



# Engaging

## Mentors/Volunteers in Under-Resourced Rural Communities

The Immokalee Foundation

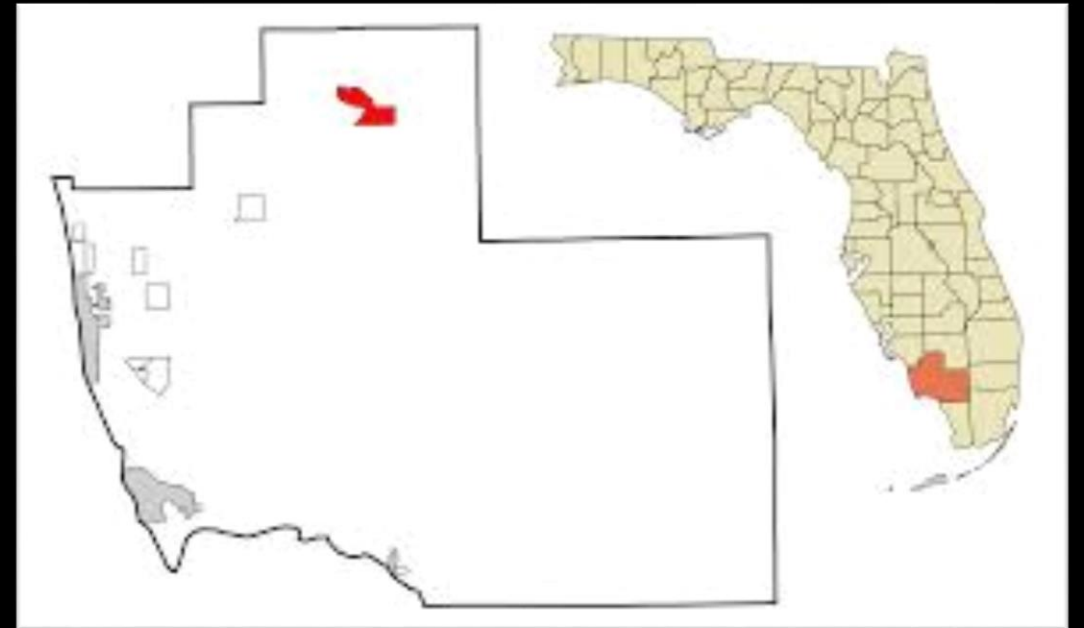


# What is a Rural Community

It is a geographic area that is located outside towns and cities.

Typical rural areas have:

- A low population density
- Small settlements
- Agricultural areas are commonly rural



# What people think when they think of Immokalee!



# What Immokalee Residents think of Immokalee!!



High School Students starting their own business!



Cultural Diversity



Community leaders working together!



Hard-working People

Soccer team ranked #2 in the Nation!!!!



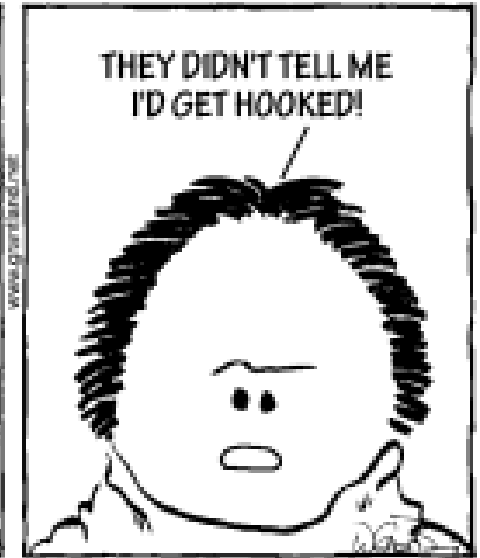
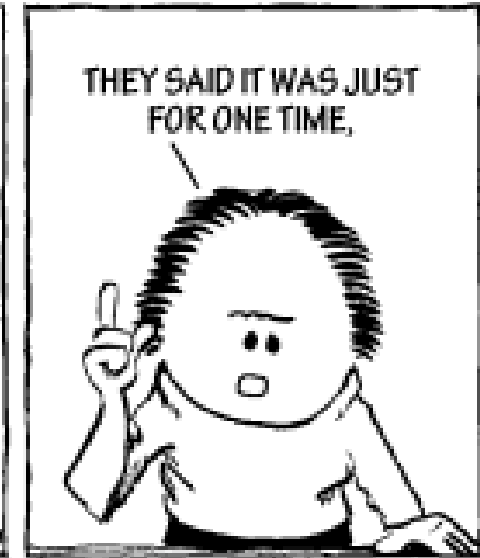
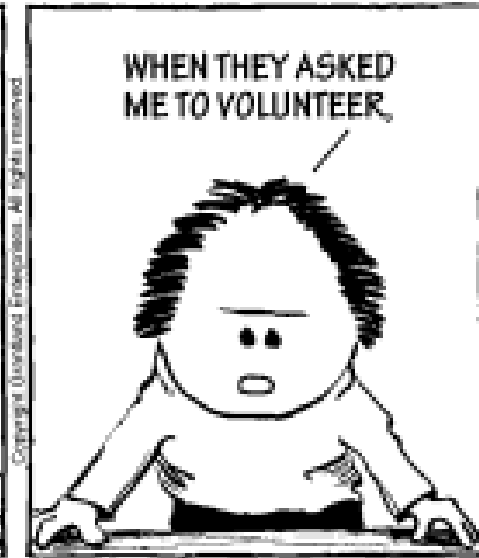
Non-Profits helping the community



I am Immokalee

# How to hook people!





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# The Approach

- Be able to HOOK them in the first 30 seconds in order to peak their curiosity
- Be Truthful
- Be Passionate about the organization
- Be Respectful
- Be Willing to stay and talk, don't seem to be in a rush
- Be in the moment, don't look around
- Be prepared to share statics if possible





*Tell a story. Stories are one of the most powerful ways to start a presentation. Nothing will compel listeners to lean in more than a well-told story.*

A young woman with long dark hair, wearing a light-colored jacket, is smiling warmly at the camera. She is outdoors in a grassy field with trees in the background. The image has a soft, bokeh effect with light spots. A teal rectangular box is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the text "CHANGE A LIFE OVER LUNCH" in white, uppercase, sans-serif font.

