



SERVE ILLINOIS

Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service

Fall 2010

Hundreds Gather in Springfield for Recognition Day

Over 900 AmeriCorps and Senior Corps members from Illinois gathered in Springfield for the annual National Service Recognition Day on October 21. The event gave volunteers a chance to celebrate their accomplishments and mentally prepare for their upcoming year of service.



AmeriCorps members help with fall maintenance at the Lincoln Home National Historic Site during a morning service project.

The event was held at the Prairie Capital Convention Center. The day began with optional two-hour service projects. Nine local organizations provided projects. Projects included the opportunity to read to children through the Springfield Urban League Head Start program, beautify the Lincoln Home National Historic Site, distribute fire protection information to local neighborhoods through the American Red Cross, and pack medical supplies for overseas distribution by the Hospital Sisters Mission Outreach.

The afternoon consisted of presentations developed to inspire and motivate volunteers. The master of ceremonies for the day was Jerry Lambert, anchor for Springfield's News Channel 20. Keynote speakers Jeffery Fields and Tim Miles shared personal struggles and motivated volunteers to overcome obstacles to achieve their goals. Following the presentations, AmeriCorp and Senior Corps programs were recognized and awarded medals for their service.

The day concluded with a march to the Illinois Capitol, where members were sworn into a year of service. Members stood on the steps of the Capitol and declared an oath of service, dedicating themselves to strengthening communities and accomplishing goals in America. Commissioner Merri Dee led the oath.

Nearly 80,000 Illinois residents serve in local, state or national service programs every year. More than 500,000 Senior Corp members are currently devoting themselves to community service; 18,000 of those members are in Illinois. Illinois currently has 30 AmeriCorps state programs in approximately 300 host sites in over 60 counties.



AmeriCorps members from Project More marched in the annual parade to the Capitol. A total of 39 AmeriCorps groups and six Senior Corps groups from across the state took part in Recognition Day this year.



AmeriCorps members show their pride and enthusiasm for service as they wait to take their oath on the steps of the Capitol.



Governor's Volunteer Service Award:
Serve Illinois is looking for nominations for the state-wide volunteer service awards. To nominate a volunteer, visit Serve.Illinois.gov. Nominations are due January 14, 2011.

From the Executive Director



Welcome to the fall 2010 issue of the Serve Illinois Newsletter.

I want to take this opportunity to inform you about some exciting news about service and the City of Chicago. On September 30, 2010, Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley announced the launch of "One Good Deed Chicago," a campaign to promote volunteerism in the City that focuses on supporting not-for-profit organizations engaged in developing out-of-school time programs for young people and helping residents most affected by the recession get back on the path to economic recovery. A two-year, \$200,000 "Cities of Service Leadership Grant" from the Rockefeller Foundation supports the initiative.

Under the terms of the grant, the City has appointed its first Chief Service Officer to develop and implement "One Good Deed Chicago" with the goals of increasing civic engagement by residents and better aligning volunteers with not-for-profit organizations. The Chief Service Officer is Jennè Myers, former Executive Director of Working in the Schools, a Chicago organization involving community members and businesses in tutoring and mentoring young people.

This month, the program will begin training the first 10-12 students along with 10 not-for-profit partners who will participate in the first phase of the initiative. The students' training will be pointed toward areas identified as ones in which the organizations need help. Upon completion of the training, students will spend five months working with a not-for-profit on a part-time basis, helping the group expand its own efforts to attract and manage volunteers.

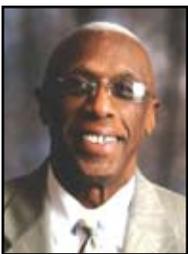
One Good Deed Chicago will work to develop and manage a one-stop-shop for Chicagoans interested in connecting with both one-time and ongoing volunteer opportunities. The website, www.OneGoodDeedChicago.org, will promote service initiatives outlined in the Blueprint for Service and enable residents to review a wider range of volunteer opportunities designed to have a positive impact on the city.

