

FOIA MARKER

**This is not a textual record. This is used as an
administrative marker by the William J. Clinton
Presidential Library Staff.**

Collection/Record Group: Clinton Presidential Records
Subgroup/Office of Origin: Americorps
Series/Staff Member: General Files
Subseries:

OA/ID Number: 24237
FolderID:

Folder Title:
[Board of Directors Meeting, 2/24/95] [3]

Stack:	Row:	Section:	Shelf:	Position:
S	66	1	1	2

Clinton Presidential Records Digital Records Marker

This is not a presidential record. This is used as an administrative marker by the William J. Clinton Presidential Library Staff.

This marker identifies the place of a tabbed divider. Given our digitization capabilities, we are sometimes unable to adequately scan such dividers. The title from the original document is indicated below.

SITE VISITS

Divider Title: _____



The Neighbors Project

Getting Things Done in D.C.

The Neighbors Project was founded in January 1993 as a student initiative with the purpose of focusing the community service energy of The George Washington University into one Washington D.C. neighborhood. It was the hope that through service projects, the GW students could create a profound and sustained impact that would lead to measurable results in the Shaw Neighborhood. This began a year of service which engaged over 500 GW students in projects ranging from park clean-ups to tutoring in local schools.

Along the way, it became clear that the service performed in Shaw was having as profound an effect on the GW student participants as it was on the community. As a result, the Neighbors Project developed another purpose: to educate students at GWU to the challenges of the inner-city through learning programs. When the Corporation for National Service, the new federal agency for nationwide community service, announced plans for its "Learn and Serve" program, it seemed like the perfect opportunity to establish a public-private partnership to get things done in D.C.

During the six-month process of preparing a proposal to the Corporation, a team of students, community members, faculty and administrators developed a unique program engaging the GW and Shaw communities in nine direct service projects and a comprehensive service-learning educational program. A month after submitting the proposal to the Corporation, The George Washington University, through the Office of Campus Life and the Human Services Program, learned that they had been chosen as one of 11 demonstration projects out of 465 applicants to receive full program funding.

Since September 1994, teams of volunteers led by 17 AmeriCorps members have been involved in service activities in the areas of education, human needs, environment, and public safety. The AmeriCorps participants receive a post-service educational award from the federal government as well as a living stipend, health care, and child care provided through matching funds by GW.

Project Teach at the Garnet-Patterson Middle School is one of the many projects taking place throughout the Shaw Neighborhood. This program involves 91 volunteers who provide 250 hours per week of tutoring and mentoring to over 300 students. Project Teach is only one of nine service projects. Other projects will provide day care for 50 kids, teach SAT skills to 15 high school students, serve 100 people per month in neighborhood health clinics, and provide 50 hours per week of free legal assistance for Shaw Neighborhood residents.

With the support of the Corporation for National Service, The George Washington University is proud to unleash the Neighbors Project on Washington D.C. with the conviction that hard work, cooperation and an unalterable commitment to service will

GET THINGS DONE!



AMERICORPS
GETTING THINGS DONE

The
George
Washington
University
WASHINGTON DC



The Greener Shaw Project

The very first group project done by the Neighbors Project was a tree planting and clean-up on the grounds of Garnet-Patterson Middle School. This began the start of a tradition in the Neighbors Project that is committed to environmental activism in the urban locations.



We have begun this year with the modest goal of cleaning two parks per semester. This modesty, however, has allowed us to explore the limits and boundaries of environmental issues in the inner-city. The Neighbors Project has internally been working to see how it can best address environmental issues in the scope of its projects. As that develops the Greener Shaw AmeriCorps Members have begun to support the development of environmental initiatives within other projects.

In the first semester, we chose two parks that were relatively close to each other and in close proximity to several of the agencies that we work with. These two parks have been adopted as a team project by the members of the Neighbors Project AmeriCorps, who have

cleaned the parks and have done some initial planting. The Corps will go back over the course of the year to develop the parks into safe green spaces.

In the meantime, the Greener Shaw AmeriCorps Members have begun to support other projects. The Service Learning Project AmeriCorps Members have begun teaching an environmental curriculum in their classes. In addition, they have been supporting a teacher-led initiative to institute a more thorough recycling program for the schools in which they work.

The Greener Shaw Project demonstrates not only how AmeriCorps Members can reach their own objectives, but how as a team they can help AmeriCorps as a whole get more done for the environment.



The Greener Shaw Project

For more information on the Greener Shaw Project, contact Jeff Callabiano, Nikia Mason, or Marlon Palmer at The Neighbors Project, Marvin Center, room 418, (202) 994-6554





Legal Assistance Project

The Neighbors Project began as an effort driven by the energy of undergraduate students at The George Washington University. Early on, though, those students recognized that the strength of the University lie in all of the members of the University community. With this in mind, members of the Neighbors Project solicited the help of their counterparts in the professional schools.

The outgrowth of this was the Legal Assistance Project. With this project, the Neighbors Project was able to utilize a long-running community service project of The George Washington University's National Law Center (NLC) for the benefit of residents of the Shaw Neighborhood.

The Legal Assistance Project calls on the resources currently found in the NLC's Community Legal Clinics. These clinics provide thousands of hours annually of legal assistance to residents of Washington, D.C. Founded in 1971, the National Law Center has developed clinics to advise on consumer mediation, domestic violence Immigration and a variety of others topics. All together, there are 10 clinical programs available to community members.

Offering legal advice on such a wide range of topics, the Community Legal Clinics are a valuable resource to offer to residents in Shaw. This year, the Legal Assistance Project will call on the abilities of GW's law students who serve as part of a class to provide 50 hours each week of legal advice. This represents one of university's longest running service-learning classes. It also represents one of the longest commitments of The George Washington University to getting things done.



Project Children

Since the start, the Neighbors Project has been sending volunteers to work at Bright Beginnings Daycare Center for Homeless Children. Last year a group of seven volunteers went weekly to help with everything from playing games, to cleaning cots, to just being a lap to sit on.

This year, that group has more than doubled, and we have nearly filled the volunteer needs of Bright Beginnings. Though the demand for volunteers has slowed for now, the needs in terms of support and resources remains constant.

The AmeriCorps Members working at Bright Beginnings have mobilized to meet those needs. Already this year, members have organized field trips and educational experiences. AmeriCorps Members will be instrumental in a New Mothers Class, started this fall in partnership with the Zacchaeus Free Medical Clinic. The class will help mothers develop basic health care and child care for infants and young children. Most importantly, AmeriCorps Members have kept up the flow and consistency of volunteers from GW working at Bright Beginnings.



But the need for volunteers in the neighborhood has not subsided.

Neighbors Project AmeriCorps Members have mobilized to identify volunteer needs in the Shaw Neighborhood at other organizations serving children. As a result we have recently been working with Martha's Table, an organization that serves 150 children a day. Our first initiative has been to assist their Computer Learning Center. An AmeriCorps Member has been upgrading the computer systems, teaching kids the basics of computers, and recruiting GW students to help out during the computer classes.

One AmeriCorps Member is also working with Crime Victims Assistance (CVA), watching children, while women who have been the victim of violent crime take part in a weekly support group. The AmeriCorps Member has also been called upon to serve as a mentor to youth taking part in the program at CVA.

Whether its being a lap to sit on or bringing children to the edge of the computer age, AmeriCorps Members are helping to preparing also the next generation to get things done.

Caring about the world does not begin with fear or morbidity but with fascination.

-Garrison Keillor

For more information on Project Children, contact Vanessa Backe or Meliza Brillantes at The Neighbors Project, Marvin Center, room 418, (202) 994-6554





Project Renovate

Project Renovate is the outgrowth of one of our longest supported projects with Habitat for Humanity. Through this project GW students are able to take part in house-raising and renovation in addition to other kinds of rebuilding in community buildings.



Each week a group of fifteen GW students goes to work on building houses and performing renovations in the District of Columbia. This year the main focus of our effort has been the construction of the Project Blueprint College House. This house is being built through a coalition of area campuses committed to housing issues. After a year of fundraising and organizing, the Project Blueprint house broke ground on September 3rd, 1994. The house is expected to be dedicated mid-January, 1995.

In addition to weekly house building, the Neighbors Project and the GW chapter of Habitat for Humanity plan weekend and spring break work trips. In the spring of 1994, 25 GW students stayed in Washington to renovate Richardson Elementary School. This year the Project Renovate AmeriCorps Members and staff at the Neighbors Project are working steadily to-

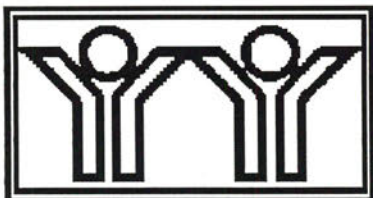
wards increasing opportunities like that, looking to other cities and regions to help in their Habitat projects.

Every person is the
right person to act.
Every moment is
the right moment
to begin.

Jonathan Schell

Project Renovate and the work of Habitat for Humanity have easily become some of the most popular service projects offered by the Neighbors Project and the Office of Community Service. Groups representing residence halls, fraternities, sororities, student organizations, and GW staff have come out to support the projects, and the portfolio of interested groups grows with each week.

AmeriCorps Members organize trips, recruit volunteers, coordinate transportation, and participate in the building. With their help in this school year, more people have been able to participate than ever before, and more importantly, the consistency means that all of us are getting even more done.



AMERICORPS

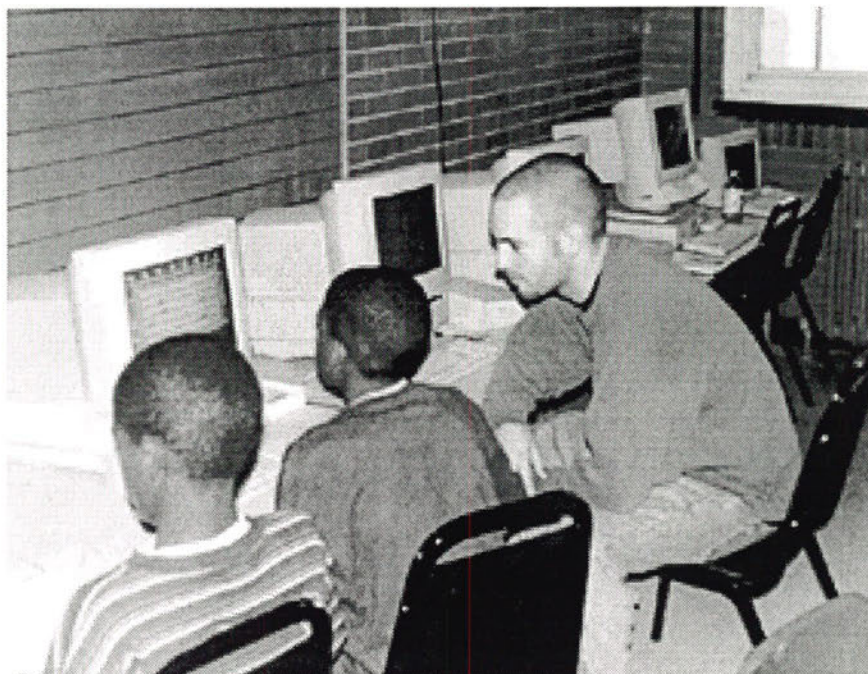
GETTING THINGS DONE

For more information, contact Annie Bird at
The Neighbors Project, Marvin Center, room 418, (202) 994-6554



Project Teach

As an educational institution, it seems fitting that the first and most successful program of the Neighbors Project would be Project Teach, our partnership with the Garnet-Patterson Middle School. For two years now the Neighbors Project has maintained a steady flow of volunteers and assistance to Garnet-Patterson in exchange for the kind of grassroots experience and education only a public school can provide. In 1992, a handful of student volunteers went to Garnet-Patterson to monitor lunches. In the next year, forty-five GW students took part in tutoring, mentoring and minor renovation projects.



This year, nearly one hundred volunteers are actively taking part in Project Teach and that number is still growing. Today, seventy GW students tutor Garnet-Patterson students in every subject and thirty GW students take part in a one-on-one mentoring project. In addition, students are helping to improve the library, provide previously unavailable art instruction, and building partnerships to support the beautification of the school.

The Project Teach energy is directed towards four areas:

Tutoring - Five days a week, GW students work with fifteen teachers from Garnet-Patterson to promote learning among the schools nearly three hundred students. GW tutors teach in every subject, from science to social studies, from English to industrial arts.

Mentoring - Once a week, thirty Garnet-Patterson students spend the afternoon with big brothers or big sisters from GW. The GW mentors take advantage of the District of Columbia's resources to create a memorable and influential experience for both partners. The Neighbors Project has looked to collaborate with local businesses and institutions to provide as many opportunities for the partners as possible.

Cultural Enrichment - As part of our effort to enhance the education of the students, the school has worked with The Neighbors Project to develop art and theatre projects. Our most notable accomplishment has been an art class that students will actually receive credit for on their report cards each quarter.

Information and Communication - With the advance of technology and the importance of information and education in our society, the Neighbors Project has adopted communications and technology as one of its main focuses. As part of this focus, the Neighbors Project has begun working with its partners and the school librarian to upgrade the library. We have begun planning a computer network system which will allow the librarian to computerize his catalogue.

The success of our partnership is only beginning. With the involvement of the AmeriCorps Members who work on Project Teach, we can be sure that our success continues to grow, and that each year we are getting more things done.

For more information on Project Teach, contact Monique Ayotte, Josh Hoeltzel, or Jamal Reid at The Neighbors Project, Marvin Center, room 418, (202) 994-6554



The
George
Washington
University
WASHINGTON DC

College Prep Program

KAPLAN The answer to the test question

Last year, the Neighbors Project and Stanley Kaplan Test Prep teamed up to offer SAT preparation classes to students in the Northwest Settlement House Program. With the start of the Neighbors Project AmeriCorps Program, the College Prep program is one of the quickest expanding programs.

As our partnership with Stanley Kaplan continues, the other services we offer continue to increase as we attempt to prepare urban youth for entrance into college.

Kaplan will be offering two 8-week classes this year, one in the fall and one in the spring. GW students will teach the classes and coordinate the support for the program, while the Northwest Settlement House has opened their doors to house the project. Stanley Kaplan has supplied the materials and the training for the instructors.

This year AmeriCorps Members will be coordinating tutors, as well as bringing in college advisers from local schools who can offer guidance to the youth as they navigate the college application process.

Our goal is to raise the SAT scores of each of the students by 120 points, but our potential is much more. Each week that the program continues, the more thorough it becomes. One day instead of saying we raised the scores of 20 students by 120 points, we will be able to say we sent 120 students to school who each had a choice between twenty different colleges.



The College Prep project is more proof that we're getting things done.

The main part of intellectual education is not the acquisition of facts, but learning how to make facts live.

-Oliver Wendell Holmes

AMERICORPS

GETTING THINGS DONE

For more information on the College Prep Program, contact Justin Parke at the Neighbors Project, Marvin Center, room 418, (202) 994-6554



Safe Streets Project

Nine years ago Jim Gibbons, a veteran insurance entrepreneur, made an investment in a community in Washington, D.C. His company, Consumers United Insurance Company, decided to cast off the trend of insurance capital investment and instead invest in the inner-city. His investment began the revitalization of a neighborhood by offering low-to-moderate income housing along with a community that possessed all the necessary services for success. A product of that investment was a youth group called Young People On the Rise (YPOR). This successful program saw 32 of its original 35 youngsters go on to college from a community where previously a good high school education was a dim prospect.

Nine years later, that insurance company is gone, put out of business. Gone with it is the capital that supported the program. But Jim Gibbons is not, and now with him stand a few idealistic young people, including three AmeriCorps Members, dedicated to the survival of the inspirational youth group.

AmeriCorps members involved in the Safe Streets Project will be witness to exciting times. The next year for them will be spent doing the work to keep the success of the program alive, while YPOR's staff work to maintain the flow of support and college scholarships. AmeriCorps Members will engage participants in the cultural programming that YPOR is known for, while leading the service projects that are part of the YPOR creed. More importantly, they will coordinate the academic support that is part of the fundamental mission of the organization, calling on the members of The George Washington University community to lend a hand.

Most of all they will be responsible for creating the fun and engaging program that made Young People on the Rise successful in the first place. And in so doing, they will make sure that everyone in this generation of young people are able to get things done.

It may well be that the greatest tragedy of this period of social transition is not the glaring noisiness of the so-called bad people, but the appalling silence of the so-called good people.

Martin Luther King Jr.



