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[Scrapbook of Success - Chicago, East St. Louis, Two Rivers] [1]

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Scrapbook of Success

featuring:

Chicago



East St. Louis



Two Rivers

*AmeriCorps
Programs*

AmeriCorps Pledge

*I will get things done for America—
to make our people safer,
smarter, and healthier.*



*I will bring Americans together —
to strengthen our communities.*



*Faced with apathy,
I will take action.*



*Faced with conflict,
I will seek common ground.*



*Faced with adversity,
I will persevere.*



*I will carry this commitment with me
this year and beyond.*



I am an AmeriCorps Member...



*And I Am Going
To Get Things Done.*

ILLINOIS USDA AMERICORPS ACCOMPLISHMENTS

East St. Louis Project

- 15 neglected and abandoned urban residential lots cleared and restored.
- 10 community garden sites cleared and ready for spring planting.
- 57 National Tree Trust trees planted on the campus of State Community College (SCC).
- Established a demonstration garden on SCC campus using biodynamic garden techniques.
- Completed 50% of East St. Louis Senior High School Greenhouse renovation.
- Completed an evaluation and renovation needs for the Jones Park Greenhouse and removed 100% of debris and broken materials from the site.
- Completed clean-up of the fountain in Jones park.
- Conducted environmental educational programs with local elementary schools.
- Started several hundred plants in SCC greenhouse and transplanted them to the Jones Park greenhouse for use by community groups.

Two Rivers RC&D Project

- Developed 6 miles of trails in the McCully Heritage Project.
- Assisted the Calhoun County Highway Department in stabilizing and clearing brush from 5 miles of highway.
- Completed the survey and design plans for a 5 acre wetland to be used for an environmental education center.
- Developed 1.3 miles of hiking trails; improved 5 acres of camp sites; and pruned 5 acres of evergreen trees at the Pittsfield City lake.
- Removed 15 tons of debris (tires, appliances, automobiles) from a stream that outlets into the city owned recreational lake of Rushville.
- Completed a listing of all business in every community in the 5 county (Adams, Brown, Calhoun, Pike, Schuyler)

area. This information will be used by people for recreation and tourism.

- Completed a central business district survey of 122 business in Pittsfield.
- Assisted the Uptown Quincy, Inc. (UQI) with rehabilitation and revitalization projects.
- Assisted the city of Quincy in clearing trees and brush from city right-of-way areas along the riverfront and relaying bricks in the East End Historic District.
- Developed a newsletter to keep the public informed about AmeriCorps activities.
- Approximately 3,000 Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) contract holders were surveyed to determine their future intentions of land enrolled in CRP. Over 60% responded and answers to the survey will be compiled into a report to promote alternative uses for land in CRP.

Chicago Project

- 30 vacant apartments cleaned up and renovated in the Lathrop Homes complex.
- Renovated a six-flat apartment building in the Ida B Wells complex.
- Assisted the Urban Resources Partnership (URP) in Chicago clean-up along the Chicago River.
- Assisted the Chicago Habitat For Humanity in cleaning out several vacant apartments to be rehabbed.
- Assisted with the planting of several hundred thousand annuals and vegetables for the Chicago Park District gardens program throughout the Chicagoland area.
- Completed stream maintenance and beautification on several miles along the Little Calumet River in South Holland.
- Provided tutoring to approximately 350 students at Price Elementary School.
- Provided assistance to Garfield, Lincoln and Marquette Park Conservatories in transplanting and potting vegetables and flowers.
- Provided environmental education to 1,000 Chicago Public school students.



USDA meriCorps Projects

C hicago

Contact:

Carzella Pritchett
Don Fehrenbacher
Ph: 312•373•9956
Fax: 312•373•9956

Environmental Corps

- 20 Members to be recruited by: Sept. 12, 1994.

The Chicago USDA AmeriCorps project will consist of work in the Ida B. Wells, Madden Park, and several other properties of the Chicago Housing Authority, several Forest District sites and other communities. The nature of the work will be cleanup and planting gardens and trees.

T wo Rivers

Contact:

Bill McCartney
Ph: 217•285•4114
Fax: 217•285•5121

Rural Development Corps

- 6 Members to be recruited by: Sept. 16, 1994.

Environmental Corps

- 9 Members to be recruited by: Sept. 16, 1994.

