

National and Community Service: Making the Vision Succeed in the 21st Century — RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL SERVICE TO THE PRESIDENT AND CONGRESS



making

National and Community Service:

Making the Vision Succeed in the 21st Century



success



in the 21st
century

Recommendations
of the Board of Directors
of the Corporation for
National Service to the
President and Congress

CORPORATION

THE CORPORATION



Created in 1993, the Corporation for National Service is a public-private partnership that oversees three national service initiatives—AmeriCorps, which includes AmeriCorps*VISTA, AmeriCorps*National Civilian Community Corps, and hundreds of local and national nonprofits; Learn and Serve America, which provides exemplary approaches and assistance to integrate service and learning from kindergarten through college; and the National Senior Service Corps, which includes the Foster Grandparent Program, the Senior Companion Program, and the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program.

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THE VISION OF THE CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL SERVICE

WE ENVISION A NATION IN WHICH:

- Service is promoted and valued by educational, religious, and governmental institutions; business and labor; nonprofit organizations; and individuals, families, and communities throughout the nation.
- Problems in communities are being solved through service, which in turn is a part of problem-solving initiatives in education, public safety, the environment, and other human needs.
- Service helps people expand their sense of community so that they look first to themselves and then to one another to improve their lives.
- Active and informed citizenship is widespread, and service helps each American feel greater responsibility toward others.
- Service is known and valued throughout the country because it has touched the lives of millions of Americans.
- Service is viewed as a significant part of the transition to adulthood, and youth are viewed as important community resources.
- Individual lives are improved through service.
- Participants in service are widely honored both while they serve and for the rest of their lives.
- Service is defined, initiated, shaped, and coordinated at the community level.
- Individuals find effective ways to engage in service throughout their lives, as children (with their families, through community organizations, and in their schools), and through adulthood.

- Service promotes partnerships at all levels of society and builds bridges among seemingly disparate groups to improve the quality of life of people in our nation.
- Successful service endeavors are celebrated in the communities they serve and shared with other communities interested in learning from them.
- Service is viewed as nonpartisan and as a form of civic action in which all people take pride.

WE ENVISION AN ORGANIZATION THAT IS:

- A catalytic, coordinating, and creative force in realizing this vision for service in America.
- A valuable resource to and a partner with national, state, and local organizations that seek to solve problems through service.
- Entrepreneurial, innovative, effective, and efficient in utilizing its resources, influences, and activities.
- A good steward of taxpayer dollars that operates programs in a cost-effective manner.
- An agency with a demonstrated history of nonpartisanship.



“Service... has touched the lives of millions of Americans.”

Executive Summary

This report is about a national call to service: how it was made and how the call has been answered. The report centers around a concept that is at the foundation of American society: active and responsible citizens will use their knowledge, skills, and abilities to create better communities, and better communities will create a better nation. In this report, the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National Service (the Corporation) offers recommendations for the future of National Service and recounts some successes of its first seven years.

The Corporation for National Service is a young organization in a nation with a rich history of engaging citizens around common concerns. The Corporation expanded attention to the functions of the nonprofit sector, identified more than 165 years ago by Alexis de Tocqueville, as one of the most distinctive features of American life. Launched with a commitment to help address the nation's unmet needs, the organization was also expected to strengthen communities and improve the lives of those who served.

Created by an act of Congress in 1993, the Corporation joined programs from ACTION (VISTA, Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), Senior Companion, and Foster Grandparents) and the Commission on National and Community Service, with a new program called AmeriCorps. The focus of VISTA was to develop capacity in low-income communities involving people in service full time, while Senior Companion, Foster Grandparents, and RSVP engaged elders in service. Serve-America, piloted with the Commission on National and Community Service to involve students, expanded with the creation of the Corporation and was called Learn and Serve America. AmeriCorps, designed originally to engage young adults, offers an educational award and stipend for full- or half-time service.

The new organization was designed to be entrepreneurial and more adaptable than typical Federal agencies and was structured with a bipartisan Board of Directors from varied sectors of society. It was designed to strengthen the ability of existing private and public agencies to expand service, rather than building new layers. Envisioned as a catalyst, the Corporation was established to promote service at all levels—national, state and local—through partnerships, grants, research, training, and assistance. Implementing legislation envisioned an organization that gave people an opportunity to serve, and in doing so, support communities in tackling local problems.

Since its creation, the Corporation for National Service has made a great deal of progress in achieving its mandate. Over 200,000 AmeriCorps members have enrolled; every year 500,000 older people help local agencies; and more than one million students serve through their schools and colleges. While much has been accomplished, more can be done.

This report includes 10 recommendations for the future of National Service from the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National Service. The recommendations are made to the new President of the United States and the next Congress. In the full report, background, areas of success, and strategies for improvement are included on each recommendation.

“Envisioned as a catalyst, the Corporation was established to promote service at all levels—national, state, and local...”





“Research shows that service-learning positively affects learning, improves student performance, and promotes an ethic of service.”

THE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board of Directors offers the following recommendations.

1. Overcome the remaining barriers to collaboration among the Corporation's major programs and among programs at the local, state, and national level.

Established throughout the nation at different times with distinct priorities, Corporation programs have faced challenges with communication and collaboration. To overcome this barrier in implementing its goals, the Board intends to:

- Build a stronger Unified State Plan through State Service Commissions. Adding incentives, outcomes, and resources to the plan will reduce barriers.
- Harness technology to link organizations and programs across states.
- Develop a plan over the next four years, with National Service partners, to link all Corporation programs more closely.

2. Support service as a deliberate strategy in every sector: private, public, and nonprofit.

To expand to meet local needs, more policies need to be advanced that support service. The Board recommends:

- Increase the use of service to achieve the goals of Federal and state agencies.
- Expand involvement of businesses in National Service, including a greater number of companies representing diverse populations.
- Increase the total amount of Federal Work-Study funds for service by college students in community-based organizations.

3. Increase partnerships and alliances with organizations in all sectors: for-profit, not-for-profit, and government.

The accomplishments of National Service have been possible only through collaboration at varied levels. The Corporation has sought partnerships with national, state, and local organizations, both private and public. Much has been achieved through relationships with State Service Commissions, and by extension with governors, to implement National Service. Further, state education agencies invest in service as a tool for learning. Many national, private, and foundation partnerships have been made already. To increase Corporation partnerships, the Board of Directors recommends:

- Work with private foundations for funds to seed innovative service projects.
- Expand partnerships with faith-based organizations, increasing outreach to groups involving diverse communities.

4. Expand student service at every school, college, and youth-serving agency.

In 1985, service could only be found *integrated into the curriculum* (service-learning) in nine percent of schools, with community service and service-learning in one-fourth of all high schools. The U.S. Department of Education reports in 1999 “32 percent of all public schools organized service-learning as part of their curriculum, including nearly half of all high schools.”¹ Research shows that service-learning positively affects learning, improves student performance, and promotes an ethic of service. More improvements would be possible if we:

- Expand infrastructure support for service-learning, including increases in the number of service-learning coordinators. Adequate support also needs to be available in state

education agencies. All educational institutions need to be involved to sustain service and enhance quality. This strategy will help to expand service-learning opportunities for youth of all races and backgrounds.

- Create opportunities for youth to design their own service experiences. While offering young people a menu of service options is ideal in some circumstances, youth also need opportunities to develop and design projects. Such options develop leadership skills and prepare them for more community service later.
- Increase teacher training in service-learning at schools and institutions of higher education.

5. Make service an expectation for people in later life by expanding service opportunities for all senior citizens.

Today's older Americans are healthier and better educated than their predecessors and have greater life expectancies. While a high percentage of seniors currently volunteer (43 percent over age 75²), trends indicate that the next generation of older adults will want more incentives and a range of service options (from part- to full-time), along with flexible benefits and educational opportunities. The Board believes expansion can result if we:

- Increase the options and incentives to attract a broader base of elders.
- Increase the base of programs across the country, expanding to organizations that have not previously involved seniors, and add more that represent minority elders.
- Expand current programs and remove legislative restrictions limiting senior involvement in Corporation programs.

6. Strengthen the Corporation as a laboratory for innovation by developing initiatives that help prepare new ways to address pressing national needs through service.

The Corporation supports demonstration programs to discover new and effective ways for National Service to address community needs. In addition, it provides support for evaluation, training, and technical assistance in the provision of high-quality programs. Through the years, competing demands have reduced funds available for research, evaluation, training, and technical assistance. Support needs to be increased for training and assistance at the national and state level for all Corporation programs. The Board recommends three strategies:

- Expand support for training and technical assistance at state and national levels, especially cross-program training.
- Enact legislative changes to allow the National Service Leadership Institute to charge fees for training.
- Increase funding for research to answer questions about service innovations that address community needs.

"...the next generation of older adults will want more incentives and a range of service options... with flexible benefits and educational opportunities."





“One theme links all of the Recommendations: National Service is an important means to address significant local needs...”

7. Initiate more performance and accountability studies on what differences the Corporation's programs make over the long term in promoting service at the local, state, and national levels.

Accountability and quality performance are essential for service to thrive. General management and financial systems have been strengthened at the Corporation and Administrative Standards were developed to determine efficiency and effectiveness of State Service Commissions. The National Senior Service Corps began outcomes-result programming, called Programming for Impact, and at the end of 1999, 32 percent of the RSVP volunteers were in outcome-based assignments.^a Strategies to further strengthen accountability include:

- Increases in support for longitudinal research, including studies that address the sustainability of National Service programs.
- Expansion of outcome-based programming under the Senior Corps programs.
- Continue the focus on outcomes and the use of quality indicators and standards in all programs.

8. Increase use of emerging information technology to connect the widespread diverse elements of the service community, to perform administrative and financial functions, to customize and distribute information, and to strengthen program coordination and efficiency.

Information technology is one way to further promote decentralization and reduce layers of management. It also has the potential to promote efficiency in financial, grant, and information systems at the Corporation.

Technological advances require a commitment of time, resources, and understanding that grantees differ in sophistication. Technology can connect the service community, customize and distribute information, and enhance training and quality. To maximize efficiency, the Corporation needs continued financial support to:

- Advance the use of technology in administrative, grant, and financial functions.
- Strengthen program coordination and efficiency through organized and regular expansion of technology.

9. Devolve even greater authority to the states and other Corporation grantees, while working with Congress to ensure accountability by setting standards, monitoring progress in meeting those standards, and building capacity within the states.

The Board of Directors supports strengthening State Service Commissions and other grantees to increasingly devolve National Service program authorities. State Service Commissions are the operational linchpins. They select and recommend projects for funding and are responsible for the preparation of comprehensive National Service plans for the states. Each State Service Commission, led by 15-25 governor-appointed volunteers, reflects the breadth of the service environment in each state. Three major strategies form the basis of the Board of Director's recommendation:

- Increase resources, at both the Federal and state levels, to enhance the capacity of State Service Commissions.

^aInformation on National Service programs come from the Corporation, unless otherwise footnoted.

- Streamline grant and program review through a meaningful state planning process, while retaining accountability.
- Increase the use of information technology to monitor and support program performance.

10. To implement the preceding recommendations most effectively, the Board recommends amendments to the statute that created the Corporation to enhance its ability to act as a Government corporation, overseen by a bipartisan Board of Directors, with the responsibility for policymaking, for appointing and retaining the Chief Executive Officer, and for consulting with the CEO regarding the appointment and retention of senior staff.

Changes are needed to strengthen the organization as a Government Corporation, while providing clear accountability for policy-making and oversight, rather than splitting these functions between the Board and Chief Executive Officer. The Board recommends that Congress and the President:

- Expand the Board of Directors' role in establishing policy for the Corporation.
- Allow the Board to appoint and assess the performance of the Corporation's Chief Executive Officer and, through the CEO, to oversee the appointment of the Corporation's other senior policy officials.

Into the 21st Century

Service can become a common expectation in the 21st century. The Corporation for National Service has an important role to play in realizing that goal. Implementing the Recommendations will mean opportunities for increased service by individuals of all ages and backgrounds, and through diverse organizations. Some of the Recommendations propose legislative changes to help reduce barriers to participation. Others urge increased incentives to those who volunteer and to the communities in which they serve. Implementing some of the Recommendations will allow the Corporation to harness technology to expand service, and others emphasize accountability as key to the Corporation's future.

One theme links all of the Recommendations: National Service is an important means to address significant local needs, and while strengthening communities, service also improves the lives of those who serve. This report also recognizes the limits of singular solutions to problems in America, and the need for collaborative efforts to resolve complex social concerns. Now and in the future, the Corporation for National Service will act as a catalyst to help communities solve problems and to create alliances across all sectors.

"...and while strengthening communities, service also improves the lives of those who serve."



INTRODUCTION



"...service should be promoted as a common expectation for all citizens."

This report is about a national call to service: how it was made and how the call has been answered. The report centers around a concept that is at the foundation of American society: Active and responsible citizens will use their knowledge, skills, and abilities to create better communities, and better communities will create a better nation. In this report, the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National Service (the Corporation) offers recommendations for the future of National Service and recounts some successes of its first seven years.

Background of National Service

During the past decade, the record of service has been one of energized partnership, particularly among government institutions and the nonprofit and private sectors. A 1991 survey, *Giving and Volunteering in the United States*, conducted by the Independent Sector, showed that 51 percent of Americans volunteered. By the end of the century, this figure reached 56 percent of the population, who volunteered 19.9 billion hours. The dollar equivalent of this service was calculated at \$255 billion. The Independent Sector also noted that 43 percent of seniors age 75 and older reported volunteering, an increase of eight percent since 1995, and that volunteering was up among people of color. Students are also volunteering at a higher rate than before 1995.³

This growth in service coincided with the increase in visibility and involvement of the Federal government's support of National Service. The beginning of the 1990s witnessed the passage of the National and Community Service Act and the creation of a Commission on National and Community Service and the Points of Light Foundation. In 1993, Federal support of service expanded by linking service and the taking of responsibility for one's community to an exchange for greater educational opportunity.

Congressional leaders believed that service should be promoted as a common expectation for all citizens. This belief was enunciated in the new Corporation for National Service mission statement: "to provide opportunities for Americans of all ages and backgrounds to engage in service that addresses the nation's educational, public safety, environmental and other human needs to achieve direct and demonstrable results and to encourage all Americans to engage in such service. In doing so, the Corporation was to foster civic responsibility, strengthen the ties that bind us together as a people, and provide educational opportunity for those who make a substantial commitment to service."⁴

The Corporation was established with an understanding of the importance of public and private nonprofit organizations engaging citizens in service. The agency was designed to support these organizations' infrastructure and strengthen their capacity for service, rather than duplicate existing systems. It was also designed under the concept of reinventing government in the image of private business; that is, the Corporation was to be innovative, responsive, and outcomes oriented. Thus, the Corporation has several features unusual to a government agency. It was statutorily created with a bipartisan Board of Directors that represent different sectors and service stakeholders. The Corporation's functions are carried out at the local community level through agreements with public and private agencies, such as public schools, nonprofit organizations, and local governments. In 1993, 48 state governors appointed bipartisan citizen commissioners to administer AmeriCorps and award Learn and Serve grants to community-based agencies.

For a system of National Service to be successful, it has to combine a respect for local community-founded wisdom and diversity with an awareness of the reasons people serve. Accordingly, the Corporation was charged with the goals of getting things done and enhancing the civic commitment of participants. The new agency was designed to appreciate the unique ways in which different communities operate. In one town, a focus on civic responsibility and the environment might be the alchemy for local action, while in another, youth leaders may hold the key and have the vision to reduce the isolation of frail homebound seniors.

In this climate, Congress passed the National Service Trust Act with bipartisan support in 1993, amending both the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 and the National Service Trust Act of 1990. AmeriCorps was created under this legislation, and several other programs were merged into the new Corporation. Three major programs were brought together to heighten civic involvement: AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve America, and the National Senior Service Corps.

The Corporation was charged to actively recruit young adults and link opportunity and responsibility. It was hoped that AmeriCorps would start youth down a lifetime path of community support and that subsequent educational benefits would promote a more knowledgeable citizenry. AmeriCorps members were envisioned to expand community service by helping local groups involve citizens with less time to give.

