

**CITY OF EL PASO, TEXAS**  
**AGENDA ITEM DEPARTMENT HEAD'S SUMMARY FORM**

**DEPARTMENT:** City Manager's Department

**AGENDA DATE:** August 25, 2015 Regular Agenda

**CONTACT PERSON/PHONE:** Chief Resilience Officer, Nicole Ferrini, (915) 474-2202

**DISTRICT(S) AFFECTED:** ALL

**SUBJECT:**

Request for the Mayor to be authorized to submit the paperwork necessary for the City of El Paso to join the Cities of Service Coalition, including the attached Declaration of Service.

**BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION:**

Cities of Service is a national nonprofit organization that supports mayors and city chief executives to engage local community and residents to tackle issues and solve problems together using impact volunteering. Cities of Service efforts focus on "impact volunteering," which are volunteer strategies that target community needs, use nationwide best practices, and set clear outcomes to measure progress. Their impact areas include neighborhood revitalization, education and youth outreach, health, preparedness, safety, veterans, and sustainability. The Cities of Service organization provides technical assistance, programmatic support, planning resources, and funding opportunities to drive long-term, positive outcomes that help to improve the quality of life in cities.

This request is for the Mayor to sign the Declaration of Service, which would have the following benefits: 1) Membership in the Cities of Service Coalition; 2) Eligibility to apply for certain service and volunteerism grants and opportunities, such as the Resilience AmeriCorps initiative, which would fund an AmeriCorps volunteer to support our resilience efforts; and 3) the City of El Paso would receive training, programmatic support, print and online resources, and recognition.

There is no cost to join and the level of engagement is at the discretion of the City—signing the Declaration of Service is a good-faith commitment to support service and volunteerism in our community. There are 200+ mayors currently in the coalition and 29 have developed Service Plans. By signing the Declaration of Service, mayors commit to: 1) Developing a service plan and strategy; 2) Working with other mayors to support the service movement; 3) Encouraging other mayors to join the effort to engage our citizens; and 4) Ensuring the voice of cities is heard in discussions related to service.

**PRIOR COUNCIL ACTION:**

**Has the Council previously considered this item or a closely related one?**

January 5, 2010 – Resolution that the Mayor be authorized to submit the paperwork necessary for the City of El Paso to join the Cities of Service Coalition, including the attached Declaration of Service and amending the City of El Paso Legislative Agenda to include the goals contained in the Serve America Act.

**AMOUNT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

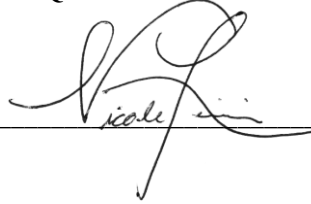
N/A

**BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION:**  
Enter appropriate comments or N/A.

N/A

\*\*\*\*\*REQUIRED AUTHORIZATION\*\*\*\*\*

**DEPARTMENT HEAD:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nicole", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized with a large loop at the top and a long, sweeping underline.

## RESOLUTION

**WHEREAS**, in 2010, the City of El Paso passed a resolution authorizing the Mayor to submit the paperwork necessary for the City of El Paso to join the Cities of Service Coalition, including a Declaration of Service; and

**WHEREAS**, the Cities of Coalition has requested the Mayor to re-submit the paperwork for the City of El Paso to join the Cities of Service Coalition and a Declaration of Service,

### **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EL PASO:**

That the Mayor be authorized to submit the paperwork necessary for the City of El Paso to join the Cities of Service Coalition, including the attached Declaration of Service.

**ADOPTED** this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 2015.


**CITY OF EL PASO**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Oscar Leeser  
Mayor

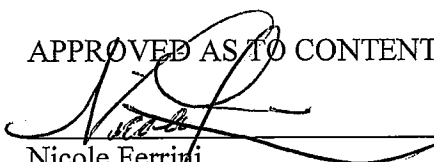
ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Richarda Duffy Momsen  
City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Theresa Cullen  
Deputy City Attorney

APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Nicole Ferrini  
Chief Resilience Officer



# Declaration of Service

Request to authorize the Mayor to submit the paperwork necessary for the City of El Paso to join the Cities of Service Coalition, including a Declaration of Service

**Strategic Goal 2:** Set the Standard for a Safe and Secure City

**Strategic Goal 5:** Promote Transparent and Consistent Communication Among All Members of the Community

**Strategic Goal 8:** Nurture and Promote a Healthy, Sustainable Community



# Cities of Service Coalition

- This request is for the Mayor to sign the **Declaration of Service**, which would have the following benefits:
  - Membership in the Cities of Service Coalition
  - **Eligibility to apply for certain service and volunteerism grants and opportunities**
    - Such as the Resilience AmeriCorps initiative, which would fund AmeriCorps volunteers to support our resilience efforts
  - Receive training, programmatic support, print and online resources and recognition



# Cities of Service Summary

- Cities of Service efforts focus on "impact volunteering"
  - Volunteer strategies that target community needs, use nationwide best practices, and set clear outcomes to measure progress.
- Impact areas include:
  - Neighborhood revitalization
  - Education and youth outreach
  - Health
  - Preparedness and safety
  - Veterans
  - Sustainability





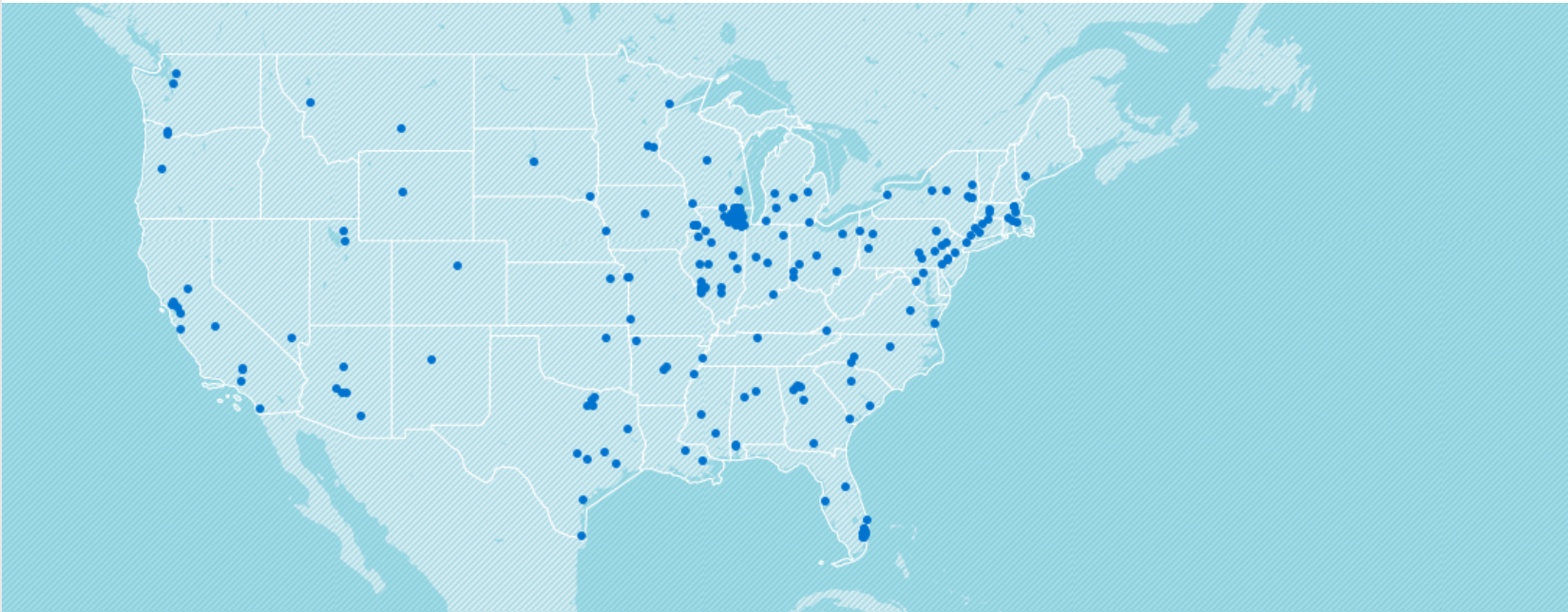
# Cities of Service Summary

- There is **no cost to join** and level of engagement is at the discretion of the city. By signing the declaration of service, the mayor commits the city to:
  - supporting service and volunteerism in our community
  - Developing a service plan and strategy
  - Working with other mayors to support the service movement
  - Encouraging other mayors to join the effort to engage our citizens
  - Ensuring the voice of cities is heard in discussions related to service



# Map of coalition members

There are 200+ mayors currently in the coalition  
29 have developed Service Plans







# **Thank You!**

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## RESOLUTION

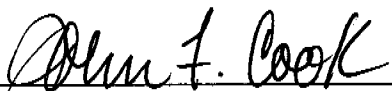
### BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EL PASO:

That the Mayor be authorized to submit the paperwork necessary for the City of El Paso to join the Cities of Service Coalition, including the attached Declaration of Service and amending the City of El Paso Federal Legislative Agenda to include the goals contained in the Serve America Act.

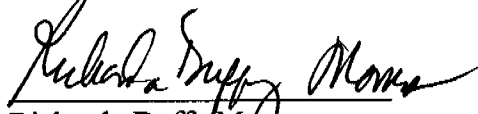
ADOPTED this 5<sup>th</sup> day of January 2010.



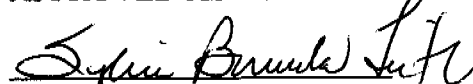
CITY OF EL PASO

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
John F. Cook  
Mayor

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Richarda Duffy Madsen  
City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Sylvia Borunda Firth  
Senior Assistant City Attorney



*El Paso, Texas*  
*The International City*

**JOHN F. COOK**  
MAYOR

Teresa Pratt  
Cities of Service Program Officer  
City of New York

I am submitting a signed copy of the Declaration of Service for the Cities of Service Coalition.

Please note that the Declaration of Service will be presented to the El Paso Council on January 5, 2010, for ratification.

