MAYOR and COUNTY

Recognition Day

for National Service

COMMUNICATIONS TOOLKIT

April 5, 2016

Dear Mayors and County Officials,

Thank you for participating in the 2016 Mayor and County Recognition Day for National Service!

On April 5, 2016, county officials and mayors across the country will highlight the impact of AmeriCorps and Senior Corps and thank those who serve.

Your participation will spotlight the importance of citizen engagement, recognize the dedication of national service members, and inspire more residents to get involved in their communities.

Communication and media outreach are key to the success of this effort. We have put together this Communications Toolkit to make it easy to plan an event and reach out to the media. In this toolkit, you will find:

- Event and Media Suggestions
- Planning a Great Event
- Key Messages and Talking Points
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Social Media Guide
- Photo Guidance
- Sample Media Advisory
- Sample Press Release
- Sample Proclamation with County Data
- Sample Proclamation
- Sample Op-Ed
- Sample Thank You Letter

Additional resources including logos, web banners, and customizable event materials are available on our Mayor and County Recognition Day for National Service resources webpage, located here. Also, we can provide a City or County Profile showing data on national service programs, participants, and funding in your jurisdiction. To receive your profile, please contact the CNCS State Director in your state. A list can be found here.

We hope these materials are helpful. If you have questions or would like help with communications, please email pressoffice@cns.gov.

Thank you for joining with us. We look forward to working with you to make this day a big success!

Office of External Affairs
Corporation for National and Community Service

EVENT AND MEDIA SUGGESTIONS

The Mayor and County Recognition Day for National Service is a nationwide bipartisan effort to recognize the positive impact of national service in our cities and counties, to thank those who serve, and to encourage citizens to give back to their communities.

There are many ways you can participate. Below are suggested activities in three categories: Public Events, Recognition, and Media. After you have figured out your plans, please feel free to tell us about them by email MayorForService@cns.gov.

Public Events

- **Become an Employer of National Service**: AmeriCorps and Peace Corps alumni are strong leaders who are motivated, flexible, innovative, and outcome-oriented. By becoming an Employer of National Service, city and county governments have new access to this dedicated, highly qualified, and mission-oriented pool of potential employees. More than 300 companies, nonprofits, and state and local governments have already signed on to this initiative. CNCS is encouraging county officials and mayors to sign up and announce their participation on April 5.

- **Host an Event:** Invite AmeriCorps members and Senior Corps volunteers and their organization's staff and board to a recognition ceremony during your city or county council/board meeting. Ask a member to tell their impact story, or to bring along a beneficiary of their service. At the end, read your proclamation and take a photo.

- **Visit a Program:** See a national service project in action by visiting a school, homeless shelter, community center, or other service location. Hear from the members and beneficiaries about how national service is working.

- **Host a Thank-You Event**: Show your appreciation for the commitment of national service members by inviting them to a thank-you event. Team up with another organization to offer some kind of an award, such as a bus pass or gift card. Present awards for outstanding service members.

- **Service Project** Organize a service project to bring together national service members and local community volunteers or serve with a national service program as an "AmeriCorps member or Senior Corps volunteer for a day" to highlight the important work being done in their community.

Recognition

- **Take A Photo:** Take a group photo with national service members in your city or county. We encourage you to hold a sign that reads "National Service Works in [*Your City/County*]." A downloadable sign is available at our resources page. Tweet the photo using the #Mayor4Service or #*County4Service,* post it on your website and Facebook page, and email it to us at photos@cns.gov. See our Photo Guidance for more details.

- **Issue a Proclamation**: Issue a proclamation naming April 5, 2016, as a National Service Recognition Day. Sample proclamations are available in this toolkit. Customize the proclamation using data from your City or County Profile available from your CNCS State Office.

- **Put Out A Report:** Highlight the scope and impact of national service in your county or city by working with local programs to put together a short report. Use data from your City or County Profile.

Media

- **Use Social Media:** Use Twitter, Facebook, and other social media platforms to thank national service members serving in your community. Check out our Social Media Guide for suggestions, sample messages, and hashtags. Use the web banners and badges found on our Mayor and County Recognition Day for National Service resources webpage.

- **Pitch the Media:** Talk about national service in your weekly press conference or other media venue. Issue a press release on the scope and impact of national service in your county or city. Write an op-ed about the unique contributions of national service in your city/county. Our toolkit has sample a media advisory, press release, and op-ed to get you started. Send your press release to pressoffice@cns.gov so we can highlight activities across the country in our national press outreach.

