



Record Type: Record

To: Katharine Button/WHO/EOP, Marsha E. Berry/WHO/EOP, Christine N. Macy/WHO/EOP

cc:

Subject: More, more, I'm still not satisfied . . .

This is a great story about a woman who will be the first in her family to graduate college. She says her success is based largely on having been an AmeriCorp member. Maybe you could work this story into a speech or a column by the First Lady. Maybe Mrs. Clinton could drop her a note?

Thanks again for all your help today. Mrs. Clinton was great! It made a real difference. Steve

----- Forwarded by Stephen B. Silverman/WHO/EOP on 03/19/98 02:05 PM -----



"Gomperts, John" <JGOMPERT@cns.gov>

03/19/98 01:57:00 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Stephen B. Silverman/WHO/EOP

cc:

Subject: More, more, I'm still not satisfied . . .

That's a line from a very old song, most likely before your time. But it still works for me.

Tomorrow, March 20th, a former ameriCorps member will be the first person in her family to graduate from college. We have received a copy of the letter she wrote to her project director inviting him to the graduation. It is an extremely moving letter. (Apparently she invited the project director because she was worried that no one in her family would come the the event.)

The letter says, among other things, (I prefer never to write inter alia):

"I would strongly recommend this program to anyone who want to pursue a college education. The AmeriCorps project is a model program for individuals such as myself who want to better their life as well as help others pursue their dreams. My dream is now coming to light; I will be the first of my mother's children to graduate from college. I had a goal set forth upon joining the AmeriCorps team. with the funds, assistance, training and rewards of being a part of a positive movement across the nation, I overcame, proving that people can improve their lives."

Pretty strong stuff. This graduation ceremony is tomorrow. The Columbus paper is doing a big story about it. It's just what we want.

Now the tough part; if you are as good as I know you are: you'll find a way for the President to tell that story. It is a perfect story, a perfect quote; and it compliments the woman as well as the program.

I'm faxing you the stuff on this right away. You are amazing. JG

PLEASE DELIVER IMMEDIATELY!

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TO: Carol Beach
WITH: first Lady's office
FAX NUMBER: 456-6244
DATE/TIME: _____
TOTAL PAGES: 9

OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

FROM: Sandy Scott(voice) 202-606-5000 ext. 255(fax) 202-565-2794 ← Tara Murphy 27841201 New York Avenue, NW Sa
Washington, DC 20525

NOTE:

Here is some quick background
on national service and
reauthorization. Let me
know what else you
need - we can messenger
it to you.

GETTING THINGS DONE.



TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES:

I am pleased to transmit today for your immediate consideration and enactment the "National and Community Service Amendments Act of 1998." This legislative proposal extends and amends national service law, including the National and Community Service Act of 1990 and the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973. It builds upon the long, bipartisan tradition of service in our country, which was renewed in 1993 when I signed the National and Community Service Trust Act creating the Corporation for National Service.

Service to one's community is an integral part of what it means to be an American. The Presidents' Summit for America's Future held in Philadelphia last April reinforced the role of programs supported by the Corporation for National Service as key vehicles to provide young people with the resources to maximize their potential and give back to their communities. Citizen service is also at the heart of our efforts to prepare America for the 21st century, as we work to ensure that all Americans have the opportunity to make the most of their own lives and to help those in need.

My Administration's most important contribution to citizen service is AmeriCorps, the national service program that already has given more than 100,000 young Americans the opportunity to serve their country. By tying opportunity to responsibility, we have given them the chance to serve and, in return, earn money for post-secondary education. In community after community, AmeriCorps members have proven that service can help us meet our most pressing social needs. For example, in Simpson County, Kentucky, AmeriCorps members helped 2nd graders jump three grade levels in reading. In Boys and Girls Clubs all across the country, AmeriCorps members are mentors for at-risk young people. Habitat For Humanity relies upon AmeriCorps members to bring in more volunteers and build more houses. In communities beset by floods, tornadoes, and hurricanes, AmeriCorps members have helped to rebuild homes and restore hope. AmeriCorps members are mobilizing thousands of college students from more than 800 college campuses in our America Reads program. In all of these efforts, AmeriCorps brings together people of every background to work toward common goals.

Independent evaluators have reviewed AmeriCorps, National Senior Service Corps programs, and Learn and Service America programs and have concluded that national service yields a positive return on investment. The legislation that I am transmitting builds on our experiences with national service to date and improves the national service program in four ways: (1) codifying agreements with Congress and others to reduce costs and streamline national service; (2) strengthening partnerships with traditional volunteer organizations; (3) increasing States' flexibility to administer national service programs; and (4) expanding opportunities for Americans to serve.

Since the enactment of the National and Community Service Trust Act in 1993, and particularly since 1995, my Administration has worked with constructive critics of national service to address their concerns and improve the program. This legislation continues that process by reducing the Corporation's average budgeted cost per AmeriCorps member, repealing authority for redundant or obsolete national service programs, and making other improvements in the efficiency of national service programs.

National service has never been a substitute for the contributions made by the millions of Americans who volunteer their time to worthy causes every year. Rather, as leaders of volunteer organizations have told me many times, national service has proven that the presence of full-time, trained service participants enhances tremendously the effectiveness of volunteers. This legislation strengthens the partnership between the national service programs and traditional volunteer organizations; codifies the National Service Scholarship program honoring exemplary service by high school students; and expands the AmeriCorps Challenge Scholarships, through which national service participants can access education awards. The legislation also authorizes appropriations for the Points of Light Foundation through the year 2002.

The National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 explicitly conceived of service as a Federal-State partnership. Significant authority was vested in bipartisan State Commissions appointed by the Governors. Consistent with our goal of turning power back to the people, I promised that we would accelerate the process of devolution as the newly-created State Commissions expanded their capacities. This legislation fulfills that promise in a variety of ways, including authority to enter into Service Collaboration Agreements with Governors to provide a means for coordinating the planning and administration of national service programs in a State.

The changes proposed in this legislation provide expanded opportunities for Americans to serve. By reducing the cost per AmeriCorps member, this legislation allows each dollar invested in the program to go further. This legislation broadens the age and income guidelines for National Senior Service Corps participants, expanding the pool of older Americans who can perform results-oriented service in their communities. It simplifies the administration of Learn and Serve America, so States and communities will more easily be able to provide opportunities for students to learn through service in their schools and neighborhoods.

On January 19th, I had the opportunity to honor the memory of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. by engaging in service on the holiday commemorating his birth. I joined sixty-five AmeriCorps members and more than 300 community volunteers in repairing and re-painting Cardozo High School in the Shaw neighborhood of Washington, DC. Thirty-one years ago, Dr. King came to that very neighborhood and urged the people there to engage in citizen service to rebuild their lives, their community, and their future. That is what those national service participants, and the thousands more who were participating in similar projects across the country, were doing -- honoring the legacy of Dr. King and answering the highest calling of citizenship in this country.

Each of the more than 500,000 participants in the programs of the National Senior Service Corps and 750,000 participants in programs supported by Learn and Serve America, and every AmeriCorps member answers that highest calling of citizenship when they make and fulfill a commitment to service in their communities. This legislation builds on the successes of these programs and improves them for the future.

I urge the Congress to give this legislation prompt and favorable consideration.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

THE WHITE HOUSE

CORPORATION

FOR NATIONAL

 SERVICE

PRESS RELEASE

3/17/98

Contact: Lisa Bloch, x140

Anne Bushman, x304

Phone: 202-606-5000

SPRING BREAK STUDENTS PUT DOWN BOOKS -- PICK UP HAMMERS WITH AMERICORPS

*AmeriCorps Members Lead Students in Building Habitat for
Humanity Homes Across the Country*

WASHINGTON, DC – More than two hundred AmeriCorps members are leading and training thousands of college students who are spending their spring break building homes in 40 communities across the country as part of Habitat for Humanity's Collegiate Challenge.

As part of this six-week effort, which ends April 11, full-time AmeriCorps members are organizing, training and supervising thousands of student volunteers who have opted to spend spring break building houses for those in need instead of going to the beach. Collegiate Challenge sites include Miami, FL; Robbins, TN; Cleveland, OH; and New Orleans, LA.

This unique partnership between AmeriCorps and Habitat for Humanity gives students a chance to learn valuable skills and a critical lesson about the importance of serving others. In total, there are 413 AmeriCorps members serving year-round at Habitat sites, supervising projects as well as recruiting and training volunteers.

"As AmeriCorps members gain skills, our affiliates are able to expand the number of occasional volunteers through increased capacity to supervise and manage volunteers," said Millard Fuller, Founder of Habitat for Humanity. "We at Habitat for Humanity feel privileged and honored to have the AmeriCorps people with us, and we want more of them as time goes on."

"Instead of spending their spring break vacations on the beach, these students are joining our AmeriCorps members in the trenches," said Harris Wofford, chief executive officer, Corporation for National Service. "Because of the AmeriCorps/Habitat partnership, more families will have a place to call home."

AmeriCorps, which is administered by the Corporation for National Service, is the national service program that provides opportunities for Americans to serve communities in the areas of education, human needs, environment and public safety. In exchange for their year of service, AmeriCorps members earn almost \$5,000 to pay for college or to pay back student loans.

NATIONAL SERVICE: GETTING THINGS DONE

AmeriCorps • Learn and Serve America • National Senior Service Corps

1201 New York Avenue, N.W. • Washington, D.C. 20525
telephone: 202-606-5000 • website: www.nationalservice.org

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EMBARGOED 2:00 PM (PST)
February 26, 1998

CONTACT: Anne Bushman
(202) 606-5000 ext. 304

PRESIDENT CLINTON ANNOUNCES PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL SERVICE AND FEMA TO HELP COMMUNITIES PREPARE FOR THE WORST

Spring Break Project Utilizes Expertise of National Service Programs in Mobilizing Volunteer Service in Times of Disaster

OAKLAND, Calif – Today, President Clinton announced an expanded partnership between the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Corporation for National Service in building disaster-resistant communities.