If you should have any questions please feel free to contact my office at 915 541-4443.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "John F. Cook".

John F. cook  
Mayor of El Paso



## CITIES OF SERVICE

### DECLARATION OF SERVICE

WHEREAS America has a proud tradition of service and volunteerism that dates back to the colonial era and today can be found in communities across the fifty states;

WHEREAS the bipartisan Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, signed into law by President Barack Obama on April 21, 2009 builds on this tradition, encouraging all Americans to serve their communities in new ways;

WHEREAS cities, home to many of the nation's most persistent challenges, are positioned to bring new leadership, facilitation, and innovation to the service movement;

WHEREAS the current need for public-spirited residents to help address increased hardship resulting from the global financial and housing crises is clear;

WHEREAS service enriches the lives of Americans of all ages, and each new generation of young Americans must be engaged to tackle emerging challenges;

NOW, THEREFORE, we resolve to develop a coalition of mayors from cities large and small to work together to harness and focus the energies of our citizens. Cities of Service coalition members will support efforts to increase service opportunities in our cities by:

Developing a comprehensive service plan and a coordinated strategy focused on matching volunteers and established community partners to the areas of greatest local need;

Working with other mayors and elected officials to advance strategies and best practices that accelerate the service movement and produce measurable results;

Encouraging other mayors to join this national effort to engage our citizens; and

Ensuring that the voice of cities is heard in federal legislative, policy, and program discussions related to service, which will help the country achieve the ambitious goals of the Serve America Act.

  
(Signature)

John Cook  
(Mayor's Name - please print)



## CITIES OF SERVICE

2 Civic Center Plaza

Mayor's Office Address

El Paso, Texas 79901

City, State, Zip

915 541-4443

Mayor's Telephone

CookJf@elpasotexas.gov

Mayor's Email Address

Mark M. Alvarado

Staff Contact Name

Neighborhood Services Coordinator

Staff Contact Title

915 541-4918

Staff Contact Telephone

alvaradomm@elpasotexas.gov

Staff Contact Email Address

To join *Cities of Service*, please sign the Declaration of Service, fill in the information above, and return this form to the coalition, attention Teresa Pratt, via fax at 212.788.3286 or by email to [citiesofservice@cityhall.nyc.gov](mailto:citiesofservice@cityhall.nyc.gov).

# THE CITIES OF SERVICE DECLARATION OF SERVICE



WHEREAS America has a proud tradition of service and volunteerism that dates back to the colonial era and today can be found in communities across the fifty states;

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Encouraging other mayors to join this national effort to engage our citizens; and

Ensuring that the voice of cities is heard in federal legislative, policy, and program discussions related to service, which will help the country achieve the ambitious goals of the Serve America Act.

<u>Mayor Oscar Leoser</u>		<u>07/20/2015</u>
MAYOR'S SIGNATURE	MAYOR'S NAME - PLEASE PRINT	TODAY'S DATE
<u>300 N Campbell</u>		<u>El Paso, Texas, 79901</u>
MAYOR'S OFFICE ADDRESS		CITY, STATE, ZIP
<u>mayor@elpasotexas.gov</u>		<u>915-212-0021</u>
MAYOR'S EMAIL ADDRESS		MAYOR'S TELEPHONE
<u>Nicole Ferrini</u>		<u>Chief Resilience Officer</u>
STAFF CONTACT NAME		STAFF CONTACT TITLE
<u>FerriniNM@elpasotexas.gov</u>		<u>915-474-2202</u>
STAFF CONTACT EMAIL ADDRESS		STAFF CONTACT TELEPHONE

## TO JOIN CITIES OF SERVICE:

Please read and sign the Declaration of Service. Return the completed form to Cities of Service by email or fax:  
[info@citiesofservice.org](mailto:info@citiesofservice.org) / (888) 335-3886

If you have any questions, please call: (646) 324-8403



Approved As to Form: *Amanda Cullen*  
Approved As to Content: *Nicole Ferrini*

[WHO WE ARE](#)[HOW WE WORK](#)[IMPACT AREAS](#)[THE COALITION](#)[WHAT'S NEW](#)[JOIN THE COALITION](#)

## CITIES OF SERVICE APPROACH

Cities of Service efforts focus on "impact volunteering"—volunteer strategies that target community needs, use best practices, and set clear outcomes to measure progress. Through comprehensive planning, meaningful partnerships, wide-reaching collaboration, and national advocacy, Cities of Service cities use citizen volunteers to make meaningful change for their communities.

[DECLARATION OF SERVICE](#) [RECRUIT YOUR MAYOR](#)

## CITIES OF SERVICE COALITION BENEFITS

At no cost to the city, coalition members receive targeted training, ongoing programmatic and logistical guidance and support, funding opportunities, print and online resources, potential press and peer recognition for your city. Coalition cities participate together in a community of practice, have access to customized volunteer-matching websites at a highly discounted rate, and are given the opportunity to represent Cities of Service and their cities at regional, national, and international conferences and meetings.





























## FOR MAYORS

































Strong mayoral leadership is key to success for Cities of Service coalition members. If you want to help your residents make real change for your city, please sign the [Declaration of Service](#) and join us! By signing the Declaration, Cities of Service mayors commit to:



































# THE COALITION




























 <b>Akron, OH</b> Mayor Donald L. Plusquellic	 <b>Albuquerque, NM</b> <a href="#">Mayor Richard J. Berry</a> 	 <b>Allentown, PA</b> Mayor Ed Pawlowski 
 <b>Alton, IL</b> Mayor Brant Walker	 <b>Ames, IA</b> Mayor Ann H. Campbell	 <b>Amesville, OH</b> <a href="#">Mayor Gary Goosman</a> 
 <b>Arlington, TX</b> Mayor Robert Cluck	 <b>Ashmore, IL</b> Mayor Kurt Crail	 <b>Atlanta, GA</b> <a href="#">Mayor Kasim Reed</a> 
 <b>Aurora, IL</b> Mayor Tom Weisner	 <b>Austin, TX</b> <a href="#">Mayor Steve Adler</a> 	 <b>Baltimore, MD</b> Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake
 <b>Barnsley, UK</b> Councillor Sir Steve Houghton 	 <b>Baton Rouge, LA</b> <a href="#">Mayor Melvin Holden</a> 	 <b>Belleville, IL</b> Mayor Mark W. Eckert
 <b>Belvidere, IL</b> Mayor Mike Chamberlain	 <b>Billings, MT</b> Mayor Thomas W. Hanel	 <b>Birmingham, AL</b> <a href="#">Mayor William A. Bell Sr.</a> 
 <b>Boston, MA</b> <a href="#">Mayor Martin J. Walsh</a> 	 <b>Bridgeport, CT</b> Mayor Bill Finch	 <b>Bristol, UK</b> <a href="#">Mayor George Ferguson</a> 
 <b>Brockton, MA</b> Mayor Bill Carpenter	 <b>Brownsville, TX</b> Mayor Tony Martinez	 <b>Bryant, AR</b> Mayor Jill Dabbs
 <b>Buffalo, NY</b> <a href="#">Mayor Byron W. Brown</a>	 <b>Camden, NJ</b> Mayor Dana L. Redd	 <b>Campton Hills, IL</b> Village President Patsy J. Smith 
 <b>Champaign, IL</b> Mayor Don Gerard	 <b>Charleston, SC</b> Mayor Joseph P. Riley Jr.	 <b>Charlotte, NC</b> Mayor Daniel E. Clodfelter
 <b>Chatham, IL</b> Mayor Thomas S. Gray	 <b>Chicago, IL</b> Mayor Rahm Emanuel	 <b>Chula Vista, CA</b> Mayor Cheryl Cox
 <b>Cincinnati, OH</b> Mayor Mark Mallory	 <b>Cohoes, NY</b> Mayor George E. Primeau, Sr.	 <b>Columbia, IL</b> Mayor Kevin Hutchinson
 <b>Columbia, SC</b> Mayor Steve Benjamin	 <b>Cooper City, FL</b> Mayor Greg Ross	 <b>Coral Springs, FL</b> <a href="#">Mayor Walter "Skip" Campbell</a>
 <b>Corpus Christi, TX</b> Mayor Nelda Martinez	 <b>Cottonwood, AZ</b> Mayor Diane Joens	 <b>Crawfordsville, IN</b> Mayor Todd D. Barton
 <b>Dallas, TX</b> <a href="#">Mayor Michael Rawlings</a>	 <b>Danbury, CT</b> Mayor Mark D. Boughton	 <b>Davenport, IA</b> Mayor William E. Gluba
 <b>Decatur, GA</b> Mayor James A. Baskett	 <b>DeKalb, IL</b> Mayor John A. Rey	 <b>Doral, FL</b> Mayor Luigi Boria
 <b>Dublin, OH</b> Mayor Michael H. Keenan	 <b>Dubuque, IA</b> Mayor Roy D. Buol	 <b>Duluth, MN</b> <a href="#">Mayor Don Ness</a> 
 <b>East Moline, IL</b> Mayor John Thodos	 <b>East St. Louis, IL</b> Mayor Alvin L. Parks, Jr.	 <b>Easton, PA</b> Mayor Salvatore J. Panto Jr.
 <b>Elgin, IL</b> Mayor David J. Kaptain	 <b>Englewood, CO</b> Mayor Randy Penn	 <b>Eugene, OR</b> Mayor Kitty Piercy
 <b>Evanston, IL</b> Mayor Elizabeth Tisdahl	 <b>Fall River, MA</b> <a href="#">Mayor C. Samuel Sutter</a> 	 <b>Farrell, PA</b> Mayor Olive M. McKeithan
 <b>Fayetteville, AR</b> Mayor Lioneld Jordan	 <b>Flint, MI</b> <a href="#">Mayor Dayne Walling</a> 	 <b>Forest Park, IL</b> Mayor Anthony T. Calderone
 <b>Forsyth, GA</b> Mayor John T. Howard II	 <b>Fort Lauderdale, FL</b> <a href="#">Mayor John P. Seiler</a> 	 <b>Fort Wayne, IN</b> Mayor Thomas C. Henry
 <b>Franklin Park, IL</b> Mayor Barrett Pedersen	 <b>Fresno, CA</b> Mayor Ashley Swearingin	 <b>Friars Point, MS</b> Mayor Catherine Miller
























































