

# **NCCC Advisory Board Retreat**

**February 14, 2012**

**1201 New York Avenue, NW**

**Washington, DC 20525**

## **Meeting Notes**

### **Attendance:**

#### **The following members of the board were present:**

Kate Becker, Chair  
John Phillips  
Tiffany Zapico  
Elizabeth Hartsell  
Dr. Janet Wall  
Dr. Danielle Varda  
Marsha Meeks-Kelly, Vice Chair  
Marty Rodgers  
Susan Braun

#### **The following partnering Federal Agency representative was present:**

Max Finberg, Department of Agriculture

#### **The following CNCS staff was present:**

Idara Nickelson, Chief of Program Operations  
Asim Mishra, Deputy Chief of Staff for Policy  
Robert Velasco, Acting CEO for CNCS  
Erin Dahlin, Deputy Chief of Program Operations

#### **The following staff participants were present:**

Kate Raftery, Director of National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC)  
Kelley DeGraff, Senior Advisor for Disaster Services  
Charles Davenport, Director of Recruitment, Selection and Placement  
Nick Zefran, Senior Advisor for Member Development

#### **The following NCCC staff was present:**

Tom Bryant, General Counsel Liaison  
Barbara Lane, Region Director, Denver, CO  
LaQuine Roberson, Region Director, Perry Point, MD  
Gary Turner, Region Director, Vicksburg, MS  
José Phillips, Region Director, Sacramento, CA  
Erma Hodge, Advisory Board Liaison  
Katrina Mathis, Assistant Director for Recruitment and Partnerships

Michelle Royall, Assistant Director for Projects and Partnerships  
Iris Dooling, Program Associate  
Sarah Reynolds, Program Associate  
Jennifer Veazey, Special Assistant

**Principal Themes:**

- Budget and Finance Report
- NCCC FEMA Corps Overview
- NCCC Member Development
- Board Membership and Development
- Meeting with CNCS Senior Management

**Chair Comments (Kate Becker) –**

- Introduction of new Advisory Board Members: Danielle, Marsha, and Max.
- Recognition of the work current board members accomplished this past year.
- Recognition of NCCC staff for their accomplishments this past year.

**Director's Comments (Kate Raftery) –**

- Informative fact sheets/statistics are available for Advisory Board Members when needed in your meetings/interactions with outside partners; please let Erma know if you need any information to support outreach efforts.
- There has been a 7% to 41% increase in youth from disadvantaged population growth since the beginning of the initiative. This population change has required NCCC to look more closely at the support we provide to members and assess what has worked/what has not worked; we continue to look at ways to improve member experience.
- NCCC is looking ahead towards a move of the Perry Point campus to ensure needs of members are being met in regards to safety and well-being.
- We will later discuss our collaboration efforts with FEMA and how this and other partnerships can help us better reach more communities, capture our impact on those communities and lastly, better tell our story.
- Draft configuration of organizational chart at headquarters are located in your folders; we will discuss this later however will not review the potential impacts on the field reorganizational changes today. Recruitment, Selection and Placement has been broken out as it is a better fit for the way we do business; this Unit will be led by Charles Davenport. Barbara Lane will take over as Director of Projects and Partnerships. Demands in the areas of member development are changing/growing; Nick Zefran will now focus on member development as the Senior Advisor for Member Development.
- Growth of the NCCC is on the way and will give many more members the opportunity to serve however it will require work and the support of many throughout NCCC and CNCS support offices.

**Budget and Finance (Erin Dahlin) –**

- Review of 2012 Budget Summary. Full year CR was passed with special language for NCCC - \$3 million dollars for the relocation of Perry Point Campus.

- Program did a great job planning and executing budget despite the challenges of the CR in 2011 and now in 2012.
- Budget does not allow for many new initiatives so we are looking for ways to be strategic in directing resources towards critical needs (i.e. directing funds towards the Denver campus to build kitchens).
- Largest expenditure is payroll (33% of budget) supporting 107 staff when fully staffed (we are currently understaffed due to a few vacancies). There is the potential to grow staff by about 2/3 moving forward with new partnerships (FEMA collaboration); this would be a large addition in staff to not only NCCC but CNCS as a whole.
- Second largest expenditure is rent/leases and contracts for facilities support. With this, we are always looking to find ways to maximize use of the facilities and reduce overall cost/member.
- Perry Point relocation (\$3 million) – we’ve typically worked with GSA to locate facilities however due to our appropriation structure (single year authority) and our rigorous demands our work with them to find facilities will change putting more of the responsibility on our staff and the Office of Procurement (who will lead leasing negotiations). We currently have a listing on FedBizOps for a new space to accommodate 240-320 members and associated staff/needs. On Wednesday, we will be looking at Edgewood Arsenal (south of Perry Point) to see if it is a possibility for a site.
- 2013 CNCS Budget was posted yesterday; NCCC chapter highlights our program’s accomplishments in 2011 and proposal for the future. Our request includes funds that will allow us to occupy the current Perry Point location and future site as there will be overlap next year (to ensure we do not have to cut our member enrollment) however it does not include funds for any new activities.

