

M I C H I G A N



**COMMUNITY
SERVICE**

COMMISSION

MCSC News

**Building a culture of service by providing vision
and resources to strengthen communities through
volunteerism**

September 2008

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In the News

First Class of NCCC Members Recently Inducted

Members of the first class to serve at the newest National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) campus were inducted on August 11. The ceremony was conducted in Vinton, Iowa and inducted 154 NCCC members and team leaders, serving on 14 teams. NCCC members serve a 10-month term of service and take on a variety of short-term projects sponsored by local organizations within the region of the campus. The first round of projects is scheduled to occur in Iowa. The Iowa campus' region also covers Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, Ohio, South Dakota, North Dakota, and Wisconsin so future projects could occur in those states as well.

National Service Programs Still Critical to the Gulf Coast Rebuilding Effort

Although it's been three years since Hurricane Katrina unleashed a high level of destruction across the Gulf Coast, National Service programs are continuing to provide support to meet local community needs, build homes, and manage volunteers. According to figures released recently by the Corporation for National and Community Service, more than 105,000 participants in AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and Learn and Serve America have contributed over 5.4 million hours in the recovery effort. These participants have also taken on leadership roles by managing the overall volunteer response – the largest in the nation's history – by recruiting or managing more than 405,000 additional volunteers.

President Bush Asks for More Service from America

On Monday, September 8, President Bush addressed members of Congress, three cabinet secretaries, members of the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation and the Corporation for National and Community Service board, state service commission directors, corporate responsibility executives, and leaders and volunteers from Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve America, Citizen Corps, the Peace Corps, and Volunteers for Prosperity. His message was to renew the call to action he made in the wake of the 9/11 attacks for every American to give 4,000 hours or two years of their lives in service to others.

"You should be volunteering not because of 9/11, but you should be volunteering because our country needs you on a regular basis," said the President. "And so today I call upon our fellow citizens to devote 4,000 hours over your lifetime in service to your country. You'll become a better person for it, and our society will be more healthy as a result of it."

Permanent Successor to SafetyNET Placed on General Calendar

Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT), Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, has placed the Senate Background Checks bill (S. 2756) on the General Calendar to be called up before the full Senate. This bill would create a

permanent successor to the SafetyNET pilot program which is set to expire in January 2009. It would allow youth-serving organizations access to FBI background checks on potential volunteers and employees. At this time, very few states allow access to this information. But data has proven how vital this information is to ensuring the suitability of volunteers and employees who will be in direct contact with children.

- Information courtesy of MENTOR



Michigan Student New Member of NYLC Youth Advisory Council

EllaKate Wagner, a Belding High School junior, was recently selected as the newest member of National Youth Leadership Council's (NYLC) Youth Advisory Council (YAC). The YAC is a team of servant-leaders, ages 14-21, recognized for their dedication to promoting youth leadership, service-learning, youth-adult partnerships, and diversity. YAC members come to NYLC from the National Youth Leadership Training, where every summer young people from across the country learn skills needed to: enhance awareness of social, political, and environmental issues; motivate action for the common goal; build capacity for taking effective action – individually, in groups, and in organizations; and strengthen abilities to work cooperatively across races, ethnicities, genders, geographies, and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Program Stories

A Special Day

Submitted by: Edith Assaff, Writer/Mentor with VIP Mentoring, VIG Grantee

Thanks to some free tickets to Greenfield Village, my three mentees and I were able to make our first outing as community-based matches. I wasn't sure whether the girls would like Greenfield Village, so I told their mothers we would only visit there for a couple of hours. They loved it so much they didn't want to leave, so we called their mothers on three separate occasions to ask for permission to stay longer.

We had lots of fun while visiting Greenfield Village, including riding the train and the carousel and singing "Strawberry Blonde" with the calliope. During our visit there was an antique car festival occurring with a World War II theme. As part of this event there were actors dressed in character walking around the village. In the evening they had a USO show that the girls wished to stay and see. We spread a blanket in front of the bleachers and listened to a band play swing music and watched GIs dancing with girls dressed in 1940s style. Suddenly all three of the girls got up to dance as well! They learned some of the "jitterbug" steps from the women, then when the soldiers and sailors asked them to dance, they all played along.

Tanechia, one of my mentees, asked one GI to dance with her but he was shy and told her didn't know how to dance. So she told him she would teach him – and she did! At one point I heard her say to him, "Don't be so stiff! You have to loosen up!"

They seemed to be having such a good time, those three girls, and the visit to Greenfield Village was also educational. We are so thankful for having the opportunity to visit such an amazing place. It's funny how one experience can bring kids out of their shyness. This was a day that gave them confidence among strangers and let them know that they can glow in whatever company they keep. It was the happiest time I've ever had at Greenfield Village.