- **Shoot a Video:** Many county officials and mayors have access to video services or local cable channels. Put together a short video that shows what national service is doing in your city or county, including interviews and B-roll with national service participants, soundbites from city or county officials, and shots from your Mayor and County Recognition Day for National Service activities. Post it on your YouTube channel, play it through local cable stations, and send us a link at pressoffice@cns.gov.

PLANNING A GREAT EVENT

Mayor and County Recognition Day provides a unique opportunity for mayors and county officials to recognize the AmeriCorps members and Senior Corps volunteers in your community. This recognition event looks different in every community, based on the needs of the community, size of the national service community, and goals of the elected officials. Here are some tips to get started:

Identify a time: Try to settle on a time on April 5, 2016 that allows for maximum participation, including local media. That usually means mid-morning to early afternoon for same day coverage, although early morning breakfast events can work as well.

Secure a venue: Find the right venue for your event. This could be the steps of city hall, the county council chambers, a city park, or at an AmeriCorps or Senior Corps service location. Regardless of where you hold your event, ensure that your chosen site has the space to accommodate your expected audience. If you're expecting a small crowd, use a small space. It makes the photos look better.

Build a crowd: This is an amazing opportunity to engage a large number of local national service members and alumni. As you make your list, think big and include the entire national service family. That includes Senior Corps (Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions, and RSVP) and AmeriCorps (including AmeriCorps State and National grantees, AmeriCorps VISTA, and AmeriCorps NCCC, if a team is deployed in your area). *Contact the CNCS Director in your state for information about all of the national service programs in your community. A list of CNCS state offices can be found here.*

Create a great program: The program provides an opportunity to thank your local national service members, let them share their stories of service, and highlight the important work they are doing in your community. Be sure to include one or more AmeriCorps members or Senior Corps volunteers to tell their compelling stories of service. Their perspective is key to remind the audience what this ceremony is about and how important the service is.

Build your event: When building your event, make sure to think of the visuals that will be present, including city or county logos, Mayor and County Recognition Day signage, and AmeriCorps and Senior Corps logos. You can download and print your own materials using our resource page.

Your big announcement: Given all the attention focused on your event, this will be a great opportunity to make a big announcement. Begin thinking now about what you want to amplify. Here are a few ideas:

- Do you have a new grant that has not yet been announced? This is the perfect time to announce it.

- Is your city or county becoming an Employer of National Service? This is a great opportunity to share the news.
- Impact data: This will be a great time to amplify some of the accomplishments of AmeriCorps and Senior Corps in your community.

Tell us what's happening: It's important for CNCS headquarters to know what is happening around the country. That will help us deploy speakers and other resources, work with national media, and amplify what is taking place on this amazing day when we honor national service members.

- Feel free to tell us about your Mayor and County Recognition Day for National Service event by emailing MayorForService@cns.gov
- Share stories of service with us at engagement@cns.gov. Share photos now and after the event.

KEY MESSAGES

- **GETTING THINGS DONE:** Every day in communities across America, AmeriCorps members and Senior Corps volunteers address the most pressing challenges facing our cities, counties, and nation - from educating students for the jobs of the 21st century and supporting veterans and military families to preserving the environment and helping communities recover from natural disasters.

- **SERVICE AS A SOLUTION:** Given the many social needs facing our communities – and the fiscal constraints facing government at all levels – county officials and mayors are increasingly turning to national service as a cost-effective solution to meet local needs.

- **THANKING THOSE WHO SERVE:** The Mayor and County Recognition Day for National Service is a nationwide bipartisan effort to recognize the positive impact of national service in our counties, to thank those who serve, and to encourage citizens to give back to their communities.

- **GET INVOLVED:** National service shows the best of the American spirit – people turning toward problems instead of away, working together to find community solutions. Today, as we thank national service members for their commitment, let us all pledge to do our part to strengthen our county through service and volunteering.

TALKING POINTS

Background: How National Service Gets Things Done

- Service to others is a hallmark of the American character, and central to how we meet our challenges.

- Given the many social needs facing our communities – and the fiscal constraints facing government at all levels – county officials and mayors are increasingly turning to national service and volunteerism to help meet local needs. Mayors and county know that engaging citizens and nonprofit partners is a smart strategy to address on county challenges.

- A key partner in our efforts is the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). CNCS is the federal agency that oversees AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and other programs that engage millions of citizens in service each year.

