

# VOLUNTEERING IN AMERICA 2010

Corporation for  
**NATIONAL &  
COMMUNITY  
SERVICE** ★★☆☆



## FACT SHEET

The Corporation for National and Community Service hosts the most comprehensive collection of information on volunteering in the U.S. at its Web site:

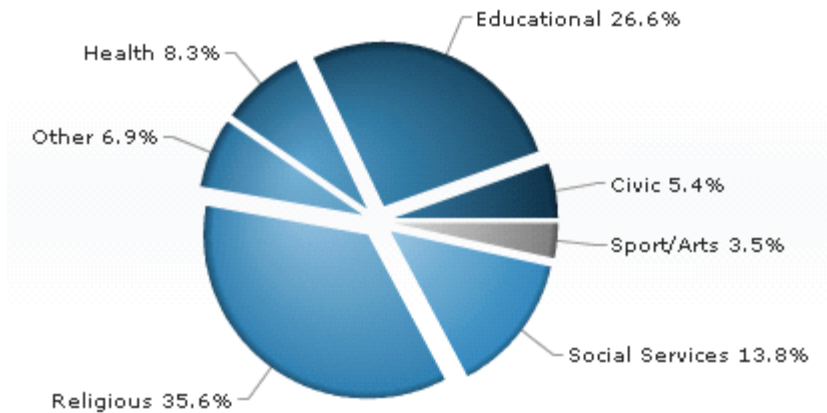
**www.VolunteeringinAmerica.gov.** The site allows civic leaders, nonprofit organizations, and interested individuals to retrieve a wide range of information regarding trends and demographics in volunteering in their regions, states, and nearly 200 metro areas. This year the research is especially important because it covers a time period—September 2008–September 2009—in which the most severe economic crisis since World War II tested the nation's ability to support vulnerable populations and build a more secure economic future. The 2010 Volunteering In America report found that Americans are responded to the crisis by serving. Last year saw the largest increase in volunteering since 2003.

## KEY FINDINGS

Americans of all ages and backgrounds have used service as a solution and mobilized to help communities across the country.

- Approximately 1.6 million more volunteers served in 2009 than in 2008, making this the largest single-year increase in the number of volunteers since 2003 (annual data collection for volunteering statistics started in 2002).
- A total of 63.4 million volunteers contributed 8.1 billion hours of service in 2009, equaling an estimated dollar value of approximately \$169 billion for their services.
- The volunteering rate increased in 2009 to 26.8 percent, up from 26.4 percent in 2008.
- The increase was primarily fueled by higher volunteer rates among women, especially women ages 45-54; among individuals who are married; and among those who were employed, especially individuals working full-time.
- The volunteer rate for individuals who identified themselves as African American/Black rose more than for other racial and ethnic groups, from 19.1 percent in 2008 to 20.2 percent in 2009. The volunteer rate among African American/Black women rose from 21.2 percent in 2008 to 22.8 percent in 2009.
- The top four activities for service across the country are fundraising—with 26.6 percent of volunteers serving in this way between 2007 and 2009—followed by collecting or distributing food with 23.5 percent, providing general labor or transportation with 20.5 percent, and tutoring or teaching with 19.0 percent.

Where People Volunteer (2007-2009)



Several community factors influence volunteer rates, including unemployment and foreclosure rates.

- Factors that positively influence volunteering rates include higher education levels, lower poverty rates, shorter average commute times, robust nonprofit infrastructure, and higher levels of community attachment as measured by indicators such as home ownership rates.
- In 2009, states with higher unemployment rates were more likely to have lower volunteering rates. The relationship is such that if the unemployment rate decreased in a state by one percentage point, the volunteering rate could be expected to increase by 1.2 percentage points.
- Among America's 51 largest metro areas, those with higher rates of foreclosures were more likely to have lower rates of volunteering. The relationship is similar to unemployment in that if the foreclosure rate decreased in a metro area by one percentage point, the volunteering rate could be expected to increase by 1.2 percentage points.\*

\* Foreclosure data courtesy of RealtyTrac, Inc. (<http://www.realtytrac.com/trendcenter/>).

## METHODOLOGY

Corporation for National and Community Service and the Bureau of Labor Statistics partner to collect Volunteering in America data through the Current Population Survey's (CPS) annual Supplement on Volunteering, which is conducted every September. Today the CPS is a monthly survey of about 60,000 households (approximately 100,000 adults), conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau for the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The purpose of the September supplement is to obtain information on the incidence of volunteering, the characteristics of volunteers, and civic life indicators in the United States. For the purposes of this report, volunteers are persons age 16 and older who serve through or with an organization without pay at any point during a 12 month-period between September of one year and September of the following year. See the issue brief for more on methodology.

## CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

The Corporation for National and Community Service is a federal agency that engages more than five million Americans in service through its Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve America programs, and leads President Obama's national call to service initiative, United We Serve. For more information, visit [NationalService.gov](http://NationalService.gov).