

CaliforniaVolunteers is the largest state service commission in the country. The organization manages a variety of programs and initiatives aimed at increasing the number of Californians engaged in service and volunteering.

CaliforniaVolunteers is led by Karen Baker, the nation's first state cabinet-level Secretary of Service and Volunteering, and is supported by a bipartisan 25-member commission appointed by the Governor.

Maria Shriver, the First Lady of California, serves as the honorary chair of the commission.

Programs and Initiatives:

AmeriCorps: AmeriCorps is often referred to as the “domestic Peace Corps.” Participants – known as AmeriCorps members – perform a year of service with a program that meets local community needs in return for a modest living allowance and education award. For the 2009-10 program year, CaliforniaVolunteers will fund 48 programs totaling more than \$23 million that will support approximately 4,000 members serving statewide in programs that address critical community needs in education, public safety, health, and the environment. Further, \$9.4 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds will support an additional 838 AmeriCorps member positions.

Business Partner Program: Recent research has demonstrated that employees entering the workforce would prefer to work for companies that give them opportunities to contribute their talents to nonprofit organizations. To stay competitive and attract the best and brightest talent, many companies need help in creating or improving their business volunteer programs. The Business Partner Program provides tools, resources and recognition for businesses to build high-quality volunteer programs that support their communities.

California Green Jobs Corps: Launched by Governor Schwarzenegger in March 2009, the California Green Jobs Corps will train 1,000 at-risk youth for technical, construction and other skilled jobs in California's emerging green economy. The program will use federal economic stimulus funds and resources from public-private partnerships to invest \$20 million in local programs to provide youth with training and development opportunities, including job-specific skills, education, environmental stewardship and service.

California Volunteer Matching Network: CaliforniaVolunteers developed and maintains the largest online statewide volunteer matching network in the nation on CaliforniaVolunteers.org. Today there are more than 45,000 volunteer opportunities available throughout the state involving the arts, education, environment and other areas of interest.

Cesar Chavez Day of Service and Learning: The Cesar Chavez Day of Service and Learning program works to engage California's youth in service while learning about Chavez' life and legacy. In the past two years, CaliforniaVolunteers supported nearly 80 Cesar E. Chavez afterschool service clubs in Title I middle schools in 38 cities and built 26 new playgrounds with more than 8,000 volunteers in communities across the state.

Disaster Donations: By Executive Order, CaliforniaVolunteers is the lead state office charged with coordinating monetary donations during disasters. In the event of a disaster, CaliforniaVolunteers will provide information on CaliforniaVolunteers.org on how to donate to assist victims.

Disaster Preparedness: The WE Prepare program is designed to motivate families to take action and get prepared for both natural and man-made disasters. The cornerstone of the program is an online customizable family disaster plan and a personalized children's book available at CaliforniaVolunteers.org. The book teaches children how to be prepared in a fun, nonthreatening way, allowing them to feel empowered and involved as they learn about being disaster-prepared.

Disaster Volunteering: Governor Schwarzenegger designated CaliforniaVolunteers as the lead state agency for coordinating volunteers in times of disaster. CaliforniaVolunteers also administers California's Citizen Corps programs including: Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT), Medical Reserve Corps, Volunteers in Police Service, Fire Corps and Neighborhood Watch. Finally, CaliforniaVolunteers is developing a statewide Disaster Corps that will unify affiliated volunteer programs and provide a common standard for training, certification and classification of disaster volunteers.

The Governor's Mentoring Partnership: The partnership brings together community, faith and school-based mentoring programs such as Big Brothers/ Big Sisters, Boys and Girls Clubs and regional mentoring coalitions throughout the state to increase public awareness of the need for and support of mentoring, as well as identifies and implements strategies to expand mentoring in the public and private sector.

Governor and First Lady Service Awards: The Governor and First Lady's Service Award honors children ages 5-14 who complete 25 hours of community service in a 12-month period and adults who complete 50 hours. Californians receiving the honor receive a personalized certificate from CaliforniaVolunteers signed by the Governor and First Lady. In addition, recipients are encouraged to keep serving to earn a President's Volunteer Service Award (a minimum of 50 hours).

Governor and First Lady's Medals for Service: At the 2009 National Conference on Volunteering and Service, Governor Schwarzenegger and First Lady Maria Shriver presented the inaugural Medals for Service to honor the California Volunteer of the Year, Nonprofit Leader of the Year and the Business Volunteer Program of the Year.

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