



SERVE ILLINOIS



Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service

Summer 2014

Governor Quinn Honors Illinoisans for Exemplary Community Service

Governor's Volunteer Service Awards Highlight Volunteerism

Governor Pat Quinn and the Serve Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service presented 23 Illinoisans and 4 businesses with the Governor's Volunteer Service Award during a special reception at the Executive Mansion on April 28, 2014. The award recognizes volunteers and volunteer programs that have made a difference in Illinois and highlights the importance of volunteerism and community service.

"Every day in Illinois, thousands of volunteers donate their time and talents to help others and to build stronger communities," said Governor Quinn. "We honor these individuals that have made positive change in our state and set an example for others to follow with their initiative, creativity and energy."

The Governor's Volunteer Service Awards focus on five areas: Economic Opportunity, Education, Environmental Conservation, Disaster Preparedness/Response, Health, and Veterans' Affairs. Individual awards in each of the

commission's five service regions (Northeast, Northwest, East Central, West Central and Southern Illinois) are presented in three categories: youth ages 18 and under, adult ages 19-54 and seniors ages 55 and older. Additionally, National Service Awards were presented to one Senior Corps, AmeriCorps in each region. This year marks the second time that the Business Volunteer Engagement Awards will be presented in each region.

"Volunteerism is what makes life worth living, and I am proud to say that Illinois has a vast number of people that are working each day to improve all of our lives," said Brandon Bodor, Executive Director of Serve Illinois. "Through Serve Illinois, we hope to expand volunteerism throughout rural, suburban and urban Illinois, and involve people of all backgrounds, cultures and ages."



Vi Heinz received the West Central Senior Corps award for her service to the Peoria Friendship House.



Shira Choi was selected as the North East AmeriCorps award for her service to the Heartland Health Outreach."

From the Chair



John L. Mason in his book *An Enemy Called Average* stated, “Always pick an obstacle big enough to matter when you overcome it.” And, “One of the greatest pleasures you can find is doing what people say you cannot do.”

These statements reflect the mind-set and courage of those who received the Serve Illinois 2014 Governor’s Volunteer Service Award. As I watch the 27 award winners and listen to their struggles against all odds to address the great need in their communities, I am overwhelmed by their service commitment to produce healing and wholeness to their communities.

The power of idea has the ability to bring positive change to a negative situation; the 27 award winners certainly embody this principle. After reflecting on their conversations, the one theme I heard was that “People see my glory. However, they do not know my story.” That story is the process of implementing an idea.

I would like to share with you the stages of implementation to completion: (1) leader gets the idea to address the problem; (2) followers are convinced of the direction; (3) the group moves in the direction suggested; (4) persecution, hard times or personal attacks come as result of the idea; (5) backlash from the group; (6) personal reevaluation and reflection; and then (7) vindication (Leaders on Leadership, 170).

For many years, according to Hebert Casson, “‘Safety first’ has been the motto of the human race... but it has never been the motto of leaders. A leader must face danger. He/She must take the risk and the blame and the brunt of the storm (An Enemy Called Average, 33).”

As I watched the award winners take pictures and reflect on their accomplishments; I felt proud to be surrounded by 27 extra-ordinary leaders. My departing words are those from an ancient text, “Do you see a man diligent in his business? He shall stand before kings.”

Thank you for your service.

Frederick D. Nettles Jr.
Chair, Serve Illinois Commission

Keep in touch with Serve Illinois!

We love learning about the great things you are doing in your community and our followers do too! Help us tell the story of volunteerism in Illinois by staying in touch as you continue to do great work, whether it’s meeting and recruiting other volunteers or your next accomplishment or volunteer event.

In addition to the stories we tell in our Newsletter, we’re also on Facebook, Twitter, and even have our own blog! Email us at dhs.ServeIllinois@illinois.gov with pictures and stories to share. You can also add “#ServeIL” to the end of your service related post on Facebook or Twitter so we can find them!

Follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/serveillinois.

Follow us on Twitter using [@ServeIllinois](https://twitter.com/ServeIllinois).

Keep updated on service stories with our blog at <http://serveillinoiscommission.wordpress.com/>.

Stay informed about upcoming events by visiting www.Serve.Illinois.gov.



WORDPRESS

Nature Museum Hosts Chicago Volunteer Expo

Like most great ideas, the inspiration for the Chicago Volunteer Expo came from a volunteer. Now in its second year, the Expo has become the one-stop shop for Chicagoans who want to give back but need a little help getting started.