The Pittsfield project will have 2 teams that will identify alternative uses for the land enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program, assist small communities with a business research, retention and revitalization program, and will do research and provide information about constructing timber bridges from local timber resources.

E ast St. Louis

Contact:

Rufus Williams and
Dr. Donald Wallace
Ph: 618•583•2514
Fax: 618•583•2661
Ed Weilbacher
Ph: 618•566•4451
Fax: 618•566•4452

Environmental Corps

- 20 Members to be recruited by Sept. 12, 1994

Environmental Corps

- 10 Members to be recruited by Sept. 12, 1994

The East St. Louis, Lovejoy/Metro Area project will restore a number of neglected and/or abandoned lots in residential settings to environmental standards. Teams will also clean up, restore, and beautify State Community College campus and the surrounding area. Several green-houses, a stream channel and lagoon, plus a number of athletic fields in the park district will also be restored. The Madison and St. Clair County project will restore rural areas affected by the 1993 and 1994 floods.



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Natural Resources
Conservation
Service

Illinois
September 1994



© USDA AmeriCorps of Chicago Park District
Carzella Pritchett and Don Fehrenbacher
 USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service
 Kennicott Park
 4434 South Lake Park
 Chicago, Illinois 60653
 Ph. & Fax: 312-373-9956



© USDA AmeriCorps of East St. Louis Lovejoy, and Metro Area; Madison and St. Claire Counties
Rufus Williams
Dr. Donald Wallace
 State Community College
 601 J.R. Thompson Boulevard
 Vocational Training Center
 East St. Louis, Illinois 62201
 Ph: 618-583-2514
 Fax: 618-583-2661



Ed Weilbacher
 Southwestern Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D)
 406 East Main Street
 Mascoutah, Illinois 62258
 Ph: 618-566-4451
 Fax: 618-566-4452

© USDA AmeriCorps of Two Rivers
Bill McCartney
 Two Rivers Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D)
 110 East Fayette Street
 Pittsfield, Illinois 62363
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 Fax: 217-285-5121



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O



AmeriCorps in Illinois

*Getting Things Done
for America*



ELLIOTT DONNELLEY YOUTH CENTER
3947 South Michigan Avenue • Chicago, Illinois 60653 • (312) 268-3815

Carzella Pritchett, Coordinator
U.S.D.A./Americorps, Soil Conservation Service
c/o Kennicott Park
4434 South Lake Park Ave.
Chicago, IL 60653



September 30, 1994

Dear Ms. Pritchett:

The staff at the Elliott Donnelley Youth Center are very excited about the Americorps program and are looking forward to working with you. The center serves over 2,000 youth through recreational, cultural and educational programs geared to develop youth and their families into productive citizens. In order to provide quality programs and a safe and clean environment we are always in need of volunteer assistance. The center also has a diverse group of staff that are eager to provide training for the Chicago Americorps Team. I am enclosing a list of action items and schedules as per your request in addition to the training that we can offer your program.

I look forward to talking with you soon.

Sincerely yours,

Todd Barnett
Program Coordinator

Enclosure: 1

**CHICAGO
YOUTH CENTERS**

FELLOWSHIP HOUSE
844 West 32nd Street
Chicago, Illinois 60608
(312) 326-2282

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November 20, 1994

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USDA Americorps
Carzella Pritchett
4434 South Lake Park
Chicago, IL 60653

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Dear Carzella;

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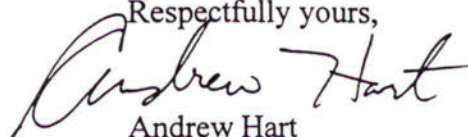
We here at Fellowship House are very excited that we have been chosen as a working partner with your Americorps Team! As a community center striving to serve the needs of this community, we are very appreciative of any assistance we can receive to improve the lives of residents in this economically disadvantaged neighborhood.

The Americorps Team will work with our community garden, which was started just two months ago. We will also be working on a beautification project, planting trees and perennial bulbs. We could provide work for your team for at least one week.

Sgt. Joe Sepulveda
Community Liason

Once again, if I can be of any assistance to you, please let me know. I am looking forward to a rewarding relationship with Americorps. Thanks so much for your support!

Respectfully yours,



Andrew Hart
Program Coordinator



A private not-for-profit agency sponsored in part by the United Way of Metropolitan Chicago.



