

## GROWING NATIONAL SERVICE

National service programs such as AmeriCorps, YouthBuild, Senior Corps, and the Peace Corps address critical national and local needs including disaster relief, conservation, housing, health, education, and economic development. Participants also benefit by learning leadership, teamwork, and technical skills; gaining exposure to people of different backgrounds; and expanding educational and career opportunities. Most Americans are unaware of national service and demand for these programs far exceeds the number of opportunities.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The Commission's recommendations would build a service infrastructure to support one million Americans in national service annually by 2031. The Commission seeks to ensure that national service is a realistic choice for all Americans, including opportunity youth, Tribal members, rural residents, and Americans with disabilities. Growth within existing programs would come from expanding AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS); enhancing support for participants, particularly those from low-income communities; and using technology to involve more Americans in national service.

- **Double the number of opportunities for opportunity youth and in support of Tribal communities.**  
The Commission proposes Congress appropriate funds to expand existing programs, including YouthBuild, Youth Conservation Corps, and the National Guard Youth Challenge program.
- **Allow CNCS to offer additional funding for programs that provide wraparound services.**  
Support such as career counseling, transit assistance, and training and certifications can make national service more attractive and feasible to all populations. The Commission recommends that Congress authorize and appropriate additional funds for CNCS to provide support programs that offer these services.
- **Restructure Senior Corps to expand opportunities.**  
The Commission recommends that Congress and the President take steps necessary to improve the Senior Corps grant process and increase the geographic diversity of Senior Corps programs in order to expand the number of service opportunities available to seniors.
- **Expand flexibility of Peace Corps volunteer opportunities.**  
Congress should authorize the Director of the Peace Corps to conduct demonstration projects focused on leveraging new technologies to allow Volunteers, such as professionals and those with disabilities, located in the United States to support Peace Corps efforts abroad.



## CREATING NEW NATIONAL SERVICE MODELS

The Commission seeks to ensure that national service is a realistic choice for all Americans and continues to grow.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

While continued growth from existing models will play an important role in reaching the Commission's goal of 1 million Americans annually in national service, **new service models will enhance and accelerate that effort.**

- **Provide support for CNCS to run novel demonstration projects.**

The Commission proposes that Congress appropriate funds that enable CNCS to conduct five demonstration projects over a period of three years, including a focus on two areas: concentrated, single-community national service projects designed to solve an important local issue, and projects supporting the reintegration of ex-offenders.

- **Create an ambitious new national service fellowship program.**

A fellowship program would empower individuals to choose programs that fit their interests and allow smaller organizations, especially those in rural areas and those without philanthropic support, to host national service members.

- The program would start at 25,000 fellows and grow by 25,000 each year for ten years.
- Potential fellows, ages 18 to 25, would be selected by a lottery that not only ensures every congressional district receives fellows, but also reserves spaces for opportunity youth and Tribal communities.
- These fellows would receive a cash stipend equal to that available to AmeriCorps State and National participants in the same region and would also be eligible for the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award or discounted cash payout at the end of their service term.



City Year AmeriCorps members in Cleveland, Ohio, pledge a year of their lives to national service.  
Source: City Year

For more information about the Commission's recommendations on national service growth, please see Pages 55–58 of *Inspired to Serve: [The Final Report of the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service.](#)*