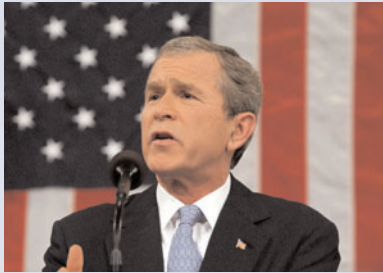


ANSWERING THE CALL TO SERVICE

September 2008, The White House



USA 
Freedom Corps
Make a Difference. Volunteer.



“ “ My call tonight is for every American to commit at least two years – 4,000 hours over the rest of your lifetime – to the service of your neighbors and your nation. ” ”

*– President George W. Bush
January 29, 2002, State of the Union Address*



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 2008

After the attacks of September 11, 2001, our Nation experienced an outpouring of compassion from Americans seeking to help their fellow Americans. To empower those searching for ways to give of themselves, I issued a National Call to Service in January 2002 and established the USA Freedom Corps. This new initiative embraced the American spirit of civic engagement and advanced a culture of service and volunteering in our Nation.

Since its launch nearly 7 years ago, the USA Freedom Corps has assisted more than one million volunteers -- bringing national volunteering rates to historically high levels -- and created the largest online resource for volunteer opportunities at volunteer.gov. The USA Freedom Corps has strengthened and expanded national and international service initiatives, including the Peace Corps, AmeriCorps, Citizen Corps, and Volunteers for Prosperity, to provide Americans with more opportunities to serve others at home and abroad. In the wake of natural disasters in the United States and around the world, America's armies of compassion have mobilized to the front lines of need. Volunteers are feeding the hungry, providing shelter for the homeless, helping seniors live independently, performing environmental cleanup, helping new Americans assimilate, and mentoring at-risk youth. Corporate America has joined the effort, encouraging employees to serve as skilled volunteers and building the capacity of nonprofits to respond to needs both global and local.

This report details the progress of a growing culture of service, citizenship, and responsibility in our Nation. It demonstrates that the USA Freedom Corps is helping nourish the American volunteer spirit and helping our citizens answer my Call to Service. As a result, more and more compassionate Americans are leading remarkable change in communities around the world and changing our Nation one heart and one soul at a time. Let us continue to trust in the good hearts of the American people and empower all citizens to serve neighbors in need.

Sincerely,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be "GWB".

George W. Bush

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In his 2002 State of the Union Address, President George W. Bush called on all Americans to serve their communities, their Nation, and their world and created USA Freedom Corps to help them do so. Over the six years since this Call to Service, Americans have initiated a new national service movement, and all sectors of U.S. society have experienced a resurgence in civic engagement.

Americans have answered the President's Call to Service by volunteering through organizations at record high rates, which remain higher today than in 2002 and in previous decades. This surge in volunteering amounts to an increase of one million volunteers over five years as significantly more Americans are volunteering both at home and abroad.

Along with this outpouring of individual service, corporations have dramatically increased their community engagement, fostering corporate volunteering programs and corporate social responsibility campaigns. College students have also volunteered in record numbers, driven in part by a significant increase in the availability of service-learning opportunities. Some of the most dramatic examples of the power of American volunteering have been in response to natural disasters. Over one million volunteers rushed to aid the citizens of the Gulf Coast in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, and the people of the Midwest received similar help after the devastating floods that struck their region this spring.

This willingness to serve those in need has not been limited by the boundaries of this Nation. American citizens also responded to international needs both for volunteers and donations – from natural disasters to HIV/AIDS – in unprecedented numbers.

Coordinated by USA Freedom Corps, the Bush Administration's policies, programs, and special initiatives have fostered and supported the service movement and the resurgence in civic engagement in a variety of ways, including:

- ◆ **Strengthening Federal support for volunteering and service.** This Administration has expanded and bolstered two cornerstones of national service – the Peace Corps and AmeriCorps. The Administration also established two new programs – Citizen Corps, whose volunteers serve primarily in communities in America, and Volunteers for Prosperity, which has allowed more Americans to contribute their skills internationally – and re-launched Take Pride in America to give citizens a role in preserving our public lands.
- ◆ **Measuring impact and outcomes in service and volunteering.** This Administration has led advances in research and new analysis of volunteering and service, which show that service plays a critical role in addressing some of our toughest social problems. To more effectively measure the impact of volunteer service, the Administration launched the Annual Volunteering Survey and interactive website, www.volunteeringinamerica.gov.
- ◆ **Expanding community influence and accountability of service programs.** The Bush Administration enacted significant reform of national and community service programs by:
 - Focusing Federal resources less on direct service and more on leveraging the maximum number of community volunteers;

- Improving program responsiveness to State and local needs and expanding engagement of faith-based and community organizations in national service activities;
 - Increasing effectiveness, oversight, and accountability; reducing costs and administrative burdens; promoting innovation, flexibility, and results; and incorporating impact-based performance measures into all national service programs;
 - Reforming the National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) to allow NCCC to become more effective and efficient in disaster preparedness and response;
 - Strengthening nonprofit organizations by promoting multi-sector engagement in solving social challenges such as literacy, graduation rates, poverty, and myriad other issues; and
 - Increasing the leadership of states through 50 State Service Commissions and transforming the Commissions' role from program administrators to hubs of collaboration and powerful drivers of community volunteering and service.
- ◆ Connecting all Americans with more opportunities to serve and dramatically raising the profile of volunteering by:
- Creating the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation;
 - Establishing a one-stop volunteer opportunity database at **www.volunteer.gov**;
 - Engaging more Americans in the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service;
 - Establishing the President's Volunteer Service Award, which has been awarded to over 1.1 million American volunteers;
 - Creating the Federal Mentoring Council and the Federal Mentoring Working Group to concentrate Federal mentoring initiatives; and
 - Engaging Baby Boomers in service through the "Get Involved" campaign.
- ◆ Growing public/private partnerships for volunteering and service across sectors by:
- Partnering with corporations to establish Business Strengthening America, a consortium of 1,000 American businesses that commit to perform volunteer service;
 - Partnering with the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation and U.S. businesses to create the Pro Bono Initiative with the goal of raising \$1 billion in corporate commitments of skilled volunteering and pro bono service;
 - Partnering with government agencies and institutions of higher education to establish Universities Rebuilding America, a university-led initiative to engage more students in volunteering;
 - Establishing the Bush Clinton Katrina Fund for tsunami relief; and
 - Establishing the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll to encourage and recognize college students who volunteer in local communities.

These developments provide evidence that the President's Call to Service and his Administration's investments under USA Freedom Corps in the broader momentum of service and volunteering are helping to build a stronger culture of service, citizenship, and responsibility in America.



INTRODUCTION

In his 2002 State of the Union Address, President George W. Bush called on “all Americans to enlist in the armies of compassion and dedicate at least 4,000 hours in service to their communities, our country, and to the world,” and announced the creation of USA Freedom Corps. This report summarizes progress made since the President made this Call to Service and highlights the important initiatives launched by this Administration to engage more Americans in service to their neighbors and Nation, as well as the incredible response from the millions of individuals who have used their power and energy to affect communities across America. Most importantly, the report lays a foundation for future Presidents who, like President Bush, seek to harness the powerful tradition of citizen service in America.

A RECORD OF CITIZEN SERVICE

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the creation of President Franklin Roosevelt's Civilian Conservation Corps, which put more than three million young, jobless men to work on our public lands over the course of a decade. Since that dramatic mobilization of Americans to tackle national challenges, many U.S. Presidents have created initiatives to engage more Americans in service to communities, the country, and the world. Some have created federally sponsored service opportunities, in the tradition of President Roosevelt, while others have tapped the power of traditional volunteers and the private sector to help solve our Nation's problems in partnership with government. The programs created and strengthened by Presidents Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Reagan, George H.W. Bush, and Clinton provided a solid foundation on which to build as the Nation faced the tragic events of September 11, 2001.

Thus, in response to the September 11th attacks, President George W. Bush called on Americans to serve their neighbors and their Nation and created USA Freedom Corps to help Americans answer his bold Call to Service. The mission of USA Freedom Corps is to foster an American culture of service, citizenship, and responsibility that will last for years to come. It provides a fresh approach to volunteer service by combining resources and enhancing cooperation across sectors. USA Freedom Corps harnesses the resources of the Federal government, the voluntary sector, and faith-based and community organizations in ways that provide broad support to individuals and organizations responding to the President's Call to Service. As a coordinating council housed at the White House and chaired by the President, USA Freedom Corps coordinates community and national service policy across 12 Federal agencies and is in a unique position to ensure that service remains a national priority.

After identifying a need to benchmark and learn more about volunteering in America, USA Freedom Corps worked with the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Census Bureau to create a comprehensive national measure of service in September 2002. The survey was a supplement to the Current Population Survey and its annual data have become the most reliable measure of volunteer behavior across the country. The annual data collection and corresponding analysis have created an invaluable tool for policymakers, civic leaders, and nonprofit organizations as they recruit, train, and retain volunteers.

The data are conclusive. Americans responded in droves in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001, attacks, and participation in national service programs has grown to historically high levels.

“ People all across the country are asking how they can help. What can they do to provide hope? What can they do to help heal the wounds by helping their fellow Americans? ”

– President George W. Bush
September 18, 2001

What is even more encouraging is that volunteering rates continued to increase and sustain those high post-September 11th levels through December 2005. Today, Americans continue to serve at high levels. Further, two emerging trends – increasing rates of service among the young and a greater commitment to volunteer service among older Americans – represent an opportunity for the country to marshal the talents of “Millennials” and “Baby Boomers” to tackle tough community problems.

It is clear from these data and the thousands of stories of service since 2002 that Americans are, as President Bush has said, “men and women who respond to the call of duty, who stand up for the weak, who speak up for their beliefs, who sacrifice for a greater good.”

BUILDING THE MOVEMENT

Even before the establishment of USA Freedom Corps, Americans responded to the attacks of September 11th by participating in volunteering and giving initiatives promoted by the President, including America’s Fund for Afghan Children and the “Liberty Unites” campaign.

Many of the terrorists involved in the September 11th attacks were associated with the Taliban in Afghanistan. Efforts were undertaken to ensure that any response in Afghanistan was not directed against the Afghan people themselves, but focused on the terrorists and the organizations that supported them. The Afghan people had endured 22 years of civil war, four years of devastating drought, and years of mismanagement by the Taliban. At the time, Afghanistan ranked

number one worldwide in maternal mortality, had one of the lowest literacy rates, and one in five Afghan children would not make it to their first birthday.

To help the most vulnerable in Afghanistan, President Bush, in partnership with the American Red Cross, launched America’s Fund for Afghan Children – a concept inspired by the original March of Dimes campaign against polio. Schoolchildren all over America contributed dimes and dollars to buy books, backpacks, health kits, coats, blankets, and more for the children of Afghanistan. Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts assembled chests of school supplies and sports equipment. Ultimately, more than \$12 million was raised through this effort, and over 100,000 young people engaged in acts of compassion that transcended the fear and terror of wartime.

Similar initiatives, such as the “Liberty Unites” campaign, offered people a way to help those in need around the three sites in America that had been attacked on September 11th. Another effort linked schools in America with schools in countries with predominantly Muslim populations to foster a better understanding of cultures, religions, and the challenges of daily life. And a White House task force in late 2001 examined the role of the citizen in protecting the homeland and made recommendations on citizen involvement.

President Bush launched USA Freedom Corps to build on these efforts to help more Americans serve those in need of help and hope.

USA FREEDOM CORPS AND THE PRESIDENT'S CALL TO SERVICE

In establishing USA Freedom Corps, President Bush built on these early efforts of his Administration and considered the efforts of past Presidents to enlist citizens to serve the country. President George Washington said, "When we assumed the soldier, we did not lay down the citizen." President John Adams believed that "our obligations to our country never cease but with our lives." Carrying on this tradition, 20th century Presidents created initiatives that would give more Americans opportunities to serve in local communities or in villages across the globe. Franklin Roosevelt's Civilian Conservation Corps, John Kennedy's Peace Corps, Lyndon Johnson's VISTA, Richard Nixon's Senior Corps, Jimmy Carter's support for Habitat for Humanity, Ronald Reagan's Office of Private Sector Initiatives, George H.W. Bush's Points of Light and Commission on National and Community Service, and Bill Clinton's AmeriCorps program all created new opportunities for Americans to serve.