Interest in National Service was brought into the media spotlight at the Presidents' Summit on America's Future, convened in Philadelphia in the spring of 1997. The Summit became symbolic of the growth in organized service opportunities to answer pressing needs. Under the chairmanship of retired General Colin Powell, the Summit brought together Presidents Clinton, Bush, Carter, and Ford as well as Mrs. Ronald Reagan. In addition, it brought together 3,000 national and community leaders to discuss the future of America's children. An outcome of the Summit was a strong alliance between three National Summit partners, America's Promise, the Points of Light Foundation, and the Corporation for National Service.

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Corporation Programs

The Corporation operates three programs under the AmeriCorps umbrella: AmeriCorps*State and National, AmeriCorps*VISTA, and AmeriCorps*National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC). Together these programs account for the largest portion of Corporation funding. Additional programs operated under the Corporation are Learn and Serve America and the National Senior Service Corps.

AmeriCorps

The AmeriCorps programs are distinct yet complementary programs designed to provide a range of needed services to communities. A total of 34,000 members joined AmeriCorps*State and National in 1999. These members serve in intensive, results-driven service for organizations such as the American Red Cross and Habitat for Humanity. The focus of AmeriCorps*VISTA is to alleviate poverty and build community capacity and sustainable programs. Celebrating its 35th anniversary in 2000, AmeriCorps*VISTA has more than 6,000 members.^b AmeriCorps*NCCC is a residential service program that provides environmental, education, public safety, and disaster relief services. In year 2000, 905 people enrolled in AmeriCorps*NCCC.

All three include individuals who serve full time, or half time, for one or two years in exchange for a small living allowance and an education award redeemable at institutions of higher education. Most AmeriCorps members serve in teams. Across all three branches of

AmeriCorps, 70 percent of the members successfully completed their term of service in 1999 to earn an education award. Since the beginning, over 200,000 members have enrolled to serve with nonprofit organizations to meet community needs.^c

Learn and Serve America

Interest in service-learning has expanded exponentially as educators see it as a way to improve academic achievement, develop personal skills, connect youth to their communities, and strengthen educational institutions. Service-learning is an educational tool, not simply a program, with implications for principals and teachers, as well as advanced, average, or troubled students. Learn and Serve America has played a leading role in connecting service and curriculum to enrich student academic development. Service-learning motivates students to learn, while they help their communities. In addition to academic and community improvements, service-learning enhances student career awareness, self-esteem, and attitudes toward school. During the past year, 1.23 million participants from kindergarten through college were involved in Corporation-funded service-learning programs. At least a million more are involved each year through training and workshops for teachers, principals, service-learning coordinators, and others. Corporation funds, the only Federal dollars specifically designated for service-learning in higher education, are at work on hundreds of college campuses.



^bThese numbers do not include members who enrolled in summer programs.

^cInformation on National Service programs comes from the Corporation unless otherwise noted.

National Senior Service Corps

At the other end of the age spectrum, the National Senior Service Corps has been providing approximately a half million opportunities each year for skilled and experienced older Americans to address local concerns. Its three programs have been in operation since the 1960s. Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion programs invite low-income seniors to serve 20 hours each week for a stipend. The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) is open to seniors of all incomes and offers no stipends. Traditionally, the National Senior programs have focused on the effect of service on the older participants themselves. A shift in recent years, however, has placed a greater emphasis on a balance between benefits to volunteers and those served.

Appendix A has detailed information on these programs.

Corporation Goals

Throughout the years, the Corporation has had three major goals as guides for increasing service opportunities and to meet urgent national needs. In response to the mission outlined by Congress, the Board of Directors established the following targets:

- (1) Help address the nation's unmet needs;
- (2) Strengthen communities through service; and
- (3) Improve the lives of those who serve through their service experience.

A brief description of each follows.

Address the Nation's Unmet Needs

The Board of Directors believes that National Service has an important role in addressing urgent needs in the country. Corporation programs had many successes addressing serious problems, and grantees are given the flexibility to meet local concerns. This success has been documented in numerous independent reviews. For example, in 1997, a Government Accounting Office (GAO) report noted,

One of the National and Community Service Trust Act's objectives is to help the nation address its unmet human, education, environmental, and public safety needs. The projects included in our sample all reported diverse service activities that address one or more of these needs. While some projects' service activities were focused on meeting a particular need within the community, such as housing, other projects' activities addressed multiple areas of need, such as environmental and education needs. In the project reports we reviewed in detail, participants organized food programs that served 2,500 children; assisted with totally rehabilitating 16 vacant public housing units; operated a 7-week summer reading camp for 36 children; planted trees, removed debris, and created gardens improving 32 urban neighborhoods; and provided parenting classes to low-income families.⁵

"AmeriCorps members recruit hundreds of thousands of community volunteers each year." (p. 12)

The Corporation has worked in a number of other ways to tackle significant problems. For instance, in 1999, 22,900 Foster Grandparents served 180,000 children with special and exceptional needs. One evaluation conducted in 1998 describes the success of a program in Washington DC. Low-achieving children tutored by Federal Work-Study students and other volunteers in a program managed by AmeriCorps*VISTA members improved reading scores to the national average at the end of the first year of the program.⁶

Strengthen Communities Through Service

Defining “community” presents challenges, yet the goal of building and strengthening communities plays a pivotal role in the Corporation’s mission. Communities are identified geographically, economically, ethnically, and chronologically. The Corporation strengthens communities through strategies such as joining people of diverse backgrounds in a common purpose. It leverages human resources by recruiting volunteers and involving full-time members to engage others with less time to give. During the past year, nearly half a million seniors helped thousands of organizations do their jobs, and over one million students participated in Learn and Serve America. AmeriCorps members recruit hundreds of thousands of community volunteers each year.⁷

Such human resources boost community capacity to address problems by improving services. In addition to supporting communities through volunteer recruitment, AmeriCorps programs help states and local areas by attracting young adults to spend a year in service. The Blackfeet Youth Initiative in Montana is one instance where members, recruited locally and nationally, promote community vitality. As summer camp counselors, AmeriCorps participants provide educational, recreational, and cultural activities for Native American youth on the reservation.

Improve the Lives of Those Who Serve

In the process of helping others, people frequently find that their own lives have been changed. Although personal transformations are not easy to track, a number of positive effects have been documented for all Corporation programs. Following are just a few. Service in AmeriCorps*State and National increases skills for employment success, enhances talents for leadership, and develops an ethic of service.⁸ A study of Minnesota-Youth Work*AmeriCorps showed that focus groups with members increased communication skills among members.⁹ Service-learning is popular with educators because it improves student academic and personal skills, as well as strengthens relationships between schools and community.¹⁰ For higher education, one evaluation noted that students in service-learning courses, compared to those in similar courses without a service component, report larger gains in civic participation (especially intended future involvement in community service) and life skills (interpersonal skills and understanding of diversity).¹¹ A 1995 GAO report also noted:

We saw evidence of this [fostering civic responsibility] at programs such as one where participants devote half of each Friday to work on community service projects they devise and carry out independently. Participants at another program, in which they organized meetings to establish relationships between at-risk youth and elderly people, commented that this work had taught them how to organize programs, experience they believed would be helpful as they took roles in their communities.”¹²

Service has additional benefits. Studies demonstrated, in AmeriCorps and Learn and Serve America, that service boosts tolerance for difference: "The most basic benefit members gained was simply the chance to experience diversity firsthand to a greater extent than most individuals in the United States ever have the opportunity to do.... The most immediate result from their developing relationships with people from different backgrounds was that members identified the personal biases and stereotypes that they held. The recognition helped them to dispel stereotypes and ignorance they may have had about particular groups."¹³ Older people also contribute, as demonstrated by a New York Prejudice Reduction Project. Trained RSVP volunteers in Staten Island have worked with more than 2,000 children in ten years to reduce student negativity toward aging and elders, building respect for difference in its place.

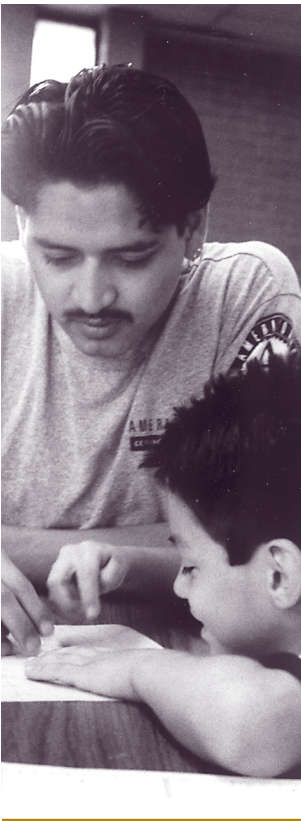
Across the country, AmeriCorps members represent a diverse population along ethnic, racial, age, and educational backgrounds. However, individual projects are not always diverse. The Board of Directors believes that keeping diversity a priority promotes stronger understanding among diverse individuals.

"In the process of helping others, people frequently find that their own lives have been changed."



WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Although national and community service is at an exciting crossroads, and the nation is moving toward increased service, the question remains: Where will National Service go in the next decade?



Because one of the biggest reasons for not volunteering is “No one asked,” it is important that we promote opportunities that invite people to serve, so that service can become the common experience, and local organizations are prepared when they respond. For service to become an expectation for everyone in the country, both full-time and part-time opportunities must be made available early in life and later. Historically, service was viewed as an activity that strengthened communities. The Corporation for National Service plays a role in providing and broadening opportunities and helping service become a strategy for addressing local problems. For the past seven years, it has been such a catalyst and has systematically:

- Expanded service through an increase in partnerships between the public and private sectors at all levels;
- Increased funds for service at all levels by providing Federal grants to leverage local funds;
- Funded infrastructures for National Service;
- Provided training and technical assistance to improve National Service;
- Conducted innovative research about new models to meet community needs; and
- Expanded community volunteering by providing participants who contribute large amounts of time and can recruit others.

The infrastructure established by the Corporation and its organized approach has an important role in further increasing community and National Service. Three major avenues have emerged in the past decade as expandable strategies that help communities get things

done. These are full-time service opportunities, service by seniors, and the integration of service with schooling. The Corporation is experienced and well equipped to advance each strategy.

Full-time Service Opportunities. Every young person needs the opportunity to have a year of service, whether in the military, the Peace Corps, or AmeriCorps. Through AmeriCorps, young people can be involved in helping solve serious social problems while they are engaged in an experience that will leave them with a greater appreciation for diversity and service. Service is also excellent preparation for community leadership and recruiting others to support local agencies. Full-time members provide support and increase opportunities for part-time and episodic volunteers to address local problems. The success of many voluntary groups depends upon the activities of people engaged full and half time. The nation's nonprofit organizations have benefited from the work of nearly one-quarter of a million members in AmeriCorps in seven years, and the potential to expand is significant. The Boys and Girls Clubs of America Safe Summer Program demonstrates how full-time service opportunities help nonprofit organizations. AmeriCorps*NCCC teams served at 26 clubs over a two-month period. Members renovated the facilities and helped coordinate and implement after-school and summer programming for youth.¹⁴

Service by Seniors. The new generation of senior citizens is revolutionizing retirement and has the potential to transform America. Seniors' numbers, experience, and opportunities to contribute mean that social service needs can be addressed on a previously unmatched scale. They will, however, require

flexible hours and opportunities. In addition to the experience and skill of those over 55, exploding demographics indicate an even larger cadre could be available to confront community problems. Truancy and crime are two such community problems that RSVP volunteers of Lansing, Michigan, work to combat. Working with the Police Department and Public School System, volunteers patrol neighborhoods seeking out-of-school youth and answer the Truant Hotline.

Integration of Service with Schooling.

Service should be an integral part of the school experience at every level. Service opportunities at all schools and colleges should be expanded to make service a common expectation. Effective strategies to increase service are essential at a time when four in ten fourth graders fail to read at a level for success, and poverty among children remains high. Research shows that the integration of service improves the quality of education and has a positive effect on schools and youth.¹⁵ One Learn and Serve America program (Higher Education) that demonstrates the value of integrating service into schooling is Project SHINE (Students Helping in the Naturalization of Elders) in Philadelphia, Boston, and San Francisco. Multicultural teams of college students help refugees and older immigrants to prepare for U.S. citizenship. The students teach history and civics. As they teach, they learn about immigration policy and increase their knowledge of citizen rights, history, and the Constitution.¹⁶

The Future of National Service

Service is stronger because of the investments of the past decade. The Corporation for National Service has been a significant contributor through:

- Infrastructure development;
- Programs;
- Innovation and demonstration ventures;

- Evaluations to determine what works and why; and
- Training and other assistance.

In the past seven years, the Corporation for National Service has come a long way. Over 200,000 AmeriCorps members have enrolled since 1993; every year, 500,000 older people help local agencies get things done, and more than one million students serve through their schools and colleges. While much has been accomplished, more can be done. This report includes 10 recommendations for the future of National Service from the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National Service. The recommendations are made to the new President and the next Congress. The 10 recommendations offer approaches for advancing service as a strategy to meet needs in American communities.

These recommendations for the future of National Service have been developed from reviews of trends, research, performance indicators, accomplishment reports, surveys, community impact ratings, program evaluations, and more than 30 focus groups held around the country. *Appendix B* includes information about the focus groups that informed the report. *Appendix C* provides information on the Corporation's budget; *Appendix D* offers a broad history of service, and *Appendix E* gives a glossary of terms.

The Board of Directors pledges its best efforts to expand participation by people of all races, backgrounds, and ages in every program sponsored by the Corporation. In this spirit, the Board of Directors proposes the following recommendations.

“The Board of Directors pledges its best efforts to expand participation by people of all races, backgrounds, and ages in every program sponsored by the Corporation.”

RECOMMENDATIONS

THE RECOMMENDATIONS

1 RECOMMENDATION

Overcome the remaining barriers to collaboration among the Corporation's major programs and other programs at the local, state, and national levels.

A fundamental tenet of the legislation that established the Corporation for National Service was that its programs were to be a source of new power and energy for nonprofit organizations across the country. Accomplishing this goal requires collaboration not only among the Corporation's programs but, most important, with those programs and the nonprofit organizations and private and religious institutions critical to strengthening our communities. Much has been done to meet this goal, but further work is required to overcome barriers set in place by programming established at separate times with different expectations.

The Corporation's authorizing legislation of 1993 set up State Service Commissions to achieve closer cooperation among Corporation programs and with the civic sector. These Commissions, overseen by

governor-appointed citizens who represent diverse elements within the state, were given the authority to:

- Prepare applications to fund community-based programs;
- Recommend program priorities;
- Provide technical assistance;
- Develop a statewide system for recruitment and placement of program participants and administer grants in support of National Service; and
- Develop projects, training methods, curriculum, and other materials for Corporation-funded programs.

State Commissions were also asked to develop plans to link the Corporation's programs with others. Each state plan was to join state and local grantees through a framework of training and planning and involve larger service networks, such as United Way, Volunteer Centers, and other leaders in service. A Unified State Plan was envisioned as a tool for reducing the separation and compartmentalization of programs. Such a plan was used by the Florida Commission on Community Service, for example, and inspired volunteer organizations to jointly sponsor an annual training conference that resulted in the development of projects involving National Service and community volunteer programs. The joint training spurred additional partnerships, one of which was to establish strategies for increasing volunteers serving in low-income areas by putting AmeriCorps*VISTA members in Volunteer Centers.

Areas of Success

Although still in its infancy, AmeriCorps has been a vehicle for developing and strengthening collaborations at the local level. Anecdotes describe AmeriCorps*State and National and AmeriCorps*VISTA programs as the "glue" that joins organizations together. At least 42 percent of RSVP projects worked with AmeriCorps*VISTA, and 27 percent worked with AmeriCorps*State and National projects.¹⁷ A five-year evaluation reported that AmeriCorps has created institutional changes that improve relationships and services.¹⁸ These changes include linking groups that rarely worked together, eliminating impasses between groups, and creating referral systems. Members frequently serve as the tie between community organizations. Sixty-six percent of the organizations involved with the program believed that it promoted collaboration

between them and other community groups. An example noted in the evaluation states:

In some communities, AmeriCorps programs developed institutional links with local businesses such as banks, real estate agents, and landlords. These business networks made businesses more aware of the opportunities to serve low-income community residents, while making services more easily available to residents. Other programs link complementary services, such as job training and childcare.¹⁹

Evaluators concluded that, in general, the introduction of AmeriCorps to a community had significant organizational effects on the network of institutions associated with the program.²⁰ Overall, three-quarters of sponsors reported that the AmeriCorps grants had caused their institutions to change. Most changes were in two categories: organizational enhancements (e.g., more capacity, increased efficiency, additional organizational elements, such as training) and increased collaborations with other community groups. Those sponsors that reported no change as a result of AmeriCorps funding tended to be larger, more established organizations with a history of large grants programs. National nonprofit organizations were prominent in this group.

