



Governor's Commission on Community Service

Office of Lt. Governor Barbara O'Brien

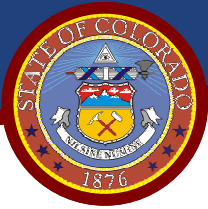


2010-2012 COLORADO STATE SERVICE PLAN

Colorado Unified State Service Plan

2010 - 2012

"Building a culture of citizenship, service, and responsibility in Colorado."



Corporation for
**NATIONAL &
COMMUNITY
SERVICE** 



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The Governor's Commission on Community Service (GCCS), under the Office of Lieutenant Governor Barbara O'Brien, promotes the ethic of civic engagement, community service and volunteerism throughout Colorado.

The Governor's Commission is the state's leader in promoting Civic Engagement, Community Service, and Volunteerism. The Commission works to foster a collective commitment to lifelong community service among Colorado residents.

As administrators of the AmeriCorps*State Programs in Colorado, the Commission builds on the dedication and expertise of individual citizens and public and private systems to expand civic participation and engagement in solving challenges faced by Colorado communities.

Mission

The Governor's Commission serves as a catalyst for the promotion and expansion of community service and volunteerism to all Colorado residents as an effective means to address civic and social issues and improve the overall well being of communities throughout the state.

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2010

This document reflects the Governor's Commission on Community Service (GCCS) plan to respond to community service needs across the state, establishes strategic and program goals for the Commission on Community Service for the period of 2010 - 2012, and creates the framework for implementing the new federal Kennedy Serve America Act (SAA). This plan also establishes the service plan for the Governor's Commission, with partner organizations, to increase civic engagement volunteerism by adults age 55 and older, as required in the Kennedy Serve America Act.

Approved by the Governor's Commission on Community Service, this plan articulates AmeriCorps program service priorities in seven service categories: civic engagement, education, early childhood services, youth development, services to people with disabilities, health and health care access, and environmental protection. The Commission also has adopted new focus areas, consistent with the Kennedy Serve America Act, in services to veterans and active duty military families, job seekers, and developing a service plan for increasing civic engagement by adults age 55 and older.

GCCS goals will be updated annually during the course of the three-year plan as AmeriCorps program funding becomes available for full implementation of the Kennedy Service America Act. Service priorities may shift as new service corps programs are established and funded. Progress in achieving state service plan goals will be reviewed annually in evaluation processes as required by the Commission on Community Service and the Corporation for National and Community Service.

I hereby approve this Unified State Service Plan for the period of 2010 through 2012 and submit it to the Corporation for National and Community Service. Should this plan require amendments I hereby delegate signatory authority to the Lieutenant Governor of the State of Colorado, Lieutenant Governor Barbara O'Brien.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Ritter Jr.".

Bill Ritter, Jr.
Governor
State of Colorado



STATE OF COLORADO

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2010

The mission of the Governor's Commission on Community Service is to administer the Colorado AmeriCorps*State program, and to serve as a catalyst for the promotion and expansion of community service and volunteerism to all Coloradans as an effective means to address civic and social issues, and to improve the overall well being of communities throughout the state.

The hallmark of the work of the Governor's Commission on Community Service is the principle of public-private partnership with the local non-profit community, educational, governmental and community-based organizations, providing direct services to meet priority community needs.

Building on the 2009 Colorado Needs Assessment, this plan offers an opportunity for governmental and non-governmental sectors to work together to respond to pressing human, social and economic needs as identified by the communities themselves. This plan offers policies and program initiatives to direct community and governmental resources in strengthening community services supporting children and families in Colorado.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Barbara O'Brien".

Barbara O'Brien
Lieutenant Governor
State of Colorado



I. Introduction

The Colorado Governor's Commission on Community Service (GCCS), under the Office of Lieutenant Governor Barbara O'Brien, is pleased to present this *2010 – 2012 Unified State Service Plan* to the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). This plan establishes strategic and program goals for 2010, 2011 and 2012, and creates the implementation framework under the new Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act (SAA).

This plan also establishes the service plan for the Colorado Governor's Commission on Community Service, with partner organizations, to increase civic engagement and a new plan for service by adults age 55 and older, as required in the Kennedy SAA.

This plan adopts new program goals and service strategies, developed in 2009-2010 as part of the Colorado needs assessment process. It also aligns the AmeriCorps*State goals and programs with community service goals and priorities set forth by the Governor's Commission on Community Service and the Corporation for National and Community Service.

The strategic goals and priorities for the GCCS are more fully described in the 2009 report *Colorado Needs Assessment Report on Community Service, Volunteerism and Civic Engagement*. The data gathered for that report were also used in developing program goals and funding priorities established for the 2009-2012 three-year AmeriCorps grant cycle, which began in 2009. Because of multi-year grants, current programming included in the Unified State Service Plan will continue over the three-year grant cycle. The next three-year grant cycle will begin in June 2011 with awards to be made in June of 2012.

Program goals will be updated annually during the course of the three-year plan as AmeriCorps program funding becomes available for full implementation of the Kennedy Serve America Act. Priorities may shift as new service corps are established and funded. Special emphasis will now be placed on planning for service strategies for adults age 55 and older, now required by the Act.

This service plan will function to guide funding decisions, program development activities and strategic long-range program development plans in Colorado over the next three years.

Priority Service Categories

The GCCS continues to emphasize the priority of aligning community service and volunteerism in the state with the needs and priorities expressed by stakeholder groups and partner organizations during the public input, review, and comment period. The seven priority service categories established by the Commission are:

Civic Engagement - direct financial and staff resources to promote volunteerism, civic engagement, and community service as a part of a broader, multi-faceted strategy to develop local leadership that is responsive to local community needs.



Conservation and the Environment - continue to direct AmeriCorps*State resources in areas that promote energy conservation and water efficiency, through the allocation of AmeriCorps*State funds to organizations such as the Mile High Youth Corps (MHYC) and in partnership with the Colorado Youth Corps Association (CYCA).

Serving People with Disabilities - continue its “disability awareness and inclusion” initiatives to promote services and encourage broader community inclusion and civic engagement for people with disabilities.

