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Thank you to Mississippi's Congressional and Legislative offices and the Corporation for National and Community Service for 12 years of support.

Our Timeless Mission

To engage and support Mississippians of all ages and backgrounds in service to their communities.

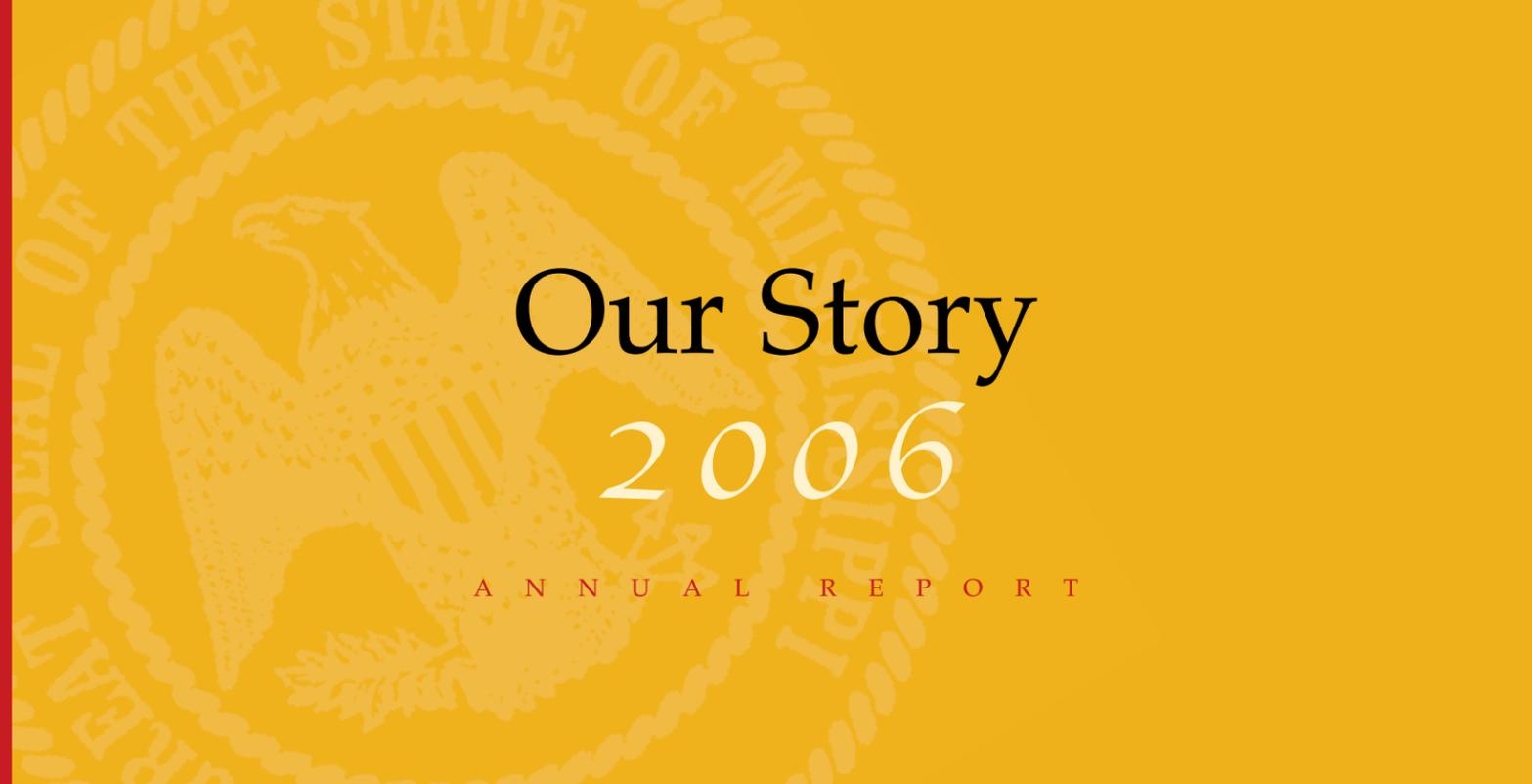
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Our Story 2006

ANNUAL REPORT



MISSISSIPPI COMMISSION *for*
Volunteer Service

Making Volunteerism Work.

