

— EDITED TRANSCRIPT —

# LEADERS FOR EVERY SECTOR: National Service as a Strategy for Leadership and Workforce Development

September 18, 2007  
11:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

## CONTENTS

Event Description	2
Agenda	3
Panel Biographies	4
Proceedings: Introduction	8
Proceedings: First Panel	10
Proceedings: Second Panel	25

## CENTER FOR AMERICAN PROGRESS

1333 H St. NW, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor, Washington, DC

## CO-SPONSORS



Jonathan M. Tisch  
College of Citizenship  
and Public Service

# LEADERS FOR EVERY SECTOR: National Service as a Strategy for Leadership and Workforce Development

## EVENT DESCRIPTION

National service has become a powerful strategy for developing leaders with values, skills and optimism to address problems in every sector of society. National service alumni bring the kinds of skills and attitudes sought by leaders from private companies to nonprofit organizations. When the Baby Boom generation retires, there will be an enormous talent gap in the nonprofit and public sectors, and national service alumni are an important resource for addressing that gap. At the same time, national service has proven a powerful strategy to expose youth to potential careers and motivate them to achieve. It has helped disadvantaged young people find an upward path, and inspired college students to choose careers in under-resourced fields.

On September 18, 2007, a luncheon discussion co-sponsored by the Center for American Progress, Hudson Institute, Voices for National Service, and the Jonathan M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service, Tufts University, examined the role that national service plays in workforce and talent development for the country. Two expert panels brought together a thoughtful group of leaders from national service, higher-education, and the private sector for a policy discussion on service as a strategy for public and private leadership. First, national service alumni shared stories about the role that their national service experience has played in their professional development and career choices. Second, executives from every sector gave their perspective on the role national service can play in developing leaders and a strong workforce.

## TRANSCRIPT INFORMATION

This transcript was prepared from a digital recording and edited by Krista Shaffer of Hudson Institute's Bradley Center for Philanthropy and Civic Renewal. To request further information on this event or the work of the Bradley Center, please contact:

Krista Shaffer  
Bradley Center for Philanthropy and Civic Renewal  
Hudson Institute  
Tel. 202 974 2424  
[Krista@hudson.org](mailto:Krista@hudson.org)

**LEADERS FOR EVERY SECTOR:**  
National Service as a Strategy for Leadership and Workforce Development

September 18, 2007  
11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

AGENDA

- 11:40 a.m.     Welcome: **Shirley Sagawa**, Visiting Fellow, Center for American Progress
- 11:50           **Panel Discussion: National Service Alumni Tell Their Stories**  
Moderator: **AnnMaura Connolly**, Senior Vice President, City Year and Steering  
                  Committee Member, Voices for National Service  
Panelists:    **Kellie Bentz**, Director, Hands On New Orleans  
                  **Kaya Henderson**, Deputy Chancellor, District of Columbia Public  
                  Schools  
                  **Jason Phillips**, Crispus Attucks, YouthBuild  
                  **Tondalaya Shepard-Turner**, Director of Volunteer Services, Mount  
                  Sinai Health System
- 12:50           Break
- 1:05 p.m.      **Panel Discussion: National Service as a Strategy for Workforce Development**  
Moderator: **William Schambra**, Director, Bradley Center for Philanthropy and  
                  Civic Renewal, Hudson Institute  
Panelists:    **Cheryl L. Dorsey**, President, Echoing Green  
                  **Rob Hollister**, Dean, Jonathan M. Tisch College of Citizenship and  
                  Public Service, Tufts University  
                  **Sally Prouty**, President and CEO, the Corps Network  
                  **Paul Schmitz**, President and CEO, Public Allies  
                  **Art Block**, Senior Vice President, General Counsel and Secretary,  
                  Comcast Corporation
- 2:30            Adjournment

*Special thanks to Comcast for its generous support of the luncheon.*

# LEADERS FOR EVERY SECTOR:

## National Service as a Strategy for Leadership and Workforce Development

### PANEL BIOGRAPHIES

**Arthur Block** has served as Senior Vice President, General Counsel and Secretary since 2000. He is the Company's chief legal officer, overseeing Comcast's legal and corporate governance functions. Mr. Block has been with Comcast since 1989; during this time, he has served as the lead in-house attorney for Comcast's mergers, acquisitions and financings.

Prior to joining Comcast, Mr. Block was a partner in the Corporate Department of the Philadelphia law firm Wolf, Block, Schorr and Solis-Cohen, which he joined in 1978.

Mr. Block currently serves as Vice Chair of the Site Board of City Year Greater Philadelphia and as the Chair of the Finance Committee of the Board of Managers of Moore College of Art and Design.

Mr. Block received his B.S. in economics from the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School of Business in 1975, and his J.D. from the University of Michigan Law School in 1978.

**Cheryl Dorsey** is an accomplished social entrepreneur with expertise in health care, labor issues and public policy, and was named President of Echoing Green in May 2002. She is the first Echoing Green Fellow to lead the social venture fund, which has awarded nearly \$25 million in start-up capital to over 400 social entrepreneurs worldwide since 1987.

As a medical student committed to improving access to quality health care for poor families, Cheryl received an Echoing Green Fellowship to launch The Family Van, a community-based mobile health unit that provides basic medical and outreach services to at-risk residents of inner-city Boston neighborhoods.

As a public policy innovator, Cheryl served as a White House Fellow from 1997-1998, serving as Special Assistant to the U.S. Secretary of Labor, advising the Clinton Administration on health care and other issues. She was later named Special Assistant to the Director of the Women's Bureau of the U.S. Labor Department, where she helped develop family-friendly workplace policies and spearheaded the labor secretary's pay equity initiative.

Most recently, Cheryl served as the first Director of Public Health Initiatives at Danya International, Inc., where she developed products and services aimed at substance abuse treatment and prevention, child and family services, minority health and community outreach.

Cheryl has received numerous awards and honors for her commitment to public service, including the Pfizer Roerig History of Medicine Award, the Robert Kennedy Distinguished Public Service Award and the Manuel C. Carballo Memorial Prize. Cheryl currently serves as a board member of CORO, a leadership development organization.

She holds a B.A. in History and Science from Harvard-Radcliffe Colleges, an M.D. from the Harvard Medical School and an M.P.P. from the John F. Kennedy School of Government.

**Kaya Henderson** is the Deputy Chancellor for the District of Columbia Public Schools where she focuses on organizational strategy, human capital and external relations. Prior to her appointment, Kaya served as the Vice President for Strategic Partnerships at The New Teacher Project (TNTP), where she oversaw the organization's work on improving teacher hiring for school districts from a process, policy and capacity-building perspective. She also launched a managed alternative certification programs in a number of districts including the DC Teaching Fellows Program. Her work contributed to the organization's two major reports: *Missed Opportunities: How We Keep High-Quality Teachers Out of Urban Classrooms*, and *Unintended Consequences: The Case for Reforming Staffing Rules in Urban Teachers Union Contracts*.

Kaya began her career in education as a Teach For America corps member, teaching middle school Spanish in the South Bronx, and overseeing the development of new teachers at summer institutes. She served the organization for a number of years as a Recruiter, National Director of Admissions, and the Executive Director for Teach For America-DC, where she was responsible for 170 teachers in over 50 DC Public Schools. Kaya has also worked with the Fresh Air Fund's Career Awareness Program, and led groups of students on overseas experiences through World Horizons International. She holds a BS in Foreign Service from Georgetown University, where she is also currently completing a Master's in Leadership at the McDonough School of Business. Kaya lives in the District and is active in local education organizations.

**Kellie Bentz** is a graduate of the College of Charleston with a B.A. in Corporate Communications and Business Administration. Kellie has been the Director of Hands On New Orleans for the past year and a half. Prior to this position Kellie worked with the Hands On Network national office working with the Director of AmeriCorps Alums to launch AmeriCorps Alums at the annual Points of Light Conference Washington D.C.. Kellie became the President of the Atlanta Chapter of AmeriCorps Alums while serving on the AmeriCorps Alums national strategic planning committee. In January of 2006 she was asked to help initiate the Hands On New Orleans Disaster Response Project that is now in the process of becoming a thriving local organization. Kellie's passion for Hands On Network was sparked during her term as an AmeriCorps Team Leader for the Hands On Atlanta School Based AmeriCorps program. Kellie's background includes business development, event planning, project management, marketing and strategic planning in both non profit and for profit organizations.

**Jason Phillips** works with the Crispus Attucks YouthBuild Charter School in York, Pennsylvania where he teaches Mental Toughness, a central component of the school curriculum that focuses primarily upon self-discipline and positive self-image. He first joined Crispus Attucks as a YouthBuild service participant in 2001 when he learned of the program while incarcerated. Jason completed the program, and then worked for one year as an intern before beginning full employment at Crispus Attucks. A part-time student at Penn State University, Jason is using his AmeriCorps Education Award to earn a Bachelor's Degree in Human Development and Family Studies.

**Paul Schmitz** was the founding Executive Director of Public Allies Milwaukee in 1993, was promoted to VP and Chief Strategist in 1997, when he led program expansion efforts, and was promoted to President & CEO in February, 2000. Beyond Public Allies, Paul has been active in Milwaukee and nationally on issues of education reform, juvenile justice reform and youth development. He co-founded an educational advocacy group in Milwaukee, two youth-led credit unions, a foundation supporting juvenile justice reform, a national coalition of nonprofit groups that are creating a workforce development strategy for the nonprofit sector, and has advised many other projects. *Milwaukee Magazine* profiled him as “a tireless advocate for youth empowerment and diversity.” Paul currently serves on the boards of the Greater Milwaukee Committee, the UW-Milwaukee Helen Bader Institute for Nonprofit Management, the Nonprofit Sector Workforce Coalition, and the steering committee for Voices for National Service. Paul was a Next Generation Leadership Fellow with the Rockefeller Foundation and serves on the faculty of the Asset-Based Community Development Institute at Northwestern University. Paul graduated phi beta kappa from UW-Milwaukee in 1994 with a degree in political science, and received their “Graduate of the Last Decade” alumni award. He lives with his three children Maxwell, Maya and Olivia in Milwaukee.

**Robert M. Hollister** is the dean of the Jonathan M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service, and the Pierre and Pamela Omidyar Professor of Citizenship and Public Service. He has led the development of Tufts’ uniquely comprehensive approach to education for active citizenship. Previously, Dr. Hollister was dean of the Tufts Graduate School of Arts and Sciences and director of the Lincoln Filene Center for Citizenship and Public Affairs. His career has focused on strengthening the civic engagement roles of higher education both in the U.S. and internationally. Dr. Hollister coordinates the Talloires Network, a global alliance of universities working together to strengthen their civic engagement and social responsibility. He is co-editor and contributing author of *Governing, Leading and Managing Nonprofit Organizations*; *Cities of the Mind*; *Neighborhood Policy and Planning*; and *Neighborhood Health Centers*; and co-author of *Development Politics*.

**Sally T. Prouty** is the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Corps Network.

Sally has 30 years’ experience in both the public and private sectors as well as in volunteer non-profit positions at the local, state, national and international levels. She has worked extensively in health care, as a Registered Nurse and as an administrator, supervisor, and teacher in medical settings.

Immediately before her appointment at The Corps Network in 2002, Sally served four years as Deputy Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) and seven years as Director of the Ohio Civilian Conservation Corps (OCCC), a division of ODNR, operating two residential and six non-residential facilities statewide.

Under Sally’s leadership, OCCC enrolled both middle class young men and women in a traditional Conservation Corps model and also unemployed young adults in a program focused on conservation based service-learning and youth development. In 2000, the Department of Labor recognized OCCC as one of ten effective youth initiatives in the nation, and in 2002 the

Annie E. Casey Foundation recognized OCCC as “one of the premier youth programs in the nation” for effectively serving youth exiting the juvenile justice system.

Currently, Sally is co-chair of both Voices for National Service and the national Campaign for Youth. She also serves on the Board of Directors of the National Youth Employment Coalition.

**Tondalaya Shepard-Turner** is the Director of Volunteer and Community Service for Mt. Sinai Health System in Chicago. In this role she has increased the volunteer base by 80% and founded several new initiatives including the Medical Interpreters Program and the Caregiving Beyond Sinai Program which recruits teams of 10-12 Sinai staff members to go out into the community and complete service projects. Tondalaya has spent 10 years working in the non-profit sector including seven years with the Women’s Business Development Center where she led advocacy efforts on behalf of women and minority business owners. Her commitment to empower others has led her to found breakthrough initiatives including WYSHB University which provides training for ex-offenders in developing business plans and assists them in finding gainful employment. The name WYSHB (pronounced Wishby) was inspired by a George Elliot quote: It’s never too late to be What You Should Have Been. As a student on the campus of Columbia College in South Carolina, she co-founded and directed the first and only Volunteer Service Office in 1995, where she placed more than 500 student volunteers with community organizations. Tondalaya served as a corps member with City Year Boston in 1993-1994 and a founding staff member with City Year Columbia. She is a graduate of Columbia College and holds a Masters in Community and Economic Development from Southern New Hampshire University.

# LEADERS FOR EVERY SECTOR:

## National Service as a Strategy for Leadership and Workforce Development

### PROCEEDINGS: INTRODUCTION

**SHIRLEY SAGAWA:** Welcome, everyone, to the Center for American Progress (CAP). I'm so thrilled to see so many of you – and sorry that we don't have more chairs! My name is Shirley Sagawa, and I'm a visiting fellow here at CAP. This is our inaugural event on national service here, and hopefully not the last event. What we're trying to do is explore some of the linkages between national service and important issues that the country is facing. We've had enough experience, now, with national service at some scale that we can start to answer some of those questions about what our country would look like if we had a more substantial portion of the population engaged in full-time service; what it would look like if we had every student throughout their education involved in service learning; and what our country would look like if when people retired or decided to switch careers later in life they were able to take on some of the problems that we know require a lot more effort than we're able to put to them. That's what we're trying to explore here today.

As I look around the room, I realize that almost everybody here could have been up on the panel, but we're unfortunately limited to only so many chairs. These people (on the panel) are – I know – going to give you a lot to think about.