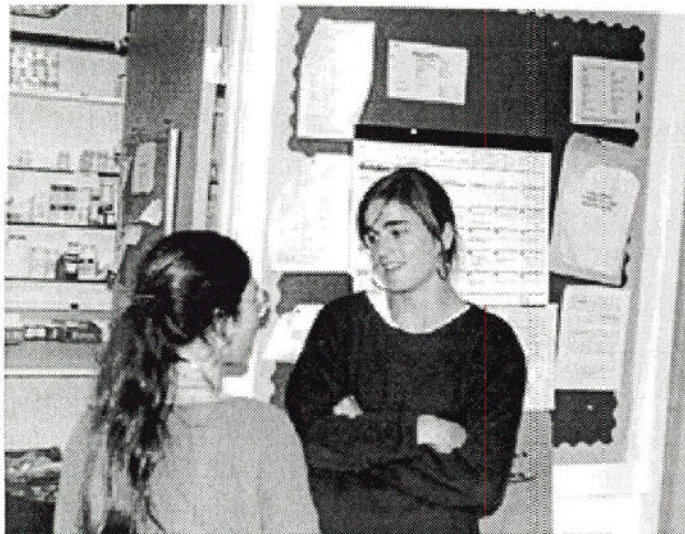
AMERICORPS

GETTING THINGS DONE

For more information on how to get involved in the Safe Streets Project, contact Jeff Caltabiano, Nikia Mason, or Marlon Palmer at The Neighbors Project, Marvin Center, Room 418, (202) 994-6554



The Healthy Neighborhood Program



In the first year of the Neighbors Project, students from The George Washington University Medical Center filled all of the volunteer positions at Zacchaeus Free Medical Clinic. This year we hope that AmeriCorps will help us to meet this achievement again, and expand further the resources that GW is able to extend to community organizations who deliver health services.

This year, three AmeriCorps Members are working with area medical clinics to increase the exchange between Shaw and The George Washington University. Although the program is young, the AmeriCorps Members have already been busy.

Annually, clinics in Shaw and the surrounding neighborhoods hold the Latin American Health Day. This year AmeriCorps Members took an active role in providing numerous services to the Latino population of the city. Routine check-ups, health screenings, and prescriptions were among the services provided.

AmeriCorps Members have also been active in the creation of health education classes through the clinics in which they work. Zacchaeus Free Medical Clinic will be sponsoring two new classes with the coordination of our on-site AmeriCorps Member. Mothers of newborn children will have access to a New Mothers Class that will help develop basic health and child care skills needed to handle the sensitive needs of infants. Clients of the clinic will also be able to take part in a nutrition class that is aimed at preventing illness through developing a healthy lifestyle.



An AmeriCorps Member will also be helping the Whitman-Walker Clinic kick-off its new child waiting room. While parents have check-ups at the clinic, the new child waiting room will provide much needed supervision for their young children.

The presence of AmeriCorps Members in the Healthy Neighborhood project not only means that we will maintain the consistency of our work from last year, but we will be making sure that even more is getting done in the future.



For more information on the Healthy Neighborhood Program, contact Vanessa Backe, Pat Thompson, or Omar Velarde at the Neighbors Project, Marvin Center, room 418, (202) 994-6554

The Service Learning Project

The Service Learning Project is the product of a partnership between The Neighbors Project and IDEALS, a initiative of National Association of Partners in Education. For more than a year, Neighbors Interns have been going into Dunbar High School and Scott Montgomery Elementary school to teach service-learning to D.C. students.

This year AmeriCorps members from The Neighbors Project have joined forces with IDEALS to continue this work. Each week, four Neighbors AmeriCorps members teach classes on the environment, the history of D.C., health, education, and a variety of other topics. In addition, AmeriCorps members coordinate community service projects that provide experiential material to enhance classroom lessons.

In the first semester of this year the AmeriCorps Members have coordinated trips to museums and other cultural institutions, including the Holocaust Museum and the George Meaney Museum. They have been supporting the development of a recycling program initiated by teachers at the school.

The AmeriCorps Members have also created and strengthened bonds between the two schools this past semester. Through their coordination, students at Dunbar are becoming tutors and mentors for students at Scott Montgomery. The drill team at Dunbar will be helping their elementary school neighbors to form their own junior drill team.

By the end of the program, students from the two public schools will not only have learned about homelessness, they will have worked with the homeless. By the end of this year, all of the participants in the program will have not learned about D.C. history, they will have taken part in making it. Both students and AmeriCorps members will be working together, getting more things done than ever before.

For more information on The Service Learning Project, contact Garrett Baxter, Doug Henshol, Darius Singpurwalla, or David Wigmore at The Neighbors Project, Marvin Center, room 418, (202) 994-6554



The sin of
ommission,
the refusal to
get involved,
is one of the
worst things in
the world.

Adolfo Perez
Esquivel



Member Information

Monique Ayotte

Monique is a George Washington University sophomore from Mill Valley, CA. She is a Sociology major in the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences. In high school she was a co-founder of HIVA, a HIV Awareness organization, President of Students for Justice, and student liaison for the Tamalpais Union High School District Board of Trustees. Since her arrival at GW she has become involved with the Campus Chapter of Teach for America and has helped to coordinate volunteer classroom aides through the Garnet Patterson Middle School.

Monique is working at Garnet-Patterson Middle school tutoring, working in the library, and recruiting more GW students to help.

Vanessa Backe

Vanessa, a graduate of Yale, is taking classes at The George Washington University this year as she prepares for Medical school in the fall. Vanessa has been a community activist since high school. In high school she served as a teacher's assistant in the Metairie Grammar School. As an undergraduate at Yale, Vanessa served as co-supervisor of the Calhoun College Soup Kitchen, where she helped prepare and serve meals at a local church. This past summer she served as a neo-natal assistant at Children's Hospital in New Orleans, LA.

Vanessa is a full-time AmeriCorps member working with Project Child and the Healthy Neighborhood Project. She works mornings at Bright Beginnings, a day care center for homeless children, and afternoons at Zacchaeus Free Medical Clinic providing health services to low-income patients.

Garrett Baxter

A senior at George Washington University from Kingston, MA, Garrett has participated extensively in the Washington community. He has volunteered at the Washington, D.C. Animal Shelter, interned for New Jersey Senator Frank Lautenberg and served an internship at the New Columbia Community Land Trust in the Shaw Neighborhood. He volunteered with Habitat for Humanity and served as a volunteer intern last year with the Neighbors Project.

Garrett will be working with the IDEALS program to teach service learning classes in Dunbar Senior High and Scott Montgomery Elementary School.

Meliza Brillantes

Meliza is a junior at The George Washington University majoring in Fine Arts in the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences. She has been active in a variety of service initiatives. During high school Meliza was a volunteer at St. James Hospital in Newark, NJ. In addition, she tutored homeless children at a program at Oak Knoll School. Here in Washington she has volunteered with the DC Department of Human Services as a staff member for the Crime Victims Assistance Center.

Meliza is working with Bright Beginnings and Martha's Table coordinating children's programs.

Annie Bird

Annie is a senior taking Latin American Studies major in the Elliot School of International Affairs at The George Washington University. Hailing from Raleigh, NC, Annie has involved herself in both school and community over the past three years, including teaching adult GED courses for the Washington Literacy Council and shaping activities with the Neighbors Project. She helped found the GW chapter of Habitat for Humanity. Last summer she helped found Community Building Community, a program designed to orient new GW freshman to service in the Washington, DC area. In addition she helped to found Project Blueprint, a DC coalition of college chapters of Habitat for Humanity. In addition, last fall Annie traveled to Guatemala to continue her studies and worked with the agency Guatemala Partners.

Annie is working with Habitat for Humanity and other local housing agencies to address housing issues through the Neighbors Project.

Jeffrey Caltabiano

A sophomore in the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences from Syracuse, NY, Jeff has been an active member of the campus community since his arrival in DC. A volunteer with the Neighbors Project during the 1993-4 academic year, Jeff served as an office intern and Community Building Community Facilitator. In High School, Jeff was President of Key Club and under his leadership the group participated in a variety of food drives, fund raisers, and events.

Jeff is now working with Young People on the Rise as part of the Safe Streets Project. He is also working with the Greener Shaw Project.

Angela Hicks

A student at University of the District of Columbia and resident of the Shaw community, Angela has been an involved community member for several years. In 1990 she has served as a volunteer at Martha's Table, where she helped tutor third grade children. In addition, she helped prepare and serve food to area homeless people. Angela has also been involved with the Quaker Workcamps, where she assisted teens from local schools in helping low income families build homes in southern Maryland.

Angela is working on environmental issues around Shaw as part of the Greener Shaw Project.

Joshua Hoeltzel

A sophomore in the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences majoring in English, Josh comes to The George Washington University from New York where he has been involved in service for almost ten years. Since the summer of 1989 he has been a member of the Antioch Youth Group in his hometown. He has also been involved with the American Field Service, helping to serve at soup kitchens in his hometown near Yonkers, NY. Since arriving at GW he has become involved with the Progressive Student Union, the Urban Art Family, and the Neighbors Project.

Josh is also working at Garnet-Patterson on the Project Teach tutoring project.

Doug Kenshol

Doug is alumni of the Peace Corps and a graduate student at American University. Currently a resident of the Shaw neighborhood, he worked in the community during the 1993-94 academic year with the IDEALS Project, a program with the National Partners in Education. As an IDEALS intern he was placed at Dunbar High School where he helped to lead service projects and organize field trips. As a Peace Corps member he served two years as a teacher in Ghana, helping to create a science club and conduct service activities.

Doug is working to strengthen the work of the IDEALS program at Dunbar High and Scott Montgomery Elementary.

Nikia Mason

A resident of Shaw, Nikia has been involved in a variety of local initiatives designed to foster greater community spirit. A member of the Ward II Youth Action Team since 1992, Nikia has participated in activities that include drug prevention seminars, community clean-up days, and weekend community retreats. Since the fall of 1992 he has served as a tutor at the Northwest Settlement House, tutoring children ages 9-12. In addition, he has served as an assistant little league baseball coach. Nikia is a graduate of Dunbar High School.

Nikia is a full-time AmeriCorps Member who devotes part of his time to Young People on the Rise working on the Safe Streets Project, and the rest of his time tackling Shaw's green space issues in the Greener Shaw Project.

Marlon Palmer

Marlon is a graduate of Roosevelt High School as well as Scott Montgomery Elementary School, located in Shaw. Since the fall of 1992 he has been a member of the Ward II Youth Action Team, which co-sponsored the DC Drug Prevention Partnership. This summer he spent as a volunteer camp counselor, supervising a group of 11 and 12 year old summer campers at the Northwest Settlement House. He has also served as reading tutor at the Settlement House for the past two years.

Marlon, a full time AmeriCorps Member is helping on the Safe Streets Project, working at Young People on the Rise. He is also dealing with environmental issues as part of Greener Shaw.

Justin Parke

Justin is a sophomore student in the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences. A member of the Shaw Neighborhood, Justin has been a volunteer at Martha's Table for ten years. During that period he helped with the homeless feeding program, organized food pickups, worked with children on a computer literacy system and helped install educational, tutorial software at the center. He has also volunteered with So Others Might Eat (SOME) and participated in environmental cleanups in Rock Creek Park.

Justin is helping to coordinate an SAT prep class with the Northwest Settlement House.

Jamal Reid

A junior from Warren, OH, Jamal majoring in International Business with a focus on Latin America in the School of Business and Public Management at GW. Jamal is a key organizer of the new student organization Urban Art Family. Under his guidance the group hopes to promote artistic endeavors among urban youth in the Washington, DC area. In addition to a proposed art publication, Jamal and his group have promoted hip hop culture by hosting events on campus and in Shaw. In high school Jamal was a member of Youth Aid, where he tutored younger students in the community.

Jamal is working with the Mentoring Project at Garnet-Patterson Middle School as part Project Teach.

Darius Singpurwalla

A senior from Arlington, VA, Darius is a history major in the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences at GW. Darius has been an active member of the Neighbors Project since 1993. Darius spent last academic year coordinating GW students into volunteer placements in Shaw neighborhood community based organizations.

Darius will be working with IDEALS teaching service-learning at Dunbar and Scott Montgomery.

Patricia Thompson

A student at Howard University, Pat has been an active community member and volunteer. Since 1992 she has served as a Children's Advocate for the Court Appointed Special Advocate. In that role she helped to serve abused and neglected children. She also is Vice-President of the Carter Woodson Association for the Study of African American Life and History, having developed educational programs to provide exchange between African ambassadors and the general public. She is also a former member of the Coalition of 100 Black Women.

Pat will be working with the Whitman Walker Clinic providing health care and services to AIDS Patients.

David Wigmore

A graduate of La Salle University, David is a first year Graduate student at GW seeking a Master's degree in International Affairs. Having returned from Vienna where he served as a Fullbright Scholar, David taught social studies and English to Austrian high schoolers and Bosnian refugees. While living in Switzerland, he joined a group called the Swiss Samaritans, a volunteer aid organization. Prior to this experience he served on a volunteer Ambulance squad in his home state of New Jersey.

David is teaching service-learning with the IDEALS program at Scott Montgomery Elementary School.

Omar Velarde

A Junior from Miami, FL, Omar has had extensive experience as a health care supporter. He has served in a variety of positions in the South Miami Hospital, including as a fundraiser and event coordinator. Fluent in Spanish and Italian, Omar joined AmeriCops to contribute to the country he now calls home. He recently gained American citizenship during the fall semester.

Omar is working at Clinica Del Pueblo providing health services to Latinos in the neighborhood.

AMERICORPS

GETTING THINGS DONE

Clinton Presidential Records Digital Records Marker

This is not a presidential record. This is used as an administrative marker by the William J. Clinton Presidential Library Staff.

This marker identifies the place of a tabbed divider. Given our digitization capabilities, we are sometimes unable to adequately scan such dividers. The title from the original document is indicated below.

NEWS ARTICLES

Divider Title: _____

The Boston Globe

• THURSDAY, JANUARY 25, 1990

WILLIAM O. TAYLOR, *Chairman of the Board and Publisher*

BENJAMIN B. TAYLOR, *President*

MATTHEW V. STORIN, *Editor*

H.D.S. GREENWAY, *Editor, Editorial Page*

STEPHEN E. TAYLOR, *Executive Vice President*

HELEN W. DONOVAN, *Executive Editor*

WILLIAM B. HUFF, *Executive Vice President*

GREGORY L. MOORE, *Managing Editor*

Founded 1872

CHARLES H. TAYLOR, *Publisher 1873-1922* WILLIAM O. TAYLOR, *Publisher 1922-1955* WM. DAVIS TAYLOR, *Publisher 1955-1977*

JOHN L. TAYLOR, *President 1963-1975*

LAURENCE L. WINSHIP, *Editor 1955-1965*

THOMAS WINSHIP, *Editor 1965-1984*

Clinton's mid-course correction

It was couched in the rhetoric of reconciliation. The talk of smaller government and less regulation could have come out of the Republican "Contract with America." But underneath the cooperative tone of President Clinton's State of the Union address is an agenda that differs markedly in substance and philosophy from that of the new Republican majority in Congress.

It is an activist, progressive agenda that shows Clinton now seeking to move forward, and not on his heels as he was in November. He hopes that his "New Covenant" can be a viable alternative to Newt Gingrich's Contract.

There are aspects of Clinton's approach that are unrealistic. His embrace of further reductions in the budget deficit is welcome, but excluding consideration of even minor changes in Social Security, Medicare and veterans benefits undermines his credibility as a long-term deficit-cutter.

In confessing that he had bitten off more than he could chew on health care last year, he acknowledged the obvious, and a measured approach now, "starting with insurance reforms, makes sense. But Clinton and Congress should not forget that the number of uninsured Americans is a disgrace.

On some other issues Clinton is tardy. Lobbyist and campaign finance reforms, for instance, should have been a first-year focus. We hope he finally does turn the heat up this year.

Several other Clinton initiatives are ones we support, including a reasonable increase in the minimum wage, welfare reform that focuses on moving recipients to work rather than punishing poor children, and modest middle-class tax reductions that are fully funded by well-advertised budget cuts. Clinton was also on the right track promising to crack down on illegal immigration. For a nation of immigrants, the only way to keep the front door open is to lock the back doors and windows against illegals.

Clinton's passionate defense of the assault weapons ban passed last year was the dramatic high point of the speech - "I will not let that be repealed" he repeated, and we applauded. He was right to defend the proven crime prevention programs as well.

Clinton captured several worthy themes in his emotional championing of Americorps, the program that has put 20,000 persons into service in their communities. Americans have to "give something back to their communities and their country," he said.

Americorps, he said, is "the essence of the New Covenant, and we shouldn't stop it." This contrasted sharply with Speaker Newt Gingrich's recent attack on the program as "gimmickry" to which he is "totally, unequivocally opposed."

As these opposing views indicate, the debate over national service is likely to be one of several that define fundamentally the current political philosophy of this Congress and the nation. Government minimalists argue that community service should be voluntary and that taxpayers shouldn't be forced to subsidize needless bureaucracies.