CHANGE A LIFE  
OVER LUNCH

Keep the HOOK short, sweet and to the point!

“Change a Life Over Lunch” embraces the power of mentoring, generosity, and hope for future generations. Every day, often over lunch, Take Stock mentors choose to support a student who has the odds stacked against them.

# How I Keep a Mentor or Volunteer Engaged!

- ① **Make it Count.** People offer to volunteer because they want to make a difference. If the volunteer opportunities you offer don't have a meaningful impact, you are wasting their time and yours. And if they do have meaningful impact, make sure your Mentors/Volunteers know it!
- ② **Cultivate Leaders.** Mentors/Volunteers are great, however the Mentors/Volunteers that recruit and organize other Mentors/Volunteers are even better! Identifying and cultivating potential volunteer leaders should be a cornerstone of your program and a goal of each and every organizer.
- ③ **Give up (Some) Control.** Most people work best when they feel a sense of ownership over their work. If you're giving your volunteer leaders a lot of responsibility, make sure you're giving them clear goals and boundaries, but also the freedom to make decisions and do a good job.

# How I Keep a Mentor or Volunteer Engaged!

- ④ **Say Thank You.** Share credit and spotlight. You can't do this too much or too often.
- ⑤ **Offer Training.** Learning new skills can be a great incentive and reward for volunteering, and it can be a good investment when your Mentors/Volunteers come back.
- ⑥ **Provide the Right Tools.** Whether it's sturdy shovels, functioning databases, or an easy way to track their hours, don't skimp on the tools that your Mentors/Volunteers use. If people are frustrated trying to work for you, they won't come back.
- ⑦ **Good Feedback Loops.** Actively solicit and respond to questions, suggestions and critique. Don't just ask if everything is ok -- ask how you can make it better.

# How I Keep a Mentor or Volunteer Engaged!

- ⑧ **Create Camaraderie.** Friendship is a supreme motivator. Working with your friends, whether they're staff or other volunteers, makes volunteering more enjoyable. Create opportunities for relationship-building with and between your volunteers.
  
- ⑨ **Be Supportive.** From carpool coordination to providing childcare, organizations who know how to smooth the way for their Mentors/Volunteers keep them coming back.
  
- ⑩ **Fun.** Some volunteer jobs are inherently fun. If you need Mentors/Volunteers for a job that isn't, make sure you can offer fun before or after.

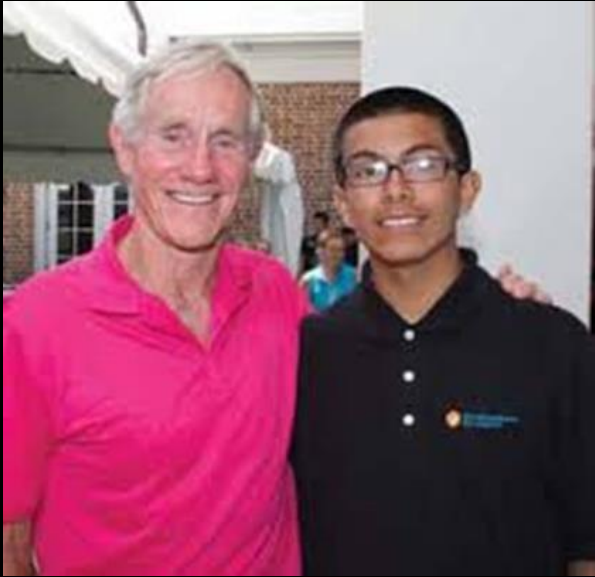
# Keep them Happy, is this impossible?

- RESPECT
- HOLD REGULAR MEETINGS
- BE ACCESSIBLE
- ESTABLISH RELIABLE GO-BETWEENS
- PRAISE AND RECOGNIZE ACCOMPLISHMENTS
- BE FLEXIBLE
- LEAD BY EXAMPLE!

# Keeping the Mentors/Volunteers Committed

- Develop Community of Volunteers
- Stay Connected with your volunteers
- Inspire Mentors/Volunteers with the cause, not the organization
- Ask Mentors/Volunteers to help in specific , actionable ways
- Make Mentors/Volunteers feel needed and appreciated
- Show Mentors/Volunteers how they made a difference

# Ways to show commitment



Believe in the cause, not the organization



Feel needed and appreciated



Show how they made a difference

Develop a community of volunteers





# Results

- 100% Graduation Rate
- 100% Go to some sort of post secondary
- 85% Graduate from the post secondary program they were in
- 92% Mentor/Mentee Match
- 95% Of our mentors return every year, even after their mentee graduates

Remember to Inspires the  
Mentors/Volunteers with the cause,  
NOT the organization!!!



Mentors, Mentees, Community Partners, Board Members and staff all working together for the common good!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bM8izJdmxOc>

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the **immokalee**  
foundation

education. empowerment. hope.