

impact

SPOTLIGHT



## Meet Dawn Batts

It was during a 2002 leadership gathering in Michigan that brought together captains of industry and organization that Alex Broderick, CEO of Volunteers of America Michigan, first met Dawn Batts. It did not take long for him to convince her to get involved with Volunteers of America.

Batts, a Michigan native, soon joined the Volunteers of America Michigan local Board, and after five years, she has moved through the ranks to become chair of the local board and an active member of the Volunteers of America national board. What drives her? The compassion. Batts says, "you can literally feel it." [Read More...](#)

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individual worth

## upcoming events

### Save the Date

**February 20-22, 2008**

Please mark your calendars for the 2008 Winter Conference to be held in Albuquerque, New Mexico. [Read More...](#)

support

### [Chairman's Message](#)

Throughout our 111-year history, Volunteers of America has transitioned through various roles—as a response both to the changing needs of the communities we serve and to our evolving capacity. As we look back, we see that the dominant image defining Volunteers of America has changed dramatically every 30 to 40 years. [Read More...](#)

### [Our Church Identity](#)

At its November meeting in Chicago, the national Board of Directors took several steps toward clarifying Volunteers of America's religious identity, making the overall organization more transparent and strengthening its ministry of service. The Board adopted several recommendations brought forth by the Church Identity Work Group following its examination of fiduciary and transparency implications of the organization's church status. [Read More...](#)

### [How to Build a Strategic-Thinking Board](#)

Organizations can go to all the trouble of adjusting their bylaws to promote strategic thinkers, recruiting the best and the brightest, orienting them to the need to share their knowledge and experience, and then shoot themselves in the foot when these people show up at a board meeting. [Read More...](#)

### [On Board Diversity](#)

The society in which we live is increasingly diverse, and projections call for this trend to continue. As nonprofit leaders, board members must be deliberate in ensuring that Volunteers of America keeps pace with these changes. We must advance diversity and inclusion in: staff and boards, policies, programs, stakeholder engagement, as well as communities served. [Read More...](#)

## [Communicating Through Crises](#)

We've all seen the headlines that have put nonprofit organizations in the news—and on the defensive. And, we all know that, in spite of integrity, strong systems and best intentions, crises occur from time to time. How we respond to them, and communicate with the media about them, in the initial minutes, hours and days can strengthen or erode our credibility with the public and our supporters. [Read More...](#)

## [Resources](#)

The Panel on the Nonprofit Sector has just released *Principles for Good Governance and Ethical Practice: A Guide for Charities and Foundations*. The guide is now available on the Panel Web site. [Read More...](#)

## [Achievements of Volunteers of America](#)

Nine Local Offices Receive Department of Veterans Affairs Program Grants.

Volunteers of America CEOs Head to Washington.

Volunteers of America Awarded \$26 Million to Provide Affordable Housing.

Lord Tennyson Property Receives National Award.

Volunteers of America of Kentucky's Jennifer Hancock Wins Award.

Volunteers of America Executive Development Program Inaugural Class Launched.

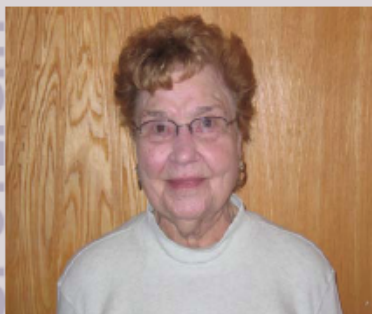
[Read More...](#)

## [Best Practices in Family Strengthening: Economic Success](#)

“Family strengthening” typically connotes a focus on the emotional parent–child bond. Although true, there is so much more that Volunteers of America can do to help build strong families. Economic success, for example, is an essential yet often overlooked component of strengthening the families with whom we come in contact every day. [Read More...](#)

impact

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## [Meet Ella Craig](#)

Ella Craig moved to Alaska 55 years ago when the 49th state was still an American territory. Working tirelessly developing the state's social services frontier, Craig's contributions made her a highly sought-after trustee. She joined the board of directors of Volunteers of America Alaska in 1995, and the 88-year-old proud grandmother of twin girls maintains a rigorous agenda.

"We have the most amazing staff who have a strong commitment to what they do," says Craig. "My goal would be to continue having Volunteers of America [Alaska] be recognized for the high-caliber services and programs it provides and to increase awareness of the organization and what it does."

[Read More...](#)

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individual worth

## upcoming events

### [Save the Date](#)

June 7 - 10

2008 National  
Conference

The Ripple Effect:  
Strengthening Our  
Communities

Visit at [www.VolunteersofAmerica.org](http://www.VolunteersofAmerica.org)

[Read the Full Newsletter Online](#)

[boardmatters@voa.org](mailto:boardmatters@voa.org)

## [Chairman's Message](#)

It is no secret that the landscape on which Volunteers of America operates has steadfastly grown more arduous. The gap between the haves and the have-nots has widened. The wars have brought home thousands of veterans in more dire conditions than ever before. From urban enclaves to rural villages, the specter of addiction, incarceration, and children falling behind looms larger than life at times. We have a rapidly growing aged population in need of specialized care with a workforce and caring establishment not yet ready for the massive influx coming. Economic indicators foretell of even tougher times ahead for our nation.

[Read More...](#)

## [Creating High-Impact Nonprofits](#)

Conventional wisdom says that scaling social innovation starts with strengthening internal management capabilities. This study of 12 high-impact nonprofits, however, shows that real social change happens when organizations go outside their own walls and find creative ways to enlist the help of others.

[Read More...](#)

## [Achievements of Volunteers of America](#)

Seniors Coming Back Home to New Affordable Housing Community:  
Volunteers of America Breaks Ground on Property March 14 in New Orleans

Verizon Awards \$80,000 to Help Seniors Access Sensor Technology

MLB Players Trust Announces "Major League" Action Team Grants

Karen M. Dale Testifies Before Congress on Veterans' Issues

[Read More...](#)

### [Primer on Unemployment Insurance Benefits](#)

In the new Volunteers of America chartering requirements, the minimum expected practices require that local offices provide unemployment insurance, workers compensation and all other mandatory employment programs as determined by local, state and federal governments. Many churches have begun providing benefits to their employees as part of their social conscience. The national office has partnered with 501(c) Agencies Trust to help local offices understand unemployment benefits, receive a cost proposal, budget appropriately and implement benefits by July 1, 2008.

[Read More...](#)

### [Save the Date](#)

Join us June 7 – 10th in New Orleans for the 2008 National Conference! We will be staying at the Hilton New Orleans Riverside, and conference attendees will receive the special discounted group rate of \$169 for a single/double occupancy room. This year, we are pleased to be launching our new online system, which will include information on both conference registration and hotel reservations. More information on the system and how to register electronically will be coming soon.

[Read More...](#)