

Job Corps' Guide to Make A Difference Day 2006

Saturday, October 28, 2006

Held in partnership with *USA WEEKEND Magazine* and The Points of Light Foundation, Make A Difference Day is the largest nationwide day of service. Each year millions of people simultaneously gather to help positively change millions of lives. The 16th annual 2006 Make A Difference Day marks Job Corps' eighth year as a national partner. This year's exciting event takes place across the country on Saturday, October 28. Last year, an astounding 3 million people volunteered in Make A Difference Day activities to support communities all across the country.

The goals of Make A Difference Day activities are to:

1. **MOBILIZE** youth to identify and address the needs of their communities through service.
2. **SUPPORT** youth on a life-long path of service and civic engagement.
3. **EDUCATE** the public, media, and policymakers about year-round contributions of young people as community leaders.

Last year nearly 11,000 students and staff from 114 Job Corps centers in 48 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico took part in Make A Difference Day activities. Our goal this year is to increase Job Corps center participation, involve more students and staff, and carry out creative and successful events that involve more members of the community.

By organizing and leading service-oriented projects within the community, Job Corps students create meaningful

relationships with community members and learn the value of what it means to give back through volunteerism. They also gain essential skills in self-confidence, leadership, teamwork, and selflessness – all skills that will lend themselves favorably to success in the workplace and in life.

APPROACHES TO PARTICIPATION

The steps to preparing and registering your project are similar to those in the past. Please reference the ideas and guidelines below to help plan and carry out your Make A Difference Day activities. Please note that *USA WEEKEND*'s goal is for all Make A Difference Day activities across the country to take place on OCTOBER 28. If you are unable to coordinate your activity on the 28th, please make plans as close to that date as possible.

PLANNING AND PARTNERING

Find a need. The goal of Make A Difference Day is to bring together neighbors and communities through volunteerism and community service. Assess the needs of your community by talking with other community members and leaders. Contact members of your center's Industry and Community Relations Councils. Look to prior Make A Difference Day or other community service activities. Then, create a plan to provide assistance and make positive changes in your community.

Get help/ideas. Find planning guides on the Web site (www.makeadifferenceday.com) under "Project Tools", or click on the "Idea Generator" for project ideas.



Job Corps'

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Remember to complete the online Activity Summary Form at www.AdvancedSurvey.com

For additional brochures and/or further assistance, email diffday@usaweekend.com or call the toll-free hotline at (800) 416-3824.

Tell everyone. Inform appropriate community leaders, elected officials, employers, and media contacts. Send out media advisories.

Register your project. To alert Make A Difference Day partners, register your project before it takes place using the DAYtaBANK at www.makeadifferenceday.com. This is a great way to get the word out about your project to a vast number of people and organizations. Your project will be part of a national listing of local projects to be viewed by other volunteers and news media looking for good stories to tell.

Take action. Be creative, implement plans, build enthusiasm with students and staff, and complete that project!

Tell Job Corps. Complete the Activity Summary Form located at www.AdvancedSurvey.com by Friday, Nov. 10.

Tell Make A Difference Day partners.

To be considered for honors and a chance to have your Make A Difference Day activities highlighted, complete and submit the Award Entry Form after you have completed your activity, by November 17 (see brochure or Web site for more details).

REACHING OUT TO COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Make A Difference Day participation is an excellent way to strengthen and make new community connections that will provide both short- and long-term benefits to students and Job Corps. Take advantage of this opportunity to engage students in service-learning while strengthening community connections. Be creative about partnerships and think outside of the box!

- **Team up** with America's Promise – www.americaspromise.org.
- **Celebrate** with the American Red Cross – www.redcross.org.

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- **Connect with local Make A Difference Day partners** (e.g., AmeriCorps, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Boys and Girls Clubs, State Farm Insurance Companies, the U.S. Army, and the YMCA/YWCA).
- **Invite community leaders**, elected officials, and media contacts.