"...its programs were to be a source of new power and energy for nonprofit organizations across the country."



1 RECOMMENDATION

Overcome the remaining barriers to collaboration among the Corporation's major programs and other programs at the local, state, and national levels.

The evaluators indicated that "...The Corporation's challenge to programs to meet higher quality standards may have the most long-lasting impact of any of the Corporation's goals..."²¹ At times, the Corporation's emphasis on accountability, formal objectives, needs assessments, and program evaluations were difficult for many programs. However, the programs reported that, in the process of responding to these demands, both their effectiveness and the perception of their organization in the community were enhanced.

AmeriCorps fortifies links between local institutions, builds physical and organizational infrastructures, and raises the level of community involvement.²² Organizations expanded or improved their existing services. Those less directly connected with the programs than clients and sponsors were also influenced. Evaluators noted:

AmeriCorps programs bolstered existing community organizations by enabling them to develop and upgrade their services. AmeriCorps also strengthened non-partnering organizations by creating new links between a whole range of private, public and community organizations. [Communities were able] "to both share and expand on resources."²³

One example of the three Corporation programs working together on a common problem is America Reads. This program strives to strengthen children's reading skills. Forty percent of all fourth graders in the United States are now reading below the accepted level on national reading assessments.²⁴ AmeriCorps members serve as tutor coordinators and recruit and train volunteers. In addition, Foster Grandparents, RSVP volunteers, and Learn and Serve students tutor children and manage programs to improve reading.

In Hawaii, for example, Learn and Serve volunteers gave 2,200 hours of service to tutor 110 low-achieving students and helped advance their reading comprehension by two levels. In Toledo Ohio, AmeriCorps*VISTA members work with the local schools to recruit, place, and coordinate RSVP volunteers who assist families and children with improved literacy.

Areas for Improvement

Despite these and other successes, in the more than 30 focus groups of Corporation stakeholders held during the past year, almost all raised the need for greater integration and collaboration and agreed that different programs within the Corporation must be brought more closely together. Connections between different Corporation programs at the local and state levels are often limited, and implementing policies for each program were established at different times as powerful, yet singularly focused, approaches.

Although a number of states have been successful in linking the larger service network and Corporation programs using the Unified State Plan, many have not. Three reasons emerged for the uneven success of this planning process:

- Each state's volunteer and service network is in a different stage of development.
- The only incentives or disincentives that tie organizations to the unified planning process are intangible and variable. The benefits are developed by the groups' own plan and decisions, not by external measures.

- The value of alliances may be unclear, especially when organizations know little about each other. Focus groups indicate that in the early phases, information sharing is itself a worthwhile goal. Planning activities together requires more time and may be another phase. While State Commissions share training resources, the needs of each group can be so varied that sessions meet only some needs.

Strategies for Improvement

By collaborating, organizations become a stronger force for the community and more effective in accomplishing local goals. Working together, they can maximize efforts. The Board of Directors therefore believes that Corporation programs will address community needs more effectively if remaining barriers to collaboration are removed. In discussions across the country and among Board members, three strategies were identified as key approaches to removing these barriers:

1. **Build stronger Unified State Plans with incentives, resources, and measurable outcomes.** All Corporation programs need to be involved—AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve, and National Senior Corps—whether they are national, state-based, tribal, or local. Corporation programs need to continue to involve the broader service network, as well.
2. **Harness technology to link organizations and programs across states.** Until recently, the technological capacity and organizational systems were unavailable to support information sharing across the Corporation's service programs in all states.
3. **Develop a plan over the next four years, with states and other National Service partners, to closely link all Corporation programs.**

“AmeriCorps fortifies links between local institutions... and raises the level of community involvement.” (p.18)



RECOMMENDATION 2

Support service as a deliberate strategy in every sector: private, public, and nonprofit. As an example, we recommend increasing the total amount of Federal Work-Study funds for service by college students.



A key to engaging all people in service is to increase the visibility both of volunteers and their impact on communities. Although the Corporation has focused primarily on its work with nonprofit organizations through program grants under AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve America, and the National Senior Service Corps, it has also worked effectively with state-based organizations, such as State Service Commissions and education agencies, to expand volunteers and service. Because of the focus on supporting operating grants, however, minimal resources have been dedicated to expanding public awareness about service and the policies that support it.

The Corporation's Board, in partnership with the Points of Light Foundation, America's Promise, United Way, and other similar organizations, supports efforts to increase the number of people and the amount of time

they give in service to nonprofit organizations. Volunteers help nonprofit organizations to deliver a higher volume of service. The hours volunteers donate to nonprofit agencies are equivalent to more than 6.3 million full-time employees.²⁵

Recruitment of volunteers is an important feature of AmeriCorps programs. In addition to providing substantial service themselves, members actively encourage others in the community to serve. Each AmeriCorps member recruits between 8 to 12 volunteers each year.²⁶ If each member recruits only eight volunteers annually, 250,000 AmeriCorps members will have recruited at least 2 million volunteers by the end of 2001. Such human resources tremendously increase communities' ability to address local needs.

Areas of Success

The American Red Cross is a dramatic example of National Service helping a nonprofit expand its outreach. Ten AmeriCorps members with the American Red Cross National Rapid Response Corps in Atlanta, Georgia, participated in six national disaster relief operations in 1998 and 1999. They assisted families recovering from the floods in central Texas and tornadoes in Tennessee, Louisiana, and Georgia. In addition, the Atlanta members responded to 631 local single- or multifamily disasters, assisting more than 1,260 people. When not responding to national or local disasters, Red Cross* AmeriCorps members presented disaster preparedness training such as fire safety and hurricane preparedness to more than 87,870 people, primarily children, and recruited 116 new volunteers for the Chapter.²⁷

AmeriCorps participants bring local residents together to address systemic problems. As noted in one evaluation:

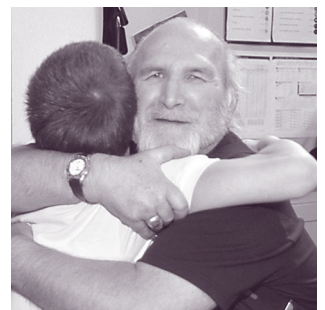
Many residents in the areas served by AmeriCorps feel overwhelmed by the community's problems as well as their own family's struggle for survival. The impact of AmeriCorps members' enthusiasm and hope on the distressed communities in which they work was profound. When AmeriCorps programs went further and involved local residents in improving their own neighborhoods and towns, the results galvanized whole communities.²⁸

The Corporation also promotes service as a strategy through the National Senior Corps and Learn and Serve America. During the past year, nearly half a million seniors helped 72,000 organizations do their jobs. For instance, 72 Foster Grandparents tutor and mentor more than 1,000 children in elementary schools and Head Start ESL migrant

centers in southwest Idaho. The grandparents read to the children and take an active interest in their lives.

Similar results were found for Learn and Serve America, Higher Education, and K-12. Over one million students participated in the Corporation's Learn and Serve programs. Student volunteers in higher education programs helped community organizations "reach more people and improve the quality of services" and were viewed as good role models in the process.²⁹ The programs added volunteers to public and nonprofit organizations that needed help. One example is found at Stonehill College in Easton, Massachusetts where they formed a Learning Center. Service-learning students were mentors and tutors to school-age children in an after-school program. One nine-year-old boy, "Joey," was dramatically transformed by his relationship with the tutor. When asked how school was going, Joey responded, "Great, this term I only missed three homeworks. Usually, I don't even do three homeworks."

"When AmeriCorps programs went further and involved local residents in improving their own neighborhoods and towns, the results galvanized whole communities."



RECOMMENDATION 2

Support service as a deliberate strategy in every sector: private, public, and nonprofit. As an example, we recommend increasing the total amount of Federal Work-Study funds for service by college students.

Government agencies, such as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), are also becoming more reliant on volunteers. The Senior Environmental Corps, an RSVP project in El Paso, received national funds through the Texas Environmental Protection Agency, to work on the issue of safe drinking water through groundwater/aquifer protection. Funds were later granted throughout the state. This work sparked a national collaboration among the Corporation, the EPA, and the Administration on Aging, with a new national nonprofit organization known as EASI or the Environmental Alliance for Senior Involvement. The EPA supports volunteers serving in a variety of environmental projects, and EASI provides technical training and support to local RSVP projects and volunteers. A Senior Environmental Corps now exists throughout 11 states, including Texas, Pennsylvania, and Delaware. The cooperative environmental effort continues to evolve. Last year, a joint AmeriCorps/Senior Corps project began and VISTA volunteers and service-learning students likewise joined to address community environmental concerns including water monitoring, environmental education, radon testing, beautification, recycling, household hazardous waste, stream corridor restoration, wellhead protection, bird counts, and environmental inventories.

In the past 10 years, spurred by efforts of the Points of Light Foundation and the Independent Sector, more businesses have learned the value of volunteering and corporate giving. Many use service as a corporate tool to increase teamwork, enhance the company image, and boost company morale. Corporate executives of 45 large companies found employee volunteering to be worthwhile and “beneficial to the company’s bottom line.”³⁰ Recent surveys indicate “nearly eight out of ten companies have increased their involvement with charities over the past five years and about seven out of ten plan to increase their commitment in the future.”³¹

The National Basketball Association (NBA), for instance, is working to pilot a cost-share program in which AmeriCorps Promise Fellows would work with teams in the NBA’s community service program, Team-Up. Also, AmeriCorps*NCCC is working with the NBA to organize the 2001 Community Service Project taking place in Washington, DC, as part of the 2001 NBA All Star Weekend.



Areas for Improvement

While the above examples highlight successes, more needs to be done to promote service in all sectors. For example, Work-Study programs around the nation have been derailed from their original purpose to encourage student participation in service.³² Nationwide, only about 10 percent of Federal Work-Study students serve in community-based organizations. Several key initiatives were undertaken to increase this amount, including encouraging college students to tutor young children; waiving requirements related to matching Federal funds when certain service is performed; enacting legislation amending the Higher Education Act to increase from five percent to seven percent as the minimum a campus must devote to service; and having political and civic leaders, like the President and retired General Colin Powell, urging college and university presidents to change their practices. To date, such efforts are only increasing service activities around the margin, as most campuses rely heavily on Work-Study funds to perform administrative and support work for campuses. Community volunteering could be further advanced if Work-Study programs in the country's colleges and universities were more focused on service. As one Corporation Board member noted,

Even with this improvement, only about one of every fifteen work-study dollars will be required for service. This simply is not enough. Community service is a powerful antidote to the dangerous disengagement of college-age youth in the civic processes that are essential for our society.³³

Engaging more diverse organizations and individuals could also advance national and community service. Although volunteering by minorities has increased in recent years, the percentage of those serving is still lower than in other groups. Participation by varied groups

could be increased by involving more businesses and associations representing diverse peoples. One example of such increases is the Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs (AFOP). The AFOP AmeriCorps conducts bilingual pesticide safety training for farm worker adults and children in 16 states. Among those recruited as members are former farm workers. Their language skills and ability to gain the trust of the communities has been valuable in areas where translation and nutritional assistance are needed, as well as safety education. Members train in many languages, including Spanish, Vietnamese, Creole, Tagalog, and Ilokano.

Strategies for Improvement

The Board of Directors believes that three strategies will further promote service across all sectors:

1. ***Increase the use of service to achieve goals of Federal and state agencies.***
2. ***Expand the involvement of businesses in National Service, including a greater number of organizations representing diverse populations.***
3. ***Increase the funds for student service in community-based organizations through Federal Work-Study.***

“Community service is a powerful antidote to the dangerous disengagement of college-age youth in the civic processes that are essential for our society.”

3 RECOMMENDATION

Increase partnerships and alliances with organizations in all sectors: for-profit, not-for-profit, and government.



Government alone cannot meet all the needs of American communities. Collaborations and partnerships with all sectors are essential to enable communities to meet their needs. National Service is an effective tool to address difficult issues facing communities. For example, the following accomplishments were noted in a 1997 GAO report:

The projects included in our sample all reported diverse service activities that address one or more of these [unmet human, education, environmental, and public safety] needs. While some projects' service activities were focused on meeting a particular need within the community, such as housing, other projects' activities addressed multiple areas of need, such as environmental and education needs. In the project reports we reviewed in detail, participants organized food programs that served 2,500 children; assisted with totally rehabilitating 16 vacant public housing units; operated a 7-week summer reading camp for 36 children; planted trees, removed

debris, and created gardens improving 32 urban neighborhoods; and provided parenting classes to low-income families.³⁴

Areas of Success

National Service has many more accomplishments. All, however, are possible only through collaboration at different levels. Corporation funds, training, and assistance establish an infrastructure for National Service, augmenting local organizations with its programs. In turn, agencies with Corporation programs reach out to create alliances with other community groups. Alliances to strengthen commitment to service have been made with thousands of organizations; however, more need to be added, and those in place need to be renewed. In addition, new models of relationships need to be developed for National Service to flourish in the 21st century. The Corporation's influence goes beyond a simple top-down pattern. It has

a lateral impact achieved by one community organization reaching another. When Corporation programs coordinate more closely, as noted earlier, this influence will be even stronger.

The Corporation has sought collaborative relationships with State Service Commissions, and by extension with governors, in carrying out National Service responsibilities. State Service Commissions exist in all states except North and South Dakota. The Corporation funds Commissions' administration and uses varied means to ensure their efficiency. Commissions made it possible for AmeriCorps*State to be established rapidly during the first year. They reached deep into their communities to locate diverse grantees. According to one study,

Considering the extremely compressed time frame, most states reached fairly extensive audiences. States' reports of the number of individuals and organizations to which they sent information ranged from 500 to 12,000. Many states also filed information at local libraries.³⁵

Since that first year, State Service Commissions have grown dramatically. The 48 State Service Commissions now manage 650 AmeriCorps programs, as well as Learn and Serve programs for community-based organizations.^d They have taken on the added responsibilities of collaborative planning and training among programs and state endeavors related to the Presidents' Summit for America's Future in 1997.

In every state, there is an important alliance between the Corporation and state education agencies. State education agencies and schools invest in service as an important tool for learning. School- and community-based grantees provide progressively higher matches

over time so that, by the fourth year of an initiative, cash or an in-kind match is 50 percent, or dollar for dollar. Learn and Serve America Higher Education grantees match Corporation funds dollar for dollar from the first day of the grant. This requires that colleges and universities make a significant investment in the long-term sustainability of the program.

While most collaborative efforts begin at the local or state level, a number are initiated at the national level. During the past five years, the Corporation has developed sound relationships with a number of notable national organizations. The list includes America's Promise, the Points of Light Foundation, Civic Ventures, Yahoo!, AOL, Habitat for Humanity, Campus Compact (an organization of 650 college and university presidents committed to enhancing community service and service-learning on their campuses), Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, W.W. Kellogg Foundation, and Ford Foundation.

One dynamic bond is with America's Promise: the Alliance for Youth. Following the President's Summit for America's Future in 1997, this organization and the Corporation linked to help meet the fundamental needs of youth. Working with State Service Commissions, governors, and others, local Summits of Promise were held to raise awareness and focus on strategies to help vulnerable children. In addition, the Corporation funded AmeriCorps Promise Fellows to organize state and community groups to expand resources that help youth grow and thrive. The Corporation is particularly focused on providing young people with the opportunity to serve and to give back to their communities.

"The 48 State Service Commissions now manage 650 AmeriCorps programs, as well as Learn and Serve programs for community-based organizations."

^dCorporation for National Service program data noted here does not include all sites for each grantee, only programs funded for AmeriCorps*State.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Increase partnerships and alliances with organizations in all sectors: for-profit, not-for-profit, and government.



Another successful collaboration is the Corporation's work with the Points of Light Foundation. The Points of Light Foundation supports a network of hundreds of Volunteer Centers nationwide. An increasing number of AmeriCorps*State and AmeriCorps*VISTA members work with these centers for volunteer leadership. Together, the two build a strong, dependable system that mobilizes volunteers and harnesses other local resources.

In the past five years, the National Senior Corps has connected with the private sector in unique ways. In 1995, a planning team designed a project to make better use of the knowledge and abilities of the country's seniors. Civic Ventures helped launch two new approaches, the Experience Corps and Seniors for Schools. Civic Ventures raised funds to help sustain the novel projects and also tapped foundations to sponsor more after-school initiatives.

