

CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

Strategic Plan

2006-2010

Improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering



The Corporation for National and Community Service provides opportunities for Americans of all ages and backgrounds to serve their communities and country through three programs: Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve America. Together with the USA Freedom Corps, the Corporation is working to build a culture of citizenship, service, and responsibility in America.

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Our Mission:

Improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering



Our Programs

The Corporation for National and Community Service provides opportunities for Americans of all ages and backgrounds to serve their communities and country primarily through its Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve America programs. Participants in the Corporation's programs contribute approximately 200 million service hours to communities each year. These programs, each with its own purpose and structure, are united for a common purpose—engaging citizens dedicated to making their communities better.

- » **Senior Corps** is a network of programs— RSVP, Foster Grandparent Program (FGP), and Senior Companion Program (SCP)— that uses the experience, skills, and talents of more than 500,000 volunteers age 55 and older to meet community needs. More than half a million Senior Corps volunteers serve in more than 65,000 local nonprofits, public agencies, and faith-based and other community organizations through the three Senior Corps programs.
- » **AmeriCorps** is a network of national service programs— AmeriCorps*State and National, AmeriCorps* NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps), and AmeriCorps* VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America)—that meets critical needs in areas such as education, public safety, health, and the environment through partnerships with public agencies, nonprofits, faith-based and other local organizations. More than 70,000 AmeriCorps members and 800,000 volunteers that they recruit tutor and mentor youth, build affordable housing, teach computer skills, clean parks and streams, operate after-school programs, and help communities respond to disasters.
- » **Learn and Serve America** is a network of programs— Learn and Serve School-Based, Community-Based, and Higher Education—that provides resources to programs to support service-learning in schools and community organizations. Programs in more than 2,000 schools, colleges and community organizations involve over one million students from kindergarten

through graduate school in meeting community needs while improving their academic and civic skills. This is often where a lifetime commitment to service can begin. Learn and Serve America programs provide training to staff, faculty, and volunteers to ensure that service-learning becomes an ongoing feature of funded organizations and schools.

Other Key Programs and Initiatives

- » **Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service:** An annual effort to promote community service activities to honor the legacy of the slain civil rights leader.
- » **President's Council on Service and Civic Participation:** A blue-ribbon panel of leading citizens from all walks of life dedicated to spreading the message of service across America.
- » **President's Volunteer Service Award:** An initiative of President's Council on Service and Civic Participation and the top recognition program for individuals of all ages who devote a significant amount of time to serving others in their community.
- » **Presidential Freedom Scholarships:** A program to honor high school juniors and seniors who demonstrate an extraordinary commitment to service with money to pay for their college education.
- » **Challenge Grants, Next Generation Grants, and Disability Grants:** A series of special grant initiatives designed to leverage public-private partnerships, support new and innovative programs, and encourage service by all Americans.
- » **Faith-Based and Community Initiative:** An agency and administrative-wide initiative to break down barriers for faith-based and small community organizations to become involved in national service programs.
- » **National Conference on Volunteering and Service:** The premier annual gathering of leaders of the volunteering and national service world.

From the terrorist attacks of September 11th to the hurricanes of 2005, the turn of the 21st century has been a time of challenge for the United States. As President Bush has pointed out, these national tragedies also present a “unique moment of opportunity” for the American people to come together as a nation that serves goals larger than the self.

Americans are rising to the occasion. More than 65.4 million Americans, a historic high, are volunteering their time and talents to help people and strengthen communities all over the country.

At this unique moment, the work of the Corporation for National and Community Service—and its thousands of state and local partners—has never been more important. The Corporation exists to help connect Americans of all ages and backgrounds to real needs in their communities, as well as to promote a culture of service across the nation.

We accomplish our mission by providing resources to a range of partners, who in turn put volunteers to work, helping everyone from students in need of mentors to the frail elderly who want to live independently. If we are to maximize the effect of our programs—Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve America—we at the Corporation must do everything we can to seize this moment to challenge ourselves and our partners to greatness, even as we recognize that we will come under increasing budget pressure.

We are pleased, therefore, to present this strategic plan for the Corporation for National and Community Service. This plan, developed with significant input from our field, sets great goals for the Corporation for the next five years, including specific performance targets. It defines our overall mission and guiding principles, and lays out four focus areas that we believe hold great promise for expanding the reach and effectiveness of national service. The plan also reinforces our commitment to management excellence.

Our new strategic plan also does something more: it lays out a national vision for volunteer service. We at the Corporation believe that a better future for all Americans will include a more widespread culture of service, more opportunities for all young people to succeed, more schools that teach citizenship, and a more productive way to deal with our demographic challenges. This vision includes specific targets for the country to reach by 2010, such as 75 million Americans volunteering, 3 million more youth from disadvantaged circumstances with mentors, another 3 million youth from disadvantaged circumstances serving others in their communities, service-learning in half of all K-12 schools, and almost 29 million Baby Boomers engaged in service.

With 10 years of experience behind us, we have a clear understanding of how our programs can help kindle the spirit of service and volunteering in America, while improving lives and strengthening communities. Our strategic plan builds on that history and provides a focus for the future. It's a blueprint to guide national service in building a culture of citizenship, service, and responsibility—and a stronger America.



Stephen Goldsmith
Chairman of the Board



David Eisner
Chief Executive Officer

OVERVIEW

“Will you be a spectator, or a citizen? To make a difference in this world, you must be involved. By serving a higher calling here or abroad, you’ll make your lives richer and build a more hopeful future for our world.”

President George W. Bush

Remarks made at Calvin College Commencement, Grand Rapids, MI, May 21, 2005

Through the programs of the Corporation for National and Community Service (the Corporation), Americans are investing their time, energy, and talent to improve the lives of others and strengthen their communities. In the process, they are building a more engaged society and becoming leaders in civic life.

By uniting together and forging new social ties, Americans demonstrate the strength of our character and renew our sense of purpose—to guarantee freedom by helping one another. When we participate in service and volunteering, we express our patriotism and citizenship while addressing critical local needs. As President Bush said in May 2005 to the graduating students at Calvin College, “When you come together to serve a cause greater than yourself, you will energize your communities and help build a more just and compassionate America.”

Participants in our programs tutor students, mentor children of prisoners, help elderly seniors remain independent, restore trails, riverbanks, and beaches, provide emergency assistance to Americans following disasters, and recruit, train, and manage millions of community volunteers who accomplish even more. These acts have a “can-do” quality that is inherently American. Our programs stimulate and nurture the spirit of optimism, volunteering, and civic engagement that sustains our democracy.

Following a Heritage of Service

When President John F. Kennedy created the Peace Corps in 1961, he expressed the hope that one day a program with a similar purpose would be created to

meet domestic needs. In 1964, Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) began the progress toward that goal. Recognizing the time and talents of older Americans, President Johnson launched the Foster Grandparent Program (FGP) in 1965, followed by the creation of the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) under President Richard Nixon and the Senior Companion Program (SCP) under President Gerald Ford. When signing the National Volunteer Week Proclamation in April 1989, President George H. Bush said to America, “[It] will be your challenge to open your organizations to young people seeking meaningful service to their communities; to match need with need; to find a calling for every volunteer; and to keep reminding us that each one of us has something to give.” The following year, he took another strong step forward when he established the White House Commission on National and Community Service, which created the program that is now Learn and Serve America. Then, in 1993, President William J. Clinton, began AmeriCorps and brought it and other domestic service programs together under a new Corporation for National and Community Service.

President George W. Bush has substantially expanded this legacy, calling for a “nation of citizens, not spectators” in his 2001 Inaugural address, and: 1) launching a faith-based and community initiative to expand support for grassroots organizations meeting local needs; 2) issuing a national call to service for every American in the wake of the September 11 attacks; 3) creating the USA Freedom Corps to stimulate service in America; and 4) winning for the Corporation the largest funding increase in its history, and expanding AmeriCorps by 50 percent to 75,000 members.

