

# Volunteering in America 2010: *National, State, and City Information*



***ISSUE BRIEF***

*Corporation for*  
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COMMUNITY  
SERVICE** 

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The mission of the Corporation for National and Community Service is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering. Each year, the Corporation provides opportunities for approximately five million Americans of all ages and backgrounds to serve their communities and country through Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve America, and its other programs and initiatives.

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## Introduction

The economic crisis continues to test the nation's ability to support vulnerable populations and build a more secure economic future. Leaders across the nation are responding by rallying Americans to use service as a solution in addressing these challenges. As stated by President Obama, "Economic recovery is as much about what you're doing in your communities as what we're doing in Washington – and it's going to take all of us, working together."<sup>1</sup>

There are many challenges that face our nation, including, for example, the 14.1 million children living in poverty,<sup>2</sup> the 3.5 million Americans with no place to live,<sup>3</sup> and the 700,000 prisoners<sup>4</sup> released from federal and state jurisdiction annually. Volunteers are helping individuals in need by mentoring youth to help them stay in school; serving food at their local church or shelter; providing job training and employment counseling; and contributing to many other critical services. Through service, volunteers are supporting the vulnerable populations hit hardest by the economy and helping to create a stronger, more stable future.

In 2009, 63.4 million Americans volunteered to help their communities. This is an *additional* 1.6 million volunteers compared to 2008, making 2009 the largest single-year increase in the number of volunteers since 2003.<sup>5</sup> Volunteers also provided 8.1 billion hours of service in 2009, which has an estimated dollar value of \$169 billion.<sup>6</sup> As the economic crisis affected many individuals personally and sent shockwaves across the country, Americans reached out to help through service.



*A volunteer playing soccer with school-aged children in recognition of September 11. Volunteers in 2009 honored the first officially-designated September 11 National Day of Service and Remembrance. Individuals chose many types of activities to honor the day including building houses, serving food, working with children, and other volunteer opportunities.*

To further understanding about volunteer trends, the Corporation for National and Community Service (the Corporation) is pleased to release *Volunteering in America 2010*, the most comprehensive source of volunteering information assembled. Volunteers are defined as adults ages 16 years and older who performed unpaid volunteer activities for or through an organization. Volunteering is just one of the ways Americans come together to address the challenges facing their communities, and while the data do not reflect all types of contributions made by community members, it does reflect a vital component of community engagement. This Issue Brief provides key findings using the most recent annual data, collected in September 2009. For more detailed statistics, the Corporation has also established the *Volunteering in America* website ([www.VolunteeringInAmerica.gov](http://www.VolunteeringInAmerica.gov)), which provides data for all 50 states and the District of Columbia, and nearly 200 cities.

The Corporation is often asked why volunteer rates are higher in one state or city and lower in another. To help answer this question, the Corporation examined economic and community factors to explore their relationship to volunteer rates. Findings indicate that some community factors, such as higher rates of homeownership, higher percentages of high school or college graduates, and larger numbers of nonprofit organizations, have a positive relationship with higher volunteer rates. Other factors, such as higher percentages of multi-unit housing, longer commuting times, and higher rates of poverty, unemployment, and foreclosure, correspond with lower volunteer rates in states and/or large metropolitan areas (Large Cities).<sup>7</sup> More information on these factors and their relationship to volunteer rates is available in this brief.

The Corporation produces *Volunteering in America* as part of its mission to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering. Each year, the Corporation provides opportunities for approximately five million Americans of all ages and backgrounds to serve their communities and country through Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve America, and other programs and initiatives.

The data for *Volunteering in America 2010* were collected through a September Volunteer Supplement to the Current Population Survey (CPS). The CPS is a monthly survey of about 60,000 households (approximately 100,000 adults), conducted on an annual basis through a partnership with the U.S. Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor Statistics. It is the goal of the Corporation to share this information and these insights on volunteering to help key decision makers and community members use service as a solution to the nation's most pressing concerns.



