



## Significantly More Americans Volunteered During Past Year

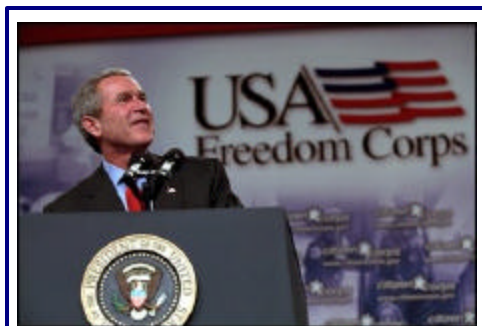
On December 17, the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor reported that significantly more Americans participated in volunteer service in the past year. The Bureau found that about 63.8 million people did volunteer work at some point between September 2002 and September 2003. This number is up from 59.8 million Americans who volunteered during the twelve-month period ending September

2002. The percentage of the American population who volunteered increased to 28.8 percent, up from 27.4 percent the previous year. Teenagers showed the greatest increase in volunteer service.

"This significant increase in the number of volunteers shows a strengthening of America's civil society - the fabric of our nation," said John Bridgeland, Assistant to the President and Director of the USA Freedom Corps. ([Click here](#) to view the press release.)

These findings are from the volunteer service indicator, an annual national measurement of volunteer behavior developed last year by the Census Bureau and Bureau of Labor Statistics with the USA Freedom Corps. The volunteer service indicator measures volunteer service activity among individuals living in the U.S. age 16 and older who volunteer with organizations such as schools, nonprofits, houses of worship, and hospitals. [Click here](#) for more information on the indicator.

To view the Bureau of Labor Statistics' comprehensive data on volunteer service, [click here](#).



"This increase in volunteering is evidence of the new culture of service we are building in America, especially among young people."

*President George W. Bush  
Radio Address to the Nation  
December 20, 2003*

## Business Strengthening America Marks First-Year Anniversary

Business Strengthening America, a business-driven effort that increases employee volunteer service and community engagement, celebrated its one year anniversary earlier this month. During the first year of this self-directed initiative, more than 730 businesses nationwide answered the President's Call to Service by committing to expand or create employee volunteer service and community engagement opportunities. These member companies employ more than five million people in the United States.

While there have been other efforts to increase employee volunteer service in the past, Business Strengthening America is unique in that it is the first time businesses nationwide have held themselves collectively responsible for civic engagement. [Click here](#) to learn more about BSA and how to expand the volunteer ethic in America's business community. In addition, [click here](#) to view a copy of BSA's "2003 Report to the Nation," which details the initiative's accomplishments, including baseline statistics on its members' activities.

## December Highlights

### ★ **Radio Address of the President to the Nation**

On December 20, in his weekly radio address to the nation, President George W. Bush reminded all Americans to reach out and share our blessings with others during this holiday season through volunteer service. The President asked each American "... to look for a challenge in your own community, and step forward to lend a hand." [Click here](#) for the full text of the President's radio address to the nation.

### ★ **The People's Vote: 100 Documents That Shaped America**

On Bill of Rights Day, December 15, the Archivist of the United States, John W. Carlin, announced the results of [The People's Vote: 100 Documents That Shaped America](#), a national challenge to help us think, talk and teach about the rights and responsibilities of citizens in our democracy. [The People's Vote](#) invited Americans to vote for ten documents from the list of 100 milestone documents chosen by historians and the National Archives, or to write in their favorites. More than three-quarters of the voters named the Declaration of Independence as one of the most influential in American history. [Click here](#) for complete results.

The People's Vote is part of a larger project created by the [National Archives](#) and [National History Day](#) in collaboration with the [USA Freedom Corps](#) titled [Our Documents: A National Initiative on American History, Civics and Service](#).