City of Chicago
Richard M. Daley, Mayor

Chicago for Youth
Theodore F. O'Keefe
Project Manager

DePaul Center
Suite 500
333 South State Street
Chicago, Illinois 60604
(312) 747-9621
(312) 747-1137 (FAX)
(312) 747-7744 (TT/TDD)

January 31, 1995

Ms. Carzella Pritchett
Director
USDA Americorp
4434 South Lake Park
Chicago, Illinois 60653

Dear Ms. Pritchett:

Mayor Daley and I would like to thank you for your participation in the Americorp Participant Recognition Reception Dinner. I would also like to commend you and your organization for your commitment to the youth of the city.

The type of applied learning that Americorp programs foster, promotes experiences that youth need to develop a concerned attitude toward their community and ensures that the young men and women acquire the skills they will utilize as our next generation of leaders.

Youth development is an important concept. Mayor Daley and I recognize this and have incorporated the concept as the mission of the Chicago for Youth office.

The City of Chicago along with the public, not-for-profit and business organizations will continue to help our youth develop the type of attitudes and competencies that will make positive community development possible. We look forward to working with you in the future.

I thank for your support in the development of the youth of Chicago. Please share the enclosed photos with your participants.

Sincerely,

Theodore F. O'Keefe
Project Manager
Chicago for Youth



WENTWORTH GARDENS MANAGEMENT CORPORATION
252 WEST PERSHING ROAD
CHICAGO, ILL. 60609
(312) 548-7512
FAX: 548-8645

Coarsely Prictchett
Coordinator
USDA AmeriCorps
4434 South Lake Park
Chicago, Ill. 60653

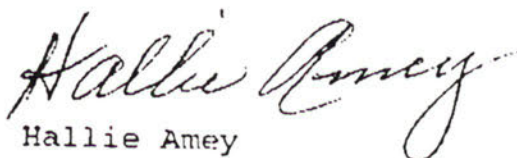
February 16, 1995

Ms. Prictchett:

The residents of Wentworth Gardens, as well as all the other participants of St. Georges' Community Garden would like to thank you for your generous offer of assistance. Your support will go a long way in ensuring the success of the garden.

We are requesting, as you offered at our meeting on February 9, 1995, twenty AmeriCorp volunteers to assist with the April 1, 1995 clean-up (alternately April 7, 1995), the testing of the soil, performing a garden survey, and on-going technical assistance. Again we thank you for your kind help, and consideration. It is very much appreciated.

Sincerely,


Hallie Amey



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF CHICAGO**

Carzella Pritchett
And USDA Americorps Members
4434 S. Lake Park Ave
Chicago, Il. 60653

Julia C. Lathrop Club
2915 N. Leavitt Street
Chicago, IL 60618
(312) 348-1866
(312) 348-4643 FAX

Dear Carzella and USDA Americorps Members:

Throughout the Lathrop Beautification Project I have had the pleasure to work with many volunteer groups from Chicago. Working with USDA Americorps has been a privilege and a gift for me.

Americorps members have displayed commitment and sincerity in all of their assignments in the Lathrop Homes. The consistent cooperation and caring among the Americorps members exemplify the success of your efforts in the development of a powerful workforce for America.

Thank you for sharing your talents and hearts with us.

Sincerely,

Ellen Glantz
Art Director
BGCC/Lathrop

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YOUTH AND FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER
KENNICOT PARK
4434 SOUTH LAKE PARKE AVENUE
CHICAGO ILLINOIS 60653

Ms. Carzella Pritchett
Kennicott Park
4434 South Lake Park
Chicago, Illinois 60653

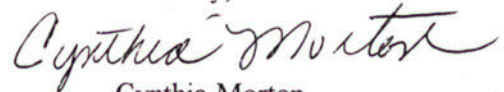
Dear Ms. Pritchett,

The Youth And Family Resource Center (YAFRC) would like to thank you and your AmeriCorps staff for participating in the Price After School Program.

The AmeriCorps staff assisted the Price students with their home work, they developed friendly relationships with students, executed a conflict resolution skill(which was superior), exhibited leadership skills, and conducted themselves in a professional manner at all times.

We are so impressed with their display of professionalism that we would like for the AmeriCorps staff to join us at the Kennicott Park After School Program. Again we would like to thank your staff for their services.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Cynthia Morton".

