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ACTION - Federal Domestic Volunteer Agency [1]

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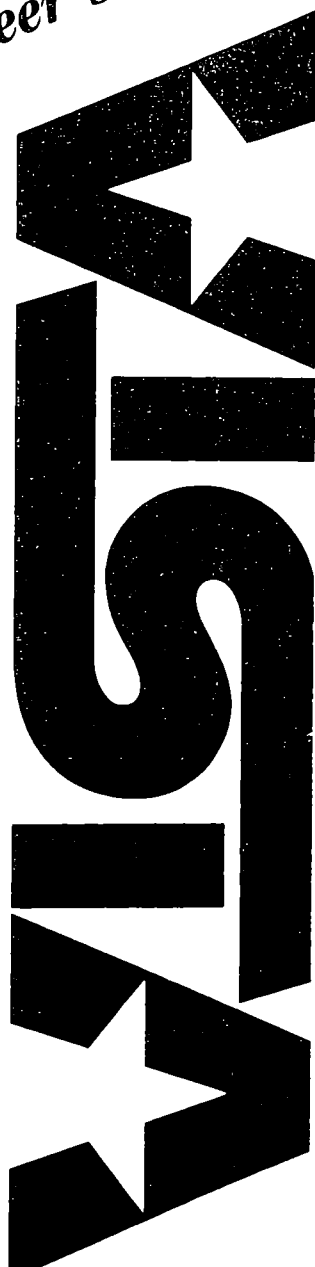
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VISTA - FEDERAL STUDENT LOANS AND VOLUNTEER SERVICE

**Federal Student Loans
and
Volunteer Service**



VOLUNTEERS
IN SERVICE
TO AMERICA



OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

1100 MONTAGUE AVENUE, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20525

Facsimile Transmittal Sheet

TO: JACK LEW

LOCATION: _____

FAX #: _____ PHONE #: _____

FROM: LW SEAL

COMMENTS: _____

NUMBER OF PAGES (INCLUDING COVER SHEET) 4IF THERE IS ANY PROBLEM WITH THIS TRANSMISSION, PLEASE CALL
(202) 606-4880.*Budget doc for new \$*

ACTION'S MISSION

To stimulate voluntary citizen participation in addressing the needs of American communities,
particularly those of the poor, the disadvantaged and the elderly



OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

1100 VERMONT AVENUE, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20525
March 12, 1993

TO: Jack Lew
FROM: John Seal *John Seal*
SUBJECT: Foster Grandparent Program Association Meeting

Following up on our discussion this afternoon, attached is a list of the Foster Grandparent Program Directors who will meeting with us on Tuesday, March 16, at 10:00 AM. I think it would be extremely valuable for someone with authority at ONS to spend 15 minutes with the group.

I have also attached the list of issues the Association wants to discuss. Of special importance to the Directors is:

- Status of Agency (this is being driven by National Service proposal and how it may affect ACTION)
- FY 94 Budget (we can give them a few reassuring statements like no program decreases, but they will be looking for something more concretely positive)
- Reauthorization (we can tell them that we are actively working on reauthorization recommendations and that many of the ones ACTION is reviewing are similar to program improvements they are seeking; for your information, I plan to have a briefing paper to you within two weeks on specific ACTION program reauthorization recommendations which we believe would make sense absent any national service impact)

Please call to let me know if someone can come. I really think it will be a pleasant surprise to the Directors and a friendly reception.

My phone number is 606-4880 and fax number is 606-4928.

ACTION'S MISSION

To stimulate voluntary citizen participation in addressing the needs of American communities,
particularly those of the poor, the disadvantaged and the elderly.



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of
Foster Grandparent Program Directors*

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LIST OF ATTENDEES
MEETING WITH ACTION
March 16, 1993

- ✓ Ann E. Smith, FGP Director, Orlando, FL
- ✓ Ann Cook, FGP Director, Missoula, MT
- Herschell Masten, FGP Director, Pontiac, MI
- ✓ Mary Louise Schweikert, FGP Director, Laurelton, PA
- ✓ Jane Watkins, FGP Director, Memphis, TN
- Jeanette Devore Monroe, FGP Director, Ft. Wayne, IN
- ✓ Dawnia Clements, FGP Director, Anchorage, AK
- ✓ Walt Hickey, FGP Director, Eldridge, CA
- ✓ Alice Jones, FGP Director, Higginsville, MO
- Norma Frohock, FGP Director, Grand Junction, CO
- Ruth Blackman, FGP Director, Boston, MA
- Anne Rosenberg, FGP Director, Atlantic City, NJ
- ✓ James Farwell, FGP Director, Pittsburgh, PA
- ✓ Fran Butler, Washington Representative, Reston, VA

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From	Ann Smith
To	Joe Orlando
Phone	407-280-4100
Fax	407-280-4100
Subject	Director
Date	3/16/93



*National Association
of
Foster Grandparent Program Directors*

**TENTATIVE ACTION AGENDA
March 16, 1993**

STATUS OF AGENCY

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

FY '94 BUDGET

REAUTHORIZATION

LIABILITY TASK FORCE

404C TASK FORCE

COST OF AUDITS AND BACKGROUND CHECKS

NON-ENGLISH BROCHURES

PUBLIC RELATIONS

MEDICAID WAIVER DOLLARS

1992 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

The logo for ACTION features the word "ACTION" in a bold, italicized, sans-serif font. Below the text are three horizontal lines of varying lengths, creating a sense of motion or a stylized graphic element.The logo for VISTA features the word "VISTA" in a bold, sans-serif font. Below the text, the words "VOLUNTEERS IN SERVICE TO AMERICA" are written in a smaller, all-caps, sans-serif font.The logo for the Student Community Service Program features the words "STUDENT", "COMMUNITY", and "SERVICE" stacked vertically in a bold, sans-serif font. Below "SERVICE", the word "PROGRAM" is written in a smaller, all-caps, sans-serif font.

Special
Volunteer
Programs

The logo for RSVP is an oval shape. Inside the oval, the words "RETIRED SENIOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM" are written along the top curve. In the center, the letters "RSVP" are written in a large, bold, serif font. Along the bottom curve, the words "A COMMUNITY OF TALENTS SERVING YOU" are written.The logo for the Foster Grandparent Program features the words "FOSTER", "GRANDPARENT", and "PROGRAM" stacked vertically in a bold, sans-serif font.The logo for Senior Companions features the words "SENIOR" and "COMPANIONS" stacked vertically in a bold, serif font. The "O" in "COMPANIONS" is stylized, with a large, decorative swirl or loop that extends upwards and to the right.

YOU CAN PARTICIPATE: If you agree that volunteerism is a fundamental part of our citizenship and want to know more about taking part in any of our programs, look for **ACTION** at the top of federal listings in many major metropolitan phone directories.

Or, write **ACTION**, Washington, DC 20525.

Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) information is also available by dialing 1-800-424-8867.

All TDD calls to **ACTION**: 1-202-606-5256

FY 1992 Highlights

Programs sponsored by ACTION, the federal domestic volunteer agency, provided approximately 500,000 Americans with the opportunity to volunteer services to communities throughout the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands during fiscal year 1992.

These volunteers continue ACTION's 21-year history of helping local sponsors develop effective, caring solutions to local poverty-related problems. ACTION volunteers are of all ages and backgrounds, united by their commitment to enhancing the quality of life for all Americans, especially the disadvantaged. ACTION volunteers serve through a vast array of local projects. They epitomize the American belief that, as citizens, we have a responsibility to give something back to our community and country.

In partnership with thousands of non-profit organizations and public agencies, ACTION programs—Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), the Student Community Service Program (SCS), the Special Volunteer Programs, the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), the Foster Grandparent Program (FGP) and the Senior Companion Program (SCP)—rely on practical wisdom and a compassionate spirit. ACTION volunteers serve in schools, hospitals, nursing homes, shelters, drug prevention and employment centers, prisons and economic development projects throughout the country.

Highlights for ACTION programs are presented in this report along with examples of successful projects. These examples illustrate only a small portion of the contributions made by these volunteers, yet convey the generous spirit of Americans who participate in ACTION's programs.

Volunteers in Service to America

Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) provides opportunities for Americans of all ages and backgrounds to volunteer on a full-time basis to address the basic needs of America's poor. During fiscal year 1992 almost 4,000 full-time VISTA Volunteers on nearly 700 projects helped low-income communities and families. Specific areas of emphasis include hunger, literacy, employment, housing and health care. All projects are developed and managed at the local level.

FY 1992 Highlights:

- As a result of an aggressive recruitment campaign, the number of recent college graduates in VISTA increased to nearly 23 percent, as compared to 15 percent in fiscal year 1991. Twice as many recent college graduates became VISTA Volunteers in the fourth quarter of fiscal year 1992 than in any of the previous three quarters.
- VISTA's college loan deferment/cancellation benefit proved to be a powerful recruitment incentive.
- Almost 27 percent of VISTA Volunteers are between ages 18 and 27, up 28 percent from fiscal year 1991. Twenty percent of the Volunteers in fiscal year 1992 were 55 and older. In recent years more women than men have served as Volunteers, but in fiscal year 1992 the number of male Volunteers increased by 12 percent. Over 40 percent of VISTA Volunteers are minorities.
- VISTA Volunteers' commitment to service was demonstrated by the fact that 81 percent completed their one-year assignment.
- Total program cost per VISTA Volunteer for fiscal year 1992 was approximately \$11,000. Volunteer benefits include a modest subsistence allowance, an end-of-service stipend equal to \$95 for each month of service, health insurance, training and travel.
- Progress continued on developing the new VISTA Management System that integrates information about VISTA Volunteers, their allowances and the projects on which they serve. The new system, expected to be operational by fiscal year 1994, will tie ACTION's larger state offices, nine regional offices and headquarters into a single system. This will provide a more efficient and dependable means of initiating payments to Volunteers as well as significantly improve management information.

Student Community Service

Student Community Service (SCS) is a small program with a powerful impact. The program gives students a heightened sense of commitment that results in continued volunteer service. Funding of \$976,000 in fiscal year 1992 supported 59 projects. Grants provide support costs only and typically amount to \$20,000 in the first year, \$15,000 in the second year and \$10,000 in the final year. At the completion of the third year, projects are expected to continue without ACTION funding. Students do not receive a stipend for their volunteer service and their efforts are focused solely on the needs of low-income communities.

FY 1992 Highlights:

- 13,000 high school and college students provided volunteer service through 61 Student Community Service projects nationwide. Student volunteers serve at hundreds of local sites.
- The annual cost per volunteer was less than \$75.
- Non-federal matching funds exceeded federal dollars.
- Over one-half million hours of volunteer service were contributed to low-income communities.
- Through an SCS grant, the National Council on Crime and Delinquency completed a how-to manual based on "Hand-in Hand" a mentoring effort involving college volunteers with youth under supervision of NJ Department of Corrections Juvenile Division.
- Due in part to SCS, more colleges and universities:
 - included an introduction to service-learning at freshmen orientation sessions.
 - visited high schools to orient students on service-learning opportunities.
 - participated in Campus Outreach Opportunity League's "Into the Streets" initiative.
 - formed community service groups in resident halls
 - offered service-learning classes.

Special Volunteer Programs— ACTION Drug Alliance

The Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973, as amended, authorizes ACTION to support nontraditional programs to meet a broad range of needs, particularly those related to poverty. Since fiscal year 1990, this authority has been targeted for drug abuse prevention activities under the title of the ACTION Drug Alliance Program. In fiscal year 1992, \$1.2 million was awarded through 48 grants across the country.

FY 1992 Highlights:

- Nearly 6,000 volunteers participated in local drug prevention efforts through the Drug Alliance Program, contributing over 370,000 hours of volunteer service.
- The \$1.2 million in ACTION funds was matched by more than \$1 million in non-federal support, achieving over a 90 percent matching rate for every dollar provided by ACTION.
- Of the 48 Drug Alliance grants awarded, 19 projects involved volunteers serving to prevent the use of illicit drugs by young residents of public housing.
- In addition to providing drug prevention awareness and education services, each of ACTION's drug prevention projects provides additional positive reinforcement such as:
 - peer or multi-generational support
 - mentoring, especially for career/life planning
 - academic tutoring

Retired Senior Volunteer Program

The Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) offers seniors, age 60 and older, the chance to contribute their talents and experience through community service. Volunteers serve without compensation, although they may be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses. Their hours of service are based upon personal interests and project needs. RSVP is ACTION's largest volunteer program and its activities include a broad range of services designed to improve local communities.

FY 1992 Highlights:

- RSVP supported 436,000 volunteers assigned to 56,200 community organizations. Almost 70 percent of the volunteers are 70 years old or older. RSVP volunteers provided almost 79 million hours of service.
- The volunteers served through 746 ACTION-funded projects. In addition, 17 local RSVP projects operated with ACTION technical assistance but without ACTION funds.
- Despite severe budget pressures at state and local government levels, ACTION's RSVP budget of \$34.1 million was matched with \$36.6 million from other sources, demonstrating broad support for RSVP.
- Federal costs of sponsoring RSVP were less than 50 cents per hour of service.
- In an effort to further address the growing misuse of prescription drugs among the elderly and educate seniors on drug abuse, RSVP projects focused greater attention on this priority. During fiscal year 1992, the number of RSVP volunteers involved in drug abuse prevention and education activities increased by 54 percent.

Foster Grandparent Program

The Foster Grandparent Program (FGP) involves volunteers who are low-income persons, age 60 and over, who provide companionship and guidance to children with mental, physical or emotional disabilities or who have other special or exceptional needs. Volunteers usually serve four hours a day, five days a week. Because the Foster Grandparents are themselves low-income, they receive a stipend of \$2.45 per hour of volunteer service, transportation and meal assistance when needed, insurance protection and an annual physical examination. They also receive annual in-service training arranged by their projects.

Foster Grandparents serve in private, non-profit organizations and public agencies such as schools, hospitals, juvenile detention centers, Head Start projects, shelters for abused or neglected children, state schools for the mentally retarded and drug abuse rehabilitation centers.

FY 1992 Highlights:

More than 23,400 Foster Grandparents contributed approximately 21 million hours assisting over 77,000 children.

- In addition to an ACTION budget of \$65.6 million, FGP projects raised \$29 million in matching funds at the state and local levels, even though only a 10 percent match is required by law. FGP's non-ACTION funding increased from the previous year by over \$1.2 million.
- There were 275 Foster Grandparent projects throughout the country. Thirteen were supported entirely by non-ACTION funds.
- During fiscal year 1992, the Commission on National and Community Service entered into an interagency agreement with ACTION for the purpose of stimulating FGP involvement with Head Start Parent Child Centers. To this end, the Commission transferred \$200,000 to ACTION for grants to be awarded in the first quarter of fiscal year 1993.

Senior Companion Program

The Senior Companion Program (SCP) enables low-income persons, age 60 and older, to provide personal assistance and peer support to older adults in need. Clients are usually homebound with physical and/or mental health limitations and are at risk of institutionalization. Senior Companions strengthen their clients' capacity to live independently and ease the transition from institutions back into their communities. As a result, this program helps contain health care costs across the country.

Senior Companions, like Foster Grandparents, receive a stipend of \$2.45 per hour and may receive transportation and meal assistance as well as insurance protection and an annual physical examination. In-service training is provided to Senior Companions by their projects on a regular basis.

FY 1992 Highlights:

- An ongoing evaluation of a joint ACTION/Administration on Aging initiative on Senior Companions has shown that "...SCP serves a population of frail elderly. Sixty-eight percent are age 80 or older, and 66 percent live alone. More than 40 percent have difficulty walking; 20 percent or more require assistance in bathing, are chair- or bed-fast, have diabetes or have experienced a recent significant event (such as a death in the close family) and smaller numbers have Alzheimer's or other impairments."
- In fiscal year 1992, ACTION funded 144 projects with \$28.7 million. In addition, 38 projects were totally supported by non-ACTION funds. There were approximately 12,000 Senior Companions throughout the United States serving more than 30,000 senior clients.
- SCP projects were supported by \$17.3 million in non-ACTION funds—an increase of 16 percent from the previous year. The 1992 amount represents a 60 percent match for every ACTION dollar.
- In fiscal year 1992, Senior Companions gave nearly 11 million hours of service to the frail elderly.

Management Initiatives

ACTION's continued commitment to management improvement included these initiatives:

- Financial and personnel management reviews by outside experts were conducted to ensure the integrity and proper administration of these critical internal agency functions.
- Comprehensive management reviews were completed in three ACTION regions. The reviews were part of an effort to strengthen the program and administrative capabilities of our field office management.
- ACTION's automated grants management system was enhanced to provide better data for identifying financial and program trends.
- Thousands of ACTION volunteer projects conducted self-evaluations of their facilities and programs to assess and improve their accessibility to persons with disabilities.
- ACTION's Inspector General conducted 17 grant audits, 10 operational audits and nine investigations which resulted in several recommendations for improvements in program and operational efficiency. In addition, the Inspector General reviewed 675 audits of ACTION grantees conducted by other federal agencies and independent auditors.
- ACTION state program offices continued to actively monitor, often through site visits, all ACTION projects whose grants were awarded at the regional level. Headquarters' grants received similar oversight by ACTION program staff. Site visits and technical assistance are central to ACTION's emphasis on program accountability.

Volunteers In Service to America (VISTA)

- **Columbus, Ohio**

VISTA Volunteers led efforts to help 14 low-income neighborhoods reduce abuse of alcohol, nicotine and other drugs. Sponsored by the City of Columbus, 25 Volunteers set out to achieve the following goals: to establish trained, community coalitions in the 14 communities; recruit and train some 1,400 local volunteers; launch 70 state-of-the-art prevention projects and activities and organize a city-wide celebration.

During fiscal year 1992—the first year of the project—10 community coalitions were established and 36 neighborhood seminars, conferences and training programs were conducted. Several Volunteers raised \$60,000 from the Columbus Foundation to expand prevention activities, ranging from community clean-ups and parades to pizza parties for drug free youth.

Two of the VISTA Volunteers secured funding from the Private Industry Council to employ 600 teens in prevention activities during July and August.

- **Tennessee**

Nine VISTA Volunteers serving with People First—a state-wide program that helps people with disabilities build self-sufficiency and increase their economic and social independence—enabled the organization to grow from 150 members in 10 chapters in 1989 to 800 members in 14 chapters, including 19 in rural areas in 1992. The Volunteers assisted each self-help chapter in developing an extensive fundraising plan by training chapter members in fundraising activities, public speaking and proposal writing.

Several VISTA Volunteers, themselves individuals with disabilities, provided training and peer counseling to people in crisis situations, teaching members to support and assist each other. Volunteers also raised \$14,000 in private sector support for long-term financial assistance to People First's Peer Counseling Program.

One VISTA Volunteer, a man paralyzed from the neck down, used his computer skills to create fundraising and public relations guides for People First's chapters, providing public awareness strategies and information about educating the media to avoid stereotypes when they portray people with disabilities.

- **St. Paul, Minnesota**

The Exodus Division of the Catholic Charities Job Services Program addresses the problem of long-term unemployment in downtown St. Paul. VISTA Volunteers with the program created a system to provide employment services for the city's homeless and low-income population. The model for the St. Paul effort was a similar successful VISTA project sponsored by Catholic Charities in Minneapolis.

The Volunteers helped homeless and chronically unemployed people overcome the variety of problems that prevent gainful employment, such as chemical dependency, illiteracy, health related conditions, insufficient education, inconsistent work history and social dysfunction. Their objective was to end the isolation of this population, which also works against long-term employment prospects.

With local and state support as well as \$247,000 from a \$1.7 million Stewart B. McKinney grant made to the city of St. Paul, four VISTA Volunteers helped 168 people undergo a full client assessment process to determine status, immediate needs and employment prospects. Of this group, 124 people (74 percent) were placed in an initial six-month employment program—a substantial number, given the difficulty of securing positions for this population.

- **San Juan County, Utah**

The College of Eastern Utah, San Juan Campus VISTA project is committed to improving educational opportunities for Navajos and White Mesa Utes in the Four Corners area. The VISTA Volunteers assigned to the project created several programs which will have a lasting impact on the education of Native Americans.

Two Volunteers started a summer school for 40 fourth-through-eighth graders. In addition to taking classes in English, math, science and archaeology, students designed a science project, kept daily journals, completed one unit of archeology and worked on a personalized math program.

Students participated in a wide variety of sports and numerous field trips organized with the assistance of the VISTA Volunteers, who also recruited local teachers and community volunteers to carry out classroom instruction, counseling and overall organization.

- **Paterson, New Jersey**

To help establish a basic literacy program and reading project, the Paterson Free Public Library enlisted a VISTA Volunteer. The Volunteer, who had completed graduate studies in international relations and was fluent in Spanish, broadened his original assignment and created an English as a Second Language (ESL) component to serve Paterson's growing population of immigrants from Latin America, Asia, the Middle East and eastern Europe.

The Volunteer also helped organize a family literacy component to the program in which parents and their children build reading skills together and, in the process, strengthen their families.

In addition, the VISTA Volunteer recruited the United Media Company to help produce computer-assisted literacy programs for the library. He also trained tutors in instruction techniques for basic reading and used his Spanish language skill to train bi-lingual tutors for the ESL program. Thanks largely to his efforts, the library has in place a model, multi-faceted literacy program accessible to its diverse community.

Student Community Service (SCS)

- **New York, New York**

Through its Student Community Service (SCS) program, the 450 students of All Hallows High School served low-income seniors, people needing health care or literacy skills, teenage mothers and at-risk children in New York City. Volunteers assisted at a range of sites, including the Harlem Hospital Center, Columbia-Presbyterian Hospital, St. Patrick's Home, the New York City Auxiliary Police Department and the Paraclete Foundation. Each student volunteer contributed at least 25 hours of service per semester.

At Our Lady of Mercy Medical Clinic, student volunteers learned about career opportunities in health care as a result of their service. At Morningside House, a nursing home, the SCS volunteers regularly visited elderly residents, giving them mental stimulation, companionship, social outlets and transportation services to various activities.

Student volunteers at the Paraclete Foundation helped locate housing for young, single mothers and their children. Volunteers at the site also assisted at its soup kitchen and food pantry. Volunteers also served with elementary schools, acting as teacher-aides and tutors for youngsters in primary grades.

- **Berea, Kentucky**

Volunteers serving with the Students for Appalachia SCS program at Berea College provided academic assistance four nights a week in the "Learning Loft" project, where each volunteer tutored the same student every week. Volunteers also provided companionship to local youth through the Berea Buddies program for boys and the Girls Only program for girls.

In the Partners In Prevention program, African-American college students provided mentoring and academic assistance to other African-American youth. Some volunteers served with hospice patients and adults who wish to improve their reading skills. Students also worked with the Social Outreach program to become friends with area seniors, and help them with such things as household tasks, transportation and shopping, thus strengthening their ability to live independently.

- **Cape Girardeau, Missouri**

Through its Eldercare Center (an adult day care facility), Southeast Missouri State University recruited student volunteers from area high schools, the local vocational-technical school and the university to assist programs for low-income seniors. The student volunteers provided transportation services and delivered meals and groceries.

The volunteers also conducted home assessments and repairs and carried out health screening activities. During fiscal year 1992, more than 300 students participated in service-learning experiences and contributed 10,800 hours as SCS volunteers.

- **Richmond, Virginia**

For the past 23 years, The Daily Planet, a multi-purpose community center in Richmond, has provided a safe day-time environment for thousands of homeless, chemically dependent and low-income persons. SCS volunteers helped the center increase that service.

The SCS volunteers received pre- and in-service training in areas such as mental illness and substance abuse. They provided counseling, led support groups and helped homeless clients fill out job applications. They also coached sports teams, instructed art classes, served breakfast and prepared bag lunches for clients who worked at the center or in the community.

- **Los Angeles, California**

Foothill Area Community Services (FACS) attracted the support of counselors from four local high schools who helped recruit student volunteers, then helped FACS place them in assignments. Pasadena Community College and the Pasadena Skills Center also supported the project.

An academic program at Pasadena Community College accepted former students who had not graduated from high school but were age 18 or older. The center offered high school equivalency training, tests and GED certificates in addition to vocational training for clerical, secretarial, word processing, electronics, telephone installation, computer literacy, plumbing and landscaping skills. This student volunteer project improved school attendance, performance and cooperation among participating students.

Special Volunteer Programs— ACTION Drug Alliance

- **Omaha, Nebraska**

The City of Omaha operated the Youth Volunteer Corps to aid in the prevention of drug abuse by youth. In addition to drug abuse prevention presentations and distribution of prevention literature, the project promoted a host of other community service activities such as working with developmentally disabled children, serving as buddies for public housing youth, conducting special social activities and snow removal assistance for the elderly, assisting bloodmobiles and participating in community beautification projects. The Youth Volunteer Corps involved 180 students who served 18,000 hours during fiscal year 1992.

- **St. Thomas-St. John, Virgin Islands**

The Council on Alcoholism, St. Thomas-St. John used 30 volunteers to operate a teen center that serves public housing youth. In an effort to curtail illicit drug use among neighborhood teens, the center provided drug education and a number of alternative activities. These activities included recreational programs; support programs such as peer counseling, rap sessions and life skills programs; and parenting skills workshops for pregnant teens and career counseling. The volunteers contributed a total of 10,000 hours of service during the year.

- **Tampa, Florida**

The Housing Authority of Tampa recruited 30 volunteers to provide drug prevention activities to public housing youth and to organize support groups for their parents. The volunteers conducted workshops in community pride, history and culture in order to increase the participants' self-discipline and desire to excel.

- **Tucson, Arizona**

The Pima Youth Partnership trained and supported 55 youth volunteers in five public housing neighborhoods to assess community needs and implement the most useful drug prevention projects. Additionally, the volunteers served as peer educators in the areas of information on illicit drug use prevention, peer leadership skills, mentoring, tutoring and recreational and sports leadership. They gave more than 5,000 hours of service to the Youth Partnership during fiscal year 1992.

- **Brinkley, Arkansas**

The Housing Authority of the City of Brinkley used volunteers to implement drug education and alternative activities targeting public housing youth. The 60 volunteers conducted drug education training programs that emphasize ways to refuse offers of drugs, build self-esteem, handle peer pressure and the harmful effects of drugs. Volunteers served more than 2,000 hours as tutors and mentors, made presentations regarding crime prevention and conducted recreational and cultural activities.

Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)

• El Paso, Texas

The RSVP in El Paso, sponsored by the city, currently serves over 120 nonprofit organizations in the city and county of El Paso. During fiscal year 1992, more than 2,200 volunteers contributed 473,000 hours of community service in this Texas border community. Volunteers served in a wide range of activities in both institutional and community settings. Program emphases included: mentoring programs, rural initiatives, youth and school partnerships, crime and drug education and the environment.

Since 1990, 23 RSVP volunteers have inventoried the area around El Paso's 140 public water supply wells. They identified approximately 2,000 potential sources of contamination. The sources included 253 underground storage tanks, 73 surface storage tanks and 812 septic tanks. In addition, many non-quantifiable sources of potential pollution were identified, such as abandoned and illegal garbage dumps, accidental spills and runoff from storm water, fertilizers and pesticides. Nineteen abandoned wells and 747 active domestic and irrigation wells were also surveyed.

Following completion of the inventory, a committee composed of 10 RSVP volunteers was formed to assure that the best management practices were enacted to prohibit or control identified potential sources of contamination. Subsequently, Lower Rio Grande Valley "colonias" (suburbs) have been surveyed for sources of pollution.

El Paso's groundwater protection program has been recognized by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and a volunteer-produced technical manual has been distributed throughout the state by the Texas Water Commission.

• Atlanta, Georgia

The Metro-Atlanta RSVP project with 2,358 volunteers at 180 volunteer stations serves Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Fulton and Gwinnett Counties. The volunteers averaged over 385,000 hours of volunteer service for the year.

Six days a week, 25 volunteers served through two volunteer stations in the area of homelessness. One volunteer station served approximately 55,000 meals per year and maintained a clothing bank where RSVP volunteers assisted homeless clients in finding adequate clothing. Many homeless, hungry and lonely persons found refuge through the Ralph W. Abernathy Food Kitchen and St. Anthony's Food Kitchen. One volunteer in her late 80's never missed a day of service.

In DeKalb County, 10 volunteers at the Atlanta Veterans Administration Hospital serve as veterans' companions. One RSVP volunteer received a distinguished service plaque at a meeting of the National Veterans Administration Hospital Association for serving 49,000 hours.

Often seniors with chronic illnesses or those with disabilities are unable to leave their nursing homes; yet they wish to contribute to their communities. Twenty RSVP volunteers did just that by knitting lap robes, baby layettes and caps for the premature babies.

The project also collaborated with the Carter Atlanta Project—Hands on Atlanta; seniors visited low-income and indigent elementary schools to serve as mentors and tutors to children.

