Volunteers are crucial human resources in non-profit organizations. Therefore, in the current unstable economy, many non-profits facing financial difficulties, eagerly seek voluntary work contributions of individuals and try to retain existing volunteer workforces to carry out their organizational missions. In particular, non-profit sport organizations report problems regarding financial difficulties and lack of appropriately skilled volunteers and board members as they make up a large portion of these organizations (Hoye, Nicholson, Smith, Stewart, & Westerbeek, 2009). In light of the essential role of volunteers in non-profit sport organizations, it is important to understand what individual differences affect volunteers’ intention to stay in these organizations. Previous empirical studies have demonstrated that older people tend to regulate their emotions after negative events better than younger people (Lo¨ckenhoff & Carstensen, 2004). Although with time young people settle in their work environment, they frequently come in the workforce with high expectations (De Vos, Buyens, & Schalk, 2003). On the other hand, given that the expectations of older people may be more realistic than younger people (Thomas & Anderson, 1998), a psychological contract breach may be less problematic to older workers than to younger workers (Bal, De Lange, Jansen, & Van Der Velde, 2008). Applying these concepts to a volunteer context, high-quality leader-member relations may have a greater impact on younger volunteers’ level of job satisfaction than on older volunteers. Moreover, given that younger workers may seek opportunities in other organizations, they may care less how their employment relationship ends than older workers who have fewer job transfer opportunities (Hedge, Borman, & Lammlein, 2006), indicating that older volunteers may want to continue to provide voluntary work for an organization as long as they have high job satisfaction.

The purpose of the study was to examine the moderating role of age in the relationships between leader-member exchange (LMX) components (affect, loyalty, contribution, and professional respect) and job satisfaction and intention to stay among volunteers in non-profit sport organizations. In light of the aforementioned, we hypothesized the following:

**Hypothesis 1a**: Age moderates the impact of affect on job satisfaction, such that affect has less influence on older volunteers’ job satisfaction.

**Hypothesis 1b**: Age moderates the impact of loyalty on job satisfaction, such that loyalty has less influence on older volunteers’ job satisfaction.

**Hypothesis 1c**: Age moderates the impact of contribution on job satisfaction, such that contribution has less influence on older volunteers’ job satisfaction.

**Hypothesis 1d**: Age moderates the impact of professional respect on job satisfaction, such that professional respect has less influence on older volunteers’ job satisfaction.

**Hypothesis 2**: Age moderates the impact of job satisfaction on intention to stay, such that job satisfaction has more influence on older volunteers’ intention to stay.

The sample was composed of 258 volunteer members (56.5% male; 43.5% female) from 29 non-profit sport organizations in a Midwestern state in the United States. A survey questionnaire consisting of four parts was administered. First, the four dimensions of LMX were measured using a multidimensional LMX scale (Liden & Maslyn, 1998): affect (3 items), loyalty (3 items), contribution (3 items), and professional respect (3 items). Second, 5 items were included to measure job satisfaction using the Job Diagnostic Survey by Hackman and Oldham (1980). All responses ranged from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (7), using a 7-point Likert-type scale. Third, one question asked “Will you stay and continue to provide voluntary work for this organization in your future?” Participants could respond Yes, or No, or I don’t know. Last were questions about the participants’ personal characteristics such as sex, age, marital status, and the number of years of work experience in the organization. Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficients supported the internal consistency of the items within the LMX and job satisfaction variables as all Cronbach’s alpha values ranged from .77 to .96, meeting the minimum level (.70) recommended by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994).

Moderated hierarchical multiple regression analysis was performed to test H1a, H1b, H1c, and H1d. The main effect variables were centered to reduce potential issues of multicollinearity by subtracting the mean from each main effect variable, and interaction terms were computed as cross-products of the centered predictors. Predictor variables (LMX factors) were entered first in the regression analysis and age in the second model. Each individual interaction term was then added in the third (professional respect × age), fourth (affect × age), fifth (loyalty × age), and sixth (contribution × age) models. The results revealed that the first model including the LMX variables was significant with an \( R^2 \) of .28, \( F(4, 71) = 6.75, p < .001 \). The second model that added age was significant, \( F(5, 70) = 5.77, p < .001 \), while the slight increase in \( R^2 \) was not significant. The
third model with an interaction, professional respect × age, was significant, $F(6, 69) = 6.08, p < .001$, with a significant $R^2$ change ($p < .05$). The fourth, fifth, and sixth models with additional interactions were all significant, but none showed a significant incremental increase in $R^2$-squared; therefore, the third model with significant main effect of professional respect ($\beta = .52$) and interaction of professional respect × age ($\beta = -.23$) was considered most acceptable, supporting H1d.

Hierarchical logistic regression was employed to examine whether age moderated the relationship between job satisfaction and intention to stay working in the organization that was a dichotomous variable (1 = yes, and 0 = no). Job satisfaction was entered in the first step, age in the second step, and the interaction term in the final step of the regression model. The addition of job satisfaction in step one improved on the null intercept model ($\Delta \chi^2 (1) = 9.75, p < .01$; Hosmer–Lemshow $\chi^2 (7) = 9.34, p > .05$). The addition of age also showed significance on the model ($\Delta \chi^2 (2) = 11.68, p < .01$; Hosmer–Lemshow $\chi^2 (8) = 9.90, p > .05$). The introduction of the interaction term yielded a significantly improved model ($\Delta \chi^2 (3) = 29.06, p < .001$; Hosmer–Lemshow $\chi^2 (8) = 5.47, p > .05$) with significant main effect of job satisfaction ($B = .83$) and interaction of job satisfaction × age ($B = .03$). Therefore, the results supported H2 that age moderates the impact of job satisfaction on intention to stay, such that job satisfaction has more influence on older volunteers’ intention to stay.

The results suggested that younger volunteers were likely to have higher job satisfaction and levels of respect, for the knowledge, competence and/or professional skills of leaders or followers than older volunteers. The findings are consistent with the argument that older people have relatively more stable psychological contracts given that older people tend to have more realistic expectations than do younger people (Bal et al., 2008). Older volunteers might have more reasonable expectations of others they consider skilled and knowledgeable, thereby are more generous rating others’ professionalism. The current study also found a strong relationship between job satisfaction and intention to stay among older volunteers. In the non-profit sector, it is plausible that younger volunteers may want to seek potential paid job opportunities even when they are satisfied with working at their current non-profit sport organizations. However, older volunteers are more likely to have high socio-economic status than non-volunteers (Choi, 2003) with an increased likelihood of voluntary engagement after retirement (Erlinghagen & Hank, 2006), implying that an older volunteer may less care about finding paid employment. Overall, this study provides valuable insights into how age may be an important factor influencing organizational outcomes.