Answering the President's Call

President Bush issued a call to service in his January 2002 State of the Union Address, in which he challenged every American to dedicate at least 4,000 hours (the equivalent of two years full time) of his or her life to the service of others. That same year, over 59 million people served their communities through volunteer activities with nonprofit organizations.¹ Since then, the desire to serve and the value of service has continued to gain momentum in our country.

In 2005, 65.4 million, or 29 percent of Americans ages 16 and older, contributed a median of 50 hours a year in volunteer service to their community.² According to

the Current Population Survey (CPS), the volunteer rate among older people ages 55 to 64 rose from 27.5 percent in 2002 to 30.2 percent in 2005. Additionally, from 2002 through 2005, the percentage of retired Baby Boomers³ who volunteer increased steadily, from about 25 percent in 2002 to about 32.3 percent in 2005.

While many Americans are volunteering and giving back to their communities, more Americans would be motivated to volunteer if they were presented with rewarding opportunities that better fit their daily lives. We plan to capitalize on this opportunity by supporting a dramatic increase in meaningful ways for all Americans to serve.

OUR SERVICE ETHIC

“One person can make a difference and every person should try.”

John F. Kennedy

What We Do

National and community service programs work closely with traditional volunteer organizations to broaden, deepen, and strengthen the ability of America’s volunteers to contribute to our communities and our nation. From its inception, the Corporation has endeavored to support service and volunteering in America through three interlocking strategic goals:

» **Meeting Critical Needs through Service and Volunteering**

Across America, millions of lives are improved, problems resolved, injuries healed, and injustices overcome as a result of interventions by caring, compassionate, and skilled volunteers and service participants in Corporation-supported programs. These outcomes are reached in partnership with an expanding public-private network of nonprofit organizations, public agencies, and educational institutions.

» **Strengthening the Capacity of Communities and Organizations**

Strong communities have a robust capacity to engage citizens effectively. Corporation programs help nonprofit organizations, public agencies, educational institutions, and volunteer connector organizations build that capacity for communities. A focus on community capacity and sustainability ensures that every Corporation program leaves a community better equipped to engage local citizens to address pressing local challenges.

» **Engaging Americans in a Lifetime of Volunteering and Service**

Through our programs and partnerships, the Corporation and its partners and grantees offer every American (as a member, program participant, or community volunteer) meaningful opportunities to serve and improve their lives. As we reinvigorate America’s ethic of responsibility, patriotism, and citizen engagement, we also enhance Americans’ civic skills and socially responsible attitudes, thereby strengthening our democracy. In return for their service, participants receive resources for their education, gain or enhance valuable skills, and find rewarding opportunities to better connect with their community.

Guiding Principles

As we pursue our goals, we are guided by ten key principles:

1. **Put the needs of local communities first.**
2. **Strengthen the public-private partnerships that underpin all of our programs.**
3. **Use our programs to build stronger, more efficient, and more sustainable community networks capable of mobilizing volunteers to address local needs, including disaster preparedness and response.**
4. **Measure and continually improve our programs’ benefits to service recipients, participants, community organizations, and our national culture of service.**
5. **Build collaborations wherever possible across our programs and with other Federal programs.**
6. **Help rural and economically distressed communities obtain access to public and private resources.**
7. **Support diverse organizations, including faith-based and other community organizations, minority colleges, and disability organizations.**
8. **Use service-learning principles to put volunteer and service activities into an appropriate context that stimulates life-long civic engagement.**
9. **Support continued civic engagement, leadership, and public service careers for our programs’ participants and community volunteers.**
10. **Exhibit excellence in management and customer service.**



“Citizens working together with their neighbors offer powerful solutions to some of the toughest problems facing our cities and rural areas. The Corporation will succeed to the extent that its programs provide genuine support, innovation and energy to local volunteers making positive change happen in their communities.”

Stephen Goldsmith, Chairman, Board of Directors
Corporation for National and Community Service



Our Focus Areas:
2006-2010

SUMMARY

Our Focus Areas for 2006-2010

We have identified four cross-program priorities to focus on over the next five years from 2006 through 2010. Each focus area requires all of our programs to work together toward critical common objectives. These priorities reinforce the Corporation's strategic goals, support our guiding principles, and call upon each of our program's unique methods for engaging volunteers and participants of all ages and backgrounds to meet critical needs. In addition, these areas of focus are sufficiently broad to encompass State Commissions, State Education Agencies, national nonprofits, volunteer connector organizations, local communities and other partners working within their own priorities. These focus areas are appropriate for the Corporation, because they are consistent with current social trends and because we are well-equipped to meet these needs and produce a significant positive impact on the nation.

» Mobilizing More Volunteers

We have seen five million more Americans serve their communities and country since the President's call to service in 2002. We are dedicated to continuing that trend so that more citizens in need, service organizations, and communities will benefit. In 2005, there were 65.4 million Americans serving; our goal for the nation is to increase that number to 75 million by 2010 by making more service opportunities available.

» 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 communities characterized by high poverty rates, high crime rates, early experimentation with drugs and alcohol, and promiscuous behavior are more likely to be at risk of school failure, unemployment, criminal behavior, and persistent poverty. Not only can youth benefit from services such as mentoring, but they also have much

to offer their communities as volunteers and service participants. The Corporation will continue to support children in need by providing opportunities for both more youth to benefit from services received, and for more youth to serve others.

» Engaging Students in Communities

Educational institutions (elementary, secondary, and higher education) play a key role in guiding students to become responsible citizens and leaders who use their academic and other experiences to support the common good. Volunteering and service are powerful factors that support and enhance the learning experience and need to be further incorporated into academic curricula.

» Harnessing Baby Boomers' Experience

Baby Boomers are a highly talented, highly motivated group that could drive solutions to some of our most intractable social problems. Capturing their experience and energy and engaging them in helping to solve critical social issues through service must become high-priority goals for the nation in the coming years. Whether providing volunteer services or receiving services, Boomers and other older Americans stay active and connected to their community, thereby improving their quality of life.

We have identified performance targets and management goals for each of these focus areas as well as the Corporation's initiative concerning management infrastructure, which, in general, are annual goals that will be reached by the year 2010. For a list of annual targets and results, please visit the Corporation's website at http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/role_impact/strategic_plan.asp. National targets reflect what we expect to stimulate nationwide, although beyond the operational scope of our programs; Corporation targets reflect the contributions that Corporation programs and their national service partners will make to service and volunteering across the nation.

MOBILIZING *more* VOLUNTEERS



As the echoes of the September 11 attacks were ringing in our ears, President Bush issued his call to service in early 2002. Between then and the devastation of Hurricane Katrina four years later, the number of people volunteering in communities has increased from 59 million Americans to 65.4 million.⁴

For those of us interested in engaging citizens of all ages and backgrounds, including those with disabilities, and strengthening our democracy, this growth in the number of Americans volunteering represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to sustain a significant upsurge in citizen engagement. This initiative is about increasing the level of individual engagement in volunteer activities and building the infrastructure of nonprofits and communities to create more volunteer opportunities, and to respond to significant community challenges through citizen mobilization.

Together with our partners, including volunteer and service-driven organizations across the country, the Corporation is committed to working toward a national goal of expanding the number of Americans who volunteer by more than 15 percent over five years, from 65.4 million to 75 million Americans. We also want to encourage volunteers to contribute more hours to their communities. As part of that effort, we are encouraging more Americans to consider making volunteering part of their regular activities. This effort will allow volunteers to gain a wealth of knowledge and enhance their individual skills through their service experience. With those increased skills, volunteers can be a tremendous asset to organizations, helping to increase long-term capacity in communities. For example, Michelle Ward, an AmeriCorps*NCCC alumna who

studies economics and international business, applied skills learned from her service when she began work with the embassy in Togo for the U.S. State Department. The emergency management work she was a part of while fighting wildfires with AmeriCorps*NCCC came in handy when a political coup occurred in Togo. She became responsible for evacuation efforts and setting up shelters.

