

# Serve Illinois Commission

The Illinois Commission on  
Volunteerism & Community Service



# Serve Illinois Commission

- **Established in legislative statute in July 2000.**  
**(20 ILCS 710, Chapter 1278, paragraphs 3800 to 3806)**

- **Commission's Stated Purpose in Legislation:**

1. **“... to promote and support community service...”**
2. **“to stimulate new volunteerism...”**
3. **“to serve as a resource...and an advocate...”**

# Serve Illinois Commission Mission

- **Mission**: To improve Illinois communities by supporting and enhancing traditional volunteerism and administering the AmeriCorps\*State programs.



# Serve Illinois Commission

## Staff

- Lisa Hooker, AmeriCorps Program Officer
  - Ebone Lott, AmeriCorps Program Officer
  - Eden Lawson, Graduate Public Service Intern
  - Scott McFarland, Resources and Information Manager
  - Scott Niermann, Volunteer Programs Manager
  - (vacant) AmeriCorps Program Manager
  - (vacant) Executive Director
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- Serve Illinois Commission Contact Information  
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# Serve Illinois Commission History

- 1979 - Founded as the Illinois Office of Voluntary Participation
- 1990 - Governor's Office of Voluntary Action
- 1991 - Lieutenant Governor's Office of Volunteer and Senior Action
- 1995 - Illinois Commission on Community Service (DCCA)
- 1998 - Moved to DHS
- 2000 - Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service Act (ICVCS)
- 2007 - Commission adopts "Serve Illinois" moniker



# Serve Illinois Commission

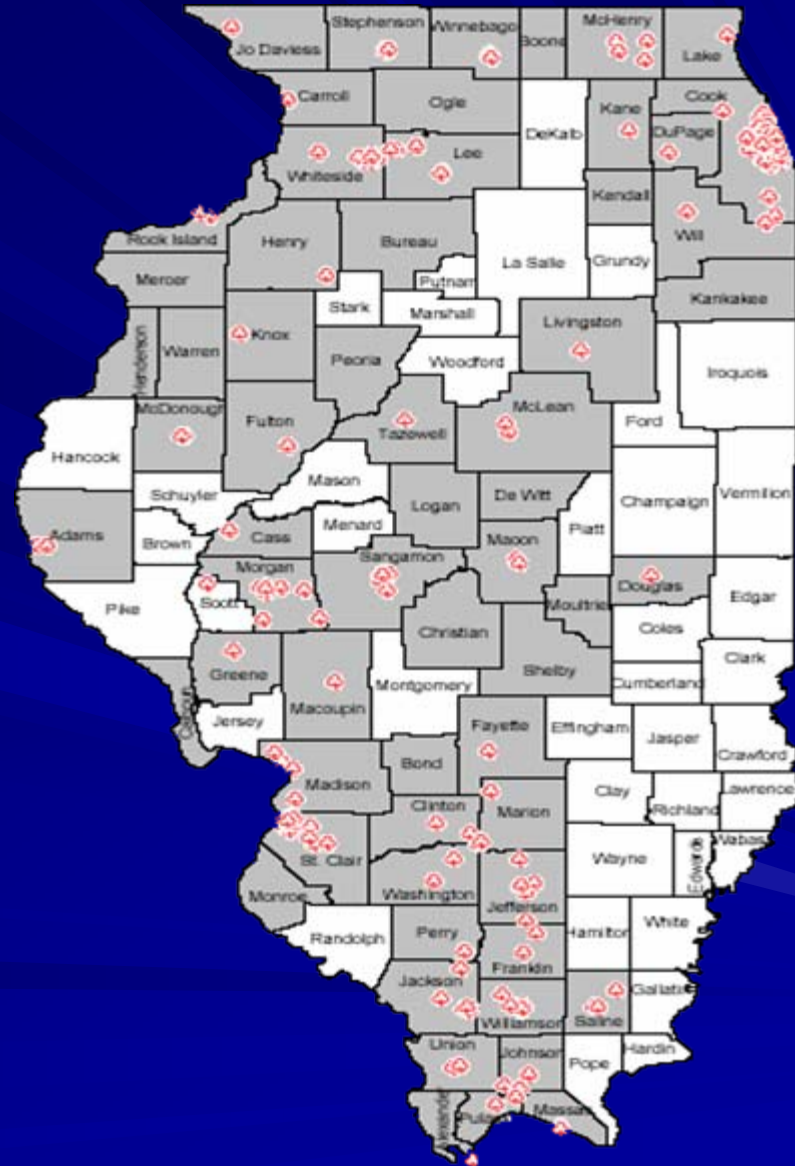
## Make-up and Duties

- 25 Governor-appointed Commissioners
- Fund and administer AmeriCorps\*State programs
- Promote National Days of Service
- Coordinate training and Professional Development
- Volunteer Recognition
- Collaborate with Volunteer Organizations



# AmeriCorps\*State Programs

- Illinois has 22 AmeriCorps\*State Programs
  - 8 “Competitive”
  - 14 “Formula”
- About 280 AmeriCorps host sites in over 60 counties in Illinois.

