



## VOLUNTEERISM IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

*Everyone can be great, because everyone can serve.  
Martin Luther King, Jr.*

Every day, across the United States, countless numbers of people from all walks of life – as individuals, and in groups – spend hours in the service of others. The economic worth of this volunteer work is incalculable and without it communities would simply fall apart. Many wrongly assume that voluntary work is only in the social services such as meals on wheels or hospice care. But volunteering also takes people into the arts, education, sports, search and rescue, health, information, administration, and environmental work. Why will one person spend time helping someone he or she does not know, close to home or far away? There are no easy answers. Volunteering is, for some, a way of returning to the community some benefit received. For others, it is an ineffable experience that makes the volunteer “feel good.” And still for others, it can be a transforming experience – changing one’s perspective on people, on community and on society, and defining one’s purpose in life. It can also lead to a new career.

The International Year of the Volunteer in 2001 sought to expand the role of volunteers in the United States and the existing array of efforts in corporate America, within the educational and religious sectors, and at different levels of government.

**U.S. Vision** - Challenged Americans to recognize the shared traditions of volunteering; and commit to volunteering as a unifying force to build strong communities

**U.S. Strategies** - Awareness, engagement, Capacity-Building

**U.S. Goals:**

- To engage more individuals, groups, and organizations in volunteer service
- To create an awareness of the formal and informal ways in which people volunteer and can volunteer to benefit their communities
- To empower more individuals, groups, and organizations to lead, mobilize, and serve through capacity-building, resources, and opportunities
- To encourage communities to build sustainable partnerships that support volunteer service and volunteer systems
- To recognize more individuals, groups and communities for their commitment or recommitment to volunteer service

**U.S. Partners** – Any organization, business, government entity, family, group, individual or coalition that conducts at least two activities which build public awareness about volunteering; recognizes volunteers; or results in more volunteers being engaged.



**Sculpture to Salute  
Volunteers**



## SELECTED WEBSITES AND ONLINE PUBLICATIONS

*No recommendation is made in respect of non-U.S. Government web sites listed.*



**AmeriCorps Week** – 13-20 May, 2007 This first ever *AmeriCorps Week* is a weeklong, nationwide event designed to bring more Americans into service, salute *AmeriCorps* members and alums for their powerful impact, and thank the community partners who make *AmeriCorps* possible.

*AmeriCorps* is a network of local, state, and national service programs that connects more than 70,000 Americans each year in intensive service to meet our country's critical needs in education, public safety, health, and the environment. *AmeriCorps* members serve with more than 2,000 nonprofits, public agencies, and faith-based and community organizations. Since 1994, more than 400,000 men and women have provided needed assistance to millions of Americans across the nation through their *AmeriCorps* service.

*"You must be the change you wish to see in the world." — Mahatma Gandhi*

### **America Reads Challenge**

The U. S. Department of Education created this site supporting President Bill Clinton's challenge to the nation "to ensure that every child can read well and independently by the end of the third grade." It includes information about training opportunities, questions and answers, legislation, the President's Coalition for the America Reads Challenge, federal work-study, publications and research.

### **America's Promise: The Alliance for Youth**

Founded at the Presidents' Summit for America's Future, America's Promise, an alliance of corporations, foundations and other organizations from the private and public sectors, aims to create access for every at-risk child in America to the resources needed in order for them to lead happy, healthy and productive lives.

### **Association for Volunteer Administration**

An international membership organization whose purpose is to "promote professionalism and strengthen leadership in volunteerism." Offers a professional credentialing program, publishes a quarterly journal, *The Journal of Volunteer Administration*, and sponsors international conferences.

### **Association for Volunteer Services** - The Gateway to Volunteer Services

### **Boston College Center for Corporate Community Relations**

An international corporate membership organization, partnering with businesses worldwide to strengthen community relationships and foster healthy, sustainable communities for citizens and businesses alike. The site includes resource material for management and professional development, including certificate programs in corporate community relations. The Center's third annual "snapshot of issues and trends in community relations" surveys the growth of global corporate citizenship.

### **Campus Compact** – Higher Education in the Service of the Nation

A coalition of college and university presidents committed to making service a central element of undergraduate education, integrated with academic study and infused throughout all areas of the institutions these presidents head.

### **Community Service** & **Community Service – Rotary International**

**Charity Focus** - Conceived by volunteers, was built by volunteers, and is run by volunteers -- all for the benefit of volunteers.

