



CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

Reaching Our Goals

Research in Support of the Strategic Initiatives

Office of Research and Policy Development (RPD)

April 2008

Corporation for
**NATIONAL &
COMMUNITY
SERVICE** 





Introduction



About this Document

As part of the Corporation's effort to promote the most effective strategies in volunteering and national service, the Office of Research and Policy Development continually conducts studies in relation to our strategic initiatives. This document synthesizes a variety of studies that together provide a roadmap for achieving the following goals:

- Mobilizing More Volunteers
- Ensuring a Brighter Future for all of America's Youth
- Engaging Students in Their Communities
- Harnessing Baby Boomers' experience

In the future, this document will also feature information regarding the Corporation's newest initiative: Helping Communities Prepare for, Respond to, and Recover from Disaster. It will be continually updated as new information becomes available.



Achieving Strategic Initiatives

The Corporation for National and Community Service strives to achieve the goals set forth in the Strategic Plan through its programs—AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and Learn and Serve America—and through Special Initiatives, such as Martin Luther King Day of Service and the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll. The Office of Research and Policy Development supports these programs and initiatives by interpreting new data on volunteering and service and providing policy guidance. Working together, we can achieve strategic goals and build our communities for a stronger America and a brighter tomorrow.

Use Research To:

- Strengthen volunteer marketing, recruitment, and management strategies
- Gain insight into who is and is not volunteering, and learn what people are looking for from a volunteering experience
- Identify volunteering demographic trends
- Understand how changes in the volunteer climate can impact program strategies and policies
- Inform decisions about resource allocation (including funding) and project development



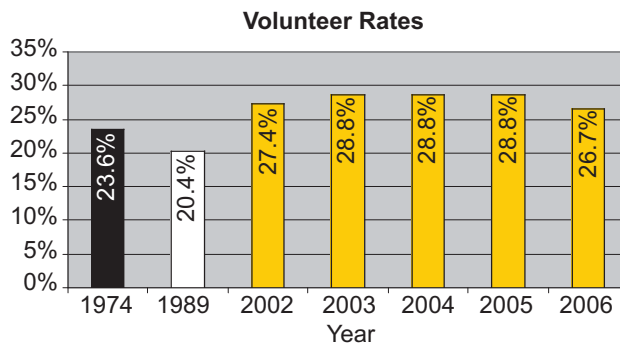
Mobilizing More Volunteers

◆ Mobilizing More Volunteers

Americans are volunteering at a historically high rate, with 61.2 million volunteers dedicating 8.1 billion hours of volunteer service in 2006. Although the numbers are high, one out of every three volunteers chooses not to return to volunteering the following year. In an effort to keep volunteers serving and meet the national target to engage 75 million Americans by 2010, we are encouraging nonprofit organizations to reinvent volunteering by incorporating it into their overall human capital and talent management strategies.

Key Findings from Research Reports on Volunteering

- Growth in volunteering since 1974 has been led by teens, Baby Boomers, and older adults.
- High homeownership rates, low population density, short commute times, high education levels, and low rates of poverty increase likelihood of higher volunteer rates in a community.
- Volunteering has significant health benefits, including increased longevity, and decreased risk of heart disease and depression.
- Volunteer retention rates are highest when activities include professional or managerial services.
- In conjunction with a trend in delaying child-bearing, there has been a growth in the percentage of volunteers serving in an education or youth-services organization, with proportions nearly doubling from 15.1% in 1989 to 27% in 2006.
- By 2036 the number of older adult volunteers is set to at least double; older volunteers tend to serve the highest amount of hours per year.



Sources

Volunteering in America: 2007 State Trends and Rankings in Civic Life. April 2007.

Provides data on volunteering and civic life at the national, regional and state levels. State level rankings and individual state profiles are also included.

Volunteering in America: 2007 City Trends and Rankings. July 2007.

Provides detailed analysis and profiles of volunteering for 50 of America's largest metropolitan areas.

Volunteer Growth in America: A Review of Trends Since 1974. December 2006.

Provides an in-depth look at volunteering over the past 30 years, with particular attention paid to changing historical volunteer patterns among select age groups.

The Numbers Suggest...

Stronger Retention Strategies are Necessary

- Between 2005 and 2006, 20.9 million volunteers (32%) dropped out of service.
- Only 31% of organizations that rely on volunteers regularly utilize effective volunteer management practices for retention, such as screening, matching and training volunteers.