Building on this legacy, President George W. Bush's USA Freedom Corps is helping Americans answer the Call to Service by:

- **Strengthening International, National, and Community Service Programs;**
- **Encouraging Institutional Change in Schools, Workplaces, and Faith-based and Community Organizations to Strengthen Volunteer Infrastructure and Accountability; and**
- **Empowering Citizens to Solve Community Problems through Volunteering and Service.**

A LASTING CULTURE OF SERVICE

Volunteers empower communities both urban and rural, at home and abroad, to achieve progress. Volunteers are agents of change, solving critical social challenges, meeting the needs of those at-risk or offering a hand of compassion to a neighbor in need. The almost 61 million Americans volunteering today join a long tradition of service that is part of the fabric of our Nation. They are leading the response in communities affected by disaster; helping children, the elderly, the hungry, the homeless; and cleaning up our public lands and local parks for future generations to enjoy.

Today, USA Freedom Corps is the coordinating council for volunteer service initiatives across the Federal government. It provides policy direction and guidance for Federal agencies and their service programs, most significantly: the Corporation for National and Community Service, Peace Corps, Citizen Corps (through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and FEMA), Volunteers for Prosperity (at the U.S. Agency for International Development), and Take Pride in America (at the U.S. Department of the Interior). USA Freedom Corps also connects the Federal government with the private sector to expand volunteering and service opportunities.

As this report demonstrates, USA Freedom Corps has been and continues to be committed to ensuring that America's future, like its past, will be distinguished by the kindness and generosity of its citizens.

STRENGTHENING INTERNATIONAL, NATIONAL, AND COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAMS

“ I ask you to be citizens; citizens, not spectators; citizens, not subjects; responsible citizens, building communities of service and a nation of character. ”

– President George W. Bush

Inaugural Address, January 20, 2001

When President Bush announced USA Freedom Corps in his 2002 State of the Union address, he called on all Americans to give two years of service over a lifetime to their communities and country. New research by USA Freedom Corps demonstrates the power of asking Americans to serve. The President also called for new service opportunities through expansion of existing programs like Peace Corps, AmeriCorps, and Senior Corps; the creation of new programs such as Citizen Corps for disaster response and Volunteers for Prosperity for skilled professional volunteers serving abroad; and the establishment of the largest online clearinghouse where Americans can find volunteer opportunities by area of interest and zip code at www.volunteer.gov.

Over the past six years, the President has repeated his Call to Service to the American people on more than 30 occasions, including two State of the Union addresses and more than two dozen events focused on USA Freedom Corps. USA Freedom Corps has provided numerous opportunities to help Americans answer those calls, and they are responding. The President has personally recognized more than 650 volunteers with the President's Volunteer Service Award as he travels the country, and, in total, over 1.1 million Americans have received the award for their outstanding volunteer service. Important

legislative and administrative steps have made national service programs like AmeriCorps and Peace Corps stronger and brought record numbers of applicants and placements. In addition, improvements in technology and the growth of social networking are connecting more Americans to opportunities to serve.

As a coordinating council that draws upon the leadership of the President, members of his Cabinet, and directors of several Federal agencies, USA Freedom Corps is positioned to make Federal offices and programs work to enhance opportunities for volunteer service. When President Bush launched USA Freedom Corps, he set specific goals for expanding national service programs like AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, Learn and Serve America, Peace Corps, and Citizen Corps. The White House created a national service council to coordinate service policies across government to create a stronger culture of service, citizenship, and responsibility.

In the past six years, the strong leadership of President Bush and the stewardship of USA Freedom Corps have helped the programs and activities chronicled in this report produce an unparalleled response in volunteering and service, as Americans from all walks of life are stepping forward to answer the President's Call to Service.

CITIZEN CORPS

On November 9, 2001, President Bush issued Executive Order 13234, which sought to identify ways “to support and enhance the efforts of the American public with respect to preparedness and volunteerism in the war on terrorism.” Mindful of the threat of terrorism to the United States, as well as our vulnerabilities to natural disasters and other hazards threatening the well-being of Americans, the resulting strategic policy was a holistic approach to citizen preparedness and participation. On January 29, 2002, the President announced the creation of Citizen Corps.

Local Citizen Corps Councils were created across the country to foster collaboration among Federal and local government and civic leaders involved in emergency management and homeland security issues. Each community and region determines the appropriate geographic boundaries its Council serves, ensuring that membership on the Council reflects the composition of the community.

Citizen Corps oversees five national programs, which are supported by the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Community Preparedness Division. By collaborating with other Federal agencies and national organizations, FEMA facilitates preparedness planning, outreach and education, training and exercises, and volunteer service. At the local level, the five programs provide communities with resources, training, and best practices for connecting citizens with Citizen Corps volunteer programs that support local emergency service providers.

Citizen Corps' five national programs are:

1. *Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT)*: CERT educates people about disaster preparedness and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, and

disaster medical operations. CERT members are responsible for preparing neighborhoods or workplaces for disasters and assisting others when an event occurs. TEEN CERT and Campus CERT, which focus on engaging young people in emergency response, also have been founded.

2. *Fire Corps*: Fire Corps promotes the use of citizen advocates to support fire and rescue departments and helps them promote citizen participation in the areas of fire safety outreach, youth programs, and administrative support.
3. *Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)*: MRC helps medical, public health, and other volunteers offer their expertise throughout the year, as well as during emergencies. MRC volunteers coordinate with local emergency response programs and supplement community public health initiatives, such as outreach and prevention, immunization programs, and blood drives.
4. *USAonWatch/Neighborhood Watch*: USAonWatch expands on the long-standing Neighborhood Watch Program to help neighborhoods focus on disaster preparedness, emergency response, and terrorism awareness. USAonWatch provides information, training, and resources to citizens and law enforcement agencies throughout the country.
5. *Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS)*: VIPS enhance the capacity of state and local law enforcement to use volunteers by providing information and resources to potential volunteers.

As of July 2008, there were 3,011 registered CERT Programs, 687 Fire Corps Programs, 770 MRC Units, more than 20,000 USAonWatch/Neighborhood Watch Programs, and 1,732 VIPS Programs.

CITIZEN CORPS TODAY

Bolstered by President Bush's support for its purpose and programs, Citizen Corps continues to provide tools and resources to local Citizen Corps Councils; identify appropriate participants; assess the status of community preparedness and identify needs; localize outreach and education; develop training exercises for non-governmental and public participation; and implement volunteer programs. Citizen Corps also continues to emphasize the importance of integrating non-governmental community leaders into the planning process.

Citizen Corps maintains formal relationships with 26 national nonprofit organizations and Federal agencies. These organizations provide resources and programs to support individual/community preparedness through outreach materials, training, volunteer opportunities, and expertise on vulnerable populations. Representatives from these organizations also serve on state and local Citizen Corps Councils throughout the country.

The 26 affiliates are: American Association of Community Colleges, American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, American Red Cross, American Radio Relay League, Association of Public Television Stations, Civil Air Patrol, Department of Education, E9-1-1 Institute, Environmental Protection Agency, Home Safety Council, Meals on Wheels Association of America, Mercy Medical Airlift, National Association for Search and Rescue, National Crime Prevention Council, National Fire Protection Association, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Safety Council, National Volunteer Fire Council, National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster, mygooddeed.org, Operation Hope, Inc., Points of Light Institute and the Hands On Network, Save a Life Foundation, United States Junior Chamber of Commerce, and Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Using their annual appropriations, Citizen Corps works with these 26 affiliates to support State and local communities in the following activities: forming and sustaining a Citizen Corps Council; developing, implementing, or amending existing plans to achieve citizen preparedness; conducting public education and outreach; ensuring clear alerts/warnings and emergency communications; developing public training; facilitating citizen participation in exercises; implementing volunteer programs to support emergency responders; involving citizens in surge capacity responsibilities; and conducting evaluations of programs.



CITIZEN CORPS VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

GLORIA SANCHEZ

On November 8, 2007, President Bush honored Gloria Sanchez for her volunteer service by presenting her with the President's Volunteer Service Award upon his arrival in San Antonio, Texas. Sanchez is responsible for starting a Citizen Corps Council in the Alamo region and was instrumental in starting a Neighborhood Watch Program in her area as well.

Sanchez actively recruits volunteers to attend CERT training and has even hosted CERT trainings in her own home. She is on the Board of Directors at the Ata-Bexar Volunteer Fire Department. She has coordinated many fundraisers to support the department. In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, Sanchez volunteered over 300 hours, helping set up shelters and staging areas for incoming evacuees. She also personally recruited volunteers, sorted donated items, and helped serve food to evacuees, volunteers, and emergency personnel.

CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

Established in 1993, the Corporation for National and Community Service supports civic engagement and volunteering as an essential element of addressing our communities' toughest social challenges. The Corporation administers AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and Learn and Serve America. Beginning in FY2004, and every year since, President Bush has requested funding to support 75,000 AmeriCorps members and in ratios of full-time and part-time members that mirror historic enrollment numbers. The Corporation's national service programs and participants are the foundation upon which many effective civic engagement and community volunteer activities are built.

EXECUTIVE ORDER 13331

In 2004, the President issued an Executive Order "to strengthen the ability of programs authorized under the national service laws to build and reinforce a culture of service, citizenship, and responsibility throughout our Nation." At the same time, he won a significant increase in funding for the Corporation. The President also directed the Corporation to institute reforms that would leverage more volunteers and increase matching funds.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Over the past seven years, the Corporation has implemented the President's compassionate conservative agenda through an emphasis on volunteering, helping disadvantaged youth, mentoring children of prisoners,

expanding the capacity of faith-based and other community organizations, and helping seniors live independently. In the aftermath of the Gulf Coast hurricanes of 2005, the California wildfires of 2007, and Midwest floods of 2008, the Corporation demonstrated that its programs are key contributors in rebuilding communities following disasters.

Corporation programs have also played a role in several other Administration initiatives. Senior Corps volunteers, through extensive outreach programs, have helped seniors understand the changes to their coverage under the 2007 amendments to the Medicare and Prescription Drug Modernization Act of 2003, resulting in increased enrollments. Additionally, AmeriCorps and Learn and Serve America participants have worked to increase student academic achievement by engaging youth in service.

In 2006, the Corporation's Board of Directors approved a five-year strategic plan. The plan identified four strategic initiatives on which the Corporation would increase its focus:

- Mobilizing more volunteers
- Ensuring a brighter future for all of America's youth
- Engaging students in communities
- Harnessing Baby Boomers' experience

In 2007, the Corporation's Board of Directors received Administration approval to add a fifth strategic initiative: Supporting disaster preparedness and response.

The number of community volunteers generated by national service programs jumped from 2.4 million to over 3.9 million between 2004 and 2007 – a 62 percent increase. This included 2.1 million national service participants and 1.8 million leveraged community volunteers who provided over 228 million hours of service.

These volunteers have:

- Mentored approximately 598,000 disadvantaged youth, including about 47,000 children of prisoners;
- Engaged approximately 663,000 disadvantaged youth in volunteering and civic engagement to provide needed services in their communities and increase their own academic performance;
- Provided independent living support to 470,000 disabled and elderly people; and
- Expanded the capacity of more than 70,000 nonprofit organizations, public agencies, and educational institutions to meet critical local community needs.



In addition, Corporation grantees raise \$375 million in non-Federal matching funds every year, equivalent to roughly 40 percent of the agency's appropriated funds.

The Corporation has a long tradition of working constructively and effectively with many nonprofit, faith-based, and other community organizations. By concentrating more on outreach efforts, each of the Corporation's major programs has expanded opportunities for more active participation by faith-based and community organizations.

In response to the President's Executive Order 13198 (Agency Responsibilities with Respect to Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, January 29, 2001), the Corporation modified many of its policies and practices to enable faith-based and small community organizations to participate more fully in its programs. The Annual Volunteering Survey shows that the majority of Americans find their volunteer

opportunities through religious organizations. In response to this finding, the Corporation created the Faith and Communities Engaged in Service (FACES) initiative. Through the FACES tool kit, on-line training, conference calls, and training at national, regional, State, and local conferences, FACES helps Corporation programs with outreach to faith-based and community groups, program development, pilot projects, technical assistance, and evaluative support. Model projects that have been launched in this way include participation in mentoring children of prisoners, prisoner re-entry, and disaster preparedness and response.

As a result of these efforts, the Corporation has helped increased the number of grants and other support to faith-based and community groups. In 2004, AmeriCorps VISTA had 315 members serving in 78 faith-based sponsoring organizations. By 2007, 994 members served in 828 faith-based sponsoring organizations, generating and supporting the service of 560,000 community volunteers. Through Corporation partnerships with faith-based and community organizations, 47,000 children of prisoners have been mentored, and 93,000 participants in national service programs have given more than 3.5 million hours of service and managed 262,000 volunteers in response and recovery efforts.

The Corporation's programs have also become more efficient under this Administration. Through rulemaking, significant reform of administrative and financial systems, extensive engagement with faith-based organizations, and streamlining initiatives, more than 20 percent has been cut from per-unit AmeriCorps costs.

