



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Jennifer Geckler
 HandsOn Network
 (404) 979-2941
jgeckler@handsonnetwork.org

HANDSON NETWORK AND THE CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD \$1.2 MILLION IN GRANT FUNDS TO HELP ANSWER THE CALL FOR SERVICE

ATLANTA, GA (Feb. 25, 2009) – HandsOn Network and the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) announced a 1.2 million dollar investment in 21 volunteer connector organizations and statewide agencies that manage volunteers, including state service commissions and state associations of volunteer centers. Part of a new Volunteer Impact Retention and Expansion initiative, this is the first of several planned capacity grants that will provide needed resources to recruit, equip, train and mobilize 800,000 volunteers.

“The organizations were selected through a competitive grant process and comprehensive review,” said Amy Smith, President of HandsOn Network. “As a result, grants have been made in communities large and small, rural and urban. These funds will fuel a tangible and compelling response to the call for service and will extend volunteerism and volunteer leader capacity to help solve some of our nation’s most critical issues.” Smith cited a range of community needs that an infusion of trained, managed volunteers could help address, including education, the environment, help for economically distressed families and health care.

The grants are expected to help increase retention rates of new and existing volunteers by an average of 75%; recruit, train, mobilize and equip another 2,000 volunteer leaders and 1,600 skill-based volunteers; and develop 400 new volunteer engagement partnerships. Additional community investment should be realized as recipients will match the grants with local business, government, nonprofit and foundation support.

2009 1st Round Volunteer Impact Retention and Expansion Grantees

American Red Cross of Massachusetts Bay	Cambridge, MA	\$100,000
Center for Volunteer and Nonprofit Leadership of Marin	San Rafael, CA	\$ 49,906
Governor’s Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service – Volunteer Florida	Tallahassee, FL	\$ 50,000
HandsOn Greater Phoenix	Phoenix, AZ	\$ 40,000
HandsOn Greater Portland	Portland, OR	\$100,000
HandsOn Jacksonville	Jacksonville, FL	\$100,000
HandsOn Nashville, Inc.	Nashville, TN	\$ 49,799
Michigan Nonprofit Association	Lansing, MI	\$ 50,000
New York Cares	New York, NY	\$100,000
North Coast Opportunities, Inc. (NCO)	Ukiah, CA	\$ 50,000
State Planning Office (Maine Commission)	Augusta, ME	\$ 49,970

Volunteer Center of Northwest Suburban Chicago	Arlington Heights, IL	\$ 48,357
United Way of Central Minnesota	St. Cloud, MN	\$ 44,000
United Way of Larimer County	Ft. Collins, CO	\$ 50,661
Volunteer Center of Gloucester County	Sewell, NJ	\$ 21,977
Volunteer Center of Lehigh Valley	Bethlehem, PA	\$ 35,286
Volunteer Centers of Lewis, Thurston and Mason Counties	Olympia, WA	\$ 50,000
Volunteer Frederick	Frederick, MD	\$ 50,000
Volunteer Macon, Inc.	Macon, GA	\$ 47,256
Washington RSVP	Seattle, WA	\$ 50,000
United Way Capital Hill Area – HandsOn Central Texas	Austin, TX	\$ 82,497

HandsOn Network and CNCS will announce future rounds of funding opportunities under this initiative this spring and applications will be available in May 2009. Funding levels will be up to \$1.3 million in grants to volunteer connector and management organizations. For more information, visit www.handsonnetwork.org.

About HandsOn Network

HandsOn Network equips, mobilizes and inspires people to take action that changes the world. Our Network, now the largest in the nation, is leading people from impulse to action, turning their ideas for change into real projects like building wheel chair ramps, watershed protection projects and tutoring programs – action that addresses critical issues facing our communities, our nation and our world. The Network includes over 250 affiliates—that serve in all 50 states and in nine countries. In 2007 alone, these HandsOn Action Centers helped to deliver more than 33 million hours of volunteer service valued at \$1.2 billion.

About The Corporation for National and Community Service

The Corporation for National and Community Service improves lives, strengthens communities, and fosters civic engagement through service and volunteering. Each year the Corporation engages more than four million Americans of all ages and backgrounds in service to meet local needs through its Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve America programs. For more information, visit www.nationalservice.gov.

#

Most Common Reasons for Non-Selection for VIRE Grant Funding

1. The grant application was not received by the deadline, or was submitted without required documents or attachments.
2. The goals and activities as outlined in the proposal did not respond to the three funding focus areas (increasing numbers of volunteers, increasing volunteer retention rates or increasing the impact and value of volunteers).
3. The metrics outlined in the proposed activities related to community impact of volunteer engagement, but did not address progress or metric in the three key funding focus areas.
4. The applicant did not answer the specific questions posed or address the required elements of each of the key areas (program design, organization capacity and budget) as directed in the grant application and Notice of Funding Availability.

5. Focus areas may have been identified, but program activities did not relate to the focus area selected.
6. Program goals and objectives were not clearly stated or explained.
7. Program goals, objectives and activities were overly broad.
8. Program activities, milestones and timeline were not clearly presented or were insufficiently addressed.
9. Program activities were disconnected from goals and objectives.
10. Program activities were overly ambitious and indicated a lack of sufficient understanding of the necessary staff, programmatic or other resources required to execute program activities successfully.
11. Program activities appeared to fund the core work of the organization and did not demonstrate new, expanded or added value activities that responded specifically to the focus areas of the grant opportunity.
12. Program activities were largely ineligible or not allowable, as outlined in the Notice of Funding Availability.
13. The staffing plan was not outlined or did not relate to either the proposed activities or the budget narrative in any way.
14. Proposed activities and budget were not aligned.
15. Budget was miscalculated, or match requirements were not met.
16. Proposed activities were not cost effective, demonstrating low "return on investment."
17. The applicant did not sufficiently demonstrate community partnerships and collaboration or did not connect how the partnerships they did identify tied to program activities.
18. For multi year grant applicants: This was a very competitive process in this round. We had designated approximately 25% of the funds in this competition to go to multi-year applicants, so the competition for these funds was much more intense.