



## President Bush Announces Additional Efforts to Assist Faith-Based and Community Organizations

On June 1, President George W. Bush addressed the first White House National Conference on [Faith-Based and Community Initiatives](#) in Washington, D.C. The Conference highlighted the [progress of the President's initiative and focused on key programs created by the Administration](#) to assist faith-based and community groups in their efforts to help Americans most in need.

The President launched the Initiative in 2001 to help end discrimination against faith-based and community charities and enable them to compete on a level playing field for federal social service funds. [In his remarks at the Conference](#), President Bush said: "I do believe that groups should be allowed to access social service grants, so long as they don't proselytize, or exclude somebody simply because they don't share a certain faith. In other words, there's a way to accomplish the separation of church and state, and at the same time, accomplish the social objective of having America

become a hopeful place, and a loving place."

That same day, President Bush signed an [Executive Order creating additional Centers for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives](#) in three federal agencies – [joining seven other Centers already created](#) by the President to help ensure that grassroots leaders can compete on an equal footing for federal dollars, receive greater private support, and face fewer bureaucratic barriers.

***"The strength of this country is not our military, or the size of our wallets, the strength of this country is the hearts and souls of the American people."***

President George W. Bush  
June 1, 2004

The National Conference followed 12 White House Regional Conferences held thus far. [The next Regional Conference is in Boston on July 8.](#)

## Citizen Corps Helping to Make Communities Safer

On June 14, local [Citizen Corps Councils](#) across America celebrated Flag Day through a variety of activities aimed at encouraging every American to play a role in making our country safer and offering ways to take action. Among the activities was [emergency response training for 50 National Park Service employees at Ellis and Liberty Islands](#) as Lady Liberty is prepared to be re-opened this summer. And in Washington, D.C. the [American Safety and Health Institute trained 200 citizens on first aid skills.](#)

President Bush launched Citizen Corps in 2002 to help coordinate volunteer activities that make our communities

safer, stronger, and better prepared to respond to terrorism and all other emergency situations. To date, there are [more than 1,200 local Citizen Corps Councils across America](#) -- serving almost half of the US population. In addition, there are more than 1,200 [CERT programs](#), 187 [Medical Reserve Corps units](#), 900 [Volunteers in Police Service programs](#), and more than 9,700 registered [Neighborhood Watch groups](#).

Citizen Corps offers community and faith-based organizations a variety of opportunities and resources to address hometown security and safety concerns. For information, visit [citizencorps.gov](#)

★ [Business Strengthening America](#) announced its sponsorship of the [Corporate Volunteer Councils \(CVC\) Partners Program](#), a program created by the [Points of Light Foundation](#). The objective of the program is to raise awareness within local business communities about the importance of volunteering by supporting a national network of employee volunteer managers, assisting existing CVC programs, and expanding the CVC reach. Corporate Volunteer Councils are often affiliated with [Volunteer Centers](#) and other community-based agencies that help mobilize volunteers. There are nearly 75 CVCs across the country, representing more than 2,000 businesses.

★ [Interior Secretary Gale Norton welcomed California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger to the Council of Governors of Take Pride in America](#), bringing the number of states participating to 44. [Take Pride in America](#) encourages Americans to volunteer in environmental service opportunities and recognizes outstanding volunteers.



★ Upon arriving in Cincinnati on June 21, [President Bush thanked Charlene Calhoun](#) for her volunteer service. The President has personally thanked [almost 300 volunteers](#) in cities across America for their commitment to service. *White House photo by Paul Morse.*