Looking forward, the Corporation and its programs will undoubtedly carry on and expand this Administration's legacy of service and volunteering. In particular, the Corporation will continue to look for new and innovative ways of engaging more Americans in volunteering and service, including through the use of social-networking and innovative partnerships.

AMERICORPS

In 1993, President Clinton signed the National and Community Service Trust Act, which established the Corporation for National and Community Service and brought a range of domestic community service programs under the umbrella of one central organization. This legislation built on the first National Service Act signed by President George H.W. Bush in 1990. It also formally launched AmeriCorps, a network of national service programs that engage Americans in intensive service to meet the Nation's critical needs in education, public safety, health, and the environment.

The newly created AmeriCorps incorporated two existing national service programs: the longstanding VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) program, created by President Lyndon Johnson in 1964, and the National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC). In September 1994, the first class of AmeriCorps members – 20,000 strong – began serving in more than 1,000 communities.

President Bush first worked with AmeriCorps as Governor of Texas by visiting numerous project sites and meeting AmeriCorps members serving throughout the state. As President, he has continued that support. On July 3, 2003, he signed the Strengthen AmeriCorps Program Act, which coincided with a 50 percent increase in the number of AmeriCorps members. The legislation was the product of extensive, cooperative discussions between the Administration and Congress and a sign of the strong bipartisan support for AmeriCorps.

AmeriCorps consists of three programs:

- AmeriCorps State and National, which provides grants to nonprofit, public, and other organizations to engage Americans of all backgrounds in service to address community needs;

- AmeriCorps NCCC, which engages Americans ages 18-24 in full-time, team-based, residential programs that provide flexible response capabilities to meet community needs; and
- AmeriCorps VISTA, which connects full-time volunteers with community organizations to help create and expand anti-poverty programs.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Under the leadership of this Administration, AmeriCorps has grown to 75,000 members strong serving annually. In 2007, President Bush welcomed the 500,000th AmeriCorps member to the White House to mark this historic milestone during a nationwide recognition week for the AmeriCorps national service program.

AmeriCorps State and National

AmeriCorps programs and members bring impressive resources to communities. In FY2007, alone, AmeriCorps programs leveraged 987,000 local volunteers and \$231 million in financial resources to meet local needs.

AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC)

As a result of this Administration's reforms, NCCC has implemented changes to become more cost-effective and shifted the majority of its focus to disaster response. The program has consistently provided critical volunteer management and coordination services in the Gulf region and has demonstrated sound capability in the recent Midwest floods. In 2008, every NCCC member will serve on disaster preparedness and response projects, primarily in these two geographic areas. Working in partnership with nonprofit and faith-based organizations, schools, and all levels of government, the NCCC can deploy members trained in first aid, CPR, disaster relief, firefighting, conflict management, asset mapping, and volunteer coordination wherever they are needed.

Since Hurricane Katrina, nearly 2,500 NCCC members have devoted 1.5 million hours to 610 disaster relief and recovery projects. NCCC teams have also supported FEMA mission assignments on disaster response efforts in Florida, Kansas, Iowa, Missouri, and New York and deployed fire teams to Utah, California, Colorado, Virginia, Montana, and West Virginia.

CASE STUDY

AmeriCorps NCCC Team Blue 4, Western Region, Class 14

The Blue 4 Team, also known as Blue Fource, traveled to New Orleans soon after completing training at the Sacramento campus, to start their first project with the Recovery School District. Team members took on the tasks associated with renovating school buildings, including painting and organizing classrooms. They also proposed creative ways to increase interactions with students, teachers, and the community in general. In addition, team members recruited 346 volunteers, delivered 15,700 books and led three Kaboom! playground builds.

Blue Fource members continue to add side projects to every assignment they undertake, involving the local community and striving to ensure that their service has a lasting impact. Blue Fource's current assignment is serving in Vernonia, Oregon, providing support to flood relief efforts following a storm that dropped 11 inches of rain in a 24-hour period. The team is assisting the Columbia County Flood Relief Unmet Needs Committee in its recovery efforts. They spend their days completing work that includes river cleanup, gutting houses, installing new insulation, and planting trees. Blue Fource also served in Sacramento with Habitat for Humanity, and in Alpaugh, California with the Bureau of Land Management.

AmeriCorps VISTA

First authorized in 1964 and joining the AmeriCorps family in 1993, Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) recruits members for a year of full-time service in low-income communities to fight poverty. Each year, approximately 6,900 VISTA members live and serve in some of our Nation's poorest urban, tribal, and rural areas. The volunteers work full time to build the organizational, administrative, and financial capacity of organizations that help low-income Americans gain the skills and



AMERICORPS MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

ANTONIO ALMEIDA

Like other members of YouthBuild, Antonio Almeida serves his community by building or rehabilitating low-income housing while simultaneously working toward a GED. But what makes him a role model to his peers are his great personal accomplishments, his involvement in promoting the program to other young people, and his focus on addressing mental health issues in his community.

Now in his second term as a part-time AmeriCorps member with YouthBuild in Fall River, Massachusetts, Antonio has gone from being homeless to establishing himself as an active and productive citizen. In addition to his home-building activities, which have included two shifts helping to rebuild housing in Mississippi in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, he is working on a local project to improve working opportunities for at-risk young adults, and he also serves as a mentor in the mental health program in which he once participated. For his many accomplishments, Antonio was recently named by the City of Fall River as its first-ever "Youth of the Year."

resources they need to break the cycle of poverty. Since 1964, more than 177,000 individuals have dedicated a year or more of their lives to serve low-income communities and individuals and to make a lasting impact on lives.

Under this Administration, the VISTA appropriation has grown from \$83 million in 2001 to \$93.8 million in 2008 – an increase of over 13 percent. In 2007, 6,852 VISTA members served with more than 1,100 organizations and agencies across the country. VISTA members have also increased the number of local volunteers recruited in their projects by more than 300 percent – from 140,600 in 1997 to 611,000 individuals in 2007. Further, since 1997, annual cash and in-kind donations generated by VISTA members to support the capacity of organizations and agencies increased by nearly \$89 million, to a total of \$171.7 million in 2007. New VISTA strategic partnerships have allowed the program to leverage Federal resources from the U.S. Departments of Labor and Health and Human Services and receive support from partnerships with numerous corporations and nonprofit organizations.

Results from a rigorous national evaluation of AmeriCorps show that the program can have significant long-term impacts on members' lives. Since 1999, the Corporation for National and Community Service has followed more than 2,000 former AmeriCorps members, as well as a comparison group of non-members, to assess the long-term effects of AmeriCorps service on an individual's civic engagement and volunteering, employment and careers, and educational attainment. Results of the longitudinal study indicate that AmeriCorps is a pipeline to careers in public service and forms civic leaders who continue to serve their communities long after their service obligations have been completed. This report demonstrates that AmeriCorps not only provides individuals with opportunities to address their communities' most pressing needs, but also spurs individuals to be agents of positive change in their

communities long after their AmeriCorps service. As public agencies, nonprofit organizations, and individuals work together to achieve healthy communities, AmeriCorps alumni will continue to be key players in this important effort.



CASE STUDY

AmeriCorps VISTA Madison Metropolitan School District

In the mid-1990s, Art Rainwater, Superintendent of the Madison Metropolitan School District, faced the grim reality that African American kids in his district, who typically came from the city's poorer neighborhoods, were more than seven times likelier than their white counterparts to test below the minimum reading performance level. Recognizing the importance that literacy can play in helping youth complete high school and earn a living, Superintendent Rainwater engaged a unique partnership that included a team of 13 VISTA members to develop and implement a system to recruit and manage community volunteers as tutors for kids.

In 2006 alone, the VISTA cadre was able to engage over 600 community volunteers to work with classroom teachers to tutor approximately 3,000 K-5 students in 24 elementary schools and several after-school community programs. The results of the VISTA members' efforts are dramatic. Between 1995 and 2005, African American students scoring at the minimal performance level fell from 28.5 percent to 5.5 percent, while Latino/Hispanic students dropped from 9.7 percent to 0.6 percent, and white students from 4.1 percent to 0.3 percent. Superintendent Rainwater attributes these impressive results to VISTA's tutor mobilization efforts and the innovative community partnership, which brought thousands of volunteers and parents into the process of educating the children and improving the schools.

SENIOR CORPS

Under this Administration, Senior Corps has continued to expand its reach. Senior Corps connects individuals over the age of 55 with opportunities to serve their communities and offer help to individuals most in need. The program helps these Baby Boomers become mentors, coaches, or companions to people in need or contribute their job skills and expertise to community projects and organizations. Conceived during John F. Kennedy's presidency, Senior Corps currently links nearly 500,000 older Americans with service opportunities. Their contributions of skills, knowledge, and experience are making a difference for individuals, nonprofits, and faith-based and community organizations throughout the United States.

In 2005, the White House Conference on Aging spurred a national public discourse on harnessing the skills of Baby Boomers through a new, targeted public service campaign called "Get Involved." Further, through the Administration's support for its research agenda, the Corporation has been able to develop more robust data and a better understanding of Baby Boomers' volunteer motivations. As a result, Senior Corps now offers its volunteers more meaningful opportunities that utilize business skills and publicize the health benefits of volunteering.

Senior Corps engages volunteers through three different programs:

- The Foster Grandparent Program connects volunteers age 60 and over with children and young people who have exceptional needs. The volunteer "grandparents" mentor and support some of the most vulnerable children in the United States.
- The Senior Companion Program brings together volunteers age 60 and over with adults in their communities who have difficulty accomplishing simple day-to-day tasks. Companions assist their neighbors in need with shopping and light chores, interacting with doctors, or just providing a friendly visit.
- RSVP (Retired and Senior Volunteer Program) connects volunteers age 55 and over with service opportunities in their communities that match their skills and availability. From building houses to immunizing children, from enhancing the capacity of nonprofit organizations to improving and protecting the environment, RSVP volunteers put their unique talents to work to make a difference.



SENIOR CORPS VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

FOSTER GRANDPARENT THELMA KING

Thelma King, a retired registered nurse, has a passion for life and a love for children that she expresses through her service with the City of Jacksonville Foster Grandparent Program, where she has volunteered more than 25,000 hours.

Granny King, as the children call her, supports inner city youth at Jean Ribault High School's Exceptional Student Education Program, which serves emotionally and academically challenged students. With emotionally challenged younger students, King uses auditory, cognitive, and kinesthetic skill-building activities that help students with no linguistic ability learn to use their body to communicate. She also works with them to develop their motor skills and provides a calming presence that helps to stabilize their emotions while they try to complete simple tasks such as putting together the pieces of a puzzle.

When asked how she communicates with these children, her response was, "All kids understand the language of love." Granny King's success with these children has not only helped to raise their self-esteem but also has helped raise their graduation rates by 82 percent.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In FY2007, volunteers in Senior Corps' three programs contributed approximately 116 million hours of service.

Foster Grandparent Program

Foster Grandparents have made real differences in the lives of youth across the Nation. Each year, approximately 30,000 Foster Grandparents provide youth with a range of services, and approximately 48,000 of these children receive intensive and ongoing mentoring services. In FY2007 alone, Foster Grandparents helped 284,000 children and youth, 14,000 of whom were children of prisoners, forge a path to success. These compassionate individuals volunteered through 10,000 different organizations – from nonprofits and faith-based groups, to health centers, Head Start Centers, schools, and juvenile correction facilities.

Foster Grandparents produce tangible and positive results for the children they serve. A 2006 study found the following positive outcomes: 81 percent of the children demonstrated improvements in academic performance; 90 percent demonstrated enhanced self-image; 56 percent improved school attendance; and 59 percent had a reduction in risky behavior.

Senior Companion Program (SCP)

The number of those aged 65 and older – and, more critically, aged 85 and older – is projected to double by 2030. Fortunately, SCP volunteers have proven themselves capable of handling the challenges that these demographic changes will create. In FY2007, approximately 15,200 Senior Companion volunteers – each serving between 15 and 40 hours per week through a nationwide network of government agencies and local nonprofits – provided 12 million hours of service to 57,000 clients. Senior Companions take care of the in-home needs of frail, older adults and others with physical or developmental limitations. These volunteers also transport clients to medical appointments, help shop for food and basic

necessities, manage clients' paperwork and bills, and offer a needed respite to nearly 9,000 family members and informal caregivers.

RSVP (Retired and Senior Volunteer Program)

Ten years ago, RSVP began preparing for the leading edge of the Baby Boomer generation, which differed tremendously from earlier generations of volunteers in both their motivations and the types of assignments they seek. Under this Administration, the program has proven itself ready to accommodate this new cadre of volunteers. In 2006, more than 440,000 RSVP volunteers nationwide provided 78.7 million hours of service to their communities, in areas such as disaster preparedness and recovery, independent living services, and mentoring children of prisoners. RSVP has accomplished this by developing and launching a set of Boomer-focused marketing materials including brochures, videos, and posters; cataloguing and disseminating effective practices; and working with partners like VolunteerMatch to provide a way for grantees to post and manage volunteer opportunities. RSVP also released the RSVP Boomer Report – research that will enable RSVP and local projects to become even more Boomer friendly in the future.

