



Toolkit Table of Contents:

Introduction to Getting Involved

Day of Action Planning:

- Day of Action Essential Guide
- Day of Action Event Ideas
- Getting People Involved in Your Event
- Logistical Checklist

Guides:

- Guide to Contacting the Press
- Sample Media Alert
- Guide to Contacting Elected Officials
- Guide to Writing Op-Eds/Letters to the Editor

Promotional Tools:

- Sign-Up Sheet
- Flyers
- What is ServiceNation

Resources:

- Resources and Readings
- Statistics

Fact Sheets:

- Education
- Poverty
- Environment
- Service



Getting Involved in ServiceNation

Thank you for joining the ServiceNation movement!

ServiceNation is not only a campaign of ideas, but one of action and the power of citizens. The Day of Action is also a day of possibility.

On September 27, across the nation, thousands of individuals, groups, and communities will come together to learn, serve, and celebrate the impact and potential that service has in our communities.

There are a number of ways to get involved in the Day of Action:

First, you can create an event that's right for you and your group, and this kit will show you how.

Still want to get involved, but don't quite have the time to organize an event yourself? Check out events others are organizing at <http://events.servicenation.org> and RSVP to participate in one.

Sign the Declaration of Service.

Write a letter to the editor or an op-ed or write to your elected officials about the importance of universal national voluntary service.

Every action, letter, phone call, and email counts. The ServiceNation movement begins with you.



Day of Action Event Essentials

Want to host a Day of Action event, but unsure of where to begin? Here are the basics to help you organize it all from start to finish.

1. **Identity Community Concerns.** First, think about issues in your community that have already been or could be addressed by service. Whether it is unmet needs in education, environment, hunger and homelessness, service addresses these unmet needs in a variety of ways.
2. **Choose an Action & Location.** What kind of event will you host to raise awareness about your communities unmet needs and the important role service plays in addressing that need? You may want to visit our list of event ideas to help get you thinking, which can be used as a jumping-off point for you to come up with your own project idea.
3. **Register** your event and information on our website. Invite your family and friends to get involved to help out. The more helpers you have organizing the event with you, the more you can all accomplish!
4. **Figure Out Logistics.** Iron out the details of your event—location, directions, carpools, permits, refreshments, bathrooms, and anything else you can think of to help September 27th go as smoothly as possible.
5. **Get the word out!** Write a small blurb about your event and submit to your local media—community print publications, college newspapers, radio stations, corporate newsletters, or church bulletins. Post flyers around your local supermarkets, restaurants, and businesses. Reach out through email and social networking sites. You may want to contact your local elected representatives and let them know about it as well. Also check out our customizable flyers, postcards, stickers, and more. Talk to as many people as you can about your September 27 event; you never know who is interested!
6. **Declaration of Service.** This is a document you can send to your elected officials and the presidential candidates to tell them that you care about volunteering and citizenship. We'll provide a template as the day gets closer, but you can edit the Declaration as much as you like. Have a discussion at your event, and people can weigh in and customize it. Make the document yours!
7. **Publicity.** Get people interested in your event not only ahead of time (so that they can join in and participate), but afterwards as well so they can learn about the ServiceNation movement and the impact you and others made on the Day of Action! Invite local media to cover your event as a special interest story, and make sure to take photos throughout the day to mark your progress and commemorate the event!
8. **Act!** September 27th is finally here! Have your attendees fill out your sign-in sheet so you can stay in touch after the event. Don't forget to have everyone discuss and sign the Declaration of Service.
9. **Follow up.** Once your event is over and all cleaned up, go back to the ServiceNation website, and under "Manage Your Event" there's a form where you can send us videos for YouTube and pictures for Flickr, to share with us how your day went. Make sure to send out thank-yous to all friends, family, volunteers, and all others that helped make your event a success!



Day of Action Event Ideas

What If . . . 1 Million by 2020

The goal of events on the Day of Action is to demonstrate the importance of service and to tell stories about the impact that service has, and the potential service could have if built to scale. The theme of the Day of Action is “What If...”

