

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

PennSERVE: The Governor's Initiative on Citizen Service

Everyone can be great, because everyone can serve.

--Dr. Martin Luther King

If there is one idea I hope you bring away from your years at Bloomsburg and from this day, it is that you are all members of an extraordinary extended family. A family which shares its benefits and its burdens. A family which achieves greatness when it leaves no one out, and no one behind.

--Governor Robert P. Casey

For more information:
John Briscoe
PennSERVE
333 Market St. 11th Floor
Harrisburg, Pa 17126

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

PennSERVE: The Governor's Initiative on Citizen Service

Everyone can be great, because everyone can serve.

--Dr. Martin Luther King

Everyone has an obligation to serve.

--Governor Robert P. Casey

Citizen service, the voluntary participation of citizens of all ages in solving public problems, is vital to Pennsylvania's civic and economic health. Its recognition, support and development is a key concern of state government.

It is estimated that 4,500,000 adult Pennsylvanians volunteer regularly. Over 90% of our Catholic schools and many of our public schools have school sponsored programs of community service, as do more than 60% of our colleges and universities. Community service provides hands on citizenship education while helping to meet community needs. It has proved a powerful antidote to the disengagement that too many of our youth feel toward school and their communities.

Pennsylvania's Conservation Corps is the second largest in the nation. In four years it has provided 7,200 young people with a chance to "Work, Earn and Learn", returning in the process \$1.38 in finished product for every dollar we spend. Nearly 50% of these corps members were high school drop outs. Urban Service Corps have started in Philadelphia and others are being planned in Pittsburgh, McKeesport and Wilkes-Barre/Hazleton.

Volunteers provide most of our fire protection and much of our health care. Service clubs and civic organizations, veterans associations and little leagues, United Ways, Library boards, school boards and zoning boards, commissions, and advisory panels of all kinds depend upon volunteers. Last year volunteers contributed nearly \$3 million worth of services to our state mental hospitals and many more millions to our senior centers, schools, and day care centers.

PennSERVE: The Governor's Initiative on Citizen Service is Pennsylvania's attempt to focus attention, recognition and support on this extraordinary resource. The proposed Governor's Office of Citizen Service located in the Department of Labor and Industry, with its extensive network of job placement offices and its close connections to labor and business, will operate as an interagency initiative spearheaded by a small office. A working group, based in the Department of Education has been developing this proposal during the past year.

Program:

Of special note is the PennSERVE program. This new program will provide jobs, job training, and educational opportunities for economically disadvantaged young men and women in an urban setting. A recommended \$500,000 will be matched with locally generated monies to establish Urban Service Corps programs in two cities in the Commonwealth. Also, included in this appropriation is creation of the Governor's Office Of Citizen Service which will carry out the Governor's commitment to volunteerism in the Commonwealth.

--Governor Robert P. Casey
1988-89 Budget in Brief

1) FULL-TIME SERVICE CORPS:

Service Corps provide job skills and education while enhancing self-esteem and awakening citizenship. The Pennsylvania Conservation Corps has enrolled 7,200 disadvantaged youth producing \$1.38 in completed work for every \$1 invested. PennSERVE, using state and federal funds requiring a 3:1 local match, will initiate two new Urban Corps to enroll approximately 400 youth each year.

COST:

Each Urban Corps' estimated cost is \$600,000 per year. With approximately \$100,000 in federal funds available for each corps per year, up to \$50,000 is needed for each from state Citizen Service funds.

STATUS:

Using Job Training Partnership Act funds, \$25,000 development grants were awarded through competitive proposals in May 1988 to three localities. Implementation is expected in the fall of 1988. The Ford Foundation contributed \$100,000 to this project through the technical assistance of the Philadelphia consultants, Public/Private Ventures.

2) THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF CITIZEN SERVICE:

i) Student Service-Learning:

Students are a resource for solving community problems. Such service-learning enhances self-esteem, breaks the sense of isolation and detachment many students feel, and teaches citizenship. The Office of Citizen Service will work with the Department of Education to promote service-learning programs through publications, curriculum development, workshops, and a mini-grant program to support service-learning coordinators in 40 schools and/or school districts.