Cynthia Morton
Executive Director



Thanks so much for
all your help, hope
you can join us!
Mel
Director of
Volunteers

Friends of the Parks

407 South Dearborn • Suite 1590 • Chicago, Illinois 60605
Phone (312) 922-3307 • Facsimile (312) 922-7481

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Executive Director

Erma Tranter

Thank You for volunteering on Earth Day's 25th Anniversary! Thanks to the care and commitment of people like you, **together** we have ensured a positive future for Chicago's fragile urban environment.

Now that you've worked hard hands-on, I'd like to offer you an easy way to make your Earth day efforts last **year-round** -- by joining Friends of the Parks!

Since 1975, Friends of the Parks has worked every day to achieve this goal. Friends of the Parks is the public's strongest and most articulate advocate for ALL of Chicago's parks. When you join you'll personally help to preserve, protect and improve Chicago's parks and greenspaces each and every day!

A small sampling of our accomplishments include:

- **Saving** over 100 acres of lakefront parkland from development.
- **Developing** a corps of over 10,000 volunteers who clean and improve Chicago's parks each year.
- **Initiating** an Adopt-A-Park/Adopt-A-Beach program, in which businesses, schools, community groups and neighbors care for their local parks. Over 50 parks have been adopted.
- **Educating** thousands of Chicago school children on issues of park care, stewardship and recycling in the classroom.
- **Spearheading** the revitalization of the Garfield Park Conservatory.

As a population grows, so do the needs for parks and open spaces. *Once we destroy them, we cannot get them back.* For them to exist, we must invest in them and do everything we can to guarantee their future **now**.

While you still have my letter in hand, please take a moment to fill out the enclosed membership application and return it to me **today!** With your support, *together* we'll ensure a certain tomorrow for Chicago's parks and for our continued good quality of life today.

Gratefully,

Erma Tranter
Executive Director



March 28, 1995

Dear Amercorp,

On February 21st, 4 men from Amercorp helped me out of Sundrop Prairie in Markham after I had fallen. I found out later that my leg was broken.

They worked hard to help me out and I appreciate it.

Thanks very much

Sincerely,

Lola B. Yore



April, 1995

Dear Carzella,

It was our pleasure having Americorps participate in the TreeKeeper spring session of classes. The Americorps group really seems to get around, too--from the Forest Preserves to The Mighty Acorns, and now TreeKeepers!

As I mentioned, here's a listing of Americorps participants who attended at least one (and, of course, more than one) TreeKeeper class. I've mailed Lena and Ralph their test results to them along with other information--they were the only two who appeared for the final class and took the written exam on-site.

Thanks to you, too, for taking the TreeKeeper class this past spring. I'm sure it was a point of inspiration for Americorps registrants to see "The Boss" in class!

We'll look forward to asking Americorps for help in the urban forest as summer goes by--I know that in fall most everyone is going their own ways. We certainly wish everybody well as they start their new and exciting lives and projects! And we hope they will remember Openlands Project and TreeKeepers fondly as part of their training in the spring of 1995.

Sincerely,

Steve Bartram
Urban Forestry Manager and
TreeKeeper Instructor

and

Julie Sacco
Volunteer Coordinator

April 3, 1995

Dear Carzella Prichett:

I am writing this letter to make you aware of the outstanding work of the USDA Americorps volunteers. I have worked with them on several projects relating to the Mighty Acorns program, for which I am the South East Chicago Education Coordinator. They are very articulate and eloquent when making presentations about Mighty Acorns to community leaders, educators and residents. The Americorps volunteers have provided strong leadership with their ability organize and plan activities that will increase community awareness and participation in our program.

Moreover, their participation in Mighty Acorns is crucial to the advancement of this program in the South East Chicago community and we look forward to working with them on present and future Mighty Acorns initiatives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kimberly Sambou".

Kimberly Sambou,
South East Chicago
Education Coordinator



ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
425 EAST McFETRIDGE DRIVE
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60605
TELEPHONE
294-2200

April 5, 1995

Ms. Carzella Pritchett
U. S. D. A. Americorps
Kennicott Park
4434 South Lake Park
Chiago, Illinois 60653

Dear Carzeila:

Thank you and the U. S. D. A. Americorps Team for being a vital part of our Spring Success, helping us transplant the many hundred thousand annuals and vegetables for the Chicago Park District gardens throughout the Chicagoland area, and helping us prepare the Showhouses for our Annual Spring Flower Shows at Garfield and Lincoln Park Conservatories.

Your team's energy, support and enthusiasm are assets to the beautification of Chicago.