Just a few thoughts before I turn it over to our experts, here. We chose this topic, the idea of service, leadership, and workforce issues for a few reasons. One is, I don't think many people think about the nonprofit sector and its health. I spend a lot of time worrying about it. The nonprofit sector employs about ten percent of America's workforce. One study by the Bridgespan Group\* says that over the next decade, we're going to need about 80,000 new leaders in the nonprofit sector every year to fill the space that's going to be left when people retire. Where are those leaders going to come from? I would argue that probably a lot of them are serving in AmeriCorps this year, or in Learn and Serve America. Others are in the business sector, thinking about retiring. How do we make sure that happens?

Second, there are already shortages in some really important fields – nursing and other health care fields, information technology, and all of the helping sectors where it doesn't pay as well. There are a lot of challenges there. The public sector – the federal government and state governments. Large numbers of Baby Boomers are retiring and there are lots of vacancies. There are a whole different set of skills that are going to be needed. What are we doing to address that? There is a solution that is looking us in the face if only we took advantage of it.

---

\* Thomas J. Tierney, "The Nonprofit Sector's Leadership Deficit," March 2006, online at [http://www.bridgespan.org/kno\\_articles\\_leadershipdeficit.html](http://www.bridgespan.org/kno_articles_leadershipdeficit.html) (accessed September 21, 2007).

We have millions of young people who are being left behind because their education system failed them. We need their talents and contributions as much as we need anybody else's. (Applause.)

We've seen that national service actually does make a difference in these areas – for example, the Community HealthCorps, which is a wonderful AmeriCorps program, finds that not only do the members provide really important services to their community, but 85 percent of them continue in careers in health care. So clearly there is a connection. Geoffrey Canada, the founder of the Harlem Children's Zone and one of the country's leading social entrepreneurs, worries about the talent pool but also observes, "One terrific pool of talent for HCZ has been our Peacemakers, who are AmeriCorps interns. Since that is a very challenging job, true leaders quickly rise to the top. We have promoted the best of each Peacemaker class, and many of them are now leaders throughout the organization, including four out of seventeen of our program directors" (from "Creating Stronger Staffs From Within: An Interview with Geoff Canada," The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, late 2007). So there are people making that connection, and we'll hear from some of them this afternoon on our second panel.

The last thing is that we've written a national service agenda ("Serving America: A National Service Agenda for the Next Decade" by Shirley Sagawa, September 2007, online at [http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2007/09/serving\\_america.html](http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2007/09/serving_america.html)), containing CAP's perspective on these and a variety of issues in the national service field. I'm hoping that those of you who are here representing different organizations will be collaborators with us on continuing to explore these connections between service and challenges facing our country.

Before I introduce the moderator for our first panel, I want to thank the people who put this event together – first, Tamara Chao, a co-fellow of mine who is working this year at CAP and helping me with these issues. She has been really instrumental in guiding this. I'd also like to thank Lauren Dunn, also at CAP, the events team, and many, many other people at CAP whose names I won't say here, but I really appreciate them – including the interns who have been helping to get people organized.

And I really need to give a special shout-out to our partners and sponsors: the people at Voices for National Service – AnnMaura Connolly, whom I'll introduce in a second, as well as Jennifer Ney and Adam Donaldson did a huge amount of work in putting this together, and we've loved partnering with you. Thank you! Bill Schambra and Krista Shaffer at Hudson Institute have been very, very helpful. And Deborah Jospin and Robert Hollister at Tufts University have also been great partners on this effort.

So without further ado, let me introduce AnnMaura Connolly, senior vice president for public policy and special initiatives at City Year and a leader of the Voices for National Service Coalition. I can honestly say that if it weren't for AnnMaura's work, I think we'd have a whole lot fewer programs here today because they probably wouldn't have been funded if it hadn't been for the work AnnMaura did to save AmeriCorps a few years ago. (Applause.)

AnnMaura is actually a great example of how this career track goes. She was a Jesuit Volunteer Corps member just a few years ago –

ANNMAURA CONNOLLY: Thank you!

SHIRLEY SAGAWA: – yes. And she went on to work at Youth Service America and the Corporation for National and Community Service before she took on the important job she has today – once you get hooked you can't leave; it's the "Hotel California."

## PROCEEDINGS: FIRST PANEL National Service Alumni Tell Their Stories

ANNMAURA CONNOLLY: Thanks, Shirley. That really is the message of our panel today. As we like to say at City Year, once you get your "social justice nerve" turned on, you can't turn it back off again after that.

As Shirley said, I am actually an alumna of the Jesuit Volunteer Corps. I would have been in AmeriCorps if AmeriCorps had existed back when I was doing what I considered to be my national service, which obviously has put me on a career path that I never anticipated it would. I had lots of other big ideas and dreams for my future.

And so when we were talking about this session, we thought it would be really interesting to hear from some people who had served in AmeriCorps and other national service programs about their experiences and about how it made them think about their futures and their careers. And so I'll introduce individually each of our panelists and ask them to say a little bit about their national service experience and how it led them to where they are today and all of the stops along the way between here and there.

I'll start with Kellie Bentz, who is an alumna of Hands On Atlanta's school-based AmeriCorps program. She is a co-founder of AmeriCorps Alums, and led the Atlanta chapter of AmeriCorps Alums for a number of years. And the reality is that Kellie is a national service hero. In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, she moved to the Gulf Coast and has really led Hands On Network's work there. Today she serves as the executive director of Hands On New Orleans. She remains a steadfast, powerful force in mobilizing volunteers and folks in the Gulf region around the rebuilding of New Orleans and in fact the entire Gulf. So, Kellie, first of all we want to say thank you to you for stepping up and for your ongoing service. And now I'll turn it over to you to say a few words about your experience.

KELLIE BENTZ: I'll start by speaking a little bit about how I got involved in national service. I guess it was my senior year in college, and I was thinking of what I wanted to do. All of my friends were getting jobs with corporations, and all I knew is that I wanted to help people. One of my friends was in AmeriCorps\*NCCC and had been out in the Denver campus, and so I decided to apply for AmeriCorps programs, and I was accepted to three different programs. I chose the Hands On Atlanta school-based program and moved there directly after college.

I became a team leader in a school – Oglethorpe Elementary, an Atlanta public school. And for me, the biggest challenge, which exposed me to so much, was being immersed in a culture that I was not familiar with. It awakened me and sort of broke my ignorance in so many different ways. As AnnMaura Connolly was just saying, it struck my social justice nerve. At that moment, when I started that, it was the biggest culture shock that I had ever experienced, and I knew from that moment that I had to stay in service. And that whole year was a huge learning experience. It taught me how to be resourceful. It taught me how to stick through things when times were really tough, to make really tough decisions for a team that might not agree with your decisions because they might not understand it, but you knew that was the best thing for the team or for the group.

After that experience, I decided to help and start up the AmeriCorps Alums national effort with Hands On Network. We launched that with the Points of Light Conference in 2005, I believe. And for me that was also a huge stepping stone where I became the president of the Atlanta chapter of AmeriCorps Alums and I was then asked in December 2005 to help launch what would be a disaster response effort by Hands On Network in New Orleans. To be honest, that time was supposed to be six weeks, and I've now been there almost two years. I arrived in December 2005 with four colleagues – we drove down when everyone said it was too dangerous to enter. And we got there and we decided that this was where we had to be. We volunteered for a week, and I was sent down in January 2006 on a six-week contract. And then I decided to stay – I thought I'd be there for three months, and then three months turned into six, and six months turned into a year, and now it has been almost two. I think when you're down there and you see an entire city struggling, an entire people struggling, it's very difficult to leave. That's what has compelled me as my service. But what started that was my service with Hands On Atlanta as an AmeriCorps member.

Currently our Hands On New Orleans houses between eighty and one hundred volunteers per night, and we've been doing that since March 2006. AmeriCorps\*NCCC is one of the staples of our operations, and so we cycle teams from NCCC campuses for two to three months at a time, and we've been doing that since March 2006. They are crew leaders out in the field. They have been our volunteer coordinators at times when we didn't have staff or other AmeriCorps members who were state-funded. And now we have a staff of eight and an AmeriCorps program of ten to twelve, and we will be increasing our national service program incredibly. And as a director of an organization – and I know everyone down on the Gulf Coast feels this way – we are thankful for the numerous AmeriCorps members and numerous national service persons who are down there, because without them the recovery effort would not be where it is today.

And I also think have a lot to be thankful for, as far as being an AmeriCorps member and being in national service, because it has developed my leadership skills, being able to run an organization in a post-Katrina disaster area. Times are still tough down there; I don't know how many of you in this room have been down there to see what has been going on not only in New Orleans but across the Gulf Coast. Every single day is different, and every single day is challenging. When I was living in the housing facility for the first six months, I was everything from a therapist to a mother to a sister to the director to the project manager. You just kind of roll with it. I think that's a lot of what national service teaches you – being able to roll with the

punches, being extremely flexible and resourceful, adapting to changes, and really learning how to deal with people and work with people in a way that otherwise you wouldn't know how to. So I'm extremely thankful for that. And I think if anything, I will continue to be compelled to stay in national service – probably for the rest of my life.

ANNMAURA CONNOLLY: Thank you, Kellie – and we look forward to continuing to follow your work.

Before I introduce our next panelist, I want to take a second and thank Art Block and Comcast for their support of this effort. They have been great supporters of Voices for National Service and have provided lunch today. Art is here, and you'll hear from him on the next panel. But I specifically wanted to thank Comcast for their support.

Our next panelist is Kaya Henderson. Kaya is very busy right now, because as you all know, school is back in session and Kaya has a big role in the Washington, D.C. public schools. She is an alumna of Teach for America (TFA), where she taught middle school Spanish in the South Bronx. She has since really dedicated her life to improving education, working with a number of leading education organizations including Teach for America – she was the founder of Teach for America in Washington – and The New Teacher Project. Today she has her hands full here in D.C. working alongside her fellow TFA alumna Michelle Rhee; Kaya serves as deputy chancellor for the District of Columbia Public Schools. Kaya, thank you for being with us!

KAYA HENDERSON: Thank you! I'm excited to be here. I can honestly say that I am who I am because of national service – I would not be where I am on this day in this position if it were not for national service.

I grew up in service household; we had mandatory community service in the Henderson household before it became a high school requirement. (Laughter.) And so I tutored while I was in high school; I was a candy striper; I went to nursing homes; you name it, I did it. It was just the ethic in our household. “To whom much is given much is required” is what I was told growing up; you had an obligation to give back and to serve. And I thought, when I get to college I'll cut this stuff out! But as soon as I got to college – go figure – I found myself serving and serving and serving. I would be up at six o'clock on Sunday mornings going to a soup kitchen, So Others Might Eat (SOME) right here in Washington, D.C. I tutored. I worked with incarcerated youth. I did all kinds of things.

At college, I was pursuing an international relations degree but was increasingly troubled by the fact that while my colleagues, my classmates and I, were all focused on things that were going on in other places in the world, there were things that I was seeing happening right here that I felt responsible to do something about. And during my junior year, my mother asked me, “What are you going to do?” and I said that I wasn't going to go to law school, which was one of the things I initially thought that I was going to do. And she asked, “What do you want to do?” And I said, well, I'm going to do something. Her response was, “We paid \$80,000 for college” – which was cheap back then – “and so you had better figure it out!”

And so I started thinking about the things I really like to do – I really, really liked working with people; I really liked working with children; and I really liked telling people what to do! And so I figured out that I wanted to be involved in policy, and when I looked across the policy fields, the only thing that made sense to me was education policy. It was where I had spent most of my free time throughout my life – my mother is an educator, and I never imagined that I would go into education – but at the same time that I was trying to figure out what to do, this very cool program came about called Teach for America. At that point it was two years old. And it was not an AmeriCorps program, so I did not get an award. But that’s okay. And I decided that I really needed to be in a classroom understanding the dynamics of what happens on the ground before I could move into any kind of an education policy position. When I told my mother, she was not very happy about that. She told me that they didn’t spend all that money so that I could be a teacher; I could have gone to City College and gotten the same degree. And I thought, you don’t get it! This is more than just being a teacher. This is a *movement*. She was not hearing me.

But I did Teach for America anyway. I taught middle school Spanish in the South Bronx. It was the most transformative experience that I’ve ever had in my entire life. I grew up literally about three miles from where I taught, and the differences were night and day. I grew up in Westchester County in New York. My kids lived in the South Bronx. I had traveled the world before I was eighteen. My kids had never left their community, for the most part; they had not gotten on the subway and been downtown to see what at that point was the World Trade Center, or to see Yankee Stadium, which was really just over the hill from us. And I came away from the experience with some very clear understandings that there were really not that many differences between me and my students. The major difference was that I had a series of people across my life, from my family to teachers to mentors, who were intentional about the experiences that I had and made sure that I was in day camp and made sure that I was serving when I was in high school. And my kids didn’t have that; they didn’t have anybody who was sort of programming their time or making sure that they were exposed to a lot of different things.

And so it became really clear to me as a young – I was twenty-two at the time that I started teaching – as a young, energetic sort of teacher, and I took my kids everywhere. I took them to Central Park. And I watched other Teach for America corps members who worked with me doing the same thing. And it became very important to me then to get more people like me into classrooms. And so after my teaching commitment, I became a recruiter for Teach for America, and I spent a year running across college campuses all over the country telling people that they needed to do this, that they needed to serve. And then I was promoted to director of admissions at Teach for America, and at the age of twenty-five I was managing a team of twenty-five people. I hadn’t managed my way out of a paper bag. But I say that to say that I got leadership opportunities at Teach for America that I would not have gotten had I gone a more traditional path. While director of admissions, I was sent to the National Service Executive program out at the Presidio in San Francisco, which was sponsored by the Corporation for National and Community Service. It was amazing. I was in touch with other national service leaders. We had phenomenal leadership training. That was nearly ten years ago, and I still pull the binder off of my shelf and refer to the materials that I received there.

Long story short, I was at Teach for America for eight years before I was compelled to come to another new sort-of startup full of Teach for America folks called The New Teacher Project. And

now, ten years later, we are a nationally recognized organization. I went because they were my Teach for America colleagues; they were my service colleagues. We had the same ethos. And we worked hard but we knew why we were doing it. And that has landed me in my current position – I’m deputy chancellor for District of Columbia Public Schools.

