

# VOLUNTEER IOWA



## Fiscal Year 2006 Annual Report

Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service

**IOWA**  
*life* | changing®



**IOWA'S PROMISE**  
THE ALLIANCE FOR YOUTH



*CARE!*

Iowa Mentoring Partnership  
*Help them write their story*

Iowa Volunteer  
Hall of Fame

Governor's  
Volunteer Awards

*Iowa Conference  
on Volunteer Service*

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# VOLUNTEER IOWA

## Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service

Vision: To create an Iowa where all citizens are empowered through volunteer service to meet community challenges and make lives better.

The mission of the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering.

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## OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Dear Fellow Iowans:

The volunteerism rate in Iowa is among the highest in the nation and is key to delivering charitable services within communities. It allows us to pursue our mission to provide quality programs and services to all Iowans. The Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service keeps that pursuit alive through volunteer promotion and recognition events, the State of Promise initiative, and AmeriCorps programs.

I, along with Lt. Governor Judge and the First Lady, strongly believe that volunteer service yields positive results for the great State of Iowa. Volunteering and neighbor-helping-neighbor have been important hallmarks of Iowa values since the state was founded more than 160 years ago. We need to continue to keep our strong spirit of service alive and well as we unite as "One Iowa, One Unlimited Future." We shall strive toward the common goals of meeting community needs, providing opportunities for those with a willingness to serve and recognizing the efforts of those who commit their time to volunteering.

As you review this report and learn more about the programs of the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service and the effect that these programs have on our communities, I ask you to consider how you might strengthen volunteerism and service in Iowa. When Iowans collaborate and come together, we positively impact our communities and the lives of our neighbors.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chester Culver". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Chester J. Culver  
Governor

## **Volunteer Promotion**

For the past several years, Iowa has consistently ranked in the top five states in the nation for the percentage of citizens age 16 and above who volunteer on a regular basis. In the most current report available<sup>1</sup>, the rate of volunteering for 2003 to 2005 in Iowa (39.2%) was higher than the three year rate for the Midwest overall (33.2%) and the nation (28.8%). Volunteers in Iowa spent a median of 43 hours annually on volunteer activities.

The Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service is committed to helping people be engaged in meaningful volunteerism and service through a variety of resources, activities and programs:

### **Volunteer Iowa! Broadcast**

The Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service partnered with Iowa Public Television for the fourth year in a row to broadcast a one-hour live television program entitled “Volunteer Iowa!” on January 15. Similar to a typical telethon, viewers were shown inspirational stories and were encouraged to call with a pledge. Yet in contrast to most telethons, financial donations were not accepted; instead, callers pledged to spend a certain number of hours volunteering in their community in the coming year. Iowans accepted the challenge and collectively pledged more than 1.5 million hours of service, which at the current rate of \$18.04 per hour is valued at more than \$28.4 million.

### **Volunteer Awareness Day at the Capitol**

March 20, 2006 marked the debut of this annual event designed to give Iowa nonprofit and charitable organizations a chance to share information with legislators about the impact volunteers have in their communities and the critical services they provide.

### **Annual Governor’s Volunteer Awards**

Coordinated by the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service, a multi-agency steering committee, and the Governor’s Office, this program gives state and city government agencies and nonprofit organizations, a way to honor the dedicated volunteers who devote their time to benefit the work of the organization. In June, Governor Vilsack and Lt. Governor Pederson presented more than 700 awards during regional ceremonies held in Des Moines, Storm Lake, Cedar Falls, and Marion.

### **Iowa Volunteer Hall of Fame**

To recognize exceptional contributions of volunteer service, up to five individuals and organizations are selected for the Volunteer Hall of Fame each year. Names of honorees are engraved on a plaque on permanent display in the State Historical Building. A special ceremony was held on November 1 to recognize the 2006 inductees:

- Ada M. Real of Council Bluffs (Individual Category)
- Natalie Bohling of Greenfield (Youth Category)
- Francis “Buzz” Burnham of Forest City (Lifetime Achievement Award)

<sup>1</sup>Volunteering in America: State Trends and Rankings, Corporation for National and Community Service, [www.nationalservice.gov](http://www.nationalservice.gov)

<sup>2</sup>Research conducted by Independent Sector, [www.independentsector.org/programs/research/volunteer\\_time.html](http://www.independentsector.org/programs/research/volunteer_time.html)

## **Volunteer Management Training**

To effectively engage and utilize volunteers, communities and nonprofits must rely on a strong, well-organized infrastructure, which includes professional staff well-trained in the latest volunteer management techniques.