Sincerely,

Dan Purciarello
Director of Conservatories

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

May 8, 1995

Christine Mallett
3829 So Wabash
Chicago, Illinois 60653

Dear Christine:

It is an honor to welcome you as a Member of the inaugural class of AmeriCorps. AmeriCorps is built on the tradition of national service established by programs such as the Peace Corps and the Civilian Conservation Corps. Like these programs, AmeriCorps provides opportunity while demanding responsibility and a commitment to confront and solve our nation's most pressing problems. I commend you for responding to this bold challenge.

You and more than 20,000 other AmeriCorps Members are making a difference by bringing emergency care to areas that have suffered from natural disaster, revitalizing inner-city neighborhoods, walking the beat with police, teaching in crowded classrooms, building homes for working families, and restoring our country's natural resources. You have accepted the responsibility to get things done on a local level and to learn from people of all different backgrounds. And you are creating common ground that all of us -- as a nation -- can build upon.

I am committed to making AmeriCorps a long-term success, and your input will help to achieve this goal. I want to know about the challenges you are facing and how you are meeting them; about how you are affecting the people and the communities you serve; and about how your work with AmeriCorps has changed you as an individual and as a citizen. Please take a moment to write to me at The White House, The AmeriCorps Program, 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, D.C. 20502.

When we launched AmeriCorps in September, I asked three basic questions: What is right? What is wrong? And what are we going to do about it? As an AmeriCorps Member, you are doing what is right. You have shouldered enormous responsibility for yourself, for your neighbors, and for our nation. You represent what is best about America, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Clinton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.



May 11, 1995

Carzella Pritchett
USDA Americorps
4434 S. Lake Park
Chicago, Illinois., 60653

Dear Carzella,

On behalf of the Austin Green Team I want to thank you for the work your volunteers provided in helping unload two plant donations at the Austin Library and for their enthusiastic presentation at the Fair on Saturday, May 6th. They were very well recieved and I think they will be a great help to Austin Gardeners this year. Austin will be more beautiful, the air will be cleaner and the people happier because of your help at the fair and certainly your help to come.

This was the first Fair I attended, but I can't help but think it was the best! Gardening is really catching on in this neighborhood. We had about 90 adults and 12 children. The children are part of the Northwest Austin Council's "Kid 'Munity" group and they came prepared with boxes of terrariums that they had created as their own special indoor garden project. The terrariums were auctioned off and the money will help with the ongoing youth program at NAC. There was an air of excitement and everyone went home loaded down with plants (and I mean really loaded down!!) to add to community and home gardens. Austin is going to really bloom this summer!

Thanks for your help, again. Look forward to working with you in the months ahead.

Julie Samuels
Community Outreach Coordinator

5/25/95

Dear Cozella:

And what a nice person
did it!

Thank You!

For the many thing you have
done for me, painting, clearing,
planting, something, calling,
removing furniture from one place
to another, setting up tables,
serving food, picking up pumpkins
Balls, If it had not been for your
concern and help things would not
have gotten done. please thank your
Sister Add. God Bless you and keep you
strong. Rhonda Noel



July 18, 1995

City of Chicago
Richard M. Daley, Mayor

Chicago for Youth
Theodore F. O'Keefe
Project Manager

DePaul Center
Suite 500
333 South State Street
Chicago, Illinois 60604
(312) 747-9621
(312) 747-1137 (FAX)
(312) 747-7744 (TT/TDD)

Ms. Carzella Prichard
Director, Americorp USDA
4434 South Lake Park
Chicago, Illinois 60653

Dear Ms. Prichard:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your efforts to support the implementation of the Mayor's Youth Development Task Force Report. It is due to your support that we are able to work in partnership with public and private institutions throughout the city to make the your priority in our lives.

Enclosed please find a copy of the first Chicago for Youth Newsletter. Inside it details the positive efforts that have been made to improve the quality of life for young people throughout the city.

If you have any suggestions that would help us carry out our mission to serve young people, or stories we could feature in subsequent editions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 747-9621.

Sincerely,

Theodore F. O'Keefe
Project Manager





Illinois Field Office • 8 South Michigan Avenue • Chicago, Illinois 60603
Phone: 312.346.8166
FAX: 312.346.5606

July 31, 1995

Mr. Tom Christensen
State Conservationist
USDA National Resource Conservation Service
1902 Fox Drive
Champaign, IL 61820

Dear Ms. Christensen:

I would like to express to you how wonderful The Nature Conservancy's experience has been in working with USDA AmeriCorps members in Chicago.