About twelve weeks in, it has been the wildest ride of my life. (Laughter.) But when I look around the leadership team, who have we called but our national service colleagues in Teach for America and in other organizations! We are a particular kind of people. We have a sense of urgency. We have a sense of possibility. And we have a track record of success that this country needs. And so we’ve got to keep on doing what we’re doing. I am who I am because of national service. Thank you.

(Applause.)

ANNMAURA CONNOLLY: Thank you, Kaya. I next want to introduce Jason Phillips, and I’m really, really glad Jason is with us today. He is an alum of YouthBuild in York, Pennsylvania. He has quite a story, which I’m going to let him tell you. And today he serves as a case manager with the Crispus Attucks YouthBuild Charter School in York. And the great thing about Jason – unlike Kaya, who did not get an education award – is that Jason is using his AmeriCorps education award to earn a B.A. in human development and family studies and Penn State University. So please join me in welcoming Jason Phillips from YouthBuild. (Applause.)

JASON PHILLIPS: Thank you. Good afternoon. My name is Jason Phillips, and I’m a graduate of Crispus Attucks YouthBuild AmeriCorps Charter School located in York, Pennsylvania. I began in national service as a student in the YouthBuild program, doing various community service projects. When I graduated from the YouthBuild School, I was able to return the following year as an intern through the AmeriCorps program. That provided me with a job, and it provided me with stability. Also, I received an education award which allowed me to attend college at the York campus of Penn State University. As I attended college, through my community service and through my college courses, I realized that I had leadership abilities, and I realized what it is that I wanted to do. So I began challenging the students, challenging the staff and the community at the charter school to really step up and get more involved in the program. I began to realize that there was a definite need for assistance in the community. I began to increase my efforts as a visible example of what a YouthBuild student can be, and what I YouthBuild student achieve and receive out of life. As I continued to work hard in my community, other students began to follow my lead and began to realize that this guy, who is just like us and sat in the same classrooms with us and sat down with us, is now continuing his education and furthering his work abilities.

(Phillips sets down the sheet of paper from which he has been reading.) I’m going to leave this alone; I started it, but as you can see, it’s just not working for me right now, my speech. What I’m going to do is speak from heart to heart, because I’m a lot more comfortable with that!

I’m here today – we’re talking about leadership, about what national service and AmeriCorps provides, and that’s what I’m here to let you know. I sit here today as a graduate, and as a case manager at the Crispus Attucks YouthBuild AmeriCorps Charter School. Initially, when I first

heard about the program, I was incarcerated in upstate Pennsylvania, not in the juvenile system but in the adult system. As I sat there, I was looking for a way out of the system, a way to land my feet on solid ground and make something positive happen. I received a brochure about AmeriCorps, about the charter school – what it is about, what AmeriCorps is about, what it can provide and how it can provide you with housing and opportunities and education. And I said, this is my ticket. I began to write letters to different judges and write for letters of recommendation. Everyone knew that I always had the abilities, but I just never had the outlook. And YouthBuild sent someone personally to come see me. And I sat down and spoke with that gentleman for about an hour. We had an intense conversation. He gave me all of the details about the program, and he gave me the opportunity and said, either you want it, or you don't want it. And I said, I want it.

I landed in YouthBuild, and the first day I walked through the halls, the first day I walked into the program, I knew that I was not going to leave that facility until I accomplished all of my dreams and goals, and God led me onto another level in life. And that's what I did. That was about five years ago, going on six years.

And so today, as I say over and over again, I'm a case manager at the charter school. It's a position I really take pride in, and I just love it. And my next position is going to be director of the program one day! (Laughter, applause.)

What I think that Dorothy (Stoneman, YouthBuild founder) sees in me, and what other YouthBuild (inaudible) sees in me is that I remain on the front lines daily with the urban youths out there. I remain on the front lines, eye to eye and at arms length with the students. And I see the hunger, I see the opportunities that they want. Because I had that same hunger, and I had that same thirst. And we start off standing on the corner, talking. I have my suit and tie on. They have their hoodies on, or their jerseys or whatever. And a week from that, they're in the office filling out applications. They have their parents or guardian sitting down and saying, how can my child become part of the program? And the kids say to me, I don't believe you're the same person everyone says you are. Yeah, that's me – that's my picture hanging out in the hallway as a top graduate of my YouthBuild class. I was the one who received all of the awards. I'm that same person, and I'm sitting here telling you that we can make this happen.

I can't begin to put a number on the students who walked through the doors – lost, troubled, looking for shelter. I'm talking about my students, coming to school. Some of them didn't even have a place to live. But you know what? They made it to school by 8:30. They knew that if they didn't make it by 8:30, we'd say, I'm sorry, but we'll see you tomorrow – that's an unexcused absence. So they made sure they were in school – under any circumstances. Sometimes they needed a change of clothes to start the day. Whatever it was, that's what we provided, and that's what YouthBuild continues to provide today.

That's not even the beginning, though. Through AmeriCorps, as I said, I began going to college. I started to see the light, and really get a handle on life. I began to see what life has to offer. And I realized, you know what? I need to make things happen. I need to take the next steps, take the lead. But as I started to college and began earning my degree, my income was not where my vision was at. And I knew that I had to read and see how to utilize resources and find out what I

could do. So I got turned on to a magazine called *Black Enterprise*, which talks a lot about financial empowerment. It talks about uplifting the community. Ironically, my director went to a program with YouthBuild USA for directors, and came back with a beautiful opportunity. They needed a graduate to commit to an IDA (Individual Development Account) program – in which funds would be matched – for the purchase of a house, to go back to school, or to start a small business. And I said, I want the house! Let me purchase the house! That’s what I need; that’s my financial base, that’s what will pull me to the next level. As I use my intelligence, use my resources – because we build affordable housing in the community, and I am very familiar with working with my hands and building homes, taking them from a shell and making them something.

So I took advantage of the opportunity. I said, not only do I want the house – I want a duplex! I want to stay in one unit and rip the other unit out. So that’s what I began to do. And I had students coming in, helping me, painting, and I paid them extra money to come help. I had the YouthBuild instructors teaching me how to make it happen. I purchased a second house about two years ago, and so I’m on my second rental income. And it keeps going; I’m going to tell you right now, in a few years I’m going to be the young Trump of my neighborhood. (Laughter, applause.) That’s what’s going on, ladies and gentlemen!

And the reality is, there are many others like me. They’re just looking for an opportunity. And that’s what we heard today – she mentioned that she worked with youths who were incarcerated. I was one of the guys she worked with. And today I’m doing the exact opposite. You know, I have a brother who unfortunately is also incarcerated. As I said, I always was a good leader – but *how* was I a leader. He is going to be coming to the YouthBuild program in another three or four months to start his life, to get transformation in his life. We’re going to transform lives, and transform communities one step, one brick at a time. Thank you.

(Applause.)

ANNMAURA CONNOLLY: Awesome! Thank you, Jason. Next, I want to introduce Tondalaya Shepard-Turner, who is an alum of City Year Boston. Her commitment to service started early; when she left City Year, she founded the first volunteer service office in Columbia College, South Carolina. She has also led advocacy efforts on behalf of women and minority business owners. And my favorite is that she founded the WYSHB University, which provides training for ex-offenders, helping them to develop business plans and find gainful employment. (The name WYSHB – pronounced “Wishby” – was inspired by a George Elliot quote: “It’s never too late to be What You Should Have Been.”) Today, Tondalaya is the director Volunteer and Community Service for Mt. Sinai Health System in Chicago. Welcome, Tondalaya.

TONDALAYA SHEPARD-TURNER: Thank you. I’ve learned, and I continue to learn, that my story is not unique. It’s not different. It’s not one in a million. In fact, I’ve learned especially today that my story is only one of millions. I’ve heard my story told by many different voices across the country and across the world, and I’ve heard my story told three times today alone.

My story begins in study period in high school. I was seventeen years old and filling out college applications – and complaining about what was wrong with the world and with this country in

particular. The poor education system, the joke of a penal system, the homelessness, the poverty, the drugs, the racism, the hatred, sexism, homophobia, xenophobia – you name it, I could complain about it. And that’s what I did. I decided that day that it was time to stop complaining and do something about it. And I started talking about what I called a year of service. I got a lot of resistance – from my family, from my mom and dad in particular, from my friends, from my mentors, and – probably rightfully so – also from my teachers. A year of service as opposed to going straight to college. And I had a mentor, Joan Klaus, who was then the vice president of American National Bank, who was brave enough to go to my mom and dad and say, I have two words for you: City Year. And she explained it as a year, similar to high school or college, where people do a freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior year, only this was a “city year.” A year where the streets become your classroom and you become students to life.

Whatever I tell you about City Year in the next minute and a half, I can’t tell you enough. It is a life-changing, mind-altering, career-focusing experience. My City Year experience was in Columbia, and I’ll just talk about three of their core values being teamwork, diversity, and of course, service. At City Year Boston, I learned the true power of diversity – and that is not a marketing tool. Because that’s what I thought. “Diversity.” “The melting pot.” I thought it was a marketing tool to pull people in. But at City Year Boston, I learned the power of putting five hundred very different people in a room together and letting them discover just how much they were alike, just how much they had in common, and what collectively they could do to change the world for the better. Our co-founders, Alan (Khazei) and Michael (Brown), talk about people “young enough to think that they can change the world,” and then they back it up with “old enough to make it happen.” Coming under that leadership, which makes City Year such a powerful, life-changing experience, my nine months were the best and the worst of times, spent in Boston, Massachusetts with people so much like me and so different from me.

When I left City Year, I was supposed to go and do my four years of college. I promised my mom that I would. And I decided that I was going to do a second year of national service and became part of the pilot City Year Columbia staff in Columbia, South Carolina. Eventually I went to Columbia College, a small, private women’s college in Columbia, SC, and discovered a dying volunteer program. I campaigned and advocated for not only the continuation of it, but for the formation of a volunteer service office. I joined April Emory (ph), who was a graduating senior at that point, and her advocacy on behalf of volunteerism, and was given the charge by the then-president, Peter T. Mitchell, to “make it happen.” He said, “Well, do it.” And I bumped into my first, biggest ever City Year fan. He said, you’re a City Year alumna, and you can make it happen, and you can do it. And he gave me the volunteer service office to run. One hundred stand-by volunteers later, and about a million dollars in in-kind and monetary donations, we did have a true volunteer service office that was going to stand the test of time.

I think what happened to me on that campus, more importantly than having the volunteer service office, the programs, the volunteer fair, the homeless awareness sleep-out, the money we raised for homeless shelters, the interns or ex-terns that we place in nonprofit organizations, was the lives that I saw change. It was the people who were dedicated to going off to law school saying, I’m going to do a career in public policy, or I’m going to be a civil rights attorney. Or I’m going to do corporate law with a human perspective. Or people who were dedicated to going off to medical school saying, I’m going to get some high-paid medical job, but I’m also going to be

dedicated to low-income neighborhoods. It was just really a mind-altering, life-changing experience that the volunteer service office turned out being for a lot of our students.

I have since gone back to my hometown of Chicago, Illinois, and I've done work with the Chicago Abused Women's Coalition, the Women's Business Development Center, Chicago Lawyers for a Better Chicago, and other nonprofit organizations. I do believe that my career has come full circle as the director of volunteer services at Mt. Sinai Hospital, where we've seen the volunteer base increase by 80 percent in the last year alone.

My fellow panelist (Kaya Henderson) talked about service as a movement. I do believe that service is the movement of the new millennium and the movement of our time. For me, service is hope for tomorrow. It is hope for the future. And my City Year experience gave me a skill set and a leadership set to set me in a path for service and volunteerism. I know for me the most important thing that happened throughout all of my experience was having leadership to say, you can do; you should do; you must do. With City Year Columbia, that was Alan and Michael and a series of other founding members with City Year. At Columbia College, it was President Peter T. Mitchell, who said, you're a City Year alum. I believe you can do this. Go ahead and make it happen. At Mt. Sinai Hospital, it's our CEO, Alan Channing, who says, there is power in service. There is power in youth service and young people and volunteerism, community service. There is something to be said about a community's ability to make their own change, to create their own change. I know that nothing happens without leadership – those people who look at you and say, you can do; you should do; you must do. For me, there is a quote that George Santayana, who is a great educator, said – that “The great difficulty in education is to get experience out of ideas.” I believe that service does that.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

ANNMAURA CONNOLLY: I'm going to ask our panel a couple of questions, and then we're going to open it up to the floor, so if you all want to start thinking now about questions you might want to ask these folks.

Specifically, I'm going to ask you two very different kinds of questions. The first question I want to ask you guys – and any of you can start – is to think for a second about a recent experience, a specific experience you've had where you called on a skill or a leadership ability or something that you learned during your national service experience, and you could trace it back specifically to something that you learned during the course of your service.

Whoever wants to jump in first, feel free.

JASON PHILLIPS: Throughout our AmeriCorps service, we were always taught that behind every individual there's a circumstance. Find out to the core – speaking from a charter school perspective, if the student has an issue, is not in school, or is acting out, there's a reason. Find out what it is to keep that student involved in the program and doing their service. About a week ago, we had a student who seemed to be having a lot of issues in his classes – he wasn't himself: he

was down; he was depressed; he really didn't want to volunteer. Every day we volunteer throughout the community, one way or another, whether it's picking up trash or just helping out. Anyway, he was down and out, and so I pulled him to the side and said to him, you know, we have to keep going. This is our mental toughness program. This is the beginning of the school year. You have to make it through and let them know that – well, basically, I was trying to show him the light at the end of the tunnel. I came to find out that his brother, about two or three days prior to that, had been stabbed and was in a hospital in critical condition. And this guy was still trying to balance coming to school and fulfilling his obligation with his personal life.

And I believe it was leadership in me to realize that there's something wrong; this guy wasn't just acting out. I pulled him to the side and really came to him eye-to-eye to find out what his issue and situation was and find out how we could keep him and reach him.

ANNMAURA CONNOLLY: That's a great example. Anyone else?

KAYA HENDERSON: Actually, I have two, and I'll make them quick.