Early Childhood - support early childhood service initiatives that support early childhood care and education, as described in the *Early Childhood Colorado Framework* (early.childhoodteam@capitol.state.co.us) released in 2008.

Education - leverage resources from current statewide and local education initiatives to address specific education needs identified by communities, and help continue and support education programs such as mentoring, after-school services, and literacy services.

Health and Health Care - leverage resources from current statewide and local health initiatives to address health issues identified by communities.

Youth Development - continue to support services and programs that prevent school dropout, alcohol and drug abuse, juvenile and criminal behavior, teen pregnancy, and other behaviors that limit opportunities later in life.

Focus Areas

In addition to the program priorities listed above, the Commission has established the following three focus areas to direct new program development activities, to increase volunteers serving meaningful roles in their communities:

- Serving job seekers
- Serving veterans, active military personnel and their families
- Civic engagement by adults age 55 and older

Engaging Adults Age 55 and Older – The Kennedy Serve America Act requires new plans for services by and for adults age 55 and older. GCCS has adopted the following policy and program recommendations to increase civic engagement of older adults through work, service, leadership, and learning.

- Education – create a signature “Boomers’ Campaign for Education” to recruit, train, and deploy older adults to address the public education challenges in the state.
- Health – establish partnerships between state AmeriCorps and other boomer efforts across the state to advance AmeriCorps initiatives to participate in joint projects to recruit, train, and deploy older adults in health care.
- Mobilize volunteerism and improve volunteer management and training capacity – develop statewide marketing campaign to recruit adults age 55+ to civic engagement.
- Income and Employment needs – partner with Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, community colleges, etc. to promote career opportunities and training for adults age 55+.



II. Outreach and Collaboration with CNCS and National Service, and Community Partners

The Colorado Needs Assessment process lays the foundation for the Unified State Service Plan. All Colorado streams of service, partner organizations, sub-grantee programs and stakeholders were actively engaged in that process. The outreach process involved eleven (11) community visits to nineteen (19) counties and eighty (80) towns and cities across the state. A total of thirty-four (34) forums, eight (8) small groups discussions and two (2) audiences with tribal representatives were held, involving over 500 stakeholders and representatives of partner organizations. A full listing of participants in the Needs Assessment process is available in the Needs Assessment report.

Following are examples of sustained, long-term, continuing and special collaboration partners, including those efforts designed to involve all CNCS grantees and stakeholders, including: AmeriCorps State, AmeriCorps National Direct, Senior Corps, Learn and Serve, AmeriCorps NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps), AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers In Service To America), Campus Compact, volunteer centers, state education agencies and other volunteer service organizations within the state.

- **AmeriCorps NCCC/State Commission Collaboration** - The Governor's Commission is adopting the new AmeriCorps NCCC collaboration strategies outlined for commissions at the 2009 National CNCS Grantee meeting. Concerted efforts are underway to involve NCCC in regular GCCS commission activities, all GCCS meetings, the State Service Conference and joint projects, such as special projects service days. GCCS and NCCC will exchange planning and program information to ensure coordinated efforts in meeting community needs, especially in rural and remote areas.
- **AmeriCorps*State/Senior Corps** – Senior Corps programs, which include RSVP, Senior Companion Program and Foster Grandparent Program, are recognized as a strong presence and a significant partner volunteer service organization nationally and in Colorado. GCCS will continue to foster a strong partnership with the Senior Corps through active engagement and participation in planning, program development and program implementation.
- **AmeriCorps National Directs** – Consistent with the Kennedy Serve America Act (SAA) amendments requiring the Corporation to solicit and consider views of state commissions regarding applications for national service within the state, GCCS is adopting collaboration principles that ensure effective communication and review of information concerning National Direct applications, programs and services in Colorado. GCCS will establish practices that allow for open and frequent communication with National Direct applicants, and will provide feedback as may be required to CNCS and the National Directs reflecting priority community needs, priority service sites and the proposed applications.
- **Colorado's Tony Grampas Youth Services Program and the Colorado Youth Development Team** – GCCS has begun a new collaboration with a state-funded youth development program, administered by the State Department of Public Health and Environment, called the Colorado Tony Grampas Youth Services Program. Several positive outcomes have resulted from this effort: information sharing; exchange of funding and grant application/grant selection information; information about youth development services best practices; co-sponsorship on positive youth development training for youth services providers; and collaboration and support concerning funding for services and programs jointly funded by GCCS AmeriCorps*State and the Tony Grampas Program.