Under the leadership of Carzella Prittchet, AmeriCorps has provided invaluable assistance to our youth stewardship education program, Mighty Acorns. Our goal with Mighty Acorns is to introduce children from the city to experiences in exploring and caring for natural areas. AmeriCorps members have been small group leaders, guiding children on hikes in the prairies, woodlands and wetlands of the Cook County forest preserves and in restoration activities including cutting brush and pulling exotic plant species. Had it not been for AmeriCorps participation, many of these children would not have been able to have these experiences this year.

All the members have done a great job in being leaders and role-models for the children. In particular, members Jackie Jackson, our liaison with USDA AmeriCorps, and Lena Witherspoon have provided excellent assistance in coordinating AmeriCorps' participation with Mighty Acorns.

We look forward to working with AmeriCorps members in the year to come.

Sincerely,

Diane M. Reckless
Northern Illinois Education Coordinator

Ernestine King
Southeast Chicago Outreach Coordinator

hit S. Holland

BY LAURI HARVEY
Times Staff Writer

The first of President Clinton's Americorps participants to hit the Chicago suburbs are spending the week working along the Little Calumet River in South Holland.

Sporting Americorps T-shirts, more than 20 volunteers were busy pulling weeds, trimming bushes and cutting tree limbs by the banks of the Little Calumet at Pacesetter Park on Monday. The volunteers will be clearing vegetation for both practical and aesthetic purposes throughout the week in an effort to keep the flow of the river smooth and the parks pleasing for visitors.

The participants, all of whom hail from Chicago, are working along the Little Calumet River in Gouwens, Pacesetter, Veterans and Riverview Parks to help with the village's stream maintenance program.

Americorps volunteers perform community service in exchange for a grant for college or vocational education courses.

"It's great to see everyone working together in a group setting with a common goal and knowing they are earning their education," said Anita Muhammad, 34, one of two group leaders on the project. "I love working outdoors, just love working with people and it really is fun, a real hands-on opportunity."

Americorps workers earn a \$159 stipend per work week. After logging 1,812 hours of federally approved community service, the workers receive a \$4,707 grant that can only be used for educational purposes. Participants must be at least 17 years old.

The nation's first Americorps volunteers began working Sept. 21. The program includes groups specializing in such fields as the environment and health care. The Americorps group in South Holland specializes in environmental projects, and began working in the Chicago area Oct. 17.

Ralph Owens, 54, is the oldest volunteer in the environmental group and serves as a team leader on the projects. Owens has been a volunteer with the U.S. Forestry Service in Utah and said the Americorps project gives him the opportunity to do the same kind of work and to earn a paycheck.

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Volunteers

Continued from Page B-1

"I'm really interested in environmental projects and studies, so this was a great opportunity for me," Owens said.

"This group of people really works hard to get things done and it benefits everyone involved."

Owens said he will most likely apply his educational grant toward environmental or horticulture studies.

Participants in the program are required to have a high school diploma or General Equivalency

Degree. If a participant does not have that requirement, he or she must agree to complete the necessary courses before their service is done.

Joel Cruz, 17, is the youngest Americorps worker on the South Holland project and is working on his GED as part of the program. He said he first heard of the program through the Boys and Girls Clubs of Chicago.

"I do it for the education," Cruz said. "I don't know what I want to go into, but when I'm done, I can get my education."

Rose Marie DeWitt, who served on a volunteer basis for the village as a flood control coordinator, assisted in bringing Americorps to South Holland. She said Monday she would like to see Thornton Township utilize the Americorps program also.

"We can clean the streams here, but it needs to be done up and down the Little Calumet, not just one place," DeWitt said. "No longer can people and the communities say, 'We can't afford to do it,' when it comes to stream maintenance. This is free."

AmeriCorp Comes to the Park

Kennicott Park, headquarters to the South Region, is also home to a state office of the national AmeriCorps program.

USDA AmeriCorps is a national service initiative to get work done. It offers Americans the opportunity to serve their country while earning educational awards. The mission of the program is to engage a diverse group of Americans in working partnerships with communities to provide real and measurable service to meet environmental and human needs.

The aim is to establish an innovative, respected and sustainable program and implement a long-term plan that makes quality service opportunities available to all Americans.

The Chicago Environmental Action Team is made up of 20 members, recruited throughout the city and suburbs.