It's important for organizations to support their cadre of volunteers with skilled leaders to ensure each and every volunteer has a positive, fulfilling experience. The training events coordinated by the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service are all designed to help build the critical infrastructure necessary to support successful volunteer-based programs throughout Iowa. In 2006:

- AmeriCorps\*State and VISTA members and Senior Corps Directors from across the state participated in a training event held January 20-21. Training topics included "Volunteer Recruitment" and "How to Engage Baby Boomers". This training provided an opportunity for national service participants to engage in skill building trainings to improve their service to communities in Iowa.
- The 2nd Annual Iowa National Service Leadership Institute was held May 2-3 at the Greater Des Moines YMCA camp. More than 50 Iowa AmeriCorps members and program directors participated in various leadership workshops to enhance their personal and professional development. This event also served as a recognition event to thank National Service participants for their commitment to serving Iowa communities.
- Nearly 400 volunteer management professionals, national service program directors, and nonprofit organization staff attended the Iowa Conference on Volunteer Service in Des Moines on October 31 and November 1. As the state's premier volunteer management conference, workshops were designed to provide the training that is critical to operating an effective and efficient volunteer-based organization, program, or project. Nearly 43% of survey respondents indicated this conference is the only opportunity they have to receive the latest volunteer management information and training.

## **The Iowa Mentoring Partnership**

The Iowa Mentoring Partnership (IMP) became a program of the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service in 2005. The Partnership acts as the voice for mentoring in the state of Iowa and provides support to certified mentoring programs to ensure that IMP local partners are fulfilling all Elements of Effective Practice as defined by the National Mentoring Partnership.

In 2006, there were 52 certified mentoring programs, reporting more than 5,000 matches, operating in 50 counties across the state of Iowa. The Iowa Mentoring Partnership provided training during the Iowa Conference on Volunteer Service for certified mentoring programs to help ensure the continued success of mentoring relationships for our most precious Iowans.

# AmeriCorps

AmeriCorps is a national service program that unites diverse Americans in improving our neighborhoods while strengthening citizenship, fostering the ethic of service, and helping communities. AmeriCorps members commit to providing intensive service over the period of up to a one year term of service. In addition to a living allowance while serving, upon successful completion of their term, members are eligible to receive a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award ranging of up to \$4,725, which may be used for post secondary education or to repay student loans.

## Iowa AmeriCorps Program Portfolio

### Habitat for Humanity (Statewide)

- Involved 3,275 community volunteers in 18 Iowa Habitat affiliates building 10 additional 0% interest homes for families in need
- Provided 79 homeownership education classes resulting in an 84% successful monthly repayment

### Eastern Iowa Conservation Alliance (11 eastern Iowa Counties)

- Collected more than 2,000 pounds of native prairie seed to help establish native prairie in eastern Iowa
- Provided environmental education to 16,522 students who attended natural resource management programs

### Project UNITE (Storm Lake)

- Tutored nearly 75 English Language Learner (ELL) students: 80% of the students increased their reading and math scores
- Recruited 593 non-AmeriCorps volunteers who worked at 50 sites for a total of 2,737 hours

### Youth Connections (Iowa City)

- Provided mentoring to youth served by the Neighborhood Centers of Johnson County, including many lower income youth
- Created two job readiness/placement programs for teens

### United Neighbors AmeriCorps (Davenport)

- Assisted with six after-school and summer programs benefiting more than 450 youth
- Supported homeland security efforts with the Citizen Corps Council creating 15 neighborhood safety patrol groups and increasing active neighborhood watch groups by 5%
- Monitored 25-30 local parks to assist law enforcement, and enrolled groups to adopt the parks for maintenance

### **Upper Explorerland (northeastern Iowa)**

- Trained more than 150 community members to identify and better address environmental issues and to increase participation in environmental education
- Assessed and maintained 5 miles of trail for recreational use