COST:	Total	State	Federal	Local
	\$500,000	\$250,000	----	\$250,000

ii) Volunteer Recognition and Encouragement:

Over \$3,000,000 worth of volunteer service were contributed to the Department of Public Welfare last year. Through Governor's Volunteer Awards, an annual Pennsylvania Volunteer Conference, technical assistance to volunteer users, providers and to those developing programs, and mini-grants to increase the number and status of Volunteer Centers, PennSERVE will seek to increase the estimated 4,500,000 Pennsylvanians who volunteered last month.

COST:	Total	State	Federal	Local
	\$100,000	\$50,000	----	\$50,000

For more information call:
John Briscoe PennSERVE
333 Market Street 11th Floor
Harrisburg, Pa 17126
717-787-1971



'Everyone Has an Obligation to Serve'

2

OLIC STANDARD AND TIMES, THURSDAY, APRIL 21, 1988

By LOU BALDWIN

Q. What are the overriding ethical values you bring to your office?

A. I think we are all products of our background, particularly our family background — for example, our parents and the values you form in the home. They are supplemented by education, beginning with the earliest grades and going through college and even law school. I think I bring to this job the standards that were given to me by my parents, my family and my educational experience. Those values are that public service is a very desirable thing, that everyone has an obligation to serve. We have a responsibility to put something back for what we are taking from society. I have been very fortunate to have a good wife and a good family, and I think I have to repay the system for that. Someone said that service is the rent we pay for the space we occupy on earth. I think that is probably a good way of putting it.

INTERVIEW



(Photo Courtesy of Commonwealth Media Services)

Governor Robert P. Casey is the second Roman Catholic to serve as Governor of Pennsylvania. Born Jan. 9, 1932, in Jackson Heights N.Y., he was raised in Scranton. A graduate of Holy Cross College and George Washington University School of Law, Gov. Casey is a former state senator and state auditor general. He is married to the former Ellen Theresa Harding. They have eight children. Before his successful 1986 election, Gov. Casey had unsuccessfully sought the Democratic Party gubernatorial nomination three times. Gov. Casey was interviewed for *The Catholic Standard and Times* in his Harrisburg office April 4.

Commentary

An education waits beyond school door

Call it student power. Imagine if every high school student were required to do a certain amount of community service work to obtain a diploma.

Picture the good things that could be accomplished and the lifelong lesson young people would learn about community involvement.

You don't have to imagine it. Some people in state government already have, and they've developed a proposal for which Gov. Robert Casey has earmarked \$500,000 in his 1988-89 budget.

It may be the best idea to come out of Harrisburg since the state established a voters hall of fame to honor those who faithfully go to the polls.

During a recent newspaper interview, John Briscoe, special assistant to Education Secretary Thomas Gilhool, said the proposal's educational goal is a simple one:

"What we want students to do is take a piece out of their lives and recognize that everyone owes something to their community and to society."

There once was a time, not all that long ago, when that was one lesson the schools did not have to concern themselves with teaching. Sadly, those days appear to be gone.

Other communities have already recognized the need and

Editorial

have done something about it. In Atlanta, for example, high school seniors are required to take a course in community service work and do 75 hours of work without pay to obtain a diploma.

"Educationally, it can be very exciting when you get the kids involved," said Briscoe, who was once a Peace Corps volunteer in India. "There are probably a lot of kids who can use it but don't, because it's not organized."

Getting it organized, of course, will not be easy. The schools, still under intense pressure to get back to basics, may balk at being forced to take on another bit of socializing that once was done by families.

But at this point, the state organizers are looking for voluntary participation by school districts and community groups.

Then, if the Legislature approves that line in the governor's budget, the first projects can get under way.

It would be interesting to see at least one school district in Columbia, Montour or lower Luzerne counties get in at the start of this project to see if student power is real, and to see if it really helps students grow.