Research conducted by the Corporation and others in recent years shows that increasing the level of individual engagement in volunteer activities requires significant recruitment, but it also requires much more. Meeting the demand of individuals wanting to volunteer requires building and sustaining capacity and infrastructure within nonprofit organizations and communities to support those volunteers, to match them with appropriate and meaningful opportunities, to train them to succeed, and to manage and reward their work.

The same research that recognized America's volunteer force as 65.4 million strong also identified millions of other Americans with a history of volunteering. These former volunteers indicated they had not volunteered recently due to a variety of obstacles, including lack of time, lack of information, family responsibilities, transportation issues, and health or medical issues. As we move forward, our challenge will be to focus simultaneously on reaching out to more Americans of all ages and backgrounds to volunteer and, at the same time, to ensure that volunteers' needs are fulfilled.

Corporation programs have a strong history of invigorating and supporting community volunteers. We promote service for young people to gain valuable

We are committed to expanding the number of Americans who volunteer from 65.4 million to 75 million Americans.

skills for work and school, for older Americans to stay active and healthy, and for people of all ages to broaden their service experience. Our Learn and Serve America programs introduce over a million children and youth every year to the excitement of meeting community needs, and put them on the path to a lifetime of service. Our AmeriCorps members recruit, train, and supervise more than 800,000 community volunteers each year. Our Senior Corps programs, with more than 500,000 participants, set the standard for experienced volunteers in thousands of communities across America. And our research shows that participants in Corporation programs leave the programs more likely to remain engaged in their communities for years to come, as well as enter into public service careers.

In addition, when nonprofit organizations were asked about what they most need in order to build an infrastructure solid enough to support greater volunteering, a common response was a dedicated, stipended volunteer (someone like an AmeriCorps member, a VISTA member, or a Senior Corps volunteer) to manage the other volunteers and support organizational capacity-building.⁵

The Corporation is committed to improving the capacity of organizations and strengthening their infrastructure to effectively engage volunteers by making volunteer recruitment and management a more central focus. In order to do this, we will engage more participants in our programs as volunteer coordinators, and we will also strengthen relationships with community volunteer connector organizations (such as volunteer centers). These organizations are also dedicated to meeting the needs of volunteers and nonprofit groups; they match individuals with appropriate service opportunities and train nonprofit organizations to deepen the engagement of individual participants.

Building on the success from the President's call to service, our efforts over the coming years will focus on six major areas:

AmeriCorps*VISTA Making a Difference for People with Disabilities

The Program: For more than 200 people in and around Ann Arbor, Michigan, help with tasks ranging from home repair to transportation is merely a phone call away, as long as the phone call is to the Washtenaw Talent Exchange. Participants in the Exchange register their requests with one of the four AmeriCorps*VISTA members running the year-old program of the Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living. The AmeriCorps*VISTA members then match the request for any one of about 300 tasks with the skills offered by participants. As Exchange participants join the service, they indicate what skills they can offer fellow participants. The Exchange participant who performs a task receives one service credit, called a Talent Share, for every hour spent in completing the assignment. In turn, that participant can use those shares for other services.

Why It Works: Most participants in the Exchange, like the AmeriCorps*VISTA members who run the program, are disabled. Joining the Exchange gives them a chance to use their skills—and teach them to others—while receiving help in areas where they might need some assistance, or like to learn. At the same time, the Exchange reduces the isolation that people with disabilities often experience.

Source: *National Service News* 2005

- » Increasing volunteer recruitment, training, and support by AmeriCorps and Senior Corps;
- » Ensuring that AmeriCorps*State and National and VISTA extensively support the spectrum of community volunteer connector organizations;
- » Utilizing participants in national service programs to provide volunteer coordination and management support for organizations, especially smaller organizations that rely on volunteers;
- » Ensuring organizations are partnering with faith-based and other community organizations to help meet community needs;
- » Building the capacity of local communities to organize citizens to respond effectively to disasters; and
- » Using our national platform to recognize volunteers.

“Opening the door to civic engagement and responsible citizenship, and getting as many Americans through it as possible so that it becomes a long-lasting phenomenon, is the job of all of us who care about engaging our citizens and strengthening our democracy and our communities.”

David Eisner, CEO

Corporation for National and Community Service

The Corporation views disaster preparedness and response as a priority that directly supports this initiative. While volunteers and voluntary associations have always been an integral aspect of how the United States responds to disasters, the September 11 tragedy, as well as the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina, indicate a renewed commitment Americans have made to rebuilding lives and strengthening communities. The Corporation intends to serve as a national catalyst and coordinator for volunteer disaster preparedness and relief efforts by further building the civic capacity and infrastructure of high priority communities to prevent, where possible, and to respond to the aftermath of terrorist or natural disasters. The Corporation will particularly work with Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (VOADs) and Citizen Corps to connect volunteers—whether youth, students or Boomers—with organizations dedicated to disaster response and preparedness.

We will also provide resources directly to community organizations to increase the number and quality of their preparedness and response trainings, thereby expanding the number of people ready to respond to a disaster, whether man-made or natural. We recognize that our current program participants, former participants, and community volunteers are themselves a very valuable resource and are essential for responding to disasters and coordinating other volunteers responding to disasters. They have a range of skills to rebuild homes and communities, connect victims with necessary services and address health care needs. The Corporation plans to capitalize on their dedication and motivation, to benefit those most in need.

By offering volunteers meaningful service opportunities, the Corporation and nonprofits across America will help strengthen volunteers' desire to continue their civic activities, thereby remaining connected to their communities. Following President Bush's lead, we believe national and community service is an effective engine for developing active and engaged citizens, which in turn strengthens our communities, our ability to meet challenges like disasters, and our democracy.

National Service Responds to Gulf Coast Hurricanes

Building on experience gained in prior disasters, the Corporation took immediate steps to join with local, state, and national relief and recovery efforts to provide emergency assistance and long-term relief to those affected by Hurricane Katrina. Working largely through FEMA, the American Red Cross, and Governor-appointed state service commissions in the Gulf region, participants in the Corporation's Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve America, and Special Volunteer programs performed a variety of critically needed services. They established and operated temporary shelters for evacuees, provided meals and social services, assisted with communications, coordinated the warehousing and distribution of donated goods, answered phones, cleared debris, provided information on housing and other resources, raised funds, and managed hundreds of community volunteers who had offered to help. More than 12,300 Corporation participants engaged in hurricane relief and recovery.

Highlights include:

- ◇ Just one day after the storm hit, the AmeriCorps*National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC), which has responded to every significant disaster in the last decade, pulled four trained teams from other assignments and sent them to support shelters in Mississippi and Alabama. Since September, over 1,100 NCCC members have served on more than 50 separate disaster services projects in the Gulf Coast region.
- ◇ Several special volunteer programs originally funded by the Corporation in the area of homeland security provided critically needed assistance in the immediate response to the storm. Volunteer pilots with Mercy Medical Airlift, for example, made more than 200 flights to carry patients out of the disaster area, deliver medical supplies, and reunite families separated by the disaster. In addition, the American Amateur Radio Relay League established vital "ham" radio links that allowed local government agencies to coordinate relief activities.
- ◇ Consistent with the Corporation's role in the National Response Plan, some 15 different AmeriCorps state and national programs from around the country have been deployed to more than 30 projects in the Gulf Coast region, primarily through FEMA mission assignments. As of the end of 2005, more than 700 AmeriCorps members had performed nearly 200,000 hours of service, including staffing the Mississippi Call Center; planning youth activities on an evacuee cruise ship; assisting with housing needs, supporting warehouse operations, removing debris, and putting tarps on roofs.