*A volunteer participating in the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service. Congress passed legislation in 1994 encouraging Americans to observe the Dr. King holiday as a national day of service that brings people together from different backgrounds to meet needs in their communities. The Corporation for National and Community Service was designated as the lead federal agency for the Dr. King Day of Service. For more information, visit [Serve.gov/mlkday](http://Serve.gov/mlkday).*

## Research Findings

### Largest Increase in Volunteering Since 2003

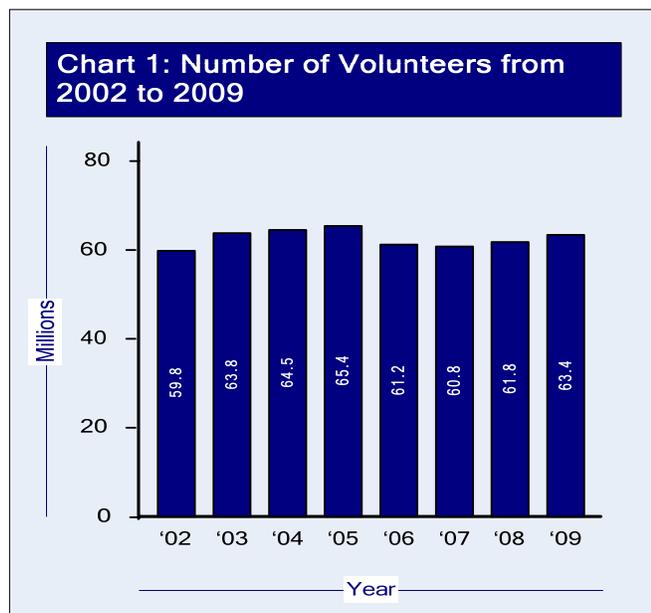
During this economic recession, as individuals across the country grappled with financial instability, one might predict that the volunteer rate should decrease between 2008 and 2009. This expectation comes from the assumption that during hard times, individuals turn inward to focus on their current plight or on the issues most central to their families. The data, however, tell a different story. In 2009, the volunteer rate actually *increased* to 26.8 percent, up from 26.4 percent in 2008. The number of volunteers also increased to 63.4 million, up from 61.8 million in 2008. This is the largest single year increase in the number of volunteers and the volunteer rate since 2003.

Americans of all ages and backgrounds participate in service. Research indicates that the rise was primarily fueled by increased volunteer rates among women, especially women ages 45-54; among individuals who are married, especially married women; and among those who were employed, especially individuals working full time.<sup>8</sup> These groups typically have volunteer rates that are higher than their counterparts (*i.e.*, men, individuals who are unmarried, individuals who are not employed).

The populations with the highest volunteer rates also included individuals with children under 18 years old in the home and individuals with a high school diploma or college degree.<sup>9</sup> In the midst of the nation's growing diversity, 2009 saw a number of populations increase their volunteer rates. Overall, the volunteer rate for individuals who identified themselves as African American/Black rose from 19.1 percent in 2008 to 20.2 percent in 2009<sup>10</sup> – largely due to an increase in volunteerism among African American/Black women. The volunteer rate among African American/Black women rose 1.6 percentage points from 21.2 percent in 2008 to 22.8 percent in 2009.

The organizations where Americans chose to volunteer stayed relatively consistent between 2008 and 2009. Religious organizations continued to be the most popular organization with which to serve. In the midst of the economic downturn, however, more volunteers also served with social and community service organizations, increasing to 8.8 million in 2009 (up from 8.4 million in 2008).

In terms of activities, volunteers most often participated in fundraising/selling items to raise money (26.6% of volunteers do this activity). Other popular activities included: collecting, preparing, distributing, or serving food (23.5% of volunteers do this activity); engaging in general labor or providing transportation (20.5%); and tutoring or teaching (19.0%).



### Area Volunteer Rates Influenced by Economic and Community Factors

The data on volunteering sometimes raises as many questions as it answers. One frequent question is why one location has a higher or lower volunteer rate than another. To help answer this question, the Corporation conducted an analysis of economic and community factors to understand their relationship with volunteer rates.

Building on research previously conducted by the Corporation in the *Volunteering in America: 2007 City Trends and Rankings* report,<sup>11</sup> the Corporation identified several community factors associated with volunteer rates. In addition, an information scan of indicators of the state of the economy was conducted based on recent reports issued by federal agencies and well-known media and research sources. Out of the broad analysis, several community factors were shown to have a relationship with volunteer rates.

