

**Corporation for National and Community Service**  
**Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting**  
**February 6, 2013**  
**9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m., EST**

The Board of Directors convened in New York, N.Y. The following members of the Board were present:

Laysha Ward, Chair

Eric Tanenblatt, Vice Chair

Rick Christman

Jane Hartley

Hyepin Im

Matthew McCabe

Phyllis Segal

Lisa Garcia Quiroz

**Chair's Opening Remarks**

Board Chair, Laysha Ward, opened the meeting by welcoming those in the room and those who were joining by telephone. Ms. Ward stated that at the end of today's meeting the Board invites members of the public who have joined the meeting to comment on the business of the Board. Anyone wishing to address the Board should sign up so that the Board can accommodate everyone that time allows.

Ms. Ward gave a quick overview of the agenda for the meeting. She said she would provide opening remarks and introductions and then summarize what occurred at the Retreat yesterday. Next, Ms. Ward would ask members of the Board to discuss Agency matters related to program strategy, external relations and public engagement as well as oversight and accountability. Following that, the Board would approve the minutes from the last Board meeting in September, and then the floor would be turned over to the CEO, Wendy Spencer, to provide her report to the Board. The Board would then recognize those Board members whose terms have recently ended and acknowledge them for their ongoing leadership and support. Finally, the Board would take an official vote for the fiscal year 2013 Annual Plan and then turn the floor over for any public comments.

Ms. Ward then provided a summary of Board activity during the retreat held the day before. They started the day with a presentation by Wendy Spencer, the CEO, who presented a foundation for the day's discussion. Ms. Spencer emphasized the connection between the Serve

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America Act and CNCS's strategic plan keep the Act front and center as it relates to ongoing goals, objectives and tactics. She then provided highlights of ways in which CNCS internalizes these connections in the daily work and focus so that we stay very attentive to the Serve America Act and our strategic plan and how we're measuring our progress against those plans. Ms. Ward thought it an impactful way to start the discussion, and that it was a way to ensure that the Agency is managing the resources of the Agency wisely, effectively and efficiently.

The Board reviewed CNCS's research and evaluation agenda. Dr. Chris Spera led the discussion. Dr. David Heistad, a guest speaker from the Bloomington Public Schools in Minnesota, made a presentation on his study of the impact of Minnesota Reading Corps, AmeriCorps grantee, on special education within the state. Ms. Ward noted that it's really important for the Agency to share the work of the CNCS programs and partners and to show the impact of that work. Studies such as this one provide the data and evidence that further bolsters why service can be a solution for some of the nation's most pressing social issues.

Ms. Ward reported that Jonathan Greenblatt, the Special Assistant to the President and Director of the Office of Social Innovation and Civic Participation in the Domestic Policy Council, and John Kelly, a senior advisor to the CEO, engaged the Board in a conversation regarding the Next Wave of Service initiatives, including how we can expand AmeriCorps through public and private partnerships. The Board also discussed with the CNCS leadership team the important work that the Agency has been doing in support of Hurricane Sandy relief efforts. The Board also received a status report on the RSVP competition and the evolution of that program. Ms. Ward reported that the Board was very pleased with what it heard in that regard. The Board also discussed the Social Innovation Fund and how it is leading innovation and how many of the grantees are thinking of new ways to drive impact that is doable.

Ms. Ward also reported that the Board reviewed ways in which the Agency can measure its success. The Board has been deeply engaged at looking at the Agency's success metrics in all parts of the Agency. The Board discussed not only success metrics relative to programs, but also looked at how CNCS is engaging with stakeholders and what success looks like within that context.

Ms. Ward said the Board wrapped up the Retreat with a great update from the Office of Government Relations, from members of the Office of the Inspector General, and from the President of the employee union. Ms. Ward noted that the Retreat provided the opportunity for great discussions on many amazing topics and that the Board had the right level of discussion and healthy debate, both as a Board as well as with the staff and key partners. The Board discussed with the Senior Leadership Team methods by which the Board can ensure that it is

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providing strategic oversight and accountability for the Agency's progress into the future. Ms. Ward concluded by thanking the Board members and the staff for their preparation, attention and engagement throughout the course of the Retreat. She observed that they all were being good stewards of the work that the Agency does.