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When Hurricane Katrina imposed its deadly wrath on our state in 2005, we called on the AmeriCorps family of national service programs for help. This storm revealed nature at its worst, but showed Mississippians and our fellow Americans at their best. Even before the storm made landfall, people opened their hearts to help in unprecedented ways. The generosity of the over 400,000 volunteers who have contributed millions of hours of service and given of their time and money is “Our Story - 2006.”

The miracle is that these volunteers are still journeying here alone and in groups—people of faith, college students, retirees, professionals, and our national service family. They have sacrificed vacations or spring breaks to provide shelter, serve meals, clear debris, gut and rebuild homes, and—perhaps most importantly—spread hope.

You see, when residents see volunteers rebuilding homes, they gain strength to rebuild their lives, too. And when residents come back, then businesses can come back, and neighborhoods once again will flourish. In short, volunteers are like sunlight and oxygen; they spread life. They spark the perception that a community can return, which greatly increases the likelihood that it will return.

That’s just part of the reason why we have to continue to remind Americans that we need more volunteers in the months and years to come. There are still thousands more houses to repair, parks to rebuild, and families to help. We still need your help and the hope it brings.

Marsha Meeks Kelly

*Executive Director,
Mississippi Commission for Volunteer Service*

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Why What We Do Matters

The timeless mission of your state office of volunteerism – the Mississippi Commission for Volunteer Service (MCVS) – is “to engage and support Mississippians of all ages and backgrounds in service to their communities.” It’s a mission that guides everything we do, creating a common theme throughout the chapters of our story.

MCVS, along with the nation, has realized the enormous impact that volunteers and national service members have had in their unprecedented commitment to Mississippi in both time and money. This seemingly insoluble problem of Hurricane Katrina fostered a natural willingness of citizens to want to rebound, rebuild, and reinvest. Matching this tremendous heroism, volunteers and our national service family responded. Over 400,000 volunteers have contributed millions of hours of service toward rebuilding our communities. And they are still coming.

Mississippi’s story is that volunteers and national service are the sunlight and oxygen to the leadership of her people and the pace of our recovery. Volunteers’ continued commitment to serve is still greatly needed. This story is not complete without recognizing the hard work and dedication of our staff and board and the cooperation and support of our grantees and our national service family in making our work more relevant than at any time in our history.



“The nation today faces breathtaking opportunities disguised as insoluble problems.”

— John Gardner, former Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare

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A Few Fast Facts

Together with your state office of volunteerism, other organizations (such as the USA Freedom Corps, the Corporation for National and Community Service, and the MS Department of Education) are working to build a culture of citizenship, service, and responsibility to America.

514,000+ Mississippians reached out to help others in 2005. (Bureau of Labor Statistics)

12,000+ Mississippians of all ages and backgrounds are helping to meet local needs, strengthen communities, and increase civic engagement through 60 national service projects.

400,000+ volunteers worked over 4.5 million hours over the past 16 months.

250+ disaster relief organizations are still housing and feeding volunteers

35,000+ national service participants contributed

1.6+ million hours to relief and recovery efforts in the Gulf region

18 million 18-28 year olds donated or volunteered to Katrina relief and recovery

\$60 million in AmeriCorps funds has benefited 500+ nonprofits and foundations through grants from MCVS since 1994

7,000+ Mississippi residents have served in AmeriCorps, the domestic Peace Corps, since 1994

and have qualified for scholarships (education awards) totaling nearly \$25.5 million.

12 outstanding volunteers received the annual GIVE (Governor's Initiative for Volunteer Excellence)

Award. Over 150 Mississippians have been recognized since 1993.

9,500+ students participated in Learn and Serve America, community service linked to academic achievement and the development of civic skills.



YES! members Katie and Karl'Nequa Ball receive the President's Volunteer Service Award from President George W. Bush in February.