The Corporation's work to close the digital divide is a recent project that triggered attention from many sectors and at different levels. Like literacy, the issue involves the inability of many Americans to access technology and make effective use of the nation's abundant information resources. As part of a new E-Corps, the Corporation committed \$10 million to recruit 1,000 new AmeriCorps members to provide technical support to school systems and teach computer literacy to adults and children. In addition to AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve will also engage student volunteers from middle and high schools to help others bridge the digital divide. Yahoo! is a major partner in the initiative and sponsored up to \$1 million in Internet advertising to attract E-Corps members. Another innovative relationship aimed at bridging the digital divide is exhibited in a project called PowerUP. As part of a \$10 million effort by America's Promise, AOL, the YMCA, the Boys and Girls Clubs, Gateway, and others, AmeriCorps*VISTA is assigning up to 400 members to work with children in schools and community technology centers across the country.

Nearly two-thirds of Americans belong to churches and religious institutions.³⁶ Across the country, faith-based organizations are on the front lines, working to improve lives in some of the hardest pressed communities in America. In many communities, especially those focused ethnically, the church is the first to be trusted when individuals and families need help. AmeriCorps members are helping faith-based organizations succeed by providing extra hands—their own and those of the additional volunteers they recruit. Of the 40,000 AmeriCorps positions this year, nearly 6,000 are in faith-based organizations. Support is provided in different ways. For instance, in partnership with Habitat for Humanity, more than 600 AmeriCorps members helped build homes for low-income families. On the other hand, the Notre Dame Mission Volunteer Program involves more than 100 AmeriCorps members each year to tutor children, provide literacy and GED classes to single mothers and high school dropouts, teach English as a second language to immigrants, and operate after-school programs at eight sites. Focus groups often noted the need for more national partnerships with religious organizations, as well as ongoing local connections.

Philanthropic institutions hold another key to the expansion and stability of service. The Corporation, along with a number of foundations in the United States, helps nonprofit organizations leverage dollars by providing venture capital to start service projects. The United States has over 41,000 foundations. These foundations have had increases in charitable support during the past five years, and more is expected with the generational transfer of wealth.³⁷

The Corporation has a major role to inspire national foundations to invest more resources in service. In the early years, the Corporation worked with the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation to launch the AmeriCorps Leaders program. On another initiative, the Kellogg Foundation, the Corporation, and many others linked together to expand the use of service-learning in schools across the country. Learning In Deed: Making a Difference Through Service-Learning was a \$13 million initiative, funded by W.W. Kellogg Foundation.³⁸

Another excellent example is the community foundation initiative, sponsored by the Ford Foundation in 1996 as a new philanthropic model for providing seed funding for service. The "Service as a Strategy Initiative" matched funds for AmeriCorps. Sixty-six regional and local grant makers came together and raised three dollars for every dollar of Ford Foundation funding, producing \$4 million. The funds supported 107 programs involving over 15,000 AmeriCorps members and thousands of other volunteers who gave over three million service hours in their communities. Also, foundations become involved in Corporation programs at a local level. One example is the funding from the Phillips Foundation to an RSVP in Nashville, Tennessee to expand service.

Areas for Improvement

While the Corporation has fostered new relationships for service during the past seven years, more need to be developed. Partnerships must be designed to reach the uninvolved, and steps can be taken to keep existing relationships fueled. The national trends heralded by upcoming transfers of wealth, and the relationship of donations to service makes philanthropic organizations an important area for partnership expansion. In 1999, foundation giving grew by nearly 14 percent surging beyond the growth in individual (5 percent) or corporate (12 percent) contributions to charitable organizations.³⁹

With larger increases anticipated in coming years, the Corporation has an opportunity to support the development of even more alliances conducive to private investments in National Service. Philanthropic groups can be encouraged to adopt more service projects and inspire innovation.

Strategies for Improvement

The Corporation and its programs have already forged an extraordinary array of partnerships with for-profit, not-for-profit, and government sectors. The potential exists to multiply those ties many times, and that is a key goal in the years ahead. The Corporation has identified two approaches that will expand these important relationships:

1. **Work with foundations to offer additional funds to seed innovative service projects.**
2. **Expand relationships with faith-based organizations, increasing outreach to groups involving diverse communities.**

"The Notre Dame Mission Volunteer Program involves more than 100 AmeriCorps members each year to tutor children, provide literacy and GED classes to single mothers and high school dropouts, teach English as a second language to immigrants, and operate after-school programs at eight sites."



RECOMMENDATION 4

Expand student service at every school, college, and youth-serving agency.

The past decade has shown a growing recognition of the value of service-learning as a method by the nation's school districts and colleges and universities. In 1985, service could only be found "*integrated into the curriculum*" (service-learning) in nine percent of schools, with community service and service-learning in one-fourth of all high schools.⁴⁰ A 1999 study by the National Center for Education Statistics showed,

Sixty-four percent of all schools, including 83 percent of public high schools, organized or recognized community service activities.

Thirty-two percent of all public schools, including nearly half of all high schools, organize service-learning as part of their curriculum.⁴¹

Areas of Success

The whole community benefits when students serve. Educators in public schools (K-12) encourage student involvement in service-learning because it helps students

become more engaged and, in turn, more knowledgeable and understanding of their community. By giving students a chance to think and reflect on their activities, service-learning links academic study to community service. Ninety percent of the agencies served by students of Learn and Serve America indicated that the youth had helped the agency improve its services to clients and the community. For 82 percent, the experience engendered a higher regard for local youth, and 66 percent felt better about involvement with public schools.⁴²

School officials describe service-learning as a way to meet real community needs, foster relationships between "town and gown," and strengthen academic learning. Students in service-learning programs were significantly more likely than nonparticipants to report changes in their understanding of community problems, sense of personal effectiveness, and skills in critical thinking, leadership, and writing. Service-learning also expands student acceptance of diversity and tolerance of others.⁴³ College students are not the only ones influenced. Middle school and high school students

reported greater acceptance of diversity than control groups.⁴⁴

Service itself becomes a tool for teaching with service-learning. Service combined with curriculum is used to teach specific subjects by linking theory and practice. When older students teach younger children, learning goes both ways. Biology students in Beverly Hills High School (California) “researched and wrote a community resource guide about cancer and presented information about the disease to sixth-grade students.”⁴⁵

A number of student improvements in middle grades and high school are associated with service-learning: better grades, increased attendance, greater motivation to learn, increase in teacher-student respect, and positive development of interpersonal skills. Generally, both students and public officials described the climates in their schools as more positive; they had a sense of greater connection to the schools. Service was found to be particularly effective for students with educational disadvantages. In addition, risk-behaviors were reduced for some students, such as a reduction in arrests and teenage pregnancy for middle school students involved in service.⁴⁶

In addition to contributing to academic and personal improvements, service-learning has been shown to help students develop citizenship and an ethic of service.⁴⁷ Two studies of the Corporation demonstrate this concept: Results in higher education reveal students in service-learning courses—compared to those in similar courses without a service component—report larger gains in civic participation.⁴⁸ A study of middle and high school students engaged in well-established, fully implemented service programs showed significant impact on the students’ awareness of community needs.

At Taos High School (New Mexico) students identified, studied, and addressed local issues through small group projects which ranged from training as drug education counselors for the

elementary school to sponsorship of a student/police basketball game as part of an anti-violence campaign. Students wrote about and discussed their projects and their role in the community through weekly reflection exercises designed by the course instructors.⁴⁹

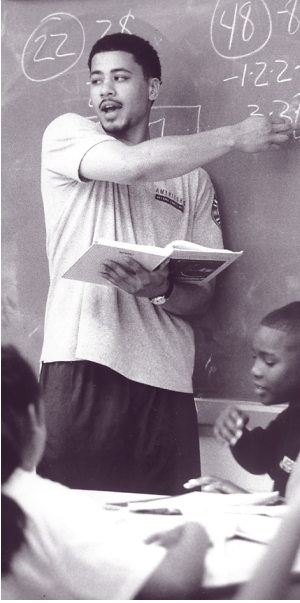
Service-learning has grown considerably over the past decade. The Corporation has provided critical support: \$43 million to assist thousands of school- and community-based programs through state education agencies and higher education programs, including consortia of institutions. The Corporation’s funds help bring in both financial and volunteer resources for service-learning. In 1996, services were worth “nearly four times the program cost that year.”⁵⁰ Each state education agency matches the Federal funds dollar for dollar. Even so, the majority of funds for service-learning projects in the country come from state and local sources.

The Corporation does not require grantees to collect demographic data on the more than one million participants funded by the Department of Service-Learning. At the K-12 level, state education agencies have flexibility in determining which school districts receive funds. The Board believes it very important that states fund school districts to expand service-learning opportunities for youth of all races and backgrounds. Further, the Board believes that the Corporation should follow a similar approach in awarding grants to institutions of higher education and other organizations.

“Service was found to be particularly effective for students with educational disadvantages... risk-behaviors were reduced for some students, such as a reduction in arrests and teenage pregnancy for middle school students involved in service.”

RECOMMENDATION 4

Expand student service at every school, college, and youth-serving agency.



"...educators are a strong key to the use and expansion of service-learning programs..."

Areas for Improvement

Service-learning programs have a greater impact on students when programs are well designed, intensive, and of high quality. In addition, students express a higher investment in service when they are allowed to choose and develop projects as well as implement them. High-quality programs, while varied in approach, require institutional support. Not all state education agencies, institutions of higher education, or community organizations have adequate funds to hire a full-time employee to coordinate service-learning activities. Further, educators are a strong key to the use and expansion of service-learning programs yet often lack time, resources, and knowledge to prepare service-learning curricula. Estimates are that only 21 percent of schools provide full- or part-time service-learning coordinators, although most experts agree that coordinators are central to the most effective programs.⁵¹ In addition, the infrastructure must exist to deliver high-quality service-learning programs. Research also indicates that most effects disappear if involvement in service-learning is not continued throughout the student's education.

2. **Create opportunities for youth to design their own service experience.** While offering young people a menu of service options is ideal in some circumstances, youth also need opportunities to develop and design projects. Such options develop skills and prepare them for leadership later.
3. **Increase teacher training in service-learning at schools and institutions of higher education.**

Strategies for Improvement

If student service is to be expanded at every school, college, and other youth-serving agency, three changes must be made:

1. **Expand infrastructure support for service-learning, including increases in the number of service-learning coordinators.** Adequate support also needs to be available in state education agencies. All educational institutions need to be involved to sustain service and enhance quality. This strategy will help to expand service-learning opportunities for youth of all races and backgrounds.

5 RECOMMENDATION

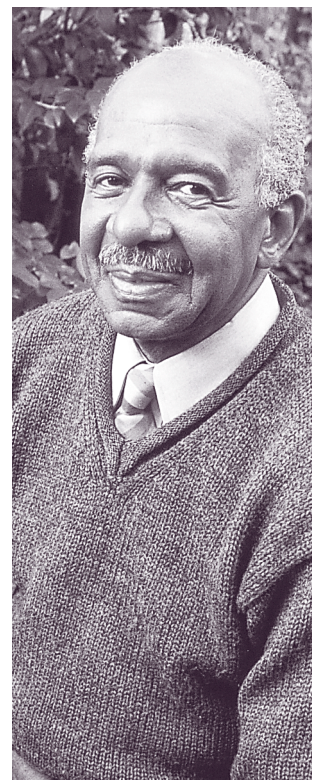
Make service an expectation for people in later life by expanding service opportunities for all senior citizens.

Most of the current thinking about the aging of America focuses on how the country will pay for a growing population of retirees. Unique characteristics set apart today's older Americans from their predecessors. Their numbers are higher. They are in better physical health and better educated than any previous generation of older Americans. They will live longer and retire earlier. When combined with the attributes of all generations—a desire to leave a legacy and a strong commitment to family and community—these qualities offer opportunities for the country that have yet to be fully recognized.

There has been a steady transition from the idea that retirement is a rest period to the concept of the “Golden Years” of recreation and leisure to today's emerging concept of retirement as a time of high activity, meaningful involvement, and significant engagement with life. Retirement is rapidly becoming a new beginning with myriad opportunities to learn, to be fulfilled, and to contribute to society. This includes staying employed, continuing

one's education, staying physically active, and volunteering for community service.

Older adults typically have more time to contribute than other age groups and are willing to serve when asked. According to the Independent Sector's latest poll results (1999), “seniors were asked to volunteer less often than younger age groups, but when asked, volunteered at nearly an equivalent rate to younger age groups.”⁵² Research on the next generation of seniors indicates plans for part-time employment, with an emphasis on work that involves service to the community. One survey of Americans between the ages of 50-75 indicated that nearly two-thirds would be interested in assignments of 15 hours each week if offered benefits such as weekly stipends, education credits, or reduced costs for prescription drugs.⁵³



RECOMMENDATION 5

Make service an expectation for people in later life by expanding service opportunities for all senior citizens.



"...people live longer because they volunteer, rather than... people volunteer because they're healthier and hence more likely to live longer."

Areas of Success

The current research on Corporation programs shows that senior volunteers gain psychological and social benefits from doing service, in addition to "increased feelings of health and vigor... greater financial security and satisfaction with the direction of their lives."⁵⁴ Loneliness and desire for companionship is a motivator among many older volunteers. Service can reduce isolation and offer a sense of belonging.⁵⁵ Research at the University of Michigan Institute for Social Research, which extends beyond Corporation programs, noted that the Institute's work was "among the first to establish that people live longer because they volunteer, rather than that people volunteer because they're healthier and hence more likely to live longer."⁵⁶

To help determine broader strategies for engaging seniors, the Corporation developed the Experience Corps, a new model with sustained, intensive opportunities. Several approaches were tested, some in schools and some to help frail, homebound seniors. One Experience Corps, a 2-year, five-city pilot, enlarged the Foster Grandparent program by involving neighborhood elders to generate a caring environment in and around inner-city elementary schools. The older volunteers worked with the children as tutors and acted as local leaders to engage the community. Experience Corps also involved people over 55, a younger group of volunteers than many of the other National Senior Service Corps projects.

The Experience Corps offered varied service options and leadership opportunities, two components that are attractive to upcoming retirees. In addition, volunteer roles expanded beyond helping individual children. Volunteers were more receptive when given a range of options, episodic assignments, and full- or part-time opportunities. They worked with parents and members of the community as well as groups of children. Senior leaders in the pilot helped to recruit and support even greater numbers of volunteers over 55.

Volunteers were allowed to serve without regard to restrictions on income or skills.

For more than a quarter century, the set of programs under the National Senior Service Corps banner has constituted one of this country's most important vehicles for engaging older adults in community service. These programs offer both valuable lessons about how to involve seniors in this work and an infrastructure for doing so.

As the country enters an unprecedented period of aging, these efforts, both directly and as flagships for a broader senior service movement, assume a new importance. They are part of the existing infrastructure for channeling the civic talents of older Americans.

Areas for Improvement

For all their strengths, however, these programs are limited in important ways. We have not, as a nation, invested in senior service at anything approaching the levels necessary to realize its potential. Further, these programs were established primarily to enhance the well being of the senior volunteer, rather than to meet the needs of communities. In addition, while two of the programs (Senior Companion and Foster Grandparents) have recruited an ethnically diverse corps of volunteers (36 percent), the Retired Senior and Volunteer Program has been less attractive to minority elders (11 percent).

The next generation of retirees is interested in staying active with new goals. Research suggests that continuing education will be an important outlet and may be an avenue for helping retirees establish new objectives.⁵⁷ By expanding opportunities for training and education, National Service might increase participation by adults searching for a change in direction after retirement. In addition, extensive training can broaden and improve the service experience, as illustrated by the Experience Corps.

Strategies for Improvement

The Board of Directors believes that service should be an expectation for people in later life. Opportunities need to be expanded for people over age 55. Three major strategies must take place for the National Senior Service Corps to implement this recommendation:

1. **Increase resources to expand the options and incentives to attract a broader base of elders.** The changes must cover a variety meaningful opportunities and offer a range of service options from full time to part time, along with flexible benefits, incentives, and ways for participants to easily move from one option to another as their circumstances change.

Incentives need to include educational opportunities and a chance for volunteers to learn from each other.