As a member of the One Good Deed Chicago Leadership Council, I look forward to working with other members of the council and Jennè Myers on utilizing service as a solution to Chicago's community needs. Please visit OneGoodDeedChicago.org to learn how you can be a part of the city's volunteerism plan.

Yours in Service,

Ted Gibbs, Executive Director
Serve Illinois Commission
Office of Governor Pat Quinn

From the Chair



I want to use this opportunity to give my dearest thanks to all of my fellow Commissioners. Serve Illinois is made up of 35 dedicated Commissioners who have been selected by the Governor to help make Illinois a place where all citizens recognize their ability and responsibility to help strengthen their communities through voluntary service.

These Volunteer Commissioners truly are leading by example as many of them sacrifice vacation time and precious days at work and with family to participate in Serve Illinois' events throughout the state. Without their tireless efforts, Illinois would not be able to boast continued increases in both its AmeriCorps programs and the number of citizens who volunteer in their communities. It is an honor to

serve with them. If you would like to become a member of Serve Illinois, please visit www.appointments.illinois.gov to complete an application for gubernatorial appointment.

In Service,

Howard Lathan, Chair
Serve Illinois Commission
Associate Executive Director, Chicago Area Project

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Recommendations Shared for Illinois' Volunteerism Plan

The Serve Illinois Commission received valuable input regarding Illinois' State Service Plan through a series of five statewide listening sessions held earlier this fall. The first session kicked off in Peoria on August 18 and the last session wrapped up in Rock Island on September 9. Other sessions took place in Champaign, Carbondale and Chicago. The listening tour drew 94 people from all locations.

Each session was open to the public and began with welcoming comments and a commission overview by Ted Gibbs, Executive Director of the Serve Illinois Commission. Commission members presented supporting remarks on volunteerism and service. Members in attendance highlighted specific programs. Commission members and volunteer organizations were able to exchange suggestions and ideas during an open floor session. Topics discussed included the need for increased funding and recruitment efforts for RSVP, the need for increased promotion of volunteer opportunities, and a desire for more agency participation with the AmeriCorps program. Increasing the volunteer rate at Illinois universities, especially in the form of tutors and mentors, was also identified as an issue of importance.

Amye Bean, Program Coordinator for RSVP in Knox County, who attended the Peoria listening session said, "It was extremely beneficial to me because I got to learn about Senior Corps and other organizations that are the umbrella for RSVP. I was hired to assist in the efforts to establish RSVP in Knox County and I left with great ideas about how to get the word out and really show the new community the benefits of RSVP."

Carol Ammons, Program Director for the Urbana Champaign Independent Media Center, agreed that the listening tour was helpful. Ammons, along with all 11 of her organization's AmeriCorps members and two long-term volunteers, attended the Champaign session.

"I found the session helpful because our AmeriCorps members had an opportunity to share their work with the public and the commission representatives," said Ammons. "I really appreciated the organizational effort that was put into having the session, as well as the timeliness of the presentations from the state level."

Ammons said her program is currently working to recruit new volunteers and the listening session alerted her to online resources to aid in the program's recruitment efforts. She added that many of her volunteers in attendance felt the session helped them see "the big picture" and understand the long-term plan to expand AmeriCorps opportunities in the east central portion of the state. "The listening session painted a unified picture for the State," Ammons said. "Our program benefited from [the Commission's] willingness to travel the state and share the vision."

The fall series marked the second year of the Listening Tour. The Serve Illinois Commission created the State Service Plan last year to guarantee that all Illinois citizens would have the opportunity to contribute to the service plan by sharing suggestions and comments in an open and public forum. Serve Illinois looks forward to the third Listening Tour in 2011.

To see the present service plan, as well as volunteer opportunities throughout the state, visit www.serve.illinois.gov.