- **Colorado State VISTA Program (CSV)** – In 2009, with the CNCS State Office, CVCN, and others, GCCS developed a statewide partnership program to use AmeriCorps VISTA resources in developing capacity to address poverty issues throughout the state. CSV partner sites include: Metro Volunteers, United Way of Larimer County, United Way of Weld County, Jefferson County Workforce Center, Adventist Community Services, CVCN and Colorado Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters (COVOAD).
- **Colorado Volunteer Center Network (CVCN)** – As part of this volunteer center network, the Commission is a primary partner in promoting and sustaining volunteer centers in the state. The GCCS goal is to continue to partner with the CVCN to expand volunteer center resources to remote areas of the state, and strengthen the capacities of all volunteer centers by accessing VISTA volunteers and other means of support.
- **Directors of Volunteers in Agencies (DOVIA)** – The Commission served as a co-sponsor of the Denver DOVIA Volunteer Awards program and co-sponsored, with DOVIA, the Colorado Springs Pikes Peak Volunteer Career Fair. Collaboration with DOVIA is extended through the DOVIA participation on the statewide VISTA project.
- **Disability Program Outreach** – Mini-grant programming for disability awareness and inclusion services. GCCS has initiated a successful community outreach effort designed to engage disability advocacy and service organizations in activities that promote volunteerism and community service. Small community outreach and training grants have been awarded to: Creative Training/Accelerating Talent (CTAT) Disability Inclusion Training; The Colorado Advisory Council for Persons with Disabilities; the Colorado Cross-Disability Coalition; Metro Children’s Center; the Colorado Disability Economic Initiative; Colorado Experience Bank (State Division on Aging and Adults with Disabilities); Black United Fund of Colorado; Disabled Cycling Program–Assisted Cycling Tours; and Denver Metro’s CPRC’s in Transition. Additional outreach to Senior Corps Advisory Councils will be made to invite Senior Corps participation in the nomination processes, ensuring the needs of disabled aging populations will be recognized in the grant making process.
- **GCCS Communications Plan** – GCCS produces and distributes several periodic reports: GCCS quarterly newsletters, MLK Day of Service Report, Colorado Cares Day of Service Report, 9/11 Day of Remembrance and Service Report, Cesar Chavez Day of Service and Learning Report, along with an active website and Facebook “social media” site. GCCS encourages public outreach, engagement and participation in community services, programs, and planning and in all GCCS program activities.
- **Metro Volunteers, Inc** – A Hands On/Points of Light affiliate, this organization is the leading volunteer match organization in Colorado. In 2009, the Commission co-sponsored, with Metro Volunteers, the statewide summit: *A New Era of Service: Summit of Civic Engagement and Volunteerism*, attracting 300 attendees to review the “new era of service” under the Kennedy Serve America Act.
- **National Philanthropy Day** – The Commission continues its work in promoting and honoring individuals, nonprofit organizations and corporations who exemplify the highest standards of volunteerism and philanthropy in Colorado. In 2009 GCCS chaired the 20th Annual National Philanthropy Day and Awards Luncheon Steering Committee. For several years, the Commission’s resources have been specifically targeted at identifying youth and youth groups to honor as exemplary volunteers.



- **Rural Philanthropy Days** – Twice annually GCCS participates in outreach activities with community foundations, state and local government agencies and other donor organizations to share and exchange information with dozens of private non-profit and small governmental organizations and educational institutions in rural and remote areas of the state. Rural Philanthropy Days is designed to introduce these organizations to potential donors, partners, stakeholders and advocates, and assist donor and grant organizations in learning more about community-based service providers in smaller and remote rural communities.
- **State Service Conference** – Each year GCCS sponsors a statewide, all-streams-of-AmeriCorps-service State Service Conference for members and program operators, attracting over 400 AmeriCorps*State, AmeriCorps National Direct, AmeriCorps VISTA, AmeriCorps NCCC, Learn and Serve, and Senior Corps members and programs. Planning for this training program includes collaborative efforts with representatives from all national service programs and provides an excellent venue for collaboration by convening all national service programs. To strengthen collaboration between AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs, sessions or tracks will be offered, to the greatest extent practical, reflecting this interface for optimum participation, engagement and impact.



III. Implementing the Kennedy Serve America Act

The Governor's Commission is prepared to implement the new Kennedy Serve America Act (SAA) and is incorporating SAA provisions in the new Unified State Service Plan and GCCS Management Plan. At the time of the State Service Plan development process, the appropriations bill funding key provisions of SAA have not yet passed Congress. Nonetheless, GCCS is "planning to plan" for SAA implementation, and features of SAA are incorporated in the State Service Plan.

Administrative provisions implemented on October 1, 2009 - Several administrative features affecting grant programs funded by GCCS, AmeriCorps*State were effective on October 1, 2009, and are being implemented through routine program administrative functions such as information dissemination, policy directives, technical assistance and training, on-site monitoring, desk monitoring, and verification.

In addition, GCCS is prepared to implement program changes over the course of the three-year Unified State Service Plan timeline, as directed by CNCS. Steps have already been taken in the following areas:

1. Align Colorado AmeriCorps*State program with the five (5) new service corps programs in Subtitle C – the State Service Plan identifies Colorado's service categories as aligned with these new service corps programs:

- Education
- Healthy futures
- Clean energy
- Veterans
- Opportunity

2. Focus areas and target populations groups - Three (3) discrete new program priorities, job seekers, serving veterans, and serving adults age 55 and older, are identified in the plan as emerging program initiatives. GCCS will also partner with Senior Corps, which has substantial resources already in place to implement the SAA.

3. Additional initiatives on the horizon over the next three years may include:

- Services for outreach and placement of participants with disabilities
- Social Innovation Fund
- Volunteer Generation Fund
- Statewide "Call to Service" campaign
- 9/11 Day of Service and Remembrance
- Colorado launch of "Cesar Chavez Day of Learning and Service"
- Fellowship programs
- Encore and Silver Scholars
- Non-profit capacity building
- Service Plan for Seniors Age 55 and Over (see *Section IV* below)

It is anticipated that SAA implementation will evolve over the three years covered in the Unified State Service Plan, and annual updates of the plan will incorporate program developments as Congress funds them and as directed by CNCS and the Commission on Community Service.



IV. Plan for Service for Adults Age 55 and Older: Increasing Civic Engagement for Adults Age 55 and Older

The Kennedy Serve America Act (SAA) places new emphasis and program requirements respecting state plan requirements for service by and for adults age 55 and over. Significant work is underway in Colorado and across the country in the emerging field of engaging adults over 55 in service for social benefit.

GCCS has recently developed a series of recommendations, incorporated in this plan, to increase civic engagement of adults age 55 and older in Colorado. (See reference document *“Increasing Civic Engagement for Adults Age 55 and Older in Colorado: Recommendations to the Governor’s Commission on Community Service”*). Recommendations from this process are incorporated in the Unified State Service Plan.

Introduction – The SAA requires two distinct plan elements for incorporation in the Unified State Service Plan: 1) the state shall work with appropriate state agencies and private entities to develop a comprehensive state service plan for service by adults age 55 and older; and 2) the plan shall include recommendations to the state’s agency on aging for policies to increase service for adults age 55 and older, including how best to use such adults as sources of social capital and how to utilize their skills and experience to address community needs.

Guiding Principles – The Unified State Service Plan initiatives to increase civic engagement for adults age 55 and older involve working closely with organizations and individuals knowledgeable in the field, drawing upon existing data, research and existing resources and engaging partners and stakeholders in developing the service plan and recommendations. Strategic partners in plan development and implementation will include: Senior Corps programs, volunteer centers, and local units of government including county government, local elected officials, and non-profit organizations.

