



CITIES OF SERVICE

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TEN MAJOR AMERICAN CITIES LAUNCH HIGH-IMPACT SERVICE PLANS TO ENLIST VOLUNTEERS TO SOLVE COMMUNITY PROBLEMS

Bi-Partisan Cities of Service Coalition has Grown to 110 Mayors in it's First Year; All Mayors Committed to Engaging more Americans in Community Service and Channeling Volunteers Towards the Greatest Areas of Need

The Cities of Service coalition today announced that 10 major U.S. cities are launching citywide, high-impact community service plans that will channel volunteers towards each city's greatest needs. The ten new programs are launching around the one-year anniversary of the Cities of Service coalition. Today, New York City Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and Newark Mayor Cory Booker, two of the 17 founding members of the coalition, launched the City of Newark's high-impact service program, *Brick City SERVES*, which will target volunteers to address Newark's greatest needs. Cities of Service is a bipartisan coalition of mayors from across the country dedicated to engaging more Americans in community service and harnessing the power of volunteers as a serious strategy to address local challenges. The coalition has grown rapidly since its inception in September of 2009, from 17 mayors to 110 mayors representing more than 47 million Americans today.

The ten cities launching a high-impact service plan this month are: Chicago, IL; Detroit, MI; Los Angeles, CA; Nashville, TN; Newark, NJ; Omaha, NE; Philadelphia, PA; Sacramento, CA; Savannah, GA; and Seattle, WA. These cities were recipients of the first round of *Cities of Service Leadership Grants*, funded by the Rockefeller Foundation, which enabled each city to hire a Chief Service Officer to develop and implement the plans. A second round of grants, funded jointly by the Rockefeller Foundation and Bloomberg Philanthropies, were announced in June 2010. Mayor Bloomberg launched the nation's first citywide, high-impact community service plan, *NYC Service*, in April 2009.

Cities of Service also announced it is providing coalition members with customizable websites that enable cities to post and prioritize volunteer opportunities and connect interested residents to opportunities where they're needed most. Six of the cities (Chicago, Detroit, Nashville, Newark, Philadelphia, and Savannah) that are launching plans this month will be using the new sites, funded by Bloomberg Philanthropies, which are modeled after New York City's website, found at www.nyc.gov. The current sites enable cities to highlight their plans and

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collect information from interested residents and organizations. The second phase, which will launch in January, will have full search and reporting functionality. This new resource will also be made available to the broader coalition.

“Faced with continued economic challenges, many mayors are working to take advantage of every available resource – including the time and energy of public-spirited residents – to solve local challenges,” said Mayor Bloomberg. “The Cities of Service movement really has taken off over the past year and is helping cities engage volunteers more effectively for greater impact. Harnessing the power of citizen volunteers makes more sense now than ever.”

“The collective power of volunteerism has helped our City address and overcome many challenges over the years,” said Mayor Booker. “This grant is a great honor and an opportunity to help more Newarkers engage in meaningful volunteer opportunities that will enrich the lives of participants and help our City meet the needs of our most vulnerable residents and communities. Now more than ever, Newark is committed to setting a national standard for urban transformation, and I believe that volunteerism is vital to this mission.”

“The Rockefeller Foundation is proud to support America’s mayors through the *Cities of Service Leadership Grants*,” said Judith Rodin, President of the Rockefeller Foundation. “Each of these 10 innovative and diverse plans reflect both the need and value of volunteerism within our cities, and the opportunity for greater impact that comes when mayors can harness that energy to areas most in need.”

All ten high-impact service plans launching this month focus on using citizen service as a serious strategy to address pressing local challenges in targeted impact areas. Those impact areas, and sample initiatives, are highlighted below. Consistent with the coalition’s commitment to measurement and accountability, each initiative includes specific metrics that will allow Chief Service Officers to measure the impact of service efforts.

- In Chicago, Mayor Richard Daley’s strategy focuses on economic recovery and out-of-school time programs for at-risk youth. For example, volunteers will be recruited to support select nonprofit organizations to significantly expand their capacity to serve at-risk youth in the currently under-resourced out-of-school time hours of 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. when peaks in youth violence occur in Chicago.
- In Detroit, Mayor Dave Bing’s strategy focuses on education, neighborhood development, and public safety. For example, local corporations will enlist 3,000 employees who are working inside neighborhoods every day (public utility service workers and others) to serve as additional “eyes and ears” in those neighborhoods, notifying the police of observed conditions that could be indicators of criminal behavior.
- In Los Angeles, Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa’s strategy focuses on education, economic development, and the environment. For example, volunteers will be recruited for a new Student Recovery Corps. A two-school pilot will connect Recovery Corps members to high-school students who are at-risk of dropping out to support them and help them stay school and graduate.