But even as confirmed a minimalist as Gov. Weld is a longtime supporter of the Boston-based CityYear, which has been copied by many of the 300 programs that are part of Americorps.

Clinton's embrace of Americorps makes sense because it is not a huge central bureaucracy doling out cash but a small government agency distributing funds to community-based groups, most of which have strong private support as well. In addition to minimum-wage jobs in the community, the program gives participants the promise of help in paying off college loans - a powerful incentive. It generates some of the idealism of the Peace Corps.

Government's job - and we believe this is what most voters want - is to conduct its business effectively, not go out of business.

DALLAS MORNING NEWS

DALLAS, TX
SUNDAY 809,188

JAN 22 1995

143 BURRELLE'S FR
...C...n

EDITORIAL

AMERICORPS

Helping communities is still a good idea

E6247AT
Republican lawmakers should, and will, take the Clinton administration to task over initiatives that cost too much and are not needed. But Mr. Clinton's national service program shouldn't be one of them.

The program, Americorps, allows young people to work for minimum wage in communities across the country in exchange for government help in repaying college loans or vocational training loans. A kind of domestic Peace Corps, the year-old program provides an excellent vehicle for restoring a much-needed sense of citizenship and community right here at home.

Yet, the new Republican leadership, especially House Speaker Newt Gingrich, has targeted Americorps for the budget ax. He told *Newsweek*, "I am totally, unequivocally opposed to national service. It is coerced voluntarism.... It's gimmickry."

Hardly. It was a good idea when Mr. Clinton made it a major campaign theme. And it was a good bill when approved by Congress. Sixteen House Republican co-sponsors sent letters to their colleagues encouraging them to support the national service bill. "We believe national service is a basic Republican idea and that the president's proposal is structured as a Republican would have structured it and that it deserves Republican support," the letter said.

Especially Republican about the bill is its decentralization, both in terms of funding and administration. A third of the federal trust fund for the program goes to national nonprofit organizations like the Red Cross, Habitat for Humanity and Teach for

America. The bulk of the money goes to bipartisan, independent state commissions that distribute the funds according to state guidelines. The application process is local, and local jurisdictions actually employ the youngsters. That means the people who know the greatest needs in their community can direct volunteers to that concern.

Texas, which has 14 program partners, has the largest number of participants per capita than any other state. The Greater Dallas Community of Churches is the local partner and is using its 49 participants to: tutor in elementary and middle schools, teach alternatives to violence, expand access to health care and improve nutrition and reduce hunger. And the volunteers are in the neighborhoods where their efforts can do the most good.

Republican critics say the program costs too much. Sen. Charles Grassley of Iowa says the cost per participant is more than \$30,000. Eli Segal, head of the Corporation for National and Community Service, which oversees the program, told *The Dallas Morning News* that the cost is under \$20,000. He said that Mr. Grassley includes such things as the donations of equipment and retired personnel by corporations being good corporate citizens.

Costs do matter. But the potential benefits of this program — meeting unmet community needs, bringing youngsters of all ethnic and economic backgrounds together, helping youngsters defray college costs, and instilling a true sense of civic responsibility — make it a worthwhile investment.

EDITORIAL PAGE

Tuesday, January 24, 1995

Page A6

THE MILWAUKEE JOURNAL

LUCIUS W. NEWMAN
Founder 1882

HARRY J. GRANT
1916-1963

THE JOURNAL EDITORIAL BOARD

MARY JO MEISNER, *Editor*
DAVID BEHRENDT, *Editorial Page Editor*
SUE RYON, *Assistant Editorial Page Editor*

Can service corps survive politics?

SOME government programs are hard to defend. The fledgling AmeriCorps, President Clinton's national service plan, is not one of them. It's a splendid way to revitalize communities, encourage social responsibility and expand educational opportunities — causes that conservatives and liberals alike can embrace.

So why are congressional Republicans trying to kill off AmeriCorps? House Speaker Newt Gingrich calls it "coerced voluntarism." Huh? Last time we checked, no one was forced to join. The service corps' 20,000 members aren't even volunteers. They get the minimum wage, health benefits, child care and an annual grant of \$4,725 to pay for college or vocational training.

An expensive bureaucracy? Come on. The program costs just \$500 million a year, a pinprick in the \$1.5 trillion federal budget.

Even so, critics complain that the cost per participant — about \$20,000 a year — is too high. That's in the eye of the beholder, of course. But the federal dollars leverage much more in private contributions — exactly the sort of public-private alliances that Republicans say they want to encourage.

Gimmickry? So says Gingrich. The facts argue

otherwise. AmeriCorps' 300 projects around the country plug into existing programs in public safety, health care, the environment and human services. In Austin, Texas, for example, participants clean up graffiti, immunize needy children and work to improve relations between police and the community. Nitty-gritty stuff that might not otherwise get done.

There's another aspect to this modest program that conservatives ought to like: It revitalizes the social contract between citizens and government. In contrast to entitlements, which demand nothing in return, national service marries benefit to sacrifice, individualism to community. Participants gain support for their schooling. But society, too, comes out ahead when the urban fabric is strengthened and the work force is better educated.

So really now, what's not to like? It's hard to avoid the conclusion that the GOP objections to national service are not about voluntarism or big government but rather about embarrassing Clinton: Get rid of a probable domestic success story and deny him something to brag about in 1996. If that's the aim here, it's a victory for political spite, not enlightened government.

Newsday

EDITORIALS

1/10/95

Back Off, Newt

Bill's AmeriCorps is a good idea

The national service program seems an unlikely place for a beleaguered Democratic president to make a stand against budget-chopping congressional Republicans. It's too new and too inexpensive to have developed much of a



Gingrich

constituency. A country that got along without it before President Bill Clinton came along could survive without it now.

But this particular program, now called AmeriCorps, has Clinton's fingerprints on it. He says he'll fight to keep it alive. We hope he means it. A voluntary corps makes a powerful statement to young Americans that their contributions in community service are needed and valued. Since it doesn't require a huge bureaucracy, even Republicans should like it.

AmeriCorps has about 20,000 members working in more than 300 locally run programs nationwide. It pays the \$4.25-an-hour minimum wage for up to 1,700 hours a year, plus medical insurance. Members can get as much as \$4,725 for past or future college costs.

But House Speaker Newt Gingrich, scenting an opportunity to trash a Clinton achievement, says he's "totally, unequivocally opposed to national service." With his usual gift for the colorful but inaccurate sound bite, he calls it "coerced voluntarism." But this man's coercion looks more like opportunity — an educational one that otherwise might not exist, as well as an opportunity for patriotic folks to serve their country and still subsist.

Congress has already approved funding for as many as 33,000 AmeriCorps slots by early fall. Clinton may not be able to expand the

program as he'd like. He may even have to shrink it to keep the Republicans at bay. An experiment with means-testing — by tying tuition subsidies to parental income for kids who choose to go to college before doing their AmeriCorps stint — might also be worth a trial. But this is a program worth fighting for. For once, Clinton must follow through.



Volunteers or Not, They Get It Done

By SARA ENGRAM

Don't call members of AmeriCorps volunteers. As anyone connected to the program is quick to point out, they're full-time workers. You won't find many "volunteers" who spend 40 hours a week or more on the job.

But for some Republicans the term is a handy buzzword for igniting a partisan debate. "To replace voluntarism with bureaucrats is wrong," says House Speaker Newt Gingrich.

Supporters of AmeriCorps — and of the ideals of national service — are ready with their answers.

"They're not replacing anyone," says Rhoda Dorsey, former president of Goucher College and chair of the Governor's Commission on Service, the board that oversees Maryland's AmeriCorps efforts. AmeriCorps funding is available only for projects that are not being done by anyone else. If these workers didn't offer these services, nobody would.

Hilda Peterson, 45, a mother of seven children in Cumberland, has learned first-hand the needs that exist in her community. As an AmeriCorps worker in Western Maryland, she has been able to extend a meal-delivery program for senior citizens into a rural community where elderly people were getting no help.

Often, Ms. Peterson says, these people were existing on diets of crackers and applesauce simply because they were unable to prepare more nutritious meals. Her most satisfying experience is the aid she has been able to provide for a woman in her 90s, crippled with arthritis and living alone in a farmhouse several miles from her nearest neighbors. "Helping her has made the whole thing worthwhile," she says.

In Baltimore, 28-year-old Sean Stevenson, an AmeriCorps worker who is tutoring in a city elementary school, cites the first-grade child who spent her days in silence before the program began. Now, he says proudly, she's such a confident little girl, "she talks all day."

Ms. Peterson and Mr. Stevenson, like those AmeriCorps members who were present in the House chamber for President Clinton's State of the Union message this past week, are volunteers in the sense that they asked to participate. But these days soldiers also volunteer for the army, and even members of Congress voluntarily run for office. Yet once they're in service to the country, no

In contrast, AmeriCorps workers come close to working for free. They earn only a small living allowance, usually around \$600 a month, plus about \$1,200 a year in health benefits. For most of them, the enticement is a voucher for \$4,725, to be used for education and collected only after they have completed a year of service, or 1,700 hours of work.

Their one-year service to America costs about \$13,000 each, 20 percent of which is covered by the programs in which they work.

Meanwhile, AmeriCorps members are plowing plenty of rewards back into the communities. That's especially true in Maryland. With 854 people serving in some 18 different programs, Maryland now has more AmeriCorps members per capita than any other state. The benefits they provide don't come just in dollars and services, but also in the spark of imagination that helps communities pull together to find local, small-scale, non-bureaucratic solutions to problems.

That's another place defenders of national service differ sharply with the critics. AmeriCorps encourages partnerships that would seem unlikely in other contexts. In Baltimore, Mr. Stevenson works in a program called Enable, which offers a range of services under the auspices of Baltimore Reads, Inc., the School of Pharmacy of the University of Maryland at Baltimore and Community Building in Partnership, Inc.

As Dr. Dorsey notes, we live in a society that believes in solutions. We tell ourselves that if we can define a social problem and devise a way to tackle it, we can solve it. But that kind of thinking has often led to exactly the kind of expensive and expansive government efforts that Speaker Gingrich and his allies detest.

AmeriCorps has a different philosophy. It puts a premium on small-scale approaches and on finding ways to leverage local resources, both in money and time. Many AmeriCorps programs make use of a "cascading" model of voluntarism, in which AmeriCorps workers recruit and train volunteers for various projects, who in turn recruit and train other volunteers, thus multiplying the rewards many times over.

"This is a not-very-expensive way of tackling problems that have not been amenable to solutions on a grander scale," Dr. Dorsey says.

AmeriCorps gets things done — from feeding hungry people and tutoring students to taking health services door-to-door and cleaning up public areas. No wonder President Clinton considers AmeriCorps one of his proudest achievements.

Sara Engram is editorial-page director of The Evening Sun.

The Washington Post

TUESDAY, JANUARY 24, 1995

J. J. Dionne Jr.

Back to Citizenship

House Speaker Newt Gingrich performed a huge service for President Clinton last week. No, this isn't about at book deal. It's about Gingrich's tack on Clinton's national service program. By forcing the president to defend national service, Gingrich has given him a chance to shift the political debate from a moldy contest over "more" or "less" government to one about priorities: What should government do in the first place, and what obligations do democratic citizens have toward each other?

The service program is certainly worth defending in its own right, and the best arguments for it have been made over the years by conservatives. It's true, as conservatives have said, that bureaucratic charity is not the preferred solution to social problems. Far better to have citizens engaged in helping each other, person-to-person, and to do so through local, voluntarily established institutions.

One of the most useful pieces of work done by conservative intellectuals over the last two decades was a 1977 essay, "To Empower People," by sociologist Peter Berger and the Rev. Richard John Neuhaus. They argued that if government relentlessly took over all charitable functions, it would endanger soci-

ety's "mediating structures"—the institutions created by families, communities and churches—that nurture individual virtue and "mediate" between government and the individual. Government, they argued, should make strengthening these institutions a central goal.

That, roughly, is what the service program does. The volunteers for AmeriCorps, as the main service agency is called, do not work for a federal bureaucracy. They work for already established local institutions that are trying to solve problems: preventing crime, teaching literacy, immunizing kids against disease, helping the homebound elderly, curbing teen pregnancy. The main function of the program's Washington arm, the Corporation for National and Community Service, is to monitor the programs—not for their adherence to bureaucratic rules but simply to make sure they're doing broadly what they claim to be doing.

Why spend any federal money on this sort of thing? Because the voluntary sector needs strengthening, and because federal money spent supplementing voluntary activities has a big payoff. A lot of volunteer organizations are having trouble finding people. Many parents—both parents—necessarily spend so much time working and then raising

their kids that they don't have a lot of time left over. Eli Segal, who heads the service program, sees it as "an effective way of filling in the holes" in the voluntary sector and a recognition of "the chords that bind us together as a people."

This last point is why the broader argument raised by the service program is so important. The idea of democratic citizenship inherent in the program is the one idea capable of answering the problems of two other ideas that are gaining currency in American politics: radical individualism and extreme multiculturalism.

Both ideas start at reasonable places. Almost all of us are individualists in that we value autonomy and freedom. But radical individualism suggests that we are completely free agents, thus denying the reality that our freedom depends on preserving a community that is civil, just, tolerant and nurturing of the other values on which freedom depends. Apart from such a community, freedom withers.

Multiculturalists started out with the fair argument that too little attention was paid to the contributions, ideas and interests of groups other than affluent white males—women, African Americans, Hispanics, working class people

and others. But pushed to the extreme, multiculturalists argued that the only forms of solidarity that counted were those within these particular groups.

Those who value the idea of democratic citizenship argue, against the radical individualists, that preserving freedom is a cooperative enterprise that carries burdens of responsibility. We can't just walk away from social problems. Against extreme multiculturalism, advocates of democratic citizenship argue that our sense of solidarity needs to transcend all our particularisms. Whites need to vindicate the rights of blacks, blacks the rights of whites, men those of women and women those of men.

The Clinton administration has been obsessed with its failure to "communicate" its achievements to the American people. This is the wrong obsession. It implies that the American people are too dumb or too bamboozled by Republican propaganda to "understand" all that the president has been doing.

What the administration should worry about instead is that it is losing the political argument. Americans have surveyed what they see as a series of messes—crime, family breakup, stagnating living standards for many in the middle—and a majority has decided (tentatively) that the best way to deal

with all of them may be for government to do little more than throw the book at criminals. This is not the product of selfishness but a retreat from government that is seen as ineffective, intrusive in the wrong places and insufficiently concerned with nurturing civic responsibility.

There is a corresponding retreat into enclaves. Suburbanites, to pick one example, are tempted to give up on the inner cities, figuring they have enough problems of their own. Think of it as the suburban (or male or white) answer to multiculturalism.

Clinton and the Democrats won't win the argument unless they reverse these trends. One worthy way of doing so is to preach the rewards—and the obligations—of democratic citizenship. A government based on this idea does not pretend to have all the answers. Still less does it claim the right to replace the civic institutions of a free people with its own. But neither is it an indifferent government, because it recognizes that government either strengthens or saps the ability of citizens to live together, solve problems and accept their moral obligations to each other. In this telling, government is not some alien structure out there. It becomes the realm of us all.

Clinton needs to save AmeriCorps

WASHINGTON — House Speaker Newt Gingrich wants to kill the Clinton administration's national service program because, he claims, it is "coerced volunteerism," a tortured concept he just invented.

The man who had a \$4.5 million book deal approves of volunteerism, mind you, he just disapproves when it does not spring from a selfless desire to work for free, but actually results in concrete rather than purely spiritual reward.

Cute Newtspeak. Clever Newtology. This is the most convoluted act since Rose Mary Woods demonstrated how she struck a foot pedal barely within reach to accidentally erase 18 crucial minutes from a Nixon Watergate tape.

It would be hilarious were this not such serious business.

The president's program, called AmeriCorps, puts young men and women at work on public service projects for a year at the minimum wage. They are rewarded with \$4,725 in education vouchers, to be put toward college tuition or paying off college loans.

They commit to a regular full week's work, unlike the traditional unpaid Gingrich-preferred volunteer, who serves perhaps an hour or so a week, when he or she can find time away from job and family responsibilities.

National service corps participants are not forced to join this program; they must apply of their own free will. No coercion is involved. No government rope snares them in, no federal trap compels them. Far more people are clamoring to get in the program than funds can support.

And government incentives to prompt people to do what they should be doing in the first place is a social policy as old as communal living itself. Harry Truman is famous for remarking upon the irony of this phenomenon, but even he was a latecomer to the idea.



Marianne Means

AmeriCorps combines idealism and practicality, opportunity and responsibility. What could be wrong with that? It has President Clinton's name on it, that's what's wrong. The resurgent Republicans would like to wipe out every trace of Clinton's presence in the White House.

