

**NORTH DAKOTA WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL –
STATE COMMISSION
ON NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE**

State of North Dakota

State Service Plan

2010 - 2013

Corporation for National and Community Service

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Corporation for National and Community Service

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I. INTRODUCTION TO CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL SERVICE PROGRAMS IN NORTH DAKOTA:

The federal contribution to volunteer service in North Dakota began in 1964 with the enactment of the Economic Opportunity Act, which saw the creation of the Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) program developed. VISTA volunteers have served a myriad of organizations throughout the state since that time. That was later followed by a Foster Grandparent Program (FGP) grant to the North Dakota Developmental Center, Grafton, in 1967. Those programs were transferred in 1971, with the creation of the ACTION agency during the Nixon administration. Later, that year, a grant was made from ACTION to the State of North Dakota's Social Services Department, Division of Human Services to begin Retired & Senior Volunteer Program (R&SVP) services. In 1981, a Senior Companion Program (SCP) grant was provided to Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota funded under ACTION SCP Demonstration Criteria.

North Dakota is an extensive (70,665 square miles) land area containing some of this nation's finest agricultural lands. Its people are innovative, dependable, and hospitable and experience problems that are unique to the area. The plight of the farming/ranching community is still subject to uncertainty and personal income still remains below average, even in such non-farm occupations as education and the service industry.

The State continues to play key roles in our nation's agricultural economy. The over 680,000 residents may not have the representation of more populous states, but they continue to support the principles of the country. Their problems are usually resolved through their own efforts, with a little help from their friends and neighbors. Consequently, CNCS resources are ideal for the Dakotas. These people get things done!

Communities fortunate enough to have a CNCS program, deeply appreciate them! North Dakota allows a 1-mill tax to be levied by its counties for Senior Citizens' programs which, when revenues permit, is matched by the State.

North Dakotans continue to develop their recreation and tourist industries, given this state is blessed with large bodies of water, clean air, and people who believe in a strong work ethic.

In summary, volunteerism comes easily to North Dakota. For most of their residents it has been a way of life, even survival, since before recorded time!

- ◆ Learn and Serve America
- ◆ AmeriCorps
- ◆ Senior Corps

LEARN AND SERVE AMERICA is a network of programs – Learn and Serve School Based, Community-Based and Higher Education – that provides resources to programs to support service-learning in schools and community organizations.

North Dakota's Learn and Serve School based program (Williston Public Schools). This type of learning, called service learning, improves communities while preparing young people for a lifetime of responsible citizenship. In addition to providing grants, Learn and Serve America serves as a resource on service and service-learning to teachers, faculty members, schools, and community groups.

AMERICORPS is a network of national service programs – AmeriCorps*State and National, AmeriCorps*NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps), and AmeriCorps*VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) – that meets critical needs in areas such as education, public safety, health, and the environment through partnerships with public agencies, non-profits, faith-based, or other local organizations.

This year AmeriCorps will provide more than **150** individuals the opportunity to provide intensive, results-driven service to meet education, environmental, public safety, and other pressing needs in communities across North Dakota. Roughly three-quarters of all AmeriCorps grant funding goes to the Governor-appointed ND Dept. of Commerce, which in turn awards grants to non-profit groups to respond to local needs. Most of the remainder of the grant funding is distributed by the Corporation directly to multi-state and national organizations through a competitive grants process. Other individuals will serve through AmeriCorps*VISTA, whose members help bring individuals and communities out of poverty by serving full-time support capacity building and resources to local organizations and public entities, recruit mentors and tutors to serve youth at risk, and develop/expand service learning opportunities. The AmeriCorps NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps) North Central Campus in Vinton, IA is a 10-month, team-based, full time residential program for young Americans (ages 18-24) to perform service that address the critical needs in urban and rural communities. All NCCC members are trained in CPR, first aid, and disaster response and about 15 percent are trained in firefighting. Among other activities, members construct and rehabilitate low-income housing, tutor students, build and restore trails and help communities prepare for and respond to disasters. In exchange for their service, AmeriCorps members earn an education award of up to \$5,350 that can be used to pay for college or to pay back qualified student loans.