Serve.Illinois.gov

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you should know

November Is National Runaway Prevention Month

Each year, between 1.6 and 2.8 million youth run away. Last year, 7,439 of these youth were from Illinois. Although that number has decreased dramatically from three years ago (when reported numbers were over 9,900), Illinois is still the state with the fourth largest number of runaways in the nation.

November is National Runaway Prevention Month. The National Runaway Switchboard (NRS) and the National Network for Youth have collaborated to promote the runaway issue in an annual campaign, which began nine years ago.

“The goal of National Runaway Prevention Month is to raise awareness of the issues facing runaway youth and educate the public about solutions and the role they can play in preventing youth from running,” stated Lashawnda Carter, Outreach Coordinator for the NRS. Carter said each campaign hopes to reach out to more youth, parents, educators, service providers and public officials so they may aid in the NRS mission to keep America’s youth safe and off the streets.

On November 4, the National Runaway Switchboard held their third annual Street Team Green Light Project on Michigan Avenue in Chicago. During rush hour, twenty NRS street team members passed out 2,000 green light bulbs to passers-by. Individuals were encouraged to let the green bulbs shine during the month of November to increase awareness and show support for runaway youth.



Carter said anyone can get involved with National Runaway Prevention Month by downloading the Community Action Toolkit from the NRS website. The kit was created to help local community members plan and implement projects and activities during the month of awareness.

To download a Community Action Toolkit, or to learn more about National Runaway Prevention Month, visit www.1800Runaway.org. Free promotional materials are also available for order on the website or by calling 1-800-RUNAWAY.

– Information contributed by Lashawnda Carter, Outreach Coordinator for the National Runaway Switchboard; statistics compiled from www.1800Runaway.org

DO YOU NEED VOLUNTEERS?

If so, post your organization’s information on one of our partner’s volunteer network opportunity databases, available through the Serve Illinois website. Your posted opportunities will be searchable via the website and individuals can view your program description, contact information and express an interest in volunteering at your organization. Post your volunteer opportunities at www.serve.illinois.gov today!

update

LeaderCorps Members Chosen for Upcoming Year



Illinois LeaderCorps is a council organized by the Serve Illinois Commission to connect AmeriCorps programs and act as liaison between the Commission and the members. LeaderCorps members for the 2010-2011 year were recognized at National Service Recognition Day in Springfield on October 21. Members were selected by their individual programs for their leadership qualities and devotion to service. The group will take part in a training session from November 30- December 1 in Springfield, where they will plan events for upcoming days of service. Members will also be chosen for officer positions by their peers at the training. LeaderCorps strives to promote effective cross-program communication and collaboration among AmeriCorps*State, *National and VISTA programs in Illinois.

Volunteer Recognized for Saving Stranger’s Life

Jahan Nurhussein, an AmeriCorps member with the American Red Cross of Greater Chicago, was recognized at National Service Recognition Day for her role in saving a man’s life. Nurhussein and a friend were running an errand at a local church when they noticed commotion

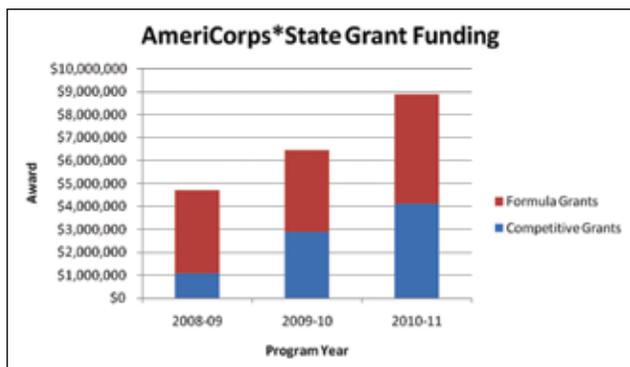


around an unconscious man and decided to help. Nurhussein delivered chest compressions and rescue breaths to the man until an ambulance arrived on scene. An EMT told Nurhussein that without her CPR efforts, the man would not have survived. A CPR Instructor at the Red Cross, Nurhussein is currently studying Forensic Nursing at the College of DuPage.