Republicans, in fact, have no objections to such stimuli when they come in the form of tax breaks, tax credits or subsidies to lure private industry or wealthy individuals into preferred development, investment or regulatory strategies.

THE SERVICE CORPS is a domestic version of President Kennedy's famous Peace Corps. It is designed to encourage good citizenship, provide needed civic service and help deserving young people go to college all at the same time.

It combines idealism and practicality, opportunity and responsibility. What could be wrong with that?

It has President Clinton's name on it, that's what's wrong. It might, if left intact, become a positive part of his historical legacy.

The resurgent congressional Republicans would like to wipe out every trace of Clinton's presence in the White House. He has mightily offended them by reversing major policies of the Reagan-Bush era and shifting some spending from the Pentagon toward domestic initiatives.

The national service corps, a Clinton campaign pledge, is the one program with which the president is totally identified. "It represents everything I wanted to do," Clinton says.

The Republicans complain that it is just more pork from big Democratic spenders. They hope that by slapping a big government label on it they can do in the program just as they did in the Clinton health plan.

But AmeriCorps volunteers are not reporting to some big new bureaucracy. They go to work for established local community and philanthropic groups that

are already serving the public in a wide range of ways, helping flood victims, repairing low-income housing, bringing supplies to elderly shut-ins, teaching illiterate adults to read and so forth.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT officials, or Washington bureaucrats, choose which organizations are to be helped. A small federal agency with a powerful inspector general was created primarily to monitor costs and conflicts of interest.

The cost, as federal budgets go, is not much. The program will fund 33,000 service jobs this year on a \$350 million budget. It could eventually put 100,000 young men and women to work — a help them go to college — at a cost of \$1 billion.

Republicans also contend that reimbursing volunteers is bad policy, because it will discourage millions of young people already doing community service from offering their services for free.

This is unrealistic, not to say hypocritical. Most current volunteers serve intermittently, part-time, and are financially secure. The program is aimed at providing reliable, consistent service from young people needing financial help to go to college who are also dependent upon earning an income for daily survival.

President Clinton vows to fight AmeriCorps. It is one of the places he has chosen to draw a line in the sand against the aggressive GOP challenge. He is correct on the merits. And it is a minimum pluck he must show if he is to earn a second term.

■ Marianne Means is Washington, D.C. columnist with Hearst Newspapers.

Seattle Post-Intelligencer 1-29-95

A baffling conservative assault on a worthy program

Much of what is going on in Washington today is admittedly puzzling as we struggle to master the vocabulary and understand the philosophy of the Newt Frontier. But nothing so baffles me as the conservatives' attack on AmeriCorps, the fledgling national volunteer service organization that seems to have been baptized with John F. Kennedy's immortal declaration, "Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country."

In its six-month life, AmeriCorps has attracted 20,000 volunteers, most of them late teens and twenty-somethings. That's more than the Peace Corps, its older and well-established cousin, attracted during its zenith years in the 1960s.

That apparently means little to Speaker Gingrich and the GOP's emergent conservative wing. In a speech last week to the Republican National Committee's winter meeting, Gingrich dismissed AmeriCorps as an example of "coerced volunteerism" that needed to be rooted out of the federal budget.

John P. Walker, president of The New Citizenship Project — an incubator of conservative thinking and ally of Gingrich — urged last week that conservatives engage in battle with President Clinton over AmeriCorps as a way of clarifying their divergent philosophies.

"AmeriCorps embodies the bureaucratic populism that has become the variant of big-government liberalism," Walker wrote.

So what is this evil that good conservatives must rip from the bosom of the federal government? In South Dade, it's young

people with hammers and saws and a hunger to help who are building houses through the Habitat for Humanity program, working alongside the prospective owners and helping weekend volunteers learn the necessary skills.

In Broward, they're volunteers who are tutoring teens on the verge of dropping out of school. The idea is that if the teens can keep up in their classes, not only will they be enriched personally, but the community has one less youth — with too much energy and too much idle time amid too much temptation — to drift into crime.

In Miami's Overtown this weekend, AmeriCorps volunteers worked with families around Phillis Wheatley Elementary to clean up a vacant lot — long a hangout for drug dealers — and transform it into a community garden. It's one less place for crime to take root. And in Liberty City, volunteers help residents remove lead paint from old apartments — paint that, when eaten by children, can cause permanent brain damage.

The list of Florida projects is eye-opening, some rural, some urban. In Pinellas County, volunteers assist police every day, while at night they attend classes toward a police certification. In Frostproof, they work with elderly farmworkers — an overlooked and vulnerable group of people.

Meanwhile, nearly 100 volunteers will fan out through the Everglades and Florida Bay, helping scientists to gather the ecological data critical to saving that endangered jewel.

This is not, says Jim Brower, deputy director of Florida's AmeriCorps program, a jobs program. The pay is too small and the hours too long for that.

"This is a program for people who want to make a difference," said the retired Navy officer. "What this does is enables people who might not otherwise be able to volunteer and serve the community to be able to do it."

The financial rewards are clearly minuscule. Each volunteer gets \$7,640 a year in salary, or \$116.92 a week, about half the minimum wage. That weekly stipend is roughly what a congressman makes in two hours (not counting the lobbyist-paid perks). The maximum hitch is two years.

In addition, for every year of service, the federal government agrees to pay \$4,725 toward college or vocational school expenses.

What makes this attack more puzzling is that the AmeriCorps would seem to encourage the values that conservatives take so much pride in emphasizing, rightly so.

The program, of course, is erected atop a foundation of

charity toward others. It also insists that those people who benefit from most AmeriCorps programs also contribute to it.

When volunteers work in an inner-city neighborhood helping residents make their houses safe against burglaries, the residents — through homeowner associations and other means — are asked to contribute a portion of AmeriCorps' costs. Typically, they are also enlisted as workers in other neighborhood projects led by AmeriCorps volunteers.

It's part of that citizen compact: with every right comes a responsibility.

Moreover, all but a few of AmeriCorps' projects are controlled by the community in which they occur — not imposed

on them from Washington, D.C., or Tallahassee. The volunteers are not even federal employees; they draw their paychecks from the program in which they work.

So much for Big Government. As kind-hearted as AmeriCorps may be, it's also a hard-headed business investment for taxpayers. For one thing, the local community gets far more from each worker than would otherwise be possible to buy on the open market.

And — just as with the GI Bill — every penny we spend on a volunteer's salary and tuition will likely come back to the U.S. Treasury many times over. The college education will enable the ex-volunteer to command a higher salary in the job market, which means higher income-

taxes flowing back.

This is not — or shouldn't be — a Democrat versus Republican issue. Among its backers have been U.S. Sen. Connie Mack of Florida, a Republican, and his colleague, Bob Graham, a Democrat. Former President Bush supported the program and presided during pilot programs.

And it may be instructive to note that in the 10 Florida counties where AmeriCorps is active, the GOP is dominant in the politics of all but one (Broward).

It would be disheartening to suddenly see congressional Republicans stampede into line behind Gingrich because of his personal and mindless hatred of government. There is an irony in that.

The speaker, his new book deal aside, has spent his life dependent on income from the public treasury. He grew up as the son of a military officer, attending government-financed schools.

After attending graduate school (which he was able to do because he applied for and received a student deferment from the draft, unlike so many of his peers in the 1960s), he was hired as a professor at a state college. He now, of course, draws his salary from you and me.

Perhaps Gingrich might change his view of AmeriCorps if he took its approach to public service. He could forgo his salary and perks in favor of the \$7,640 stipend for the next two years.

That would be a start. But of course by doing his service in Congress he'd miss out on the chance to help people directly who have been through disaster or are hoping to avert one; he'd miss the chance to experience the fear and frustration of those who try to lead good lives in crime-riddled neighborhoods; he'd miss the joy of teaching a child to read, thereby opening his or her mind to a world of wonder and opportunity; he'd miss the true meaning of JFK's clarion call.

Most of all, he'd miss the chance to gather material for a great second book. An apology for his first



TOM FIEDLER
POLITICAL
EDITOR



Herald file photo

READY TO WORK: AmeriCorps volunteers in Dade County were sworn in by President Clinton via satellite at the Miami-Dade Community College downtown campus in September

Program With 60's Spirit Butts Against 95's

By PETER APPLEBOME

Special to The New York Times

PHOENIX, Feb. 1 — On New Year's Eve, Kerri Goncher packed up her 1987 Toyota Supra in Chicago and drove here in 34 hours straight to begin teaching the severely emotionally disturbed and sometimes violent children who end up at the Little Canyon Center run by the Arizona Baptist Children's Services. She will earn \$4.50 an hour plus an annual \$4,725 educational grant.

Ms. Goncher's bouncy enthusiasm for a low-wage public service job may be just what President Clinton had in mind for the AmeriCorps public service program.

In its first five months of operation, the program has placed 20,000 Americans like Ms. Goncher, a recent University of



Jeffery V. Chatlosh for The New York Times

The New Volunteers

A special report.

Wisconsin graduate who hopes to become a teacher, in a wide variety of public service jobs tutoring children, serving as police cadets, repairing housing projects and monitoring contamination of rivers in 350 programs around the country.

Mr. Clinton has hailed the program as perhaps his proudest achievement and one that is already "changing the way that Government works." In his proposed budget for the fiscal year 1996, he is asking \$812.5 million out of a \$1.6 trillion budget to finance 47,000 AmeriCorps members.

Congressional Republicans are threatening to kill AmeriCorps, calling it a costly throwback to an era of big Government. Some say that it will make it harder to recruit volunteers without incentives and that it is unnecessary because many participants will just get Government assistance to what they would have done way.

And instead of Mr. Clinton's hope that AmeriCorps would evoke the spirit of the Kennedy years, when the Peace Corps drew instinctive support, AmeriCorps



Jeff Topping for The New York Times

Donald Davis, above, works for the Federal AmeriCorps program organizing social service projects for young people at two elementary schools in Florence, S.C. Kerri Goncher teaches emotionally disturbed children in an AmeriCorps program in Phoenix.

Continued on Page B7, Column 1

USDA

has come to reflect the opposite: the Anti-Government ethic and budget roadblocks now facing almost any new Federal program.

With its self-consciously businesslike moniker as the Corporation for National Service, its bottom-up structure controlled by state commissions appointed by mostly Republican Governors, and its scaled-down stipend, the program was designed as a public service program for an anti-Government era.

"I like to think of our role as an investment banker investing in local communities, rewarding the programs doing well with growth possibilities and making sure those not working are not refunded," said Eli Segal, who heads the program and has the title of chief executive. "This is a like a start-up business, designed with the support of moderate Republicans, which believes that delivery systems as close as possible to the customer will bear fruit in terms of quality."

But, businesslike oratory aside, Congressional Republicans say Americorps is just another Government program at a time the nation needs fewer of them.

"If you're going to get to a balanced budget and your choice is having a nice little Government bureaucracy that runs people around the country doing nice things or taking care of people with severe disabilities," Speaker Newt Gingrich, Republican of Georgia, said in a recent interview, "where is each one on the priority list?"

"It just strikes me that on any reasonable list that gets to a balanced budget, this is a long way below the line of what doesn't survive."

In his Presidential campaign, Mr. Clinton advertised his proposal for a national service program as a way to help students pay for their education while serving their country and being imbued with the spirit of service to others. Interviews with Americorps members and organizations that employ them indicate that the program is already creating extraordinary interest among young people and tapping into a nascent spirit of public service on college campuses.

But they also indicate that it could be difficult for the program to meet the most exacting standards for selfless activism that some will hold it to and that the timing of the program could not be worse, given the budget realities in Washington.

"I really think that as long as the Government is going to play some role, this is the best way they can do it, and that you can use a program like this to jump start a lot of positive activity for very little money," said H. Daniels Duncan, president of

the United Way in nearby Mesa, where six Americorps workers are putting together what organizers hope will be a network of 3,000 community volunteer workers. "The issue is, Is a little money too much money right now?"

The Beginning A Network Of Activists

Americorps formally began last September with a \$376-million budget for 20,000 participants. The budget for the fiscal year 1995 is \$580 million for 33,000 members.

Participants receive a small living allowance, approximately the minimum wage, limited health care coverage and child care, plus a \$4,725 tuition grant for each year of service — about 1,700 hours of work. People can serve for two years and get a maximum tuition grant of \$9,450, which can be used for current or future college costs or to repay existing loans.

Americorps incorporates some existing programs like Vista. It is separate from the Job Corps, which provides job training every year for about 65,000 disadvantaged young people.

Americorps is producing an enormous variety of public service work, much of it historical social service activity, some of it reflecting current conservative trends.

In New Orleans, the Youth Action Corps founded by Americorps works on projects from wetlands preservation to tutoring in low-income areas. The South Carolina Victim Assistance Network works with crime victims and advocates for victims' rights in law-enforcement centers, shelters and crisis centers around the state.

At what is called the SalmonCore program, students from the Yakima Indian Nation in Washington State are cleaning out polluted settling ponds at a former Department of Energy site to grow fish to help replenish the dwindling salmon run in the Columbia River.

In the New York area, activities include tutoring and mentoring disadvantaged young people through the I Have A Dream Foundation and working as cadets in the Police Cadet Program of the New York City Police Department.

In Iowa, Sarah and Rebekah Swan, 19-year-old twins, are members, Sarah working at a Family Violence Center in Des Moines, Rebekah at the Alzheimers Association of America in Cedar Rapids.

Donald Davis, 45, a carpenter and painter, decided after 14 years in the Army that he wanted to work with young people. He is now working at two elementary schools in Florence, S.C., organizing social service projects for youngsters.

Michael Davis, a student at Eastern Michigan University, and Michelle Cooper, a student at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, tutor as part of the program. In Boulder, Colo., Pakou Cha, a University of Colorado student who speaks Hmong, Spanish and English, tutors children, many of whom speak little or no English, at the San Juan del Centro Family Learning Center.

The program's goal has been to provide opportunities for as diverse a group as possible, from the Ivy League graduates who once might have joined the Peace Corps to high school dropouts working on their general equivalency degree and trying to stay out of trouble.

"I had thought of being an architect, but it was like a fading dream," said Timothy Moore, an 18-year-old high school dropout and former gang member in New Orleans. "Americorps really changed my life. It gave me good things to think about."

The Mechanics

Conservatism And Public Service

The program in Arizona reflects Americorps's structure and scope —

from working on environmental issues with Navajo elders to passing out condoms and pamphlets about sexually transmitted diseases in Tucson's red-light district.

Programs are selected by a 25-member board appointed by Gov. Fife Symington, a conservative Republican, and headed by Lieut. Col. Gary Smith, who works in the anti-drug program of the National Guard.

Most participants, like Ms. Goncher, augment existing operations. The most ambitious new project spawned by Americorps is the Border Volunteer Corps, a \$2.6 million program with 103 Americorps members working in 25 projects along the border.

Richard H. Carter, the program's director, said, "There is a new park now, immunized children, trained migrant farm workers, people working in environmental programs, community gardens, new homes in the Indian nations, restored homes."

But Republican critics in Washington say that its incentives will

draw people from other volunteer activity, that it is more expensive than the Government is saying and that in the end it is not true volunteerism but a Government job.

"All those volunteer programs that have been working so beautifully cannot compete with this type of program," said Representative Bill Goodling, the Pennsylvania Republican who is the new head of the House Economic and Educational Opportunities Committee. "You really kill volunteerism with a program like this."

Social service organizations here and elsewhere scoff at the idea that Americorps will have a negative impact on volunteerism.

"We've had a lot of volunteers, but most don't last more than a day or two," said Maggi Castagna, education coordinator at Little Canyon Center, which has about 36 emotionally disturbed students ranging in age from 6 to 17, and where Ms. Goncher augments the three teachers and three technicians. "They

just find that these kids are out of their league."

On the other hand, it is less clear how much Americorps is creating public service workers and how much it is just creating a more attractive environment for people who would be doing similar work.

In Arizona, Jennifer Larkin, 25, was holding down three part-time positions with the Y.M.C.A., working with children before and after school and in the 118-degree heat at summer camp. "I really felt I was being used," she said.

Now she gets her health care covered and the educational grant helping to organize volunteer programs for Parents Anonymous, which works to prevent child abuse and neglect.

Dorothy Cuppernell, 20, whose husband is with the United States Army in South Korea, originally got into the Americorps program in North Carolina because it was one of the few options available to a young mother that provided day care.

She said her first position was at a school where she barely felt needed. Now, in Phoenix, she is at Tumbleweed, a small social service agency that runs shelters and group homes for teen-age runaways. And the program pays \$75 of the \$99-a-week child care cost for her 3-year-old daughter.