“If you want to keep volunteers, you need to give them serious and meaningful work that affects change in your community.”

-David Eisner, CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service



Ensuring a Brighter Future for all of America's Youth

◆ Ensuring a Brighter Future for all of America's Youth

Youth need support from caring adults in their families, schools, and communities. In particular, youth who grow up in severely distressed environments are more likely to face challenges in achieving success in school and their careers. Not only do youth benefit from services such as mentoring, but they also have much to offer as volunteers. Our national targets are to engage 3 million additional volunteers in mentoring youth from disadvantaged circumstances and involve over 3 million children and youth from disadvantaged circumstances in service by 2010.

“Exposure to school-based service, especially service that contains high-quality elements of service-learning, has a strong and direct relationship to fostering positive attitudes and behaviors among youth”

-Amy Cohen, Director of Learn and Serve America

Key Findings from Research Reports

Mentoring

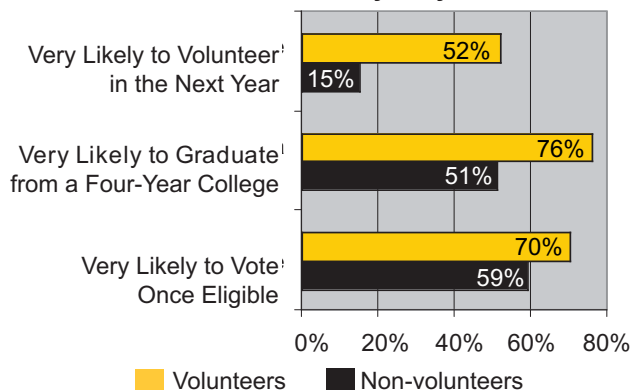
- Adult volunteers between 20 and 24 years of age are the most likely group to be mentors. However, 41% of volunteers who engage in mentoring youth are Baby Boomers, born 1946-1964.
- Religious organizations are the most popular through which mentors serve (43%), followed by educational organizations (31%).
- Nearly all (96%) volunteers who engage in mentoring would recommend participation in mentoring to others.

Service Learning

- Approximately 10.6 million young people ages 12 to 18 report past or current participation in school-based service.
- Students who have participated in school-based service are more likely than students who have not to volunteer in the future.

- Young people ages 12 to 18 are most likely to volunteer when they are asked, and teachers are most often doing the asking.
- There is an "income gap" between those youth who do and do not volunteer.
- Youth from disadvantaged circumstances are less likely than other youth to experience most "pathways" to civic engagement, i.e. service-learning and school-based service, parents who volunteer, or participation in groups or clubs.

Youth from Disadvantaged Circumstances who Volunteer Say They Are...



Sources

Volunteers Mentoring Youth: Implications for Closing the Mentoring Gap. May 2006.

Provides a greater understanding of the characteristics and traits that distinguish individuals whose volunteering includes mentoring youth from volunteers who do not mentor.

Mentoring in America 2005: A Snapshot of the Current State of Mentoring. 2006.

This report was done by MENTOR. It assesses and evaluates the progress of the mentoring community.

Youth Helping America Series. Leveling the Path to Participation: Volunteering and Civic Engagement Among Youth from Disadvantaged Circumstances. March 2007.

Highlights volunteer trends and looks at opportunities to engage this demographic in service opportunities.

Engaging Students in their Communities

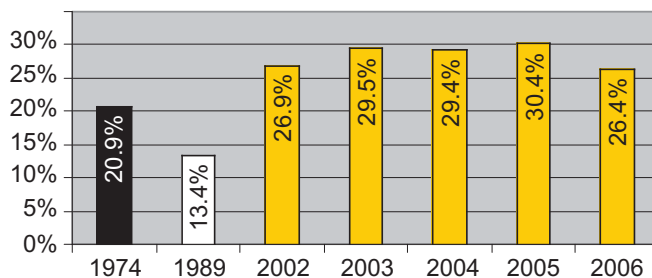


◆ Engaging Students in their Communities

Schools and educational institutions, along with the students who attend them play a critical role in the civic structure of our country. The Corporation for National and Community Service is striving to support civic participation in schools by working to engage 5 million college students in service by 2010 and ensure 50 percent of America's K-12 schools incorporate service-learning into their curricula.

