





THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

January 2003

My Fellow Americans:

Each year millions of Americans serve our Nation by helping a neighbor in need. To increase the number of people volunteering and the amount of services being provided, I have called on all Americans to make a lifetime commitment to serving others. I am pleased that Americans of all ages -- baby boomers entering retirement, seniors, professionals in the middle of their careers, families, and our young people -- are responding to this call.

I created the USA Freedom Corps at the White House to harness the power of these individuals and the diversity of their volunteer interests for the benefit of our communities at home and for those in need around the world. Over the past year, the USA Freedom Corps has worked to offer more Americans the opportunity to serve something greater than themselves. The USA Freedom Corps has provided new resources to serve potential volunteers; built new networks for nonprofits looking to recruit and use volunteers; expanded, improved, and in some cases, created new Federally supported service programs; and engaged our schools, business community, and the nonprofit sector in supporting the mission of promoting service. In the process, the USA Freedom Corps has helped more Americans to engage in meeting vital community needs, develop their personal characters, and participate in our civic traditions and institutions.

In 2003, the USA Freedom Corps will continue working to reach our long-term goal of creating a culture of service, citizenship, and responsibility that will distinguish America's communities for decades to come. Our volunteers are a powerful force in the effort to overcome evil with acts of kindness and decency, and their service demonstrates the best of the American spirit. Together, with the USA Freedom Corps, they will help us show the world the true heart of America.

Sincerely,



George W. Bush

Foreword by John Bridgeland, Director, USA Freedom Corps



Volunteer organizations and the efforts of the volunteers who power them have played an important role in meeting the needs of urban and rural communities since our Nation was founded. Americans who are volunteering today are part of a long tradition of volunteer service that is part of the fabric of the history of the United States. The work of volunteers safeguards our communities, provides clean and accessible parks and open spaces, and helps children, the elderly, the hungry, the homeless, and others at risk or in need.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor, more than one in four American adults volunteered their time to help others through a school, hospital, house of worship, or other community-serving organization between September 2001 and September 2002. The survey results have established a baseline of volunteer behavior in America against which we can measure the impact of the USA Freedom Corps and other efforts to support volunteer service. As a coordinating council and office housed at the White House, the USA Freedom Corps worked to engage the U.S. Census Bureau, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and other government agencies and nonprofit organizations in creating this regular national measure of volunteer behavior where none as comprehensive existed before.

President George W. Bush created the USA Freedom Corps to help Americans answer a bold call to serve their neighbors and their Nation. Our mission is to foster an American culture of service, citizenship, and responsibility that will last for decades to come. We are doing that by harnessing the resources of the federal government, the voluntary sector, and our community-based institutions to encourage and assist Americans to answer the President's call to service.

The USA Freedom Corps was established only one year ago. Over the past twelve months, we have worked to develop and implement an agenda for engaging more Americans in more volunteer service.

Through the federal government and in partnership with local governments and organizations, we have guided the development of the new Citizen Corps initiative to provide individuals with opportunities to participate in homeland security and other emergency preparedness and response efforts in their communities. Already more than 300 communities from Los Angeles, California and Washington, D.C. to Belvidere, Illinois and Roane County, Tennessee have formed Citizen Corps Councils. Communities like these have received more than \$35 million in grants from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and Corporation for National and Community Service to support the development of Citizen Corps Councils, Medical Reserve Corps units, Neighborhood Watch groups, Community Emergency Response Teams, and volunteer programs that support local law enforcement agencies.

We have taken important legislative and administrative steps to strengthen and expand the national service programs of the Corporation for National and Community Service, and interest in those programs is growing. The AmeriCorps program filled its enrollment goals faster than ever before and measures of online applications show a more than 60 percent increase over pre-2002 State of the Union levels. Demand for information on Senior

Corps programs for Americans age 55 and over is also up since President Bush made his call to service. Over the past year, more than 50,000 AmeriCorps members have taught and tutored hundreds of thousands of students, participated in safety patrols, maintained thousands of miles of trails, collected hundreds of tons of trash, and immunized thousands of children. During the same period, more than 500,000 Senior Corps members working through Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions, and the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program have assisted programs that offer more than 100,000 children preschool and daycare services, collaborated with hundreds of police and community safety organizations, participated in thousands of environmental education programs, and supported other seniors and adults in need of long-term care with meals and other services.

Interest in the Peace Corps is also up since the 2002 State of the Union. More than 115,000 potential Peace Corps volunteers have requested applications since the President's call to service – a more than 34 percent increase over the same period in 2001 – and processing time for those applications is down. During the same period, the Peace Corps has opened or re-opened programs in countries such as East Timor, Peru, Bangladesh, Macedonia, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, and has sent out 24 assessment teams to countries that have requested Peace Corps volunteers. Over the past year, 6,678 volunteers worked in 70 countries to provide education, agriculture, information technology and health services to developing communities.