Barbara Tenes, 27, who works at another Tumbleweed shelter, was previously a youth-care worker for another social service agency and joined Americorps partly because of the opportunity for child care for her four children. Americorps has a maximum amount it will pay for child care and she is still waiting to find out how much the state will pick up to see if she can afford to stay in the program.

"I'm doing basically what I was doing before," she said.

The majority of Americorps members are young people without children or with minimal interest in health insurance.

"There's not enough money in this to do it unless you really want to serve," Ms. Goncher said.

But, in the current budget-cutting environment, critics say, it is likely that unless the program can document that it is increasing the volunteer pool, it could run into problems in Congress.

The Future Productivity Vs. Priorities

Americorps' future may depend at least as much on how people in power view Government as how they view the program.

Mr. Gingrich says he has no great criticisms with the way the program has been run, but he still thinks it is not needed.

"I'm glad that Americorps vaguely resembles the Peace Corps," he said. "I'm willing to bet money 20 years from now it won't. If you looked at HUD, at the Model Cities Program, the Appalachian Commission, you'll find they will gradually be politicized, they will have a few scandals, they will then adopt more rules and regulations, and presently they will be a mess."

So far almost all the criticism of the program has come from Washington. In the states and among those in academia who study volunteerism, there is general agreement that the Federal Government can play a positive role in fostering public service and volunteerism and that the current moment is a propitious one for doing it.

Arthur Levine, the president of Teachers College of Columbia University, who has studied volunteerism on campus, said the nation was seeing a resurgence of public service on campuses and that a recent study showed that 64 percent of college students took part in some form of public service.

What is needed, Dr. Levine said, are structures and incentives that allow that service to be sustained. In its ability to foster a broad-based ethic of community service, he said, Americorps is admirable and right for the times.

"The last Administration talked about a thousand points of light," Dr. Levine said, "but that hasn't produced the kinds of programs that America needs. This is real, it's tangible, it's worth doing well."

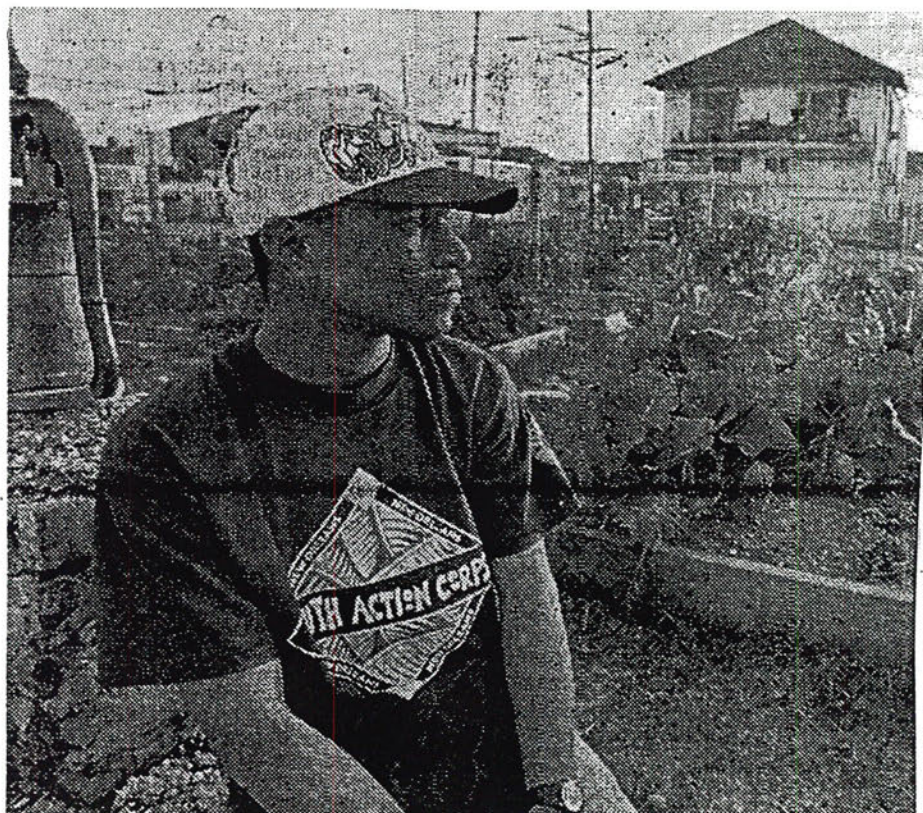
"This isn't recruitment for national activity. It's making things better at the local level, which seems consistent with everything that's happening in the country."

Whether it is consistent with current budget realities is another issue.

"Show me the priority list that keeps this alive and show me what you kill in order to keep this alive," Mr. Gingrich said. "The President's answer is, 'Don't have a balanced budget, and your grandchildren will be glad that you borrowed the money from them to do this in your lifetime.'"

"I think, frankly, that's wrong."

Program With 60's Spirit Collides With Do-It-Yourself Ethic of 90's



Timothy Moore, a high school dropout in New Orleans, said the Youth Action Corps, part of the Federal AmeriCorps program, changed his life. He helped prepare the beds for vegetables in a neighborhood garden. Alex Brandon for The New York Times

DETAILS

AmeriCorps Up Close

■ **CURRENT FIRST-YEAR FINANCING**
\$376 million for 20,000 AmeriCorps members.

■ **AUTHORIZED SECOND-YEAR FINANCING**
\$580 million for 33,000 participants.

■ **COMPENSATION**
Living allowance of approximately \$7,600 a year and education award of \$4,725 for up to two years.

■ **REQUIREMENTS**
Participants in most programs must generally be at least 17 years old, must be U.S. citizens or permanent residents, and have high school diploma or G.E.D. or agree to obtain one before using education award.



Barbara Tenes, a mother of four, works with Tumbleweed, an agency that runs shelters and group homes for runaways in Phoenix. She said she joined the program because it provided child care for her children. Jeff Topping for The New York Times

TENNESSEAN

NASHVILLE, TN
DAILY 139,086

THURSDAY
JAN 12 1995

BURRELLE'S

114
xoeag

Uf
b...b

AmeriCorps' positive step

WHAT was once a mere campaign pledge is becoming reality.

President Clinton's AmeriCorps, a community service program creating opportunities for people of all walks of life, is taking shape, including right here in Nashville.

Locally, some 60 people are embarking on a plan either to help provide prenatal and post-natal care for women, or by assisting in health-care services for elderly people.

The jobs pay, but not much. Each participant will get a package that totals about \$7,000. That's a substantial amount to a young person who needs money for school, but it shows that most of the participants are involved for the broader rewards of community service.

From the beginning, the Clinton program has been hailed as a domestic Peace Corps. That it is. But where the Peace Corps, launched in the 1960s, made ambassadors of young people to third world countries, the AmeriCorps system concentrates on needs right here at home. And as the local organization

demonstrates, it reaches right into our own backyard.

Each person in the program is bound for a rewarding personal experience. The plan will no doubt create bonds between the community servants and those who can use the extra care and attention. It strikes at the heart of some of the gripping needs in our society.

AmeriCorps is not the answer to every problem in the country. But it puts the emphasis on opportunity and on helping fellow citizens in a way that also provides a catalyst for education for its members.

The program should prove to be an inspiration, not just for those who participate now but for others who may see it as a path they would like to follow themselves one day. Leaders in government are always looking for effective ways to address grassroots needs of the people. Here is one. The AmeriCorps plan needs the continued support of all Americans so that it can truly reach the goals of community service and can pay dividends that last a lifetime. ■

WINSTON-SALEM JOURNAL

WINSTON-SALEM, NC
DAILY 95,000

FRIDAY

JAN 20 1995

BURRELLE'S

121
Feb 9

PJ

AMERICORPS

EDITORIAL

Program deserves a chance

President Clinton, who on some points has seemed almost too willing to accommodate the new Republican congressional majority, has rightly taken a stand for one of the best achievements of his administration. He is mounting a defense of the Americorps national-service program, which is the latest target of House Speaker Newt Gingrich.

It would be a shame if Americorps becomes a victim of the Republican government-cutting campaign. There are so many other things more deserving of the budget ax.

Far from an entrenched program that has outgrown its usefulness and become a bloated bureaucracy, Americorps is a new idea and a new approach, an example of a more creative approach to government problem-solving.

CLINTON MADE a national-service program an important part of his presidential campaign. Its approval was one of his early legislative successes. Last September, a satellite hookup helped him swear in the first 15,000 Americorps volunteers. Some 20,000 are involved now.

The idea behind Americorps is simple. Young people work for a specified time in a worthwhile program in exchange for government vouchers that can be used to help pay for higher education or to pay off student loans. While they work, they are paid minimum wage and receive health benefits.

The potential advantages are many. The volunteer-service program is a good way to help students and their families deal with the soaring cost of college.

It encourages higher education, certainly a worthwhile national goal, given

the need for a more capable work force. Because it uses vouchers for work done, it avoids the default programs that have plagued government loan programs. Because it usually places volunteers in existing programs, it does not involve make-work or an extensive new bureaucracy.

It gives young people some much-needed work experience and often makes them more aware of problems in society. Ideally, it shows participants the values and rewards of community involvement and might help revive the spirit of volunteerism.

Americorps is not a handout; it involves work; it bolsters old-fashioned values of helping oneself and helping others.

In short, it sounds like something that Gingrich and company might have come up with themselves.

Instead, Gingrich is attacking the program as "gimmickry" and saying that he wants to do away with it to help pay for the middle-class tax cut he's promising.

Middle-class families who are struggling to educate their children stand to benefit more from the opportunity Americorps offers than from the few dollars a tax cut might save them.

The program should not be dismantled simply because it was created by Clinton.

Clinton has promised to work with congressional Republicans to trim government and reduce spending, as he should.

But he's right to draw the line around Americorps.

Rather than an old, outdated program that is demonstrably wasteful, the national-service corps is an innovative, fresh approach with promise.

It deserves a chance to prove itself.

PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE

PITTSBURGH, PA
DAILY 247,145

MONDAY

JAN 23 1995

441 BURRELLE'S EG
...ceoe ...a....

Defending national service

B62-97 RT C (Amurclossy)
Gingrich is out of bounds in attacking the new program

Newt Gingrich has struck a chord with his campaign against the welfare system and crime and bloated governments and taxes. But national service?

The speaker of the House stepped over his perceived mandate in attacking the national-service program that was enacted last year. His misstep has given the Clinton administration a golden opportunity to find its voice.

"I am totally, unequivocally opposed to national service," Mr. Gingrich told Newsweek. "It is coerced volunteerism. ... It's gimmickry."

What it is, in reality, is 20,000 primarily young Americans working with local organizations to tutor children, rehabilitate old housing, immunize babies, help old people, fight illiteracy and much more. In exchange they get a minimum-wage stipend and help in paying for college.

President Clinton had dreamed of hundreds of thousands of students giving service to their communities. Instead he got 20,000 the first year — still more than the Peace Corps at its peak — and nearly 50,000 in three years. They won't change the world, but they will help remake their neighborhoods. And many of them, in turn, will have a better chance of remaking their own lives through higher education.

Yes, they are compensated. Mr. Gingrich might prefer a totally charitable gesture, but the compensation doesn't pollute the service and it most assuredly does not coerce it. If there is a gimmick involved, it has not yet been revealed.

This program won Democratic and some Republican support. It costs \$500 million a year, which is not peanuts, but by all accounts it is money that actually yields grass-roots results and does not support a bureaucracy.

It's a worthy initiative, one of Mr. Clinton's proudest achievements, and it deserves continued funding. And the president, on the appropriate occasion of Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday, said that it was a program for which he would fight.

That's great, but Mr. Clinton shouldn't stop there. It isn't enough for the president to wait for Mr. Gingrich to get ahead of himself and go after programs that he loathes, but that the public does not.

The House speaker is shaping the discussion on the fundamental issues of the day — crime, welfare, the role of government. Mr. Clinton cannot afford to stand by waiting for miscues. He must define himself and his vision and turn the discussion into a debate. National service is just a starting point.

ATLANTA CONSTITUTION

ATLANTA, GA
DAILY 449,027

WEDNESDAY
JAN 25 1995

BURRELLE'S

26 XK
KOE . . . n

First lady's guest list sends many messages

Invitees cast spotlight on White House priorities

ASSOCIATED PRESS

6297AT
Washington — The White House sought to showcase its national service program and the U.S. military operation in Haiti by inviting AmeriCorps workers and a Haitian-born Marine to sit with Hillary Rodham Clinton during the State of the Union speech.

Cpl. Gregory Depestre, a 24-year-old soldier who served in his native Haiti, was invited to sit on Mrs. Clinton's left in the House gallery. Four AmeriCorps members also were invited to join the first lady, demonstrating the administration's determination to preserve the program that is on House Speaker Newt Gingrich's hit list. AmeriCorps allows Americans to pay off college loans through community service.

In addition, Kansas City Police Chief Steven Bishop, a strong supporter of the program, was to join the group.

Mrs. Clinton's guest list also included the Lucas family from Hattiesburg, Miss. Jack Lucas was the youngest Marine ever and the youngest man in this century to be given the Medal of Honor, receiving the award at the age of 17 for throwing himself on a grenade to protect his buddies on Iwo Jima during World War II. Lucas' son, Jimmy, a veterinarian from North Carolina who served in Vietnam, and his grandson, Matthew, a high school student, also were invited guests.

Also invited to sit with Mrs. Clinton were 2nd Lt. Mary Kay McLean, 31, who recently re-

turned from Air Force duty in Kuwait.

The first lady's guests also included the Rev. John Cherry and his wife, Rev. Diana Cherry, of AME Zion Church in Temple Hills, Md. Their congregation is active in promoting personal responsibility among community members, a favorite Clinton theme. Clinton spoke at the church last year.

The AmeriCorps members invited to sit with Mrs. Clinton were:

► Cindy Perry, 31, serving as a tutor to second-graders in rural Kentucky.

► Philip Wu, 28, working with Habitat for Humanity in Miami.

► Colin Yost, 24, working in Portland, Ore., with Green Corps to weatherize houses, teach energy conservation and combat lead poisoning.

► Laron Field, 22, working in Kansas City's Blue Hill neighborhood on anti-crime initiatives.

RICHMOND REGISTER

RICHMOND, KY
DAILY 10,000

WEDNESDAY
JAN 25 1995

BURRELLE'S

144 UN
ced

Kentucky mom attends Clinton speech

6297AT
WASHINGTON (AP) — A Franklin, Ky., mother of four attended Tuesday night's State of the Union speech by President Clinton as guest of First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton.

Cindy Perry, 31, is a participant in the new AmeriCorps national-service program.

Mrs. Clinton invited her to attend the speech to give a "personal face" to the president's promise to help save the program from Republican budget cuts.

AmeriCorps was created by Congress in 1993 at Clinton's urging. Volunteers are assigned to local public service programs.

CINCINNATI POST

CINCINNATI, OH
DAILY 98,320

THURSDAY
JAN 26 1995

BURRELLE'S

82
Debg

RL
....Y

Clinton salutes Kentucky mom in AmeriCorps

By Bill Straub
Kentucky Post Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — Cindy Perry's story doesn't sound all that unusual in many parts of rural Kentucky — a teen bride, her first child at age 15, three more to follow and no high school diploma.

But after sending her youngest child off to kindergarten last August, the 31-year-old Simpson County woman decided that she "wanted to do some good work."

That decision started Mrs. Perry on an unlikely journey that culminated Tuesday when she sat with first lady

Hillary Clinton in the chambers of the U.S. House of Representatives during President Clinton's State of the Union address.

Clinton asked her to stand toward the end of his speech and identified her as a person who "gains when she gives," a woman with four children who nonetheless "had time to serve other people."

Mrs. Perry serves in AmeriCorps, the national service program championed by Clinton and approved by the 103rd Congress.

Under the \$375 million program, volunteers engage in educational, environmental, public safety and human

service programs for minimum wage and a chance to earn awards of about \$5,000 per year to help pay for college or job training.

The program has attracted 20,000 people — more than the Peace Corps had in any single year. Northern Kentucky Abuse Prevention is developing a plan to become involved in AmeriCorps. The project, coordinated by the Northern Kentucky United Way and Community Chest, would work to reduce abuse of children and the elderly.

AmeriCorps has attracted the attention of congressional budget-cutters looking to balance the budget by 2002. House Speaker Newt Gingrich, R-Ga.,

has referred to AmeriCorps as "forced volunteerism."

In response, Clinton cited AmeriCorps as "the essence of the new covenant" and invited four participants, including Mrs. Perry, to attend the address with the first lady.

Last September, the self-described "stay-at-home-mom" went to Franklin Elementary School to volunteer as a nurse. Instead, she got involved in the SLICE Corps — Service Learning Impacting Children's Education — which participates in the AmeriCorps program.

"I wanted to do some kind of work to help people, but I didn't know how,"

she said outside the Capitol Tuesday as her husband, Wade, ran a video camera.

