

**Corporation for National and Community Service  
Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting  
September 19, 2007**

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

Stephen Goldsmith, Chair  
Vincent Juaristi, Vice Chair  
Cynthia Burleson  
Richard Hill  
Mimi Mager  
James Palmer  
Stan Soloway

## **OFFICIAL ACTIONS**

The Board approved the minutes of the meeting held June 13, 2007. (Transcript, 14).

Chairman Stephen Goldsmith swore in Board members Richard Hill, James Palmer, and Stan Soloway. (Transcript, 3-4).

The Board passed resolutions honoring departing Board members Cynthia Burleson, Dorothy Johnson, and Carol Kinsley. (Transcript, 9, 13).

The Board passed a resolution in honor of Learn & Serve Challenge Week. (Transcript, 41).

## **Chairman's Opening Remarks**

Chairman Stephen Goldsmith called the meeting to order. As the first order of business, he swore in three new Board members: Richard Hill, James Palmer, and Stan Soloway.

Mr. Goldsmith noted that the Board continues to work to improve relations with our grantees, such as the recently merged Points of Light Foundation and Hands On Network. He discussed ongoing streamlining efforts, including the modernization of electronic systems. He acknowledged that, especially in the case of out-dated timekeeping systems, grantees may have questions and concerns about the new systems, and invited suggestions for improvement.

Regarding new technology, Mr. Goldsmith summarized the key points of a conversation the Board had during its retreat with Jean Case, Chairman of the President' Council on Service and Civic Participation, including better, more creative uses of modern technology, such as networking technology, for the Corporation and its grantees. He expressed the Board's commitment to examining technology and encouraging the adoption of new systems to advance the Corporation's mission.

He reported that the Board had been updated during its retreat on how the Corporation is executing its strategic initiatives and on new research conducted by the Corporation. He related that the Board is concerned about the recent slight decrease in the number of Americans volunteering, but that overall the Board felt reassured of the Corporation's continuous progress.

## **Honoring Departing Board Members**

To honor the upcoming departure of Cynthia Burleson from the Board, Mr. Goldsmith offered the following resolution:

*Whereas, Cynthia Burleson 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 2007; and*

*Whereas, Cynthia Burleson has played an integral part in strengthening the Board's oversight of the Corporation, resulting in widely-noted improvements in the agency's internal and program management; and*

*Whereas, Cynthia Burleson has worked to sharpen the Corporation's focus through her contributions to the development of the agency's strategic plan and in her efforts to effectuate the plan through the Corporation's programs, and has shown commitment to the critical role of national service programs in disaster relief by visiting the hurricane-stricken Gulf Coast region to survey the Corporation's programs in action; and*

*Whereas, Cynthia Burleson has demonstrated steadfast support for the Corporation's faith-based and community initiatives, emphasizing the value of*

*inclusiveness in carrying out the Corporation's mission, and has worked to enhance and make more effective communications with the Corporation's stakeholders;*

*Now therefore, the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service, with respect and affection, gratefully recognizes Cynthia Burleson and her inspirational contributions to national and community service.*

The resolution was passed by voice vote without objection. Ms. Burleson congratulated the new Board members and praised the Corporation for its progress during her time as a Board member.

In light of the recent retirement from the Board of Carol Kinsley, the following resolution was distributed to the Board members for consideration:

*Whereas, Carol Kinsley has served with distinction for three terms as a Member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service from 1994 through 2006; and*

*Whereas, Carol Kinsley has been a stalwart supporter of service-learning, has repeatedly led efforts to enhance the role of students in national service, and has been a leading voice for the inclusion of schools and other educational organizations and agencies as key partners in all conversations about the future of national service; and*

*Whereas, Carol Kinsley made significant contributions to the development of the Corporation's Strategic Plan for 2006-1010, particularly in shaping the inclusion of students as a central element; and*

*Whereas, Carol Kinsley has led the Corporation's development and growth since its creation in 2003, and has played an instrumental role in promoting the Corporation as an organization that today leads the country in fostering civic engagement through service and volunteering;*

*Now therefore, the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service, with respect and affection, gratefully recognizes Carol Kinsley and her inspirational contributions to national and community service.*

The resolution was approved unanimously by notational ballot.

