



FLORIDA NEEDS YOU ... VOLUNTEER!

APRIL IS FLORIDA VOLUNTEER MONTH

Talking Points: Florida Volunteer Month

- The inaugural Florida Volunteer Month occurred in April 2005 and has been held each year since.
- Florida Volunteer Month celebrates and promotes the spirit of volunteerism throughout Florida, and raises awareness about how volunteering **changes lives** and **strengthens communities**.
- Some of the ways Volunteers can strengthen communities today include:
 - Volunteering with a faith or community-based organization that specializes in serving the needy
 - Volunteering with or collecting food for a local food bank
 - Volunteering at a group home for displaced families
 - Helping to prevent foreclosures
 - Volunteering with a telephone crisis help line
 - Volunteering in a homeless shelter or soup kitchen
 - Making home repairs to impoverished neighborhoods
 - Providing respite care for seniors
 - Making public spaces accessible
 - Removing graffiti/neighborhood clean-up
 - Building a playground
 - Delivering meals to homebound seniors
 - Organizing a neighborhood watch
 - Getting trained with Red Cross or Salvation Army so that you can help during a disaster
 - Mentoring or tutoring at a local school
 - Volunteering with your local hospice or at your local hospital
- During these challenging economic times, volunteerism has never been more important. An engaged citizenry is one means of providing for needs that might otherwise go unmet.
- In Florida, approximately **219,000** adults are mentoring school children, and providing needed guidance and role modeling for children who might otherwise not succeed in school or in life.
- Florida has **approximately 84,000 National Service Volunteers** in the AmeriCorps, Senior Corps and Learn and Serve America programs. These volunteers serve in critical areas such as education, the environment, human needs, homeland security, public safety, and more.
- Volunteerism is personally and professionally rewarding, and offers benefits such as enhanced self-esteem and confidence; new friends and associates; new skills and abilities; and enhanced employability.
- According to the Points of Light Foundation, **volunteerism is good for business**. Philanthropic companies attract higher quality employees and experience lower turnover rates. In addition, employee volunteers are more innovative, and show improved morale and a greater sense of team spirit.