 <b>Galesburg, IL</b> <a href="#">Mayor John T. Pritchard</a>	
 <b>Grand Rapids, MI</b> <a href="#">Mayor George Heartwell</a>	
 <b>Harrisburg, PA</b> <a href="#">Mayor Eric Papenfuse</a>	
 <b>Hayward, CA</b> <a href="#">Mayor Barbara Halliday</a>	
 <b>Holyoke, MA</b> <a href="#">Mayor Alex Morse</a>	
 <b>Island Lake, IL</b> <a href="#">Mayor Charles R. Amrich</a>	
 <b>Joliet, IL</b> <a href="#">Mayor Thomas Giarrante</a>	
 <b>Kansas City, KS</b> <a href="#">Mayor Mark R. Holland</a>	
 <b>Kewanee, IL</b> <a href="#">Mayor Bruce Tossell</a>	
 <b>Lancaster, CA</b> <a href="#">Mayor Rex Parris</a>	
 <b>Libertyville, IL</b> <a href="#">Mayor Terry L. Wepler</a>	
 <b>London, UK</b> <a href="#">Mayor Boris Johnson</a>	
 <b>Markham, IL</b> <a href="#">Mayor David Webb</a>	
 <b>Memphis, TN</b> <a href="#">Mayor A C Wharton, Jr.</a>	
 <b>Midlothian, IL</b> <a href="#">Mayor Sharon L. Rybak</a>	
 <b>Mobile, AL</b> <a href="#">Mayor Sandy Stimpson</a>	
 <b>Mount Vernon, IL</b> <a href="#">Mayor Mary Jane Chesley</a>	
 <b>Navasota, TX</b> <a href="#">Mayor Bert Miller</a>	
 <b>New Orleans, LA</b> <a href="#">Mayor Mitch Landrieu</a>	
 <b>O'Fallon, IL</b> <a href="#">Mayor Gary L. Graham</a>	
 <b>Olympia Fields, IL</b> <a href="#">Mayor Debbie Meyers-Martin</a>	
 <b>Palatine, IL</b> <a href="#">Mayor Jim Schwantz</a>	
 <b>Parker, PA</b> <a href="#">Mayor William R. McCall Jr.</a>	
 <b>Peoria, IL</b> <a href="#">Mayor Jim Ardis</a>	
 <b>Pierre, SD</b> <a href="#">Mayor Laurie R. Gill</a>	

 <b>Glendale Heights, IL</b> <a href="#">Mayor Linda Jackson</a>	
 <b>Hamilton, OH</b> <a href="#">Mayor Pat Moeller</a>	
 <b>Hartford, CT</b> <a href="#">Mayor Pedro E. Segarra</a>	
 <b>Hazel Crest, IL</b> <a href="#">Mayor Vernard L. Alsberry, Jr.</a>	
 <b>Houston, TX</b> <a href="#">Mayor Annise Parker</a>	
 <b>Jackson, MS</b> <a href="#">Mayor Tony T. Yarber</a>	
 <b>Joplin, MO</b> <a href="#">Mayor Michael Seibert</a>	
 <b>Kansas City, MO</b> <a href="#">Mayor Sylvester James, Jr.</a>	
 <b>Kingsport, TN</b> <a href="#">Mayor Dennis Phillips</a>	
 <b>Lansing, MI</b> <a href="#">Mayor Virg Bernero</a>	
 <b>Lithonia, GA</b> <a href="#">Mayor Deborah A. Jackson</a>	
 <b>Los Angeles, CA</b> <a href="#">Mayor Eric Garcetti</a>	
 <b>Marysville, WA</b> <a href="#">Mayor Jon Nehring</a>	
 <b>Mesa, AZ</b> <a href="#">Mayor John Giles</a>	
 <b>Milwaukee, WI</b> <a href="#">Mayor Tom Barrett</a>	
 <b>Monmouthshire, UK</b> <a href="#">Mayor Peter A. Fox</a>	
 <b>Nacogdoches, TX</b> <a href="#">Mayor Roger Van Horn</a>	
 <b>New Bedford, MA</b> <a href="#">Mayor Jonathan F. Mitchell</a>	
 <b>New York, NY</b> <a href="#">Mayor Bill de Blasio</a>	
 <b>Oakland, CA</b> <a href="#">Mayor Jean Quan</a>	
 <b>Omaha, NE</b> <a href="#">Mayor Jim Suttle</a>	
 <b>Palmdale, CA</b> <a href="#">Mayor James C. Ledford, Jr.</a>	
 <b>Parkland, FL</b> <a href="#">Mayor Michael Udine</a>	
 <b>Philadelphia, PA</b> <a href="#">Mayor Michael Nutter</a>	
 <b>Pittsburgh, PA</b> <a href="#">Mayor William Peduto</a>	

 <b>Glens Falls, NY</b> <a href="#">Mayor John Diamond</a>	
 <b>Hanover Park, IL</b> <a href="#">Mayor Rodney S. Craig</a>	
 <b>Hattiesburg, MS</b> <a href="#">Mayor Johnny L. DuPree</a>	
 <b>Hoffman Estates, IL</b> <a href="#">Mayor William D. McLeod</a>	
 <b>Indianapolis, IN</b> <a href="#">Mayor Gregory A. Ballard</a>	
 <b>Jacksonville, IL</b> <a href="#">Mayor Andy Ezard</a>	
 <b>Kalamazoo, MI</b> <a href="#">Mayor Bobby J. Hopewell</a>	
 <b>Kettering, OH</b> <a href="#">Mayor Donald E. Patterson</a>	
 <b>Kirklees, UK</b> <a href="#">Councillor Jean Calvert</a>	
 <b>Las Vegas, NV</b> <a href="#">Mayor Carolyn Goodman</a>	
 <b>Little Rock, AR</b> <a href="#">Mayor Mark Stodola</a>	
 <b>Louisville, KY</b> <a href="#">Mayor Greg Fischer</a>	
 <b>McKinney, TX</b> <a href="#">Mayor Brian Loughmiller</a>	
 <b>Miami, FL</b> <a href="#">Mayor Tomas Regalado</a>	
 <b>Missoula, MT</b> <a href="#">Mayor John Engen</a>	
 <b>Monterey, CA</b> <a href="#">Mayor Chuck Della Sala</a>	
 <b>Nashville, TN</b> <a href="#">Mayor Karl Dean</a>	
 <b>New Hope, MN</b> <a href="#">Mayor Kathi Hemken</a>	
 <b>North Chicago, IL</b> <a href="#">Mayor Leon Rockingham, Jr.</a>	
 <b>Ogden, UT</b> <a href="#">Mayor Mike Caldwell</a>	
 <b>Orlando, FL</b> <a href="#">Mayor Buddy Dyer</a>	
 <b>Park Ridge, IL</b> <a href="#">Mayor David F. Schmidt</a>	
 <b>Pembroke Pines, FL</b> <a href="#">Mayor Frank Ortis</a>	
 <b>Phoenix, AZ</b> <a href="#">Mayor Greg Stanton</a>	
 <b>Plano, IL</b> <a href="#">Mayor Robert Hausler</a>	

	<b>Plano, TX</b> <a href="#">Mayor Harry La Rosiliere</a>	
	<b>Portsmouth, UK</b> Lord Mayor Councillor Steven Wylie	
	<b>Raleigh, NC</b> Mayor Nancy McFarlane	
	<b>Richmond, VA</b> <a href="#">Mayor Dwight C. Jones</a>	
	<b>Robbins, IL</b> Mayor Tyrone Ward	
	<b>Sacramento, CA</b> Mayor Kevin Johnson	
	<b>San Francisco, CA</b> Mayor Edwin M. Lee	
	<b>Savannah, GA</b> <a href="#">Mayor Edna Jackson</a>	
	<b>Silvis, IL</b> Mayor Tom Conrad	
	<b>South Bend, IN</b> Mayor Pete Buttigieg	
	<b>St. Paul, MN</b> Mayor Christopher B. Coleman	
	<b>Sunrise, FL</b> Mayor Michael J. Ryan	
	<b>Syracuse, NY</b> Mayor Stephanie Miner	
	<b>Toledo, OH</b> Mayor D. Michael Collins	
	<b>Troy, NY</b> Mayor Louis A. Rosamilia	
	<b>Tuscaloosa, AL</b> Mayor Walter Maddox	
	<b>Utica, NY</b> <a href="#">Mayor Robert Palmieri</a>	
	<b>Vermillion, SD</b> Mayor John E. Powell	
	<b>Waterbury, CT</b> Mayor Neil M. O'Leary	
	<b>West Palm Beach, FL</b> Mayor Geraldine Muoio	
	<b>Wheaton, IL</b> Mayor Michael J. Gresk	
	<b>Wilmington, DE</b> Mayor Dennis P. Williams	

	<b>Plymouth, UK</b> Councillor Chris Penberthy	
	<b>Prichard, AL</b> Mayor Troy Ephraim	
	<b>Reading, PA</b> Mayor Vaughn D. Spencer	
	<b>Richton Park, IL</b> Mayor Rick Reinbold	
	<b>Rock Hill, SC</b> Mayor Doug Echols	
	<b>Salem, IL</b> Mayor John Raymer	
	<b>San Jose, CA</b> <a href="#">Mayor Sam Liccardo</a>	
	<b>Schenectady, NY</b> Mayor Gary R. McCarthy	
	<b>Smithville, TX</b> Mayor Mark Bunte	
	<b>Springfield, MA</b> Mayor Domenic J. Sarno	
	<b>St. Petersburg, FL</b> Mayor Rick Kriseman	
	<b>Surprise, AZ</b> Mayor Sharon Wolcott	
	<b>Telford and Wrekin, UK</b> <a href="#">Councillor Shaun Davies</a>	
	<b>Topeka, KS</b> Mayor Larry E. Wolgast	
	<b>Tucson, AZ</b> Mayor Jonathon Rothschild	
	<b>Union City, GA</b> Mayor Vince R. Williams	
	<b>Valdosta, GA</b> Mayor John Gayle	
	<b>Virginia Beach, VA</b> Mayor William D. Sessoms, Jr.	
	<b>Waterloo, IL</b> Mayor Thomas G. Smith	
	<b>West Park, FL</b> Mayor Eric H. Jones, Jr.	
	<b>White Plains, NY</b> Mayor Thomas Roach	
	<b>Wisconsin Rapids, WI</b> Mayor Zachary J. Vruwink	