spotlight

AmeriCorps Program Sees Increased Funding For 2010-2011

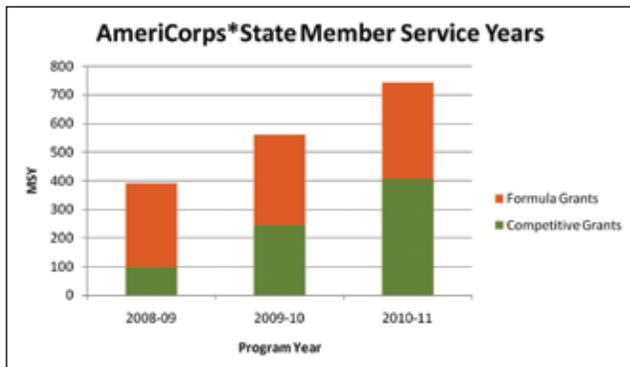
AmeriCorps*State grant funding is distributed by the Governor-appointed Serve Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service. These funds are given to local nonprofit groups in the form of population-based formula grants, and the remaining funds are awarded via a competitive grants process overseen by the Corporation for National and Community Service.



In addition, this year the Serve Illinois Commission has issued five planning grants to local and statewide programs. These grants provide the organizations with funding for a year of planning and preparation leading up to each program's application for AmeriCorps grant funding.

The Illinois Coalition for Immigration and Refugee Rights was awarded a \$50,000 grant while Council for Jewish Elderly (doing business as the Council for Jewish Elderly SeniorLife), the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs, Lewis and Clark Community College, and Jobs for Youth were awarded grants totaling \$212,268.

AmeriCorps funding has increased for program year 2010-11 for both competitive and formula grant programs. Member Service Years (also known as full-time equivalent years) have also risen compared with years past. With growths in funding and member service years, 2011 looks bright for AmeriCorps programs and their members.



Illinois Association of Fire Protection Districts: Representing a Long-Standing Tradition

Fire Protection Districts in Illinois are the first line of defense for many villages, communities and rural areas. They provide services related to fire suppression, protection and prevention, emergency medical services, natural disasters, water rescue emergencies, terrorism incidents, technical rescues, hazardous material responses, and other services. While the number of reported fires has declined in many areas, many districts are responding to more calls for service due the increased focus on emergency medical services.

The Illinois Association of Fire Protection District's (IAFPD) mission is to protect the interests, rights and privileges of Fire Protection Districts as they may be affected by legislative, administrative and judicial action. Fire Protection Districts in Illinois are a long-standing tradition that involves non-municipal fire departments. Approximately 70 percent of all fire departments in Illinois are designated as volunteer or paid on call organizations and often have involved several generations of families.



According to the National Volunteer Fire Council, volunteering in the fire and emergency medical services is one of the most demanding activities today. Time commitments include operational responses (at a moment's notice), expanding training requirements, fundraising, vehicle and station maintenance, education and inspection programs, and other duties. The IAFPD is committed to informing members of the legal, legislative, policy and procedural changes that impact these requirements and their role and responsibilities as administrators of a fire protection district.

Approximately 350 members of the IAFPD are completely volunteer departments and 25 percent operate with less than \$75,000 annual budget. Volunteer firefighters rely heavily on community supported events such as chili cook-offs, pancake and sausage breakfasts, and ham cooks to provide funding for equipment and other needs. The importance of volunteer firefighters to the fire service was confirmed by the National Fire Protection Association who reported that volunteers comprise 72 percent of firefighters in the United States.

The IAFPD hosts an annual three-day conference in Peoria each June that is supported by approximately 1,000 attendees. The conference includes a trade show that showcases fire apparatus and the latest fire equipment. In addition, attendees select from approximately 30 breakout sessions in four tracks: administrative (legal), operations, emergency medical services, and pension related topics.