There is also increased interest in volunteer opportunities with community organizations. In July 2002, the USA Freedom Corps launched the USA Freedom Corps Volunteer Network, the most comprehensive clearinghouse of volunteer opportunities ever offered. The USA Freedom Corps Volunteer Network brings together the resources of some of America's largest volunteer-serving organizations to offer millions of opportunities to get involved with more than 60,000 organizations across the country and around the world. VolunteerMatch, one of the members of the USA Freedom Corps Volunteer Network, has measured a 35 percent increase in its online matching of volunteers with community opportunities as measured against the same period in 2001.

Progress is also being made in our workplaces, schools, and other community institutions to strengthen our culture of service. Leaders of large and small businesses responded to the President's call to service by creating Business Strengthening America and making the case that engaging their employees and customers in volunteer service is good for their businesses and communities. Teachers and students are increasingly engaging in service activities, and connecting their service projects to what they are learning in the classroom. The President has initiated efforts to strengthen the teaching of American history and civics, and to make national treasures, such as 100 milestone documents from the National Archives and Records Administration, more readily accessible to teachers and students. These powerful lessons from history reinforce the fact that individuals can make a significant difference through their acts of service.

Good progress has been made in our first year, particularly in light of research on civic participation that suggests fewer and fewer Americans have been participating in civic activities over the past three decades. And we are excited by the opportunities that lie ahead. We are in a unique moment in history, and we hope you will use this annual report as an opportunity to learn more about the USA Freedom Corps and what we are doing to foster an ethic of service in America's communities that will last for decades to come.

Overview of the USA Freedom Corps



Americans of all ages are already serving others in countless ways, by mentoring a child, caring for an elderly neighbor, teaching someone to read, or donating food and clothing to those in need. Individuals are meeting important community needs through their service, and by serving something greater than their own self-interests, they are also developing personal responsibility and character, and leading more fulfilling lives. Their volunteer service is also contributing to the well being of a Nation that is a great force for good.

During his 2002 State of the Union address, President George W. Bush called on every American to dedicate at least two years over the course of their lifetimes to the service of others. He included all Americans because everyone can do something, and every American has a duty to serve. He created the USA Freedom Corps to help all Americans answer that call to service.

JANUARY 2002

29th – President Bush announces the formation of the USA Freedom Corps in his State of the Union address.

While government cannot fulfill the need for kindness, understanding, and love in our communities, through the USA Freedom Corps, government can support the momentum of millions of acts of kindness and decency that are changing America one heart at a time.

As a Coordinating Council housed at the White House and chaired by President George W. Bush, the USA Freedom Corps is working to strengthen our culture of service by making and facilitating institutional changes at every level and helping find opportunities for every American to start volunteering.

30th – President Bush launches Citizen Corps in Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

Research on volunteer service tells us that potential volunteers respond to being asked to serve, and that having positive experiences with service organizations is important to developing long-term habits of service. Research also tells us that many people think they cannot volunteer because they do not have the time or the skills to make a difference. The USA Freedom Corps is working to offer the volunteers of America the support of government and the nonprofit, business, education, faith-based and other sectors to encourage them to seek, and help them find, the time and the opportunities to make a difference.

31st – President Bush officially launches USA Freedom Corps in Daytona Beach, Florida and Atlanta, Georgia.

The USA Freedom Corps is working with the community-serving organizations that form our volunteer infrastructure to expand quality service opportunities and to make a sustained effort to ask Americans to make a difference through service. Volunteer service organizations can already use the USA Freedom Corps Volunteer Network – the largest clearinghouse of volunteer opportunities ever created – to recruit volunteers, and can use resources and information from the USA Freedom Corps to better recruit, train, and keep volunteers.

FEBRUARY

15th – President Bush swears in Gaddi Vasquez as Director of the Peace Corps, and charges him with expanding the reach and number of Peace Corps volunteers who

At the same time, the USA Freedom Corps is working to reform and strengthen federal service programs like the Peace Corps, Citizen Corps, AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and Learn and Serve America to leverage federal resources for the benefit of individual volunteers. The USA Freedom Corps, in coordination with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, is also directing the development of the new Citizen Corps programs that engage volunteers in efforts to prepare for and respond to community emergencies of all kinds, including terrorist attacks.

As a Coordinating Council that includes ten federal agencies and departments, the USA Freedom Corps is also working across government to raise awareness of and break down barriers to service opportunities supported by the federal government, and to find new opportunities for federal agencies to support the expansion of volunteer service. One important example is the new volunteer service indicator developed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and U.S. Census Bureau to measure the volunteer behavior of adult Americans through a comprehensive national survey.

In order to build support for volunteer service from the grassroots up, the USA Freedom Corps is also working with the institutions that make up each of our communities to enlist them in helping to increase civic awareness and participation by encouraging volunteer service and increasing the number of meaningful opportunities available to volunteers. For example, through several federal agencies as well as local and national nonprofit organizations, the USA Freedom Corps is spearheading Students in Service to America by working with educators at the K-12 levels to develop lifelong habits of service among America's young people by assisting them to develop service and service-learning programs on their campuses or through after-school and other community programs.