	<b>Portland, OR</b> Mayor Charlie Hales	
	<b>Providence, RI</b> <a href="#">Mayor Jorge Elorza</a>	
	<b>Richmond, CA</b> <a href="#">Mayor Tom Butt</a>	
	<b>Riverton, WY</b> Mayor Ronald O. Warpsness	
	<b>Rock Island, IL</b> Mayor Dennis E. Pauley	
	<b>Salt Lake City, UT</b> <a href="#">Mayor Ralph Becker</a>	
	<b>Sauk Village, IL</b> Mayor David A. Hanks	
	<b>Seattle, WA</b> Mayor Edward B. Murray	
	<b>Somerville, MA</b> Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone	
	<b>St. Louis, MO</b> Mayor Francis G. Slay	
	<b>Streamwood, IL</b> Mayor Billie D. Roth	
	<b>Swindon, UK</b> <a href="#">Councillor David Renard</a>	
	<b>The Colony, TX</b> Mayor Joe McCourry	
	<b>Trenton, NJ</b> Mayor Eric E. Jackson	
	<b>Tulsa, OK</b> Mayor Dewey F. Bartlett, Jr.	
	<b>University Park, IL</b> Mayor Vivian E. Covington	
	<b>Vancouver, WA</b> Mayor Tim Leavitt	
	<b>Washington, DC</b> <a href="#">Mayor Muriel Bowser</a>	
	<b>Watervliet, NY</b> Mayor Michael P. Manning	
	<b>Westbrook, ME</b> Mayor Colleen Hilton	
	<b>Wilkes-Barre, PA</b> Mayor Thomas M. Leighton	
	<b>York, PA</b> Mayor C. Kim Bracey	

- Developing a comprehensive service plan and a coordinated strategy focused on matching volunteers and established community partners to the areas of greatest local need.
- Working with other mayors and elected officials to advance strategies and best practices that accelerate the service movement and produce measurable results.
- Encouraging other mayors to join this national effort to engage our citizens.
- Ensuring that the voice of cities is heard in federal legislative, policy, and program discussions related to service, which will help the country achieve the ambitious goals of the Serve America Act.

## FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS

If your city is not yet part of the Cities of Service coalition, there are a few simple steps you can take to get your mayor to join. Download the [Recruit Your Mayor](#) blueprint, a step-by-step, how-to guide to get all the information you need to make a compelling case to your mayor to make your city a city of service.

Click [here](#) to see if your city is part of the coalition.

## DOWNLOAD THE DECLARATION OF SERVICE

Click [here](#) to download the Declaration of Service to join the coalition and send the signed copy to Cities of Service.

NEWSLETTER SIGN-UP 



# CITIES OF SERVICE TO LEAD FIRST RESILIENCE AMERICORPS IN THE U.S.

## **Building Resilience in Cities, Before Crises Occur**

*The White House Council on Environmental Quality announced July 9 that Cities of Service will help to launch and lead a "Resilience AmeriCorps" this summer, in partnership with the Rockefeller Foundation, the Corporation for National and Community Service, and additional federal partners.*

In cities across the country to be announced later this summer, Cities of Service along with [federal partners](#) and the Rockefeller Foundation will develop more resilient cities through citizen and resident engagement in local impact volunteering programs that are designed to improve environmental and social resiliency in low-income communities. Led by Cities of Service, **Resilience AmeriCorps** (CoSRAC) national service members in participating cities will serve as local ambassadors and experts in impact volunteering, increasing local capacity and equipping low-income communities to better prepare for and address the risks and challenges associated with climate change.

In conjunction with the Rockefeller Foundation and federal agencies, Cities of Service will select 8 to 12 cities based on local vulnerability, commitment from City Hall to resilience efforts and capacity to host and implement Resilience AmeriCorps in their cities. The program responds to a recommendation made by President Obama's State, Local, and Tribal Leaders Task Force on Climate Preparedness and Resilience to assist vulnerable communities that lack the capacity to address climate-resilience planning and implementation.

## ***Opportunities***

- An excellent **Resilience Project Manager** to be based with Cities of Service will lead the day-to-day management of the Resilience AmeriCorps Project. **Learn more and apply [here](#)!**
- Applications for VISTA members will be posted once participating cities are announced.

## ***Our Partners and Press Announcements***

- [The White House Council on Environmental Quality](#) – with the Department of Energy (DOE), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
- [The Corporation for National and Community Service](#)
- [The Rockefeller Foundation](#)
- #ActonClimate Google+ [Hangout with the White House](#)

# HOUSTONSERVICE



**A Plan to Promote Civic Engagement by Empowering Houston's Communities.**

**March 28, 2011  
Annise Parker, Mayor**

# HOUSTONSERVICE

**A Plan to Promote Civic Engagement by Empowering  
Houston's Communities.**

**For more information, please contact:  
The Mayor's Volunteer Initiatives Program  
900 Bagby – Public Level, Suite 019, Houston, TX 77002  
832.393.0971  
[volunteer@houstontx.gov](mailto:volunteer@houstontx.gov)**

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**“Houston boasts a long tradition of community service and engagement. The Houston SERVICE plan provides measurable strategies that will allow us to harness our collective passion for service and better target our volunteer efforts toward areas of critical need.”**

**-Mayor Annise Parker**



# A Message from the Mayor

In January of 2009, the passage of the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act ushered in a new era of service and civic engagement. Houston, as a Cities of Service Leadership Grant recipient, is at the forefront of this national movement. I am pleased to join our President – and mayors from over 100 cities across the nation – in answering this call to service by announcing the release of Houston SERVICE.

Houston SERVICE is the City's high-impact service plan, developed with the support of Cities of Service, a bi-partisan coalition of mayors nationwide dedicated to engaging citizens locally to make a difference against pressing City issues. The following pages outline a coordinated strategy focused on matching volunteers and established community partners to Houston's areas of greatest local need. The service plan is a blueprint for action in Houston, designed in response to the feedback of hundreds of community partners that overwhelmingly agreed our efforts must focus on addressing pressing local challenges:

1. Increasing students' college readiness
2. Strengthening veteran services
3. Preparing our citizens to respond to emergency situations

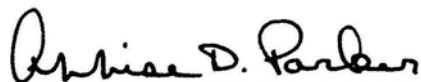
As a result, Houston SERVICE will harness the collective talent and energy of our citizens to accomplish these primary goals:

- Provide after-school educational programs for at-risk youth
- Enhance mentoring programs for our returning veterans
- Educate citizens on life-saving CPR techniques
- More generally, increase citizen access to volunteer opportunities in the City

Houston is a city of open arms and warm hearts. In 2008, I saw first-hand the outpouring of support and record volunteer response in the wake of the destruction of Hurricane Ike. Houston SERVICE will create a volunteer support infrastructure to accommodate and sustain this passion for service while strategically addressing the most pressing needs of our great City.

I thank the many community partners without whom this effort would not be possible, and the citizens of Houston who continuously and consistently make me proud to call Houston home. Together, we will make a difference.

Sincerely,



Annise D. Parker  
Mayor





# Executive Summary

Mayor Annise Parker joined the Cities of Service Coalition on February 3, 2010, with a commitment to work together with the other mayors in this bi-partisan coalition to address pressing City needs with citizen service.

Houston SERVICE – the City of Houston’s Service Plan – focuses on increasing the impact of volunteerism by aligning key partnerships with service programs that address the City’s most critical challenges. Programs that are priorities for our service plan are those that address three priority need areas: providing after-school educational programs for at-risk youth (After School Zones), enhancing mentoring programs to help reintegrate our returning veterans (Houston Veterans Continuing Service), and educating citizens on life-saving CPR techniques (Everyone Can be a Lifesaver).

## 1. Impact Initiatives

After assessing Houston’s current efforts in these areas and collaborating closely with community partners, volunteer Impact Initiatives were carefully designed and will be implemented using various community partners.

- **After School Zones:** This initiative seeks to increase both the number of mentors engaged with the City’s at-risk youth and the number of young people who are able to participate in academically rich after-school programming. The ultimate goal is to improve educational outcomes for the targeted youth by setting individualized goals for students and engaging them in apprenticeships that will help them gain mastery over content areas.
- **Houston Veterans Continuing Service:** The veterans’ initiatives will offer peer to peer support to help 250-500 newly returning combat veterans reintegrate successfully into civilian life over two years. This initiative will help these veterans understand and better access the programs and services that are available to the 2,500 servicemen and women who return to Houston annually.
- **Everyone Can be a Lifesaver:** This initiative involves training citizens on a potentially lifesaving technique, compression-only CPR, which would impact the entire Houston population by having more residents ready to respond to instances of cardiac arrest.

Measuring impact is a crucial component of Houston SERVICE. Each of the three initiatives includes specific metrics to assess the programs’ impact over the next two years, with an ultimate goal of moving the needle on the City’s identified challenges through implementation of targeted volunteer strategies.

The following service plan has been designed so that the tools used to measure the outcomes will be replicable for future service programs. Houston SERVICE will report

these outcomes over the next two years as the programs roll out.

## 2. Infrastructure Initiatives

The City of Houston has identified three cross-cutting challenges that deter citizens from participating in service projects throughout the City. These three challenges must be faced head-on to effectively engage Houstonians in the Impact Initiatives described above, as well as other volunteer opportunities in the City.