Below we present our findings, including graphs showing the relationships between community factors and volunteer rates. The graphs use the most current data available for metropolitan areas; therefore, some community factors were measured in 2009, while others were measured in 2008. The data presented in the community factors section were collected through the American Community Survey,<sup>12</sup> the Urban Institute's National Center for Charitable Statistics, and the Current Population Survey. Foreclosure data were obtained from RealtyTrac.<sup>13</sup>



*A volunteer helping to rebuild homes in the Gulf Coast. More than a million volunteers have served in the Gulf since Hurricane Katrina, providing critical support and helping to meet local needs.*

### *Greater Attachment to the Community Encourages Volunteering*

The research literature on social capital (connections within and between social relationships) indicates that it is more challenging to build citizen engagement in communities where residents do not have a long-term commitment to the community and where a sense of anonymity may make it more difficult to know one's neighbors.<sup>14</sup> Indicators such as homeownership and the number of multi-unit dwellings help determine residential stability and whether residents have a long-term commitment and attachment to their communities.

The Corporation measured the relationship between homeownership and volunteering because owning a home tends to signify a personal and financial interest and commitment to the long-term success of the community.

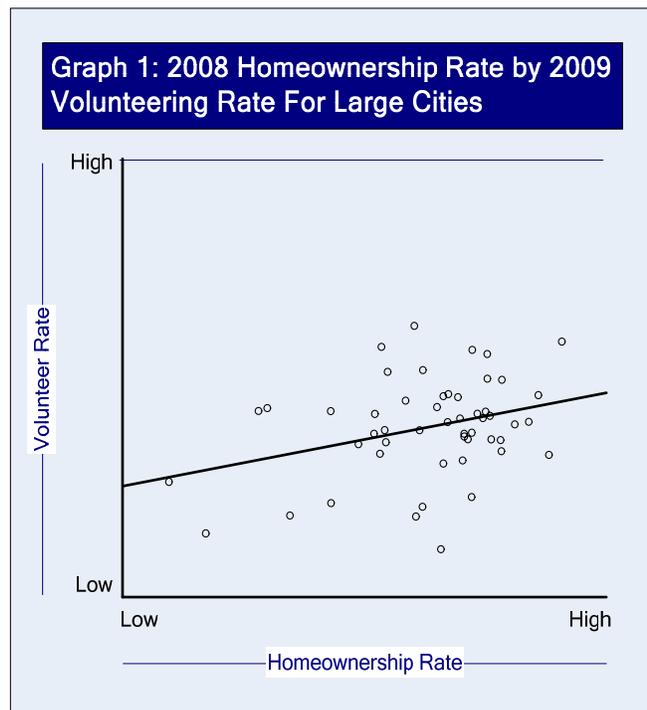
### *A Closer Look at the Relationship Between Volunteering and Community Factors*

*In this section, the relationship between volunteer rates and economic and community factors uses a special graph called a scatter-plot. Scatter-plot graphs show the relationship between two variables—e.g., volunteering and homeownership rates. A scatter-plot graph provides a visual sense of how much of the differences of an area's volunteer rate can be explained by the presence of a particular characteristic, such as homeownership or commuting times. Each graph has a solid line that represents the general trend for volunteer rates compared to other factors. The graphs also contain dots that show how accurately this general trend describes the data for each area. The stronger the relationship, the closer the dots are to the trend line. The steepness of the line also indicates the strength of the relationship.*

Data show that as the rate of homeownership increases, the volunteer rate also tends to increase. Graph 1 illustrates the relationship in Large Cities. In this graph, each circle represents a Large City, its 2008 homeownership rate and its 2009 volunteer rate. The national homeowner rate is 66.6 percent. With a rate of 73.8 percent, Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minn., had the highest homeownership rate, a high rate of volunteering (36.6%), and ranked among the top 10 largest cities for volunteering.

It is interesting to note that homeowners (as measured by individuals who live in owner-occupied households) have higher volunteer rates overall (30.4%) than individuals who rent (18.0%). However, while homeowners tend to volunteer at higher rates, renters may be closing the gap. Renters increased their volunteer rate by 1.8 percentage points from 2007 (from 16.2% to 18.0%). Residents of owner-occupied households increased their volunteer rate by 0.5 percentage points during the same period (from 29.9% in 2008, to 30.4% in 2009).

