

Corporation for National and Community Service
Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting
February 7, 2007

The Board of Directors convened in Washington, D.C. The following members of the Corporation's Board were present:

Stephen Goldsmith, Chair
Dorothy Johnson, Vice Chair
Vincent Juaristi
Henry Lozano
Mimi Mager

Carol Kinsley attended at the Board's invitation.

OFFICIAL ACTIONS

The Board approved the minutes of the meeting held on September 20, 2006. (Transcript, 4).

The Board approved the FY08 annual plan for Learn and Serve, Senior Corps, AmeriCorps*NCCC, and AmeriCorps*VISTA (Transcript, 27).

The Board honored the service of former Board member, William Schambra (Transcript, 37).

Chairman's Opening Remarks

Chairman Stephen Goldsmith thanked who that participated in Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service activities. He noted the progress being made in executing the Corporation's strategic initiatives, including the Corporation's leading role among other federal agencies related to disadvantaged youth and the White House Conference on Aging, and the first Honor Roll for colleges. He acknowledged the challenges facing the Congress and the President in the 2008 budget.

Chairman Goldsmith emphasized the Board's continuing desire to help provide better service to grantees, reduce regulatory burdens, streamline processes, digitize systems, and be perceived as a service agency. The Board remains focused on developing the right set of metrics by which to hold the executive staff responsible. He reiterated the Board's desire to make streamlining a high priority.

Committee Reports

Management, Audit, and Governance Committee

Vincent Juaristi reported that the Committee previewed the Corporation's '08 budget request, met the new Inspector General, Jerry Walpin, and reviewed the 2006 financial statement audit results. He commended the Corporation for its seventh consecutive clean audit on financials and fourth consecutive clean audit on the Trust. There was no reportable condition on grants oversight and monitoring. The Corporation also resolved the previous year's reportable condition on personnel and payroll management. The Corporation had one minor reportable condition on VISTA cost-sharing agreements.

Mr. Juaristi reported that the Committee reviewed some recent information technology projects intended to reduce the amount of paper required for internal transactions at the Corporation and with grantees, such as a web-based time and attendance system, an e-travel system, a new data warehouse, the AmeriCorps member portal, and a new IT contract vehicle. He commended the contributions of Chief Financial Officer Jerry Bridges and Chief Information Officer Rudy Mazariegos to these efforts.

Mr. Juaristi reported five green lights, two yellow lights, and two red lights on the financial metrics for December.

Program Evaluation Committee

Committee Chair Dorothy Johnson thanked Donna Williams for her previous leadership as chair of the Committee. Ms. Johnson reported that the Office of General Counsel is working with AmeriCorps to develop a proposed rule to reduce grantee burden through streamlining. Senior Corps is considering a small number of regulatory amendments as well. She reported that on October 26, 2006, the Corporation published a proposed rule on criminal history checks in the Federal Register and is now analyzing public comments before developing a final rule, in consultation with the committee, for submission to

OMB.

Ms. Johnson discussed progress on a VISTA member portal. She reported that VISTA member administrative support functions currently involving 47 state offices will be consolidated into one office and that time spent by new VISTA members to complete Federal forms will be cut 75%. She reported that the Corporation will have improved data integrity and real time access to member information.

Ms. Johnson thanked Marlene Zakai for her contributions to grant streamlining efforts, including processing more than 350 comments from interested parties gathered at the 2006 National Conference, over the internet, and in focus groups. She summarized some of the most significant streamlining accomplishments, including reducing the burdens of the applications for AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service, reducing the steps for amendment approval for all programs, allowing AmeriCorps programs to use electronic timesheets, and implementing standardized performance measures for Learn and Serve grantees.