### **COOL2serve.org: Campus Outreach Opportunity League**

A national nonprofit organization dedicated to the education and empowerment of college and university students to strengthen the United States through community service. COOL mobilizes and links students of all backgrounds so as to increase participation in communities, and fosters the civic and social responsibility necessary to build a just society.

### **Compact for Learning and Citizenship** - National Center for Learning & Citizenship

Housed at the Education Commission of the States, the Compact for Learning and Citizenship is an organization of state chiefs and district superintendents. The organization works to "provide the educational leadership necessary to integrate community service learning into the program of study for all youth enrolled in grades kindergarten through twelve."

### **Congregations in Community**

An initiative of the McKnight Foundation as an interfaith effort to recruit and train volunteers to assist low-income people. Its goals are to further the reach of religious organizations to serve children and families, and to bring people of different faiths together to address common community problems.



### **Corporation for National and Community Service – an invaluable resource**

Links to all the organizations under the CNS umbrella: AmeriCorps, Learn & Serve America, the Senior Corps, America Reads, and National Service Scholarships. Numerous service resources, such as notices of funding opportunities, internships available, networking guides, clearinghouses, and documents are highlighted as well.

**Doctors Without Borders** - Doctors Without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) is an independent international medical humanitarian organization that delivers emergency aid to people affected by armed conflict, epidemics, natural or man-made disasters, or exclusion from health care in more than 70 countries.

### **Energize, Inc - especially for leaders and volunteers**

A variety of resources are included on this site including a [library of articles and bibliography on volunteer management](#), an online Bookstore, quotes and parables on volunteerism, hot topics, a calendar of conferences, a job bank and more. Also lists state, local and provincial associations of volunteer administration.

### **Habitat for Humanity International**

Habitat for Humanity has built over 65,000 houses in partnership with people in need throughout the world. This page will answer your questions on how to get involved, where the houses are built and how the program works. Fact sheets describing Habitat's progress are available for each country in which Habitat is working.

**Hearts and Horses** - To promote the physical, cognitive, emotional, and social well-being of people with special needs through equine assisted therapy. Volunteers drive the Hearts & Horses program. They are the people who give their time and services and who assume the obligations of the program of their own free will. In 2003 the program documented over 15,846 volunteer hours.

### **Idealist – Action Without Borders**

Lists 14,000 nonprofit organizations from 125 countries. Each entry provides information about their services, volunteer opportunities, job openings, internships, upcoming events and publications. The directory is searchable, and the site provides numerous links.

### **Independent Sector**

IS describes itself as a "national leadership forum, working to encourage philanthropy, volunteering, not-for-profit initiative and citizen action." Publishes numerous highly useful surveys, toolkits and monographs on government relations, leadership, management and research in the nonprofit field.

### **International Association for Voluntary Effort (IAVE)**

Created in 1970 by a small group of women throughout the world "who shared a common vision of how volunteers can contribute to the solution of human and social problems." With a board of directors from 19 countries, the organization continues to promote and support effective volunteering internationally through its conferences, volunteer centers, membership services and training programs in education, public awareness and youth involvement.

### **Internet Nonprofit Center**

Provides information on non-profit organizations, wise giving practices, and other issues of concern to volunteers and donors. A [Bibliography of Books on Volunteerism](#) is also available.

### **Literature of the Nonprofit Sector Online**

From the [Foundation Center](#), this authoritative bibliography is regularly updated and contains citations to materials collected by the Center's five libraries as well as selected literature from other sources. A [listing of new acquisitions on voluntarism](#) is available.

### **Learn & Serve America**

This clearinghouse collects and disseminates information for the service-learning field. Among the resources available are searchable databases of Contacts, Events, a ListServ, Literature and Program Information; downloadable bibliographies, monographs, newsletters and videos; publications for purchase; and extensive service learning links.

### **National Environment Education Week – Get Involved**

The nation's largest event devoted to environmental learning.

### **National Service**

Corporation for national and community service.

### **The Non-Profit Management Education Center - Learner Resource Center**



### **Nonprofit Gateway**

Links to information on government grants, budgets, volunteer opportunities and agency partnerships.