The Corporation for National Service, which administers AmeriCorps, has taken the lead role in Spring Break, a partnership with FEMA. AmeriCorps members will mobilize and train high school and college students to volunteer during their Spring Break vacations in disaster-reduction projects in five states. The AmeriCorps members will organize and lead activities such as securing heavy objects like refrigerators, shelving units and glass mirrors and supplying fire extinguishers and weatherproofing devices for low-income and disabled residents.

Built upon an existing relationship between FEMA and the Corporation begun in 1995, in which specially-trained AmeriCorps members assist in disaster-relief efforts, the Spring Break project is part of Project Impact, an on-going initiative to take actions that protect families, businesses and communities by reducing the effects of natural disasters. In California alone, more than 100 AmeriCorps members will participate in the Spring Break project.

"The value of well-managed volunteer service in communities is even more apparent in times of disaster," said Harris Wofford, Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation for National Service. "The Spring Break project not only strengthens our existing partnership with FEMA, but empowers communities to be ready for disasters on their own, such as in Los Angeles where the AmeriCorps Rapid Response Corps members educated a quarter million people about disaster preparedness."

"It is a big help to disaster victims to work with motivated, self-sufficient young AmeriCorps members who will be in the community long after the TV cameras have been turned off and interest has flagged," said FEMA Director James Lee Witt.

There are five Corporation for National Service/FEMA Spring Break Projects.

- **Oakland, CA:** In over 300 public housing units, volunteers will implement mitigation measures, including bracing book shelves to walls, securing pictures and providing general preparedness information.

(more)



- **Deerfield Beach and St. Petersburg, FL:** High school students will make minor repairs to homes of elderly residents including installing and securing shutters, strengthening windows and doors and providing general preparedness information.
- **Wilmington, NC:** Over 300 volunteers from the University of North Carolina-Wilmington will assist elderly, low income and special needs individuals with debris removal resulting from Hurricanes Bertha and Fran, including clearing growth from exits, ramps and windows; repairing security devices; and performing light maintenance work to make the homes more disaster resistant.
- **Randolph County, WV:** Volunteers will place benchmarks and flood elevation marks on several sites throughout the county to raise flood awareness.
- **Pascagoula, MS:** AmeriCorps coordinators are recruiting high school volunteers to perform hazard reduction activities for home-bound and disabled citizens.

While plans are underway to help reduce the effects of future disasters in communities across the country, AmeriCorps members have been helping with California disaster relief efforts since early February.

- The AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (AmeriCorps*NCCC) **San Diego** campus sent several teams to northern California where AmeriCorps members are leading damage assessment activities in **Milbrae and Watsonville**. Ten Corps members are bilingual and are able to meet the needs of migrant workers in Watsonville.
- Members serving in the American Red Cross Rapid Response Corps are working with the Red Cross to assess damage and provide mass care at shelters and mobile food units.
- AmeriCorps members serving with the Santa Cruz Service Corps are also working with the American Red Cross to assess damage and assist the residents of the **Santa Cruz** area.

AmeriCorps joined disaster response efforts in 1995 through an agreement between FEMA and the Corporation for National Service that enables Corporation programs to assist FEMA in all four phases of emergency management. In the past three years, Corporation programs including AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve America and the National Senior Corps have responded to disasters in over 30 states; participated in eight mission assignments through FEMA; created partnerships with state emergency management networks and programs; and created partnerships with the American Red Cross and local emergency management entities.

Last year, more than 550 members and volunteers from Corporation programs assisted in California following the extensive flooding in January. Members and volunteers serving in Corporation programs worked at American Red Cross shelters, conducted traffic control and river watches for the local law enforcement, managed donations, interviewed disaster victims and conducted damage assessment.

The Corporation for National Service is a public-private partnership engaging 1.2 million Americans in results-driven service.

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National Service: A Powerful Force for Disaster Response

"It is a big help to disaster victims to work with motivated, self-sufficient young AmeriCorps members who will be in the community long after the TV cameras have been turned off and interest has flagged."

-James Lee Witt, Director Federal Emergency Management Agency

From tornadoes in Florida to forest fires in Idaho to floods in California and around the country, AmeriCorps members specially trained in disaster relief have responded to disasters in more than 30 states since 1995. Participants in all national service programs – AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve America and the National Senior Service Corps – perform a range of disaster relief functions. They run emergency shelters, help law enforcement, provide food and shelter, manage donations, assess and repair damage, and help families and communities rebuild. Because they serve full time, a key function of AmeriCorps members is to recruit, organize and supervise other volunteers.

This strong track record in disaster response led to a 1995 agreement between the Corporation for National Service and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) providing for national service to be on call to respond to disaster whenever it strikes. Since then, national service volunteers have responded to dozens of disasters, participated in nine FEMA mission assignments, and created partnerships with numerous state emergency management networks. The Corporation for National Service is taking a lead role in FEMA's Spring Break Project, part of Project Impact, which will recruit high school and college students to spend their spring break helping to build disaster resistant communities.

Specially-Trained Disaster Relief Teams

- **AmeriCorps*National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC):** AmeriCorps*NCCC, a residential AmeriCorps program for 18-24 year-olds, has agreements with FEMA and the Red Cross and is on call to deploy highly trained teams in the event of a disaster. In three years, corps members have responded to 25 disasters.
- **American Red Cross AmeriCorps Rapid Response Corps:** Based in six cities, this program provides AmeriCorps members with intensive training in mass care, family services, disaster communication, and emergency response and recovery. The Rapid Response Corps can be deployed anywhere in the country and has served in eight major disasters and provided assistance to more than 450 single-family homes. Los Angeles corps members have provided disaster preparedness education to a quarter million area citizens.

Disaster Response Impact

- AmeriCorps*NCCC team members from the San Diego campus are working in northern California leading damage assessment activities in Milbrae and Watsonville.
- AmeriCorps Rapid Response Corps members from six cities are responding to floods in central, coastal and northern California, assisting with damage assessment and providing mass care at shelters and mobile food units.
- In January 1997, more than 550 AmeriCorps and Senior Corps members served in California, Nevada and Washington in flood relief efforts. Members assisted at Red Cross shelters, conducted traffic control and river watches, managed donations, interviewed disaster victims and conducted damage assessments.
- In September 1996, AmeriCorps members and RSVP volunteers assisted in Hurricane Fran disaster relief. They coordinated dispersal of food and supplies and removed debris including fallen trees from roads and off homes.
- In 1995, three teams of AmeriCorps*NCCC members joined trained firefighters to contain 90% of a blaze that engulfed 21,000 acres in Idaho. Corps members logged 6,684 hours fighting fires, restoring fire-ravaged areas, building and maintaining fire lines, and protecting salmon fisheries and the historic Wapiti ranch.
- In September 1995, an AmeriCorps team coordinated and assisted with recovery efforts after Hurricane Marilyn devastated the island of St. Thomas. AmeriCorps members repaired roofs of hurricane victims, removed debris, assisted with food distribution, erected tents, and addressed health and sanitation issues, completing over a hundred projects while working in intense heat and challenging terrain.

DRAFT

DRAFT – NOT FOR DISTRIBUTION

3/16/98, 4:00 p.m.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Month, Day, 1998

CONTACT:

**PRESIDENT CLINTON CALLS ON CONGRESS TO EXTEND NATIONAL SERVICE
INTO THE 21ST CENTURY**

**Legislation Will Reauthorize the Corporation for National Service and Provide
Opportunities for Millions Of Americans to Serve**

President Clinton today submitted legislation to Congress to extend national service into the 21st century, creating the opportunity for millions more Americans to serve their communities. The legislation, which enjoys strong bipartisan support among members of Congress, will reauthorize the Corporation for National Service and its three initiatives -- **AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve America**, and the **National Senior Service Corps** – for five years.

The Corporation for National Service was created in 1993 with bipartisan support from the President and Congress. Working in partnership with community-based national service programs, national and local non-profits, faith-based organizations, and others, the Corporation involves more than 1.2 million Americans of all ages and backgrounds in service that meets vital community needs.

(do we need to describe what each of our programs do?)

“National service reminds us that serving others and giving back to our communities is part of what it means to be an American. Thanks to programs like AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve America, and National Senior Service Corps – today there are more than 1 million Americans who are serving their country by serving their community. These citizens and their accomplishments are living proof of the power of national service to get things done for America.” President

“For the past five years, the Corporation and its programs have helped more than 1 million Americans make a difference in their communities. Every day these citizens are busy tutoring and mentoring children and youth, responding to natural disasters, immunizing children, building homes, and taking care of the elderly. Extending support for national service into the 21st century will give millions more Americans the opportunity to serve and strengthen their communities” Harris

Over the past five years, thousands (?) of communities across America have discovered the value of national service in meeting vital needs in education, public safety, health and human needs and the environment. The experience of these communities is that national service works. Specifically national service:

(more)

- **Meets community needs.** Doing everything from creating educational programs for at-risk children, to providing disaster response, to working with local police to make neighborhoods safer, national service strengthens communities.
- **Improves the lives of children and youth, while providing opportunities to serve.** Through Foster Grandparents who mentor more than 80,000 children, to AmeriCorps members who taught, tutored or mentored more than 600,000 youth last year, to Learn and Serve America which provides opportunities for students to learn while giving back to their communities, national service is making a difference in the lives of children and youth. (need to say more about Goal 5?)
- **Strengthens existing community service efforts.** National service provides the "people power" that helps national organizations like the Boys And Girls Clubs of America and the American Red Cross, faith-based organizations like Habitat for Humanity and the National Council of Churches, and local non-profits do what they do best.
- **Provides educational opportunities for thousands of the nation's young people.** Through AmeriCorps, more than 70,000 Americans have earned education awards of \$4,725 which they can use to go on to college or pay back student loans.