Ms. Johnson reminded Board members that they had approved the '07 annual plan for all programs, and the programs used this guidance to focus on grant competitions, placements for VISTAs, and guidance to the field for accomplishing the goals as set forth in the Corporation's strategic plan. In September, 2006, the Board approved the AmeriCorps*State and National annual plan for FY08. She reported that the '08 annual plans before the Board at present were for Senior Corps, Learn and Serve, AmeriCorps*NCCC, and VISTA. She read the following resolution into the record:

Whereas, by a resolution adopted on September 21, 2005, the Board of Directors delegated to the Chief Executive Officer authority to make grants and other forms of financial assistance as are necessary and appropriate to carry out the national service laws, provided that the Chief Executive Officer acts in accordance with a Board-approved annual grantmaking and program plan, and reports implementation milestones to the Board on an ongoing basis; and

*Whereas, the Chief Executive Officer has consulted with the Board in developing the agency's annual priorities and goals for its Learn and Serve America, Senior Corps, AmeriCorps*NCCC, and AmeriCorps*VISTA grant-making and programming, and submitted for the Board's approval the Agency's programmatic priorities and goals for Learn and Serve America, Senior Corps, AmeriCorps*NCCC, and AmeriCorps*VISTA for fiscal year 2008 in relation to the Board-approved strategic plan; and*

*Be it resolved that the Board hereby approves the annual grantmaking and program plans for Learn and Serve America, Senior Corps, AmeriCorps*NCCC, and AmeriCorps*VISTA for fiscal year 2008 as submitted by the Chief Executive Officer through the Board's program committee in advance of the Board meeting of this date; and*

Be it further resolved, that the Board directs the Chief Executive Officer to report implementation milestones to the Board on an ongoing basis.

Regarding the Learn and Serve America 2008 plan, Ms. Kinsley expressed her appreciation for the expansion of the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll and the recommendations for renewing a recognition program for K-12 service learning. She commented that including implementation in the resolution should be helpful in rolling out the plans.

Ms. Mager commented on the integral role that Corporation programs, in particular AmeriCorps*NCCC, play in addressing national disasters and disaster preparedness, and predicted that the Corporation's programs will continue to play this role in the future as preparing for and recovering from national disasters continues to be a priority.

Mr. Juaristi emphasized the role the NCCC has played in helping the nation recover from disasters, the increasing percentage of NCCC members that are utilized solely for disaster recovery and preparedness, and how their good work has demonstrated the value of the program.

Chairman Goldsmith spoke about the necessity of efficiently investing the dollars the Corporation receives from Congress and, thus, of identifying places where the Corporation can cut unnecessary spending, such as by removing unnecessary regulations and processes, leveraging more volunteers, and getting more members per dollar. He specifically identified the restructuring of NCCC in order to keep the membership up while working within the budget, and the leveraging of Federal resources in the AmeriCorps program as a whole.

Ms. Kinsley recommended that the Board members visit program sites in order to better familiarize with the accomplishments and challenges of individual programs.

The resolution was approved without objection.

Chief Executive Officer's Report

Chairman Goldsmith introduced CEO David Eisner by expressing the sense of the Board that the Corporation's executive staff has shown exemplary leadership, efficiency, and effectiveness, and has earned the Corporation a positive reputation and respect on Capitol Hill and among the Corporation's stakeholders.

Mr. Eisner introduced the Corporation's new Inspector General, Gerald Walpin, and new Chief of Staff, Nicola Goren. He thanked the Corporation staff for their dedication to promoting service and volunteering. He discussed his recent trip highlighting the Martin Luther King, Jr., Day of Service, and thanked Board members for their participation. He reported that this year's Day of Service had the greatest response to date with projects in all 50 states, 2000 projects registered on the Corporation's website, 4000 projects overall,

and hundreds of thousands of volunteers. Mr. Eisner also reported on his recent travels through several states in conjunction with National Mentoring Month. This is the first year the Corporation has collaborated with the National Mentoring Partnership and the Harvard Mentoring Project.

Mr. Eisner commended Corporation staff, both on the program and administrative sides, for eliminating the long-time reportable condition on grants monitoring. He noted progress in developing enterprise systems, such as the data warehouse, the paperless office, automated time and attendance, and collaboration between the program offices and the CFO's office. He acknowledged the accomplishments of Chief Operating Officer Liz Seale for aligning programs with their strategic initiatives.

Mr. Eisner addressed the President's proposed 2008 budget for the Corporation. Because the Corporation's 2007 appropriation is likely to be different than the level of funding authorized under the half-year continuing resolution, year-to-year comparisons might lead to confusion. He identified Joint Resolution 20 as the expected outcome for the 2007 appropriation and as the best indicator of the actual differences between '07 and '08. He stated that the Corporation had done well in communicating the contents and implications of the budget both internally and to external stakeholders.

