

# *National Service: A Resource for Faith-Based and Community Groups*



Corporation for  
**NATIONAL &  
COMMUNITY  
SERVICE** 

“ Miracles happen—all the time—in America. They happen because loving souls take time out of their lives to spread compassion and love. And lives are changing. Listen, our society is going to change one heart and one soul at a time. It changes from the bottom up, not the top down. It changes when the soldiers in the armies of compassion feel wanted, encouraged, and empowered. And that’s what the faith-based and community initiative is all about. ”

– President George W. Bush  
*National Conference on Faith-Based and Community Initiatives*  
Washington, DC | June 1, 2004



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The Corporation for National and Community Service provides opportunities for Americans of all ages and backgrounds to serve their communities and country, primarily through its Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve America programs. Together with the USA Freedom Corps, the Corporation is working to build a culture of citizenship, service, and responsibility in America.

JULY 2005 | UPON REQUEST THIS MATERIAL WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE IN ALTERNATIVE FORMS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES.



*“All of us have something to share that can make our communities and our nation stronger.”*

## Helping You Serve America

**T**he Corporation for National and Community Service provides opportunities for Americans of all ages and backgrounds to serve their communities and country, primarily through its Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve America programs. Together with the USA Freedom Corps, the Corporation is working to build a culture of citizenship, service, and responsibility in America. Through access to human capital, grant funding, training and technical assistance, and other resources, we can help increase your organization’s capacity to deliver innovative solutions for communities.

All of us have something to share that can make our communities and our nation stronger.

We hope this booklet gives you a better understanding of how the Corporation works with faith-based and secular community organizations and how we can help you accomplish your goals.

To learn more, visit us at [www.nationalservice.gov/fbc](http://www.nationalservice.gov/fbc) or call us at 1-866-783-2237.



## Our Faith-Based and Community Initiative: Expanding Good Works

Today, more Americans volunteer through religious organizations than through any other type of organization and 92 percent of faith-based charities report the ability to take on additional volunteers. The Corporation is dedicated to ensuring that faith-based and community organizations have the capacity, tools, and volunteer power they need to help America's communities flourish. Its Faith-Based and Community Initiative (FBCI) is a gateway for these groups to learn about and gain the valuable asset of human capital that the Corporation and its programs offer.

Working through thousands of charitable organizations, schools, and faith-based and other community organizations, the Corporation's volunteers and members have helped improve the lives of children and youth, bridge the digital divide, secure our homeland, protect the environment, and alleviate poverty for low-income families. Over the next two years, the Corporation will devote special attention to faith- and community-based efforts to mentor children of incarcerated parents and assist youth and adult ex-offenders to support the President's reentry initiative and related family strengthening programs.





## Partnering for Success

In the pages that follow, you will see examples of how the Corporation and its members and volunteers have helped a variety of faith-based and community organizations meet, and often exceed, their goals. You will read about Sister Katherine Corr and how her work with the Corporation over the years helped turn a small, fledgling literacy program into a national model. About Gene Wiggers, who, as an RSVP volunteer, has helped meet various needs in his southeastern Idaho community. About Melissa Long, an AmeriCorps\*VISTA member, who helped an economic and community development organization expand its reach to help refugees across Ohio develop the necessary skills to succeed and start their own

small business. And you will read about Elder Roland Hairston of the Potter's House in Dallas, Texas, who alongside Bishop T.D. Jakes, has helped build an impressive prisoners' support network that is providing hope for thousands of incarcerated inmates and their families.

These stories highlight the myriad ways the Corporation is working together with faith-based and community organizations to reach common goals.\* We encourage you to read on to learn more about how we are expanding our partnerships with faith-based and community organizations and how we might be able to help you.

\*The information about each organization and the impact they have on the communities they serve is self-reported.



*“ It’s been wonderful to grow together with AmeriCorps and help link the congregations we work with to the manpower they need to get things done in their community. ”*

Susana Leon | DIRECTOR, NATIONAL URBAN MINISTRY PROJECT  
VICE PRESIDENT, LATINO PASTORAL ACTION CENTER





# Latino Pastoral Action Center

Established 1993 | Bronx, New York\*

*\*New centers in Philadelphia; Chicago; Whittier, Calif. and Lawrence, Mass.*



Our journey with the Corporation for National and Community Service started at a conference focused on strengthening families. Our CEO, Reverend Ray Rivera, speaks often at these conferences to share our work and experiences in this area. During one conference a little over two years ago, he met a representative from the National Crime Prevention Council who told us all about the Corporation.