On a related note, the percent of multi-unit dwellings in states and large metropolitan areas exhibits an inverse relationship with volunteer rates, as seen in Graph 2; that is, communities with a larger percentage of multi-unit housing, such as apartment buildings and condominiums, tend to have lower volunteer rates. One hypothesis is that while the urban environment can offer a wider range of opportunities for volunteering and service, residents may also be less socially connected.<sup>15</sup> Past research has shown that being asked to volunteer is among the primary routes to volunteering. If residents are less connected to their neighbors, especially in an area of high population density, then they may also be less likely to be asked to volunteer. This can present unique challenges for local organizations, which must work harder to recruit and mobilize volunteers.



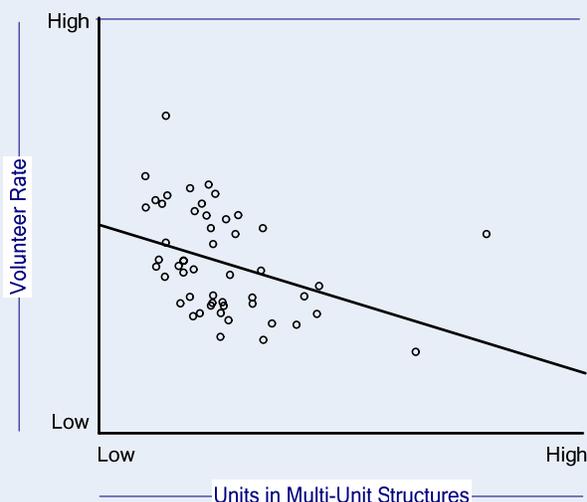
Nationally, 32.4 percent of households are located in multi-unit dwellings. In Iowa and Kansas, 22.5 percent of households are located in multi-unit dwellings. Iowa's volunteer rate in 2009 was 38.7 percent. Kansas' volunteer rate in 2009 was 35.2 percent. In Florida, 39.7 percent of households are located in multi-unit dwellings, while the 2009 volunteer rate was 22.3 percent. Among Large Cities, New York City, NY, has the highest rate of multi-unit dwellings (57.0%), and a volunteer rate of 16.4 percent. Kansas City, MO, has the lowest rate at 23.0 percent, with a volunteer rate of 29.0 percent.

### *Long Commutes Can Curtail Opportunities to Volunteer*

Long commutes can be expected to reduce the time and opportunity individuals have to connect to organizations in their communities, thus reducing average volunteer rates. States and large metropolitan areas with shorter work commutes also tend to have higher volunteer rates, as shown in Graph 3. Nationally, commuters travel an average of 25.5 minutes to work. States with shorter commutes include North Dakota (16.0 minutes), South Dakota (16.4 minutes), Montana (17.9 minutes), and Nebraska (18.0 minutes). In 2009, South Dakota's volunteer rate was 37.4 percent, while Nebraska's volunteer rate was 36.1 percent. New Jersey, in comparison, has a longer commuting time of 30.1 minutes and has a volunteer rate of 22.4 percent. Among cities, one example of a shorter commute time is Oklahoma City, OK, at 21.8 minutes. Oklahoma City, OK, had a volunteer rate of 33.6 percent.

Individuals who live in Chicago, IL, have longer commutes, with an average of 31.6 minutes. Chicago, IL, had a lower volunteer rate among Large Cities of 26.9 percent.

