

VISTA FY08 ANNUAL PLAN

OVERVIEW

VISTA provides opportunities for full-time service with community-based non-profit organizations and public agencies that address a wide range of poverty and poverty-related problems. In FY08, VISTA will contribute to each of the strategic initiatives with more emphasis on Volunteer Mobilization and Youth Initiatives. Additionally, the VISTA portfolio of projects will emphasize prisoner re-entry, rural community development, financial asset development, and disaster recovery.

VOLUNTEER MOBILIZATION

Substantially expand volunteer leveraging in low-income communities

- ◆ Increase the number of community volunteers recruited by VISTA members from **500,000 in 2005 to 558,000 in 2008**.
- ◆ Ensure that existing VISTA projects receive training and technical assistance in volunteer management as needed and, when opportunities for new projects arise, ensure that the project supervisor and key staff are qualified to manage volunteers.

Support community volunteer connector organizations specifically working with low-income populations on poverty-alleviation programming

- ◆ Seek opportunities to place VISTAs in appropriate volunteer connector organizations.

Build volunteer management capacity and expertise in organizations that rely on volunteers

- ◆ Support volunteer management training in small organizations through the development and dissemination of guidebooks on recruiting, training, and managing volunteers.
- ◆ Provide training to VISTAs to develop skills and awareness in recruiting and retaining community volunteers and mobilizing community resources.

Continue the forty-year practice of connecting faith-based and other community-based organizations to volunteer needs and efforts

- ◆ Encourage projects to train their VISTAs on partnering with faith-based and community organizations in appropriate capacity-building activities.
- ◆ Grow and further develop volunteer leveraging program models that extensively partner with congregations and other community organizations that supply large numbers of volunteers to meet on-going and emerging community needs.

Offer a national platform to promote volunteerism

- ◆ Build the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service into the nation's largest annual service event by encouraging VISTA project participation with MLK activities that focus on poverty alleviation.

- ◆ **Provide recruitment materials at volunteer generation events, such as AmeriCorps week and other large service-focused events to promote full-time VISTA service opportunities.**

A BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR OUR YOUTH

Mobilize volunteers to support and participate in mentoring programs in disadvantaged communities

- ◆ Strengthen the commitment of VISTA resources to programs that serve children and youth from disadvantaged circumstances, with a particular emphasis on children of prisoners and juvenile offenders.
- ◆ **Position VISTAs to match adult mentors with aging-out foster youth to aid their transition to self-sufficiency and adulthood.**

Engage children and youth in service

- ◆ Promote the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service as an opportunity to introduce young people to service and volunteering.

STUDENTS IN SERVICE INITIATIVE

- ◆ Assign up to 315 VISTAs as campus volunteer or service site coordinators in 2008, and focus the 2008 VISTA “Summer Associates” program on coordinating college students to perform meaningful anti-poverty service.

BABY BOOMER INITIATIVE

- ◆ Tap the energy, innovative spirit, experience, and skills of Baby Boomers to serve in VISTA and deliver critically needed services to low-income individuals and communities.
- ◆ Provide training and technical assistance to help projects attract and retain Baby Boomers.
- ◆ Support partnership outreach to non-profits, the private sector, professional associations and others to help engage Baby Boomers in addressing unmet human needs.
- ◆ Provide quality service opportunities for Baby Boomers to assist poor, disadvantaged, vulnerable, and elderly persons.
- ◆ Engage Baby Boomers to address the expanding need for independent living opportunities for vulnerable seniors.