

## Michigan Community Service Commission

The Michigan Community Service Commission (MCSC) builds a culture of service by providing vision and resources to strengthen communities through volunteerism. In 2009-2010, the MCSC is granting more than \$8.2 million in federal funds to local communities for volunteer programs and activities. The MCSC is funding 19 AmeriCorps programs and 20 Learn and Serve programs. The Governor's Service Awards and Mentor Michigan are also premier programs of the MCSC. The MCSC is housed in the Michigan Department of Human Services, whose mission is to assist children, families, and vulnerable adults to be safe, stable, and self-supporting. The MCSC Board of Commissioners consists of 25 Governor appointed members who approve funding, determine policy, serve as ambassadors for service, and engage in resource development.

For FY2010, the State of Michigan's General Funds investment will **leverage \$9.4 million** in federal funds the MCSC receives from the Corporation for National and Community Service. These federal funds are helping financially struggling nonprofit organizations and schools meet the growing social need in our communities through service and volunteerism.

### Michigan's AmeriCorps

This year more than **1,200 individuals** will serve our struggling communities through AmeriCorps. These AmeriCorps members will serve in 327 nonprofits and schools throughout the state addressing some of our state's toughest challenges. Members will provide foreclosure prevention and financial counseling, help ex-offenders re-enter society, help homeless individuals and families find permanent housing, organize literacy and tutoring programs for underperforming youth, mentor and support youth from disadvantaged circumstances, and support health care services to the most needy. Members often engage others in their efforts. On average, each member recruits an additional 23 volunteers to help address the needs in their communities. These volunteers give nearly **184,000 hours of service** equating to an additional **\$3.7 million** of services contributed to Michigan communities.

As a result of their year of service, AmeriCorps members will earn an estimated **\$3.4 million in education awards** to pay for college, vocational training programs, or repay student loans. At a time when many Michigan families are struggling to find employment or pay for college, AmeriCorps can be a solution.

As our state is facing double digit unemployment, AmeriCorps is providing individuals with opportunities to gain valuable job skills, retrain for new careers, and the ability to stay in their home community. In fact, the MCSC received **\$2.5 million** from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to expand AmeriCorps opportunities in Michigan. Research has shown that after one year of AmeriCorps service, members are more likely to stay in the community they served, pursue careers in the nonprofit and public sector, and continue to be civically involved.

Online applications to AmeriCorps have risen dramatically in recent months, fueled by a "compassion boom" of Americans wanting to help their neighbors in tough times, increased interest in public service by millennials and boomers, the economy, and an "Obama effect" of people responding to the President's call to service. Between November 2008 and April 2009, AmeriCorps received 76,404 online applications, **an increase of 230%** from the 23,145 applications that came in the same six month period a year ago.

### **Learn and Serve – Michigan**

Through Learn and Serve – Michigan, more than **25,000** K-12 students across Michigan will be given the opportunity to connect meaningful service to their community with classroom instruction. These students will provide close to **540,000 hours of service** through numerous opportunities to apply what they are learning in school to solve real community problems. Service-learning helps students understand the relevance of what they are studying and how it applies to the real world. It also helps them develop stronger bonds with their teachers and fellow classmates keeping them more connected to their school and less likely to dropout. Service-learning helps increase overall job experience and career awareness. It also creates a commitment among young people to be part of the solution and not part of the problem. Research shows that individuals that volunteer at an early age are more likely to continue to volunteer throughout their life time. We can count on these 25,000 students to be the next generation of community leaders and problem solvers.

### **Mentor Michigan**

In addition to leveraging the federal funds, our State General funds are used to expand youth mentoring across the state. Through Mentor Michigan, the MCSC is supporting a network of nearly 300 mentoring organizations that are changing lives by matching mentors with young people. Last year, these organizations served **23,000** youth with mentors. Since the inception of Mentor Michigan, the MCSC has leveraged **\$4.1 million** in federal funds to help increase the capacity of local mentoring organization to serve more youth. Mentor Michigan continues to raise awareness about the importance of and need for mentors.

### **Governor's Service Awards**

The Governor's Service Awards honor and celebrate Michigan citizens who volunteer their time to make communities better places to live. Since 1994, the Governor and his/her spouse have been recognizing Michigan's outstanding volunteers. The annual celebration includes a private reception hosted by the Governor followed by an awards presentation. The awards are given in eight categories highlighting the diverse nature of volunteers in our state. People from across Michigan nominate their friends, colleagues, family and neighbors for these prestigious awards.