2. **Increase the number of programs across the country, expanding to organizations that have not previously involved seniors, and add more that represent minority elders.**

3. **Expand current programs by removing legislative restrictions that limit the appeal of opportunities and senior involvement in Corporation programs.**

Programs that make up the National Senior Service Corps must be expanded and reinvented to appeal to the next generation of retirees. Barriers to expansion include legislative restrictions that limit participation by seniors in service. For instance, participation in Foster Grandparents and Senior Companion is determined by income and allows only one-on-one contact with clients. The age of involvement needs to be lowered, and leadership opportunities should be available in all programs.

“The new generation of senior citizens is revolutionizing retirement and has the potential to transform America.” (p. 14)



6 RECOMMENDATION

Strengthen the Corporation as a laboratory for innovation by developing initiatives that help prepare new ways to address pressing national needs through service.



The Corporation was designed to foster civic responsibility by stimulating innovation and providing resources for service. The focus was defined by law and also emphasized quality through the delivery of information on best practices, technical assistance, training, and evaluation. The Corporation supports demonstration projects to discover innovative and effective ways for National Service to address community needs.

Innovation

Innovation is a small, yet critical component of Corporation funding. Without national demonstration projects, there are few focused efforts to discover the new service models for building infrastructure, improving members' lives, or delivering service with Corporation programs. While innovation uncovers new models, evaluation helps clarify what, of current methods, are most effective. Demonstration

activities, for instance, identified a new national senior service model to engage senior leaders. Senior leaders helped recruit and support even greater numbers of volunteers over age 55. The model has been adopted by nearly 200 local Senior Corps projects. The flexibility and innovation of pilot projects also invites new partners. For instance, at the national level, Yahoo! partnered with the Corporation to close the digital divide. An example at the local level is Rutland READS (Vermont), where the Herald and Rotary Club made donations so that paperback books could be given to each classroom.

Training and Technical Assistance

Focus groups conducted in 1999-2000 indicated that training is important in all programs. Assessments are conducted regularly to determine grantee needs, and the Corporation provides training and technical assistance directly or through contracts with training providers. More training and assistance is delivered every year. In 1999, more than 1,400 training or assistance events were held for 36,000 National Service participants on such issues as sustainability, member development, financial management, and supervisory skills. In addition, electronic publishing made it possible for 43 publications to be available online. Ninety percent of grantees expressed high satisfaction with training and assistance services provided by the Corporation.

States need the flexibility to deliver training effectively and quickly. Currently, a portion of the Corporation's training funds goes to State Service Commissions. During recent years, however, competing demands have reduced training and technical assistance funds. More resources are needed at the state level to allow states to respond quickly and efficiently to needs. Uniform training and technical assistance also should be available at the national level to address a few specific areas, such as financial management. Focus groups urged consistent and regular training for new commission directors and commissioners, with an orientation to National Service and its benefits.

The original focus for training and technical assistance was broadened in 1997 to encompass all Corporation programs. The expansion of services, however, was implemented without a corresponding increase in training funds. In fact, resources originally set aside for innovation have, over time, been used for programmatic needs established by the Administration and Congress. Nationwide assessments of training and assistance needed by grantees indicate that the demand is far greater than the Corporation's ability to provide. A broad

range of needs was identified through the survey. For instance, training and assistance needs cited by the highest percentage of AmeriCorps programs were managing multiple sites and identifying funding sources, followed by motivating and recruiting members for high-quality service and developing evaluation plans.⁵⁸ The broad and divergent range of services and subsequent training needs is illustrated by two AmeriCorps projects in St. Louis, Missouri. One, a Safety Corps, provides mediation, conflict resolution, and problem-solving for inner-city neighborhoods, while also having a team trained in emergency response. Another, at the St. Louis Health Department, works in high-priority housing to protect children from lead poisoning.

A hallmark of excellence in training at the Corporation is the National Service Leadership Institute (the Institute). Corporation staff developed assessment tools and curricula based upon competencies needed for National Service. It was designed to develop leaders in the entire field of service and volunteerism. The Institute conducts unique and quality leadership training that is in high demand. Corporation staff receives far more training requests from the field than they can fulfill. Since its inception in 1995, over 4,000 service leaders have participated in these programs. Cost-sharing has been used to expand training opportunities for the field. Staff is unable to expand training due to limited funds and a lack of statutory authority to charge fees.

“A hallmark of excellence in training at the Corporation... The National Service Leadership Institute conducts unique and quality leadership training that is in high demand.”

Strengthen the Corporation as a laboratory for innovation by developing initiatives that help prepare new ways to address pressing national needs through service.



Evaluation

Research is key to strengthening service. Twenty to 30 Corporation-sponsored evaluations are conducted annually, and each one answers a number of carefully designed questions. The studies range from descriptive topics to outcome studies and include all Corporation programs. Evaluations suggest that Corporation programs are successful in providing communities with valuable services and meet community needs. While short-term information is valuable, little is known about the long-term effects of National Service. Most recently, a longitudinal study of AmeriCorps was started. The study tracks the lives of more than 1,000 AmeriCorps members to learn whether National Service enhances civic engagement. The first results from the study will be available early in 2001.

This longitudinal study can give the Corporation important information about the effect of service on AmeriCorps members. Other important questions will still remain about National Service. Evaluations have not yet been developed, for example, to learn the qualities of teams that make them successful and to identify the arenas in which teams are most effective. Likewise, we do not yet know which training has the greatest effect on helping members become better citizens. These and more questions should and could be answered by evaluations, yet finances have restricted the amount of research being done.

The Corporation uses another evaluation strategy; the National Service Fellows Program gives 12 awards for evaluation projects that further the mission of the Corporation and service. In three years, 36 projects have been completed by Fellows on a range of topics

such as Partnerships that Work, Service to Citizenship, Inclusion: An Activity Guide to Inclusion of People with Disabilities, and National Service and the Internet: Building Bridges to Collaboration.

Strategies for Improvement

In short, interactive and relevant training and technical assistance are essential for the further expansion of National Service. Research and evaluation must answer critical questions and engage new partners. The Board of Directors believes the Corporation must pursue a number of strategies in this area, including:

1. ***Expand support for training and technical assistance at both the national and the state level. Further support a strategy of having states provide training in support of all National Service programs.***
2. ***Expand the National Service Leadership Institute to cover programs and organizations other than grantees of the Corporation and allow it to charge fees. Such expansion requires legislative changes.***
3. ***Increase research funding to answer questions about innovations in service that help the nation address community problems and inform about those who serve.***

7 RECOMMENDATION

Initiate more performance and accountability studies on what differences the Corporation's programs make over the long term in promoting service at the local, state, and national levels.

Accountability and quality performance are essential for national and community service to thrive. While governments and nonprofit organizations do not have the "market test" to determine success, other measures exist to support efficiency and accountability. They must be further defined, accepted, and understood by the public and used to measure ongoing progress.

Areas of Success

Over time, the emphasis of the Corporation has evolved from running programs to providing training and technical assistance, setting standards, conducting evaluations, and monitoring quality. It has steadily devolved a greater number of functions to the local level. Operational structures and safeguards are being put in place for different programs to operate both effectively and with greater autonomy.

To ensure accountability, the Corporation—with the strong involvement of the Board, and based upon the recommendations of the Inspector General—developed an action plan to correct financial management weaknesses and strengthen general management. A new financial management system, Momentum, was adopted that significantly strengthened all aspects of financial management. The new system, operational for a year, gives the Corporation improved controls over financial management processes, more accurate and timely information, and better reporting capabilities. Implementation of the overall action plan continues.

In addition, as a result of criticism concerning high costs of AmeriCorps programs during the first couple of years of the program, the Corporation successfully reduced costs for AmeriCorps*State and National members. The average annual budgeted cost from the Corporation per member is now below

RECOMMENDATION 7

Initiate more performance and accountability studies on what differences the Corporation's programs make over the long term in promoting service at the local, state, and national levels.



\$15,000, according to a GAO study.⁵⁹ Cost reductions were accomplished by ceilings set on average budgeted costs for grants, increases in grantee match requirements, and expansion of the Education Awards program.

The Corporation established a set of Administrative Standards with input from State Service Commissions. The Standards were developed as guidelines of efficiency and effectiveness. They provide quality measures and establish basic competencies of operations specific to State Service Commissions. The Standards also give states a mechanism for self-assessment. Six State Service Commissions were assessed in 1999; the rest will be reviewed in the next three years. The Standards, and other measures that the Corporation uses to determine capacity, indicate that State Service Commissions fall along a grid similar to the bell curve used by educators. The majority has an average performance, although stars can be found, as can low-achievers.

The Corporation has a complex system for measuring performance that was put in place as part of the Government and Performance Results Act of 1993 (GPRA). The most recent annual performance plan, submitted to Congress in February 1999, details the outputs and outcomes of each of the Corporation's programs and describes the measures in detail.^e The Board recognizes the need for further improvements to these measures, focusing still more on the outcomes of programs.

As part of the spotlight on results, the National Senior Service Corps adopted an outcomes-based programming approach, called Programming for Impact. Measuring for impact was always part of AmeriCorps, yet

prior to becoming part of the Corporation, the senior programs concentrated more on those who served than on outcomes. Service sites and volunteer counts were the primary measures of accomplishment. Earlier approaches were replaced with outcomes and performance measures that emphasize volunteer contributions to communities. Guidance to support the changes was added, such as new program regulations, field manuals, spending plans, and progress monitoring.

The Corporation uses a variety of other means to help grantees achieve tangible results in the community and ensure adequate measures of quality. Learn and Serve grants, for instance, each have sets of objectives for which recipients are accountable. Grantees are expected to describe their impact in concrete terms. Evaluation assistance is available to support local efforts to assess whether goals are being met.

Two examples show the variation with which grantees can report on accomplishments. In the Senior Corps, by the end of 1999, projects reported that 32 percent of the RSVP volunteers were serving in outcome-based assignments in local communities. One project in Washington State reduces gang violence by creating a safe place for gang members. The project, called the Neutral Zone, is open late at night and early in the morning. Gang members are encouraged to come study, play pool, or watch TV. AmeriCorps members provide tutoring and support. Every night, 200-300 children stop in. Since the project began, juvenile booking has gone down by 48 percent; gang activity in the area dropped 91 percent; bookings for graffiti were eliminated; and long-term suspensions in school went down by 25 percent.⁶⁰

^e All Corporation documents related to the GPRA are available on the web at www.nationalservice.org

Whether projects report on an annual or multiyear basis, one of the major challenges facing programs is their sustainability. Can states and communities continue projects having a high impact if Federal funds are not available? The Corporation has established sustainability as a priority, but the evidence of effectiveness is incomplete. Further, while the planning process helps an organization determine strategies for sustaining the programs, the outcome is different in varying communities. In one community, developing a strong sustainable program may take three years, while in another, eight. Volunteers may be more easily recruited in one area than another. There is no set formula for sustaining service in all communities.

Strong evidence of sustainability was demonstrated by AmeriCorps*VISTA, whose members have as a basic objective the development of sustainable activities in low-income communities. One study in 1997 showed that 3,368 VISTA members “helped projects generate an additional \$37 million in cash funding (\$11,000 was the average)... and recruited a total of 140,600 volunteers across all program areas.” The greatest number of community volunteers recruited and largest amounts of cash raised were in the areas of housing/homeless and education.⁶¹

The Gaston Literacy Council's AmeriCorps*VISTA project in North Carolina is one example of effective plans to sustain a project. VISTA members were “to develop and institutionalize a work-based literacy program,” a school-based program, and a second office in Belmont. The group more than met their goals with one year remaining. Teachers reported that students had higher self-esteem and a reduction in behavior problems, as well as an increase in reading skills. In addition, community awareness of illiteracy was greater, and the school programs were already institutionalized, with volunteers recruited and serving.⁶² Another VISTA project in Boston demonstrates a different angle in the development of private sector resources. Working Capital establishes peer-lending groups for small loans and other support

to low-income entrepreneurs. The program also creates a strategy for low-income entrepreneurs to work together. Two VISTA members conduct outreach, supervise peer lending groups, and develop and conduct training. Outcomes for the project include business sustainability, increases in annual sales, profits, and customers and job creation.

The above projects illustrate the ability of AmeriCorps*VISTA members to mobilize private-sector resources. And, while the short-term accomplishments are significant, information is not available on the long-term impact of AmeriCorps*VISTA or AmeriCorps*State and National. Answers to such questions will help the Corporation better establish what promotes service in the long run.

Strategies for Accountability

The Corporation's Board of Directors believes that three strategies will continue the Corporation's emphasis on strong accountability for its activities:

1. ***Increase support for longitudinal research, including studies that address the sustainability of National Service programs at local, state, and national levels.***
2. ***Expand outcome-based programming under the National Senior Service Corps programs.***
3. ***Continue the focus on outcomes and use of quality indicators and standards in all programs.***

“One project in Washington State reduces gang violence by creating a safe place for gang members... juvenile booking has gone down by 48 percent; gang activity in the area dropped 91 percent; bookings for graffiti were eliminated; and long-term suspensions in school went down by 25 percent.”

RECOMMENDATION

Increase use of emerging information technology to connect the widespread, diverse elements of the service community, to perform administrative and financial functions, to customize and distribute information, and to strengthen program coordination and efficiency.

Information technology is one way to further promote decentralization and reduce layers of management. It also has the potential to promote efficiency in financial, grant, and information systems at the Corporation. Technology can also enhance quality by enabling real-time comparison with standards and with the State Service Commissions and programs situated elsewhere. Advances in information systems require a commitment of time, resources, and consideration of the different levels of technological sophistication among grantees.

Areas of Success

Within available resources, the Corporation has made a number of investments to further this strategy. For example, the Web-Based Reporting System was developed to track

AmeriCorps member enrollment, service hour reports, and exit forms. The Corporation has worked with State Service Commissions on the new electronic system to enhance management of the National Service Trust. In addition, data were digitally imaged for the National Service Trust. Piloted in 1999, the system was fully implemented in 2000: 48 states, 32 National Direct grantees, and 15 Education Awards programs.

System improvements were also implemented for the older programs. The installation and revision of new budget tracking software for use by Senior Corps was accompanied by the development of a database for managing project progress and volunteer activity. Electronic communication improvements accelerated use of the Senior Corps Intranet as a repository of comprehensive information.

Reporting tools and systems were developed for Corporation state offices, and data collection was streamlined. Support and assistance are provided to project directors in all programs.

The Web-Based Reporting System allowed the Corporation to improve operations. This is only one step, although an important one. The Corporation's goal is to increase speed, accountability, and information access across all systems. The Corporation's web page has at least 10,000 visitors daily, and more than two million hits each month (75,000 daily). Recruitment on the World Wide Web is limited now; however, plans exist to expand use of the Web for recruitment. Technology has the potential to transform each of these systems and support greater efficiency with all Corporation programs. Real-time information about programs, members, and their accomplishments will also enable all involved to identify problems and implement solutions quickly. For example, under-enrollment in all programs within a state might call for immediate changes to statewide recruitment efforts.

These information technology advancements take time, resources, and a commitment on the part of the Corporation and Congress, since State Commissions and grantees are at different phases of technological preparedness.

Strategies for Improvement

The Board of Directors is strongly committed to increasing the Corporation's use of emerging information technology to connect the service community, customize and distribute information, and enhance training and quality. To maximize efficiency, the Corporation needs to:

1. ***Advance the use of technology in administrative, grant, and financial functions.***
2. ***Strengthen program coordination and efficiency through organized and regular expansion of technology.***
3. ***Provide on-line connectivity for State Commissions and programs to enable timely peer-group comparison and analysis.***

"The Corporation's web page has at least 10,000 visitors daily, and more than two million hits each month (75,000 daily)."



RECOMMENDATION 9

Devolve even greater authority to the states and other Corporation grantees, while working with Congress to ensure accountability by setting standards and monitoring progress in meeting those standards, and building capacity within the states.



As noted earlier, National Service requires partnerships among the civic, corporate, and governmental sectors at all levels. The Corporation emphasizes a strategic vision of service that links varied sectors, shares resources, and ensures accountability for program results.