The theme paints a picture of a world where service is brought to scale: What if every child had a mentor? What if every child graduated from high school? What if our parks, rivers, and open spaces were void of pollution and trash? What if service became a right of passage and not a punishment or chore?

The theme is also about creating a sense of urgency to take action. It is also about telling the story if service is not brought to scale. What if the high school dropout crisis increases? What if children have no place to go after school? What if our public lands continued to become polluted? What if college becomes too expensive for most our country’s children?

The Day of Action is about telling the story of impact of service, the possibility of a country where 1 million people are serving full time or part time annually and 100 million people are volunteering throughout the year.

Examples of events that you might organize for the Day of Action include:

- Hosting an awareness-raising concert featuring local bands. Provide a time for participants to share stories of personal service-related experience, or to discuss what service means to them.
- Organizing a letter-writing campaign or a phone bank to your elected representatives that involves sharing service success stories and reminding them that the time to implement a universal national service policy is now.
- Hosting a talk by someone who has volunteered full-time, such as a PeaceCorps, AmeriCorps or Teach for America volunteer, or a CityYear alumnus. ServiceNation can help connect you with someone in your community who has worked in one of these programs. [Click here.](#)
- Organizing a local citizen hearing or a town meeting with members of your community who can testify to the impact of service and what it has achieved in your community. Make sure to engage local media outlets to cover the event.
- Organizing a rally in front of the State House or walk from office to office of your elected officials in a demonstration.



- Holding a service fair, where representatives from different organizations come to talk about the service work they do and the impact their service work has in their community.
- Hosting a house party or smaller gathering to share stories of service and its importance.
- Filming a documentary or making a public art display involving a variety of community members' stories about service and testimony on why they believe in universal voluntary national service.
- Creating a photo gallery with pictures of service along with people's stories written up beside them.
- Painting a mural with inspirational quotes and images of service.
- Researching for and hosting a teach-in about service, the different programs that are out there and how they have impacted various communities.

Make sure to make your event fun, creative and tailored to your community. At each event, make sure to have people sign the Declaration of Service as well as sign postcards to or call their representatives to remind them of the immediate importance of universal voluntary national service.



Getting Others Involved

As you plan your event, you'll want to reach out to as many participants as possible to attend.

1- Your personal networks are a perfect place to start. Reach out to friends, family, co-workers, neighbors and fellow members of organizations through e-mail, phone or mail. Try e-mailing your entire address book or messaging your entire friend list—you never know who is interested in volunteering! Let them know that the ServiceNation event and cause is something you're excited about and that they can play a concrete and important role in. Also encourage them to invite a few more people of their own.

2- The internet can be a critical tool in organizing your Day of Action event. Make sure to get everyone to RSVP on the ServiceNation website. Setting up Facebook or MySpace events is also a great communication method. You can also use the ServiceNation Facebook or MySpace pages to find other people in your area who are part of ServiceNation and invite them to your events.

3- Local media is another great way to publicize your event. Place an ad in your local newspaper or in more than one local newspaper from surrounding communities. Also, if there is one, ask your local paper to put your event on its calendar. You can also try putting your event in church bulletins, college newspapers or radio stations, or corporate or non-profits' newsletters.

4- Community leaders and community organizations are people you should target and ask them and their membership to come. Definitely call the offices of all your state and local officials and invite them to come. Congress will be in recess at the time, so make sure to include your representatives and senators. ServiceNation provides a tool for inviting your elected officials here. Depending on the event, different interests groups might turn out their membership: if you're focused on the power of service to protect the environment, for instance, you might want to contact environmental advocacy groups like local chapters of the Sierra Club, Greenpeace or 1Sky.

Finally, make sure to put up flyers around the neighborhood, or write some chalk advertisements near busy areas. A sample flyer can be found here. Feel free to be creative; this is your event and your ideas will drive it.



Logistics Checklist

As you're planning out your Day of Action event, you'll have many things to keep in mind. To help you stay on track, here's a checklist about some logistical details you might need to consider.