Through extensive outreach over the last several months, we have identified three Infrastructure Initiatives we will take on to support volunteering in the City: changes in the City of Houston’s volunteer website (HoustonSERVICE.org), procedures regarding volunteer badging (Volunteer Badging 2.0), and a need for a Leadership Forum to facilitate collaboration between Houston organizations (Mayor’s Non-profit and Faith Based Leadership Forum). By providing new resources and aligning key partnerships with service programs that address the City’s cross-cutting challenges affecting essential volunteer practices, it is our goal to make volunteering in Houston a priority.

The City of Houston’s three Infrastructure Initiatives are:

- **HoustonSERVICE.org:** The City of Houston, in partnership with Cities of Service, has developed a new website that will provide up-to-date information on volunteer needs in Houston as well as a user-friendly interface to make applying for opportunities easier. On the website, Houston area non-profits, faith-based groups and corporations will be able to post volunteer opportunities and highlight service projects. This will encourage greater organizational partnerships and increase volunteer awareness of Houston service programs.
- **Volunteer Badging 2.0:** The City is committed to improving and accelerating the process of providing volunteers with required City identification badges, to make it easier for residents to volunteer with the City of Houston.
- **Mayor’s Non-profit and Faith Based Leadership Forum:** This forum will provide an avenue for volunteer administrators to meet annually with the senior leadership of the City of Houston in a Leadership Forum. This forum initiative will improve coordination and collaboration among non-profits and other organizations in the Houston area such as corporations and foundations.

It is our hope that by implementing these Infrastructure Initiatives, Houstonians will be better served and better able to serve.





# Introduction

## About Cities of Service

Founded in New York City on September 10, 2009 by 17 mayors from cities around the nation, Cities of Service is a bipartisan coalition of mayors who have committed to work together to engage citizens in a multi-year effort to address pressing city needs through impact volunteerism. The coalition has rapidly grown since its inception and now includes more than 100 mayors, representing more than 49 million Americans across the nation.

American cities face serious challenges, and many mayors want to take advantage of every resource available to them — including the time and energy of public-spirited residents — to address those challenges. In cities across America today, citizen service is often an underutilized or inefficiently utilized. Cities of Service supports mayors to leverage citizen service strategies, addressing local needs and making government more effective.

All Cities of Service efforts are characterized by a concept called “impact volunteering” — volunteer strategies that target community needs, use best practices, and set clear outcomes and measures to gauge progress.

In June 2010, the City of Houston was one of ten cities to receive a *Cities of Service Leadership Grant*. Funded jointly by Bloomberg Philanthropies and the Rockefeller Foundation, the two-year grants enable cities to hire Chief Service Officers responsible for developing and implementing high-impact service plans.

### *Cities of Service Methodology*

In addition to funding, all *Cities of Service Leadership Grant* recipients receive technical assistance and support from Cities of Service to develop high-impact service plans. Much of this support follows a methodology outlined in the *Cities of Service Playbook*.<sup>1</sup>

Like all *Cities of Service Leadership Grant* recipients, Houston first conducted a landscape analysis to identify both the specific challenges the city would address through service and the resources and opportunities available to support the effort. This landscape analysis included:

- Focus groups with key stakeholders, including representatives from city agencies, nonprofit organizations, colleges and universities, local businesses, and foundations;
- Expert interviews with local and national leaders, including Chief Service Officers from cities across the nation; and
- Surveys of volunteer-using nonprofit organizations, city agencies, and K-12 schools.

After completing the landscape analysis, City of Houston developed a unique set of Cities of Service initiatives: “Impact Service Initiatives” to address specific challenges in the City’s priority need areas and “Infrastructure Initiatives” to address cross-cutting service challenges. Next, the City developed metrics to gauge the progress of each initiative and operational plans for implementation.



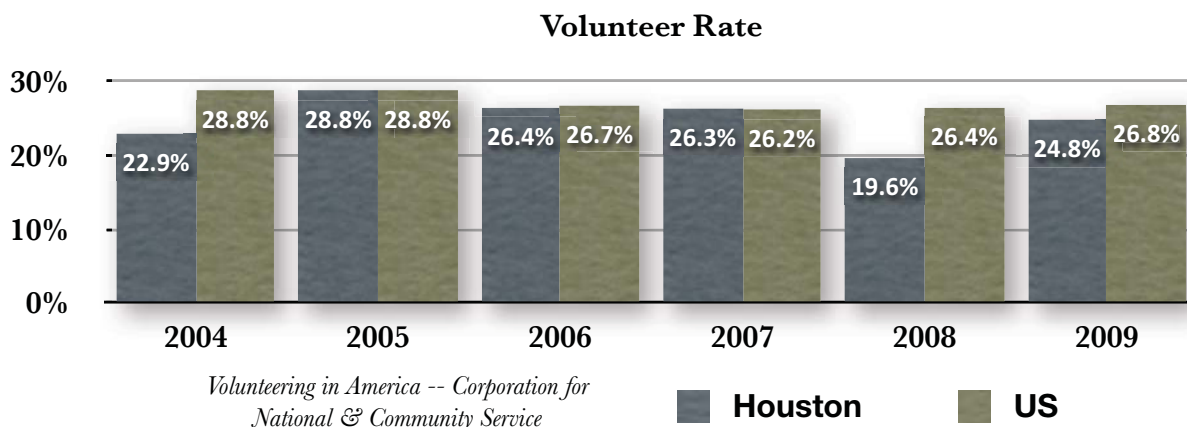
<sup>1</sup> The Cities of Service Playbook is available for download at [citiesofservice.org](http://citiesofservice.org)

# Service in the City of Houston Past & Present

The City of Houston is the 4th largest City in the United States, and continues to grow at a rapid rate. However, we rank 40<sup>th</sup> out of the 51 major U.S. cities in volunteer service. According to *Volunteering in America*, only 23% of the City's adult population volunteered an average of 34.2 hours/person. This is a relatively low number and not indicative of the City's rich history of volunteerism. We can do better!! The mission of Houston SERVICE is to provide Houstonians more opportunities to volunteer and become civically engaged in their communities.

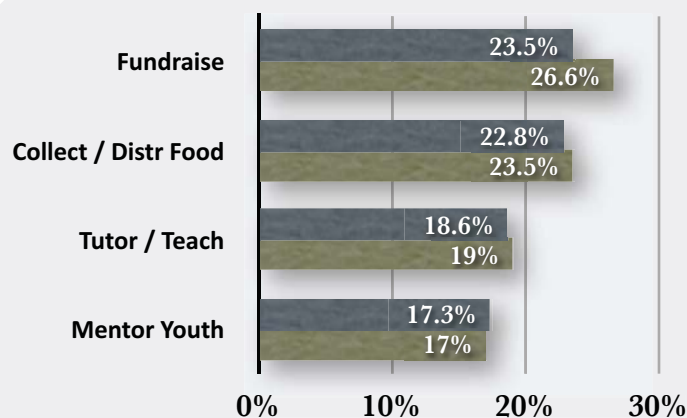
**"Our prime purpose in life is to help others."**

- Dalai Lama



Volunteers are an essential source of energy, ideas, spirit, and manpower that help Houston function as a large metropolitan area. For example, the City's Volunteer Initiatives Program (VIP), which is the pre-cursor to Houston SERVICE, annually places 3000-5000 volunteers with various City departments, allowing them to channel their passions into meaningful action.

Through these volunteers, the City of Houston has been able to provide services that might otherwise have been cut during this time of economic need. Volunteers have become an integral part of moving the City forward in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and, in the process, have made it a leading community in its commitment to service. The following graph breaks down the different areas in which Houstonians have served the community:



The top four volunteer activities cited were: Fundraising (23.5%--3.1% lower than the national average); Collect/Distribute Food (22.8%--.7% lower than the national average); Tutor/Teach (18.6%--.4% lower than the national average); and Mentor Youth (17.3%--.3% higher than the national average). Although education/youth development activities comprise half of the major areas in volunteerism for the City of Houston, Houston SERVICE aims to create more opportunities in these areas. The data illuminates the lack of focus in the areas of veteran's outreach and public safety and health.

Houston has a great tradition of service that is keenly reflected in the size of the veteran population that resides within the Greater Houston area. Harris County has the second largest veteran population in the United States with nearly 305,000 veterans. This presence is a testament to the understanding of what service means for our country, our City and our community.

Houston's Mayor Annise Parker, who was elected in January 2010, issued a statement that embodies the esprit de corps of the typical volunteer in Houston:

**"Whether it is helping our neighbors next door or those far away, Houstonians never hesitate to step up and lend a hand. Too often we fail to recognize and appreciate those who give of their time to others. This is our chance to say thank you."**

In June 2010, the City of Houston, along with nine other cities around the nation, became the recipient of a Cities of Service Leadership Grant provided by the Cities of Service, and funded by Bloomberg Philanthropies and the Rockefeller Foundation. With this grant, Houston hired the City's first Chief Service Officer, Cameron M. Waldner, to develop and implement a high-impact service plan that matches Houston's volunteer resources with the issues of greatest local need. This is how Houston SERVICE has been created.

**"A leader is someone who helps improve the lives of other people or improve the system they live under."**

- General Sam Houston

## A. Methodology

As part of its landscape analysis, Houston SERVICE conducted extensive research to identify the pressing City challenges that can be addressed effectively with volunteer service, as well as the cross-cutting challenges that hinder more service across the City. To do this, the following activities were taken:

### 1. Focus Groups

Focus groups were held over a few weeks and involved 133 participants, representing various nonprofits, faith-based organizations, as well as universities and colleges in Houston. These discussions were facilitated by our Chief Service Officer at the local United Way office. Data was also received from participants through in-person and telephone interviews, as well as panel discussions involving university

and school leaders, non-profit and volunteer agency directors, foundations, and corporate administrators.