State Service Commissions are a centerpiece of National Service administration, and the National and Community Service Act provides for extensive state control of AmeriCorps programs. One-third of AmeriCorps grant funds pass through to states by formula, and another third are distributed competitively among states. Additionally, states have a major role in the distribution of training and technical assistance funds. Success in the Corporation's mission requires a corresponding expansion in the capacity of state and local organizations. While the promotion of service in

the United States is as old as the country, knowledge about how to increase National Service in ways that have maximum impact is relatively new and requires greater attention. The extent to which the Corporation can devolve authority to State Service Commissions depends on their ability to manage expanding workloads. Strong and stable State Service Commissions exist, as do their weaker counterparts. Some Commissions have funds and capacity for all of the roles envisioned for them, while others need Corporation support for such functions. For example, some Commissions conduct regular needs assessments and ensure a wide range of training for Corporation programs in their state. Others need help for such responsibility. Most State Service Commissions now collect data that helps them complete program evaluations on a small scale. Some states need help with this task.

By statute, the State Service Commissions are responsible for the preparation of comprehensive National Service plans for the states. Each State Service Commission reflects the breadth of the service environment in its state, with members appointed by Governors and representing youth, older persons, community-based agencies, education, local government, labor organizations, businesses, and others involved in service. State Service Commissions are also bipartisan, with no more than 50 percent of their membership from one political party.

The Board of Directors supports continuing to strengthen State Service Commissions, and other grantees, as entities that administer increasingly devolved National Service program authorities. Increased resources, at both the Federal and state levels, should be made available for this purpose.

Areas of Success

A major initiative to underpin the Corporation's commitment to devolution is the application of comprehensive State Administrative Standards. The Standards were developed by the Corporation with input from a representative group of State Service Commission members and staff to ensure that essential functions of a commission are properly carried out. Among other areas, the Standards include planning, grant making, program monitoring, training and technical assistance, records and reporting, and financial management. The initiative is important for building State Service Commission capacity. Administrative Standards reviews will be completed for all states by the end of 2002.

The Board of Directors also supports broadening cooperation and state involvement in the administration of Corporation programs beyond the AmeriCorps*State program. Toward that end, the Corporation continues to strengthen the Unified State

Planning process for service programs, a collaborative undertaking involving State Service Commissions, state education agencies, Corporation offices located in states, and other elements of the service community such as the United Way and Volunteer Centers. The Board of Directors encourages co-location of Corporation and State Service Commission offices.

Strategies for Improvement

The Corporation is committed to devolving further authority to the states and other grantees. Existing mechanisms must first be strengthened to ensure accountability to high standards of performance. This will be possible only by collaborative efforts among the State Service Commissions, other state and local agencies, and the Corporation. Three major strategies form the basis of the Board of Director's approach:

1. **Increase resources, at Federal and state levels, to strengthen support of State Service Commissions.**
2. **Streamline grant and program review through a meaningful state planning process.**
3. **Increase the use of technology to monitor and support program performance and State Service Commissions.**

“While the promotion of service in the United States is as old as the country, knowledge about how to increase National Service in ways that have maximum impact is relatively new and requires greater attention.”

10 RECOMMENDATION

To implement the preceding recommendations most effectively, the Board recommends amending the statute that created the Corporation to enhance its ability to act as a Government corporation, overseen by a bipartisan Board of Directors, with the responsibility for policy-making, for appointing and retaining the Chief Executive Officer, and for consulting with the CEO regarding the appointment and retention of senior staff.

The Corporation for National Service is a corporation that is owned by the Federal Government. Its structure was conceived to enhance its business practices by providing more flexibility in procurement, personnel, and similar business areas than is typically possible in a Federal agency. Additionally, the structure was intended to communicate a businesslike character and to make the Corporation attractive as a partner with the nonprofit and private sectors.

Areas of Success

As envisioned by the Corporation's legislation, the Corporation's Board of Directors has successfully pursued an activist course since its inception. This has included setting the Corporation's strategic plan; overseeing an active business agenda, including the sound stewardship of public resources; and communicating with the American public about the value and importance of service.

Areas for Improvement

Challenges remain, however, to carrying out the full intent behind the creation of a Government-owned Corporation. By statute, the Corporation's Board of Directors has only narrowly limited policy authorities, including approval of the strategic, annual, and evaluation plans; approval of certain grants, allotments, contracts, financial assistance, payments, and positions; receiving reports of the Inspector General; and advising the President and the Congress on developments in National Service. Also, the Board has no formal role in the selection of a Chief Executive Officer and the approval of senior staff.

The limited nature of these authorities restrains the Board's ability to provide and oversee the kind of consistent policy direction for the Corporation that should appropriately rest with a corporate Board of Directors, as well as ensure responsiveness by officers of the Corporation to that direction.

The Board believes its role should be expanded to encompass a clear mandate for establishing policy generally for the Corporation; for appointing and assessing the performance of the Corporation's Chief Executive Officer; and, through the CEO, for overseeing the appointment process for the Corporation's other senior policy officials. This change will have several significant benefits:

- Clear accountability is set for policymaking and oversight rather than splitting various aspects of these functions between the Board of Directors, the Chief Executive Officer, and others.
- Clear policy direction exists. The Chief Executive Officer takes policy direction from the bipartisan Board of Directors.
- An emphasis is placed on the Corporation's nonpartisanship. Under the current statute, the Corporation's key officers (the Chief Executive Officer, two Managing Directors, the Chief Financial Officer, and

the Inspector General) are appointed by the President, with Senate confirmation, and are part of the President's administration.

- A stronger and energized Board is in place. The changes will energize the Board of Directors and allow their knowledge and experience to be broadly and consistently applied to the Corporation's business affairs.

Under this structure, the Corporation and its bipartisan Board will develop stronger consulting and reporting relationships with the President and the Congress, particularly with regard to the annual budget.

Strategies for Improvement

The Board of Directors therefore recommends that Congress and the President:

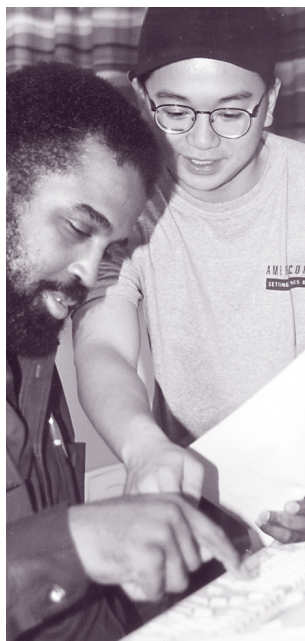
1. **Expand the Board of Directors' role in establishing policy for the Corporation.**
2. **Allow the Board to appoint and assess the performance of the Corporation's CEO, and through the CEO, to oversee the appointment of the Corporation's other senior policy officials.**

"The Board believes its role should be expanded to encompass a clear mandate for establishing policy generally for the Corporation..."



21ST CENTURY INTO THE 21ST CENTURY

Service can become a common expectation in the 21st century. The Corporation for National Service has an important role to play in realizing that goal. Implementing the Recommendations will mean opportunities for increased service by individuals of all ages and backgrounds and through diverse organizations. Some of the Recommendations propose legislative changes to help reduce barriers to participation. Others urge increased incentives to those who volunteer and to the communities in which they serve. Implementing some of the Recommendations will allow the Corporation to harness technology to expand service, and still others emphasize accountability as key to the Corporation's future.



One theme links all of the Recommendations: National Service is an important means to address significant local needs, and while strengthening communities, service also improves the lives of those who serve. This report also recognizes the limits of singular solutions to problems in America, and the need for collaborative efforts to resolve complex social concerns. Now and in the future, the Corporation for National Service will act as a catalyst to help communities solve problems and to create alliances across all sectors.

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APPENDIX A

CORPORATION PROGRAMS

Through Corporation-supported local programs and projects, more than two million committed participants, volunteers, and service corps members work to address the nation's unmet, critical needs in the environment, education, public safety, and other areas.

The Corporation's programs are designed to lay a foundation for heightened civic involvement with recipients and contributors in service as diverse in every sense: from race and ethnicity to gender and age. These programs offer a range of service opportunities, including: service-learning experiences for students at all grade levels, from elementary schools through college; full-time and substantial part-time service to the country for one or two years in one of the AmeriCorps programs; and service opportunities for those age 55 years and older in the National Senior Service Corps programs and demonstration projects.

Service cannot occur in a vacuum. Substantial contributions of service, especially, require support and incentives for participants. These allow and encourage participants to commit their time and energy to service—creating both better citizens and communities. The full- or substantial part-time service opportunities offered by AmeriCorps are supported by modest financial incentives, similar to the Peace Corps. Other incentives, like scholarships, education awards, and training, have helped link the taking of responsibility for one's community with individual opportunity. In the Senior Corps, modest financial incentives help offset the costs of volunteering. Through Corporation-sponsored programs, individuals serve in nonprofit and public organizations to advance their missions. A mix of resources, including funds from the nonprofit organization in which the individual serves, supports participation with these agencies.

AMERICORPS

AmeriCorps engages thousands of Americans, age 17 and over, in community service and provides education awards in exchange for their service. The service comes through the hundreds of local, state, and national organizations across the nation with whom AmeriCorps forms partnerships to involve people in results-driven community service. Members who serve full time for a year receive education awards worth \$4,725. The Corporation's National Service Trust pays the awards as vouchers. They may be redeemed, within seven years, at institutions of higher education to either pay for current education costs or to pay down loans incurred in previous enrollments in school. AmeriCorps members can earn, at the most, the equivalent of two full-time education awards.

*AmeriCorps has three divisions. First, there are state and local programs that make up AmeriCorps*State and National. Second, the Corporation for National Service operates the AmeriCorps*National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC), a full-time residential service program. Third, AmeriCorps*VISTA is an anti-poverty program with a 30-year history of helping low-income communities.*

*AmeriCorps members earn an education award when they successfully complete a term of service (not including those members of AmeriCorps*VISTA who choose to earn the cash stipend). Across all three branches of AmeriCorps, 77 percent of the members successfully completed a term of service in fiscal 1999 to earn the education award.*

APPENDIX A

AmeriCorps Enrollments for the Education Award Program Years 1994-1995 through 1999-2000

PROGRAM YEAR	ENROLLMENTS
1994 -1995	25,121
1995 -1996	25,190
1996 -1997	25,205
1997 -1998	39,703
1998 -1999	40,224
1999 -2000 (incomplete)	38,285
TOTAL	193,728

Number of Education Awards and Their Value Program Years 1994-1995 through 1999-2000

PROGRAM YEAR	NUMBER WHO EARNED AWARD	VALUE OF AWARDS
1994 -1995	18,788	\$ 62,760,987
1995 -1996	18,418	71,448,914
1996 -1997	18,197	71,189,984
1997 -1998 (incomplete data) ^a	26,545	96,203,081
1998 -1999 (incomplete)	25,519	92,153,043
1999 -2000 (incomplete)	14,518	43,535,124
TOTAL	121,985	\$443,291,133

^a Data change in the National Service Trust very quickly. These are figures in the National Service Trust database as of September 19, 2000.

AmeriCorps*State and National

- **Program Elements.** The kinds of National Service programs that can be supported with Corporation funds under the legislation authorizing *AmeriCorps*State and National* are extensive, including community corps, full-time youth corps programs, programs emphasizing individual placements, campus-based programs, professional corps, intergenerational programs, and others. Local service programs are run by not-for-profit organizations, local and state government entities, Indian tribes, institutions of higher education, local school and police districts, and partnerships. Programs may not engage participants in lobbying, support religious activities, or take part in partisan political activity. Seven key principles are the foundation of *AmeriCorps*State and National*: (1) Competition: Competition is healthy and ensures that quality programs are funded. (2) Responsibility: Local responsibility and authority rests primarily with community organizations and states. (3) Impact: Service needs to result in demonstrable impact. (4) Value: Results must exceed resources expended. (5) Nonpartisan: Service is good for America and needs to be a common expectation of every citizen. (6) Volunteer efforts in existence: National Service needs to connect with established volunteer programs. (7) Face of America: National Service brings together people from different backgrounds and walks of life.
- **Level of Participation.** Members must be at least 17 years of age. While the Corporation may provide help with applicant referrals to local programs, recruitment, selection, and placement are the responsibility of the grantees. Full-time members must serve at least 1,700 hours over a 7- to 12-month period to earn an education award worth \$4,725. Members may also serve part time for one or more years to qualify for a partial or full education award. In the 1998-99 program year, for *AmeriCorps*State and National*, there were more than 33,000 members (including Education Award Program members) serving in 593 direct grant-supported programs. *AmeriCorps*State and National* members may receive a subsistence stipend (in fiscal 2000, approximately \$9,000 for full-time members, of which the Corporation pays 85 percent) and benefits.
- **Types of Service.** Services range from tutoring children in preschool programs to serving in community policing programs to rehabilitating housing for the homeless. In a sample of accomplishments from 1997-98, *AmeriCorps*State and National* members taught over 486,000 students and provided health-related information to more than 1.5 million individuals.
- **Funding.** Two-thirds of the Federal funds appropriated for *AmeriCorps*State and National* goes to the states, to be managed by the State Commission on National Service appointed by the governor in each state. One-half of the Federal funds distributed to states are determined by formula. One-half is distributed to states through a national competition. These funds are managed by the State Commission on National Service, which is also primarily responsible for the local programs, ensuring their compliance with Federal laws and regulations and the quality of programming. The remaining one-third of the Federal funding for *AmeriCorps*State and National* goes to regional and national nonprofit organizations, although since 1996 this amount has been capped below that level through the appropriations process. The grantees receiving *AmeriCorps*State and National* funding must contribute a substantial amount of matching funds in order to qualify for Federal support. *AmeriCorps*State and National* received \$237 million in fiscal 1999 and \$234 million in fiscal 2000.

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AmeriCorps*National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC)

- **Program Elements.** *AmeriCorps*NCCC* is a full-time, residential service program that combines the best practices of the military and of the many civilian service and conservation corps going back to the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) of the 1930s. Members live and train at one of five campuses. In three locations they occupy closed or downsized military bases: San Diego, California; Aurora, Colorado; and Charleston, South Carolina. In Perry Point, Maryland, the *AmeriCorps*NCCC* campus is at a veteran's medical center. In Washington, DC, the campus is at a municipal facility. Former or retired members of the Armed Forces are represented throughout the *AmeriCorps*NCCC* staffing structure. *AmeriCorps*NCCC* conducts service projects in partnership with local and state sponsors whose applications for project support must meet criteria targeted at encouraging community involvement.
- **Level of Participation.** *AmeriCorps*NCCC* members are between the ages of 18 and 24 and serve full time in a team-based structure for a 10-month period. Corporation staff for *AmeriCorps*NCCC* manages recruitment, selection, and placement of all members. In fiscal 1999, 871 members completed 478 projects in 49 states and Puerto Rico and assisted citizens on 53 disaster relief projects. *AmeriCorps*NCCC* members receive a \$4,000 annual living allowance, room and board, and earn an education award at the successful completion of their service.
- **Types of Service.** *AmeriCorps*NCCC* member service has a special focus on environmental issues and disaster relief. As a national program *AmeriCorps*NCCC* serves communities throughout the United States. When *AmeriCorps*NCCC* service takes the members beyond the immediate area of the campuses, they call the project a "spike." The term is borrowed from the Civilian Conservation Corps, referring to the spikes used in securing tents to the ground. Members serve in state and national forests, building trails and providing fire mitigation services. In urban areas, *AmeriCorps*NCCC* members develop environmentally sound habitats and help citizens use energy more efficiently. Members have served in disasters, from providing flood relief to fighting fires. Service activities also include tutoring children, rehabilitating public schools and public housing in urban areas, and providing assistance in daily living activities to low-income residents of nursing homes.
- **Funding.** *AmeriCorps*NCCC* is operated by the Corporation for National Service and is a fully federally funded program. Some costs for lodging and food associated with "spikes" and project supplies and materials are offset by sponsor support. *AmeriCorps*NCCC* received an annual appropriation of \$18 million in fiscal 1999 and 2000.