- ✓ Securing a location for the event, and getting the necessary permissions.
- ✓ Ensuring there is a way to get to the event by public transportation or that there is nearby parking.
- ✓ Ensuring that participants know how to find the event and have directions.
- ✓ Arranging for rides or carpools to the event.
- ✓ Preparing and purchasing refreshments for the event.
- ✓ Getting all the materials you need: paper, pens/pencils, camera, video camera, postcards for elected officials, copies of the Declaration of Service, stickers, banners, decorations, etc.
- ✓ If there are reporters, appointing someone to greet the media, and making sure there are participants to speak with them.
- ✓ If there are speakers, arranging to introduce them and getting their biographies. Also making sure they'll be around to talk to the press. Some of the most powerful speakers are the ones that have been impacted by service—whether through serving or by being served.



Contacting the Press

(Source: STAND—the Student Anti-Genocide Coalition. <http://www.stand.org>)

Media publicity is a great way to boost attendance at your Day of Action event and spread the word about ServiceNation. When first contacting the press, write up a media alert or a press release and send it out to as many news outlets as possible. When contacting the press, remember to make two clear points: the importance of universal voluntary national service and the plan for 1 million active full or part-time volunteers by 2020.

Media Alert vs. Press Release:

A media alert is the basic facts of an event, the who, what, where, when and why. It publicizes an event to the press and invites them to come.

A press release is essentially a one page article about your event, written from your perspective. It can include quotes from event organizers and attendees, and a much greater level of detail. As STAND (the Student Anti-Genocide Coalition) put it, “think of a press release as a way to write the article for a reporter.” Press releases are usually written in Associated Press style, going from most to least important information. Look for an example of any AP news story for more guidance.

Both media alerts and press releases are usually less than a page, so don’t worry about making them longer.

Sending Out the Alerts:

You should send out information about your Day of Action event to as many press outlets as you can think of, but definitely prioritize the local outlets first, since they are more likely to send a reporter to your event. Community and local newspapers are key, as are nearby college and university newspapers. Also try local radio stations. If you’re planning a particularly large event, you can also try contacting local television news channels, or even the local affiliates of major networks like CBS, CNN, NBC and Fox. Contact information for local affiliates of these channels can be found on their websites.

Make sure to make the subject heading of your e-mail or the headline of your press release as catchy as possible. Also make sure to have a clear message about the importance of service with any success stories about service you want to share.

Media Timeline:

<u>1-2 Weeks Before</u>	<u>3 Days Before</u>	<u>1 Day Before</u>	<u>Day of Action!</u>
Contact as many media outlets as possible with your press release or media alert. Make a list of those follow up; make sure to give any more information they might need.	Call and e-mail all of your press contacts and remind them about the event individually.	Call and e-mail all press who responded to your alert or press release and try to get a list of who will come.	Make sure there are participants to speak to press and if you have a guest speaker be sure they’ll take questions after.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: [Your name]
[Your phone number]

Headline of Your Event

E.g. A Hundred Citizens Rally Outside State House to Demonstrate Importance of Service

What: [Describe your event and your events goal, as well as details like the number of participants here].

When: [Your event date and time]

Where: [Your event location and city]

Why: All across the country, thousands of Americans are participating in the ServiceNation campaign, calling upon our country to increase the role of service as a means to solving problems. With over 62 million Americans already volunteering in some capacity, Americans now are serving more than at any other time in history and are ready to take on an expanded role in service.

How: Through a “grasstops” and grassroots campaign, ServiceNation encourages national leaders to promote new legislation that works towards universal voluntary national service. However, this cannot happen until communities of citizens mobilize themselves at a grassroots level to call upon their legislators and the President to make lasting change by passing new national service legislation. For more information, visit www.servicenation.com.



Communicating with Elected Officials

Communicating with policy makers is an important strategy leading up to the Day of Action. Getting policy makers at the local and state level is an essential element of the ServiceNation campaign, and meeting with them in person or writing a letter can also be a great way to invite them to your Day of Action event. The following are various ways you can communicate with your elected representatives.

Sending a Postcard:

If you are pressed for time, signing one of these yourself and getting a few family and friends to do so as well helps to reinforce the importance of service to your representatives.