#### **NCCC/FEMA Collaboration (Kate Raftery) –**

- Disaster Services Unit has moved out of NCCC and is now under the Chief of Program Operations Office.
- Collaboration with FEMA is moving forward very quickly; many staff with both CNCS and FEMA has already invested much time in negotiations; this endeavor is being viewed as an agency-wide initiative and many staff support departments are on board. REMINDER - this information is not public as of yet and any discussions must be handled with this in mind.
  - FEMA is prepared to fund the enrollment of 1600 additional NCCC members solely dedicated to disaster services tasks/projects. 5 Year endeavor at a minimum in order to see results/track performance.
  - Summer 2012 (June/July): 240 will start in Vinton and 240 will start in Vicksburg. Summer of 2013 we will reach the full 1600 increase.
  - Members will receive specialized training to go further into the realm of disaster services than our typical NCCC members. Traditional 1200 member NCCC Corps will continue to support initiatives it is currently implementing (which also includes work in Disaster and other organizations).
  - FEMA currently has 10,000 intermittent employees that can be called up during an emergency. There is currently a decline in the number of people willing to go when called. The 1600 members of the NCCC-FEMA Corps will always be able to go.
- FEMA is providing 100% of funding.

- The estimated expenditure per NCCC-FEMA Corps member is \$34,000. Current expenditure is \$28,000 per member of the original corps. The increase in funding will provide for National Trust enrollments, infrastructure, new staff, etc.
- The money will be given up front at the beginning of the year. This money will be “No Year” money. This means the funding is not tied to a fiscal year and can be used at any time.
- Corps benefits will be the same. Both sides, FEMA and NCCC, are trying to ensure that this new track will not become a “Super Corps.”
  - This corps will receive FEMA qualifications, but the original corps will still receive Red Cross training, construction tutoring and other skills.
  - Ensure that both are ready for the workforce when the corps members graduate.
  - Trying to get Non-Competitive eligibility for all AmeriCorps NCCC graduates.
- There has been detailed risk assessment on various aspects of the collaboration. This includes”
  - Maintaining identity of NCCC. We want to make sure that the corps doesn’t become just FEMA corps.
  - Losing the current appropriation for the original corps. There is a fear that because the FEMA funding will be larger than our congressional appropriation, congress will not feel the need or the want to fund the original corps.
  - Organizational overload.
  - FEMA reputation. FEMA has faced criticism in the past.
- FEMA is very involved in the process. They are involved in every step of the process.
  - Board members should have a copy of the business plan in their folders. This plan outlines the basics of the collaboration.
  - The interagency agreement (IAA) is currently being finalized. This agreement involves funding.
  - The implementation plan is currently being worked on by staff at both agencies. Even though the IAA has not been finalized, the implementation plan is moving forward so members can start in the summer.
- FEMA is giving us some guidance and leads on recruitment of new members. However, ultimately the selection and placement of members is solely in the hands of NCCC. NCCC will strive to ensure that 50% of the corps will be disadvantaged youth, but right now the focus is on finding members in general.
- A draft of the rollout plan will be forthcoming to the board members, but it is ready for use in case the IAA is finished sooner than expected.

Questions/Comments:

- Will the two corps look the same?
  - Every effort will be made to have both tracks look the same.
- Federal Coordinating officers that are in charge at disasters may not know who the NCCC-FEMA Corps is and this could create a problem for the rollout.
  - Currently NCCC teams are requested at the state level. The NCCC-FEMA Corps will be directed from the top down. They will be in the Joint Field Offices (JFO) and will have the correct badging to be there.
- What will members do if there aren’t any current disasters?

- Even if there aren't any new disasters, there are currently 400 JFOs open. These JFOs are still in responding to the disaster and doing recovery.
- NCCC has stipulated in the IAA that NCCC members will have work 42.5 hours per week. This is in alignment with the original corps.
- Will the same team model be used?
  - Yes. Members will be deployed as a team and they will be housed as a team. There may be two different sites that the members will be working at. FEMA understands that the team will only have one vehicle, and NCCC has asked FEMA to provide additional transportation as needed.
- Will veterans be involved?
  - We will explore new avenues to engage vets as members and team leaders.
- Will the teams ever transition between projects or will they be in the field the entire time?
  - This process is still being worked on, but NCCC has stressed that the members will need to come back to campus and transition. We don't know the length of the deployments yet.