The USA Freedom Corps is also working with the business community to expand and enhance volunteer service. Business leaders in the entertainment, telecommunications, shipping, retail, financial services, and other industries are working together on Business Strengthening America, a self-directed effort to involve American businesses of all sizes in recruiting and enabling their employees and consumers to answer President Bush's call to service.

The next pages of this annual report offer more detailed descriptions of each of these and other activities, and the USA Freedom Corps looks forward to reporting regularly on our progress.

currently number
approximately 6,500
individuals.

MARCH

1st – Peace Corps celebrates its 41st anniversary on Peace Corps Day.

4th – Willard Gove of Minneapolis, Minnesota is the first individual to be recognized by President Bush as part of the USA Freedom Corps for his efforts to answer the call to service.

12th – President Bush directs his Cabinet to conduct a review of agency programs to find new and existing opportunities to foster service, and introduces the Record of Service as a journal individuals can keep to reflect upon their experiences answering the call to service.

APRIL

6th – Entertainer Ed McMahon joins the U.S. Department of Justice, USA Freedom Corps, law enforcement agencies, and community organizations to announce the expansion

The USA Freedom Corps Volunteer Network



of Neighborhood Watch as part of the Citizen Corps, and to unveil a public service advertising campaign.

8th – President Bush and local government officials from across the country meet in Knoxville, Tennessee, to announce the formation of the first Citizen Corps Councils.

9th – President Bush introduces Principles and Reforms for a Citizen Service Act in Bridgeport, Connecticut, outlining his vision for legislation that governs the AmeriCorps, Senior Corps and Learn and Serve America programs.

19th – President Bush proclaims National Volunteer Week.

One of the reasons individuals give for not volunteering is that they do not know how or where to start. The USA Freedom Corps Volunteer Network was created in 2002 to offer everyone with an interest in volunteering easy contact with organizations in their communities that are looking for assistance. It works through a partnership that is larger and more comprehensive than any forged before within the voluntary sector to recruit potential volunteers.

The Network for Volunteers

The USA Freedom Corps Volunteer Network is the largest clearinghouse of volunteer opportunities ever offered to potential volunteers. Through it, individuals can find service opportunities that match their interests and talents in their hometowns, across the country, or around the world.

The USA Freedom Corps Volunteer Network is available online at www.usafreedomcorps.gov or by phone at 1-877-USA-CORPS. Individuals can enter their zip code and areas of interest, such as serving youth, hunger and homelessness, or education, to find part-time or full-time service opportunities with more than 60,000 service organizations worldwide.

The USA Freedom Corps Volunteer Network offers potential volunteers millions of opportunities through a massive and unmatched partnership that includes America's Promise, Idealist.org, National Mentoring Partnership, Network for Good, SERVENet, the Points of Light Foundation, The United Way, and VolunteerMatch. The USA Freedom Corps Volunteer Network also includes federal government agencies that offer opportunities to get involved, such as the Peace Corps, AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, Learn and Serve America, Citizen Corps, and the land management agencies that are part of Volunteer.gov. Together, these partners offer millions of opportunities to get involved through more than 60,000 organizations that use volunteer services to meet important community needs.

The USA Freedom Corps web site offers other tools to potential and current volunteers to assist them in making their volunteer experience a positive one, in meaningfully reflecting upon their experiences with an online Record of Service, or in finding information on scholarship and recognition programs.

Based upon visits to the USA Freedom Corps web site since the network was launched in July 2002, we expect to offer these resources to approximately 2.7 million searchers during the first year of the USA Freedom Corps Volunteer Network.

The Network for Organizations

The USA Freedom Corps Volunteer Network also offers the USA Freedom Corps a platform for working across the voluntary sector to offer potential volunteers more and better experiences by establishing and sharing wise practices for recruiting, training, and using volunteer skills and time.

The more than 60,000 community-serving organizations such as hospitals, schools, houses of worship, and other nonprofit organizations that recruit volunteers through the USA Freedom Corps Volunteer Network are a large part of the infrastructure that supports more than 59 million American adults, and even more when you include America's youth, in delivering vital community services.

In 2003, the USA Freedom Corps will work with the Corporation for National and Community Service to offer the voluntary sector the results of a survey of more than 10,000 organizations around the country that are a part of this network. The survey is designed to measure and evaluate the capacity of these organizations to use volunteer service in carrying out the important work of meeting our vital community needs.

The results of the survey will offer the first meaningful measure of the capacity of America's volunteer infrastructure, as no study like this of voluntary service organizations has ever been carried out on such a large scale. The results will also offer data to develop and support future work on sound practices in volunteer recruitment, training, and use. Our objective is to produce information that will guide the thousands of organizations that make up our volunteer infrastructure in their efforts to expand and improve their capacity to use the skills and time of volunteers to make those efforts effective and meaningful for America's communities.