### 2. Survey

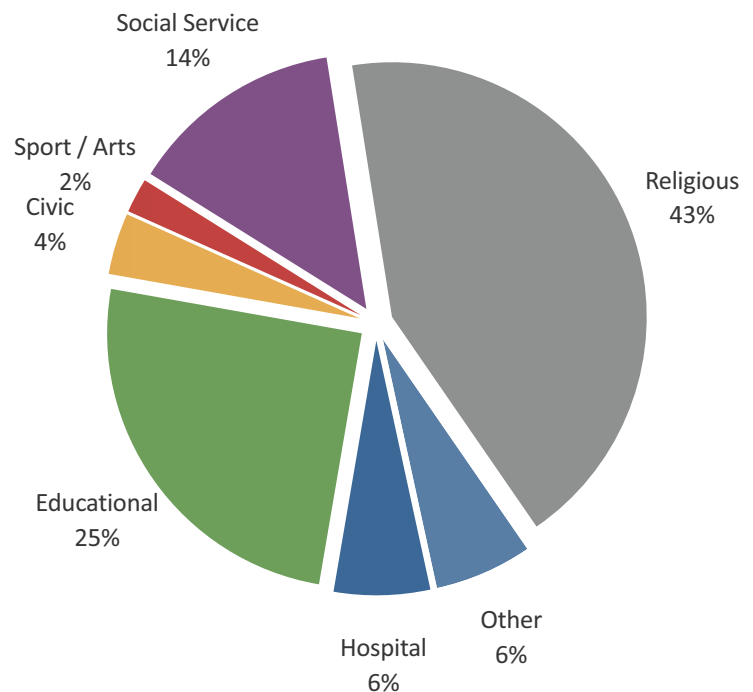
An electronic survey was sent to over 250 representatives from internal agencies, nonprofit organizations, volunteer based institutions, and universities that captured information related to the benefits of increased volunteer activity. The information collected includes specific areas of need, organizational volunteer capacity, measurement of volunteer activity, and characteristics of effective volunteer management.

**"No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted."**

-Aesop

## B. The Service System

Whether they are non-profits, public schools, City agencies, or places of worship, organizations use the enthusiasm and skills of volunteers to strengthen operations and support the administration of programs to further their mission. The survey data collected documents that volunteers are most often being used to prepare fundraising mailing, serve on boards of directors, and to deliver services to clients.



**The above data represents the most prevalent areas of volunteering in Houston. With the Cities of Service Leadership Grant, Houston SERVICE will continue to promote programs and various initiatives within these areas.**



The results of the focus groups and the surveys provided a general idea of how the different non-profits, faith-based organizations, and universities are addressing volunteerism in Houston.

The initiatives presented in the following section, highlighting the goals and strengths of Houston's blueprint of service; offer a diverse and comprehensive vision for building existing strengths as well as improving on the strengths and challenges noted above. The ultimate goal of Houston SERVICE is to move the needle on pressing City challenges through impact volunteerism, while bringing Houstonians together, achieving sustainable practices in volunteer recruitment, and leveraging the collective impact of local-level action to affect state-level and federal volunteer policies through service initiatives.

**“Unselfish and noble actions are the most radiant pages in the biography of souls.”**

- **David Thomas**



# Impact Initiatives

The City of Houston has a tradition of providing service opportunities to its citizens. The City has consistently embodied the principle of service by implementing unique programs to allow citizens to address the City's needs and become agents of change. Utilizing the Cities of Service Leadership Grant, the City of Houston is using high-impact volunteer strategies to address pressing City needs.

**“Only life lived for others is worth living.”**

- **Albert Einstein**

## After School Zones

**Challenge:** Currently, the City of Houston, like many large cities, is facing falling graduation rates in some of its high schools. Effective study habits are nurtured in middle school, so targeting students at both levels is important. This is especially true as the City is also facing low attendance rates throughout middle and high school.

**Initiative:** As studies have shown that pairing mentors with students helps to alleviate absenteeism and low graduation rates, the After School Zones initiative seeks to increase the number of mentors engaged with the City's at-risk youth. Along with the immediate goals of providing an educational outlet and a safe recreational environment for students, Houston SERVICE aims to increase academic outcomes for these students.

The After School Zones initiative is formulated by the City of Houston in partnership with schools and organizations and seeks to integrate art, health, and education through guest speakers and offer them to high poverty areas and high needs schools. The partnership includes Houston SERVICE, with the Chief Service Officer and Office of Education, Houston Public Library, Houston Independent School District, local museums, mentor organizations, community organizations and higher education. For year one, the initiative will be implemented at a local, high needs middle and high school. It is the goal of the City of Houston to expand this program in the following years.

This program is designed to be easily replicated and based off of pre-existing services and resources that connect to resources for students and families. It will serve middle school and high school students providing them positive out of school time in an academically-rich environment. The program will engage students in a service learning project, which will be overseen by Houston SERVICE and the Mayor's Youth Council. Additional learning opportunities will be provided by guest speakers who will utilize their professional interests to engage students in literacy, arts, life skills, high school graduation, and college planning activities and connect the classroom to careers. The Mayor's Youth

Council will partner with after school youth to hold a town hall meeting at a local school, focusing on the importance of mentoring and youth engagement. Finally, mentors will work regularly with students to develop a college/career plan and help students identify available positive out of school activities.

The pilot program will be held at a Houston Public Library, but may also take place in museums, City of Houston community centers, schools or other community organization locations. Adhering to the model established by Citizen Schools, a consultant in this initiative, the mentors will cultivate a college-bound mentality and help students develop a personal career plan. The volunteers will be solicited and retained by Ryan Middle School, Houston SERVICE and the Houston Public Library. University partners will analyze the data for the initiative and measure the efficiency and overall success of the program. Students from local universities will also attend some After School Zones to apply lessons from their service-learning classrooms to the mentor sessions.

Based on focus group research and sustained practices of the Houston Public Library, the City of Houston has identified a 3:1 student to mentor ratio to achieve positive outcomes. This would require 10 mentors in the pilot year to achieve our expected outcomes. In addition to volunteers, Houston SERVICE has requested 3 AmeriCorps Vista members to assist in the expansion of this pilot. With these additional personnel, the outreach into the mentor community will be further sustained for Year 2 and beyond.



A mentor assisting a student with her homework in the Houston Public Library

For the pilot year, the City of Houston will collaborate with a middle school and high school within close proximity to their public libraries. The program will foster an academically stimulating environment, connect students to educational resources in their community and promote career-focused activities. Upon completion of the pilot year, the City of Houston will move towards collaborating with five middle

schools and high schools for the second year, and focus on establishing the after school zones with ten middle schools and high schools by the end of the third year.

Listed below are the four metrics that will be used:

1. Number of mentees served
2. Increase in number of students who begin developing college/career plans
3. Increase in students' attendance rates
4. Increase in positive behavioral changes toward school

To maintain a 3:1 student-mentor ratio, the City of Houston will require approximately 80 - 100 volunteers to reach 250 students in year two and approximately 400 volunteers to reach 1,000 students by year three. The ultimate goal will be to sustain the year 3 implementation for five years, and it is anticipated that 2,500 volunteers will mentor over 6,000 students in this initiative.

<i>After School Zones</i> Challenge addressed: School attendance and graduation rates of at-risk youth		
Lead	Metrics	Timing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ryan Middle School</li> <li>• Houston Public Library</li> <li>• Houston Parks and Recreation</li> <li>• Mayor's Office of Education</li> <li>• Houston SERVICE</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in students with a mentor</li> <li>• Increase in number of students who begin developing college/career plans</li> <li>• Increase in students' attendance rates</li> <li>• Increase in positive behavioral changes toward school</li> </ul>	Launch Spring 2011

## Houston Veterans Continuing Service

**Challenge:** The City of Houston, along with many other major cities, has a challenge of reintegrating returning veterans back into civilian life. This has been the on-going mission of the City of Houston Office of Veterans Affairs (COHOVA). It is not easy for veterans to reintegrate back into civilian life due to reasons such as: veterans not having access to available resources or not knowing how to access those resources, and not having a viable support system such as family and friends. Related to this, COHOVA, Lone Star Veterans and the VA Medical Center have identified many veterans who need assistance but lack mentors to help provide access to that assistance.

While the Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center provides strong support and services to returning veterans, the City of Houston seeks to increase the number of veterans that receive such support and services. The City wants to ensure that these service members have direct access to free local resources when they return home, as well as provide them with outreach opportunities in the community to further enrich their lives.

The following statistics provided by the comprehensive report, "All Volunteer Force, From Military to Civilian Service" from Civic Enterprises 2009, offer a glimpse into how Veterans are disconnected from the community:

- Nearly 7 in 10 respondents (69 percent) said that they had not been contacted by a community institution, local non-profit, or place of worship. Fifty-four percent of veterans had been contacted by a veteran's service organization. Sixty-nine percent were offered a service, while only 21 percent were asked to serve.
- Only 13 percent of veteran's strongly agreed that their transition home was going well, and just 9 percent strongly agreed the needs of their family were being met.

The following statistics offer why Veterans continue to serve:

- Those veterans who were volunteers were twice as likely to be contacted by a community organization as those who did not volunteer.
- Veterans were interested in meeting needs in their communities and many wanted to serve on multiple issues.
- 55 percent of respondents who volunteer said their transitions were going well, compared to 47 percent of non-volunteers. The difference held for their family's transition, with 48 percent of veterans who volunteer saying their family's needs were being met, while only 38 percent of non-volunteers said the same.

**Initiative:** The Houston Veterans Continuing Service initiative aims to increase the City's outreach to transitioning veterans and their families residing in the City of Houston. The initiative will recruit and train peer mentors (veterans who have successfully transitioned to civilian life) to help returning veterans access services such as job/career training, housing assistance, and mental wellness/health care. The overall goals of the initiative include helping veterans that need assistance reintegrate into society, increasing the number of mentors and volunteers available for veterans' assistance, offering veterans opportunities to assist their peers, and increasing awareness of veterans issues throughout the City of Houston.



Veterans have expressed a strong desire to help their fellow veterans reintegrate into society. By participating in mentoring activities, the returning veterans will integrate into civilian life and feel a sense of connection to the City. The City of Houston in partnership with the Lone Star Veterans Association has pledged to certify peer mentoring specialists as trainers within this initiative. These specialists will train volunteers to further expand the number of peer mentors.