Key Findings from Research Reports on Engaging Students

Volunteering Rates Among Youth Ages 16-19



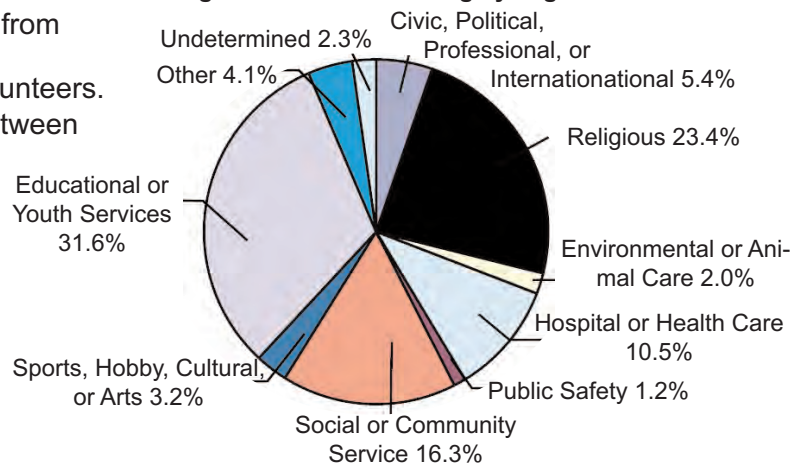
College Students

- The growth rate of college student* volunteering was approximately 20% from 2002 to 2005, which was more than double the growth rate for all adult volunteers.
- College student volunteering rates between 2004 and 2006 varied by state, ranging from 17.3% to 55.4%.
- The Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) reports that 66.7% of students entering college in 2006 believe it to be very important to help others in difficulty- the highest percent in 25 years.

Service-Learning

- In 1999 the U.S. Department of Education found there is a growing service-learning trend, with more middle and high schools offering service-learning as part of their curriculum.
- Youth ages 12 to 18 from disadvantaged circumstances are less likely than other youth to experience most "pathways" to civic engagement, such as service-learning and school clubs.

College Student Volunteering by Organization



"My generation is united in the belief that the choices we make now define our moral selves and determine the ethical character of the world we inhabit and leave to future generations, and this is why we serve." -Katie Franck, Elon University student

Sources

Youth Helping America Series. Educating for Active Citizens: Service-Learning, School-Based Service, and Youth Civic Engagement. March 2006.

Takes a closer look at participation in school-based service among middle school and high school aged youth, paying particular attention to the relationship between different service-learning experiences and civic attitudes and outcomes.

College Students Helping America. October 2006.

Identifies key trends in volunteering among college students ages 16 to 24, looks at the demographics and select civic behaviors of college students who volunteer, discusses future implications for volunteering given the changing college environment, and provides state rankings for volunteering among college students.



Harnessing Baby Boomers' Experience

◆ Harnessing Baby Boomers' Experience

Baby Boomers are not only a large demographic, but are also a highly educated and skilled group. We are committed to capturing the value of their experiences and engaging them in helping to solve some of our most intractable social problems. Our key national target is to engage more than 28.7 million Baby Boomers in volunteering by 2010.

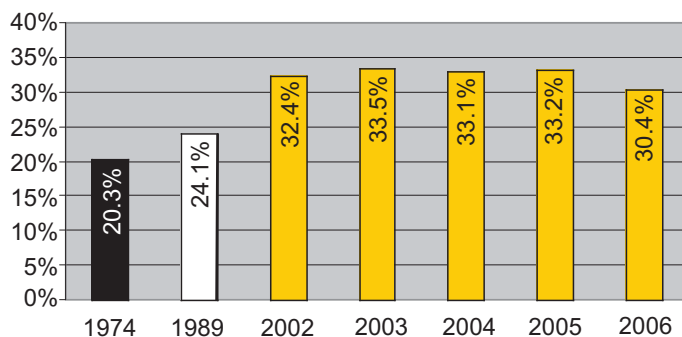
Key Findings from Research Reports on Baby Boomers

- Baby Boomers (Americans born between the years 1946 and 1964) are creating a historically high mid-life volunteering rate.
- As Baby Boomers become older adults, they are likely to cause a boom in older adult volunteering, from 9 million in 2007 to over 13 million by 2020. Older Americans tend to volunteer much more intensively than other age groups.
- Baby Boomers show interest in putting their skills and experience to use in their volunteering activities. Boomers who provide professional or managerial service are most likely to continue service.
- In order to best put the skills of Baby Boomers to use, it is important to strategically plan for their use. Job functions for exploration include but are not limited to the following: board/leadership, strategic partnership development, fundraising and development, organizational development and training, marketing and communications, etc.
- Remaining in the workforce increases the probability that a Baby Boomer will continue volunteering.
- Significant physical and mental health benefits can be gained from volunteering, especially later in life.