(needs closing paragraph)

###

TALKING IT OVER

BY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hundreds of thousands of America's college students are on spring break this week. Some are playing volleyball at the beach. Others are earning some extra cash at part-time jobs or just hanging out at home.

Seven thousand, though, are spending their vacation building homes with Habitat for Humanity's Collegiate Challenge. Under the leadership of several hundred AmeriCorps members, these student volunteers are learning valuable skills at Habitat sites from Lynchburg, Va., to Miami.

Elsewhere this week, AmeriCorps members are collaborating with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Red Cross to recruit and train high school and college students to work in areas that have been devastated by natural disasters.

Among my husband's accomplishments that I am most proud of is his success in returning national service to the national agenda. The centerpiece of this effort is the Corporation for National Service and its three initiatives -- AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve America, and the National Senior Service Corps.

AmeriCorps provides an opportunity for all Americans to serve, in exchange for which they can receive education awards worth \$4,725 a year to pay for college or to repay student loans.

Learn and Serve America offers grants to teachers and community members for projects that involve students in service activities that complement their classroom studies. Through a Learn and Serve America program in Minnesota, for example, high school students test the water quality of the St. Louis River as part of their chemistry class, and in New York, nursing students help operate a community health center serving low-income people.

The National Senior Service Corps helps people over 55 find service opportunities related to their interests. Foster Grandparents provide support to children with special needs; Senior Companions enable more than 32,000 frail elderly individuals to live independently; and Retired and Senior Volunteers care for a variety of local services that range from leading local museum tours to teaching adult education computer classes.

This week, my husband will submit bipartisan legislation to Congress reauthorizing the Corporation for National Service. Serving others and giving back is part of what it means to be an American and part of what it means to be a citizen in a democratic society. Extending Congressional support for national service into the 21st century will give millions more Americans the opportunity to serve and strengthen their communities.

Over the course of the last five years, communities in every corner of America have discovered the value of national service. What they have learned is that national service works. It works for the country, and it works for those who serve.

Vanesse Backe postponed medical school in order to join an AmeriCorps project here in Washington. Her experience changed her professional goals: She has decided to use her medical knowledge to help under-served populations.

Senior volunteer Joe Whitlow is a hero to a classroom of 4-year-olds in the Head Start program at Bellevue Community College in Bellevue, Wash. For more than 10 years, he has volunteered his time and talents on a weekly basis. Wednesday is "Joe Day," when he brings bags filled with wood, hammers, drills, glue guns, nails and screws. He and the children create toy boats and birdhouses, and learn about woodworking and working together.

Four years ago, Marilyn Concepcion was a high school dropout working on an assembly line. Then, she joined the AmeriCorps program in Providence, R.I., where she tutored and taught English to elementary students. During her year of service, she earned her GED and gained the confidence to apply for college. She is now studying to become a pediatrician at Brown University.

Sherry Thomas grew up in Clearwater, Fla., in the predominantly black, low-income North Greenwood neighborhood. At the age of 14, she was living on the streets because of an abusive situation at home. Today, in her second year as an AmeriCorps member, Sherry is helping to build community playgrounds and participating in neighborhood cleanups, crime patrols, crime prevention and after-school programs for at-risk youth. Sherry has become a role model for the disadvantaged kids in the very neighborhood where she grew up.

Luis Pizarro is a former gang member and drug dealer. He turned his life around by serving as an AmeriCorps member in Milwaukee, Wis. In the same community where he used to deal drugs, he now helps at-risk youth build self-esteem and find alternatives to joining gangs.

At a time when we look at each other across so many divides -- economic, political, racial, religious, cultural -- our country cries out for a common connection to bring us together. National service can provide that connection -- helping us rediscover the bonds of friendship, teamwork and community that tie us together.

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March 17, 1998

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The AmeriCorps Home Page

AmeriCorps is the national service program that allows people of all ages and backgrounds to earn help paying for education in exchange for a year of service. AmeriCorps members meet community needs with services that range from housing renovation to child immunization to neighborhood policing. Currently, more than 25,000 AmeriCorps members serve in over 430 programs across the country. Just starting its third year, AmeriCorps is the newest chapter in America's long tradition of national service.

What are AmeriCorps programs?

AmeriCorps*State and National Direct members are sponsored by national, state, and local nonprofit organizations. In order to meet the specific needs of the communities they serve, local AmeriCorps sponsors recruit and train AmeriCorps members themselves. The Corporation for National Service oversees AmeriCorps.

AmeriCorps*NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps) is a full-time residential service program for men and women ages 18 through 24. AmeriCorps*NCCC members work in teams and live together in housing complexes on AmeriCorps*NCCC campuses, which are located in Perry Point, MD; Washington, DC; Charleston, SC; Denver, CO; and San Diego, CA. AmeriCorps*NCCC members focus their service on the environment, education, public safety, unmet human needs and disaster relief assistance.

AmeriCorps*VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) is a full-time service program for men and women age 18 and older. Members generally work individually, rather than in teams. And rather than provide direct service, such as tutoring or housing renovation, AmeriCorps*VISTA members work in nonprofit organizations, helping them expand services and reach more people. AmeriCorps*VISTA members organize "capacity-building" activities for the nonprofits they serve -- like recruiting and training community volunteers and setting up neighborhood education programs. Members of AmeriCorps*VISTA live in the low-income communities they serve.

Last year, AmeriCorps members accomplished amazing feats!

If you have general questions about the AmeriCorps education award and related benefits, please call our toll-free number: **1-888-507-5962**. Project directors can order Enrollment and End of Term forms, members can request duplicate Voucher and Payment Request forms and 1099s (for taxes), and members can report changes of address. There are also recorded messages that discuss a variety of general topics related to the education award.

Please send program questions to: [Adin Miller](#)

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AmeriCorps



**Senior
Corps**



**America
Reads**



**National
Service
Scholarships**



**Resource
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The Learn & Serve America Home Page

Learn and Serve America is a grants program that supports teachers and community members who involve young people in service that relates to studies in school. More specifically, Learn and Serve America funds *service-learning* programs.

Learn and Serve America has two components:

- Learn and Serve America: School and Community-based programs for elementary through high school-based service-learning programs
- Learn and Serve America: Higher Education programs for post secondary school-based service-learning programs

What is service-learning?

Service-learning involves students in community activities that complement their classroom studies. Every service-learning program is unique, but all aim to help students increase their academic skills through understanding how what they learn in school can be applied to the real world. Service-learning programs help students become interested in their communities and learn how they can affect the quality of life in them.

Through a Learn and Serve America program in Minnesota, for example, high school students test the water quality of the St. Louis River as part of chemistry class. Following the field work, they present their findings and recommendations for pollution control to the local community.

As part of a college-level service-learning program in New York, nursing students help operate a community health center serving low-income people. While the students acquire practical experience in their field of study, they also help meet health needs that local budgets cannot afford.

What are some Learn and Serve America facts?

More than 780,000 students currently provide vitally needed services to their communities through Learn and Serve America. For many, this is their first exposure to evaluating and addressing community needs. Statistics show that a meaningful service experience instills a lifelong desire to contribute to society. This desire, along with the skills and knowledge participants gain through service, builds a strong future generation of citizens and community leaders.

Last year, over 190,000 young people provided nearly 3 million hours of service to their communities through Learn and Serve America. The service ranged from tutoring disadvantaged youth to rehabilitating public housing to helping single mothers strengthen job skills. In addition, 45,000 volunteers from the communities served assisted in the operation of those programs, contributing over 605,000 hours of service.

Students who participate in service-learning programs show increased interest in school and improved academic performance. For example, following a service-learning program that combines science lessons with meeting local environmental needs, students placed in the 97th percentile in science knowledge and were the first group of Indiana students ever to

unanimously choose science as their favorite subject; this school is in a county that previously had ranked lowest on the state's education attainment scale.

Learn and Serve America programs encourage youth to pursue service-oriented careers. Said one pre-med student involved in service-learning at a free health clinic, "I had always planned to be an academic after I got my degree, a professor focused on research. But now I know I want to become a doctor who works with underserved people. It would be the ultimate contribution I could make to society."

Local support for service-learning programs is strong: Institutions and organizations that receive Learn and Serve America grants for higher education programs find local matching funds in cash or in-kind, dollar for dollar. Organizations and schools that receive Learn and Serve America grants for K-12 initiatives also match funds, 10% the first year, 20% the second, and 30% the third.

If you would like more information, call: 202-606-5000, ext. 136.

Please send program questions to: blewis@cns.gov

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AmeriCorps



**Learn
& Serve**



**America
Reads**



**National
Service
Scholarships**



**Resource
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The Senior Corps Home Page

The National Senior Service Corps helps people age 55 and older find service opportunities related to their interests and close to home. The Senior Corps includes three programs:

- ☐ Foster Grandparents provide support to children with special needs;
- ☐ Senior Companions offer assistance to help elderly individuals live independently;
- ☐ Retired and Senior Volunteers tend to a variety of local services that range from leading local museum tours to teaching adult education computer classes.

Together, these programs involve over one half million seniors serving in tens of thousands of sites across the country.

What are some Senior Corps facts?

