

**Corporation for National and Community Service**  
**Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting**  
**March 8, 1999**

The Board of Directors convened its meeting at the University Place Doubletree Hotel in Indianapolis, Indiana. The following members of the Corporation's Board were present:

Victor Ashe  
Thomas Ehrlich  
Carol Kinsley  
Bob Rogers, Chairman

The following persons were present at the invitation of the Corporation:

Les Lenkowsky  
Chris Gallagher  
Art Naparstek

**OFFICIAL ACTIONS**

The Board approved the minutes of the Board's meeting on October 5, 1998. (Transcript, 20-21).

The Board approved reports from the Executive Committee (Transcript, 25), the Management and Budget Committee (Transcript, 36), the Planning and Evaluation Committee (Transcript, 59), and the Communications Committee (Transcript, 89).

The Board approved a resolution honoring Eli Segal for his leadership as Chief Executive Officer and Board Chair. (Transcript, 163-5).

The Board approved a resolution recognizing the 25th anniversary of the Senior Companion Program. (Transcript, 165-6).

## **SUMMARY OF BOARD DISCUSSIONS**

### **Introductory Remarks**

Bob Rogers, Chairman of the Board of Directors, called the meeting to order.

### **Report of the CEO**

Harris Wofford, the Corporation's Chief Executive Officer, began by discussing the Corporation's progress on financial management. An audit of the Corporation is nearly complete. Chief Operating Officer Wendy Zenker is heading the Corporation's efforts in this area. Mr. Wofford acknowledged the assistance given by Bob Rogers, Chris Gallagher, and other members of the Board, as well as Inspector General Luise Jordan and the auditors from KPMG.

Mr. Wofford reported on preparations for his testimony before Congressional appropriations subcommittees. He reviewed the following activities recently completed by the Corporation: holding a financial management conference for AmeriCorps grantees; holding a conference for AmeriCorps National Direct grantees; providing training to National Senior Service Corps programs; completing revised Senior Corps regulations and other Senior Corps oversight materials; entering into an agreement with the Boys and Girls Clubs of America regarding the President's Student Service Scholarships; completing several evaluations; making progress towards implementing a new core accounting and financial management system; making progress on becoming Y2K compliant; providing several reports and briefings to Congress.

Mr. Wofford spoke of building bi-partisan support for national service, most recently reported by E.J. Dionne in the Washington Post. The President and Vice-President have served alongside AmeriCorps members. The Corporation has led a nationwide day of service on the Martin Luther King, Jr. federal holiday. The Corporation has launched a call to service to foster increased recruitment for AmeriCorps. The Corporation has initiated recognition of service-learning leader schools, trained the first class of AmeriCorps Promise Fellows, conducted other leadership training, and is reviewing applications for AmeriCorps, Learn & Serve, and the Senior Corps.

Mr. Wofford urged the Board to review the Corporation's strategic plan in terms of the direction the Corporation should go in the future.

Mr. Rogers recognized Gene Tempel, Director of the Center on Philanthropy at the University of Indiana and the Chair of the Indiana State Commission, who welcomed the Board of Directors on behalf of University Chancellor Gerald Bepko. Mr. Tempel acknowledged the leadership in service-learning by Board member Tom Ehrlich in his former position as President of the University. He described service activities in Indiana, including a total of 48,000 participants in various programs, with 1,100 AmeriCorps members, 36,000 Learn and Serve America participants, and 10,000 Senior Corps

participants. The State receives \$9.9 million in funding from the Corporation. He noted that Indiana's Governor and First Lady have provided leadership in this area by establishing a service award and recognizing service in other ways. Indiana's millenium project is also incorporating service into its initiatives. Indiana's Unified State Plan has brought together a variety of partners, including a youth commission. Mr. Tempel concluded by recognizing the efforts of AmeriCorps members serving with (1) the 21st Century Scholars Program, (2) an environmental program in South Bend that was recently selected on a competitive basis for funding, and (3) the Campus Compact organization that coordinates and supports approximately 20 universities in the state. Carter Wolfe, Indiana's AmeriCorps Director, added to Mr. Tempel's remarks.

### **Executive Committee Report**

Bob Rogers described the committee's recent discussions on the role of the Board in providing leadership in (1) developing the Corporation's long-term strategy; (2) assisting the Chief Executive Officer; and (3) ensuring accountability among management. The Committee also examined how the Board could better prioritize the matters discussed at its conference calls between Board meetings.

### **Management and Budget Committee Report**

Chris Gallagher noted the Corporation's recently-submitted action plan to improve financial systems and management. The plan addresses financial reporting, operations and systems, the operations of the National Service Trust, grants management, Year 2000 compliance, other informational technology goals, and procurement management.

Mr. Gallagher reported on the audit of the Corporation's 1998 financial statements. The Corporation has asked the Inspector General to hold open the field work, delaying the audit's issuance.