NATIONAL TARGETS FOR 2010

- » Engage 75 million Americans (age 16 and older) in volunteering, up from 65.4 million in 2005⁶
- » Engage 43 million Americans (age 16 and older) in regular volunteering (defined by those who volunteer 12+ weeks a year), up from 31.75 million in 2005
- » Ensure at least half of all nonprofit organizations and faith and community-based organizations that rely on volunteers regularly utilize effective volunteer recruitment and management practices, up from 31.3 in 2003⁷

CORPORATION TARGETS FOR 2010

- » Leverage 4 million community volunteers who are recruited and managed within Corporation-sponsored national service programs
- » Engage 90 percent of former AmeriCorps members in volunteer activities in their communities after their term of service, up from 72 percent in 2005

For data sources and updates on annual targets, see http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/role_impact/strategic_plan.asp

ENSURING a *brighter* FUTURE for ALL of America's YOUTH



America is known as the “land of opportunity”—where anything is possible regardless of heritage, background or status. This “American dream” is the hallmark of our society and an inspiration to our citizens and the world. America’s youth have enormous potential to succeed, yet far too many youth do not have the consistent, positive presence of an adult in their lives to help them transition to adulthood. Unfortunately, for some of the most vulnerable, yet promising of our nation’s population—our youth—the prospect of achieving the American dream seems insurmountable. Today’s youth face increasing challenges to becoming productive adults capable of earning a sustainable wage, supporting a family and positively contributing to their communities. Some will turn to drugs, alcohol, tobacco, promiscuity, violence and other risky behaviors. For instance, children who grow up in disadvantaged circumstances are more likely to be at risk of school failure, entry into the juvenile justice system, persistent poverty, and entry into foster care.⁸ If we work together—through faith-based, community, state, national, and local groups, we can provide our children and youth the opportunity to succeed and ensure a brighter future for all.

Many American children and youth need additional support. Youth living in rural and distressed communities face tremendous challenges, making positive youth development difficult. More than 35 percent of fourth graders and at least 25 percent of eighth graders cannot read at grade level. Approximately 15 percent of American children are living below the poverty level and almost 30 percent of children under age 18 are living in single parent or no parent homes. In 1960, less than 10 million children

were not living with their fathers. Today, that number has increased to 25 million.

Children and youth in at-risk environments are particularly susceptible to negative role models and behavior, and thus, have special challenges to overcome to reach their full potential. Among at-risk factors include:⁹

- » Neighborhoods with high poverty rates;
- » Below-grade level performance in school;
- » Teen pregnancy
- » Time spent in the juvenile system or in foster care;
- » Mental and/or physical disabilities; and
- » Incarcerated parent(s).

We will improve the lives of youth by providing meaningful opportunities to serve and by meeting their most pressing needs, whether academic, environmental, health-related, or social.

The Corporation, and many communities, schools and nonprofits around the country are poised to make a significant positive impact. After the release of the Final Report from the White House Task Force on Disadvantaged Youth

in October 2003, the Bush Administration has strongly advocated for collaboration among Federal agencies that affect the lives of youth in at-risk and disadvantaged environments. The report strongly encouraged agencies to respond to the policy of supporting all youth in becoming highly engaged and successful participants in education and civic life. We will leverage our national service resources to develop meaningful partnerships with our federal, state, and community youth service partners. We will also help advance First Lady Laura Bush’s national priority of empowering youth, through which she highlights the need to reconnect youth with their families, schools, and communities. Our goal is

Focus Area Two

to improve the lives of youth by providing meaningful opportunities to serve and by meeting their most pressing needs, whether academic, environmental, health-related, or social.

The Corporation will meet the needs of our nation's youth by:

- » Recruiting and supporting mentors for youth (with special attention towards children of incarcerated parents);
- » Engaging youth in at-risk and disadvantaged environments in meaningful service experiences; and
- » Developing community volunteering to strengthen positive youth connections with family, schools, and community (including faith-based institutions).

As we have done for many years, we will continue to engage youth in national service and volunteering, as well as continue to provide youth as service recipients necessary mentoring, tutoring, and service-learning opportunities. The Corporation will continue to emphasize the importance of connecting youth with adults who can support their academic and emotional development. Such healthy relationships can provide youth with valuable life-lessons that can prove useful to them even as they become adults, perhaps even motivating the youth to themselves begin or continue serving others.

Young people need relationships with caring adults to assist them in their successful transition to adulthood. Connections between youth and their families, schools, and communities (including faith-based organizations) create a strong social construct that enables youth to make positive choices. The Corporation will help to strengthen these positive connections for youth by generating volunteers and building community capacity to engage, train, and manage volunteer mentors. Children of prisoners are particularly in need of positive role models. To address this need, we will mentor and serve 100,000 children of prisoners, in support of the President's initiative.

Parents and families are the first and most important influence in a child's life, providing a system of love

AmeriCorps*NCCC Member Helps Former Truant Succeed in School

The boy's grandmother thought he had been going to school every morning when he left her home in Brooklyn's inner city. But he hadn't. For years, the youth who had come from another country to live with his grandma had been finding other ways to fill most of his days. He was painfully shy and not comfortable speaking English. His school-skipping pattern continued until he was 13, and placed in the sixth grade in a school with crowded classes of 30-40 children per teacher. He couldn't keep up. Because of his reticence and language difficulties, some believed he might be mentally challenged.

This is the youngster who was assigned to Kendra Moore in her first AmeriCorps venture last winter. She and her nine AmeriCorps team members were asked to help lagging students prepare for testing that would determine if they remained in sixth grade, or moved on to middle school. "It took a long time for him to trust me," says Kendra, 21. "He was scared of people. I started by teaching him the alphabet." She worked one-on-one with him and found that he was actually a rapid learner. Gradually, he not only accepted her but tried hard to win her praise. At the end of six weeks, he had made marked improvement and Kendra was asked to make a recommendation on his behalf to the school board. She urged officials to provide continuing one-on-one instruction for him, "and they have."

Source: *The Gleaner* (Henderson, KY), December 2, 2003

and support. We acknowledge and will seek to strengthen and reinforce parental engagement in youth development.

While it is essential that our nation ensure all youth receive the services that will support their positive transition into adulthood, it is also important to appreciate the powerful benefits that youth engaged in service can provide their communities and our nation. Over the next five years, the Corporation will engage over three million youth from at-risk environments in national community service. These opportunities—to become involved in meaningful volunteer and service activities—enable youth to experience the joy and

"Over two million children have a parent who is incarcerated. These children are seven times more likely to become involved in the juvenile and adult criminal justice systems themselves."

satisfaction of laying aside their own needs to meet the needs of others. Such lessons are irreplaceable and help to instill the spirit and value of community, which contributes to their sense of civic responsibility as adults. Retired General Colin Powell, former Secretary of State and founder of the America's Promise Alliance, supported the idea of infusing service into the learning process when he said, "[W]e ought to push our youngsters. . . so that they see that service is an important part of being an American citizen."

Engaging youth in meaningful service has also proven to be a powerful way to help young people improve their academic and social behaviors while increasing their confidence. For example, Alex San Pedro, who at age 18 was a troubled teen admittedly "on the road to nowhere", is now 26-years-old and studying art at Lane Community College. He no longer plans to die young. He became a literacy tutor for youth in at-risk and disadvantaged environments through AmeriCorps. He says, "I saw in those kids' eyes that they were so happy to see me. . . That just made me feel like, hey, maybe I do have something to give. Maybe I should do something more."¹⁰

Without meaningful and coordinated intervention, a large population of American children (particularly children of incarcerated parents, children in foster

Valencia County Foster Grandparent Program, sponsored by SER De New Mexico, Los Lunas

Valencia County FGP operates near a large state penitentiary for male offenders. The prison is a key component of the economy, and a large contingent of the population consists of families of the prisoners – spouses and children who move to Los Lunas to be near their incarcerated family member. The FGP project has assigned Foster Grandparents to provide ongoing support and services to children in the community, including the children of inmates, through schools, the Head Start Center, day care facilities, and community agencies. On an annual basis, as many of 3,000 children of inmates, primarily under the age of 10, receive nurturing, mentoring, love and support from Foster Grandparents.