PSBA bulletin

April 1988

Official Publication of the Pennsylvania School Boards Association

Tomorrow's school board leadership

A couple of years ago, Dr. Ernest Boyer, author of a major education report, recommended that future high school graduates should complete a certain number of community service hours before graduation.

Several other national studies made similar recommendations. The Carnegie Foundation suggested at least 120 hours of community service. As Dr. Boyer explained, "Such a service program would tap an enormous source of talent, let young people know that they are needed, and help students see a connection between what they learn and how they live."

Various community service projects are already underway in school districts across the nation and in our state. In Atlanta schools, 75 hours of community service are required before graduation. Private schools often require similar time in the community.

Pennsylvania schools in Leechburg (Armstrong Co.), Chestnut Ridge (Bedford Co.), and Wissahickon (Montgomery Co.), plus Pittsburgh and Philadelphia, have incorporated youth programs tied to the formal curricula or with other community-business organizations.

Of special note is the PennSERV program, currently proposed by Gov. Casey, which will provide several projects to tie educational and job training opportunities for economically disadvantaged young people. Within this \$500,000 recommended appropriation will be the creation of the Governor's Office of Citizen Service, a tangible commitment to volunteerism in the state.

Obviously I'm a strong advocate of volunteer service. I marvel at the degree of high quality public pur-

pose that is achieved in our society through voluntary action.

Our hospitals, libraries and local governments depend on the skills and energies of our citizens, especially school board service. A recent Gallup poll found that 48% of our citizens ages 14 and older had participated in volunteer programs. That equates to 90 million Americans in 1985, the most recent report. Thirteen percent of this number participated in public school projects, nearly 12 million people.

My bias to nonpaid, volunteer service on local school boards is apparent. The theme I selected for this year speaks to that purpose: "Public Service for a Brighter America."



The challenges facing our society and public education are immense. And local boards and educators are being called upon to do more with less. But I would encourage local boards to continue to examine ways to connect our young people with our communities, schools and a value system based on our common good.

At the same time we need to encourage and teach our young people the value of citizenship and participation in the role of school board

service, just one area of volunteer action. As America moves into the 21st century, we will need broad-based community support for our public schools and other social services. One avenue may be continued, vigorous and rejuvenated volunteer action.

As an association of school boards we need to ensure that others, like you, will seek their role in effective school board service and community participation.

Our children and our schools mandate your thoughtful consideration. The future leadership who will take our place on local school boards across this great commonwealth are in our classrooms.

The question before us is simple: What are we going to do about it?

PSBA

Mrs. Valerio would like to hear from you. Send your suggestions or volunteer program activities to her attention at PSBA offices.



Betty L. Valerio
PSBA President

President's page



PennSERV PROPOSAL

Schools encouraged to take community service seriously

One challenge facing schools and communities today is to design new bottles for the old wine of communicating society's service expectations and offering opportunities to serve, according to John Briscoe of the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Traditionally, schools have served as places for volunteering and community service to happen. But, evidence suggests neither youth nor traditional volunteers are answering the call.

Dr. Ernest Boyer, former U.S. commissioner of education and current president of the Carnegie Commission on the Advancement of Teaching, suggests why this is happening.

"Today it is possible for American teenagers to finish high school yet never be asked to participate responsibly in life in or out of school, never be encouraged to spend time with older people who may be lonely, to help a child who has not learned to read, to clean up litter on the street, or even to do something at the school itself?"

Compounding this lack of opportunity to serve are problematic demographic trends that limit traditional volunteer sources.

Many schools and a growing number of educators suggest more active roles for schools. They urge school-sanctioned and organized student community service in addition to the traditional informal support systems. They note that the ethic of service remains strong. Several recent surveys support this claim and accent Dr. Boyer's contention.