CASE STUDY

RSVP

Mentoring Children of Prisoners

The National Mentoring Partnership reports that children of prisoners are seven times more likely than other children to become involved in the juvenile and adult criminal justice systems, and six times more likely to be incarcerated at some point during their lives.

In Pocatello, Idaho, the Southeast Idaho Community Action Agency RSVP matches 56 volunteer mentors with 61 children and their families in the

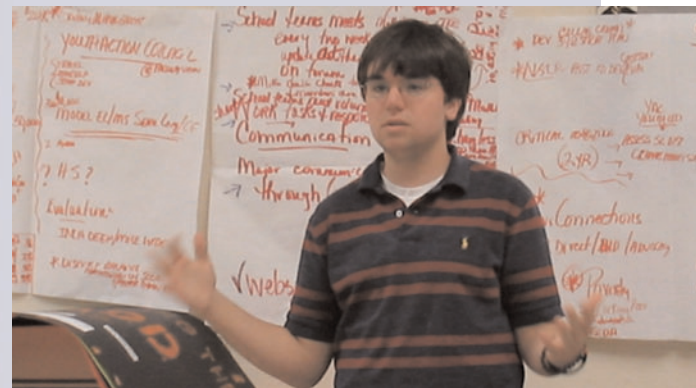
Pocatello area – of whom 70 percent have at least one incarcerated parent. The mentors and children meet at least once a week and participate in activities that promote intergenerational trust, growth, and friendship. They also join in organized community service projects throughout the year.

Mentors receive monthly in-service training on such issues as juvenile drug and alcohol use, depression, and suicide. Teachers and school counselors often refer their students to the program, and administrators report a 66 percent increase in student attendance among mentees, as well as improvement in behavior and more positive attitudes toward education.

LEARN AND SERVE AMERICA

Learn and Serve America connects academic learning with community service for more than one million students. The program helps these students make meaningful contributions to their community while building their academic and civic skills through service-learning. By engaging our Nation's young people in service-learning, Learn and Serve America instills a lifelong ethic of community service in our Nation's young people. Learn and Serve America has its roots in Serve America, a program created under the National and Community Service Act of 1990. Serve America distributes grants to service-learning programs to enrich the education of young people, demonstrate the value of youth as assets to their communities, and promote service-learning as a strategy to meet pressing community needs. In 1993, Serve America was integrated into the new Corporation for National and Community Service, along with AmeriCorps and Senior Corps, and became known as Learn and Serve America.

The Corporation's 2006 strategic plan included two initiatives that directly relate to the Learn and Serve program – ensuring a brighter future for all of America's youth and engaging students in their communities. These priorities are reflected across all Learn and Serve America programming. For example, one of Learn and Serve's primary goals is to ensure that at least 50 percent of America's K-12 schools incorporate service-learning into their curricula by the year 2010.



LEARN AND SERVE VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

NICHOLAS METRAKOS

Nick Metrakos got his first taste of service-learning as a freshman at Blythewood High School in Columbia, South Carolina, when his social studies class researched the local impact of Federal judicial and legislative decisions on desegregation of public schools in the United States. Students examined local history through archived documents, school board policy, news articles, and interviews with long-time community residents, including former school officials and students. Through their studies, students followed political, social, economic, and demographic shifts that brought the school district to its current status as one of the most rapidly growing and diverse districts in South Carolina.

Now a senior, Nick currently serves as co-chair of the Richland School District Two Youth Action Council. Comprised of middle and high school students, the Council's mission is to promote youth-directed civic engagement through a service-learning framework. Nick leads his fellow council members in instructing teachers and students how to connect community issues such as hunger, homelessness, and poverty to their classroom studies; and to help students develop service-learning councils and recruit student leaders. Nick exemplifies the Richland School District Two service-learning and student leadership philosophy: "What students can do responsibly, adults should not do."



PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

CICELY WOLTERS, NICARAGUA

With a father working for an international aid organization, Cicely Wolters had the unique experience of growing up overseas, spending two years in Yemen and six years in Islamabad, Pakistan. After graduating with a degree in international relations, she joined the Peace Corps, serving as a community health volunteer for a village of about 6,000 people in Nicaragua. She developed a health and hygiene curriculum for elementary schools and a reproductive education curriculum for a high school, cultivated community gardens, founded a teen club, and taught English to local coffee cooperative members. Additionally, she assisted her community in opening a casa materna - a home where pregnant women from surrounding rural towns can stay to ensure they give birth with proper medical attention. Nicaragua is now very close to Cicely's heart and she often shares her experiences with school children, hoping to inspire the next generation of volunteers.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Through Learn and Serve America, 1.5 million students from kindergarten through college, at approximately 1,700 sites nationally, participate in service learning programs each year. Multiple independent studies indicate that service-learning increases civic participation; enhances school engagement, leading to improved academic achievement; and reduces risky behaviors among young people, including teen pregnancy.

In higher education, Learn and Serve has been the catalyst for unprecedented expansion of the scope and scale of service and civic engagement opportunities available to students. Most recently, Learn and Serve offered grants to colleges to enhance student service through the use of innovative technology and social media. Annually, Learn and Serve America sponsors the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll in cooperation with USA Freedom Corps, the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation, the U.S. Departments of Education and Housing and Urban Development, and Campus Compact. The Honor Roll recognizes the significant contribution of America's college and university students to community life.

PEACE CORPS

During a speech at the University of Michigan on October 14, 1960, then-Senator John F. Kennedy challenged the students and the Nation to serve a greater purpose and volunteer in the developing world. These words laid the groundwork for the Peace Corps, which was created by Executive Order 10924 on March 1, 1961. Peace Corps sends trained men and women to countries in need to promote a better understanding between Americans and other peoples. Since its inception in 1961, 190,000 Peace Corps volunteers and trainees have served in 139 countries.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Since 2002, President Bush has strengthened the Peace Corps by providing the program with its highest level of funding in history. As a result, Peace Corps has increased by 15,000 volunteers to reach a 37-year high and has opened or re-opened programs in 13 countries. Today, more than 8,000 Peace Corps volunteers and trainees serve in 74 countries, working on a wide range of vital issues from HIV/AIDS education to economic development. With this Administration's support, Peace Corps continues to grow. In September 2007, Peace Corps launched a program to recruit more of the Baby Boomer generation into its volunteer ranks. Since then, applications from Baby Boomers (those over the age of 50) have risen by 70 percent.

Over the last four years, the Peace Corps has intensified its role in combating HIV/AIDS in more than 30 countries around the world through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). Currently more than 3,000 volunteers are involved in HIV/AIDS prevention and care activities. In Botswana, Ethiopia, and Swaziland, volunteers are devoted solely to fighting the disease.

The Peace Corps has also played an active role in disaster response. Following the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami, Peace Corps Response fielded teams of volunteers to assist in the rebuilding process in Thailand and Sri Lanka. Peace Corps Response is a way for returned volunteers to re-enroll in the Peace Corps for short-term assignments (usually three to six months) to respond to unique and pressing situations and broaden the scope of Peace Corps projects within host countries as their needs change. In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, Peace Corps Response recruited 272 former volunteers to support the recovery efforts in an agreement with FEMA. This marked the first time Peace Corps volunteers were deployed domestically and was also the largest Peace Corps Response program to date.



PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

MARK HUFFMAN, MOROCCO

"I have built friendships that will endure for a lifetime and, in America, I continue to educate others about Morocco and its people and hope to curb the stereotypes that many have about Muslim countries."

A native of Elkhart, Indiana, Mark Huffman joined the Peace Corps at the age of 42 after working as both a writer and an editor for 20 years. While he says it was difficult to leave the journalism industry, moving to Morocco for a 27-month assignment proved to be a rewarding decision. Mark served as a youth development volunteer, teaching English and a variety of club activities at a youth center in the mid-Atlas mountain village of El Menzel. As one of his secondary projects, he served as a mentor and facilitated recreational activities at a juvenile reformatory in Fes, Morocco's fourth-largest city. He learned Moroccan-Arabic and was able to facilitate an HIV/AIDS awareness seminar, environmental cleanups, and other projects that involved both older and younger members of his village of 9,000 people.



VOLUNTEERS FOR PROSPERITY VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

CHEN LI, AFGHANISTAN

"They were smart, hard-working, and enthusiastic about learning a new technology; they made my volunteer work more meaningful. Thank you GISCorps, for giving me this opportunity."

Chen Li is an information technology specialist, whose area of expertise is in geographic information systems (GIS). During April 2007, he spent three weeks as a volunteer in Afghanistan working with the Afghanistan Information Management Services (AIMS), a local nonprofit that provides information technology to organizations across Afghanistan.

During his time with AIMS, Chen worked with a team of ten staff members on a database system that supported the USAID mission on Afghanistan, which needed to be spatially modified to include GIS mapping functions. Thus, Chen spends most of his time training the AIMS staff on GIS database management and application development. Together, they designed a web mapping application that can: present locations of assistance activities, indicate budget or progress status and present statistical information.

VOLUNTEERS FOR PROSPERITY

On May 21, 2003, President Bush announced the creation of Volunteers for Prosperity (VfP), a USA Freedom Corps initiative housed within the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). VfP encourages highly skilled Americans to answer the President's Call to Service by volunteering internationally. VfP enables volunteers to serve others abroad in shorter and more flexible assignments than the Peace Corps. Through a network of partner organizations, VfP gives volunteers the opportunity to specify their location, area of interest, and duration. Ultimately, VfP empowers America's professionals to share their expertise with the developing world.

VfP also supports the Administration's international agenda of promoting health and prosperity around the world by providing volunteers for several of the President's key initiatives, including: the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), African Global Competitiveness Initiative, Digital Freedom Initiative, Middle East Partnership Initiative, Millennium Challenge Account, and the President's Malaria Initiative.

VfP supports these programs by matching highly skilled American volunteers with VfP partner organizations; developing and managing innovative public-private partnerships - including those not traditionally involved with foreign assistance like smaller faith-based and community organizations; providing financial assistance to individual volunteers through a matching grant program; and by recognizing outstanding volunteers with the President's Volunteer Service Award (PVSA).

EXECUTIVE ORDER 13317: VOLUNTEERS FOR PROSPERITY

To strengthen VfP, President Bush signed Executive Order 13317 on September 25, 2003. The Executive Order directed the appropriate Federal agencies to find ways to expand, promote, and enhance volunteer service opportunities overseas. The Executive Order also directed the agencies to evaluate prospective grantees, in part, according to their ability to utilize highly skilled American volunteers in carrying out their missions. As VfP lacks the resources to directly deploy skilled Americans as volunteers, it must work through a network of U.S. organizations – nonprofits and for-profits alike – and encourage those organizations to not only make volunteer assignments available abroad but to fill those assignments with skilled Americans. By making VfP partner organizations more competitive for grants, the Executive Order is helping to ensure that grantees have the resources needed to deploy more skilled Americans as volunteers. This has enabled grant applicants who rely on skilled volunteers to be more competitive for Federal funds.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Since its inception, VfP has worked closely with hundreds of partner organizations to mobilize greater numbers of skilled Americans in volunteer service abroad. As of July 2008, VfP has helped mobilize over 43,000 American professionals, an increase of more than 20 percent over the FY2007 total of 34,000. Now entering its fifth year, VfP has played an integral role in the deployment of approximately 116,000 talented Americans through a network of 266 leading U.S. nonprofits and for-profit companies.

VfP has made particularly significant contributions to the Nation's global health and prosperity agenda. VfP has played an active role in the continued success of PEPFAR and the President's Malaria Initiative. In December 2006, Executive Order 13317 was amended to include the President's Malaria Initiative as a key focus area for VfP. As a result, VfP has been able to help facilitate the deployment of a growing number of American health care professionals as skilled volunteers to combat the diseases of HIV/AIDS and malaria that are plaguing Africa.



VOLUNTEERS FOR PROSPERITY VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

JOHN VARALLO, GUYANA

Since 2004, Dr. John Varallo has traveled to Guyana eight times with Omni Med to help implement a national cervical cancer screening initiative. Guyana suffers from one of the highest cervical cancer rates in the world, with the highest rates among the Amerindian women in remote villages. In an effort to address this problem, Dr. Varallo worked with his Guyanese colleagues to develop an effective and sustainable cervical prevention program, which led to the creation of the Guyana Cervical Cancer Prevention Program (GCCPP). Dr. Varallo served as the first director.