ANNMAURA CONNOLLY: Go for it.

KAYA HENDERSON: When I started teaching, one of the first things that I dealt with was angry parents. They were angry about all kinds of things, and at twenty-two I was a bit overwhelmed. But I remember one of my Teach for America program directors telling me, they are angry for a reason. They care about something that is not being addressed, and you've got to figure out what it is they care about – and you care about that thing, too! They just have a different way of expressing it.

Fast forward to the last twelve weeks, where I'm dealing with angry parents – and remembering that at the heart of it all, these people are passionate about their children's education in the same way that the parents were in the South Bronx. This has helped me to anchor the work that I'm doing every day.

The second piece is really a little bit more from a management and leadership perspective. When I worked at Teach for America, we operated with an incredible sense of possibility. For a while I thought it was insanity – because we would literally try to do things that looked impossible. And part of the reason why I accepted this position is because if you know anything about D.C. Public Schools, it looks like an impossible situation. Everything that I know about impossible situations I learned at Teach for America. You just decide what you want to do and you plow through and you do it. And that's what we've been doing for the last twelve weeks in D.C. Public Schools. And just low-hanging fruit has paid off in such a humongous way. People are energized and excited and have taken our sense of possibility and grabbed onto it. And so we're excited about what is going to happen in D.C. public schools, and that comes directly out of what I learned in Teach for America.

TONDALAYA SHEPARD-TURNER: For me, it was City Year's core value of teamwork. We served in a team of ten to twelve. We had four different team leaders in our year, because we always had the best team leader ever – who was always promoted to a new position. But what we

learned about teamwork and really the whole concept of team-building is what it means to be a team member, a team player, a team leader – what the weakest link does; what the strongest link does; and what they all bring to the team.

At the volunteer service office at Mt. Sinai Hospital, we do create teams and so each of them feed off of each other. So we've built on the whole concept of teamwork and creating teams around programs and projects so that there's always somebody there as a back-up.

ANNMAURA CONNOLLY: My next question is a little bit different in tone. How much do you think that the skills and abilities you developed during your national service year were intentional on the part of the program that you were a part of, and how much of it was just learning on your feet, learning in the moment, and the experience in which you found yourself?

KELLIE BENTZ: We had training sessions every Friday – we were a very team-based, school-based AmeriCorps program. And I felt like the training was almost a channel or a vessel for us to learn from, but I felt like the overall experience was really our training. It was the hands-on, every-single-day, out-in-the-schools learning, not only from the community and the students but also from each other. I think I learned more from my team and the community I was serving than sometimes the students I was serving, or I think I learned more from them than they learned from me.

The way that our program was set up, there were some very intentional trainings and some speakers who had been invited, but right now I can't even think of one or two who really stuck out. But I think that they were inextricably linked to the experience that we were having. So I can remember different speakers who came in and spoke about oppression or different things that were occurring specifically within Atlanta public schools, and it helped guide us through that program. But I think at the same time it was more the experience that the program allowed for than the intentional training.

JASON PHILLIPS: For me, an intentional training is what I'm doing today – speaking amongst you. In the YouthBuild AmeriCorps program, in school, we don't just sit there, do our work, and give diplomas. It's much more involved – a lot of communicating, a lot of personal experiences being shared with one another so we can learn from each other's experience. When I first started, I had a lot of built-up issues and emotions, I guess you could say. I was very inward. I really didn't speak a lot, and I really didn't get amongst my peers. So that was something they forced me to do slowly but surely – to get out in front and speak, share my story, share experiences learned from others. And the developed me to be doing what I'm doing today – which is to speak more and feel, you know, somewhat comfortable.

TONDALAYA SHEPARD-SMITH: I think it's probably fifty-fifty. There were some built-in trainings and experiences that were very intentional, and then there were some things that you never knew were going to happen, and the organizers could not have known were going to happen. And for me, what I really appreciate about the program was – there's that cell phone company that talks about "the network." Well in City Year there's a network that sort of follows you throughout the program, and I think throughout your life. I still call on the network. But for those things that you can't anticipate, you can't plan for, those other life-changing and training

experiences that are hands-on and in the middle of it, there was a network of supporters here for us, whether it was our team members, leaders, program managers, or our founders and CEOs. So I think it's sort of fifty-fifty, built in and ad hoc.

KAYA HENDERSON: I'd say twenty-eighty. (Laughter.) I happened to go through the program in its infancy. And so the organization was still trying to figure out a lot of stuff. And they trained us on some things, but a lot of it was just sort of being in the moment and being in the experience. Likewise with the leadership opportunities that I got through Teach for America. Like I said, I couldn't manage my way out of a paper bag, but here I found myself leading twenty-five people, the largest team at Teach for America. And so I had to learn how to manage. And so I read books and I got under my desk and cried every day, and I worked it out. And a lot of it was putting good people or smart people or resourceful people into key positions and then allowing them to figure it out. Thankfully the organization has developed and evolved and is in a very different place and is doing a lot of really great intentional training so that folks can be the most effective corps members that they can be.

ANNMAURA CONNOLLY: Now I'll open it up to you all. Does anybody out in the audience have questions they'd like to ask of our panel?

CECILIO MORALES, *Employment & Training Reporter*: I'm particularly interested in asking Kaya Henderson about the contrast between – you're describing almost a culture of people who want to get things done. And I know several people who have taught in the South Bronx as volunteers – in the New York City Teaching Fellows program, which is similar. Their experience was, they ended up hating the school bureaucracy and never wanting to have anything to do with it. Now, because there are school bureaucracies, you have in D.C. the guy who sat on the textbooks while they were right there – whom I hope you fire one of these days. (Laughter.) But anyway, how do you deal with that – you come out of this service-oriented culture and face, well, reality. How do you deal with that?

KAYA HENDERSON: That is a great question. The way we are dealing with it is in several ways. One, we are filling our ranks with people like us. The leadership team at D.C. Public Schools is full of lots of people who have worked at Teach for America or other national service organizations and who have that can-do spirit, that sense of urgency.

And then – literally – we are setting the example from the top to the bottom, challenging it and calling it when we see it. I mean, this textbook issue is not new. This has been happening every single summer. But, call it, right? Say, we are not delivering our textbooks, and let's set a goal, and hold us accountable. I think that being very transparent and about what needs to happen so that you can hold people accountable is how we're doing it. We're willing to be held accountable. We're asking that everybody else be willing to be held accountable. You read in the newspaper about us pursuing legislation to change some of the personnel rules – and it's because if people don't do their jobs, there is no way to fire them. That's why the textbook man is not gone. But we have to – if we can't hold people accountable, we're never going to be able to make these kinds of changes. So from Michelle (Rhee) down to secretaries, we're challenging people to do things differently, and setting the example. If the chancellor can answer her telephone or respond to every e-mail that comes, you can't be busier than she is! It's about

culture change. And it's going to take a little while. But from the very top to the very bottom, we're modeling it; we're swelling our ranks with people like us, and we're being transparent and holding people accountable.

DOROTHY STONEMAN, YouthBuild founder: You all have filled me with hope and relaxation about the next generation of leaders, and also you've demonstrated the power of the AmeriCorps national direct program with each of you having the same heart and same soul, and with slightly different manifestations of it. My question to you is a generational question. My generation – I come out of the 1960s. I was in the Civil Rights Movement. There was no public funding for the national service we did. Had there been public funding for all of the churches that led the Civil Rights Movement, there might not have been a Civil Rights Movement. When people in my generation ask me, where is the movement? Where are the young people? I say, they're in national service. Be patient. They're coming. But what I want to ask you is, do you find any tension around the question, is this generation of idealists and activists being co-opted and limited by the fact that there is public funding for what you do? How do you deal with that? How do you deal with injustice? When do you decide to stand up? When do you feel inhibited from doing that?

ANNMAURA CONNOLLY: Who wants to take that one on?

TONDALAYA SHEPARD-TURNER: I'll take it. When I work with young people, I often talk about the generation gaps and how our generation has been labeled. I'm a Generation Xer, and I feel like they *x*-ed us out – they put a big fat *x* on us. Worse than that, they said of our children, *Y!* Why even bother? Part of what I believe the service movement is allowing Generation X and Y to do is showcase what they want to do for their country, for their world, for their fellow man. I believe that our generation – Y, X, and others – we're the Baby Boomer children, and we *have to* do great things. We must do great things. It is expected of us, no matter what kind of *x*'s or *y*'s you put on us. We will do great things – but with the proper resources, with the proper funding, with the proper backing and the proper leadership. It's boundless what we can do and what we can accomplish. I think like with anything, you put more oomph behind the Civil Rights Movement, how much faster could you have gotten where you wanted to be? I think it's a question of resources and leadership backing. And so, I don't know what to say of the naysayers, but it's with anything, whether you're talking business, for-profit, nonprofit. Without proper resources and backing, you don't go anywhere.

KELLIE BENTZ: The experience I've had in New Orleans, every night we have a community meeting with all of the volunteers in house, over a meal. All of the volunteers talk about their projects for the day, and their projects for the next day. And then the people who are leaving stand up and give a good-bye speech. And I think it has been one of the most – I have those moments when I'm standing in the room and, it's a very surreal moment, because there are so many people who stand up, people who are in the Baby Boomer generation, who are the retired folks coming in and giving a week and then coming back and giving months and months at different times – and we've only been down there for two years. They'll stand up and say, this experience gives me hope in what our future holds. I thought that I had lost all hope in humanity. When people stand up and say that, it is absolutely amazing, because our entire organization is run by young people. And everybody down there, from NCCC to all of the AmeriCorps

members to many of the nonprofits, to the charter schools that are being developed in New Orleans and across the Gulf Coast, it's all young people. So for me, my hope in humanity has been renewed, and it is refreshed on a consistent basis down there.

And I would say, when it comes to resources and funding, it's absolutely necessary and I think there can be an argument both ways. It can inhibit, in a sense, but I think that more than likely, for a lot of the folks who are coming out of college – if the idea were that you were just to go and volunteer for a year and not going to get anything to live off of, only a certain market is able to do that, namely the wealthy folks who are able to be supported by their parents. That would be only allowing a certain group of people to serve. And I think in order to open that up, you have to at least give the living stipend, which makes it still hard to get folks like us to be involved, but I think more and more people are able to have a channel to serve, and then be able to open that up to serve the rest of their lives because of those resources.

JASON PHILLIPS: Speaking again from the experience of the YouthBuild AmeriCorps program, just having a general idea of where this conversation is going, I really feel that this generation needs growth. I think that's the main thing. Growth in their resources – if I'm not mistaken, there are about 225 or 226 YouthBuild programs across the country. And about 14,000 young people were turned away last year. And so that's letting you know right there that the population is growing. The issues are growing. The need is growing. So I really feel that that's the main thing; the resources need to be expanded. We need to be able to reach the youth at a younger age, at the early stages in life, to bring them into the programs, with volunteers. That's just needed. (Inaudible.) And recognition. All of that. Everyone is looking for something, whether it's change in a person's life, or whether it's just being able to meet your basic needs for  $x$  amount of time. Those are the requirements I believe are necessary to be able to grow.

KAYA HENDERSON: I grew up in the 1970s, and my parents were the civil rights parents who told my generation, whew – you can be anything that you want to be, now that you have access to education, and now that you have equal access, whatever that means. We expect great things of you. And so my group of colleagues grew up with this, I guess, command to be lawyers and doctors and bust open the professional ceilings. And so when I told my mother that I wanted to be a teacher, that was not exciting – even though she spent her life as a teacher. I'm out of college now fifteen years, and what I've seen happening is, all of my friends who pursued business degrees and jobs at investment banks or accounting firms are all now trying to figure out how they can come into service positions.

And so I think the challenge for my generation was this pressure from parents to do well, and then this internal drive to also do good. There's a book by Derrick Bell called *Ethical Ambition* (Bloomsbury, 2002), and the question is, can you do well and do good? And I think what my generation has tried to figure out is, are they linear? Do you have to do well first so that you can do good? Can you do well and do good at the same time? And so I think we are sort of busting up the notion that you have to be poor to volunteer – you know, martyrdom and dusty sandals. We are a different breed of folks. And so I think the resource question really is a good one, but I think that the two things are not mutually exclusive, and that we're a generation that is trying to find the genius of the *and* instead of the tyranny of the *or*.

ANN MAURA CONNOLLY: Great answer. We have time for one more question from the floor.

FRAN ROTHSTEIN, Rothstein Consulting: I'd like to follow up on just a little piece of Dorothy (Stoneman)'s complex question and ask again, one of the things I heard was, what are the pros and cons of federal funding for this – not of adequate resources, but of federal funding. I'm old enough that I remember the very beginnings, the pre-AmeriCorps days, and the heady first days when AmeriCorps members were registering people to vote. What a thought! How American is that! You can't do that anymore.

There are a lot of things that the feds of shut down in AmeriCorps. The feds have made AmeriCorps much more about the service, about the trees that are planted and the kids who are educated than about the kind of thing you all stand for, the impact on the server. Those are things that – the person with the money calls the shots, or something like that. But that's, I guess, part of your question, Dorothy. Are there better ways to either fund national service expansion, or are there ways that we need to come together and advocate for more flexible federal funding of national service expansion.

ANNMAURA CONNOLLY: Well, if I had to answer that question, I think there should be more federal funding for national service, but that's always my answer to that question! Do any of you want to take that one on?

KAYA HENDERSON: I haven't given a ton of thought to this, Fran, but I do feel like it is important for the federal government to fund national service. It says something about who we are as a country. I do think some flexibility around the funding piece is very important. One of the things I'm sure all of us learned in our national service programs is that you can't impose change on communities; change has to come from the communities. And so if the community feels like they want to register people to vote, than there should be some flexibility around the funding to allow the community to meet its needs the way it would like to.

So I would – just sort of top-of-mind – think that more flexible funding is pretty important.

TONDALAYA SHEPARD-SMITH: I totally understand the whole concept of, if you dance to the king's music, then maybe you have to play the king's game, but I agree that the federal government should absolutely support this movement because of what it says to have the federal government backing. And as with any funder, there is the opportunity to work with them on some of the obstacles that might exist, that come with federal funding. Whether it's a corporate donor, an individual donor, or the federal government, if you're the person who is running and organizing the program, and there are things that are not specific or not working for the community you're working with, then that means that there has to be a start of a conversation with your donor, who should be your partner in the program.

