



EX-PROGRAM OFFICIAL PLEADS GUILTY TO THEFT

WASHINGTON (Feb. 7, 2005) - A former AmeriCorps program official in Baltimore pled guilty on January 21, 2005, to a Federal theft charge following an investigation by the Office of Inspector General (OIG), Corporation for National and Community Service (Corporation).

Kate L. Fernald was sentenced to two years' probation, 250 hours of community service and was ordered to make \$44,757.50 in restitution to the Notre Dame Mission Volunteer Program, Inc. (NDMVP), a Baltimore-based nonprofit that uses Corporation funding to deploy AmeriCorps members in social service and education programs nationwide.

Investigators from the OIG disclosed that Fernald, the nonprofit's associate director from November 2001 to December 2002, used a variety of schemes to embezzle funds from the AmeriCorps program. Her offenses included:

- Making more than \$16,000 in personal charges on NDMVP's program credit card.
- Writing a check to herself for \$1,200 on NDMVP's account, forging the executive director's signature and depositing the funds in her personal account.
- Forging documents that caused NDMVP to pay \$1,035 in premiums for her personal health insurance policy.
- Diverting \$19,500 in checks, payable to NDMVP, to her personal checking account.

Tipped to the embezzlement scheme by NDMVP officials, OIG investigators conducted extensive interviews of NDMVP staffers and used program financial records, e-mails, canceled checks, credit card data and Fernald's personal banking records (made available to the OIG under grand jury subpoena powers) to build their case.