**Board Reports**

Ms. Ward then turned the floor over to Board member Lisa Garcia Quiroz, Chair of the External Relations Committee. Ms. Quiroz began her report by noting that there had been a major opportunity for service with the Presidential Inauguration, which coincided with the Martin Luther King Day holiday. It was a great opportunity to take advantage of showcasing the American spirit of service at the same time as the Inauguration. As the federal agency that leads the MLK Day of Service, the Agency had worked very closely with the Presidential Inaugural Committee to make the National Day of Service and MLK Day into a whole "Weekend of Service." The Agency had leveraged traditional and new media to promote service opportunities around the country, securing coverage of all of the Agency's work in USA Today, the Washington Post and statewide media throughout the nation. More than a dozen cabinet secretaries and administration officials participated in numerous service projects in the DC area and throughout the country. The Agency also provided grants to host service projects across the country as well.

Ms. Quiroz said that the results reflected the strength of the opportunity and the effort expended. Every single state came together to make a difference. Nationally, volunteers served or donated close to 200,000 pounds of food, 86,000 individuals received emergency food from food banks, food pantries and other non-profit organizations, and 10,000 military families and veterans engaged in service opportunities as a National Service participant or volunteer. Ms. Quiroz recognized Board members Hyepin Im and Matt MaCabe who served alongside Ms. Ward and more than 100 CNCS employees at the Armory. These volunteers were visited by the Vice President and Dr. Jill Biden and members of their family. Additionally, the Vice President and Dr. Jill Biden also spent time with the AmeriCorps NCCC members who played a critical role in organizing the project. The President and the entire First Family also had the opportunity to serve at a service project that was organized through City Year in the DC area, and Wendy Spencer had the opportunity to serve with the First Family at a DC elementary school. The President spent close to two hours at the project.

Ms. Quiroz noted that it took an extraordinary team effort to pull all of this off and she wanted to give special thanks to the Office of External Affairs and the CNCS State Office staff, as well as give thanks to all of the non-profits, the faith-based organizations, businesses, and schools that

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joined in making this all come together. She also commented on the Service Bowl, a bet between the mayors of Baltimore and San Francisco in which the mayors agreed that the mayor from the city whose team lost the Super Bowl would perform community service in the city of the mayor whose team won. The mayors both appeared on the Today Show to talk about the Service Bowl, with AmeriCorps members--AmeriCorps and Wendy Spencer appeared in the background.

Ms. Quiroz stated that without a doubt the Weekend of Service and the Super Bowl generated a lot of activity and momentum around AmeriCorps. She noted that the Agency wants to continue to harness this energy to further advance the importance of service in this country. As a follow-up to the Weekend of Service, thousands of Americans pledged to continue service in their communities. Over 100,000 names were collected by CNCS of people who pledged to donate service this year. She highlighted Serve.gov as the on-line resource for the President's Call to Service, which is operated by CNCS. It allows organizations and individuals to register their service projects so that visitors can volunteer in their local communities. Ms. Quiroz concluded by noting that the Agency is working very closely with the Administration and the CNCS non-profit partners to develop an ongoing calendar of opportunities that can be made available through Serve.gov.

Ms. Ward then recognized Ms. Hyepin Im, the Vice Chair of the Program, Budget and Evaluation Committee. Ms. Im stated that she was reporting on behalf of Marguerite Kondracke. Ms. Im stated that the Committee had been working very hard and she wanted to share some of the highlights. First, under the leadership of Dr. Chris Spera, the Director of Research and Evaluation, his team has developed a 2013 strategic plan for research and evaluation that encompasses an official mission statement, doctrine principals, establishes strategic priorities and proposes new initiatives. Some of the highlights of the plan include the following: his team has asked internal and external colleagues to rank the priorities of the work and the big four include the community impact and return on investments, the performance measures, evaluation capacity and culture building, and then finally member experience. The guiding principles for the teams include focus on documenting the impact of the program, building on the existing knowledge base, employing research to practice models and developing signature products that tell the story of impact achieved by our program initiatives.