Mr. Eisner reported that the President had requested \$820 million for the Corporation for 2008, which should be a sufficient amount for all of the Corporation's programs to achieve their strategic objectives. He stated that while the budget would present challenges, it was a generous budget in a time when discretionary funding in social programs is under pressure and an indication of a strong commitment of resources to national service. He stated that the requested budget will support 75,000 AmeriCorps members, more than 500,000 Senior Corps volunteers, and 1.3 million Learn and Serve participants, enabling those programs to continue to achieve as they have previously. Although there are reductions in funding for some programs, none of these reductions should result in the discontinuance of any project or require any presently serving member or volunteer to stop serving in the following year.

Mr. Eisner expressed excitement on behalf of the Corporation for the budget for AmeriCorps NCCC. He reported the Corporation's estimate that combining the more than \$11 million requested by the President in the 08 budget with the remaining \$7 plus million from the 07 budget would provide a \$19.1 million budget. This total budget constitutes a decrease in costs and increase in cost efficiency. He reported that NCCC will be able to support 1,160 members as well as 250 members doing summer service programs. He thanked the NCCC staff, led by Liz Seale and NCCC Director Merlene Mazyck, for operating in an exemplary manner despite uncertainty surrounding the future of the program.

Honoring Departing Board Member

Chairman Goldsmith noted that Board member William Schambra's appointment had

ended. He praised Mr. Schambra for his effectiveness in policy development and his national reputation as a respected leader in the area of philanthropy.

Henry Lozano read the following resolution into the record:

Whereas, William Schambra has served with distinction for two terms as a Member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service from 2003 through 2006; and

Whereas, William Schambra led the development of the Corporation's Strategic Plan for 2006 through 2010, helped to lead the taskforce that created comprehensive reforms and enhancements to the Corporation's grant-making process, and guided the development of the Corporation's first five-year research and evaluation plan, which has already produced benefits towards our strategic goals; and

Whereas, William Schambra worked to effectively broaden and deepen the participation of small community and faith-based organizations in national service, promoted program accountability, and exemplified a commitment to strengthening the nation through service; and

Whereas, William Schambra demonstrated outstanding leadership in articulating the vital role national service participants and volunteers have in rebuilding communities affected by natural disasters such as the 2005 Gulf Coast Hurricanes;

Now therefore, the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service, with respect and affection, gratefully recognizes William Schambra and his inspirational contributions to national and community service.

The resolution was passed without objection.

Panel: Engaging College Students in Community Service

Chairman Goldsmith introduced the panel of guest speakers on higher education and volunteering: Richard Rush, Wayne Meisel, and Veronika Gilliland. He expressed the Board's interest in the issue of higher education and volunteering based on the individual backgrounds of the Board members. He reported that volunteering on the part of college students has gone up since 9/11 and noted the Corporation's ambitious strategic plan for 5 million more college volunteers by 2010. The Corporation currently spends about \$150 million each year in various programs to support higher education and volunteering in addition to over a billion dollars since 1994 spent on Segal Education Awards. He stated that the Board wants to find ways to encourage colleges to be more active by matching the Education Award, giving tuition credit, or building infrastructures that support volunteering.

Richard Rush, President of the California State University Channel Islands, a member of the Board of Directors for the National Campus Compact, and Chairman of the Board of

California Campus Compact, spoke on behalf of Campus Compact, which celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2006. He introduced the recently-appointed President and CEO of Campus Compact, Maureen Curley. Campus Compact has been working with the Corporation since 1994 to increase student involvement in service learning and community service. He reported that 98% of Campus Compact campuses have service learning courses.

Mr. Rush expressed Campus Compact's commitment to the goals set forth in the Corporation's strategic plan. He reported some of Campus Compact's progress towards achieving these goals, including engaging 1.9 million students in 2006 – up from 247,000 in 1998, which translates into service valued \$5.6 billion to local communities. He reported that an additional \$48 million worth of direct service is provided through Campus Compact's VISTA and AmeriCorps programs and that 19 of Campus Compact's state offices operate VISTA programs.

