

CONNECTICUT COMMISSION ON COMMUNITY SERVICE  
Commission Meeting  
Record of Meeting – September 24, 2007  
Hartford, CT

Members Present: K. Arnold, R. Cherry, P. Cohen-Hecht, W. Dyson, E. Janney, J. Kristof, V. Lewis, S. Murdoch, C. Underwood, M. Wilcox

Members Absent: N. Berube, D. Machacek, R. McCue, A. Quiñones, S. Shah

Others: A. Davis (Executive Assistant), J. Johnson (Executive Director)

1. Call to Order

W. Dyson called the meeting to order at 10:16 a.m.

2. Roll Call

A. Davis read the roll call.

3. Approval of June 11, 2007 Minutes

W. Dyson called for a motion to approve the minutes. E. Janney made the motion and M. Wilcox seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

4. Action Items since June Meeting – J. Johnson

Presentations by AmeriCorps programs at Commission meeting will begin at the January 2008 meeting.

**2007 National Conference on Volunteerism and Service – Philadelphia, PA**

R. Cherry, P. Cohen-Hecht, E. Janney, J. Kristof, S. Shah and C. Underwood attended the conference. It is a great opportunity for fellowship with one another as Commissioners. E. Janney stated that there were similar questions and concerns among the commissioners from other states, i.e. what can we expand on, is there more that we could/should be doing. J. Johnson announced that next year's conference will be held in Atlanta the week of June 1st. There is money put aside for commissioners' travel. S. Murdoch mentioned that she encountered online registration issues, i.e. some of the training she wanted to take was closed. E. Janney stated that he thought it would be great if the conference offered a commissioner track for the 3-4 days spent at the conference. A discussion ensued regarding the conference as a whole. Historically speaking, the conference used to be geared more to AmeriCorps. The conference has now gone from a specific track to a broader range of tracks. The Point of Light Foundation has merged with the Hands on Network and is now referred to as the Point of Light Corporation. They have an interest in properly branding volunteerism, using the same language, galvanizing resources, etc.

**AmeriCorps Launch**

The launch will be held on Wednesday, October 24, 2007, 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Connecticut Grand Hotel and Conference Center, Waterbury. This event launches CT AmeriCorps programs into a year of service. All programs are required to attend. Commissioners are invited to participate.

**FY 2008 Appropriations/Status of Reauthorization**

On July 19, the House of Representatives passed the FY08 Labor-Health and Human Services Appropriations bill (H.R.3043), which includes funding for the Corporation for National and Community Service and its programs. During the floor debate, Representative Christopher Shays (R-CT) offered an amendment (H.AMDT.518) to increase funding for AmeriCorps and the National Service Trust by \$8.3 million. The Shays effort, to restore the AmeriCorps appropriation above the reduced level requested by the White House, failed by an unrecorded voice vote.

On behalf of the national service community, Voices for National Service urged Congress to restore funding for the core programs of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). Programs such as the National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC), Senior Corps, VISTA and Learn and Serve America, enable Americans to serve together, help their neighbors, strengthen their communities and address society's most pressing needs. We need to make a larger investment in service programs, and Congress can help by restoring the funding cuts of FY05-FY07.

### National Service Appropriations in \$ Millions

| PROGRAM  | FY05  | FY06  | FY07  | FY08<br>PRESIDENT'S<br>REQUEST | FY08<br>HOUSE<br>REPORT | FY08<br>SENATE<br>REPORT | VOICES<br>REQUEST |
|--|-------|-------|-------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| AmeriCorps* State and National                       | 287.7 | 264.8 | 264.8 | 255.6                          | 255.6                   | 275.8                    | 312.1             |
| National Service Trust                               | 142.8 | 138.6 | 117.7 | 122.5                          | 122.5                   | 117.7                    | 142.8             |
| AmeriCorps* NCCC                                     | 25.3  | 36.7* | 26.7  | 11.6                           | 11.6                    | 31.8                     | 26.7              |
| AmeriCorps* VISTA                                    | 94.2  | 95.5  | 95.5  | 89.7                           | 95.5                    | 95.5                     | 95.5              |
| Learn and Serve America                              | 42.7  | 37.1  | 37.1  | 32.1                           | 37.1                    | 39.1                     | 46.0              |
| Senior Corps   | 215.9 | 217.6 | 217.6 | 204.5                          | 217.6                   | 217.6                    |                   |
| Foster Grandparent                                   | 111.4 | 110.9 | 110.9 | 97.6                           | 110.9                   | 110.9                    |                   |
| Senior Companion                                     | 45.9  | 47.0  | 47.0  | 41.3                           | 47.0                    | 47.0                     |                   |
| RSVP   | 58.5  | 59.7  | 59.7  | 65.6                           | 59.7                    | 59.7                     |                   |
| State Commission Admin Grants                        | 14.4  | 12.5  | 12.5  | 12.0                           | 12.0                    | 12.5                     | 20.0              |
| Innovation, Demonstration, and Assistance Activities | 13.2  | 16.3  | 31.1  | 12.7                           | 13.0                    | 10.5                     | 31.0              |

\* Includes \$10 million from P.L. 109-234 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations.