Source: Senior Corps Children of Prisoners Issues List, June 2005.

care, and children reading below grade level) will face increasingly insurmountable obstacles to becoming productive adults who are capable of maintaining employment, earning a sustainable wage, supporting a family, and positively contributing to their communities. However, we will work with our partners to engage the nation's youngest citizens in meaningful service opportunities that help to provide the necessary tools for America's youth to experience the American dream.

NATIONAL TARGETS FOR 2010

- » Provide mentoring services to 3 million additional children and youth in at-risk environments, up from 2.5 million in 2002
- » Provide mentoring and other support and services to 200,000 children of prisoners
- » Engage over 3 million children and youth in at-risk environments in service

CORPORATION TARGETS FOR 2010

- » Provide mentoring and other support and services to 100,000 children of prisoners
- » Engage 2.2 million children and youth in at-risk environments in national service through Corporation-sponsored programs

For data sources and updates on annual targets, see http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/role_impact/strategic_plan.asp

ENGAGING *students* in *Communities*



Student involvement in service and service-learning produces valuable benefits to local communities and enables young people to become proactive members of society, while also experiencing the mutual benefit gained from such involvement. Service and service-learning opportunities create avenues for our nation to develop the next generation of citizens who sustain or enhance their service commitments. Students develop an understanding about the importance and impact of service, strengthen their character and roles as engaged citizens, and improve their academic performance. Schools—both K-12 and postsecondary—as well as community-based and other service-learning programs provide useful places for engaging students in volunteer opportunities and in helping them start off on a solid path toward a lifetime of service and civic participation.

Engineering Serves the Community

Purdue's Engineering Projects in Community Service (EPICS) gives aspiring engineers a chance to enhance the quality of people's lives and the life of the community. EPICS is helping to draw more undergraduates into engineering careers by engaging them in a variety of ambitious projects, such as creating electromechanical toys for physically disabled children or building computer systems to track services to the homeless while maintaining privacy. By designing, deploying, and supporting engineered systems that make a difference in the real world, EPICS students gain a satisfying sense of contributing to the common good. They also emerge from the program with communication and teamwork skills, system design proficiency, customer orientation, and project management and leadership

Driving Greater Service on Campus

Virtually every American college articulates a dual mission—on the one hand supporting the pursuit of knowledge and skill development, and on the other hand building strong character for effective citizenship.

Many post-secondary institutions are making significant progress in supporting the civic engagement of their students; however, additional opportunities to energize meaningful service and volunteering on campus exist. Research indicates that high school students volunteer at a higher rate than college students. Although it is true that college students' participation in service is slightly higher than the adult average, it is also true that our efforts to engage college students could be far more robust.

Since its inception, the Corporation for National and Community Service has built a strong network of relationships with higher education.

- » Since 1994, AmeriCorps members have earned more than \$1 billion in AmeriCorps Education Awards to further their educational opportunities.
- » Roughly one quarter of all institutions of higher education have received support from Learn and Serve America funding.
- » In FY 2004 alone, the Corporation invested approximately \$180 million in higher education.

What Is Service-Learning?

Service-learning aims to build knowledge, character, and civic skills in young people by combining service to the community with academic learning. By directly linking service to the academic curriculum, service-learning creates a place for service that is integrated into a school's core mission: education.

Source: *Students in Service to America: A Guidebook for Engaging America's Students in a Lifelong Habit of Service.*

Yet, college investment in service and service-learning (a teaching method that combines service to the community with academic learning) has not kept pace

with demand. Over the next five years we will build upon our relationship with post-secondary institutions of higher education through our three major programs—Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve America, encouraging higher education institutions to offer more service-learning courses as well as more co-curricular opportunities to serve. In addition, we will support colleges and universities in providing more service opportunities through the Federal Work-Study program. In particular, we will focus colleges on efforts designed to give youth in disadvantaged circumstances the skills and tools to be prepared for and attend college. The Corporation currently offers significant benefits, in the form of AmeriCorps education awards and stipends, to members who commit to full or part-time service. We will continue to promote these and other benefits of service in an effort to increase the number of students engaged in service by 40 percent over the next five years.

We will work to ensure that at least half of all higher education institutions provide, or stimulate the creation of resources to coordinate service, service-learning, and community partnerships. In order to make service and volunteering more a part of the college experience over the next five years, we will:

- » Strengthen and expand our network of intermediaries (Volunteer Centers, Campus Compact, State Service Commissions, national foundations and public service non-profits, faith-based and other community based organizations at the state, community, and campus level) that support service and service-learning;
- » Reduce barriers that inhibit students from engaging in service (such as transportation, information, relationships with community agencies, and lack of institutional support);
- » Ensure that students have opportunities to serve as part of their academic studies through high-quality service-learning;
- » Increase the number of college students serving as tutors and mentors to youth from disadvantaged circumstances, particularly to prepare them for high school completion and college attendance; and
- » Provide a national platform to promote the value and importance of service on campus.

By supporting those educational institutions that make service an integral part of their academic mission and connect education to the needs of the local community, we will help to promote an ethic of service among America's younger Americans.

Bringing Service to the Classroom

The Corporation's programs have been catalysts for the growth of service-learning in our nation's K-12 schools. In 1984, nine percent of schools offered service-learning opportunities. Today, service-learning reaches approximately 30 percent of all schools. The Corporation will work to build service-learning into the curriculum of half of all K-12 schools by 2010.

Since President George H.W. Bush signed the legislation authorizing grants to schools to support service-learning, we have worked to support

service for young people both during the school day and in after school programs. Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve America have all provided support to student service. The U.S. Department of Education has made service-learning a key feature of many of the programs it supports as well. The Corporation will build on this existing infrastructure to disseminate effective practices and spread service-learning to new schools and districts. We will expand support for teacher education and professional development programs that provide training in community partnership development and service-learning. In addition, we plan to pilot a new "summer of service" program for young teens that will also support effective training for educators.

In order to incorporate service-learning in more K-12 schools, we will work toward the following goals over the next five years:

- » Identifying quality program models to highlight effective practices, increase visibility of service-learning, and evaluate the outcomes of service-learning;
- » Expanding the number of teachers, faculty, and school administrators using service-learning;
- » Strengthening the value of service-learning to educational institutions; and

Students who participate in service and service-learning gain valuable knowledge and skills that help improve their academic and social behavior while setting the stage for a lifetime of service.

- » Working with non-profit groups to help them recognize students as valuable resources and enable them to more effectively connect K-12 students with appropriate and effective service opportunities.

Taking Service-Learning Beyond the Classroom

The practice of engaging individuals in service-learning extends beyond engaging students in an academic setting. People other than students, including working or retired individuals, can also engage in service-learning, particularly through structured community-based projects and programs. Throughout their service-learning experience, individuals, either serving alone or in a group, increase the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively carry out projects, strengthen communities, serve as leaders, and expand their future opportunities. Service-learning in this context, as well as in the academic context, is a systematic, thoughtful, and programmed approach to learning that emphasizes the links between service, community, and civic responsibility.

Service-Learning Engages Students in Local Service Opportunities

Ross Meyer did more than get a bachelor's degree while a student at Miami University of Ohio. He also participated in alternative spring break programs, tutored GED classes, mentored young people, led housing construction crews, and coordinated after-school and summer youth programs. And he created a service-learning program, Over-the-Rhine Weekend Experience: an Introduction to Urban America. The two-day experience brought students to Cincinnati's most impoverished neighborhood where they worked in a homeless shelter, rehabilitated low-income housing, toured neighborhood and community agencies, and discussed issues with local activists and community leaders. A strong model of service-learning that emphasizes action and reflection, OTR attracted students and professors from many academic areas, with more than 300 students participating in the weekends. OTR served as the basis for the Empower Program at Miami University, a year-long credit course focused on social justice issues. Meyer's idea sparked interest at other college campuses in Ohio and within the Campus Compact Network. Meyer received the Howard R. Swearer Humanitarian Award, sponsored by the Sallie Mae Fund, from Campus Compact in honor of his efforts.