- In Nashville, Mayor Karl Dean’s strategy focuses on education and the environment, with a particular emphasis on flood recovery. For example, volunteers will be recruited to incorporate energy efficient upgrades and other environmental best practices into the rebuild of homes that were damaged by the recent flood. The goal is to decrease carbon emissions and energy consumption overall in residential neighborhoods, specifically targeting flood-affected homes.
- In Newark, Mayor Cory Booker’s strategy focuses on education and on health and wellness. For example, 200 volunteers will be recruited to staff Play Nights, free evening physical activity play clinics that will serve 3,000 children and help reach Mayor Booker’s goal of dramatically decreasing childhood obesity within a generation.
- In Omaha, Mayor Jim Suttle’s strategy focuses on education and neighborhood restoration, For example, 3,000 young people will participate in Lemonade Days, a new program in which volunteers will help young people to write business and marketing plans, create a budget, and operate lemonade stands. For each stand, one-third of the earnings will go to the student directly, one-third will go into free savings accounts established for the students by local banks, and one-third will be donated to the charity of the student’s choice.
- In Philadelphia, Mayor Michael Nutter’s strategy focuses on education and community vitality. For example, 60,000 volunteers will be trained to serve as Graduation Coaches and help young people successfully graduate from high school and succeed in college and careers. The program aims to help reach Mayor Nutter’s goal of increasing the high school graduation rate to 80 percent by 2015 and doubling the percentage of college graduates from 18 percent to 36 percent by 2018.
- In Sacramento, Mayor Kevin Johnson’s strategy focuses on public safety, education, homelessness and the environment. For example, volunteer Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) members will recruit 500 additional residents to be CERT trained; thereby increasing the number of CERT trained and prepared Sacramentans by 50 percent.
- In Savannah, Mayor Otis Johnson’s strategy focuses on education and neighborhood development. For example, volunteers will tutor and mentor all 2nd grade students in a pilot program at a targeted elementary school in order to ensure that students are reading at or above grade level.
- In Seattle, Mayor Mike McGinn’s strategy focuses on education and youth development. For example, volunteer mentors will be connected to 100 high-need youth identified through Seattle’s Youth Violence Prevention Initiative. The City of Seattle also seeks to recruit additional mentors to eliminate the city’s current waiting list of youth in-need.

“By focusing our initiative on our City’s young people and those that need our help the most, we are helping to secure a stronger Chicago for future generations,” said Chicago Mayor

Richard Daley. “I am proud of the high level of volunteerism we already have in Chicago and this new program is going to help take our service to the next level.”

“The Cities of Service Leadership Grant provides an opportunity for Detroit to further its tradition of service and enlist new volunteers in efforts to move our city forward,” said Detroit Mayor Dave Bing.

“Small acts of everyday heroes bring communities together and help individuals through difficult times,” said Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa “If Americans, and especially our young people, do their part and answer the call to service, cities across this country will support their efforts and help them contribute to the greater good.”

“As I stood alongside Mayor Bloomberg and fifteen other Mayors from across the country a year ago, I pledged to find creative ways to utilize volunteers to address local challenges,” said Nashville Mayor Karl Dean. “What I did not realize at that time, was that in less than a year Nashville would be declared a disaster area and volunteerism would become Nashville’s biggest asset. With the launch of Impact Nashville, I am looking forward to the results of volunteer impact in our public schools and our environmental recovery efforts.”

“Omaha Serves will build a stronger city through neighbors helping neighbors,” said Omaha Mayor Jim Suttle. “With this program, we hope to engage people of all ages from all backgrounds and encourage involvement from young people to instill in them the value of serving their community.”

“As Philadelphians, we have always been committed to helping our fellow citizens,” said Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter. “SERVE Philadelphia will build on this great tradition by strategically engaging volunteers to make Philadelphia a safer, greener, healthier and more educated city.”

