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Commission News

GETTING
THINGS
DONE!

Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service

Iowa Volunteer Hall Of Fame Awards

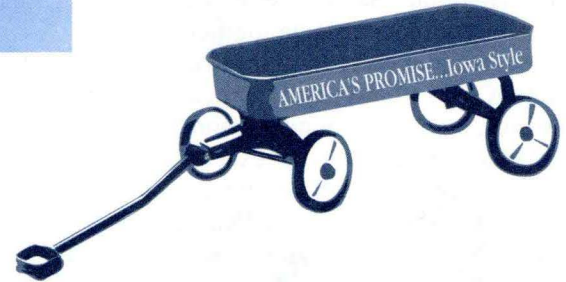


The Iowa Volunteer Hall of Fame was established in 1989 to recognize outstanding individuals, associations and corporations that make exceptional contributions to their communities and the state through volunteer service. The 1998 ceremony was held November 23 in Des Moines.

Dorothy Carpenter, Chair of the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service, presented a special Founder's Award to Governor Terry Branstad for his 16 years of extraordinary commitment to all Iowans by his support of volunteer service. In the presentation, she noted several significant programs Governor Branstad initiated to encourage and honor Iowans involved in service.

Among Them Are:

1. His recognition of thousands of Iowans for service to their communities, in ceremonies that take place every spring around the state.
2. The development of the Iowa Volunteer Hall of Fame that honors those who have made exceptional commitments to volunteer efforts.
3. Establishing the Governor's Conference on Volunteerism and Community Service, the only statewide forum for volunteerism in Iowa.
4. Initiating and supporting the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service that promotes community service, service learning and volunteerism.



5. His program of service days, where he pitched in to paint, clean up, read to youngsters, or whatever service was needed to help organizations throughout Iowa.
6. His active participation in the Iowa Summit Initiative and support for America's Promise.
7. Serving as a personal role model for volunteerism, along with his family, throughout his years of public service.
8. Using his office to draw attention to the vital role volunteer service plays in the quality of life enjoyed in Iowa, and making the nation aware of the value Iowans give to the ethic of service.

Fredric Waldstein, Director of the Institute for Leadership Education at Wartburg College and past chair of the ICVS, was presented the Distinguished Service Award, and ten outstanding Iowans were inducted into the 1998 Iowa Volunteer Hall of Fame. Inductees received a plaque from Governor Branstad and \$500 to be given to an organization or cause of their choice.

Those Inducted Were:

Priscilla Matt from Ames
Allen L. Heaton of Corning
Dr. Tam Khac Nguyen of Des Moines
Pat Carmack of Dubuque
Wallace "Wally" Oldfather of Manchester
Mary Ellen Kimball of Osceola
Vincent Lewis of West Des Moines
Nancy Shower of Waterloo
Lujack's Northpark Auto Plaza of Davenport
Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 25 from Davenport.

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A Helping Hand Means A Hand Up - Not A Hand Out

AmeriCorps helps change the lives of many people, both AmeriCorps members and the people they assist. The following letter was written by an AmeriCorps member from Clinton.

When I started AmeriCorps, it was strictly for financial reasons. I was receiving State Assistance, was deeply in debt and was a single mother of three, when a close friend introduced AmeriCorps to me. The financial awards, such as a living stipend and an education grant, were exactly what I needed to get my life on track and help me become self-sufficient. Not only was I able to survive from day to day, I was also able to plan a future.

My service objective was to work with small children, something I've always enjoyed. My first service site in 1997 was ISU Extension. There, I provided young children with an

educational program during the summer. I also arranged a project called Clover Buds, similar to 4-H. It is geared toward children kindergarten through 3rd Grade. My first year of service ended December 31, 1997. The year as an AmeriCorps member was so enjoyable that I signed a contract for a second year.

In 1998 I worked in a school in Clinton, helping families and students become more involved in school activities. During the summer of 1998, I volunteered to help with the CTC Adventure Zone Summer Program. I explored new areas with the children and shared in their excitement. Not only have I received the financial start that I need, I have been able to grow as a person. I have received countless emotional and intellectual rewards. I have become a better person for my family, my community and

myself. In return, I am able to help others do the same.

With all the benefits I received from volunteering, I have made a personal declaration in which I promise my family, friends and community to continue to volunteer throughout my life.

I would like to thank the AmeriCorps group, the community and anyone else who gave me an opportunity to rebuild my life.

Changing The World One Neighborhood At A Time

One of the top six AmeriCorps programs in the country changes the focus of domestic violence in Iowa. REACH (Rural Education And Community Help) provides assistance to battered women and children in rural Iowa. Their presence is in areas where services for victims of domestic violence are currently minimal or nonexistent.