Mr. Rogers emphasized that improvements in financial systems and management is a priority for the Board. He noted that there is a significant matter regarding the balance in the National Service Trust as well as an ongoing weakness in the Corporation's internal control system. He alluded to the upcoming conversion to a new financial system that will resolve many of the internal control issues. He stressed the importance of attracting and training staff to handle financial and operating transactions.

Mr. Gallagher observed that Luise Jordan, the Inspector General, is fully engaged in the audit process, providing close review and assistance to the Corporation's efforts to improve management. He thanked Ms. Jordan and Wendy Zenker, the Corporation's Chief Operating Officer, for their participation in a meeting the previous day to discuss ways to carry out their respective functions in a manner that advances the overall objectives of the Corporation.

Mr. Gallagher reported also that the committee had met with Mr. Wofford to discuss management issues, particularly in light of the report by the National Academy of Public Administration.

Mr. Gallagher concluded by noting the Corporation's progress on ensuring that its systems are Year 2000-compliant.

### **Planning and Evaluation Committee Report**

Tom Ehrlich reported on the committee's involvement in developing policies and priorities for programs supported by the Corporation in 2000. Mr. Ehrlich referred to several major evaluation efforts now underway, including longitudinal research. He lauded a set of materials on citizenship that are ready for distribution to the national service field. The Committee urged the Corporation to integrate the materials into service programs.

Mr. Ehrlich praised the Corporation's fiscal 2000 performance plan, including its revised goals. He emphasized the importance of public-sector leadership training provided at the Corporation's leadership institute, and encouraged the Corporation's senior management and Board members to participate. He described the committee's support for rationalizing and coordinating the resources available for training for service programs. He ended by alerting the Board to the fact that it will be making decisions on many new applications for grants in 2000 and should therefore plan accordingly.

Les Lenkowsky tied the evaluation initiatives and leadership training to the Corporation's role in reawakening interest in the role of voluntary organizations in making a difference in the quality of life in communities throughout the United States.

### **Communications Committee Report**

Art Naperstek referred to progress in developing a comprehensive communications strategy for the Corporation, one that successfully promotes all of the programs supported by the Corporation through a universal call to service. He provided an update on a streamlined reauthorization proposal being put forward by Senator Kennedy. He described the increased support for all of the Corporation's programs in the President's 2000 budget. He reported that the American Association of State Commissions has a new structure in place and is beginning to build the capacities of State Commissions. He praised the Corporation's efforts to forge additional links between the public and private sectors and communities, most recently in tapping the resources of Silicon Valley to help bring technology to high school students and others who have been denied access to technology, and in facilitating the Cellular Telecommunications Industry Association's donation of air time to public safety programs.

Chris Gallagher expressed his support for securing more private sector support for national service and suggested that the Corporation redouble its efforts to develop a communications strategy with that purpose in mind.

Harris Wofford advised the Board that he is working on a small book about service that will support this type of broad outreach.

Tom Ehrlich suggested that the Board review the Corporation's guidelines on the solicitation and acceptance of corporate donations. Harris Wofford stated that the Corporation's emphasis has been on directing such donations to the national service field rather than to the Corporation.

Les Lenkowsky observed that the Corporation was also developing the capacity to gain and share insights about best practices in service programs. He emphasized the importance of disseminating the results of the many research efforts. Chris Gallagher noted that effective evaluations and measurable results will help in promoting private sector involvement by showing donors that their investments are being used wisely.

#### **Comments from Dr. Robert Bringle, Indiana University**

Dr. Bringle described a variety of service-related activities at the university, with a detailed account of the Universities as Citizens Project. This project began in 1996 and fosters the increased engagement of universities in their communities. Service-learning is vital to this engagement, as is faculty development and curriculum reform.

Mr. Ehrlich advised that the Planning and Evaluation Committee would revisit the statutory proportion of service-learning funds earmarked for higher education as opposed to K-12.

#### **Comments from Janell Heidenreich, State Education Representative for Indiana; Will Morgan, Learn and Serve Coordinator in Illinois; and Bill Garcia, Learn and Serve Coordinator in Illinois**

Ms. Heidenreich described the activities of the state's K-12 programs, the Indiana Service Learning Compact, efforts to incorporate service-learning into teacher education, and the Indiana Reading Corps.

Mr. Morgan summarized a series of evaluations concluding that most teachers felt revitalized, saw students gain marketable skills, and gained interest in structural reform in the schools. Students showed improvements in grades and renewed interest in school and in civic matters.

Mr. Garcia expressed enthusiasm for the National Service Leaders Schools program and the President's Student Service Challenge, which are generating a great amount of interest in Illinois. He described impressive increases in the number of

students engaged in service-learning, including in Chicago where the schools have instituted a 40 hour service requirement for graduation from high school.

**Comments from Peg McCarthy, Director, RSVP Program of Greater Cleveland**

Ms. McCarthy reported on RSVP volunteers who are tutoring at-risk public school students, with dramatic improvements in reading scores. The program recently received the prestigious Anisfield-Wolf Award. She also described a support group that her program started for grandparents who are primary caregivers to their grandchildren.

**Adjournment**

Mr. Rogers adjourned the meeting.