SENIOR SERVICE CORPS is a network of programs – RSVP, Foster Grandparents Program (FGP), and Senior Companion Programs (SCP) - that uses the experience, skills, and talents of volunteers age 55 and older to meet community needs.

More than 4,200 seniors in North Dakota contribute their time and talents in one of three Senior Corps programs. The Foster Grandparent Programs (FGP) provide opportunities for over 140 volunteers to have a positive impact on the lives of 2,700 young people in need through tutoring and mentoring in educational and youth facilities. The Senior Companion Program (SCP) supports over 90 volunteers in providing opportunities for

older volunteers to provide critical support services and companionship to more than 800 adults at risk of institutionalization and who are struggling to maintain a dignified independent life. The Retired and Senior Volunteer Programs (RSVP) provides opportunities for older volunteers to share their knowledge, experiences, abilities, and skills for the betterment of their communities and themselves by providing 525,000 hours of assistance to over 800 stations by building capacity and resources for the organizations, tutoring and mentoring youth at risk, providing health and nutrition services for seniors and the homebound elderly, and senior citizens assistance as well as responding to natural disasters.

II. STRATEGIC PLAN NEEDS ASSESSMENT:

The “Community Service Needs Assessment Survey” completed in 2004, was updated using Survey Monkey to survey community-based, faith-based and non-profit organizations throughout North Dakota. The response rate was very low.

For the North Dakota State Commission, Community Needs Assessments will be an ongoing initiative. The State Commission will gather information on community service needs during scheduled “Town Hall Meetings” which are conducted across the state each fall prior to announcing our Request for Proposal for the AmeriCorps*State formula funding. The Town Hall Meeting input will be supplemented by mail surveys to non-profits, faith-based and community organizations. We are in the process of developing an electronic mailing list of these groups to insure geographic equity in the input process.

Community service needs for the elderly and youth were identified most frequently as having the greatest need and current lack of adequate community resources or services.

Community service needs for the elderly which were most frequently identified was availability of home healthcare assistance to allow seniors to live independently in their home and adequate transportation to obtain healthcare, do shopping, etc. The rising cost of transportation was identified as a major concern.

Community Service Needs for Children and Youth which were most frequently identified was availability of quality daycare for children of working parents, availability of structured pre and after school programs for children who need such programs and a lack of tutoring and adult mentoring for children who need it. Another issue identified was the lack of youth involvement in community leadership and meeting needs of the community. Access to legal services was also ranked high.

Communities Capacity to Respond to Service Needs of Citizens most frequently identified were the lack of services available to special populations, inadequate coordination and partnerships between community resource agencies, lack of ability to adequately respond to disasters, and a lack of awareness about Corporation for National and Community Service Programs.

Based on the responses, the primary community service gaps occur in meeting the needs of the elderly and meeting the needs of the youth. These gaps are manifested in the need for qualified volunteers in all areas.

III. FOCUS AREAS AND STRATEGIC GOALS FOR THE NORTH DAKOTA STATE SERVICE PLAN:

The North Dakota State Commission on National and Community Service participated in a Strategic Planning Retreat in August 2008. During this Retreat, the State Commission participated in strategic planning around both workforce and community service needs within North Dakota. The State Commission reviewed and again adopted a set of major outcome goals, organizing pillars and principles, volunteer initiative strategies, and identified areas for continuous improvement.

Major Outcome Goal:

- Increase the quantity and quality of North Dakota's volunteer force.