GCCPP utilizes mobile clinics to bring same-day screening and treatment to the remote villages, greatly improving access to care for women. Guyanese health workers trained by or undergoing training by Dr. Varallo and other Omni Med volunteers staff these clinics. With the success of these mobile clinics, at the request of Guyana's Minister of Health, Dr. Varallo drafted a national policy for cervical cancer prevention. He is currently working to expand the training of local health workers to provide a solid foundation for a national GCCPP.

Dr. Varallo plans to take four two-week trips a year to Guyana in the future, based largely on the deep, trusting relationships he has built and the rich personal and professional rewards he receives volunteering.

Additionally, VfP has been actively involved with the Digital Freedom Initiative (DFI), which provides information and communication technology to entrepreneurs and small businesses in developing countries. In DFI's first annual report, VfP was recognized as an important implementing partner, responsible for engaging experts in volunteer-related efforts. VfP also played a crucial role in the management of the humanitarian relief efforts following the Asian Tsunami in 2004 and the Peruvian earthquake in 2007.

Part of VfP's success can be attributed to its responsiveness to emerging needs within the international volunteer service community. In early FY2007, VfP, in cooperation with USA Freedom Corps and GlobalGiving Foundation, created the "Volunteers for Prosperity Service Incentive Program," or VFPServ, an innovative public-private partnership to improve the affordability of short-term international volunteer service for those skilled Americans seeking to serve others abroad with their expertise but lacking adequate personal financial resources. VFPServ awards individuals non-renewable grants ranging from \$500 to \$1,000 for travel, insurance, and local living costs related to international volunteer assignments.

To qualify, applicants must collaborate with participating VfP partner organizations on the design of international volunteer assignments and raise at least an equal amount of funds from within their local communities. As of July 2008, VfP had received 150 applications and awarded grants to 21 volunteers who had either already embarked upon meaningful volunteer assignments or would do so shortly.



TAKE PRIDE IN AMERICA®

Upon issuing his Call to Service in the 2002 State of the Union Address, President Bush re-launched Take Pride in America – a national service initiative that promotes volunteer service on public lands. Then-Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior Gail Norton said the goal of Take Pride is to “inspire a whole new generation of volunteers, who enthusiastically put their patriotism to work in protecting our national parks, wildlife refuges, public lands and other natural treasures.”

Take Pride is based on the premise that, as Americans, we have the freedom and the right to share and enjoy nearly one out of every three acres of the land in our Nation, but the responsibility to care for it also. Take Pride now boasts more than 400,000 volunteers who serve annually on Federal public lands and sponsors a Take Pride public service announcement featuring Clint Eastwood, which has reached more than 45 million people. In addition, the Take Pride website, www.takepride.gov, is a central portal for service, connecting skilled volunteers to more than 1,000 meaningful service opportunities on public lands.

Take Pride relies on solid cross-sector partnerships with nonprofit and for-profit organizations such as Keep America Beautiful and Travelocity to promulgate its message: “It's Your Land, Lend a Hand.” A corporate partner is sponsoring three “Take Pride VolunTours,” which are multi-city environmental stewardship outreach campaigns, as well as a targeted outreach to youth through a Take Pride school program. In addition, Take Pride hosts an annual national awards ceremony honoring the most compelling volunteer accomplishments on public lands. Since 2003, Take Pride has honored more than 100 individuals and groups.

HISTORY

In 2003, President Bush re-launched and strengthened Take Pride in America and built on the efforts of a number of previous Administrations. Take Pride originated in 1985, when then-Secretary of the Interior Don Hodel testified before Congress that he could not stop vandalism on our public lands, even with the resources of the U.S. Army and Marines. The solution, he said, was to raise awareness among Americans that abusers of public lands and public resources were robbing the American public of a shared birthright. Inspired to build a national culture of ownership in our public lands, Secretary Hodel developed Take Pride in America. The initiative quickly gained momentum and became a movement: the Ad Council helped launch a national awareness campaign; Clint Eastwood and other celebrities became spokespersons; the program established solid partnerships; and President Ronald Reagan discussed "Take Pride in America" to Congress as part of his agenda for America's future in 1986, saying:

"All Americans should take pride in their outstanding public lands and historic sites that belong to everyone. The Departments of Interior, Agriculture, Education, and Army (Corps of Engineers) and the Environmental Protection Agency will work together on a "Take Pride in America" campaign. We must all work for a renewed awareness that these lands are our lands." (Ronald Reagan, Message to the Congress on America's Agenda for the Future, February 6, 1986)

Take Pride was authorized by Congress in 1990 as a permanent program with volunteer, fundraising, and gift authority. The program established solid partnerships across 14 Federal agencies in all 50 states with businesses, local governments, and other civic organizations. In all, eight million people participated in this original version of Take Pride, donating more than 12 million hours translating into more than \$140 million to local, State, and Federal government savings, but the program ceased operation during the Clinton Administration.

FEDERAL VOLUNTEER LIAISONS

In Executive Order 13401, "Responsibilities of Federal Departments and Agencies with Respect to Volunteer Community Service," President Bush required that each Federal agency designate a White House volunteer service liaison. The President's action underscored the importance of the Federal government fostering "a culture of taking responsibility, service to others, and good citizenship." Executive Order 13401 promotes and expands skilled volunteer opportunities in conjunction with USA Freedom Corps, recognizes outstanding volunteers using the President's Volunteer Service Award, and mandates that each agency's volunteer liaison catalog and identify all areas of volunteering within that agency. This Order, signed by President Bush on April 27, 2006, enabled USA Freedom Corps to establish agency liaisons for volunteer community service in more than 80 Federal agencies. Throughout the year, these liaisons help coordinate service activities, including more than 50 service-related activities during National Volunteer Week in 2007.

The volunteer liaisons are required to issue a memorandum from their agency head to all agency employees clarifying the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) guidance on scheduling work and granting time off to permit Federal employees to participate in volunteer activities and promote department-wide volunteering. Volunteer liaisons encourage volunteering by securing the participation of their agency heads during key service days including: the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service, National Volunteer Week, and Make a Difference Day. Volunteer liaisons have also implemented innovative techniques to encourage volunteering, such as writing intranet blogs, producing department television programs, and creating volunteer opportunities for agency employees.

TASK FORCE ON NEW AMERICANS

The Task Force on New Americans was created by President Bush in June 2006 as a part of comprehensive immigration reform to strengthen assimilation among new Americans, improve access to federal information and resources, encourage volunteering, and provide training and technical resources to organizations that serve new immigrants. The Task Force provides volunteer opportunities to nonprofits, academic institutions, local faith-based and community organizations, and individual Americans willing to help new Americans assimilate.

To achieve the Task Force's objectives, USA Freedom Corps, and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) within the Department of Homeland Security have also collaborated to create the New Americans Project, which encourages new immigrants and citizens to volunteer. It teaches new Americans how they can embrace the American ethic of service and easily engage in community service, which, in turn, can help them develop stronger community connections. Through www.volunteer.gov, new immigrants and Americans can find ways to volunteer. This initiative is a crucial component of American citizenship.



In July 2008, USA Freedom Corps joined the U.S. Departments of Homeland Security and Interior and the American Recreation Coalition to launch a new initiative called This Land is Your Land as part of its work with the Task Force on New Americans. This initiative is aimed at encouraging new Americans to visit their national parks and to volunteer to preserve our Nation's natural resources.

CONCLUSION

Since the creation of USA Freedom Corps in 2002, national, international, and community service programs are stronger. AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, Learn and Serve America, and Peace Corps have been strengthened by President Bush's support, and volunteers in these programs are making a difference in communities at home and around the world. The re-launch of Take Pride in America has brought a renewed focus on volunteering to protect our Nation's natural resources. New initiatives such as Citizen Corps, Volunteers for Prosperity, the Task Force on New Americans, and the establishment of Federal volunteer liaisons have created more opportunities for Americans to serve in meaningful ways that match their personal interests. Through stronger national, international, and community service programs, USA Freedom Corps is helping Americans of all ages answer the President's Call to Service.

ENCOURAGING INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE IN SCHOOLS, WORKPLACES, AND FAITH-BASED AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS TO STRENGTHEN VOLUNTEER INFRASTRUCTURE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Since the President issued his Call to Service in 2002, USA Freedom Corps has focused on measuring the impact of efforts to engage more Americans in volunteer service. USA Freedom Corps, in partnership with the Census Bureau and Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), created a volunteer supplement for the 2002 Census to gauge why Americans volunteer and what motivates them to sustain service. For each of the past six years, the data has revealed demographic trends that are being utilized to strengthen volunteer recruitment, retention, and management.

The information reveals that volunteering in America will continue to be strong. As many Baby Boomers approach retirement, they are finding volunteering as an alternative to work, while young adults are demonstrating an appreciation for service in schools and in their workplaces. The data also show that America's businesses are investing more in a culture of service and social responsibility in the workplace. Nonprofits are understanding more about the critical role of volunteers and beginning to adopt stronger volunteer recognition and management programs. And technology is connecting potential volunteers in new and innovative ways.

In July 2008, USA Freedom Corps, in cooperation with the Corporation for National and Community Service, launched a new interactive website, www.volunteeringinamerica.gov, which includes six years of data on volunteer-

ing, rankings of states and cities, and volunteer trends and demographic information for all 50 states and 162 large and mid-sized cities. The data can be customized to provide local leaders with information specific to their communities. The tool is designed to empower policymakers, nonprofit leaders, and volunteers to better manage policies and resources that will continue to expand a culture of service.

The volunteering data has also helped USA Freedom Corps capitalize on other significant trends in volunteering that have emerged over the past six years across the business, nonprofit, education, technology, and research sectors.

THE VOLUNTEERING DATA

ANNUAL VOLUNTEERING SURVEY

To ensure accountability for results and to understand opportunities for increased volunteering among Americans, USA Freedom Corps partnered with the Corporation for National and Community Service, the U.S. Census Bureau, and the Bureau of Labor Statistics in 2002 to create the Nation's most rigorous annual measure of volunteering in the United States. This information is collected through the annual September Volunteer Supplement to the Current Population Survey (CPS). The CPS is a monthly survey of about 60,000 households (approximately 100,000 adults), conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau for the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Prior to this Administration, the BLS did not gather volunteering information in the CPS. This lack of data made it difficult to determine the role, value, and trends of volunteering in America and even more difficult to foster a culture of service in our Nation. The President recognized a need to collect data to help stimulate interest and growth in service. USA Freedom Corps partnered with the BLS and CPS to identify and gather this valuable volunteering information.

The resulting volunteering data demonstrated the tremendous, widespread impact of the President's Call to Service. Between September 2001 and September 2005, volunteering climbed from 59 million to 65.4 million Americans. Today, the number of Americans volunteering remains high – at 61 million – leading some historians to refer to the emergence of a “9/11 Generation” of young people who continue to serve in historically high numbers.

The Census Bureau designed the volunteering component of the CPS to gauge the level of interest in volunteering within each household surveyed. The questions aimed to collect data on youth and adults by engaging each member of the household.

The data collected covers the following categories:

- Volunteers by selected characteristics;
- Volunteers by annual hours of volunteer activities and selected characteristics;
- Volunteers by number of organizations for which volunteer activities were performed and selected characteristics;
- Volunteers by type of main organization for which volunteer activities were performed and selected characteristics;
- Main volunteer activity for main organization for which activities were performed and selected characteristics; and
- Volunteers by how they became involved with main organization for which volunteer activities were performed and selected characteristics.

The volunteer supplement represents the government's first annual data on volunteering among America's nonprofit and charitable organizations. Nonprofit and service organizations and local communities are using this information to build their volunteer infrastructure and support more opportunities to engage Americans in volunteering. For the first time, we have national, State, and local information on the frequency and intensity of volunteering, the types of organizations where individuals volunteer, and the volunteer activities that are performed.

In addition to providing this supply-side information on the market for volunteering, the data supports the President's Management Agenda by providing a powerful benchmark from which to track and measure our progress in expanding volunteering, as well as overall volunteer trends across America.

Data from the 2007 survey reveal that 60.8 million Americans volunteered in 2007, serving 8.1 billion hours and contributing \$158 billion to the national economy through volunteer service. This represents a one million volunteer increase since 2001. However, the data also indicate that there remains great potential to increase volunteering even further. For instance, the data reveal that one out of every three people who volunteer in one year do not volunteer the next year. Therefore, stemming the high rate of volunteer attrition from year to year would substantially increase levels of volunteering. In addition, emerging research suggests a key to keeping people engaged in their communities is to promote regular volunteering.