In Pennsylvania, student community service has become an integral part of educational programs. Community service is a graduation requirement in Pittsburgh's alternative high schools. Other schools have adopted community service to meet local educational needs:

- In **Wissahickon High School** (Montgomery Co.) seniors who voluntarily enroll in "social lab" have a 90% college attendance rate and are known for their senior-year energy. The service-learning program was established in 1971 by the principal who was seeking to combat "senioritis?"

- **Dr. Larry Giovacchini**, principal of rural **Chestnut Ridge High School** in Bedford County, challenged the student Honor Society to live up to its avowed commitment to service. The result was that the Honor Society now runs the county's literacy program with the help of a \$40,000 state grant.

- **Pittsburgh** uses community services through the OASES program to help at-risk seventh graders. Four inner-city middle schools nominate the 100 most at-risk for community service during eighth grade. In one school, 38% of those made the honor role by the end of eighth grade.

- **Leechburg Area** school board recently adopted a resolution to "encourage high school students to share their talents and abilities with the community, either inside or outside of the school, in the form of community service." The board is committed to developing a community service program in cooperation with PDE for the 1988-89 school year, and to recognizing students for their service to the community.

Common elements connect successful programs, which should: begin with clear educational goals; be carefully introduced and creatively promoted; be directed at both community and school; and be more than career preparation.

Encouraging student and citizen service is part of Gov. Robert P. Casey's fulfillment of his challenge that Pennsylvania see itself as a "family . . . a family which leaves no one out and no one behind."

The governor's 1988-89 budget requests \$500,000 for **PennSERV: The Governor's Office on Citizen Service**, charged with organizing two Urban Service Corps on the CCC and Peace Corps model, and with "meeting the governor's commitment to volunteerism."

If the Legislature approves the initiative, says Briscoe, the Department of Education will "encourage school districts throughout the commonwealth to explore service learning options as an integral part of their educational programs. PDE will provide curricular support, a series of regional workshops, and competitive minigrants to schools to implement this effective learning and living tool!"

John Briscoe has been based in PDE since last summer, working with an interagency group to develop PennSERV.

Special request to superintendents, board secretaries

PSBA would like to hear from districts who may be planning or already involved in student community service programs. Please send a brief description of your program to Mrs. Lynn Mannion at PSBA.

John Briscoe, based in PDE since last summer and working with an interagency group to develop PennSERV, would also welcome your suggestions, comments or interesting local examples of school-based service. Contact him at 333 Market St., 11th floor, Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333. Tel: (717) 787-1971.

Phila Inquirer
5-11-88

National service:

A proposal that both parties ought to push

By David S. Broder

WASHINGTON — Different as they are in many respects, likely presidential rivals Vice President Bush and Michael S. Dukakis share one thing in common: Both were taught growing up that public service is an obligation of citizenship.

This week, a report has been issued that takes the concept of citizen service and makes it the starting point for a proposal that could pay dividends for this nation and its people well into the next century. Its basic elements should appeal to, both prospective nominees.

The report, titled "Citizenship and National Service," comes from the Democratic Leadership Council (DLC), now headed by Sen. Sam Nunn of Georgia. It offers Dukakis a bold national initiative of affordable scale. The proposal addresses the unmet domestic needs both he and Jesse L. Jackson have identified in their campaigns, but it does not require a vast new federal bureaucracy. It also suggests a theme for the themeless Dukakis campaign, a philosophy that could be an antidote to the "celebra-

tion of individual cunning in the single-minded pursuit of wealth and status" it says has characterized the Reagan years.

But put aside the partisan rhetoric, and the basic proposal has elements that could appeal equally well to Bush. It offers the vice president a way to flesh out his embryonic ideas for improving education opportunities and restoring the concept of unselfish public service so tarnished by examples of opportunism and sloppy standards among Reagan appointees.

The essential idea is simply to ask young people to perform several years of subsistence-pay military or civilian service, in return for a substantial voucher the individual can use for college tuition, for job training or as a down payment on a home. The proposal outlined in preliminary form last March and amplified in this week's paper suggests \$20,000 for two years of civilian service in school, hospital, day-care, senior-citizen, social service, police, criminal justice or conservation jobs, and \$24,000 for an equivalent time in the military.

