

CALL TO SERVICE

A Publication of the Massachusetts Service Alliance

Gala to Honor State's Most Dedicated Volunteers

Massachusetts Service Alliance, in connection with the Governor's Office, is excited to announce the upcoming Governor's Points of Light Gala, a highly prestigious awards ceremony that will underscore the tremendous impact volunteerism has throughout the Commonwealth.



The Governor's Points of Light Award, the highest honor given to a volunteer in Massachusetts, has, for the last four years, been administered on a monthly basis to individuals. Now, the award will be conferred at an annual Gala and will highlight the efforts of citizens, nonprofits, corporations, and government agencies with exemplary dedication to their communities.

The event is set for November 15th and will be held in the Great Hall of the State House. Governor Mitt Romney, the Gala's Honorary Chair, will be in attendance, along with Mrs. Romney, and will present the Points of Light Awards to recipients.

Stay tuned for more details regarding this exciting event!



Governor Mitt Romney presents the Points of Light Award to recent award recipient Dr. Leonard Radin.

Sponsorship opportunities are available. To request an invitation, contact Pauline Jeong by email at pjeong@mass-service.org or by phone at 617-542-2544 ext. 227.



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A Culture of Service

Dear Friends,

Summer provides us with a great opportunity to explore the joys of life in New England. From days at the beach to hikes in the mountains, there are bountiful recreational choices. While the summer months bring us outdoors, they can also be the catalyst for us to get to know our neighbors and inspire a culture of service in our community.

As a leader in volunteer service in Massachusetts, you and I can take advantage of the summer months and engage new people in service projects. Summer might just be the time to package abundant service projects into "Volunteer Vacations." Some people may be looking to devote a portion of their vacation to service while others are willing to contribute a week or two of their time this summer to a good cause. Consider coordinating a "Volunteer Vacation" for your colleagues, friends, and neighbors this summer.

The summer is also a great time to do an inventory of the critical needs in your community. Recent national disasters have tested many neighborhoods – including the recent deluge of rain we had here in our state. Better prepared communities are able to effectively react to crisis. Working with your local municipality, you can determine who in your community is most likely to be affected by each disaster. For example how many seniors do you have who are living alone and may need help in a heat or cold wave? Or is your local shelter ready for an emergency and stocked with nonperishables and dry goods? Take this time to work with your community and key volunteers to better prepare for an emergency.

I would also take this opportunity to salute Jason Henrichs, the outgoing President of the Massachusetts Youth Service Alliance. Many thanks to Jason for his ten outstanding years of leadership, making the Commonwealth's community service and volunteerism programs better. Jason's stewardship has helped shape MYSA's fiscal future through disciplined budgeting, investment and management. Thank you Jason for all of your efforts as a true Champion of Service in Massachusetts.

Thank you to our readers for your continued support and everything you do to instill a culture of service and kindness in our Commonwealth.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Judge". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

John Judge
Massachusetts Service Alliance
Board Chair

Youth Volunteerism in America: "It Takes A Village"

In early 2005, the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) conducted a major study on the volunteering habits of American youth ages 12 to 18. The survey focused on the possible influence that social institutions – such as family structure, religious organizations, and school systems – exert over the state of youth volunteerism. In general CNCS's research indicated that three-fourths of young people who donate service time to their communities do so through programs established by schools, religious institutions, or youth organizations.

Specifically, a young adult whose parents are active in their community is nearly twice as likely to volunteer as a youth whose family has not set a precedent for service outside the home. Similarly, twice as many young people *with* religious affiliation volunteer as those without any such ties. Of these, 47 percent engage solely in service opportunities provided by those institutions, while an additional 8 percent volunteer with an external, faith-based group. Finally, school-related service programs generate a great deal of interest in volunteerism among youth, often through the medium of service-learning. Service-learning is the effort to incorporate community-enhancing activities into academic curriculum, allowing students to forge connections between lessons learned in the classroom and lessons learned in the service field. "Community service-learning is an educational tool that engages students in their learning as well as in their communities," says Kristen McKinnon, a Community Service-Learning Specialist. "Through service-learning, we are preparing students to be lifelong learners, and to apply that learning to their responsibility as active and engaged citizens." A report issued by the National Center for Education Statistics estimated that in the 2000-2001 academic year more than 13 million school-aged children and youth took part in a service-learning project of some sort.