- ☐ 80,000 children, teenagers and their families are supported by the services of Foster Grandparents.
- ☐ Nearly 24,000 Foster Grandparents contribute 21.6 million hours of service annually. The value of this service is estimated at \$262 million.
- ☐ The Foster Grandparents FY 1994 federal budget of \$66.1 million was matched with \$30.7 million in cash and donations from states and the local communities in which Foster Grandparents serve.
- ☐ Over 12,000 Senior Companions provide 12 million hours of service annually to help more than 32,000 frail elderly individuals live independently. The estimated value in terms of saved nursing home costs and services provided is \$150 million. (The average cost of nursing home care in the United States for an individual exceeds \$35,000 annually.)
- ☐ The Senior Companion Program's FY 1994 federal budget of \$29.8 million was supplemented by \$17.8 million in cash and in-kind donations from states and the local communities in which Senior Companions serve.
- ☐ Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) participants provide over 80 million hours of service annually to communities across the country. The value of this service is about \$1 billion.
- ☐ Nearly 450,000 RSVP participants serve through more than 60,000 public and nonprofit community organizations.
- ☐ RSVP's FY 1994 federal budget of \$34.4 million is matched with \$36.7 million contributed by states, local governments and the private sector, demonstrating broad support for RSVP across the country.

Estimated values of service come from the Independent Sector, a Washington, D.C.-based organization that studies trends in American volunteerism.
If you would like more information, call: 1-800-424-8867

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FROM: Sandy Scott

(voice) 202-606-5000 ext. _____

(fax) 202-565-2794

1201 New York Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20525

NOTE:

Event Memo - drafted
by us for Steve
Silvorman

GETTING THINGS DONE.



March 18, 1998

INTRODUCTION OF
NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE AMENDMENTS OF 1998

DATE: March 19, 1998
LOCATION: Cannon House Building, Room 210
TIME: 10:30 A.M.
FROM: Steve Silverman
John Gomperts and Tara Murphy, Corporation for
National Service

I. Purpose

To announce President Clinton's national service legislation. This legislation will reauthorize the Corporation for National Service and its three programs – AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve America, and the National Senior Service Corps for 5 years.

II. Background

The Corporation for National Service was created in 1993 with bipartisan support from the President and Congress. Working in partnership with community-based national service programs, national and local non-profits, faith-based organizations, and others, the Corporation involves more than **one million** Americans of all ages that meets vital community needs through three programs:

- Now in its fourth year, *AmeriCorps* offers more than 40,000 people the opportunity to serve for a year with nonprofits, faith-based groups, and other organizations. In return, they receive an education award to help pay for higher education or training.
- Through *Learn and Serve America*, a half million students from kindergarten through college meet community needs, improve academically, and learn about responsibility and citizenship through service.
- As part of the *National Senior Service Corps*, nearly 24,000 Foster Grandparents help young people with special needs; almost 12,000 Senior Companions help other seniors live independently; and more than 450,000 volunteers with the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) contribute their experience and skills to meet important community needs.

The President's proposed legislation -- National and Community Service Amendments Act of 1998 -- builds on national service's successful track record by extending programs for five years and providing millions more Americans the opportunity to serve. The legislation gives states and communities more flexibility to administer service programs, strengthens partnerships with traditional volunteer organizations and increases efficiency of national service programs.

III. Participants

YOU

Senator Barbara Mikulski (D-MD), known as the "Godmother of National Service." A key supporter in the Senate, she is a member of the Labor and Human Resources which is responsible for reauthorizing the Corporation, and is a ranking member of the Appropriations Subcommittee that funds AmeriCorps.

Rep. Chris Shays (R-CT), the chief Republican supporter in the House and former Peace Corps volunteer.

Rep. Tim Roemer (D-IN). Strong supporter and member of House Committee on Education and the Workforce that is responsible for reauthorizing the Corporation.

Rep. Rob Andrews (D-NJ). Designated by ranking Democrat Rep. William Clay (D-MO) as responsible for spearheading support for reauthorizing legislation in the House.

Harris Wofford, CEO of the Corporation for National Service

Jennifer Phelps, AmeriCorps alumn. Jennifer, age 25, served with AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps in Charleston, SC campus. She is currently studying law at Georgetown University -- and her education award is helping her pay tuition.

Jessie Pannell, Senior Corps member. Mr. Pannell enjoyed a distinguished 29 -year career with the Small Business Administration. In 1995, after retiring, he joined the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program in Maryland where he still serves at Strathmore Elementary School in Silver Spring as a mentor and literacy coach to 3rd, 4th and 5th graders.

Michael Masone, Learn and Serve participant. 1994 graduate of the University of Notre Dame and member of the charter class of the Alliance for Catholic Education which places college graduates in under-resourced schools for one year. IN 1994 Mike taught civics and ethics to sophomores and juniors and coached freshman football at Bishop Sullivan High School in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

IV. Press Plan

Open Press.

V. Sequence of Events

YOU will enter accompanied by Members of Congress and national service participants.

YOU will stand with participants around the podium. Members of Congress will give brief remarks and introduce national service participants who will give short 2-3 minute testimonials about their service experience.

YOU will be introduced by Senator Barbara Mikulski.

YOU will make remarks.

YOU will depart.

VI. Agenda

Rep. Andrews – opening remarks, introduces Rep. Shays

Rep. Shays – introduces Jennifer Phelps, AmeriCorps alumn

Jennifer Phelps -- remarks

Rep. Roemer -- remarks, introduces Michael Masone, Learn and Serve participant and
Jessie Pannell, Senior Corps member

Michael Masone, remarks

Jessie Pannell – remarks

Rep. Andrews - introduces Senator Mikulski

Senator Barbara Mikulski -- remarks, introduces First Lady Hillary Clinton

First Lady Hillary Clinton—remarks, closing.

VI. Remarks

To be provided by Christy Macy

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 19, 1998

CONTACT:

PRESIDENT CLINTON CALLS ON CONGRESS TO EXTEND NATIONAL SERVICE

First Lady Joins Hill Lawmakers to Announce Bipartisan Measure Providing Millions of Americans the Opportunity to Serve

President Clinton today sent to Congress a bill to extend national service into the 21st century, creating the opportunity for millions more Americans to serve their communities. The First Lady joined a bipartisan group of legislators on Capitol Hill to announce the bill, which will reauthorize the Corporation for National Service and its three initiatives -- **AmeriCorps**, **Learn and Serve America**, and the **National Senior Service Corps** -- for five years.

The Corporation for National Service was created in 1993 with bipartisan support from the President and Congress. Working in partnership with community-based national service programs, national and local non-profits, faith-based organizations, and others, the Corporation involves more than one million Americans of all ages and backgrounds in service that meets vital community needs.

"In community after community, people are coming together in service to meet our most vital social needs," said President Clinton. "Those of us in Washington should be able to come together in that same spirit to support this legislation to create more opportunities for Americans to serve. Serving others is at the heart of what it means to be an American."

"Since 1993, millions of Americans have answered the call of service, and the results can be seen across the country in better schools, safer streets, healthier children and a cleaner environment," said Harris Wofford, chief executive officer of the Corporation. "By creating opportunities for millions more to serve, this bill will take citizen problem-solving to the next level and help usher in a new century of service."

Thousands of communities across America have discovered that national service is an effective strategy for meeting vital needs in education, public safety, health, the environment and other human needs. The experience of these communities -- and the conclusion of several independent evaluations -- is that national service:

- **Meets community needs.** National service participants run after-school programs, respond to disasters, work with local police to make neighborhoods safer, restore watersheds, build and repair housing and care for the elderly.
- **Improves the lives of children and youth, while providing opportunities to serve.** Through Foster Grandparents who mentor more than 80,000 children, to AmeriCorps members who taught, tutored or mentored more than 600,000 youth last year, to Learn and

Serve America which provides opportunities for students to learn while giving back to their communities, national service is making a difference in the lives of children and youth.

- **Strengthens existing community service and volunteer efforts.** National service invests in successful community-based organizations like Big Brothers and Big Sisters of America, the American Red Cross, and Habitat for Humanity, and hundreds of local groups, by providing trained, dedicated people who commit to sustained service and expand the organizations' impact. Last year, national service members recruited, trained, and supervised more than 300,000 volunteers – making the organizations they serve stronger and more efficient.

The National and Community Service Amendments Act of 1998 builds on this track record by extending for five years the three national service initiatives: *AmeriCorps*, which this year provides educational opportunities to more than 40,000 people in exchange for intensive service in non-profit and faith-based groups; *Learn and Serve America*, which engages a half million students of all ages in service-learning that improves academic learning and meets community needs; and the *National Senior Service Corps*, which taps the experience of more than half a million older Americans to help solve community problems who serve as Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions and Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) volunteers. The legislation also reauthorizes appropriations for the Points of Light Foundation for five years.

The legislation makes a number of changes to allow more Americans to serve, gives states and communities more flexibility to administer service programs, strengthens partnerships with traditional volunteer organizations and increases efficiency of national service programs.

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CORPORATION
FOR NATIONAL
★ SERVICE

MEDIA ADVISORY

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON TO DELIVER PRESIDENT'S NATIONAL SERVICE LEGISLATION TO CAPITOL HILL

Bipartisan Lawmakers Support Legislation to Extend National Service Into the 21st Century

First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton will deliver President Clinton's National and Community Service Amendments Act of 1998 to Congress at a briefing with Senator Barbara A. Mikulski, Congressman Robert E. Andrews, Timothy J. Roemer, Christopher Shays and Harris Wofford, Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation for National Service.

Mrs. Clinton, lawmakers and national service members will talk about the importance of national service and the proposed legislation that will extend AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve America and the National Senior Service Corps for five years.

WHO: First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton
Senator Barbara A. Mikulski (D-Md.)
Robert E. Andrews (D-N.J.)
Timothy J. Roemer (D-Ind.)
Christopher Shays (R-Conn.)
Harris Wofford, CEO, Corporation for National Service

WHAT: First Lady Delivers President Clinton's National Service Legislation

WHEN: Thursday, March 19, 1998
10:30 a.m.