The proposal, shaped largely by North-

western University sociologist Charles Moskos and the DLC's Will Marshall, draws heavily on the example of the GI Bill for veterans of World War II and later conflicts. The GI Bill was perhaps the single most successful government program since Social Security. It helped millions attain the college degrees and first home mortgages that moved them into the middle class.

The proposed Citizen Corps, as the DLC calls it, offers that same possibility of upward mobility for participants — and many additional social benefits as well. It could produce a more diverse, talented and representative military. And it could provide hundreds of thousands of volunteers who, at low cost, could lead the attack on adult illiteracy and the spread of drugs, provide day-care for youngsters, tutoring for students and home health care for the elderly.

Beyond those specific benefits, the report argues persuasively that such a program could re-establish the link between benefits and obligations in this society, and thus strengthen the underlying concept of citizenship. That notion has taken a battering

in the cynical 1970s and '80s and badly needs to be restored.

In one of its more controversial passages, the DLC report suggests that, over time, existing federal-aid programs for college students could be phased out and voluntary service become the basic ticket to higher education. That will produce some howls, but the fairness of the idea is beyond dispute.

The report is also on target in saying that job-skill training programs for the half of the young people who do not complete college are every bit as important in the competitive and fast-changing world economy we now face. The vouchers could be used for that purpose by those who do not opt for college.

And even for those who have the family resources to get through college, the prospect of a young couple's earning \$40,000 for a down payment on their first home through two years of public service is a powerful incentive.

There are some question marks. The \$5 billion federal cost estimate may be unreal-

istically modest, other studies suggest. But those who have worked on the DLC plan — Nunn, former Virginia Gov. Charles S. Robb, Arkansas Gov. Bill Clinton, Reps. Barbara Bailey Kennelly (Conn.) and Dave McCurdy (Okla.) and former Rep. James R. Jones (Okla.) — have done a good job of building on existing and effective state, local, campus and non-profit private programs.

Their blueprint envisages only a limited, catalytic role for the federal government and heavy reliance on local designs and initiatives. Much of the administrative backup could be provided, they suggest, from that other great national resource — retired citizens.

The plan will undoubtedly profit from discussion and revision. But I can't think of a healthier development than for Dukakis and Bush to challenge each other in the coming months to make it a reality for the nation as it enters the 1990s.

(David S. Broder has been a writer for Congressional Quarterly, the Washington Star and the Washington Post.)

Youth Service Corps open for business

Something big is brewing in Philadelphia. It will strike at the heart of one of the city's biggest problems/opportunities. Like any effort to do something substantial, it will cost money. But if run correctly, and supported strongly enough, the money will be well spent.

The project is the Philadelphia Youth Service Corps, operated by Public/Private Ventures (PPV) and sponsored by the Private Industry Council of Philadelphia Inc. (PIC).

The proposal is straightforward (always a good sign): Identify about 1,000 youths who need and want help entering the workforce, and train them in the basics of dealing with the real world.

What makes this different from the 1,001 job training programs out there already? As explained by PIC:

"Because productive workers need physical stamina, the program includes a 'hard corps challenge' training camp and daily calisthenics. Because good workers need a positive work attitude, the program incorporates stringent supervision and team-building activities. Because productive employees must have job skills, the program includes on-the-job technical training for a range of entry-level positions.

"And, because employers demand a mastery of basic education, the program includes daily education classes tailored to participants' needs."

As you might have guessed, this all-encompassing program won't be cheap. The head of PPV, Michael Bailen, estimates it will cost about \$10,000 a year per corps member, inclusive of the minimum wage members will be paid for their labor. Although that may seem like a big ticket, the results of a successful program would make it easily worth the investment.

Ignore for a moment the social gains, which would be considerable, and look at the bottom line. A one-year jail term, a real possibility for out-of-work urban youths, costs three times as much cash as the corps, not to mention the lost productivity. And adding just a few hundred qualified workers in a tight workforce would be extremely valuable to the city's economy.