Needs Assessment Update – In future years the Colorado Needs Assessment report will be updated to add a service category entitled: *“Engaging Adults Age 55 and Over”* to incorporate the community needs, program goals and service strategies recommended as part of the Unified State Service Plan.

Data – Data elements relevant to service strategies to increase the civic engagement for older adults include:

- Economic impact of workers age 55 and older in the economy, including current labor market participation rates and employment rates
- Social impact of the roles of workers age 55 and older in the community
- Health and social benefits of active engagement for adults age 55 and older
- Volunteer engagement statistics for adults age 55 and older, with comparative analysis of other demographics for Colorado
- Demographic and census data respecting income, employment, poverty rates, education, residency, home ownership, health and other data respecting the over-all well-being of adults age 55 and over in Colorado

Outreach Participants and Process – GCCS has engaged the following organizations in outreach, review and comment on the plan process:

- State Department of Human Services, Division on Aging and Adults with Disabilities
- State of Colorado Commission on Aging
- State of Colorado Department of Local Affairs
- State of Colorado Department of Labor and Employment
- State of Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment



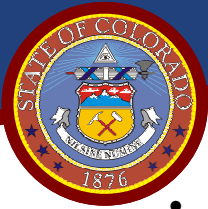
- State of Colorado Department of Natural Resources (State Parks)
- Rose Community Foundation - *Boomers Leading Change* initiative (www.coloradoboomers.com)
- Colorado Experience Bank (www.coloradoexperiencebank.com)
- AARP
- Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) - including Senior Corps, Foster Grandparent, RSVP and Senior Companion Program
- Volunteers of America (VOA)
- Colorado Nonprofit Association (CNA)
- Constituency groups and interest groups
- Volunteer Match
- Colorado Trust

Plan Elements – Elements discussed in the recommendations also include:

- Recommendations to the State Department of Human Services, Division on Aging, on:
 - Marketing outreach plan to businesses
 - Outreach to non-profit organizations, the Colorado Nonprofit Association and Denver Office of Strategic Partnerships
 - Outreach plan to the State Department of Higher Education, the Colorado Community College System and individual public and private colleges
 - Outreach to the State Department of Education
 - Outreach to other state agencies, including the Department of Local Affairs, Department of Labor and Employment, Department of Public Health and Environment, Department of Natural Resources (State Parks), and others as may be appropriate
- Recommendations for GCCS policies and programs to be included in the Colorado Needs Assessment Report for Engaging Adults Age 55 and Older in Civic Engagement and Multigenerational Activities in the seven service categories included in the report.
- Recommendations for engaging adults over age 55 in respite services for adults age 55 and older and for caregivers.
- Recommendations for employment programs and strategies for transitional employment for adults age 55 and older to move to purposeful work in their post-career lives, including recommendations for Alternative Work Models (AWM) and flexible work plans, computer lab training, career transition education, and other transitional work strategies.
- Recommendations for encouraging the development of Encore Service Programs, with specific recommendations on enrolling a significant number of AmeriCorps members age 55 and older, including those who are age 55 and older in the design and implementation of the Encore Service program.

POLICY AND PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS - Increase civic engagement of older adults through work, service, leadership and learning.

- **Education:** Create a signature **“Boomers’ Campaign for Education”** to recruit, train and deploy older adults to address the public education challenges in the state.
 - Partner with targeted school districts and non-profits
 - Begin with AmeriCorps, AmeriCorps VISTA, and Senior Corps and extend to other programs



- Create an “Experience Corps” and “Encore Program” to engage older adults in all levels in support of education: research, mentoring/tutoring, math and science teachers, transportation, health care, social services, counseling, administration, nutrition, policy and advocacy, etc.
 - “Teacher Corps” - Provide training (with stipends, health care coverage) to transition experienced professional adults age 55+ to education positions as teachers, counselors, tutors in science, technology, engineering and math to augment public school resources
 - Partner with state colleges, universities, community colleges to provide classroom instruction as a key element to transition to education positions
 - Train “boomers” as navigators to assist entering middle and high school students to provide one-on-one counseling and career path development, map out course work, and assist high school student with college applications, scholarship and grant applications, etc.
- **Health:** Establish partnerships between GCCS, AmeriCorps*State, and other boomer efforts across the state to advance AmeriCorps initiatives to participate in joint projects such as the Rose Community Foundation’s “Boomers Leading Change in Health” a project to recruit, train, and deploy older adults to serve as health care navigators, community health workers, and health advocates to increase access to quality health care.
 - Create joint partnerships
 - Develop projects that are replicable in other areas, especially rural, remote and mountain communities.
 - Focus senior corps and “encore” programs on health care, health care access, advocacy, and other quality health care issues
 - **Volunteerism:** Mobilize volunteerism and improve volunteer management and training capacity. A source of human capital – develop statewide marketing campaign to recruit adults age 55+ to civic engagement
 - Create a leadership corps of retired marketing experts to help develop campaign messages and strategies
 - Integrate “relationship marketing” that builds on trusted sources and networks on older adults into all marketing strategies: coffees, café Sundays, peer-to-peer volunteer fairs, etc.
 - Recruit boomer volunteer ambassadors to do outreach
 - Create an umbrella website for the state – “VolunteerColorado.org”
 - Partner with resort communities and developers that target second and third homeowners
 - Partner with service clubs
 - Market to community festivals
 - Partner with “VIP – Volunteers with Impact and Purpose” and Metro Volunteers to help nonprofit organizations build capacity and benefit from the skills of older adult volunteers
 - **Employment:** Partner with Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, community colleges, etc. to promote career opportunities and training for adults age 55+
 - “Encore Fellows Program –provide a year of training with stipends to training in nonprofit management and social entrepreneurship for adults age 55+ to transition from private sector to leadership positions in nonprofit or public sector organizations
 - Place adults age 55+ in one-year management/leadership positions in nonprofit organizations
 - Develop “next chapters” programs to connect pre-retirement boomers or newly retired boomers to learning, volunteerism, new careers, and civic activities
 - In changing economic times, retirement may not be an option; older adults may need to use volunteerism as a bridge to future work