### **REACH - Rural Education and Community Help (Statewide)**

- Made nearly 7,000 domestic abuse victim contacts and offered referral services, crisis intervention, legal advocacy, and education programs
- Trained 22 new volunteers in providing culturally sensitive services including obtaining advocacy certification

### **Keepers of the Land (Statewide)**

- Provided in excess of 8,000 environmental presentations educating 12,484 people
- Restored, improved, and maintained 103 miles of trail for recreational use in state parks
- Recruited 758 community volunteers that provided 3,232 hours of service to clean up Iowa's rivers

### **Partners in Learning (Dubuque)**

- Tutored/Mentored more than 4,500 students at 10 schools, two community centers, and two local parks resulting in nearly 90% of students showing an increase or maintaining math and reading scores
- Supervised cultural and recreational activities resulting in 85% of students showing an increase in positive social behavior

### **Northwest Iowa AmeriCorps Youth Project (northwestern Iowa)**

- Provided 232 youth with a safe place for before-, after-, and out-of-school activities
- Recruited 401 community volunteers to provide youth-related services in rural northwest Iowa



# Iowa AmeriCorps

Over the past five years, 1,083 AmeriCorps members have served more than 1 million hours of service, valued at approximately \$18 million (Source: Independent Sector – Dollar Value of Volunteer Time)

Since 2001, AmeriCorps members have engaged an additional 59,711 community volunteers in providing 315,890 hours of service

Every state dollar invested in AmeriCorps program leverages more than \$22.70 in federal funds – will change once pie charts are complete

More than 200 AmeriCorps members are expected to serve in Iowa in 2007.

## 2006 Accomplishments

### Education

- 4,601 K-12 students were mentored or tutored
- 4,908 youth participated in after-school and summer activities
- 85% of participating students' grades were maintained or improved
- 85% of mentored students reported increased self-esteem

### Environment

- 29,156 citizens trained in environmental awareness and protection
- 16,522 students received environmental enrichment programming
- More than 100 miles of trails for recreational use was maintained benefiting more than 1 million people
- Restoring 600 acres of habitat

### Other Human Needs

- Organized 115 service projects with 1,378 volunteers
- Partnered with more than 343 local agencies
- Habitat ReStore gained net proceeds of \$193,512 from collecting and reselling donated items

### Public Safety and Homeland Security

- 6,874 people received anti-victimization and violence prevention training and counseling services
- Organized Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) class and trained AmeriCorps members in CPR/First Aid



## **RSVP...Connecting People to Purpose**

RSVP (Retired and Senior Volunteer Program) is one of three Corporation for National and Community Service Senior Corps programs. Iowans over the age of 55 have an opportunity to make new community connections while helping fellow citizens through RSVP assignments. The cost to Iowa taxpayers for this valuable service is less than thirty cents per hour.

Through RSVP, participants engage in volunteer activities where they can share their skills, expertise and energy to meet critical community needs. RSVP volunteers have continuing opportunities to learn, grow, have purpose and meaning, and to leave a legacy.

Iowans who benefit from the services of RSVP volunteers live independently, receive better health care, improve academic performance, receive friendship and guidance, have their basic needs met, learn to read, live in a cleaner and safer community, learn to budget and save, become better parents, feel loved and cared about, have their quality of life improved, and have hope in the future.

The RSVP Vision: RSVP believes that the future of Iowa must include a plan that values our healthy active adults age 55 and older, and recognizes the important role they play in addressing critical needs in our communities. These dedicated Iowans are our fastest growing population and our greatest natural resource.

## **Return on 2006 Investment in RSVP**

- 22 RSVP projects placed 6,800 volunteers in assignments to meet vital community needs
- RSVP volunteers served nearly 700,000 hours in those assignments
- 1,308 nonprofits benefited from the services of RSVP volunteers
- RSVP projects leveraged \$1.9 million in federal and local dollars; state funding is vital to RSVP being able to leverage federal funds.
- The value of RSVP in Iowa is greater than \$12 million (at a rate of \$18.04 per hour for 688,077 hours of service)

## **Seniors Against Investment Fraud (SAIF)**

In 2006, the Iowa Insurance Division approached the Iowa RSVP Directors Association (IARSVPD) asking for a partnership in educating Iowa's population 50 and older about investment fraud and scams. Currently, RSVP projects have trained SAIF volunteers educating their communities on investment fraud prevention.