A resolution honoring departing Board member Dorothy Johnson was also distributed to the Board. This resolution read as follows:

*Whereas, Dorothy Johnson has served with distinction for three terms as a Member and as Vice Chair of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service from 1998 through 2007; and*

*Whereas, Dorothy Johnson has been a tireless champion of national service and the Corporation, forging strong alliances with Members of Congress, foundations, and institutions of higher education; and*

*Whereas, Dorothy Johnson was instrumental in identifying areas in which the AmeriCorps grantmaking program could be improved, and worked collaboratively to implement the necessary changes through her leadership of the Board's grantmaking task force, resulting in the successful completion of AmeriCorps rulemaking in 2005 and the achievement of substantial streamlining milestones during the past two years, all reflected in an AmeriCorps program that is stronger, more effective, and better-positioned for continued growth; and*

*Whereas, Dorothy Johnson has demonstrated unflinching dedication to supporting the Corporation's involvement in rebuilding the communities damaged by the hurricanes in 2005, including making a trip to personally survey the hurricane-ravaged Gulf Coast and to give witness to the role of national service in the recovery efforts; and*

*Whereas, Dorothy Johnson has worked to effectively improve the overall position of national service in our country by seeking out strategic partnerships essential for the accomplishment of the Corporation's mission to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering;*

*Now therefore, the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service, with respect and affection, gratefully recognizes Dorothy Johnson and her inspirational contributions to national and community service.*

The resolution was approved unanimously by notational ballot.

### **Consideration of Previous Meeting's Minutes**

Mr. Hill moved to adopt the minutes of the June 13, 2007 Board meeting. The minutes were approved by voice vote.

### **Chief Executive Officer's Report**

Mr. Eisner echoed the Board's sentiments about the departing Board members and welcomed the three new Board members. He gave an overview of upcoming and ongoing significant events, including the Learn and Serve Challenge, the second annual President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, and the National Conference on Service in Indian Communities. He discussed the Corporation's momentum on its newest strategic initiative - disaster preparedness and response - relating that since the last Board meeting, the Corporation has developed metrics, designated staff, and engaged in dialogues with its partners, including the commissions, Freedom Corps, grantees working with FEMA and Homeland Security, and the White House, on how to frame the focus on volunteering and donations in the national response plan.

Mr. Eisner reported that the Corporation's leadership is planning the last year before the change in administration, identifying priorities, and anticipating necessary actions to facilitate the transition to a new administration. He identified three focal points as priorities: (1) shifting the perception of national service to "not just nice, but necessary"; (2) encouraging the Corporation and its partners to make an even greater effort to achieve the Corporation's mission; and (3) positioning the Corporation and the greater volunteering sector to best utilize modern technology to advance national service.

## **Committee Reports**

### **Management, Audit, and Governance Committee**

Mr. Goldsmith spoke on behalf of Committee Chair Mr. Lew, who was absent. Mr. Goldsmith reported that the MAG committee had been focusing on technology issues. He reported on management issues, including the Board's annual evaluation of the CEO, which was positive. He added that the Board had held an election, resulting in his re-election as Chair and Vince Juaristi's election as Vice-Chair.

Mr. Goldsmith discussed the Corporation's budget situation, relating that the House had passed a 2008 appropriations bill of \$843 million - \$14 million more than the President's request and \$38 million less than the Senate's proposal. He reported that the Board had been working with the House and Senate, explaining the Corporation's priorities to assist them in determining the appropriate level and distribution of funding.

Mr. Goldsmith related that leading members in both the House and the Senate are supportive of a reauthorization bill for the Corporation. The Board has instructed the Chair and the CEO to continue to assist Congress by providing solicited information to assist reauthorization efforts.

### **Program and Evaluation Committee**

Committee Chair Mimi Mager reported that the Committee had been focusing on four issues: (1) the Summer of Service Notice of Funding Availability, which offers \$900,000 to summer programs for middle school youth; (2) the Learn and Serve Challenge; (3) research and data collection to show NCCC's role, and impact, in disaster preparedness and response; and (4) the development of a Corporation team of staff devoted to disaster preparedness and response. She reported that the Summer of Service in 2007, despite being assembled on short notice, was a success. VISTA and the Louisiana Serve Commission mobilized over 200 VISTA members to engage thousands of youth in productive summer activities. NCCC hosted intensive three-week programs in Charleston, Denver, and New Orleans, engaging a large number of young people in a variety of projects including environmental awareness, education, and disaster recovery.