THE EXPERIENCE BOOM AND THE CIVIC BOOM AMONG YOUNG ADULTS

The CPS research on volunteering has also been valuable in identifying several trends in volunteering and opportunities for growth. For example, Baby Boomers will double the number of older

“ Every time you reach out to a neighbor in need you touch a life, you improve your community, and you strengthen our nation. ”

– President George W. Bush
November 30, 2002

American volunteers in the coming decades, and young people are more interested in service today than past generations.

It is estimated that by 2036, Baby Boomers will at least double the number of older Americans who volunteer. Boomers are healthier, more educated, and predicted to live longer, which could encourage more volunteering later in life. Boomers expect to continue working later in life – perhaps half of all Boomers will continue working into their 70s. While one might assume Americans working outside the home are less likely to volunteer, working appears to actually encourage people to stay more connected with their community and maintain social networks that promote volunteering. Taken together, these factors translate into a generation that has the potential to contribute a tremendous amount of skilled work to the social sector for years to come.

At the other end of the age spectrum, America's young people are increasingly interested in making a difference. In particular, the CPS volunteering data shows that older teenagers (ages 16-19) have more than doubled their volunteering over the last few decades. Corroborating this research, the highly respected UCLA Higher Education Research Institute has collected data on first-year college students for 40 years and recently reported a 25-year high in first-year students' belief that it is “essential or important to help others.”

It appears that, together, Boomers and young adults are poised to transform the world of volunteering through their passion and skills. USA Freedom Corps helps link them with opportunities and support to address critical social needs.

VOLUNTEERING IN STATES AND CITIES

Annual CPS data from the volunteer supplement are analyzed and published by the Corporation in its signature publication, *Volunteering in America*. First published in 2003, *Volunteering in America* was the first study to give a detailed breakdown of America's volunteering habits and patterns by geographical area, offering information critical to understanding the volunteering behaviors of citizens in each State and major city in the United States. With the information in the report, cities and States gained the volunteer information they need to plan and track their future progress toward creating more civically engaged communities. The report presented data on volunteering and volunteers in an easily accessible format that is useful to researchers, policymakers, and concerned citizens interested in learning more about volunteering in their community. Now online, the data from the most recent survey, as well as that from five previous years, is available at www.volunteeringinamerica.gov.

The research on volunteering has also provided new and valuable information on factors that influence volunteering in communities across the country. Volunteering rates are lower in areas where densely populated communities and a large influx of new residents often mean that residents do not have a long-term commitment to the community. In comparison, volunteering rates tend to rise in areas with higher levels of home ownership, perhaps because owning a home tends to signify a personal and financial interest and commitment to the long-term success of the community.

Education levels are also a strong predictor of volunteering. As education levels increase, the likelihood of volunteering also rises. In con-

trast, poverty tends to be negatively associated with volunteering. High poverty rates can create economic stress that places great demands on individuals and families, which may leave individuals feeling less connected to their communities and reduce both capacity and opportunities to volunteer. Further exacerbating the problem, youth from low-income households are less likely to encounter service opportunities in school or be involved in youth organizations that engage teenagers in volunteering.

The capacity of community organizations can also expand or limit volunteering opportunities. In order to volunteer successfully, infrastructure must exist to recruit, place, and manage prospective volunteers. Research suggests that communities with fewer nonprofits per capita are likely to have lower volunteering rates. In contrast, communities with a greater number of nonprofits per capita tend to experience higher volunteer rates. Further, communities with more small nonprofit organizations than large organizations may have a greater rate of volunteering.

The ability of communities to retain volunteers also plays a major role in a community's volunteering rate and that



community's capacity to meet its own needs. For nonprofits that depend on volunteers, turnover forces them to incur the substantial additional costs associated with recruiting, orienting, and managing new volunteers. Turnover also reduces the number of experienced volunteers who can better address the community's needs. In contrast, communities able to reduce their volunteer turnover tend to maintain higher overall volunteer rates and are more effective in addressing com-

munity issues. In general, linking volunteers with appropriate and meaningful work and effectively managing volunteers can encourage an individual to continue volunteering. However, a poor fit between a volunteer and a nonprofit increases the probability that a volunteer will not keep volunteering.

INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE TO STRENGTHEN VOLUNTEER INFRASTRUCTURE

In addition to helping States and cities more effectively harness their volunteer potential, the new data, and subsequent analysis, have helped USA Freedom Corps understand the significant trends encouraging institutional change in businesses, nonprofits, and academic institutions; along with the importance of technology and volunteer recognition to strengthening volunteer infrastructure.

ROLE OF BUSINESSES

America's businesses are adopting a culture of corporate social responsibility and empowering employees to serve as skilled volunteers to build the capacity of nonprofits. Business interest in service is contributing to unprecedented public and private collaboration. In 2002, President Bush met with 18 corporate CEOs to launch Business Strengthening America, an effort to engage industry and community leaders in a campaign to promote civic engagement and volunteer service in the workplace. The program led to 1,000 businesses engaging in service projects and 100,000 more employees serving their communities.

Today, the business community is also leading a movement to open more skilled volunteering opportunities for employees. To support this drive for more skills-based volunteering, the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation and key corporate partners

“ American foreign policy is more than a matter of war and diplomacy. Our work in the world is also based on a timeless truth: To whom much is given, much is required. We hear the call to take on the challenges of hunger and poverty and disease – and that is precisely what America is doing. ”

– President George W. Bush
January 23, 2007

launched the Pro-Bono Initiative in February 2008 to engage businesses in providing non-profits with volunteer assistance in financial management, organizational development, communications, marketing, and fundraising. This \$1 billion initiative has garnered partnership commitments from over 150 top corporate, government and nonprofit leaders to date. Recognizing these efforts, President Bush welcomed CEOs of Deloitte and Intel Corporation to the White House in April 2008, presenting them with President's Volunteer Service Awards and honoring their leadership in promoting skills-based volunteering among their employees.

ROLE OF NONPROFITS

Throughout the 21st century, America's non-profit sector has rapidly expanded. Endeavors once initiated by well-intentioned individuals or small groups of volunteers have matured into sophisticated organizations requiring strategic leadership and professional skills. Answering the President's Call to Service requires continued investment by nonprofits, faith-based and community organizations, academic institutions, and businesses to build a stronger volunteer infrastructure and enhance the capacity of organizations supporting volunteers.

According to Census data, the majority of Americans find their volunteer opportunities through religious organizations. However, a 2003 report on volunteer management capacity, organized by USA Freedom Corps, the

Corporation for National and Community Service, and the UPS Foundation, and conducted by the Urban Institute, found that while four out of five charities and congregations use volunteers to support critical social service programs, they lack dedicated staff resources to effectively manage them. The study helped identify challenges for nonprofit volunteer management, suggested capacity-building options for overcoming these challenges, and provided a significant resource to nonprofits responding to the President's Call to Service.

ROLE OF ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS

Elementary schools, high schools, colleges, and universities also play a large role in strengthening volunteering. Youth can be an enormous asset to America's communities and studies show that citizens who engage in service as students are more likely to volunteer throughout their lifetimes, demonstrate greater academic achievements, and have more positive attitudes about civic participation.

The growth of service-learning in schools and the increasing focus on community service by students in colleges and universities represents an investment in our young people and a benefit to our communities. Elementary, middle, and high schools are expanding service-learning to connect classroom lessons to service experiences. For example, the Learn and Serve America program provides an on-ramp to active citizenship and lifelong volunteering for over one million students from kindergarten

through college. Colleges and universities are also being recognized for their expansion of Federal Work-Study to engage students in community service and other innovations that provide support to students who want to volunteer. In 2002, USA Freedom Corps developed a service-learning toolkit for every school in America, which outlined best practices on service-learning and provided resources for schoolchildren. For example, the "Record of Service" journal encourages students to log their volunteer hours and activities and the President's Volunteer Service Award recognizes that service.

IMPORTANCE OF TECHNOLOGY

Technology and the creation of social networking websites are providing new opportunities for volunteers to serve. USA Freedom Corps created the USAFC Volunteer Network, the Nation's largest online clearinghouse at www.volunteer.gov to link Americans with local volunteer organizations that match their interests, time, talents, and skills. This resource makes it easier for citizens to learn of volunteer opportunities in their neighborhoods and across the Nation. Since its inception, the USAFC Volunteer Network has been accessed more than 23 million times.

IMPORTANCE OF VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION

Improving volunteer accountability has also led to improved volunteer recognition. Research shows that recognizing the efforts of people donating their time and skills leads to higher rates of volunteer retention. Thus, in March 2002, President Bush implemented a volunteer recognition program. The President's Volunteer Service Awards (PVSA) recognize the efforts of the many Americans who have

answered the President's Call to Service. Through the USA Freedom Corps Presidential Greeter Program, over 650 local volunteers have been selected to greet the President upon his arrival in cities nationwide and to be honored with the PVSA. More than 1.1 million volunteers have earned PVSA's and more than 26,000 organizations are certified to award them. The award recognizes America's unsung heroes in the armies of compassion who volunteer and serve their communities on a daily basis.

In January 2003, President Bush created the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation to find ways to recognize the valuable contributions volunteers are making in our communities. The Council brings together leaders from the worlds of business, entertainment, sports, education, government, nonprofits, and media.

CONCLUSION

The new volunteering data, developed with support from USA Freedom Corps, has provided significant benefits to communities, governments, and organizations and has the potential to provide even greater benefits in the future. The data reveal that communities with high levels of citizen engagement are better equipped to solve some of the key challenges facing our society today, such as risky behaviors among youth, community disaster preparedness, hunger, and homelessness. Further, governments, community leaders, organizations, and volunteers can use the new research to develop a volunteer growth strategy, and build infrastructure to support more volunteer opportunities. With this new knowledge, leaders from all sectors can better meet the needs of their communities – collaborating with volunteers to build a stronger America.

EMPOWERING CITIZENS TO IMPROVE COMMUNITIES THROUGH VOLUNTEERING AND SERVICE

“In communities across our land, we must trust in the good heart of the American people and empower them to serve their neighbors in need. Over the past seven years, more of our fellow citizens have discovered that the pursuit of happiness leads to the path of service.”

–President George W. Bush

State of the Union Address, January 28, 2008

The President's Call to Service embraces the idea that every American can demonstrate greatness by giving back to their community, and that in many cases, the best way to address our toughest community problems is to empower Americans to serve their neighbors in need. Whether in times of disaster or calm, in struggling neighborhoods or in vibrant parks, volunteers of all ages are providing and sustaining social services that are critical for healthy communities. Numerous initiatives of USA Freedom Corps empower local citizens to answer the President's Call to Service through innovations in technology and social networking, understanding the American tradition of service and diverse opportunities that engage people in service on issues they value.

The Call to Service was also based on an important reality: America is strongest when its citizens come together in times of great need. Never has that been more apparent than in the wakes of the September 11th attacks and Hurricane Katrina. During both emergencies, volunteers augmented emergency responders and helped lead emergency relief coordination. Colleges mobilized teams of young people to volunteer during alternative spring breaks. Faith-based organizations contributed thousands of volunteers, coordinated donations, and provided housing for on-site volunteers.

As USA Freedom Corps has grown, important lessons have been learned from the response to these two national tragedies about harnessing

the time, skills, and hearts of Americans called to serve their neighbor and their Nation. USA Freedom Corps has helped police officers, firefighters, and paramedics who are answering the Call to Service by establishing emergency response and preparedness organizations under Citizen Corps. Through these councils, trained volunteers supplement emergency responders during the hours and days immediately following any disaster. In 2008, alone, these organizations have provided critical service during the Midwest floods, California wildfires, and other local disasters nationwide.

USA Freedom Corps has also created new, effective volunteer opportunities to respond to the needs of our time. In 2002, the new Citizen Corps for homeland security and disaster preparedness and response was created. In 2003, Volunteers for Prosperity was founded to mobilize skilled American professionals to meet urgent international crises, such as HIV/AIDS, malaria, and a shortage of clean water. VfP sought to engage more of the 215,000 people who indicated their interest in applying for Peace Corps but could not be deployed for a lack of available positions. In partnership with the Department of Defense, USA Freedom Corps created “On the Homefront” in March 2003 to provide opportunities for Americans to support our troops and their families. Volunteers help military families keep small businesses running, prepare tax returns, or complete home repairs while their loved ones serve in Afghanistan and Iraq.

International volunteering opportunities are also increasing at a record rate with support from this Administration. Programs such as Volunteers for Prosperity, the President's Emergency Plan for Aid's Relief, and the President's Malaria Initiative have created thousands of volunteer opportunities for skilled professionals to serve in developing regions of the world. Americans have also volunteered time and financial resources to aid the relief efforts for China's earthquakes, the Indian Ocean Tsunami, and Cyclone Nargis.

