



## **Connecticut Woman Sentenced For Childcare Fraud**

A former AmeriCorps member from Connecticut has pled guilty to defrauding the AmeriCorps\*Care childcare program of more than \$10,000 following an investigation by the Office of Inspector General (OIG), Corporation for National and Community Service (Corporation). Bernadette Teele, of Waterbury, was sentenced on March 26, 2004, to five years probation and ordered to repay the Corporation \$10,589, the amount of Federal funds she illegally obtained. She was also barred for two years from receiving any Federal contracts or grants, including student loans.

Office of Inspector General investigators found that Teele had filed false claims for the care of her five children and had kept a large portion of the subsidy checks that were issued to her alleged childcare provider. The investigation further found that Teele had committed similar fraud against the State of Connecticut's childcare program. AmeriCorps\*Care provides Federally funded childcare subsidies to support AmeriCorps members who are serving full time to meet community needs. Subsidies are paid directly to childcare providers. The two-year ban on Teele's participation in Federal contracts and grants, known as a debarment, was recommended to the Corporation by the OIG. In their debarment order, Corporation officials wrote that Teele's actions were a "violation of the terms of a public agreement so serious as to affect the integrity of the Corporation's AmeriCorps program."