WHERE: Cannon House Office Building, Room 210

CONTACT: Anne Bushman (202) 606-5000 ext. 304
Lisa Bloch (202) 606-5000 ext. 140



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TO: Christie Macy

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FROM: Sandy Scott(voice) 202-606-5000 ext. 255

(fax) 202-565-2794

1201 New York Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20525

NOTE:

Here are some materials
to start. More is
on the way -

GETTING THINGS DONE.



TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES:

I am pleased to transmit today for your immediate consideration and enactment the "National and Community Service Amendments Act of 1998." This legislative proposal extends and amends national service laws, including the National and Community Service Act of 1990 and the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973. It builds upon the long, bipartisan tradition of service in our country, which was renewed in 1993 when I signed the National and Community Service Trust Act creating the Corporation for National Service.

Service to one's community is an integral part of what it means to be an American. Citizen service is at the heart of our efforts to prepare America for the 21st century, as we work to ensure that all Americans have the opportunity to make the most of their own lives and to help those in need. The Presidents' Summit for America's Future held in Philadelphia last April reinforced the role of programs supported by the Corporation for National Service as key vehicles to provide young people with the resources to maximize their potential and give back to their communities.

My Administration's most important contribution to citizen service is AmeriCorps, the national service program that already has given more than 100,000 young Americans the opportunity to serve their country. By tying opportunity to responsibility, we have given them the chance to serve and, in return, receive money for post-secondary education. In community after community, AmeriCorps members have proven that service can help us meet our most pressing social needs. For example, in Simpson County, Kentucky, AmeriCorps members helped 2nd graders jump three grade levels in reading. In Boys and Girls Clubs all across the country, AmeriCorps members are mentors for at-risk young people. Habitat For Humanity relies upon AmeriCorps members to bring in more volunteers and build more houses. In communities beset by floods, tornadoes, and hurricanes, AmeriCorps members have helped to rebuild homes and restore hope. AmeriCorps members are mobilizing thousands of college students from more than 900 college campuses in our America Reads program. In all of these efforts, AmeriCorps brings together people of every background to work toward common goals.

Independent evaluators have reviewed AmeriCorps, the National Senior Service Corps programs, and Learn and Service America programs and have concluded that national service yields a positive return on investment. The legislation that I am transmitting builds on our experiences with national service to date and improves the national service program in four ways: (1) codifying agreements with Congress and others to reduce costs and streamline national service; (2) strengthening partnerships with traditional volunteer organizations; (3) increasing States' flexibility to administer national service programs; and (4) expanding opportunities for Americans to serve.

Since the enactment of the National and Community Service Trust Act in 1993, and particularly since 1995, my Administration has worked with constructive critics of national service to address their concerns and improve the program. This legislation continues that process by reducing the Corporation's average budgeted cost per AmeriCorps member, repealing authority for redundant or obsolete national service programs, and making other improvements in the efficiency of national service programs.

National service has never been a substitute for the contributions made by the millions of Americans who volunteer their time to worthy causes every year. Rather, as leaders of volunteer organizations have told me many times, national service has proven that the presence of full-time, trained service participants enhances tremendously the effectiveness of volunteers. This legislation strengthens the partnership between the national service programs and traditional volunteer organizations; codifies the National Service Scholarship program honoring exemplary service by high school students; and expands the AmeriCorps Challenge Scholarships, through which national service participants can access education awards. The legislation also authorizes appropriations for the Points of Light Foundation through the year 2002.

The National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 explicitly conceived of service as a Federal-State partnership. Significant authority was vested in bipartisan State Commissions appointed by the Governors. Consistent with our goal of turning power back to the people, I promised that we would accelerate the process of devolution as the newly-created State Commissions expanded their capacities. This legislation fulfills that promise in a variety of ways, including authority to enter into Service Collaboration Agreements with Governors to provide a means for coordinating the planning and administration of national service programs in a State.

The changes proposed in this legislation provide expanded opportunities for Americans to serve. By reducing the cost per AmeriCorps member, this legislation allows each dollar invested in the program to go further. This legislation broadens the age and income guidelines for National Senior Service Corps participants, expanding the pool of older Americans who can perform results-oriented service in their communities. It simplifies the administration of Learn and Serve America, so States and communities will more easily be able to provide opportunities for students to learn through service in their schools and neighborhoods.

Two month ago, I had the opportunity to honor the memory of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. by engaging in service on the holiday commemorating his birth. I joined sixty-five AmeriCorps members and more than 300 community volunteers in repairing and re-painting Cardozo High School in the Shaw neighborhood of Washington, DC. Thirty-one years ago, Dr. King came to that very neighborhood and urged the people there to engage in citizen service to rebuild their lives, their community, and their future. That is what those national service participants, and the thousands more who were participating in similar projects across the country, were doing -- honoring the legacy of Dr. King and answering the highest calling of citizenship in this country.

Each of the more than 500,000 participants in the programs of the National Senior Service Corps and 750,000 participants in programs supported by Learn and Serve America, and every AmeriCorps member answers that highest calling of citizenship when they make and fulfill a commitment to service in their communities. This legislation builds on the successes of these programs and improves them for the future.

I urge the Congress to give this legislation prompt and favorable consideration.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

THE WHITE HOUSE

NATIONAL SERVICE: STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES, IMPROVING LIVES

National service gives Americans a way to improve their lives while also bringing substantive, enduring change to their communities. In the areas of education, public safety, the environment, health care, housing, and other needs, national service enables citizens to solve problems, strengthen their communities, and improve our nation.

From school-age children to retired seniors, national service provides opportunities for all Americans to serve.

While encouraging citizen action and responsibility generally, the Corporation for National Service offers specific opportunities for Americans of all ages and backgrounds to serve:

- As *AmeriCorps* members, more than 40,000 people commit to serving for a year with nonprofits, faith-based groups, and other organizations. In return, they receive an education award to help pay for higher education or training.
- Through *Learn and Serve America*, nearly a million students from kindergarten through college meet community needs, improve academically, and learn about responsibility and citizenship through service projects.
- As part of the *National Senior Service Corps*, nearly 24,000 Foster Grandparents help young people with special needs; almost 12,000 Senior Companions help other seniors live independently; and more than 450,000 volunteers with the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) contribute their experience and skills to meet important community needs.

National service solves community problems.

The structure of national service depends on local decision making and demands results.

- *Improving the lives of children and youth.* In addition to serving as mentors, tutoring, providing immunizations, offering safe places, and leading after-school programs, national service members also give young people a chance to give back to their communities through their own service.
- *Responding to disasters.* Working with groups like the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the American Red Cross, national service members respond to floods, forest fires, and hurricanes, and help communities rebuild after and protect themselves against these and other disasters.
- *Making neighborhoods safer.* National service members serve with local police officials to prevent crime, create safe environments and after-school programs for children, establish neighborhood watches, and walk schoolchildren to and from city schools.
- *Building housing.* Last year, serving with partners such as Habitat for Humanity, national service members built and rehabilitated more than 5,600 homes and placed more than 32,000 homeless people and families in permanent housing.
- *Caring for the elderly.* By providing health assistance and helping seniors live independently, national service participants improve the lives of seniors and save families and taxpayers the cost of expensive institutionalization.

National service strengthens community-based, volunteer, and faith-based organizations.

- *Providing "people power."* National service invests in successful community-based organizations like Big Brothers and Big Sisters of America, the American Red Cross, City Year, and hundreds of local groups, by providing trained, dedicated people who commit to sustained service and expand the organizations' impact.
- *Generating new volunteers.* Last year, national service members recruited, trained, and supervised more than 300,000 volunteers – making the organizations they serve stronger and more efficient.
- *Supporting faith-based organizations.* Through organizations like the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, which serves at-risk children in troubled urban schools, to the National Council of Churches with the Council for Religious Volunteer Agencies, which are placing thousands of members to meet community needs, national service members help meet today's most important challenges.

NATIONAL SERVICE PROGRAMS

Created with bipartisan support from Congress, the President, and community groups nationwide in 1993, the Corporation for National Service is a public-private partnership that engages Americans of all ages and backgrounds in results-driven community service. The Corporation for National Service oversees three initiatives that provide service opportunities for more than one million Americans: AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve America, and the National Senior Service Corps.

AmeriCorps

AmeriCorps is the national service program that provides thousands of Americans of all ages and backgrounds with education awards in exchange for full- or part-time community service. Through hundreds of local and national sponsors, AmeriCorps involves people in results-driven community service. AmeriCorps sponsors include national, state, and local nonprofit organizations across the nation. In exchange for a year of service, members receive a living allowance and \$4,725 to help pay for college or pay off student loans. In addition to the more than 400 state and local programs that make up AmeriCorps, the Corporation for National Service operates two national programs:

A full-time residential service program, **AmeriCorps*NCCC** (the National Civilian Community Corps) combines the best practices of civilian service with the best aspects of military service, including leadership and team building. Men and women age 18 to 24 serve full-time and are based at one of four AmeriCorps*NCCC campuses -- in Perry Point, Md.; Charleston, S.C.; Denver, Colo.; and San Diego, Calif.

For more than 30 years, **AmeriCorps*VISTA** members have been serving disadvantaged communities. The program increases the capability of people to improve their lives. Members of AmeriCorps*VISTA work and live in the communities they serve, creating programs that can continue after they complete their service. Members must be at least 18 years old, and there is no upper age limit.

Learn and Serve America

Learn and Serve America promotes service as a learning opportunity -- integrating service into classrooms from kindergarten through college. The program provides models and resources for teachers at all levels.

In Learn and Serve's **School-Based Programs**, schools plan, implement, and expand service activities for elementary and secondary students. Schools also use Learn and Serve grants for adult volunteer programs and teacher training.