Clearly, social institutions have a significant role to play in motivating young people to volunteer. Promoting and supporting youth volunteerism is a vital endeavor, in part because of the considerable proven benefits afforded to young adults involved in service ventures. Among such advantages are a heightened dedication to academic excellence, an increased aptitude for leadership, and an improved outlook on continued volunteer service.

Young volunteers are also incredible assets to their communities. American youth currently contribute more than 1.3 billion hours of volunteer service annually. In addition, studies show that individuals who begin volunteering at a young age will maintain their commitments to service into adulthood. Thus, social institutions which encourage, inspire, and enable youth in America to volunteer have a positive impact on young people and on the service community as a whole, both present and future.

Get Prepared! Disaster Relief in Massachusetts



AmeriCorps Cape Cod members participate in disaster simulation activities.

On March 18th, seven women and four men from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tuft's University boarded a plane bound for New Orleans. They each spent their spring break, not relaxing in a sunny vacation spot, but gutting houses ravaged by Hurricane Katrina in the muck and mud. These types of post-emergency service endeavors are a vital part of an affected region's recovery process following a major disaster.

Individuals interested in assisting with disaster relief can also get involved ahead of time, well before a storm hits or a fire starts, by engaging in disaster preparedness efforts. Since Hurricane Katrina, more and more disaster preparedness programs are being established in regions across the nation.

In Massachusetts there are a number of service groups that

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Announcements

An Update on AmeriCorps Inclusion Initiatives

In March, Kim Woodbury, an AmeriCorps Program Officer at the Massachusetts Service Alliance (MSA), transitioned into a new full-time position as the MSA Inclusion Program Officer. While continuing to sit on the AmeriCorps program team, Kim's primary role will now be to develop, coordinate, and present training to individuals and to national service and volunteer programs on issues including member and volunteer recruitment, and inclusion of persons with disabilities.

MSA recently participated in the Career Expo for People with Disabilities hosted by *Careers and the Disabled Magazine*. During this event, MSA staff spoke with potential applicants about AmeriCorps and about other national service opportunities throughout Massachusetts.

This summer, MSA will provide up to \$12,000 in mini-grants (\$1000-\$2000 for 5-10 programs) to be used by any AmeriCorps State or National program operating in Massachusetts for the purpose of implementing recruitment initiatives that promote inclusive recruitment practices. The Request for Proposal has been posted on the MSA website (www.mass-service.org/funding_opportunities.shtml) and has been sent out to all Massachusetts-based AmeriCorps State and National programs.



Board Member Profile

Professor Larry Bailis, is an associate research professor and Senior Research Associate at the Center for Youth and Communities at Brandeis University, where he specializes in the administration of welfare, childcare, social service, employment and training, and education programs. His research includes an effort to work with community groups to assess the impact of welfare reform in Massachusetts as well as more than a dozen studies that address service-learning, school-to-work, school-to-college, and efforts to prevent dropouts.



How did Massachusetts Service Alliance (MSA) become one of the vehicles through which you exercise your commitment to service?

I have long been a believer in the power of volunteer efforts to strengthen America's communities, going back to the ideas put forward by George Romney when he was running for President in 1968. Massachusetts has some of the best volunteer initiatives in the country and I became involved with MSA to discover more about these exemplary programs and to try to help make them even better.

What do you find most rewarding about your involvement with MSA?

It is extremely rewarding to have the opportunity to work with the staff at MSA to make it possible for so many Massachusetts residents to harness their interests in and talents for addressing community needs.

What are some challenges you think MSA faces?

MSA and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts do not have sufficient resources to mobilize enough students and other volunteers to deal with all of all the pressing needs of our society throughout the state and to provide them with proper support. We are therefore forced to choose among many, many highly qualified programs to sponsor. Hopefully there will be more resources available in the future.

What do you see for the future of MSA?

More and more people in America are beginning to understand the benefits that volunteering in the community can bring to them. I see MSA continuing to provide leadership in supporting service to the community, helping others know what community service can do for them, be it through AmeriCorps, through service-learning at community-based organizations, or through the kinds of volunteer acts that are highlighted in the Governor's Points of Light awards.