V. AmeriCorps*State - Specific Programming and Goals

Based on the Key Findings identified in the 2009 *Colorado Needs Assessment Report on Community Service, Volunteerism and Civic Engagement*, the Governor's Commission on Community Service has adopted the seven (7) priority service categories, listed below:

- Civic Engagement
- Conservation and the Environment
- Serving People with Disabilities
- Early Childhood
- Education
- Health and Health Care
- Youth Development

Additionally, in light of the present economic situation the Commission plans to direct more resources to community service solutions that respond to this new economic reality. The specific GCCS program priority areas listed above were developed and endorsed by the Commission prior to the passage of the Kennedy SAA. The GCCS program priority areas align closely with the Corporation for National and Community Service's five (5) new strategic priorities identified in the Kennedy SAA:

- Education
- Healthy Futures
- Clean Energy
- Veterans
- Opportunity

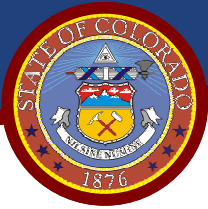
Colorado Programming Areas - Service Strategies by Program Categories

The GCCS has matched the Needs Assessment findings with current and projected resources to develop specific goals for the seven (7) identified service area categories and the added focus on economic recovery. For each of the seven service area categories, the Kennedy SAA priorities, which are being addressed, have been listed in parentheses.

1. Civic Engagement - Promoting volunteerism, community service, and civic engagement

The Governor's Commission on Community Service will direct financial and staff resources to promote volunteerism, civic engagement, and community service as a part of a broader, multi-faceted strategy to develop local leadership that is responsive to local community needs.

GOAL 1 – Statewide Volunteerism Campaign: Increase the number of Coloradans in service, and increase the volunteer support to community non-profit organizations through a statewide promotional campaign. This year-long multi-media campaign will elevate the role of volunteers in sustaining community organizations, promote the role of volunteers as the catalysts for positive community change, and support a higher level of recruitment, training, retention, technical assistance, support, and recognition for volunteerism throughout the state.



Special emphasis in the campaign will be targeted to young social entrepreneurs, returning veterans, and those individuals who have recently lost their jobs – all of whom will be encouraged to take on leadership roles in community problem-solving.

GOAL 2 – Volunteer Centers: To engage and empower Coloradans to address critical community needs through direct service in their communities, GCCS will assist in developing an expanded volunteer center infrastructure across the state, with a special focus on rural, remote, and underserved communities.

This initiative will, on a pilot basis, establish new volunteer service projects in target communities across the state, including campus-based projects, and assist in an increase, over three years, of up to four new volunteer centers in high priority areas, beginning with one demonstration site. The volunteer centers will join the existing Colorado Volunteer Center Network, comprised of 8 volunteer centers, to serve underserved communities that lack a local volunteer center. The local volunteer centers will:

- Create a community based volunteer outreach and matching service to recruit volunteers of all ages and match volunteers with the volunteer service opportunities and priority needs identified by the communities
- Create and maintain a Non-Profit Directory – Community Resource Guide
- Provide orientation, education, training and community workshops for new volunteers, to build sustainability and a pool of long-term, well-trained and dedicated community volunteers
- Conduct corporate and business community outreach to encourage business support and private investment in local services and encourage local philanthropy
- Engage local college students and young adults in volunteer service, coordinating student volunteer programs with community needs
- Engage baby-boomers in community and volunteer services, using skills, talents and experiences of newly retired baby boomers in service to meet community needs
- Promote civic engagement inclusion of, and promote increases in direct community services to, people with disabilities
- Support the Colorado State Emergency Operations Plan, in conjunction with the Colorado Division of Emergency Management and supporting agencies, to serve as the coordinating agency to ensure the effective and efficient use of unaffiliated volunteers and unsolicited donations during emergencies and disasters
- Serve as a catalyst to support resources to local communities for community planning, needs assessment and advocacy for strengthening communities through volunteer service, engaging the non-profit private sector in meeting community needs
- Develop and promote service learning in elementary, middle schools, high schools and college and to serve as a site for college internships; identify and assist in service-learning curriculum development to be used with the school based programs
- Promote and support technical assistance for volunteer programs in agencies

2. Conservation and the Environment (Clean Energy)

The Commission will continue to direct AmeriCorps*State resources, to the greatest extent practical, in areas that promote energy conservation and water efficiency, through the allocation of AmeriCorps*State funds to organizations such as the Mile High Youth Corps (MHYC) and in partnership with the Colorado Youth Corps Association (CYCA), and the Weld County Youth Conservation Corps (WCYCC).



GOAL – AmeriCorps support for energy conservation and water efficiency will be maintained as a top priority service area: AmeriCorps support for MHYC and the CYCA provides significant support for energy conservation and water efficiency services for low-income, elderly and people with a disability across Colorado. AmeriCorps members provide direct service to assist residents to reduce energy costs and improve water use efficiency.

Through youth corps programs and other programs, AmeriCorps members provide the following energy and conservation direct services:

- Install compact florescent bulbs
- Install low-flow shower heads
- Assist households with energy savings audits and measures
- Install high efficiency toilets
- Install carbon monoxide detectors
- Improve state trails and campgrounds
- With resources, continue to focus on eradication of invasive plants, insects, and animals (e.g., tamarisk, pine beetle, zebra mussel)
- Continue resources to boost the health of the environment (e.g., thin out trees that may be a fire hazard)
- Maintain urban park areas for neighborhood recreation in central city areas
- Construct and maintain community gardens

Many of these community-based services serve low-income neighborhoods and households, people with disabilities, and the elderly.

3. Serving People with Disabilities (Opportunity, Veterans)

Colorado communities expressed an interest in learning more about service needs and community services (both needs and gaps) for people with disabilities. The Governor’s Commission on Community Service will continue its “disability awareness and inclusion” initiatives to promote services and encourage broader community inclusion and civic engagement for people with disabilities.