- **Bellingham, Washington**

The RSVP of Whatcom County, Inc. has been providing volunteer tutors, mentors and other support to public schools and numerous nonprofit organizations concerned with education and child development issues since 1989 through its SAY = YES to Education program. (SAY = YES is an acronym for Seniors and Youth = Youth Excel in School.)

There were 112 RSVP volunteers placed in 31 public schools (primarily elementary) in Bellingham and throughout Whatcom County, where they were paired by teachers with students who needed individual help with reading, spelling, math and improving relationships with their peers. Many of the students selected for this program were from low-income, single-parent households, or were non-English speakers who had recently migrated to Whatcom County from central and eastern Europe, southeast Asia, Mexico, and Central America. Everyone benefited from this RSVP initiative: the youngsters' self-esteem increased, the RSVP volunteers' lives were enriched through their interaction with children and teachers and administrators reported a greatly enhanced education process resulting in public support for their schools.

- **Collaboration with National Council on Patient Information and Education**

In fiscal year 1992, more than 18,000 RSVP volunteers nationwide provided services in the area of substance abuse prevention, education and treatment. These efforts included both intergenerational programs and peer education and support.

In collaboration with the National Council on Patient Information and Education, all RSVP projects received Brown Bag Starter Kits. RSVP volunteers conducted free, personalized check-ups of seniors' medications. Local pharmacists volunteered their time to conduct the medicine review. During these reviews, the pharmacists looked at each prescription and discussed the older person's medicine-taking routine. The conversation was private and confidential and many seniors and their families appreciated the chance to talk with a health professional—free of charge. Pharmacists were alert for easy-to-solve problems that could become serious if not caught in time.

- **St. Cloud, Minnesota**

St. Cloud RSVP's woodblock and toy project enabled residents of nursing homes and seniors with developmental disabilities to volunteer outside the facilities where they live. With the help of a lead volunteer proficient in woodworking, 38 volunteers met twice a month from September through June to sand and paint wooden building blocks. Twenty-two additional RSVP volunteers cut out the blocks and toys and sewed cloth bags for the finished products.

Last year, the project produced 685 sets of wooden blocks and toys which were distributed to needy children through agencies such as Head Start, the Salvation Army, Women's Guild and County Social Services. According to the St. Cloud RSVP project director, "The project gave these frail and developmentally disabled seniors the opportunity to feel good about helping others."

Foster Grandparent Program (FGP)

• Providence, Rhode Island

During the past two years, Foster Grandparents assigned to the FGP project sponsored by the John Hope Settlement House in Providence have served approximately 20 toddlers from homes of crack abusers. These homes are typically headed by single, female heads-of-household.

The volunteers served at day care centers where they developed loving relationships with the children and helped to reduce their hyperactive behavior. The children, who are developmentally delayed, required extra one-on-one attention, which the Foster Grandparents generously provided.

• Monticello, Arkansas

Several years ago, Eudora High School was experiencing a 35 percent drop-out rate. The school searched for alternatives and came up with a “suspension classroom” using Foster Grandparents.

When students created a discipline problem, rather than suspend them from school, they were assigned to the suspension classroom staffed by one teacher and five Foster Grandparents. The volunteers provided direct one-on-one counseling and support to these at-risk students while working with them on their school assignments.

As a result of the Foster Grandparents’ participation, the drop-out rate decreased from 35 to 10 percent in 1992. School officials attributed this decline directly to the involvement of the dedicated Foster Grandparents. The volunteers quieted the students, helped them through their crises and provided scholastic continuity so that when they re-entered the classroom they were not behind in their work.

• Anchorage, Alaska

Living on the streets can be deadly in Alaska where winter temperatures frequently fall to -30 degrees. As a result, the shelter for runaway youth is frequently filled to capacity with young people who have nowhere else to go. The shelter offers warmth from the weather; it also offers the warmth of a Foster Grandparent. When new residents arrive at the shelter, they sense immediately that “Grandma” is special.

In the course of a day, she may hold and comfort a pregnant teen who has no idea what will happen to her, let alone her baby; she may discuss the value of good grooming with a young man trying to get a job or she may encourage a boy to try to communicate with his parents in an effort to resolve the differences between them. The Foster Grandparent makes each child feel special; each may see new possibilities—because someone cared.

• Cheyenne, Wyoming

Of nearly 7,000 babies born in Wyoming during 1992, some 950 were delivered to teenage mothers. Without adequate support, these young mothers faced uncertain futures and were at risk of being unable to give their babies the nurturing needed to grow healthy. Thanks to Foster Grandparents who serve with the Healthy Infant-Capable Adolescent Project (HICAP), many teenage mothers finished their high school educations and learned parenting skills while their infants were tended by the

volunteer “grandparents” at the center. The Foster Grandparents provided the young mothers with active examples of how to care for the babies, as the parents also learned about health, child development and dangers of substance abuse.

- **Memphis, Tennessee**

According to physicians at the perinatal center of The Med, the Regional Medical Center at Memphis, the care that prematurely born infants received from Foster Grandparents not only enhanced their growth but, in some cases, enhanced their chances for survival. Sponsored by the Porter-Leath Children’s Center, the Foster Grandparents assisted staff at the perinatal center by helping nurture the infants when they first emerged from sterilized care.

The Foster Grandparents joined the infants’ parents in providing personal care and touching. Many young parents learn how to hold and comfort the babies from the volunteers. Often, the time that parents can be present is limited, and Foster Grandparents ensured that the babies were touched and caressed. One doctor at the center noted that the infants seem to breathe more efficiently when they are stroked and tended to by the Foster Grandparents. “There is no substitute for that human touch,” he observed.

Senior Companion Program (SCP)

- **Boston, Massachusetts**

Monthly training for Senior Companions, conducted by Boston's Commission on Affairs for the Elderly, mirrors the rich ethnic diversity of the city.

Special recruitment attention is given to older volunteers born in Haiti, China, Russia, Italy and Spain to help mostly homebound linguistic minorities from these and other countries bridge the gap to the larger community.

Five Senior Companions were assigned to the Greater Boston Chinese Golden Age Center. One client, a frail 98-year-old woman who speaks only Cantonese, immigrated from Hong Kong four years ago. In the two years she and her Senior Companion have been together, the volunteer has helped her client settle into a senior public housing project apartment in Chinatown. In addition to her Senior Companion Program activities, the volunteer is a Cantonese translator at the New England Medical Center Hospital.

- **Coeur d'Alene, Idaho**

Thanks to her Senior Companion, a 92-year-old legally blind woman who lives on a remote ranch in Northern Idaho is able to remain in her home of 40 years.

For four years, the Senior Companion has driven the 14 miles from her home to the ranch five days a week where she provides a variety of services to her client—a widow for 20 years. The client has heart disease and arthritis and is unable to drive. There is no immediate family in the area. The Senior Companion prepares lunch and dinner, shops, picks up medications and does light housekeeping chores.

She is in frequent contact with Panhandle Health District nurses assigned to the Home Health Unit. By actively monitoring her client's condition, busy health care professionals are able to spend more time with patients with more critical health problems. Idaho's five northern counties and its regional Panhandle Health District operate a unique rural home support service that benefits isolated older persons.

- **Cincinnati, Ohio**

For eight months, a 74-year-old Senior Companion has assisted an 80-year-old woman recovering from hip surgery and helped her progress to the point where she can walk with a cane.

When the volunteer met her client, she was depressed and doubted she could ever walk again. Both her hips had been fractured and recovery from surgery was progressing slowly. Her medical support services benefits had expired. Mobility was limited to walker-assisted trips from her bed to the bathroom. The volunteer's first task was to restore her client's confidence. Then, under the supervision of health professionals at Catholic Services of Southwest Ohio, she helped her client with range-of-motion exercises and, with her client's walker, took her on short walks up and down the corridors of her high rise apartment building.

Eventually they went outside and, in time, graduated from using the walker to using a cane. Now the woman walks independently—and with confidence.

- **American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) Demonstration**

The two-year grant that ended July 31, 1992, successfully demonstrated the feasibility and value of visually disabled Senior Companions serving frail elderly persons who are homebound and visually impaired. A key product of the grant was the publication of the AFB guide: "Visually Impaired Seniors As Senior Companions: A Reference Guide for Program Development." The guide was distributed nationally to all Senior Companion projects and to organizations that serve visually impaired citizens and work with AFB.

- **ACTION/Visiting Nurse Associations of American Public/Private Partnership Program**

Fiscal year 1992 marked the completion of the second year of a three-year partnership grant between ACTION and the Visiting Nurse Associations of America (VNAA).

Under the grant, local visiting nurse associations have joined 18 SCP projects nationwide to increase home health care to frail elderly persons. The support services provided by Senior Companions free visiting nurses to extend professional services to more clients.

Approximately 100 volunteers are serving homebound older persons with chronic physical and mental health limitations.

The VNAA is the national association representing nonprofit home health agencies that offer a wide range of home health care services in urban and rural areas. The ACTION/VNAA partnership is designed to increase and improve volunteer service through application of the SCP model. Through the interagency agreement, the VNAA helps projects identify potential funding sources and tries to assure continuance of the program after the termination of federal funds.

- **ACTION/Administration on Aging Joint Initiative for Vulnerable Elderly**

A three-year demonstration program between ACTION and the Administration on Aging is nearing the end of its second phase, providing volunteer service opportunities to Senior Companions in 17 projects located in 11 states.

The volunteer placements are coordinated through State Agencies on Aging and are designed to help Senior Companions assist vulnerable homebound older persons. The focus is on clients age 80 and older at risk of institutionalization.

By providing volunteer in-home services such as grocery shopping, meal preparation and monitoring of service delivery, SCP volunteers become client advocates who stimulate the community's natural support system needed to keep people independent of more costly public services. Approximately 90 percent of the volunteers are serving through existing Senior Companion projects.

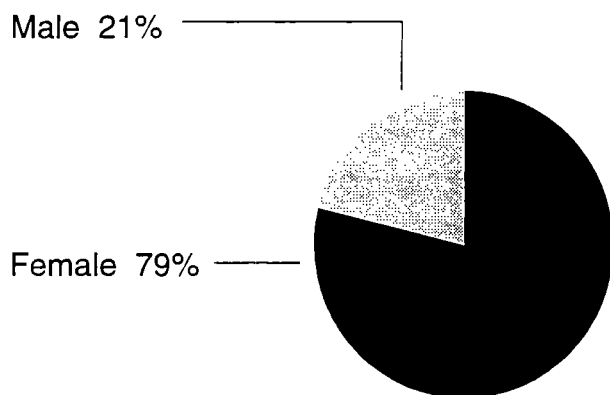
The scope of the agreement between the two agencies is to increase collaboration at all levels in order to expand:

- Meaningful volunteer service opportunities for older people and
- Volunteer services for the homebound elderly.

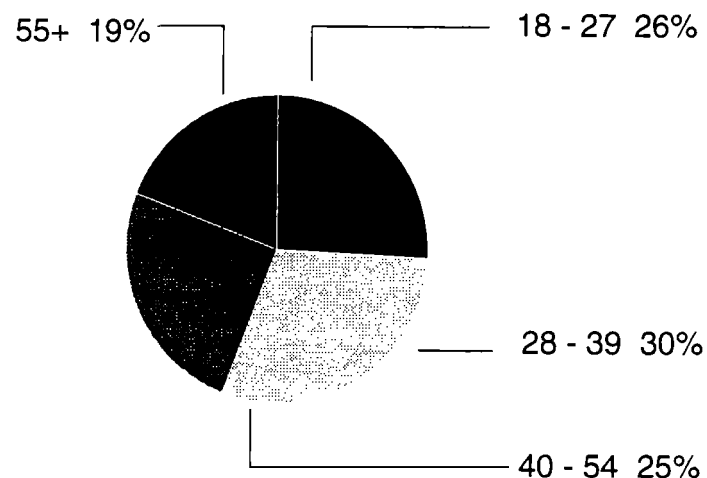
An extensive evaluation supported by ACTION to measure the program's impact is in progress. The Administration on Aging is responsible for developing community support to extend services following the demonstration period.

Characteristics of Volunteers in Service to America Volunteers

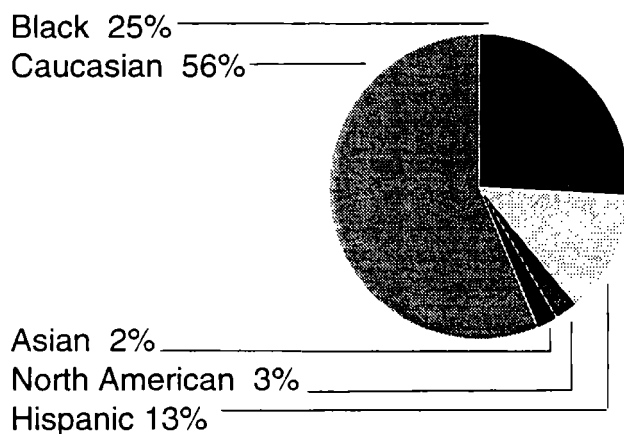
Distribution by Gender



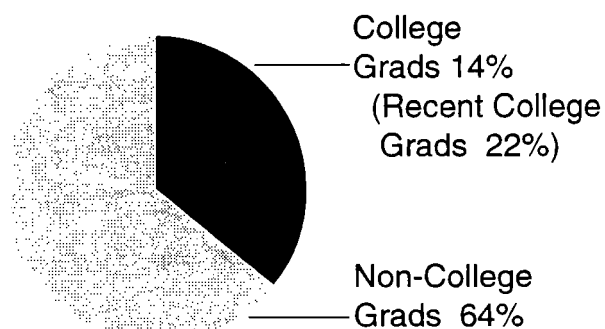
Distribution by Age



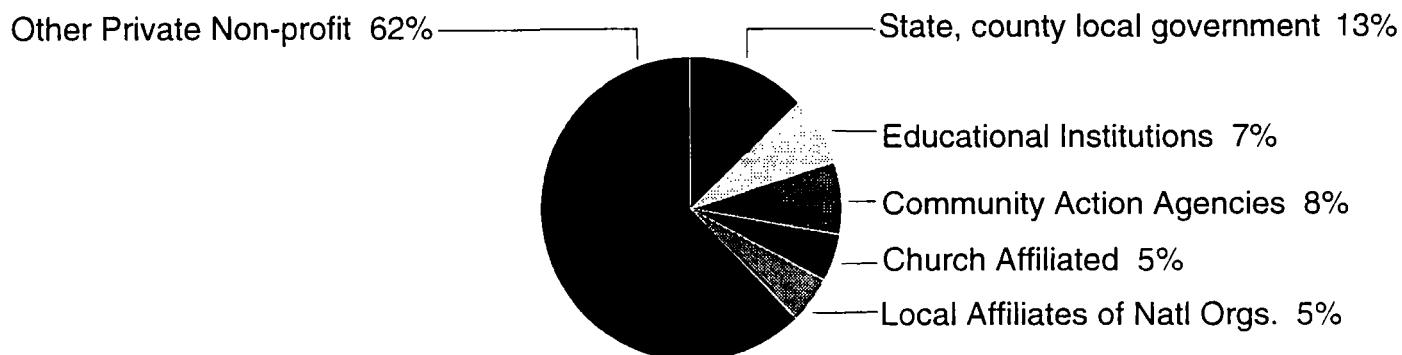
Distribution by Ethnic Group



Distribution by Education

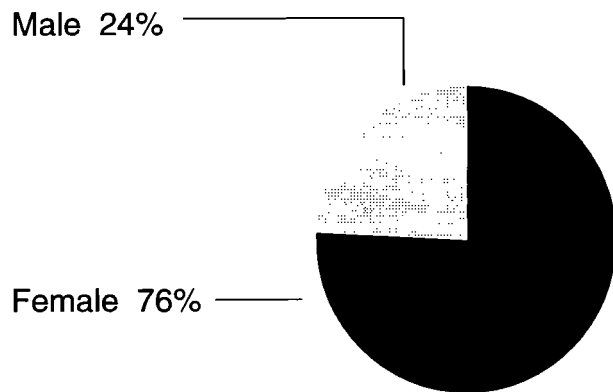


Types of Project Sponsors

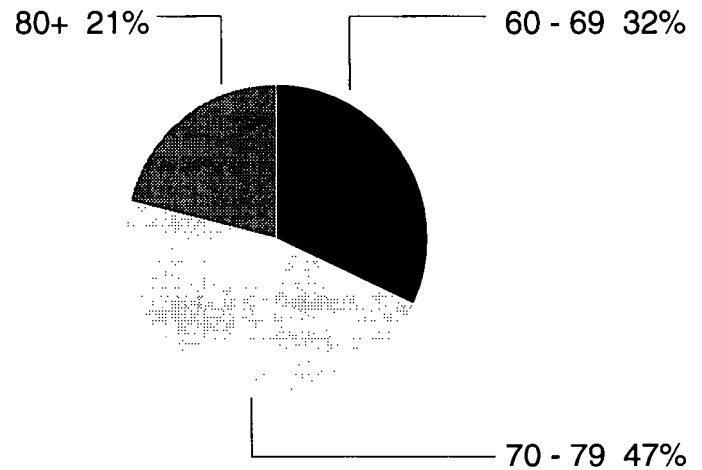


Characteristics of Retired Senior Volunteer Program Volunteers

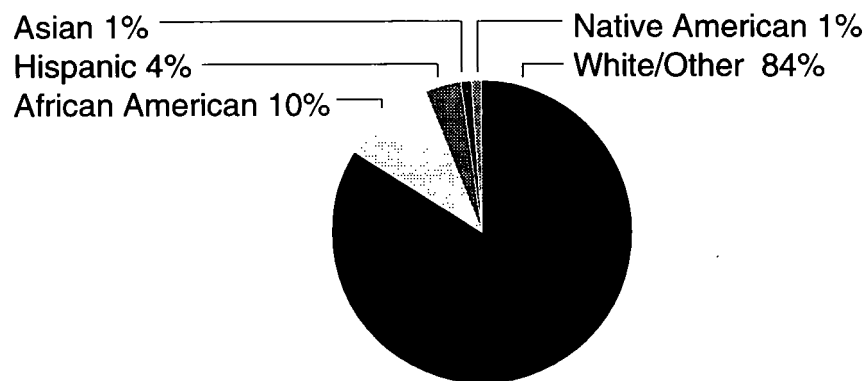
Distribution by Gender



Distribution by Age

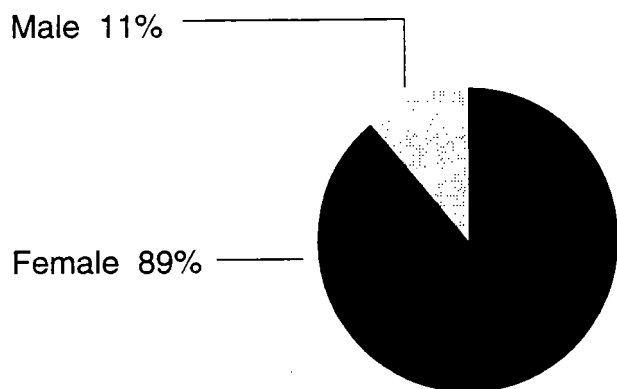


Distribution by Ethnic Group

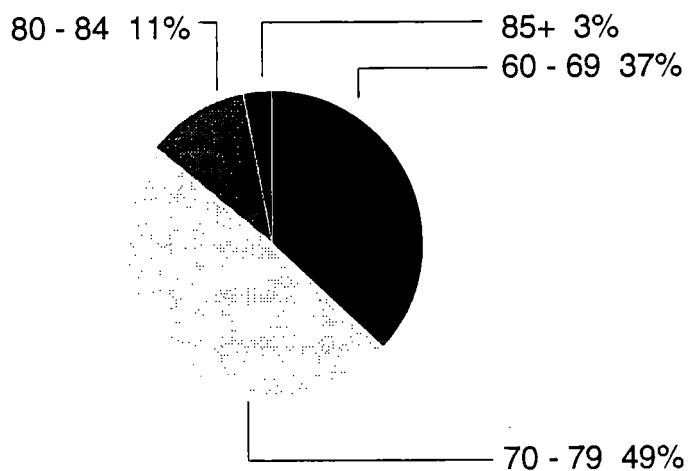


Characteristics of Foster Grandparent Program Volunteers

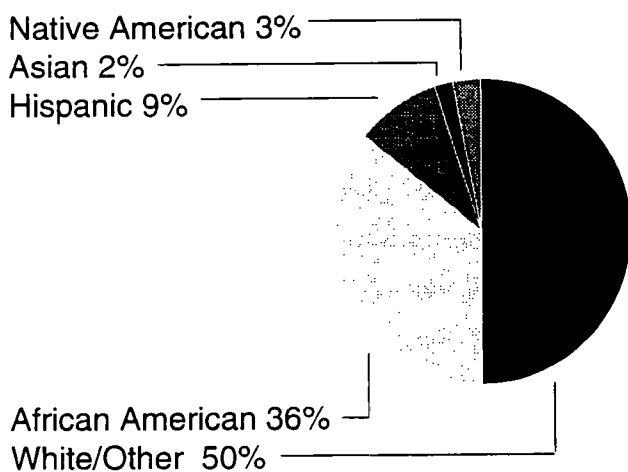
Distribution by Gender



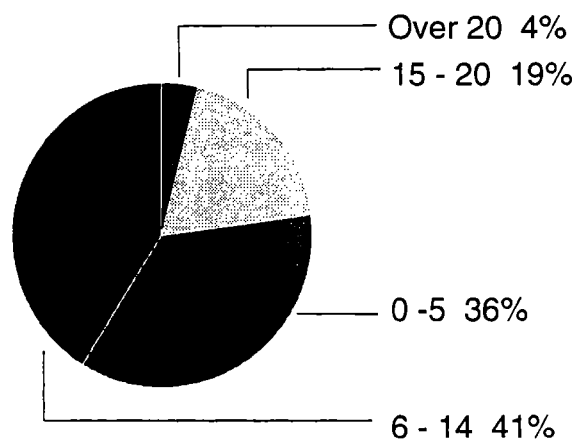
Distribution by Age



Distribution by Ethnic Group

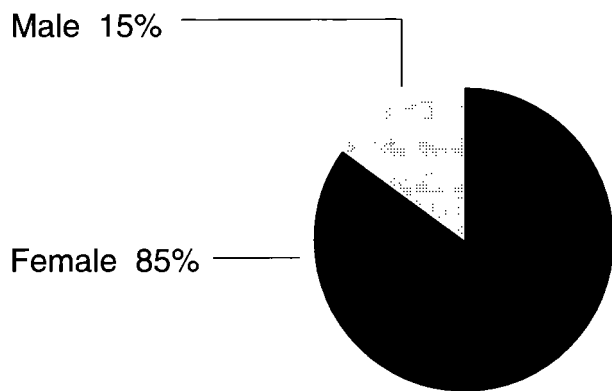


Ages of Children Served

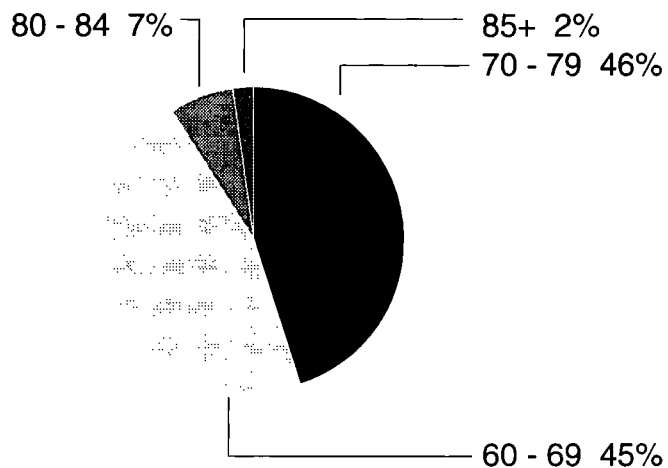


Characteristics of Senior Companion Volunteers

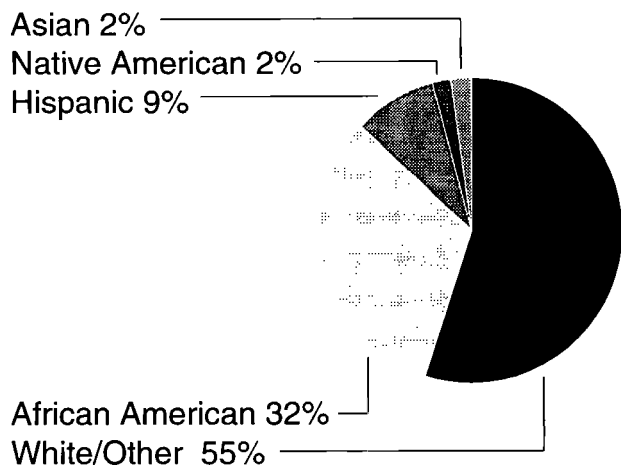
Distribution by Gender



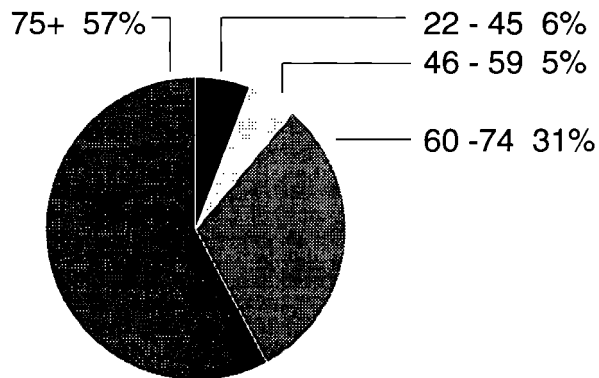
Distribution by Age



Distribution by Ethnic Group



Ages of Clients Served



ACTION FUNDING: FY 1991 AND FY 1992

	Fiscal Year 1991	Fiscal Year 1992
Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA)	\$ 34,907,000	\$ 37,464,000
(1) VISTA	30,286,000	32,688,000
(2) Literacy Corps	4,621,000	4,776,000
Student Community Service Program	\$ 976,000	\$ 976,000
Special Volunteer Programs— ACTION Drug Alliance	\$ 2,191,000	\$ 1,225,000
Older American Volunteer Programs	\$123,938,000	\$128,445,000
A. Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)	33,425,000	34,128,000
B. Foster Grandparent Program (FGP)	62,945,000	65,590,000
C. Senior Companion Program (SCP)	27,568,000	28,727,000
Inspector General	\$ 976,000	\$ 954,000
Program Administration	\$ 28,301,000	\$ 29,528,000
Appropriation	\$191,289,000	\$198,592,000



A PART OF ACTION

Key Findings on the Impact of ACTION's

FOSTER GRANDPARENT VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

In 1968, the **Administration on Aging** analyzed data from the Merrill-Palmer Foster Grandparent Research Project. The focus of the study was the thirty-six Foster Grandparents at a children's institution in Michigan, and twenty-two controls, aged 61 to 77. The Foster Grandparents and the control group of older Americans were interviewed twice, about ten months apart. Twenty-six Foster Grandparents who continued into a second year were interviewed again two years after the project began. Some of the findings were:

- Parts of the Foster Grandparent experience are seen as benefits by more participants after the second year than after the first year. These are: the opportunity to stay active; improved financial situation, sense of direction and purpose to life, maintenance of improvement of health and vigor, and satisfaction in being useful to others.
- After two years in the program, participants showed a clear improvement in their overall life-satisfaction.
- The Foster Grandparents held views on child-rearing consistent with those of professionally-trained child-care workers. The Foster Grandparents also evidenced an ability to grow in their roles as specialized child care workers.

Between June and September, 1975, evaluators from **ACTION's Evaluation Division** visited 38 of 157 Foster Grandparent Projects. They evaluated the policies, procedures, delivery models and operations, and the overall impact of the program. The researchers found that:

- Foster Grandparents reported gains on several dimensions of life satisfaction as a result of participation in the program. Areas of gain included: feeling of usefulness, satisfaction from helping children, extra income, and companionship.
- Many FGP volunteers expressed that they feel better physically, visit the doctor less, and do not worry nearly as much about health problems.
- Eighty-nine percent of the project personnel stated that children are progressing more rapidly with Foster Grandparent care. Eighty-two percent mentioned that special treatment could be terminated early as a result of this progress.
- Based on reports by FGP volunteers and project staff, children exhibited positive changes in several functional areas. These included: communication skills, reduced anti-social behavior, maturity level, sense of security, performance in school, general disposition, self-image, better relationships with authority, physical health, and peer relations.

Key Findings on the Impact of ACTION's FOSTER GRANDPARENT PROGRAM

Page 2

In 1982 and 1983, ACTION's Office of Planning and Policy Development/Evaluation Division conducted an evaluation of the effects of Foster Grandparents on juvenile offenders in three Georgia Youth Development Centers. These facilities are large residential institutions providing treatment for youth committed by the Juvenile and Superior Courts. Pre-test and post-test interviews were conducted with 106 youth. This included a control group of youth who were not served by Foster Grandparents. The 1984 report revealed that:

- FGP volunteers were well accepted in institutions for juvenile offenders by staff and youth alike. Most youth stated that having a Foster Grandparent was helpful, and 77% of the staff wanted the program expanded at their facility.
- Foster Grandparent positively affected youth attitudes toward themselves and the Youth Development Centers and to a lesser degree their self esteem. They had their greatest effect during the first six months of commitment.