ANNMAURA CONNOLLY: Well, I'd like to thank our panelists today, and all of you for joining this great conversation. I think we're going to take a short break now, and then Shirley (Sagawa) will tell you what else to do.

SHIRLEY SAGAWA: Our next panel will begin in ten minutes... I also really want to underscore that for those of you who enjoyed lunch today, we really want to thank Comcast for providing that and for being a sponsor of this event, but also because of their great support for City Year and the many other ways they do a lot of work in the community. We really do appreciate that. So let's have a break and be back in ten minutes.

(End of first panel.)

## PROCEEDINGS: SECOND PANEL

### National Service as a Strategy for Workforce Development

SHIRLEY SAGAWA: I'd like to welcome you to our second panel. We're very thrilled to have Bill Schambra, who is the director of the Bradley Center for Philanthropy and Civic Renewal at Hudson Institute. I met Bill several years ago when he was on the board of the Corporation for National and Community Service, and although he comes from a slightly different ideological background, I was amazed at how we agreed on so many things, and that of course made me nervous. But we're so pleased to have Hudson Institute as a co-sponsor and to have Bill moderating our next panel. He has a long career in civil-society related work, including directing Social Policy Programs at the American Enterprise Institute and writing extensively on the topic.

I'm very interested to hear from this panel, and thank you so much for being here.

WILLIAM SCHAMBRA: Thank you, Shirley. As Shirley mentioned, my name is Bill Schambra, and Krista Shaffer and I comprise the Bradley Center for Philanthropy and Civic Renewal at Hudson Institute here in town. And as Shirley suggested, I dare say that today's event is one of the few in Washington, D.C. that can boast among its co-sponsors both the Center for American Progress on the one hand, and Hudson Institute on the other, standing as they do – at least in the public eye – on opposite sides of the ideological spectrum. In fact, I'm pretty sure that history will bear me out that this is the first such co-sponsored event in the histories of our two institutions – and I hope not the last.

But this fact, of course, speaks to the phenomenon that national service has the potential of being one of those rare issues in American politics today, riven as it otherwise is by bitter and vitriolic ideological disputation, where political adversaries might actually be able to come together and agree on something important. Now while the idea of national service has long drawn support from folks who are sort of on the left side of the spectrum, one of the promising developments of the past decade has been the emergence of some support on the right as well.

If service is indeed to secure its long-term future as a federally funded program, this is a development to be nurtured and encouraged. Insofar as conservatives claim to have a particular historical allegiance or an affinity for the free market system and the private sector, it will be useful for them to understand that national service not only doesn't contradict the free market idea and true voluntarism, but it may actually, in fact, be useful for preparing young people for a

role in the private sector and in the marketplace for the jobs and the professions that are the lifeblood of our nation's prosperity and civic life.

Our panelists today, I dare say, are going to provide us plenty of evidence along those lines, coming as they do from major national institutions in the nonprofit sector, in the foundation world, in the academy, and in corporate America. Their extensive biographies are included in today's event materials, so I am going to introduce them very briefly now, and simply get out of the way.

We will hear first from Cheryl Dorsey, president of Echoing Green, which is a major national philanthropy dedicated to social entrepreneurship; second, Rob Hollister, dean of the Jonathan M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service at Tufts University; then Sally Prouty, president of the Corps Network; Paul Schmitz, president of Public Allies; and finally Arthur Block, senior vice president at Comcast – who as you know is responsible for the lunch today and once again, we are grateful for that.

Cheryl?

CHERYL DORSEY: Thank you, Bill, and good afternoon, everyone. Thank you for having me. I'm going to spend my five minutes talking about social entrepreneurship and the linkage with national service and vice versa. I'm thrilled to be here; social entrepreneurship as a recognized field is only about two decades old, but over the past few years it has really garnered increasing amounts of attention and scrutiny. So thank you for this opportunity.

Just a quick definitional update: Social entrepreneurship as a field looks at highly accountable, metrics-driven and opportunistic leaders who are developing and executing on pattern-breaking or pattern-changing ideas as a highly impactful lever for delivering positive social change. Echoing Green is one player in that industry, and just to give you the thirty- or forty-five-second sound bite, Echoing Green has been around for the last twenty years. We are a global social venture fund that provides seed capital and technical support to some of the world's best emerging social entrepreneurs. Although you may not be familiar with Echoing Green or our brand, I dare say that you probably know a number of the groups that we've invested in over the past two decades, whether it be Teach for America, Public Allies, City Year, Citizen Schools, College Summit, or whole host of others in the youth and education development space. Internationally, we've had a footprint in funding cutting-edge human rights organizations, been involved in community and economic development programs like SKS Microfinance, the fastest-growing microfinance institution in all of India, and a range of terrific programs that are really changing the way that things are being done in their particular field of endeavor.

In terms of Echoing Green's impact, we use a number of indicators. So for example – and this makes sense especially in light of our discussion of workforce development issues – about 85 percent of those that we fund through the fellowship program will stay in the social sector in key leadership positions, as opposed to going off and doing other things. We also can say that about two out of three of the organizations that we help seed are sustainable in the short-, medium-, and longer term. And lastly, when you look at some basic return-on-investment data, we've collectively invested about \$25 million in these 450 plus social entrepreneurs, and they've gone

on to garner about \$1 billion in additional public and private funding for their work. That's a rough return on investment of about forty-four to one.

So the question at hand, and why I was invited to join you all today, was to really sort of look at the relationship between social entrepreneurship and national service. And I think it's clear that it's very much a bi-directional relationship, and let me just start first by looking at social entrepreneurship and the way that national service feeds into it.

Social service organizations like some of the ones that I just mentioned – Teach for America, City Year, Public Allies, Jumpstart, Citizen Schools – have all received substantial early funding from AmeriCorps. So when you look at proxy measures like awards, designations by their industry, media attention received, as well as impact data from these programs, I dare say you could make the case that AmeriCorps investment was a highly leveraged one and a worthwhile investment in helping to develop these national service models. Secondly, I would also say that national service has been a proportionate boon for social entrepreneurship organizations like Echoing Green. And I'll go from general to specific in this regard.

Generally, I think it is fair to say that national service exposes young leaders like the leaders we heard from in the last panel to the social inequities that still really plague our country and our world. And providing this up-close-and-personal account of structural inequities really is an important opportunity for these emerging leaders to not only identify them, immerse themselves in these inequities, but also to begin brainstorming new and innovative ways to address these issues, and ultimately to solve some of these problems.

I would also say that when you look at what the AmeriCorps program provides to a lot of these national service young folks is that the education award received by those engaged in AmeriCorps I think really provides an important financial opportunity to mitigate student debt burden and to really free up these emerging leaders to really take risks and to really think seriously about starting social entrepreneurial organizations.

And I think now I'll move to the specifics. When I was invited to sit on this panel, I started to look back through our data to get a sense of where our applicants come from. The Echoing Green Fellowship Program is highly competitive – it's brutal, quite frankly. Each year when we open up our fellowship process, we get close to one thousand applications from seventy countries around the world, and we spend about six months winnowing down these applicants to a pool of about twenty – only twenty – who will ultimately receive funding. That's pretty tough – I mean, that's less than a 2 percent acceptance rate. But I think it speaks to the level of quality control, quality assurance of those who we ultimately select and work with. And when you sort of look back through the last couple of years, through our portfolio, a number of our fellows have come from the ranks of national service and have a national service pedigree.

So, a couple of examples: A young man, Furman Brown, who was accepted as a fellow a couple of years ago, started a new charter school entity called Generation Schools, about to open its first charter school in New York City. Furman was actually in the first corps of TFA, in Los Angeles. And it was very interesting in talking to Furman – in the first week on the ground in his classroom in South Central, he began looking at the stark realities faced by his students and

began at that moment dreaming up a new model for American education. Over the course of his TFA experience and through other activities as an education consultant and an education reformer, now has led to the creation of this new model of charter schools.

Secondly, I would also mention a young man who is here – did I see Chris? Ah – Chris Myers Asch, who was just selected as a 2007 Echoing Green Fellow, has the bold and audacious idea to create a U.S. public service academy. Some of you may have read about the idea in the recent *TIME* magazine article. Chris is also a TFA alum, and generated and probably thought about a lot of these ideas while he was engaged in national service.

City Year – we had an Echoing Green Fellow, Taj Mustapha, who was the co-founder of an organization in San Francisco called At The Crossroads, which is a very important, well-regarded, community-based organization that works with the most at-risk and hardest to reach homeless youth in that city.

And I will also just mention tangentially that when you look through our portfolio, quite a few of our applicants and fellows are Peace Corps volunteers who have gone on to start social entrepreneurial organizations abroad and are doing very important work.

An interesting question that was posed by one of the panel organizers, Shirley (Sagawa), was, what more can we do to engage national service alumni in social entrepreneurship? I'm going to take just a quick crack at this, if I may. First, I would say, really work hard to educate those in national service about the definitions, the principles, and the practices of social entrepreneurship. It really is a new field, so the definitions and the semantics are changing and roiling, and we're still learning as we go in this field. But a public awareness campaign is not a bad idea – to sort of get that target audience engaged in national service to understand the field of social entrepreneurship and get them jazzed about it. That's one thing.

The second thing is, I would leverage the powerful, inspiring stories of the myriad of social entrepreneurs who are well known and not so well known to really further inspire and catalyze those engaged in national service. Again, it is the perfect demographic – those who have done this work on the ground and are thinking about what they do next. Use those stories of people like Chris, Wendy Kopp from Teach for America, and Alan (Khazei) and Michael (Brown) from City Year to get that next generation of leadership thinking about a fulfilling career in social entrepreneurship.

And then I would say, tactically, let's think about unfettering those emerging social entrepreneurs who are engaged in national service to really go forward, to take risks, to innovate, to experiment, to shift paradigms. So why not increase the amount of the education awards to further encourage that next generation of social entrepreneurs to just go for it and start something new. And secondly, why not think about creating a matching program that would combine national service dollars and venture-capital-type dollars from organizations like Echoing Green that promote these new social entrepreneurs and really combine that capital to get the next generation of social entrepreneurial ideas out into the ether.

I think I will stop there, but I appreciate this opportunity, again, to make linkages between national service and social entrepreneurship – because I think they’re real; I think they’re legitimate; and I think they’re already being impactful.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

ROB HOLLISTER: Good afternoon! Again, I’m Rob Hollister, dean of the Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service at Tufts University. And as I was looking forward to this panel, it occurred to me in a way that I hadn’t fully appreciated before that community service and national service have played a huge factor in driving and encouraging our aggressive, across-the-institution civic engagement and civic education campaign at Tufts. And I would argue that the same is true at all of the sister institutions of higher education that work together on service through Campus Compact. So in our history, in our genealogy, and in our future, national service is a big part of the story.

The mission of Tisch College is education and active citizenship in all fields of the university. In some ways our story at present is a bit unusual, but I would that over the next decade, you’re going to see an increasing number of colleges and universities across the country embracing the same, more comprehensive approach to service that is serving us well at Tufts. With this mission, our vision is that all of our alumni graduate committed to service and have the skills to be effective in service roles. It’s about scale of impact – that’s the definition of our vision. And it’s *all* alumni, not just those who are attracted to a separate center of public service. So our vision is to generate future practical visionaries. We want to be graduating first-rate pediatricians who also are advocating for the expansion of health insurance for kids. We want to be developing first-rate businesswomen who also are effective leaders in education reform. We’re committed to our future alumni in mechanical engineering also being effective warriors for environmental justice.

Why have we undertaken this uniquely comprehensive civic initiative? There are three reasons. One is the obvious one – society needs more effective community leaders. The second is student demand, and the third is institutional opportunity and self-interest.

Let me speak as a career educator, as a guy who has always drawn his paycheck from a university, about the student demand piece, because we at Tufts and at other institutions across the country are very much in your debt in that regard. Student demand at Tufts is the single most important driver and enabler of what we are doing. We are attracting a growing number of undergraduates who say that part of the reason that I want to be at your institution is because community service is part of what I’ve done; community service is a big part of who I am and want to be. We’re a tuition-driven institution. We care about, we respond to who our students are and what they want to be. So we’ve been dramatically influenced by the programs that you represent. The alumni of City Year, of Public Allies, of Teach for America, of Hands On are a powerful driver of our effort to change one university. They bring with them both their experience that has changed their minds and hearts, but also they bring with them their awareness of what they can do with their college degrees when they graduate.

The way in which we're doing this work is an infusion strategy across the curriculum, across the extracurriculum – it's a full-court press, if you will. We're a collective leadership model mobilizing all of the constituencies of Tufts University: The majority of students participate regularly in volunteer service programs, many of the best ones being programs of course that they have invented and organized. Faculty in all disciplines, not just the social sciences, integrate values and skills of active citizenship in their coursework. In the fall term and in the spring term at Tufts, you have a literally a hundred courses that integrate active citizenship – dynamic presidential leadership, and a whole host of alumni programs as well. Alumni created a national high school awards program, the Tufts Award for Citizenship and Public Service. Alumni like Deb Jospin are creating and supporting public service internships.

And I'm pleased to report that this uniquely comprehensive approach is working. We are graduating increasing numbers of students who are not only competent in their fields of study but are committed to being effective agents of social change. We're attracting students in part because we put a stake in the ground and said, this is a serious, university-wide commitment. And it has served our institutional self-interest as well; it has helped the university garner more recognition and also to raise funds at a level that we would not have otherwise seen. Alumni active in the service movement – Deb Jospin, Alan Solomont, Vanessa Kirsch, and many others – stepped forward and said, we believe in the service mission of our alma mater. If you guys are serious about building this across-the-university college, we will help you do it. We want to help make education for active citizenship a signature strength of our alma mater. And in seven years, we've raised \$65 million for that campaign. And I think it's fair to say that that's a direct leverage effect of Learn and Serve. The direct and indirect experiences of our students before, during, and after college are a big reason why we've been able to accomplish that.