For more information about the IAFPD, contact Cheri Breneman, Association Administrator, Illinois Association of Fire Protection Districts or visit www.iafpd.org.

– Submitted by Cheri Breneman, Association Administrator for the IAFPD & Bill McCamey, Volunteer Firefighter for the IAFPD.

AmeriCorps Members Help Food Depository Agencies Reach More People in Need

When Sister Catherine Marie Lowe started as director of Family Services for Marillac Social Center in July 2009, she was the department's only staff member. After considering the array of services Marillac offered and the lack of funds to hire more full-time help, Lowe made the difficult decision to temporarily close the agency's food pantry until she had a better hold on the agency's other programs.

Aware of Lowe's struggles, the Greater Chicago Food Depository contacted Marillac about a new program made possible by a partnership with AmeriCorps, and the Lillian and Larry Goodman Foundations. In September 2009, Marillac was paired with two full-time AmeriCorps members, Whitney Allen and Jaimie Perez. With their support, Marillac was able to reopen its food pantry to its neighbors in need. "Simply put without them, we could not have a pantry," Lowe said.



From left, Jaimie Perez, Sister Catherine Marie Lowe and Whitney Allen serve more than 100 individuals a week at Marillac Food Pantry on the West Side.

From September 2009 to August 2010, the Food Depository welcomed eight AmeriCorps members, placing them at nine food pantries in disadvantaged neighborhoods throughout Cook County. During their time of service, AmeriCorps members helped pantries meet the rising need by distributing 2,716,300 pounds of food to hungry men, women and children – an increase of more than a million pounds compared to the same period in 2008.

At Marillac, Allen and Perez took over every level of pantry operations, including ordering food from the Food Depository and organizing volunteers during tri-weekly distributions. Both enrolled in Food Depository Pantry University training courses to

learn more about food pantry operations. The classes led Allen to reevaluate how Marillac distributes food to clients.

"I began to think about what I would want from a pantry," she said. By employing a choice system where clients can pick the food they take home rather than distributing pre-packaged bags, we are empowering the clients – they can feel like they are shopping."

Beyond fine-tuning distribution logistics, Allen and Perez began developing new ways to expand the pantry's offerings and improve the overall client experience. Both volunteers worked with the University of Illinois Chicago's Chicago Partnership for Health Promotion to offer nutrition classes to pantry clients. In January, Marillac kicked off their first six-week course.

"We started with a small group," Perez said. "But every week, someone would bring a friend along." The group learned healthy cooking tips, how to read food nutritional labels and ways to stay physically fit. "We try to make nutrition accessible," Perez said. "Everyone can relate and talk about their lives."

Marillac has made tremendous progress since its re-opening. For Lowe, the volunteer help she received from Allen and Perez have helped uncover the potential the pantry has to help those in need on the West Side. "We're going to the sky," Lowe said.

A new class of AmeriCorps members is slated to began their work with Food Depository member agencies in October. For more information, visit www.chicagosfoodbank.org or call 773.247.3663.

– Submitted by Meaghan Farno, Public Relations Coordinator for the Greater Chicago Food Depository.



Whitney Allen and Lizette Flores unpack boxes from a truck for a Produce mobile (which is like a farmer's market on wheels).



AmeriCorps members participate in a repack session during AmeriCorps Week. The volunteers break down bulk size packages of food and repackage them in to family-sized portions.

Find or Post a Volunteer Opportunity Today!

Visit Serve.Illinois.gov



In addition to the searchable portal of more than 71,000 volunteer opportunities statewide, Serve.Illinois.gov hosts a wide variety of volunteer resources:

- Ability to Post Volunteer Opportunities
- Statewide Volunteer Management Network Conference & Meeting Information
- National Service Program Information (AmeriCorps, Senior Corps & Learn and Serve America)
- Volunteerism Research & Volunteerism Web Links
- Featured Volunteer Stories
- Serve Illinois Calendar of Events

We want to hear from you!