Top this off with the corps' plans to work on projects such as helping to staff shelters for the homeless, or physical labor such as building or improving neighborhood parks

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

By Brian Sullivan



and clearing empty lots, and the final measure of investment return becomes a tangible gain to residents of the city.

With these facts in hand, and several years of planning to justify confidence, many are sold on the idea, and the funds are in place to run the program for its first three years. PIC has committed \$1.5 million over three years; the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is in for \$1.25 million, also over three years; and Greater Philadelphia First Corp. has put up \$750,000 over three years.

The Pew Memorial Trusts put up \$250,000 for the first year, with further funding based on matching contributions. The city of Philadelphia has pledged \$200,000 for the first year. Further city commitments must be made in future budgets.

Also buying into the idea are United Way (\$23,000) and Aetna Life & Casualty (\$10,000). Total public and private investments in the corps for the initial three years exceeds \$4 million.

A kicker is a desire to make the corps partially or completely self-sustaining by establishing some sort of fee-for-service system where the corps would be reimbursed for its work. It is hoped the corps can move in that direction in year 2.

About 30 candidates to be the first group of potential corps members will be brought together for an intensive orientation/screening process on Feb. 28. Selecting corps members will be a tricky task, given the goals of the corps. PPV seeks a racially diverse group from all parts of the city. And not just the poorest of the poor are being sought — PPV also wants to include youths with a more fortunate background who wish to spend six months to a year in community service.

Another factor in the equation is finding the mixture of need and skill. Most members will likely be high school dropouts, according to David Lacey, head of PIC. The corps does not want to become a summer camp for rich kids headed to a top college, but it does not want members who have little interest or ability to take advantage of what the program has to offer. How do you tell someone they are not disadvantaged enough? Or too much? An unenviable task, but a critical one if the program is to accept challenging youths but still have a high rate of success.

Of the initial 30 candidates, about 20 are expected to enroll, making up two "crews." Over the life of the three-year launch, about 1,000 members are expected to enroll, with about 600 expected to graduate and be placed with an area firm. Some of the graduates will be eligible for scholarships to continue their education.

About 25 area employers have agreed to work with the corps to try and hire graduates. A smaller group, perhaps five or so, are being asked to work with the corps throughout the program to help make it more effective in preparing members for employment.

Clearly, this program is a rare situation in which everyone can win. Youth unemployment, still a major problem in a region that boasts of a booming economy, can be attacked. The labor shortage can be eased, and for relatively little cost businesses can develop a steady stream of well-prepared candidates for entry-level jobs. Closer ties can be forged between the growing businesses of Philadelphia's booming Center City and the many troubled neighborhoods. For all that, \$10,000 a person is a small price to pay.

The Philadelphia Business Journal welcomes letters to the editor for publication. Letters should be sent to:

Letters to the Editor,
718 Arch Street,
Philadelphia, PA 19106

Letters are subject only to editing for grammar, spelling and space requirements. All letters must be signed and should include a telephone number (which will not be published) so that your signature can be verified.

The 222nd Commencement Exercises
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
May 26, 1988

Excerpted

....Higher education already makes important contributions to teaching the virtues of sharing and caring, but I propose we do more. I propose we look at community service as a necessary component of the learning experiences which constitute a liberal education.

I am extremely proud of the several hundred Rutgers students who now work in the Rutgers Community Outreach program -- tutoring students in the inner city schools, assisting in hospitals, serving meals to those who cannot serve themselves, acting as tour guides at local museums, and in many other ways of being engaged. I congratulate the students at Rutgers College who have proposed community service courses that are now being adopted by our faculty. I urge that we consider going one step further by making service to others a requirement of the undergraduate liberal arts degree.

Everyone would agree, I am sure, that such service would contribute greatly to the communities in which our universities live and are nourished. In these terms, student commitment to community service would constitute a partial return to the commonweal of what they received from it.