# Fulfilling Iowa's Promise to Children and Youth

## Iowa's Promise

Iowa's Promise helps local communities fulfill the Five Promises to America's Youth by building upon the collective power of communities to make a difference in every child's life. The Five Promises are:

1. Caring Adults
2. Safe Places
3. Healthy Start
4. Effective Education
5. Opportunities to Help Others

Iowa's Promise has been mobilizing Iowans and communities toward this goal since its designation as a State of Promise in 2004. The following have achieved "Community of Promise" designation in recognition of their effort to work collaboratively to deliver the Five Promises to children and youth.

- Cedar Valley's Promise (Black Hawk County)
- Dickinson County's Promise
- Hamilton County Power Up YOUTH
- Lamoni's Promise
- Mississippi Valley Promise (Dubuque County)
- Spencer's Community of Promise
- Buena Vista County's Promise

Iowa's Promise is strengthened by its work with the Iowa Collaboration for Youth Development, which believes all Iowans benefit when all youth are engaged and contributing in their communities. Experiences and connections children and youth have growing up affect their success in school, in work, and in life. Iowa's Promise helps Iowans to find their place in ensuring the success of our children and youth by providing support and resources to individuals and communities to help them fulfill the Five Promises.

## Iowa's Promise Youth Grants

Iowa's Promise is helping young Iowans fulfill Promise Number Five: "Opportunities to Help Others" through the Iowa's Promise Youth grant program. Offered in partnership with Iowa State Extension, Iowa youth groups can receive up to \$250 to help plan and carry out service projects. Recipients must collaborate with other groups within their communities, and projects must relate to or fulfill one of the Five Promises.



# The Commission/Sponsors

## *2004-2005 ICVS Commissioners*

Rev. Ken Gibson, Commission Chair, Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque  
Joan McCulloch, Commission Vice Chair, RSVP, Spirit Lake  
Christie Vilsack, Commission Honorary Chair, Iowa's First Lady  
Todd Behrends, Iowa College Student Aid Commission, Des Moines  
Mary Bracken, Iowa Public Television, Johnston  
Jane Butler, Glenwood Resource Center, Glenwood  
Penny Ehlinger, Dubuque County Extension, Dubuque  
Elaine Hanson, RSVP / Waldorf College, Forest City  
Joe Herrity, Learn & Serve, Iowa Department of Education  
Jack Hotchkiss, Rockwell Collins Retiree Volunteers, Marion  
Vicki Hover-Williamson, Iowa Office, Corporation for National and Community Service  
Jodi Kluge, Volunteer Center of Cedar Valley, Waterloo  
Robert MacKenzie, Youth Homes of Mid-America, Johnston  
Justin Mason, Youth Commissioner, Ames  
Linda Miller, Iowa Department of Education / Iowa Collaboration for Youth Development, Des Moines  
Fred Moore, Buena Vista University, Storm Lake  
Chuck Morris, 4-H Youth Development / ISU Extension, Ames  
Linda Nelson, Iowa State Education Association, Des Moines  
Drew Sanders, Keokuk County, Sigourney  
Cindy Stull, Ankeny Schools, Randall  
Ron Thielenhaus, Kemin Foods, LLC, Des Moines  
Megan Wettach, Youth Commissioner, Mt. Pleasant  
Jim Wilson, MidAmerican Energy, Des Moines  
Floyd Winter, Cedar Valley's Promise, Waterloo

## *ICVS Staff*

Adam Lounsbury, Executive Director, 515.242.5466  
Jody Benz, Outreach & Communications Director, 515.242.4764  
Kristin Honz, AmeriCorps Program Officer, 515.242.5467  
Greg Pepping, AmeriCorps Program Officer, 515.242.4952  
Julie Struck, Program Development and Training & Disability Placement Coordinator, 515.242.4866  
Frank Milik, Fiscal Officer, 515.242.4879  
Joe Mowers, Governor's Office Liaison, 515.281.4504

## *Sponsors*





Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service  
200 East Grand Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa 50309  
800.308.5987  
[icvs@iowalifechanging.com](mailto:icvs@iowalifechanging.com)  
[www.volunteeriowa.org](http://www.volunteeriowa.org)