“As Mayor, I launched ‘Volunteer Sacramento’ as my first priority initiative to promote service and volunteerism in Sacramento,” said Sacramento Mayor Kevin Johnson. “Our service plan outlines an innovative set of initiatives that aim to achieve two overarching goals: making our city the most caring city in the nation, and setting a new standard for how cities can tap the power of their people to tackle our most pressing challenges.

“Volunteer Savannah will enable us to strengthen our neighborhoods so they can aid the families and children who live in them,” said Savannah Mayor Otis S. Johnson. “We have a wonderful opportunity to demonstrate how committed we are to the principle, ‘We are our brothers’/sisters’ keeper,’ because in the final analysis, we are all in the same boat. Through volunteering to help the least of us, we increase the chances of keeping the boat afloat.”

“We are fortunate in Seattle to have a strong ethic of volunteerism and public service,” said Seattle Mayor McGinn. “In times like these of economic recession and declining government budgets it is even more important that we work together on shared community values like helping our young people succeed. I am happy that Seattle is part of the Cities of Service coalition.”

About Cities of Service

American cities face serious challenges and many mayors want to take advantage of every resource available to them – including the time and energy of public-spirited residents — to address those challenges. But in cities across America today, citizen service is often an underutilized or inefficiently utilized strategy by municipal governments. Founded in September 2009, Cities of Service supports mayors to leverage citizen service strategies, addressing local needs and making government more effective.

All coalition members have signed a “Declaration of Service,” committing to lead a multi-year effort to expand community service and volunteerism by:

- Developing a comprehensive service plan and a coordinated strategy focused on matching volunteers and established community partners to the areas of greatest local need;
- Working with other mayors and elected officials to advance strategies and best practices that accelerate the service movement and produce measurable results;
- Encouraging other mayors to join this national effort to engage our citizens; and
- Ensuring that the voice of cities is heard in federal legislative, policy, and program discussions related to service, which will help the country achieve the ambitious goals of the Serve America Act.

The coalition has rapidly grown since its inception and now includes 110 mayors representing more than 47 million Americans: Akron, OH; Albany, NY; Allentown, PA; Annapolis, MD; Arlington, TX; Atlanta, GA; Austin, TX; Baltimore, MD; Baton Rouge, LA; Birmingham, AL; Boston, MA; Bowling Green, KY; Brownsville, TX; Buffalo, NY; Catoosa, OK; Chandler, AZ; Charleston, SC; Chattanooga, TN; Chicago, IL; Chula Vista, CA; Cincinnati, OH; Corpus Christi, TX; Denver, CO; Detroit, MI; Dublin, OH; Easton, PA; El Paso, TX; Elsmere, KY; Englewood, CO; Eugene, OR; Fall River, MA; Flint, MI; Fort Wayne, IN; Fresno, CA; Grand Prairie, TX; Grand Rapids, MI; Hamilton, OH; Harrisburg, PA; Hattiesburg, MS; Houston, TX; Irvine, CA; Jackson, MS; Jacksonville, FL; Kalamazoo, MI; Kansas City, MO; Lancaster, CA; Lexington, KY; Little Rock, AR; Los Angeles, CA; McKinney, TX; Meridian, MS; Mesa, AZ; Miami, FL; Milwaukee, WI; Muskegon, MI; Nacogdoches, TX; Nashville and Davidson County, TN; New Bedford, MA; New York, NY; Newark, NJ; Oakland, CA; Omaha, NE; Orlando, FL; Palm Bay, FL; Panama City, FL; Parker, PA; Pawtucket, RI; Philadelphia, PA; Phoenix, AZ; Pittsburgh, PA; Plano, TX; Portland, OR; Providence, RI; Reading, PA; Richmond, VA; Riverside, CA; Roseville, CA; Rochester, NY; Sacramento, CA; Salinas, CA; Salt Lake City, UT; San Antonio, TX; San Francisco, CA; San Jose, CA; Santa Cruz, CA; Santa Fe, NM; Santa Rosa, CA; Savannah, GA; Scranton, PA; Seattle, WA; Smithville, TX; Somerville, MA; Springfield, MA; St Louis, MO; St Paul, MN; St Petersburg, FL; Stockton, CA; Syracuse, NY; Toledo, OH; Topeka, KS; Trophy Club, TX; Tucson, AZ; Utica, NY; Vancouver, WA; Ventura, CA; Vicksburg, MS; Virginia Beach, VA; Washington, DC; West Palm Beach, FL; and Wilkes-Barre, PA.

More information about the coalition can be found at www.citiesofservice.org.

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