Organizing Pillars, Principles, and Priorities:

- Attract new volunteers for North Dakota
- Retain volunteers in North Dakota
- Expand the pipeline of volunteers in North Dakota

Volunteer Initiative Strategies:

- Quality Volunteer Intelligence
- Volunteer Cluster Support and Partnership
- Vertical (Operational) Alignment with Demand
- Horizontal (Community) Alignment with Demand
- System Expansion and Partnership
- Public and Stakeholder Awareness

Eight Areas for Continuous Improvement:

1. Ensure **Commission leadership** in attracting, retaining, and expanding volunteers by
 - making all decisions based on community service and volunteer

intelligence,

- seeking both vertical and horizontal alignment with demand,
 - building strategic partnerships with the nonprofit & faith-based sector and targeted community service clusters,
 - forging service system partnerships to achieve success in all community service initiatives, and
 - developing broad public awareness and understanding of North Dakota's community service and volunteer needs.
2. Develop a **dynamic community service and volunteer intelligence system** with the vital information needed to confront North Dakota's community service crisis and to assess progress in ameliorating it.
 3. **Disseminate key community service and volunteer intelligence to all stakeholders and partner organizations and staff** so all North Dakotans may take appropriate actions to meet the service needs of individuals and communities.
 4. Focus on **volunteer and civic engagement improvement, preparation through lifelong learning** by improving the quality and quantity of training for volunteers, ensuring the offerings respond to community needs and volunteer skill demand to address these needs.
 5. **Increase the volunteer participation rate and expand the available talent pool of volunteers** by reaching, serving, preparing, and connecting those not currently volunteering, including target populations.
 6. Give **emphasis to the emerging volunteer talent pipeline by focusing on young people**, improving the connections between school and volunteer opportunities, and encouraging them to stay in North Dakota.
 7. Build **even stronger volunteer system partner-ships to increase efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability** through the reducing duplication, sharing resources and adopting a common action agenda and strategies for volunteer attraction, retention, and expansion.
 8. **Promote North Dakota as a great place to live by** attracting and retaining volunteer talent.

The North Dakota Community Service and Volunteer Initiative adopted by the North Dakota State Commission on National and Community Service is a bold undertaking which will require support of all Commission Members and expansion of the State Commission's role as:

- Being the *champion* for community service issues;
- Being the state's *convening* agent;
- Being the state's *change* agent; and
- Being the state's *accountability* agent.

In this role, the North Dakota State Commission will work closely with all public agencies, non-profit, community-based, and faith-based organizations to begin the process of clearly establishing the community service priorities for communities, the infrastructure of the volunteers to support work of the partner organizations in addressing community service needs, and a common vision and plan to approach expanding the pipeline of future volunteers through engagement with students at the PK-16 level, attraction of new volunteers by focusing on the skills and qualifications of the retiring baby-boomers, and retention of current volunteers through recognition for their work and opportunity to participate in life-long learning to advance their skills and opportunities for higher level volunteer activities.

The North Dakota State Service Plan will respond to the identified community service gaps by supporting the goals of the Corporation for National and Community Service. The State Service Plan goals will be to expand the network of volunteers and to prioritize the meeting of community service gaps identified for the elderly, children, and youth.

In addition, the State Commission will continue to insure compliance with all requirements for the AmeriCorps*State formula funding and to continue to work with subgrantees on improvement of overall performance.

Goal One: Mobilizing More Volunteers in North Dakota.

The North Dakota State Commission and the Corporation for National and Community Service partners will promote the expansion of volunteerism and civic engagement by making it easier for North Dakotans to volunteer and become involved in meeting service needs which will maximize the use of their talents and interests.

Each of the Corporation for National and Community service programs will place an emphasis and provide training to program members on mobilizing volunteers in their community. In order to help manage and coordinate volunteers in communities, the State Commission and Corporation programs will work to expand on a network of Community Volunteer Centers across the state.

Goal I.		2011 Target	2011 Actual	2013 Target
Mobilizing more volunteers to meet community services needs.	Develop a community resource map of all current community volunteer centers with a goal of having a minimum of one	3		8

	Volunteer Center in each of the State Eight Planning Regions by 2013.			
	Through outreach to non-profits and community-based organizations and implementation of public information campaigns will increase the volunteering rate in North Dakota.	35%		36%

Goal Two: Expand adult mentoring services to help ensure a brighter future for all of North Dakota’s youth.