Finally, USA Freedom Corps is helping Americans embrace more regular episodic opportunities to serve, such as on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. The 2008 effort marked the largest Martin Luther King Day of Service since the initiative began in 1994. More than 500,000 individuals volunteered in 5,200 service projects nationwide to mark Dr. King's legacy with a "day on, not a day off."

The success of the President's Call to Service in empowering citizens to improve communities around the world through volunteering is a result of USA Freedom Corps' targeted efforts to create more meaningful volunteer opportunities for Americans of all ages. Over the past six years, USA Freedom Corps has strengthened or launched a series of programs and initiatives to build a stronger culture of service, responsibility, and civic engagement.

LINKING AMERICAN HISTORY, CIVICS, AND SERVICE

By participating in the tradition of service, students learn about our Nation's history and the responsibilities of citizenship in a democratic society. In September 2002, President Bush announced several new policies and initiatives to enhance all Americans' understanding of our demo-

cratic traditions and institutions and increase civic engagement. The campaign was launched on the 215th anniversary of the signing of the U.S. Constitution and in conjunction with National Civic Participation Week. The campaign included the following elements:

- *"We the People"* was administered by the National Endowment for the Humanities and included a three-year, \$100 million competitive grant program to support the teaching of American history and civics education. The program included a nationwide "Ideas of America" essay contest for high school juniors, traveling American history exhibits, an online "Heroes of History" lecture series, and grants to help schools and universities enhance course offerings in American history, government, and culture.
- *"Our Documents"* is a collaboration with the National Archives and Records Administration, the National History Day Project, and the Corporation for National and Community Service to bring 100 of our country's milestone documents that helped shape our rights and duties as citizens to classrooms across our Nation. Images of the original documents, lesson plans, and national competitions for students and teachers on the significance of American history are included in the online source materials.
- *"We the People Forum"* was convened at the White House on May 1, 2003, to promote the importance of teaching American history to our youth. The audience, which included students, teachers, scholars, academic administrators, political leaders, and community institutions, heard about best practices and innovative projects that advance the understanding of American history and participation in our civic institutions and tradition of service.

MENTORING

To mark the first anniversary of USA Freedom Corps in 2003, President Bush proposed a new mentoring initiative. The initiative aimed to match volunteer mentors with more than one million children in need of a caring adult in their lives and, in particular, to provide 100,000 mentors to children whose parents are in prison. USA Freedom Corps supports the President's Mentoring Initiative by working with national organizations, faith-based and community mentoring programs, and independent community leaders serving the target populations.



National service participants in AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and Learn and Serve America serve directly as mentors and help build the capability of mentoring organizations through volunteer

recruitment and other means. In FY2005, the Corporation for National and Community Service devoted more than \$250 million to support approximately 400,000 children and youth, including 16,000 children of prisoners, through mentoring, tutoring, and related services. The mentoring activities are hosted by the Corporation's Foster Grandparent Program, RSVP, AmeriCorps State and National, and AmeriCorps VISTA programs.

Research has confirmed that mentoring successfully reduces the incidence of delinquency and substance abuse among at-risk youth and promotes other positive outcomes, such as improved self-esteem, academic achievement, social skills, and career development.

FEDERAL MENTORING COUNCIL

To ensure the effective coordination of Federal investment in mentoring activities and to

recommend policies consistent with that approach, the Administration created a new interagency Federal Mentoring Council in January 2006, with representatives from USA Freedom Corps, the Corporation for National and Community Service, the Departments of Agriculture, Education, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Justice, and Labor, among others. Experts in the mentoring field also share information, concerns, ideas, and best practices through the National Mentoring Working Group.

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND SKILLED VOLUNTEERING

AN EFFECTIVE NONPROFIT SECTOR IS VITAL TO THE NATION'S STRENGTH AND SECURITY

The nonprofit sector is the fastest growing sector in the U.S. economy and is, comparatively, playing a much bigger role in society as it responds to a greater need for services. In the past ten years, the number of nonprofits has grown by 67 percent, and the number of foundations has nearly doubled. Corporate pro bono and skills-based volunteering programs represent the optimal collaboration between business and nonprofits, and the results to date have been remarkable. Programs that bring corporations and nonprofits together are helping America's nonprofits serve communities in need while providing an outstanding return on investment, and research

Pro Bono Services Are Needed in the Nonprofit Sector: 89 percent of nonprofit directors and managers realize that volunteers' workplace skills are extremely or very valuable to their organizations. (Source: 2006 Deloitte/Points of Light Volunteer IMPACT Study)

shows that pro bono and skills-based volunteering is beneficial to the company, its employees, and the community as a whole.

Pro Bono Taps Unused Potential: There are more than 6.7 million professionals in corporate America with the skills necessary to help address the nonprofit sector's most critical needs. (Taproot Foundation)

Our Nation, while rich with resources and talent, struggles to meet the basic needs of some of its citizens in areas such as social services, education, health care, environmental protection, and cultural enrichment. The nonprofit sector works every day to meet these needs despite constant funding shortfalls. To provide critical services and grow to meet new needs, the nonprofit sector is beginning to integrate businesslike practices. One way to ensure that nonprofits learn these invaluable practices is to create a pipeline of professional human capital from the for-profit sector to the nonprofits in need of support.

USA Freedom Corps has helped create and bolster these opportunities to tap the tremendous talents and resources of the business world. Leaders of American businesses have responded to President Bush's Call to Service by creating initiatives that engage their leadership and employees in volunteering. The growth of professional services as part of the American economy has produced an

Pro Bono Enhances Recruitment: 81 percent of Americans take into consideration a company's commitment to a social issue when deciding where to work. (Source: Cone Corporate Citizenship Study, 2004)

army of potential skilled volunteers. According to U.S. Department of Labor statistics, more than 6.7 million Americans have professional skills that are needed by the nonprofit sector. In February 2008, USA Freedom Corps and the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation developed a partnership with businesses with domestic and global reach with the goal of providing \$1 billion in pro bono services to our Nation's nonprofit sector over the next three years.

Workplace volunteering benefits the company as well as the community. Typically, the volunteering taps the same professional skills employees use in the workplace, boosting employee morale, enhancing recruitment and retention, and making companies more competitive.

FINANCIAL LITERACY CORPS

USA Freedom Corps, in conjunction with the President's Advisory Council on Financial Literacy, launched the Financial Literacy Corps in 2008 to increase basic financial literacy among Americans. The initiative provides the tools and resources for Americans interested in sharing their financial services, nonprofits in need of skilled volunteers, and Americans seeking financial guidance.

Through the Financial Literacy Corps, volunteers provide a wide range of help to Americans. Some work with young students to teach them the importance of having good credit, balancing a checkbook, and being financially literate. Other volunteers help low-income individuals and families prepare their taxes, or maintain or restore their credit. The initiative is also helping subprime homeowners in need of immediate financial assistance connect to the resources necessary to avoid foreclosure and receive credit counseling.

DISASTER RELIEF AND PREPAREDNESS

USA Freedom Corps has played an integral role in delivering volunteers to some of the world's largest natural disasters including: the Asian tsunami of 2004, Hurricane Katrina, the California wildfires, and Cyclone Nargis. Through www.volunteer.gov, USA Freedom Corps serves as the Federal government's portal for Americans searching for ways to help others. During and after a natural disaster, Americans can log on to the website and find a list of reputable charities and volunteer opportunities.

For example, the website helped Americans learn about service opportunities in the Gulf Coast region. Now, more than 93,000 participants in national service programs have given more than 3.5 million hours of service in response to the devastation inflicted by Katrina. National service participants from AmeriCorps and Senior Corps have supported and managed more than 262,000 community volunteers – a quarter of the total Katrina volunteer force of 1.1 million volunteers (the largest in the Nation's history). In total, these volunteers have given 14 million hours of service.

USA Freedom Corps also ensures that volunteers and voluntary organizations are incorporated into key disaster response documents, such as the National Response Framework. During the Framework's development, USA Freedom Corps convened leaders from the volunteer and donations management communities for roundtable discussions on how to better coordinate during times of disaster. The result of these discussions is a significantly strengthened Volunteers and Donations Annex in the National Response Framework, which recognizes the critical nature of volunteers in disaster response. Working in partnership with the Department of Homeland Security's Exercise and Evaluations division, USA Freedom Corps conducted a tabletop exercise simulating volunteer response to a variety of scenarios, which encouraged private sector collaboration with government counterparts during disaster response.

TSUNAMI RELIEF AND RECOVERY

On December 26, 2004, the most powerful earthquake in nearly half a century struck the Indian Ocean Region. The 9.0 magnitude quake created violent tsunamis that carved an unrelenting path of destruction throughout that area. In just hours, hundreds of thousands of lives were lost, countless homes destroyed, and millions left homeless. The devastation was experienced from Thailand to the Horn of Africa. Food and shelter were scarce and those injured and displaced were seriously vulnerable to disease.

In the wake of this disaster, people from nations throughout the world responded with remarkable compassion. The United States placed itself at the center of this response, as its citizens gave generously to ease suffering and to facilitate and quicken reconstruction efforts. President George W. Bush called on former Presidents George H. W. Bush and William J. Clinton to lead the fundraising effort. President Bush also asked USA Freedom Corps to provide the Nation with accurate information and to assist the American people in making direct donations to humanitarian organizations conducting relief operations in the affected region.

Former Presidents Bush and Clinton created a public service announcement in which they directed those interested in making financial contributions to find guidance on the USA Freedom Corps website. The President also frequently instructed those eager to help to seek direction from USA Freedom Corps. In partnership with President Bush, former Presidents Bush and Clinton, and, most importantly, the American people, USA Freedom Corps was able to secure more than one billion dollars in donations from the private sector in America.



UNIVERSITIES REBUILDING AMERICA PARTNERSHIP

While the response of the American people to the devastation caused by the hurricanes in the Gulf Coast region was unprecedented, the response of our Nation's colleges and universities was particularly notable. Many schools offered displaced students and faculty a place on their campuses, often waiving fees and requirements. Student organizations held fundraisers and assembled books, supplies, clothing and other necessities and, in some cases, delivered them personally to people who were suffering. In areas housing Katrina evacuees, college students volunteered in shelters, schools, and community centers. Even today, students continue to aid the Gulf Coast recovery by organizing teams to help in the long-term process of rebuilding. As part of the Administration's response to Hurricane Katrina, on November 1, 2005, USA Freedom Corps partnered with U.S. Housing and Urban Development Secretary Alphonso Jackson and Corporation for National and Community Service CEO David Eisner to launch the Universities Rebuilding America Partnership (URAP) at Louisiana State University. The new program offered resources and support to engage college and university students, faculty, and staff in helping rebuild the Gulf Coast region and encouraged a growing number of college students to go on "alternative spring breaks" to volunteer in the recovery effort, rather than going on a tradition vacation.

ENGAGING YOUTH IN SERVICE

An estimated 15.5 million youth or 55 percent of youth ages 12 to 18 participate in volunteer activities (compared to 29 percent of adults) totaling 1.3 billion hours of service. Research has shown that youth who engage in volunteer

service are more likely to succeed academically and less likely to engage in risky behavior. Youth are also twice as likely to volunteer if their parents or members of their family are engaged in volunteer service.

WHITE HOUSE TASK FORCE ON DISADVANTAGED YOUTH

In December 2002, President Bush created the White House Task Force on Disadvantaged Youth to address the fact that youth from a disadvantaged background are disproportionately more likely to encounter problems academically and socially. The Task Force called for a national youth policy that included the following changes at the Federal level: better management of programs through the creation of a Disadvantaged Youth Initiative; greater accountability for programs; increased parental involvement in Federal youth programs; and the creation of advisory groups to define a Federal priority for the most at-risk youth.

HELPING AMERICA'S YOUTH

In his 2005 State of the Union Address, the President announced that Mrs. Bush would lead a new initiative to raise awareness about the challenges facing America's youth and to motivate caring adults to connect with youth in three key areas: family, school, and community. Mrs. Bush convened a national conference and six regional conferences to share best practices shown to be successful in overcoming those challenges. The Helping America's Youth initiative, working with a coalition of experts from 10 agencies, developed an online resource, *The Community Guide to Helping America's Youth*, to provide Americans with assistance in forming partnerships, creating successful programs, and enhancing existing programs.

YES TOOLKIT: A CALL TO ENGAGE DIVERSE YOUTH IN MEANINGFUL SERVICE

Since April 2008, the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation and 48 youth-serving organizations have promoted the online toolkit, "Youth Engaged in Service: How and Why to Incorporate Volunteer Projects into Your Youth Program."

The online toolkit was launched with input from 40 organizations in response to a study conducted by the Corporation for National and Community Service that found that youth who volunteer are more likely to succeed in school and avoid risky behaviors; but there is a disturbing economic disparity in teen volunteer rates – youth from low-income backgrounds volunteer at a rate of 43 percent, compared to 59 percent for other youth. The goal was to help faith-based and community groups engage youth from disadvantaged circumstances in volunteer service.