- This agency works hand-in-hand with counties, nonprofits, and other local partners to support high-impact national service at more than 50,000 sites across the country.

- AmeriCorps members and Senior Corps volunteers address the most pressing challenges facing our counties and nation. Whether supporting food banks and homeless shelters, restoring parks, providing health services, strengthening public safety and juvenile justice services, tutoring and mentoring students, and managing community volunteers, national service members help county officials tackle tough problems.

- National service participants increase the impact of the organizations they serve with, both through their direct service and by recruiting and managing millions of additional volunteers.

Mayor and County Recognition Day for National Service

- That's why I am pleased to join my fellow county officials and mayors today in the Mayor and County Recognition Day for National Service. County officials and mayors across the country are taking time to recognize the impact of national service in their counties and thank those who serve.

- This effort is being led by the Corporation for National and Community Service, in partnership with the National League of Cities, the National Association of Counties, and Cities of Service.

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- Across the country, county officials and mayors are participating in a variety of activities, including visiting national service programs, hosting roundtable discussions, issuing proclamations, and communicating about national service through social media.

- I am proud to join in this nationwide salute that will highlight the importance of citizen engagement, recognize the dedication of national service members, and inspire more residents to get involved in their communities.

Localize Impact of National Service in Our City/County:

- More than *[NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS]* AmeriCorps members and Senior Corps volunteers serve in our city/county, providing vital support to county residents and improving the quality of life in our county.

- You don't hear their stories on the nightly news, but every day they head out, quietly and without fanfare, to improve lives and strengthen communities.

- *[GIVE EXAMPLES OF NATIONAL SERVICE ACTIVITIES AND IMPACT]*

- As a county official/mayor, I am grateful for the dedication and sacrifice of these citizens, who are helping make our great county stronger, safer, and healthier. I have seen their impact first-hand, and know that national service is a cost-effective strategy to meet critical county needs.

Get Involved!

- National service shows the best of the American spirit – people turning toward problems instead of away, working together to find community solutions.

- Strengthening that spirit is one of my goals as a county official/mayor. Today, as we thank national service members for their commitment, let us all pledge to do our part to strengthen our city/county through service and volunteering.

- Go to *[CITY/COUNTY WEBSITE FOR VOLUNTEERING]* or Serve.gov to find a volunteer opportunity that matches your skills and interests.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the Mayor and County Recognition Day for National Service?
The Mayor and County Recognition Day for National Service is a nationwide bipartisan effort to recognize the positive impact of national service, to thank those who serve, and to encourage citizens to give back to their communities.

Why a Mayor and County Recognition Day for National Service?
City and county governments have a broad range of responsibilities to their residents, which matches CNCS's mission to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement. A coordinated day of recognition presents a unique opportunity to spotlight the key role that national service plays in helping counties and cities solve problems. Participating in the day will highlight the impact of citizen service, show support for nonprofit and national service groups, and inspire more residents to serve in their communities.

What is CNCS and how does national service help the nation?
As the federal agency for service and volunteering, the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) engages millions of citizens in service at more than 50,000 locations across the country through AmeriCorps (including VISTA and NCCC), Senior Corps (including Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions, and RSVP), and other programs. CNCS also supports innovative community-based solutions improving the lives of low-income people through the Social Innovation Fund.

CNCS leverages federal and private funds to support organizations that achieve measurable results where the need is greatest. National service helps county officials tackle problems in the following areas:

- tutoring and mentoring students
- supporting food banks and homeless shelters
- strengthening public safety and juvenile justice services
- restoring parks and public lands
- removing blight and creating safer neighborhoods
- supporting veterans and military families
- responding to disasters and emergencies
- providing health services
- managing community volunteers

What happened last year?
On April 7, 2015, the third-annual Mayor and County Recognition Day for National Service united local leaders across the country to spotlight the impact of national service and honor those who serve. Altogether, 2,786 mayor and county officials in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, Guam, and Puerto Rico officially recognized the work that AmeriCorps members and Senior Corps volunteers are doing to make cities better and stronger. Together, these

elected officials represent more than 150 million citizens, or half of the population. You can learn more about what happened last year in our 2015 Recognition Day wrap up on Storify.