Such service as a part of an undergraduate education would have a much broader significance, however. It would constitute a valued ingredient of liberal education. It would help educate our students to the world of the deprived and dispossessed, a world which looms before us and which we can no longer continue to neglect except at our moral and political peril.

This and other American universities must now explore ways to enlarge the liberal component of education by instituting a requirement of civic service. Even if we were to suppose that some portion of the student body might undertake it unwillingly, without compassion, or with disdain for its ethical quality, it would find justification in the expansion of the horizons of feeling and experience it would afford. Would it be very different from requiring our students to read and write in terms some of them will never thereafter have need or appreciation for? Why not an introduction into social and cultural literacy, reflecting our times and place, as well as an introduction into mathematical, aesthetic, or historical analysis?....

Edward J. Bloustein
President
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

The Philadelphia Inquirer

An Independent Newspaper

Published Every Morning by Philadelphia Newspapers, Inc.
400 N. Broad Street, P.O. Box 8263, Philadelphia, Pa. 19101

SAM S. McKEEL
Publisher and Chairman

EUGENE L. ROBERTS JR.
Executive Editor and President

DAVID R. BOLDT
Editor of the Editorial Page

Mandating a social conscience

If the 1980s have been symbolized by college students focused on their earning power, Rutgers University President Edward J. Bloustein seems ready to do his part in producing a new generation of selfless volunteers in the 1990s — even if that means borrowing the Army's interpretation of voluntary.

The state university, which has campuses in New Brunswick, Newark and Camden, could become the first college in the country to make one semester of community service — both classroom and community time — a part of the required curriculum for graduation. It would be a bold step beyond the growing emphasis at universities across the country on purely voluntary community service.

In a book entitled *College: The Undergraduate Experience*, Carnegie Foundation President and former U.S. Education Commissioner Ernest L. Boyer writes, "Today's undergraduates urgently need to see the relationship between what they learn and how they live. Specifically, we recommend that every student complete a service project — involving volunteer work in the community or at the college — as an integral part of the undergraduate experience. The goal is to help students see that they are not only autonomous, but also members of a larger community to which they are accountable."

The Carnegie Foundation went further in recommending that high schools devise mandatory community service projects, and as many as 200 public and private high schools — including the school systems of Atlanta and Detroit — do just that. The Philadelphia area seems fertile ground for similar programs.

Rutgers' program for mandatory community service might be in place as early as the coming school year. Students presumably would have options such as tutoring inner-city students, assisting the elderly or helping in local hospitals, nursing homes and homeless shelters.

The university is ideally suited to take a national lead in this matter. It administers a generous financial assistance program for a student body that attends classes in three cities with an array of social problems and a constant shortage of warm bodies to provide help.

"We think there are a lot of people who would offer service to help people in need," says Walter Gordon, provost at the university's Camden branch. "This should not be a matter of replacing another education program, but it should be an added college endeavor. We are a public institution supported by tax money and we should return something to the community."

It's hard to argue with that.

Phila Inq. 7-16-88

Student Volunteers, Academic Credit

By Robert Coles

DESPITE the enticements of our competitive, consumerist culture, a growing number of high school, undergraduate and graduate students are finding time to do local volunteer work. We applaud such evidence of idealism put into daily or weekly practice in what amounts to a national service program. As one Middle Western college dean said, it is "exactly the kind of constructive extra-curricular activity this school values."

I have heard many students sharply, and properly, challenge such use of the phrase "extra-curricular." They object to this false distinction between their intellectual life and their work in, say, a ghetto neighborhood. After all, isn't the mind kept busy in many important ways when one leaves a campus to work in a neighborhood where people live constantly in great jeopardy?

When a student crosses the ocean to study French or Spanish for a year, or to assist in a social scientist's "field work," we have no reluctance to consider such an effort intellectual and worthy of academic credit.

But when that same student spends time working with people who, after all, live in a world as different in certain respects as some of those studied by anthropologists and sociologists, they are pursuing an "extra-curricular" activity.