Did You Know ... ?

Volunteer experience can be an excellent résumé or career builder. For students seeking their first professional jobs, volunteer work demonstrates to potential employers an enthusiasm for pursuits outside the classroom. Individuals planning to return to the workforce can stay sharp, motivated, and involved by volunteering during their leaves of absence. Also, through volunteerism, career changers can attain fresh skills and gain valuable experience, helping to ensure a smoother transition into new work fields.

Research indicates that employers prefer applicants who have served in a volunteer capacity of some sort. 73 percent of employers say they would hire a candidate with volunteer experience over one without; 94 percent believe volunteering can enhance job skills; and 58 percent consider volunteer experience more useful than knowledge acquired through paid employment. Furthermore, 94 percent of employees who have served as volunteers gained new proficiencies, which, they say, helped them obtain first jobs, increased salaries, and promotions.

Additionally, volunteerism provides opportunities for building relationships with professional individuals. By widening the range of people in their daily circles, volunteers have increased occasions to network and connect with potential employers. Networking is a vital part of the job search; up to 60 percent of job openings are filled by candidates who already have contacts on the work site.

To search for volunteer opportunities, please visit www.mass.gov/connectandserve or contact Kelsey McCoy at 617-542-2544 ext. 211.



www.mass.gov/connectandserve

Announcements

We are delighted to welcome a new addition to the MSA family, Amaad Rivera. Amaad joined the MSA staff in mid-May as our second AmeriCorps Program Officer. Previously, Amaad served as AmeriCorps Program Director for Solutions CDC in Holyoke and as a Massachusetts Promise Fellow. Welcome Amaad!

This summer, two Board members will be concluding their service on the Massachusetts Service Alliance Board. We are grateful for the friendship and dedication of Jason Heinrichs and Reverend Shawn Jegede and acknowledge some of their many contributions to the field of service and volunteerism in Massachusetts.

Jason Heinrichs has been a member of the MSA Board for eight years. Under his leadership as board chair, MSA has flourished with a stronger infrastructure and a more stable environment, improving staff retention and allowing MSA to better meet the needs of the field. We are grateful for his many years of service.

Reverend Shawn Jegede served as a member of the MSA Board for almost two years. During that time, she helped build bridges to the faith-based community through a series of events and meetings. Her valuable and unique perspective in discussions on capacity-building for community-based and faith-based organizations will be missed!

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Several AmeriCorps members work to clean birds covered in oil following the 2003 Bouchard oil spill in Buzzards Bay.

are committed to developing better plans for disaster response and mitigation. For instance, the Cape Cod Medical Reserve Corps (CCMRC) in South Dennis, Massachusetts consists of a team of highly qualified health care professionals who have volunteered to be on standby in the event that an emergency begins to overwhelm the existing state system for disaster response. In the days and weeks after Hurricane Katrina, the CCMRC sent over 80 volunteers to the Otis Air National Guard Base to provide survivors with medical care. "One of the most important lessons learned in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina was that communities need to have local emergency volunteers ready when the bell rings," said CCMRC's clinical manager, Cheryl Bushnell.

Similarly, for the past two years, AmeriCorps Cape Cod has been teaming up with the American Red Cross to increase community awareness of the need for disaster preparedness strategies. Members of AmeriCorps Cape Cod have taken part in disaster simulations, created campaigns to educate locals about disasters, and founded a program called Well Aware that teaches seniors about effective methods for disaster preparedness. Regarding the importance of disaster preparedness initiatives, AmeriCorps Cape Cod member Amy Morris said, "once you experience a disaster firsthand, there's simply no excuse not to be prepared for the possibility from then on. Being proactive in preparation is absolutely necessary."

To learn more about disaster preparedness opportunities in Massachusetts, visit Connect and Serve (www.mass.gov/connectandserve) and click on "Disaster Relief."