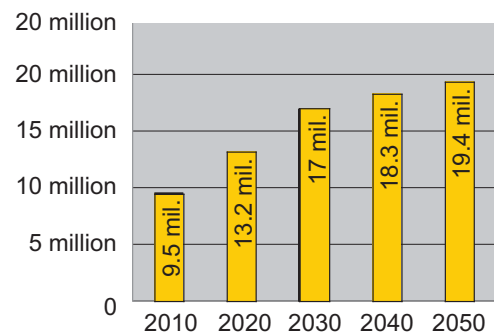
"With knowledge and investment we can transform the aging of the Baby Boomer generation from a potential crisis into an historic opportunity."

-John S. Gomperts, president of Civic Ventures and CEO of Experience Corps

Baby Boomer (Born 1946-1964) Volunteering Rates



Estimated Number of Senior Volunteers



Sources

Keeping Baby Boomers Volunteering: A Research Brief on Volunteer Retention. March 2007.

Analyzes the characteristics of Baby Boomer volunteering, trends in Baby Boomer volunteering, and opportunities to further enhance their engagement.

Volunteer Growth in America: A Review of Trends Since 1974. December 2006.

Provides an in-depth look at how volunteering compares by age groups for the period from 1974 to 2005.

The Health Benefits of Volunteering: A Review of Recent Research. April 2007.

Reviews a number of recent studies on the linkage between health and volunteering.

Volunteering Reinvented: Human Capital Solutions for the Nonprofit Sector. July 2007.

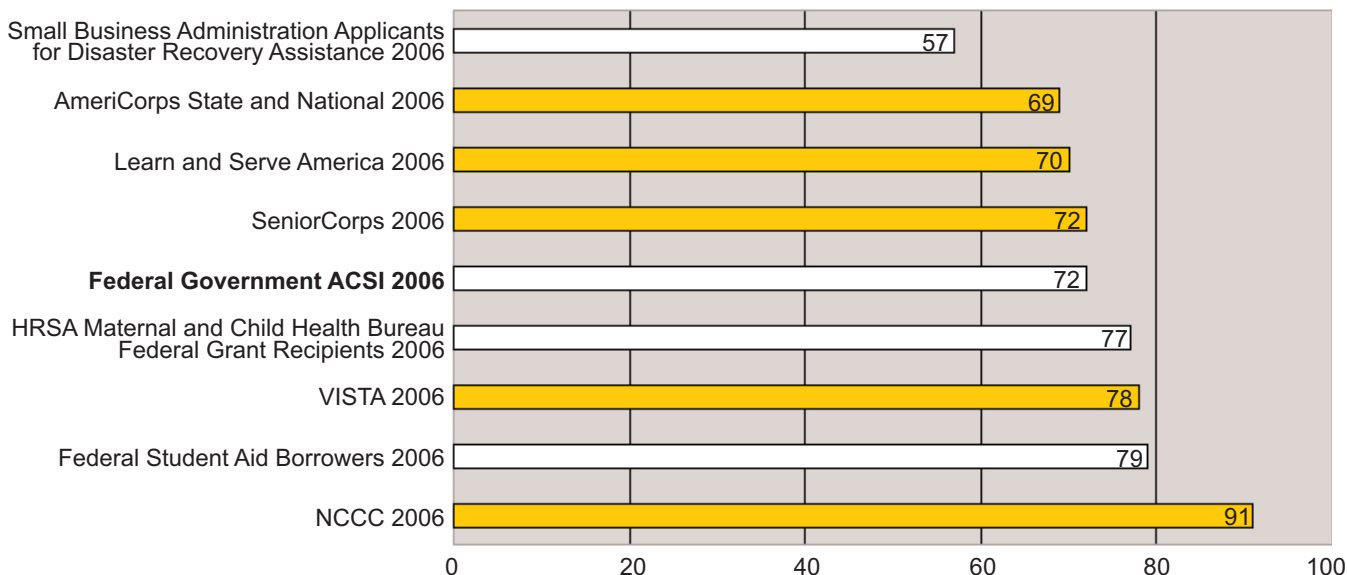
Presents strategies for using volunteers as a strategic human capital resource to maximize impact.

