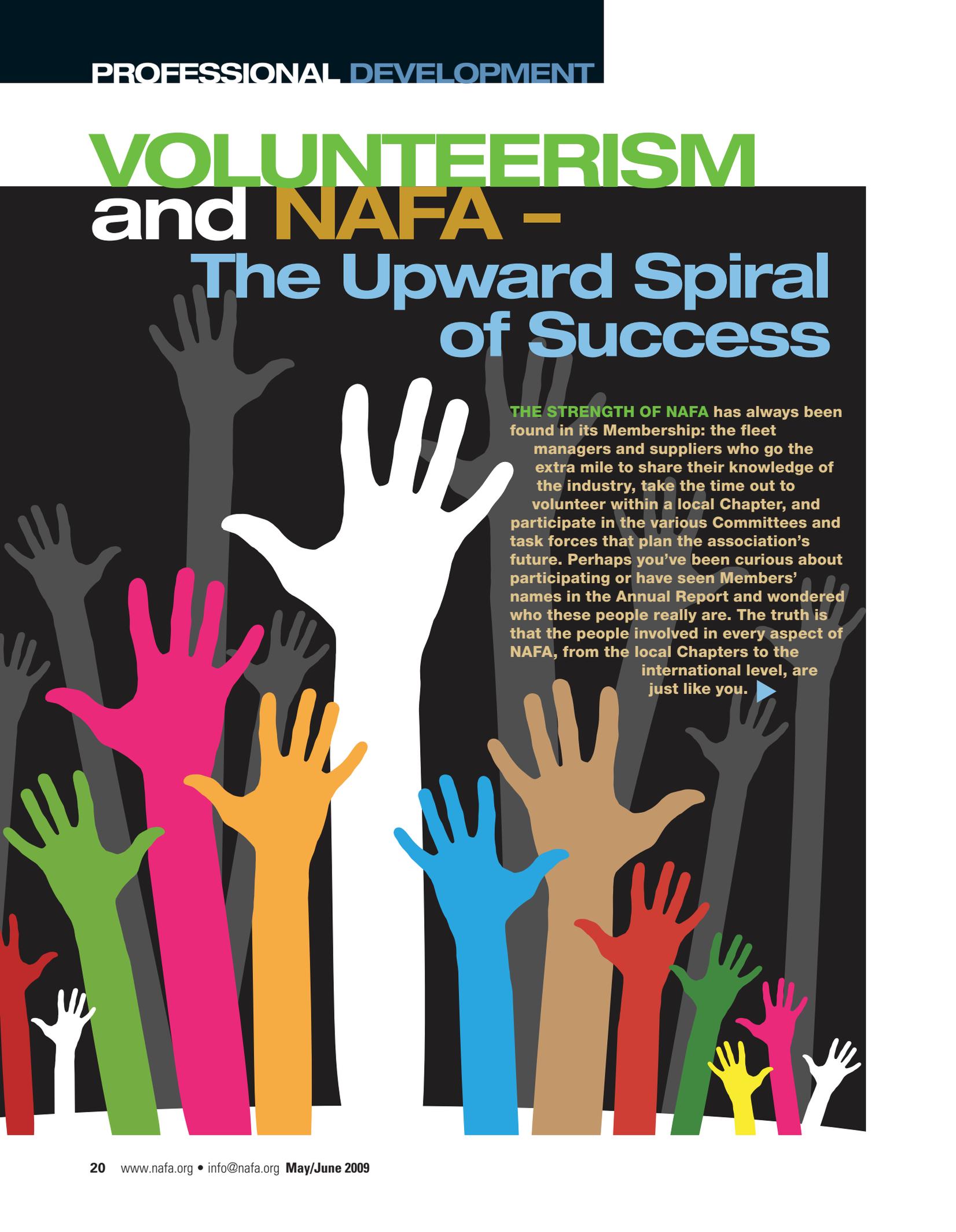


VOLUNTEERISM

and NAFA -

The Upward Spiral of Success



THE STRENGTH OF NAFA has always been found in its Membership: the fleet managers and suppliers who go the extra mile to share their knowledge of the industry, take the time out to volunteer within a local Chapter, and participate in the various Committees and task forces that plan the association's future. Perhaps you've been curious about participating or have seen Members' names in the Annual Report and wondered who these people really are. The truth is that the people involved in every aspect of NAFA, from the local Chapters to the international level, are just like you. ▶

NAFA volunteers are fleet professionals who made the choice of giving some of their time to the Association because they want to help their industry and colleagues, while also knowing their return on investment is great. It is the dedication of these Members and Affiliates that help make NAFA strong, and with the help of even more volunteers, the Association can be even stronger.