This AmeriCorps program is unique in that the members enter a rural community with two goals. The first is to provide direct services and the second is to recruit and train volunteers in order to sustain the program long-term. In Algona, Oskaloosa, Jefferson and other communities, the first advocates were AmeriCorps members. Now those communities have a new non-profit organization established, a board of directors, paid staff and a trained list of volunteer advocates. The presence of each AmeriCorps member is felt long after his or her year ends. "Our members are what make it special," says Lynnette Irlmeier, Program Director of REACH. "They make less than \$9,000 a year and they are completely dedicated. I tell them they make me look good wherever I go."

Iowa has only thirty-three domestic violence projects. In the 1997/1998 grant year, AmeriCorps advocates made nearly 5,000 victim contacts in rural communi-

ties in Iowa. In the past, many women in rural Iowa had to drive over sixty miles to find services. REACH advocates go to the women. They meet women in bakeries, church basements, at the WIC clinic, any place that is safe.

REACH members work extends beyond direct service to help others within the community. Last year, AmeriCorps members provided 330 educational programs covering the issues of domestic violence and victims' needs. They also presented dating violence classes in high schools and conflict resolution skills to elementary and middle school children.

On October 15, 1998, fifteen members were honored by the Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence (ICADV) as they completed their year of service. "Many people compare AmeriCorps to the Peace Corps and say that Peace Corps members are trying to change the world and AmeriCorps members are trying to change their neighborhoods," said Irlmeier. "Our members work to change the house across the street, and, when they are successful, it changes their neighborhood. In turn, the neighborhood changes the community, which changes our state. I would say that eventually our members change the world; they just do it one neighborhood at a time."

Miss Iowa Promotes Community Service Across Iowa

As official hostess of the state of Iowa, Lisa Dondlinger, Miss Iowa 1998, promotes community service across the state as well as the rest of the country. Lisa was a performer and guest speaker as well as a member of the public relations committee for the Iowa Summit on Volunteerism. She was recently recognized for her efforts to help America's youth by retired General Colin Powell and was named an official spokesperson for America's Promise. Lisa is also a member of the joint planning committee for The Forum on Volunteerism,

Service and Learning in Higher Education to be held in Atlanta, GA next June.

Lisa is a talented violinist, speaker, singer and mentor. Her extraordinary talent as a violinist has won her numerous awards including the title of Miss Iowa. She is available to promote community service organizations and projects throughout the state. Through recitals, string workshops, motivational speeches, conventions and other fund-raising endeavors, Lisa can collaborate with you to create a beneficial event tailored to

your organization.

For further information on how to arrange a visit with Miss Iowa, please contact Angela Dearing at the address below.

Miss Iowa Business Manager
Angela Dearing
5770 Dodds Drive
Bettendorf, IA 52722
319-344-2603 Phone
319-359-4027 Fax
helloia@netexpress.net

Volunteers Open Up Hearts, Open Up Books

Taken from Waterloo Courier 8/23/98

Seniors are being sought for a new program matching volunteers with first-graders who need help reading. Reading Buddies is an effort between Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) and Waterloo Community Schools to reduce reading failure for students in first grade, as part of the Reading Recovery program.

"Literacy is a major push for senior programs across the country through America Reads," says RSVP Director Sheila Bohr and "Reading Buddies sounded like a good fit for us." Based on the highest need, three elementary schools have been selected as pilot projects for the reading program: McKinstry, Longfellow and Grant. Additional schools could be added in the future.

"We've been told the volunteers become very popular with the students they're matched with," Bohr says. "Plus there is the reward of seeing the students improve their reading skills. If they have a good grasp of reading, it opens the world up for them." Volunteers will be trained according to the Reading

Recovery method.

Each volunteer will work with one or several first-grade Reading Recovery students for the upcoming school year. Their role will be to listen to students read their lesson, which should take 10-15 minutes per session. Volunteers are needed on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays (Wednesdays are early dismissals) and it is hoped a participant will be willing to volunteer each of the four days or two of the four days. The idea is that each student not have more than two volunteers to listen to their reading because it is important to develop an ongoing relationship with a caring adult.

"We're shooting for 30 volunteers between the three schools, but we'd love to have twice that many," says Bohr. Although RSVP's focus is on individuals 55 and older, the Reading Buddies program is open to adults of all ages. Transportation can also be provided. Training took place in September. For more information, contact RSVP at 319-272-2250.