The organizing committee was partnered with Serve Illinois for the 2014 Volunteer Expo held in February, bringing together over 100 nonprofit organizations from throughout Chicago, representing people working on many important issues. With the unwavering support of the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum, which graciously hosts the event, Expo attendees got a unique opportunity to find the perfect volunteer role to match their interests.



The second annual Chicago Volunteer Expo brought together over 1,300 volunteer participants.

Over 1300 people attended the Expo, with 22% of visitors hearing about the event through word of mouth. Still, success doesn't just mean getting people in the door; 93% said they will volunteer based on the connections they made.

In addition to meeting with organizations, Chicagoans were able to try speed volunteering – upcycling plastic grocery bags into sleeping mats for the homeless – see the museum's exhibits, and sit in on talks by our guest speakers. Giving a compelling talk on national service in Illinois, Brandon Bodor, Executive Director of Serve Illinois, spoke about the power

of volunteering and the goal of cultivating civilian service that could complement and be as visible as military service. Other notable talks offered advice and opportunities for family volunteering, using social media to help your cause, and turning a volunteer role into a paying job.

Best of all, the Expo is doing exactly what it was intended to do. Smaller organizations are getting a chance to engage with a wider range of Chicagoans, gaining visibility and making connections with fellow nonprofits. Even Uber got involved, offering free rides to anyone attending the event. ABC aired a segment about the Expo, and great organizations such as Chicago Cares are looking forward to how to make this event even bigger next year.



Serve.Illinois.gov

COMMISSION MEMBERS

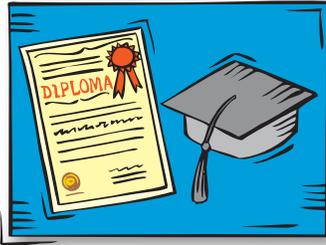
- Frederick D. Nettles, Jr., Chair, Springfield
- Don Baden, Ed. D., Vice-Chair, Fairview Heights
- Jane Angelis, Ph. D., Carbondale
- Kathleen Blair, Woodridge
- Julian Brown, Chicago
- Barb Byrne, Monmouth
- Bechara Choucair, M.D., Chicago
- Merri Dee, Chicago
- Evelyn J. Diaz, Chicago
- James Dixon, Springfield
- Robert Dwyer, Kenilworth
- Kathy Engelken, Chicago
- Alvin Goldfarb, Ph. D., Macomb
- Amanda Guinn, Belleville
- Jill C. Heise, Chicago
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- Christopher A. Koch, Springfield
- Howard L. Lathan, Chicago
- Debra Martón, Chicago
- Bob McCammon, Lake Villa
- Garry McCarthy, Chicago
- Jenné Myers, Chicago
- Hannah Porter, Macomb
- Toni Preckwinkle, Chicago
- Robert "Al" Riddley, Springfield
- Joseph Rives, Ph. D., Moline
- Giraldo Rosales, Champaign
- Anne Schuman, Morton Grove
- Cynthia Sims, Ed. D., Carbondale
- Ilya Sheyman, Waukegan
- Stephen Silberman, Hanover
- Louise Stonitsch, Evanston
- Barbara Tubekis, Winnetka
- Jeff Turnbull, Peoria
- Heather Way, Chicago
- Jennifer Witzel, Mt. Vernon

COMMISSION STAFF

- Brandon Bodor, Executive Director
- Scott McFarland, Deputy Director
- Lisa Fernandes, AmeriCorps Program Officer
- Sue Zellers, AmeriCorps Program Officer
- Karla Kunzeman, Volunteer Programs Manager
- Mike Stehlin, Training Officer
- Lanie Cooper, Graduate Public Service Intern
- Courtney Abbott, Graduate Public Service Intern
- Cynthia Sandoval, Policy Dunn Fellow
- Lilliane Webb, New Sector AmeriCorps member

Congratulations Graduates!

AmeriCorps members directly address the most challenging problems that communities face each and every day. Some of these members also find time to continue their education at local colleges and universities.



This May, several Illinois AmeriCorps members graduated from college, and Serve Illinois would like to congratulate them on their accomplishments.