Mr. Goldsmith added that Learn and Serve plays an instrumental part in increasing service across all age groups, and identified the challenge as putting a greater emphasis on service learning and extending its reach into more classrooms. In honor of the first annual Learn and Serve Challenge Week, September 12-23, 2007, which has been recognized through proclamations by the Governors of Arizona, Tennessee, Louisiana, and New York, Mr. Juaristi offered the following

resolution:

*Whereas, research has shown that service-learning has an enduring positive impact on students' academic achievement, personal and social development, and civic engagement, particularly among students from disadvantaged backgrounds, and that the historically high level of volunteering demonstrated by America's youth has been attributed in part to the growth of service-learning in our nation's schools; and*

*Whereas, the Corporation for National and Community Service supports the expansion of service-learning through Learn and Serve America, Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, VISTA, NCCC, and other initiatives such as the President's Community Service Honor Roll, the National Service-Learning Clearinghouse, and the Bring Learning to Life PSA campaign; and*

*Whereas, the Board of Directors, through Resolution 2005-011, approved "Engaging Students in Communities" as one of Corporation's five strategic initiatives, and set a national goal to integrate service-learning into at least half of all elementary and secondary schools and to engage 5 million college students in service by the year 2010; and*

*Whereas, more than 25 nonprofit organizations, led by the National Service-Learning Partnership, have organized the first Learn & Serve Challenge in order to raise awareness of the value and impact of service-learning and Learn and Serve America; therefore*

*Be it resolved, that the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service reaffirms its strong support for service-learning, recognizes Learn and Serve America for its pivotal role in advancing service-learning, and expresses its gratitude to the organizers of the Learn & Serve Challenge for their support for achieving our mutual goals for service-learning and engaging students in America.*

The resolution was approved by voice vote without objection.

### **Strategic Partnerships Committee**

Mr. Juaristi gave the report for the Strategic Partnerships Committee. He related that the Committee has been examining potential federal partnerships, particularly with those smaller or less recognized federal programs that may benefit from the Corporation's leadership and partnership in achieving shared missions. He reported that the Committee had assembled a list of federal programs that are devoted to national service, youth development, and volunteering with the help of Jill Marshall and the Office of Budget.

Mr. Juaristi discussed the Committee's idea to convene a group of former Board members who could use their familiarity with and knowledge of the Corporation's programs to continue to support national service in other venues. He addressed the Committee's ongoing and broader goal of program branding and communication to expand knowledge about national service. Mr.

Juaristi summarized some of the key points of the presentation given by Jean Case regarding information technology from the recent Board retreat, including how information technology could be used to further the goal of branding.

## **Public Comment**

Betty Ruth, Vice President of the National Association of RSVP Directors and Executive Director of Athens-Limestone County RSVP, expressed concern that Senior Corps, in particular RSVP, may not be getting as much of the Board's attention as some of the other Corporation programs. She discussed apprehensions she had regarding recompetition of RSVP programs in the proposed reauthorization bill, stating that the current Corporation guidelines on the treatment of non-performing RSVP programs already sufficiently address the problems that the new reauthorization provisions are intended to address.

David Ramsey, former Chair of the Florida Governor's Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service ("Volunteer Florida"), thanked the Corporation leadership for the fruitful partnerships it has made and collaborations it has encouraged to achieve its strategic initiatives. He recounted his experiences as a volunteer during Hurricane Ivan and with VISTAs tutoring impoverished children in Florida.

Honor Bell, ex-officio Commissioner for Volunteer Florida, expressed his personal devotion to national service and applauded the Board, the Corporation, and David Eisner for their consistent commitment to national service and support for Florida's commission.

Alex Amporo, former Commissioner and current Director of Emergency Management for Volunteer Florida, commended the Corporation's addition of disaster preparedness and response as a strategic initiative, noting his personal positive experiences working with AmeriCorps in disaster recovery and the impact AmeriCorps members make by providing essential aid to vulnerable communities.

Marsha Meeks-Kelly, Executive Director of the Mississippi Commission for Volunteer Service, thanked Mr. Amporo for helping Mississippi by providing instruction on disaster preparedness and response, positioning them to be the state leader for donations and volunteer management. She stated that the Commission also relied upon the Board, and reminded the Board that the state commissions are the Corporation's strategic partners, acting as a delivery system across the country; Mississippi presently has 25 Commissioners, and in combination with other commissions, there is a large network of Commissioners. She identified America's Service Commission ("ASC") and Voices for National Service as other associations supporting the Corporation's mission. She commended the Corporation for the partnerships it has helped develop, such as between the Hudson Institute and the Center for American Progress. She expressed support for the Senate's budget, noting that there had been a trend of decreased funding for national service that needed to be reversed in order to support the Corporation's, and Mississippi's, strategic goals. She encouraged the Board to advocate on behalf of the Corporation at such events as Hill Day, recounting the Mississippi Commission's advocacy efforts. She also encouraged the Board to travel to different states' commissions and Corporation state offices, and to visit program sites, relating that previous Board members have



found visits to the field helped to clarify the purpose and value of the Board. She advertised the availability of a novelty license plate, the proceeds from which will go to support volunteer work in Mississippi. She discussed the Commission's "Finish the Job" campaign, and thanked the Corporation for their support of the field.

