



## **Together for Tomorrow Demonstration Sites Summary**

To advance community partnerships and citizen service that will support school improvement, the U.S. Department of Education, working with the White House Office of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships and the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), is launching Together for Tomorrow (TFT). Together for Tomorrow will spotlight and foster partnerships among schools, families, national service programs, and community-based organizations in order to propel improvement of our lowest-performing schools.

Demonstration sites for TFT are currently operating in six cities: Orlando, Fla.; New Orleans, La.; Memphis, Tenn.; Denver and Center, Colo.; and New Haven, Conn. These local projects are demonstrating how community-based organizations can work together with schools to achieve key student outcomes.

Full-time AmeriCorps VISTA members are working in the schools and are joined by other national service programs and community partners to build capacity, manage volunteer resources, and facilitate the interaction between schools and organizations, both secular and faith-based.

### **Denver and Center, Colo.**

The Denver's Far Northeast Service and School Turnaround pilot is uniquely positioned to be a leader in education turnaround work. Sponsored by the Foundation for Educational Excellence, six AmeriCorps VISTA members play a pivotal role in developing, testing, and refining systems that help to build capacity to support Denver schools' vision and ensure sustainability in the areas of community engagement, extended learning goals and communications.

The key focus areas include:

- Create the structure for an effective parent engagement and community outreach
- Initiate a social media marketing plan
- Build a community stakeholder management database
- Develop training materials, a communication plan and website for Adopt-a-Senior

### **Memphis, Tenn.**

In partnership with Tennessee Campus Compact, AmeriCorps VISTA members are creating sustainable partnerships and developing new systems to improve underperforming Memphis schools. The partnership is an effort to increase community involvement, enhance academic performance and increase student access to secondary education opportunities.

The key focus areas of the project include:

- Community mapping to identify student and family needs
- Taking an inventory of resource, matching needs with community resources

### **New Haven, Conn.**

The New Haven Education AmeriCorps VISTA Project, sponsored by the Agency on Aging of South Central Connecticut, is a collaborative of six non-profit host organizations working together with a common goal of closing the achievement gap for public elementary and secondary school students in New Haven, Connecticut. VISTA members are placed at Dwight Hall at Yale, Everybody Wins! CT, Experience Corps, Higher Heights Youth Empowerment Program, New Haven Reads, and United Way of Greater New Haven. The overall goal is to provide community solutions to support the New Haven School Change Initiative by increasing student literacy and by enabling students to gain access to college.

The key focus areas of the project include:

- creating better systems to recruit and train community volunteers
- securing resources to aid in the development of programs
- building community partnerships to support and expand existing services to serve and support more students in grades K through 12
- establishing College Access Centers to prepare students for a post-secondary education

### **New Orleans, La.**

Tulane University's Center for Public Service was created to merge academic inquiry with sustained civic engagement. Tulane's partnership with AmeriCorps VISTA since 2006 has proven to be an extremely effective means to building robust partnerships with community organizations. Today, AmeriCorps VISTA members and the Tulane community are assisting community partners with capacity building to support school improvement at underperforming public schools.

The key focus areas of this project include:

- Developing a Partnership Plan to identify existing assets and resource deficits
- Creating a Volunteer Engagement Resource Guide to engage and retain volunteers
- Building Parent Advisory Councils and a Community Coalition, including local churches

### **Orlando, Fla.**

The Interfaith Service Pilot for School Turnarounds, supported by The Heart of Florida United Way and AmeriCorps VISTA, is designed to strengthen partnerships between community-based organizations and schools. The AmeriCorps VISTA members are dedicated to building systems that manage school and community partnerships, and are developing a clearinghouse to match school needs with resources from faith based and other community organizations.

The key areas of this demonstration site include:

- Developing a sustainable volunteer recruitment and management system
- Design of evidence-based interventions
- Managing partnerships at the local level to build capacity in the schools

For further information on the demonstration sites, please contact Sara Albright at [salbright@cns.gov](mailto:salbright@cns.gov)

Communities interested in details and updates on *Together for Tomorrow* please email [edpartners@ed.gov](mailto:edpartners@ed.gov) or visit [ed.gov/edpartners](http://ed.gov/edpartners).