Source: Corporation for National and Community Service (see <http://www.nationalservice.gov/> for this and other stories of service)

NATIONAL TARGETS FOR 2010

- » Engage 5 million college students in service, up from 3.27 million in 2005¹¹
- » Ensure half of all higher education institutions provide at least one full-time person responsible for coordinating and supporting service on campus
- » Ensure 20 percent of Federal Work-Study funds are devoted to college students who engage in service, up from 15.9 percent in 2005
- » Ensure at least one-third of teenagers are exposed to service-learning in school
- » Ensure at least 50 percent of America's K-12 schools incorporate service-learning into their curricula, up from 32 percent in 1999

CORPORATION TARGETS FOR 2010

- » Engage 300,000 college students in service supported by Corporation-sponsored national service programs as participants and volunteers
- » Ensure 80 percent of Learn and Serve America higher education institutions have service-learning as part of their official core curriculum (in at least one discipline or school major)¹²
- » Ensure 65 percent of Learn and Serve America K-12 schools and school districts have service-learning as part of their official core curriculum (in at least one subject in at least one grade)
- » Double the number of higher education institutions matching the AmeriCorps Education Award or providing other incentives for volunteering

For data sources and updates on annual targets, see http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/role_impact/strategic_plan.asp

[The following text is heavily blurred and illegible. It appears to be a list of items or a table of contents, possibly including names and dates, but the specific content cannot be transcribed.]

HARNESSING *Baby Boomers'* experience



It is clear that America is on the forefront of an unprecedented demographic revolution, with older members of the 77 million Baby Boomer generation a mere five years away from age 65. Beginning about 2010, the share of the population that is age 65 and over will begin to climb substantially, resulting in profound implications for our society, our social service delivery systems, our economy, as well as Social Security and Medicare.

Baby Boomers bring the advantages of experience and education, and are motivated to make a difference. There is tremendous potential to provide solutions to some of our most intractable social needs, including the expanding need for independent living support. Research tells us that Baby Boomers, as a whole, will not withdraw completely from the work place in “traditional retirement.” Instead, they will seek a balance of work, leisure, civic engagement, and other interests. Offering opportunities to capture their talents and experience and engaging them in the process of solving critical social issues through service must become high-priority goals for the nation in the coming years.

One such critical social issue is independent living. Demands for affordable long-term care and independent living services in particular will increase sharply in the next four decades. Beginning in 2020, approximately one in six Americans will be age 65 or older. Americans ages 85+, the group most in need of long term care services, including community-based care, is projected to triple by 2040, from today’s four million individuals to about 14 million.¹³

The discussion about America’s aging Baby Boomers often centers on the increasing costs ahead for taxpayers as the ranks of older Americans swell. The other side of the equation, however, is the potential of Baby Boomers to deliver critically needed services, including independent living support. According to the Government Accounting Office,¹⁴ “Family and other informal caregivers play a critical role in supplying the bulk of long-term care. Effective policy must create incentives and supports for enabling informal caregivers to continue providing assistance.”

America faces a near-term opportunity to unleash an unprecedented increase in civic engagement and volunteering in local communities. As we look to the horizon, we believe

that the aging of the Boomer generation can produce a civic revolution that:

- » Provides opportunities for Boomers to deliver independent living to today’s seniors in need, including the 80-plus population;
- » Lays the foundation for affordable independent living services to meet the rapidly accelerating demand; and
- » Offers fulfillment that yields a higher quality of life for Boomers who serve.

Baby Boomers on the whole are better educated and will live longer and healthier lives than any generation before them. They offer an array of experiences, talents, and available time. If properly engaged, they could have a positive impact on some of our country’s most challenging social problems and alleviate the volunteer sector’s greatest recruiting challenge—finding volunteers during the workday.

The nation and its communities can greatly benefit from the sheer volume, high motivation, and broad talents of Baby Boomers, who can bring innovative ways to address the most pressing community needs

“One out of every four adults in the United States is a caregiver to a family member or friend. Caregiver stress and burnout significantly place older Americans at risk of institutionalization.”

Administration on Aging, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2004)

Picture communities where volunteers help improve the quality of life for increasing numbers of older Americans by helping them continue to live independently in their homes. Envision some of the more than 22.4 million informal caregivers in the United States receiving respite services from volunteers to help alleviate caregiver burnout.

To meet the challenge of engaging the vast number of the coming wave of Baby Boomers in service to their communities, we need to:

- ◇ Encourage a significant cultural shift in the thinking of the nonprofit sector in how groups use volunteers, and help nonprofits create meaningful opportunities for service by the coming wave of Baby Boomers;
- ◇ Secure commitments from the business sector to expand volunteer programs, offer flexible work options to Boomer employees, and enhance notions of good corporate citizenship;
- ◇ Give an appropriate role to government, including charging the Corporation for National and Community Service with bringing Baby Boomers into prominence in America's civic activities; and
- ◇ Promote an increase in volunteering, service, and civic engagement by baby boomers, including through a public education campaign to promote volunteering.

David Eisner
Testimony to the Policy Committee for the 2005
White House Conference on Aging

George Ferguson, a retired Baby Boomer, started mentoring a seven-year-old boy through the Grandfathers Group, an RSVP project in Alexandria, Virginia. The child worried about how long Ferguson would be available. Five years later, he is still mentoring the same child. Imagine how our society would be different if Boomers were deployed to ensure two million more pre-school children from impoverished neighborhoods were ready for school. Consider how mobilizing retired teachers could solve tutor shortages in depressed urban areas.

The Baby Boomer population contains a wealth of talent. Many Boomers are still working; others are retired, or semi-retired. They have an array of extensive experiences in areas such as law, medicine, and education, management of a home or small business, and a wealth of other areas. They can be a valuable resource to strengthen nonprofits and the clients they serve. The Corporation is focused on creating meaningful and flexible service opportunities that both engage the large number of Boomers who currently volunteer as well as motivate non-volunteers who are looking for the time and the opportunity to make a difference in their communities.

In addition to helping solve community needs, service offers important benefits for Boomer volunteers. Older Americans who receive or deliver service are more connected with the community, remain more active, and have a more optimistic outlook. Research tells us that Boomers are different from the population of older Americans who currently volunteer in their communities. First, they tend to respond more positively to articulations of the benefits to themselves, including personal fulfillment, excitement, social opportunities, or opportunities to learn something new. Second, they will generally respond more favorably to flexible opportunities, such as those that allow for full-time, part-time, or episodic service. They also respond to service that meets their personal interests and to opportunities that demonstrate visible benefits to the community. Consequently, we must support programs and institutions that effectively engage these Boomers.

Currently most of the volunteers age 55 and over who participate in Corporation supported activities serve through Senior Corps programs: RSVP, Senior Companion Programs (SCP) and Foster Grandparent Program (FGP), but Boomers (who by the end of 2006 will be ages 42 through 60) also serve in AmeriCorps*VISTA and AmeriCorps*State and National. Over the next five years, the Corporation will build on its experience recruiting Boomers in national service programs by: 1) assessing how the skills of this

group can be tapped; 2) strengthening our support for engaging Boomers in Senior Corps programs; 3) exploring strategies for increasing the participation of Boomers in AmeriCorps; and 4) encouraging collaboration between Senior Corps and AmeriCorps in promoting service and volunteerism among Baby Boomers as they reach the traditional retirement age.

We are standing at the dawn of a new era if we can successfully recruit Boomers into community service; but that cultural shift will require great effort. Making

full use of Boomers' experience will take strategic and extended commitments from nonprofit groups, business, and government, with each group offering unique and attractive opportunities for engaging Boomers (such as creating flexible work schedules for service participation). By changing how nonprofits view and use volunteers and pioneering alternative models of service, we will take full advantage of Baby Boomers' talents, skills and experience and make tomorrow better for people of all ages.

National service members and volunteers can deliver critical respite services to ease the burden on caregivers.