Writing a Letter:

Keep it personal, but make sure to include facts that demonstrate the impact of the issue on the larger community. Handwrite your letter if at all possible, and if you type, add a handwritten note. Be brief, clear and specific. Request a personal and written response from the official in question, specifically about your issue. Also, make sure to include your address on your letter itself; it's especially important to include where you live, because representatives will only take your opinions into account if you live within their district.

Meeting with Representatives:

One of the most effective things you can do as a constituent is meet with your representative in person or a member of her or his staff. You can go by yourself or in a group. In order to meet with your rep, call up the office and tell the staff member that you're a constituent and that you'd like a meeting.

Before going in, make sure everyone in your group is on the same page and knows your message, and establish the goals for the meeting. Also research your representatives stance on service and what organizations she or he might have been involved with or how they might have voted in the past. www.vote-smart.org or www.thomas.loc.gov are good websites to find out your representatives' stance. Bringing background materials on your issue can also be a good way to make sure your meeting has an impact.

During the meeting, be as concise as possible, and of course make sure to be polite. Also speak from your own experience and the experience of your community; tell a story and make it personal. If they tell you that they agree with the importance of the issue, press them to attend your Day of Action event or sign the Declaration of Service.

After the meeting, make sure to thank the representative or her or his staff for their time and re-emphasize the points that you made in an e-mail or note. Also, follow up with any information, whether it is details about your Day of Action event or a copy of the Declaration of Service.



Writing an Op-Ed/Letter to the Editor

Source: “Writing Letters to the Editor” and “Writing Op-Eds” from STAND (the Student Anti-Genocide Coalition).

Writing a letter to the editor or an opinion-editorial for your local newspaper is a great way to be involved in ServiceNation even without planning an event for the Day of Action. You will spread the message of the Day of Action and help put the issue of universal voluntary service on the agenda as we head towards the election. When writing your piece, make sure to include two points: the importance of universal voluntary national service to you and the constituency you represent, and the plan for 1 million active full and part-time volunteers by 2020.

Targeting Media Sources

Before writing an op-ed or a Letter to the Editor, try to find out what’s already been written recently about ServiceNation or service in general in the media outlets you’re looking at. Also, consider the full range of print and electronic media at your disposal. It’s always worth trying to get a piece in a larger circulation newspaper like the Boston Globe, the San Francisco Chronicle or the Chicago Tribune, but your chances of success with local newspapers or magazines are much higher.

Consider community and neighborhood publications as well, and even corporate or school newsletters. You might also want to look into writing for a community blog or an electronic newsletter; even if the audience seems small, every additional person who learns about ServiceNation is critical in this grassroots movement.

Writing an Op-Ed

An op-ed is a longer piece that details a wider variety of reasons why your issue is important and should be acted upon in the ways you suggest. Here it can be particularly helpful to start with your own personal story about service and why you believe in service as an effective solution. Then you could expand to more general reasons that a wide variety of people can get behind so as to draw people in. Try to start off with a recent experience or a recent piece of news as a hook for why the paper should publish it and people should be interested. Feel free to allow your voice to drive the piece, but also make sure to ground your op-ed in stats and facts.

Writing a Letter to the Editor

You can write a Letter to the Editor to do one of the following things:

- 1- To point out and fill a hole in the newspapers’ coverage of your issue (or lack thereof).
- 2- To call upon elected representatives to act on an issue and vote a certain way.
- 3- To campaign for an official endorsement of your position from the newspaper.

In addition, Letters to the Editor are considerably shorter than an op-ed. Keep them around 250-300 words, and make sure you read the paper’s requirements. State your point or criticism clearly and support it pithily. Identify yourself and the constituency (whether a



neighborhood, a student (or a community group or a student body) that you represent, and discuss how the issue affects you. Don't make a series of complaints; instead, provide concrete ideas for a solution or ways to take action.

Make sure to include your full contact information for both Letters to the Editor and Op-Eds; the newspaper may want to be in touch with you before publishing.



