

President Bush hosted recently a White House event highlighting the accomplishments of USA Freedom Corps, the volunteer initiative launched as part of a national Call to Service after the attacks of 9/11 to help more Americans connect with opportunities to serve their neighbors in need. The President honored the work of America's armies of compassion and repeated his call for Americans to devote 4,000 hours – or two years, in service to our country over their lifetimes.

Ø Following 9/11, President George W. Bush called on all Americans to serve their communities, their Nation, and their world. In his 2002 State of the Union Address, he announced the creation of USA Freedom Corps to connect Americans with more opportunities to serve their country and to foster a culture of citizenship, responsibility, and service.

Ø Nearly 61-million Americans have answered the President's Call to Service by volunteering. These volunteers are helping feed the hungry, house the homeless, aid the addicted, mentor at-risk youth, and offer critical care to those in need at home and around the world.

President Bush highlights volunteer initiative and thanks America's armies of compassion

**USA Freedom Corps Is Helping Americans Answer the President's Call to Service by Strengthening National Service Programs**

## USA Freedom Corps: Strengthening Service to Meet Community Needs - MabuhayRadio

Written by The White House Press Office

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- Citizen Corps, created by President Bush following 9/11 to build a culture of preparedness, now has nearly one million volunteers nationwide, and their efforts reach more than three-quarters of the American people. Citizen Corps fosters collaboration among government and civic leaders to achieve broader participation in disaster preparedness and response.
  
- Volunteers for Prosperity, also created by President Bush, mobilized more than 43,000 doctors, teachers, engineers, and other skilled Americans this year to address critical needs abroad. The program matches skilled American professionals with service opportunities in the developing world. Both Citizen Corps and Volunteers for Prosperity have proven to be effective, and President Bush calls on Congress to make these programs permanent.
  
- Peace Corps has been provided its highest level of funding in history under President Bush. The Peace Corps has opened or re-opened programs in 13 countries. It currently supports about 8,000 Americans who commit to serve two years in communities overseas.
  
- AmeriCorps provides opportunities for more than 74,000 people to serve their fellow Americans.
  
- Senior Corps connected approximately 500,000 older Americans with opportunities to serve their communities and country through Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), Senior Companions, and Foster Grandparents programs. Last year, Senior Corps members provided approximately 116 million hours of service.

- Learn and Serve America supported 1,700 grantees for service-learning programs in schools last year alone, engaging more than 1.4-million students from kindergarten through college in nearly 28 million hours of service.

- Take Pride in America was re-launched at the U.S. Department of the Interior and is supporting more than 400,000 skilled volunteers through meaningful service opportunities preserving America's public lands and National Parks.

USA Freedom Corp's website [www.volunteer.gov](http://www.volunteer.gov) created a volunteer network that has become the Nation's largest clearinghouse of volunteer opportunities. Volunteer.gov offers more than four million volunteer opportunities, both in the United States and abroad.

Ø USA Freedom Corps plays a vital role in the aftermath of disasters like Hurricanes Gustav and Katrina, helping to link more than 1.1 million volunteers with opportunities to assist with relief efforts. As part of this effort, more than 93,000 participants in national service programs have given 3.5-million hours of service in response to Katrina. National service participants from AmeriCorps and Senior Corps have supported or managed more than 262,000 community volunteers. Americans have also donated more than \$3.5-billion to help the recovery and rebuilding effort.

Ø President Bush has personally recognized more than 660 outstanding volunteers throughout the United States with the President's Volunteer Service Award. In total, more than 1.1 million Americans have received the President's Volunteer Service Award, in recognition of their time spent in service to others. Today the President welcomed to the White House many of the volunteers he has honored to celebrate their achievements and thank them once again for their service.

Ø President Bush created the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation, which launched a "Pro Bono Challenge" seven months ago and has secured corporate pledges totaling more than \$400 million. The Council is charged with promoting volunteerism and advancing corporate social responsibility. It brings together leaders from the worlds of business, entertainment, sports, education, government, nonprofits, and media to echo President Bush's Call to Service. The national "Pro Bono Challenge" encourages companies to promote skills-based volunteering by their employees to help build the capacity of nonprofits meeting community needs.

USA Freedom Corps issued a report, "Answering the Call to Service," a comprehensive look at the work of the initiative to improve communities and change lives over nearly seven years under the President's leadership. The report details the response from the millions of individuals who have answered the President's Call to Service and used their power and energy to affect communities across America. To view the report, visit [www.volunteer.gov](http://www.volunteer.gov) . # # #

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