Is this the right way to respond to the substantial amount of personal commitment involved in tutoring needy children, feeding the homeless in soup kitchens and reaching out to vulnerable families to provide medical or legal assistance?

When I listen to my students describe what they see and hear in voluntary "extra-curricular" activities, I realize how much they are learning.

For example, listen to an undergraduate — he has tutored and played basketball in a ghetto neighborhood — trying to educate his teacher:

"I never knew people live like that until I started going there. I'd read a book or two [about ghetto problems] and mostly forgotten what I read, but you don't forget the kids when you see them every week. Now I know a little of what those families are like. I know

about their history, the story of their past: They'll talk with you and take you back a few generations — from the rural South to up here."

He went on: "I know about the anthropology and sociology — what the people eat, and what they say and what they do with their time. I know about the psychology — what's troubling them, and what they want and what scares them to death. I know about the politics of that neighborhood, and the economics — where the power is, and how the people make their living. It's not only tutoring I'm doing, it's learning — the kids teach me, and their parents do, too."

He contrasted the vivid, enduring education he was getting outside of school with what occasionally takes place inside — when he sits in class or prepares in his room for tests. "I cram stuff in, and forget it right after the exam," he said. "I sit and take notes automatically, and lots of times I doze off." But he was not suggesting that he deserved academic credit for the acquisition of outside learning.

A bright, able student, successful by most standards, he craves intellectual and moral challenges, and has found them in the volunteer work he has done for several years. An able writer, he found time to contribute several articles to a local paper — descriptions of the children he teaches, of the lives they live, of the points about life they have made to him.

He wishes more would come of his volunteer work. He wants to study carefully and discuss books by novelists, social scientists and essayists that delineate and sort out the complexities, ironies, ambiguities, confusions and apprehensions he witnesses — and those in himself as an outsider who, trying to understand and change a particular world, achieves successes but also encounters obstacles and contends with failures.

He would like to compare his own observations, goals, hopes, disappointments, discouragements, and his sense of burn-out, with similar experiences described in books of the documentary tradition that have mattered over time.

Put differently, he wants to learn from what he does. He wants a chance to talk and write about his volunteer work while also discussing significant books, films and collections of photographs that would give that work a broader perspective.

Surely, we who teach in universities can develop courses that will respond to the challenge of student voluntarism — that connect its moral energy with the life of the mind. □

Robert Coles is a child psychiatrist who teaches at Harvard.

New York Times 4-30-88

A Day In The Life Of Youth Service



To document, promote and celebrate young people making a difference

COOL
Campus Outreach
Opportunity League

Youth
Service
America

A Day In The Life Of Youth Service will promote and celebrate youth and service by capturing the spirit, energy, and commitment of young people throughout the nation as they serve individuals in need, their local communities, and their country.

On this day, the activities of young people, as they serve in everyday community settings across the country, will be documented and publicized through photography, newspapers, radio, television and other media.

A Day In The Life Of Youth Service will:

- expand the awareness of and support for the youth service movement
- demonstrate the value of youth service
- encourage community agencies and leaders to support local youth service efforts
- document the countless ways that committed young people are contributing
- challenge other young people to get involved

The day will have many lasting expressions -- slide shows, videos, exhibits, combining pictures, writings, drawings, and poetry. The best materials will be submitted to YSA and COOL for a national exhibit, a catalogue and a book.

Youth community service programs on college and university campuses, in conservation and service corps, in schools or communities can use this day to highlight their own activities and create a photo exhibit for a downtown store window, a student union, a community center, a photo essay for a newspaper, or a multi-media production.

A Day In The Life Of Youth Service is a project of COOL, (Campus Outreach Opportunity League), and Youth Service America, involving other national and local organizations committed to youth service.

*To participate please call or write: Carolyn Mecker
Project Coordinator

1319 F Street, N.W.
Suite 900
Washington, D.C. 20004
202 / 783-8855