I must admit, at first, I didn't really understand exactly how we were going to be able to tap into national service resources through the Corporation. Like a lot of folks in the field, I thought government grants were complicated and out of reach. There was definitely a fear factor involved. Putting yourself out there is always a risk. I remember asking myself, "What if we have to change what we stand for, or change what we do?" That was the biggest concern I remember having.

Obviously, we took the plunge and I am so glad we did. We started small, but it didn't take long to see the impact AmeriCorps was having with our partners. They kept telling us every day how they wouldn't be able to keep their soup kitchens and youth programs running without their AmeriCorps members.

And the AmeriCorps members we worked with inspired others in the community to consider joining AmeriCorps, too. I've always thought members are the best recruiters. I suppose the communities we work in have proven to be built-in captive audiences.

We have had so much success with our state programs that we worked with the Corporation to create a national program. We just wrapped up our first year of planning to establish centers in five states across the country.

I am so grateful to the Corporation for recognizing the potential in our organization and working with us to broaden our ability to make our communities safer and better.

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## AMERICORPS\*STATE/NATIONAL AMERICORPS\*VISTA

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LPAC is a partner with the Corporation's AmeriCorps\*State/National and AmeriCorps\*VISTA Programs.

### ■ AMERICORPS MEMBERS

45 total: 9 Members per site, 5 AmeriCorps\*VISTAs and 4 National Directs

### ■ SERVICES PROVIDED

LPAC provides holistic capacity building and leadership development technical assistance to churches, faith-based organizations, and community-based organizations across the country. LPAC also operates community-based, citywide and national programs that provide counseling, crisis-intervention, education, literacy, and job training and readiness services.

### ■ ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Over the past several years, LPAC has had significant success in providing educational support to children and youth. From 1998-2003, LPAC served 600 students (ages 5-12) through in-class instruction and the New Hope After School Program, and nearly 450 (or 75 percent) improved reading at grade level or above. In 2001-2002, 97 percent of the in-class students mastered their grade requirement. In addition, LPAC provided homework help and tutoring to 640 students through New Hope, and nearly 450 (or 70 percent) improved their GPA by at least 20 percent. LPAC has also tutored more than 200 youth (ages 13-21) through the Greater Heights education division, with more than half improving their GPA by at least 20 percent.

### ■ WEBSITE

[www.lpacministries.com](http://www.lpacministries.com)

# Southeastern Idaho Community Action Agency Retired and Senior Volunteers

Established 1993 | Idaho

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## SENIOR CORPS/RSVP

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### ■ VOLUNTEERS

586 RSVP volunteers

### ■ SERVICES PROVIDED

SEICAA-RSVP focuses on crime prevention, health promotion, tutoring, mentoring, and working in various capacities with other civic and community organizations.

### ■ ACCOMPLISHMENTS

SEICAA-RSVP has a volunteer base of more than 586 seniors. Last year, these seniors donated more than \$1.8 million in service hours to the counties of Bannock, Bear Lake, Bingham, Caribou, Franklin, Oneida, and Power. SEICAA-RSVP volunteers also have helped the local police department save \$56,000 in hiring costs by helping with desk work, vacation home checks, and taking care of the traffic speed control signs placed around the city. This help has allowed local law-enforcement to focus on patrol and crime prevention duties. Although SEICAA-RSVP's Mentoring Program for Children of Prisoners is new, there have already been anecdotal reports of increased school attendance and improved attitude and behavior at school and home.

### ■ WEBSITE

[www.seicaa.org](http://www.seicaa.org)



I have always enjoyed volunteering and RSVP helps me do what I enjoy. That's how I look at it. I first learned about the RSVP program through another local group. I am always talking with people and learning about what is going on in the community.

The RSVP program in southeast Idaho is one of the best ways to access senior volunteers. As an RSVP volunteer, I've been able to help out in my community in a lot of different ways. One project that I have found to be truly rewarding is our Mentoring Program for Children of Prisoners. Many children of prisoners have supportive families and are doing well. Others have had some tough life experiences like separation from a parent, drug-addicted parents, poverty, or negative contact with the police or social workers. Some of these children have had multiple caregivers and many different living arrangements that have disrupted their education and their relationships.