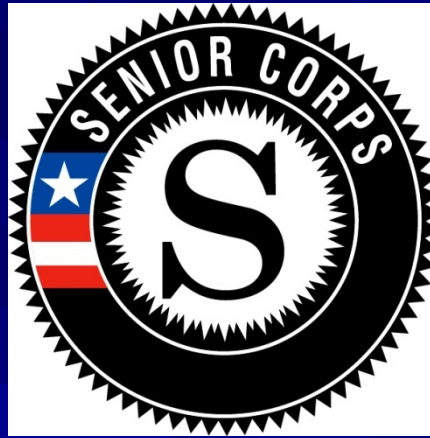


# AmeriCorps\*State Service

- **Focus on direct service in the community**
  - Tutor and mentor
  - Assist crime victims
  - Community health outreach
  - Recruit volunteers
  - Student counseling
  - Environmental protection
  - Restoration of parks



# National Service Partners



**The Serve Illinois Commission administers AmeriCorps\*State programs, but is a partner with other national service entities.**

# Volunteerism

# Volunteer Facts

- **Approximately 26-28% of the U.S. population over the age of 16 years volunteer.**
- **28% of Illinois citizens over age 16 volunteer**
- **Top volunteer locations:**
  - **Faith-based organizations (35%)**
  - **Youth Development / Education organizations (28%).**

# Volunteer Facts

- Illinois' "volunteer rate" ranks 31st among states.
  - Illinois' volunteer rate generally exceeds the national average
  - Illinois' volunteer rate lags every other state in the Midwest
- 2.7 million Illinoisans volunteered 303 million hours
- A volunteer hour in Illinois is valued at \$20.25
- 303 million annual Illinois volunteer hours is valued at \$6.1 billion

# Volunteer Facts

- **Communities with high levels of volunteering and social capital are more likely to have:**
  - **Higher educational achievement**
  - **Better performing governmental institutions**
  - **Faster economic growth**
  - **Less crime and violence**

# Evidence Regarding Sound Volunteer Management Practices:

## Organizations investing in volunteer management:

- Have a greater “surge” volunteer capacity
- Reap greater benefits from those volunteers’ services.
  - Paid Volunteer Coordinator position
  - Policies and procedures related to volunteers
  - Formalized volunteer orientation and training
- Can more easily expand the services volunteers perform.

# **Volunteer Management Challenges**

*(Ranked in Order)*

- 1. Lack of funds**
- 2. Recruiting workday volunteers**
- 3. Recruiting sufficient number of volunteers**
- 4. Lack of paid staff to train/supervise volunteers**
- 5. Recruiting volunteers with the right skills or expertise**
- 6. Volunteer absenteeism**
- 7. Volunteer unreliability/poor work habits**
- 8. Too many volunteers (for organizational capacity)**
- 9. Regulatory/legal/liability constraints**
- 10. Resistance from staff or board members**

Source: Volunteer Management Capacity in America's Charities and Congregations, The Urban Institute, 2004

# Volunteer Management Challenges

*(Observations)*

- Three (3) of the top 5 challenges relate to volunteer recruitment.
- The other 5 of the top 8 challenges concern the support, training, supervision, and management of volunteers and volunteer programs. All are necessary for a successful volunteer program.

*The Serve Illinois Commission strives to “support and enhance” volunteer efforts in these areas, e.g., regional conferences, technical assistance manuals, etc.*

# **Volunteer Management Network**

# What does the network look like?



- The network is not defined by geographical boundaries.
- The network uses cities within each region as anchor points.
- The network assumes natural community relationships exist that aid in defining boundaries.
- The network is made of people and organizations that desire to belong.