Where did the idea come from?
Michael A. Nutter, former mayor of Philadelphia and president of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, was a strong supporter of national service, having seen first-hand the key role service in tackling local problems in his hometown. In 2012, he came up with the idea of setting aside a day when mayors across the country could recognize and thank those who make a difference through national service. He shared the idea with Wendy Spencer, CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service. Together, they began planning the first Mayors Day of Recognition for National Service, which took place on April 7, 2013, and engaged 832 Mayors across the country. In 2015 the initiative expanded to engage county officials through a partnership with the National Association of Counties. This year, tribal leaders from around the country will join the effort in the first annual Tribal Leader Recognition Day for National Service.

Who is participating?
Mayors, county officials, county board chairs, , tribal leaders, or other chief officials of counties and cities of any size.

Is it a day of service?
There are multiple service days throughout the year, including the Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service and the September 11 National Day of Service and Remembrance. While some mayor and county officials are participating in service activities on April 5, most are using Mayor and County Recognition Day for National Service as an opportunity to recognize the impact of national service and thank those who serve.

What are the goals of the day?
- Highlight how county officials and mayors use national service to solve their local challenges
- Thank national service members for their commitment and impact
- Build public awareness about the value and impact of national service
- Highlight the role that national service plays in managing volunteers to focus and amplify their impact
- Provide opportunities for county officials and mayors to communicate about the impact of national service to national policymakers
- Generate press coverage and online discussion about county officials and mayors supporting service

Where can I learn more about national service and volunteering in my city/county?
CNCS offers a variety of resources that can help county officials learn about national service and volunteering in their counties and expand the impact of volunteering by their residents:

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- Each year, CNCS produces State Profiles that list all national service funding, projects, and participants in every state. CNCS also will produce city and county profiles on demand for cities/counties participating in Mayors and County Officials Day. To receive your city/county profile, contact the CNCS Director in your state. A list is here: http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/contact/stateoffices.asp.
- CNCS also produces the annual Volunteering and Civic Life in America report, the most comprehensive data on volunteering ever assembled. Visit: www.volunteeringinamerica.gov

Who can I contact for more information?

- For information on Mayor and County Recognition Day for National Service or CNCS programs, contact CNCS State Director in your state. A list is available at www.nationalservice.gov/about/contact/stateoffices.asp.
- For government relations questions, contact Tess Mason-Elder, Office of Government Relations, 202-606-6873 or TMason-Elder@cns.gov.
- For communications questions, contact the Office of External Affairs at pressoffice@cns.gov.

Who are the sponsors of County Day?

- The **Corporation for National and Community Service** (CNCS) engages more than five million Americans in service through AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and other programs, and leads President's national call to service initiative, United We Serve. For more information, visit NationalService.gov.
- The **National League of Cities** (NLC) is dedicated to helping city leaders build better communities. Working in partnership with the 49 state municipal leagues, NLC serves as a resource to and an advocate for the more than 19,000 cities, villages and towns it represents. For more information, visit www.nlc.org.
- **National Association of Counties (NACo)** promotes sound public policies, foster county solutions and innovation, promotes intergovernmental and public-private collaboration and provides value-added services to save counties and taxpayers money. For more information, visit www.naco.org.
- **Cities of Service** is a national nonprofit that supports mayors and city executives to design and implement high-impact volunteering initiatives that can apply to multiple issues from supporting youth and education to sustainability. Founded by Michael R. Bloomberg in 2009, Cities of Service is a nonpartisan coalition which currently supports a coalition of 207 cities in the U.S. and UK whose mayors are committed to engaging citizen volunteers to solve local pressing challenges. Cities of Service helps coalition cities share solutions, best practices, and lessons learned, as well as spreads awareness about meaningful work happening in cities. For more information, visit www.citiesofservice.org.

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SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDE

Social media is a powerful tool for county officials and mayors to highlight the impact of national service, thank those who serve, and draw more people into service. We strongly encourage county officials and mayors to use social media to build buzz and engagement in the days leading up to and on April 5. Included below are a few ideas and suggestions to get you started. Please direct any questions to DigitalMedia@cns.gov - we're happy to connect with you!

Hashtags and Accounts

CNCS will use the #Mayor4Service and #County4Service. Be sure to use it too, so we can retweet all the great messages you're sharing and start a national conversation. Our official accounts include @AmeriCorps, @SeniorCorps, and @NationalService. And if you're using social media networks not listed below (Instagram, Pinterest, or Flickr) please use the #Mayor4Service and #County4Service too. We'd hate to miss any of the good content you're sharing.

Twitter

Here are some sample tweets to get you started. More information on national service in your state can be found here or in your county profile. Make sure to take and share photos.