Ms. Im also highlighted key ongoing initiatives. The Committee's work will be focused on the community impact studies such as the Minnesota Reading Corps Evaluation and the CNCS initiatives with military veterans, the Senior Corps and the SIF national evaluations. In addition, the Committee will be focused on AmeriCorps performance measures pilot, member surveys and focus group projects. Regarding the Senior Corps RSVP competition, CNCS is in the 2013

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grants competition final stages. The final decision is scheduled to be announced in February, 2013. The SIF investment report is also scheduled to be released in February 2013 and will be the first public report on the SIF activities for the fiscal years 2010 through 2012. There is no new grant competition for the SIF in 2013; therefore, the focus and emphasis will be on the kind of infrastructure that is needed for each SIF grant project.

Ms. Im concluded by noting that CNCS and the Committee are working on the next wave of service, looking at developing partnerships, and working with the Department of the Interior and other federal agencies to create a 100,000 member 21<sup>st</sup> Century Conservation Service Corps. The Service Corps will focus on including service as a method of protecting, restoring, and enhancing America's public land. Another initiative is the Student Veterans AmeriCorps that will place assistance on many campuses where veterans are enrolled to help them use the GI Bill and to lead them to graduation as well. Lastly, Ms. Im noted the great service effort that was energized by Hurricane Sandy. Over 2,400 national service members have served in that effort, constituting over 400,000 volunteer hours. Focusing on long-term needs, up to 60 AmeriCorps VISTA members have been deployed to positions in New York and New Jersey to assist on rebuilding initiatives.

Next, the Chair recognized Phyllis Segal, the Chair of the Oversight, Governance, and Audit Committee. Ms. Segal stated that in the area of oversight, the Committee was informed on CNCS's budget status for fiscal 2013 and reviewed the new Office of Accountability and Oversight's strategic plan and CNCS's integrity framework. The Committee feels confident that these activities move the Agency in the right direction regarding strengthening internal oversight and controls. In the area of governance, the Committee discussed the Board's responsibility regarding the annual review of the Chief Executive Officer which is required under the Serve America Act. In the area of audit, the Committee was briefed on the completed 2012 financial audit in which CNCS received its 13<sup>th</sup> consecutive unqualified opinion on consolidated financial statements and unqualified opinions were also given on the trust schedules. She noted that the report on internal controls included one material weakness on grant approval estimates and the report on compliance with laws and regulations had no reportable matters. The Committee discussed how that material weakness is being addressed and other internal control issues and feels confident that the Agency is moving to address the material weakness effectively. Finally, Ms. Segal reported that the Committee met with the Inspector General and received an update on activities being undertaken by the Office of the Inspector General.

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**Consideration of Prior Meeting's Minutes**

The Board considered and approved by voice vote the minutes for the public Board meeting held September 17, 2012.

**Chief Executive Officer's Report**

The Chief Executive Officer Wendy Spencer thanked Laysha Ward for her leadership and expressed her gratitude to the entire Board for their service. Ms. Spencer acknowledged the presence of former CNCS Board Chair, Mark Gearan; Susie Stern, who is currently the Chair of the President's Advisory Council for Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships, and former Cabinet Secretary for the State of New York for service; and she introduced Ms. Anna Duff who has been committed to service and volunteer work for decades and holds a national post in Colonial Dames.

Ms. Spencer then thanked everyone in the national service field, CNCS partners, grantees, the service members, and all who make national service come to light and make an impact on the ground. Ms. Spencer reported that it had been a busy and exciting time at CNCS. Ms. Spencer described her vision for implementing the Serve America Act and the Agency's Strategic Plan and achieving the goals articulated in those documents. That vision is described by what she calls her "leading EDGE," in which the EDGE is an acronym that stands for Expanding economic opportunity; Driving innovation and impact; Growing national service and volunteerism; and Explaining why service matters. Ms. Spencer said that last letter was very important because we all can work very hard, and serve each and every day, but if we don't talk about our work and the impact it's having, we're not going to be sending the message of why we serve. Ms. Spencer highlighted some of the initiatives that CNCS is currently undertaking. CNCS was working to expand economic opportunities for more Americans. National service and volunteerism strengthens the pathway to education and jobs. The Agency is always thinking of how to open doors for opportunities for those who serve. In December 2012, CNCS hosted the National Disability Leadership Training Institute. It brought together more than 100 of our grantees and partners, state commissions, and disability partner organizations to learn from each other. CNCS focused on two important tracks during the Training Institute: national service as a pathway to employment and engaging veterans with disabilities.