In Learn and Serve's **Community-Based Programs**, state offices and nonprofit organizations implement, expand, and replicate service-learning programs in local

communities. Participants are between the ages of 5 and 17 and include students and youth who are not in school.

Learn and Serve America: Higher Education helps create and strengthen community service and service-learning initiatives at colleges and universities, which involve a wide array of students and organizations working together to address community needs. Grants also support technical assistance for expanding the field of service-learning.

National Senior Service Corps

The ***National Senior Service Corps*** is a network of more than a half million people age 55 and older who make a difference as Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions, and Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) volunteers. These programs tap the experience, skills, talents, and creativity of America's seniors.

Since 1965, the ***Foster Grandparent Program*** has provided valuable aid to children and youth with exceptional needs. Foster Grandparents serve 20 hours a week in schools, hospitals, drug treatment centers, correctional institutions, and Head Start and day care centers -- helping children who have been abused or neglected, mentoring troubled teenagers and young mothers, and caring for premature infants and children with physical disabilities.

Providing assistance and friendship to seniors who have difficulties with daily living tasks, members of the ***Senior Companion Program*** help other seniors retain their dignity and independence. In their 20 hours of service each week, Senior Companions help clients with chores such as paying bills, buying groceries, and finding transportation to medical appointments. Senior Companions receive training in topics such as Alzheimer's disease, stroke, diabetes, and mental health -- and alert doctors and family members of potential health problems.

One of the largest volunteer efforts in the nation, the ***Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)*** matches local problems with older Americans who are willing to help. RSVP members choose how and where they want to serve -- and determine how many hours a week they can serve. They organize neighborhood watch programs, tutor teenagers, renovate homes, teach English to immigrants, program computers, help people recover from natural disasters -- whatever their skills and interests lead them to do.

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary
Saturday, November 29, 1997

**RADIO ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT
TO THE NATION**

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning. This week, millions of Americans have gathered with family and friends to share Thanksgiving. Much has changed for America since George Washington first proclaimed a day of thanksgiving for our new nation in 1789. But the Thanksgiving spirit -- sharing our good fortune with others, coming together to meet our common challenges -- that is as important as ever. That's why we must keep that spirit alive throughout the year through citizen service.

Citizen service must be at the heart of our efforts to prepare America for the 21st century, as we work to guarantee all Americans the opportunity and conditions to make the most of their own lives and to help those who need and deserve it with a hand up. My administration's most important contribution to citizen service is AmeriCorps, our national service program that already has given more than 100,000 young Americans the opportunity to serve our country and earn money for a college education. In community after community, AmeriCorps members have proved that service can help us meet our most pressing social needs.

For example, in Simpson County, Kentucky, AmeriCorps members helped 2nd graders jump three grade levels in reading. In boys and girls clubs all across the country, AmeriCorps members are mentors for at-risk young people. Habitat For Humanity relies upon AmeriCorps members to bring in more volunteers and build more houses. In communities beset by floods, tornadoes and hurricanes, AmeriCorps members have helped to rebuild homes and restore hope.

Now, AmeriCorps members are mobilizing thousands and thousands of college students from 800 campuses in our America Reads program, to make sure that all our young people can read independently by the 3rd grade. AmeriCorps brings people of every background together to work toward common goals. And after years of partisan fighting over it, I'm pleased that Congress now seems ready to come together to support AmeriCorps.

Today, I'm proposing legislation to give more Americans the chance to serve by strengthening AmeriCorps and our student and senior citizen service programs and extending them for five years. This legislation reflects the spirit of the President's Summit on Service, where last spring thousands of Americans pledged to give our children the support they need to make the most of their lives. As General Colin Powell reported this week, we've made a lot of progress since the Summit with more AmeriCorps members, more reading tutors for our children through America Reads, more mentoring programs for young people, more partnerships with private businesses and community groups. At Thanksgiving, I want to thank especially the

citizens and businesses who have worked with us to ensure that our nation's surplus food helps to feed the hungry, not fill up dumpsters.

Now we must create more opportunities for people to serve all year long and, through service, to reach out to one another across the lines that divide us. In honor of the spirit of citizen service embodied in the life of Martin Luther King Jr., the Congress has designated the Martin Luther King holiday as a day of national service. And I'm pleased to announce that our Corporation for National Service has awarded 73 grants to communities from Boston to Los Angeles, to help make this day of service a resounding success. Dr. King once said that, "Everybody can be great because anybody can serve -- you only need a heart full of grace and a soul generated by love."

As we look forward to a joyous holiday season, let us pledge to live up to those words by making citizen service a part of our lives every day.

Thanks for listening.



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Subject: 1998-03-02 President's Remarks at JFK Library Dinner

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

March 2, 1998

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT AT JOHN F. KENNEDY LIBRARY DINNER

Organization of American States

9:10 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Senator, Vicki, Caroline and Ed, other members of the Kennedy family, Paul Kirk. And I say a special word of thanks to all of you who have made this evening possible. I thank Senator Jeffords and Senator Thurmond and Senator Hatch for being here tonight to restrain the partisan impulses that might otherwise overtake Senator Kennedy and me. (Laughter.) I thank Yo-Yo Ma and Jill and all the other musicians who have come here. Secretary General, thank you for the wonderful job you do here at the OAS.

I think I should begin by saying that for me this is not an obligation, it is an honor -- not only because, like every other member of my generation I was inspired by President Kennedy, but because Hillary and Chelsea and I have been profoundly moved by the uncommon kindnesses of this family to ours.

In 1991 I had an event in New York when no one in New York knew my name, and I looked up and John Kennedy was there. I think it would be fair to say that his name recognition was five times higher than mine among all in attendance. (Laughter.) Early in 1992 Mrs. Kennedy came to an event for me and later went out of her way to be helpful and kind to Hillary and to Chelsea in ways that are difficult to relate, but impossible to overestimate.

The other day we were spending a weekend in Camp David and I went out with a couple of members of Congress, cavorting around in the lousy weather. Hillary stayed home with her friends and watched Jackie Kennedy's White House special, marveling again about the incredible work that was done to preserve America's house by Mrs. Kennedy.

And I do believe that, no matter who writes the history books, when people look back on this century, they will say that Edward Kennedy was one of the ablest and most productive, most compassionate and most effective men who served in the United States Senate in the entire history of the country. (Laughter.)

The JFK Library and its museum are national treasures, but I would like to talk about three things that are to some extent both more intangible and more tangible in the legacy of President Kennedy that will be enshrined forever if all of us do our job and keep this great enterprise going.

First, the spirit of citizen service, most clearly embodied in the Peace Corps. President Kennedy said that he wanted to speak to those peoples in the huts and villages of half the globe struggling to break the bonds of mass misery. We pledged to them our best efforts to help them help themselves. Five weeks later, 37 years ago yesterday, the Peace Corps was born. In three weeks when I travel to Africa, my first stop will be Ghana, the first place President Kennedy's Peace Corps volunteers went to serve.

Now they have gone, over the years, to 132 nations. Tomorrow America will celebrate these accomplishments during the first ever Peace Corps Day, when thousands of former Peace Corps volunteers, including Secretary Shalala, who was a volunteer in Iran -- and I might add has volunteered to go back if it will help our new efforts. (Laughter.) Thousands of Peace Corps volunteers have agreed to talk with students around our country about their life-changing experiences.

The JFK Library also has a Library Corps, perhaps not as well known as the building itself, started by this foundation, which is inspiring young people in Roxbury, Dorchester, South Boston to work after school on community service projects.

Inspired by President Kennedy's example, I have done what I could to advance the cause of citizen service. I just asked for the largest funding increase for the Peace Corps in history, in the hope that we can put 10,000 volunteers overseas by the turn of the century. (Applause.)

Our national service project, Americorps, has already given 100,000 young people a chance to earn some money for college while they serve in their communities. One of my happiest days as

President was when we walked up the South Lawn of the White House with all the first group of young people, and I met Senator Kennedy, and we signed the bill.

Soon tens of thousands of those young people will be working with elementary school students to teach them to read and middle school students, promising to stay with them throughout their careers to make sure they get a chance to go to college, too.

So we thank President Kennedy and all of you for the spirit of citizen service.

The second thing that I would like to say in appreciation to the legacy of President Kennedy is that he did a lot to remind us all that we owe it to ourselves, to our children, and to our future to cherish and proliferate exposure to the arts. The First Lady and I have tried to do that in our celebration of the millennium. We have been having these Millennium Evenings. We had the great Harvard historian Bernard Bailyn the other night, and this Friday night we will have the brilliant cosmologist Stephen Hawking. A week from tonight we will also highlight four vernacular dances that have entered our unique dance: tap, Lindy-hopping, jazz, and -- so help me, I didn't organize this -- Irish step dancing.
(Laughter.)

I want to thank Yo-Yo Ma for the work that he has done to try to bring the arts, and music in particular, to so many Americans who might otherwise have never had a firsthand experience with what can lead us all to a higher level of understanding and enjoyment of life.

Finally, and most personally, I am here because President Kennedy and Robert Kennedy, their generation, made me admire and believe in public service, and made me understand that it could be fun, but that it also carried with it certain responsibilities. They made me believe that it was not a bad thing, but a noble thing, to want to exercise power, but only if it were exercised for some larger purpose. There are many people in this room tonight who could be standing here who could be making exactly the same statement.

Just before I came over here, I finished a magnificent new biography of Theodore Roosevelt by H. W. Brands called The Last Romantic. It's a terrific book, and it's only 820 pages long.
(Laughter.) But I was thinking -- because President Roosevelt died

right after the close of the First World War, I was thinking about the whole sweep of the century that President Kennedy's life marked and that his service marked in such a profound way.

