

Corporation for National and Community Service

# 2015 MLK Day of Service

*Communications Toolkit*

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## Things to Know

Thank you for helping to make the 2014 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service a success! Below are a few helpful updates, tips, and reminders.

- Please direct questions regarding media or communications the CNCS press office at [pressoffice@cns.gov](mailto:pressoffice@cns.gov).
- Add your project to the volunteer opportunities listed in the search engine at [mlkday.gov](http://mlkday.gov).
- Help others find a place to #volunteer on MLK Day by using a search widget on your website.
- We love to hear about your media successes (and challenges). Share them with us at [pressoffice@cns.gov](mailto:pressoffice@cns.gov).
- Follow [@MLKDay](https://twitter.com/MLKDay) on Twitter and [MLK Day](https://www.facebook.com/MLKDay) on Facebook.

## 2015 MLK Day of Service Key Messages and Talking Points

### OVERALL THEME

*“Engaging Americans in Creating Economic Opportunity”*

### KEY MESSAGES

1. **Dr. King committed his life and his work to expanding opportunity for all Americans.** Dr. King’s vision of harnessing the power of volunteering and service to transform our communities is more important than ever.
2. **The MLK National Day of Service is an opportunity to re-commit ourselves as citizens by volunteering in service to one another.** MLK Day is also, importantly, a launching pad for an entire year of service. Working together, we will create economic opportunities by improving education, strengthening health care services, and improving financial literacy.
3. **President Obama has made Dr. King’s work his own.** As the President said in his landmark speech on economic mobility in December, “Making sure our economy works for every working American...drives everything I do in this office.”

## MLK DAY 2015: THE TASK FORCE ON EXPANDING NATIONAL SERVICE

- **As we mark the MLK Day of Service, we also recognize the President’s Task Force on Expanding National Service.** Launched in July, the Task Force is an effort to engage citizens in the work of moving our nation forward. Specifically, the Task Force brings together cabinet agencies to identify additional ways that the public and private sectors can partner together to support volunteering and service as a strategy for tackling our nation’s biggest challenges.
- **As part of the President’s Task Force and to honor Dr. King,** senior Administration officials, cabinet secretaries, and members of Congress will participate in a number of service projects across Washington, DC and the nation.

## KEY FACTS ON MLK DAY AND THE BENEFITS OF SERVING IN YOUR COMMUNITY

- **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, “Life’s most persistent and urgent question is: What are you doing for others?”**
  - In recognition of Dr. King’s incredible legacy of service to all, Congress designated the Martin Luther King Jr. Federal Holiday as a national day of service in 1994 and charged the Corporation for National and Community Service with leading this effort.
  - Taking place each year on the third Monday in January, the MLK Day of Service is the only federal holiday observed as a national day of service – a “day on, not a day off.”

- **The best way to honor Dr. King is through service and volunteering in our communities.** Dr. King devoted his life to advancing equality, social justice, and economic opportunity for all. He challenged us to build a more perfect union and taught us that everyone has a role to play. Five decades later, we still have work to do to realize Dr. King’s dream.
- **Service is also a powerful way for citizens to empower themselves.** Our annual report on volunteering shows that more than one in four Americans volunteered last year; altogether, 62.6 million Americans volunteered nearly 7.7 billion hours, representing an estimated economic value of \$173 billion.
- In addition, our research shows that volunteering could also be a pathway to employment:
  - Volunteers have, on average, **27% higher** odds of securing a job than non-volunteers.
  - Among volunteers in rural communities, that number is even higher: **55%**.
  - And among volunteers without a high school diploma, the likelihood that you’ll find a job increases by **51%**.
- **Our agency, CNCS, provides grants to six national organizations that play a leadership role in the MLK Day of Service.** Those organizations are The Cesar Chavez Foundation, Points of Light, HOPE worldwide, Service for Peace, Wisconsin Campus Compact, and Youth Service America. In addition

to these grantees, more than 30 other organizations, including AARP, American Red Cross, America's Promise, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Boys & Girls Clubs of America, and Habitat for Humanity and United Way of America are strategic partners.

## Template Media Advisory



[ORGANIZATION LOGO]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January XX, 2015

CONTACT: [YOUR NAME]

[PHONE, EMAIL]

### MEDIA ADVISORY: [NAME OF ORGANIZATION]

#### Mobilizes Area Residents to Serve on King Holiday

*Volunteers [DESCRIBE LOCAL PROJECT] as part of National Day of Service*

[CITY, STATE]— [HUNDREDS, THOUSANDS] of [CITY] residents will step up to serve as volunteers on the annual Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday. Volunteers will [INSERT SHORT DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT], joining hundreds of thousands of Americans across the country in volunteer service.

[ORGANIZATION] has planned a day of service that will leverage the strength of local citizens to help tackle local problems and advance King’s dream of opportunity for all. [DESCRIBE SERVICE EVENTS].

The annual event honors Dr. King’s legacy and is an opportunity for Americans to renew their own personal vows of citizenship through service to others.