Quickly, in conclusion, I see two big roles at Tufts and in other schools in the area of the connection between community and national service and work-force development. One is the obvious part of the story: We're in the education business. We're educating students. We're directly preparing the future work force. It's terribly important that that preparation integrate the values and skills of community service. But the second key part of the story – and again, it's not at all unique to my institution – is that the vast majority of students doing service are doing it in relation to K-12 schools and efforts, a whole host of efforts embedded in the curriculum and extracurriculum, to enhance the education of students K-12. It is students inventing an after-school science education program that has grown dramatically, and a colleague in civil engineering inventing an educational outreach center through which a small army of faculty and students do curriculum development training and tutoring in science and math in a set of schools.

So we feel a great sense of partnership with service groups locally and nationally. We want to be part of a continuum of students' participation in service before they get to college and graduate school, an integral part of their experience in those programs, and the exciting opportunities that you all have developed and run for what they can do to reinforce their lives of service after they graduate. So thank you very much for your continuing partnership.

(Applause.)

SALLY PROUTY: What a privilege it is to be in the room with you all, and certainly to be a part of this panel. My name is Sally Prouty. I represent the Corps Network. And the questions posed to me, to which I've been asked to respond, are around how do we change the life trajectory of disadvantaged youth utilizing service as a strategy. It's a great question. How do we provide incentives or opportunities? How do we work with young people as they're coming from highly disadvantaged situations into employment and educational opportunities where they receive the support that they need and have an ongoing level of substantial success. But I'm looking – we're headed in a different direction with this conversation.

The Corps Network is a member association. Our members are across the country, currently 118 corps working in forty-two states and enrolling 21,000 plus corps members. Although we represent very proudly corps that are enrolling much more traditional, full-time AmeriCorps members like those you are hearing from here today, the majority of our membership is made up of programs that focus enrollment on highly disadvantaged young people. In that mix, of the young people enrolled, 52 percent have no high school diploma or GED; another 20-25 percent of our membership in corps consists of young people who have a high school diploma or GED, but do not have the skills necessary or the ability to get their lives in order and move forward into productive employment. And each year, depending on whose numbers you look at, 540,000 young people in this country drop out of high school. That's a third of the young people who start – and in minority communities, it's well over 50 percent.

So we believe – and I believe very strongly – that based on the history of our work that we have the opportunity to utilize a services strategy to make a dramatic impact on what is happening with that population of young people. It is interesting to think about: Of that population of young people, a high percentage of them are involved with the courts. A high percentage of them are involved with drug-alcohol issues and mental health issues and a lot of things that are just out there. And to extend that thought, 75 percent of state prison inmates are high school dropouts; 59 percent in the federal system are high school dropouts. There is so much – and I just want to give one statistic – we have a document written by Cecilia Rouse called “Labor Market Consequences.”\* She says, “If just one-third of dropouts were to earn a high school diploma, savings on food stamps, housing assistance, and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) would amount to \$10.8 billion—more than enough to cover the cost of investing in these young peoples' education.”

So how do we get our heads around that? One of the ways we do is we talk about service and work force development programming coming together and thinking about – in many cases, work force development programs do not have the data that supports positive outcomes. Some do. But in many cases across the country, they do not. We know that when service is a component – we actually had a foundation-funded project, a five-year project with thirty-three corps, that engaged in developing a corps-to-career program model, incorporating work force development best practices into the traditional conservation corps program. And we've seen very substantial results; we have random assignment evaluation that shows substantial earnings and employment gains, reductions in risk behaviors, and general change in life skills and behavior, so we know, thank you to the Corporation for National and Community Service, that young people

---

\* Cecilia Rouse, “Labor market consequences of an inadequate education,” Paper prepared for the symposium on the Social Costs of Inadequate Education, Teachers College Columbia University, October 2005.

end up in a better place if they have the Youth Corps experience combining service and work force development best practices, and concentrating on young people assuming responsibility for working out their own problems, handling their own issues, developing their own life plan, and moving from being destructive in the community to leadership roles as evidenced by a number of people here – and certainly our young man from YouthBuild (Jason Phillips) was a dramatic example of the change that occurs in lives.

I'm going to mention a number of things. We have the Civic Justice Corps project that is a fifteen-site demonstration around the country where we are intentionally focusing enrollment on individuals who are exiting incarceration or are otherwise involved – at least 50 percent have been incarcerated. So we are moving to more and more document effectiveness – we've looked at programs twenty-five years old, and we have a tremendous knowledge base around what works – and bringing that to the forefront.

Working with the Center for American Progress and a number of individuals nationally, there is a tremendous desire to consider climate change. How do we begin to address the issues around reducing energy consumption and developing a clean-energy economy? There's a tremendous move nationally to head in a direction that will hopefully provide substantial monies for work force development and, from our side, certainly for service and bringing the two together to begin to address those issues in the country while also, from our perspective, reengaging disconnected young people.

I was asked to mention that as young people are prepared for the work force in our corps programs, it is often difficult for them to be accepted into employment, and one of the things we were able to do in late 2005 is that we had a bill passed, the Public Lands Corps Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2005 (P.L. 109-154), in a session that was particularly complicated so were delighted with that. The unique thing about it – one of the unique things – is that it provided for noncompetitive hire within land management agencies that are administered by the U.S. Departments of Agriculture and the Interior for young men and women who are graduates of the Public Lands Corps. We're still working with the agencies around exactly how this is to happen, but it's an opportunity, and it's one of the ways we can provide additional opportunities for our young people.

I had the occasion to be in court with a young man a few years back, when I was director of a conservation corps in Ohio, and when he was finished with his court session and walking out the door, I asked him, "Where will you go? Where are you going?" And he said, "Sally, when I walk down the courthouse steps, I don't have one reason to turn right, one reason to turn left, or one reason to go straight ahead. And I'm suggesting that with the service world and work force development coming together, we can provide reasons for our young people to go in a direction of service, growth, and development.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

PAUL SCHMITZ: Good afternoon! I'm Paul Schmitz, and I'm the president of Public Allies, and I want to thank you for coming today and allowing us to share some of our perspectives. Public Allies is simply about changing the face and practice of leadership in communities across the country. We believe that the next generation of leaders in communities needs to look like America will look, needs to be able to work across social boundaries, needs to be able to facilitate collaborative action, needs to be able to commit to self-development, and needs to be accountable to each other and the people it serves. We believe in a concept we call the leadership of the many, the idea that social change has not ever come just from the inspiration of a few, but from the courageous acts of many. And we believe that we need to build a pipeline into community service, public service, advocacy, etc. – the whole range of public life – that is reflective of the diversity in our communities and in our country. And so we focus on both changing the face, but we've also learned that if you bring new and different kinds of people to the table, the table itself has to change. And so for us, if we're going to change who comes to the table, we have to change the table. And so it's about changing the face and practice of leadership and trying to be a pipeline for diverse young people to begin careers in public life, but also a source for new leadership practices that we believe are more effective at solving social problems.

Our AmeriCorps program, which is about fifteen years old, is a program that we operate right now in fifteen communities across the country. We recruit young adults from diverse backgrounds between the ages of eighteen and thirty. About 70 percent are people of color. About half have a high school diploma or GED, and about half have a college degree. About 60 percent are women. About 15 percent are gay or lesbian. And so we have a wide variety, and we try to be over-representative of people who are underrepresented in leadership. We only recruit in the communities we serve because we are trying to develop home-grown leadership and indigenous leadership that will commit to that community. And we try and find people who really have a passion for working for change. They have a passion about issues in their community but they don't know how to turn that passion into a viable career path or into options for themselves to do that work. And we find that there are thousands of young people who want to make a difference but they just don't know how.

Our program places them in full-time apprenticeships at nonprofit organizations where they create, improve, and expand services with measurable results, and that can be in a wide variety of fields. We allow nonprofits to apply competitively. And we have a rigorous leadership development program; we bring these young people together once a week as a cohort for an intensive leadership development program based on the values of what we believe leaders have to be. We have in fifteen years graduated 2,230 allies, and over 80 percent have continued careers in public life, the vast majority of them in the nonprofit sector. Just as a couple of examples – and I think that Kellie (Bentz), Kaya (Henderson), Jason (Phillips), and Tondalaya (Shepard-Turner) are great examples of the kinds of young people involved in AmeriCorps, and their stories are very much like the stories of our graduates as well. As I was listening to them, I was thinking of just two alumni I ran into last week. One was a young man named Will Altheizer (ph), who was incarcerated. He is now a community organizer for Americans For Democratic Action. And no, he does not get federal funding, Dorothy (Stoneman)! But this is a guy who is just a terrific young man who has become a very active leader in his community, whom a lot of people would have never looked to as a future leader in the community and would have written off. And I thought of a woman named Dionne Shaw (sp), who works at our community

foundation and runs a youth grant program in which young people actually invest money in projects they select run by other young people. The program also supports grants for people under eighteen to do initiatives in their communities. She has been leading the program for the last several years.

One of the things that I wanted to step back on and talk about our model – the reason why we do our model the way we do is because the nonprofit sector has a real need for leadership. As Shirley (Sagawa) said in her opening remarks, the nonprofit sector employs about 14 million people, about 11 percent of the U.S. work force. That’s more than construction and utilities combined, just as an example. We pay more wages in the nonprofit sector than two of the largest industries in our country. And it’s about the size of the finance and insurance industry. About seven million of those workers work in nonprofit human services, in the kinds of work that AmeriCorps members are doing.

As Shirley referenced, the Bridgespan Group did a study\* that found that the sector is going to need 640,000 leaders over the next decade. And so there’s a huge leadership transition happening in this sector, and we would argue at Public Allies that there’s a need to make sure that as we develop that leadership, that those pipelines are diverse and inclusive. A study that came out last year from CompassPoint\*\* shows that nonprofit executive directors under the age of forty were less diverse than those over fifty-five. We had a real concern about making sure, as we build that pipeline, that it is truly inclusive and diverse, and that it represents the America we live in.

AmeriCorps has been one of the greatest pipelines, but a lot of people don’t know it. I was talking to the senior vice president of human resources at the Girl Scouts, Michael Watson. He’s a terrific guy. When they recruited him to be senior vice president of human resources for the Girl Scouts, he had been at IBM. He asked why they needed such a person; he didn’t know that the Girl Scouts had employees. Well, the Girl Scouts needs to hire hundreds and hundreds of people a year. And so more recently, he asked me, “How do we get these people from AmeriCorps – where are they?”

I know that David Eisner likes to tell the anecdote of being down in Mississippi with the head of the Boys and Girls Clubs and asking her if she ever saw AmeriCorps as being a pipeline into the clubs’ work force, and she said, no. And then they walked into a Boys and Girls Club and a number of the staff were AmeriCorps alums.

We’ve had half a million people go through, and I think that while our program is intentionally focused on bringing people into these careers, our field has done a collective job at helping people to really get the bug to want to make a career out of making a difference. And we need that. Our communities urgently need that. Our nonprofit sector urgently needs that.

The other thing that I find is that – I speak on campuses, especially. I spoke to two campuses in Wisconsin within a week last year with about two hundred students between the two. And I

---

\* Thomas J. Tierney, “The Nonprofit Sector’s Leadership Deficit,” March 2006, online at [http://www.bridgespan.org/kno\\_articles\\_leadershipdeficit.html](http://www.bridgespan.org/kno_articles_leadershipdeficit.html) (accessed September 21, 2007).

\*\* “Daring to Lead 2006: A National Study of Nonprofit Executive Leadership,” online at <http://www.compasspoint.org/content/index.php?pid=121> (accessed September 21, 2007).

asked them how many people work in the nonprofit sector in Wisconsin. The first estimate was five hundred, and among the two groups the highest estimate was 25,000. The actual answer was 240,000. I also asked them what they thought the average nonprofit executive director in Milwaukee earned. The highest estimate from the two groups was \$45,000. The actual answer was \$90,000. There is a real challenge we have, as we build the pipeline, to also educate that pipeline and getting them to educate their friends that the sector is a place where there are viable careers. It is a place that has great jobs. It is a place that doesn't just need social workers and people in service – it needs accountants and IT people and HR people and all sorts of professional backgrounds. It's a sector that needs all sorts of people, and we need leadership to come from people of all backgrounds.

And so I think that AmeriCorps is doing its job at a level, but there's a lot more we can do.

One last thing I'll add is that a number of us – and there are some in the room who are part of it – have created what's called the Nonprofit Sector Work Force Coalition, which is a national coalition of organizations that is focused on creating a work force development strategy for the nonprofit sector. And we see national service as one of the key ingredients to any strategy to build that work force. It's a very important if not essential strategy for building that work force. A number of national service groups have joined, and it's a growing effort to figure out how we get the diverse talent we need to serve our communities and country and the people in our country as best as possible, and to make the sector, which is so special because it really is that space that is where citizens come together to solve problems, to make it a place that really is inclusive and strong and responsive to our needs.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

ART BLOCK: I'm representing the entire private sector – that's pretty intimidating! (Laughter.) And worse, I think I'm one of Shirley (Sagawa)'s Baby Boomers who woke up a few years ago. My mother just put my nose to the grindstone and it was pointed there for about twenty-five years. I'm Comcast's general counsel, born and raised in Philadelphia. My first job out of law school was to go and work for a law firm in Philadelphia. My first assignment happened to be for a small company called Comcast, and so that was kind of luck of the draw. That was in 1978. In 1989 I came in-house as the third lawyer at the company. I took the chance as to whether this company might stick around or not; it was a scary thing for me to do, because you never know how that is going to work out. Fortunately, Comcast is now the nation's largest cable company and broadband provider.

As I said, I have been in-house since 1989. I became the company's general counsel in 2000, still nose-to-the-grindstone, working and not paying attention while all of you folks do your good work – until about five years ago, when Comcast decided it was time to refocus its own approach to community service and rethink how it wanted to invest its dollars in that area. That refocus was triggered by a transforming company for Comcast – we acquired what was then AT&T Broadband, a company twice our size in the cable business. Overnight we became the nation's largest cable company. And as the largest industry participant, we both had a target on our back

for folks in Washington and unions and others who have issues, and suddenly we became visible in all of those ways. But we also felt that we were now more visible and had more of a responsibility to think through what we wanted to do in this arena. And so one of the first things that we became involved in as a company was City Year – and I'll talk a little bit later about why I think that is.