MAY

10th – President Bush and hundreds of White House staff members visit a service fair hosted by the USA Freedom Corps with Washington, D.C.-area community organizations seeking volunteers.

24th – The “Citizen Service Act” is introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives.

30th – The U.S. Department of Justice and USA Freedom Corps launch the Volunteers In Police Service program, featuring hundreds of local programs that bring volunteers into police and public safety departments.

Movie trailers are released and appear in theaters across the country offering information on how to contact the USA Freedom Corps to answer the call to service.

JUNE

12th – The House Education and the Workforce Committee approves the Citizen Service Act and sends it to the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives.

Strengthening National Service



As a Coordinating Council that draws upon the leadership of the President of the United States, members of his Cabinet, and the directors of several federal agencies, the USA Freedom Corps is uniquely situated to make federal offices and programs work to support enhanced opportunities for volunteer service.

When he launched the USA Freedom Corps, President Bush set specific goals for three groups of federally supported service programs – the Peace Corps, the programs of the Corporation for National and Community Service, and the new Citizen Corps. We have made important progress toward those initial goals, and have also begun working with other federal agencies and departments to stimulate expanded and new efforts to support the President's call to service with federal resources.

13th – Leaders of 18 U.S. corporations meet with President Bush at the White House to launch Business Strengthening America – their self-directed effort to support the call to service.

14th – President Bush urges the graduates of the Ohio State University Class of 2002 to serve their neighbors and their Nation, and members of his Cabinet do the same in dozens of commencement addresses across the country.

22nd – President Bush makes volunteer service an entry requirement for his Fitness Challenge race for White House staff.

30th – White House staff members celebrate National Homeownership

Peace Corps

Formed in 1961, the Peace Corps engages men and women 18 years and older to serve internationally for two years, working in business development, health and HIV/AIDS, the environment, education, agriculture, and information technology. Since 1961, more than 168,000 Peace Corps volunteers have shared their skills to help solve some of the most important challenges that face communities in the developing world.

At one time, the Peace Corps assigned 15,000 volunteers each year to pursue this important mission, but over the past four decades that number has dwindled to approximately 6,500 volunteers each year. President Bush has pledged to more than double the number of Peace Corps volunteers so that by 2007 approximately 15,000 Americans will again be sharing American compassion abroad.

At the same time, the Peace Corps is working to reach more countries and to expand its services to include important global needs such as quality housing, through new partnerships with organizations such as that which it established with Habitat for Humanity in September 2002. Since the 2002 State of the Union, applications to the program are up, processing time for those applications is down, and more than 38 countries have requested that the Peace Corps consider them as future volunteer opportunities.

The legislation that authorizes the activities of the Peace Corps expires at the end of the 2003 fiscal year and is due to be considered by Congress this year. We look forward to this legislative opportunity to strengthen the Peace Corps, and we will continue to pursue increased funding levels for the Peace Corps to support greater numbers of volunteers over the next four years. Those funding levels will be published as part of the President's budget request to Congress for fiscal year 2004.

AmeriCorps

As part of the Corporation for National and Community Service, AmeriCorps is a grant program that supports national service by helping Americans participate in intensive service to meet critical needs, such as education, public safety, health, and the environment, in America's rural and urban communities. AmeriCorps members serve through more than 2,100 nonprofit organizations, public agencies, and faith-based organizations. They

tutor and mentor youth, build affordable housing, teach computer skills, clean parks and streams, run after-school programs, and help communities respond to disasters on a full-time or part-time basis. Since 1994, more than 250,000 men and women have served as AmeriCorps members.

President Bush has proposed reforming the AmeriCorps programs to: provide that AmeriCorps members are used to mobilize thousands of volunteers who receive no support from government, better support the work of faith-based and community-based organizations, create more state and local control, and establish accountability systems. The President has also proposed expanding the number of AmeriCorps members, and legislation is now pending that would make these important changes and reforms to improve the effectiveness of the AmeriCorps programs, and maximize the impact of individual AmeriCorps members who are working to recruit, train and supervise volunteers around the country. We look forward to final passage of that legislation, and will continue to offer support for the expansion of the Corporation's programs. Specific budget information will be published as part of the President's budget request to Congress for fiscal year 2004.

Senior Corps

Senior Corps, another set of Corporation for National and Community Service programs, helps more than half a million volunteers ages 55 and older to serve their neighbors through three programs: Foster Grandparents, Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, and Senior Companions. Senior Corps allows older Americans to use their experience and skills to assist local organizations and meet a wide range of community needs, such as caring for homebound or ill seniors and tutoring and mentoring youth.

Half a million men and women participate in these programs already, and President Bush has proposed reforms to make more seniors eligible to participate, and new funding that will help engage another 100,000 talented seniors. These reforms to strengthen the Senior Corps programs are proposed in the pending legislation authorizing the programs of the Corporation for National and Community Service, and they will work to make Senior Corps volunteers an even more valued part of America's volunteer infrastructure.