“NAFA is its volunteers,” explained NAFA Member Donna Bibbo, CAFM, of Novo Nordisk, Inc., in Princeton, New Jersey. “Without fleet managers sharing their time to choose the direction

and priorities of the association, as well as create our educational programs, we wouldn’t be the force within the industry that we are. Without NAFA, there would be a real void in the fleet industry.”

Many NAFA Members and Affiliates who volunteer say they are fortunate to work for employers who believe in the value of volunteerism within their industry. There may be times when budget cuts force companies to limit the extent of volunteer work their employees can do, or family situations that reduce the amount of time a person has to work with. But for those willing

and able, volunteer opportunities are numerous and varied. In fact, many people who are currently running local Chapters or are head of a NAFA Committee once began by volunteering to do much smaller tasks.

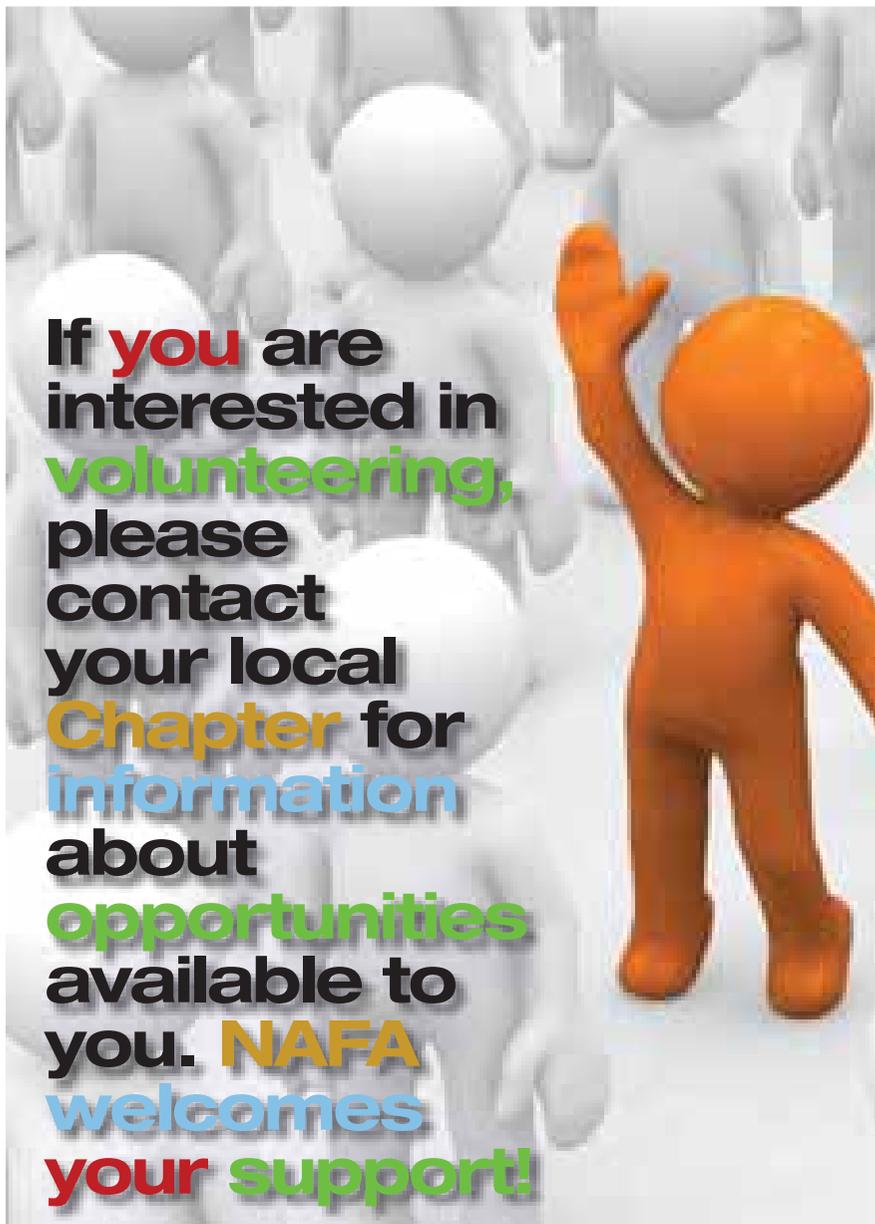
“There are many levels of commitment available, and Chapters may want to [let] folks know that,” suggested NAFA Member Arthur Kappel, CAFM, of Cablevision Systems Corporation in Bethpage, New York. “For instance, perhaps you can’t be a Chapter Chair or sit on the Board (you may not have that much time), but would you be interested in volunteering at the meeting registration table? From there, maybe one wouldn’t mind doing a little more. You’ll meet more folks and become involved in making NAFA an organization that is valuable to you.”