Resources

The following are some resources and readings that inspire participation in service and call for America to become a nation of service. You might want to share these with family and friends, or hand out copies at your Day of Action event.

Speeches:

- Bill Clinton's remarks on signing the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=47092>
- Bill Clinton's speech on the swearing in of new AmeriCorps members: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=49067>
- Alan Khazei's Speech to City Year: <http://www.cityyear.org/media/pdf/AlanSpeech0806NoCovers.pdf>
- John McCain's Address to the Naval Academy, "Service to America": <http://www.johnmccain.com/informing/News/Speeches/9ab40f08-d2ce-46c4-bae4-18e65994927c.htm>
- Barack Obama's Commencement Address to Wesleyan University: http://www.wesleyan.edu/newsrel/announcements/rc_2008/obama_speech.html

Readings:

- Robert Putnam, Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community, 2000.
- Michael Sandel, Democracy's Discontent: America in Search of a Public Philosophy, 1998.
- Kim Bobo, J. Kendall and S. Max, Organizing for Social Change: Midwest Academy Manual for Activists, 2001.
- Richard Stengel: Time Magazine Cover Article—A Call to Service: http://www.time.com/time/specials/2007/article/0,28804,1657256_1657317,00.html
- Caroline Kennedy: Making a Difference At Home: http://www.time.com/time/specials/2007/article/0,28804,1657256_1657317_1657423,00.html
- The American Interest Magazine: A Call to National Service: <http://www.the-american-interest.com/ai2/article.cfm?Id=372&MIId=17>
- A timeline with important dates in the history of the Service Movement: http://nationalserviceresources.org/files/legacy/filemanager/download/ed_awards/Sect6-3b.doc
- Many more readings can be found at our blog: <http://www.bethechangeinc.org/changewire>.



Why Should the U.S. Become a Nation of Service?

Over half of all public schools in the U.S. reported a criminal incident to the police. Incidents ranged from fistfights, theft, or vandalism to serious violent crimes. 10 percent of schools reported serious violent crimes.

Only 31 percent of 4th graders are proficient in reading. Low-income students did half as well.

As many as 15 million kids have no place to go after school.

- Teens who do not participate in after school programs are nearly three times more likely to skip classes or use marijuana or other drugs, drink alcohol and smoke cigarettes.

- The hours between 3-6 p.m. on school days (referred to by law enforcement officials as a "danger zone") are the prime time for violent juvenile crime.

An American child or teen is killed by gunfire every two hours and 40 minutes; that results in 9 American children dying from gunfire every day.

About 9% of murders in the U.S. were committed by youth under 18 in 2000.

Only 70% of students in the U.S graduate from high school. The dropout rate is 15 percentage points lower in the nation's urban schools.

One out of every eight children under the age of twelve in the U.S. goes to bed hungry every night.

3.5 million people in the United States (1.35 million of which are children) will experience homelessness in a given year.

Military veterans constitute 40% of America's homeless population.



Education Fact Sheet

The Issue

- Nine-year-olds growing up in low-income communities are already three grade levels behind their peers in high-income communities.
- Only 31% of fourth graders are proficient in reading. Low-income students do half as well.
- As many as fifteen million students have no place to go after school.
 - Teens who do not participate in after school programs are nearly three times more likely to skip classes or use marijuana or other drugs, drink alcohol and smoke cigarettes.
 - The hours between 3-6 p.m. on school days (referred to by law enforcement officials as a "danger zone") are the prime time for violent juvenile crime.
- More than 1.2 million children drop out of school each year. The cost is more than \$312 billion in lost wages, taxes, and productivity over their lifetime.
- Only 70% of students in the U.S graduate from high school. In the nation's urban schools, the dropout rate is fifteen percentage points lower. Those who do graduate high school will, on average, read and do math at the level of eighth graders in high-income communities.
- Only 1 in 10 students in low-income communities will graduate from college.