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The AmeriCorps Story

AmeriCorps provides opportunities for Americans to make an intensive commitment to service. Members serving in our 8 AmeriCorps programs—America Reads-Mississippi, Algebra Project, Boys and Girls Clubs of the Gulf Coast/Takes ACTION, Corinth Public Schools/FOCUS, Delta Reads Partnership, Meridian Housing Authority/AmeriCorps Rebuilds Mississippi, MSU/Mississippi Early Literacy Corps, and Living Independence for Everyone/Project LINC—accomplished in 2006:

*382 members completed their year of service and earned \$1,734,075 in scholarships
recruited 15,690 volunteers who gave 42,985 hours of their time to school and community projects
tutored 21,218 students*

*Junior Citizen Corps Clubs planned and carried out 57 projects on National Youth Service Day
provided disability skills training to 875 individuals with disabilities
transitioned 21 individuals with disabilities from assisted living facilities back into independent living
completed weatherization work on 262 homes/apartments*

*assisted with 8 Habitat builds
completed rehabilitation/renovation on 262 Meridian Housing Authority units
abated 106 units and the Beatrice Brown Community Center through the Biloxi Housing Authority
assisted 8 families in obtaining mortgage financing and becoming homeowners*



Our AmeriCorps membership encompasses all faiths, genders, creeds, races, and abilities.

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YES! Successes

Youth Engaged in Service (YES!) is a program of the Mississippi Commission for Volunteer Service and Learn and Serve America that engages teens in service-learning and civic engagement while improving communities and lives. Members are selected from a statewide applicant pool and go through a year of intensive leadership training and service.

Despite the extreme devastation of schools and community-based organizations after Hurricane Katrina, Mississippi's service-learning programs have worked to recover and rebuild. Understanding that Learn and Serve America after-school program sites provide structure, camaraderie, a sense of purpose, and support for students still dealing with the emotional and psychological impact of the storm, YES! students have taken the lead in planning and implementing many projects.

Because of their commitment to service, YES! members have been recognized and honored in remarkable ways this year:

3 YES! Members received the President's Volunteer Service Award.

Ja'Detrus Hamilton was invited to sit beside the First Lady at the President's State of the Union Address in January 2006. Karl'Nequa Ball and Katie Ball were two of only five award recipients at a Black History Month ceremony at the White House.

YES! Members were commended in 2006 for their work advocating for people with disabilities, their work volunteering with children impacted by cancer, and their efforts to support children who have been removed from their homes due to abuse or neglect.

YES! Members hosted the annual 2006 Mississippi Youth Service Summit.

This Summit, planned by youth for youth, brought over 500 elementary and middle school students together in a celebration of service-learning and in civic engagement.



First Lady Laura Bush honored YES Members at a KaBoom! playground build in Kiln.

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Volunteer Center Network

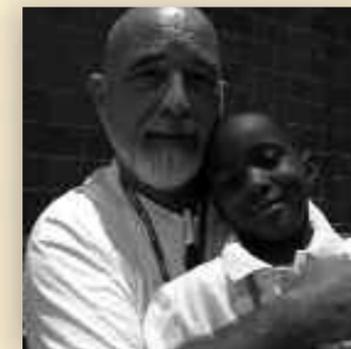
MCVS recognizes that volunteer centers are a key resource for citizen involvement by promoting volunteerism and mobilizing volunteers to meet community needs. Volunteer centers enhance not only the lives of the people who receive services, but also the lives of the ones who deliver the services. A key strategy of MCVS is to develop new centers and to enhance the capacity of existing centers to ensure a ready source of volunteers available to address community needs.

The Commission has helped start:
8 community-based volunteer centers
8 volunteer centers on college/university campuses
5 special needs project sites

The Mississippi Disaster Preparedness and Response Project provides training and resources to volunteer centers and other agencies throughout the state. AmeriCorps*VISTA members are assigned to these organizations to build their capacity to meet the needs of communities. The Commission has a total of 18 VISTAs, with others expected to come aboard after training.

MCVS Volunteer Centers:
Have recruited 900+ community volunteers (197 are Baby Boomers), who have contributed 17,462 service hours
Have produced \$147,019 of in-kind contributions and \$40,381 in cash resources

The project sites and resources generated by MCVS through the Disaster Preparedness and Response Project will only continue to grow, demonstrating the commitment and dedication Mississippi volunteers have to improving their communities.



Sharing across the generations through community service... it's why volunteer centers work.

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Hurricane Recovery & Rebuilding

M CVS sees the need to have an ongoing presence on the Gulf Coast to help volunteers and nonprofits manage the challenges of rebuilding post-Katrina. Over 400,000 volunteers have worked on Hurricane Recovery Projects in Mississippi. Accomplishments include the following:

Ongoing assessment and coordination of volunteer groups operating on the coast

Creation of a strategic plan to support disaster relief organizations and volunteers

17 Long Term Recovery Committees have been created to meet individual unmet needs. They organize force-multiplying initiatives such as resource collaboration, county-wide coordinated case management, unmet needs assessment, and unified fund raising.