GOAL 1 – Maintain current GCCS service initiatives: In 2008 – 2009 the GCCS implemented a strategy to expand community awareness of the abilities and community service capacity of people with disabilities by providing direct grants to partner organizations to:

- Partner with other organizations to increase referrals and applications by people with a disability to AmeriCorps with a resulting increase in the numbers of people with a disability who become AmeriCorps members. Increase the quality and quantity of supports for AmeriCorps members with disabilities
- Create a statewide working group to develop and implement strategies to recruit and retain persons with disabilities in service positions and to ensure positive experiences
- Sponsor training sessions for and with AmeriCorps*State and AmeriCorps National programs to educate program staff and AmeriCorps members on ways to increase participation of individuals with disabilities
- Provide financial incentives to modify or enhance program activities or deliverables to help defray the costs of achieving “disability and awareness” program goals



GOAL 2 – Share best practices: The results of this work will assist the GCCS in promoting broader strategies, sharing best practices and developing more focused program initiatives to serve people with a disability. Best practices venues include:

- GCCS State Disability Grant Report
- GCCS Newsletter
- GCCS Mid-Year and Annual Reports
- Program Managers' Institute
- Colorado State Service Conference
- Day of Service promotional campaigns including the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service, Colorado Cares Day, and Cesar Chavez Day of Learning and Service

GOAL 3 – Expand the network of the GCCS partner agencies that are routinely engaged in advocacy and services delivery for people with a disability: Assist these agencies in developing civic engagement initiatives to serve their program participants as well as their partner organizations. Community service partner organizations include:

- Creative Training/Accelerating Talent Disability Inclusion Training
- Colorado Advisory Council for Persons with Disabilities
- Colorado Cross-Disabilities Coalition
- Metro Children's Center
- Colorado Disability Economic Initiative
- Colorado Division on Aging, Colorado Experience Bank
- Disabled Cycling Program
- Denver Metro Community Parent Resource Centers in Transition

4. Early Childhood (Education)

To promote services and direct resources in support of early childhood care and education, the *Early Childhood Colorado Framework*, (early.childhoodteam@capitol.state.co.us) released in 2008 established the following policy goals for Colorado's young children and their families:

- Children have high quality early childhood learning supports and environments and comprehensive health care
- Families have meaningful community and parenting supports
- Early childhood professionals have the knowledge, skills and supports to work effectively with and on behalf of families and children

GOAL – Increase initiatives that work with families: Current initiatives include the Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY Corps program) by the Colorado Parent and Child Foundation, a GCCS-funded AmeriCorps program.



5. Education (Education)

The GCCS will continue to leverage resources from current statewide and local education initiatives to address three specific education needs identified by communities to:

- Increase the number of tutors
- Increase the number of mentors
- Increase school-to-work programs

GOAL – Program creation and development: The GCCS will embark on a new program initiative, in partnership with the Colorado Department of Education, to develop the Colorado Statewide Mentoring and Tutoring Partnership. The purpose of this program is to serve as a catalyst to:

- Establish and sustain a statewide youth mentoring collaborative partnerships with direct-service mentoring programs
- Build increased organizational capacity, community support, and resources for mentoring and tutoring
- Expand mentoring services in underserved areas, especially those serving at-risk school-age children living in poverty

6. Health/Health Care (Healthy Futures)

The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment is the state agency that sets the agenda for public health and environmental quality in the state. As such, it works closely with local public health and environmental health partners to make Colorado one of the healthiest places to live. Through enhanced community service and volunteer activities, GCCS will leverage resources from current statewide and local health initiatives to address four health issues identified by communities to:

GOAL 1 – Increase participation in healthy lifestyles: GCCS and partner agencies, including grant recipients and sub-recipients, Learn and Serve, and AmeriCorps will embark on new “service strategies” to promote “healthy lifestyles” among all groups, especially children and families. GCCS will actively promote healthy lifestyle, recreation and health and wellness initiatives in all AmeriCorps*State funded programs, and assist in technical assistance and “best practices” strategies.

GOAL 2 – Promote and support current programs: In partnership with the Lieutenant Governor’s Office initiatives, other state agencies and other partner organizations, GCCS will actively promote and support activities and events that highlight existing community awareness campaigns, such as:

- Colorado Kids Outdoors
- National Get Outdoors Day
- 50th Anniversary of State Parks in 2009
- “No Child Left Indoors”
- GCCS Statewide Service Day promotions, including Colorado Cares Day
- LiveWell Colorado (funded by Kaiser Permanente, Colorado Health Foundation, etc.)

GOAL 3 – Increase volunteer and community services for the elderly and people with disabilities: Increase services such as home delivered meals, volunteer transportation services, senior “day care”, respite service and other support services for the elderly and people with disabilities.



GOAL 4 – Develop partnerships to provide services: With the Colorado Department of Human Services, Division on Aging and Adult Services, assist in promoting “healthy lifestyles” for baby-boomers and maturing adults, through volunteering, lifelong learning, and employment and community services.

7. Youth Development (Education, Opportunity)

Youth development services are those community support, guidance, educational and employment opportunities that help increase positive adolescent and youth development, and serve to prevent school dropout, alcohol and drug abuse, juvenile and criminal behavior, teen pregnancy, and other behaviors that limit opportunities later in life. Youth development programs are a long-standing program priority of GCCS and AmeriCorps*State programs.

