

# SUMMARY OF THE NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE ACT OF 1990

The National and Community Service Act of 1990 was approved in the last days of the 1990 session of Congress. This legislation, which authorizes a variety of national community and service learning programs, was introduced by Senators Kennedy and Hatch in the Senate, and Congressman Hawkins in the House. It passed in the Senate by a 75 to 21 vote on October 16, the House by a 235 to 186 margin on October 24. The Bill was signed by President Bush on November 16, 1990.

## The Commission on National and Community Service

The Act will be administered by a newly created commission on National Service. The Commission will be made of 21 members appointed by the President, with nominations for 14 members coming from Congressional leaders. Not more than 11 members can be of the same political party.

## Authorization

The Act Authorizes \$287 million for its various grant programs over the next three years: \$62 million for FY 1991, \$105 million for FY 1992, and \$120 million for FY 1993.

## New Grant Programs and Authorizations

### A. NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE STATE GRANT PROGRAM—\$54 million

1. **Kindergarten through 12th grade service learning programs** are adult volunteer and partnership programs, and community-based programs for dropouts and out-of-school youth. The Commission, in consultation with the Secretary of Education, may make grants to States or local applicants (which include a public or private nonprofit organization that will make service opportunities available for participants, and that is representative of the community in which such services will be provided).

2. **Higher Education Innovative Projects for Community Service.** The purpose of this is to support innovative projects to encourage students to participate in community service activities while they are attending institution of higher education. The Commission, in consultation with the Secretary of Education, is authorized to make grants to and enter into contracts with institutions of higher education, and other public agencies and nonprofit organizations working in partnership with institutions of higher education. Included in the programs are a range of student loan forgiveness and deferral provisions for individuals who perform full-time service.

3. **American Conservation and Youth Corps.** These programs would include an extensive list of optional service projects that may be undertaken: Work with the disabled, maintenance of roads and wildlife preserves, energy conservation, rehabilitation of low-income housing, drug-abuse education, and historic preservation. These programs will require full-time service by participants, and provide stipends for living expenses. The Commission shall make grants to States on a competitive basis. The Commission may also make grants to local applicants, to the Secretary of Agriculture, to the Secretary of the Interior, or the Director of ACTION for the creation or expansion of full-time or summer youth programs.

4. **National and Community Service.** A participant in this program will perform national service to meet unmet edu-

cational, human environmental, and public safety needs, especially those needs relating to poverty. The Commission may make grants to States for the creation of full and part-time national and community service programs. In order to determine whether to award a grant to a State, the Commission shall consider the ability of the proposed program to serve as an effective model for a large-scale national service program. To receive a grant a State must prepare and submit a plan for the implementation of the program. The Commission will ensure that not more than five States are authorized to operate full-time programs, and not more than five States are authorized to operate part-time programs in FY 1991.

### 5. Innovative and Demonstration Programs and Projects

#### a. Governor's Innovative Service Program

Grants may be made to states or Indian tribes for the creation of innovative volunteer and community service programs. Funds may be used for enhancing volunteer and community service programs, demonstration programs, research and evaluation of service programs, coordination of service programs, technical assistance, training and staff development, and the collection and dissemination of information concerning service programs.

#### b. Peace Corps

Grants may be made to the Director of the Peace Corps or the Director of ACTION to carry out training and educational benefits demonstration programs. Fifty individuals, from groups traditionally underrepresented in the Peace Corps or VISTA, shall be selected to receive appropriate training in skills that he/she will employ in the Peace Corps or VISTA as a part of the course of study the individual is pursuing at his/her college.

#### c. Other Volunteer Programs

The Commission may also make grants to establish demonstration projects in rural areas. Such projects may include volunteer service involving the elderly, and assisted-living services performed by students, school dropouts, and out-of-school youth.

The Commission, in consultation with the Director of ACTION, may make grants to grantees under the Foster Grandparents program to increase the number of low-income individuals who provide services under the program to children who participate in Head Start programs.

Grants may further be made to public and private nonprofit organizations to bring together retirees, their former employers, and community agencies to develop employer-based retiree volunteer programs.

### B. COMMISSION ON NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE — \$2 million

The Commission will provide assistance to not more than four **Regional Clearinghouses**. The functions of the regional clearinghouses that receive assistance are the following: Assist state and local community service programs with planning, conduct research and evaluation concerning

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community service, provide leadership development and training to state and local community service program administrators, administer award and recognition programs, facilitate communication among programs, provide information and materials to programs, gather and disseminate information on successful programs, and make recommendations to State on quality controls. Public and private nonprofit agencies that have experience in community service, adult volunteer and partnership programs, youth service, intergenerational service programs, and programs working with at-risk youth will be eligible to become a clearinghouse.

**C. MODIFICATIONS OF EXISTING PROGRAMS -- \$1 million**

1. **Youthbuild.** The purpose of this project is to provide economically disadvantaged young adults with opportunities for service to their communities by helping to meet the housing needs of homeless individuals and low-income families, and to help economically disadvantaged youth to obtain the education and employment skills to achieve economic self-sufficiency. The Director of the ACTION Agency, in consultation with the Secretary of Labor, may provide grants to an eligible entity such as: State and local educational agencies, institutions of higher education, state and local housing development agencies, and with other public agencies and

private organizations. Full-time participants will receive living allowances of no more than an amount equal to 100 percent of the poverty line for a family of two.

2. **Amendments to Student Literacy Corps** gives priority in providing tutoring services to educationally disadvantaged students, and illiterate parents of educationally or economically disadvantaged elementary school students with special emphasis on single-parent households.

**D. POINTS OF LIGHT INITIATIVE FOUNDATION -- \$5 million**

The Act includes an authorization for the Points of Light Initiative Foundation.

**E. FOOD DONATIONS**

The Act includes the sense of Congress that states should encourage the donation of wholesome food or grocery products to nonprofits for distribution to needy individuals, and consider for enactment the model Good Samaritan Food Donation Act, included in the Act, as a means of encouraging donations.

**F. EXCHANGE PROGRAM**

The Act authorizes the President to provide, by grant or contract, exchanges with countries that are in transition from totalitarianism to democracy. The program would be coordinated by the U.S. Information Agency.

## A New American Hero: The Volunteer

You know who they are -- people who take the time to care. As dependable as John Wayne and as caring as Jimmy Stewart . . . our volunteers.

We salute the nation's newest heroes -- the people fighting illiteracy, drug abuse, and child neglect. Those cleaning up the environment and serving meals to homeless families.

Celebrate the new American heroes during



### National Volunteer Week

April 21-27, 1991