The AmeriCorps members who completed their degrees in May are:

ABC AmeriCorps Graduates:

Kyler Grossman - Sauk Valley Community College
Alex Barth - Sauk Valley Community College
Lexi Brummit - Augustana College
Lindsay Rodriguez - Sauk Valley Community College
Ashley Wolf - Sauk Valley Community College

Peace Corps Fellows Program in Community Development AmeriCorps Graduates:

Ramo Stott - Illinois State University
John Ceglarek - Western Illinois University
Rebecca Moss - Western Illinois University
Kara Garten - Western Illinois University

Land of Lincoln/ Southern Seven AmeriCorps Graduates:

Cynthia Dunevant - Murray State University
Tabitha Troutman - Southern Illinois University Carbondale
Jenna Pelaez - Southern Illinois University Carbondale

LSSI AmeriCorps Graduates:

Brehn Prusacki - Southern Illinois University Carbondale
Brianna Morten - Southern Illinois University Carbondale

Thank You for Your Service!

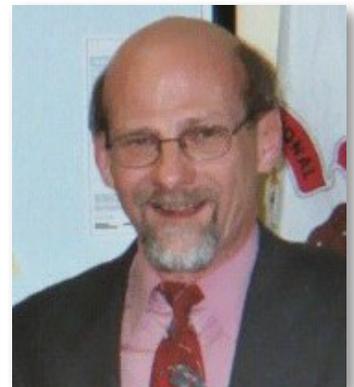
The Serve Illinois Commission would like to recognize and thank Bob McCammon and Merri Dee for their outstanding service to the Commission and the state of Illinois. Bob and Merri have both been an outstanding example of the ethic of service the Serve Illinois Commission seeks to promote.

Merri Dee has been a beacon of light of service in Illinois for many years, and continues to serve her community in multiple capacities including being involved as a Serve Illinois Commissioner. Merri has filled the role of Mistress of Ceremony for the annual Governor's Volunteer Service Awards since its inaugural year in 2009, and is already on board to host again next year. We thank you, Merri, for your service to the Commission, and we look forward to many more years!



Merri Dee continues to be a strong advocate for service in Illinois.

Bob McCammon has served as a Commissioner since September 2007, and has been a true service leader in Illinois for many years beyond his tenure on the Commission. The April 28, 2014, Commissioner meeting marked Bob's last day as a Serve Illinois Commissioner. Thank you, Bob, for your wonderful service!



Bob McCammon provided the Commission with valuable insight into the world of service and volunteerism.

Nichole Brants: Passion for Service and Learning

As a two-time AmeriCorps member, Nichole Brants stated, “I could probably go on for days on all the things I learned from my volunteer experiences. They instilled in me a sense of determination of working towards a purpose, even though there might be setbacks.”

After volunteering in various ways during her undergraduate career, Nichole decided to immerse herself fully in the volunteer experience. Volunteering provided her with a sense of fulfillment; she knew she was making a difference while working in direct service to others. Although she is an Illinois native, Nichole’s service with the the AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) moved her to the Pacific Region in 2010, where she focused on urban and rural development, education and the environment. Nichole initially chose the NCCC program because she was drawn to the team-based environment that allowed her to interact with people from all walks of life. Although she enjoyed California’s mild climate, she returned to Illinois to serve her second term as an AmeriCorps Response Coordinator with the Red Cross in 2011.



Nichole Brants has devoted her life to serving those less fortunate.

During her time in Springfield with the Red Cross, Nichole provided emergency as well as long-term assistance to those affected by disaster. She also educated communities and trained volunteers in emergency services. In recounting her experiences with AmeriCorps, Nichole stated that she is grateful that her leadership skills were sharpened, and she also learned more about working with others. Offering advice to those considering AmeriCorps, Nichole shared, “Having an open mind and a good attitude can really get you a long way. AmeriCorps provides a great opportunity for people to grow as individuals and build character. I would recommend it to anyone.”

Nichole is currently an Applied Community and Economic Development (ACED) Fellow in Sociology at the Illinois State University’s Stevenson Center for Community and Economic Development. Through coursework and field work, the ACED Fellows Program enhances the skills of experienced students working to become the new generation of development specialists. As a part of her master’s degree program, Nichole is currently serving with the McLean County Domestic Violence Multidisciplinary Team in Bloomington, Illinois.

Nichole has also completed projects relating to food injustice, conservation, and animal welfare: as an AmeriCorps alum, she is passionate about many areas of public service and well-being. Equipped with a master’s degree, an open mind, and a history of service, Nichole plans to pursue a career in the public sector in Illinois.

This piece was written by Carly Smaha, Public Relations intern at the Stevenson Center for Community and Economic Development.



STEVENSON CENTER
FOR COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
Illinois State University



**American
Red Cross**

Governor Quinn and Serve Illinois Commission Announce \$4.4 Million in Competitive Federal Grants

Federal grant is a \$1.2 million (36%) increase from 2013 and will support 1,004 AmeriCorps Members.