Through initiatives like the Community Blueprint and Together for Tomorrow, CNCS was helping to foster innovative approaches to local needs. Community Blueprint was launched last October with the help of Points of Light and a coalition of more than 55 veteran and military

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service organizations and serves as a national initiative to support our returning military service members, veterans and their families. Together for Tomorrow encourages schools and community partners to work together towards better results in our low performing schools. This is a program that started several years ago in Orlando, Florida and is now a super initiative nationwide that we are working on with the Department of Education.

Ms. Spencer stated that other parts of driving innovation and impact also means investing in results. Competition is a core value at CNCS that is used to drive funds to the highest quality programs. The first RSVP competition results will be announced very soon. The Social Innovation Fund is now in its third year and is getting great results, scaling proven programs across the country and working with over 200 non-profits that have served over 170,000 of our most vulnerable citizens in need. Ms. Spencer said that CNCS always strives to be good stewards of taxpayer resources. The AmeriCorps NCCC Atlantic Region campus is moving to Baltimore from Perry Point, Maryland and the citizens of Baltimore have embraced this move. The campus is moving to a former Sacred Heart of Mary School in Baltimore and the school is currently being renovated with a move planned for this summer. Ms. Spencer stated that this new campus had a ribbon-cutting ceremony attended by the Mayor of Baltimore, Mayor Rawlings Blake, and by U.S. Senator Mikulski, together with over 100 guests.

Ms. Spencer also highlighted the Corporate Mentoring Challenge. CNCS collaborated with Mentor and other organizations to engage the corporate sector in mentoring and providing skill support. Leading up to the Presidential Inauguration CNCS worked closely with the Inauguration Committee to celebrate the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service. She had the honor of volunteering with the President and First Family at the Burrville Elementary School and working with Principal Roper. Ms. Spencer concluded by highlighting that, according to the CNCS Volunteering and Civic Life in America Report released in December 2012, Americans are volunteering in record numbers. There is a five year high of 64 million Americans serving. Ms. Spencer commented on the fact that to her the busiest people might be young parents, and yet the Report shows that parents are one of the highest, if not the highest, demographic for serving others. Ms. Laysha Ward, the Board Chair, then recognized three former Board members who were not present, Stan Soloway, Jim Palmer and Julie Fisher-Cummings and thanked them again for their service and commitment to the Agency and to the individual service activities that they continue to be a part of. Ms. Ward announced that CNCS was launching an Alumni Board at CNCS and that all three of the former Board members had accepted an invitation to join the Board in the launch of the Alumni Board and that Julie and Stan agreed to

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co-chair the effort. Ms. Ward then recognized former Board Chair Mark Gearan, who was present at the meeting, and announced that Mark would also be joining the Alumni Board.

**Consideration of the 2013 CNCS Annual Plan**

The Board considered and approved by voice vote the 2013 Annual Plan for the Corporation for National and Community Service.

**Public Comment**

Ms. Ward began the public comment session by introducing the first presenter, Ms. Rowena Madden, the Executive Director of the New Jersey Commission on National and Community Service. Ms. Madden stated that because of super storm Sandy, New Jersey had experienced an unprecedented disaster. Her organization was proud of the leadership of their Governor, and their Lieutenant Governor Kim Guadagno, to whom her organization reports. Ms. Madden noted the great leadership at CNCS and how quickly assets got to the places most needed. They had teams from Mississippi, Iowa, Washington State, St. Louis, Sacramento and now Utah and the Uka Tribe from California. They had received tremendous support from Wendy Spencer and Bill Basl, the Director of AmeriCorps at CNCS. She reported that New Jersey was now in the process of long-term recovery. They continue to rely on national AmeriCorps members, who are on the ground every day with compassion, talent, and commitment. She concluded her presentation by thanking the Board and all those who are supporting the effort in New Jersey.