Learn and Serve America

America's students who are engaged in volunteer service in their youth offer the promise of a dedication to service that will last for decades. Also through the Corporation for National and Community Service, the Learn and Serve America grant program supports K-12 and college and university programs that link classroom instruction with community service – a practice known as service-learning. Through its grants and the resources and research it supports, Learn and Serve America is helping to engage thousands of schools around the country in promising service-learning activities for America's students.

The Students in Service to America effort launched in September 2002 is just the first step in an expanded effort to partner with educators to engage America's youth in volunteer activities and help them develop habits of service and civic participation that will last a lifetime. This past fall, educators with 130,000 elementary, middle, and high schools as well as after-school programs, homeschools and other organizations received the Students in Service to America guide and materials to help them develop service and service-learning programs that engage their students in making a difference.

Citizen Corps

Month by building with Habitat for Humanity in Northern Virginia.

JULY

18th – The Corporation for National and Community Service issues grants to organizations and communities to support homeland security volunteer efforts.

30th – President Bush launches the USA Freedom Corps Volunteer Network, providing Americans with millions of volunteer opportunities across the country and around the world, and unveils a multimedia public service announcement campaign to run for the next year.

AUGUST

30th – In his radio address to the Nation, President Bush unveils the Students in Service to America effort and encourages educators and others to make September 2002 a September of Service, and to honor the memory of the victims of the 9/11 attacks with service projects.

SEPTEMBER

11th – Nonprofit organizations and corporations around the country promote the USA Freedom Corps Volunteer Network as a way to honor those who lost their lives to terrorism a year ago and generate eight times the average daily number of searches for volunteer opportunities.

17th – On the 215th anniversary of the signing of the United States Constitution, President Bush introduces “We the People,” “Our Documents,” and other government initiatives to support teaching students of all ages about America’s legacy of freedom, citizenship and service.

24th – More than 30 White House and Cabinet spouses join the USA Freedom Corps and Habitat for Humanity International’s “Women Building a Legacy” program to build two homes in Annapolis, Maryland.

30th – The Peace Corps and Habitat for Humanity International announce their agreement to partner

Citizen Corps

President Bush set out a vision for the Citizen Corps initiative in January 2002 that involved the creation of programs that support local efforts to engage individuals in helping communities prevent, prepare for, and respond to crime, natural disasters and terrorist attacks. Americans are now volunteering with police departments through more than 320 Volunteers in Police Service programs, doctors and nurses are joining Medical Reserve Corps units across the country, the number of registered Neighborhood Watch groups has more than doubled, and twice as many individuals have been trained to teach emergency response skills in their communities through Community Emergency Response Teams.

More than 300 Citizen Corps Councils around the country are bringing together leaders from law enforcement, fire, emergency medical and other emergency management groups, community-based and faith-based organizations, local elected officials, educators, and the private sector to coordinate and engage citizens in emergency response and preparedness. In addition, all 50 states and six U.S. territories are supporting state or territory-wide Citizen Corps Councils to coordinate volunteer efforts at that level, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency announced the formation of a National Citizen Corps Council in December 2002 to bring together national first responder groups, emergency management agencies, volunteer service organizations, and other national groups to support the growth and development of Citizen Corps.

More than \$35 million in grants has been awarded to the states and to organizations around the country to support these efforts, and additional resources will be forthcoming to support the expansion of these programs. Details of future budgetary support for these programs will be published as part of the President’s budget request to Congress for fiscal year 2004.

Other Federally Supported Service Opportunities

Other federal agencies such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Forest Service and U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs engage more than 500,000 volunteers each year in carrying out their respective missions, and countless agencies support nonprofit and community-serving organizations that use volunteers to fulfill the purpose of their government grants. By working with the USA Freedom Corps, these agencies can make the opportunities to work with them more readily available to interested volunteers and also expand and improve the opportunities they offer volunteers.

Other federal agencies have resources, such as survey and research activities, that can be used to support the mission of the USA Freedom Corps, the operation of federally supported volunteer service opportunities, and the voluntary sector in general. For example, it was a coordinated effort involving the USA Freedom Corps, the U.S. Census Bureau, and Bureau of Labor Statistics, in consultation with the Corporation for National and Community Service and the nonprofit Independent Sector, that led to the creation of a new national measurement of adult volunteer behavior.

The data collected for the first time in 2002 will serve as a baseline for measuring the progress of the USA Freedom Corps and other efforts to engage Americans in volunteer service. It will also offer voluntary service organizations as well as researchers and the government the opportunity to analyze patterns and trends for valuable information about the nature of our volunteer behavior. The volunteer service indicator is just one reflection of the possibilities that lie within federal government agencies to support expanded and enhanced volunteer service.

Building Support for Lasting Change

To create lasting change in communities across the country, the USA Freedom Corps is also working with the business, education, nonprofit, and other sectors to create more opportunities for Americans to help others, and to enable all volunteers to make a difference through their service. The participation of these community institutions is essential if the USA Freedom Corps is to accomplish its mission of changing the culture of America's communities to instill in them an ethic of service, citizenship, and responsibility.

