



Volunteer Headline



Your Source for Volunteer News and Events in Florida

August, 2006



Florida AmeriCorps and National Service Conference

It's Coming ... December 1 & 2, 2006. Volunteer Florida hosts the Florida 2006 AmeriCorps and National Service Conference in Orlando! Be on the lookout for more details coming soon!!



**2006 Florida AmeriCorps
& National Service Conference**



Volunteer Florida CEO Encourages Everyone to Be Prepared

Among the many lessons the past two hurricane seasons have taught us all is the importance of being prepared. The good news is that a recent Florida Hurricane Preparedness Survey, conducted by the [Florida Association of Broadcasters](#), tells us approximately two-thirds of residents are stocked with at least 72 hours' worth of food, water and other vital hurricane preparedness supplies. But being ready for hurricanes doesn't stop with stocking up. We all remember the four devastating storms of 2004. In 2005, volunteers proved their value once again, compassionately providing more than \$100 million worth of assistance to Floridians affected by Hurricanes Dennis, Katrina and Wilma.



Be a part of the culture of preparedness. Make volunteering an integral part of your disaster preparedness plans.

In this period of increased tropical activity, it's vital not only for everyone to prepare, but also to prepare to volunteer. Governor Jeb Bush has called on Floridians to unite in creating a year-round "culture of preparedness," and that includes getting ready to help after disaster strikes. All indications are that together we face another active hurricane season, and volunteers are essential to a successful response. I urge all Floridians to get trained so they know exactly what to do when their assistance is needed most -- in the aftermath of a hurricane.



**Wendy Spencer
Chief Executive Officer
Volunteer Florida**

Throughout the year, many experienced disaster relief agencies, including faith and community-based organizations, provide training to potential disaster recovery volunteers in order to ensure their efforts are maximized. Everyone should contact organizations like the [American Red Cross](#), the [Salvation Army](#) or other community-based agencies that provide relief services. Ask them about available training opportunities.

For more information about volunteering in disasters, links to disaster relief organizations and volunteer centers, and other volunteer resources, please visit Volunteer Florida's Web site at

www.volunteerflorida.org.

Many Floridians have benefited from the selfless actions of disaster volunteers. Their contributions are a testament to the true strength of our great state. Together, we can ensure this tradition continues. Please make volunteering an integral part of your disaster preparedness plans.

Volunteer Florida Appoints Co-Chair to Inclusion Council

Debra Dowds was appointed Co-Chair of Volunteer Florida's Inclusion Council during the July Inclusion Council meeting in Palm Beach. Volunteer Florida's Inclusion Council was created to advance and support National Service and volunteer opportunities for individuals with disabilities throughout Florida's communities.

Currently Debra serves as Executive Director of the [Florida Developmental Disabilities Council](#) (FDDC). The FDDC is a nonprofit, federally funded organization, the main purpose of which is to engage in advocacy, capacity building, and systemic change activities that contribute to promoting self-determination, independence, inclusion, productivity and integration of individuals with developmental disabilities into all facets of community life.

The Council is comprised of leaders in the disability field, AmeriCorps Program Directors and representatives from other national and volunteer service organizations. Contact [Paul Martell](#) for more information on the Inclusion Council



The Volunteer Florida Inclusion Council Meets in Palm Beach in July.

Hurricane Katrina Reimbursement Program

Since June 13, nine workshops statewide have been conducted on the new Katrina Private/Non-Profit (PNP) Reimbursement Program. Partners such as the [United Way](#), [American Red Cross](#), and county emergency management offices have been supportive of this program. Private/Non-Profit 501(c)3 organizations (including faith-based organizations) in Florida are eligible for cost reimbursement for the in-state sheltering/hosting of out-of-state Hurricane Katrina/Rita evacuees. Visit www.volunteerflorida.org or contact [Doug Ott](#) for additional information. The application deadline is Sept. 30, 2006.



A KRP attendee with Doug Ott, KRP Coordinator, Walde Serrano, Special Assistant to the Governor and Greg Collins of Orange County Emergency Management during a KRP Workshop at the Catholic Charities Office in Orlando.

Hispanic Heritage Month

Governor Jeb Bush and First Lady Columba Bush invites all Florida students in kindergarten through twelfth grades to participate in the fourth annual Florida Hispanic Heritage Month essay contest. The theme of the essay contest is, "Why is learning about Florida's Diverse Hispanic Heritage and Culture Important?" A panel of educators and community and business leaders from around the state will serve as judges and select the winning essays. One winner will be selected from each of the three grade-level categories, elementary (grades K-5), middle (grades 6-8) and high school (grades 9-12). Winners will receive a full four-year tuition scholarship to a Florida college or university of their choice, provided by lead essay contest partner, the Florida Prepaid College Foundation.



Hispanic Heritage Month

Entries must be received no later than 5 p.m. Eastern time, September 16, 2006. For official guidelines visit www.floridahispanicheritage.com

Project Impact Brightens Up Local Community Center

Project Impact is a program that links AmeriCorps Members with students with disabilities in the [High School/High Tech](#) program. Among Project Impact's goals is to introduce High School/High Tech students to National Service as a means to enhancing their futures.

Project Impact Coordinator **Cheryl Dennis** recently coordinated a service project with the Leon High School/High Tech students to paint a mural at the HOPE Community Center. The HOPE Community Center provides transitional housing for homeless families in the Tallahassee area. During the event, which took place August 5th, students assisted the children at the center in painting the mural in the Community Center's cafeteria.



Artist rendering of Project Impact mural at HOPE Community Center

Hurricane Hints

Imagine a hurricane strengthens in the Gulf, and the forecast has your family or business right in the middle of the dreaded "cone." What is the first thing you should do?

1. Start my disaster plan!
2. Finish my disaster plan!
3. Put my disaster plan into action!
4. Eat another doughnut. I've got plenty of time to prepare.



So what is the correct answer? Ideally it would be "3," put my disaster plan into action! Unfortunately some Floridians still have not prepared for a storm. In a major disaster, emergency workers may not be able to reach everyone right away, and in some cases it may take three or more days for help to arrive. What would you do if you had no electricity, no gas, no water and no telephone service? Having a plan for your family and/or business will help ensure safety and comfort during these difficult times. Visit www.floridadisaster.org and **GET A PLAN!**

National Day of Service - My Good Deed

Join hundreds of thousands who are pledging to engage in good deeds, charity or service in observance of the 5 th anniversary of 9/11. Visit www.myGoodDeed.org to take the Good Deed Pledge Today!



AmeriCorps Dignity Project Presents New Home

The **AmeriCorps Dignity Project** just turned over the keys to George and Ethereen Polite's new home! Two eight-person teams of **AmeriCorps** members earned a total of **8,076 volunteer hours** working on the structure. The home was constructed in two halves at Dignity's campus and was presented to the new owners during a ribbon-cutting ceremony and open house on August 9th. For more, visit volunteerflorida.org.



AmeriCorps Dignity Project built this house for George and Ethereen Polite earning 8,076 volunteer hours