



SERVICE INITIATIVE

June 22 – Sept 11, 2009

This is an extraordinary moment in time. As Americans, we have a unique opportunity to come together and solve our nation's most vexing problems. In this spirit, President Obama is announcing a nationwide service initiative, the beginning of a sustained, collaborative, and focused effort to meet community needs and make service a way of life for all Americans.

Focus: The Economic Recovery

The Service initiative will empower Americans to participate in the economic recovery by:

- Promoting clean energy, energy efficiency, and public land restoration.
- Supporting education and literacy for all Americans.
- Increasing health care access, public health awareness, and prevention.
- Providing community renewal to areas hardest hit by the economic crisis.

Purpose: A New Call to Service

The Service initiative will take traditional calls to service further by:

- Putting volunteers on a path to **sustained service**.
- Asking volunteers to step up and become volunteer organizers by identifying unmet needs in their community, **developing their own service projects**, and engaging others who are interested in the same issue area.
- Providing **easy-to-use tools** for volunteers to develop their own service projects, **set outcome-oriented goals**, and **track their community impact**.
- Developing **creative partnerships with a broad and diverse group of stakeholders**, including nonprofits, faith-based groups, issue groups, labor unions, educational institutions, **businesses, corporations**, foundations, and all levels of government.

We aim to use the convening power of the federal government to promote and highlight new and existing service projects, encourage volunteers to stay involved in their communities over time, and empower people from all walks of life to take a leadership role. The Corporation for National and Community Service will be the key coordinating federal partner, working with the White House, federal agencies, and hundreds of nonprofit and community groups. The Corporation can be reached at ServiceInitiative@cns.gov.

The Challenge: Help Needed, Capacity Stretched

At a time when volunteers' help is most needed, the capacity of traditional service organizations to absorb volunteers has been stretched thin. To help meet growing social needs resulting from the economic downturn, the Service initiative aims to both engage new volunteers in expanding the impact of existing organizations and to encourage "do-it-yourself" projects.

Timeline

The Service initiative – spanning 81 days, or just under 12 weeks – will officially kick off June 22 at the National Conference on Volunteering and Service. The White House will make a public announcement in early June, allowing adequate lead time for organizations to post opportunities and prepare to absorb new volunteers. The Service initiative will culminate with a National Day of Service and Remembrance on September 11, 2009. The culmination will provide an opportunity to recognize the summer's accomplishments, honor those who died on September 11, 2001 by serving in their memory, and encourage Americans to make an ongoing commitment to service.

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