If your agency is currently preparing for upcoming volunteerism or national service events, or if you have recently completed an event and would like to share your story, we want to hear from you. For newsletter or website publication consideration, please send information to dhs.serveillinois@illinois.gov. Web links, photos accompanying a story and professional development resources are also encouraged.

Fall Regional Conferences Wrap Up a Noteworthy Year

Three regional conferences were held during the latter part of summer through mid-fall to round out a momentous year in regional conference history. This year marked the First Annual Northwest Illinois Volunteerism Conference, making 2010 the first year that all five regions have hosted a conference.

Each conference offered sessions and workshops directed toward individuals who currently work with or are interested in working with volunteers. Each conference consisted of various concurrent sessions throughout the day.



Commissioner Judy Swinson, Director of Volunteer Programs at St. Mary's Good Samaritan Hospital, responds to a question during a SIVC panel discussion on increasing and retaining volunteers.

The Northwest Illinois Volunteerism Conference (NWIVC) was held August 5 at Sauk Valley Community College in Dixon. Keynote speakers were Rick Haskens and Marilyn Smit from the Extreme Makeover Home Edition build. Sabrina Earl, co-chair of the NWIVC, said that she was impressed with the number of attendees at the region's first conference. Ninety-one people attended the conference. The committee met monthly since last September to prepare for the event and Earl said she has begun planning next year's conference and hopes to partner with MVDIOVA (Mississippi Valley Director's of Volunteers in Agencies) to offer joint sessions for volunteers and coordinators in an effort to increase attendee numbers.

The Southern Illinois Volunteerism Conference (SIVC) took place at the Holiday Inn in Mt. Vernon on September 23. When choosing the keynote presenter and workshop topics, Jennifer Witzel, Co-Chair of the SIVC, said the committee wanted to plan a day that people would look forward to attending. The committee planned diverse sessions with the intent of appealing to both seasoned and new volunteer coordinators.

"Our goal for the 2010 Southern Illinois Volunteerism Conference was to provide an educational, yet enjoyable day for those who work so diligently with volunteers," Witzel stated. She recognized the diversity of the conference's sessions and the day's keynote speakers (Karen Foss, a nationally known former newscaster; and Jen White, Leadership Development Coordinator at Peoria's Methodist Medical Center) as highlights of the program.

The West Central Illinois Volunteerism Conference (WCIVC) concluded the year's conferences with their event on October 28 at the Wesley United Methodist Church in Macomb. Nancy Jameson, Director of the WCIVC, said she felt the conference was a unique opportunity for non-profit organizations to connect with colleagues while learning more about volunteer recruitment, placement and recognition. Jameson said the conference also provided means for attendees to enhance their current volunteer management skills. Keynote speaker Rick Lynch, an internationally renowned presenter and author, was the highlight of this year's conference.

For additional information, please visit the conference websites: www.nwivc.net, www.sivc.net, and www.wcivc.net.



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Upcoming Days of Service

January 17, 2011	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service – www.mlkday.gov
Spring 2011	Cesar Chavez Day of Service & Learning – www.chavezfoundation.org
April 10-16, 2011	National Volunteer Week – www.handsonnetwork.org
April 15-17, 2011	Global Youth Service Day – www.ysa.org/gysd



SERVE ILLINOIS is a publication of the Serve Illinois Commission on Volunteerism & Community Service. Send articles for submission and suggestions to:

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Illinois AmeriCorps Disability Outreach Project: Meeting the needs for AmeriCorps Members of all backgrounds and abilities.

This material is based upon work supported by the Corporation for National and Community Service under AmeriCorps Grant No. 07CAHIL001. Opinions or points of view expressed in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Corporation for National and Community Service or the AmeriCorps program.