North Dakota youth need support from caring adults in their families, schools, and communities. Many North Dakota youth from low income families, foster children, single parent households, experimentation with drugs and alcohol, or who have delinquency problems do not have a support structure of caring adults to serve as role models and mentors. This increases their likelihood of failure in school, persistent poverty, and criminal behavior. The State Commission and Corporation programs will support children in need by providing opportunities for adult mentoring for at-risk youth across the state.

Goal II.		2011 Target	2011 Actual	2013 Target
Expand adult mentoring services to help ensure a brighter future for all North Dakota’s youth.	Work with the NDDOC to establish the number of children of prisoners who are receiving mentoring services through Corporation programs.		Completed	
	Through encouraging an emphasis on AmeriCorps project focus and integration of Corporation-sponsored programs increase the number by 10% of children of prisoners receiving mentoring or other services through Corporation programs.	3%		10%

Goal Three: Engaging Students in Communities through Volunteering to help meet community service needs.

North Dakota Education institutions (elementary, secondary, and postsecondary) play a key role in guiding students on their path to becoming responsible citizens and leaders in their communities. Volunteering and service are powerful factors that support and enhance the learning experience.

Goal III.		2011 Target	2011 Actual	2013 Target
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Engage a greater number of students in meeting community service needs.				
	Through outreach, increase the volunteer rate of youth between the ages of 16–22 who actively engage in formal volunteer activities with non-profits, community-based organizations, their community, or through Corporation sponsored programs.	35%		36%

Goal Four: Engage the Baby Boomer population in North Dakotans to a lifetime of volunteering and service.

North Dakota has an aging population that is highly talented, highly motivated, and could drive solutions to many of the community service needs in communities which they reside. Through volunteerism and civic engagement, Baby Boomers can stay active and connected to their communities improving the quality of life for themselves and others. The Needs Assessments have identified many areas such as services for the elderly, transportation, and adult mentoring for youth which could be tackled by the Baby Boomer population.

Goal IV.		2011 Target	2011 Actual	2013 Target
Engage North Dakotans in a lifetime of volunteering and service.	The State Commission and Corporation program partners will develop a tool kit of promotional and marketing news releases to make citizens aware of the contributions of volunteerism, importance of non-profits, and community-based organizations and contributions each citizen can make in filling gaps in community services.	Presidential Service Award Volunteering in America		
	The State Commission and Corporation programs will coordinate with the State Office of Faith-Based Initiatives to help expand the volunteer rate of individuals age 55 – 64 actively engaged in addressing community needs.	+2%		+5%

Goal Five: Through Town Hall meetings and individual contact with faith-based and community organizations develop awareness and interest in AmeriCorps*State formula programs to address unmet needs of the elderly populations.

Goal V.		2011	2011	2013
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		Target	Actual	Target
Provide planning grants which will lead to a minimum of one AmeriCorps*State formula applications which addresses the community service needs of the elderly populations in their communities.	The State Commission provide outreach leading to the establishment of at least one planning grant to address unmet service needs of the elderly populations.	1 Planning Grant		1 AmeriCorps funded project.
	The State Commission will coordinate with the State Office of Faith-Based Initiatives to help identify organizations that have the capacity to respond to unmet service needs of the elderly.	Data Mapping one Region		Data Mapping in three Regions

IV. SPECIAL INITIATIVES:

The following describes the ongoing efforts and the special initiatives to enhance the collaboration and coordination of the State Commission with the Corporation State Office, State Education Agencies, state network of volunteer centers, and other service organizations within the state.

Service to Individuals Age 55 and Over:

North Dakota as many other Midwestern State’s has an aging population. This aging population is evident and prevalent in many industries in the State, including State Government. With that said, one of the major initiatives of the North Dakota Talent Initiative and the Volunteer Initiative is to keep individuals ages 55 and over engaged in the workforce or volunteer force longer.