As a SLICE participant, Mrs. Perry serves as a mentor, working with five to six second-graders on a one-on-one basis to improve their reading scores. Her students' proficiency in spelling has jumped 22 percent.

To qualify for AmeriCorps, she agreed to earn a General Education Development certificate.

Now Mrs. Perry wants to go to college, probably Western Kentucky University, with hopes of becoming a teacher or a social worker.



ADVANCE PHOTO/AMR BOMMA

Philip Wu Jr., a member of AmeriCorps, meets Rep. Susan Molinari in her Capitol Hill office. Ms. Molinari has opposed funding AmeriCorps because she believes it is not cost-effective.

Wu

(From Page A 1)

The 20,000-person AmeriCorps was a centerpiece of Clinton's first year in office. Last night before introducing some of its members the president called it "citizenship at its best."

Participants get up to \$4,725 for college or vocational school tuition in return for doing two years of service in community programs. They live on an allowance of \$600 a month plus room and board and health care coverage.

Now a resident of Miami, Wu said he plans to spend his money on tuition to finish his college education. The one-time College of Staten Island student said he wants to get a degree in social work.

"I enjoy building homes and I enjoy building relationships with the community," said Wu of his current stint helping to rebuild Homestead, Fla., which was devastated by Hurricane Andrew in 1992.

Wu, who yesterday paid an unscheduled visit to the office of Rep. Susan Molinari, said the program has given him "on-the-job training as a carpenter, supervisor and team leader." He said he and 20 others are working to produce a 90-home development.

Ms. Molinari has opposed funding AmeriCorps because she believes it is not cost-effective. While she said she was pleased Wu was recognized for his work, she said those who belong to the program should be paid through educational vouchers to ensure that they use the money they earn to go to college.

She said the \$2.8 billion that funds the program could be "stretched out" to benefit more youths simply by allocating it as straight tuition aid and requiring recipients to do volunteer work in their own community.

"I think what he [President Clinton] calls volunteerism is providing people with a full-time job," the congresswoman said, estimating that when health care costs were included, the cost of putting a participant in the field was about \$20,000 a year.

The once-popular national volunteer plan also has come under fire from top Republicans, including House Speaker Newt Gingrich, as just another wasteful and overreaching government spending program.

Wu said he heard about AmeriCorps through the church he attends in Miami.

Just hours before the president's

address Wu said he still couldn't believe he had been selected to appear.

"I feel like I won the lottery," Wu said. "Working with Habitat is great stuff. We just moved in 16 families. We developed relationships with them. They even invited us to spend Christmas with them."

Wu's parents still live on Staten Island. His father, Philip Sr., is an accountant with Shamrock Bus Co. in Mariners Harbor. His mother, Myriam, also works for Shamrock, as a manager.

Staff writer Terence J. Kivan contributed to this report.

STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE

STATEN ISLAND, NY
DAILY 78.155

WEDNESDAY
JAN 25 1995

BURRELLE'S

661
CEN

9L



ASSOCIATED PRESS

West Brighton native Philip Wu Jr. (arrow) applauds as first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton acknowledges the House gallery before her husband's State of the Union speech.

Night of a lifetime

Islander at Clinton's speech as Hillary's guest

6297AT
By JUDY L. RANDALL
ADVANCE POLITICAL WRITER

FRONT PAGE

WASHINGTON — West Brighton native Philip Wu Jr. — a member of AmeriCorps — said he felt like he "won the lottery" last night as the national service program he works for took center stage during President Clinton's State of the Union address.

Wu, 29, a Susan Wagner High School graduate who works with Habitat for

Humanity in conjunction with AmeriCorps, was among those selected by the White House to sit with first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton during the president's address.

Wu, who wore his work clothes of jeans, boots, a sweatshirt and cap to the State of the Union, said he was "amazed" at having been selected to appear as a guest of the first lady.

(See WU, Page A 8)



President Clinton begins his State of the Union speech.

TAMPA TRIBUNE

TAMPA, FL
DAILY 268,876

WEDNESDAY
JAN 25 1995
BURRELLE'S

253
cece

TP

Official defends national service program

An Associated Press Report

WASHINGTON — The fledgling national service program known as AmeriCorps — targeted by Republican budget cutters — builds leaders and is more than worth the money it costs, a White House official said Tuesday.

"Taking responsibility and earning opportunity — that is what AmeriCorps is all about," national service chief Eli Segal told a Capitol Hill news conference. The program allows Americans 17 and older to earn educational grants by doing community service.

House Speaker Newt Gingrich has threatened to cut the program, calling it "coerced voluntarism" and "gimmickry." He has said he is

totally, unequivocally opposed to national service."

Joining Segal were four AmeriCorps participants who were invited to sit with Hillary Rodham Clinton to watch the State of the Union address Tuesday night.

"I'm not too much up on politics. All I know is that it's made a difference," said Cindy Perry, a mother of four from Franklin, Ky.

Perry joined AmeriCorps in September, helping second-graders from low-income families boost their reading skills. Since then, she has earned her high-school equivalency degree and she is planning to use her educational award for college.

Segal also invited five members of Congress who served in the Peace

Corps to talk about their experiences to prove his contention that such programs create leaders and are more than worth the money. The current budget for AmeriCorps is \$580 million.

"It taught me a lot about maturing. It taught me a lot about fellowship," Rep. Tony P. Hall, D-Ohio, said of his Peace Corps service in Thailand. Of the national service volunteers he has known, Hall said, "They carried this commitment and zeal into every part of their lives."

AmeriCorps — a President Clinton-sponsored program passed by Congress in 1993 — has 20,000 members working on 350 programs to improve education, public safety, human services and the environment.

WEDNESDAY
FEB 1 1995

BURRELLE'S

234
CUCB

KH
6

The real heroes



James Robbins, a Seaboard Conservation Corps member from Katy, talks with Eli Segal, president of AmeriCorps, as corps members carry logs to be shipped at Challenger Park in Friendswood Tuesday. Corps members were repairing a nature trail. (Photo by Marc Pesetsky)

AmeriCorps chief praises students

JANICE SIMON
Daily News

GALVESTON — AmeriCorps' survival depends on the differences the young corps members make in their communities, the president of the national program said Tuesday. Eli Segal, president of AmeriCorps, visited the site of the Galveston's Seaboard Conservation Corps, one of the first job-training programs started by President Clinton. Segal came to the Texas A&M University at Galveston campus as part of a two-day trip to Texas. "We have to focus on the real heroes, the kids themselves," Segal said. "We have to focus on the young people and the benefits for everyone."

The AmeriCorps program is facing the budget from the Republican-controlled Congress. House Speaker Newt Gingrich has criticized the cost of the program, but Segal said he was confident the program would be spared. "Over time, this program will not only survive, it will prevail," Segal said.

In Galveston, the members of the Seaboard Conservation Corps have been cleaning up the shoreline and restoring nature trails in Friendswood's Challenger Park.

The Galveston corps has given 71 high school students a second chance to earn a high school diploma and to do community service work. The students live aboard the Texas Clipper training ship at TAMU's Pelican Island station.

Conservation Corps

The Seaboard Conservation Corps' three-year pilot program began in September, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Defense, the National Guard and AmeriCorps.

Each student must complete 900 hours of community service before training ends.

Students spend four hours a day in school at Galveston College and on the Texas Clipper studying for their General Equivalency Diplomas.

New classes will convene every nine months. During the program, students are given a weekly stipend of \$15. Uniforms, room and board and training are provided.

Each student will receive \$2,375 after the completion of nine months. The money can be used for college education or an approved technical training course.

Segal toured the park where the students were working on their latest environmental project.

Corps members receive small stipends and money for college.

They also are required to do community service work, ranging from tutoring children to building houses for the homeless.

"Our young people will get things done," Segal said, adding that the program has been good nationally. "They've closed crack houses, immunized children and cleaned up the shoreline."

DAILY TEXAN (UNIV. OF
TEXAS)

AUSTIN, TX
DAILY 30,000

WEDNESDAY
JAN 25 1995

30
XCWCI
BURRELLE'S
GK
SC...C.

'Grinch' blasts AmeriCorps program

6297AT

Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich, R-Ga., claims to be a college professor by trade. Despite this, the good man is out of touch with the needs of the workaday college student.

Gingrich recently blasted the AmeriCorps national service program, President Clinton's brainchild, as "coerced volunteerism." The AmeriCorps program allows students to pay off their college loans by working in non-profit programs. AmeriCorps allows students who do not want to enter the military to finance their education by serving their country upon graduation. The program has been hailed as a "Peace Corps for America" and a "G.I. Bill for the '90s."

But Newt doesn't see it that way. He derides the program as "gimmickry" and a waste of money that will only give limited benefits to college students.

In one respect, Gingrich is correct. This is "coerced volunteerism," but

Stephen Thibodeau
TEXAN COLUMNIST

only because the current economic situation nearly forces those who can't afford school otherwise to enroll in the AmeriCorps program. If they don't, students will need six years to finish school, and they'll graduate with a massive debt burden brought on by student loans.

Gingrich's own Contract with America does attempt to give incentives to those attending college. Families paying for their youngsters' college education will receive a big tax break under the Contract.

Well, that's fine and dandy — if your family can pay for college in the first place. In essence, Newt wants to reward those who can already afford to send their kids to school. Imagine cutting out the AmeriCorps program so the money can be used to give tax breaks to the

rich! It's a classic case of social stratification along the lines of class.

In addition to these tax breaks, Gingrich also proposes eliminating subsidized government student loans altogether.

This would mean that students would need to pay interest on any student loan immediately after taking out the loan. In the sum of things, only the bankers collecting the interest would enjoy this situation.

As a history professor, Gingrich should know the implications of his plan. Prior to World War II, college education in the United States was primarily reserved for the rich. Only after the G.I. Bill allowed millions of servicemen the opportunity to attend school did college enrollment skyrocket. A reversion to the days of college as an exclusive club of the elite would damage our society as a whole. Allowing all economic levels an opportunity to get a degree encourages understanding of the

cultural, social and economic patches of the American fabric.

Granted, the AmeriCorps program is not perfect. Currently, only 20,000 students are enrolled in the program, which doesn't even equal half the student population here at the University. But the program has been in existence for only a year, and spending on the program will increase in 1995.

The AmeriCorps program merits more time to develop and prosper. The lack of enrollment due to limited funds is not an argument for its abolishment. It is a call for more development and study.

Gingrich needs to end this demagoguery against the national service program.

AmeriCorps is a win-win situation: students win and society wins. Let us college students decide whether or not it is "gimmickry."

Thibodeau is a graduate student in Asian studies.

STANDARD-TIMES
NEW BEDFORD, MA
DAILY 43,903

SATURDAY
JAN 28 1995

BURRELLE'S

167
Deck

PK
y

It is irrational to cut community service

by George Keverian

6297AT

In the words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., "life's persistent and most important question is what you are doing for others."

This year, The Massachusetts National and Community Service Commission (MNCSC), a 24-member body appointed by Gov. William Weld, joined the Corporation for National Service in celebrating Martin Luther King Day by making it a day to reflect on our commitment to community service and our power as individuals to create change in our communities.

Sadly, our new speaker of the House, Newt Gingrich, does not share this view. Rep. Gingrich saw Jan. 17th as an opportunity to announce that he was "totally, unequivocally opposed to national service."

Here in Massachusetts, young people are making a difference in communities throughout the state. MNCSC and the Corporation for National Service alone fund 41 service programs throughout the commonwealth.

Young people are working with community-based organizations to address vital community needs and to strengthen the work of these organizations.

In Revere, young people in the YouthSTAR program are working to immunize low-income residents.

In Springfield, Americorps members are providing legal assistance to battered women.

In Worcester, young people are working in the schools to teach middle school children

Throughout the commonwealth, community service learning is becoming a valuable teaching tool, instilling in young people a strong sense of civic responsibility and volunteerism.

violence prevention and conflict-resolution techniques.

And, students at Lasalle College are providing educational outreach programs to local schools on HIV/AIDS.

Throughout the commonwealth, community service learning is becoming a valuable teaching tool, instilling in young people a strong sense of civic responsibility and volunteerism.

Above all, these young people are giving of themselves and giving back to their communities. By engaging in service, they are committing themselves to improving the lives of those around them. This is truly an inspiration in a time when many people are disillusioned, having lost their faith in government, in their communities, and in each other.

Through community service, people are working hard every day not only to help those around them, but also to restore our faith in this country, and our belief in positive change. Rather than despairing, these individuals are finding ways to have a

meaningful impact on their communities.

Each and every one of us who engages in community service — whether by teaching recent immigrants to learn to read, participating in a local food drive, or coaching little league — should be very proud. By engaging in service, you are giving of yourself to enrich your community and your nation.

You are also engaging in something uniquely American. Americans should be proud of their long history of meaningful community service. It is this sense of civic responsibility and volunteerism that makes our democracy work.

As the former speaker of the House of Representatives of Massachusetts and a public servant for more than 35 years, I am inspired by the number of citizens throughout the commonwealth who are serving their communities.

I am encouraged that Americans are again making service a national priority and that many of us are choosing to make helping those in our community a personal priority.

As Dr. King so eloquently stated, "make a career of humanity . . . and you will make a greater person of yourself, a greater nation of your country, and a finer world to live in."

It is very sad that Newt Gingrich does not agree.

George Keverian, former speaker of the Massachusetts House of Representatives, lives in Everett and is the chairman of The Massachusetts National and Community Service Commission.

THURSDAY
JAN 26 1995

BURRELLE'S

293
...C90CFA
...n

State of the Union was Bill Clinton at his best

OH, IT was sweet. I still can't decide what was the best part of Tuesday night's annual State of the Union ritual.

Was it watching Peggy Noonan, the Republican speechwriter, make a fool of herself on NBC by comparing President Clinton's speech to his 1988 disaster in Atlanta when he single-handedly put the nation to sleep?

Was it watching Newt Gingrich squirm as he found himself applauding the work of AmeriCorps, a program he has vowed to kill because, as he claims, it's coerced volunteerism?

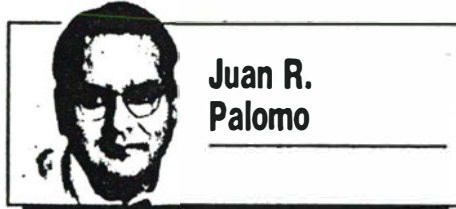
Was it watching Dick Armey, the chief foe of a minimum-wage hike, looking dumb and glum when Clinton reminded Americans that members of Congress in their first month in office, were already earning more than a minimum-wage worker would earn in an entire year?

Was it Phil Gramm behaving like himself, only more so?

Was it any of the other numerous sweet ironies of Bill Clinton's night, one the Republicans clearly expected to be theirs?

No, it was simply watching and listening to one of the best political speeches in recent years.

This may not have been the night that



Juan R.
Palomo

Clinton turned around his presidency, but it certainly was one of his finest moments and it showed the Republicans that they have nobody — not the dour Bob Dole, not the barmy Newt Gingrich, not the blustery Phil Gramm — nobody who can match Clinton at his best.

And he was at his best.

(I'm not talking about the content of his speech, just his style and delivery, and its effectiveness. Like any good liberal, I was offended by his immigrant-bashing and his attempts to out-conservative the conservatives on welfare and other issues.)

Compared to Clinton, New Jersey Gov. Christie Whitman looked and sounded like a tired late-night infomercial host.

It was a long speech. But who cared? Americans love a great speech, even when they disagree with the contents or the person delivering the speech. More than 80 percent of those polled by three networks said they liked it.

Even more amazing, more than three-quarters of those polled by ABC said they liked the idea of raising the minimum wage and an almost equal number said AmeriCorps should be kept.

The speech's popularity is not surprising, for Clinton was able to turn the tables on the GOP by making Americans — for that one night, anyway — see the congressional Republicans as part of the problem instead of the solution.

His insistence that he would not allow Medicare to be cut, for instance, had the effect of making people believe Republicans are bent on taking Medicare from old people. Never mind that Newtists have never really come out and said it.

His admonishment that they "just stop" taking all those freebies from lobbyists succeeded in making the Republicans appear as the instruments of the lobbyists (if Dole thinks it was a cheap shot, it obviously was effective). Never mind that Democrats — including Clinton — have done little to curb the lobbyists' influence.

His comparison of congressional salaries to those of people on minimum wage was a stroke of genius (even if it wasn't original) because it brought home to viewers in stark terms the reality that members of Congress continue to live a

pampered, luxurious life, the kind that most of us can only dream about. Never mind that the president obviously has no intention of fighting the minimum-wage increase battle.

And for those of us who wondered why Clinton was not striking back at the nastiness aimed his way by Gingrich, Gingrich's mother, Dick Armey and other Republicans, now we know. Clinton was able to stand up there Tuesday night and talk convincingly about ending the partisan pettiness. He didn't say the Republicans were being nasty, but he didn't have to.