AmeriCorps – Leaving a Legacy Behind

The Michigan Primary Care Association (MPCA) Community HealthCorps program engages AmeriCorps members to address patient self-management, school-based health, and health outreach and enrollment. Members are placed in community health centers and other host sites across the state. Members are also given the opportunity to work on legacy projects that produce lasting benefits beyond their terms of service.

Mary Prowse, a MPCA Community HealthCorps member who served for two years from 2006 to 2008, made a difference through the MidMichigan Health Park located in Houghton Lake through her legacy project.

Mary's 2007-2008 legacy project was extended beyond two days and into a lengthy process. One of Mary's activities as an AmeriCorps member was Prescription Medicine Assistance. During her term of service, Mary would assist patients who did not have prescription coverage by helping them apply for free or low-cost medicine through pharmaceutical companies. As part of the legacy project, Mary created a system that helps keep track patients currently receiving assistance through MidMichigan Health Park's Prescription Assistance Program.

"I had many duties in implementing this legacy project. Everything from creating the Excel spreadsheet, to pulling and entering data, to making sure the spreadsheet could be easily updated for future use," Mary says.

Although a legacy project can typically be considered a project one leaves behind, Mary's project will last far in to the future.

"This project, with the prescription assistance, will never be completed as long as there is a need for prescriptions and there are people who do not have insurance coverage. This new system will be a very good tool for the next AmeriCorps volunteer," she says.

Thanks to Mary's hard work during her two years of service, she directly impacted 422 individuals and helped them receive life-saving prescriptions worth a total value of \$1.82 million.



Mentor Michigan Advocate Setting a Prime Example

Mentor Michigan is proud of its partnership with the Michigan National Guard: Mobilizing Mentors – Hometown Heroes Mentoring Hometown Kids. At the annual Recruiting and Retention Command Awards and Training Conference held in Grand Rapids in August, Mentor Michigan was able to see just how proud the National Guard is of this partnership as well.

LTC Shawn Harris is the Commander of the Recruiting and Retention Command, Michigan Army National Guard, and serves as a member of the Adjutant General's Special Staff. At the recent Grand Rapids conference, LTC Harris took the lead in promoting mentoring to those in his command.

LTC Harris told his command he is taking the lead to champion the Mentor Michigan – Michigan National Guard partnership by signing up with Big Brothers Big Sisters to be a mentor, setting a goal to recruit 25 soldiers to start a lunch buddy mentoring program at Gardner Middle School (where he previously taught and coached), and challenging the rest of his command to follow suit.

The Mobilizing Mentors partnership was launched by Major General Thomas Cutler and First Gentleman Dan Mulhern in January 2008 and seeks to better serve Michigan youth who need mentors. The goal of this partnership is to recruit 500 National Guard members to mentor by 2010. LTC Harris has helped to put that goal in motion by setting a prime example of all the great qualities and values Michigan National Guard members have to offer to our state's youth.



L'Anse Creuse Broadcast Media Club Brings Service to the Public

The Broadcast Media Club at L'Anse Creuse High School was created during the 2007-2008 school year to help students learn the art of broadcasting. The club is open to students in 9-12 grades and all participants are given a unique opportunity to participate in community service.

The club broadcasts nearly 60 events throughout the year thanks to LCHS' closed-circuit network and also records its programs on DVD. Most of those programs are sports highlights, happenings throughout the district, staff interviews, and community service events. LCHS is the first high school in Michigan to produce live sports and other events using completely in-house television equipment and personnel.

George Mikla, LCHS senior and original Broadcast Media Club member, knows a little something about community service. He also knows a little something about broadcasting. And in the past, he's been pretty good about putting those two together.

In 2007, George was the recipient of the Learn and Serve – Michigan Outstanding Service-Learning Student Award for a video he created called "Valentines Day for Veterans." The video was a part of his school's service-learning project which included making Valentines Day letters and distributing them at a veteran's home in downtown Detroit. George wanted to put this unique story onto video and followed the students on their trip to catch the impact of their efforts.

Now 90 percent of what George and the LCHS Broadcast Media Club produce in school is for community service. In the 2007-2008 school year the club accumulated approximately 600 to 700 hours of community service. And now the club's past efforts are already encouraging other students to get involved.

"We had a lot of new students joining the club this year – 36 students in fact. An incentive in joining a great broadcast club is that you're helping the community," George says.

A further incentive is that the school applied for and received a \$3,152.73 grant from the Detroit Sports Broadcasters Association (DSBA) this summer which will be used to replace the club's deteriorating cameras and tripods. This equipment will come in hand as this year the club has plans to provide a "Game of the Week" to LCPS-TV, to be seen by cable television subscribers in the local community.