In 1981, ACTION and HHS developed a joint project called the FGP/RSVP Head Start Demonstration Program. The project sought to demonstrate that FGP and RSVP Volunteers could make a significant contribution to the Head Start program. An evaluation conducted by **Development Associates** in 1983 concluded that the demonstration program achieved positive results.

- "100% of the Head Start Center directors rated FGP as having excellent (57%) or good (43%) value to the programs."
- "83% of the teachers rated FGP volunteers as having excellent (50%) or good (33%) value to the programs."
- "98% of the FGP volunteers chose "very satisfied" (67%) or "satisfied" (31%) in rating their value to Head Start."
- 72% of the FGP volunteers felt that their present assignment was personally very meaningful all the time; 26% felt their assignment was meaningful most of the time.

In 1984, **Litigation Support Services** reported the results of a three-year longitudinal evaluation of the Foster Grandparent Program begun in 1980. Data were collected from a sample of volunteers and a comparison group of persons waiting to become volunteers. In comparison to the Wait-List group of non-participants, the Foster Grandparents:

- maintained or improved their overall functioning, especially their physical health.
- experienced improved mental health and social resources.
- saw their economic resources remain stable, while the non-participants resources improved.

Key Findings on the Impact of ACTION's FOSTER GRANDPARENT PROGRAM

Page 3

One of the most intriguing finding in all the research done on Foster Grandparents came from this study.

- "The mortality rate of the Wait-List Group was twice that of the Participant Group: 16 of the 318 (5%) potential respondents in the Participant Group died during the three-year evaluation, and seven of the 56 potential respondents in the Wait-List Group died (12.5%). The Wait-list group, on the average, had better scores on the physical health outcome scale in 1980 than did the Participant group. Thus, the higher mortality rate of the Wait-List group cannot easily be attributed to the rejection or deselection from FGP of seriously ill or moribund persons on waiting lists. . . . this finding should be considered as tentative because of the small number (23) of respondents who died over the three-year study period."

The report concluded:

- "The Foster Grandparent program is maintaining or improving the mental and physical health, social and economic resources of the Participants."

Between November 1989 and May 1990, the New York City Department for the Aging conducted a study to document the experiences of Foster Grandparents working with high-risk children in a variety of sites. Key findings of the study were:

- "Nearly 70 percent [of the Foster Grandparents] felt that being a FGP had changed their life for the better."
- ". . . 80 percent of site staff observed that the relationship between site staff and FGPs was good and they felt that, in addition to benefitting the children, FGPs improved the atmosphere of the institution (59%) and provided role models for the staff and families (35%) and decreased staff workload (28.2%)."

The findings summarized in this document are the result of systematic, rigorous, evaluation research. Most of the work was performed by private research firms under contract to ACTION. Some of the work may have been funded by other Federal or private sources. Questions regarding these summaries may be directed to the Program Analysis and Evaluation Division, Office of Policy Research and Evaluation, ACTION (202) 606-4821. (OPRE/PAE 2/2/93)



Key Findings on the Impact of ACTION's

SENIOR COMPANION PROGRAM

From 1973 to 1975, **Booz Allen and Hamilton** conducted an evaluation of all 18 current SCP projects. They found:

- "The vast majority of persons receiving the services of Senior Companions are elderly, and many experience problems of limited functioning, poor health, and social isolation."
- "The Senior Companions often have an important impact on alleviating the loneliness of the adults they serve, increasing their level of activity, and meeting other basic needs."
- "In most communities, Senior companions perform a service that would not be available to needy adults if the program did not exist."

In 1985 **SRA Technologies** completed a five-year evaluation of SCP begun by ACTION. The evaluation used interviews with active Senior Companions and clients, comparing them to program applicants and clients on waiting lists. The evaluation used scales that measure functional capabilities in economic resources, mental health, social resources, and physical health. They discovered:

- "Individuals who remained on the waiting list showed substantial declines in functioning; program participants did not. . . . Active participants maintained their level of functioning compared to those who ceased participation."
- "Active volunteers reported adjusting more positively to the limitations of declining health [than inactive participants]."
- "Entering volunteers showed an improvement in functioning [in areas of economic resources and mental health functioning]. In comparison, there were no significant changes among individuals who continued on the companion waiting list."

The study concluded that:

- ". . . a strong association [exists] between participation as a volunteer in SCP and positive functioning, and strongly suggest[s] that these positive effects are the result of participation in SCP."
- "Clients who continued participating in SCP remained stable in social resources and areas of serious impairment. In contrast, clients who stopped participating and those who remained on the waiting list to become clients showed decline in these areas."

Key Findings on the Impact of ACTION's SENIOR COMPANION PROGRAM

Page 2

In 1985 **Arawak Consulting** completed the Long-Term Care Demonstration Research Project. The study concluded that the project:

- ". . . clearly had a significant positive impact for the volunteers in the areas of economic resources."
- ". . . strengthened the clients' social resources. The presence of volunteers as additional resources for social networking appears to have given to the clients' significant improvement in this area."

From 1985 to 1988 the **Research Triangle Institute** studied the SCP Homebound Elderly Demonstration Program using control groups of Companions, clients, persons on FGP waiting lists, and persons waiting for SCP services. Researchers obtained data on health, economic situation, and psychological well-being. They concluded:

- "SCP services are flexible, individually targeted, able to respond to clients' needs, and include a range and variety of services that other available programs do not provide."
- "SCP services supplement and augment those services already being received from other sources, rather than displacing them."
- "The SCP Companions are serving a frail, needy population. The clients are elderly, typically widowed and living alone, and have significant impairments in health and functional status. . . . [Their] resources are limited, however, and SCP plays an important role by augmenting them."
- "Measures of health and function status indicate stability or some deterioration, as would be expected. . . . SCP participation may enhance clients' perceptions of health and functional status, and thus their ability to function in their daily lives."
- "Data on objective health status measures show little change. . . . Overall, the data on health status show the generally high levels of perceived health status, for both companions and controls at both time points."
- "Because of the stipend volunteer companions receive, SCP participation provides direct economic benefits [To the volunteer companions]."

In 1988, **Sociometrics, Inc.** reported the results of an evaluation of the contributions of SCP and RSVP volunteers to family caregivers responsible for the care of frail and disabled older adults. The study focused on projects where volunteers "provide one-to-one assistance to care recipients living in the same residences as their family caregivers."

Key Findings on the Impact of ACTION's SENIOR COMPANION PROGRAM

Page 3

Some of the findings by Sociometrics, Inc. included:

- The family caregivers "perceive their direct benefits to include reductions in stress, feelings of being alone, family tension and financial burden."
- "Care recipients (of SCP respite services) perceive their direct benefits to include being cheered up, feeling less lonely, feeling better about self, having better health, and appreciating volunteers helping all family members understand each other better."
- "Caregivers report that as a result of respite care, recipients are less dependent, more mentally alert, better physically, better able to remain in the home and have a more positive attitude."

In 1991, the **Alzheimer's Association** conducted an evaluation of a demonstration program they conducted with SCP. The program developed materials for training SCP Volunteers in the care of Alzheimer's sufferers. The study found that:

- "Overwhelming satisfaction was expressed by families who have received services in the demonstration project."
- "Senior Companions . . . can be an effective resource for respite care."
- "The capability of trained companions to communicate effectively and participate in enjoyable activities with impaired clients allowed families to have relief from caregiving responsibilities and peace-of-mind while they were away."

In 1991, the **Research Triangle Institute** began a three year evaluation of the SCP/AoA Joint Initiative project. Thus far into the project they find that:

- "The project serves a population of frail, elderly. Sixty-eight percent are age 80 or older, and 66 percent live alone. More than two-fifths have difficulty walking; one-fifth or more require assistance in bathing, are chair- or bed-fast, have diabetes or a recent significant event (such as a death in the close family); and smaller numbers have Alzheimer's or other impairments."

The findings summarized in this document are the result of systematic, rigorous, evaluation research. Most of the work was performed by private research firms under contract to ACTION. Some of the work may have been funded by other Federal or private sources. Questions regarding these summaries may be directed to the Program Analysis and Evaluation Division, Office of Policy Research and Evaluation, ACTION (202) 606-4821. (OPRE/PAE 2/2/93)



Key Findings on the Impact of ACTION's

RETIRED SENIOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

In 1979, the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation of St. Paul, Minnesota interviewed 1,228 senior citizens in a random survey from "Ramsey County." The foundation also surveyed 44 RSVP participants from the same county. The two groups were compared. They found the following results.

- "members of RSVP tend to be more pleased with their lives than are respondents from Ramsey County."
- "the RSVP sample [is] more positively oriented towards their present situations, with 7.4% more indicating this was the best time of life among RSVP respondents."
- "While RSVP subjects earned less on average than the general sample, they were surprisingly less inclined to worry."
- RSVP Volunteers were more mobile, but complained about restrictions to mobility more. RSVP participants were more active, with hobbies and community activities, but were more likely to complain about a lack of activities.
- RSVP Volunteers were less likely to be married, and less likely to be satisfied with the contact sustained with their children. At the same time, RSVP Volunteers were less lonely.

The 1979 Wilder Foundation study concluded:

"The picture we obtained of the RSVP volunteers, then, is one of relative good health and mobility. They are not particularly wealthy but they find satisfaction in non-material aspects of their lives. In particular, they are outgoing and 'other-oriented'. They may well have displayed these characteristics prior to retirement; RSVP participation probably did not produce such traits but was appealing to those who had those characteristics.

RSVP cannot produce health, mobility or financial security, but it does provide an outlet for those who have high activity, mobility and contact needs."

Key Findings on the Impact of ACTION's RETIRED SENIOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Page 2

In 1981, ACTION and HHS developed a joint project called the FGP/RSVP Head Start Demonstration Program. The project sought to demonstrate that FGP and RSVP Volunteers could make a significant contribution to the Head Start program. An evaluation conducted by **Development Associates** in 1983 concluded that the demonstration program achieved positive results.

- "94% of the Head Start teachers rated RSVP volunteers as being of excellent or good value to the program."
- "80% of the RSVP Volunteers felt that their present assignment was personally very meaningful all or most of the time."
- "The RSVP volunteers provided 20 different types of activities, the predominate ones being making educational materials, craftmaking and sewing, and socialization."
- "RSVP volunteers were rated as being more committed (48%), more reliable (61%), more willing to increase involvement (50%), and more enthusiastic (63%) by Head Start teachers when compared to volunteers in general."

In 1984, **Booz, Allen, and Hamilton** reported the results of a national, longitudinal study of RSVP impacts. The focus of the research was on the value and benefits of participation in the RSVP program to the volunteers, and how participation over time may affect their functional capabilities. RSVP volunteers were studied at three points in time. In addition, the findings from the RSVP study were compared to a General Accounting Office's longitudinal study of "The Well-Being of Older People in Cleveland, Ohio."

"Functional capacities were measured in terms of 1) social resources, 2) mental outlook, 3) physical health and 4) economic resources." The results show:

- "The evidence is overwhelmingly clear RSVP attracts a healthier group of seniors than in the comparison group . . . and RSVP participation is associated with improved or stable levels of functioning while noticeable decrements in functioning are evident among non-volunteers."
- The most dramatic differences in functioning emerge between those who continue to serve in the program and those who drop out. The research indicates that volunteers who continue to serve exhibit either improved functioning or slower rates of functional deterioration than those who leave the program. That is to say, continued program participation may stave off the effects of aging."

Key Findings on the Impact of ACTION's RETIRED SENIOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Page 3

The 1984 Booz, Allen, and Hamilton study concluded:

- "Socially, mentally, physically and, to a lesser degree, economically, RSVP volunteers are better off than those who never serve in the program."
- "Continued program participation is associated with participants' enhanced sense of well being and outlook on life and may stave off the effects of aging."
- "Since other older American programs offered by ACTION are restricted to low-income seniors, RSVP is filling a void by appealing to a significant and important segment of older Americans not served by other ACTION programs."
- "RSVP volunteers provide meaningful services and contribute indirectly to the national workforce. . . . RSVP provides a vehicle for 'working' beyond the traditional working-years and captures the true spirit of volunteerism."

In 1988, Sociometrics, Inc. reported the results of an evaluation of the contributions of RSVP and SCP volunteers to family caregivers responsible for the care of frail and disabled older adults. The study focused on projects where volunteers "provide one-to-one assistance to care recipients living in the same residences as their family caregivers." Some of the findings by Sociometrics, Inc. included:

- "The average total cost per RSVP volunteer hour was less than one dollar."
- "Caregivers perceive their direct benefits to include reductions in stress, feeling of being alone, family tension and financial burden. Caregivers also appreciate being able to run errands and get away for a while."
- "Care recipients perceive their direct benefits to include being cheered up, feeling less lonely, feeling better about self, having better health, and appreciating volunteer helping all family members understand each other better."
- "Social service utilization doubles while utilization of private duty nurses, sitters and maid service decrease with the introduction of volunteer respite support."

The findings summarized in this document are the result of systematic, rigorous, evaluation research. Most of the work was performed by private research firms under contract to ACTION. Some of the work may have been funded by other Federal or private sources. Questions regarding these summaries may be directed to the Program Analysis and Evaluation Division, Office of Policy Research and Evaluation, ACTION (202) 606-4821. (OPRE/PAE 2/2/93)



Key Findings on the Impact of ACTION's

VOLUNTEERS IN SERVICE TO AMERICA (VISTA) PROGRAM

In 1971 **Pennsylvania State University** completed a study of the impact of the VISTA experience on the volunteer's attitudes and commitment to solving the social problems of this country. The study used a survey of all former VISTA volunteers and successful applicants who declined VISTA service. The study concluded:

- ". . . The majority [of VISTA volunteers] come out of the VISTA experience knowing more about themselves, the poor, and our social system. The majority come out still intending to work in programs where they can assist in making our society a better place for all of our citizens."

In 1973 **Vasquez Associates, Ltd.**, conducted a Study of VISTA and University Year for ACTION (UYA). The goal of the study was to assign dollar values to VISTA and UYA volunteer production (outcomes of their work) at the local project level. The study was limited to dollar values of *direct volunteer production only*, with no attempt to document secondary or consumption benefits such as increased self-esteem, motivation, good feelings, etc. The study found that:

- The VISTA volunteers in the sample had a higher value (\$38,990) of production assigned by the direct method than did the UYA volunteers (\$14,329).
- All volunteers generated for the target population an average of \$8,617 in new yearly income and a yearly savings of \$7,407, per volunteer.
- The value of project resources was \$5,632, per volunteer/year, and donated manpower amounted to \$7,284.
- The average dollar value of benefits mobilized or generated by all volunteers in the survey was \$28,941.

Key Findings on the Impact of ACTION's VISTA PROGRAM

Page 2

In 1973 ACTION surveyed 55% of all VISTA projects to examine project impact. The study found that:

- "2172 volunteers mobilized \$30 million [\$13,800 per volunteer], \$18 million [\$8,300 per volunteer] of which was state, local or private funds." The study also found that VISTA volunteers mobilized community volunteers, facilities, supplies and equipment in almost half of the projects.

The study concluded that:

- "VISTA volunteers have mobilized resources which are available to supplement community efforts to eliminate poverty."

In 1977 ACTION completed a national assessment VISTA's accomplishment of goals and objectives, productivity, community impact and policy compliance. The study confirmed earlier findings that VISTA volunteers are providing effective human services to poor communities. In addition, the study discovered that:

- "The amount of resources generated by VISTA projects for anti-poverty programs, the target community, or individual community members was quite high. A conservative estimate of the average amount generated per project would \$447,455. A conservative estimate of the average amount generated per volunteer would be \$46,822."

In 1978 the **Contract Research Corporation** completed a study of the impact of volunteer service on recently returned Peace Corps and VISTA Volunteers. The study obtained questionnaire data from 1,699 former VISTA volunteers who had completed service since 1971 as well as from 1,851 former Peace Corps volunteers who had completed service since 1968. The study found that:

- "Both VISTA and Peace Corps volunteers were very highly active in a variety of social, educational and cultural volunteer organizations before and after service."
- "Over one-half of former VISTA volunteers began working immediately after service completion. [Most] were employed full-time as social service providers, managers and teachers . . . mainly by governmental agencies and non-profit organizations."
- ". . . Although both samples [former Peace Corps and VISTA volunteers] worked in similar jobs during the pre-service period, . . . more [former VISTA volunteers] are employed in the provision of social services while more [former Peace Corps volunteers] engage in teaching."

Key Findings on the Impact of ACTION's VISTA PROGRAM

Page 3

- "While the four most highly rated VISTA motivations were evenly divided between altruistic and personal benefits, former Peace Corps were attracted to a larger extent because of personal benefits. 'Desire to help others' which constituted the most highly ranked VISTA motive, was fourth in importance among Peace Corps volunteers."
- "A comparison of Peace Corps and VISTA volunteers' post-service social involvement shows that VISTA volunteers tend to have a greater and more immediate impact on American society." Both before and after service, VISTA volunteers were more active than Peace Corps volunteers in charity organizations, poverty programs, hospital work, political campaigns, political parties, and civil rights movements.

In 1988 **Abt Associates** completed a two-year evaluation that examined the accomplishments of VISTA projects and their effect of the communities in which they operate. The study found that:

- ". . . The efforts of the volunteers allowed projects to serve more clients and to provide better services than they could otherwise have provided. The volunteers were instrumental in helping the projects achieve their goals."
- "The median amount of money raised by the VISTA projects was \$54,600 during the second year of VISTA involvement, and a similar amount was raised during the first year. Approximately 55 percent of these contributions were from private sources. . . . Staff members estimated that the volunteers' efforts were responsible for mobilizing approximately 40 percent of the monetary resources in the second year."
- "VISTA volunteers also worked to mobilize community volunteers, and recruited an average of 35 in their first year and 70 in their second year [of the VISTA project's existence]. . . . Staff estimated the volunteers were responsible for recruiting about 60 percent of all in-kind resources."

The study concluded that:

- "Clients received substantial benefits from the projects. The entire low-income community also benefited indirectly, and some community members learned valuable skills as a result of volunteering time to the projects."

Key Findings on the Impact of ACTION's VISTA PROGRAM

Page 4

In 1991 **Development Associates** completed an evaluation of the VISTA Literacy Corps that examined how well the literacy projects were working and the quantity and quality of services delivered to the clients. The study found that:

- "Project Directors (83 percent) reported that the most important impact of VISTA volunteers is that they increased cooperation or partnership with other organizations. Other impacts were: more regular literacy clients served, more literacy tutors, larger projects to serve different clients, and increased effectiveness of literacy tutors."
- "Volunteers were most influential in interagency cooperation and increasing the number of regular literacy clients. . . . Regular literacy clients increased by an average of 249, ESL clients by 204, tutors by 112, and community volunteers by 51. Project Directors estimated that client reading grade levels increased an average of 3.4 grade levels while VISTA Volunteers were working on the project."
- "Sixty-seven percent [of former Volunteers contacted] had jobs. . . . About two-thirds (69 percent) reported that their job derived from their VISTA experience. . . . Seventeen percent were attending school. Sixty-four percent of those still in school said they chose their course of studies because of their VISTA experience."
- . . . "VISTA Volunteers are working in a wide variety of tasks. . . . Project Directors reported that VISTA Volunteers were most effective in community outreach activities, tutor and client recruitment, and tutor training."

The study concluded:

- "VISTA Volunteers have directly affected poor communities where illiteracy rates are high. . . . VISTA Volunteers are making effective contributions in the projects in which they serve."

The findings summarized in this document are the result of systematic, rigorous, evaluation research. Most of the work was performed by private research firms under contract to ACTION. Some of the work may have been funded by other Federal or private sources. Questions regarding these summaries may be directed to the Program Analysis and Evaluation Division, Office of Policy Research and Evaluation, ACTION (202) 606-4821. (OPRE/PAE 2/2/93)



Key Findings on the Impact of ACTION's

STUDENT/SERVICE-LEARNING PROGRAMS

Vasquez Associates, Ltd., conducted a Study of University Year for ACTION (UYA) and VISTA in 1973. UYA was a service-learning program providing an opportunity for students to serve a full year in anti-poverty programs while continuing normal academic progress toward a degree. The goal of the study was to assign dollar values to VISTA and UYA volunteer production (outcomes of their work) at the local project level. The study was limited to dollar values of *direct volunteer production only*. There was no attempt to document secondary or consumption benefits such as increased self-esteem, motivation, good feelings, etc. The study found that:

- The VISTA volunteers in the sample had a higher value (\$38,990) of production assigned by the direct method than did the UYA volunteers (\$14,329).
- All volunteers generated for the target population an average of \$8,617 in new yearly income and a yearly savings of \$7,407, per volunteer.
- The value of project resources was \$5,632, per volunteer/year, and donated manpower amounted to \$7,284.
- The average dollar value of benefits mobilized or generated by all volunteers in the survey was \$28,941, per volunteer.

In 1975, the **American University** evaluated the effectiveness of ACTION's National Student Volunteer Program (NSVP). This program sought to provide technical assistance materials, training sessions and on-site consultations to high schools and colleges to develop service-learning programs. The NSVP sought to stimulate growth and improve the quality of student volunteer programs. The report found that:

- Fifty percent of those who received written technical assistance to begin a new program began a new program. Sixty-one percent reported improvements in existing programs after seeking technical assistance materials.
- Ninety percent of those who attended high school or college training sessions to gain information and skills to begin a new program began or were working on beginning a new program. Eighty percent reported improvements in existing programs after attending high school or college training sessions.
- Eighty percent found on-site consultation services improved aspects of existing programs.

Key Findings on the Impact of ACTION's STUDENT/SERVICE-LEARNING PROGRAMS

Page 2

In Fiscal Year 1976, ACTION's Evaluation Division evaluated 27 University Year for ACTION (UYA) projects. The goal was to assess project performance and policies. Policies under review included the requirements that UYA students work 40 hours/week for one calendar year and that students not attend traditional, regularly scheduled classes on campus. The evaluation found:

- There were significant variations in the number of hours volunteers spent at agency and agency-related work and in the agencies' adherence to the full-time work requirement. Only 52% of the UYA volunteers were serving 40 hours per week.
- Almost half of the volunteers interviewed were attending formal, traditional classes on campus. Volunteers averaged 8.3 credit hours per semester or quarter. Fifteen of eighteen Project directors reported that the UYA policy prohibiting formal class attendance impeded their project's operation in some way.
- The three primary reasons for students becoming UYA volunteers were to gain practical experience, to provide a needed service to alleviate poverty-related problems, and to obtain experience to enhance graduate school admission.
- In assessing their UYA experiences, volunteers reported that they learned more on-the-job than in comparable classroom time, they had better formulated career goals, and they had learned more about themselves.
- Seventy percent of the anti-poverty agency supervisors reported expanded involvement with the universities in ways beyond the plans and expectations of the UYA project. This secondary growth increased the potential for the institutionalization of UYA.

Using a study designed by the **American Institutes for Research**, ACTION's Evaluation Division administered a volunteer activities survey in 1978 to all UYA volunteers. The study concluded:

- A majority of volunteers and supervisors reported changes in both sponsoring agencies and community clientele which were attributed to volunteer efforts.
- The volunteers wanted to "work directly with people in solving their problems and . . . to learn new skills." These expectations were fulfilled for most of the volunteer participants.
- Volunteers and supervisors believed that the UYA project was very successful in fostering a concern for the needs of others while providing service learning opportunities.

In 1981, ACTION'S National Center for Service-Learning (NCSL) published a study of the effect of an intensive service-learning experience on the cognitive, attitudinal and skill development of a group of juvenile offenders. The 1978-1979 pilot program prepared troubled young people for placement in community agencies. The youth were to work with special populations with problems served by the agencies. The students worked every day in the agencies and participated in group

Key Findings on the Impact of ACTION's STUDENT/SERVICE-LEARNING PROGRAMS

Page 3

seminars designed to reflect upon their volunteer service experiences. Pre and post-test means scores indicated that:

- Participants in the service learning experience showed significantly greater increases in reading scores than a cohort group.
- Participants also felt more involved in their school, perceived a greater degree of affiliation, perceived more support from teachers and viewed their school as more innovative than did members of the cohort group.

The Young Volunteers in ACTION (YVA) Effects Evaluation report, prepared by ACTION's Office of Compliance in 1986, examines specific effects of the YVA program. YVA was implemented by ACTION in 1981 to give students, ages 14 to 22, a chance to become involved in their communities while exploring career interests. The study showed:

- Eighty-nine percent of the young people who became YVA volunteers did so out of a desire to help others; 70% wanted a new experience or to meet new and different people.
- Students who joined YVA to get career related experience were more likely to be satisfied with the program than those students with other motives. YVA volunteers who served the most hours achieved the highest degree of satisfaction.
- Self assessments by volunteers as well as assessments by supervisors at two points in their service indicated an increased sense of self-esteem during their service. Data also indicated that the volunteers gained a better sense of their career plans.

In 1989, Enterprises for New Directions, Inc., conducted an evaluation of the Student Community Service Program for ACTION. The report concluded:

- By helping community agencies provide services that they otherwise could not have afforded, student volunteers become a valuable resource for increasing public services.
- Student volunteers gained a better understanding of the low-income community's needs and problems; learned new, marketable skills; experienced numerous challenges; increased their self-esteem, and were able to make better career choices.

The findings summarized in this document are the result of systematic, rigorous, evaluation research. Most of the work was performed by private research firms under contract to ACTION. Some of the work may have been funded by other Federal or private sources. Questions regarding these summaries may be directed to the Program Analysis and Evaluation Division, Office of Policy Research and Evaluation, ACTION (202) 606-4821. (OPRE/PAE 2/2/93)



OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

1100 VERMONT AVENUE, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20525
March 15, 1993

TO: Rick Allen
FROM: John Seal *John Seal*
SUBJECT: Grants Delivery Audit

Attached are the recommendations from an Inspector General grants management audit I mentioned in our Friday meeting. Although the audit reviewed the Foster Grandparent Program, the recommendations largely apply to all of our grant programs (all non-VISTA programs in ACTION). Some of the recommendations are fairly mundane, but the important ones that may be of interest to you (and are probably applicable to many Federal grant programs) are the following:

- #4 - Award grants on a 3 year cycle.
- #7 - Revise the grant application form in order to streamline it and make the form more user friendly.
- #8 - Streamline ACTION's grantee application review/approval process.
- #15 - Initiate efforts to improve project monitoring.

As you can see from our management responses to the Inspector General, we concurred on 12 of the 15 recommendations. We are moving on these items as part of our overall streamlining effort for the Agency (the IG suggests calling it "Reinventing ACTION"). We hope to beat several of the projected completion dates.

I'd be glad to discuss these ideas further with you.

ACTION'S MISSION

To stimulate voluntary citizen participation in addressing the needs of American communities,
particularly those of the poor, the disadvantaged and the elderly.

Recommendation 1

The Associate Director for Domestic and Anti-Poverty Operations should bring written policy guidance up to date, keep it current with appropriate page changes, and ensure that policy changes are carried through to all related handbooks and orders. Priority should be given to the following:

- (a) a complete revision of Project Development and Approval; and
- (b) page change updates of FGP Operations Handbook and Resource Allocation Formulas for Operational Programs within DO.

Response

Concur. The following actions will be taken on the Orders cited in the recommendation:

- ACTION Order 3770.1, Project Development and Approval, has been proposed for rescission and is now being forwarded to the Director. Policy guidance on project development and approval is provided as follows:

AO 3780, Interim OAVP Sponsors, was approved by the Director on December 7, 1992, and is now in effect.

AO 3775, Replacement OAVP Sponsors, was signed by the Director on January 15, 1993.

Guidance on new grants for OAVP is provided in material published in the Federal Register, and numbered memoranda to the field, when funds are available for such purposes. Augmentation grants guidance is provided through numbered memoranda to the field.

The VISTA Handbook contains guidance on project development and approval, which is also contained in VISTA Guidelines issued in the Federal Register on July 31, 1985.

Guidance on development and approval of Student Community Service and Drug Alliance grants is provided in material published in the Federal Register and numbered memoranda to the field, when funds are available for such purposes.

- The Foster Grandparent Program Handbook requires a comprehensive updating and revision rather than simple page-change updates. A number of significant policy decisions, including actions to be taken as a result of the Income Eligibility Task Force report, necessitate this action. A Task Force comprised of field and headquarters staff will be established not later than March 31, 1993. An initial assignment will be the development of a schedule for issuance of a revised handbook.
- ACTION Order 4000.6, Resource Allocation Formulae for Operational Programs in Domestic Operations, was last updated on June 27, 1988. It continues to be an appropriate, valid policy statement. However, the Order will be included in the FY 1994 DO CYOP schedule for review of ACTION Orders, with action to be completed by December 31, 1993.