GETTING RECOGNITION

Make A Difference Day is a great way to make connections and raise Job Corps' profile within our communities and around the country. Below is a quick checklist for highlighting your efforts with community leaders and media contacts.

Getting There...

- **Survey the community.** Find the "real" needs. Talk to members of your Community Relations Council, local neighborhood groups, and police and fire departments to accurately determine the areas of need within your community.
- **Recruit volunteers.** Contact local nonprofits that coordinate volunteers, consult your governor or mayor's office, or "adopt" a local facility or community agency and provide services on its behalf. You'll find that members of a community are more than willing to get involved and lend a helping hand alongside their neighbors, but are unsure about how to get started. Invite them to join in and help out with your Make A Difference Day activity. Last year, multiple Job Corps centers reported community volunteers in the hundreds!
- **Contact employers.** Contact local and national employers, members of your Industry and Community Relations Councils, local Chambers of Commerce, and Work-Based Learning sites. These contacts will also help to strengthen your center's relationship with these organizations and increase the possibility of future support from such members.
- **Produce attention-getting materials.** Student-developed materials, student photos and testimonials, as well as profiles and testimonials from community leaders are effective ways to engage local media. Be sure that materials are clear, concise, and compelling.
- **Distribute materials and notices.** Get the community involved by alerting them to your exciting and purposeful event. Send materials to community leaders, elected officials, and media contacts prior to the event.
- **Engage the media.** Begin pitching your story to local media outlets, and follow up with a press release. Media pitching should begin about two weeks prior to your event and should be ramped up in the last few days leading up to the event. Develop and distribute a media advisory two to three days prior to your event that outlines event logistics.
- **Make it personal.** A personal invitation through a phone call and/or student visit could be just the right touch to get a new community leader or policymaker involved. They can't

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- **Send thank you notes** and a summary of accomplishments to outside participants. Provide specifics on results, both quantitative and qualitative.
- **Complete the online entry form** to be considered for awards, including a \$10,000 dollar charitable donation from Paul Newman. In 2000, Job Corps was chosen as one of ten national honorees to receive a \$10,000 dollar donation and to be featured in *USAWEEKEND Magazine*. As a former winner, Job Corps is eligible for the \$10,000 Encore Award which recognizes an organization that continues to go above and beyond when serving the community. Visit www.makeadifferenceday.com and click on the "Entry Form" link to be considered. Help to put Job Corps back in the spotlight this year with an Encore Award!
- **Go online and complete the Job Corps Activity Summary Form** located at www.AdvancedSurvey.com. After completing the survey, you may want to retain a copy for your records. Please do so before submitting, as you will not have access to this information once it has been submitted.

All of the above mentioned activities will help to enhance public awareness about Job Corps while expanding our employer and community outreach network. Of course, these are not the only approaches, so don't hesitate to try other ideas and share what works in your Activity Summary!

LINKING TO NATIONAL RESOURCES

- Web site – www.makeadifferenceday.com
- Email – diffday@usaweekend.com
- Hotline – (800) 416-3824

come if you don't ask.

- **Follow up.** With busy schedules and hot media topics, it is important to take the time to follow up with media and partners both the day before and the day of your event. Make the event relevant and easy for them to cover.

Setting the Stage...

- **Promote Job Corps** by displaying Job Corps information and giveaways. Wear Job Corps hats, t-shirts, and any other items that help identify your connection to Job Corps.
- **Take photos** so you can submit them to newspapers and other local media outlets. Include Job Corps banners, signs, t-shirts and other Job Corps visuals in your photos.

Bragging Rights...

- **Follow up with your media contacts.** Whether or not they attended the activity or event, they might still do a story!
- **Write to the editor** of your local newspapers describing the results of your event, particularly how it helped the community and Job Corps students. Be specific. Provide numbers. Tell a personal anecdote about who was helped.

For the Record...

- **Send copies of photos** to community leaders, elected officials, and Make A Difference Day partners.
- **Post digital photos** of your Make A Difference Day activities on your center Web site after securing proper photo releases.