GOAL – Support current youth development programs: GCCS is committed to continue youth development service programming to help meet the youth development and community needs identified in the needs assessment process, and to promote youth self esteem, future goals and plans for achieving them, problem-solving skills, participation in extracurricular activities, etc. Program initiatives will continue in:

- Job training, team building, and service learning
- GED enrollment, preparation and tutoring
- Youth and adult mentoring and tutoring, and peer mentoring
- Independent living skills instruction in subjects such as budgeting, employment and job-seeking skills, education, conflict management, personal hygiene, healthy lifestyles, and recreation
- Youth leadership development, including the Crew Leader Development Program (CLDP) and Education and Outreach Program (EOP) in youth corps programs

8. Strategies for economic recovery (Opportunity)

The Governor’s Commission on Community Service will direct staff resources to assist Workforce Centers in serving job seekers through volunteerism and community service. Two specific new program initiatives are planned:

GOAL 1 – Enhance Volunteerism: With the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE), improve and enhance “volunteer opportunity” web site information to assist job seekers in using volunteer referral service opportunities as an integral part of the comprehensive job search activities. In the current labor market, volunteer service can be used by job seekers to:

- Improve networking and exposure
- Strengthen job skills, and practice new occupational skills
- Explore new occupations and potential career options

GOAL 2 – Provide Technical Assistance, Toolkit and Best Practices (Veterans): With Colorado Department of Labor and Employment and county Workforce Centers, using AmeriCorps VISTA and Senior Corps resources, provide technical assistance support, toolkit and best practices to assist in developing “volunteer coordinator” functions in local workforce centers, expanding job search services to returning veterans, including disabled veterans, ex-offenders, baby-boomers, new college graduates, displaced workers, and other categories of job-seekers.



VI. GCCS Project and Program Initiatives, Maintaining Sustainability

1. Building Strategic Partnerships

The Commission continues to place great emphasis on a campaign to increase public awareness of community service and volunteerism related to strengthening communities, expanding volunteerism, youth development and education, civic engagement, and mentoring.

The Commission is continuing a comprehensive community awareness effort, begun in 2008. The goal of the outreach plan is to expand the Commission's visibility in Colorado and to foster volunteer service statewide with emphases in three distinct areas: public information, marketing and branding, and community awareness and building partnerships. The goals are:

- Educate the general public about the mission and goals of the Commission and all state and national service corps programs, including Senior Corps, NCCC, Learn and Serve, AmeriCorps VISTA, and national direct programs in the state.
- Increase community awareness and media exposure in a variety of ways, including personal appearances, print media, routine and periodic press releases, more visible announcements, web site updating, and expansion of electronic database of partner agencies and organizations.
- Encourage all Colorado residents, especially youth, to engage in volunteer service to make the state a better place to live and raise a family.

2. Program Evaluation

Accountability is one of the GCCS management's guiding principles. In the last quarter of CY 2009, GCCS completed a program activities summary and best practices tool-kit for AmeriCorps programs operated in 2006-2009, as part of the AmeriCorps grant cycle close-out. A comprehensive on-going program outcomes and evaluation cycle for the next three-year grant cycle for 2009-2012 grants will begin later in 2010.

This program evaluation component will begin by designating a committee consisting of Commission staff and program managers to outline the framework for an evaluation tool and process. The Corporation's training and technical assistance providers will provide assistance in this aspect of the project. Through an RFP process, a subcontractor will be chosen to implement the evaluation plan.

3. Special Projects

- GCCS Days of Service
- Colorado Statewide VISTA
- AmeriCorps Week – Annual Governor's Service Awards
- Bi-annual State Summit on Civic Engagement, Volunteerism and Community Service, to alternate with the bi-annual State Volunteerism Conference.
- On-going participation in and support for established service day projects sponsored by others, such as Global Youth Service Day, which focuses on the contributions of children and youth and fosters the development of an ethic of service for America's youth.



4. Three new service initiatives and focus areas to be developed and implemented over the three-year plan cycle

- Job Seekers – GCCS will develop a community and business outreach toolkit to engage employers, volunteer centers, and nonprofit organizations in developing volunteerism as part of a comprehensive job seeking strategy.
- VetsCorps Program Development – a veterans’ service corps program that will implement the Veterans Corps provision of the Kennedy SAA, to recruit and mobilize veterans to serve the needs of returning veterans and their families. Unemployment data and health risk data (e.g., accidents, PTSS, overdoses, suicides, domestic abuse, etc.) suggest that serious attention is needed to assist veterans transitioning and reintegrating to civilian life.

A new Veterans Corps program would provide resources for veterans to learn and work their way back to civilian life through service to others. VetCorps members would be deployed to organizations providing services to veterans, including in-take and needs assessment, employment services (coordinated with local veterans employment representative (LVER) at Work Force Centers), medical “navigation” services, skill training, child care, housing, education, financial literacy, and other direct and support services to veterans. Partnerships with existing conservation corps programs such as the Veterans Conservation Corps crews and others are important resources to use to achieve full implementation of a Veterans Corps presence in Colorado.

- Increasing Civic Engagement for Adults Age 55 and Older – described in Section IV above.

5. Sustainability

GCCS continues its efforts to reach out to state agencies, private sector foundations and grants, businesses and other non-federal fund sources to achieve program sustainability. Unfortunately, Colorado is one of only seven (7) states in the nation that does not provide a state appropriation for community service programs. Colorado’s Governor’s Commission on Community Service relies heavily on in-kind state administrative support and private sector discounts, gifts, donations, grants and other non-federal contributions to maintain a cost-effective administrative system and programs.

State support: The state of Colorado provides a significant level of in-kind state support for legal counsel, contracting, accounting, fiscal controls, and financial management.

Private sector support: Non-federal in-kind and small grant support is realized from a variety of private sector donors and contributors, listed below, who support, sponsor and co-sponsor the administrative and program activities of GCCS,

- The El Pomar Foundation
- The Gay and Lesbian Fund of Colorado
- The Martin Luther King Holiday Commission
- Colorado Volunteer Center Network
- Metro Volunteers, Inc.



- State GCCS Commissioners' in-kind contributions
- Colorado YMCA Camp of Rockies
- Johnson and Wales University

Future sustainability efforts: The GCCS Commission has embarked on a more aggressive campaign to reach community foundations, private sector donors, state legislators, and other state agencies to support the long-term viability and sustainability of community service programming in the state. Non-federal program grants will be sought for volunteer center support, a statewide volunteerism campaign, veterans' services, volunteer recruitment from job-seekers, youth development training and support services, education, environment and conservation, Senior Corps programs and senior services, engaging adults age 55 and older programs, and other program initiatives.