Voices for National Service and the National Service Congressional Caucus (co-chaired by Congressman Shays) each sent letters to President Bush urging him to increase support for these programs in his FY08 budget. Voices for National Service and the Caucus will remain engaged during the long appropriations process, reaching out to the Administration and the Congress and urging a robust federal investment in national service programs.

*\*Addendum*

On September 27, 2007, the Senate passed a continuing resolution (H.J. Res. 52) that funds government operations at its current levels until November 16, while Congress continues to work on the fiscal year 2008 spending bills. On the previous day, the House had already agreed to the resolution.

Fiscal year 2007 expired on October 1 and to date - only four of the 12 annual appropriations bills have passed both the House and Senate. National service programs - funded through the Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bill - will stay funded at their fiscal year 2007 level for the duration of the continuing resolution.

## **National Service Hill Day**

J. Johnson attended the 2007 National Service Hill Day held in Washington, D.C. September 18 – 20. On September 19, representatives of the national service field, including alumni, program staff, service partners, and corporate sponsors, visited with more than 120 congressional offices during the Voices for National Service Hill Day to discuss the federal investment in AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve America, and Senior Corps. J. Johnson visited with the offices of Courtney, DeLauro, Dodd, Lieberman, Murphy and Shays. The meetings on Capitol Hill were a critical opportunity to share with Congress how national service is addressing needs in local communities, as key lawmakers consider legislation and funding bills that affect national service.

An opening program with Representatives Chris Shays and Jim McDermott (WA), both members of the National Service Congressional Caucus, launched the Hill Day. Each lawmaker shared his vision and hopes for the expansion of national service in America and testified to why it is essential to visit Congress regularly and update policymakers on the impact national service is having across the country in nearly every congressional district.

While working to grow bipartisan support for national service, Hill Day participants reinforced three messages:

- For the programs administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service, we urge Congress to adopt the funding levels approved by the Senate Appropriations Committee on July 21: \$275.8 million for AmeriCorps State and National, \$217.6 million for the Senior Corps, \$39.1 million for Learn and Serve America, and \$31.8 million for National Civilian Community Corps. The Senate mark is \$36 million more than approved by the House.
- Since fiscal year 2004, federal support has been on a steady decline and all the service initiatives have been targeted for cuts. In three years, funding has declined by close to \$100 million, a trend that must be stopped and reversed to meet the record demand for service opportunities.
- It has been more than 14 years since Congress has passed a national service authorization bill. The service programs are long overdue for reauthorization, and we are pleased the House Education and Workforce Committee has taken the lead and introduced H.R. 2857, the Generations Invigorating Volunteerism and Education Act (GIVE Act). The GIVE Act includes many exciting provisions, but we hope to work with the committee to address some fundamental concerns in a manager's amendment.

## **5. Committees**

### **501C3 Status – Commissioner Janney**

After returning from the National Conference, E. Janney feels that it is too early for us to launch a 501C3. Some portions are easy-logistics, sponsors and filing, language, areas of focus. The difficult aspects are who/what do we want to be and who we want to partner with. We need to work on "us" first then we can go forward with a 501C3. We should do a National Service Hill Day in Hartford. The state of Mississippi has a "community service" license plate – why not Connecticut? Great fundraisers!

V. Lewis shared four possible initiatives that could be tied in to the Commission.

- 1) There will be a requirement for all high school students, based on the first high school reform disciplinary structure, to select a career path. How about community service?
- 2) Minority recruitment – tutoring/structure system (as part of the Regional Education Service Center) – help with career choice of teaching AmeriCorps programs.
- 3) Connecticut Employment and Training. Reclaim responsibility for drop out high school students. Look at their agenda.
- 4) Baby Boomers – the Commission on Aging subgroup – Tie into those discussions as it relates to step-down roles in the working environment.

### **Leadership Development – Commissioner Cohen-Hecht**

P. Cohen-Hecht went over the established Leadership Development Committee responsibilities. The CCCS structure was distributed and reviewed.

Draft Bylaws were distributed. In 1997 a subcommittee set up draft bylaws which were to be adopted but was not. The bylaws edits are generated from the strategic plan (the sessions w/Mike Burns). The legal name of the commission is “Connecticut Commission on National and Community Service” (by executive order). The “Connecticut Commission on Community Service” is an abbreviated moniker used on stationary, business cards and promotional materials only. Once the bylaws are adopted, policy and procedures will be done.

M. Wilcox made a motion to adopt the bylaws with amendments, K. Arnold seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carries.

Officers will be elected at the November 5th Annual meeting. A mailing will be sent regarding the annual meeting – it’s an all-day event at The Inn in Middletown.

### **Communications – Commissioner Shah**

Commissioner Shah not in attendance; tabled.

### **AmeriCorps\*VISTA & CT Campus Contact – J. Johnson**

Moving forward!

#### **6. New Business**

None.

#### **7. Announcements**

- E. Janney would like to connect with commissioners after hours. Friday, November 9<sup>th</sup>, he will host a cocktail party at his home (a flyer was distributed). Feel free to bring spouses/significant others.
- Commissioner Lewis has announced her plans to retire effective February 1, 2008.
- Leadership Development Committee – Will meet again on 10/25 at 10:30 here at the DHE. A proposed agenda will be emailed.

#### **8. Adjournment**

K. Arnold made a motion to adjourn and M. Wilcox seconded. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 12 noon.

Respectfully submitted,

Annie Davis, Executive Assistant