Through AmeriCorps, individuals of all ages and backgrounds address the nation's education, public safety, human and environmental needs through service. In return, members receive education awards to help finance their college education or vocational train-



USDA AmeriCorps State Conservationist Thomas Christensen greets some 75 citizens at a press conference to kick-off the AmeriCorps program.

ing, or to pay back their student loans after successful completion of service.

The members who work out of Kennicott Park are from varied backgrounds. Each demonstrates a commitment to service, a willingness to use their time and abilities to improve the lives of others, and an interest in learning new skills. Through their service, they have already brought a sense of community responsibility to parks that they have worked in throughout the South Region.

Their goals include: helping to create new green space and gardens, improving existing green spaces, educating students on environmental aware-

ness, helping community residents make basic home improvements, and serving alongside community groups.

AmeriCorps is open to any U.S. citizen or legal resident who is 17 years or older. For information on the South Region office location, contact Carzella Pritchett.

Southside Girls Learn Fundamentals of Basketball

Girls ages 9 through 14 from South Region parks recently learned how to dribble, pass, shoot, play defense and offense and talk to professional women basketball players, all at the same time!

The Chicago HoneyBees, the most recent addition to professional women's basketball, held a 3-day clinic at Washington Park for girls interested in the sport.

While the HoneyBees admit their mission is to field the best women's team in the WBA League, they recognize their responsibility to serve as positive role models for Chicago area girls.

Nearly 50 girls participated in the 3-day clinic. The first day of the program was devoted to mentoring. The girls met the HoneyBee team members and discussed issues including peer pressure, study skills, self-esteem and other areas of concern.

The next two days included hands-on work in the art of playing basketball. The young ladies learned the fundamentals of the game and ended their clinic experience with pick-up scrimmage games and a ceremony recognizing each participant with a certificate of completion. The girls

received a free HoneyBee T-shirt too.

"This was a good example of how park programs can meet the needs of young girls who are interested in sports," said South Region Manager Sidney Bundrage. "Everybody had fun. This tells us that we should look into offering these kinds of clinics and workshops year round."

Tentative plans include inviting the HoneyBees back to the Region before their professional season begins in March, 1995.

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SOUTH REGION NEWS was written by ReGina Hayes, Region Marketing and Communications Manager. Information and stories for this issue were provided by park and playground supervisors and the region staff. If you would like to contribute to **SOUTH REGION NEWS** with ideas or stories, please send information to ReGina Hayes, Region Marketing/Communications Manager, South Region, 4434 South Lake Park, Chicago, IL 60615; 312-747-7661.

WE'RE BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS FOR AND WITH YOUNG PEOPLE



"Blueprints for Change" put into action

Last June, the Mayor's Youth Development Task Force—which, under the leadership of MacArthur Foundation president Adele Simmons, had spent a year gathering input from Chicago's young people as well as community and religious leaders—went public with its agenda.

It released a bold report that challenged every organization and every citizen in Chicago to help make the city a safer, smarter, happier place for young people to spend their out-of-school hours.

Using the "Blueprints for Change" spelled out in the report, the Chicago for Youth team, coordinated by Ted O'Keefe, has spent

the intervening year putting the task force's words into action. Among the results:

Ultimately, all Chicago for Youth initiatives lead to the same goal: stimulating young people to strive for excellence.

Six YouthNet sites are up and running in the Westworth, Pullman, Wood, Austin, Foster and Prairie police districts, thanks to \$1.2 million from the city. They offer educational, social and recreational opportunities to more than a thousand 10- to 18-year-old Chicagoans. More YouthNets will open later this year.

■ The YouthWorks program is hard at work building public/private partnerships between corporations and youth-serving agencies to increase youth employment and mentoring, in the critical summer months as well as year-round.

■ To combat duplication of effort and encourage social-service linkages, O'Keefe has established a Citywide

Coordinating Council that brings together youth-savvy representatives from YouthNet communities and local and state governments as well as the Chicago Park District, Chicago Public Schools and philanthropic sources.

The YouthVision component, which will be run independent of the city, has received initial funding from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

Ultimately, all Chicago for Youth initiatives lead to the same goal: Stimulating young people to strive for excellence—and helping adults understand they can share ownership of the future by helping them achieve it.

"...I want this entire city mobilized and committed to a citywide crusade for children. Nothing else we do will ever be as important." —Mayor Richard M. Daley