The Veterans Affairs initiative will support veteran to veteran mentoring, providing an opportunity for successfully transitioned veterans to assist new veterans in their integration into civilian life. The initiative will also recruit and train non-veteran volunteers to support case management for the veterans, services which will supplement the case management already being performed by the City of Houston's Office of Veteran Affairs. Recruitment of new volunteers will come from a variety of available resources including the City of Houston Office of Veterans Affairs, Lone Star Veterans, and the Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center.

Through the implementation of this initiative, the City of Houston expects to create a veteran population more integrated into the civilian and service activities of the City. For the first year, the initiative will require a minimum of 150 volunteers to meet the mentor need at the Harris County Veterans Court and the Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center. Sustaining the program will require approximately 500-1,000 by year five.



Listed below are the metrics the initiative will measure:

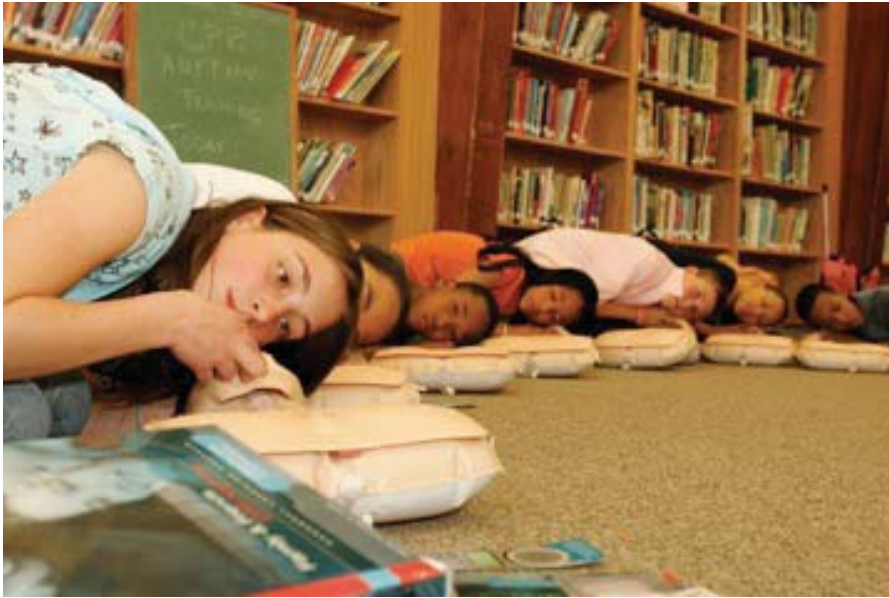
1. Number of veterans trained to be veterans peer to peer mentors.
2. Number of veterans receiving peer to peer assistance.
3. Number of veterans receiving job training and other City benefits.
4. Number of veterans with job placements after 6 months

The City of Houston will require the collaboration and cooperation of several partners to ensure the success of this initiative including the City of Houston Office of Veterans Affairs, Lone Star Veterans Association, Wounded Warrior Project, Harris County Veterans Court, Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center, The Open Table and the University of St. Thomas.

## *Houston Veterans Continuing Service*

Challenge addressed: Reintegration of returning veterans

Lead	Metrics	Timing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>City of Houston Office of Veterans Affairs</li> <li>Lone Star Veterans Association</li> <li>Houston SERVICE</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of veterans trained as mentors</li> <li>Number of veterans receiving peer to peer assistance</li> <li>Number of veterans receiving job training and other city benefits</li> <li>Number of veterans with job placements after 6 months</li> </ul>	Launch Sumer 2011



## Everyone Can be a Lifesaver

**Challenge:** The City of Houston seeks to increase the number of citizens trained in hands-only CPR. The City faces the challenge of not having enough trained volunteers ready to respond in a CPR emergency.

In general, eighty percent of out-of-hospital sudden cardiac arrest victims collapse at home. This means, the person most likely being saved – or not – is a loved one. Effective bystander CPR, provided immediately after sudden cardiac arrest, can double or triple a victim's chance of survival. If bystander CPR is not provided, a sudden cardiac arrest victim's chances of survival fall by as much as 10 percent for every minute of delay until defibrillation.

Today, only one third of people who suffer out-of-hospital sudden cardiac arrest receive bystander CPR. Further, only 35 percent of those trained on administering CPR feel confident enough in their training to act.

**Initiative:** *Everyone Can be a Lifesaver* seeks to provide citizens an opportunity to become trained in hands-only CPR and provide avenues for these citizens to share their knowledge with five friends, family members or neighbors. In doing so, the program raises awareness amongst local volunteers for both the new CPR training techniques and Houston's newest service initiative.

Through *Everyone Can be a Lifesaver*, the Mayor's Citizens Assistance Office (MCAO) trains volunteers on the life saving hands-only CPR technique. The MCAO has a presence in local communities, super-neighborhoods and operates through the City's Multi-Service Centers where they actively engage volunteers and the community alike, which gives this initiative a broad reach. Volunteers in this initiative will be trained by and provided with a *CPR Anytime* kit. These "volunteer trainers" then commit to training five friends, neighbors, or family members with the CPR technique.

By adopting *Everyone Can be a Lifesaver*, Houston can dramatically increase the number of residents trained with this life-saving hands-only CPR. While it is true that the City of Houston has

responded well to natural disasters and emergency situations, there is still a need for CPR trained volunteers in the community.

Listed below are the metrics the initiative will measure:

1. Initial number of Houstonians trained in compression-only CPR
2. Number of Houstonians trained directly in compression-only CPR
3. Number of Houstonians trained indirectly through the "pass it on" component

Within a year, we expect to have 10,000 instructor trained volunteers in hands-only CPR and we expect their reach in training others to be 40,000 – 50,000.

Implementing this initiative will provide various City offices and local non-profits with an opportunity to work towards creating a more efficient City-wide response to victims of cardiac arrest. It will also uphold the City's commitment to providing its citizens meaningful venues for civic engagement.

### *Everyone Can be a Lifesaver*

Challenge addressed: Number of citizens trained in life-saving CPR

Lead	Metrics	Timing
Mayor's Citizen Assistance Office American Heart Association Houston SERVICE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of volunteer "trainers" recruited and trained directly (10,000 persons)</li> <li>• Number of citizens trained in CPR indirectly through the "pass it on" component of the initiative (40,000 – 50,000 persons)</li> </ul>	Launch Summer 2011

# Infrastructure Initiatives

The City of Houston is committed to making our municipality a premier City in volunteering. However, the existing infrastructure needs to be strengthened in order to achieve this goal. During the fall of 2010, the Mayor's Office held a focus group to address broad challenges in volunteerism in the City of Houston. The focus group brought together faith-based organizations, non-profits, and local universities.

The City of Houston identified three cross-cutting challenges that deter citizens from participating in volunteer projects:

- Volunteer connectivity to service opportunities,
- Efficiency of volunteer badging process, and
- Coordination and collaboration between organizations.

Houston SERVICE plans to address these cross-cutting challenges in order to effectively engage Houstonians in service. Highlighted below are three strategies – Infrastructure Initiatives – that the City of Houston will implement in order to improve volunteer connectivity to service opportunities (*HoustonSERVICE.org*), efficiency of volunteer badging (*Volunteer Badging 2.0*), and coordination and collaboration between organizations (*Mayor's Non-Profit and Faith Based Leadership Forum*).

## HoustonSERVICE.org

**Challenge:** Houstonians are eager to volunteer, but they may not have the knowledge of where the need is for volunteer services. Twenty nine percent of organizations surveyed did not have a staff person dedicated to volunteer management, which makes it even more difficult for volunteers to connect to service opportunities.

**Initiative:** The City of Houston, in partnership with Cities of Service, has developed a new website that will provide up-to-date information on volunteer needs in Houston as well as a user-friendly interface to make applying for opportunities easier. On this website, Houston area non-profits, faith-based groups and corporations will have the opportunity to post volunteer opportunities and highlight service projects. The new website will encourage greater organizational partnerships and increase volunteer awareness of Houston service programs, ultimately helping to improve volunteer connectivity to service opportunities.

## Volunteer Badging 2.0

### Challenge:

Another cross-cutting challenge the City of Houston faces is its slow badging process. This inefficient process causes a delay in volunteer access to volunteer opportunities.

**Initiative:** *Volunteer Badging 2.0* will improve and accelerate the process of providing volunteers with required City ID badges. This will encourage more Houstonians to volunteer as the process will be streamlined and hassle free. Volunteers will not be deterred by the inaccessibility to City facilities or the length of time it takes to get processed. Improving the badging process will increase the number of volunteers assigned to service activities, thereby enhancing the service atmosphere of the City.

### Volunteer Badging

Challenge addressed: Efficiency of the City's badging process

Lead	Metrics	Timing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Houston Fire Department</li> <li>• Volunteer Initiatives Program</li> <li>• Mayor's Citizen Assistance Office</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of volunteers recruited</li> <li>• Number of citizens trained in CPR through the initiative</li> </ul>	Launch Summer 2011



### HoustonSERVICE.org

Challenge addressed: Volunteer connectivity to service opportunities

Lead	Metrics	Timing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Houston SERVICE</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of unique visitors to website</li> <li>• Users connected with service opportunities through the site</li> <li>• Number of postings by Houston organizations (relative to the old site)</li> </ul>	Launch Summer 2011



## Mayor's Non-profit and Faith Based Leadership Forum

**Challenge:** The third cross-cutting challenge is to improve coordination and collaboration among non-profits and other organizations in the Houston area. Thirty one percent of survey respondents stated that a lack of knowledge of corporations and philanthropic entities in the community was a challenge to their service efforts. Over 1/3 of respondents stated that competition with other organizations was limiting their ability to work together and achieve better results.

**Initiative:** This cross-cutting challenge will be addressed by holding an annual Leadership Forum. Through this Forum, Houston SERVICE aims to reach out to numerous organizations in the non-profit, faith based and corporate-philanthropic networks to create a coalition of engaged civic partners that will foster open communication in an effort to sustain better volunteer programs.