AmeriCorps*VISTA

- **Program Elements.** For 35 years, *AmeriCorps*VISTA* members have been serving disadvantaged communities. The program increases the capability of people to improve their lives. Members of *AmeriCorps*VISTA* create programs that continue after they complete their service. *AmeriCorps*VISTA* members may choose to receive a lump sum cash payment at the end of their service instead of the education award. Those who choose this option, about 40 percent of the *AmeriCorps*VISTA* members, receive \$100 for each month of service.
- **Levels of Participation.** Members must be at least 18 years old, with no upper age limit. They serve full-time for at least one year; the average length of service is about 18 months. *AmeriCorps*VISTA* keeps track of service levels in terms of “volunteer service years,” which are equal to one member serving full time for 12 months. In fiscal 1999, *AmeriCorps*VISTA* members completed 5,481 service years through appropriated funds on almost 1,200 projects nationwide. *AmeriCorps*VISTA* members receive a yearly stipend that will average approximately \$9,000 in fiscal year 2001.
- **Types of Service.** *AmeriCorps*VISTA*'s main activities involve strengthening and expanding the capacity of local organizations to address the needs of low-income communities in the following program emphasis areas—education, health and nutrition, housing and homelessness, community and economic development, public safety, the environment, and technology. Evaluations have shown that *AmeriCorps*VISTA* members generate support for project activities averaging \$24,000 per member and recruit an average of 42 volunteers to support projects.
- **Funding.** *AmeriCorps*VISTA* members serve in local organizations that, while not required to provide matching funds, must absorb the cost of training, supervision, and logistical support. In fiscal 1999, *AmeriCorps*VISTA* received an appropriation of \$73.0 million, and in fiscal 2000 an appropriation of \$80.6 million. In addition to these Federal funds, *AmeriCorps*VISTA* promotes “cost-share” arrangements with project sponsors, in which sponsors reimburse the Federal Government for the direct support costs of the *AmeriCorps*VISTA* members. In fiscal 1999, over 200 sponsoring organizations generated more than \$5 million to pay for cost shares.

APPENDIX A

LEARN AND SERVE AMERICA

Learn and Serve America provides young people with opportunities to connect community service experiences with academic learning, personal growth, and civic responsibility. *Learn and Serve America* does this through service-learning, a method for integrating service into the curriculum to enhance student academic achievement and personal skills and to connect youth to their communities. In addition, service-learning strengthens educational institutions through structured service activities that meet community needs. Two features distinguish service-learning from other forms of community service and volunteering. First, service-learning facilitates learning about the issues—the historical, sociological, and cultural contexts—behind the community needs the students are addressing. Secondly, service-learning is a reciprocal activity. The act of giving *and* receiving is important because both parties in the service relationship learn from each other.

Learn and Serve America provides funds to schools, universities, and community organizations. These grantees must create new programs, replicate existing programs, or provide training and professional development to staff, faculty, and volunteers. Participants in school- and community-based programs range in age from 5 to 17, while college students participate through both undergraduate and graduate programs.

- **Program Elements.** Service-learning programs are coordinated locally through partnerships between schools and community organizations and are administered by state educational agencies, State Commissions, nonprofit organizations, and institutions of higher education. Programs typically have three basic components: academic preparation (classes and other structured situations that prepare students for service); community service (activities that students do in communities to fulfill needs); and reflection (an opportunity for students to relate their service experience to their personal and academic learning).

- **Level of Participation.** In fiscal 1999, the school- and community-based programs enrolled more than 750,000 students in service-learning activities. In that same year, college and university programs supported by *Learn and Serve America* engaged approximately 30,000 students. The students receive no pay for their efforts but may receive credit in school.
- **Types of Service.** Students work with the community to identify needs and determine appropriate service activities. Projects meet the four National Service priority needs, and may include schools, hospitals, nursing homes, community recreation centers, daycare centers, parks, and human service agencies of all types. The intensity of service varies from a few hours each semester to 20 hours a week.
- **Funding.** *Learn and Serve America* grants funds to state government entities and national nonprofit organizations. They in turn make subgrants for local service-learning programs. In addition, *Learn and Serve America* grants funds directly to institutions of higher education. State educational agencies receive funds from *Learn and Serve America* through a population-based formula. Nonprofit organizations, State Commissions, and institutions of higher education receive funds through a national competitive process. All grantees must demonstrate an increasing level of matching funds to qualify for continued Federal support. Congress provided \$43 million annually for *Learn and Serve America* in fiscal years 1999 and 2000.

NATIONAL SENIOR SERVICE CORPS

The *National Senior Service Corps* brings the skill, energy, and creativity of half a million older Americans, age 55 and over, to bear on important community problems through its three programs—the *Foster Grandparent Program (FGP)*, the *Senior Companion Program (SCP)*, and the *Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)*. Much of the focus within the National Senior Service Corps is on its initiative to implement “Programming for Impact.” This is the Senior Corps’ new programming approach that enhances the “service” side of senior service. It calls for projects to measure accomplishments and impacts or outcomes that occur as a result of volunteer efforts.

Foster Grandparent Program

- **Program Elements.** Since 1965, the *Foster Grandparent Program* has provided valuable aid to children and youth with exceptional needs. *Foster Grandparents* serve 20 hours a week and receive stipends set at \$2.55 an hour. *Foster Grandparents* must be age 60 or above and low-income. In addition to the stipend, they receive accident, liability, and automobile insurance, if needed, as coverage during their assignments.
- **Levels of Participation.** In fiscal 1999, more than 28,000 *Foster Grandparents* served in 333 local projects. These participants provided service to more than 180,000 children with special and exceptional needs.
- **Types of Service.** *Foster Grandparents* serve in schools, hospitals, drug treatment centers, correctional institutions, and Head Start and daycare centers. *Foster Grandparents* help children who have been abused or neglected, mentor troubled teenagers and young mothers, and care for premature infants and children with physical disabilities.

- **Funding.** Local sponsors apply to the Corporation for grants to operate *Foster Grandparents Programs*. In fiscal 1999 appropriations totaled \$93.2 million and in fiscal 2000, \$96.0 million. In fiscal 1999, non-Federal contributions were \$36.9 million.

Senior Companion Program

- **Program Elements.** *Senior Companions* provide assistance to frail, homebound individuals, most of them elderly. These clients have difficulties with daily living tasks and *Senior Companions* help them retain their dignity and independence. The *Senior Companion Program*, like the *Foster Grandparent Program*, provides low-income eligible persons, age 60 and over, the opportunity to serve those in need. *Senior Companions* receive the same stipend and insurance as *Foster Grandparents* and serve 20 hours a week.
- **Levels of Participation.** In fiscal 1999, approximately 15,000 *Senior Companions* were in service, through 207 projects, with more than 41,000 clients each day.
- **Types of Service.** In 20 hours of service each week, *Senior Companions* help homebound clients with chores such as paying bills, buying groceries, and finding transportation to medical appointments. *Senior Companions* receive training in how to assist those with Alzheimer’s disease, stroke, diabetes, and mental health—and alert doctors and family members to potential health problems.
- **Funding.** Similar to *Foster Grandparents*, local sponsors apply to the Corporation for funds to operate *Senior Companion* projects. In fiscal 1999, the program was funded at \$36.6 million and in fiscal 2000 at \$39.2 million. In fiscal 1999, non-Federal contributions were \$24.1 million.

APPENDIX A

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program

- **Program Elements.** The *Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)*, one of the largest volunteer efforts in the nation, matches older Americans who are willing to help with local problems. *RSVP* volunteers choose how and where they want to serve. They determine how many hours a week they can serve. *RSVP* volunteers do not receive any stipend, but the *RSVP* project may reimburse them for some out-of-pocket costs associated with their service activities. In addition, *RSVP* provides insurance coverage for volunteers while on assignment.
- **Levels of Participation.** Each year more than 460,000 older Americans, age 55 and over, provide community service through the sponsorship of more than 760 local *RSVP* projects. In fiscal 1999, they provided almost 78 million hours of service to 67,000 organizations. The amount of service provided by an individual can vary from a few hours a month to almost full time, with the average hours of service being about four hours a week.
- **Types of Service.** *RSVP* volunteers, who serve through nonprofit organizations, organize neighborhood watch programs, tutor children, renovate homes, teach English to immigrants, program computers, help people recover from natural disasters, serve as museum docents—and whatever else their skills and interests lead them to do to meet the needs of their community.
- **Funding.** In fiscal 1999, *RSVP* received \$43.0 million. In fiscal 2000, appropriations totaled \$46.1 million. Non-Federal contributions were over \$44 million in fiscal 1999; this represented a match of \$1.13 for every dollar invested in *RSVP*.

APPENDIX B

STRATEGIC PLAN FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

To enable the Board to make recommendations about the future of national and community service, input was gathered from the field and various stakeholders. Since August 1999, the Board of Directors and Corporation staff convened over 30 focus groups (called groups and the field, interchangeably) and disseminated six surveys, reaching more than 700 people (see the chart at the end of this appendix). In addition, the strategic plan was published for public comment in the Federal Register on September 28, 1999.

Each group followed a similar design. Sessions ran from one to two hours. Each session began with an explanation of the strategic plan, its importance, and the process and timeline. The key areas discussed about the Corporation were: (1) the mission and goals, (2) programs (AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and Learn and Serve), and (3) the role of the Corporation as a Federal agency in the service field. Due to time constraints and particular interests, some groups focused on specific topics.

This document summarizes feedback gathered around key topics from the groups.

I. MISSION OF THE CORPORATION

Overall, focus groups believe that the current mission of the Corporation is still appropriate and there is a need to continue the focus on helping to meet community needs. However, most think the mission statement needs to be shorter and concise, yet remain broad. Keeping the mission broad allows more discretion at the state and local levels. Yet, groups said that clearer definition is needed around language such as “strengthen the ties that bind us.” Some feel that we should avoid National Service jargon, and the mission statement and goals need to reach a broader audience. In addition, several groups expressed concern that the statement was AmeriCorps focused because of the reference to “educational opportunity.”

II. GETTING THINGS DONE VS. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT

The majority thinks that equal emphasis should be placed on getting things done and member development. They are linked and should go hand in hand. However, many people believe that getting things done is the first priority and would lead to member development. In addition, groups believed there needed to be more definition of the phrases: “What is meant by “member development,” “getting things done” and “strengthening communities?”

III. THE GOALS OF NATIONAL SERVICE

In general, people feel that the goals should remain broad to allow flexibility. It is important that they address both community needs and civic responsibility. In addition, many believe that they are difficult to measure and quantify in proposals and grants.

A. Help solve the nation's unmet, education, public safety, environmental, and other human needs.

Many feel that the Corporation's programs are helping meet these needs. However, an understanding needs to exist that programs do not “solve” needs but help “address” these needs.

B. Make communities stronger through service.

Most people like the emphasis on communities and service. However, there was widespread recognition of the difficulties of measuring this.

C. Improve the lives of those who serve through their service experience.

Most groups agree that member development is important. However, many question how lives will be improved—and think the improvement needs to be measurable. Many believe that it is the Corporation's responsibility to ensure that this is occurring, yet know it may vary by community.

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D. Make service a common expectation and experience of Americans as an integral part of civic responsibility.

The consensus of the groups is that there should be a large emphasis on this goal. Fostering civic responsibility is important. However, civic responsibility needs to be defined, since there is no agreement and the nature and scope is unclear to many people.

E. Develop and maintain sound organizational systems and effective partnerships with the wider National Service network.

Many recognize that this is not a goal—it is a means or strategy. The Corporation should be focused on building partnerships, institutionalizing National Service, and strengthening the service field.

IV. THE ROLE OF THE CORPORATION

There were several repeated ideas regarding the role of the Corporation. The groups believe that the Corporation should:

- A.** Continue to provide *basic support* for service programs.
- B.** Function as a *resource* and provide effective practices, common outcomes, and core measurements by issue area for states and programs.
- C.** Provide *training and technical assistance*. In particular, the State Service Commission Executive Directors believed that the Corporation should conduct regular orientation and training for new state executive directors and commission members. There should also be more training to the field about National Service and its benefits.
- D.** Help build *capacity*. Several groups feel that the Corporation should build the nonprofit capacity and the capacity of the states so that service opportunities can be carried out. In addition, the Corporation should serve as a catalyst to multiply volunteers through members.

E. Provide better *communication* internally and externally. More information about what is going on at headquarters is needed. Who is doing what?

F. Provide resources for *sustainability*. Groups believed the Corporation could help develop strong, sustainable non-profits. However, there needs to be more definition around sustainability.

G. Establish and maintain an *identity* for the Corporation and its programs.

V. PROMOTION OF SERVICE

Focus groups believe that it is the Corporation's (and the Federal Government's) role to promote service. The Corporation should create one face of service and increase education for those unaware of the Corporation and its programs (e.g., traditional volunteer sector, youth). Particularly, people think that more public relations and media efforts were needed on the part of the Corporation. A national identity needs to be created and supported to foster service and help make service a common expectation.

VI. COMMUNICATION

Almost all groups discussed the need for better communication and sharing of information. Some mentioned the use of technology to help in this area. Many expressed the desire for databases of information (e.g., listings of community partners, Corporation projects, AmeriCorps members) to network and get connected. For example, AmeriCorps*NCCC members would like a database of Corporation projects and alumni so that when they go into a new community, they can tap these resources. In addition, since the service community is widespread, with many serving in rural communities, the Corporation needs to provide the technology and resources (e.g., email) to stay electronically connected.

VII. FUNDING/FEDERAL SUPPORT

In general, the field believes that there is a continued need for all Corporation programs and that there is a good mix. The Corporation needs to continue to play the role of major funder of National Service opportunities. Groups had different ideas of where they want resources directed. However, there were several repeated themes and suggestions among the groups.

A. *Cross-Stream*

- Integrate the streams of service.
- Create a program/resource for the working age population.
- Achieve greater diversity of members and participants.

B. *AmeriCorps*

- Provide services for alumni.
- Expand AmeriCorps.

C. *Learn and Serve*

- Place greater emphasis on service-learning.
- Support youth in philanthropy.
- Provide more service opportunities for youth (e.g., a summer program).

D. *Senior Corps*

- Respond to the aging, active population.
- Expand Senior Corps to be more inclusive (i.e., change the age and income eligibility requirements).
- Provide more incentives for seniors.

VIII. INTEGRATION

Almost all groups stressed the importance of integration and the need for more resources directed towards achieving collaboration among the Corporation's programs. The current structure at headquarters and in the field promotes compartmentalization. The Corporation should take the lead in integrating the programs and providing the communication and technology (e.g., email)

to share information. A formal, institutionalized structure is needed from headquarters.

The Unified State Plan has been met with mixed results and feelings. The philosophy was good and brought people together on equal footing; however, it did not necessarily result in successful integration in all states. Future planning must have real consequences and promote greater integration.

IX. COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Groups believe that the Corporation should take an active role in forming and developing relationships with the service field and other organizations. They think that more partnerships need to be formed, specifically, with other Federal agencies, businesses, philanthropic foundations, and faith-based organizations.

X. DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

Some groups discussed devolution to the states. State Commission executive directors and the American Association of State Service Commissions (AASSC) feel that devolution would give greater authority to the states and help them develop stronger capacity. For devolution to be successful, the Corporation would need to set standards and competencies, provide resources and training, and develop clear direction and guidelines. Some groups feel that combining Corporation state offices and State Commissions would help with collaboration.

Some had reservations about giving more responsibilities and power to the states because some states are stronger than others. There is concern that some states, especially smaller ones, do not have the resources and mechanisms to make devolution successful.