Recommendation 2

The Associate Director for Management and Budget should bring policy guidance up-to-date, keep it current with appropriate page changes, and ensure that policy changes are carried through to all related handbooks and orders. Priority should be given to the following:

- (a) completely revising Grants Management Handbook for Grantees and Grants Management Handbook for Grants Officers; and
- (b) updating information in Maintenance of Volunteer Service Years in the Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion Programs and consolidating the information as a chapter in Grants Management Handbook for Grants Officers.

Response

Concur. The new Grants Management Handbook for ACTION Staff is now under development. Two new Federal OMB Circulars (A-102 and A-110) are currently under development and were expected to be issued early in 1993, although their issuance has been held up due to the current moratorium on new Regulations and Circulars. Those Circulars will include language which will be repeated verbatim in the Handbook. It is expected that a decision will be made within the Federal OMB about going ahead with the Circulars by late February; if not, then we will go forward with the Handbook without the new language and insert it when the Circulars become available. Either way, the Handbook should be forwarded to the Director for approval about February 28, 1993.

ACTION Order 2650.1, Maintenance of Volunteer Service Years in the Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion Programs, is the responsibility of DO/OAVP. This Order is still an accurate statement of Agency policy. However, since it is 10 years old in its current version, it will be included in the FY 1994 DO/OAVP CYOP schedule for revision to remove archaic references. It will be scheduled for reissuance not later than March 31, 1994.

Recommendation 3

Publish a Handbook for State Offices covering areas for which State personnel are responsible.

Response

Concur. A Task Force, including state and regional office and headquarters participants, will be established by DO by September 30, 1993. This will be a major assignment, with final issuance of the handbook scheduled for September 30, 1994.

Recommendation 4

Award grants up to 3 years, subject to the availability of funds and satisfactory performance of sponsors.

Response

Concur with limitations. OMB supports the concept of having one application covering 3 years, assuming that a budget and workplan are provided for each year. We believe it would greatly facilitate the application and award process, and is particularly appropriate when applied to stable grantees. Whether to award a grant or grants for a multi-year period should remain the province of the Director of ACTION and the Associate Director for Domestic Operations.

Among the implementation issues that would need to be resolved are:

- whether to pursue this approach on a pilot basis;
- means for issuing a grant showing a 3-year budget period since that cannot be done at present without fully funding the entire 3 year period from current fiscal year funds;
- the nature and coverage of the application package, including those items that would be required annually;
- means for revising budgets and workplans according to the availability of funds and when decreases/increases and deviations in grantee percentages occur; and
- current OMB requirements call for annual Debarment/Suspension, lobbying and Drug-Free Workplace certifications.

DO and OMB will review the issue and recommend to the Director by June 30, 1993, whether, and how, multi-year grants might be implemented.

Recommendation 5

Delete the requirement to sign annually the Memorandum of Understanding between the sponsor and each volunteer station and to submit a sample with each application.

Response

Non-Concur. It is the strong view, backed by experience, of Regional Directors and state office personnel that the annual Memorandum of Understanding renewal process should be retained. It provides a systematic, structured opportunity for project directors to review what is going on in the stations and for many, especially in larger projects, it may be the only time there is any interaction with some stations.

Recommendations 6

Discontinue the Project Rating requirements for all ACTION programs/projects.

Response

Concur. Review of ACTION Order 3800, ACTION Project Rating System, is already included in Domestic Operations CYOP for the third quarter of FY 1993. A rescission recommendation will be submitted to the Director not later than June 30, 1993. In the meantime, a numbered memorandum will be issued within 30 days of approval of this MORD, suspending use of the Project Rating System.

Recommendation 7

Revise the Project Grant Application Form for Older American Volunteer Programs and change the distribution. Include the following specific recommendations:

- (a) Reevaluate the information requested in Part III of the form and eliminate that which is not necessary;
- (b) Reduce the size of the form by designing two separate sections for Part III, one for new applications and one for continuation applications;
- (c) Develop a separate section for instructions;
- (d) Make the document computer friendly;
- (e) Print and distribute the forms for new applications only; and
- (f) Make the forms for continuation applications available as an attachment to Grants Management Handbook for Grantees with local reproduction authorized.

Response

Concur. This Form is the responsibility of DO/OAVP. Current Federal OMB approval of this public use form expires on September 30, 1993. Given lead times necessary to accommodate both Agency and Federal OMB clearance, work on a revised form will begin in January, 1993, with submission to OMB not later than June 30, 1993. The specific suggestions contained in the Audit will be taken into consideration when the form is revised and, to the extent permitted by OMB Circulars and other laws and regulations, will be reflected in the revised form and in the distribution and accessibility of the material.

Recommendation 8

Streamline the review/approval process by --

- (a) Developing a review/approval checklist to eliminate duplication and unnecessary delays, and
- (b) establishing waiver policy and delegating authority to the Regional Directors.

Response

Concur. As the audit notes, Regions currently do use checklists, with variations from Region to Region. ACTION Form A-570, which is a signature sheet for regional project clearance and approval, was issued in March 1974, and requires a total revision if it is to be a useful document. DO will revise and reissue SF-570 by June 20, 1993, together with Numbered Memorandum guidance on its use.

The Task Force, cited in response to Recommendation 1, will recommend a waiver policy, including appropriate delegation of authority to Regional Directors. As noted earlier, this Task Force will be convened by March 31, 1993, and will have as an initial task the establishment of timelines for completion of assigned responsibilities. It should also be noted that the development of waiver policy is one of the many recommendations of the Audit that will impact on other OAVP programs. The membership of the Task Force will reflect this reality.

Recommendation 9

Revise the Notice of Grant Award to shorten the document and concentrate on essential information. The revision should --

- (a) Reduce initial NGA's to 2 pages and changes to NGA's to 1 page;
- (b) Eliminate automatic printing of the data sheet, but make information available through inquiries or reports;
- (c) Eliminate line-item budget information and print only funding source and totals for major budget inquiries or reports;
- (d) Reduce the conditions to 1 page of essential statements arranged in topical categories;
- (e) Print only the conditions unique to the change and an inclusive statement that all other conditions apply for revised NGA's;
- (f) Eliminate the signature requirement and replace it with an acceptance statement, and
- (g) Make the NGA a numbered ACTION form with appropriate review and approval.

Response

Non-concur. While appreciating the intent behind this recommendation, we believe that cost considerations need to be given greater weight. In that regard, a case remains to be made that the value added is sufficient to justify the cost.

(a) and (b): ACTION has made a substantial investment (four years and several thousand dollars) in acquiring a stable Grants Module and stable output that all interested parties can use with confidence. To change the Notice of Grant Award (NGA) at this stage would be a major undertaking that would take many months to analyze, program, test and put into production. Although the cost in contractual dollars cannot be readily calculated, if recent experience is a guide, it would be a major contract. The length of the current document does not seem to be serious problem for staff or grantees.

With regard to printing blank pages, we have been working diligently to solve the problem, but the cause appears to be internal to the system and our information is that it may well not be fixable without creating an entire new system. We will, of course, continue to pursue a remedy.

(c) The line-by-line budget information is printed on the NGA so that all involved parties have a final copy of the negotiated line items. We believe it is important for grantees to know what line items have been approved so that funds are not spent for unapproved cost items. Further, grantees are responsible for obtaining approval where line item categories have not been previously approved. The Agency cannot, and does not, require the grantees to report on expenditures on a line item basis, but we are responsible for approving on a line item basis those budgeted cost which are appropriate to an ACTION grant. Federal OMB has approved ACTION's modification of Part II of the Application for precisely that purpose.

(d) and (e): The NGA conditions that are printed on each grant are a summary of important instructions that past experience has shown need to be repeated at the start of each grant period. Past discussions with the contractor (AG Genasys) on removing the "required" conditions from amendments have indicated that this could be done for a price. At this time, cost is an overriding factor against making the change even though several conditions now printed

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automatically on all NGA's will no longer be necessary when they are included in a guidance manual to grantees. As to printing only one condition on revised NGA's, many revisions are for multiple reasons and one condition may not suffice.

(f) This could be done in the system. Again, it is a systems program change that would take some time and money to implement.

(g) The NGA was assigned an ACTION number only when it was a manually completed form that needed to be ordered from in-house supplies. The NGA is now an automated output that does not require a form number per se.

Recommendation 10

Update the requirements for the package of informational materials to be sent for new and continuation grants. Include in the update the following specific recommendations:

- (a) Delete the requirements to send a copy of Grants Management Handbook for Grantees; instead, send it to new grantees only with additional copies available upon request; and
- (b) Add guidance on the OMB Circulars A-128 and A-123 audit requirements.

Response

Concur: These recommendations will be implemented through guidance to the field not later than March 31, 1993.

Recommendation 11

Improve fiscal management related to carryover balance, augmentation, and rebudgeting procedures by ---

- (a) establishing a threshold below which carryover balances will be liquidated rather than deobligated, during processing of the final FSR for a budget period;
- (b) adjusting the timing to process augmentations -- stipend increases, Section 225 supplements, and Section 226 supplements -- and distribution of unexpended funds, whenever possible, with continuation awards or funding for multi-year grants;
- (c) reevaluating current rebudgeting requirements and retaining only those requirements that can be monitored and enforced, such as movement of funds from one major category to another; and
- (d) realigning the funding period to coincide with the grantee's fiscal year in those instances where both the grantee and ACTION will benefit.

Response

Concur:

- (a) OMB supports specifying a threshold of \$50 in Grant Management Handbook for ACTION Staff for deobligating leftover funds in a grant year.
- (b) OMB has encouraged regional offices to combine as many of these diverse increases as possible at the time of a continuation award.
- (c) Current rebudgeting requirements will be more accurately spelled out in OMB Circular A-110 and in the revised "Common Rule." Both of these documents have significantly reduced the circumstances under which grantees need to request formal approval to rebudget. Nevertheless, our requirements do allow grantees to move money among approved line items but not from Volunteer Expense to Volunteer Support without prior approval. Our experience indicates that minimal rebudgetings are going on under the present regulations; even less will be required in the future.
- (D) Realigning the budget period of individual grants is properly a DO funding prerogative. Having grants routinely end on other than a Federal fiscal quarter could open up the possibility that carryover funds would be lost, particularly if the grantee's fiscal year ended in July or August.

Recommendation 12

Establish a requirement to maintain a permanent file for the entire period a sponsor manages a project plus three years thereafter. Identify which documents are to be kept, and publish a list in the Grants Management Handbook for Grants Officers.

Response

Concur. We believe there are a limited number of documents that are appropriately placed in a "permanent" grant file, eg., the Articles of Incorporation, open audit reports and findings and perhaps some that DO believes are important from a program perspective. We plan to include a section on permanent or semi-permanent document retention in the new Grants Management Handbook for ACTION staff.

Recommendation 13

Redefine and communicate clearly in the Program Operations Handbook the intended purpose, scope, target audience, level of expectation for content, and distribution of the Advisory Council Reports, and publish separate guidance for the Advisory Councils.

Response

Concur. The Task Force which will be revising and updating the Handbook (See response to Recommendation 1) will revise Handbook guidance on Advisory Councils. They will review and recommend how separate guidance can best be provided for the Advisory Councils. There is considerable evidence that this is a need which can be met, in considerable part, through workshops at Regional Training Conferences, such as the presentation made by ACTION's Evaluation Director at the most recent RTCs.

Recommendation 14

Eliminate the requirement to produce the Federal Cash Transaction Report for all grantees whose budget period exceeds \$120,000.

Response

Non-Concur. The Cash Transaction Report (SF 272) shows federal cash balances and, to our knowledge, is the only effective means of monitoring excess federal cash held by grantees. The Financial Status Report and the Request for Advance and Reimbursement do not provide this capability.

Since cash management is a regulatory requirement, the SF 272 report serves an important purpose. If the Agency eliminates this report, or makes it optional, there should be an effective alternative to allow stewardship of cash management. We are presently exploring such alternatives, including electronic funds transfer and more frequent drawdowns of federal funds. For the time being, however, the SF 272 report should be retained.

Recommendation 15

Initiate action to improve monitoring activity. Include the following:

- (a) Publish formal policies and procedures for monitoring activities in a Handbook for State Offices to establish the purpose, objectives, and expectations or desired outcome of monitoring visits.
- (b) Revise the internal and external monitoring instruments. Maintain a balance between programmatic objectives and fiscal issues. Records checks should focus on areas most vulnerable to fraud, waste, and abuse that are not adequately covered with required audits.
- (c) Provide more flexibility with the frequency of monitoring visits.
- (d) Require followup during monitoring visits on problems mentioned in the project progress reports and findings in prior monitoring letters.
- (e) Require Grants Management Officers to provide copies of audit reports with findings to State Offices to be used for followup during monitoring visits.

Response

Concur. A headquarters field Task Force, will be established not later than March 1, 1993. That task force, will be charged with reviewing current monitoring policies, instruments, procedures (including follow-up procedures) and schedules. While we are in general agreement with each of the points raised in the recommendation, the most appropriate specific actions will await the recommendations of the task force. The task force will, as an initial assignment, establish a time-phased plan for its work; however, major recommendations including proposed new and revised monitoring instructions should be provided to the DO Associate Director not later than September 30, 1993.



OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

1100 VERMONT AVENUE, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20005

C -> Jack

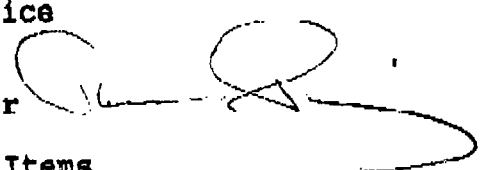
Fy1

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February 17, 1993

MEMORANDUM

TO: Susan Stroud
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of National Service

FROM: Thomas M. Flemming
Acting Executive Officer 

SUBJECT: Budget and Legislative Items

John Seal asked that the attached memorandum, which we are using internally for our "passback" discussions with OMB, be sent to you per Eli Segal's request.

A note on a February 25 hearing of the House Subcommittee on Select Education on VISTA and national service models is also attached.

We would be happy to provide any additional information as needed.

Attachments

ACTION'S MISSION

To stimulate voluntary citizen participation in addressing the needs of American communities,
particularly those of the poor, the disadvantaged and the elderly.



ACTION

1101 VERMONT AVENUE, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20525

February 9, 1993

MEMORANDUM

TO: John Seal
Acting Director

FROM: Gary Kowalczyk *GK*
Acting Associate Director
for Domestic and Anti-Poverty
Operations

SUBJECT: FY 1994 Budget Position to OMB

This memorandum provides the recommendations of the Office of Domestic Operations concerning the Agency's fiscal year 1994 budget in anticipation of the Agency's being asked to comment on an OMB "mark" prior to the release of the budget at the end of March.

After discussion with all of the relevant program officials in the Office, we collectively share the view that in this interim period the Agency should raise the policy proposal of expanding considerably its volunteer and service programs, particularly in light of the commitment of the Clinton Administration to expansion of national service opportunities. We recognize, of course, that the Director of the Office of National Service in the White House is in the process of developing specific national service proposals. There should be a coordinated position set forth in any proposals released in the Administration's budget in March for ACTION, and it is our view that any letter from ACTION to OMB should emphasize the need for such a coordinated policy approach.

However, whatever the outcome of the discussions of a coordinated approach, we are confident that ACTION's efforts and programs can be tailored to contribute to an overall service plan, and that proposing an expanded budget at this stage will help promote such participation and stimulate needed dialogue. Most important, we believe that ACTION and its programs and policies not be unknowingly included in any governmentwide deficit reduction plans.

VISTA today is the largest domestic volunteer service program directly comparable to the concept of national service set forth by the Clinton Administration -- full-time, stipended service addressing critical needs of low-income communities.

ACTION'S MISSION

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particularly those of the poor, the disadvantaged and the elderly

The Older American Volunteer Programs have a demonstrated record of engaging seniors in service to their communities and to the nation. Moreover, this population will grow considerably, both in numbers and as a percentage of the total population, over the next several decades. The programs themselves are well established and respond to local needs. Foster Grandparents provide a variety of one-to-one services to children with special needs, an effort consistent with the Administration's emphasis on families and children. Senior Companions are directly engaged in helping the frail elderly to stay in their own homes and to delay or avoid costly institutional care. Over 400,000 Retired Senior Volunteers, at a cost of only about \$80 per year per volunteer, represent perhaps the largest organized volunteer service force in operation today.

Given the clear connection of these programs to the concepts of expanded service in the country, we propose a budget for ACTION's programs of \$255.5 million in fiscal year 1994; this represents an increase of \$85.9 million, or 51%, above the \$169.6 million available in fiscal year 1993.

For VISTA, we propose a total budget of \$89.2 million, an increase of \$49.5 million above the FY 1993 amount of \$39.7 million. This level will support:

- Attaining a volunteer strength of 7,500 by the end of the Summer, 1994, more than double the current strength of approximately 3,300. Reaching this target equates to a total of 5,500 volunteer service years in fiscal year 1994, an increase of 2,134 volunteer service years, or 63%, above the FY 1993 estimate of 3,366 service years.
- A VISTA summer program providing 5,000 college students with the opportunity to engage in a summer of service addressing the needs of low-income Americans.
- A subsistence increase to an average of 110% of the poverty level for a single individual, an increase of 5% in real terms above the current level. This would set the average subsistence rate at \$675 per month, which is below the levels established in a number of similar federal and non-federal programs.
- A postservice stipend of \$1,800 per year of service, which is a 58% increase above the current stipend of \$1,140 per year. Many comparable programs provide \$5,000 as a postservice stipend to be used toward further education.

- Expanded training and support costs for volunteers, reflecting the realities of the expanded program described above.

Under this proposal, the total cost per volunteer service year for VISTA would be \$14,400 in fiscal year 1994; this is about 30% less than the average costs depicted for a number of other national service approaches.

For the Older American Volunteer Programs, we are proposing increases of \$25.3 million, or 20% above the amounts available in fiscal year 1993. We believe these programs, at relatively little cost, have tremendous potential to contribute to overall national goals in several important policy areas.

For the Foster Grandparent Program, we believe that 1,800 new volunteers can be added to support Parent Child Centers under Head Start, care for boarder babies in our nation's urban hospitals, and provide special education services to children in public institutions across the country. This would represent a 10% expansion in the program in a single year at a cost of approximately \$6.5 million.

The Senior Companion Program needs to expand to a number of unserved areas across the 50 states, with the potential to add over 3,000 volunteers in fiscal year 1994 to provide in-home and community-based care for seniors who would otherwise be institutionalized. These low-cost services (less than \$3 per hour) are provided by low-income seniors, and contribute significantly to overall efforts to control health costs for the elderly around the country. The cost of adding 3,000 volunteers in about 50 projects is estimated at \$11.4 million.

Under the Retired Senior Volunteer Program, 50,000 additional seniors will be engaged in a variety of initiatives to be determined, but include areas such as immunization, mentoring, and environmental activities. The total cost of the expansion is about \$100 per participant, or \$5 million.

We are also requesting an additional \$2.4 million to cover increases in administrative costs of the over 1,200 Older American Projects around the country.

For Part B of Title I, we propose a budget of \$3.0 million to support 200 students in a University Year for ACTION program and technical assistance and innovation grants designed to help improve the significant service learning activities and programs that exist throughout our nation's secondary and postsecondary schools.

For Part C of Title I, we propose a fund of \$10 million for a number of important discretionary activities not directly tied to the specific program structure outlined above, but designed to fulfill ACTION's broader mission of stimulating volunteerism across the country. ACTION has a long and successful history of identifying, developing, and demonstrating innovative and cost-effective strategies to promote the involvement of volunteers in responding to a wide range of community and social needs.

In fiscal year 1994, these funds would be used to support: small seed grants to stimulate community-based programs; training, technical assistance, and other capacity-building initiatives and the replication of already-proven approaches; nationwide demonstrations of promising volunteer strategies, some of which will prove valuable to long-range ACTION and other federal and non-federal programs; and responses to new initiatives for innovative programming.

A table showing the costs of the expansion by program is attached to this memorandum.

The significant growth in the programs will also have an impact on program administration. We believe that 20 additional staff in our regional and state offices will be required, as well as additional travel and support funds. In total, we believe that an additional \$2 million in program administration funds, above the amounts included in the original FY 1994 submission to OMB, will be required to deliver the above program in its entirety.

Attachment

cc: David Spevacek

ACTION

Domestic and Anti-Poverty Operations

February 9, 1993

2:44 PM

TABLE I: COSTS OF EXPANSION BY PROGRAM -- FY 1994

(\$000)	FY93	FY94	INCREASE DIFFERENCE
VISTA/LIT. CORPS	\$39,676.0	\$89,200.0	(\$49,524.0)
Student Community Service	\$958.0	\$3,000.0	(\$2,042.0)
OAVP	\$128,038.0	\$153,338.0	(\$25,300.0)
FGP	\$64,804.0	\$71,858.5	(\$7,054.5)
RSVP	\$33,686.0	\$40,166.3	(\$6,480.3)
SCP	\$29,548.0	\$41,313.1	(\$11,765.1)
TITLE I, PART C	\$982.0	\$10,000.0	(\$9,018.0)
TOTAL:	\$169,654.0	\$255,538.0	(\$85,884.0)



OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

1100 VERMONT AVENUE, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20525

February 17, 1993

MEMORANDUM

TO: John Seal
Acting Director

FROM: Nora Manning, Acting Director
Legislative Affairs Staff

SUBJECT: Hearing on VISTA and National Service Models

The Subcommittee on Select Education has scheduled a hearing on February 25, 1993, at 10:00 a.m. on Full-time Volunteer Service Models.

Currently the following witnesses are scheduled:

- Two VISTA Volunteer from a Norfolk, VA. project. One, a woman, who was an accountant who was laid off her job and had to move into a homeless shelter. She became a VISTA and has set up an accounting system for the homeless shelter as well as provided other services. The second, also a woman, has organized a support group for homeless women to keep them in school.

- A representative from Friends of VISTA
- A National Service volunteer from the Delta Youth Corps
- A representative from the National Association of Service Corps.

Braden Goetz, Legislative Director for Congressman Owens, would be happy to have any suggestions we may have for VISTA Volunteer witnesses. They have interviewed volunteers in New York, but are saving them for witnesses at a hearing they will hold in New York.

Two prerequisites for witnesses are: (1) Located in the district of a subcommittee member 1 and (2) Will be able to travel to Washington at their own expense.

Diana London is reviewing projects in the member's districts for potential witnesses. She is also sending Braden information on the Delta Community Development Corps which has VISTA Volunteers that work along side Delta Service Corps volunteers.

I have also spoken with Sally Lovejoy of the minority staff. Diana is also reviewing the minority members' districts for potential witnesses.

ACTION'S MISSION

To stimulate voluntary citizen participation in addressing the needs of American communities, particularly those of the poor, the disadvantaged and the elderly



OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

1100 VERMONT AVENUE, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20525

February 19, 1993

*Rick/J. Ak/Susan
I haven't
read. Please
sent me. Impt!*

The Honorable Eli J. Segal
Assistant to the President and
Director of the Office of National Service
Old Executive Office Building, Room 145
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. Segal:

Following up on your request for ideas on summer employment and service initiatives, ACTION is pleased to provide the attached proposal for mobilizing 10,000 full-time volunteers and 10,000 part-time volunteers to work with local non-profit organizations.

If there are any questions or if we can provide any additional information, please feel free to contact me at 606-4880.

Sincerely,

By Knowledge For

John Seal
Acting Director

Enclosure

cc: Susan Stroud
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of National Service

ACTION'S MISSION

To stimulate voluntary citizen participation in addressing the needs of American communities, particularly those of the poor, the disadvantaged and the elderly.

A SUMMER OF SERVICE

Proposal from ACTION **To the Office of National Service** **as Part of the Economic Stimulus Package**

Proposal

Provide 10,000 high school and college students on a full-time basis, as well as over 10,000 Older Americans on a part-time basis, with the opportunity to spend a summer of service working through a variety of local nonprofit organizations and institutions, including schools and universities, addressing the needs of low-income communities, environmental concerns, health requirements such as immunization, and educational needs. This will be a high visibility effort with broad impact at minimal cost. ACTION will use its broad program and legislative authorities to accomplish the initiative, including VISTA, Student Community Service, and Older American Volunteer Programs.

What Types of Service Will Take Place?

The high school and college students will work in local projects meeting defined community needs, including items such as:

- building houses through Habitat for Humanity,
- serving as tutors in literacy programs with Literacy Volunteers of America and Laubach Literacy International affiliations,
- providing community outreach to determine eligibility of families for the earned income credit,
- assisting in inner-city weatherization and other conservation projects,
- providing direct services within shelters or transitional housing for the homeless, in conjunction with affiliates of the National Coalition for the Homeless,
- serving in food bank arrangements affiliated with the Second Harvest national food bank network,
- serving with regional Rural Community Assistance Projects in surveys and outreach related to water and waste water systems, and
- serving in urban Boys' and Girls' Clubs.

The Older American volunteers in local projects will:

- provide child support services for youth involved in summer employment programs,
- give volunteer support to youth employment service organizations on a local level,
- assist in a variety of projects in cooperation with youth such as home repair and surplus food distribution,
- provide intergenerational activities, including tutoring youth and supporting immunization efforts,
- address environmental concerns,
- assist individuals aged 20-35 with disabilities as companions in order to return to the work force, and
- offer opportunities for youth to participate to assist seniors with particular needs and requirements.

ACTION has consulted with the National Directors Association of Older American Volunteer Programs in developing this strategy, as well as with a number of national associations with interests in providing meaningful service opportunities for youth.

How Will the Program Be Administered?

ACTION, through both its state offices and affiliations with various national organizations, will identify appropriate projects where individuals will serve. In most cases, after a project has been identified by state or national office, grants will be made either directly to local projects or to national private nonprofit associations, which in turn will allocate resources to local affiliations (such as the Boys' and Girls' Club). In several cases, VISTA Summer Volunteers will be assigned directly to local projects where full-year VISTA Volunteers also serve. This will enable the activities to continue after the summer volunteers leave.

This approach will assure quality control (good assignments in worthwhile projects), enable the program to be delivered by this summer, and focus specifically on locally-defined needs and programs through local institutions.

In all cases, the volunteers' day-to-day activities will be supervised by the local sponsoring organization which will also handle all local administration associated with the effort.

ACTION will work with its existing universe of projects and organizations--over 2,000 projects nationwide which provide volunteers at over 50,000 local sites and organizations. In addition, ACTION will work with a number of national youth service organizations to accomplish the program.

For this summer program, ACTION envisions projects in over 500 communities around the country (average of 10 per state), involving 10,000 young Americans on a full-time basis and over 10,000 Older Americans on a part-time basis.

For youth, ACTION's existing program structure under VISTA, Student Community Service, and Part C of Title I (demonstration programs) will provide the program structure to accomplish this effort. For older volunteers, ACTION's Retired Senior Volunteer, Foster Grandparent, and Senior Companion Programs will provide the vehicles for mounting expanded senior volunteer efforts. These programs are well established, and ACTION has existing administrative structure and support to assist projects under these program umbrellas.

What Will Volunteers Receive?

Youth engaged in service on a full-time basis will receive:

- a payment of about \$620 per month to cover living expenses;
- on-site training and skill development in a variety of technical and other areas;
- a meaningful service opportunity, an experience that will translate to a life of service;
- coverage under FECA and tort claims; and
- ongoing support and supervision from a variety of local organizations addressing critical social and economic needs.

Retired Older Americans with sufficient income will participate without stipends; funds will be used for the administrative and out-of-pocket costs associated with providing over 500,000 hours of volunteer service during the summer. Low-income Older Americans will receive a small stipend (\$2.45 per hour) under ACTION's existing program structure.

ACTION's program structure for Older American programs also provides on-site training, meals for low-income volunteers, and various community support systems provided by local institutions and organizations. Such support will continue under this summer of service.

Costs

The cost of this proposal is an additional \$23.5 million to be allocated from the Administration's economic stimulus package related to summer employment. This will support all stipend and related support costs for youth service (\$20 million) and Older American Programs (\$3.5 million). ACTION envisions an average of 10 weeks of service over the summer, with some variation based on local project requirements.

Process

Once this plan is approved, ACTION's state offices will be charged with identifying suitable projects to provide these service opportunities, including necessary recruitment at the local level. The headquarters office will arrange with nonprofit national associations to assist in the delivery. Grants and project approvals will be provided by mid-April. ACTION state staff will provide ongoing technical assistance during the summer, and will monitor the performance of these efforts. A nationwide report will be prepared at the end of the summer documenting the activity; this should prove useful in future discussions regarding the National Service initiative.