Ms. Ward then introduced Mr. Gary Bagley, the Executive Director of New York Cares, CNCS's main partner in the volunteer operations in New York City. Mr. Bagley wanted to echo the sentiments of Ms. Madden and add that AmeriCorps members have been critical in leveraging the service of thousands and thousands of other people. Mr. Bagley stated that in the 100 days since Sandy, New York Cares has been privileged to leverage the time and commitment of 14,000 individuals in terms of serving in the Rockaway's and other highly impacted areas in Brooklyn and Staten Island. Without the AmeriCorps members, New York Cares would not have been able to have that many individuals serving. Mr. Bagley concluded by stating that his remarks were a thank you and to tell everyone that the service is critical as there is still another year of clean-up to be done. New York Cares would not be able to do what is needed without AmeriCorps.

Ms. Ward next introduced Ernest Farmer who is a crew leader with the Washington Conservation Corps. The Washington Conservation Corps has been a major player in the

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national service response. Mr. Farmer said the Corps deployed immediately after the storm hit landfall. They sent eight crews to New York City. Those crews were in New York City for three to four weeks before half of those crews transitioned to New Jersey. Since then, the Corps has deployed 23 crews, or 112 AmeriCorps members. Mr. Farmer said that their total man hours in New York by AmeriCorps members were 13,151 hours, and in New Jersey it was 16,472 hours. Mr. Farmer stated that what he really wanted was to emphasize the importance of AmeriCorps. He invited the Board members to visit New Jersey and work hand in hand with their volunteers.

Ms. Erin McGraff then introduced herself as the CNCS State Program Director in New Jersey and she said that all of the volunteers have just been phenomenal. Citizens have come up to her when she is in the field, and they are all just so appreciative for what these volunteers have done. They have been absolutely tireless and wonderful ambassadors for national service.

Ms. Ward next introduced Diana O'Neil, the Director of the Long Island Regional Volunteer Center. Ms. O'Neil said that she wanted to share an incredible experience with the Board. After the storm Sandy hit, the area and the Volunteer Center had to rely on their networks and the State of New York. She wanted to recognize Susan Stern and Mark Walter, who is the State Commission Executive Director. Both of them add support and confidence to all of the work that is being accomplished. Additionally, Ms. O'Neil stated that the AmeriCorps team that was deployed there, the AmeriCorps St. Louis and the NCCC teams, have made all the difference in the ability to address the relief, recovery and rebuilding needs of the region. A volunteer reception center was created on Long Island from space donated by a privately-held company. The company donated both office and warehouse space and Ms. O'Neil said that from there they are able to deploy the volunteer disaster teams that are trained and equipped by AmeriCorps members. As a recipient of the Volunteer Generation Fund, Ms. O'Neil and her organization were positioned to do the part necessary to bring the volunteers to the needs at hand. Even more importantly, it allowed Long Islanders to be part of the recovery effort. Ms. O'Neil also wanted to recognize the Buffalo Volunteer Center that came to their aid and did the social messaging. She also wanted to recognize HandsOn Affiliates from Boston to New York, Atlanta, Fairfax, Howard County and Anaheim, California. She also counts AmeriCorps and Senior Corps as partners. She concluded by stating that it was an honor and privilege to do this kind of work.

Ms. Ward then introduced Susan Stern, the Chair of the New York State Commission on National and Community Service. Ms. Stern, on behalf of the State, the State Commission and the Governor's Office, wanted to thank the Board and Ms. Spencer for the work that AmeriCorps and the Conservation Corps has done. It was especially challenging in this area because of the population density. The high rise apartments and the inability to get people out of their

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apartments and then having no place to put them were especially challenging, and the work could not have been done without the efforts of AmeriCorps and the Miracle Volunteers. Ms. Stern said that the area needed the volunteers from Oregon and Utah and every place around the country. Ms. Stern concluded by thanking the Corporation and thanking Ms. Spencer for her leadership. She also wanted to publicly thank Gary Bagley and Diana O'Neil. They represent the boots on the ground, making things happen. Ms. Stern also added that the Volunteer Generation Fund, and working together with the Corporation, had allowed New Jersey and New York to be prepared the next time a natural disaster strikes.

**Closing Remarks**

There being no further presenters, Ms. Spencer again thanked the members of the Board, the CNCS staff, and all of the partners in the room and those who joined by telephone as well as the presenters. Ms. Ward adjourned the public meeting at 11:00 a.m.