

**Voices for National Service and The Corps Network**

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***The 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Friends of National Service Reception***

Tuesday, February 14<sup>th</sup> 2012 \* Union Station, Washington D.C.

On Tuesday, February 14th, a gathering of national service organizations including Voices for National Service and The Corps Network honored congressional and private sector leaders across the country who have supported national service and community volunteering. These lawmakers have supported service programs, including AmeriCorps, which allow citizens to work in partnership with government and the private sector to address pressing needs in local communities.

**9<sup>th</sup> Annual Awards Recipients and Honorees:**

***Edward M. Kennedy National Service Lifetime Leadership Award***

*Senator Thad Cochran*

***Citizen Service Award***

*Jon Bon Jovi and Eduardo Padrón, President, Miami Dade College*

***Outstanding National Service Advocacy Award***

*Governor Pat Quinn and Governor Terry Branstad*

***Distinguished Service Award***

*Senator Richard Shelby and Representative Norm Dicks*

***Outstanding New Member Award***

*Senator Chris Coons and Representative Steve Stivers*

***State and Local Leadership Award***

*Mayor Mitch Landrieu and Mayor Michael Nutter*

***Service in Media Award***

*David Gergen*

***Franklin D. Roosevelt Service and Conservation Corps Leadership Award***

*Secretary of Interior Ken Salazar*

**Introduction of Mayor Nutter:**

Mayor Michael Nutter has been a long time champion of national service. In 1997, he was instrumental in the founding of City Year Philadelphia, serving as a founding Board Member. Today Mayor Nutter continues his devotion to national service as a true leader in the Cities of Service coalition – a bipartisan coalition of mayors who have committed to work together to mobilize citizens to address critical city needs through high-impact volunteering.

Working with his Chief Service Officer, Catie Wolfgang, Mayor Nutter has used service to advance some of his ambitious goals for the city. For example, as one component of the City's laser focus on increasing the high school graduation rate, Philadelphia has successfully trained over 2,300 adults as "graduation coaches" – arming these adults with the skills they need to help the city's students graduate from high school prepared for postsecondary success. This is just one of the many examples of how Mayor Nutter has leveraged AmeriCorps members and community volunteers to address local needs, identify and learn from best practices and examine outcomes to gauge progress.

Mayor Nutter also recently spearheaded a letter to the U.S. Conference of Mayors extolling the value of the Cities of Service model and the key role that a Chief Service Officer plays in elevating citizen service as a solution to local challenges. Importantly, he had 20 leading mayors join him in signing this letter.

Mayor Nutter's innovative approach to service is changing the way other cities organize their citizens to address local needs. It is our honor to present Mayor Michael Nutter with the State and Local Leadership Award.

**Mayor Nutter's Acceptance Speech:**

Good evening, I'm Mayor Michael Nutter. I am proud to accept the Friends of National Service Award. I'm sorry that I cannot be with you this evening.

I thank Voices for National Service and the Corps Network for this honor and congratulate my friend and fellow honoree, Mayor Mitch Landrieu of New Orleans.

I have long been an advocate of national service because it is a powerful strategy to solve problems and address challenges. Every taxpayer dollar invested in the AmeriCorps programs is used to leverage additional private, corporate and foundation funding that increases the clear and measurable impact of AmeriCorps members. Simply put, even in the most challenging financial times, AmeriCorps is not something that is "nice to have," it is something that we "must have."

The future of Philadelphia, like that of cities across our great country, depends on citizens rolling up their sleeves and working together to tackle many complicated challenges. In Philadelphia, AmeriCorps Alumni have proven their willingness to do just that. Their presence is felt in City government and across a diverse range of non-profit organizations.

Philadelphia depends on the passion, idealism and cost-effective problem solving that comes from the wide range of national service programs in our city. I couldn't do my job without them. It is because of this that I have such a strong commitment to national service programs, their members, alumni and advocates.

Thank-you for this award and I send best wishes to those being honored here tonight. If we work together, we can do great things in Philadelphia and across the nation.

**About Voices for National Service**

"Voices for National Service" is a diverse coalition of national service programs, state commissions and individual champions committed to expanding opportunities for Americans of all ages to serve and volunteer. Founded in 2003, the coalition is the respected voice for the service community in Washington, D.C., building strong bipartisan support among our nation's leaders for national service as a viable policy solution to tackle unmet needs, expand opportunity, and leverage social capital. Drawing on the combined experience and knowledge of the service community, Voices for National Service played a key role in the development of the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act.

**About the Corps Network**

The Corps Network is a proud advocate and representative of the nation's Service and Conservation Corps. Their number one goal is to sustain and grow the Corps movement. The Corps Network's member Service and Conservation Corps operate in 42 states and the District of Columbia. Over 26,000 Corps members, ages 16-25, contribute and generate more than 16 million hours of service annually.