Timing

The timing for conducting any meaningful program effort this summer is critical. ACTION believes that project approvals must occur no later than April 15 in order to finalize meaningful summer service opportunities at the local level and to recruit individuals to meet those needs.

Alternatives

ACTION has the state office structure and interest to assist with any other possible national service efforts over the summer. For example, in Alaska ACTION has an agreement with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to create apprenticeships during the summer for low-income youth (Resource Apprenticeship Program for Students (RAPS)). BLM pays all direct costs for VISTA Volunteers on the project. A number of private, public, and Alaskan Native organizations provide financial and related support to this project.

Working with a number of Federal agencies, particularly those with additional resources under the economic stimulus package, further opportunities exist for ACTION's involvement. We can provide the local delivery structure for involving volunteers where other agencies might pay the costs because of the relationship to fulfilling their mission.

In the past, ACTION volunteers have supported programs with other federal funds in areas such as environmental initiatives, immunization efforts, program support in public housing, and child assistance programs.



OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

1100 VERMONT AVENUE, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20525

March 4, 1993

*Must call
Judy by
Monday*

TO: Eli Segal
Director
Office of National Service

FROM: John Seal *John Seal*
Acting Director

SUBJECT: Summer Intergenerational Funding Proposal

ACTION's authorizing law, the Domestic Volunteer Service Act, includes wide-ranging program authority under Title I, Part C for its Special Volunteer Programs. While its authority is both broad and permissive (see attached legal opinion), its funding has been limited through the appropriations process to one-time drug abuse prevention grants in the last few years.

For this fiscal year, the appropriation under Title I, Part C is \$982,000. In the previous four years, we have conducted at least two competitive grant award cycles with additional funds directed to unsolicited project proposals. This year we decided to go with a single competitive process for one-time, drug abuse prevention grants totalling \$500,000, leaving the balance of \$482,000 for special project purposes.

Now that the President has announced a Summer of Service initiative for this year, I am considering an ACTION staff proposal to allocate the remaining \$482,000 of Part C funds to complement this summer effort with a Senior-Youth Volunteer Partnership. We can develop and implement a national-scope, summer initiative to involve senior volunteers and youth volunteers working together to respond to the needs of their communities. ACTION already supports youth service and the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), so this proposal builds on both of these on-going efforts. This intergenerational initiative would be apart from the \$1.2 million supplemental request for approximately 600 VISTA Summer Associates proposed in the President's Summer of Service budget.

Specifically, we propose:

- approximately 10 grants of \$50,000 each for sponsors to build local alliances between youth-serving organizations and the base of able older Americans for operations this summer

ACTION'S MISSION

To stimulate voluntary citizen participation in addressing the needs of American communities, particularly those of the poor, the disadvantaged and the elderly.

- emphasis areas for the volunteer service activity to mirror the President's priorities; i.e., disadvantaged youth, education, health, environment, literacy, housing, economic development, etc.
- informing the Appropriations Committees of our intent to award grants for purposes other than drug abuse prevention; preliminary contact with the Committee staffs indicates that we have an opportunity for their agreement and if they should disagree, we can still proceed with inter-generational grants having an anti-drug abuse emphasis.

This limited number of projects would permit us to establish a workable technical assistance mechanism to support the program development process. It will also allow better assessment of overall program effectiveness regarding:

- (1) developing partnerships which continue independent of government resources;
- (2) demonstrating how senior resources can expand the scope of youth service initiatives; and
- (3) demonstrating how youth and seniors can contribute to helping meet one another's needs.

Please keep in mind the flexibility of the Part C authority and our capacity to rapidly develop and support other opportunities which you may want to pursue.

I basically want to get your reaction to this idea. We are excited about its potential to complement the Summer of Service theme with existing FY 1993 funds. If you concur, we will immediately develop the detailed implementation strategy.

Attachment

cc: Rick Allen

*How diff from current community
and senior likely*



ACTION

1100 VERMONT AVENUE, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20525

February 23, 1993

MEMORANDUM

TO: John Seal
Acting Director

FROM: Stewart A. Davis 
Acting General Counsel

SUBJECT: Authority Under Title I, Part C of the DVSA

This memorandum is in response to your oral request for a legal opinion concerning ACTION's program authority under Title I, Part C of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act (DVSA), as amended.

Part C, Special Volunteer Programs, at Sec. 121 of the DVSA, 42 U.S.C.A. § 4991 (West Supp. 1992) Congressional Statement of Purpose states:

Sec. 121. This part provides for special emphasis and demonstration volunteer programs, together with appropriate powers and responsibilities designed to assist in the development and coordination of such programs. The purpose of this part is to strengthen and supplement efforts to meet a broad range of needs, particularly those related to poverty, by encouraging and enabling persons from all walks of life and from all age groups to perform meaningful and constructive volunteer service in agencies, institutions, and situations where the application of human talent and dedication may help to meet such needs. It is the further purpose of this part to provide technical and financial assistance to encourage voluntary organizations and volunteer efforts at the national, State, and local level. (emphasis added)

The above statutory language and the legislative history are consistent and clear that this provision of the DVSA was a mandate of broad and unfettered discretionary authority to the Director of ACTION to establish, operate, and provide technical and financial assistance for special or demonstration volunteer programs.

ACTION'S MISSION

To stimulate voluntary citizen participation in addressing the needs of American communities particularly those of the poor, the disadvantaged and the elderly

To emphasize the expansive intent of this section, which was to widen the impact and focus of the ACTION programs,¹ Congress amended the section in 1984 from "broad range of human, social and environmental needs" to be all inclusive by substituting "broad range of needs", and providing for technical and financial assistance to encourage voluntary organizations and volunteer efforts at the national, State and local level.

S. Rep. No. 182, 98th Cong., 2nd Sess. 6-7, *reprinted in* 1984 U.S. Code Cong. & AD. News 454, 459 states:

PART C-SPECIAL VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

It is the fundamental premise of Part C that demonstration volunteer programs allow the Director the flexibility to design and implement new programs consistent with the intent of this Act. As stated in the Act, the Committee believes volunteers in Special Volunteer Programs should be serving in programs which strengthen and supplement efforts to meet a broad range of human needs, particularly those related to poverty.

[page 7]

Section 10 of the bill adds to Section 121 of the Act providing technical and financial assistance to encourage volunteerism at the federal, state and local level as a purpose. The cooperation of volunteer organizations and efforts in the community will provide more effective and efficient service.

Thus, Part C, special and demonstration programs were obviously intended to meet the most broad range of human needs, particularly, but not solely, related to poverty. The flexibility of the Director of ACTION to determine appropriate programs under Part C of Title I appears only to be limited by appropriations.

¹ S. Rep. No. 311, 93rd Cong., 1st Sess., *reprinted in* 1973 U.S. Code Cong. & AD. News 2155, 2209.

406-4880

OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET**LABOR, VETERANS AND EDUCATION DIVISION****DATE:**2/19/93**TO:**Jack**FROM:**Sam**COMMENTS:**

Here is ACTIONS
pass back. My sources at
ACTION indicate all is calm +
quiet over there. Also John Seal
15 out-of-town!

NUMBER OF PAGES
(including cover)2**LVE DIVISION FAX NUMBER: 202-395-1596****CONFIRMATION:** Division Office 202-395-6150
Education Branch 202-395-5880
Labor Branch 202-395-3262
Veterans Branch 202-395-4300

ACTION FY 1994 Passback

(\$ in thousands)

18-Feb-93

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Budget Authority	\$201,526	\$206,738	\$211,954	\$217,375	\$222,613	\$228,870
Outlays	\$199,389	\$204,104	\$209,516	\$214,963	\$220,283	\$226,129
FTE	429	422	416	416	416	416

Current Services Baseline	BA	\$201,526	\$206,325	\$214,635	\$220,855	\$227,242	\$233,823
Pay Raise Adjustments	BA	\$0	(\$738)	(\$1,158)	(\$1,461)	(\$1,814)	(\$2,063)
FTE Reduction Savings	BA	\$0	(\$435)	(\$694)	(\$714)	(\$734)	(\$756)
Admin Overhead Reduction	BA	\$0	(\$414)	(\$649)	(\$1,305)	(\$2,061)	(\$2,134)
Passback Baseline	BA	\$201,526	\$206,738	\$211,954	\$217,375	\$222,613	\$228,870
	OL	\$199,389	\$204,104	\$209,516	\$214,963	\$220,283	\$226,129

Current Services Baseline FTE		433	433	433	433	433	433
FTE Reduction		-4	-11	-17	-17	-17	-17
Passback FTE Level		429	422	416	416	416	416

23 Feb 93
1123 hours



OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

1100 VERMONT AVENUE, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20005

Facsimile Transmittal Sheet

TO: JACK LEW

LOCATION: _____

FAX #: 456-6720 PHONE #: _____

FROM: JOHN SEAR

COMMENTS: PER OUR CONVERSATION

NUMBER OF PAGES (INCLUDING COVER SHEET) 2

IF THERE IS ANY PROBLEM WITH THIS TRANSMISSION, PLEASE CALL
(202) 606-4880.

ACTION'S MISSION

To stimulate voluntary citizen participation in addressing the needs of American communities,
particularly those of the poor, the disadvantaged and the elderly

VISTA SUMMER ASSOCIATES FACT SHEET

Program: As part of the economic stimulus package, under the Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) program located in ACTION, 600 individuals aged 18 and above will spend a summer of service addressing the needs of low-income communities. These VISTA Summer Associates will work with full-time VISTA volunteers on a number of existing projects.

Service Activities: VISTA summer associates will focus on the broad needs of children, including: building houses through Habitat for Humanity; serving as tutors in literacy programs with Literacy Volunteers of America and Laubach Literacy International affiliations; assisting in inner-city weatherization and other conservation projects; providing direct services within shelters or transitional housing for the homeless, in conjunction with affiliates of the National Coalition for the Homeless; serving in food bank arrangements affiliated with the Second Harvest national food bank network; and serving with regional Rural Community Assistance Projects in surveys and outreach related to water and waste water systems.

Cost: The Summer Associate Program will cost \$1.2 million, or \$2,000 per volunteer. In addition to payments to volunteers, projects will receive support funds for supervision, transportation, and related costs. ACTION will administer the activity at no additional cost.

Benefits to Service Participants: VISTA Summer Associate engaged in service on a full-time basis will receive: a payment averaging \$620 per month to cover living expenses; on-site training and skill development in a variety of technical and other areas; a meaningful service opportunity, an experience that will translate to a life of service; coverage under FECA and tort claims; and ongoing support and supervision from a variety of local organizations addressing critical social and economic needs. No post-service stipend will be provided under this program.

Other Information: (1) VISTA Summer Associates will be recruited locally from the low-income communities being served as well as from ACTION's national recruitment system. (2) The programs will last an average of 10 weeks over the summer, with some variation reflecting local community needs. (3) The appropriation under the economic stimulus package for national service is being made to the Commission on National and Community Service which will transfer monies to ACTION to accomplish this program.

Jack

Interesting memo.

(1) Could we track down hard info on # of VISTAS who go off welfare after VISTA

(2) Can we write language that offers those not receiving public assistance at beginning of VISTA team the same loan forgiveness benefits of our grant programs?

(3) Via a continuing focus on not recruiting, no of VISTA volunteers on welfare will go down -- which to my untrained way of thinking is consistent with our notion of "service" -- a probably an important element of "welfare reform."

(4) See last paragraph. We ~~will~~

should try to find out how many
programs getting JTPA funds (\$13 million
in services) have people on public
assistance.

- (5) Review chart carefully ~~with a view toward overall~~
with a view toward overall
cost differential -- especially in
light of our meeting with
Pete .

El.



OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

1100 VERMONT AVENUE, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20525

March 23, 1993

TO: Eli Segal
Director
Office of National Service

FROM: John Seal *John Seal*
Acting Director

SUBJECT: Discussion Follow-Up

In response to our last discussion yesterday about issues surrounding public assistance and educational benefits in relation to National Service, I am attaching two documents for your review:

- background on the income disregard provision for VISTA, including the provision's intent and impact
- a table illustrating comparative program features of the current VISTA program and the centerpiece National Service program as we know it today

A strong rationale for VISTA's income disregard is that it allows individuals from the low income community to participate in the program and removing the disregard would significantly block their future enrollment.

It is also important to remember these facts about VISTA:

- We do not view VISTA as a "job" and the overwhelming number of Volunteers do not either. The average length of service for a VISTA Volunteer is 18 months and normal turnover for VISTA projects is 4 to 5 years.
- While educational loan forgiveness and deferment are definitely issues that arise in our VISTA recruitment contacts, they are not the primary motivations for people to join VISTA and we would not want them to become disproportionately important to the program.
- A large percentage of VISTA Volunteers continue their public service long after leaving VISTA. Almost 100 percent of a sample of over 800 VISTA Volunteers contacted as part of a recent evaluation indicated that if they had to choose again, they would still choose to be a VISTA Volunteer.

Attachments

ACTION'S MISSION

To stimulate voluntary citizen participation in addressing the needs of American communities, particularly those of the poor, the disadvantaged and the elderly.

"INCOME EXCLUSION" FOR VISTA VOLUNTEERS

Background

The Domestic Volunteer Service Act (DVSA) has a long-standing provision, enacted in 1973, that enables low-income individuals already receiving government benefits to participate as VISTA Volunteers without losing those benefits. Section 404(g) of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act states:

"Notwithstanding any other provision of law except as may be provided expressly in limitation of this subsection, payments to volunteers under this Act shall not in any way reduce or eliminate the level of or eligibility for assistance or services any such volunteer may be receiving under any governmental program."

This Section means, in effect, that payments made to VISTA Volunteers may not be counted as income in arriving at eligibility for (or amount of benefits) a Volunteer is entitled to receive. A person's level of benefits or services may not be reduced on account of allowances paid to VISTA Volunteers by ACTION.

Further, the statute clearly indicates that the exclusion applies to benefits under any governmental program. The legislative history specifically lists social security, medicare, medicaid, public assistance, public housing, and food stamps as examples of programs to which the income exclusion applies. In addition, the legislative history refers to programs "at any governmental level," which makes it clear that State and local programs are covered as well as federally funded programs. This interpretation has been upheld by court cases and has been confirmed in the past by the Assistant Attorney General of the United States.

Rationale for Income Exclusion Provision

As provided, the income exclusion provision has several rationales:

1. Low-income persons should be encouraged to participate in programs of voluntary service and such a provision serves as an incentive to accomplish that goal.
2. Volunteer service provides a major benefit to the Volunteer as well as to the community. Low-income Volunteers and their families should continue to receive throughout their service the benefits to which they were otherwise entitled before becoming Volunteers. Service in VISTA will enable low-income Volunteers to gain skills and experience which they can use in the job market after service.

3. Many Volunteers have families. VISTA allowances, which are less than the minimum wage, are made to the individual, irrespective of the size or income status of the family. Eliminating the "income exclusion" provision would serve as a powerful disincentive for participation as Volunteers by this group.

Major Effects of the "Income Exclusion" Provision

1. To be eligible for the income exclusion provision, one must have been eligible for, or receiving assistance, prior to enrolling as a VISTA Volunteer. Enrollment in VISTA, with its allowance levels set at an average of 105% of the poverty index for a single individual, does not entitle anyone to receive public assistance for which they were not previously eligible.
2. **Individuals with families** who meet the income eligibility requirements receive payments under Aid to Families With Dependent Children (AFDC). These payments vary significantly. Families with one needy adult and two children generally receive between \$300-600 per month, depending upon the State. Volunteers who are single are ineligible for AFDC.

ACTION's View Concerning Income Exclusion

ACTION believes there is a strong rationale for retaining the income exclusion benefit. The practical impact is primarily to enable low-income individuals with families to volunteer. The VISTA experience enables such individuals to gain a valuable work experience, one that frequently enables them to move on to occupations with nonprofit and public sector organizations and, in some cases, off of welfare. This is consistent with the President's stated goals for welfare reform.

Other Points

1. With regard to the impact of significant postservice benefits under a new National Service program and its relationship to any income disregard provision, it is difficult to determine this impact in the absence of specifics about postservice benefit determinations for VISTA Volunteers in the future. In general, however, individuals who participate as a result of the "income exclusion" provision today will generally not benefit from college loan cancellations. Further, many of these same individuals, given their age and backgrounds, will not benefit from a postservice payment targeted for employment training.

2. The National and Community Service Act also contains an income disregard provision. It references the Job Training Partnership Act, which states: "Allowances, earnings and payments to individuals participating in programs under this Act shall not be considered as income for the purposes of determining eligibility for and the amount of income transfer and in-kind aid furnished under any Federal or federally assisted program based on need, other than programs under the Social Security Act."

PROGRAM COMPARISON: VISTA AND NATIONAL SERVICE

Program Element	VISTA	National Service Proposal**
Eligibility	18 years of age or older; U.S. citizen or permanent resident; average age is about 37 today	Focus on 18-25 year olds
Term of Service	One year enrollment; possible service up to 5 years; current average service is 18 months	One year period (?) Two year period (?)
Program Focus	Anti-Poverty	Broad community service tied to tuition/training benefits
Type of Assignment	Resource mobilizer; neighborhood and organizational capacity building	Broad range of service activities
Placement Mechanism	Locally within own communities (presently 80%); nationally through VISTA recruitment system (presently 20%)	Locally and possibly state (?)
Matching Requirement	No legislative requirement; most sponsors contribute supervision, transportation, space, supplies, etc.	Requirement for matching of subsistence and related direct support (?)
Living Allowance	Average of 105% of the poverty index for a single individual; actual rates are adjusted for cost-of-living (average \$620 mo)	(?)

** Many questions of equity and difference continued to be raised. We fill out this chart not to make judgments or put down wrong information on the NS volunteers but simply to structure a way to discuss the equity and difference issues.

(cont.)

PROGRAM COMPARISON: VISTA AND NATIONAL SERVICE

Program Element	VISTA	National Service Proposal
Post-Service Benefits: Prior to college	\$1140 in readjustment stipend for each year of service with no restrictions on use	Up to \$5,000 (for non-loan cancellation participant) for each service year for employment training or further education
Student Loans	Deferment of repayment, not to exceed 3 years, while borrower is serving in VISTA; partial cancellation of Perkins Loans at 15% of the principal and interest for each of first & second years of service, and 20% for each of the third and fourth years of service; partial cancellation of Stafford loans authorized under Higher Ed. Act Amendments of 1992, but not funded.	Up to \$10,000 maximum loan cancellation for each year of service.
Health Insurance; Workmen's Compensation; Tort Claims	Comprehensive coverage	Comprehensive health coverage (?); no compensation or liability coverage(?)
Income Disregard	Allowances do not reduce or eliminate level of, eligibility for, <u>any</u> public assistance program	None (?)
Child care	Not provided by VISTA; those eligible for child care through public assistance maintain that eligibility	To be provided (?)
Treatment as Federal Employee	For purposes of coverage under FECA, tort claims, service credit for retirement, leave and seniority in the Federal civil service, and non-competitive hiring in the Federal service	None
Training	Four days of pre-service orientation; in-service training primarily by sponsor	To be defined

from Sherbidge
in-service training

3/8/93

Eli Seagal,

Simply stated, being a Vista Volunteer has changed my life. I know through my change others around me have also changed. I love to show others that giving my time to national service serves a purpose. Volunteers are used to get a job done that would not otherwise be a priority. Such as empowering low-income persons, advocating for the homeless, and filling gaps caused by our increasing State & federal financial aid cuts.

I have become personally and emotionally involved in providing service to my community. I will continue in this direction even after my service as a Vista Volunteer. This is evidence of lasting effects of volunteerism.

Maureen Walt
Vista Volunteer
Maine State Housing Authority.

MEMORANDUM

To: Judy Harrington, Senior ACTION Liaison to the White House
Fr: Kerry Gurtler, Public Affairs Liaison
Re: "Stakeholders" in ACTION
Dt: February 10, 1993

Congressional Stakeholders: SEE ATTACHED SENATE & HOUSE COMMITTEE LISTS

Traditionally, the chairmen of the House and Senate committees and subcommittees listed at the end of this memo have been the strongest congressional supporters of ACTION programs. In addition to SENATORS EDWARD KENNEDY, CHRISTOPHER DODD and TOM HARKIN, HARRIS WOFFORD and PAUL SIMON have also played significant roles. On the House side, Representatives MAJOR OWENS and MATTHEW MARTINEZ have a history of support.

As Chairman of the Senate Appropriation Committee, Senator Harkin has spearheaded a consistent effort to obtain more funding for the Senior Companion Program (SCP). This program was started in 1974, later than ACTION's other senior programs, and did not receive the financial boost that human service programs did in the 60s. Harkin has identified the SCP's ability to assist in a reduction of health care costs as a key to its value. For FY '89 the Senate Appropriation Committee raised the SCP budget by \$2,029,000 and then another \$1,546,000 the following year. This year the committee appropriated \$2,273,000 more than was budgeted for FY '92.

Senator PAUL SIMON led the effort in 1986 to authorize a VISTA Literacy Corps for which funds would be earmarked. *(Judy Wagner, Senior Staff)*

Senator ORRIN HATCH has been generally supportive of ACTION, though he withdrew support when President Reagan moved to dismantle the VISTA program in the early 80s.

ACTION as an agency has been highly conservative about congressional outreach over the last decade though ACTION programs maintain strong constituencies in every Congressional District in the country. There has been more frequent contact at the state level between state directors and congressional district offices than there has been on a federal level between the D.C. office and offices on Capitol Hill.

For more information regarding congressional support, please contact Nora Manning in ACTION Congressional Affairs at (202) 606-4872.

- more -

Older American Volunteer Program (OAVP) Stakeholders:

The Retired Seniors Volunteer Program (RSVP) has at least one program in every Congressional District and the 465,000+ participants are vocal, quickly mobilized and send large numbers of constituent mail to their Senators and Representatives. OAVP's claim 96% of ACTION volunteers. There has been tension between ACTION and congressional offices in the past when funding has been cut.

Fran Butler has served as a lobbyist for all OAVP's. Formerly, she worked for Senator Cranston and participated in the drafting of the original Domestic Volunteer Service Act in 1973. OAVP was her first client when she started her own business at home in the late 70s. Butler has served as an especially strong advocate of RSVP and is in regular contact with ACTION.

Each OAVP has a National Project Director Association that serves as a lobbying group for the program; there are also regional and state associations. These groups provide information to program directors and also lobby Congress.

Chain of Command for OAVP's outside of Washington, D.C.:

ACTION Regional Director:	Project approval, project accountability, training and technical and administrative support.
ACTION State Director:	In charge of recruitment, project development and monitoring; represents volunteerism in the community and state.
Local Project Director:	In charge of fundraising at the state and local level. Usually paid by sponsor.
(Coordinator:)	There is not necessarily a coordinator in each project. In NY, for example, there is a statewide FGP that utilizes 3,000 volunteers and requires a coordinator.
Local Station Manager:	Monitors stations. (Examples: for FGP stations are schools and Head Start facilities, for SCP they are the clients' homes.) Programs pay for station managers.
Volunteers:	RSVP's, FGP's, SCP's.

Stallholders

**List of Attendees for ACTION OAVP Task Force Meeting
February 23, 1993**

1. Ms. Kay Banister Schaeffer
Wilder Foundation
1650-23rd Avenue, N.W.
New Brighton, Minnesota 55112
PH: (612) 636-6693

2. Mr. Marc Freedman
Director of Special Projects
Public/Private Ventures
2742 Martin Luther King Way
Berkeley, California 94703
PH: (510) 704-8832

Policy Experts

3. Laura Wilson, Ph.D.
Director, Center on Aging
University of Maryland
2304 Perh Building
College Park, Maryland 20742
PH: (301) 405-2469

4. Ms. Fran Butler
Washington Representative
Older American Volunteer Program
National Directors Association
11481 Bingham Terrace
Reston, Virginia 22091
PH: (703) 860-9570

Lobbyist

5. Mr. Dwight Rasmussen
National Association of
Senior Companion Project Directors
2001 South State Street; Room S-1500
Salt Lake City, Utah 84190-2300
PH: (801) 468-2775

6. Ann Smith
National Association of Foster
Grandparent Program Directors
7500 Silver Star Road, Bldg. 9
Orlando, Florida 32818
PH: (407) 298-4180

ASSN. PRESIDENTS

7. Maureen Mulligan
National Association of
Passaic County RSVP Directors, Inc.
703 Main Street
Patterson, New Jersey 07503
PH: (201) 977-2618

Volunteers In Service To America (VISTA) Stakeholders:

By every account VISTA suffered tremendous strain following President Reagan's appointment of Tom Pauken as Director of ACTION in 1981 and many take pride in the fact that VISTA survived that period. A group called Friends of VISTA is comprised of former VISTA volunteers; they have a regular newsletter and have attempted to stay involved in shaping policy at ACTION. Friends of VISTA have mobilized against senior ACTION administrators when they believed that their decisions were not in the agency's best interest. For this reason, ACTION employee contact with Friends of VISTA has been discouraged.

There is much support on a grassroots level: VISTA recruits 80% of its participants through sponsors on the local level while only 20% are recruited through regional offices and the 800 number.

Friends of VISTA
1000 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20007
(202) 342-0519

Board of Directors:

Sargent Shriver, Co-Chairperson
George Romney, Co-Chairperson

Richard Bank
Robert Collier
Shayne Del Cohen
Pablo Eisenberg
Arthur Flemming
Mildred Jeffrey
William Josephson
Francis Luzzatto
Mimi Mager

Noel McCaman
Wayne Maisel
Jeffrey Newman
David Parr
Tricia Rubackey*
Hans Spiegel
Peter Waite
Dorothy Wexler
Lisa Woll

Peter Yarrow
Richard Yop

* Tricia Rubackey, Chairperson, Friends of VISTA Executive Committee (202) 408-1080

HOUSE APPROPRIATION

Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education and Related Agencies:

William H. Natcher (D-KY) - chrm
Neal Smith (D-IA)
David Obey (D-WI)
Louis Stokes (D-OH)
Steny H. Hoyer (D-MD)
Nancy Pelosi (D-CA)
Nita Lowey (D-NY)
Jose E. Serrano (D-NY)
Rosa DeLauro (D-CT)

John E. Porter (R-IL)
C. W. Bill Young (R-FL)
Helen Bentley (R-MD)
Henry Bonilla (R-TX)

HOUSE AUTHORIZATION

Committee on Education and Labor: see attached sheet

Subcommittee on Select Education and Civil Rights: (VISTA)

Major R. Owens (D-NY) - chrm
Donald Payne (D-NJ)
Pat Williams (D-MT)
C. Robert Scott (D-VA)
Thomas Sawyer (D-OH)
Vacancy

Cass Ballenger (R-NY) - ranking min.
Bill Barrett (R-NE)
Harris W. Fawell (R-IL)

Subcommittee on Human Resources: (OAVP)

Matthew G. Martinez (D-CA) - chrm
Dale E. Kildee (D-MI)
Major R. Owens (D-NY)
Robert E. Andrews (D-NJ)
Robert C. Scott (D-VA)
Lynn Woolsey (D-CA)
Carlos Romero-Barcelo (D-PR)
Scotty Baesler (D-KY)

Paul B. Henry (R-MI)
Susan Molinari (R-NY)
Bill Barrett (R-NE)
Vacancy

SENATE APPROPRIATION

Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies:

Tom Harkin (D-IA) - chrm
Robert C. Byrd (D-WVA)
Ernest F. Hollings (D-SC)
Daniel K. Inouye (D-HI)
Dale Bumpers (D-AR)
Harry Reid (D-NV)
Herbert H. Kohl (D-WI)
Patty Murray (D-WA)

Arlen Specter (R-PA) - ranking min.
Mark O. Hatfield (R-OR)
Ted Stevens (R-AR)
Thad Cochran (R-MS)
Slade Gorton (R-WA)
Connie Mack (R-FL)
Christopher S. Bond (R-MO)

SENATE AUTHORIZATION

Committee on Labor and Human Resources:

Edward M. Kennedy (D-MA) - chrm
Claiborne Pell (D-RI)
Howard M. Metzenbaum (D-OH)
Christopher J. Dodd (D-CT)
Paul Simon (D-IL)
Tom Harkin (D-IA)
Barbara Mikulski (D-MD)
Jeff Bingaman (D-NM)
Paul D. Wellstone (D-MN)
Harris Wofford (D-PA)

Nancy Kassebaum (R-KS) - ranking min.
James M. Jeffords (R-VT)
Dan Coats (R-IN)
Judd Gregg (R-NH)
Strom Thurmond (R-SC)
Orrin Hatch (R-UT)
Dave Durenberger (R-MN)

Subcommittee on Children, Family, Drugs and Alcoholism:

Christopher Dodd (D-CT) - chrm
Claiborne Pell (D-RI)
Tom Harkin (D-IA)
Paul D. Wellstone (D-MN)
Harris Wofford (D-PA)
Edward M. Kennedy (D-MA)

Dan Coats (R-IN)
Orrin Hatch (R-UT)
Nancy Kassebaum (R-KS)
James Jeffords (R-VT)
Dave Durenberger (R-MN)
Strom Thurmond (R-SC)

**CONCEPT PAPER ON ACTION'S INVOLVEMENT
IN CARRYING OUT NATIONAL SERVICE PROPOSALS**

**OPTIONS FOR DISCUSSION
February 10, 1993**

ACTION and National Service

ACTION's experienced administrative and program staff can contribute to rapidly and successfully initiating a National Service program by:

- Increasing the number of volunteers under proven program models such as VISTA.
- Providing an infrastructure for administering other National Service initiatives proposed by the President.
- Helping to certify local volunteer service opportunities for student loan payments.
- Generating cooperative relationships with local communities, stressing local participation in funding.