The Service Solution

- Since its founding, 17,000 people have participated as Teach For America corps members, teaching and affecting over 2.5 million public school students.
- Since its founding in 1988, City Year's 10,400 corps members have served 1,060,000 children, completed 16 million hours of service, and engaged more than 1,015,000 citizens in service.
- According to a study by The Urban Institute, high school students taught by TFA corps members on average performed significantly better on state-required end-of-course exams, especially in math and science, than peers taught by far more experienced instructors.
- A study by Mathematica Policy Research in 2004 randomly assigned students within the same schools to teachers both from TFA and traditional certification programs. It found that students taught by TFA teachers performed better in math and science as those taught by non-TFA novice teachers.
- One study shows that first-, second- and third-graders tutored by AmeriCorps members gained seven to fourteen percentile points in reading scores compared to their peers.
- AmeriCorps members in Education Works help inspire students to improve attendance, helping low-income schools to keep students coming to class for an average of 20 more days per year than other neighborhood schools.
- By focusing its efforts on standardized test preparation, the AmeriCorps program Admission Possible helped students raise their ACT scores by an average of sixteen percent.
- AmeriCorps members working for College Summit help low-income students apply to and enroll in college. One study found that 80% of College Summit students got into college, compared to less than 50% of their peers.
- National service programs give students who did not complete high school a chance to finish their education. Since 2002, almost 5,000 AmeriCorps members in the program YouthBuild USA have earned their GED. Many of these GED recipients were previously incarcerated.



Poverty Fact Sheet

The Issue

- Thirty-seven million Americans live in poverty.
- As many as one-third of working Americans do not earn enough money to meet their basic needs.
 - There is not a single county in the United States where a full-time minimum wage worker can afford even a one-bedroom apartment at what the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development determines to be the Fair Market Rent.
 - The Census Bureau reports a consistent trend in which less than 10% of Caucasians live in poverty, compared to 24% of African-Americans and 20% of Hispanics. America remains segregated, not by law but by opportunity.
 - About 95 million people, one third of the nation, have housing problems including a high-cost burden, overcrowding, poor quality shelter and homelessness.
 - One in three American households spend more than 30% of income on housing, and one in seven spends more than 50%.
 - Housing deprivation leads to an average of 25 percent greater risk of disability or severe ill health across a person's lifespan. Those who suffer housing deprivation as children are more likely to suffer ill health in adulthood, even if they live in non-deprived conditions later in life.
 - Children who live in bad housing have lower educational attainment and a greater likelihood of being impoverished and unemployed as adults.

The Service Solution

- Since 1965, 170,000 VISTAs (Volunteers in Service to America, through AmeriCorps) have played a key role in establishing some of the best-known anti-poverty programs including Head Start and Upward Bound.
- 6,500 AmeriCorps members serve at 1,200 projects nationwide working to develop new programs, raise funds, manage projects, and build the capacity of non-profit organizations to become sustainable and build the capacity of families to break the cycle of poverty.
- Universal voluntary national service would create common bonds between Americans from dramatically different backgrounds in the same way that military service did for the Greatest Generation.
- National service is perhaps our best means to get Americans from all walks of life—inner city and suburban, African-American and Caucasian, college educated and GED recipient—to work together again for a common cause.

**Service can make a change and be the solution. Join the campaign:
www.servicenation.com.**

Sources: Habitat for Humanity; AmeriCorps (www.americorps.org); "A Call to National Service." *The American Interest Magazine*. <http://www.the-american-interest.com/ai2/article.cfm?Id=372&MIId>.



Environment Fact Sheet

The Issue:

- Americans are 4% of the world's population, but consume 25% of the world's energy.
- The number of Americans who recycle grew only by 1-2% from 2000-2005 and did not grow at all in 2006.¹
- 37% of the world's cars are on American roads, something that could be combated with a strengthened public transportation system.
 - The number of cars in Boston increased 38% from 1990-2005, while the population only increased 3.9%.
 - In inner-city Philadelphia, there are 30-40,000 blighted urban lots.²
 - In 2000, more than 50% of rivers were not up to an acceptable standard of cleanliness, and the number of sites cleaned up each year has dropped by almost 50%.³

The Service Solution:

- In 2007, National River Cleanup filled 100,980 bags of trash, removed 600 tons of trash and cleared 7,453 miles of river.
- In Philadelphia, Philadelphia Green turned 4,300 blighted urban lots into turf gardens.
- In March 2008, Habitat for Humanity International launched a new green building initiative, Partners in Sustainable Building, which will assist in making 5,000 homes built by Habitat affiliates more energy efficient.⁴
- According to Rick Stengel, TIME Magazine editor, a proposed new program called The Green Corps "could reclaim polluted streams and blighted urban lots; repair and rehabilitate railroad lines, ports, schools and hospitals; and build energy-efficient green housing for elderly and low-income people."

**Service can make a change and be the solution. Join the campaign:
www.servicenation.com.**

¹ Krebs, Kate M. "Expanding America's recycling can play a big role in fighting global warming." [The Daily Camera](#). November 18, 2007.

² Duffy, Marcia Passos. "Vacant Lots Grow Urban Solutions." [Turf](#).

³ Eckl, Eric. "Most Endangered Rivers of 2004 Announced." [American Rivers. www.americanrivers.org](http://www.americanrivers.org).

⁴ "Habitat for Humanity International and the Home Depot Announce National Green Building Effort." March 28, 2008. http://www.habitat.org/newsroom/2008archive/03_21_08_Home_Depot.aspx



Service Statistics

A New Generation of Volunteers:

- Of the 70 million Americans born between 1978 and 1996 and known as the Millennial Generation:
 - 50 million of them will be voters in 2008.
 - 65% of them are volunteering in high school, more than any previous generation.
 - 58% volunteer at least monthly, if not more.
 - 70% of 18-24 year olds believe that politics is relevant in their lives.

- We also currently have civic core of active citizen full and part time volunteers:
 - 500,000 alumni of AmeriCorps
 - ⌚ 17,000 Teach For America alums
 - ⌚ 10,400 City Year alums
 - ⌚ 200,000 VISTA alums
 - 200,000 alumni of the Peace Corps
 - 26 million U.S. military veterans

The Impact of Service

- According to a study by The Urban Institute, on average, high school students taught by TFA corps members performed significantly better on state-required end-of-course exams, especially in math and science, than peers taught by far more experienced instructors. The TFA teachers' effect on student achievement in core classroom subjects was nearly three times the effect of teachers with more experience.

- One study shows that first, second and third graders tutored by AmeriCorps members gained 7 to 14 percentile points in reading scores compared to their peers.

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- The Census Bureau reports a consistent trend in which less than 10% of Caucasians live in poverty, compared to 24% of African-Americans and 20% of Hispanics. America remains segregated, not by law but by opportunity.
- About 95 million people, one third of the nation, have housing problems including a high-cost burden, overcrowding, poor quality shelter and homelessness.
- One in three American households spend more than 30% of income on housing, and one in seven spends more than 50%.
- Housing deprivation leads to an average of 25 percent greater risk of disability or severe ill health across a person's lifespan. Those who suffer housing deprivation as children are more likely to suffer ill health in adulthood, even if they live in non-deprived conditions later in life.
- Children who live in bad housing have lower educational attainment and a greater likelihood of being impoverished and unemployed as adults.

The Service Solution

- Since 1965, 170,000 VISTAs (Volunteers in Service to America, through AmeriCorps) have played a key role in establishing some of the best-known anti-poverty programs including Head Start and Upward Bound.
- 6,500 AmeriCorps members serve at 1,200 projects nationwide working to develop new programs, raise funds, manage projects, and build the capacity of non-profit organizations to become sustainable and build the capacity of families to break the cycle of poverty.
- Universal voluntary national service would create common bonds between Americans from dramatically different backgrounds in the same way that military service did for the Greatest Generation.
- National service is perhaps our best means to get Americans from all walks of life—inner city and suburban, African-American and Caucasian, college educated and GED recipient—to work together again for a common cause.

Sources: Habitat for Humanity; AmeriCorps (www.americorps.org); "A Call to National Service." *The American Interest Magazine*. <http://www.the-american-in>

SERVICE
NATION