

Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service FY2006 - 2nd Quarter Report

On November 9 and 10 the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service (ICVS) held the annual Iowa Conference on Volunteer Service. 419 volunteer managers, national service program directors and mentoring program directors attended this year's conference to receive training around volunteer management, recruiting, financial management, youth development, faith based programming, and a variety of other training aimed at further developing the capacity of volunteer programs or programs utilizing volunteers in Iowa. In November, ICVS also began transitioning the Iowa Mentoring Partnership (IMP) to ICVS, as it was no longer financially viable as an independent organization. An AmeriCorps *VISTA member was enrolled to assist in the transition. On December 7 the IMP board met to certify 65 mentoring programs in Iowa for 2006 and to discuss final details of transition to ICVS. Program year progress reports have been compiled for AmeriCorps and the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP). Below are program summaries.

AmeriCorps

For the 2004-2005 program year (9/1/04-8/30/05), the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service administered fifteen AmeriCorps program grants and three AmeriCorps planning grants. The grants totaled more than \$1.9 million and were matched by more than \$1.5 million in local funds.



During this period, 220 AmeriCorps members provided more than 180,000 hours of service and recruited an additional 10,189 community volunteers. The member service hours are valued at more than \$3 million according to Independent Sector.

Members participated in a variety of activities and reported the following accomplishments:

- Provided tutoring, enrichment activities and/or Service Learning opportunities to more than 37,000 Iowa students
- Constructed or repaired 381 miles of trails in state or county parks
- Completed more than 8,000 neighborhood or community safety projects
- Worked with more than 87,000 community partners

RSVP

A Better Place to Retire

According to the 2000 census, 14.9% of Iowa's population is age 65 or older. Common needs of this population include: a need for nutritious meals; a need for activities and friendly visitors to fight the depression that often occurs when a frail elder is homebound or residing in a long term care facility; and a need for transportation to doctor appointments. RSVP volunteers are responding to this need.



- **Home Delivered Meals:** 20,000 homebound Iowans had meals delivered to their homes by RSVP Volunteers.

- **Caregiver Respite/Homebound Visitation:** 70% of 757 caregivers reported that they experienced stress relief as a result of volunteer respite/visitation from RSVP volunteers.
- **Nursing Home Activities:** 70% of 400 care center residents maintained or increased their physical and/or emotional well being due in part to RSVP volunteers.
- **Transportation:** 90% of 1700 seniors/disabled Iowans had greater access to health, medical, and other essential services.
- **Iowa Veterans Identification Project:** 119 nursing home residents applied for Federal Veterans Affairs benefits with the assistance of RSVP Volunteers.

A Better Place to Raise a Family

RSVP Volunteers are responding to the needs of Iowa's children by acting as mentors, tutors, and reading role models. SPEAK Up! Volunteers help students to overcome a fear of public speaking.

- **Literacy:** 60% of 5,000 students assisted by RSVP volunteers showed improvement in literacy and math.
- **Mentoring:** 75% of 775 students mentored by RSVP volunteers showed improvement in attitude, behavior, and academic performance.
- **SPEAK UP:** 80% of 2,500 students showed increased self-confidence and self-esteem after working with an RSVP volunteer to prepare and deliver oral presentations.
- **Head Start:** 70% of 200 students had increased pre-literacy skills following the assistance of RSVP volunteers.

A Safer Place to Live

Declining municipal budgets have forced public safety agencies to look at different ways to serve the needs of the population. Local justice departments utilize RSVP volunteers to provide assistance in recordkeeping, investigate nuisance complaints, provide mediation services, and serve on Citizen Corps Councils.

A Healthier Place to Live

Serving in Blood Drives and at Health Clinics designed specifically to help diagnose and treat health issues in children who might not otherwise have access to quality health care, RSVP volunteers are helping to meet the medical needs of Iowans.

- **Blood Drives:** 250,000 units of blood and blood products were collected during blood drives where RSVP volunteers assisted.
- **Pediatric Health Clinics:** 3,200 children received care at health clinics where RSVP assisted.

A Caring Community of Neighbors

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the family income of Iowans ranks 35th in the nation. 6.8% of Iowa's families have incomes that place them below poverty level. RSVP volunteers respond to the needs of these families by working in food pantries and thrift stores, providing income tax filing services, and providing clothing and personal care items.

- **Food Pantries:** 75% of 92,263 recipients met basic food needs for themselves and/or their families due to the assistance of RSVP volunteers

A More Prosperous Iowa for All

RSVP volunteers assisted with events that promote business, tourism, goodwill and community activities. By working in museums, welcome centers, conventions, city parks, or other non-profit agencies, RSVP volunteers strengthen the capacity of those agencies.