Clearly, this was one of Clinton's best nights. His speech will help his slumping ratings in the short run. But will it save his presidency? Probably not. He's in too much trouble already. He will never be able to discard all of his personal baggage and the electorate won't be shifting back to the middle anytime soon.

But what this speech cannot do for him, the Republicans just might. All you had to do was look at the faces of his potential opponents in the audience (and picture Danny Boy sulking back home in Indiana) to understand that if Clinton is renominated without much of a bruising his re-election can't be ruled out.

E-mail: juanski@aol.com

THURSDAY
JAN 26 199516
DeckBURRELLE'S

UC

Building on shared values

President Clinton went to Capitol Hill on Tuesday night to stake out common ground with a Congress now controlled by the Republican Party. He outlined in broad strokes the importance, in national policy, of social and fiscal values supported on both sides of the partisan divide. And he cast his own record in the light of having begun the work of advancing those values.

His State of the Union speech was more bully-pulpit than programmatic outline, but he did use it to mount a lively defense of one endangered program, his national service corps or Americorps. In fact, Mr. Clinton cited the program as a concrete example of how enlightened national policy can support broadly held societal values.

"Opportunity and responsibility," he said, "go hand in hand. We can't have one without the other, and our national community can't hold together without both."

Americorps supports those linked goals. It helps instill a sense of civic responsibility by putting young people to work on grass-roots community improvement projects. And it helps ensure opportunity by providing them a modest stipend toward the cost of continuing their education.

But Mr. Clinton invited bipartisan cooperation on a far wider range of issues. The invitation was expected, of course, but this political necessity has much else to recommend it.

America has had enough of partisan bickering and congressional paralysis. Democrats eager to give Republicans a taste of their own obstructionist medicine should think again. Likewise, Republicans tempted to show uppity Democrats who's boss now should remember this is more than a political game.

It is government of, for and by the people. And "the people" are less concerned with partisan win-loss tallies than with the well-being of the country and the security of its future.

They want, among other things, smaller gov-

ernment, less federal spending. And the new Republican leadership claims leadership of a revolution in that direction. But President Clinton reminded the public Tuesday night that the revolution began two years ago.

"For years before I became President," he said, "I heard others say they would cut government and how bad it was. But not much happened. We actually did it. We cut over a quarter of a trillion dollars in spending, more than 300 domestic programs, more than 100,000 positions from the federal bureaucracy in the last two years alone."

The president's bragging list went on: Mohair subsidies finally got axed. So did 1,200 Agriculture Department field offices. The small-business loan form shrank from an inch thick to a single page. And the government's 10,000-page personnel manual, declared hopeless, was just thrown away.

Decisions already made will reduce the bureaucracy by another 150,000 positions in the coming year. And the deficit is expected to decline for the third year in a row — the first time that has happened since the Truman presidency.

It's a more-than-respectable list of accomplishments and rebuts the Republican assertion that they are the only ones willing and able to rein in federal excess. Neither party can credibly claim sole rights to fiscal responsibility.

The country's best hope for continued progress toward budgetary prudence lies in bipartisan ship. The same is true on social issues.

Democrats and Republicans alike believe in protecting children, empowering people, strengthening families and making communities healthy and safe. Wise policy will be guided by such values. They don't belong to any political party.

They unite us as a people and define a common ground on which our national politics should be played out. The president has invited Republicans to join him there. The nation will benefit if they do.

HUNTSVILLE TIMES

HUNTSVILLE, AL
DAILY 58,965

WEDNESDAY
JAN 18 1995

BURRELLE'S

80
..oebk

RG

Clinton's line in the sand

6 297AT
After facing weeks of criticism for being altogether too compliant with the new Republican Congress, President Clinton has finally drawn a line in the sand. The issue? His national service program, known as AmeriCorps.

During the 1992 campaign, Clinton made his proposal for young Americans to work in community service in exchange for college tuition grants a cornerstone of his platform. Then he had visions of a grander program, but his deficit-reduction program demanded a little sacrifice.

Clinton settled for a plan that this year has some 20,000 youngsters working on about 350 community projects nationwide. Participants work at least 1,700 hours a year in exchange for \$4,725 per year for college. The cost to the taxpayer is \$590 million this year, with a \$1 billion price tag expected next year due to expanded enrollment.

From the start, House Speaker Newt Gingrich has opposed the plan, but Monday

Newsweek magazine published an interview where he turned up the torch. For Gingrich, AmeriCorps represents "coerced voluntarism," "gimmickry" and a ballooning, costly government bureaucracy. He implied he'd work to kill the program.

For Clinton, the program is a symbol of his brand of activist government that encourages personal responsibility. Speaking in Denver Monday, he said it represents "everything I want to do." It is "the one achievement I was most proud of" in his administration. And AmeriCorps' director, Eli Segal, announced that Clinton had told him that, "This is a program I'm going to fight for today, tomorrow and forever."

That's more consistency than this nation has seen from Bill Clinton in a long time. And frankly, it would be refreshing to see. AmeriCorps is a sound concept at a reasonable price, and it comes at a time when more and more students are finding it extremely difficult to pay for college educations. Clinton has staked out a reasonable bottom line; we'd like to see him defend it.

AUSTIN AMERICAN-STATESMAN

AUSTIN, TX
DAILY 173,368

WEDNESDAY
JAN 18 1995

27
xcwmi BURRELLE'S FK
b...x

National service program deserves continued funding

EDITORIAL

Republicans in Congress apparently intend to drag President Clinton's national service plan, AmeriCorps, to the federal budget chopping block this year.

Although the president has given tacit approval to some other items the GOP wants to ax, he is drawing the line at the two-year-old AmeriCorps. Clinton is right to fight to save his young national service program.

Congress should be finding ways to encourage more national service, not eagerly awaiting the chance to slay a fledgling program that appears to actually be doing some good for the country.

But House Speaker Newt Gingrich has condemned the national service plan as "coerced voluntarism" and "gimmickry." So his acolytes in the House are falling meekly in line and planning the demise of AmeriCorps.

Clinton rode into the Oval Office promising a program of national service, which had been advocated years before by Clinton's allies in the Democratic Leadership Council. Without a lot of fanfare, AmeriCorps began in 1993 and now has 20,000 young people working for it.

The volunteers work full- or part-

time for minimum wage in the areas of education, human services, public safety and the environment. In return, the federal government awards them up to \$4,725 for education benefits.

Although the program is a modest one, it deserves congressional support, not the death penalty. There are many items in the federal budget that Gingrich and his supporters ought to kill — including some of their own perks and some questionable corporate giveaways — but AmeriCorps isn't among them.

What does the government get for its \$500 million AmeriCorps appropriation? It gets 20,000 young people working, serving 300 communities across the country in important roles; it provides these volunteers with job skills and community and personal values; and it assures them of financial help to continue their education.

Only the most myopic budget writers couldn't see the value in that kind of investment in America.

Congress should be looking for ways to expand national service, not devising plans to retreat from it.

National service is one way this country can begin to heal from within. And that is worth the investment.

Newsday

EDITORIALS

1/10/95

Back Off, Newt

Bill's AmeriCorps is a good idea

The national service program seems an unlikely place for a beleaguered Democratic president to make a stand against budget-chopping congressional Republicans. It's too new and too inexpensive to have developed much of a



Gingrich

constituency. A country that got along without it before President Bill Clinton came along could survive without it now.

But this particular program, now called AmeriCorps, has Clinton's fingerprints on it. He says he'll fight to keep it alive. We hope he means it. A voluntary corps makes a powerful statement to young Americans that their contributions in community service are needed and valued. Since it doesn't require a huge bureaucracy, even Republicans should like it.

AmeriCorps has about 20,000 members working in more than 300 locally run programs nationwide. It pays the \$4.25-an-hour minimum wage for up to 1,700 hours a year, plus medical insurance. Members can get as much as \$4,725 for past or future college costs.

But House Speaker Newt Gingrich, scenting an opportunity to trash a Clinton achievement, says he's "totally, unequivocally opposed to national service." With his usual gift for the colorful but inaccurate sound bite, he calls it "coerced voluntarism." But this man's coercion looks more like opportunity — an educational one that otherwise might not exist, as well as an opportunity for patriotic folks to serve their country and still subsist.

Congress has already approved funding for as many as 33,000 AmeriCorps slots by early fall. Clinton may not be able to expand the

program as he'd like. He may even have to shrink it to keep the Republicans at bay. An experiment with means-testing — by tying tuition subsidies to parental income for kids who choose to go to college before doing their AmeriCorps stint — might also be worth a trial. But this is a program worth fighting for. For once, Clinton must follow through.

Volunteers or Not, They Get It Done

By SARA ENGRAM

Don't call members of AmeriCorps volunteers. As anyone connected to the program is quick to point out, they're full-time workers. You won't find many "volunteers" who spend 40 hours a week or more on the job.

But for some Republicans the term is a handy buzzword for igniting a partisan debate. "To replace voluntarism with bureaucrats is wrong," says House Speaker Newt Gingrich.

Supporters of AmeriCorps — and of the ideals of national service — are ready with their answers.

"They're not replacing anyone," says Rhoda Dorsey, former president of Goucher College and chair of the Governor's Commission on Service, the board that oversees Maryland's AmeriCorps efforts. AmeriCorps funding is available only for projects that are not being done by anyone else. If these workers didn't offer these services, nobody would.

Hilda Peterson, 45, a mother of seven children in Cumberland, has learned first-hand the needs that exist in her community. As an AmeriCorps worker in Western Maryland, she has been able to extend a meal-delivery program for senior citizens into a rural community where elderly people were getting no help.

Often, Ms. Peterson says, these people were existing on diets of crackers and applesauce simply because they were unable to prepare more nutritious meals. Her most satisfying experience is the aid she has been able to provide for a woman in her 90s, crippled with arthritis and living alone in a farmhouse several miles from her nearest neighbors. "Helping her has made the whole thing worthwhile," she says.

In Baltimore, 28-year-old Sean Stevenson, an AmeriCorps worker who is tutoring in a city elementary school, cites the first-grade child who spent her days in silence before the program began. Now, he says proudly, she's such a confident little girl, "she talks all day."

Ms. Peterson and Mr. Stevenson, like those AmeriCorps members who were present in the House chamber for President Clinton's State of the Union message this past week, are volunteers in the sense that they asked to participate. But these days soldiers also volunteer for the army, and even members of Congress voluntarily run for office. Yet once they're in service to the country, no

In contrast, AmeriCorps workers come close to working for free. They earn only a small living allowance, usually around \$600 a month, plus about \$1,200 a year in health benefits. For most of them, the entitlement is a voucher for \$4,725, to be used for education and collected only after they have completed a year of service, or 1,700 hours of work.

Their one-year service to America costs about \$13,000 each, 20 percent of which is covered by the programs in which they work.

Meanwhile, AmeriCorps members are plowing plenty of rewards back into the communities. That's especially true in Maryland. With 854 people serving in some 18 different programs, Maryland now has more AmeriCorps members per capita than any other state. The benefits they provide don't come just in dollars and services, but also in the spark of imagination that helps communities pull together to find local, small-scale, non-bureaucratic solutions to problems.

That's another place defenders of national service differ sharply with the critics. AmeriCorps encourages partnerships that would seem unlikely in other contexts. In Baltimore, Mr. Stevenson works in a program called Enable, which offers a range of services under the auspices of Baltimore Reads, Inc., the School of Pharmacy of the University of Maryland at Baltimore and Community Building in Partnership, Inc.

As Dr. Dorsey notes, we live in a society that believes in solutions. We tell ourselves that if we can define a social problem and devise a way to tackle it, we can solve it. But that kind of thinking has often led to exactly the kind of expensive and expansive government efforts that Speaker Gingrich and his allies detest.

AmeriCorps has a different philosophy. It puts a premium on small-scale approaches and on finding ways to leverage local resources, both in money and time. Many AmeriCorps programs make use of a "cascading" model of voluntarism, in which AmeriCorps workers recruit and train volunteers for various projects, who in turn recruit and train other volunteers, thus multiplying the rewards many times over.

"This is a not-very-expensive way of tackling problems that have not been amenable to solutions on a grander scale," Dr. Dorsey says.

AmeriCorps gets things done — from feeding hungry people and tutoring students to taking health services door-to-door and cleaning up public areas. No wonder President Clinton considers AmeriCorps one of his proudest achievements.

Sara Engram is editorial-page director of The Evening Sun.

The Washington Post

TUESDAY, JANUARY 24, 1995

E. J. Dionne Jr.

Back to Citizenship

House Speaker Newt Gingrich performed a huge service for President Clinton last week. No, this isn't about that book deal. It's about Gingrich's attack on Clinton's national service program. By forcing the president to defend national service, Gingrich has given him a chance to shift the political debate from a moldy contest over "more" or "less" government to one about prior questions: What should government do in the first place, and what obligations do democratic citizens have toward each other?

The service program is certainly worth defending in its own right, and the best arguments for it have been made over the years by conservatives. It's true, as conservatives have said, that bureaucratic charity is not the preferred solution to social problems. Far better to have citizens engaged in helping each other, person-to-person, and to do so through local, voluntarily established institutions.

One of the most useful pieces of work done by conservative intellectuals over the last two decades was a 1977 essay, "To Empower People," by sociologist Peter Berger and the Rev. Richard John Neuhaus. They argued that if government relentlessly took over all charitable functions, it would endanger soci-

ety's "mediating structures"—the institutions created by families, communities and churches—that nurture individual virtue and "mediate" between government and the individual. Government, they argued, should make strengthening these institutions a central goal.

That, roughly, is what the service program does. The volunteers for AmeriCorps, as the main service agency is called, do not work for a federal bureaucracy. They work for already established local institutions that are trying to solve problems: preventing crime, teaching literacy, immunizing kids against disease, helping the homebound elderly, curbing teen pregnancy. The main function of the program's Washington arm, the Corporation for National and Community Service, is to monitor the programs—not for their adherence to bureaucratic rules but simply to make sure they're doing broadly what they claim to be doing.

Why spend any federal money on this sort of thing? Because the voluntary sector needs strengthening, and because federal money spent supplementing voluntary activities has a big payoff. A lot of volunteer organizations are having trouble finding people. Many parents—both parents—necessarily spend so much time working and then raising

their kids that they don't have a lot of time left over. Eli Segal, who heads the service program, sees it as "an effective way of filling in the holes" in the voluntary sector and a recognition of "the chords that bind us together as a people."

This last point is why the broader argument raised by the service program is so important. The idea of democratic citizenship inherent in the program is the one idea capable of answering the problems of two other ideas that are gaining currency in American politics: radical individualism and extreme multiculturalism.

Both ideas start at reasonable places. Almost all of us are individualists in that we value autonomy and freedom. But radical individualism suggests that we are completely free agents, thus denying the reality that our freedom depends on preserving a community that is civil, just, tolerant and nurturing of the other values on which freedom depends. Apart from such a community, freedom withers.

Multiculturalists started out with the fair argument that too little attention was paid to the contributions, ideas and interests of groups other than affluent white males—women, African Americans, Hispanics, working class people

and others. But pushed to the extreme, multiculturalists argued that the only forms of solidarity that counted were those within these particular groups.

Those who value the idea of democratic citizenship argue, against the radical individualists, that preserving freedom is a cooperative enterprise that carries burdens of responsibility. We can't just walk away from social problems. Against extreme multiculturalism, advocates of democratic citizenship argue that our sense of solidarity needs to transcend all our particularisms. Whites need to vindicate the rights of blacks, blacks the rights of whites, men those of women and women those of men.

The Clinton administration has been obsessed with its failure to "communicate" its achievements to the American people. This is the wrong obsession. It implies that the American people are too dumb or too bamboozled by Republican propaganda to "understand" all that the president has been doing.

What the administration should worry about instead is that it is losing the political argument. Americans have surveyed what they see as a series of messes—crime, family breakup, stagnating living standards for many in the middle—and a majority has decided (tentatively) that the best way to deal

with all of them may be for government to do little more than throw the book at criminals. This is not the product of selfishness but a retreat from government that is seen as ineffective, intrusive in the wrong places and insufficiently concerned with nurturing civic responsibility.

There is a corresponding retreat into enclaves. Suburbanites, to pick one example, are tempted to give up on the inner cities, figuring they have enough problems of their own. Think of it as the suburban (or male or white) answer to multiculturalism.

Clinton and the Democrats won't win the argument unless they reverse these trends. One worthy way of doing so is to preach the rewards—and the obligations—of democratic citizenship. A government based on this idea does not pretend to have all the answers. Still less does it claim the right to replace the civic institutions of a free people with its own. But neither is it an indifferent government, because it recognizes that government either strengthens or saps the ability of citizens to live together, solve problems and accept their moral obligations to each other. In this telling, government is not some alien structure out there. It becomes the realm of us all.