SPRINGFIELD, IL – Governor Quinn and his Serve Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service today announced that the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) has awarded \$4.4 million (36% increase) to enable 1,004 volunteers (increase of 726) in seven AmeriCorps programs to better serve Illinois communities.

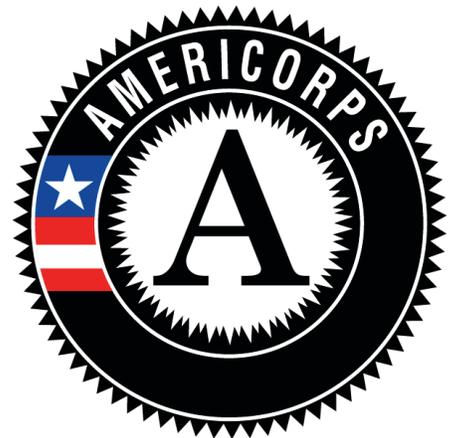
“Since 1994, more than 33,000 Illinois AmeriCorps members have served over 45 million hours. This year, we celebrate the 20th anniversary of AmeriCorps members directly addressing the most challenging problems that communities face,” said Governor Quinn. “These volunteers are the foundation of our volunteer infrastructure in the state, and we are excited to continue to build upon that foundation in the upcoming year.”

This federal competitive grant will go towards services in Illinois including teaching, tutoring and mentoring at-risk youth, supporting literacy programs, preparing for disasters, and improving underserved communities. CNCS is the federal agency that administers AmeriCorps, and its goal with the grant is to develop and expand volunteer organizations across the country. The Serve Illinois Commission administers the AmeriCorps programs in Illinois.

The seven competitively funded programs competed on a national stage with hundreds of programs submitted by other state commissions. They will join an additional 18 to 20 formula funded programs that will be announced at a later date.

AmeriCorps programs receiving competitive funds from the Corporation for National and Community Service:

- American Red Cross – Chicago – Safe Families AmeriCorps
- Literacy Volunteers of Illinois – VOCAL AmeriCorps
- Southwestern Illinois College - Belleville AmeriCorps
- City Year Chicago
- Public Allies Chicago
- Teach for America
- University of Illinois-Chicago - Project MORE : Making Opportunities for Reading Enrichment



AmeriCorps Project MORE



TEACHFORAMERICA

Find or Post
a Volunteer
Opportunity
Today!

Visit Serve.Illinois.gov



**Commission on Volunteerism
and Community Service**

In addition to the searchable portal of more than 140,000 volunteer opportunities statewide, Serve.Illinois.gov hosts a wide variety of volunteer resources:

- Ability to Post Volunteer Opportunities
- Statewide Volunteer Management Network Conference & Meeting Information
- National Service Program Information (AmeriCorps, Senior Corps & Learn and Serve America)
- Volunteerism Research & Volunteerism Web Links
- Featured Volunteer Stories
- Serve Illinois Calendar of Events

• Training and Professional Development

Save the Date

2014 Volunteerism Conferences



*Central Illinois Volunteerism Conference:
June 12, 2014*

www.civconference.org

*Illinois Conference on Volunteer Administration:
August 14, 2014*
www.icova.info



*Southern Illinois Volunteerism Conference:
September 25, 2014*
www.sivc.net

*Northwest Illinois / MVDOVIA Volunteerism
Conference: October 2014*



Mark Your Calendars!

Mark your calendars for the AmeriCorps 20th Anniversary Opening Day Celebration on September 12, 2014. The Serve Illinois Commission will be celebrating AmeriCorps' 20th Anniversary and recognizing all National Service members at the beginning of their year-long commitment to service. Join us on September 12, 2014!



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“Building Stronger Communities Through Service”

Upcoming Days of Service

June 12, 2014	Central Illinois Volunteer Conference www.civconference.org	September 11, 2014	9/11 National Day of Service www.911day.org
June 16-18, 2014	Point of Light National Conference on Volunteering and Service www.volunteeringandsevice.org	September 12, 2014	National Service Recognition Day www.serve.illinois.gov
August 11-14, 2014	Midwest Community Development Institute www.midwestcdi.org	September 22-24, 2014	NAWDP Youth Development Symposium www.nawdp.org
August 14, 2014	Illinois Conference on Volunteer Administration www.icova.info		



SERVE ILLINOIS is a publication of the Serve Illinois Commission on Volunteerism & Community Service. Send articles for submission and suggestions to:

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Illinois AmeriCorps Disability Outreach Project: Meeting the needs for AmeriCorps Members of all backgrounds and abilities.

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