



CONVENTION RELEASE

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The mysteries and magic of volunteers

Tom McKee helps PTA members to better understand their most valuable resource

SACRAMENTO – Tom McKee, an expert on volunteerism, does not minimize the difficulty of recruiting and retaining dedicated volunteers.

“Passion is your greatest asset and your greatest liability,” McKee told an audience of several thousand during a presentation on Saturday, May 1, at the California State PTA’s annual convention. He went on to explain that these passionate volunteers can also be challenging, because they are often independent and single-minded.

“Even though giving back is hot, many volunteers are episodic and only volunteer for short-term projects,” McKee added. Wise leaders can use this episodic tendency to engage in what McKee described as the “dating method of recruiting,” starting with small tasks and building a relationship from there.

McKee pointed to bright spots in the volunteer world, including the power of technology to organize and connect, particularly in using WIKI technology, as well as such old-fashioned techniques as handwritten thank you notes sent by snail mail.

And, when all else fails, a request can be powerful: “We need to ask,” he said.

McKee has made many presentations on this topic over the years and is the co-author, with his son, of “The New Breed: Understanding and Equipping the 21st Century Volunteer.”

everychild. onevoice.

The California State PTA has nearly 1 million members throughout the state working on behalf of public schools, children and families, with the motto, "Every child, one voice." The PTA is the nation's oldest, largest and highest profile volunteer association working to improve the education, health and welfare of all children and youth. The PTA also advocates at national, state and local levels for education and family issues. The PTA is nonprofit, nonsectarian and noncommercial.

For more information about the California State PTA, visit www.caпта.org.