He gave an example of how Learn and Serve America has advanced efforts to develop the concept of an engaged campus, which was defined by the Director of the American Council on Education, Nancy Thomas, as “an institution whose mission, purpose, and support structures are aligned with the needs of the local community.” He reported that 98% of Campus Compact's member schools have partnerships with one or more community organizations, and 89% have an office on campus dedicated to coordinating civic engagements and service activities. He reported that Campus Compact has completed two studies on indicators of engagement in colleges, one for minority-led colleges and one in community colleges, and is planning a third study for faith-based institutions. He announced that the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching recently credited Campus Compact as integral to the development of its community engagement classification, and, of the 76 institutions of higher education that received this Carnegie classification, almost 90% were Campus Compact members.

Mr. Rush spoke about California State University Channel Island's history, commitment to service learning and the roles AmeriCorps, VISTA, and Learn and Serve have played in making civic engagement one of the school's fundamental characteristics. He reported that students are currently involved in such diverse projects as wetlands restoration, tutoring, small business development, public policy development, and Katrina relief. He spoke about a pilot project initially funded by the Carnegie Foundation and the New York Times to promote the involvement of four regional community colleges with CSU Channel Islands in service learning and civic engagement.

Ms. Kinsley asked Mr. Rush why he had chosen to focus the Channel Island school on learning and community service. He responded that the school was founded on the notion of partnerships and an inter-disciplinary approach to learning, which led naturally into service learning and civic engagement.

Chairman Goldsmith introduced Veronika Gilliland, a senior at California State Northridge, past mentee, and present mentor, graduating in May with a B.A. in psychology. Ms. Gilliland shared her personal history as an identified at-risk student from

the time she was in 6th grade. She stated that she had been required to meet with a mentor, a relationship that ultimately benefited her as the mentor encouraged her to believe in herself and to apply to college.

Ms. Gilliland shared that, once in college, she benefited greatly her involvement with a Federal Work Study program that is also funded by Learn and Serve America, Mentoring to Overcome Struggle and Inspire Courage (MOSAIC), a program that pairs college students with at-risk middle and high school youth. She shared success stories about individual youths with whom she worked, meeting several times a week, doing community service work, going on field trips, and getting to know the mentees and their individual strengths and needs. She expressed her intention to use what she has learned through mentoring in her future career, hopefully through continuing her work with at-risk teenagers and service learning.

Wayne Meisel, President of the Bonner Foundation, recollected accounts from his early service on the Board's predecessor, the Commission on National and Community Service. He commended Learn and Serve America Director Amy Cohen for being an admired and respected leader in the area of service learning in higher education. He commended Shannon Maynard, an early Bonner Scholar, for her accomplishments in advancing the Corporation's mission.

The Bonner Foundation currently works with about 75 colleges supporting about 2,500 students each year to volunteer between 300-500 hours annually in exchange for scholarships. He characterized the service-based scholarship as the third merit-based scholarship, following academic and athletic scholarships. He spoke about the value of the Bonner Student Congress, a body of students representing each of the schools who contribute ideas about the policy of the Bonner programs.

Mr. Meisel spoke about how the Corporation's grant programs have helped the Bonner Foundation achieve its mission through Learn and Serve and AmeriCorps*State and National grants. He expressed his hope that the Bonner Foundation, through its investments and relationships, will be able to fund at least 50,000 service-based scholarships by the end of the decade.

Mr. Meisel discussed the results of a survey conducted over a ten-year period which showed that service learning is insufficiently integrated into the college curriculum.

Mr. Meisel talked about the potential negative effects of not using the Segal education award strategically or having a college misapply the award based on a misunderstanding of the relevant financial aid rules. He expressed concern that in some circumstances, a student might pay more for college due to the use of the Segal Education Award than the student would have otherwise.

Public Comment

Betty Ruth, from the National Association of RSVP directors, expressed her concerns

about President Bush's proposed budget cuts to the Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion programs and the lack of an increase in funding for the RSVP program. She talked about the Corporation's emphasis on baby boomers and how additional funding would be necessary for the available service components to expand the way the Corporation intends. She expressed her desire to see increased media coverage of the Corporation and recommended that Corporation representatives try to engage with more of grantees when they make a site visit to the field.

Adjournment

Chairman Goldsmith adjourned the meeting at 11:10 a.m.