- Excited to join the 2016 [County or City] Recognition Day for @NationalService on April 5, 2016. I'm a *[#Mayor4Service or #County4Service]*
- #NationalServiceWorks/#AmeriCorpsWorks/#SeniorCorpsWorks for [COUNTY/CITY] because _____. *[#Mayor4Service or #County4Service]*
- RT to thank the [#] @AmeriCorps & [#] @SeniorCorps members serving in [COUNTY/CITY] this *[#Mayor4Service or #County4Service]*day.
- #NationalServiceWorks/#AmeriCorpsWorks/#SeniorCorpsWorks for [#EDUCATION/ #VETERANS/#HUNGER, etc.] in [County/CITY] through [ORGANIZATION]. *[#Mayor4Service or #County4Service]*
- Has @nationalservice touched your life? To celebrate *[#Mayor4Service or #County4Service]*, share your favorite moment.
- @nationalservice is getting things done for America. @AmeriCorps & @SeniorCorps] members are doing so much for [COUNTY/CITY]. *[#Mayor4Service or #County4Service]*
- Did you know [NUMBER] @AmeriCorps & @SeniorCorps members are helping make [COUNTY/COUNTY] stronger, safer, and healthier. *[#Mayor4Service or #County4Service]*

Facebook

Badges and graphics are available on our Resources page and we've included a few additional ideas for engagement below. Please tag the official Corporation for National and Community Service or AmeriCorps or Senior Corps pages so we can see your great posts.

- Consider posting a thank you message and photo or graphic and ask the members, volunteers, alumni to tag themselves in it.

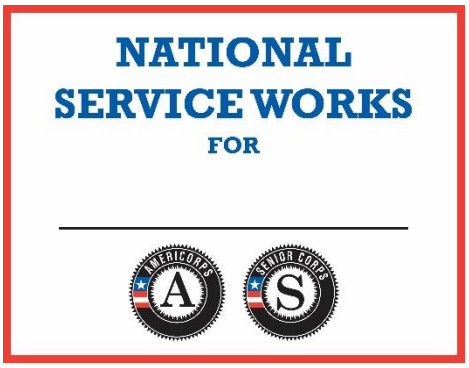
Facebook users love fill-in-the-blank questions, so post something like: "National Service works for [COUNTY/CITY] because _____."

PHOTO GUIDANCE

We encourage you to take and share photos of county officials or mayors surrounded by national service members, whether at the county/city building or on a service site. Participants in the photo should be holding the "National Service Works for (County/City Name)" sign that can be found on the Resource page. Here are steps to submit your photo(s):

Photo Requirements:

- Visit the "Photo Guidance and Event Signs" section of our Resource page to find a customizable sign.
- Add **YOUR** County/City name to the sign and print.
- Take a photo of your county official holding the sign with national service members from your community.
- 3 photos allowed (max).
- Photos should be no larger than 2MB each.
- Photos must be named by respective County/City and State (Montgomery County-MD-1.jpg)



Sending:

- First, share your photos on your Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or other accounts.
- Second, send them to us so we can share them on our national accounts and galleries.
- Go to "**We Transfer**" (www.wetransfer.com) to send photos.
- Upload photo(s) to We Transfer (www.wetransfer.com).
- Insert photos@cns.gov as "Friends email".
- In "Message" of email include county officials name, county and state, and "County/City Day 2016 Photo". If you have other relevant caption info, please include.
- Click TRANSFER!

Photo submissions will be collected until Friday, April 8, 2016.

If you have question, please contact CNCS Photographer, Matthew Guinan (mguinan@cns.gov). Please include Mayor and County *Day 2016 Photo Question* in subject line to ensure prompt response.

SAMPLE MEDIA ADVISORY

For Immediate Release
March XX, 2016

Contact Name
Phone and Email

County Official/Mayor *[Name]* to Join Nationwide Effort to Recognize Impact of National Service

[CITY, STATE]– On April 5, County Official/Mayor *[NAME]* will join more than *[TBD – UPDATED NUMBER ON WEBSITE]* city and county leaders across the country in a day of recognition to highlight the impact of AmeriCorps and Senior Corps on [county/city] challenges.