Iowa Summit Initiative

Governor Terry E. Branstad asked the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service to review the activities of the Iowa Summit on Volunteerism held this past June 10 and 11 in Des Moines. The Commission's charge was to formulate a plan of action that will continue the Iowa Summit Initiative into the next century. The Commission report recommends another Iowa Summit event in the year 2000 to maintain the Summit momentum. The report will be presented to Governor Branstad on December 1. The report includes: 1) Grassroots initiatives; 2) Coordination with the state's Community Empowerment Area Initiative;

3) Private sector involvement and collaboration; 4) Creation of a data exchange system; 5) Marketing and public relations; 6) AmeriCorps Promise Fellows Grant; 7) Use of the Iowa Summit budget.

Grassroots Initiative: The Grassroots Initiative is a pilot project that will facilitate the active involvement of County Summit Teams in increasing volunteerism and expanding and targeting youth services that address high-priority local issues. The pilot project will have three activities.

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1. Preparation of a list of county-level volunteer and government youth services providers.
2. Identifying local priorities and implementing related collaborative projects. The inventories in step one will be used to conduct county-level sessions of service providers.
3. Support of youth providing services through small grants made available to Summit County Teams.

Coordination with the State's Community Empowerment Area Initiative: This past year new legislation was passed setting up a State Empowerment Board and calling for establishment of local empowerment boards throughout the state. The local boards, once designated by the state board, will be eligible to receive state and federal funds targeted toward improving the development of children in the ages of 0 - 5, and to assist families with children of those ages.

Private Sector Involvement and Cooperation: From supplying volunteers to perform the work on a specific project, to CEOs serving on the board of a volunteer organization,

the private sector collaboration is critical to the success of volunteer service initiatives.

Creation of a Data Information Exchange System: There are currently three efforts underway to create a communication infrastructure to connect the people, companies and agencies of good will all across Iowa. The modern technology and the excellent communication networks that Iowa is building create an opportunity to share information at all levels at any time.

Marketing and Public Relations: The support services committee of the Commission has the responsibility of coordinating a marketing plan for the Summit Initiative (as approved by the governor). The committee then must integrate those marketing plans with the Commission's marketing and public relations efforts, which are a part of its annual plan, submitted to the feds.

AmeriCorps Promise Fellowship Grant: The Commission received a grant for four fellows from the AmeriCorps Promise Fellowship Program. The Commission will use the fellows to help sustain the Iowa Summit Initiative throughout the state.

Love Of Reading Does The Job For VISTA Volunteer Jones

Taken from The Sioux City Journal, 9-15-98

Rebecca Jones typically prefers activities that allow her to interact with others. Reading has always been one of them.

"When you're reading, you're mentally interacting with the characters in the book, or you're imagining yourself as a character or an observer," Jones says. "If you're really reading, you're engaged in the book and you're not really alone."

Jones' love of reading is a perfect fit with her job, coordinating volunteers in the schools to support young students with their reading. The Ames, Iowa, native joined the Volunteers in Service to America program, similar to a domestic Peace Corps, following her graduation from Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, in May. Through AmeriCorps VISTA she's the local coordinator for the America Reads Challenge, which brings volunteers into the schools to help students in kindergarten through third grade by reading to children and listening as they read aloud. Teachers select students who could benefit from such a program.

Jones, who works through the Woodbury County Extension Service, cooperates with the Retired and

Senior Volunteer Program, which is also active in the America Reads Challenge. RSVP, like AmeriCorps, falls under the umbrella of the Corporation for National Service. Jones is Woodbury County's first VISTA volunteer.

For her work, the 22-year-old receives a "modest living allowance" and an education award at the end to pay for student loans or future education. She signed up for one year and the contract can be renewed for another year.

Jones spends her spare time with her other hobbies. She reads all types of books and magazines, from literary classics to *Cosmopolitan*. She enjoys gardening, although she's sticking to houseplants while she lives in her Morningside apartment. Camping and canoeing are other outdoor hobbies.

Jones loves theater - her work-study job was taking care of costumes for the theater department - and enjoys going to the movies. She likes foreign films, romance comedies and some action films, but can't stand mindless violence. Sometimes B-movie comedies "drive me nuts," Jones admits, but she did think the recent hit "There's Something About Mary" was clever.

When her VISTA service is finished, Jones hopes to pursue her "dream career" - teaching college. "It seems like such a nice life," she explains. She majored in English and French at Luther and will likely earn her master's degree in English.

For now, she's happy helping younger kids. Jones understands how vital it is for young students to have a good foundation in reading. "After third grade, students are generally done learning to read and instead are reading to learn," she says. "But help is always available for older students who are behind," she adds. "Research shows that a student who struggles with reading can benefit from consistent individual help from adults," Jones says.