**WHO:** [LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS, NATIONAL SERVICE PARTICIPANTS, COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS, etc.]

**WHAT:** [NAME OF EVENT/ACTIVITY]

**WHERE:** [ADDRESS WHERE EVENT WILL TAKE PLACE]

**WHEN:** [DATE, START & END TIME FOR EVENT]

The Corporation for National and Community Service leads the annual MLK Day of Service, working with the King Center in Atlanta and thousands of nonprofit groups, faith-based organizations, and schools and businesses nationwide. For further information about the MLK Day of Service and what's taking place across the country, visit [MLKDay.gov](http://MLKDay.gov).

###

[ORGANIZATION BOILERPLATE]

Dedicated to improving lives and strengthening communities, the Corporation for National and Community Service is a federal agency that engages millions of Americans in service each year through its core programs, Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and the Social Innovation Fund and leads President Obama's national call to service initiative, United We Serve. Visit [NationalService.gov](http://NationalService.gov) for more information.

## Template Press Release



[ORGANIZATION LOGO]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January XX, 2015

CONTACT: [YOUR NAME]

[PHONE, EMAIL]

### [CITY/COMMUNITY] Puts Citizenship and Service in Action

*Volunteers [DESCRIBE LOCAL PROJECT (for example: paint/muck/plant trees)] as part of MLK Day*

[CITY, STATE] – [NAME OF ORGANIZATION] today led [NUMBER] [CITY] residents in [BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT] in volunteer service to honor Dr. Martin Luther King’s legacy. [CITY NAME] residents were joined by hundreds of thousands of volunteers across the country on this national day of service.

“Today we answer Dr. King’s call to serve and are making a difference in the lives of [COMMUNITY] residents,” said [ORGANIZER NAME], the [TITLE] of [ORGANIZATION.] “A resourceful way to meet local needs, volunteer service is a powerful tool that builds strong communities. We are putting the core American principles of citizenship and service into action.”

[PROJECT-SPECIFIC INFORMATION].

The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) is the federal agency that leads the annual MLK Day of Service, working with the King Center in Atlanta and thousands of nonprofit groups, faith-based organizations, and schools and businesses nationwide.

These projects include delivering meals, refurbishing schools and community centers, collecting food and clothing, signing up mentors, reading to children, promoting nonviolence, and more.

The MLK Day of Service shines a spotlight on service as a powerful force to bridge economic and social divides – today and throughout the year. National Days of Service provide each of us with an opportunity to join neighbors and local leaders to tackle community challenges and strengthen the nation.

###

[ORGANIZATION BOILERPLATE]

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## Sample Social Media Messages

### Twitter

- Last year's #MLKDay legacy video was such a hit – we created more! Check out these interviews w/ #MLK luminaries. [Mlkday.gov/promote/videos](http://Mlkday.gov/promote/videos)
- A few great #MLKDay resources for teachers. [scholastic.com/mlkday](http://scholastic.com/mlkday)
- To volunteer more is a noble and easily fulfilled #resolution. Start by committing to serve on #MLKDay.
- #MLK said: "Everyone can be great because everyone can serve." Where will you serve this #MLKDay?
- Did you know #MLKDay is a day of service? Learn more about how to volunteer w/ @MLKDay at [mlkday.gov](http://mlkday.gov).

### Facebook

- Dr. King once said, "Everyone can be great because everyone can serve." Where will you serve this #MLKDay?
- How has Martin Luther King, Jr. inspired you to serve on [TAG: MLKDAY] and beyond? Share your story!
  - Need a place to #volunteer this #MLKDay? Find a project in your area: <http://1.usa.gov/sV7FB9>
  - \_\_\_ days until #MLKDay! Make it a day on... not a day off. Find a place to #volunteer near you. <http://mlkday.gov/serve/find.php>
  - I serve on [TAG: MLKDAY] because \_\_\_\_\_.

## **Template Email Message or Blog Post**

Headline: Serve on MLK Day 2015

The 2015 MLK Day of Service is almost here – and Americans across the country are rolling up their sleeves in service. Are you ready to get out and serve?

Making time to volunteer for the 2015 MLK Day of Service is a great way to engage with your community while honoring the legacy of Dr. King. Whether you plan on grabbing a paintbrush, mentoring a young person or helping to clean up a public space in the next few days, know that what you do makes a world of difference.

Still looking for a way to participate? Sign up to volunteer with a project in your area.

[DETAILS ON ORGANIZATION PROJECTS]

Be sure to share your thoughts and photos from your volunteer service that day:

- Tweet using the hashtag #MLKDay
- Connect with other volunteers on [FACEBOOK PAGE]
- [OTHER SOCIAL MEDIA NETWORKS]

## Additional Resources

CNCS also has a number of digital and printed resources available for use by grantees and project organizers. Below are just a few that may be helpful in your communications efforts.

- [Project Toolkits](#)
- [Logos](#)
- [Web Banners and Widgets](#)
- [Radio and TV PSAs](#)
- [MLK Day Legacy of Service Videos](#)
- [Promotional Materials \(posters, etc.\)](#)