State, county, and local government programs are facing serious reductions, program cutbacks, lay-offs and retrenchment. While it is unrealistic to seek a state appropriation in the current economic environment, it is realistic to continue efforts to seek non-federal donations, grants and contributions and to leverage non-government support for expanded AmeriCorps*State and expanded AmeriCorps VISTA program services, especially for targeted populations such as seniors, veterans, people with disabilities, and services in rural and remote areas of the state.



VII. GCCS Management Plan

In addition to specific program areas noted as state priority goals, the Governor's Commission on Community Service has adopted the following management goals, with annual performance goals, objectives and outcomes in each goal category:

1. Develop and maintain organizational and financial resources necessary to provide effective and efficient program services
 - Increase financial support for community service and volunteer initiatives from a broad range of public and private sources.
 - Develop organizational capacity, financial resources and policy initiatives to respond to critical social and economic issues, develop service strategies for job creation and employment, and launch new economic stimulus grants.
 - Create and support new "service strategies" programs in "focus areas" identified by the Commission.
 - Develop and capture non-federal resources to improve GCCS sustainability.
 - Develop implementation plans for Kennedy SAA.
2. Establish and maintain effective and efficient grants program management and systems
 - Establish and maintain effective and efficient grants program and other program services and financial systems that are consistent with statutory requirements and established program goals and priorities.
 - Implement ARRA Recovery Act monitoring and reporting.
 - Dedicate additional AmeriCorps resources to implement effective grants and contracting processes now being implemented by OIT, OSC, etc.
 - Update and develop cohesive policies and procedures manuals that meet standards for Kennedy SAA and new program requirements.
3. Build strategic partnerships
 - Create mechanisms that facilitate greater cooperation, communication and partnerships among agencies working in the service and volunteerism field.
 - Promote service and volunteerism as an integral component of GCCS programs and priorities.
 - Develop partnerships with state agencies to create service strategies jobs initiatives.
 - Build new partnerships in targeted focus areas identified by the Commission – Veterans, Job Seekers and employment services, and groups representing "adults age 55 and older" – to implement program goals involving these focus areas and target groups.
 - Establish and maintain effective relationship with all service categories including senior corps, learn and serve, national directs, NCCC, etc. as envisioned by the Kennedy SAA consultation and coordination requirements.
4. Promote community service and volunteerism
 - Advocate for service and volunteerism as essential component in sustaining healthy Colorado communities.
 - Increase public awareness, appreciation, support and participation in service and volunteerism.
 - Develop cohesive work plan based on three-year state service plan for 2010-2012, with emphasis on economic stimulus context and Kennedy SAA requirements, based on the Needs Assessment Report and report on civic engagement for adults age 55 and older.



5. Establish and achieve standards of excellence in all aspects of operations and provide for professional growth and development for employees
 - Provide for high standards of accomplishment in all aspects of operations.
 - Provide for professional growth and development for employees.
 - Develop and implement principled decision-making and value-driven principles that guide program implementation and administration.



VIII. Accomplishments and Reference Documents

Specific Accomplishments - 2009

- 1. Communication and Public Information Plan** – In an effort to increase communication, promote volunteerism, and create a brand for the Commission, the GCCS has implemented a new communication plan. Along with the annual publications of the *MLK Jr. Day Report* and the *Colorado Cares Day Report*, the staff now publishes scheduled quarterly Newsletters, the *AmeriCorps State Program Mid-Year Report*, and the *Governor's Commission on Community Service Annual Report*, on a regular basis. Aside from our new regular publications, the Commission also produced special reports in 2008 such as the US Commissions *State Funding Survey Report*.
- 2. Preparation and Outreach for 2009 Grant Cycle – New Grantees Selected in 2009** - In mid-2008, the Commission staff launched a new three-year AmeriCorps grant cycle. The Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) requested applications that addressed the strategic initiatives of the Corporation for National and Community Service as well as specific Colorado initiatives. Several outreach activities were undertaken in an effort to provide this funding opportunity to all geographic areas of the state and to all potential grant recipients, particularly those in rural, underserved and areas of extreme poverty.

The NOFO was distributed to:

- All Colorado counties through the 211 volunteer network system
- GCCS stakeholders, program partners and participants
- National service partners including the CNCS State Office, NCCC, and Campus Compact
- A press release distributed by the Governor's Media Office

Seven pre-application sessions were held in Denver (2), Glenwood Springs, Pueblo, Durango, Fort Morgan and Estes Park.

- 3. State Needs Assessment Report Published in April 2009** - The current needs assessment, completed in 2009, is the foundation for the development of the *2010--2012 State Service Plan*, and will help the Commission develop and enhance relationships, partnerships, and collaborations with individuals, organizations, foundations, and others to build and maintain vital thriving communities throughout Colorado.

The general focus of the assessment is to determine what is important to communities, how citizens are involved in their communities, what is working to engage citizens in the civic life of the community, and what kinds of supports are needed to expand service, volunteerism, and civic engagement. While specific issues may vary by community, emphasis is placed on issues such as: education, early childhood development / learning, youth development, health care, people with a disabilities, conservation / environment.

From April – August 2008, community forums, small group discussions, and interviews involving approximately 500 people were conducted in the six primary sites (Alamosa, Durango, Greeley, Grand Junction, Lamar, Pueblo) plus Cortez, Pagosa Springs, Southern Ute Indian Reservation, and the Ute Mountain Ute Indian Reservation.



To ensure reliability and validity, the draft report was distributed to those participating in the initial data-gathering phase. Final reports for the six primary sites plus a statewide report were produced and distributed.

The final comprehensive report was published and distributed in April 2009.

GCCS Reference Documents:

1. *"GCCS Colorado Needs Assessment Report on Community Service, Volunteerism and Civic Engagement" -2009*
2. *GCCS Grant Portfolio – 2009-2010*
3. *GCCS Management Plan – 2008, 2009, 2010*
4. *GCCS Disability Mini-Grant Portfolio – 2008 and 2009*
5. *"Increasing Civic Engagement for Adults Age 55 and Older in Colorado: Recommendations to the Governor's Commission on Community Service" - 2009*



Governor's Commission on Community Service

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