Business Strengthening America

Leaders of American businesses have responded to President Bush's call to service by creating their own Business Strengthening America initiative. Launched in June 2002 by a group of 18 corporate chief executives who met with President Bush at the White House to outline their efforts, Business Strengthening America is a self-directed, long-term effort to engage America's businesses and business leaders in making changes to corporate practices and policies that will support expanded volunteer service for decades.

As of January 2003, more than 140 companies representing more than two million employees are now a part of Business Strengthening America, and the group has set a goal of recruiting 500 businesses by June 2003 and more in the months that follow. The corporate chief executives leading the effort make the case that a strong commitment to volunteering and civic responsibility serves corporate interests as well as community needs by increasing employee, consumer, and shareholder loyalty.

Each of the members of Business Strengthening America has made an explicit commitment to use its corporate resources to mobilize employees, customers and vendors to engage in service and civic engagement activities, and to report annually on its corporate efforts to support volunteer service. One Business Strengthening America company has established a new policy of allowing employees paid time to volunteer in their communities, and several others have expanded their existing policies and programs to support employee volunteer activity. Another Business Strengthening America company that manages residences for more than 20,000 seniors in 150 communities is working to engage its residents as Senior Corps volunteers. Several Business Strengthening America companies are launching new web sites or other software features to better track, recognize and encourage employee service in an effort to strengthen existing volunteer service programs. And several more Business Strengthening America members are using their consumer materials to feature messages that support volunteer service. To date, bank statements, web sites, and grocery bags have been modified to include information on the USA Freedom Corps Volunteer Network web and phone clearinghouse of volunteer opportunities.

Students in Service to America

Our K-12 schools, as well as our colleges and universities, can help American youth develop habits of service that will last for decades. Research published in 2002 demonstrates a correlation between volunteer service in adult years and volunteer service as youth. Those adults who volunteered as young people were more likely not



on projects located in several regions around the world to promote homeownership.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics and U.S. Census Bureau survey more than 60,000 households to create the first volunteer service indicator – a comprehensive annual measure of volunteer activity among American adults.

More than 130,000 elementary, middle, and high schools, after-school programs, home schools and other youth serving programs around the country receive the Students in Service to America guide, CD-Rom and online resources to stimulate student service.

OCTOBER

15th – The USA Freedom Corps Volunteer Network expands to include millions of volunteer opportunities with more than 60,000 organizations.

26th – White House staff join Miss America 2002, the Secretary of Commerce, and local leaders to build a playground on Make a Difference Day.

Peace Corps surpasses a milestone – more than 100,000 Peace Corps applications have been requested since the launch of the USA Freedom Corps.

NOVEMBER

1st – The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services delivers its first round of Medical Reserve Corps grants to 42 organizations around the country to help them start this new Citizen Corps program.

26th – The USA Freedom Corps director represents the United States by addressing a plenary session of the United

only to be engaged in volunteer service as adults, but also to give and give more to nonprofits and other organizations through personal philanthropy.

Through the Students in Service to America initiative, the USA Freedom Corps, with the Learn and Serve America programs, U.S. Department of Education, and Points of Light Foundation, has already reached out to more than 130,000 schools and after-school programs for K-12 students to help them support service activities and service-learning as part of the lessons they offer our young people.

Linking American History, Civics, and Service

By participating in the American tradition of service, students can learn about our country's history and citizenship in our democratic society. President Bush announced several new policies and initiatives in September 2002 to help Americans of all ages, and particularly our young people, develop a better understanding of our democratic traditions and institutions, and create a better informed and more involved citizenry, including:

“We The People,” which includes a new multimillion dollar competitive grant program to be administered by the National Endowment for the Humanities, an “Idea of America” essay contest for high school students, a “Heroes of History” lecture series, and summer institutes to train educators to teach American history well;

“Our Documents,” a collaboration between the National Archives and Records Administration, National History Day, the Corporation for National and Community Service and the USA Freedom Corps, that gives students and teachers access to national treasures of American history and includes the distribution of teaching guides, lesson plans, and electronic resources featuring 100 milestone documents in American history that helped to shape our rights and responsibilities as citizens of a democracy; and

A “We The People” Forum on American History, Civics, and Service to be held in February 2003 to bring attention to best practices and innovative projects that advance the understanding of American history and participation in our civic institutions and tradition of service.

Philanthropies Strengthening America

The USA Freedom Corps is also working with the community of philanthropic organizations that includes foundations and grantmakers to develop an initiative modeled on Business Strengthening America. The initiative will engage the resources of philanthropies across the country to encourage increased philanthropic investment in and commitment to citizen service and volunteering. We look forward to announcing that initiative later in 2003.

Soldiers in the Armies of Compassion

According to the data released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics in December 2002, more than 59 million or approximately one in four Americans age 16 and older, volunteered between September 2001 and September 2002. According to The Condition of Education 2001, more than half of all students between grades 6 and 12 reported they had volunteered during 1999.