Individuals ages 55 and over will continue to be a major force in North Dakota’s economy and communities. This age group will both drive the ability of the State to continue to grow as well as increase the need for additional community services to help aging populations remain independent and live in their own homes.

1. The following are recommendations to increase service for adults 55 or older including how to best use such adults as sources of social capital, and how to utilize their skills and experience to address community needs.

- a. The State Commission will work with existing Intermediaries such as Experience Works, AARP, Workforce Investment Act Title I Adult to identify individuals ages 55 and older both to coordinate delivery of services to meet their needs and to insure that they expose their clients to

opportunities available to help address community needs through volunteerism and civic engagement.

- b. The State Commission will work with businesses and community organizations to help develop an awareness and culture of acceptance to modification of work/volunteer and work/volunteer schedules to provide flexibility so that more individuals ages 55 and over continue to stay active and engaged in their community.
- c. The State Commission will identify and provide recognition of ‘Community Best Practices’ which support increased service and engagement of adults 55 and over.

2. Recommendations to North Dakota Department of Human Services Agency on Aging.

- a. Coordinate with the State Commission, Corporation for National and Community Service Programs, Experience Works, AARP, Tribal Workforce Investment Act, and Job Service North Dakota the development of marketing and outreach collateral material appropriate for various target audiences which include: private sector business, non-profits, faith-based organizations, State Education Agency, Institutions of Higher Education and other State Agencies, including the North Dakota Workforce Development Council on both the service needs and social capital that adults ages 55 and over need and can bring to the table.
- b. Coordinate a joint outreach campaign between the Commission, Corporation for National and Community Service Programs, Experience Works, AARP, Job Service North Dakota and Tribal Workforce Investment Act to reach out to faith-based, community organizations, Senior Clubs and other organizations who provide services to seniors or could serve as a referral source of seniors needing service and/or having opportunity to volunteer and become engaged in volunteerism.

3. Recommendations to advance civic engagement and multigenerational activities.

- a. The State Commission will work with the Department of Human Services and community childcare providers to help identify areas where adults ages 55 and older can become actively engaged in providing early childhood education and daycare to youth in need of such services.
- b. The State Commission will work with AARP, JSND and Experience Works to promote opportunities for their clients and members to meet community service needs through volunteer opportunities.
- c. The State Commission will work with AmeriCorps Sub-grantees and Learn and Serve Sub-grantees to identify opportunities to both use individuals ages 55 and older as members of AmeriCorps and to have members of programs collaborate with Senior Centers and others organizations to have members and seniors work side by side.
- d. The State Commission will seek out opportunities by working with County Social Service Offices, Older Americans Act service providers,

and other organizations to identify areas where planning grants could be provided to organizations who have capacity to assist those ages 55 and older maintain their independence and continue living at home.

- e. The State Commission will work to expand the concept of doing Volunteer and Civic Engagement Fairs across the State to give individuals age 55 and older opportunities to see what is available to them and help them make appropriate selection of volunteer and civic engagement commitments.

4. Recommendations for encouraging the development of Encore service programs.

- a. North Dakota is a minimally funded State. To encourage development of Encore Service Programs which can take advantage of enrolling a significant number of AmeriCorps members ages 55 and older the State Commission would seek out opportunities to provide planning grants to help eligible organizations design and develop the partnerships and linkages which could help develop AmeriCorps applications which could enroll a significant number of AmeriCorps members age 55 or older and take advantage of the skills and experience that they offer.

Some facts about individuals Age 55 and Over volunteering:

Older volunteers meet a wide range of community needs - helping seniors live independently in their homes, tutoring and mentoring at-risk youth, providing financial education and job training to veterans and their families, and helping communities recover from disasters.

Results of older adults volunteering:

- It is believed that older adults who volunteer are living longer, have lower depression rates with better mental and physical health.
- On average, older adults involved with volunteering are reporting less disability.
- Volunteering is resulting in healthy lifestyles for those over the age of 55.
- Volunteering can provide an important way to stay connected and active.