[COUNTY OFFICIAL MAYOR NAME] will participate in the Mayor and County Day of Recognition for National Service by *[INSERT SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES COUNTY OFFICIAL/MAYOR WILL ENGAGE IN].*

The nation's counties and cities are increasingly turning to national service and volunteerism as a cost-effective strategy to address county challenges at a time of fiscal constraint. More than *[NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS]* AmeriCorps and Senior Corps members serve in *[COUNTY/CITY]*, providing vital support to local residents by *[NUMBERS FROM COUNTY/CITY PROFILE – ALSO CAN INCLUDE IMPACTS FROM LOCAL PROGRAMS].*

The activities in *[COUNTY/CITY]* are part of a national bipartisan effort to recognize the positive impact of national service, thank those who serve, and to encourage citizens to give back.

WHAT:

WHO:

WHERE:

WHEN:

The effort is sponsored by the Corporation for National and Community Service, the National Association of Counties, the National League of Cities, and Cities of Service. For more information, visit NationalService.gov/RecognitionDay.

[INSERT COUNTY/CITY BOILERPLATE DESCRIPTION]

The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) is a federal agency that engages millions of Americans in service through Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, the Social Innovation Fund and other programs. For more information, visit NationalService.gov.

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
April 5, 2016

Contact:
Phone and Email:

County Official/Mayor *[NAME]* Joins Nationwide Effort to Recognize Impact of National Service

[COUNTY, STATE]– County Official/Mayor *[NAME]* joined more than *[CHECK WEBSITE FOR LATEST TOTAL]* county officials and mayors across the country in a nationwide bipartisan initiative to highlight the impact of national service in tackling local problems.

"National service is a vital resource for our county/city," said County Official/Mayor *[NAME]*. "AmeriCorps members and Senior Corps volunteers make our counties better places to live. As [*County Official/Mayor]*, I am grateful for the dedication and sacrifice of these citizens, who are helping make our great county/city stronger, safer, and healthier."

[COUNTY OFFICIAL/MAYOR] [NAME] participated in *[INSERT SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES COUNTY OFFICIAL/MAYOR ENGAGED IN].*

Given the many social needs facing communities, county and city leaders are increasingly turning to national service as a cost-effective strategy to meet local needs. More than *[NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM COUNTY/CITY PROFILE]* AmeriCorps members and Senior Corps volunteers serve in *[COUNTY/CITY]*, providing vital support by *[LIST SERVICE ACTIVITIES].*

[ADD PARAGRAPH ABOUT EXAMPLE OF NATIONAL SERVICE IMPACT OR HOW NATIONAL SERVICE HAS HELPED CARRY OUT COUNTY/CITY PRIORITIES].

The Mayor and County Day of Recognition for National Service is a nationwide bipartisan effort to recognize the positive impact of national service in counties, to thank those who serve, and to encourage citizens to give back to their communities. The day is sponsored by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), the National League of Cities, the National Association of Counties, , and Cities of Service.

"I am proud to be working with *[COUNTY/CITY NAME]* as we continue to strengthen communities through national service," said Wendy Spencer, CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service. "County officials and mayors are leaders who get things done. They know first-hand the value of national service in tackling local problems. I commend *[COUNTY OFFICIAL/MAYOR] [NAME]* for working with us to improve lives and strengthen communities through national service."

As the federal agency for service and volunteering, CNCS annually engages millions of Americans in service at more than 50,000 locations through AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and other programs. National service participants address the most pressing challenges facing our counties and nation, from educating students for the jobs of the 21st century and supporting veterans and military families to preserving the environment and helping communities recover from natural disasters.

Across the nation, county officials and mayors are participating in a variety of activities, including visiting national service programs, hosting roundtables, issuing proclamations, and communicating about national service through social media. By shining the spotlight on the impact of service and thanking those who serve, local officials hope to inspire more residents to get involved in their communities.

"National service shows the best of the American spirit – people turning toward problems instead of away, working together to find community solutions," said *[COUNTY OFFICIAL/MAYOR] [NAME]*. "Today, as we thank national service members for their commitment, let us all pledge to do our part to strengthen our county through service and volunteering."

For more information including background and a list of participating county officials and mayors, visit NationalService.gov/RecognitionDay.

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[INSERT COUNTY/CITY BOILERPLATE DESCRIPTION]

The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) is a federal agency that engages millions of Americans in service through AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, the Social Innovation Fund, and the Volunteer Generation Fund, and leads the President's national call to service initiative, United We Serve. For more information, visit NationalService.gov.