The RSVP mentoring program helps children feel safe, cared-for, and in control of their lives. We don't lecture or judge. We share our lives to provide stability and hope when it is needed most.

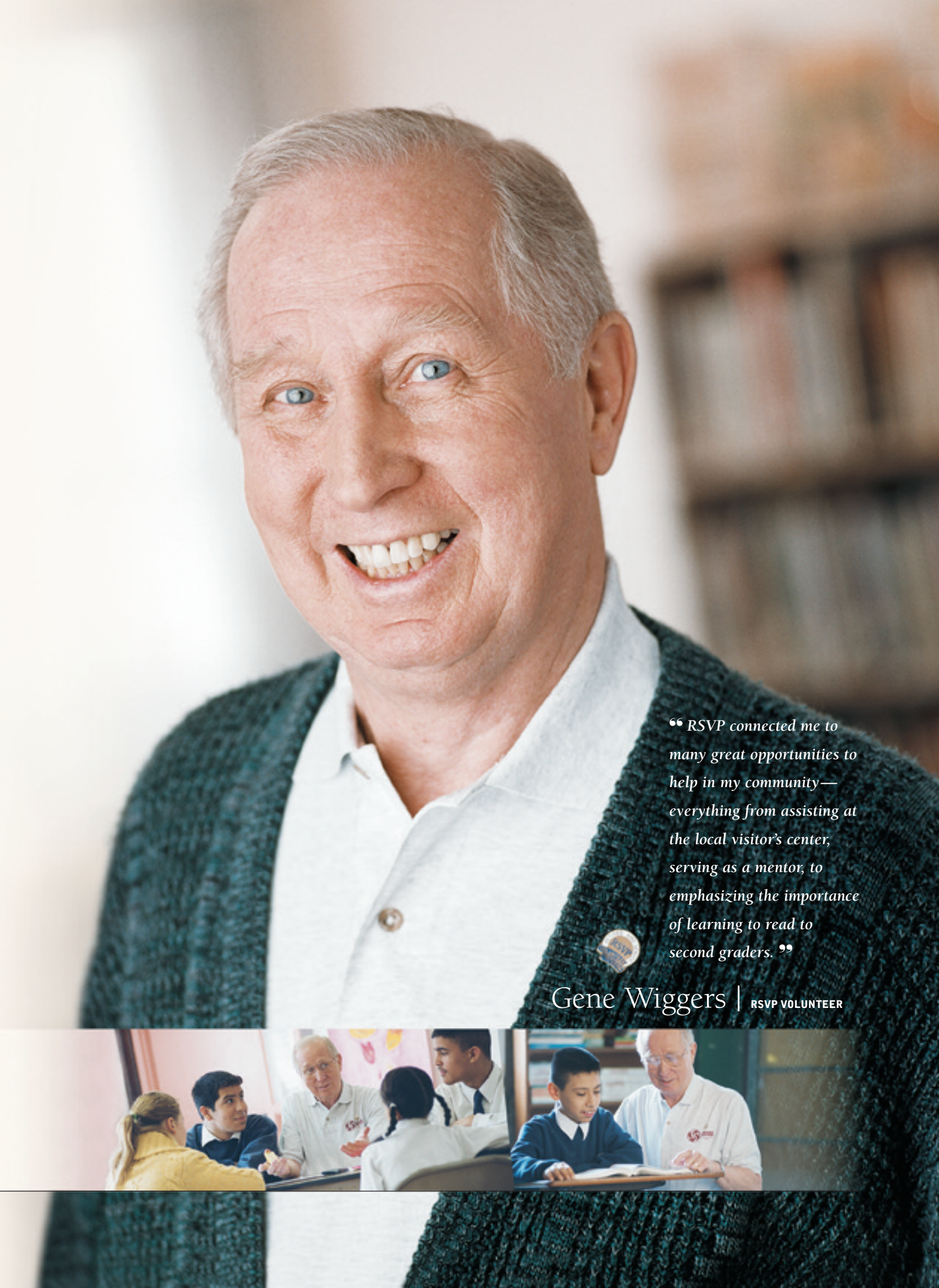
As much as I have given, I have gained even more. In addition to being a mentor and working at the local visitor center, I am also volunteer coordinator for the SEICAA tutoring program. Teaching kids to read is rewarding for both the child and the tutor.