The YES Toolkit provides local youth leaders – coaches, ministers, volunteers, and community program coordinators – with the tools and resources needed to incorporate youth service into their existing efforts. The goal is to increase the number of youth from diverse backgrounds who volunteer. In particular, it addresses the barriers that keep low-income youth from serving and identifies ways to bring service opportunities to the places where young people are already engaged. The YES Toolkit is available at www.presidentialserviceawards.gov/yes.

HONORING VOLUNTEERS

PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL ON SERVICE AND CIVIC PARTICIPATION

On January 29, 2003, the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation was established through Executive Order 13285 as an initiative of USA Freedom Corps.

The Council strives to promote and recognize outstanding volunteer service and raise awareness of the many ways in which Americans can help meet the vital needs of individuals within their communities and around the world. The Council brings together leaders from business, entertainment,

MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

(*denotes current members)



Sean Astin
Emy Lou Baldrige
Dixie Carter
Jean Case, Chair*
Michael W. Smith, Vice Chair*
Amber Coffman
Stephen Baldwin*
Ray Chambers*
Jerry Colangelo
Evern Cooper Epps*
Clotilde Dedecker
Myrka Dellanos
Bo Derek*
Bob Dole, Honorary Co-Chair
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Hilary Duff
Sara Evans
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Luis Gonzalez
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Jordin Sparks*
Wendy Spencer*
Roxanne Spillett*
Hope Taft*
Julie Thomas
Charles Turlinski*
Janine Turner*
Martha Williamson
Danny Wuerffel*
Steve Young
Mark Yudof

sports, education, government, nonprofits, and the media, each of whom has demonstrated a commitment to service and volunteering in his or her own life.

Council Initiatives and Activities

PRESIDENT'S VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARDS

One of the primary activities of the President's Council is to recognize outstanding volunteers with the President's Volunteer Service Award. This award program acknowledges individuals, families, and organizations that have made a sustained commitment to volunteer service. More than 26,000 schools, nonprofits, businesses, and other organizations have registered as certifying organizations and have recognized more than 1.1 million Americans with this honor. One of the tools offered through the awards program is an electronic Record of Service, which has enabled users to track and document hours of volunteer service at www.presidentialserviceawards.gov.

SUMMIT ON CORPORATE VOLUNTEERISM: TOWARD A NEW DEFINITION OF PRO BONO

On February 13, 2008, the President's Council convened business and nonprofit leaders at the Summit on Corporate Volunteerism in New York City to launch a three-year campaign to generate \$1 billion of pro bono service toward helping nonprofits become more effective. The Summit brought together 150 corporate, government, and nonprofit leaders to discuss their pro bono efforts and map strategies for boosting skilled volunteering in professions such as marketing, finance, technology, and management consulting.

The President's Council, along with a coalition of partners, continues to focus on:

- Improving the nonprofit sector's readiness to effectively seek and utilize skills-based volunteers and pro bono services;
- Promoting the value proposition of pro bono to corporate America and helping develop and disseminate common standards, models, and measures to help companies implement or expand their pro bono and skills-based volunteering initiatives;
- Creating more accessible pathways for individuals to find volunteer opportunities where they can apply their professional skills; and
- Creating a movement through coalition-building, public awareness, and knowledge management.

PRESIDENT'S HIGHER EDUCATION COMMUNITY SERVICE HONOR ROLL

The President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, launched in 2006, recognizes colleges and universities nationwide that support innovative and effective community service and service-learning programs. The Honor Roll is a program of the Corporation and is sponsored by the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation, USA Freedom Corps, the U.S. Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The Honor Roll's Presidential Award, given each year to only a handful of institutions, is the highest Federal recognition a college or university can receive for its commitment to volunteering, service-learning, and civic engagement. In February 2008, 528 colleges and universities were recognized for their participation in volunteer activities, with six receiving the Presidential Award. For more information on the Honor Roll, visit:

www.learnandserve.gov.

“MAKE A DIFFERENCE. VOLUNTEER.” PSA CAMPAIGN

“Make A Difference. Volunteer.” is a national public radio campaign to encourage Americans of all ages and backgrounds to volunteer. The campaign was developed in February 2006 and features the President along with members of the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation in a series of public service announcements (PSAs). Through the PSAs, listeners are directed to visit www.volunteer.gov to find volunteer and community service opportunities that best fit their needs and experience. To listen to or download the PSAs, visit www.presidentialserviceawards.gov

USA FREEDOM CORPS PRESIDENTIAL GREETER PROGRAM

In March 2002, two months after creating USA Freedom Corps, President Bush implemented a volunteer recognition program in conjunction with his domestic travel schedule.

Through the USA Freedom Corps Presidential Greeter Program, local volunteers are selected to greet the President upon his arrival at cities nationwide. Honorees, chosen through a nomination, interview, and vetting process, are invited to participate in the official greeting party that welcomes the President during his travels.

USA Freedom Corps Greeters are thanked by the President, presented with the President's Volunteer Service Award lapel pin, and photographed under the Presidential seal on Air Force One.

ZACH BONNER VALRICO, FLORIDA

Zach greeted President Bush in September 2006.

Zach was inspired to begin volunteering following Hurricane Charley in 2004. He was six years old. When Zach heard about the devastation caused by the storm, he began collecting basic necessities in his red wagon for families in need. This grassroots effort resulted in the donation of more than 25 truckloads of supplies. Following Hurricane Katrina, he organized a similar drive with toys and games for children. In 2005, Zach founded the Little Red Wagon Foundation, Inc. to provide opportunities for kids to help other kids in need. He then teamed up with volunteers from Stand Up For Kids to assemble more than 400 backpacks, called Zach packs, filled with donated snacks, personal hygiene items, first-aid kits, and toys for distribution to children in need.



MARK POLAKOFF RED LODGE, MONTANA

Mark greeted President Bush in November 2006.

Mark has worked as a Search and Rescue Dog Handler for more than 23 years. He and his dogs have worked on hundreds of searches for lost or missing persons throughout Montana, Wyoming, and Idaho. As a founding member of Absaroka Search Dogs, Mark has trained dozens of search dogs and their handlers. Mark is also a member of the 1st Special Response Group, an organization of volunteer Search and Rescue personnel who respond internationally in searches for lost or missing Americans, and he has been a volunteer for 18 years with the Red Lodge Emergency Medical Services.



**CHARLES "CHICK"
LEMONICK**
MANALAPAN, NEW JERSEY

**Chick greeted
President Bush
in April 2007.**



Chick has been a volunteer for the Statue of Liberty National Monument and the Ellis Island Immigration Museum for more than 15 years. He has logged more than 14,000 hours of volunteer service. Chick created a digital database for the Ellis Island Discography project that uses more than 8,000 phonograph recordings from the late 19th and early 20th centuries to catalogue the cultural influence of ethnic music on American society. He has transcribed more than 200 interviews for the Ellis Island Oral History Project that preserves first-hand recollections of immigrants. Chick also manages the museum's library database.

ROBBIE POWELL
LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS

**Robbie greeted
President Bush in
July 2008.**



Robbie's best friend, Ben, was diagnosed with Neurodegeneration with Brain Iron Accumulation, a rare inherited neurological movement disorder causing degeneration of the nervous system. For five years Robbie helped Ben with school assignments and class activities. As the disease progressed and Ben was unable to speak and walk, Robbie visited him at home to provide support and friendship. After Ben's death in August of 2007, Robbie began selling Live 4 Ben silicone bracelets and raised nearly \$2,000 for research and awareness about the disease that took his friend's life. Robbie continues to volunteer for disabled children in his community with the Conway Braves tee-ball program for children with disabilities.

Since the program's inception, more than 650 Americans have been honored as USA Freedom Corps Greeters. The greeters range in age from 8 to 92 years old. Honorees are recognized for their sustained commitment to hands-on volunteer service in areas ranging from public safety to the environment, youth programs, education, art, and culture. They have served in soup kitchens, supported military troops and their families, tutored children, and built homes for families in need. They also have provided disaster relief, both locally and internationally, comforted those battling illnesses, and provided care to people with special needs.

By recognizing volunteers through the USA Freedom Corps Presidential Greeter Program, President Bush honors citizens who have answered the call to serve a cause greater than self and whose service helps realize his vision to change America one heart, one soul, and one conscience at a time.

**HONORING OUR MILITARY
FAMILIES AND VOLUNTEERS**

In 2008, USA Freedom Corps, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Defense and the White House Military Office, initiated a program to highlight volunteer service among America's active duty military personnel. Members of the United States Armed Forces contribute valuable volunteer time serving both at home and abroad. USA Freedom Corps has integrated the President's Volunteer Service Award into military support agencies so that the agencies can recognize members of the Armed Forces with the PVSA and encouraged the media to share stories with the American public about the positive contributions that military personnel are making in communities around the world.

Utilizing existing networks, USA Freedom Corps has been successful at recognizing those service members who volunteer beyond duty hours to improve the communities where they are stationed. In May 2008, USA Freedom Corps hosted the first military PVSA recognition ceremony at the White House to honor seven active-duty members of America's Armed Forces.

USA Freedom Corps has also helped the President acknowledge the service of military spouses. On May 11, 2007, President Bush observed Military Spouse Day in the East Room of the White House. The President celebrated the contributions and sacrifices of military spouses throughout our Nation's history and honored outstanding spouses with the PVSA for their sacrificial service to our nation, through support of their active duty spouses, their military communities, and the civilian communities in which they are stationed. In addition, President Bush signed a proclamation released in conjunction with the event to acknowledge the profound impact military spouses have on the readiness and well-being of service members.

On May 6, 2008, the second Military Spouse Day was held on the South Lawn of the White House and was attended by nearly 1,200 invited guests representing all branches of the Armed Forces. Guests enjoyed musical entertainment, remarks by the President, and the presentation of the President's Volunteer Service Awards to six military spouses representing the Army, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, Marines, and Army Reserves.

These initiatives, honoring our military families and volunteers, reinforce the President's commitment to supporting the military family and honoring those whose volunteer service strengthens our military and our Nation and tells a brighter, more hopeful story about the selfless acts of service by our men and women in uniform and their families.

KRISTEN HOLLOWAY PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

**Kristen greeted
President Bush in
March 2006.**



Kristen is the founder and president of Operation Troop Appreciation (OTA), a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting military troops. The idea for OTA began in March 2004 when Kristen developed a plan to provide Under Armour t-shirts to a Pennsylvania National Guard platoon that had 38 soldiers deployed in Iraq. The response was so overwhelming that Kristen decided to find other ways to help the troops and OTA was established.

Since its inception, OTA has reached more than 12,000 troops with care packages tailored to meet specific "wish list" requests from active duty members. Through fundraising and in-kind donations, OTA volunteers have collected phone cards, sports equipment, musical instruments, cosmetics, and DVDs for distribution to deployed troops. In addition, all care packages contain a letter to each soldier in the designated unit thanking them for their service and sacrifice.

“ Each of the activities that we talk about at the USA Freedom Corps or this organization will touch a life and strengthen the country. And the important thing that we're doing today, I hope, and I know you all hope, will send a clear signal to our young that serving something greater than themselves in life is a part of the American experience. ”

– President George W. Bush
December 10, 2002

EMPOWERING VOLUNTEERS

USA FREEDOM CORPS VOLUNTEER NETWORK

The USA Freedom Corps Volunteer Network, www.volunteer.gov, the largest clearinghouse of volunteer opportunities ever created, currently offers more than four million volunteer opportunities both in the U.S. and abroad. Since the Volunteer Network was created in 2002, more than 23 million visitors have searched for volunteer opportunities. This website serves as the primary connection point for volunteer matching and donations management in times of disaster, both domestic and international.

In December 2004, USA Freedom Corps, with the assistance of Secretary of Education Rod Paige, launched a new website designed to show elementary and middle school students how they can start making a difference by volunteering. The site, www.usafreedomcorpskids.gov, also includes resources, ideas, and information to help parents and teachers engage American youth in their communities

CONCLUSION

From the earliest days of our democracy, Americans have stepped forward to help their neighbors and their communities, cultivating a rich legacy of service that has continued to this day.

Through the initiatives and activities chronicled in this report, the American spirit of service and civic engagement is demonstrably alive and vibrant in cities and towns, classrooms and corporations, and community and faith-based organizations across our country. USA Freedom Corps is proud to tell the stories of those who boldly answer the President's Call to Service and of this Administration's many accomplishments in ensuring that the spirit of compassion in America's citizens endures for years to come.





USA 
Freedom Corps
Make a Difference. Volunteer.

The White House
Washington, DC 20500
www.volunteer.gov