Anita Barrett, Executive Director of the State Education Agency K-12 Service-Learning Network ("SEANet"), a national association of Learn and Serve America K-12 school-based program directors, thanked the Corporation for setting a goal the previous year of having 5 million college students serving and 50% of all America's schools offering service learning as part of their curricula by 2010, inspiring the service learning community to increase their efforts. She reported that that week thousands of youth, educators, parents, policy-makers, and community leaders from 31 states and Australia had responded to the Learn and Serve Challenge. She echoed Mr. Juaristi's report that four governors, from Arizona, Louisiana, Tennessee, and New York had issued proclamations in honor of the Learn and Serve Challenge, the first time in her recollection that so many governors have gone on the record to support service learning and Learn and Serve. She reported that the California State Superintendent of Public Education made a statement to support service learning and celebrated the graduation of more than 30,000 Los Angeles high school students who were the first class to be required to meet the district's innovative service learning graduation requirement. She expressed gratitude to the Kellogg Foundation for its investment which enabled more than 40 organizations and nearly 600 individuals to directly participate in strategic work designed to bring service learning into 50% of all schools. She thanked the Board for responding to those people who had come before them in the past to advocate for making service learning an increased priority. She recollected that SEANet was the first organization to suggest a week to honor Learn and Serve, and expressed pride in serving on the organizing team for the Learn and Serve Challenge along with partners Camp Fire U.S.A., the National Service Learning Clearinghouse, Youth Service America, and the National Service Learning Partnership. She noted that the team has been joined by more than 30 participating partner organizations who are actively pursuing the Corporation's goal for 2010.

Angeline Mutima, a former VISTA and current staff of Youth Service America, a member of the Learn and Serve Challenge Organizing Committee, noted that there had been discussion about the endorsements of elected officials and the pledges made by organizations to promote the Corporation's 2010 goal for service learning. She encouraged a focus during the Learn and Serve Challenge on the ways that youth are a part of the solutions to the pressing problems of their communities, and how service learning is mutually beneficial to the communities and the students, giving young people a voice. She gave some examples of young leaders around the country who were raising awareness for service learning and exemplifying a desire to be engaged civically, including: 100 students from Valdosta, GA, who prepared emergency preparedness kits for a group called Youth Organized for Disaster (a Learn and Serve initiative); 150 elementary, middle, and high school students from Enola, OK, who hosted a series of service learning showcases to raise awareness and support for service learning; and 1,500 students in New York, Philadelphia, and New Jersey who began the process to participate in after-school service learning projects designed to prevent childhood obesity. She related that at Youth Service America, it is their goal that service be the common experience and expectation of all young Americans, and she thanked the Corporation for its leadership to reach its 2010 goal.

Kelly Daly, President of the CNCS Employees Union, AFSCME Local 2027, and Corporation employee, welcomed the new Board members and congratulated David Eisner for his efforts in holding supervisors and managers accountable in the previous year. She related that while they were unable to reach 100% compliance in the employee appraisal system this year as they had hoped, the goal was set out in the Collective Bargaining Agreement and she recognized Mr. Eisner's efforts to have the appraisals done on time. She asked that the Board take a greater interest in employee-specific metrics, as employee satisfaction and retention is essential to accomplish the Corporation's program's goals. She expressed a concern, on behalf of union members, about the remaining days in this administration, stating that the Corporation may lose many of its discretionary employees, and asked that Mr. Eisner and the Board be attentive to transition planning to ensure that offices and programs are not left with gaps, and, in addition to what Mr. Eisner and the Office of Human Capital are already planning, to look for other ways to reduce the negative impact of the departure of such a large number of employees.

Kelita Bak, Vice President of Government Relations for Camp Fire U.S.A., a member of the Learn and Serve Challenge Organizing Committee and a Learn and Serve grantee, expressed two concerns, as gathered from comments from the service learning field, about the GIVE Act and its impact on service learning: that the reauthorization bill would require a 1:1 match for Learn and Serve grantees, which she noted may be a challenge for rural and low-wealth communities; and that the bill would reduce the overall amount of competitive Learn and Serve funding to just under half of its current amount.

### **Adjournment**

Vice-Chair Mr. Juaristi adjourned the meeting at 10:01 a.m.