So often I think of all the great things we are able to do together right here in Idaho. I can only imagine the amazing contributions other RSVP volunteers are doing across the country. Talk about people power.

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For more information on our faith-based and community initiatives, call 1-866-783-2237 or visit [www.nationalservice.gov](http://www.nationalservice.gov)





*“RSVP connected me to many great opportunities to help in my community— everything from assisting at the local visitor’s center, serving as a mentor, to emphasizing the importance of learning to read to second graders.”*

Gene Wiggers | **RSVP VOLUNTEER**





*“ By securing matching grants, I helped small, community-based groups earn almost \$2 million to help secure homes, employment, and educational opportunities for low-income families. Now that is rewarding! ”*

Melissa Long | AMERICORPS★VISTA MEMBER





# Economic and Community Development Institute

Established 1998 | Columbus, Ohio



For as long as I can remember, I have been involved in community service and service-learning. So when I interviewed with the Economic and Community Development Institute as an AmeriCorps\*VISTA member, it felt like just the right fit for me.

The partnership with AmeriCorps\*VISTA and ECDI has allowed me to develop the skills I needed to continue serving my community as a Grant Specialist.

At ECDI, I was involved in programs like the Federal Compassion Capital Fund, helping faith-based and community organizations survive and grow in the non-profit world. The fund provides mini-grants for training opportunities for grassroots and faith-based organizations, and mentor partnerships with Compassion Capital Fund partners helped serve many immigrant communities, such as members of the Muslim community from Somalia and Ethiopia, and Jewish and Pentecostal Christian refugees from the former Soviet Union. Partnering with their local places of worship, we helped these refugees learn the life skills they needed to build a home or business in the United States. Without the Corporation's support, ECDI would not have had the opportunity or capacity to serve these organizations and communities.

I am particularly proud of my role to help expand ECDI's reach to support organizations across the state of Ohio. I helped secure a partnership with the Ohio Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives and other partner organizations.

I witnessed first-hand the hope these programs and partnerships provide. One afternoon, I met a woman from a small, local faith-based group in central Ohio. We discussed the challenges faced by many faith-based and community organizations, especially in building a sound financial base. I shared with her the many opportunities available through ECDI programs and training. She felt so fortunate to have discovered us.

I am so grateful to ECDI and the Corporation for giving me the opportunity to have done something meaningful for my community.

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## AMERICORPS\*VISTA

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ECDI is a partner with the Corporation's AmeriCorps\*VISTA Program.

### ■ AMERICORPS\*VISTA MEMBERS

Formerly 2, expanding to 8 members

### ■ SERVICES PROVIDED

ECDI works to strengthen low-income neighborhoods by increasing economic development (homeownership opportunities, small business development, micro enterprise, and workforce development) within the community.

### ■ ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Since 1999, ECDI has assisted more than 800 low-income individuals in attaining personal assets, including homes, education, and small businesses valued at nearly \$4 million. More than 580 microenterprises have been started in central Ohio as a result of their efforts.

### ■ WEBSITE

[www.econcdi.org](http://www.econcdi.org)



# Jewish Youth Philanthropy Institute

Established 1998 | Rockville, Maryland

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## NEXT GENERATION GRANT

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JYPI is a partner with the Corporation through its Next Generation Grant.

### ■ VOLUNTEERS

In 2005, more than 100 teens will distribute the equivalent of \$70,000 in grants to local, national, and international non-profit organizations. An additional 400 teens will participate in service-learning and alumni programming.

### ■ SERVICES PROVIDED

JYPI's mission is to advance the development of youth philanthropy and civic engagement in the Jewish community by engaging in *tzedakah* (charitable acts) and *tikkun olam* (repairing the world).

### ■ IMPACT

Four years after its inception, JYPI teens had donated more than \$120,000 and hundreds of hours of community service to 36 different organizations while gaining a holistic view of the philanthropic process and developing a lifelong ethic of service. By the end of this program year, approximately 230 teens will have gone through the JYPI philanthropy program, providing brief but intense assistance to 20 non-profit agencies serving a wide range of needs.

### ■ WEBSITE

[www.jypi.org](http://www.jypi.org)



When I started high school, I learned that I was required to log community service hours in order to graduate. I didn't have high expectations for these projects, and figured I would complete them when they didn't interfere with my "real" education and after school activities.