For follow-up, contact:
Judy Harrington, OPP-AR
at ACTION, 202/606-4880

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Introduction

This concept paper provides a proposal, with options, for a role for ACTION in the Administration's National Service initiative.

Why Consider ACTION in the National Service Proposal?

ACTION, the Federal Domestic Volunteer Agency, supports over 2,000 volunteer projects across the country with a total budget of \$201 million and a Federal staff of 420 employees, the majority of whom are located in Regional and State offices. These projects, through the placement of local volunteers, reach out to over 50,000 local public and non-profit organizations aligned with the concept of volunteer service.

ACTION's mission is to stimulate voluntary citizen participation in addressing the needs of American communities, particularly those of the poor, the disadvantaged, and the elderly.

ACTION's entire program structure and philosophy is in addressing community needs and, as a means toward that end, in providing structure and support for volunteer projects developed by local organizations. Thus, ACTION is in a strong position to identify, help develop, and sanction bona fide community service placements.

ACTION's strengths in a national service environment are significant:

1. **The maturity and proven worth of its programs.** VISTA, RSVP, FGP, and SCP have successfully worked through issues related to the administration of volunteer service programs. Recognizing the importance of sound local project delivery and experience, as well as the importance of continuous improvement and renewal, ACTION's programs provide a cooperative, structured and creative environment for volunteers as well as projects. The Agency's management culture emphasizes partnership with local communities (including non-profit and public agencies) in fostering sound volunteer administration. Further, a variety of program models have been tested, evaluated, and proven over the last several decades, many of which have formed the basis for expanded activities, such as service learning programs and urban youth corps.

2. **Management capacity.** ACTION has significant experience in sound management of volunteer programs. Fraud, waste, and abuse have not been a major issue with ACTION programs for over a decade. Further, the local control of projects ensures that they address community needs and do not displace employed workers.
3. **Field structure.** The staff is dispersed, experienced, and knowledgeable. Roughly 60 percent of ACTION's staff are located in 47 State and 9 regional field offices. These staff are very familiar with the needs of local communities in their areas and how to leverage the resources most effectively to meet those needs.
4. **Local acceptance and support.** ACTION's programs, although by design not the Agency, have name recognition locally. VISTA, FGP, RSVP, and SCP are well known in local communities and particularly in low-income areas. All local organizations already contribute support for ACTION's volunteer programs in a public/private partnership. Each of ACTION's programs have a history of far exceeding their matching requirements for non-federal support.

Some have argued that ACTION's programs and projects are overly monitored and that paperwork requirements are excessive. The Agency believes that by reducing Congressional mandates in the Domestic Volunteer Service Act and by internal program management decisions, this perception can be changed while still maintaining strong program accountability.

Judgments will be required concerning the role of two other central organizations potentially interested in National Service -- the Commission on National and Community Service and the Points of Light Foundation. Both were established within the last few years to help promote service to the country. There are significant needs beyond the major program administration and delivery function that could be addressed by one or both of these organizations to help promote the Administration's service agenda.

Any Federal effort must also interact with the important work of the nonprofit sector, both public and private, in this country. The Federal goal should be to further encourage the development and contributions of this sector, not to replace or diminish it.

Fundamental Concepts Regarding National Service

Defining ACTION's role in National Service requires some definition of the principles of the Administration's program. This is not to prejudge the outcome of the current effort to develop the National Service proposal, but it is necessary to provide a context for reviewing the recommendations for a role for ACTION. A different concept of National Service could well lead to a potentially different role for the Agency.

This paper assumes the following regarding the National Service proposal:

1. Service should be based in communities across the country, with the activities determined, supported, and provided locally through a broad range of public and nonprofit organizations. There will not be a large, monolithic federal program, such as the Civilian Conservation Corps.
2. Service should be voluntary; it should encompass a range of full-time and part-time opportunities. Full-time service should include minor amounts for living expenses, as well as post-service stipends to help pay off college loans, to be used for college, or in some programs to be used for other legitimate specified purposes.
3. Full-time service will not be an entitlement open to all current or potential college students. Instead, the program will be defined more narrowly, with considerable care given to assure that meaningful service opportunities are available to those serving.
4. The service effort will be inclusive to Americans of all ages, and will reach out through Older American and student volunteer programs (e.g, ACTION's existing programs). National Service will not be defined simply as full-time stipended service. The Trust Fund itself, by definition, will be beneficial to those who have completed college and potential college enrollees, primarily youth, but non-college youth and Older Americans will be involved as an integral part of the effort.
5. The Federal administrative costs of the program will remain small; this will not become a major, large federal agency, but will instead be a program based on existing structures, primarily local.

Programs Providing Service Opportunities

The question exists as to what specific program opportunities will be available under the National Service proposal and how it will be administered. With regard to the full-time opportunities, the following guidelines are suggested:

1. There would be a range of service opportunities, all of which would be approved by a designated Federal agency. Service would be documented and verified by this agency, which would maintain a roster of projects and individual participation for loan verification and other purposes.
2. The specific number of service opportunities will depend upon the budget and a variety of program factors. In general, however, opportunities will expand in a number of existing programs including: Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), urban corps such as City Year in Boston, and State Conservation Corps programs. In addition, new opportunities will be available, such as working in schools, law enforcement, and a variety of other local, community-based efforts.
3. Some programs would receive Federal support through grants. Others, such as VISTA, would be operated under existing delivery mechanisms. All programs would be based locally and operated by local organizations.
4. The specific programs do not necessarily require Federal funding. Indeed, it is anticipated that some programs will be locally funded, and indeed all would be required to have local contributions, either cash or in-kind. For example, a school system might agree to provide support for individuals to serve as teacher aides. A designated Federal organization would certify that this was an appropriate assignment under the National Service program, specify the living allowance and other requirements that must be met by the school system, and arrange to verify successful completion of service and pay the postservice stipend for payment of education loans.

Loan Program and Its Administration

This paper does not address the question of what portion of individuals' education loans should be paid for through service. This policy question is determined by costs and consideration of broader questions of Federal aid to higher education.

From the service perspective, however, the procedures can be straightforward. The service agency would not be involved in any judgments about who receives loans and the management of the front-end processing. The service agency would, however, be responsible for the post-service activity related to loans. Specifically, upon completion of service by an individual volunteer, the Federal agency responsible for service would make a direct payment either

- to an institution designated by the individual (pre-college attendee who will be using the stipend to attend college); or
- to the holder of an individual's loan (post-college service). [If there is a National Trust established to administer a single Federal loan portfolio, the payment would be made to the Trust.]

[If the determination is made that the loan repayment should not be a fixed amount, but some percentage of the total loan, the agency could easily be informed of this by the applicable loan holder and then make the payment.]

This procedure would assure program integrity, that is, that the National Student Trust would be used only for education purposes following successful completion of a period of service. It would not rely on thousands of local organizations to be responsible for the certification of service and appropriate payment. It is simply not feasible to manage a trust arrangement through thousands of local organizations, many of whom may well be small nonprofit organizations which would be burdened by such administrative requirements. Further, there would be financial integrity and other concerns raised through such an approach.

Costs of National Service

The total costs of the National Service effort will depend upon the number of participants and the specific decisions concerning the range of cost items, such as living allowances and post-service stipends.

Although a number of possible administrative and funding procedures exist, one possibility is to have ACTION appropriated monies to cover the total Federal costs of the National Service effort. This would enable the Administration to monitor and track all costs from a single location on an ongoing basis.

In addition, State, local, and private contributions would be encouraged to flow into local programs. The ultimate size of the program (number of service participants and organizations)

will then depend upon its popularity and success at the local level. This is attractive both programmatically (if it isn't working locally it should not grow) and politically (the Administration can correctly argue that the ultimate size of the program will depend upon how successful it is, not on some preset Federal funding target).

The specific appropriations to ACTION would cover the following costs for full-time service:

1. Living allowances. This would vary some by program and local cost of living, but the goal would be to achieve an average of approximately \$620 per month (105% of the poverty level for a single individual).
2. Post-service stipend. A separate, aggregate ceiling could be placed on this activity, reflecting judgments about the student aid package made available through the Federal government. [Some programs may pay a direct stipend not targeted for education purposes.]
3. Health coverage as appropriate.
4. Local project support costs. In some cases, local projects will require Federal funds for supervision and management of the service program. In other cases, these amounts will be funded locally. Although minimum matching requirements should exist, it is not feasible to expect local institutions to cover all of the project support costs.
5. Training. Volunteers should receive pre-service and in-service training. The amount, and cost, will vary by program.

The total estimated cost for full-time service, less the postservice stipend, should be between \$11-13,000, including all supervision and other costs at the local level. Assuming a postservice stipend of \$5,000 per volunteer, the direct program costs for 60,000 full-time participants would be about \$1 billion. Most of the Federal monies would be distributed through project grants.

Part-time, non-stipended service should also be encouraged, as not everyone will be interested in full-time service. Part-time service costs are dependent upon policy judgments about loan cancellations and other items. Although not advocated in this paper, if part-time service qualifies for loan cancellations, the costs of part-time participation should still be less than 50% of the costs of full-time participation, as living allowances and certain other costs would be inappropriate.

Aside from the loan cancellation issue, part-time service can and should be expanded through a variety of Federal, State, and local mechanisms. ACTION's Student Community Service and Older American Programs should be considered for such expansion; other important efforts exist as well.

The issue is also raised as to Federal administrative costs for these programs. Although this will depend upon the size and specifics of the effort, ACTION already has a nationwide staff in place and the capacity to deliver expanded activities at very marginal cost increases. In general, Federal administrative costs under the above program description will remain minor.

Role of ACTION

ACTION could have a number of alternative roles in the administration of programs under the National Service Trust. Under one scenario, the responsibilities under the program structure described above could be as follows:

1. Identifying and certifying programs and projects for participation in National Service. This activity would be performed by ACTION State offices, who would be knowledgeable about the organizations and assignments. [Such certification is necessary not as a "Federal sanction," but simply to assure that taxpayers' funds would not be used for inappropriate activities.] Further, such certification also serves as a mechanism for controlling costs under the program.
2. Funding the local operation of service programs through project grants and, in the case of VISTA, operating the program through the approval of local projects and individual volunteers to address issues related to poverty.
3. Tracking individual participation in sanctioned programs to verify that service requirements have been met for loan cancellation and other purposes.
4. Providing technical assistance and support to local organizations and individuals who contribute to the service effort.
5. Encouraging State, local, and private support for National Service. Such support is mandatory in ACTION's existing programs.

Several Issues

There are many issues that require discussion concerning ACTION's potential involvement in the National Trust proposal. Several issues are identified below, but further discussions are required.

1. *What should be the role of ACTION if the National Trust is administered by another Federal agency?*

One logical view is that ACTION's programs should be expanded as important vehicles through which service under the National Service Trust would occur. ACTION has determined that over 4,000 VISTA Volunteers, 50,000 RSVP volunteers, 3,000 Senior Companions, and 2,000 Foster Grandparents could be added above existing program levels within a year, as well as new summer VISTA programs and expanded demonstration activities. It would cost an additional \$90 million in program funds in fiscal year 1994 to accomplish this expansion. The program flexibility exists to expand the level of participation beyond the 12-month period.

The fiscal year 1994 budget to be released in March for ACTION and other organizations will be a key signal of the Administration's plans for service and volunteer programs.

Further, ACTION already has statutory authority for and experience in administering other service and volunteer programs, beyond its current six programs, where additional potential for contribution to the service effort exists.

Full-time service through VISTA, as well as potentially part-time service through the Foster Grandparent or Senior Companion Programs, would result in credits that could be converted to payments toward the cost of postsecondary education for participants or their immediate family.

2. *Should postservice stipend payments for education purposes be provided only to the individual or extended to other family members?*

Involving other family members keeps the focus on postsecondary education while recognizing important roles of those volunteers who are not interested (e.g., because of age) or not able to pursue postsecondary education themselves. It also reinforces family support systems; helps focus people on making their own career choices based on their interests and abilities; and recognizes that the "forgotten half" should be encouraged to contribute to their communities through this mechanism.

A consideration to this approach is the increase in financial costs. Debate could also focus on the definition of "immediate family."

3. *Should postservice payments be provided to the volunteer, rather than the institution?*

Paying the institution provides an inexpensive management control. Payments to individuals, on the other hand, can create substantial management control weaknesses.

4. *What alternatives exist for the funding and operation of the National Student Trust fund?*

Among the many options, in addition to the one identified above, are:

- a) Set up a separate Trust Fund for loan cancellation requirements only, with no direct link to program costs.
 - b) Include the option that State and local governments, private businesses and individuals, and other entities could contribute directly to the Fund, possibly in exchange for providing service opportunities in a specific community.
5. *What should the role of States be in the effort?*

This is a major issue; and a suggestion is that the following principles should guide a role for the States:

1. The goal is to involve States and to encourage their participation and funding.
2. Administration of the Trust Fund must be done centrally; it makes no sense to set up 50 separate State systems.
3. States should receive monies for program delivery where appropriate, but not all Federal monies should pass through States. (Local communities must define and support the activities, and local projects should be sanctioned.)
4. States would be consulted and involved in the selection and sanctioning of all projects within the State.

6. *What should be done about the coordination of community service programs in other agencies, such as Defense, HUD, Education, and Labor?*

This initially requires a determination of whether program consolidations should be accomplished. At a minimum, we believe that there are opportunities for better coordination among the agencies and departments with programs in this area.

Summary

ACTION has considerable potential to contribute to the goals of the National Service Trust, perhaps as the Federal organization responsible for interacting on an ongoing basis with the thousands of local organizations where such service will occur. A specific role for the Agency needs to be considered as part of the development of the National Service proposal. Failure to use ACTION's resources and capabilities could result in duplication of systems which already exist, fragmentation of a major Administration initiative, and potential exclusion of the thousands of volunteers already providing valuable service to the nation. ACTION has the staff expertise, program and management systems, and enthusiasm to play a key role in the National Service initiative.

Background Concerning ACTION's Programs

ACTION's current programs, authorized under the Domestic Volunteer Service Act, are:

- o **Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA)** provides opportunities for Americans of all ages and backgrounds to serve full-time in addressing the needs of low-income communities.
 - ♦ VISTA Volunteers receive money for living expenses during service and a stipend at the completion of their service.
 - ♦ The program supports over 3,300 full-time volunteers in over 700 local projects at a cost of \$39 million. The current cost, including all support, is approximately \$12,000 per volunteer service year.
 - ♦ In 1994 VISTA will celebrate its 30th anniversary having enrolled approximately 100,000 volunteers on more than 12,000 anti-poverty projects across the nation.
- o **The Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)** provides older volunteers with service opportunities and is open to all seniors age 60 and older.
 - ♦ Over 430,000 Americans serve part-time as RSVP volunteers in over 750 projects across the country and are engaged in a wide variety of activities to address local community needs.
 - ♦ The budget for this program is approximately \$33.7 million; local organizations contribute an additional \$35 million in funds and in-kind contributions. The cost of the program is less than \$.50 per hour of service.
- o **The Foster Grandparent Program (FGP)** provides low-income, senior volunteers with modest stipends to serve with community projects that help children with special needs.
 - ♦ Over 20,000 Foster Grandparents participate in more than 260 projects around the country and contribute more than 21 million hours of service.

- ♦ The Federal cost of the program is \$64.8 million; State and local organizations contribute an additional \$29 million. The cost of the program is less than \$3.00 per hour of service.
- o The **Senior Companion Program (SCP)** provides low-income senior volunteers with modest stipends to serve in community projects assisting frail elderly and other seniors with special needs who are risk of institutionalization.
 - ♦ Over 10,000 volunteers contribute over 10 million hours of service at a cost to the Federal budget of \$29.5 million, with State and local organizations contributing an additional \$17 million. The cost of this program is also less than \$3.00 per hour of service.
- o The **Student Community Service Program** provides seed money to local non-profit organizations and universities and schools to initiate or expand activities that involve high school and college students in poverty-related community service activities.
 - ♦ Approximately 13,000 students currently contribute about a half million hours of service and participate in over 60 projects at a cost of less than \$1 million.
- o **Special Volunteer Programs** develop and demonstrate innovative approaches in volunteerism.
 - ♦ Recently, this authority has been primarily used for drug prevention activities; the budget is less than \$1 million.
 - ♦ In the most recent year, over 4,000 volunteers contributed over 350,000 hours of service under this program.

In addition to these current programs, ACTION has throughout its history supported a wide variety of community-based volunteer programs.

JAH

**CONCEPT PAPER ON ACTION'S INVOLVEMENT
IN CARRYING OUT NATIONAL SERVICE PROPOSALS**

**OPTIONS FOR DISCUSSION
February 10, 1993**

ACTION and National Service

ACTION's experienced administrative and program staff can contribute to rapidly and successfully initiating a National Service program by:

- Increasing the number of volunteers under proven program models such as VISTA.
- Providing an infrastructure for administering other National Service initiatives proposed by the President.
- Helping to certify local volunteer service opportunities for student loan payments.
- Generating cooperative relationships with local communities, stressing local participation in funding.

For follow-up, contact:
Judy Harrington, OPP-AR
at ACTION, 202/606-4880

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Introduction

This concept paper provides a proposal, with options, for a role for ACTION in the Administration's National Service initiative.

Why Consider ACTION in the National Service Proposal?

ACTION, the Federal Domestic Volunteer Agency, supports over 2,000 volunteer projects across the country with a total budget of \$201 million and a Federal staff of 420 employees, the majority of whom are located in Regional and State offices. These projects, through the placement of local volunteers, reach out to over 50,000 local public and non-profit organizations aligned with the concept of volunteer service.

ACTION's mission is to stimulate voluntary citizen participation in addressing the needs of American communities, particularly those of the poor, the disadvantaged, and the elderly.

ACTION's entire program structure and philosophy is in addressing community needs and, as a means toward that end, in providing structure and support for volunteer projects developed by local organizations. Thus, ACTION is in a strong position to identify, help develop, and sanction bona fide community service placements.

ACTION's strengths in a national service environment are significant:

1. **The maturity and proven worth of its programs.** VISTA, RSVP, FGP, and SCP have successfully worked through issues related to the administration of volunteer service programs. Recognizing the importance of sound local project delivery and experience, as well as the importance of continuous improvement and renewal, ACTION's programs provide a cooperative, structured and creative environment for volunteers as well as projects. The Agency's management culture emphasizes partnership with local communities (including non-profit and public agencies) in fostering sound volunteer administration. Further, a variety of program models have been tested, evaluated, and proven over the last several decades, many of which have formed the basis for expanded activities, such as service learning programs and urban youth corps.

2. **Management capacity.** ACTION has significant experience in sound management of volunteer programs. Fraud, waste, and abuse have not been a major issue with ACTION programs for over a decade. Further, the local control of projects ensures that they address community needs and do not displace employed workers.
3. **Field structure.** The staff is dispersed, experienced, and knowledgeable. Roughly 60 percent of ACTION's staff are located in 47 State and 9 regional field offices. These staff are very familiar with the needs of local communities in their areas and how to leverage the resources most effectively to meet those needs.
4. **Local acceptance and support.** ACTION's programs, although by design not the Agency, have name recognition locally. VISTA, FGP, RSVP, and SCP are well known in local communities and particularly in low-income areas. All local organizations already contribute support for ACTION's volunteer programs in a public/private partnership. Each of ACTION's programs have a history of far exceeding their matching requirements for non-federal support.

Some have argued that ACTION's programs and projects are overly monitored and that paperwork requirements are excessive. The Agency believes that by reducing Congressional mandates in the Domestic Volunteer Service Act and by internal program management decisions, this perception can be changed while still maintaining strong program accountability.

Judgments will be required concerning the role of two other central organizations potentially interested in National Service -- the Commission on National and Community Service and the Points of Light Foundation. Both were established within the last few years to help promote service to the country. There are significant needs beyond the major program administration and delivery function that could be addressed by one or both of these organizations to help promote the Administration's service agenda.

Any Federal effort must also interact with the important work of the nonprofit sector, both public and private, in this country. The Federal goal should be to further encourage the development and contributions of this sector, not to replace or diminish it.

John
Gandy
Tom
Blair
David

Crack the just team
up is there who could
45- respond - eliminate
direction the payment
streamline the agency
reduce orders internal
redundant approval
process (maintain
object, value)
convert your change
to a reduction of people
& up grade of technology

Fundamental Concepts Regarding National Service

Defining ACTION's role in National Service requires some definition of the principles of the Administration's program. This is not to prejudge the outcome of the current effort to develop the National Service proposal, but it is necessary to provide a context for reviewing the recommendations for a role for ACTION. A different concept of National Service could well lead to a potentially different role for the Agency.

This paper assumes the following regarding the National Service proposal:

1. Service should be based in communities across the country, with the activities determined, supported, and provided locally through a broad range of public and nonprofit organizations. There will not be a large, monolithic federal program, such as the Civilian Conservation Corps.
2. Service should be voluntary; it should encompass a range of full-time and part-time opportunities. Full-time service should include minor amounts for living expenses, as well as post-service stipends to help pay off college loans, to be used for college, or in some programs to be used for other legitimate specified purposes.
3. Full-time service will not be an entitlement open to all current or potential college students. Instead, the program will be defined more narrowly, with considerable care given to assure that meaningful service opportunities are available to those serving.
4. The service effort will be inclusive to Americans of all ages, and will reach out through Older American and student volunteer programs (e.g, ACTION's existing programs). National Service will not be defined simply as full-time stipended service. The Trust Fund itself, by definition, will be beneficial to those who have completed college and potential college enrollees, primarily youth, but non-college youth and Older Americans will be involved as an integral part of the effort.
5. The Federal administrative costs of the program will remain small; this will not become a major, large federal agency, but will instead be a program based on existing structures, primarily local.

Programs Providing Service Opportunities

The question exists as to what specific program opportunities will be available under the National Service proposal and how it will be administered. With regard to the full-time opportunities, the following guidelines are suggested:

1. There would be a range of service opportunities, all of which would be approved by a designated Federal agency. Service would be documented and verified by this agency, which would maintain a roster of projects and individual participation for loan verification and other purposes.
2. The specific number of service opportunities will depend upon the budget and a variety of program factors. In general, however, opportunities will expand in a number of existing programs including: Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), urban corps such as City Year in Boston, and State Conservation Corps programs. In addition, new opportunities will be available, such as working in schools, law enforcement, and a variety of other local, community-based efforts.
3. Some programs would receive Federal support through grants. Others, such as VISTA, would be operated under existing delivery mechanisms. All programs would be based locally and operated by local organizations.
4. The specific programs do not necessarily require Federal funding. Indeed, it is anticipated that some programs will be locally funded, and indeed all would be required to have local contributions, either cash or in-kind. For example, a school system might agree to provide support for individuals to serve as teacher aides. A designated Federal organization would certify that this was an appropriate assignment under the National Service program, specify the living allowance and other requirements that must be met by the school system, and arrange to verify successful completion of service and pay the postservice stipend for payment of education loans.

Loan Program and Its Administration

This paper does not address the question of what portion of individuals' education loans should be paid for through service. This policy question is determined by costs and consideration of broader questions of Federal aid to higher education.

From the service perspective, however, the procedures can be straightforward. The service agency would not be involved in any judgments about who receives loans and the management of the front-end processing. The service agency would, however, be responsible for the post-service activity related to loans. Specifically, upon completion of service by an individual volunteer, the Federal agency responsible for service would make a direct payment either

- to an institution designated by the individual (pre-college attendee who will be using the stipend to attend college); or
- to the holder of an individual's loan (post-college service). [If there is a National Trust established to administer a single Federal loan portfolio, the payment would be made to the Trust.]

[If the determination is made that the loan repayment should not be a fixed amount, but some percentage of the total loan, the agency could easily be informed of this by the applicable loan holder and then make the payment.]

This procedure would assure program integrity, that is, that the National Student Trust would be used only for education purposes following successful completion of a period of service. It would not rely on thousands of local organizations to be responsible for the certification of service and appropriate payment. It is simply not feasible to manage a trust arrangement through thousands of local organizations, many of whom may well be small nonprofit organizations which would be burdened by such administrative requirements. Further, there would be financial integrity and other concerns raised through such an approach.

Costs of National Service

The total costs of the National Service effort will depend upon the number of participants and the specific decisions concerning the range of cost items, such as living allowances and post-service stipends.

Although a number of possible administrative and funding procedures exist, one possibility is to have ACTION appropriated monies to cover the total Federal costs of the National Service effort. This would enable the Administration to monitor and track all costs from a single location on an ongoing basis.

In addition, State, local, and private contributions would be encouraged to flow into local programs. The ultimate size of the program (number of service participants and organizations)

will then depend upon its popularity and success at the local level. This is attractive both programmatically (if it isn't working locally it should not grow) and politically (the Administration can correctly argue that the ultimate size of the program will depend upon how successful it is, not on some preset Federal funding target).

The specific appropriations to ACTION would cover the following costs for full-time service:

1. Living allowances. This would vary some by program and local cost of living, but the goal would be to achieve an average of approximately \$620 per month (105% of the poverty level for a single individual).
2. Post-service stipend. A separate, aggregate ceiling could be placed on this activity, reflecting judgments about the student aid package made available through the Federal government. [Some programs may pay a direct stipend not targeted for education purposes.]
3. Health coverage as appropriate.
4. Local project support costs. In some cases, local projects will require Federal funds for supervision and management of the service program. In other cases, these amounts will be funded locally. Although minimum matching requirements should exist, it is not feasible to expect local institutions to cover all of the project support costs.
5. Training. Volunteers should receive pre-service and in-service training. The amount, and cost, will vary by program.

The total estimated cost for full-time service, less the postservice stipend, should be between \$11-13,000, including all supervision and other costs at the local level. Assuming a postservice stipend of \$5,000 per volunteer, the direct program costs for 60,000 full-time participants would be about \$1 billion. Most of the Federal monies would be distributed through project grants.

Part-time, non-stipended service should also be encouraged, as not everyone will be interested in full-time service. Part-time service costs are dependent upon policy judgments about loan cancellations and other items. Although not advocated in this paper, if part-time service qualifies for loan cancellations, the costs of part-time participation should still be less than 50% of the costs of full-time participation, as living allowances and certain other costs would be inappropriate.

Aside from the loan cancellation issue, part-time service can and should be expanded through a variety of Federal, State, and local mechanisms. ACTION's Student Community Service and Older American Programs should be considered for such expansion; other important efforts exist as well.

The issue is also raised as to Federal administrative costs for these programs. Although this will depend upon the size and specifics of the effort, ACTION already has a nationwide staff in place and the capacity to deliver expanded activities at very marginal cost increases. In general, Federal administrative costs under the above program description will remain minor.

Role of ACTION

ACTION could have a number of alternative roles in the administration of programs under the National Service Trust. Under one scenario, the responsibilities under the program structure described above could be as follows:

1. Identifying and certifying programs and projects for participation in National Service. This activity would be performed by ACTION State offices, who would be knowledgeable about the organizations and assignments. [Such certification is necessary not as a "Federal sanction," but simply to assure that taxpayers' funds would not be used for inappropriate activities.] Further, such certification also serves as a mechanism for controlling costs under the program.
2. Funding the local operation of service programs through project grants and, in the case of VISTA, operating the program through the approval of local projects and individual volunteers to address issues related to poverty.
3. Tracking individual participation in sanctioned programs to verify that service requirements have been met for loan cancellation and other purposes.
4. Providing technical assistance and support to local organizations and individuals who contribute to the service effort.
5. Encouraging State, local, and private support for National Service. Such support is mandatory in ACTION's existing programs.

Several Issues

There are many issues that require discussion concerning ACTION's potential involvement in the National Trust proposal. Several issues are identified below, but further discussions are required.

1. *What should be the role of ACTION if the National Trust is administered by another Federal agency?*

One logical view is that ACTION's programs should be expanded as important vehicles through which service under the National Service Trust would occur. ACTION has determined that over 4,000 VISTA Volunteers, 50,000 RSVP volunteers, 3,000 Senior Companions, and 2,000 Foster Grandparents could be added above existing program levels within a year, as well as new summer VISTA programs and expanded demonstration activities. It would cost an additional \$90 million in program funds in fiscal year 1994 to accomplish this expansion. The program flexibility exists to expand the level of participation beyond the 12-month period.

