

New Public-Private Partnership to Prepare Young People for College and Careers

WASHINGTON, Mar. 31 /CSRwire/ - The [Corporation for National and Community Service](#) (CNCS), the federal agency that administers [AmeriCorps](#), and [Points of Light](#), one of the world's leading organizations dedicated to volunteer service, today announced a new initiative that will help young people develop the skills they need to prepare for college and careers.

Part of a ground-breaking partnership with the [Citi Foundation](#), called Pathways to Progress, [ServiceWorks](#) will become the nation's largest corporate-sponsored [AmeriCorps VISTA](#) program. This \$10 million initiative directly aligns with President Obama's call to create new public-private partnerships that use national service to help solve our nation's most pressing challenges.

"From the boardrooms of corporate America to the hallowed halls of Congress, preparing our youngest citizens for college and career is a responsibility we all share," said U.S. Department of Education Secretary, Arne Duncan. "I applaud AmeriCorps, the Citi Foundation and Points of Light for putting the needs of our children first and coming together to create ServiceWorks. The innovative partnership among these organizations will help our nation's young people succeed inside and outside the classroom while strengthening and building a thriving middle class."

ServiceWorks will engage 25,000 low-income youth and young adults in volunteer service in 10 cities: Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Los Angeles, Miami, New York, Newark, San Francisco, St. Louis and Washington, D.C. The program will deploy 225 AmeriCorps VISTA members to these cities. These AmeriCorps VISTA members will help build a large-scale volunteer response to the crisis of low college and career attainment.

"We believe that civic engagement and service leadership can be pathways to success," said Wendy Spencer, CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service. "ServiceWorks will demonstrate that service can be an effective strategy to level the playing field for young adults—not only by decreasing the opportunity gaps they face but by increasing the likelihood that they will continue their education and find good jobs."

"If we want a strong labor force for generations to come, we need to make sure our country's youth are prepared to meet the evolving needs of employers," said Citi CEO Michael Corbat. "Through Pathways to Progress, we will connect young people with opportunities to fuel their own career ambitions and develop the skills that are needed in a 21st century economy. The professional success and civic engagement of our young men and women are critical to our economic competitiveness, and we are proud to support them."

"ServiceWorks will combine a structured youth service and leadership development program with a cadre of thousands of volunteer mentors and coaches to create a powerful force for combatting the crisis of low college and career attainment affecting too many of our nation's low-income youth and young adults," said Tracy Hoover, president of Points of Light.

ServiceWorks is a key component of the Citi Foundation's recently launched Pathways to Progress initiative, a three-year \$50 million commitment to unlock economic opportunity for 100,000 low-income youth in 10 cities across the United States.

Through ServiceWorks, participants, ages 16 to 24, will have the chance to build their professional networks and connections to their communities, receive training in leadership and workplace skills, and participate in and lead volunteer service projects. Thousands of volunteers, including Citi employees, will join this effort as mentors and coaches.

A 2013 study by CNCS shows that volunteers have a 27 percent higher likelihood of finding a job after being out of work than non-volunteers. Volunteers without a high school diploma have a 51 percent higher likelihood of finding employment than non-volunteers without a diploma.

A program of CNCS, AmeriCorps VISTA has engaged Americans in a year-long, full-time intensive commitment to service designed to bring individuals and communities out of poverty. AmeriCorps VISTA members focus their efforts to build the organizational, administrative and financial capacity of organizations that fight illiteracy, improve health services, foster economic development, and otherwise assist low-income communities.

The **Corporation for National and Community Service** is a federal agency that engages more than five million Americans in service through its AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, Social Innovation Fund, and Volunteer Generation Fund programs, and leads the President's national call to service initiative, United We Serve. For more information, visit NationalService.gov.

The **Citi Foundation** works to promote economic progress in communities around the world and focuses on initiatives that expand financial inclusion. We collaborate with best-in-class partners to create measurable economic improvements that strengthen low-income families and communities. Through a “More than Philanthropy” approach, Citi’s business resources and human capital enhance our philanthropic investments and impact. For more information, visit www.citifoundation.com.

Points of Light – the world’s largest organization dedicated to volunteer service – mobilizes millions of people to take action that is changing the world. Through affiliates in 250 cities and partnerships with thousands of nonprofits and corporations, Points of Light engages 4 million volunteers in 30 million hours of service each year. We bring the power of people where it’s needed most. For more information, go to www.pointsoflight.org.

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