Over the past year, President Bush has met more than 140 individuals in travels to more than 36 states to recognize them for their dedication to service to others as part of the USA Freedom Corps. Willard “Will” Gove was the first dedicated volunteer who greeted President Bush. They met when the President arrived in Minneapolis, Minnesota on March 4 and discussed Mr. Gove’s work as a full-time volunteer with a nonprofit community development corporation, where he is directing the construction of two soccer fields in inner city Minneapolis, as well as his work over the past 33 years reading to the blind on a weekly radio broadcast. Mr. Gove, who was 83 when he met President Bush, is one of many seniors recognized by the President over the past year for service to their communities during their retirement.

The President has also recognized the dedicated work of young people such as Star Wallin, whom he met in Jackson, Mississippi in August, as she was planning to start her freshman year of college at Vanderbilt University, where she has received a scholarship in recognition of her dedication to volunteer service. Ms. Wallin founded Project CARE (Compassion in Action creates a Ripple Effect of positive change) in 1999. Through that organization, she has worked to match 300 elementary school students with high school mentors, and to organize students to collect food, clothing, and furniture for impoverished families, help refurbish the grounds of local public schools, and nurture and rehabilitate abused and neglected animals.

The President has also had the opportunity to recognize families who volunteer together to support community organizations. He met Larry and Linda Swartz and their son Eric in Springfield, Illinois on November 3. All of the Swartzes are active volunteers with Special Olympics, a program that Eric has been involved with as a multi-sport athlete for the past ten years. Eric and his father have also been active in Boy Scouts – Mr. Swartz as a troop leader, and Eric as he volunteers with his fellow scouts who are pursuing their Eagle Scout rank.

President Bush has also recognized professionals who are finding the time to volunteer in the midst of busy careers, including two professionals from Atlanta. He met Nir Eyal during a March visit. Mr. Eyal is a management consultant who has turned his AmeriCorps experience with Hands On Atlanta into a sustained commitment to volunteer work and who currently serves as a mentor through the Big BrothersBig Sisters program he helped to establish during college. During a June trip to Atlanta to discuss his policies to promote minority homeownership, the President met Darryl Hicks, an executive with a local utility company who has been working on home building projects with Habitat for Humanity for the past decade, and is now a member of their board of directors. When he met the President, Mr. Hicks was planning the start of a new volunteer commitment, serving meals at the Atlanta Union Mission.

These are just a few examples of the dedication to service that is present in communities across the country, and of the impact that volunteers are having on the lives of those who need our compassion. President Bush will continue to recognize dedicated volunteers in the communities he visits and encourage the members of these communities to follow the example of these dedicated individuals by finding the time to make a difference through the USA Freedom Corps.



Nations General Assembly regarding the International Year of the Volunteer.

30th – President Bush asks Americans to make the holiday season a “Season of Service” in his radio address to the Nation.

Citizen Corps surpasses a milestone – more than 200 Citizen Corps Councils have been formed in communities around the country.

DECEMBER

4th – The Federal Emergency Management Agency delivers more than \$21 million in grants to support Citizen Corps programs across the country and announces

Looking Ahead to 2003



Fulfilling the mission of the USA Freedom Corps will take years of work that involves the support and commitment of all of our community institutions working in partnership with government. In 2003, we will continue to build upon the groundwork laid during our first year of operation and to fulfill the promises made during that period, including the launch of two significant initiatives to encourage more Americans to do more to care for their neighbors and to meet urgent needs in our communities.

President's Council and Awards on Service and Civic Participation

Modeled on the President's Council on Physical Fitness, which has worked to engage millions of Americans for almost 50 years in learning about and adopting healthy exercise habits, President Bush has formed a new President's Council on Service and Civic Participation to recognize the dedication of America's volunteers, and encourage more Americans to engage in service to their neighbors and their Nation.

The council will include 25 members who will work with a staff to establish nationwide recognition programs for individuals of all ages, and for institutions, including schools, businesses and nonprofits that have demonstrated an exemplary commitment to answering the President's call to service. The awards will be given to millions of individuals engaged in a variety of volunteer services who have made a sustained commitment to service over the course of a one year period. The first members of the new council include entertainers, athletes, retired elected officials, business and media leaders, leaders of nonprofit and volunteer service organizations, and community volunteers.

Volunteer Service Action Priorities

In 2003, the USA Freedom Corps will begin focusing on some of the specific areas of need where our volunteers are making a difference and developing new opportunities for government and private institutions to enhance their efforts for the benefit of our communities.

In order to mobilize individuals to meet pressing community needs, each calendar quarter the USA Freedom Corps will offer support, research, and other information regarding an area of need in America's communities that can be uniquely addressed through volunteer time and talents. The USA Freedom Corps will also announce new and expanded efforts by the agencies that are a part of the USA Freedom Corps to enhance existing volunteer efforts. The first areas of need to be addressed this year include: youth achievement, parks and open spaces, healthy communities, and homeland security. Youth achievement will be the focus of the first quarter of 2003, and will include the announcement of new support for engaging mentors in the lives of more than one million disadvantaged youth who are moving from childhood to adolescence.