NAFA’s Affiliate Trustee Matt Betz, of AmeriFleet Transportation in Brighton, Michigan, echoes Kappel. “Because NAFA is an organization of volunteers, I believe it’s each Member’s duty to do what they can to keep the organization a strong, viable resource for the fleet industry. There are a number of ways to volunteer talents to the organization. Sharing your expertise through the many ‘one-time’ projects is a great way to help others.”

Volunteers are the lifeblood of the Association. Not only does volunteering help make NAFA more valuable to you, it also makes the Association more valuable to the whole. For example,

the program of sessions and speakers at the annual Institute & Expo (a program that offers more than 50 courses over four days!) is created by the volunteers on the I&E Curriculum Committee. The Certified Automotive Fleet Manager (CAFM) program—the industry’s leading certification designation—exists due to the work of volunteers on the Certification Board. And products such as NAFA’s *Fleet Maintenance Operations Guide* are the results of planning that began with the Education Development Committee.

Think about the fleet manager who may be new to the industry who spends



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a few days at the I&E and gains a plethora of information to bring back to his company. Or the new vendor relationships gained from those who attend a fleet fair held by the local Chapter. Or the next generation of fleet managers brought on thanks to the hard work put in by Committees and the Board to set up a partnership with Ferris State University on the CAFM program. Success stories surround us.

"It's the kind of stuff where you'll [say], 'Oh really? I had that kind of impact?'" added NAFA Member Steven Pederson of VPSI, Inc., in Troy, Michigan.

The impact is felt both ways. NAFA clearly benefits from the work of its volunteers, and those who volunteer are rewarded in return, in various ways.

"As a result of my work with NAFA, I have broadened my circle of colleagues, and that, in turn, has brought me to interact with people I probably would not have had an opportunity to interact with had I not volunteered at this level with NAFA," said Pederson. "What I'm finding is that I'm exposed to a broader range of issues, thoughts, and opportunities that I can bring back to my company."

Pederson believes that the hardest part is simply getting people to make the commitment to spend some time volunteering. "It's a very difficult proposition in a busy world where everybody's being tasked beyond their means to volunteer more time," he said.

For some, getting involved was just a matter of being in the right place at

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—Karen Hussey, Manager, Operations Resources, Boec Corporation

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the right time. Betz recalls that his first experience was accidental. "One of the Fleet Management Seminar (FMS) instructors had to cancel at the last minute, and I was around and available to fill in. I got through the class without messing it up too bad and was invited to come back and teach other classes. That led to positions on the Education and Affiliates Committees and the NAFA Foundation. The more I got involved, the more I came to care about the organization, and the more I wanted to do to help. I think for many people, it's an upward spiral in that regard."

Some Members are extremely passionate about the act of volunteering because they know just how much their own careers have benefited from the



contributions of others. They, in turn, feel the need to give something back.

"I owe so much to the fleet community," said J.J. Keig, CAFM, of Brinks, Inc., in Dallas, Texas. "I owe the people that I know and those I have never met but still have played no less of an important role in the exchange of ideas, successes, and failures of the operation of vehicles and equipment. Fleet



managers, as a group, have got to be some of the most fortunate people in a profession due to the fact that there is so much camaraderie, support, and trust amongst our colleagues. Interwoven in this fabric is a considerable amount of networking and sharing of information. It is truly remarkable.

"Having been in this profession for nearly 30 years," Keig continued, "I continue to be amazed and proud of the men and women who make up the 'bumper to bumper' coverage of dynamics, which make this great machine function. The spirit we have in fleet management is rivaled by no other."

NAFA is indeed like a machine comprised of many intricate parts. Even the smallest input from a Member or Affiliate serves a tremendous part in keeping things rolling smoothly, whether it's someone like Pederson, who became involved with working on the NAFA/Ferris State University partnership for an accredited fleet program because he believes in seeing young people enter the industry; or someone like Kappel, who was instrumental in helping the New York Chapter utilize e-mail and the web to help reduce costs, attract new members, and set up meetings more effectively; or someone like Keig, who played a major role in steering this magazine through a new design and new editorial focus; or someone like Bibbo, who, as Treasurer of the New Jersey Chapter, has kept her Chapter vibrant and thriving even in bad economic times; or someone like Betz, who helped out during an emergency and discovered a hidden talent that became an important focus of their NAFA experience. There are so many different ways NAFA Members and Affiliates can contribute and see how their contributions help make NAFA stronger. ■

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