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State of Montana
State of Washington

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January 18, 1999

Governor Don Siegelman
Governor's Office
State Capitol
600 Dexter Ave.
Montgomery, AL 36130-2751

Dear Governor Siegelman:

We believe that Americans -- whether young or old -- who care for one another through service, exhibit the best of the American spirit. Service to one's community and to each other is what makes this country great. As governor, you can play an active role in guiding AmeriCorps and other national service programs in your state. We support national service programs and want to let you know how these programs will enhance your efforts as governor to reduce illiteracy, clean up the environment, make our streets safer and provide services to needy individuals, just to name a few examples.

The Corporation for National Service was established with bi-partisan support and continues to enjoy strong support from Congress. Funding for AmeriCorps has increased as well as for the three senior service programs of the Corporation, the Foster Grandparent Program, the Senior Companion Program and the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP).

Serving through local non-profits and schools, national service members and volunteers tutor children, coordinate service-learning and after-school programs, build homes with Habitat for Humanity, organize neighborhood watch groups, clean streams, provide disaster assistance relief, recruit volunteers, and perform other important activities to improve and strengthen communities.

This year, AmeriCorps reached an important milestone -- In October, the 100,000th member joined AmeriCorps. This program is a great example of how States and the federal government can work together. Governors appoint commissions on national and community service in their states to award AmeriCorps grants to local organizations.

Because states have the authority to distribute federal AmeriCorps funds, they can work effectively with non-profit organizations to meet the needs of their citizens. Governors' commissions control two-thirds of all AmeriCorps funding

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nationally. The other one-third of federal AmeriCorps grant funding is awarded to national non-profit organizations like Habitat for Humanity and the American Red Cross.

Learn and Serve America grant money, also funded by the Corporation for National Service, is awarded to state departments of education. Learn and Serve America provides help for teachers and schools that are integrating service into classrooms from kindergarten through college.

These diverse programs supported by the Corporation for National Service offer service opportunities for citizens of all ages. The resources that come to the state from the Corporation can and do contribute much to achieving governors' goals. They also enable us to design new partnerships — partnerships that revitalize peoples' sense of personal and community responsibility for the future.

We look forward to working with you in the coming year. We enclose introductory materials about the programs of the Corporation for National Service and recent published commentaries on service. Each of us has had good experiences with these programs in our states and would welcome you to visit with either of us about the programs offered by the Corporation for National Service.

With good wishes and best regards,

Marc Racicot

Governor Marc Racicot
State of Montana

Gary Locke

Governor Gary Locke
State of Washington

enclosures