This century we are about to leave was dominated by the consequences of the Industrial Revolution, the growth of very big organizations -- economic organizations, governmental organizations

-- and the attendant wealth and power and possibility and threat that revolution spawned. So that for most of this century Americans in positions of responsibility and ordinary American citizens have both had an incredible opportunity to find wealth and personal fulfillment and greater expression of freedom because of the organized development of this time. But they have also had an enormous responsibility to stand up against the new horrors that vast organized power presented to them, whether in greed or bigotry or outright totalitarian oppression.

John Kennedy made us believe that in public service you could fight for the things that ought to be fought for, you could fight against the things that ought to be fought against, and that the sole purpose of power, fleeting though it is, was to be applied to the best of your God-given ability to those worthy goals.

Now we're about to enter a new century with problems and opportunities unparalleled in history, speeding along at a pace and with a complexity that would have been unimaginable just a few years ago. There is a lot of good in the fact that the knowledge of the world is now doubling -- sheer facts are doubling every five years. We see in the Human Genome Project miraculous health discoveries being made almost weekly now.

But we also know that in this new world, where the Internet is exploding and 65,000 new sites are being added every hour of every day, that there will be new ways that people who are organized for the abuse of their power will present new threats -- perhaps terrorists or organized criminals or narco-traffickers, perhaps in the forms of chemical or biological or small-scale nuclear weapons; perhaps unwise leaders being too greedy in the short run, forcing poor people off their land into the teeming cities of poor countries, devastating the environment, leading to the spread of disease.

So we will now live in a new era where humankind will have all kinds of new possibilities for good and all manner of new things that need to be fought against. I hope that the children of this age will find a way to believe in America the way President Kennedy helped me to believe in America, and to believe that the political process leaves the ultimate power in the people and gives its elected representatives a precious chance just to bring out the good and stand against the bad. It is the eternal human obligation. He made it seem fun and noble and good. The least we can do is to keep the torch burning.

Thank you and God bless you.

END

9:22 P.M. EST



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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

February 4, 1998

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT ON "HIGH HOPES" PARTNERSHIPS

The East Room

2:40 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Fabiola, you can introduce me any time you want. (Laughter.) You were magnificent, and I know you're family is very proud of you today.

Mr. Vice President, thank you for all the work you've done on our education initiatives. Secretary Riley, thank you for what you said and for what you've done. And I want to thank you and all your people, Leslie Thornton and the others who worked on this. I want to thank Gene Sperling -- the Vice President has already blown his head up too big -- (laughter) -- but he has been working on this issue with deep personal conviction for five years. Now, all of you who know Gene know that since he never sleeps, that is the equivalent of 10 years' work for anyone else. (Laughter.)

I thank Harris Wofford, and all the people at AmeriCorps, including the young volunteers who are here today; Linda Chavez-Thompson; and especially Congressman Chaka Fattah, for whom this has been a life passion. I thank the members of Congress, both Republicans and Democrats who are here and those who could not come today. We have an extraordinary representation from Congress among those who are here and among those who are not. I thank the college

presidents who are here and the over 300 they represent, and the heads of organizations who are here.

And I think before I begin I should recognize a man who has been a mentor to all of us, and a great friend to Hillary and to me for many years, Mr. Eugene Lange, would you please stand. Thank you and God bless you, sir, for everything you have done. Thank you. (Applause.)

Since this is my only public appearance of the day, before I begin it is important, I think, to say a few words about the situation in Iraq. Later today, Secretary Albright is going to report to me about her intensive week of meetings with our friends in the Persian Gulf, Europe and Russia. I'm encouraged by the strong consensus she found that Iraq must fulfill all the United Nations Security Council resolutions, and that it must allow international weapons inspectors full and unfettered access to all suspect sites.

All of us would prefer a genuine diplomatic solution. I want to reiterate that to every single American. All of us would prefer a genuine diplomatic solution.

The best way to stop Saddam from building nuclear biological or chemical weapons is simply to get the international inspectors back to work with no restraints. Keep in mind, they have done a marvelous job. They have uncovered more weapons potential and weapons stores than were destroyed in the entire Gulf War. But I will say again, one way or the other, we are determined to deny Iraq the capacity to develop weapons of mass destruction and the missiles to deliver them. That is our bottom line. (Applause.) Thank you.

Now, back to the moment. Last week in my State of the Union Address, when I spoke about what we had to do to strengthen America for the 21st century, I said I wanted an America where everybody has a chance to work, where everyone has a chance to get ahead with that work, where people have the chance to live up to their God-given potential, where our government provides opportunity and our citizens exhibit the responsibility to give something back to their communities. This is the kind of America the High Hopes initiative we announced today will put within our reach.

Thanks to the new \$1,500 HOPE Scholarships, the lifetime learning tax credits, the education IRAs, education grants for serving with AmeriCorps, streamlined loans and expanded Pell Grants, we have opened the doors to college wide to those willing and able to work for it. Now we have to make sure that all our students, especially those from our hardest-pressed families, have a guardian angel helping to guide them to those doors and to make sure they are ready to walk through them. That's what this is all about.

You know, I was listening to Secretary Riley's lilting southern accent, looking at the Vice President, thinking about all three of us white southerners up here, over-represented on the

platform -- (laughter) -- and remembering the last 20 years that Dick Riley and I have worked together on these issues. There's a reason we feel so passionately about this.

When I was born in Arkansas, the per capita income of my state for 56 percent of the national average. That's what the average income was. And I came from a family without a lot of money. Nobody in my family had ever been to college before, but by the time I got out of Ramble Grade School in Hot Springs, Arkansas, I never had any doubt that I was going to college. My family told me I was going to college, all my teachers told me I was going to college, all the people at my church told me I was going to college. Everybody told me I was going to college. It never occurred to me that I wouldn't go to college -- and yet no one in my family had ever been to college before. I was in an environment which made it very difficult for me to fail. That's the environment I want for every child in America. (Applause.)

Now, Congressman Fattah has a similar story. His grandmother set him early on his path to college. She used to tell him and his five brothers, unless your dead or dying, you're going to school. (Laughter.) Apparently, the acorn does not fall far from the tree. I just found out that on this, perhaps the most important day of his public service, Chaka Fattah would not let his son, Chip, come to the ceremony because he wouldn't permit him to miss class. (Applause.)

But you know, a lot of our young students are not as lucky. They grow up without realizing how important or how possible college is. There may not be anyone in their homes to push them to take algebra, to take those other classes that are important to college. They probably don't know how to secure scholarships or grants or loans. And, maybe most important, there may not be anybody pumping them up with hopes and dreams.

That's why we have to make mentorship a way of life in America. The High Hopes initiative will enlist colleges and community groups to form partnerships with thousands of middle schools and give more than a million students both the information and the inspiration to seize the opportunity of college.

Our balanced budget for 1999 includes \$140 million to help these groups harness the power of citizen service and reach out to students, no later than 7th grade, and work with them all the way to high school graduation. Trained mentors and role models will help children pick challenging courses, tutor them when they need some extra help, take them on college visits and other academic field trips, and help them during the college application process.

And with Representative Fattah's leadership, we will make sure children and their parents receive a 21st Century Scholar certificate telling them how much aid for college they will receive well in advance, so they will never have any doubt that if they do

their part they can, in fact, go on to college. (Applause.)

I want to thank the more than 300 college presidents and more than 50 major education, religious, civil rights and service groups who have embraced this initiative. And to show you the depth of support -- we've already seen how many members of Congress have come here for this today -- I'd like to ask the leaders of these groups and the college presidents who are here today to stand and be recognized. Look at them. Thank you very much. (Applause.)

Again, I want to thank the Republican and Democratic members of Congress who are here. I want to thank Linda-Chavez Thompson and the rest of the members of my Race Advisory Board for their help with this initiative. They found already that early mentoring and tutoring has made a remarkable difference in the lives of minority students. And they believe, as I do, that these High Hope Partnerships will help close our nation's opportunity gap and help us to build that one America.

I want to thank General Colin Powell and the people who are working in the President's Summit on Service. Remember, when we had that summit they identified making sure that every child in America who needed it had a mentor as one of the five things we ought to be able to guarantee to all of America's children.

I want to thank, as I said, Eugene Lang, and all others who have gone into their personal pockets to give children this kind of guarantee long before the rest of us were involved in the endeavor.

The High Hopes Partnerships are just one of the ways we're working to raise expectations and lift the sights of our young people. Because we know that high school drop-out rates are still too high, especially among Hispanic Students, the Vice President just announced a \$600 million effort to focus more classroom attention on those most at risk. We're also expanding Head Start to a million children; enlisting thousands more college students to make sure all our 8-year-olds can read; working to add 100,000 qualified teachers to the 1st, 2nd and 3rd grades to get average class size down to 18; challenging our states to adopt high academic standards and to ensure that all our children master the basics.

In every community in this country, there are children with an enormous ability, who just need a little spark to go on to great things. There's a child in rural Tennessee who, with a helping hand and a higher education will go on to a career in medical research; a child in Southwest Washington who, with the guidance of a caring college student, will go on to become a college President; a first generation American in Texas who might go on to become President of the United States.

We have to have high hopes for all of our children. And we have to make them know that they can have high hopes for themselves. A great nation that aspires to even greater things in a

new century in a new millennium cannot afford to leave a single child behind. And we don't intend to. Thank you and God Bless you.

END

2:52 P.M. EST

Message Sent To: _____

**PRESIDENT CLINTON:
PREPARING FOR COLLEGE: MENTORING AMERICA'S YOUTH**

February 4, 1998

"I also ask this Congress to support our efforts to enlist colleges and universities to reach out to disadvantaged children starting in the sixth grade so that they can get the guidance and hope they need so they can know that they, too, will be able to go on to college."