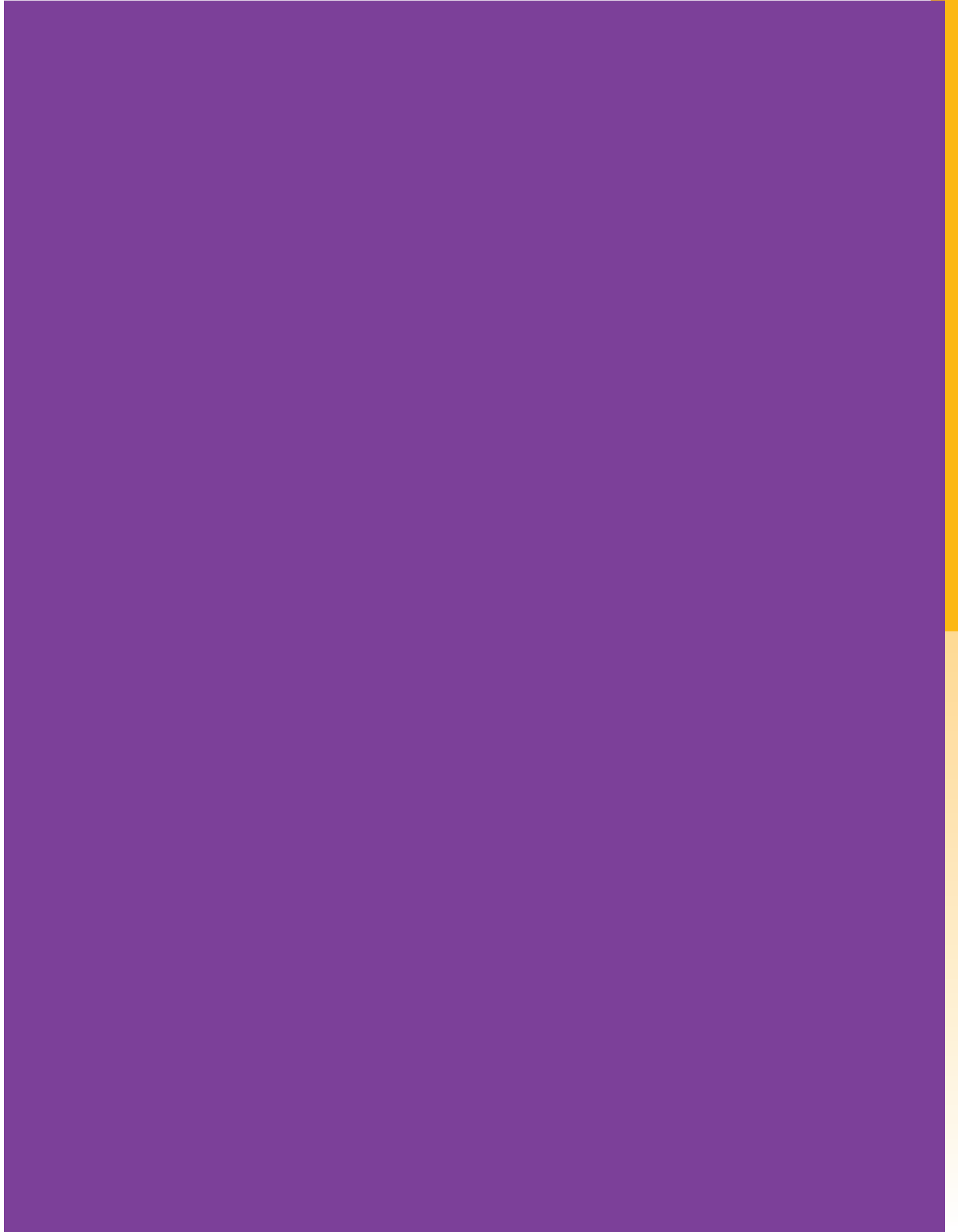
NATIONAL TARGET FOR 2010

- » Engage an additional 3 million Baby Boomers in volunteering, up from 25.8 million in 2005

CORPORATION TARGETS FOR 2010

- » Engage 500,000 Baby Boomers in Corporation-sponsored national service programs as participants and recruited volunteers
- » Ensure at least 75 percent of Baby Boomers in Senior Corps and AmeriCorps rate their overall service/volunteer experience as excellent
- » Ensure at least 75 percent of Baby Boomer volunteers in Senior Corps and AmeriCorps believe programs have given them a significant chance to bring about change in their community
- » Provide (through service and volunteering) 250,000 seniors support from Corporation-sponsored national service programs to live independently
- » Provide 100,000 families and caregivers of seniors support from Corporation-sponsored national service programs

For data sources and updates on annual targets, see http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/role_impact/strategic_plan.asp



Focus On Management

SUSTAINING *Excellence*



The Corporation's management strategy is to create and foster shared values throughout the agency that improve our performance culture and strengthen the delivery services to our clients, and ensure accountability within our workforce. In order to reach our strategic goals, we commit ourselves to effectively and efficiently:

- » Deliver solid performance that meets established targets, goals and objectives;
- » Use public funds with a high level of accountability;
- » Leverage risk and opportunity to increase overall productivity;
- » Build confidence and credibility among programs, grantees, partners and other stakeholders; and
- » Continually analyze and improve its performance.

To rapidly deploy assistance from the national to regional levels, the Corporation has delegated significant program management decisions to state and local organizations. Therefore, effective management must exist at two levels in order for these factors to be present—both within the Corporation itself and among the grantee organizations who operate the programs. The Corporation has implemented an aggressive plan to achieve management excellence. As we continue to improve our management systems, achieve greater accountability and efficiency, meet the needs of our customers, and work collaboratively with our field to ensure they are operating effectively, we will increase our capacity to affect positive change in organizations and increase our grantees' and partners' abilities to meet our communities' needs.

Expand Program and Project Quality

The Corporation has embarked on a multi-faceted approach for improving program and project quality. As

the Corporation continues to move toward an enhanced, performance-based grants management system, we will we will continue to add vigor and expertise to the process we use to select high-quality programs. We will support a variety of organizations capable of developing successful programs and generating increased volunteer capacity. We will conduct and support outreach to faith-based and other community organizations that are not presently receiving Corporation resources and be more responsive to state and local needs in order to build a pipeline of high quality and diverse applicants in all grant competitions.

Significant management improvements have taken place over the past two years at the Corporation. The changes will continue to unfold over the next five years. We will further enhance knowledge management by engaging and sharing meaningful research and evaluation efforts to identify effective program practices, societal trends, and areas for program improvement. We will promote knowledge sharing internally and externally and invest in the skills and capabilities of our service partners. By investing in a continuous culture of learning, we will strengthen management and program performance. We will also provide more tools and opportunities for the replication of successful service models and accelerate innovation in program models during competitions and pilot ideas that can later be embraced by our core programs.

Cultivate a Culture of Performance and Accountability

To strengthen the Corporation's performance and accountability, we will enhance our administrative and evaluation systems, fully utilize technology, and grow the value of national service dollars. In order to maintain reliable systems, we must will that they are:

- » Effective, accurate, and secure;
- » Automated and paperless;
- » Aligned across all of the Corporation's programs;
- » Streamlined to reduce both Corporation and grantee workloads; and,
- » Geared towards meeting our customers' (including grantees, programs and participants) needs.

We will conduct more targeted and in-depth monitoring and analysis of our grantee programmatic and fiscal performance. In order to achieve greater management effectiveness, we will fully integrate more rigorous performance metrics into management analyses and program operations, assessing and where necessary revamp systems for capturing, aggregating, and analyzing data that impact administrative operations and programs.

We will better integrate and streamline grant-making functions and Trust operations to produce strong management results. Through efforts to increase investment in technological data management systems such as e-Grants, and capture data in one central and user-friendly location (the Data Warehouse), we will develop and sustain more valuable data that is readily and securely accessible. This will allow employees and partners to perform more efficiently and effectively. The Corporation also supports various forms of sustainability. Through strategic grant-making and more targeted capacity-building, we will provide local organizations with the tools to increase the current annual \$380 million in non-Corporation funds annually leveraged to a total of \$2.5 billion over the next five years. These resources will allow more Americans to serve, increasing the capacity of communities to meet critical local needs.

