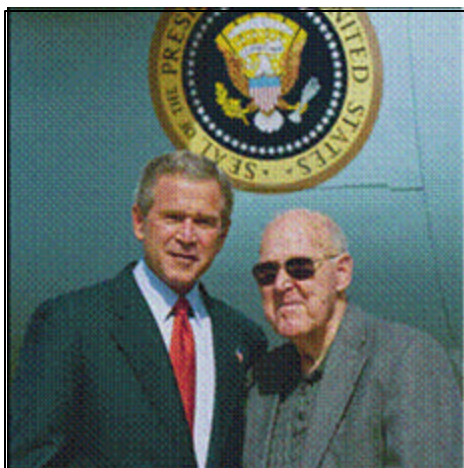




President Bush Thanks Volunteers for Their Dedication



President George W. Bush thanks Bill Sellers for his dedication to volunteer service.

When President Bush stepped off Air Force One in Houston this past September, he was greeted by one of the city's most dedicated volunteers, Bill Sellers. Mr. Sellers, age 83, has been an active volunteer in the Houston community for 40 years helping to provide food to those in need. He volunteers as manager of a food pantry that provides groceries

for 500 to 600 families each month. (See box below to see how your organization can help feed those in need.)

President Bush thanked Mr. Sellers for his work and dedication to serving others. Since issuing his Call to Service in January 2002, the **President has personally thanked 235 volunteers in cities across America for their commitment to service.**

President Bush hopes to encourage all Americans to perform more volunteer service by highlighting the work of individuals in the communities to which he travels. (Forward local contact information for the cities in which your organization utilizes volunteers to therese_lyons@who.eop.gov Your volunteers could be considered for future recognition opportunities.)

In addition, President Bush has launched the **President's Volunteer Service Awards** to thank and honor Americans who, by their demonstrated commitment and example, inspire others to engage in volunteer service.

Help make Thanksgiving the start of a Season of Service

USA Freedom Corps is sponsoring a Thanksgiving food drive at the White House to help stock the shelves of the **Capital Area Food Bank**. As your organization considers service activities for the holiday season, we encourage you to consider coordinating a food drive in your community. To find a food bank in your area, visit **America's Second Harvest**, the nation's largest hunger-relief organization.

During the week of Thanksgiving, adults age 55+ can make a difference in their communities through the **Share Your Volunteer Spirit Pledge Drive**, part of the **Senior Corps' "Ask a Friend" campaign**. Senior Corps is encouraging older adults to give thanks by finding local volunteer opportunities in their neighborhoods by calling 1-800-424-8867 or visiting www.volunteerfriends.org.

"... In this holiday season, let's commit ourselves to making it a season of service to others, others who might hurt, others who need food, others who can benefit from our kindness and generosity." -- President Bush after he and Mrs. Bush volunteered at the Capital Area Food Bank during the 2002 holiday season



Medical Reserve Corps

On October 30, HHS Secretary Tommy G. Thompson **announced more than \$8 million in Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) grants** to help community-based organizations develop local volunteer medical emergency and public health response capabilities. These funds allowed 125 new communities to join this national effort to answer President Bush's call to volunteer service and help make our communities better prepared to respond to emergency and other public health situations. There are now 167 MRC units across the country.



Peace Corps

On November 12, Peace Corps Director Gaddi H. Vasquez signed **an historic agreement with Mexico** that will lead to Peace Corps volunteers serving in Mexico for the first time in 2004. They will work in the areas of science, technology, and small business development. Peace Corps began exploring the possibility of entering Mexico after President Bush and Mexican President Vicente Fox announced the "Partnership for Prosperity" initiative during their summit in September 2001.



Business Strengthening America

Business Strengthening America (BSA) is the business community's effort to engage thousands of businesses around the country in new or expanded efforts to support civic engagement and volunteer service over the coming years in response to President Bush's Call to Service. To date, more than 700 companies have joined this initiative. To find out more information about BSA and how to expand the volunteer ethic in the American business community, **click here**.