President Bill Clinton
January 27, 1998

Today, President Clinton announces a new initiative to inspire more young people to have high expectations, to stay in school and study hard, and to go to college. The High Hopes initiative is a long-term investment -- starting with \$140 million in the FY 99 Budget -- that promotes partnerships between colleges and middle or junior high schools in low-income communities, to help teach students how they should go to college by informing them about college options, academic requirements, costs, and financial aid, and by providing support services -- including tutoring, counseling, and mentoring.

Educating families early on: College Is Within Reach. Families need to know that college is affordable regardless of their income. The President's High Hopes initiative provides children and their families at middle and junior high schools in low-income communities with a 21st Century Scholar certificate, an official, early notification of the amount of their eligibility for Federal college aid.

Providing Children With The Support They Need. To make the hope of a college education a reality, the High Hopes initiative encourages degree-granting colleges to establish partnerships with middle and junior high schools with large concentrations of low-income children. Working with parents, community and religious groups, and businesses, these partnerships provide information about what it means and what it takes to go to college, as well as support services -- such as mentoring, tutoring, college visits, summer programs, after-school activities, and counseling -- to help the children stay on track. The partnerships will help ensure that children have access to the rigorous core courses that prepare them for college and let parents know how they can help their children prepare for college.

Staying With Children Through High School Graduation. This new initiative is flexible, allowing partnerships to design their own efforts based on local needs and resources. But, to ensure effectiveness, the programs must:

- begin reaching out to children by the 7th grade;
- continue to help each student through graduation from high school; and,
- help all students in a class, not just the ones who get the best grades.

Reaching More Than 1 Million Students. The President's Budget calls for a \$140 million investment in new High Hopes partnerships in 1999, and an additional \$70 million for new

partnerships in each of the years 2000 and 2001 (as well as continuation funds for the original partnerships). If each project begins with one sixth or seventh grade class, this would fund partnerships with 2,500 middle and junior high schools. If each project adds an incoming class each year, more than 1 million students would be served over five years.

Widespread Support. Everyone agrees, the High Hopes initiative is the way to go. More than 300 college presidents, 60 organizations (including Big Brothers/Big Sisters, NAACP, and a variety of other education and religious groups), and 68 members of the House -- Democrats and Republicans -- have endorsed the initiative.

David S. Broder

The Peace Corps: Winner All Around

Credit President Clinton for at least one initiative that has received warm praise in both parties and reflects well on this nation around the world.

In his budget for next year, Clinton will ask for a substantial increase in funds for the Peace Corps, a legacy of the idealistic 1960s that has taken on fresh significance in this end-of-the-century environment.

The president has announced he will seek a 21 percent boost in Peace Corps funds—\$48 million—as the first stage in increasing the number of Americans in its overseas assignments to 10,000 by the end of the decade. Today there are roughly 6,600 volunteers working in schools, clinics, nascent businesses and helping on agricultural and environmental projects in 85 countries.

They may be the best ambassadors this country has ever had.

John Kennedy launched the Peace Corps in 1961, borrowing the idea from Hubert Humphrey, and in its first heady years it sent as many as 15,000 young Americans to remote villages in the Third World. But it languished in the go-go 1980s, when barely one-third that many volunteers were in the field at any time.

Today, happily, the supply of would-be Peace Corps workers is increasing at the same time that worldwide demand is, on the rise. Last year, according to Director Mark Gearan, more than 150,000 people contacted Peace Corps offices inquiring about slots—up 40 percent from 1994.

The end of the Cold War and the spread of democracy in previously authoritarian countries have opened new opportunities and responsibilities for the Peace Corps. This year, it will start programs in the former Soviet republic of Georgia, in Bangladesh and in Mozambique. Last year, at the request of President Nelson Mandela, it began working in South Africa.

Later this week, a new contingent of 41 volunteers will leave Atlanta for South Africa, after a sendoff from Gearan, Franklin Sonn, South Africa's ambassador to Washington, and Sargent Shriver, the first director of the Peace Corps.

One of those volunteers is Jason Carter, a recent graduate of Duke University and the grandson of former president Jimmy Carter. The Peace Corps is of course a Carter family tradition. Jason's great-grandmother, Miss Lillian, served as a volunteer nurse in India in the late 1960s, when she was well along in years.

Young Carter tells me he asked for an African assignment after seeing the devastation in Liberia on a visit with his grandfather and calculating that "I may never have another chance" to explore what can be done to help on that continent. But, at 22, he also sees the rewards for himself. "Even if you go to Duke," he said, "or maybe to make up for going to Duke, you want a new way of going out to look at the world. Our culture is stampeding, and this may be a way to see what parts you can take at face value and what parts you need to reject."

Gearan, an understated Boston Irishman, asked for the Peace Corps assignment after carrying lots of water for Clinton, first as director of the Democratic Governors' Association, then as a 1992 campaign press spokesman and finally as White House communications director during the toughest parts of the first term.

One of the least cynical politicians I have known, Gearan said the other day, "It was a great honor to work in the White House, but it is really inspiring to be in this job and see the very tangible differences our volunteers are making."

"In Botswana," he said, "I was with one of our volunteers, a 64-year-old grandmother who has helped a cooperative of women weavers triple their income in the past year. She's living in a thatched-roof hut filled with drawings by her nine grandchildren."

Gearan has used his influence with Clinton to set the Peace Corps on its upward trajectory, but he has had many allies. "When heads of state and foreign ministers come to Washington, many of them come by here to thank us," Gearan said. "Some of them, in their youth, were taught by Peace Corps volunteers."

The returned volunteers, now numbering 150,000, form a powerful grass-roots lobby. On Capitol Hill, the support is bipartisan. Georgia Republican Sen. Paul Coverdell, who ran the Peace Corps during much of the Bush administration, told the Atlanta Journal-Constitution he is enthusiastic about Clinton's expansion plans. "I never met an ambassador . . . of another government that had been the beneficiary of this program who did not view it as the most successful of its kind." Similar support has come from six other legislators—three Democrats and three Republicans—who were Peace Corps volunteers.

This one is a winner all around.

The Washington Post

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14, 1998

Robert Kuttner

Masterstroke on Medicare

President Clinton's proposal to extend Medicare eligibility to people aged 55-65 is a masterstroke, as politics and program. Republicans say he's inserting the camel's nose under the tent—resurrecting universal health coverage. And right they are.

First, his approach would help stabilize Medicare's finances. People aged 55 to 65 are a lot healthier than older folks. If you have them pay into the Medicare pot, you infuse the actuarial pool with healthier subscribers.

Second, the 55 to 65 set is, and feels, medically insecure. These are precisely the people who get laid off and find private health insurance prohibitively expensive, or who get stuck with inferior coverage.

Any surgeon can tell you of someone 63 or 64 waiting for a needed operation until the (arbitrary) day of Medicare eligibility arrives. Guaranteeing the option to join Medicare at affordable prices—the administration projects \$3,000 to \$5,000 a year—solves a real problem for a big segment of the population.

Third, the proposal is brilliant politics. Republicans hate this idea. It's more big government. It is just the sort of program, like Social Security and the original Medicare, that bonds voters to the party that champions social insurance—which happens to be the Democrats.

The Republicans' allies in the private health insurance industry hate the proposal even more. Medicare is competition. It is mercifully unmanaged—you get to choose your own doctor, your own hospital, and there are no shareholders and stock analysts demanding that Granny get tossed on the sidewalk a day early to help save a few bucks and boost the stock price.

So this proposal associates Democrats with a valued reform. Republicans get stuck with the unpopular side of the argument as shills for a self-interested and often heartless industry.

How would you like to be a GOP congressional candidate in 1998, telling an audience of 60-year-olds why they can't have Medicare? The speech would play well to the executive council of the Health Insurance Association of America—power players, but not many voters there. A slam dunk for the Democrat.

Extending Medicare to 55- to 65-year-olds indeed reopens the debate about universal health coverage. The logic of health insurance requires that the temporarily well subsidize the currently ill; and that the still young subsidize those who have grown old.

The more that private industry tries to skim off the profitable subscribers, who are young and healthy, the more the logic breaks down and the more sick people get left out. It makes insurance prohibitively expensive—or excessively managed—for people the industry finds costly to treat.

The unsung hero of this idea is California Rep. Pete Stark, who several years ago proposed the simplest and clearest route to universal health coverage—gradually expand Medicare. In year one, extend it to 55-year-olds; in year two, expand it to kids under 10 (who are even healthier and cheaper.) In year three, add teenagers.

After seven years, the whole country belongs. Unlike Clinton's late and unlamented plan, there are not whole new byzantine complexities. And unlike the Canadian-style "single-payer" approach, it is not an alien import.

Rather, this is good old, comfortable, familiar Medi-

care, the salvation of so many of our parents and grandparents, a program that gets rave ratings in public opinion polls. Expand a known quantity, gradually, universally, to a healthier population. Brilliant!

The proposal is not quite perfect. There is the issue of who pays the premiums for the unemployed. (Tax insurance company profits?)

Also, Medicare costs have been inflating at faster-than-average rates, because the Medicare population keeps getting older and sicker, and because Medicare is less intensely subjected to ruthless case reviews and incentives to deny care. This new proposal should be combined with a more benign approach to managed care.

Medicare HMOs are an industry favorite. You turn your Medicare eligibility over to an HMO, and they cover the out-of-pocket expenses that Medicare doesn't cover. Fine if you're healthy. The fly in the ointment is that they tend to market to relatively healthy oldsters, and are much tougher in denying or limiting care when they get sick. We need a middle ground here—with the efficiencies of group health plans, but without the merciless and self-serving cost-cutting.

Lately, private managed care has become more and more of a consumer nightmare. And the medical insecurity that prompted Clinton to propose universal coverage back in 1992 has only worsened.

This issue has not gone away, nor will it. Good camel, good tent.

The writer is co-editor of the American Prospect.

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