To my surprise — and especially that of my parents — after participating in my first Jewish Youth Philanthropy Institute (JYPI) service-learning program, I continued to go back, serving many more hours than required by my school.

I will never forget the day I spent at an inner-city senior citizen's apartment complex in Southeast Washington, D.C. We were asked to help senior citizens clean their apartments to avoid being evicted from their homes. I spent that day with an older man and as I cleaned, he shared stories about his life. After talking about our families and friends, I realized that while we came from very different backgrounds, we had a lot in common.

The Corporation for National and Community Service has made it possible for JYPI to continue sponsoring service-learning programs. I am so grateful that I have the opportunity to continue to serve others, be a leader in my community, and meet other youth who enjoy community service as much as I do. We may come from different backgrounds and faiths, but overall, we all share a commitment to help those in need.

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For more information on our faith-based and community initiatives, call 1-866-783-2237 or visit [www.nationalservice.gov](http://www.nationalservice.gov)



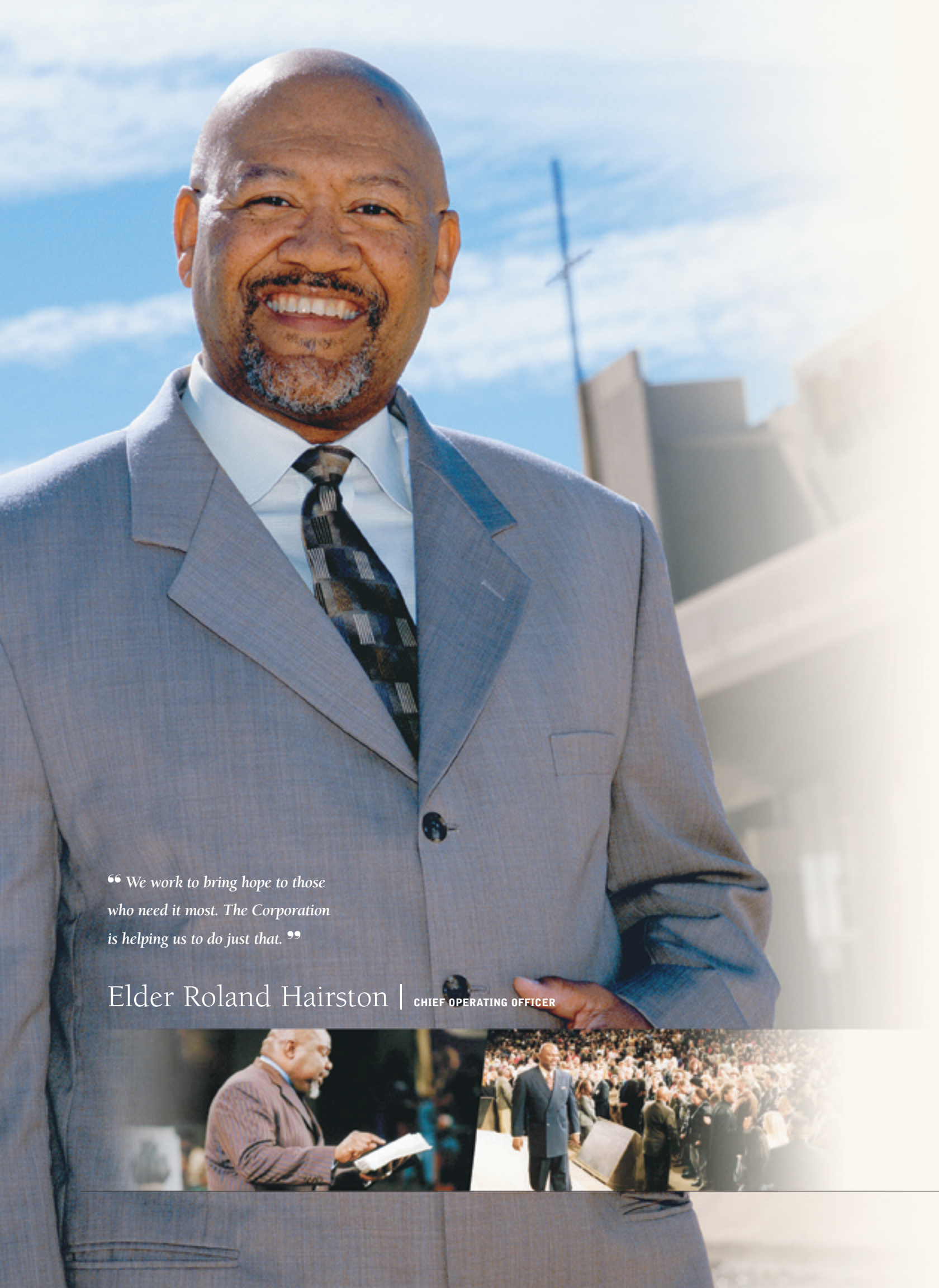


*“ My experience with the Jewish Youth Philanthropy Institute showed me that people of all faiths share common values. ”*

Ben Gittleson | YOUTH PARTICIPANT







*“ We work to bring hope to those who need it most. The Corporation is helping us to do just that. ”*

Elder Roland Hairston | CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER





# The Potter's House

Established 1996 | Dallas, Texas



I was initially introduced to Bishop T.D. Jakes nearly a decade ago through my wife, who attended his conferences. Today, as Chief Operating Officer and an ordained elder of The Potter's House, pastored by Bishop Jakes, I witness each day the impact on the lives we touch.

Through the help and guidance of the Corporation for National and Community Service, we recently established four Texas Offenders Reentry Initiative (TORI) programs in Dallas, Fort Worth, San Antonio, and Austin, and we plan to reach into Houston next year. We chose these cities because they are Texas' top five "reentry points," cities where former offenders reenter society after serving their sentences in Texas prisons. A Corporation Challenge Grant has helped us go where there is great need for services like substance abuse education, family and marriage counseling, pre-employment counseling, and help enrolling low-income families in state and federal support programs.

The Potter's House prisoners' support network develops programs and services that equip, empower and support, and restore offenders and former offenders. To help them with their journey, this support also is offered to families of offenders and correctional staff. Local churches and community groups also provided training to better embrace and support former and current prisoners and their family members.