The fiscal year 1994 budget to be released in March for ACTION and other organizations will be a key signal of the Administration's plans for service and volunteer programs.

Further, ACTION already has statutory authority for and experience in administering other service and volunteer programs, beyond its current six programs, where additional potential for contribution to the service effort exists.

Full-time service through VISTA, as well as potentially part-time service through the Foster Grandparent or Senior Companion Programs, would result in credits that could be converted to payments toward the cost of postsecondary education for participants or their immediate family.

2. *Should postservice stipend payments for education purposes be provided only to the individual or extended to other family members?*

Involving other family members keeps the focus on postsecondary education while recognizing important roles of those volunteers who are not interested (e.g., because of age) or not able to pursue postsecondary education themselves. It also reinforces family support systems; helps focus people on making their own career choices based on their interests and abilities; and recognizes that the "forgotten half" should be encouraged to contribute to their communities through this mechanism.

A consideration to this approach is the increase in financial costs. Debate could also focus on the definition of "immediate family."

3. *Should postservice payments be provided to the volunteer, rather than the institution?*

Paying the institution provides an inexpensive management control. Payments to individuals, on the other hand, can create substantial management control weaknesses.

4. *What alternatives exist for the funding and operation of the National Student Trust fund?*

Among the many options, in addition to the one identified above, are:

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This is a major issue; and a suggestion is that the following principles should guide a role for the States:

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 - ♦ Over 430,000 Americans serve part-time as RSVP volunteers in over 750 projects across the country and are engaged in a wide variety of activities to address local community needs.
 - ♦ The budget for this program is approximately \$33.7 million; local organizations contribute an additional \$35 million in funds and in-kind contributions. The cost of the program is less than \$.50 per hour of service.
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 - ♦ Approximately 13,000 students currently contribute about a half million hours of service and participate in over 60 projects at a cost of less than \$1 million.
- o **Special Volunteer Programs** develop and demonstrate innovative approaches in volunteerism.
 - ♦ Recently, this authority has been primarily used for drug prevention activities; the budget is less than \$1 million.
 - ♦ In the most recent year, over 4,000 volunteers contributed over 350,000 hours of service under this program.

In addition to these current programs, ACTION has throughout its history supported a wide variety of community-based volunteer programs.

SCOPE OF CONSULTATION--ACTION Feb. 8-9, 1993

JUDY DENNY--Inspector General. (July, 1989) Legal and management experience in three other federal agencies. Former prosecutor at Dept. of Justice in Fraud Section of Driminal Division; U.S. Dept. of Education and Departmet of the Treasury.

TOM ENDRES--Acting Director, Older American Volunteer Programs, coming from director of Senior Companions Program. Hdqts. employee since 1992. Former PC volunteer & trainer; VISTA trainer; ACTION regional staff; and then ACTION Maine state director for 13 years.

TOM FLEMING--Acting Executive Officer for the Director's Office, coming from Executive Officer of ACTION OMB. Hdqts. since Jan. 90. Has conducted management reviews of all 9 Regions. Has other experience with federal structure, having worked at GSA, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, and the Office of Economic Opportunity.

DIANA LONDON--Acting Director, VISTA, coming from VISTA Program Officer. Has served VISTA since 1965 when it started in OEO.

GARY KOWALCZYK--Acting Director of Domestic Operations, coming from Assoc. Dir. for ACTION OMB. At ACTION since Aug.89. Former PC Volunteer and VISTA recruiter, he was staff director for DC Committee on Public Education, an associate administrator at GSA, director of the Office of Planning, Budget and Program Analysis at Treasury and chief of planning at HEW.

DANA RODGERS--Executive Office to Domestic Operations. At ACTION since 1971, however, on detail away from the agency from 1981-1989. During those years he worked at the Community Service Administration, the EPA, and at the Office of Management and Budget. Extensive knowledge of programs and work flow.

DAVID RYMPH--Director of Evaluation. Nov.89. Previous experience at HUD, in private sector non-profits, and at the Peace Corps.

JOHN SEAL--ACTION Acting Director, from Executive Officer to Director. Dec. 89. Previously has been budget analyst for OMB, deputy assistant secretary at the Dept. of Education and management director at the EEOC. He is past chair of the Small Agency Council and still serves on the Executive Committee.

VAL WHEELER--Student Community Service Program Specialist. Feb.82. She also worked for the Army, the National Endowment for the Arts, and a private sector environmental organization. She served as a Peace Corps Volunteer.

*NOTE: No regional or state directors had been called or visited at the time of this writing.

OPTION 1 -- Maintaining Existing Agency Structures

DESCRIPTION: ACTION and the Commission on National and Community Service would be maintained. Both would be reauthorized as separate administrative structures with separate programs. The reauthorizations would make constructive changes to help improve efficiency and effectiveness of each organization and its programs. For ACTION, this would involve eliminating detailed requirements on a number of program and administrative items, as well as strengthening program delivery capacities. The roles of the organizations could be clarified to have ACTION funding operational programs and the Commission supporting alternative national service demonstration models.

Pro:

- * ACTION programs are Democratic programs mismanaged by Republicans. Performance problems of the agency can be remedied by new leadership with a clear purpose, plan and message.

- * Focus of national service will be on the service issues, and not on questions of agency creation and dissolution.

- * ACTION and the Commission have separate national and local constituencies (i.e., organizations they fund); this option would be less threatening to them.

Con:

- * Loses the opportunities presented by consolidating agencies--administrative efficiencies and savings as well as the benefits of similar program structures being housed in the same organization.

- * Will raise major questions among the constituencies of these organizations as to how they participate in the new National Service agenda (especially ACTION's Older American volunteers).

- * Does not take any advantage of the additional capacity of ACTION and its field structure throughout the country.

- * Sends a signal of "business as usual".

OPTION 2 -- Structural Change at ACTION

DESCRIPTION: ACTION's FY 1992 program administration expenditures were \$31 million. These monies funded staffing, rent, automated systems, etc., with \$22.3 million going toward salaries and benefits. Headquarters' staffing costs were \$9.6 million; regional staffing costs were \$4.7 million; and state offices cost \$8.0 million. ACTION's staffing has been reduced significantly over the last 12 years due to policy decisions by former Administrations, i.e. from 700 in 1981 to 420 today. These reductions have resulted in a relatively lean organization although there are opportunities for reducing redundancies and re-focusing resources on program improvements. Keep in mind that organization and efficiency can only be considered in the context of agency functions. Reorganization options cannot be prudently determined in the absence of longer term policy and programmatic assumptions.

Pro:

- ACTION's structure dates to the 1970's and would benefit from a fresh review that takes into consideration new National Service initiatives. Authorization changes could help modernize the organization, particularly the Headquarters staff.
- Implementing modern management concepts, including an emphasis on quality and customer service, will improve organizational effectiveness.
- Some economies of scale could result for processing functions (e.g. grants processing, financial management), particularly in a more automated environment.

Con:

- Potential savings from organizational improvements are marginal given the small budgetary and staffing base -- costs and benefits must be carefully weighed. Short-term costs will increase because of severance payments, relocations, etc.
- ACTION has 60% of its employees located in regional and state offices. These offices are so small (state offices range from 1 to 9 employees, with 70% in the three to four employee range) that eliminating one or even a dozen does not reduce costs significantly. Also, state offices provide experienced stewardship for volunteer programs; their proximity to local conditions allows them to generate grassroots programming.
- Regional offices are headed by political appointees who carry the message of the President (other field employees are career). Although very small, they play important roles in such areas as project approval and training, and they allow for a manageable span of control for state office oversight. Their elimination would force all project approval, training and oversight to the national level.

OPTION 3 -- Expand ACTION and make it the centerpiece for the administration of the National Service Proposal

DESCRIPTION: ACTION would have a significant role in the administration of programs under the National Service Trust. Its responsibilities would be to: (1) identify and certify programs and projects for participation (2) provide for and fund the local operation of service programs (3) track individual participation in sanctioned programs (4) provide technical assistance and support to local organizations and (5) encourage state, local, and private support for National Service.

C-

Pro:

* ACTION's entire program structure and philosophy is in addressing community needs and providing support for volunteer projects developed by local organizations; it is in a strong position to identify and sanction bona fide community service placements; it has already worked through difficult issues related to the administration of volunteer service programs.

* Local acceptance and support. ACTION's programs are known in local communities and particularly in low-income areas; they are in 412 Congressional Districts. ACTION's programs have a history of far exceeding their matching requirements for non-federal support.

* Accountability. ACTION has significant experience in sound management of volunteer programs. Fraud, waste, and abuse have not been major issues with ACTION programs for over a decade.

* Field structure. The ACTION staff is dispersed (60% in states and regions), experienced, familiar with the needs of local communities, and can be built upon to accomplish the National Service agenda.

* Some targetable unobligated money exists now which could assist the larger picture. (This is true under any option.)

Con:

* Significant steps (name, public affairs, outreach to other organizations and programs) would be required to broaden the role of the Agency.

* Too many people have their "minds made up" about ACTION. President's proposals tied here might not be attractively perceived--at least if the Agency had the same name.

OPTION 4 -- Move ACTION Programs and Dissolve Agency

DESCRIPTION A: A new agency would be established in the Executive Office of the President (ExOP) to administer and/or coordinate all national and community service programs. ACTION's administrative infrastructure would form the operational nucleus of the new agency and its programs would be major components. Programs could also be drawn from the other federal agencies (e.g., DHHS, Interior)

Pro:

- Locating this agency in the ExOP would: (a) make a statement that National Service is a top Presidential priority and will benefit from his personal interest/attention, and (b) provide a government-wide purview whereby the agency can coordinate National Service policy and opportunities involving all Departments and Agencies of the Federal government.
- Budgets and staffing would be drawn from existing agencies, thereby minimizing start-up costs. Allows strengths of each involved agency to be maximized.
- Likely to be received positively on the Hill since it moves the nation (and the involved programs) toward a broader and positive vision of National Service.

Con:

- Creates a new entity in the Executive Office of the President at a time when others are being eliminated or reduced, and new ExOP staff would presumably exceed the 100-person figure used with the media.

DESCRIPTION B: Disperse ACTION's programs, with Older American Volunteer Programs going to DHHS (AoA) and VISTA/Student Community Service to the Commission on National and Community Service.

Pro:

- Strengthens AoA and the Commission; is a rational approach to merging related programs.

Con:

- Congressional opposition likely.
- Diffuses focus on voluntary service, particularly multi-generational volunteer opportunities.
- Buries OAVP programs within the DHHS bureaucracy, and, with VISTA, taxes present administrative capabilities of the Commission.
- Approach ignores ACTION's proven volunteer program administrative capabilities.



OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

1100 VERMONT AVENUE, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20525

March 19, 1993

Mr. Jack Lew
General Counsel
Office of National Service
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. *Jack* Lew:

ACTION's staff have prepared recommendations related to the reauthorization of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act, which is scheduled to expire at the end of September. These recommendations are enclosed for your review along with a copy of the current Act.

In general, the recommendations are designed to: (1) add certain new authorities for activities that will enable existing programs to better achieve their intended purposes; (2) provide greater capacity and flexibility for the Agency to meet the purposes of the Act through these program structures; (3) improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Agency by eliminating a number of specific statutory mandates that currently limit our flexibility; and (4) make a number of technical revisions to the existing statute.

Several of the recommendations may have a direct relationship to proposals under consideration for the President's National Service initiative. We have commented separately on the outline released by the Office of National Service last week.

We are in the process of converting these recommendations to a formal legislative package for transmittal to the Office of Management and Budget and then to the Congress. Inquiries on our reauthorization continue to come from our Committees. We expect to have this completed within two weeks and would appreciate your thoughts as we develop the package.

Sincerely,

John Seal
John Seal
Acting Director

Enclosures

cc: Pam Van Wie
Office of Management and Budget

ACTION'S MISSION

To stimulate voluntary citizen participation in addressing the needs of American communities, particularly those of the poor, the disadvantaged and the elderly.

REAUTHORIZATION OF THE DOMESTIC VOLUNTEER SERVICE ACT (DVSA)

Recommendations

A. Title I of the DVSA

VISTA

1. Reauthorize the VISTA program so as to maintain its basic purpose and focus -- providing the opportunity for Americans of all ages and backgrounds to engage in full-time service addressing the critical needs of low-income communities and individuals.

The VISTA program has a rich history, is proven as an effective full-time volunteer program, and can be an important vehicle for expansion under National Service.

2. Establish a new authority within VISTA to support a summer of service. [Section 104 of the DVSA]

This new authority would enable individuals age 18 and over to volunteer under VISTA for the summer only, with the goals and requirements of the summer program being consistent with the overall VISTA program. The language would leave it to the discretion of the Director to set the terms and conditions of the summer program. [ACTION is currently planning to implement a VISTA Summer Associates Program under its broad authority to conduct volunteer programs under Part C of the DVSA. This change would provide specific authority for a VISTA Summer Associates program.]

3. Expand the statement of purpose of the VISTA program to reflect the strengthening of community and nonprofit organizations to address the needs of low-income communities and individuals. [Section 103]

This change clarifies that a purpose of the VISTA program is to strengthen local institutions and organizations to eliminate and alleviate poverty and poverty-related problems in the United States.

4. Leave the minimum subsistence rate for full-time volunteers at an average of about 105% of the poverty level for a single individual. [Section 105]

The current subsistence rate is adequate to attract and maintain individuals as VISTA Volunteers. The rate is adjusted to take into account geographic differences in the cost of living.

Maintaining the rate would keep VISTA cost-effective when compared to other full-time stipended programs. As currently written, the legislation allows for increases in the subsistence rate beyond the minimum of 105% of the poverty level for a single individual if circumstances warrant.

5. Increase the postservice stipend to a minimum of \$125 per month for each year of service, beginning in fiscal year 1995. [Section 105]

The current legislation provides a maximum postservice stipend of \$95 per month, or \$1,140 per year. This is less than a number of other programs enabling individuals to serve full-time, where postservice stipends of up to \$5,000 per year are provided for further education or to cover expenses.

This change will depend, to a certain extent, on broader questions related to National Service. Depending upon the specifics, ACTION believes that VISTA Volunteers should receive educational benefits comparable to the participants in the new National Service program.

If implemented, the program cost for this change per 1,000 volunteer service years is \$360,000 above current levels; based on current volunteer strength, the annual cost would be \$1.2 million. ACTION believes that the stipend should not be increased if it will reduce volunteer strength.

6. Consolidate fully VISTA Literacy Corps and VISTA, while maintaining a central focus of VISTA on literacy. [Sec. 109]

A separate identity for Literacy Corps, within the VISTA program, is not necessary. Instead, all existing and future volunteers engaged in literacy activities can be managed and accounted for under the regular VISTA program. Today, more volunteers engage in literacy activities under the regular VISTA program than under Literacy Corps. Whether or not there is a Literacy Corps, VISTA will continue to emphasize this very popular and proven activity.

The change will eliminate the need to develop projects, recruit volunteers, and track their costs, specifically for a subcomponent of the entire VISTA program. The administrative burden and cost to the Agency will be lessened.

[Note: If strong interest for a separate Literacy Corps continues, there are no major difficulties in keeping such a separation. If the Literacy Corps is maintained, ACTION

recommends deleting Section 109(g), which requires that funds made available for Literacy Corps shall be used to supplement and not supplant the level of services provided under the regular VISTA program in fiscal year 1986.]

7. Simplify the language requiring the Director to consider certain factors in selecting sponsors under the VISTA program; the intent is that support for projects under VISTA should be made on the basis of merit, and that the prior existence of VISTA support should not be a negative consideration when considering future support. [Sec. 110]

The current language is cumbersome and unnecessary.

8. Repeal provisions mandating particular organizational structures, information systems, staffing levels, and hiring requirements related to the recruitment and placement of VISTA Volunteers. [Section 103]

These provisions would be deleted because they are administratively cumbersome and unnecessary and restrict the flexibility of the Director to administer the recruitment and placement program in the most efficient and economical manner possible.

9. Revise authority for a sponsoring organization to recruit a volunteer to clarify that it is subject to the Director's approval and that the Director is not required to give priority for placement in that organization. [Section 103]

This would conform the legislation to the practice of having sponsoring organizations recruit volunteers subject to the approval of the Director. The sponsoring agency also must approve any volunteer assigned or recruited, and hence there is no reason for the Director to be required to give priority to a locally recruited volunteer.

10. Delete a provision that allows a project to replace an applicant who is recruited locally but becomes unavailable for service prior to commencement. [Section 103]

This particular authorization is unnecessary; when feasible, other recruits are assigned to projects when another recruit cannot become a volunteer.

11. Make a series of changes to the existing requirements concerning public awareness and recruitment, the composition of the volunteer force, and spending requirements related to promotion and recruitment. Specifically, the changes will:
(1) replace certain mandated activities with the requirement that the Director conduct a vigorous recruitment program,

with the specific activities under that program to be determined at the discretion of the Director; (2) eliminate the statutory requirement for the production of an annual recruitment plan with the recognition that this activity may continue at the discretion of the Director; (3) eliminate the mandate that 20 percent of the VISTA Volunteer force must be 55 years of age or older and another 20 percent must be between 18 and 27 years of age; (4) identify returned Peace Corps Volunteers as potential experienced applicants for VISTA; and (5) revise the requirement that a minimum of 1.5% of available monies must be spent for recruitment and promotion to such sums as necessary. [Section 103]

These changes are necessary to provide the Director with the discretion and flexibility necessary to conduct a vigorous recruitment and placement program that will meet the volunteer strength goal. Further, legislative mandates concerning age range prescribed as percentages of volunteers are unnecessarily restrictive and may conflict with other goals of the program, such as increasing the recruitment of recent college graduates. There is also potential for greater use of returned Peace Corps Volunteers as potential Volunteers under VISTA.

12. Clarify the terms and periods of service for VISTA Volunteers. [Section 104]

This change would clarify the statutory language concerning the terms and periods of service. VISTA volunteers may be enrolled initially for a minimum of one year, and a maximum of two years, of service. Exceptions to the minimum requirement are critical needs set by the Director and summer programs. Reenrollment terms are set by the Director, but no volunteer may serve for more than five years under the program.

13. Prepare separate legislation, in conjunction with the Peace Corps, to provide Federal Employees' Retirement System (FERS) coverage for Peace Corps and VISTA volunteer service for those entering service after January 1989.

Peace Corps and VISTA Volunteers lost this coverage when FERS replaced the Civil Service Retirement Act (CSRA). This is being prepared as stand-alone legislation because of the jurisdictional differences in the Congress and because the changes involved are not amendments to the DVSA. Peace Corps is taking the lead on this issue.

STUDENT COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM

14. Reauthorize, as is, the authority to conduct a Student Community Service program.

The DVSA provides flexible authority for the Director to conduct Student Community Service Programs on a non-stipended basis. The nature and purpose of the programs to be funded are left to the discretion of the Director. ACTION's experience has been that such programs are extremely important sources of opportunities for young adults to engage in service while in school and can act as a "feeder system" for later VISTA enrollment.

15. Reauthorize the University Year for ACTION Program. Revise the minimum period of service under this program from an academic year to an academic semester. [Section 113]

This revision will enable individuals to participate in the program for an academic semester or its equivalent, whereas the former requirement was to serve for a minimum of one year. This will provide greater flexibility for individuals to participate in the program.

PART C PROGRAMS

16. Reauthorize Part C of title I providing broad authority to the Director to support volunteer programs, including demonstration and innovative activities. Redraft Title C to make the purpose clearer, to eliminate references to specific activities that should be supported, and to provide a simple, broad authority to serve as a "venture capital fund" for the Agency.

The major purposes of activities conducted under Part C would be to support: demonstrations, capacity building efforts, technical assistance, and other broad functions in support of volunteerism. The authority would include funding stipended volunteer programs through grants that are different from the VISTA and OAVP program structures. Non-stipended volunteer programs could also be supported. Drug abuse prevention activities, the priority over the last several years, would be permitted but would not be separately identified and authorized.

17. Reauthorize Literacy Challenge Grants. [Section 125]

This section provides authority to establish, operate, or expand community or employee literacy programs, with the Federal government contributing a declining grant share over

a three-year period. Although this section has not been funded to date, it could be an important vehicle for expanding literacy activities in the future. Further, while the recommended merger of VISTA and VISTA Literacy Corps does not reduce ACTION's concentration on literacy, the Literacy Challenge Grants would permit ongoing visibility to this emphasis area.

18. Drop the provision eliminating the ability to provide support for state offices of volunteerism. [Section 122]

The Administration may want to have the option of supporting such State organizations in the future.

B. Title II of the DVSA

OLDER AMERICAN VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

1. Reauthorize ACTION's Older American Volunteer Programs -- Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), Foster Grandparent Program (FGP), and Senior Companion Program (SCP).

These programs have proven to be cost-effective vehicles for involving older Americans, including low-income seniors, in volunteer activities.

2. Rename the Retired Senior Volunteer Program to the "Retired and Senior Volunteer Program." Specify that individuals aged 55 and over, both retired and currently working either full-time or part-time, may serve under the Program.
[Section 201]

In recognition of the interest of older Americans aged 55 and above in participating in senior volunteer activities, this provision lowers the age limit for participation from 60 to 55, and clarifies that people still employed may participate in the Program. Since the program is non-stipended, this change does not automatically trigger higher Federal costs.

3. Clarify that Foster Grandparents may serve multiple children in certain settings, such as in Head Start projects.
[Section 211]

The DVSA authorizes Foster Grandparents to provide person-to-person services. ACTION believes that this unique characteristic of the Foster Grandparent Program, that is, linking a Foster Grandparent with individual children in need of assistance, needs to be preserved. However, the reality also is that Foster Grandparents working in schools, day care centers, and with the parents of children, are often providing special assistance to multiple individuals at the same time. These are positive experiences for both the Foster Grandparent and the organization and individuals receiving assistance, and the law should reflect these positive activities.

4. Provide authority under the Older American Volunteer Programs to enter into arrangements with profit-making organizations so as to offer the services of Senior Companions, Foster Grandparents, and Retired Senior Volunteer Programs with full cost reimbursement, including a portion of local administrative costs, to employees and relatives of such organizations.

The provision of such services may occur only when there is no negative impact on the organization to provide services in the public sector.

5. Permit Foster Grandparents and Senior Companions to work on a part-time basis.

This would clarify that these individuals are permitted to hold part-time employment while serving as Foster Grandparents and Senior Companions. It would not affect the separate provision requiring these volunteers to be low income.

6. Revise the language for stipends in the Senior Companion and Foster Grandparent Programs so as to set a minimum of \$2.45 on and after October 1, 1993. [Section 211]

The current law provides for a minimum of \$2.50 per hour, but appropriations have been insufficient to accomplish this rate. The DVSA specifies that increases in stipend rates may occur only if implementing the increase will not result in a decrease in the number of volunteers or projects supported in the prior year. The proposed language simply clarifies that we do not intend to reduce the current stipend level in future years.

7. Specify that, in carrying out the Older American Programs, the Director is encouraged to enter into arrangements with other federal agencies in order to expand ACTION's programs and the mission of the other Agency. Specifically, encourage the Director to enter into arrangements with the Department of Health and Human Services to provide Foster Grandparents in Head Start projects and to use Medicaid funds for Senior Companions, with the Department of Education to provide intergenerational tutoring and mentoring for at-risk children, with the Administration on Aging to promote in-home care, and with the Environmental Protection Agency to support environmental efforts.

This will provide legislative support for ACTION's participation in certain governmentwide initiatives that could benefit from volunteer involvement.

8. Delete the requirement that one-third of new monies must be made available for programs of national significance. Allow the amount to be a determination made by the Director of ACTION. [Section 225]

Although this provision has resulted in some additional monies for projects, it has proven administratively burdensome. Frequently, nationwide grant competitions are required to be held even when only a few awards will be made under this authority.

9. Revise the programs of national significance to indicate that they are priority areas to be implemented when new monies are available for existing projects. Expand to include environmental projects for RSVP and those reaching out to categories of new organizations not previously involved in local projects, such as labor unions and retired volunteer programs under private, profit-making corporations. [Section 225]

Currently, monies under this category are distributed on a discretionary basis, with the activities to be determined by local projects. This change would provide greater flexibility in administering the program on a nationwide basis and would expand the areas that may be supported.

10. Delete the requirement to report on the inflationary adjustments made for grants to the Older American programs. Retain the requirement to consider inflation when making annual grants. [Section 226]

This reporting burden, while intended to demonstrate projects' needs for additional administrative funds, has proven excessive for projects and the Government. A simple provision, requiring the Director to consider inflation when making awards, will suffice.

11. Repeal a requirement that grants under the Older American Volunteer Programs be made to a community action agency, and if not made to that agency, that certain requirements be met. Repeal a similar requirement related to State Agencies on Aging. [Section 212]

These provisions are outdated and no longer applicable. To the extent that community action agencies wish to participate in the program, they are afforded the same opportunity to do so as other local organizations. Further, the mission of community action agencies was changed under the Community Services Block Grant Act and they no longer receive direct, earmarked support from the Federal government. Finally, there is no need to give State Agencies on Aging a right of first refusal.

12. Delete a provision requiring the evaluation of the impact of projects assisted under the Senior Companion Program. [Section 213]

This provision is outdated and duplicative; Section 416 of the Act sets forth the evaluation requirements for all programs under the Domestic Volunteer Service Act.

13. Provide a separate authority to conduct demonstration and other innovative programs involving Older American Volunteers. Existing projects, as well as other organizations, would be eligible to compete for these monies.

This would provide flexible funds to be used to improve Older American Volunteer Programs on a nationwide basis. It is different from Part C under Title I in that programs do not have to be focused on poverty and will be targeted on Older American Volunteer Programs.

14. Modify language designed to make difficult the use of non-stipended volunteers in FGP and SCP, while retaining the intent of these provisions. [Section 211]

This language is not necessary; such activity will be permitted but it is not likely to grow and will not be encouraged.

15. Change the name of Title II from the Older American Volunteer Programs to National Senior Volunteer Corps.

This name reflects a more appropriate umbrella for these activities, and would encourage greater participation in local programs and projects.

C. TITLES IV THROUGH VII OF THE DVSA

1. Change the name of the organization to the Volunteer Action Agency. [Section 401]

This provision provides greater identity for the Agency with the public and others served by the organization. The title, ACTION, does not indicate the responsibilities and activities of the organization. A modified name, in addition to promoting greater identity, has the advantage of reflecting the mission and responsibilities of the organization.

2. Provide authority for the Director to solicit gifts [current authority is limited to accepting gifts]. [Section 402]

This provision provides the Agency with the ability to seek gifts and services from public and private agencies and individuals to support the activities authorized under the Domestic Volunteer Service Act. Currently, Agency officials may accept such gifts and services, but are not specifically authorized to actively solicit them. As a result, opportunities to further the mission of the Agency and its activities are lost.

3. Repeal the requirement for a report on the annual recruitment plan. [Section 407]

This provision is deleted because the report is unnecessary; the important information required in the report is provided to the Congress, through both authorizing and appropriations committees, upon request.

4. Revise the basis of computation for disability benefits for volunteers under the VISTA program from the entrance salary of a grade GS-7 employee to the entrance salary of a grade GS-5 employee. [Section 415]

This provision is necessary because the current computation procedure results in a situation where a volunteer receives more benefits upon becoming disabled than he or she receives as a volunteer. This both serves as a powerful disincentive to rehabilitate and increases costs. This new procedure will set a compensation rate that is fair and equitable, is comparable to that offered in other federal programs, and will encourage the return of recipients to gainful employment.

5. Revise the requirement for program evaluations as follows:
 - (a) Delete a requirement for an evaluation component in every grant of more than \$10,000. [Section 124]
 - (b) Eliminate a requirement that there be an evaluation for each program every three years, and specify that the Director shall evaluate ACTION's programs on a periodic basis, including setting up appropriate Management Information Systems for ACTION's programs. [Section 416]
 - (c) Authorize the creation of a Center for Research and Training on Volunteer Service. This Center would support independent research on the impact of volunteer service on the well-being of individuals, families, neighborhoods, and communities. As well, the Center would be charged with supporting training for volunteer efforts around the country. The Center would also serve as a clearinghouse for information.
 - (d) Authorize, from sums appropriated for the Act, not less than one-half of one percent, nor more than one percent, for the Agency's evaluation activities and the Center for Research and Training. This would replace the current authority enabling the Director to spend a maximum of one percent of program funds for evaluation purposes. Further, programs would be held harmless when implementing this authority. [Section 416]
6. Limit the liability of volunteers, advisory council members, and other personnel supported under the DVSA. Proposed language, based on model State legislation developed by the Department of Justice, is as follows:

The Act is amended by inserting the following new section at the end of Title IV:

"Section 425 (a). Any part-time or full-time volunteer serving under Title II of this Act, or individual serving as a member of a Board of Directors or Advisory Council of a nonprofit organization receiving support under this Act, shall be immune from civil liability in any legal cause of action on the basis of any act or omission of such volunteer or individual resulting in damage or injury if (1) the volunteer or individual was acting in good faith and within the scope of his/her official functions and duties; and (2) the damage or injury was not caused by willful or wanton misconduct by such volunteer or individual.

