



January 2004

AmeriCorps Program Receives Historic Funding Increase Congress delivers on President Bush's Request to Expand AmeriCorps

On January 23, 2004, President Bush signed the "Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2004" into law. This important measure will provide historic funding for the AmeriCorps program located at the [Corporation for National and Community Service](#). This new law will support a record 75,000 AmeriCorps participants -- reflecting President Bush's commitment to reform and expand AmeriCorps while working with Congress in a bi-partisan manner to support the demand for national and community service activities.

[AmeriCorps](#) is a grant program that supports national service by helping Americans participate in intensive service to meet critical needs in local communities. AmeriCorps members serve through more than 2,100 nonprofit organizations, public

agencies, and faith-based organizations. They mentor youth, build affordable housing, clean parks and streams, teach computer skills, and provide a range of other services.

In addition to AmeriCorps, the bill provides funds for two other key programs of the Corporation: Senior Corps and Learn and Serve America. The Corporation's 2004 appropriation totals \$935 million - an almost 20% increase over the 2003 appropriation. [Click here for details.](#)

AmeriCorps funds are currently available from the Corporation as part of a grant competition for nonprofit organizations seeking to operate an AmeriCorps*National program in two or more states. The deadline for grant applications is March 2, 2004. [Click here for details.](#)

"...AmeriCorps and Senior Corps are an integral part of the USA Freedom Corps. that in America, we can change our country one heart and one soul and one conscience at a time.... And I view AmeriCorps and Senior Corps as ways to tap into the great talent and strength and compassion of America to help people in need." -- President George W. Bush, April 9, 2002

Laura Bush Encourages Americans to Volunteer to Help the Hungry



The President and Laura Bush help volunteers pack food during a previous visit to the Capital Area Food Bank in Washington, D.C. To find a food bank in your area, visit [America's Second Harvest](#). (Photo by Tina Hager.)

On January 22, Mrs. Laura Bush packed food with volunteers and made remarks at the [Capital Area Food Bank's Souper Bowl of Caring](#), a grassroots, faith-based campaign against hunger led by young people who collect donations in soup pots prior to Super Bowl Sunday. Mrs. Bush said, "On Super Bowl weekend, I encourage every American to give what they can and to give hope to those in need. President Bush and I are grateful for volunteers across America for inspiring others to love their neighbors."

January Highlights

★ [Mentoring](#)

In honor of [National Mentoring Month](#), President Bush invited two special guests to join him in the Capitol Building for his [2004 State of the Union Address](#): Jim Diesing and David Moreno, a "Big-Little match" with a [Big Brothers Big Sisters](#) chapter in Minnesota. [Jim has been David's mentor for five years](#), and is the recipient of the 2003 Angel of Mentoring Award for Minnesota.

In the [2003 State of the Union Address](#), President Bush called for a three-year \$450 million initiative to recruit and train mentors for more than one million disadvantaged youth, with a special emphasis on children of prisoners. On January 22, 2004 Congress approved \$100 million of first year funding for this initiative. Grant competitions will be announced later this year.

★ [Citizen Corps](#)

The Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency has launched an on-line, independent study course for volunteer members of [Community Emergency Response Teams](#). CERT members work with a community's emergency management officials to provide disaster assistance by helping victims, organizing spontaneous volunteers at a disaster site, and supporting emergency responders. [Click here for details.](#)

★ [Learn and Serve America](#)

\$3.2 million in grant funds is available from the Corporation for National & Community Service for organizations addressing homeland security concerns by engaging students in service-learning activities. The initiative aims to engage young people in planning for and responding to health, safety, and security concerns in their schools or communities. The deadline for applications is March 9. [Click here for details.](#)