When I was going through school, you talked about *shareholders* and your duty to shareholders, and if you read the corporation statutes in those states, that's really all they still talk about. Shareholders really don't want their profits spent on good works, right? At least not without really have the metrics to show that there is a return on that investment, which is pretty difficult. Now it's more politically correct to talk about *stakeholders*, including the community you live in, your employees, and others. And it's more than politically correct, because I think we are sophisticated enough to realize there is a real benefit to the business in paying attention to all of those communities of interest. We recognize, after all, that we are only here everyday because 90,000 people get up and come to work, and they are people like all other folks – they have their own interests and they want to feel good about the company they spend so much time in. They are going to be motivated to work if they do. And like the students, I think more and more they are interested in seeing the company they work for be involved in the community and do these kinds of important things.

But I think primarily it starts at the highest levels of any company in the private sector, and it starts with the question, why do we want to spend dollars in the nonprofit arena, and what do we want to achieve with them, and if we can't get a good quantitative measure of the return on that investment, what's the theory? Why are we doing it and how are we going to do it? And of course every company struggles to figure that out.

For us, we are a company that likes to think of itself as a national company, but made up of a lot of local businesses, because the cable company is on the ground with a wire into the homes in community after community across the country. That's where our employees live, and that's where our customers live. And until just recently, our major video competitors were the satellite television companies. And so around five years ago, when we were looking at this, we saw that we had a strategic, competitive advantage. If you want satellite television, there is no employee who lives in your community, who is your neighbor, who works for Direct TV or Dish. They hire some local television contractor who runs the truck but isn't really connected to the business. It's just some satellite in the sky and some national office. We, on the other hand, have people. And we are in the communities. And so we ought to invest in the communities – it's in our long-term interest to take advantage of that facet of our organization as a national company. We're there on the ground.

And so we started to think about how to do that – and again, it's a long-term perspective, the idea that we need to strengthen the communities we're in because that's where we want our employees to come from and that's where our customers are. We want our customers to own homes. We want our customers to have disposable income for what are in effect entertainment services. People have to have employment that supports a meaningful lifestyle. And so the idea of focusing on leadership – so that you can help the next generation of leaders in a community –

made sense for us, and focusing on young people and their education made sense for us. And that was a major factor in why City Year was a great fit.

The secondary factor was really the happy coincidence that in City Year's now fifteen cities, we have an overlap of nine major markets. So we're able to actually get involved in a growing national nonprofit and have that terrific footprint overlap and have their goals meet some of our goals. So I think that was the original concept behind the support for City Year. And we have a unique asset to offer, which is our airtime, and so we've produced public service announcements for City Year to help them with recruitment and help them with their new branding campaign, which has been a problem for City Year and I think that everyone like myself who first gets introduced to City Year – at first you have to make sure you heard the two words correctly. You may only have two words, but I'm not sure that anyone understands what they mean the first time they hear them. And so there is a branding issue and we can help with that. So we have some unique assets and we've spent millions of dollars in in-kind advertising for City Year over the years, and other nonprofits like United Way. And I think we've shown a real commitment in this area.

At the same time, I think there is the reality that there is a balance that management has to do. You have to think about, what are the returns we're getting for this investment? Is this long-term concept of strengthening communities and helping young people be educated and live better lives ever going to be visible to us in our lifetime? How do you measure that? That's something that we do struggle with. I know City Year is working to work hard in the area of quantifying results for their constituencies like private companies.

One of the things, though, that happened out of this that we didn't anticipate – and this ties in somewhat to the theme here today – is the realization, as we became involved with City Year in particular, that there were qualities that we were seeing in the graduates of the programs that started to look to us to be the very qualities that we were looking for in potential new employees. Not necessarily because – and in fact, young people typically do not have relevant experience in a business area that might be where there's a job requirement for experience. But we do a lot of hiring in entry-level positions that are service positions and technical positions where we do our own training. And because our business is fortunate enough to be growing, we are doing more hiring after forty years of business than we've ever done in our history. And so we have tremendous need to hire folks. In fact, we're probably one of the few companies in America that has difficulty hiring to the levels that are our goals.

So what are the characteristics that I began to see and others began to see in the City Year graduates? And not just City Year – I think that this has to be true for many, many if not all of the kinds of nonprofit organizations we've been talking about today that are involved in these arenas of strengthening the leadership skills of young people. One is – and this was a surprise to me in particular – a characteristic that I'm going to call the “business-like approach.” I think that the people who come out of these programs have a leg up on people who are like I was – people who have their nose to the grindstone, go right through high school, college, graduate school, and into the work force and have no real world experience and no sense of what it takes to be in the work force and in the real world. And more and more, I think, the reputation of the nonprofit world as this kind of disorganized, inefficient, money-not-well-spent set of people and

organizations is being replaced, as people are demanding more of nonprofits, by organizations that have to be efficient with the money they spend and do a better job training people.

What we have found is that the people we have started to hire from City Year really all over the country into entry-level positions are more focused and more efficient because they have been through that experience of needing to be focused and efficient and understanding what it takes to get and keep constituents' attention than the graduate who we see otherwise coming out into the work force. And again, I think that has been a surprise to us.

There is a motivation to make a difference. Folks who give a year of service or more to a community organization or a nonprofit are doing it because they got off the path that I was on. No one told me that there was another path, and I wouldn't have had the courage, probably, of some of the folks who we saw earlier to take the path. The folks who do it are motivated, and that's a tremendous resource in a private company. One of the hardest things to do, in my experience, is to find workers who really care about what they are doing and are motivated to do it well.

They also understand that it takes hard work – probably better than anybody. If you're in the nonprofit world, if you're in the public sector, you understand that you've got limited resources and you've got to make the most of them. It's hard work, whatever area of the business you're in, so to speak. Coming into a company environment, our business is more competitive than it has ever been. It is hard work that is demanded of folks, and we have trouble retaining people who maybe have kind of been coddled along the way, or who don't understand yet what the work environment requires. We think that the folks who we hire from City Year do.

Problem solving experience. That creativity and experience that says, again, in the real world not everything goes in a straight line. Being able to adjust and figure it out and have that capability leads to another terrific thing, which is leadership. If people in the work place see that you can solve a problem, they're going to come to you with their next problem. And there is no question, in my visibility so far into my five years at this City Year experience, the need for problem solving – and listening to all of you folks, I understand, and it has to be true in all of this sector – it's right up at the top of the list. You go into a place like New Orleans after a hurricane, and there's no business plan in front of you that tells you what to do the next day.

And lastly, I would say people-oriented skills. We're in a business where we've got folks who are facing customers and we're in a battle with the phone companies and the satellite companies for those customers every single day. We have to have people who can relate to other people. And I've always said that it's not just intellect, it's not just experience, it's that human ability to interact, that emotion quotient. And it's tough. It's tough when you pick up the phone and there are people who do want to complain about their cable service or tell you how their phone service didn't work, and in the same way maybe you've got angry parents, we've got angry customers. And the folks who have been through it and understand that there's an element here that works if you connect at the human level and listen to people is a tremendous value.

So we have started to recognize that and try and figure out how to take advantage and get some return on our investment that is measurable. One of the things we have done – we started in

Philadelphia at our headquarters a couple of years ago – is that we got our HR folks involved and we created a career day, a career planning day for the entire City Year corps in Philadelphia, which is now up to two hundred folks just at that one site. We bring them in, and we bring in third-party professionals who help them with resume building and interview skills. We have our HR people talk to them. We make available to the entire City Year corps all of our e-learning, so if they have particular subject areas they want to learn about, it is as available to them as if they were employees. And we have in Philadelphia – our headquarters, again – a Comcast University, where we bring in our management from across the country to be trained in various areas. We invite in subject matter appropriate areas the City Year staff and corps members, and we are seeing people start to apply for jobs and take jobs. We have rolled out the career day program to all of the overlap sites, so last year there were nine sites having this Comcast program. Over six hundred corps members went through it. And we're getting great reviews, because we're figuring out how to help them and how to help us.

I came up with an idea, and I've shared this with City Year because I think it's something that all of City Year national corporate sponsors should do, and I think it's an idea that can have broader applicability for all nonprofits that partner with the private sector. Every company now has a web site with their job postings. What we need to do with those web sites is we need to promise people who are graduates of City Year or Teach for America or any AmeriCorps program that if they submit a resume online, and they check a box that lets the company know that they are a graduate of one of these programs, we will guarantee that the resume will be seen, and that they will hear from us. The biggest problem with submitting your resume online is that you don't know that it is ever going to be seen, let alone be seen by anybody who can make a decision and separate the wheat from the chaff, let alone ever hear back to even know whether it was seen. Why can't every single private company that has that web site make that promise? Because you know, once you're involved with these companies, that that entry on the resume positively distinguishes that person from every other resume you're going to get.

So there's a specific example where we are trying to do something that we're even willing to share with the competition.

It is a challenge. I would kidding you if I said it wasn't. How much money does Comcast spend in this arena every year? How much should we spend? Is it something our shareholders particularly care about? Not really. Is that different from most companies? I don't think so. Are there companies in the private sector that are founded more on ideas relating to doing good than making profit? Yes. For City Year I know Timberland is in that camp. And their shareholders understand when they invest what they're investing in. It's easier when the company is kind of born that way. Most American companies weren't born that way. And with your help, we're still trying to figure it out.

Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

**WILLIAM SCHAMBRA:** Thank you! I'd like to pose one question to the panel: Mr. Block just gave us a terrific list of specific skills or attitudes or values that he sees in people who come to

him through this national service portal – City Year in particular. For the rest of the panelists, how does that sound to you? Is that a list of values that you also see in your sectors, or are there specific values, traits, things that when someone comes to you and they perform in a certain way, you say, “Ah – that’s a person who obviously was involved in national service because he or she did it *this way*.” Responses to that question?

SALLY PROUTY: I’ll respond and say, yes, first of all, as an answer to the question. As we are preparing young people for entry into the work force, we work with employers to know what they need, what the opportunity is, how we work on the application process and then the referral process and those things. When we’re starting with young people who come from situations where they have a lot of things to sort out in their lives before even thinking of being headed in the direction of job-ready, there is a lot of work to be done. The amazing thing is how they grow by leaps and bounds toward what you’re looking for while engaged in service.

PAUL SCHMITZ: For us, as a leadership development organization (Public Allies), it’s why we exist. And I think that for us, we’ve defined the core values of what we want our allies to be able to demonstrate, and they actually do presentations of learning at the end of the program, where they defend before their fellow allies and the community how they’ve met these outcomes and will apply them in their work. But it has to do with diversity and specifically looking at diversity as an action, not an ideal. How do they move from diversity to inclusion? How do they collaborate? How do they collaborate? How are they as team members and in teamwork? How are they able to recognize and mobilize all of the community’s assets? Can they work in all parts of the community with all kinds of people? And can they really recognize how to mobilize the inherent strengths of the community in the work they do? How do they demonstrate integrity? How do they demonstrate that they’re continuous learners? For us, those are the things that we’re trying to develop. And I think that the literature we see in the private sector is much more aligned with that kind of thinking.

The crazy thing, in a lot of ways, is that a lot of social purpose organizations and nonprofit organizations sometimes assume that they have those values because they state those values. And that’s why we talk about moving from an ideal to an action. Because I think sometimes because of our status – Bill Treanor from *Youth Today*, who is in the audience today, always says that nonprofits only share a tax status, that’s it. There is a wide variety. But for those of us who are motivated by the desire to serve in our charitable organizations and service organizations, I think sometimes there is the belief that we automatically are about recognizing community assets and inclusion and collaboration. And the reality is that most of the nonprofit sector struggles with that stuff and doesn’t do very well. And so it’s stuff that we believe leaders really have to be developed and continue to be developed to do. But I think that those skill sets are – we’re seeing – very relevant as well to the private sector.

CHERYL DORSEY: I would only add a couple of things – I would say that this is a trait that we see quite often in the social entrepreneurial community, but I would posit that it is broadly applicable: A lot of the young people who you all probably work with are incredibly resilient. And the notion of resiliency is really a critical emotional tool for future success. So the notion of how do you channel that resiliency in positive ways, I think that that’s something that is really important.

And then the other thing I would add is that we are certainly focused on the success of these young people, but also the notion of allowing these young people to fail. It's something that we see a lot of in the social entrepreneurial community that failure is as important a component in the development of these organizations as is success. So how do you handle failure? How do you rise above it? And how does it make you stronger? I think that's a really important component, and allowing these young folks to fail I think is really important as well.

WILLIAM SCHAMBRA: Let's go to the audience – do we have questions from the audience, please?

DAVID AUXTER, Research Institute for Independent Living: I'm going to ask a question about making differences for the people whom you serve. My question is, are there evidence-based research protocols that can be reproduced in other communities available? And the reason I ask that question is that the evidence (inaudible) is different than evaluation. It actually brings science into human services. So, is it out there, and can it be out there?

SALLY PROUTY: When you say the people served, you're talking about the members enrolled in our programs, right?

DAVID AUXTER: I'm talking about the people the members are serving.

SALLY PROUTY: The recipients of the services in the community?

DAVID AUXTER: They are the targets – they are the ones whose human needs need to be met. And then the question is, can we apply research procedures to the implementation, to make these needs really come about?

SALLY PROUTY: Can we have we”

DAVID AUXTER: Either.

SALLY PROUTY: That's a great question. And we have lots of anecdotal evidence. We do not have research-based information – actually, we *do* have some cost-benefit information reported in 1997. So, yes, we do have some, and I'd be happy to share with you what we have from our Youth Corps study that was published in 1997, and then we have a new study that we completed enrollment of in May of this year, which will have similar information. It's looking at the impact in the community. Yes.

PAUL SCHMITZ: We've done a limited amount of work with that, and I think the challenge is that when you get into that kind of research, it's very costly. And I think that for a lot of our organizations and programs, it's a challenge to find the ability to actually do that kind of evidence-based research on community impact, when you've got people for short periods of time. What we've been interested in is – and hope to engage in in the next couple of years – is a longer term impact that includes what they do during their year of service but also what they're doing beyond that. And I think that AmeriCorps is pretty specific about seeking measurable

outcomes for the service that people do, and a lot of our programs have very specific metrics in terms of what we're trying to accomplish in the people's lives we're touching. But at the same time, in terms of the kind of rigorous science you're talking about, if you have a couple million bucks for us, we'd be happy to be your guinea pig.