APPENDIX B

STRATEGIC PLAN FOCUS GROUPS: August 1999 - September 2000

MEETING	DATE	ATTENDEES/STAKEHOLDERS	APPROX. NUMBER REACHED
Tribal Consultation Working Group Meeting (Mille Lacs Reservation, Minnesota)	August 17, 1999	Tribal Working Group	6
State Commission Executive Director Meeting (Washington, DC)	October 6, 1999	State Commission executive directors	50
AVA Conference (Chicago, IL)	November 12, 1999	Volunteer community	12
Southwest Cluster Program Directors Conference (Phoenix, AZ)	December 1, 1999	AmeriCorps grantees, program directors, and State Commission staff	20
Atlantic Cluster Conference (Philadelphia, PA)	December 1, 1999	Corporation field staff and commission staff	30
Headquarters Brown Bag Lunch (Washington, DC)	December 8, 1999	Corporation for National Service staff	40
AmeriCorps Alumni Meeting (Washington, DC)	December 8, 1999	AmeriCorps Alumni Association staff	2
Learn and Serve Grantee Conference (Washington, DC)	December 10, 1999	Learn and Serve grantees (K-12, Higher Ed, Community-based) and Learn and Serve staff	30
Service Center Directors Meeting (Washington, DC)	December 16, 1999	Corporation Service Center directors	6
Disability Conference (Albuquerque, NM)	January 25, 2000	Corporation grantees, state disability coordinators, and disability organizations	25
Headquarters Brown Bag Lunch (Washington, DC)	February 2, 2000	Corporation for National Service staff	30
AmeriCorps Leader Training (San Diego, CA)	February 5-8, 2000	AmeriCorps Leaders, AmeriCorps*VISTA Leaders, AmeriCorps members	50
T/TA Strategy Meeting of Corporation for National Service Environment Professionals (Washington, DC)	February 9-10, 2000	Directors of environmental programs	10
Service-Learning in Higher Education (Washington, DC)	February 17, 2000	Organizations represented included Univ. of MD, American Youth Policy Forum, Nat'l Assoc. of Public Affairs Administration, AAHE, American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, SFSU, CIC	20
Focus Group of Federal Government Agencies (Washington, DC)	February 18, 2000	Government agencies (U.S. Dept. of Ed., Peace Corps, FEMA, USDOJ, DOD, White House)	6
United Negro College Fund Technical Assistance Meeting (Charlotte, NC)	February 20, 2000	Learn and Serve Higher Ed grantees and project directors (historically black colleges and universities)	40
National Associations Board Meeting (Washington, DC)	March 7, 2000	Senior Corps grantees (FGP, SCP)	30

STRATEGIC PLAN FOCUS GROUPS: August 1999 - September 2000

MEETING	DATE	ATTENDEES/STAKEHOLDERS	APPROX. NUMBER REACHED
COOL (Campus Outreach Opportunity League) Conference (Manchester, NH)	March 9, 2000	AmeriCorps project directors and members	5
Illinois State-wide Conference of Senior Corps Project Directors (Champaign/Urbana, IL)	March 15, 2000	Senior Corps project directors/grantees (FGP, SCP, RSVP)	60
NYLC Conference (Rhode Island)	March 16, 2000	Learn and Serve participants (K-12, community-based) and Learn and Serve grantees (community-based)	40
Southern Cluster AmeriCorps*VISTA Supervisor Training (Atlanta, GA)	March 28, 2000	AmeriCorps*VISTA supervisors and sponsors	40
National Collaboration for Youth Program Support Group – a component of the National Assembly of National Health and Social Welfare Organizations (Washington, DC)	April 4, 2000	Senior staff from American Red Cross, Salvation Army, United Way, GSUSA, BSUSA, National 4-H, Boys and Girls Clubs, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, and Camp Fire	10
Focus Group with Youth Service America as convener (Washington, DC)	April 7, 2000	Youth Service America working group (organizations included United Way, American Red Cross, Center for Youth as Resources, Earth Force, Heads Up)	15
Western Regional Campus Compact Consortium (Seattle, WA)	April 12, 2000	Learn and Serve participants (Higher Ed)	20
Focus Group with AmeriCorps*NCCC Members (Washington, DC)	May 2, 2000	AmeriCorps*NCCC members and project leaders	20
Focus Group with American Association of State Service Commissions (AASSC) (Washington, DC)	May 12, 2000	State Commission executive directors (TX, IA, MT, MI, MO, MA)	6
Focus Group with National Interfaith Alliance (Washington, DC)	May 17, 2000	National Interfaith Alliance (organizations included Nat'l Council on Churches, Unitarian Church, National Baptist Convention)	6
Focus Group with T/TA Department (Washington, DC)	May 31, 2000	Corporation for National Service T/TA department	5
National Youth Summit (Orlando, FL)	June 24, 2000	Youth and youth commissioners	30
National Community Service Conference (Orlando, FL)	June 26, 2000	Corporation for National Service field staff, grantees, service field	70
Friends of VISTA (Washington, DC)	August 18, 2000	Friends of VISTA Board Members	6
Technical Assistance Provider Meeting (Washington, DC)	September 13, 2000	T/TA providers	40
Grant Makers Forum (Seattle, WA)	September 14, 2000	Foundations	10

APPENDIX C

CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL SERVICE ENACTED BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2000

PROGRAM	AMOUNT <i>(millions of dollars)</i>
<i>Authorized by National and Community Service Act:</i>	
National Service Trust	\$ 69.4
AmeriCorps Grants	234.0
Innovation, Assistance, and Other Activities	28.5
Evaluations	5.0
AmeriCorps*National Civilian Community Corps	17.9
Learn and Serve America	43.0
Program Administration and State Commissions	27.9
Points of Light Foundation	7.5
SUBTOTAL	\$ 433.2
Office of the Inspector General	\$ 4.0
<i>Authorized by the Domestic Volunteer Service Act:</i>	
AmeriCorps*Volunteers in Service to America	\$ 80.6
Retired and Senior Volunteer Program	46.1
Foster Grandparent Program	96.0
Senior Companion Program	39.2
Senior Demonstration Program	1.5
Program Administration	31.1
SUBTOTAL	\$ 294.5
TOTAL	\$ 731.7

APPENDIX D

A BRIEF HISTORY OF NATIONAL SERVICE

When faced with challenges, our nation has always relied on the dedication and action of citizens. The Corporation for National Service carries on a long tradition of citizen involvement by providing opportunities for Americans of all ages to improve their communities through service.

Following is a brief history of National Service.

1910

American philosopher William James envisions nonmilitary National Service in his essay *The Moral Equivalent of War*: "...instead of military conscription, a conscription of the whole youthful population to form for a certain number of years a part of the army enlisted against Nature, the injustice would tend to be evened out and numerous other goods of the Commonwealth would follow."

1933-1945

Through the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), created by Franklin D. Roosevelt, millions of young people serve terms of 6 to 18 months to help restore the nation's parks, revitalize the economy, and support their families and themselves.

President Harry Truman introduced the GI Bill linking service and education, offering Americans educational opportunity in return for service to their country.

1961

President John F. Kennedy establishes the Peace Corps, with authorizing legislation approved by Congress on September 22, 1961. President Kennedy says, "The wisdom of this idea is that someday we'll bring it home to America."

1964

As part of the "War on Poverty," President Lyndon B. Johnson creates VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America), a National Teacher Corps, the Job Corps, and University Year of Action. VISTA provides opportunities for Americans to serve full time to help thousands of low-income communities.

1960s

The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), the Foster Grandparent Program, and the Senior Companion Program (which today comprise the National Senior Service Corps) are developed to engage older Americans in the work of improving the nation.

1970

The Youth Conservation Corps engages 38,000 people age 14 to 18 in summer environmental programs.

1976

California establishes the California Conservation Corps, the first non-Federal youth corps at the state level.

1978

The Young Adult Conservation Corps creates small conservation corps in the states with 22,500 participants age 16 to 23.

1980s

National Service efforts are launched at the grassroots level, including the Campus Outreach Opportunity League (1984) and Campus Compact (1985), which help mobilize service programs in higher education; the National Association of Service and Conservation Corps (1985), which helps replicate youth corps in states and cities; and Youth Service America (1985), through which many young people are given a chance to serve.

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1989-1990

President George Bush creates the Office of National Service in the White House and the Points of Light Foundation to foster volunteering.

1990

Congress passes and President Bush signs the National and Community Service Act of 1990. The legislation authorizes grants to schools to support service-learning (Serve America, now known as Learn and Serve America) and demonstration grants for National Service programs to youth corps, nonprofits, and colleges and universities.

1993

In September, President Bill Clinton signs the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, creating AmeriCorps and the Corporation for National Service to expand opportunities for Americans to serve their communities. VISTA becomes part of AmeriCorps. The bill creates governor-appointed commissions in every state to further national and community service within states.

1994

Congress passes the King Holiday and Service Act of 1994, charging the Corporation for National Service with taking the lead in organizing Martin Luther King Day as a day of service.

Governor-appointed citizen-led Commissions begin to administer AmeriCorps through State Service Commissions around the country.

In September, the first class of AmeriCorps members—20,000 strong—begins serving in more than 1,000 communities. In swearing in these Americans, President Clinton says: “Service is a spark to rekindle the spirit of democracy in an age of uncertainty. . . . When it is all said and done, it comes down to three simple questions: What is right? What is wrong? And what are we going to do about it? Today you are doing what is right—turning your words into deeds.”

1997

In April, the Presidents’ Summit for America’s Future was chaired by General Colin Powell. President Clinton, former Presidents Bush, Ford, and Carter, along with Mrs. Reagan, invited the country to join in providing five fundamental resources for youth: (1) caring adults in their lives as parents, mentors, tutors, and coaches; (2) safe places with structured activities during nonschool hours; (3) healthy starts and futures; (4) marketable skills through effective education; and (5) opportunities to give back through community service.

AmeriCorps expands by introducing the Education Awards Program, which allows more organizations to join the service network—nonprofits, faith-based organizations, colleges and universities, welfare-to-work programs, and other groups.

President Clinton and former President Bush announce the resumption of the Daily Points of Light Award.

1998

The AmeriCorps Promise Fellows Program begins. The Program was created to provide resources to local communities and national nonprofits to help them fulfill their state promises to youth.

1999

AmeriCorps celebrates five years and 150,000 members in October. General Colin Powell, Utah’s Governor Mike Leavitt, Coretta Scott King, and Sargent Shriver joined President Clinton at the White House honoring the winners of the first All*AmeriCorps awards.

2000

For the first time, four organizations launch a National and Community Services Conference. The four partners are the Corporation for National Service, the Points of Light Foundation, United Way of America, and America’s Promise: The Alliance for Youth.

APPENDIX E

GLOSSARY

APPENDIX E

Within the field of National Service, and in this report, there are a number of terms that are not necessarily recognizable by the general public. The following attempts to define several of these terms.

America Reads: A grassroots national campaign that challenges every American to help all our children learn to read, with a particular goal of having children read well and independently by the end of the third grade. The Corporation for National Service is a major partner with the Department of Education and others in the effort to achieve this goal.

America's Promise: The Alliance For Youth: The organization led by General Colin Powell to carry out the goals of the Presidents' Summit for America's Future, convened by President Clinton and former President Bush in April 1997. The Summit was co-sponsored by the Points of Light Foundation and the Corporation for National Service. The five promises to youth are caring adults in their lives as parents, mentors, tutors, coaches; safe places with structured activities during nonschool hours; healthy starts and futures; marketable skills through effective education; and opportunities to give back through community service.

America's Promise Fellows: As a followup to the Presidents' Summit for America's Future in fiscal 1997, the Corporation began a special initiative designed to identify talented individuals who will assist with state and local efforts to provide all young people with the five fundamental resources identified at the Summit. In program year 1998-1999, the Corporation awarded 61 grants and enrolled more than 400 Promise Fellows.

AmeriCorps Leader: The AmeriCorps Leaders Program is a national program that provides opportunities for outstanding AmeriCorps members to develop their leadership skills. Initiated with resources from the Kellogg and Kauffman Foundations, the primary goal of this program is to provide the next generation of community leaders with the skills to succeed and achieve results. In 1999, 51 AmeriCorps Leaders served at AmeriCorps service sites throughout the country.

Commissions, (State Service Commissions, State Commission on National and Community Service): Authorized in 1993 under section 178 of the National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended, Commissions are responsible for the development of a National Service plan for the state and administer AmeriCorps*State and community-based Learn and Serve America programs. State Commissions must conduct statewide grant processes, monitor programs, provide training and technical assistance, and serve as liaison between the Corporation and the local programs. Governors identify the organizational entities to apply to the Corporation and appoint 15-25 citizen Commissioners to serve as the governing board. Each Commission must include voting members with experience in different areas: business, local government, labor, youth training, and needs- and community-based organizations. Commissions also must include a young person and the head of the state education agency. Ex Officio representation may come from a variety of sources.

APPENDIX E

Corporation: The Corporation for National Service (Corporation) was established in 1993 under the National and Community Service Act. It gives more than a million Americans opportunities to improve communities through service. The Corporation supports service at the national, state, and local levels, overseeing three main initiatives: AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve America, and the National Senior Service Corps. See *Appendix A* for a more complete explanation of each initiative.

Education Award: AmeriCorps members, upon successful completion of service, earn an education award that can be used to: (1) repay qualified student loans; (2) cover all or part of the cost of attendance at a qualified institution of higher education; or (3) pay expenses incurred in participating in an approved school-to-work program. For full-time service, requiring a minimum of 1,700 hours, members receive an award of \$4,725. Part-time term of service requires a minimum of 900 hours of service, for which members receive an award of \$2,362.50.

Living Allowance: AmeriCorps members receive a modest allowance for living expenses during their term of service. For most programs, the current living allowance is approximately \$9,000 per year.

Member: National Service participants in AmeriCorps (AmeriCorps*NCCC, AmeriCorps*VISTA, and AmeriCorps*State and National) are referred to as members, not volunteers. Participants in the Senior Corps are referred to as Senior Corps participants or volunteers, however, not as members. Members are not employees of organizations in which they serve.

National Service: National Service is results-oriented service by an individual or group of individuals that helps meet the nation's needs in the areas of education, public safety, the environment, and other needs. Also, it is the term used for programs and services delivered as part

of the National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended, and the Domestic Service Act of 1973.

National Service Leader Schools: These are middle schools and high schools recognized by the Corporation for effectively incorporating service-learning into their curriculum.

National Service Leadership Institute: Formerly known as the Presidio Leadership Center, this Institute provides leadership development and training experience for staff of nonprofit organizations engaged in National Service.

National Service Scholarship Program: These provide an opportunity for schools and communities to recognize high school juniors and seniors for outstanding service to their communities. Scholarships of \$1,000 are offered, with 50 percent of the funds provided by the Corporation and 50 percent by local sources.

National Service Trust: The Trust is a repository for education awards earned by eligible participants who successfully complete a term of service in one of the three branches of AmeriCorps: AmeriCorps*State and National, AmeriCorps*NCCC, and AmeriCorps*VISTA.

Outcome-based, also Outcome-focused: This term refers to the general trend in social service programming to focus on the achievement of specific results. Such an approach is required of organizations receiving funds from the Corporation.

Participant: Individuals who enroll in programs sponsored or funded by the Corporation are often called participants and volunteers. Only those with an AmeriCorps program are called members. Participants do not include program employees and may or may not receive a stipend or living allowance during their term of service. They are, however, entitled to receive reimbursement for expenses.

Points of Light Foundation: This is a nonprofit organization established in 1990 to engage more people effectively in volunteer community service that helps solve serious social problems. Funded in part by appropriations made under the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, the Foundation works in communities primarily through a network of over 500 Volunteer Centers.

Senior Demonstration Programs: These were created in Part E of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act and gave the Corporation Director authority to provide grants for pilot projects involving older volunteers that test new approaches or national priorities.

Service-learning: This is a method of teaching and experiential learning used in educational settings, kindergarten through college. It combines service to the community with academic learning in a way that improves both the student and the community. Service-learning (1) offers an approach where students learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service that is conducted in and meets the needs of communities; (2) coordinates an educational institution or community-based program and the community; (3) helps foster civic responsibility; (4) integrates into and enhances the academic curriculum of the students, or the education components of the community service program in which the participants are enrolled; and (5) provides structured time for students or participants to reflect on the service experience.^a

State Administrative Standard: This is a new tool that the Corporation uses to assess and expand the capacity of State Commissions to effectively administer Federal funds. The Corporation awards funds to State Commissions for developing and supporting National Service within the state. The State Administrative Standards seek to communicate what the Corporation expects of State Commissions.

State Education Agencies (State Educational Agencies): These agencies are referenced in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (Section 14101) and the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (Section 111). With respect to National Service, this is the agency in each state responsible for administration of school-based Learn and Serve America programs within that state.

Stipend: A benefit given to certain individuals to defray the cost of volunteering. Foster Grandparents and Senior Companions serve an average of 20 hours a week and receive stipends set at \$2.55 per hour. They must be age 60 or above and meet certain low-income requirements. For AmeriCorps*VISTA members, a stipend is a cash alternative to the education award.

Technical Assistance: Support provided to Corporation-funded organizations to deliver more effective and efficient service. Technical assistance can be peer development, for instance, when a new Executive Director joins an experienced Director to learn best practices. Another example is the support given to help teachers learn to incorporate service into curriculum to develop effective service-learning. Another example is professional development given to Senior Corps Directors to help them better apply outcome-based programming.

Unified State Plan: Each Commission prepares a three-year plan, with annual updates, for National Service in its state. The plan is developed through an open, public process that includes maximum participation by National Service programs and other stakeholders in service and ensures outreach to diverse community-based organizations.

Volunteers: Individuals who voluntarily assist in their communities without recompense or for a modest stipend or living allowance to defray the cost of serving. Also, see *Member and Participant*.

^a National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993.