Planned and hosted fact-finding tours for White House Staff, congressional delegations, federal agencies and national nonprofits and funders to inform policy decisions

Advising the Mississippi Recovery Fund in meeting individual unmet needs

Created strategic alliances with FEMA and the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) to ensure that future planning or engaging volunteer groups in times of disaster is educated, realistic, and effective.

*Supporting placement of national service resources: AmeriCorps*VISTA, the St. Louis AmeriCorps Emergency Response Team, West Seneca Youth Bureau AmeriCorps team, National Association of Service and Conservation Corps, Youth Build, and Hands On Gulf Coast.*



Volunteers and national service members are a driving force in the rebuilding efforts across our state.



Among other national groups, The President's Council on Service and Civic Participation and the Corporation for National and Community Service board of directors and staff visited the Gulf Coast to honor volunteers and engage citizens in policy discussions.



AmeriCorps*NCCC stepped up to the challenge of rebuilding through volunteerism throughout Mississippi. Their members rebuilt and refurbished homes, coordinated volunteers, renewed public parks, and helped assess the needs of Mississippi citizens.

AmeriCorps*National Civilian Community Corps teams have:

*Completed 94 concentrated tours of service throughout the state
More than 1,900 NCCC Members served over 775,000 project hours
NCCC members refurbished 539 homes*

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Training For The Future

2006's impressive training agenda included the "I Will Get Things Done for America" National Service Orientation Conference, "The Art of Taking Care of Yourself," "Media and Marketing," Mississippi's Youth Service Summit, "Grant Writing Made Easy: Financing Your Vision," "Creating Sustainable Programs," "Reinventing Mississippi: The Conference For Nonprofits And Volunteers" (co-sponsored by the Mississippi Center For Nonprofits), the AmeriCorps Celebration of Service, and a Program and Fiscal Management Training.

MCVS sponsored 9 trainings for 1,600 people, improving the quality and impact of our national service programs.

The overall goal of MCVS' training and technical assistance component is to improve the quality and the impact of national service programs in Mississippi by providing effective training events; providing or facilitating practical, usable technical assistance; and utilizing state-of-the-art technology and other media to share opportunities, resources, and best practices.



Whether in one-on-one or large group trainings, MCVS connects people to the information and skills they need.

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Disability Inclusion

MCVS continues to be instrumental in fostering collaboration with other agencies and service providers. As we educate and provide opportunities for service, we can enlarge the scope of awareness and increase the involvement of volunteers across Mississippi. In 2006, national service members with disabilities across the state made great contributions.

AmeriCorps members with disabilities:

*provided life skills training to 875 individuals with disabilities and their families;
recruited 260 volunteers to provide 2500 community hours of service; and
assisted with the relocation and placement of 21 individuals with disabilities from institutions into community life.*

VISTA members with disabilities:

*provided assistance to volunteer centers helping Katrina victims and their families;
provided input and helped develop a future disaster preparedness plan for individuals with special needs; and
conducted hurricane preparedness training for the Mental Health Association and for a Senior Citizens Day Program.*

Senior Corps members with disabilities:

*tutored approximately 50 children after school with reading and math skills; and
provided over 80 pre-schoolers with the successful tools needed for academic achievement before
entering the public school system.*

Creating an inclusive environment requires a strong willingness to adapt in our ever changing world. There is a sense of pride among national service members with disabilities; they are encouraging others with disabilities to get involved.



Giving back is a common goal. If you think outside the box to create inclusive programs, a person's talents and gifts may surprise you!

C H A P T E R

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The Financial Picture

Service Program Funding Sources in Mississippi: For Fiscal Year 2006 (beginning July 01, 2005), service programs in Mississippi received \$8,485,203 made up of \$6,100,112 in federal funds, \$298,423 in state funds, and \$2,086,668 in local matching funds.

For each **\$1** the Legislature appropriated to MCVS in Fiscal Year 2006, we leveraged **\$27** from non-state sources.

During Fiscal Year 2006, \$5,285,032 flowed through to benefit Mississippi communities through grants. An additional \$150,000 provided training and technical assistance for national service programs and participants. Only \$388,671 or 7% of the total budget was spent for MCVS administration.