Highlights of older adults service include:

- Over 377,000 seniors volunteer every year.
- They volunteer over 96 million hours.
- They serve over 65,000 organizations and 300,000 families annually
- These volunteers provide immeasurable value to the organizations and families they serve.

Program Development and Technical Assistance Training:

Annually, the State Commission conducts a formal Needs Assessment to identify the training and technical assistance needs of AmeriCorps subgrantees and Corporation sponsored programs. This Needs Assessment is used to develop the State Commission's PDAT Plan and to plan Cross Stream Training Events in the State.

Joint Educational & Planning Retreat of the North Dakota Workforce Development Council and the State Commission on National and Community Service:

The North Dakota State Commission on National and Community Service will co-sponsor a Joint Educational and Planning Retreat with the North Dakota Workforce Development Council.

The purpose of the Joint Retreat is to provide orientation and training to Commission and Council members on their roles and responsibilities, share data on community service and workforce needs, and identify and prioritize workforce and community service issues for the Council and State Commission to work on. The Retreat will be attended by members from the Councils and Commission, representation from the Corporation State Office, the Administrator from the USDOL-ETA Regional Office, Governor's Office, and members of the North Dakota State Legislature.

Biannual Governor's Workforce Summit 2011

The purpose of the Governor's Workforce Summit is to help create an awareness and develop policy discussion around the workforce and community service needs of the State. The primary audience of the Summit includes: Council and Commission members, business representatives, policymakers, community leaders, community organizations and faith-based groups, economic development professionals, educators, workforce professionals and project managers and service providers from the workforce and volunteer service arena.

North Dakota's Faith-Based and Community Organizations Initiative:

The 2007 Legislature transferred the Office of Faith-Based Initiatives which to the Department of Commerce Workforce Development Division. The Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives was incorporated into the State Commission as an independent standing committee. The membership of the State Commission was expanded to include members of the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives.

Cross Stream Training Events:

The State Commission will continue to work with the State Office to co-coordinate a Cross Stream Training Event for North Dakota AmeriCorps state projects and Senior Corps projects. In building such relationships we intend to assist faith-based and non-profits organizations in building capacity and providing services to help meet community needs.

V. CORPORATION TECHNICAL SUPPORT TO THE COMMISSION:

The following describes the non-monetary support the State Commission believes would be needed from the Corporation and Corporation State Office in order for our State

Service Plan to be successful.

The greatest challenge in working with the Corporation for National and Community Service stems from the informality of the communication process used by the Corporation.

The current Program Officer at CNCS is very responsive and is making progress in learning her program responsibilities. Having the Program Officer visit our State and meet with the State Commission periodically would enhance the working relationship between our State Commission and CNCS.

The State Commission will look to the Corporation for supporting the AmeriCorps state project training needs as it has in the past. The State Commission will continue to assess the state projects on an on-going basis to determine the necessary and appropriate training needed to build strong projects. In building strong projects, the State Commission's emphasis is on assisting projects to develop services that can be offered long after the AmeriCorps funding has ended.

The State Commission will also seek the assistance of the Corporation in helping to assure everyone that we are doing our best to meet the AmeriCorps standards. The State Commission is well aware of the ever-changing AmeriCorps standard requirements and is doing everything possible to be in compliance. At every opportunity the State Commission will investigate what services and products the Corporation offers that can assure the State Commission is meeting standards.

The State Commission is staying current on the implementation of the Serve America Act.

I certify that the State of North Dakota State Service Plan for the Corporation for National and Community Service was jointly developed and accepted. I further certify that we will operate our Corporation for National and Community Service funded programs in accordance with this Plan.

Wayne Kutzer, Vice- Chairperson
ND State Commission

Date

Debra Schiefelbein, State Director
Corporation for National and Community Service

Date

Valerie Fischer, Director Adult Education
State Education Agency

Date