She doesn't work with the students much - her job is to get volunteers into the school as "reading partners." About 50 or 60 volunteers are currently on board, including some work-study students at Morningside College, and she'd like to increase that number to 100. "But we'll take as many as we can get," she's quick to add.

Forming a Volunteer Partnership

What Are Volunteer Partnerships?

They are mutually beneficial partnerships between a corporation or association and a volunteer organization. The partnerships will ultimately generate additional resources and increase awareness for the volunteer organization, while enabling the corporation or association to accomplish its internal and external objectives.

Volunteer partnerships help the volunteer organization benefit from the built-in awareness the corporation has already spent advertising and PR dollars to gain. It increases public relations opportunities through the corporation's influence and visibility in the community, builds a volunteer base from the corporation or association's work force and dramatically increases the funding potential for the volunteer organization.

Through volunteer partnerships, the corporation or association partner increases its public relations opportunities, gains respect and credibility within the community, builds teamwork and leadership skills among employees and becomes more aware of what is going on in the community.

Choosing an appropriate partner is essential to the success of the partnership. There are several factors to consider when choosing a corporation or association for a partner.

- Determine what you have to offer a partner.
- Public Relations
- Facilitate employee cohesiveness
- Help train the retired workforce
- Determine your needs in a corporate partner. Do you need volunteers, funding, materials or credibility in the community?
- What corporation or association has what you need? If you are a fledgling volunteer organization and need credibility before beginning a capital campaign, don't choose a low-profile manufacturing firm as a partner. Choose a high-profile partner with a strong public relations presence.
- Research corporations and associations that are involved in volunteerism and community projects. Do any of these fit

in with what you are trying to accomplish? Do they complement your organization?

- Find out what the corporation or association's public relations needs are, and determine how you can help meet those needs. Do they need to change their image to appeal to a certain demographic?

Once you have set the parameters of a successful partnership, you must carefully outline your partnership plan. Include what your needs are: do you need volunteers, commercial time or image enhancement? You also need to include the benefits to the corporation or association of becoming a partner with your organization. Always leave room for negotiation when you formulate your plan. When you have a plan in place, call on the corporation or association and present your partnership plan.

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Twenty individuals and eight organizations from twenty-six Iowa counties were honored for their volunteer work in their respective counties.

Honorees Included:

Kathy Burr from Adair County, Elma Inqamells and GMAC Mortgage (Corporation) from Blackhawk County, Bernice Kappmeyer from Bremer County, Rhonda Ringgenberg from Buena Vista County, William Polking from Carroll County, Hazel L. Chuck and Lakeside Festivals LTD. (Corporation) from Cerro Gordo County, Loretta Schram from Crawford County, Karen Spurgeon from Davis County, Virgene Bockenstedt from Delaware County, Darrell and Eunice Bushman from Fayette County, Elizabeth Hand from Floyd County, Angela Even from Franklin County, Everett Arthur Ludley from Hamilton

County, Carolyn Holmgren of Lee County, Helen H. Shields, Linn-Mar FFA Chapter and the Kiwanis from Linn County, Marilyn Schultz from Louisa County, Gert Patterson from Lucas County, Betty Millard from Mills County, General Telephone-GTE Midwest Inc. (Corporation) from Palo Alto County, Audrey Van Roekel from Plymouth County, Pearle L. Bowsby, The Iowa Civil Rights Commission and the Principal Financial Group (Corporation) of Polk County, Harold Kaemingk from Sioux County, Frank Burton from Warren County, Jim T. Motl from Webster County and the Decorah Public Library (Corporation) of Winneshiek County.

The 1998 Iowa Volunteer Hall of Fame ceremony was funded by Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc., and Stine Seed Company

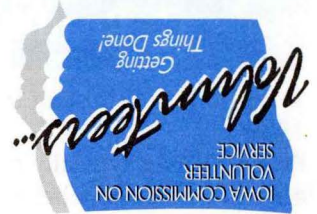




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UPCOMING EVENTS

EVENT	DATE	LOCATION
ICVS Meeting	January 14th	TBA
Martin Luther King Jr. Day	January 18th	TBA
ICVS Meeting	February 11th	TBA

LIST YOUR EVENT IN OUR MARCH NEWSLETTER

If you would like your event listed on our "Upcoming Events" calendar, please submit the name of the event, location, time and date to:

Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service
150 E. Des Moines Street
Des Moines, IA 50309

Although we can't promise to announce every event, we will do our best.

Announcements for the March newsletter must be submitted by February 1, 1998.