DAVID AUXTER: (Off microphone.)

PAUL SCHMITZ: Yeah. And I would just add again that in AmeriCorps, all programs have to have objectives – and measurable objectives – for the service that we do, and it is very outcome driven, not output driven. And so there is a real focus on – say, if you're running a tutoring program or you're tutoring children, what grade advances are they making? If you're working with homeless people, how many of them are getting placed in permanent housing? All of our programs are accountable and are held accountable for measurable service results. So at that level, we're all doing it, but the level of science behind it is I think a bit different. I think we do have to capture that information and self-report, in a lot of ways. And we are asked every three years to have some independent analysis of our evaluation, or an independent evaluation conducted. And so there is a drive, and I think AmeriCorps has been great about really making sure that it's not just service that benefits the member, but that our service is always about benefiting the community and putting the community first. And it's a byproduct that we're developing these leaders and these strong citizens and these people who are active in community. But the people who are being served are focus of our service and of our grants.

WILLIAM SCHAMBRA: Just to reinforce something that Paul said, this of course has been, as you all know – and not entirely as a welcome development, this push toward measurable outcomes and focus on outcomes as opposed to outputs – has in fact been pretty high on the agenda for the folks at the national office for the past eight years or so. And just to reinforce a note of caution, the challenge is not just to count how many folks are served, of course, or what kinds of changes are brought about. If you're going to be rigorously scientific about it, you have to show how this intervention was the precise thing that brought this about – not a blip up in the economy, not any of the other extraneous factors that impact a situation. So it's always a challenge to be scientific, but I know that this is something that they're working toward at that national office – and they do have a lot of data available. And it is publicly available. The research and development office has collected a lot of that.

Do we have another question from the audience?

AARON MARQUEZ, Georgetown University: I'm a senior at Georgetown University and also an AmeriCorps alum (and co-founder of ServeNext.org). My question is for Dean Hollister. As we look at the idea of leadership for every sector, and as we look at how national service plays a role, how does the university system in America, in general, and at Tufts, specifically, see themselves playing a role in helping us get to a more universal voluntary path towards national service and providing incentives, once we move from 70,000 members up to 1,000,000 members, or 500,000 members – kind of like what Comcast is doing with providing an incentive on job applications. Does Tufts do anything, or could they something, about adding an incentive for people who have done a year of service?

ROB HOLLISTER: That's a great question. We need to do more. Our top priority as an institution is to increase the amount of undergraduate financial aid that we provide. Paul (Schmitz), what you said earlier about diversity resonates, because how can you feel good about your education for active citizenship at a university level unless you're educating a fully diverse set of graduates? And so the topic of access to higher education and public service need to be brought closely together. I love the proposal that many of you are working on of increasing dramatically the educational incentives, the education award approach. And I think there is huge merit also – we're just about to start a loan-repayment assistance program, and that, as you know, has been pioneered by law schools across the country where if you go into public service work, a portion of your law school loans are forgiven. So I think around tying financial aid to the theme of service and making it available to diverse groups whose life experience includes service is both an important commitment but also can be a powerful strategy for change.

LUKE KNITTIG, Executive Office of the Headquarters, U.S. Army: Hi – I'm Major Luke Knittig, and I'm one of a small handful of people who conduct outreach for the top U.S. Army leadership to try to connect them with publics that they might not otherwise connect with. And I can't miss this opportunity: I get thanked quite a lot for my service, being in uniform nowadays, but it's neat to be in a position to thank you for your service and hear about all of the fascinating work that is happening.

My question is, this seems a very worthwhile gathering, and seems like you have almost unique co-sponsorship. Where are you going with it from here – is this an annual event? Do you have offshoots? What happens going forward with this gathering, and at the Center for American Progress?

SHIRLEY SAGAWA: Thank you for the question! The Center for American Progress has made a commitment to doing more work in national service, particularly around the connections between domestic service and solving specific problems, the kind of crises we have at home that we could mobilize the country around. And so we hope to do more writing and sponsor some additional forums like this later this year so that we can talk about other topics – this was just the first. We don't have a calendar for you yet, but if you attended this event or are on our lists and got an invitation, you'll be invited to future events. And thank you for *your* service!

WILLIAM SCHAMBRA: Speaking for Hudson Institute for just a second, I think it is important for the conversation around service to think about national service as a way of reinforcing local communities. There are, I think, in the world of conservatives people who could be much more friendly to national service if it could be shown and shown decisively that national service doesn't undercut local, naturally occurring, neighborhood voluntary activity, but that it in fact reinforces, augments, and in many cases helps to plan and coordinate and stimulate that local, voluntary sort of activity.

The way it has been posed in conservative thinking so far has been that if you pay for volunteers, you're going to suppress local voluntary activity. Well, a year ago, some of the members of the board (of the Corporation for Community and National Service) went down to the Gulf Coast to see firsthand what was going on. And of course what you saw there was a very conclusive demonstration of the fact that paid national service doesn't usurp or suppress or in any way

override local voluntary activity. It was interwoven activity. It was a value-added element to that activity. AmeriCorps volunteers and NCCC folks were working side by side with Pentecostal churches to do whatever had to be done, and no one was raising any stink about the separation of church and state or all of the various things that we get caught up in.

So I think, for Hudson Institute's side of things, we're trying to develop that idea, that aspect of the argument, as a way of bridging some of these traditional differences that we've had ideologically around this question of service, and I hope that we've managed to do that. But that certainly, I think, lays an intellectual groundwork for a sort of cooperation in the future. Do any of our panelists want to –

ROB HOLLISTER: It sounds like a great topic for our next forum!

WILLIAM SCHAMBRA: Right!

PAUL SCHMITZ: I would just add that I think that a lot of times when talk about national service – and I'm one of the people who believe that the education award should be increased – but we talk about it in a way that seems to indicate that people believe that most young people, eighteen-to-thirty-year-olds, have been to college. And you know, I think that in Sally's case, groups like YouthBuild and others, the majority of young people eighteen to thirty aren't worried about their student debt. And so we have to remember that that can kind of be a privileged way of looking at national service.

Another thing I want to say, which gets at something **you** said, is that at a panel we did a number of years ago, we had a young man who was in our program, and they asked him if he had volunteered growing up. And he said that he had been too busy taking care of his sister's kids after school to volunteer. Now, what he was doing as a family member, if someone from outside the community came in to do that they would be getting an award for being a volunteer. And so we have to remember that there are all sorts of activities that people do in their daily lives as neighbors and family members and part of a community, and we don't often honor that. Moreover, we talk about voluntary service and service as something in which people who are often defined as being "half-full" people come in to serve "half-empty" people, and we forget the fact that we're all half full and half empty. We forget the fact that there are all sorts of activities – community-centered, citizen-driven – that exist in community that we must also honor and support as part of national service.

WILLIAM SCHAMBRA: More questions? Yes, please –

PENNY BAILER, City Year Detroit: I just want to follow up with Art Block's comments about Comcast, as a firsthand recipient of that wonderful sponsorship, and also Timberland, which is a long-time national sponsor. These are extraordinary companies. And everything he said is absolutely true, and there are a dozen more examples every site could tell about what Comcast has done as a partner – it's just amazing. But what I want to ask you, Art, and also perhaps Dean Hollister, is, how can we increase that philanthropy and that community-service-minded partnership among the corporate sector? Because I've heard Jeff Schwartz, (CEO) of Timberland, and I've heard David Cohen, (executive vice president) at Comcast, talk about what

it has done for their companies, and what it has done for their employees, making their employees proud of the companies, making the employees feel bonded when they go out and do service with City Year or with any group. Timberland gives forty hours a year of paid leave for employees to do community service. These are extraordinary companies! How do we get more of your graduates at Tufts who are going to become corporate CEOs, to lead companies in that manner?

ART BLOCK: I don't have a magic answer. I've been thinking about that all day, kind of anticipating the question from somebody around here to that point. It's a little bit like the City Year starfish story\* – you do it one starfish at a time, you do it one company at a time. For example, when we run public service announcements for service, there may be CEOs of other companies sitting in their living rooms who see what we are doing. And when we're out doing things like this today, sponsoring these kinds of events, but it is slow going. I don't know of a comprehensive way to do it, and it's because I think in the corporate sector, there is a resistance. It is difficult to get the attention of someone to see the value beyond the understood value – the understood value is that it is politically correct for a public company to do something in this arena because you have to, because that is the expectation, and your reputation is such that you have to be able to check that box. It's a challenge and I don't have a magic answer.

ROB HOLLISTER: Clearly there's no magic answer, but what a magnificent collective challenge! It's a very exciting one. I think we have to work on it hard and encourage exactly what you're promoting. I would argue also that some of this is going to happen naturally. The vast and growing number of alumni of community and national service programs are going to start successful businesses. Jason (Phillips)'s business may become multi-national at some point. (See first panel for Jason Phillips' presentation.) Or they're going to compete effectively for jobs at existing large companies. So I think that that can play a factor also.

DIANA EPSTEIN: I'm a two-year AmeriCorps\*NCCC alum, and I'm curious as to what you all think about the connection between national service participants moving into roles as elected officials. As members, we're very conscious of the distinction between politics and service, and we make that very clear. But as my generation of service members ages, I see us transitioning perhaps into roles as elected officials and helping facilitate the movement in that way. What are your thoughts on that? Are there things we can do to help move people into those positions a little bit quicker, or is that just going to happen naturally as we get older? And how do we help people understand that in many ways, serving in an elected role is sort of the epitome of public service.

---

\* The Starfish Award is City Year's highest honor. The "starfish story" was adapted from "The Star Thrower," written by Loren Eiseley and published in his 1969 collection of essays, *The Unexpected Universe*. It also appears in his 1978 collection of essays entitled *The Star Thrower*. Eiseley's original story tells of a madman throwing beached starfish back into the sea. Popular adaptations of it are often used to illustrate the importance of charity – for example this version, found online: "A man was walking on the beach saw that it was littered with thousands of starfish. A little boy was picking up the starfish one by one and throwing them into the ocean. He asked the boy, 'What are you doing?' The boy replied, 'I'm throwing starfish back into the water. If I leave them here they'll dry up and die.'" The man said, 'But look how many starfish there are. What you're doing can't possibly make a difference.' As the boy picked up another starfish and threw it into the ocean he said, 'Well, it makes a difference to this one!'"

PAUL SCHMITZ: Please run! (Laughter.) I forget who did the forum a couple of years ago on service at Brookings where John McCain had said that he wished there was a day when most of Congress was made up of people who had been through the military, the Peace Corps, or AmeriCorps. There is that distinction between what we prepare people for as AmeriCorps members, which should be to prepare people to be great servants and also great leaders. And what they do beyond that and take that experience to do should be broad, but I certainly hope that a lot of our members get elected. We had one of our graduates come close last year in a city council race that we were very excited about. But I think that it is important. We need people – if we had people making laws who had spent time with their sleeves rolled up at the community level, who had worked in teams with diverse groups of people, they might make better laws.

CHERYL DORSEY: And I would just add, from a social entrepreneurial perspective, we're starting to see in our ranks a number of social entrepreneurs who do go on to run for elected office. We had a woman, Andrea Silbert, who ran for lieutenant governor of Massachusetts; she had done work in Brazil with homeless girls as a part of her Echoing Green Fellowship. Mark Levine, a Teach for America alum who went on to found Credit Where Credit Is Due, the first credit union in Washington Heights for low-income, immigrant citizens, ran for city council a few years ago. And I think what's instructive about those examples is that social entrepreneurs sort of break boundaries, and just like in ten or fifteen years there will be no distinction between for-profit business and not-for-profit business, I would posit that there is going to be sort of a breaking down of these boundaries in terms of career trajectory, so over the course of someone's career they're going to spend some time in the social sector, probably some time in the for-profit business sector, as well as elected office. So you're going to see this, and you're going to have people with their hands in many different pies. We're starting to see that in the Echoing Green community now, and I bet we'll see the same thing through national service over the next few years.

ROB HOLLISTER: There's actually a member of the audience who is working hard on this – Greg Propper, do you have any thoughts on this?

GREG PROPPER: Thanks, Rob. Many of you probably know Alan Khazei, who founded City Year. After having worked for City Year for eighteen years and having gone through the save-AmeriCorps crisis a few years ago, where he and we and the entire field realized the value of people who have done service engaging in the political and policy process, he decided to leave City Year and has founded a new organization, tentatively called Be The Change. It is still in formation, but its goal is really threefold. One is to put together a vision for the year 2020 about what America should look like. And in order to achieve that, the organization is going to be part think thank, but as opposed to being made up largely of academics, it's going to be largely made up of social entrepreneurs – people who have solved these problems, people like Paul (Schmitz) and Wendy (Kopp) and others in the field – and Alan (Khazei) and Michael (Brown) and many others. And then the idea is to build the citizen movement behind these ideas, which is going to be focused largely on people who have done AmeriCorps, people who have done Peace Corps, veterans of the armed forces, people who have served their country in great ways but may not have otherwise engaged in the political and policy process. So we encourage you all to get involved in that. You're going to hear more about that in the months ahead. We really are very much a start-up at the moment. But hopefully in the next two or three months, the web site will

be up and running and we'll have opportunities to engage everybody in this room. But we think it's a really exciting opportunity to build a citizen movement for change, and it is going to be largely made up of folks in this room and folks who have participated in programs like the ones that are represented on the panel today. So we look forward to working with you, and thanks, Rob (Hollister), for the plug!

PAUL SCHMITZ: Alan is very enthusiastic and deeply committed, and that means we're all going to have a lot more work in our work plans. (Laughter.) And I just also want to recognize also the ServeNext.org guys, alumni who have tried to create kind of a political action committee around the issues of service. They're AmeriCorps alums who are also getting involved in the public square.

WILLIAM SCHAMBRA: Let's thank our panel!

(Applause.)

(End of proceedings.)