New resources are being developed to focus on those children who are most at risk of being left behind: children with a parent in prison, and other disadvantaged children. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services will administer a program to help more than 100,000 children of prisoners over the next three years with the assistance of the U.S. Department of Justice and a network of other agencies. The U.S. Department of Education will administer a program that will support the development, expansion, and strengthening of exemplary mentoring programs targeted at at-risk middle school students in order to cultivate mentors for these young people. Together these programs will assist more than one million young people over three years.

the creation of a National Citizen Corps Council.

10th – Business Strengthening America hosts a day of service featuring remarks from President Bush and marks a milestone of more than 100 members.

18th – The Bureau of Labor Statistics releases the results of its survey of volunteer service and creates a benchmark for measuring the growth of volunteer service across the country.

19th – President and Mrs. Bush visit the Capital Area Food Bank in Washington, D.C. to help distribute food collected by members of the White House staff and the Office of Management and

Conclusion

Americans have always stepped forward to volunteer their time and talents to help those in need and to improve their communities and country. In the second volume of his Democracy in America published in 1840, the French social philosopher Alexis de Tocqueville included an entire chapter entitled "Of the Use Which the Americans Make of Public Associations in Civil Life." In that chapter, he noted that Americans of all ages and backgrounds had a great propensity for forming voluntary associations to support community needs, including the formation of hospitals and schools, missionary efforts, book distribution, and the construction of churches.

More than 160 years later, Americans who are volunteering are taking part in a great American tradition of service that draws upon individuals of all backgrounds to address a variety of our most important community needs. To join that tradition, and to help advance a culture of service, citizenship, and responsibility for years to come, go to www.usafreedomcorps.gov or call 1-877-USA-CORPS.



Budget, as part of a nationwide effort by more than 29 federal agencies to collect food for regional food banks around the country.

JANUARY 2003

On the first anniversary of the USA Freedom Corps, President Bush forms the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation and introduces the first members, who will work to recognize the dedication of volunteers around the country through a massive Presidential recognition program. The President also introduces new Volunteer Service Action Priorities to be a focus of activity in 2003, with the first priority being improving youth achievement.

PHOTO USAGE DETAILS:

PAGE 1.

President George W. Bush works on a Habitat For Humanity house in Tampa, Florida. White House photo by Eric Draper.

PAGE 3.

President George W. Bush celebrates the 6-month anniversary of USA Freedom Corps by unveiling a new public service announcement in the East Room of the White House. "The USA Freedom Corps is matching potential volunteers with local charities," said the President. "We're promoting service to prepare for crises at home, to strengthen our communities, to help people in need, and to extend American compassion throughout the world." White House photo by Tina Hager.

PAGE 5.

President George W. Bush and Laura Bush help volunteers pack food during their visit to the Capital Area Food Bank in Washington, D.C. "More Americans need to volunteer. There are ways to do so. The usafreedomcorps.gov on the web page is the place to look," said the President in his remarks. "You can call 1-877-USA-CORPS and find out ways that you can help. If you are interested in being a part of feeding those who hunger, this is a great place to come to." White House photo by Tina Hager.

PAGE 7.

President George W. Bush with young volunteers from the Washington, D.C. area on the South Lawn of the White House. White House photo by Eric Draper.

PAGE 10.

President George W. Bush takes a working tour of The Adirondack Park near Wilmington, New York. "We had a great time in the Park, and I want to thank you all very much for giving me the opportunity to hammer and stack, place gravel -- in a beautiful part of the world. This is quite a sight for a fellow from Texas," said the President in his remarks about Earth Day at Whiteface Mountain Lodge. "We have a duty in our country to make sure our land is preserved, our air is clean, our water is pure, our parks are accessible and open and well-preserved." White House photo by Eric Draper.

PAGE 12.

President George W. Bush and Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Mel Martinez, far right, talk with new friends during a break from house building at the Waco, Texas, location of Habitat for Humanities "World Leaders Build." White House photo by Eric Draper.

PAGE 13.

Visiting "Martha's Table" center for homeless adults and children, President George W. Bush talks with volunteer Connie Jeremiah. The president helped pack sandwiches into carrying crates at the center which has been providing food to the hungry since 1980. White House photo by Eric Draper.

PAGE 14.

President George W. Bush talks with students at the South End Community Center in Bridgeport, Connecticut. AmeriCorps volunteers come to the community center to mentor students. "We need to encourage programs to expand, to give people an outlet, a chance to participate," said the President during his remarks at the city's Klein Auditorium where he outlined how people could join the ranks of thousands who are already serving others. White House photo by Tina Hager.



I-877-USA-CORPS WWW.USAFREEDOMCORPS.GOV