The Corporation's grant has helped to generate volunteers for the TORI program at The Potter's House. Through these volunteers, The Potter's House gives people the tools they need to grow and become better, more productive citizens. Through training, education, and empowerment, we help individuals move forward to reach their potential. It's exciting when we are able to find organizations that are willing to join us in this effort, such as the Corporation for National and Community Service.

The Corporation is a true partner. They too have a passion for improving lives. Together, we leverage our strengths and achieve the best results possible. Any partnership like that is worth nurturing.

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## CHALLENGE GRANT

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The Potter's House is a partner with the Corporation through its Challenge Grant.

### ■ VOLUNTEERS

The Potter's House prisoners' support network utilizes 130 volunteers, and an additional 100 volunteers work on The Potter's House Texas Offenders Reentry Initiative.

### ■ SERVICES PROVIDED

The Potter's House has 50-plus outreach programs, including a comprehensive outreach and ex-offender reentry initiative. As part of The Potter's House reentry initiative, selected life skills television programming is broadcast to prisons nationwide. Prisoner support groups operated by the church provide former male and female offenders and their families with an accepting atmosphere where they can share time with counselors who understand, care, and serve as mentors.

### ■ IMPACT

While the Texas Offenders Reentry Initiative is a new program, The Potter's House ex-offender reentry initiative has already served 33,000 prisoners with its program, and broadcasts selected television programs to more than 425 prisons located throughout the country. The goal of both programs is to ultimately decrease the recidivism rate of program participants.

### ■ WEBSITE

[www.pottershous.org](http://www.pottershous.org)

# Notre Dame Mission Volunteers AmeriCorps

Established 1992 | Baltimore, Maryland (headquarters)

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## AMERICORPS\*STATE/NATIONAL

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Notre Dame AmeriCorps is a partner with the Corporation's AmeriCorps\*State/National Program.

### ■ AMERICORPS MEMBERS

More than 270

### ■ SERVICES PROVIDED

Notre Dame AmeriCorps members work to empower the poor through education and personal hands-on support. Members tutor children and adults (literacy, GED, and ESL), organize after-school enrichment activities, model and teach conflict resolution/parental effectiveness, and involve community professionals in the learning process.