Steve Miller, LCHS Technology Education Instructor and Broadcast Media Club Advisory, says the grant was a result of the generosity and commitment of the DSBA to help schools promote broadcasting to students.

Opportunities

Annual Search Under Way for Michigan's Top Youth Volunteers

The search to identify young Michiganders who have made meaningful contributions to their communities over the past 12 months has begun. The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards are presented nationwide by Prudential Financial, Inc. in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals. These awards are entering their 14th annual year recognizing community service by young people in grades five through 12.

Young volunteers can apply online at www.prudential.com/spirit or at www.principals.org/prudential. Applications must be completed by October 31, 2008, then printed out, signed, and submitted to a middle or high school principal, Girl Scout council, county 4-H agent, American Red Cross chapter, YMCA, or affiliate of HandsOn Network. Those without internet access can get a paper version of the application by calling 877-525-8491 toll-free.

Local honorees will be selected in early November then reviewed by a state-level judging committee. That committee will name the top two candidates from each state who will then travel to Washington, D.C. in May to see who will be named America's top youth volunteers of the year.

Service-Learning Grant Program Announced by State Farm Youth Advisory Board

The State Farm Advisory Board is again offering grants ranging from \$25,000 to \$100,000 for service-learning projects. Topics for the grants include: Financial Education; Access to Higher Education/Closing the Achievement Gap; Disaster Preparedness; Driver Safety; and Environmental Responsibility.

The State Farm Advisory Board is comprised of 30 students from across the U.S. and Canada who are charged with helping State Farm design and implement a \$5 million-a-year signature service-learning initiative to address issues important to the company and communities across North America.

Grant applications are available at www.statefarmyab.com. All grant requests are due by Friday, October 3, 2008.

Various Grant Opportunities Available

There are many grant opportunities currently available, with due dates scheduled for October and November. **Click here** for a complete listing. (link to landing page with the following information....)

K-6 Grants – For innovative projects designed by math and science teachers to make classrooms more exciting and students more successful.

Funder: Toshiba America Foundation

Eligibility: K-6 teachers working in either public or private schools.

Deadline: October 1

Amount: Up to \$1,000

Contact: www.toshiba.com/tafpub/jsp/recentgrants/K6.jsp

Staples Foundation for Learning – For programs that provide job skills and/or education for all people, with a special emphasis on disadvantage youth.

Funder: Staples Foundation

Eligibility: Nonprofits

Deadline: Submit applications between October 10 and October 24

Amount: Between \$5,000 and \$25,000

Contact: www.staplesfoundation.org/foundapplication.html

Best Buy Teach – To support K-12 schools with an integrated, interactive technology curriculum that engages students and makes learning fun.

Funder: Best Buy

Eligibility: Accredited K-12 public, private, parochial, magnet, and charter schools.

Deadline: October 12

Amount: \$500 to \$10,000

Contact: bestbuyteach.scholarshipamerica.org

2008 Healthy Sprouts Awards – For school and youth garden programs that teach about nutrition and hunger.

Funder: National Gardening Association and Gardener's Supply Co.

Eligibility: Schools and organizations

Deadline: October 15

Amount: Of 20 schools or organizations selected, the top five will each receive a gift certificate valued at \$500; the other 15 will receive \$200 gift certificates.

Contact: www.kidsgardening.com/healthysprouts.asp

Lowe's Toolbox for Education – For school-improvement projects.

Funder: Lowe's Charitable and Educational Foundation

Eligibility: Public schools and public school parent-teacher groups

Deadline: October 17 (**Note:** Process will close early if 1,500 applications are received before the deadline.)

Amount: \$5,000 per school for a total of \$5 million.

Contact: www.toolboxforeducation.com

Youth Garden Grants – For child-centered garden programs that emphasize education, nutrition, environmental awareness, entrepreneurship, leadership development, team building, community support, and service-learning.

Funder: Home Depot and National Gardening Association

Eligibility: Schools and community organizations

Deadline: November 1

Amount: 125 grants ranging from \$250 to \$1,000 will be awarded.

Contact: www.kidsgardening.com/YGG.asp

GTECH After School Advantage – A national community investment program to provide community agencies and public schools with state-of-the-art computer labs.

Funder: GTECH

Eligibility: Nonprofit 501(C)(3) community agencies or public schools that serve minority and at-risk children aged five to 15 and that house an after-school program in need of a computer lab.

Deadline: Open

Amount: 115 After School Advantage computer centers – each receiving an average of \$15,000 – are planned for 2008.