Clinton needs to save AmeriCorps

WASHINGTON — House Speaker Newt Gingrich wants to kill the Clinton administration's national service program because, he claims, it is "coerced volunteerism," a tortured concept he just invented.



Marianne Means

The man who had a \$4.5 million book deal approves of volunteerism, mind you, he just disapproves when it does not spring from a selfless desire to work for free, but actually results in concrete rather than purely spiritual reward.

Cute Newtspeak. Clever Newtology. This is the most convoluted act since Rose Mary Woods demonstrated how she struck a foot pedal barely within reach to accidentally erase 18 crucial minutes from a Nixon Watergate tape.

It would be hilarious were this not such serious business.

The president's program, called AmeriCorps, puts young men and women at work on public service projects for a year at the minimum wage. They are rewarded with \$4,725 in education vouchers, to be put toward college tuition or paying off college loans.

They commit to a regular full week's work, unlike the traditional unpaid Gingrich-preferred volunteer, who serves perhaps an hour or so a week, when he or she can find time away from job and family responsibilities.

National service corps participants are not forced to join this program; they must apply of their own free will. No coercion is involved. No government rope snares them in, no federal trap compels them. Far more people are clamoring to get in the program than funds can support.

And government incentives to prompt people to do what they should be doing in the first place is a social policy as old as communal living itself. Harry Truman is famous for remarking upon the irony of this phenomenon, but even he was a latecomer to the idea.

AmeriCorps combines idealism and practicality, opportunity and responsibility. What could be wrong with that? It has President Clinton's name on it, that's what's wrong. The resurgent Republicans would like to wipe out every trace of Clinton's presence in the White House.

Republicans, in fact, have no objections to such stimuli when they come in the form of tax breaks, tax credits or subsidies to lure private industry or wealthy individuals into preferred development, investment or regulatory strategies.

THE SERVICE CORPS is a domestic version of President Kennedy's famous Peace Corps. It is designed to encourage good citizenship, provide needed civic service and help deserving young people go to college all at the same time.

It combines idealism and practicality, opportunity and responsibility. What could be wrong with that?

It has President Clinton's name on it, that's what's wrong. It might, if left intact, become a positive part of his historical legacy.

The resurgent congressional Republicans would like to wipe out every trace of Clinton's presence in the White House. He has mightily offended them by reversing major policies of the Reagan-Bush era and shifting some spending from the Pentagon toward domestic initiatives.

The national service corps, a Clinton campaign pledge, is the one program with which the president is totally identified. "It represents everything I wanted to do," Clinton says.

The Republicans complain that it is just more pork from big Democratic spenders. They hope that by slapping a big government label on it they can do in the program just as they did in the Clinton health plan.

But AmeriCorps volunteers are not reporting to some big new bureaucracy. They go to work for established local community and philanthropic groups that

are already serving the public in a wide range of ways, helping flood victims, repairing low-income housing, bringing supplies to elderly shut-ins, teaching illiterate adults to read and so forth.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT officials, and Washington bureaucrats, choose which organizations are to be helped. A small federal agency with a powerful inspector general was created primarily to monitor costs and conflicts of interest.

The cost, as federal budgets go, is not much. The program will fund 33,000 service jobs this year on a \$350 million budget. It could eventually put 100,000 young men and women to work — a help them go to college — at a cost of \$1 billion.

Republicans also contend that reimbursing volunteers is bad policy because it will discourage millions of young people already doing community service from offering their services for free.

This is unrealistic, not to say hypocritical. Most current volunteers serve intermittently, part-time, and are financially secure. The program is aimed at providing reliable, consistent service from young people needing financial help to go to college who are also dependent upon earning an income for daily survival.

President Clinton vows to fight AmeriCorps. It is one of the places he has chosen to draw a line in the sand against the aggressive GOP challenge. He is correct on the merits. And it is a minimum pluck he must show if he is to earn a second term.

■ Marianne Means is Washington, D.C. columnist with Hearst Newspapers.

Seattle Post-Intelligencer 1-29-95

A baffling conservative assault on a worthy program

Much of what is going on in Washington today is admittedly puzzling as we struggle to master the vocabulary and understand the philosophy of the New Frontier. But nothing so baffles me as the conservatives' attack on AmeriCorps, the fledgling national volunteer service organization that seems to have been baptized with John F. Kennedy's immortal declaration, "Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country."



TOM FIEDLER
POLITICAL
EDITOR

In its six-month life, AmeriCorps has attracted 20,000 volunteers, most of them late teens and twenty-somethings. That's more than the Peace Corps, its older and well-established cousin, attracted during its zenith years in the 1960s.

That apparently means little to Speaker Gingrich and the GOP's emergent conservative wing. In a speech last week to the Republican National Committee's winter meeting, Gingrich dismissed AmeriCorps as an example of "coerced volunteerism" that needed to be rooted out of the federal budget.

John P. Walker, president of The New Citizenship Project — an incubator of conservative thinking and ally of Gingrich — urged last week that conservatives engage in battle with President Clinton over AmeriCorps as a way of clarifying their divergent philosophies.

"AmeriCorps embodies the bureaucratic populism that has become the variant of big-government liberalism," Walker wrote.

So what is this evil that good conservatives must rip from the bosom of the federal government? In South Dade, it's young

people with hammers and saws and a hunger to help who are building houses through the Habitat for Humanity program, working alongside the prospective owners and helping weekend volunteers learn the necessary skills.

In Broward, they're volunteers who are tutoring teens on the verge of dropping out of school. The idea is that if the teens can keep up in their classes, not only will they be enriched personally, but the community has one less youth — with too much energy and too much idle time amid too much temptation — to drift into crime.

In Miami's Overtown this weekend, AmeriCorps volunteers worked with families around Phillis Wheatley Elementary to clean up a vacant lot — long a hangout for drug dealers — and transform it into a community garden. It's one less place for crime to take root. And in Liberty City, volunteers help residents remove lead paint from old apartments — paint that, when eaten by children, can cause permanent brain damage.

The list of Florida projects is eye-opening, some rural, some urban. In Pinellas County, volunteers assist police every day, while at night they attend classes toward a police certification. In Frostproof, they work with elderly farmworkers — an overlooked and vulnerable group of people.

Meanwhile, nearly 100 volunteers will fan out through the Everglades and Florida Bay, helping scientists to gather the ecological data critical to saving that endangered jewel.

This is not, says Jim Brower, deputy director of Florida's AmeriCorps program, a job program. The pay is too small and the hours too long for that.

"This is a program for people who want to make a difference," said the retired Navy officer. "What this does is enables people who might not otherwise be able to volunteer and serve the community to be able to do it."

The financial rewards are clearly miniscule. Each volunteer gets \$7,640 a year in salary, or \$116.92 a week, about half the minimum wage. That weekly stipend is roughly what a congressman makes in two hours (not counting the lobbyist-paid perks). The maximum hitch is two years.

In addition, for every year of service, the federal government agrees to pay \$4,725 toward college or vocational school expenses.

What makes this attack more puzzling is that the AmeriCorps would seem to encourage the values that conservatives take so much pride in emphasizing, rightly so.

The program, of course, is erected atop a foundation of

charity toward others. It also insists that those people who benefit from most AmeriCorps programs also contribute to it.

When volunteers work in an inner-city neighborhood helping residents make their houses safe against burglaries, the residents — through homeowner associations and other means — are asked to contribute a portion of AmeriCorps' costs. Typically, they are also enlisted as workers in other neighborhood projects led by AmeriCorps volunteers.

It's part of that citizen compact: with every right comes a responsibility.

Moreover, all but a few of AmeriCorps' projects are controlled by the community in which they occur — not imposed

on them from Washington, D.C., or Tallahassee. The volunteers are not even federal employees; they draw their paychecks from the program in which they work.

So much for Big Government. As kind-hearted as AmeriCorps may be, it's also a hard-headed business investment for taxpayers. For one thing, the local community gets far more from each worker than would otherwise be possible to buy on the open market.

And — just as with the GI Bill — every penny we spend on a volunteer's salary and tuition will likely come back to the U.S. Treasury many times over. The college education will enable the ex-volunteer to command a higher salary in the job market, which means higher income-

taxes flowing back.

This is not — or shouldn't be — a Democrat versus Republican issue. Among its backers have been U.S. Sen. Connie Mack of Florida, a Republican, and his colleague, Bob Graham, a Democrat. Former President Bush supported the program and presided during pilot programs.

And it may be instructive to note that in the 10 Florida counties where AmeriCorps is active, the GOP is dominant in the politics of all but one (Broward).

It would be disheartening to suddenly see congressional Republicans stampede into line behind Gingrich because of his personal and mindless hatred of government. There is an irony in that.

The speaker, his new book deal aside, has spent his life dependent on income from the public treasury. He grew up as the son of a military officer, attending government-financed schools.

After attending graduate school (which he was able to do because he applied for and received a student deferment from the draft, unlike so many of his peers in the 1960s), he was hired as a professor at a state college. He now, of course, draws his salary from you and me.

Perhaps Gingrich might change his view of AmeriCorps if he took its approach to public service. He could forgo his salary and perks in favor of the \$7,640 stipend for the next two years.

That would be a start.

But of course by doing his service in Congress he'd miss out on the chance to help people directly who have been through disaster or are hoping to avert one; he'd miss the chance to experience the fear and frustration of those who try to lead good lives in crime-riddled neighborhoods; he'd miss the joy of teaching a child to read, thereby opening his or her mind to a world of wonder and opportunity; he'd miss the true meaning of JFK's clarion call.

Most of all, he'd miss the chance to gather material for a great second book. An apology for his first.



Herald file photo

READY TO WORK: AmeriCorps volunteers in Dade County were sworn in by President Clinton via satellite at the Miami-Dade Community College downtown campus in September

Program With 60's Spirit Butts Against 95's

By PETER APPLEBOME

Special to The New York Times

PHOENIX, Feb. 1 — On New Year's Eve, Kerri Goncher packed up her 1987 Toyota Supra in Chicago and drove here in 34 hours straight to begin teaching the severely emotionally disturbed and sometimes violent children who end up at the Little Canyon Center run by the Arizona Baptist Children's Services. She will earn \$4.50 an hour plus an annual \$4,725 educational grant.

Ms. Goncher's bouncy enthusiasm for a low-wage public service job may be just what President Clinton had in mind for the AmeriCorps public service program.

In its first five months of operation, the program has placed 20,000 Americans like Ms. Goncher, a recent University of



Jeffery V. Chaites for The New York Times

The New Volunteers

A special report.

Wisconsin graduate who hopes to become a teacher, in a wide variety of public service jobs tutoring children, serving as police cadets, repairing housing projects and monitoring contamination of rivers in 350 programs around the country.

Mr. Clinton has hailed the program as perhaps his proudest achievement and one that is already "changing the way that Government works." In his proposed budget for the fiscal year 1996, he is asking \$812.5 million out of a \$1.6 trillion budget to finance 47,000 AmeriCorps members.

Congressional Republicans are threatening to kill AmeriCorps, calling it a costly throwback to an era of big Government. Some say that it will make it harder to recruit volunteers without incentives and that it is unnecessary because many participants will just get Government assistance to what they would have done anyway.

And instead of Mr. Clinton's hope that AmeriCorps would evoke the spirit of the Kennedy years, when the Peace Corps drew instinctive support, AmeriCorps



Jeff Topping for The New York Times

Donald Davis, above, works for the Federal AmeriCorps program organizing social service projects for young people at two elementary schools in Florence, S.C. Kerri Goncher teaches emotionally disturbed children in an AmeriCorps program in Phoenix.

Continued on Page B7, Column 1

has come to reflect the opposite: the Anti-Government ethic and budget roadblocks now facing almost any new Federal program.

With its self-consciously businesslike moniker as the Corporation for National Service, its bottom-up structure controlled by state commissions appointed by mostly Republican Governors, and its scaled-down stipend, the program was designed as a public service program for an anti-Government era.

"I like to think of our role as an investment banker investing in local communities, rewarding the programs doing well with growth possibilities and making sure those not working are not refunded," said Eli Segal, who heads the program and has the title of chief executive. "This is like a start-up business, designed with the support of moderate Republicans, which believes that delivery systems as close as possible to the customer will bear fruit in terms of quality."

But, businesslike oratory aside, Congressional Republicans say Americorps is just another Government program at a time the nation needs fewer of them.

"If you're going to get to a balanced budget and your choice is having a nice little Government bureaucracy that runs people around the country doing nice things or taking care of people with severe disabilities," Speaker Newt Gingrich, Republican of Georgia, said in a recent interview, "where is each one on the priority list?"

"It just strikes me that on any reasonable list that gets to a balanced budget, this is a long way below the line of what doesn't survive."

In his Presidential campaign, Mr. Clinton advertised his proposal for a national service program as a way to help students pay for their education while serving their country and being imbued with the spirit of service to others. Interviews with Americorps members and organizations that employ them indicate that the program is already creating extraordinary interest among young people and tapping into a nascent spirit of public service on college campuses.

But they also indicate that it could be difficult for the program to meet the most exacting standards for selfless activism that some will hold it to and that the timing of the program could not be worse, given the budget realities in Washington.

"I really think that as long as the Government is going to play some role, this is the best way they can do it, and that you can use a program like this to jump start a lot of positive activity for very little money," said H. Daniels Duncan, president of

the United Way in nearby Mesa, where six Americorps workers are putting together what organizers hope will be a network of 3,000 community volunteer workers. "The issue is, Is a little money too much money right now?"

The Beginning A Network Of Activists

Americorps formally began last September with a \$376-million budget for 20,000 participants. The budget for the fiscal year 1995 is \$580 million for 33,000 members.

Participants receive a small living allowance, approximately the minimum wage, limited health care coverage and child care, plus a \$4,725 tuition grant for each year of service — about 1,700 hours of work. People can serve for two years and get a maximum tuition grant of \$9,450, which can be used for current or future college costs or to repay existing loans.

Americorps incorporates some existing programs like Vista. It is separate from the Job Corps, which provides job training every year for about 65,000 disadvantaged young people.

Americorps is producing an enormous variety of public service work, much of it historical social service activity, some of it reflecting current conservative trends.

In New Orleans, the Youth Action Corps founded by Americorps works on projects from wetlands preservation to tutoring in low-income areas. The South Carolina Victim Assistance Network works with crime victims and advocates for victims' rights in law-enforcement centers, shelters and crisis centers around the state.

At what is called the SalmonCore program, students from the Yakima Indian Nation in Washington State are cleaning out polluted settling ponds at a former Department of Energy site to grow fish to help replenish the dwindling salmon run in the Columbia River.

In the New York area, activities include tutoring and mentoring disadvantaged young people through the I Have A Dream Foundation and working as cadets in the Police Cadet Program of the New York City Police Department.

In Iowa, Sarah and Rebekah Swan, 19-year-old twins, are members, Sarah working at a Family Violence Center in Des Moines, Rebekah at the Alzheimers Association of America in Cedar Rapids.

Donald Davis, 45, a carpenter and painter, decided after 14 years in the Army that he wanted to work with young people. He is now working at two elementary schools in Florence, S.C., organizing social service projects for youngsters.

Michael Davis, a student at Eastern Michigan University, and Michelle Cooper, a student at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, tutor as part of the program. In Boulder, Colo., Pakou Cha, a University of Colorado student who speaks Hmong, Spanish and English, tutors children, many of whom speak little or no English, at the San Juan del Centro Family Learning Center.

The program's goal has been to provide opportunities for as diverse a group as possible, from the Ivy League graduates who once might have joined the Peace Corps to high school dropouts working on their general equivalency degree and trying to stay out of trouble.

"I had thought of being an architect, but it was like a fading dream," said Timothy Moore, an 18-year-old high school dropout and former gang member in New Orleans. "Americorps really changed my life. It gave me good things to think about."

The Mechanics

Conservatism And Public Service

The program in Arizona reflects Americorps's structure and scope —

from working on environmental issues with Navajo elders to passing out condoms and pamphlets about sexually transmitted diseases in Tucson's red-light district.

Programs are selected by a 25-member board appointed by Gov. Fife Symington, a conservative Republican, and headed by Lieut. Col. Gary Smith, who works in the anti-drug program of the National Guard.

Most participants, like Ms. Goncher, augment existing operations. The most ambitious new project spawned by Americorps is the Border Volunteer Corps, a \$2.6 million program with 103 Americorps members working in 25 projects along the border.

Richard H. Carter, the program's director, said, "There is a new park now, immunized children, trained migrant farm workers, people working in environmental programs, community gardens, new homes in the Indian nations, restored homes."

But Republican critics in Washington say that its incentives will