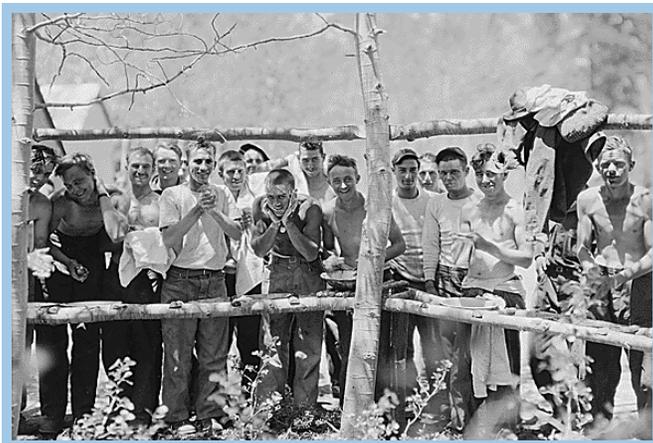
Massachusetts Celebrates Civilian Conservation Corps Day

On March 30th, Massachusetts celebrated Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Day with a ceremony and reception that took place at the State House. The CCC, established as part of the New Deal, was one of the most highly regarded public works initiatives of its time. CCC Day was founded in 2002 as a way of recognizing the numerous accomplishments of CCC members.



The event's featured speakers included CCC alumni Francis Derwin of Quincy and Philip Gouzie of South Portland, Maine as well as Senator Michael W. Morrissey. During his address, Senator Morrissey said that he was "pleased to join with the members of the Conservation Corps in celebrating their 73rd anniversary and paying tribute to the important contributions made over the years by its 100,000 members. The Corps, made up of civilian members, was invaluable in the Commonwealth's time of need, building roads, bridges, and towers and preserving our nation."

This year, honors were given to the education program offered by the CCC. During their term of service, CCC members were given on-the-job training in a range of skills relevant to conservation efforts, including operation of heavy machinery, wildlife management, and landscaping. Evening courses on motor repair, cooking, and basic literacy were also available. For many CCC members, these programs constituted the only education they were able to receive. As a tribute to these past educational efforts, the Department of Conservation and Recreation announced, during the March ceremony, the launching of a new interactive CCC instructional kit that can be used in schools, libraries, and parks that are interested in developing curriculum on the history of the CCC.



Original members of the Civilian Conservation Corps around the time of the organization's founding in 1933.

Photo Credit: www.vw.cc.va.us

In attendance at this year's CCC Day were CCC alumni from Marlboro, Westfield, Feeding Hills, Chicopee, Quincy, Canton, and South Portland, Maine, along with their family members.

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The Massachusetts Service Alliance is a private, nonprofit organization that serves as the state commission on community service. Our mission is to generate an ethic of service throughout the Commonwealth by creating and supporting diverse, high quality service and volunteer opportunities for all age groups, resulting in stronger communities and more active citizens.

We welcome news suggestions, article submissions, and announcements. To contribute, please contact Pauline Jeong at pjeong@mass-service.org or 617-542-2544 ext. 227.

Funded in part by the



MCOVA Member Receives Prestigious Award



Generations Together, an intergenerational program established by Jewish Community Housing for the Elderly (JCHE), was recently granted an Exemplary Program Award from the National Council on Aging (NCOA). This honor,

called the RespectAbility Award, was conferred upon Generations Together for its efforts to involve older adults in civic engagement opportunities.

Through Generations Together, JCHE's 1300 tenants are provided with numerous occasions to interact with young people ranging in age from pre-schoolers to college undergraduates. Together children and older adults participate in intergenerational fitness classes, email pen pal programs, or film discussion groups. The connections they foster give support to the young people and renewed vitality to members of the older generation. By serving as mentors and role models for school-aged children, these older adults are able to make significant contributions to their communities.

Barbara Friedman, the Director of JCHE's Intergenerational Programs and a member of the Massachusetts Coalition on Vital Aging, says that she is "most pleased" to see the "hard work and dedication" of JCHE residents result in such a prestigious award. Friedman plans to use the monetary grant that accompanied the honor to further the mission of Generations Together and to develop additional intergenerational programs.

Congratulations to Barbara Friedman and everyone else involved with the Generations Together program.

To learn more about Generations Together or Jewish Community Housing for the Elderly, please visit www.jche.org.



Tom Enfres of NCOA and Barbara Friedman of Generations Together

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