**Peace Corps** traces its roots and mission to 1960, when then Senator John F. Kennedy challenged students at the University of Michigan to serve their country in the cause of peace by living and working in developing countries. From that inspiration grew an agency of the federal government devoted to world peace and friendship. Since that time, more than 187,000 Peace Corps Volunteers have been invited by 139 host countries to work on issues ranging from AIDS education to information technology and environmental preservation.

### **Points of Light Foundation**

Along with the Corporation for National Service, the Points of Light Foundation co-sponsored the Presidents' Summit for America's Future. Devoted to promoting volunteerism, the nonprofit organization has developed a number of ongoing training and development programs and initiatives, such as Connect America, the Prudential Youth Leadership Institute, the JC Penney Golden Rule Awards Program, the Daily Points of Light awards and the annual "National Volunteer Week." Note the section on corporate volunteer initiatives.

### **Roots and Shoots**

The program is about making positive change happen—for our communities, for animals and for the environment. And it all starts with you! With tens of thousands of young people in almost 100 countries, the Roots & Shoots network branches out across the globe, connecting youth of all ages who share a common desire to help make our world a better place. This powerful, youth-driven network fosters a fun, flexible and supportive environment where young people and adults alike come together to share ideas and inspiration, implement successful community service projects and participate in special events and global campaigns.

### **SERVEnet**

Sponsored by Youth Service in America, an organization committed to community and national service. Includes directory of affiliated organizations and a service called "Volunteer Now!" which matches the skills of volunteers with the non-profit organizations that need them.

### **Stand Up for Kids – Get Involved**

A national non-profit organization dedicated to the rescue of homeless and street kids.

### **Students In Service**

The purposes of the *Students in Service* program are to meet critical community needs by engaging higher education students in service, and fostering within them an ethic of civic responsibility. Through the program, students are introduced to local, regional, and national Service-Learning opportunities, resulting in a regional network of student leaders committed to serving and strengthening their local communities. Students serve in partnership with schools and community-based organizations in the areas of education, human needs/services, the environment, public safety, and Homeland Security.

### **USA.gov**

Public service and volunteerism



One of the most compelling things about being the President  
is I get to see on a daily basis the true compassion of our fellow citizens."  
– President George W. Bush

**USA Freedom Corps** - USA Freedom Corps encouraged all Americans to participate in a service-related activity during National Volunteer Week and National & Global Youth Service Day (April 20th to 22nd).

### **VolunteerUSA.com**

Volunteer-USA is an on-line communication, information, and coordination network that organizes the general public to (1) perform volunteer opportunities and (2) to organize during large-scale emergency response efforts.

**VolunteerMatch** – "Bringing good people and good causes together is what we do."

Looking for a great place to volunteer / looking for a great volunteer? This "virtual volunteering" project has a "matching service" for volunteers and the organizations that need them. The project looks at volunteer activities that can be completed off-site via the Internet. The web site includes a number of practical guidelines, resources and examples of noteworthy activities.

**Volunteer with Kids – Big Brothers Big Sisters** – “It’s one of the most rewarding and enjoyable things you will ever do.”

**Volunteer Opportunities** - Helping other nonprofits & people in your local community

**Volunteer Vacations** – “It was the most amazing experience of my life...”

### **Volunteers of America**

Founded in 1896, Volunteers of America is "one of the nation's oldest, largest and most comprehensive nonprofit human service organizations." Serves abused and neglected children, homeless families and individuals, the elderly, youth at risk, people with disabilities and ex- offenders returning to society. Its public policy advocacy role is accomplished through its nationwide affiliates and publications, including *Spirit Magazine* and *The Gazette*.

### **Volunteerism and Philanthropy – State Department**



**Volunteerism is an Integral Part of U.S. Culture** in *The Washington File*, 28 February. 4p. President Bush has called on Americans to dedicate at least two years over their lifetimes, or 4,000 hours, to serving their communities. In 2002, he created the USA Freedom Corps, a national clearinghouse that matches volunteers with charities worldwide and with national service programs such as AmeriCorps.

**Data Show Americans Give to Charity, Volunteer** in *The Washington File*, 18 February. 3p. The stereotype many Europeans hold of Americans as uncharitable towards the poor is wrong, says Professor Brooks, who has studied the link between faith, charity and politics.

**Picture:** President Bush visits with children at the Anthony Bowen YMCA. Volunteers assist with many of the YMCA's programs. (© AP)

### **World Volunteer Web**

During the 52nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly on November 20, 1997, a proposal was approved to proclaim the year 2001 as the International Year of Volunteers. Continual updates on IYV 2001 can be accessed through this page.

