

THE USA FREEDOM CORPS' 

Network of Service

August 2003

Citizen Corps Experiences Dramatic Growth During Past Year

The second annual National Citizen Corps Conference brought together 220 state, local, and federal emergency managers, first responders, and voluntary service organizations from across the country. At the conference, held in Washington, D.C. on July 29-31, participants shared information and best practices, discussed collaborations among state and local Citizen Corps Councils, and identified volunteer service opportunities to support first responders.

The Citizen Corps initiative has grown dramatically since last year's conference. During that time, the number of local councils has increased from 100 to 723, and state and territory councils from 10 to 50.

In his [remarks](#), Secretary of Homeland Security Tom Ridge thanked the attendees for their efforts. "As leaders of the Citizen Corps, you've taken up the responsibility of harnessing the great power of the American spirit - and channeling it into volunteer service. That service translates into a better prepared nation - one where you're helping us to reach one individual, one family, one neighborhood, one community at a time."

Secretary Ridge also acknowledged that Citizen Corps' success would not be possible without its federal partnerships with the Department of Justice ([Neighborhood Watch, Volunteers in Police Service](#)) and the Department of Health and Human Services ([Medical Reserve Corps](#)). Since President Bush issued his Call to Service, the number of VIPS programs has increased seven-fold, Neighborhood Watch is on track to double, and there are 42 MRC units nationwide.

John Bridge land, Director of the USA Freedom Corps, also thanked the attendees for helping to engage Americans in emergency preparedness and response: "Through Citizen Corps, you are building the citizen preparedness movement in the country." President Bush established the Citizen Corps initiative, a component of the USA Freedom Corps, to provide individuals with opportunities to volunteer to keep their communities safe and prepared for emergencies.

During the conference, Michael D. Brown, Under Secretary of Homeland Security for Emergency Preparedness and Response, signed affiliate agreements on behalf of Citizen Corps with the American Red Cross ([click for details](#)) and three federal agencies, including the Department of Education, Environmental Protection Agency, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration ([click for details](#)). Affiliate organizations help to strengthen the Citizen Corps initiative by raising public awareness of disaster preparedness and response opportunities, providing public education and training opportunities in emergency preparedness and lifesaving skills, and promoting volunteer service. [Click for a list of Affiliate Programs and Organizations.](#)



We encourage you to visit www.citizencorps.gov to find out if there is a Citizen Corps Council in your community and how your organization can assist in creating safer and stronger communities.

August Highlights



President Bush helps to repair a trail in the Santa Monica Mountains. White House photo by Paul Morse.

On August 15, President George W. Bush visited the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area in California to highlight his [agenda to care for our National Parks](#). During his [remarks](#), the President said: "One of the things that makes the park systems go and really function well is the volunteer effort all around our country." He then urged Americans to volunteer in our nation's parks to help preserve their beauty. For volunteer opportunities, visit [Take Pride in America](#) and the [USA Freedom Corps](#).

On August 12, [One Day's Pay](#) brought together service organizations and groups representing the families of victims of September 11 to announce an effort to mobilize Americans to serve others every September 11 as a living memorial. Their goal is to make September 11 a national day of volunteer service, charity and compassion. [Click for details.](#) To recruit volunteers for your organization's activities in honor of September 11, post your service opportunities on the [USA Freedom Corps Volunteer Network](#).