# STEP 1: Identify the Players

## ■ Who are the “players” in volunteerism efforts?

### \* Nonprofit and public organizations:

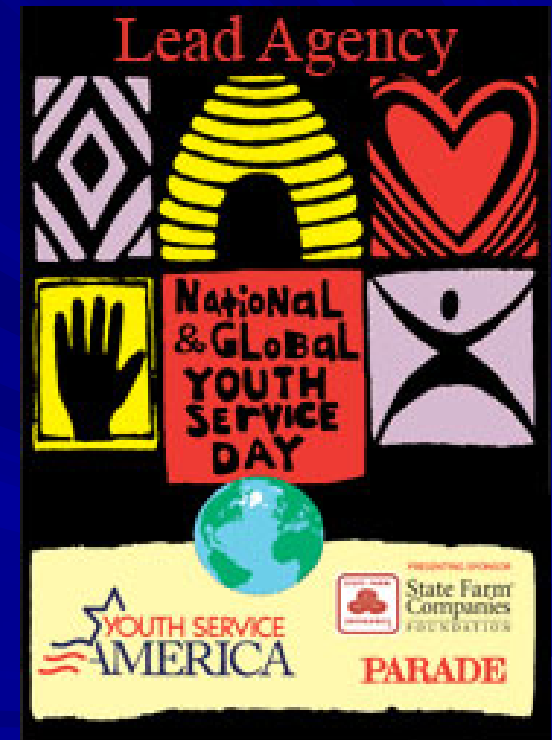
- Serve Illinois Commissioners
- Volunteer Connector Agencies
- National Nonprofits and Nonprofit Networks
- State & Local Governments
- Civic Service Organizations
- College/University Volunteer Programs (public & private)
- Academic and Professional Development Organizations
- Faith-based Organizations/Ministerial Alliance Reps.
- Community & Economic Development Organizations

### \* Corporate volunteer programs

# STEP 2: Develop Tasks and Goals

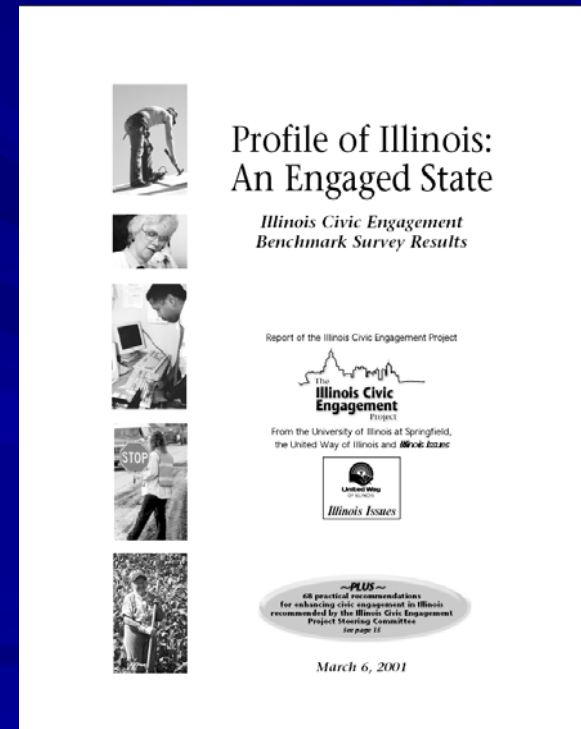
## Sample Tasks:

- Promote and coordinate Days of Service
- Nominate Serve Illinois Volunteer Award Recipients
- Provide leadership in conference planning and other professional development opportunities for volunteer managers
- Coordinate regional needs assessment for volunteer engagement and support
- Serve as a “voice” for the region to the nonprofit and service community



# Step 3: Volunteerism Community Needs Assessments

- Possible models:
  - 2001 UIS/United Way “Civic Engagement Survey”
  - Urban Institute’s 2004 “Volunteer Management Capacity” study
- Other models or current initiatives?
- Specific community issues to address?



# Product: Regional Conferences

- Continuing Education
- Certification / Credentialing
- Agency Exhibits / Info Booths
- Local Celebrities Promote Volunteerism
- Promote National Service Partnerships



# Product:

## Volunteer Service Awards

### ■ *In process, not yet formally established:*

- Award recipients nominated and selected by VMN
  - Regional awards presented at public ceremony or regional volunteerism conference
- Regional winners nominated for statewide awards
  - Commissioners select statewide award recipients
  - Commission coordinates public recognition by Governor, Lt. Governor, Commission Chair, or other officials
  - Corporate support for Volunteer Service Awards



# Results: Regional Collaboration and Unified “Voice”

- A more formal / better defined structure, with leadership and good communication, leads to:
  - Recognition of local volunteer and community improvement efforts.
  - Promotion of local community / social service organizations leading to a higher profile for local volunteerism.
  - Collaboration to solve community problems.
  - Opportunity for partnership, coordinated marketing, and growth for local volunteer connector organizations.



**Questions? Comments?  
Information Request?**

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