**Expanding Partnerships and Sponsor Engagement (Charles Davenport)-**

- There has been a focus on working with specific federal partnerships. These partnerships include the Department of the Interior, FEMA, USDA/Forest Service, and Department of Energy. NCCC continues to work with other agencies.
- The Department of the Interior has a 21st Century Corps Advisory Board. It is using this as a pipeline to get younger staff into the agency.
- Going the route of FEMA and funding specific corps may not be a bad idea for different agencies. Agencies would need to think about what they would want out of the partnership, what the focus would be, and what work needed to be done. Additionally, any partnership would have to include the leadership of both agencies.

Expanding Partnerships and Sponsor Engagement (Charles Davenport) Continued.

Comments

- The FEMA partnership gets us back to the original intent of NCCC's founding legislation.

**Closing**

- In the next meeting (July), there will be more discussion about member recruitment strategies.
- Closing quote- "GROWTH is good, and *interesting*"

**NCCC Member Development and Experience (Nick Zefran)**

- Review of Class 17 Accomplishments

	Target	Actual
Enrollment	1200	1200
Retention	90%	88%
Fire Fighters Trained	110	164
Congressional Award	45%	63%
Completing Satisfaction Survey	60%	63%
Service rated Excellent or	85%	89%

	Target	Actual
Good		

- Discussed Service Leadership Experience, reviewed handout in Board folder
  - Currently being implemented at Vinton, Vicksburg, and Perry Point Winter classes
  - There are 4 primary outcomes, which have associated competencies and training objectives
  - 3 of the 4 measures are measured as outcomes in a retrospective pre/post member survey
    - Significant increases in members responses from pre/post
- Nonprofit Leadership Alliance Conference, Kansas City, MO
  - Nick attended conference along with 32 members who were earning their certificate of non-profit management
  - Most competencies for the certificate program are earned by NCCC service
  - 140 members have earned their certificate in non-profit management
- American Association of Community Colleges Meeting
  - Goal-provide all members with a transcript of all the skills and competencies they have achieved during NCCC service that they can take to an employer or college
  - Badges another option being explored instead of a certificate
  - AACC interested in connecting NCCC to national community colleges
  - Project will develop and continue this year
  - This will be a standardized way for all members to describe their service experience and to help them prove and validate their experience
  - Thanks to Janet Wall for ongoing advice and counsel

Questions concerning the certificate program

- The certificate program is partially completed during service and then members take courses after service year completed. NCCC helps to identify competencies while members are serving and gets them set up with online classes through LSU or University of Montana. After graduation, members complete their online classes, and within 6 months the members can earn their cert of non-profit management.
- NECHAMA- Jewish disaster response group
  - Market research proposal received from NECHAMA for a non-FEMA Corps disaster response course
  - Need to determine if there is campus interest, if so, NECHAMA and other organizations can bid for providing disaster course services
- FEMA Training
  - Weekly conference calls are being held for training and member development. FEMA Corps members will have an additional two weeks of training added on to CTI. FEMA training is online, but due to connectivity issues at campuses, FEMA has agreed to hold all of their training for the first group of members in person.

**Board Membership, Development and Direction (Kate Becker) –**

- Goal to grow the board. With NCCC's expansion, board members can help find solutions to issues.
- NCCC Alumni Leadership Council (Tiffany Zapico) –
  - Selected two local Alumni to represent each campus
  - Michelle Royall offering staff support, in addition to campus CRSs (Community Relations Specialist)
  - Recently held first call and discussed developing the regional representative role, developing committees, “Pass the Fire” book, monthly calls.
  - If anyone knows any NCCC Alums interested in learning more, contact [ncccalums@gmail.com](mailto:ncccalums@gmail.com)
  - Collaboration with and support from AC Alums. Ben Duda, AC Alums Executive Director, a NCCC Alum
  - Estimated that NCCC 1.5% of AmeriCorps Alums, but 30% of active alum participation
- NCCC 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
  - Will discuss more at next meeting and have specific assignments for NCCC staff, Alums, and Board
  - September 2013 will be the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary
- Board Development (Marsha Meeks-Kelly) –
  - Board term is 3 years, important to think about leaving a legacy
  - Openings for new board members
    - Important to recruit new members from both sides of the aisle
    - Region directors should have representation from their region
  - Goal: to recruit candidates, hear back, narrow slate, and by the fall meeting, have new members on board
  - Need to have more members with branding skills and public relations experience
  - Should also look at Education, Youth and Labor, and Military representation
  - Send inputs/comments/recommendations to Kate and cc' Marsha
  - By early-mid June, Kate should have received recommendations and resumes (more specific deadlines will be TBD)
  - Strategize on how to get stronger federal participation
  - Should also look at post-term CNCS board members
  - Should focus on keeping post-term board members, both CNCS and NCCC engaged
  - Possibly look for representation from US Conference of Mayors or US League of Cities
  - Possible to engage current executive directors of state commissions
  - Important to have a strong NCCC connection with CNCS Board Members
  - Region Directors should consider NCCC and CNCS Board members for Induction and Graduation speakers

**Meeting adjourned at 1:45 PM, EST.**