Deliver Exemplary Customer Service

Over the next five years, we will work towards becoming a Federal government leader in customer service. It is important to us that we engage in continuous open dialogue with our grantees and other resource recipients, staff, community constituents, and other stakeholders, as well as eliminate any undue burden upon these groups that makes accomplishing their goals a challenge. This process, as well as the process for obtaining accurate and relevant data from our customers, will allow us to better serve everyone with

whom we communicate as they continue meeting the needs of those they serve. We recognize that the road ahead will be challenging, but we will actively measure how well we are doing in providing exemplary customer service. As we continue to improve our relationships with constituents and partners, we will listen and respond to our customers' feedback to ensure that our communication and responses are transparent, as well as work with them to ensure we develop and execute strategies for obtaining specific individual program and national performance outcomes.

Build a Diverse, Energized, and High-Performing Workforce

The Corporation recognizes that our hard working and committed employees are our most valuable asset. They have answered the call to public service, and to further embody that ideal, we continue to seek and employ a diverse, energized, and high-performing workforce. To achieve this commitment, we will work to strengthen workforce diversity at all levels, reward high performers, and be more responsive to and supportive of employees. We will provide more opportunities for professional growth and civic participation, as well as identify tools to ensure that all employees are offered the training necessary to perform their expected duties. We believe our improved human capital strategies will help us foster greater employee satisfaction, enhance our performance culture, better reflect staff's civic motivation, and ultimately transform the agency into one of the most rewarding and supportive places to work in the Federal government.

Effective communication is key to successful management; therefore, we will work to ensure that key organizational decisions receive appropriate attention through dialogue between managers, staff, and the broader service network. We will incorporate feedback systems, providing staff with opportunities to be heard and with the assurance that their ideas will be incorporated into the process for making management and administrative decisions and furthering our strategic goals. Furthermore, we will engage in ongoing communication with and through our Diversity Advisory Council and our Union leadership to help ensure that those decisions are responsive, fair, and accurate.

The Corporation aspires to become a successful learning organization. To do this, we will improve and leverage our technologies to ensure we are sharing both knowledge and skills. We will also provide more effective training opportunities that will allow new employees to begin performing their tasks proficiently, as well as to provide existing employees with more learning opportunities to enhance job performance and develop interpersonal skills. We will collaborate with issue area experts to conduct evaluations of programs, and foster “affinity groups” for programs working on similar issues. To support this effort, we will strengthen

our merit and performance culture, reward higher-performing employees, and ensure that compensation is appropriately tied to performance. We believe our improved human capital strategies will help us foster greater employee satisfaction, enhance our performance culture, better reflect staff’s civic motivation, and ultimately transform the agency into one of the most rewarding and supportive places to work in the Federal government. In taking these steps, we will ultimately transform the Corporation into one of the best places to work in the Federal government, and positioning the Corporation as a successful knowledge management organization.

MANAGEMENT TARGETS

- » Achieve a customer service score on the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) of 80 plus for our programs, up from 69 in 2005
- » Increase the percent of employees who report overall satisfaction with their job to at least 80 percent, up from 67.5 percent in 2004
- » Achieve a percentage of at least 80 percent of grantees who are satisfied with the overall usability and effectiveness of our major technology systems
- » Have no reportable conditions or material weaknesses identified in the most recent Corporation financial statement audits, down from 1 reportable condition in 2004
- » Increase the percent of government-wide financial management metrics where the Corporation is rated Green to 100 percent, up from 78 percent in July 2005
- » Increase the percent of key internal program management metrics that meet scorecard targets to 100 percent
- » Leverage cumulatively \$2.5 billion in non-Corporation funds from 2006-2010

For data sources and updates on annual targets, see http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/role_impact/strategic_plan.asp

the \mathbb{R}^n -valued function \mathbf{f} is a solution of the system (1) if and only if \mathbf{f} is a solution of the system (2).

Let us assume that \mathbf{f} is a solution of the system (2). Then, for any $t \in \mathbb{R}$, we have

$$\mathbf{f}(t) = \mathbf{f}(0) + \int_0^t \mathbf{f}'(s) ds = \mathbf{f}(0) + \int_0^t \mathbf{A}(s) \mathbf{f}(s) ds.$$

Since \mathbf{f} is a solution of the system (2), we have $\mathbf{f}(0) = \mathbf{0}$. Therefore, we have

$$\mathbf{f}(t) = \int_0^t \mathbf{A}(s) \mathbf{f}(s) ds.$$

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APPENDIX

Strategic Plan Development Process—A Collaborative Effort

The Corporation's Board of Directors led this development process from start to finish, and included two rounds of stakeholder input. The first round focused primarily on the content of key components of the plan (such as the mission statement and the focus areas) while the second round focused on refining the communication quotient of the plan. In both rounds we actively engaged a broad community of internal and external stakeholders, including members, participants, grantees, Corporation staff, and the public. The published plan represents a genuine mission that is ambitious enough to be challenging and still sufficiently realistic to be implemented.

Round One

Data collection events—meetings and conference calls—were held to gather input from stakeholders. Documents presenting three initial, draft mission statements as well as potential focus areas (initiatives) that were identified by the Corporation Board of Directors were distributed and used to guide discussions and gather participant feedback. Approximately 29 total, $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ hour events were held, and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) participated in at least 25 of them. Stakeholders were also given the opportunity to provide written feedback hard-copy documents, email, or fax. All stakeholder comments were quantitatively analyzed, and the results

were presented to the Corporation Board. After carefully considering the feedback, the Board made decisions regarding the feedback and suggested revisions accordingly.

Round Two

A more comprehensive draft of the plan was then released to the public with a request from the Board and CEO for review and comment. Public input sessions were held with a wide array of stakeholders, where Board members actively engaged in feedback sessions and where the CEO and other Corporation executive staff attended. Conference calls were conducted for stakeholders who were unable to attend the input sessions in person. Feedback from all of the sessions was analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively and was incorporated into the draft as appropriate. In all, over 700 stakeholder comments were received. A new draft incorporating the changes was then presented to the Board for review and final comment. Any changes were included and the draft was then submitted to OMB, which gave us feedback that we incorporated into the final plan.

All of these insights made our plan considerably stronger and stimulated an open dialogue that will continue as we work to achieve the important goals outlined here.

Endnotes

1 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2005 Current Population Survey's (CPS) Supplement on Volunteering.

2 *Id.*

3 Baby Boomers refers to those 77 million persons in America born between 1946 and 1964 who will begin reaching the age of retirement within the next few years.

4 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2005 Current Population Survey's (CPS) Supplement on Volunteering.

5 Based on findings from 2003 Volunteer Management Capacity Study, which was organized and funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service, the USA Freedom Corps, and the UPS Foundation and conducted by the Urban Institute.

6 This includes all Americans who do both sporadic and regular volunteering, as well as one-time, short-term and long-term volunteering.

7 This target measures how many organizations regularly implement at least two of three effective volunteer recruitment and management practices, such as screening and matching, offering training to, and recognizing volunteers.

8 The risk factors presented here and throughout this section are only a portion of factors that were compiled from various sources, including the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) within the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), the U.S. Department of Education (DOE), the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), as well as risk factors cited in the Helping America's Youth (HAY) assessment tool.

9 *Id.*

10 Source: The Register-Guard (Eugene, OR), June 1, 2004.

11 This data comes from the Current Population Survey, where 16-24 years of age were asked if they attend college.

12 Although all Learn and Serve higher education institutions have service-learning as part of their program and even as a single course, not all have service-learning as a core part of their academic curriculum.

13 U.S. Department of Health and Human Resources, Administration on Aging, 2004 profile of older Americans.

14 U.S. General Accounting Office. Long-term Care: Aging Baby Boom Generation Will Increase Demand and Burden on Federal and State Budgets, March 2002.

OUR MISSION:

*Improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic
engagement through service and volunteering*

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