Contact: www.gtech.com/about_gtech/proposal_guidelines.asp

Calendar of Events

October 2 & 3, 2008

Team Up Michigan! Setting the Pace for National Service – Big Rapids, MI

A cross-stream conference for Michigan National Service Program staff. Join your colleagues from Michigan's AmeriCorps, Learn & Serve, National Direct, Senior Corps, and VISTA programs for two motivational days of networking, training, and collaboration. For more detailed information contact Angelia Salas at salasa@michigan.gov or Megan Sargent at sargentm1@michigan.gov.

October 6 – 12, 2008

Learn and Serve Challenge

Join your peers from around the country for a concentrated week of special events and community outreach activities designed to raise awareness and build support for service-learning. For more information, visit www.learnandservechallenge.org/.

October 20, 2008

Dropout Prevention Summit – Lansing, MI

America's Promise Alliance is supporting more than 100 state and local Dropout Prevention Summits across the country in the next two years. Every governor has been invited to host a statewide summit and Governor Granholm has responded with a summit planned for Michigan. These summits are intended to build a sense of urgency around the dropout crisis, secure a commitment to action from leaders in all sectors, and result in action plans that strengthen current efforts and initiate new strategic activity around measurable policy and program supports for young people. For more information, visit www.americaspromise.org.

October 25, 2008

Make A Difference Day – Nationwide

Make A Difference Day is the most encompassing national day of helping others -- a celebration of neighbors helping neighbors and all Americans are invited to participate. The annual event was created by USA

WEEKEND Magazine and occurs on the fourth Saturday of every October. For more information, visit <http://www.usaweekend.com/diffday/index.html>.

October 26 – 28, 2008

Youth Service Institute 2008 – Orlando, FL

The Youth Service Institute 2008 – “Across the Street, Around the World” – will present opportunities for participants to strategize critical ways to think and act both locally and globally. It is the ideal environment for individuals and organizations to further develop their programs while learning inventive ways to engage young people as assets and resources on Global Youth Service Day and throughout the year. For more information, visit www.ysa.org/institute.

October 27 – 29, 2008

Advanced Volunteer Management Conference – Portland, OR

State service commissions and partners are invited to this event, co-sponsored by Oregon Volunteers, two of the state’s Volunteer Managers’ Associations, and the Institute for Nonprofit Management at Portland State University. Sessions will be provided by an international training team composed of volunteer management experts. For more information, or to register, visit www.oregonvolunteers.org.

November 13, 2008

Poverty Summit – Statewide

This first-time one-day event will organize the fight to eliminate poverty and provide help to Michigan families in financial crisis. “Voices for Action: The 2008 Poverty Summit” will bring together activists, leaders, and families to share strategies and develop new networks to fight poverty and provide help to Michigan families. For more information, visit www.michigan.gov/poverty.

November 17, 2008

Mentor Michigan Statewide Conference – East Lansing, MI

Mentor Michigan will host its third annual conference where Michigan mentoring professionals are invited to spend the day interacting with leading authorities as they share and discuss best practices, quality enhancement, and other valuable topics. For more information contact Amber Reiss at reissa@michigan.gov.

November 18, 2008

Michigan’s AmeriCorps Member Celebration – East Lansing, MI

This annual event brings Michigan’s AmeriCorps*State, VISTA, and National Direct members for a day of training, speakers, teambuilding, and festivities. Included in the celebration is a swearing-in ceremony and reaffirmation of members’ commitment to AmeriCorps and national service. For more information contact Michelle Mackie at metzmakerm1@michigan.gov.

SAVE THE DATE(s)

January 2009

National Mentoring Month – Nationwide

Michigan Mentoring Month – Statewide

National Mentoring Month highlights mentoring and the positive impact it can have on young lives. This month-long outreach campaign focuses national and local attention on the need for mentors, as well as how each of us—individuals, businesses, government agencies, schools, faith communities and nonprofits—can work together to increase the number of mentors and assure brighter futures for our young people. For more information, visit www.mentormichigan.org.

June 22 – 24, 2009

National Conference on Volunteering & Service – San Francisco, CA

Mark your calendars to attend the largest gathering in the world of volunteer and civic leaders. At this annual event learn from volunteer and service experts from across the country, connect with volunteer leaders,

nonprofit organizations, corporate and government partners, and be inspired by the City by the Bay and its innovative practices. For more information, visit www.volunteeringandservice.org.

About MCSC

The Michigan Community Service Commission builds a culture of service by providing vision and resources to strengthen communities through volunteerism. In 2007-08, the MCSC granted more than \$5.9 million in federal and state funds to local communities for volunteer programs and activities. The MCSC funded 19 AmeriCorps programs, 23 Learn and Serve programs, and 13 Volunteer Investment Grant recipients. The Governor's Service Awards and Mentor Michigan are also premier programs of the MCSC.