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SAMPLE PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, service to others is a hallmark of the American character, and central to how we meet our challenges; and

WHEREAS, the nation's [counties/cities] are increasingly turning to national service and volunteerism as a cost-effective strategy to meet their needs; and

WHEREAS, AmeriCorps and Senior Corps participants address the most pressing challenges facing our communities, from educating students for the jobs of the 21st century and supporting veterans and military families to providing health services and helping communities recover from natural disasters; and

WHEREAS, national service expands economic opportunity by creating more sustainable, resilient communities and providing education, career skills, and leadership abilities for those who serve; and

WHEREAS, AmeriCorps and Senior Corps participants serve in more than 50,000 locations across the country, bolstering the civic, neighborhood, and faith-based organizations that are so vital to our economic and social well-being; and

WHEREAS, national service participants increase the impact of the organizations they serve, both through their direct service and by managing millions of additional volunteers; and

WHEREAS, national service represents a unique public-private partnership that invests in community solutions and leverages non-federal resources to strengthen community impact and increase the return on taxpayer dollars; and

WHEREAS, national service participants demonstrate commitment, dedication, and patriotism by making an intensive commitment to service, a commitment that remains with them in their future endeavors; and

WHEREAS, the Corporation for National and Community Service shares a priority with county officials and mayors nationwide to engage citizens, improve lives, and strengthen communities; and is joining with the National League of Cities, the National Association of Counties, Cities of Service, and mayors and county officials across the country for Mayor and County Recognition Day for National Service on April 5, 2016.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that I, *[COUNTY OFFICIAL/MAYOR NAME]*, County Official/Mayor of *[COUNTY/CITY]*, do hereby proclaim April 5, 2016, as National Service Recognition Day, and encourage residents to recognize the positive impact of national service in our community, to thank those who serve; and to find ways to give back to their communities.

SAMPLE PROCLAMATION – WITH COUNTY/CITY DATA

[NOTE: The county/city-specific data to fill out this proclamation is available in your National Service County or City Profile. To receive your County or City Profile, please contact the CNCS Director in your state. A list of CNCS state offices can be found here.]

WHEREAS, service to others is a hallmark of the American character, and central to how we meet our challenges; and

WHEREAS, the nation's [counties/cities] are increasingly turning to national service and volunteerism as a cost-effective strategy to meet county needs; and

WHEREAS, participants in AmeriCorps and Senior Corps address the most pressing challenges facing our cities and nation, from educating students for jobs of the 21st century and supporting veterans and military families to providing health services and helping communities recover from natural disasters; and

WHEREAS, national service expands economic opportunity by creating more sustainable, resilient communities and providing education, career skills, and leadership abilities for those who serve; and

WHEREAS AmeriCorps and Senior Corps participants serve in more than 60,000 locations across the country, including *[NUMBER OF SERVICE LOCATIONS]* in *[COUNTY/CITY]*, bolstering the civic, neighborhood, and faith-based organizations that are so vital to our county's economic and social well-being; and

WHEREAS, more than *[ROUNDED NUMBER OF CNCS PARTICIPANTS]* national service participants of all ages and backgrounds serve in *[COUNTY/CITY NAME]*, providing vital support to county residents and improving the quality of life in our county; and

WHEREAS, national service participants increase the impact of the organizations they serve, both through their direct service and by managing millions of additional volunteers; and

WHEREAS, national service represents a unique public-private partnership that invests in community solutions and leverages non-federal resources to strengthen community impact and increase the return on taxpayer dollars; including more than *[DOLLAR AMOUNT OF LEVERAGED RESOURCES]* in *[COUNTY/CITY NAME]*; and

WHEREAS, national service participants demonstrate commitment, dedication, and patriotism by making an intensive commitment to service, a commitment that remains with them in their future endeavors; and

NATIONAL LEAGUE of CITIES | NATIONAL ASSOCIATION of COUNTIES NACo | CITIES OF SERVICE .ORG | Corporation for NATIONAL & COMMUNITY SERVICE

WHEREAS, the Corporation for National and Community Service shares a priority with city and county officials nationwide to engage citizens, improve lives, and strengthen communities; and is joining with the National League of Cities, the National Association of Counties, Cities of Service, and mayors and county officials across the country for the Mayor and County Recognition Day for National Service on April 5, 2016.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that I, *[COUNTY OFFICIAL/MAYOR NAME]*, *[TITLE]* of *[COUNTY/CITY]*, do hereby proclaim April 5, 2016, as National Service Recognition Day, and encourage residents to recognize the positive impact of national service in our community and thank those who serve; and to find ways to give back to their communities.

