Laissez Les Bons Temps Rouler

Welcome to the 2011 National Conference on Volunteering and Service in the historic city of New Orleans. You are gathered here with more than 3,500 service and volunteering leaders from across the country to hone your skills, be inspired and develop strategies to address the critical issues facing our nation.

This week you’ll hear from luminary figures in media, government and entertainment including civil rights leader Ruby Bridges, entertainers Rosario Dawson and Branford Marsalis, journalists Soledad O’Brien and Deborah Roberts, and government officials Governor Haley Barbour of Mississippi and Melody Barnes, assistant to the president and director of the Domestic Policy Council.

You will be motivated, challenged and engaged by leaders like Wendy Kopp, CEO of Teach for America; retired U.S. Coast Guard Admiral Thad Allen; California Secretary of Service and Volunteering Karen Baker; and Cliff Burrows, president of Starbucks Coffee U.S.

Speakers will appear throughout the conference’s more than 150 workshops, immersion learning sessions, forums, book clubs and general gatherings. If you’re looking for resources, stop by the Community Champions Quarter where more than 50 exhibitors will provide tools, learning and best practices and services. The three editions of Lagniappe, the conference newsletter, will provide you with latest conference news.

We hope you leave the conference renewed in your efforts to strengthen your community.

Robert Velasco, II, Named Acting CEO of CNCS

President Barack Obama has designated Robert Velasco, II, acting CEO for the Corporation for National and Community Service. Robert has served as CNCS Chief Operating Officer and Chief of Program Operations for the last eight months. He comes to CNCS with 17 years of federal experience and a proven record in management, program and regional operations at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Robert has a deep commitment to national service, which has its roots in the time he spent as a youth volunteer where he experienced first-hand the impact of service and its ability to change lives. “I am deeply honored to serve in this role at a time of great need and opportunity for national service, and I am excited to meet service leaders from across the country at this important national convening,” he said.

Key Events

Skills-Based Volunteering Corporate Mentoring Forum (5584)
Sponsored by: Microsoft
Monday, June 6, 8 - 10:30 a.m.
Location: Convention Center 343
Wondering how to help move the “Billion + Change” initiative forward in your company? This session is uniquely designed to help businesses understand best corporate practices around SBV.

America’s Service Commissions and Points of Light Institute Public Policy Update (5558)
Monday, June 6, 1 - 2:30 p.m.
Location: Convention Center 255-257
America’s Service Commissions and Points of Light Institute will present a policy panel to discuss the future of national and community service programs. The session will provide an update on national service legislation and Congressional appropriations.

Public Participation in the Wake of Disaster (5048)
Sponsored by: The UPS Foundation and eBay
Monday, June 6, 1 - 2:30 p.m.
Location: Convention Center 344-345
Join us for a discussion framed by Admiral Thad Allen on the importance of public participation in the wake of disaster. Admiral Allen will discuss his experience in being U.S. Coast Guard commander during Hurricane Katrina and the 2010 Gulf oil spill.

Welcome to Our World! Feds, Veterans and Military Family Service Organizations, Meet Community Champions Quarter (5290)
Sponsored by: Bank of America
Monday, June 6, 1 - 2:30 p.m.
Location: Convention Center 238
Federations, agency veterans and military family service organizations, volunteer service organizations and national service project representatives will come together to get acquainted, build partnerships and strengthen existing relationships.

News Round-Up

Free Disaster Response Training from FEMA
For the past two years, the NCVS has been held in cities that have benefited from the amazing American spirit of service.

In 2010, New York City played host to NCVS. The city will never forget the outpouring of support it received after the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. This year, we gather in New Orleans, a city that has even more recently welcomed the support of millions in response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and the Gulf oil spill.

As we now turn our collective attention to those affected by recent floods and tornadoes, we encourage volunteers – both leaders and those looking to assist those in need – to take advantage of free disaster response training provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The training focuses on the right way to work efficiently and effectively in the face of a natural or manmade disaster.

Visit the online catalog of programs to determine what is right for you. We encourage you to sign up and promote awareness of this free training to those within your community.

L’Oréal Women of Worth
During your time at the National Conference on Volunteering and Service, L’Oréal Paris invites you to nominate a Woman of Worth, a champion of service who is making an exceptional difference in her community.

L’Oréal Paris will select 10 honorees, each of whom will receive a $10,000 grant for the nonprofit of her choice. In addition, one grand prize of $25,000 will be awarded based on public voting. Visit the L’Oréal Paris Women of Worth booth (#516) to enter your nomination and have the chance to win special prizes. Also, join us at the “Only In New Orleans” party on Monday, June 6, to meet previous Women of Worth honorees.

The volunteer sector is evolving rapidly with dramatic changes in how and why people engage. To keep up with these changes, HandsOn Network has launched a focused investment strategy called the Innovation Hub initiative. The goal of the initiative is to help HandsOn Network affiliates stay on the cutting edge of innovation, creating new ways to connect with individuals and create change.

The first 10 Innovation Hubs are: Boston Cares, Chicago Cares, HandsOn Central Ohio, HandsOn Greater Portland, HandsOn Twin Cities, New York Cares, Seattle Works, Volunteer Center of Bergen County, Inc., Volunteer Center of Santa Cruz County and Volunteer Marin/Center for Volunteer and Nonprofit Leadership.

Innovation Hubs will be learning labs for community engagement. They will be predisposed to innovation and have strong leadership ready to advance the mission of HandsOn through newly acquired skills and knowledge. The initiative will provide 30 Innovation Hubs (10 per year for three years) with grant funding and executive leadership focused on innovation. This innovation framework will incorporate the five elements of the David La Plana’s “new social sector” including:

- Redefining participation due to demographic shifts
- Abounding technological advances
- Organizing of work in new ways through networks
- Rising interest in civic engagement and volunteerism
- Blurring of sector boundaries

At the end of three years, the practices and learning emerging from the Innovation Hubs will form the blueprint for evolving the model of engagement across our network to meet 21st century needs of both volunteers and the communities in which they engage.

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