

THE USA FREEDOM CORPS' 

Network of Service

March 2003

Peace Corps Celebrates 42nd Anniversary

The Peace Corps celebrated its 42nd anniversary on February 28, 2003 by helping 7,000 former Peace Corps volunteers share their experiences with half a million students in classrooms across the country. Peace Corps Day 2003 served as an excellent opportunity for Americans to benefit from the overseas experiences of volunteers.

President George W. Bush applauded former and current volunteers stating, "By recognizing the potential of all people, Peace Corps volunteers affirm the value and dignity of every person, and advance goodwill and understanding between cultures and nations."

Last year, 6,678 Peace Corps volunteers worked in 70 developing countries around the world. President Bush has pledged to more than double the number of volunteers over the next five years to 15,000. In addition, the Peace Corps is working to reach more countries and to expand its services to include important global needs such as quality housing.

Since President Bush's 2002 State of the Union, applications to the program are up while processing time is down. For a Peace Corps application, [click here](#).



President George W. Bush participates in the swearing-in ceremony for Gaddi Vasquez as the 16th Peace Corps Director.

USA Freedom Corps Launches "On the Homefront"

On March 25, 2003, the USA Freedom Corps launched "On the Homefront," a new resource for people who want to support our troops, their families, and their communities. While hundreds of thousands of Americans are serving in the armed forces and away from their homes, those "on the homefront" can be making a difference too.

The USA Freedom Corps, in partnership with the Department of Defense, is offering online resources at www.usafreedomcorps.gov to Americans who want to express their support for members of the military and to help their families in meaningful ways, including:

★ [Support For Troops](#) ★

To support our troops with letters and care packages, the Department of Defense recommends: [Operation Dear Abby](#) to send e-mail messages to deployed troops; [Defend America](#) to sign an on-line thank you card for troops; [Operation USO Care Package](#) to contribute to the purchase of care package items; and [Operation Uplink](#) to contribute to the purchase of phone cards.

★ [Help for Families](#) ★

Families of reserve, National Guard, and active duty personnel may need extra help in meeting basic home and family needs during deployment. Several of the country's leading community service organizations are providing opportunities for individuals, organizations, and businesses to offer their time and resources to help local military families, including the local chapters

"This effort will match Americans who want to volunteer their time and skills with the military families who need help. Because of all this generosity, our men and women serving overseas will know that their loved ones are not facing this time alone."

President George W. Bush

of the [American Legion](#), [American Red Cross](#), [Boys & Girls Clubs of America](#), [BPO Elks of the USA](#), [Camp Fire USA](#), [National 4-H Headquarters](#), [National Fraternal Congress of America](#), [The Salvation Army](#), [U.S. Chamber of Commerce](#), [Veterans of Foreign Wars](#), and [YMCA of the USA](#).

These organizations are working with the National Guard and Reserve, as well as with military bases, to match volunteers with families that need help in areas from household repairs to financial planning and legal services, as well as directing families to businesses that are offering free or discounted services. In addition, these organizations are providing childcare to families that have a parent or caregiver stationed away from home.

★ [Service in Communities](#) ★

Individuals who want to help strengthen their community and America can do so through volunteer service. Some communities may need particular help to replace valued volunteers who have been deployed. Volunteer opportunities can be found at www.usafreedomcorps.gov or by calling 1-877-USA-CORPS.