### **World Volunteer Web – United States**

#### **YouthLearn: Recruiting Volunteers via the Internet**

Promoting your volunteer opportunities online is effective, fast, and easy and doesn't require any additional costs. It's an excellent way to reach nontraditional volunteers—populations that might be underrepresented in an organization's volunteer ranks (e.g., seniors, ethnic minorities, and people with disabilities)—and targeted groups, such as particular kinds of professionals (e.g., lawyers, accountants, musicians, Web designers) or people in a specific geographic area.



### **TEN TIPS on Volunteering Wisely - The Independent Sector**

### **The Estimated Value of Volunteer Time in 2006 / Dollar Value of a Volunteer Hour 1980-2006**

### **Publications:**

**Volunteering in America: 2007 State Trends and Rankings in Civic Life** Corporation for National and Community Service, April. 148p.

**20 Ways for Teenagers to Help Other People by Volunteering:** Online resource for the book *The Teenager's Guide to the Real World*, by Marshall Brain. Also includes links to several nonprofit organizations.

**The Future of Volunteering: Children under 14 as Volunteers e-Volunteerism** – Online Journal of the Volunteer Community

**Older Volunteers – Aging in Place – Effective Practices in Supervising**

**ServiceLeader.org** – Documents and Reports Related to all aspects of Volunteerism and [more...](#)

**Volunteer Abroad**

**Volunteer Today** – Electronic Gazette

**Turn Your Organization into a Volunteer Magnet** (60p.)

**Volunteer Recruitment and Recognition: Marketing Volunteers** (Museums)

**The United States: A Nation of Volunteers** an e-journal, *IIP, Dept. of State*. Chapters include:

1) **The Best Years of Our Lives** by President Jimmy Carter. 2p.

The former U.S. President has spent the majority of his time since leaving the White House in 1981 as an active volunteer and planner. He offers some thoughts on the personal gratification he has received from Pitching in on numerous projects and how volunteering has change his perspective on the world.

2) **Volunteerism and the Government Sector** by Susan Ellis. 5p.

Ellis reviews the many ways which U.S. citizens volunteer at various levels of government – federal, regional, and local. She also points out the role being played by public officials in the private arena.

3) **Finding Time** by Gene Rose. 3p.

Rose views state legislators and their staffers in unusual roles – as volunteers – which great satisfaction.

4) **Volunteerism and Corporate America** by Betty Stallings. 4p.

The benefits accruing the U.S. community from employee voluntary programs.

5) **Schools, Universities and Volunteering** by Terry Pickeral. 3p.

Pickeral, an expert on service learning and a consultant on educational matters analyzes what volunteering means on various educational levels, from primary schools through the university sector.

6) **Shared Love of Reading Pairs legislators and Students** by Kathleen Kennedy Manzo. 2p.

U.S. senators and their aides are adding a new dimension to their workday lives by participating in a reading program in the primary schools of the District of Columbia, in the shadow of the Capitol.

7) **Volunteerism and Religion: A Mid-Western Perspective** by Paula Beugen & Jay Teath. 3p.

8) **Voices of Volunteers.** 2p. Men and women at the front lines of volunteerism, and their experiences.

### **Television program:**

**The Visionaries: Changing the World One Day at a Time** - Each episode of this PBS series "highlights the positive difference individuals are making in the lives of other people through the vital work of nonprofit organizations." This site contains summaries of the episodes from the first three seasons.

### **Quotes:**

And so, my fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you - ask what you can do for your country.  
- *John F. Kennedy - January 20, 1961*

I shall pass through this world but once. Any good therefore that I can do or any kindness that I can show to any human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.  
- *Mahatma Gandhi*

The heart of a volunteer is not measured in size, but by the depth of the commitment to make a difference in the lives of others.  
- *DeAnn Hollis*

The deeds you do may be the only sermon some persons will hear today. - *Saint Francis of Assisi*

Don't know what your destiny will be, but one thing I do know: The only ones among you who will be really happy are those who have sought and found how to serve.  
- *Albert Schweitzer*

You have not lived until you have done something for someone who can never repay you. - *unknown*

A civilization flourishes when people plant trees under which they will never sit. - *Greek Proverb*



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