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## **Illinois Ranks #1 in Volunteer Rate Among the Country's Largest States** ***2.51 Million Illinoisans Give \$6.8 Billion in Service***

SPRINGFIELD, IL – The Serve Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service (Serve Illinois) is commending the state's more than 2.5 million volunteers who made a difference through volunteerism last year. Illinois volunteers served nearly 275 million total hours, which is valued at \$6.8 billion (based on the value of volunteer time in Illinois [https://www.independentsector.org/volunteer\\_time](https://www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time)).

“Illinois has a strong tradition of neighbors helping neighbors,” said Scott McFarland, Executive Director of the Serve Illinois Commission. “Illinois volunteers save lives every day. They give comfort to the homeless, help educate our students, respond to disasters, and so much more.”

The recently released 2014 Volunteering and Civic Life in America report shows that 2.51 million Illinoisans volunteered and helped to make Illinois the top volunteering state out of the five most populated states in the country.

The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) issued the annual report in partnership with the National Council on Citizenship, the U.S. Census Bureau, and the Bureau for Labor Statistics. The complete report is available at [www.VolunteeringInAmerica.gov](http://www.VolunteeringInAmerica.gov).

According to CNCS, 62.8 million Americans (or 1 in 4 adults, 25.4 percent) volunteered nearly 7.9 billion hours last year. Illinois rates above the national average with 25.9% of residents volunteering. Based on the Independent Sector's estimate of the average value of a volunteer hour, the estimated value of this volunteer service is nearly \$184 billion.

Additionally, volunteers are almost twice as likely to donate to charity as non-volunteers. Eighty percent of volunteers donated to charity, compared to 40% of non-volunteers. Overall, half of all Americans donated at least \$25 to charity in 2014.

### *About Serve Illinois*

The Serve Illinois Commission is a 40 member (25 voting and 15 non-voting), bi-partisan board appointed by the Governor and administered by the Illinois Department of Public Health. Its mission is to improve Illinois communities by enhancing volunteerism and instilling an ethic of service throughout the state. The Commission is accomplishing this mission through the support of local community-based efforts to enhance volunteer opportunities and the administration of Illinois' AmeriCorps program. To find a volunteer opportunity, nominate a volunteer for the 2016 Governor's Volunteer Service Awards, or learn more about the Serve Illinois Commission and volunteerism in Illinois, visit [www.Serve.Illinois.gov](http://www.Serve.Illinois.gov).

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