Customer Satisfaction & AmeriCorps: Member Satisfaction

◆ Customer Satisfaction Surveys

As part of the Corporation's vision of focusing on the customer, we continue to gauge annually the satisfaction of grant receiving organizations in various areas (application content and process, training and technical assistance, technology, etc.) across all programs. The chart below compares the Corporation's program overall scores (on a scale 0 to 100) against its overall score and the federal average. This document will be updated to include 2007 scores in the summer of 2008.

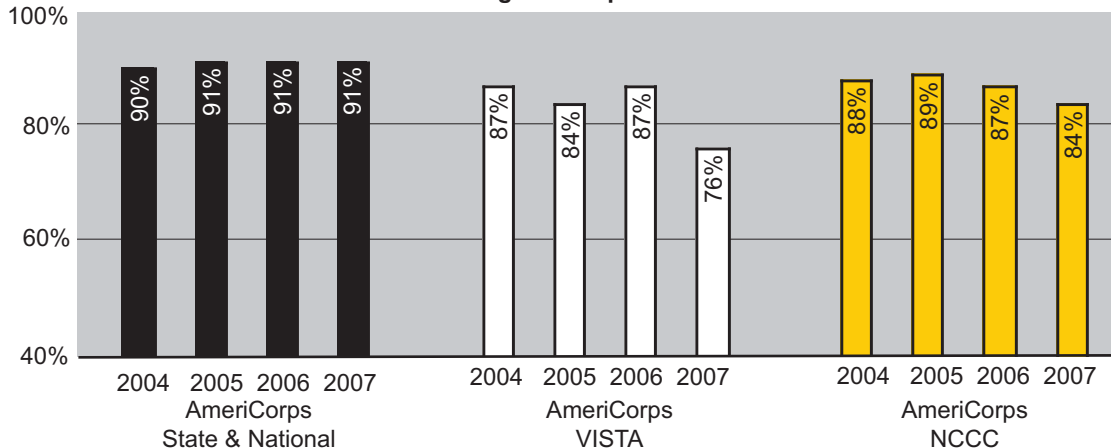
2006 American Customer Satisfaction Index Scores



◆ AmeriCorps Member Satisfaction Surveys

This study gauges AmeriCorps program participants' satisfaction with their experience, training, and supervision so that the Corporation might better strategize to meet members's expectations. Ninety-one percent of current AmeriCorps State & National and 87% of current VISTA members, and 87% of current NCCC members rated their overall experience as excellent or good. Scores will be updated this month.

Percent of Members Rating their Experience as Excellent or Good



Senior Corps: RSVP & Learn and Serve: Youth Helping America

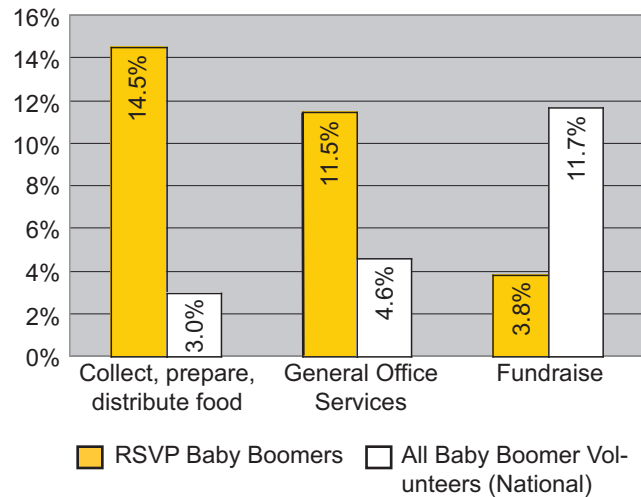


◆ Senior Corps RSVP Baby Boomer Survey

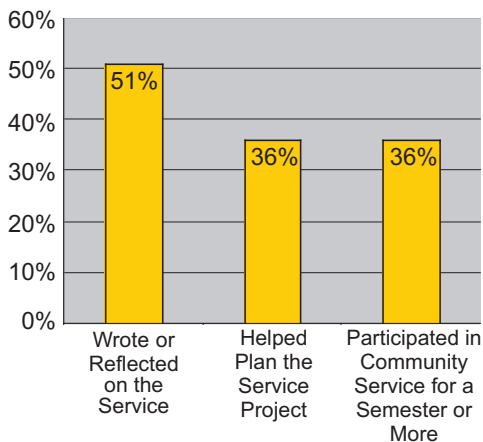
This study was designed to better understand Baby Boomers' interests in serving, making comparisons between RSVP Baby Boomer volunteers and other Boomer adult volunteers, so that better recruitment and management strategies might be developed for Baby Boomer RSVP participants.