"(b). In any suit against a nonprofit organization receiving Federal assistance under this Act, based upon the negligent act or omission of a volunteer or individual as described in subsection (a) (including the limitations set forth in subsection (a)(1) and (a)(2) of this section) proof of such act or omission shall be sufficient to establish the responsibility of the organization, therefore, under the doctrine of respondeat superior, notwithstanding the immunity granted to the volunteer or individual with respect to any act or omission within the meaning of this section.

"(c). Notwithstanding subsection (b) of this section, a plaintiff may sue and recover civil damages from a volunteer or individual as described in subsection (a) of this section, based upon a negligent act or omission involving the operation of a motor vehicle under the circumstances described in subsection (b) of this section provided that the amount recovered from such volunteer or individual shall not exceed the limits of applicable insurance coverage, maintained by or on behalf of such volunteer or individual with respect to the negligent operation of a motor vehicle in such circumstances."

This provision is necessary given that the willingness of volunteers and others to offer their services has been increasingly deterred by a perception that they put personal assets at risk in the event of tort actions seeking damages arising from their activities as volunteers under this Act.

Further, the contributions of programs, activities and services to communities is diminished, and worthwhile programs, activities and services are deterred by such fears. There should be an effective balance in the public interest between the right of a person to seek redress for injury and the right of an individual to freely give his time and energy without compensation as a volunteer in service to his community without fear of personal liability for acts undertaken in good faith absent willful or wanton conduct on the part of the volunteer.

7. Provide copyright protection for the major programs operated by the Agency.

The specific language would be as follows:

The Act is amended by inserting the following new section at the end of Title IV, following Section 425:

"Section 426 (a). The following are hereby declared the property of the United States:

- (1) The name "Retired Senior Volunteer Program" and the logo and acronym, RSVP, associated therewith;
- (2) The name "Foster Grandparent Program" and the logo and acronym, FGP, associated therewith;
- (3) The name "Senior Companion Program" and the logo and acronym, SCP, associated therewith; and
- (4) The names "Volunteers in Service to America", "VISTA" and the logo associated therewith.

"(b). For purposes of this Section:

- (1) The term "Director" means the Director of the Volunteer Action Agency.
- (2) The term "the Act" means the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973, as amended.
- (3) The terms "Volunteers in Service to America" and "VISTA" mean the name of the program established by Title I, Part A of the Act.
- (4) The term "Retired Senior Volunteer Program" means the name of the program established by Title II, Part A of the Act.
- (5) The term "Foster Grandparent Program" means the name of the program established by Title II, Part B of the Act.
- (6) The term "Senior Companion Program" means the name of the program established by Title II, Part C of the Act.

"(c). The Director shall deposit into a special account, to be available to foster and expand volunteerism consistent with the Act, all fees collected under regulations prescribed by him/her relating to use or reproduction of the property designated in subsection (a) of this Section by entities other than the Volunteer Action Agency.

"(d). Whoever, except as provided by regulations prescribed by the Director uses, reproduces or creates the appearance of using or reproducing any of the property designated in subsection A of this Section may be enjoined from such use, reproduction or misleading impression at the suit of the Attorney General upon complaint by the Director."

This Section is necessary because, on occasion, other organizations have used the names of ACTION programs and volunteers in a manner that is inappropriate for Federal volunteer programs. Other Federal programs and symbols, such as "Smokey the Bear" in the Department of the Interior, have such copyright protection.

8. Provide separate authorizations for programs under Title I of the legislation for fiscal years 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, and 1998.

This authorization is necessary to provide authority for appropriations to carry out programs under Title I.

9. Amend the minimum service year floor under VISTA to reflect 5,500 volunteer service years in fiscal years 1994, and 7,500 volunteer service years in each of fiscal years 1995, 1996, 1997, and 1998.

This provision is dependent upon National Service decisions and is an important statement as to what extent the Administration supports VISTA. It is consistent with the package submitted by ACTION for VISTA's participation under National Service in fiscal year 1994, with the figures in the out-years left to future decisions about available slots within National Service.

10. Provide separate authorization for Older American Volunteer programs under Title II of the legislation for fiscal years 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, and 1998. Authorization would be such sums as necessary.

This authorization is necessary to provide authority for appropriations to carry out programs under Title II.

11. Provide authorization for program administration under title IV of the legislation for fiscal years 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, and 1998.

This Section is necessary to provide authority for appropriations to carry out Title IV of the Act.

12. Modify requirements placed upon grantees concerning the availability of records; insert the words "the Inspector General of ACTION" after the words "the Director" in the two places in which those words appear in subsection 422(b).

This will clarify that recipients of ACTION grants and contracts must make records available to the Inspector General of ACTION. This requirement already exists, but this language would help further specify the requirements placed upon grantees and contractors.

13. Clarify the statute so as to prohibit any coercion of volunteers or beneficiaries into making financial contributions and eliminate current requirements affecting funding relationships among sponsors, projects, and volunteer stations. [Section 404]

Section 404(c) of the DVSA creates operational problems for certain ACTION projects by appearing to prohibit them from receiving local support funds from project stations and sites in support of volunteer activities. This language clarifies that the prohibition applies to contributions from volunteers or beneficiaries only, not organizations where volunteers are assigned.

14. Add the following specific authority to the DVSA: "This Agency shall promote the coordination of volunteer efforts among federal, state, and local agencies and organizations, exchange technical assistance information among them, and provide technical assistance to other nations concerning domestic volunteer programs within their countries."
[Section 401]

While these activities are not prohibited, specifically mentioning them in the law would provide a firm basis for their implementation.

15. Add the following authority for the Director: "enter into agreements with private, profit-making organizations under terms and conditions determined by the Director when such agreements will further the purpose of this Act."
[Section 402]

This provision will provide specific authority to enter into formal arrangements with profit-making organizations to further the purpose of the Act.

16. Eliminate separate requirements for prescribing regulations.
[Section 420]

Governmentwide requirements concerning the publication of regulations exist and are sufficient to cover ACTION's

programs and operations; there is no need for additional requirements in the DVSA.

17. Retitle the statutory Presidential appointment of "Associate Director for Domestic and Anti-Poverty Operations" to "Associate Director for Program Operations." [Section 401]

The Associate Director title dates to the agency's formation when it was much larger and included additional programs (including the Peace Corps and the Service Corps of Retired Executives).

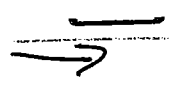
ELI -

2/8
JACK
I just gave Rick
the transition document
on ACTION. I suspect
you read it & that we
should review it
@ Jack's meeting with
@ Andrew on 2/8/93
@ Andrew's memo & from
transition - will
be needed
for input.
Eli

Rather than assuming that including
Action would be buying a big headache,
I think we should revisit the issue
with a meeting or meetings early next
week to gauge the reaction. Clearly there
are significant resources that could be
captured by including Action, and we also would
build a fire wall against criticism that
we are re-inventing the existing structures
instead of re-vamping government.

One possibility:

- Meet with transition cluster rep.
supporting including Action
- Congressional supporter of Action
to give us the political road map
- Set our person at Action



I think one meeting with all three would be the most efficient way to proceed, since we will benefit from hearing them bounce ideas off of each other.

If you would like me to proceed with this

(A) Do you want to participate?

(B) Do you have any ~~particular~~ preferences on participants?

Let me know if there is history here I should know about from the transition.

John

Jack

2/3/93

Robert has materials prepared by transition on ACTION. Here's a summary.

Our tentative conclusion not to build it into our legislation (something which we'll need to justify with the President) doesn't mean we can overlook it -- & its many unfilled slots which we can use for appropriate service objectives....

Judy Harrington, a good friend of mine is our contact point. Rick & I have spoken to her. John Seals, a career employee, is Acting Director... We need to design an overall approach here ASAP -- or else it will wind up embarrassing us... Ask Robert for what I gave him yesterday on VISTA. Eli

December 11, 1992

To: Transition Office/Andrew Cuomo/Cong. Tom Downey
Fr: ACTION Transition Cluster (Heather Booth, Cole Finnegan, Joe Gardner, Mimi Mager, Kathleen Kennedy Townsend)
Re: Overview on ACTION recommendations

In addition to the technical and legal status of the agency, we reached a common analysis on some overall priorities that might be worth consideration by the new administration.

Our main conclusion is that ACTION is a remarkable conception, has had wonderful periods in its history and has many systems in place that make it an invaluable part of a National Service Initiative. It is currently substantially diminished in scope, budget, vision, leadership and morale. It can be revitalized as part of a much bigger effort. It has enormous capacity to help support a new and more experimental approach.

1. **Strengthening of ACTION in an Integrated Plan for the Promotion of Public Service.** With its existing array of volunteer based programs, ACTION could play a useful role in the implementation of the Clinton-Gore national service initiatives.

There are several reasons to justify such a policy:

A. ACTION has over twenty years of experience in managing programs designed to activate volunteers to provide various services within local communities. It has the experience and systems in place to deal with a great variety of situations that may develop in a vastly expanded volunteer initiative.

B. In order for a national service corps to be successful in meeting its goals, there must be a strong working relationship between the managing federal agency and community and grassroots organizations. They provide a source of recruitment, access and credibility at the local level for service corps members etc. ACTION has worked with public and private non-profit organizations throughout its history. This must be revitalized, but the structure is there.

2. **Integration of Volunteer Agencies.** Presently there are a wide array of federal agencies/foundations that administer volunteer based programs within the federal government. Some of the most visible include ACTION, the Commission on National and Community Service, the Points of Light Foundation and the Conservation Corps.

? { A greater degree of cost effectiveness could be achieved through a consolidation of these entities into one administering agency-- while keeping their programs distinct and under their current authorizations. While there are many reasons these functions were separately created, those reasons may no longer be necessary with a new administration.

3. **State and Regional Field Structure.** The strength of this Agency is its field operation. It is extremely cost effective. It allows for greater accountability and oversight of the volunteers and the projects. It moves a central conception with decentralized implementation. It has the experience of a tested system that appears to have the capacity to accommodate a dramatically increased number of volunteers and additional programs if there is new direction and political leadership. The ACTION structure (with a new name and broadened mandate) could possibly provide the apparatus for the new public service initiatives. In effect, a new initiative would be created with the benefit of past experience. ??

4. **Intergenerational.** The Older American Volunteer Programs in combination with the VISTA and other programs allows for broad public appeal and the possibility of broad public support and involvement. It seems wise to keep these diverse programs together in the same agency.

6. **Mission.** National Service will be more than just increasing what exists. It needs a boldness of something new and a clarity of how broadly it will be defined. It will need to promote the vitality of spirit to the volunteers, the organizations providing the placements, the communities in which they are placed and the public at large. All of these audiences will play a crucial role in shaping the effectiveness of the program and supporting it. It could include a variety of programs ranging from those with large institutions (eg. college, hospitals) to non-profit organizations. It could involve a wide variety of volunteers ranging from new high school graduates to college graduates to retired professionals to people making midline change. It will need to respond to more traditional human needs as well as a variety of contemporary issues. It must be designed to support a variety of approaches from service to advocacy to education.

7. **Training, Recruitment and Public Awareness.** Support for the volunteers, supervisors and organizations and promotion of the services with the public at large will be essential to the success of a re-constituted agency. ACTION Volunteer and Staff training have been seriously reduced with budget cuts (not allowing adequate travel funding). This needs to be increased, even if it means slower increase of the number of volunteers.

Recruitment can be substantially increased using pro bono assistance (eg. the Ad Council), former volunteers (now over 100,000 from VISTA) and primarily through publicity about the renewed mission and support.

A national excitement about the program can be created with the commitment from the President and new dynamic appointees promoting the new mission.

JAH

**CONCEPT PAPER ON ACTION'S INVOLVEMENT
IN CARRYING OUT NATIONAL SERVICE PROPOSALS**

**OPTIONS FOR DISCUSSION
February 10, 1993**

ACTION and National Service

ACTION's experienced administrative and program staff can contribute to rapidly and successfully initiating a National Service program by:

- Increasing the number of volunteers under proven program models such as VISTA.
- Providing an infrastructure for administering other National Service initiatives proposed by the President.
- Helping to certify local volunteer service opportunities for student loan payments.
- Generating cooperative relationships with local communities, stressing local participation in funding.

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Introduction

This concept paper provides a proposal, with options, for a role for ACTION in the Administration's National Service initiative.

Why Consider ACTION in the National Service Proposal?

ACTION, the Federal Domestic Volunteer Agency, supports over 2,000 volunteer projects across the country with a total budget of \$201 million and a Federal staff of 420 employees, the majority of whom are located in Regional and State offices. These projects, through the placement of local volunteers, reach out to over 50,000 local public and non-profit organizations aligned with the concept of volunteer service.

ACTION's mission is to stimulate voluntary citizen participation in addressing the needs of American communities, particularly those of the poor, the disadvantaged, and the elderly.

ACTION's entire program structure and philosophy is in addressing community needs and, as a means toward that end, in providing structure and support for volunteer projects developed by local organizations. Thus, ACTION is in a strong position to identify, help develop, and sanction bona fide community service placements.

ACTION's strengths in a national service environment are significant:

1. **The maturity and proven worth of its programs.** VISTA, RSVP, FGP, and SCP have successfully worked through issues related to the administration of volunteer service programs. Recognizing the importance of sound local project delivery and experience, as well as the importance of continuous improvement and renewal, ACTION's programs provide a cooperative, structured and creative environment for volunteers as well as projects. The Agency's management culture emphasizes partnership with local communities (including non-profit and public agencies) in fostering sound volunteer administration. Further, a variety of program models have been tested, evaluated, and proven over the last several decades, many of which have formed the basis for expanded activities, such as service learning programs and urban youth corps.

2. **Management capacity.** ACTION has significant experience in sound management of volunteer programs. Fraud, waste, and abuse have not been a major issue with ACTION programs for over a decade. Further, the local control of projects ensures that they address community needs and do not displace employed workers.
3. **Field structure.** The staff is dispersed, experienced, and knowledgeable. Roughly 60 percent of ACTION's staff are located in 47 State and 9 regional field offices. These staff are very familiar with the needs of local communities in their areas and how to leverage the resources most effectively to meet those needs.
4. **Local acceptance and support.** ACTION's programs, although by design not the Agency, have name recognition locally. VISTA, FGP, RSVP, and SCP are well known in local communities and particularly in low-income areas. All local organizations already contribute support for ACTION's volunteer programs in a public/private partnership. Each of ACTION's programs have a history of far exceeding their matching requirements for non-federal support.

Some have argued that ACTION's programs and projects are overly monitored and that paperwork requirements are excessive. The Agency believes that by reducing Congressional mandates in the Domestic Volunteer Service Act and by internal program management decisions, this perception can be changed while still maintaining strong program accountability.

Judgments will be required concerning the role of two other central organizations potentially interested in National Service -- the Commission on National and Community Service and the Points of Light Foundation. Both were established within the last few years to help promote service to the country. There are significant needs beyond the major program administration and delivery function that could be addressed by one or both of these organizations to help promote the Administration's service agenda.

Any Federal effort must also interact with the important work of the nonprofit sector, both public and private, in this country. The Federal goal should be to further encourage the development and contributions of this sector, not to replace or diminish it.

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Fundamental Concepts Regarding National Service

Defining ACTION's role in National Service requires some definition of the principles of the Administration's program. This is not to prejudge the outcome of the current effort to develop the National Service proposal, but it is necessary to provide a context for reviewing the recommendations for a role for ACTION. A different concept of National Service could well lead to a potentially different role for the Agency.

This paper assumes the following regarding the National Service proposal:

1. Service should be based in communities across the country, with the activities determined, supported, and provided locally through a broad range of public and nonprofit organizations. There will not be a large, monolithic federal program, such as the Civilian Conservation Corps.
2. Service should be voluntary; it should encompass a range of full-time and part-time opportunities. Full-time service should include minor amounts for living expenses, as well as post-service stipends to help pay off college loans, to be used for college, or in some programs to be used for other legitimate specified purposes.
3. Full-time service will not be an entitlement open to all current or potential college students. Instead, the program will be defined more narrowly, with considerable care given to assure that meaningful service opportunities are available to those serving.
4. The service effort will be inclusive to Americans of all ages, and will reach out through Older American and student volunteer programs (e.g, ACTION's existing programs). National Service will not be defined simply as full-time stipended service. The Trust Fund itself, by definition, will be beneficial to those who have completed college and potential college enrollees, primarily youth, but non-college youth and Older Americans will be involved as an integral part of the effort.
5. The Federal administrative costs of the program will remain small; this will not become a major, large federal agency, but will instead be a program based on existing structures, primarily local.

Programs Providing Service Opportunities

The question exists as to what specific program opportunities will be available under the National Service proposal and how it will be administered. With regard to the full-time opportunities, the following guidelines are suggested:

1. There would be a range of service opportunities, all of which would be approved by a designated Federal agency. Service would be documented and verified by this agency, which would maintain a roster of projects and individual participation for loan verification and other purposes.
2. The specific number of service opportunities will depend upon the budget and a variety of program factors. In general, however, opportunities will expand in a number of existing programs including: Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), urban corps such as City Year in Boston, and State Conservation Corps programs. In addition, new opportunities will be available, such as working in schools, law enforcement, and a variety of other local, community-based efforts.
3. Some programs would receive Federal support through grants. Others, such as VISTA, would be operated under existing delivery mechanisms. All programs would be based locally and operated by local organizations.
4. The specific programs do not necessarily require Federal funding. Indeed, it is anticipated that some programs will be locally funded, and indeed all would be required to have local contributions, either cash or in-kind. For example, a school system might agree to provide support for individuals to serve as teacher aides. A designated Federal organization would certify that this was an appropriate assignment under the National Service program, specify the living allowance and other requirements that must be met by the school system, and arrange to verify successful completion of service and pay the postservice stipend for payment of education loans.

Loan Program and Its Administration

This paper does not address the question of what portion of individuals' education loans should be paid for through service. This policy question is determined by costs and consideration of broader questions of Federal aid to higher education.

From the service perspective, however, the procedures can be straightforward. The service agency would not be involved in any judgments about who receives loans and the management of the front-end processing. The service agency would, however, be responsible for the post-service activity related to loans. Specifically, upon completion of service by an individual volunteer, the Federal agency responsible for service would make a direct payment either

- to an institution designated by the individual (pre-college attendee who will be using the stipend to attend college); or
- to the holder of an individual's loan (post-college service). [If there is a National Trust established to administer a single Federal loan portfolio, the payment would be made to the Trust.]

[If the determination is made that the loan repayment should not be a fixed amount, but some percentage of the total loan, the agency could easily be informed of this by the applicable loan holder and then make the payment.]

This procedure would assure program integrity, that is, that the National Student Trust would be used only for education purposes following successful completion of a period of service. It would not rely on thousands of local organizations to be responsible for the certification of service and appropriate payment. It is simply not feasible to manage a trust arrangement through thousands of local organizations, many of whom may well be small nonprofit organizations which would be burdened by such administrative requirements. Further, there would be financial integrity and other concerns raised through such an approach.

Costs of National Service

The total costs of the National Service effort will depend upon the number of participants and the specific decisions concerning the range of cost items, such as living allowances and post-service stipends.

Although a number of possible administrative and funding procedures exist, one possibility is to have ACTION appropriated monies to cover the total Federal costs of the National Service effort. This would enable the Administration to monitor and track all costs from a single location on an ongoing basis.

In addition, State, local, and private contributions would be encouraged to flow into local programs. The ultimate size of the program (number of service participants and organizations)

will then depend upon its popularity and success at the local level. This is attractive both programmatically (if it isn't working locally it should not grow) and politically (the Administration can correctly argue that the ultimate size of the program will depend upon how successful it is, not on some preset Federal funding target).

The specific appropriations to ACTION would cover the following costs for full-time service:

1. Living allowances. This would vary some by program and local cost of living, but the goal would be to achieve an average of approximately \$620 per month (105% of the poverty level for a single individual).
2. Post-service stipend. A separate, aggregate ceiling could be placed on this activity, reflecting judgments about the student aid package made available through the Federal government. [Some programs may pay a direct stipend not targeted for education purposes.]
3. Health coverage as appropriate.
4. Local project support costs. In some cases, local projects will require Federal funds for supervision and management of the service program. In other cases, these amounts will be funded locally. Although minimum matching requirements should exist, it is not feasible to expect local institutions to cover all of the project support costs.
5. Training. Volunteers should receive pre-service and in-service training. The amount, and cost, will vary by program.

The total estimated cost for full-time service, less the postservice stipend, should be between \$11-13,000, including all supervision and other costs at the local level. Assuming a postservice stipend of \$5,000 per volunteer, the direct program costs for 60,000 full-time participants would be about \$1 billion. Most of the Federal monies would be distributed through project grants.

Part-time, non-stipended service should also be encouraged, as not everyone will be interested in full-time service. Part-time service costs are dependent upon policy judgments about loan cancellations and other items. Although not advocated in this paper, if part-time service qualifies for loan cancellations, the costs of part-time participation should still be less than 50% of the costs of full-time participation, as living allowances and certain other costs would be inappropriate.

Aside from the loan cancellation issue, part-time service can and should be expanded through a variety of Federal, State, and local mechanisms. ACTION's Student Community Service and Older American Programs should be considered for such expansion; other important efforts exist as well.

The issue is also raised as to Federal administrative costs for these programs. Although this will depend upon the size and specifics of the effort, ACTION already has a nationwide staff in place and the capacity to deliver expanded activities at very marginal cost increases. In general, Federal administrative costs under the above program description will remain minor.

Role of ACTION

ACTION could have a number of alternative roles in the administration of programs under the National Service Trust. Under one scenario, the responsibilities under the program structure described above could be as follows:

1. Identifying and certifying programs and projects for participation in National Service. This activity would be performed by ACTION State offices, who would be knowledgeable about the organizations and assignments. [Such certification is necessary not as a "Federal sanction," but simply to assure that taxpayers' funds would not be used for inappropriate activities.] Further, such certification also serves as a mechanism for controlling costs under the program.
2. Funding the local operation of service programs through project grants and, in the case of VISTA, operating the program through the approval of local projects and individual volunteers to address issues related to poverty.
3. Tracking individual participation in sanctioned programs to verify that service requirements have been met for loan cancellation and other purposes.
4. Providing technical assistance and support to local organizations and individuals who contribute to the service effort.
5. Encouraging State, local, and private support for National Service. Such support is mandatory in ACTION's existing programs.

Several Issues

There are many issues that require discussion concerning ACTION's potential involvement in the National Trust proposal. Several issues are identified below, but further discussions are required.

1. *What should be the role of ACTION if the National Trust is administered by another Federal agency?*

One logical view is that ACTION's programs should be expanded as important vehicles through which service under the National Service Trust would occur. ACTION has determined that over 4,000 VISTA Volunteers, 50,000 RSVP volunteers, 3,000 Senior Companions, and 2,000 Foster Grandparents could be added above existing program levels within a year, as well as new summer VISTA programs and expanded demonstration activities. It would cost an additional \$90 million in program funds in fiscal year 1994 to accomplish this expansion. The program flexibility exists to expand the level of participation beyond the 12-month period.

The fiscal year 1994 budget to be released in March for ACTION and other organizations will be a key signal of the Administration's plans for service and volunteer programs.

Further, ACTION already has statutory authority for and experience in administering other service and volunteer programs, beyond its current six programs, where additional potential for contribution to the service effort exists.

Full-time service through VISTA, as well as potentially part-time service through the Foster Grandparent or Senior Companion Programs, would result in credits that could be converted to payments toward the cost of postsecondary education for participants or their immediate family.

2. *Should postservice stipend payments for education purposes be provided only to the individual or extended to other family members?*

Involving other family members keeps the focus on postsecondary education while recognizing important roles of those volunteers who are not interested (e.g., because of age) or not able to pursue postsecondary education themselves. It also reinforces family support systems; helps focus people on making their own career choices based on their interests and abilities; and recognizes that the "forgotten half" should be encouraged to contribute to their communities through this mechanism.

A consideration to this approach is the increase in financial costs. Debate could also focus on the definition of "immediate family."

3. *Should postservice payments be provided to the volunteer, rather than the institution?*

Paying the institution provides an inexpensive management control. Payments to individuals, on the other hand, can create substantial management control weaknesses.

4. *What alternatives exist for the funding and operation of the National Student Trust fund?*

Among the many options, in addition to the one identified above, are:

- a) Set up a separate Trust Fund for loan cancellation requirements only, with no direct link to program costs.
 - b) Include the option that State and local governments, private businesses and individuals, and other entities could contribute directly to the Fund, possibly in exchange for providing service opportunities in a specific community.
5. *What should the role of States be in the effort?*

This is a major issue; and a suggestion is that the following principles should guide a role for the States:

- 1. The goal is to involve States and to encourage their participation and funding.
- 2. Administration of the Trust Fund must be done centrally; it makes no sense to set up 50 separate State systems.
- 3. States should receive monies for program delivery where appropriate, but not all Federal monies should pass through States. (Local communities must define and support the activities, and local projects should be sanctioned.)
- 4. States would be consulted and involved in the selection and sanctioning of all projects within the State.

6. *What should be done about the coordination of community service programs in other agencies, such as Defense, HUD, Education, and Labor?*

This initially requires a determination of whether program consolidations should be accomplished. At a minimum, we believe that there are opportunities for better coordination among the agencies and departments with programs in this area.

Summary

ACTION has considerable potential to contribute to the goals of the National Service Trust, perhaps as the Federal organization responsible for interacting on an ongoing basis with the thousands of local organizations where such service will occur. A specific role for the Agency needs to be considered as part of the development of the National Service proposal. Failure to use ACTION's resources and capabilities could result in duplication of systems which already exist, fragmentation of a major Administration initiative, and potential exclusion of the thousands of volunteers already providing valuable service to the nation. ACTION has the staff expertise, program and management systems, and enthusiasm to play a key role in the National Service initiative.

Background Concerning ACTION's Programs

ACTION's current programs, authorized under the Domestic Volunteer Service Act, are:

- o **Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA)** provides opportunities for Americans of all ages and backgrounds to serve full-time in addressing the needs of low-income communities.
 - ♦ VISTA Volunteers receive money for living expenses during service and a stipend at the completion of their service.
 - ♦ The program supports over 3,300 full-time volunteers in over 700 local projects at a cost of \$39 million. The current cost, including all support, is approximately \$12,000 per volunteer service year.
 - ♦ In 1994 VISTA will celebrate its 30th anniversary having enrolled approximately 100,000 volunteers on more than 12,000 anti-poverty projects across the nation.
- o **The Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)** provides older volunteers with service opportunities and is open to all seniors age 60 and older.
 - ♦ Over 430,000 Americans serve part-time as RSVP volunteers in over 750 projects across the country and are engaged in a wide variety of activities to address local community needs.
 - ♦ The budget for this program is approximately \$33.7 million; local organizations contribute an additional \$35 million in funds and in-kind contributions. The cost of the program is less than \$.50 per hour of service.
- o **The Foster Grandparent Program (FGP)** provides low-income, senior volunteers with modest stipends to serve with community projects that help children with special needs.
 - ♦ Over 20,000 Foster Grandparents participate in more than 260 projects around the country and contribute more than 21 million hours of service.

- ♦ The Federal cost of the program is \$64.8 million; State and local organizations contribute an additional \$29 million. The cost of the program is less than \$3.00 per hour of service.
- The **Senior Companion Program (SCP)** provides low-income senior volunteers with modest stipends to serve in community projects assisting frail elderly and other seniors with special needs who are risk of institutionalization.
 - ♦ Over 10,000 volunteers contribute over 10 million hours of service at a cost to the Federal budget of \$29.5 million, with State and local organizations contributing an additional \$17 million. The cost of this program is also less than \$3.00 per hour of service.
- The **Student Community Service Program** provides seed money to local non-profit organizations and universities and schools to initiate or expand activities that involve high school and college students in poverty-related community service activities.
 - ♦ Approximately 13,000 students currently contribute about a half million hours of service and participate in over 60 projects at a cost of less than \$1 million.
- **Special Volunteer Programs** develop and demonstrate innovative approaches in volunteerism.
 - ♦ Recently, this authority has been primarily used for drug prevention activities; the budget is less than \$1 million.
 - ♦ In the most recent year, over 4,000 volunteers contributed over 350,000 hours of service under this program.

In addition to these current programs, ACTION has throughout its history supported a wide variety of community-based volunteer programs.