### ■ IMPACT

Since its inception, Notre Dame AmeriCorps members helped almost 90,000 individuals learn to read, finish high school, and develop necessary life skills through literacy, after-school, and mentoring programs. In the last three years alone, Notre Dame AmeriCorps members provided tutoring and small group instruction to more than 22,000 low-income children and adults, helping more than two-thirds of these individuals advance to the next reading level. Notre Dame AmeriCorps' out-of-school enrichment programs have provided access to homework clubs, art, music, creative writing, and sports for more than 9,000 at-risk children.

### ■ WEBSITE

[www.ndmva.org](http://www.ndmva.org)



I remember the day I learned about the Corporation for National and Community Service as clear as if it were yesterday. That was more than a decade ago and the Corporation was brand new then. I had just recently been assigned to turn around our fledgling education

and adult literacy program into a national program serving disadvantaged schools. I remember sending a letter out to the sisters to ask how many volunteers they needed in their communities. They came back to me requesting 80 volunteers. I thought "My word, how am I going to make this happen?"

That was right about the time I learned about the Corporation and its new AmeriCorps program at a national service conference. I thought, "This is the answer to my prayers!" and I made a beeline right toward the AmeriCorps speaker. He and I spoke many times about my needs and how they could help us build our education and adult literacy programs. They worked with us every step of the way.

Initially, we targeted four cities. I wrote a grant asking for 46 AmeriCorps members. Today, we have more than 270 AmeriCorps members serving at 118 sites in 15 different cities. If not for AmeriCorps, our education and adult literacy program wouldn't be what it is today — a truly national program. And we certainly wouldn't be able to fulfill our education mission.

I've been with the Corporation since the beginning and look forward to growing with this program for many more years to come.

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For more information on our faith-based and community initiatives, call 1-866-783-2237 or visit [www.nationalservice.gov](http://www.nationalservice.gov)





Sister Katherine Corr  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NOTRE DAME AMERICORPS

*“ We’ve been able to teach children and adults to learn to read all across the country— thanks to AmeriCorps and all its members. ”*





# Our Programs and Funding Opportunities



**Senior Corps** is a network of programs that tap the experience, skills, and talents of older citizens to meet community challenges with Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions, and RSVP (Retired and Senior Volunteer Program).



**AmeriCorps** is a network of national service programs that engage more than 70,000 Americans each year in intensive service to meet critical needs in education, public safety, health, and the environment. AmeriCorps consists of three programs: State and National, AmeriCorps\*VISTA, and AmeriCorps\*National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC).



**Learn and Serve America** supports service-learning programs in schools and community organizations that help nearly 1 million students from kindergarten through college meet community needs, while improving their academic skills and learning the habits of good citizenship. Learn and Serve grants are used to create new programs or replicate existing programs, as well as to provide training and development to staff, faculty, and volunteers.

## Faith-Based and Community Initiative Resources

- The White House Office on Faith-Based and Community Initiatives  
[www.fbc.gov](http://www.fbc.gov)
- State Liaisons (many states have liaisons or FBCI offices)  
Go to [www.fbc.gov](http://www.fbc.gov) and click on contacts.

**To learn more about the Corporation and our programs, please log on to [www.nationalservice.gov/fbc](http://www.nationalservice.gov/fbc) or call 1-866-783-2237.**

## Martin Luther King Day of Service Grants

*are made to organizations to support volunteer projects across a state or throughout a multi-state area to honor Martin Luther King, Jr. on the federal holiday. The King Day of Service is a way to transform Dr. King's life and teachings into community service that helps solve social problems. For more information on the grants or other ways you can get involved with the King Day of Service, visit [www.mlkday.org](http://www.mlkday.org).*

**Next Generation Grants** foster the expansion of national service by providing seed money to help organizations that have not previously received Corporation funds plan and implement service programs.

**Challenge Grants** are "matching grants" that provide \$1 in Federal funding for every \$2 of private funding raised by an organization. These grants help link non-profit organizations with previously untapped sources of private funds to build sustainable service and volunteer programs.

**President's Volunteer Service Awards** recognize individuals, families, and groups who have made a sustained commitment to volunteer service. The Award can be earned by serving a specified number of hours in volunteer activities that meet national or community needs in such areas as youth achievement, parks and open spaces, healthy communities, public safety, and emergency response. To learn more about the Award visit [www.presidentialserviceawards.gov](http://www.presidentialserviceawards.gov) or call 1-866-545-5307.





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