- RSVP Baby Boomers serve nearly three times as many hours as adult volunteers in general, but serve in different capacities than other Baby Boomer volunteers.

Baby Boomer Volunteer Activity Comparison



Elements of Service-Learning for Youth Who Reported Participation



◆ Youth Helping America Series

This series investigates the role of service-learning in the lives of young people and identifies the outcomes of participation as well as the factors that affect participation.

- An estimated 38% of students, or approximately 10.6 million youth nationwide report current or past participation in school-based service. Of those, 77% report experiencing one or more quality service-learning element.

Sources

American Customer Satisfaction Index

Surveys administered as part of the American Customer Satisfaction effort are given to customers (grantees and other Corporation resource recipients) of grant-making agencies to gauge their satisfaction with the Corporation and its services.

AmeriCorps Member Satisfaction Surveys

These surveys are administered by the Corporation for all three AmeriCorps Programs.

Senior Corps RSVP Baby Boomer Survey

This study was completed in 2007. The next report to focus on the Corporation's Senior Corps programs will be released in May of 2008 and will include information on not only RSVP, but also Foster Grandparents, and Senior Companions.

Youth Helping America Series

These reports are based on data from the youth survey done as an addition to the Volunteering Supplement to the Current Population Survey. The Current Population Survey is administered by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The next youth survey is scheduled for September of 2008.



Other Resources

National Research

Volunteering in America: State Trends and Rankings, 2002-2005. June 2006.

This was the Corporation's first report to analyze national, regional, and state-level volunteering trends. It includes a national overview, as well as profiles for all fifty states and the District of Columbia.

Building Active Citizens: The Role of Social Institutions in Teen Volunteering. November 2005.

Examines the state of youth volunteering and considers the relationships between youth volunteer behavior and three primary environments where youth form their social networks: family, religious organizations, and school.

Volunteer Management Capacity Study. 2003.

The study, conducted by the Urban Institute, was designed to assess the capacity of the nonprofit sector to engage volunteers in a way that provides the greatest possible impact and to provide meaningful volunteer opportunities. It led to the creation of four different briefs:

- Volunteer Management Capacity in America's Charities and Congregations: A Briefing Report*
- Volunteer Management Practices and Retention of Volunteers*
- Volunteer Management in Religious Organizations*
- Balancing Act: The Challenges and Benefits of Volunteers*

Program Research

AmeriCorps, Changing Lives: Changing America. May 2007.

This study analyzes the benefits of AmeriCorps service to members and the organizations that host them.

AmeriCorps State Commission Performance Report 2003-2005. August 2006.

Provides program results of AmeriCorps State Commissions for the years 2003-2004 and 2004-2005, as well as trends reflecting prior years. Data reported are related to service activities, performance highlights, member completion/fill rates, state financial data, and Education Award usage rates.

Learn and Serve America Performance Report.

An annual report that provides program data on organizations that receive Learn and Serve America grant funds. The most recent report covered organizations that were funded during the 2006-2007 program year and was released in April 2008.

Forthcoming Research

Volunteering in America: 2008 State Trends and Rankings.

The third installment in this series will combine state and city data in one release. It will be featured as part of an interactive web tool on the Corporation's website and will include an in depth analysis of the factors that influence volunteer retention in nonprofit and public organizations.

Random Assignment Evaluation of Youth Corps.

Designed to assess the impact of participation in Youth Corps on members' employment, education, life skills and civic engagement. Data will be available in 2008.

The Longitudinal Study of AmeriCorps Members.

Seven-year follow-up of a 1999/2000 cohort will include approximately 2,200 members and will look at former members' behaviors seven years after AmeriCorps. The report will be available May 13, 2008.



The Office of Research & Policy Development (RPD) is part of the CEO's Office. RPD's mission is to develop and cultivate knowledge that will enhance the mission of the Corporation and of volunteer and community service programs.

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