It is the hope of Houston Service that by addressing these cross-cutting challenges in our service plan, Houstonians will be better served.



### Leadership Forum

Challenge addressed: Connectivity of Houston organizations to each other

Lead	Metrics	Timing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Houston SERVICE</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of organizations attending the Forum</li> <li>Number of connections/collaborations that occur because of the Forum, as assessed through a post-Forum survey</li> </ul>	Launch Summer 2011

## Endnotes

1. Corporation for National & Community Service, Volunteering in America Report 2009, <http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/serveamerica/index.asp>
2. Statement by President Obama on the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, March 31, 2009, [http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/newsroom/statements\\_detail.asp?tbl\\_pr\\_id=1288](http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/newsroom/statements_detail.asp?tbl_pr_id=1288)
3. NYC Service: A Blueprint to Increase Civic Engagement, [http://nycservice.org/pdf/nyc\\_service\\_report\\_web.pdf](http://nycservice.org/pdf/nyc_service_report_web.pdf)
4. All Volunteer Force, From Military to Civilian Service from *Civic Enterprises* 1.2009 <http://www.civicenterprises.net/pdfs/allvolunteerforce.pdf>

# Houston SERVICE Plan Overview

Initiative Name	Priority Area	Impact Initiative	Impact Metric(s)	Goals	Lead Partner (s)	Timing
After School Zones	Education & Youth Development	Provide mentors to the City's at-risk youth and engage them in positive out of school activities in an academically-rich environment	-Number of students mentored -Number of mentors recruited - Number of students who develop college/career plans - Student attendance rates - Student behavioral changes toward school	Semester 1: 10 mentors trained, 30 students mentored  Year 2: 80-100 mentors trained, 250 students mentored  Year 3: 400 mentors trained, 1,000 students mentored  Initiative Totals: 2,500 mentors trained, 6,000 students mentored	-Houston Public Library -Mayor's Office of Education - Houston Parks and Recreation Department -Houston SERVICE -Houston Independent School District -University of Houston-Downtown	Spring 2011
Houston Veterans Continuing Service	Veteran Services	Reintegrate veterans into civilian life by increasing their access to City services and providing opportunities for veteran to veteran mentoring	-Number of veterans recruited as peer-to-peer mentors - Number of veterans receiving peer-to-peer assistance -Number of veterans receiving job training and other City benefits - Number of veterans with job placements after 6 months	Year 1: 150 veterans trained  Initiative Totals: 500-1,000 veterans trained	-City of Houston Office of Veterans Affairs -Houston SERVICE -Lone Star Veterans Association -American Legion Post 416 -Wounded Warrior Project -Vets 4 Vets -Harris County Veterans Court -Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center -Harris County Vet Center -University of St. Thomas	Spring 2011
Everyone Can Be a Lifesaver	Health and Public Safety	Increase the number of trained citizens in compression-only CPR to improve outcomes in emergency situations	-Number of volunteer "trainers" recruited and trained directly (10,000 persons) -Number of citizens trained in CPR indirectly through the "pass it on" component (40,000 – 50,000 persons)	Year 1: 10,000 volunteers trained  Initiative Totals: 40,000 – 50,000 volunteers trained	- American Heart Association - Mayor's Citizens' Assistance Office - Houston SERVICE - Houston Community College	Summer 2
Initiative Name	Cross Cutting	Civic Infrastructure Initiative	Metric	Lead Partner (s)	Timing	
HoustonSERVICE.org	Website Development	Provide information on volunteerism in the City as well as a user-friendly interface to make applying for opportunities easier	- Number of unique visitors to the site -Users connected with service opportunities -Increased number of postings by Houston organizations	- Houston SERVICE	Spring 2011	
Volunteer Badging 2.0	Improved Infrastructure for badging	Improve and accelerate the process of providing volunteers with required City ID badges.	-Number of volunteers who apply for a badge -Number of volunteers who receive a badge -Time lapsed between volunteer matched with opportunity and provision of badge	- Houston SERVICE	Summer 2011	
Mayor's Non-profit and Faith Based Leadership Forum	Community Outreach	Improve coordination and collaboration among non-profits and other organizations by hosting an annual leadership forum	-Number of organizations attending the Forum - Number of connections/ collaborations that occur because of the Forum	- Houston SERVICE	Summer 2011	



# Other On-Going Service Efforts from the Mayor's Office

## What is the Volunteer Initiatives Program?

In 2004 the City of Houston created the Volunteer Initiatives Program (VIP) to engage residents in civic service. The VIP places 3000 - 5000 volunteers annually with various City departments, allowing them to channel their passions into meaningful action. This innovative collaboration between Houston employees and citizen volunteers will continue to improve the City's existing partnerships with nonprofits, faith-based organizations, and the community at-large. The contribution that the VIP generates towards saving the City's time, resources, and funds through its volunteer and internship outreach is enormous. Without the generous dedication of these workers, Houston would not be able function in the capacity that it does and is continually grateful for the amount of quality volunteers and interns that the VIP procures. The Volunteer Initiatives Program has established rapport with several local and national organizations to plan community outreach events that provide important services to the Houston Community.

Listed below are a few engagements of the Volunteer Initiatives Program

- *The Souper Bowl of Caring*: an event that provides much needed food supplies to Houston's homeless community at the end of the National Football League season during Super Bowl weekend.
- *The Jefferson Awards for Public Service*: works with various volunteer organizations to promote the efforts of volunteers across the country to raise awareness about service opportunities within the community and empower individuals to follow by example.
- National Days of Service: opportunities for civic engagement throughout the United States. The Volunteer Initiatives Program gathers and distributes information about the many events taking place on these days, and if needed coordinates resources for particular projects.

## Getting the Youth Involved – the Mayor's Youth Council

In 1998, the City of Houston proudly created the Mayor's Youth Council (MYC), a program open to all interested Houston high school students. After a screening process and an interview, the top candidates are selected to represent their respective district and are expected to participate in two volunteer projects a month. Modeled after the elected City Council, consisting of a Chair, City Secretary, and At-Large and District Council Members with Senior Aides, the MYC provides valuable experience to members to gain a thorough comprehension of the dynamics of City government. Members grow personally and intellectually, obtaining a deeper understanding of City departments, the role of community leaders and elected officials and their personal capacity to advocate and implement change.

Students who are not selected also have the option of enlisting in the Youth Service Corps, a nationwide organization that provides service opportunities to young people. Utilizing this organization as a vehicle, Mayor Annise Parker continued the tradition of promoting civic engagement among Houston's youth by creating the Mayor's Youth Service Corps. The Mayor's Youth Service Corps are required to volunteer at least twice a year for a minimum of ten hours. The dedication of these volunteers is evident in their ability to surpass this requirement annually, hence embodying the Houstonian spirit of service.

## Restoring Houston's Historic Cemeteries

Mayor Annise Parker has made it a priority to restore dignity to the historic cemeteries in Houston. The initiative is imperative in preserving Houston's rich, diverse history for the City's future generations.

**"Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave, I am the dream and the hope of the slave. I rise I rise I rise."**

- Maya Angelou

To execute successfully, the Restoring Houston's Historic Cemeteries initiative is partnering with the Texas Historical Commission and its R.I.P. Guardianship Program, the non-profit organizations responsible for the cemeteries, and Houston businesses and volunteers. The Mayor's Youth Council, the Mayor's Cultural Affairs Office, Chevron's Human Energy, and AmeriCorps NCCC will also participate in this endeavor. The involvement of these organizations will be critical in transforming the historic cemeteries into admirable symbols of the City's past, portraying the arrival of the first free African-Americans to Houston in search of a new life. The struggles and successes of these African Americans exemplify the undeniable presence of opportunity in Houston as well as the rewards that individuals reap when availing such opportunities with dedication and perseverance.



# Acknowledgements

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## Universities

*The following universities were enthusiastic participants in the three Houston Initiatives.*

Houston Community College  
Rice University  
University of Houston – Downtown  
University of St. Thomas

## Community Organizations

*These organizations have provided valuable insight into the cross-section of volunteerism in Houston through their participation in surveys.*

American General  
American Heart association  
American Hospice  
American Legion Post No. 416  
The Beacon  
Boat People SOS  
Citizen Schools  
Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT)  
Eye Care for Kids Foundation  
Family to Family Network  
Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council  
Harris County Veterans Court  
Houston Food Bank  
Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston  
Junior Achievement  
Lemonade Day  
Lone Star Veterans Association  
Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center  
Museum of Fine Arts Houston  
The Open Table  
Ryan Middle School – Houston Independent School District  
Sam Houston Area Council, Boy Scouts of America  
Shriners Hospitals for Children  
Texas Campaign for the Environment  
Texas Childrens Hospital  
Wounded Warrior Project  
Urban Harvest  
Vets 4 Vets  
YMCA of Greater Houston

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*The Cities of Service Grant would not be possible without the dedication of the following interns who pledged their time and efforts to making Houston a better City for volunteerism and civic engagement.*

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Houston Parks and Recreation Department  
The Houston Public Library  
Houston Television  
The Mayor's Office  
Office of Homeland Security  
The Office of Veterans Affairs  
The Volunteer Initiatives Program

## Special Thanks to:

Volunteer Houston, established in 1974, is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the development, promotion and support of volunteerism. For more than 35 years, Volunteer Houston has been the city's sole referral service connecting volunteers to a broad spectrum of diverse nonprofit organizations. Nonprofit organizations all around Houston and its vicinity rely on Volunteer Houston to acquire over 30,000 volunteers per year.

The Mayor's Volunteer Houston Awards were first awarded in 1984. The awards continue to honor individuals who do remarkable volunteer work that make Houston a better place to live. Nominations are reviewed and honorees selected by a diverse community panel of judges. The awards are presented at a ceremony held in the spring each year.

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For a copy of Houston SERVICE, go to [www.houstonservice.org](http://www.houstonservice.org).



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