SAMPLE OP-ED

National Service Strengthens *[COUNTY/CITY NAME]*

[LEAD OFF WITH ONE OR TWO EXAMPLES OF AMERICORPS OR SENIOR CORPS MEMBERS IN YOUR CITY/COUNTY]

[As one of the only members of his family to graduate from college, John Smith always wanted to do something to help children from disadvantaged backgrounds make the most of their education. Through AmeriCorps, John now serves as a full-time mentor and tutor at a [COUNTY/CITY] high school, giving extra attention to help students stay on track to graduate.]

[At age XX, Mary Smith could be expected to live a quiet life of retirement. Instead, she volunteers 20 hours a week as a Foster Grandparent, helping kids develop early literacy skills. Mary is using her lifetime of experience to put young people on a path to success.]

John and Mary are just two examples of how *[COUNTY/CITY]* citizens making a difference through national service. Altogether, more than *[NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS]* AmeriCorps members and Senior Corps volunteers are serving in *[COUNTY/CITY]*, tackling tough challenges including adult literacy, disaster preparedness, neighborhood revitalization, and bridging the education gap.

You don't hear their stories on the nightly news, but every day they head out, quietly and without fanfare, to improve lives and strengthen communities.

As *[TITLE]* of *[COUNTY/CITY NAME]*, I am grateful for the dedication and sacrifice of these citizens, who are helping make our great county stronger, safer, and healthier. I have seen their impact first-hand, and know that national service is a cost-effective strategy to meet critical community needs.

That's why I am pleased to join county officials and mayors across the country today in the Mayor and County Recognition Day for National Service. We are taking time to recognize the impact of national service and thank those who serve.

Given the many social needs facing our communities – and the fiscal constraints facing government at all levels – local leaders are increasingly turning to national service and volunteerism to help meet local needs. We know that engaging citizens is a smart strategy to make progress on local challenges.

A key partner in our efforts is the Corporation for National and Service, a federal agency that oversees AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and other programs that engage millions of Americans in service each year. This agency works hand-in-hand with counties, cities, nonprofits, and other

local partners to support high-impact national service at more than 50,000 locations across the country.

Here in *[COUNTY/CITY NAME]*, more than [*NUMBER]* AmeriCorps members *[INSERT SERVICE ACTIVITIES - TUTOR, RESPOND TO DISASTERS, ETC].* More than *[NUMBER]* Senior Corps volunteers *[INSERT SERVICE ACTIVITIES - MENTOR, PROVIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICES, ETC].*

[ADD PARAGRAPH ABOUT EXAMPLE OF NATIONAL SERVICE IMPACT OR HOW NATIONAL SERVICE HAS HELPED CARRY OUT COUNTY/CITY-WIDE SERVICE PLAN OR OTHER COUNTY OFFICIAL/MAYOR PRIORITY].

National service shows the best of the American spirit – people turning toward problems instead of away, working together to find community solutions. Strengthening that spirit is one of my goals as county official. Today, as we thank national service members for their commitment, let us all pledge to do our part to strengthen *[COUNTY/CITY NAME]* through service and volunteering.

[COUNTY OFFICIAL/MAYOR NAME] is [TITLE] of [COUNTY/CITY NAME]. To find a volunteer opportunity, visit [WEBSITE WITH LOCAL VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES] or serve.gov. To learn more about AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and other national service programs, visit NationalService.gov

SAMPLE THANK YOU LETTER

DATE

Dear [INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP NAME]

As [TITLE] of [COUNTY/CITY], I want to thank you for making a difference in our county/city through national service.

Every day, AmeriCorps members and Senior Corps volunteers are helping make our county stronger, safer, and healthier. Dedicated citizens like you are tackling tough challenges – helping kids graduate, making neighborhoods safer, caring for seniors, supporting veterans and military families, preserving our environment, and much more.

I have seen your impact first-hand, and am grateful for your dedication and sacrifice.

Today, county officials and mayors across the country are recognizing the value of national service and thanking those who serve. I am proud to be part of this nationwide bipartisan effort.

National service and volunteerism shows the best of the American spirit – people turning toward problems instead of away, working together to find community solutions.

Strengthening that spirit is one of my goals as County Official/Mayor. Thank you for being a shining example for others to follow.

Sincerely,

[COUNTY OFFICIAL/MAYOR NAME]
[TITLE] of *[COUNTY/CITY]*

Attachment: County/City Proclamation