**Graph 2: 2008 Units in Multi-Unit Structures by 2009 Volunteering Rate For States**



**Graph 3: 2008 Average Travel Time to Work by 2009 Volunteering Rate For Large Cities**



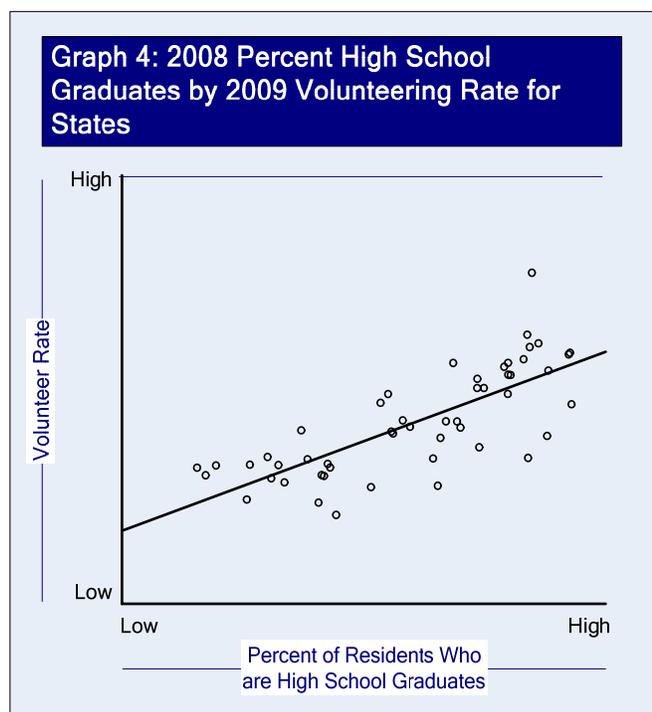
### *Volunteering Rises with Education*

Research has shown that individuals with higher levels of education volunteer at higher rates.<sup>16</sup> Education, in fact, is one of the most important predictors of a community's volunteer rate. For states and large metropolitan areas, as the education level increases, the likelihood of volunteering also increases – as illustrated in Graph 4. Consistent with this research, individuals with a bachelor's degree or more had the highest national volunteer rate among educational categories at 42.8 percent in 2009, compared to 18.8 percent for those with only a high school degree or GED, and 8.6 percent for those without a high school degree or GED.

At a national level, 85.0 percent of the country ages 25 and older had a high school diploma or GED equivalent. Wyoming had the highest rate of high school graduates at 91.7 percent, and a volunteer rate of 31.2 percent. With a rate of 92.7 percent, Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minn., had the highest rate of high school graduates among Large Cities, a high rate of volunteerism (36.6%), and ranked among the top 10 largest cities for volunteering. Los Angeles, CA, had the lowest rate of high school graduates (76.8%) and a volunteer rate of 21.9 percent. For states, Texas had the lowest rate of high school graduates at 79.6 percent and a volunteer rate of 24.4 percent.

Because education is a key predictor of volunteering, the Corporation looked into volunteer rate changes within educational categories (high school graduate, some college, and a college degree). While there has always been a gap in volunteer rates between those who have a high school diploma and those who do not, current data show the gap may be widening.

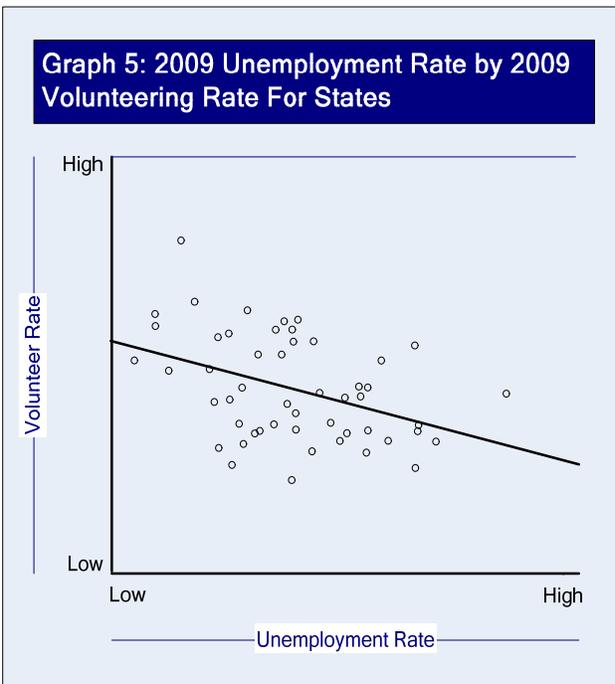
In 2009, the volunteer rate for individuals with a high school diploma or GED and no college experience increased (from 18.1% in 2008 to 18.8% in 2009), while the rate for individuals without a high school diploma or GED decreased (from 9.4% in 2008 to 8.6% in 2009). This represents a difference of 10.2 percentage points in 2009 volunteer rates between individuals who have a high school diploma (but no college) and those who do not. In 2008, the difference between these two groups was 8.7 percentage points; thus, we see the gap widening in 2009. As improving high school graduation rates remains a key priority for the nation, it is important to be aware of the impact of high school completion on service and volunteering.



### *In States, Higher Unemployment Related to Lower Volunteering*

The impact of unemployment was felt across the nation. All states including the District of Columbia experienced unemployment rate increases.<sup>17</sup> Michigan and Nevada reported the highest unemployment rates (13.6% and 11.8%, respectively), followed by South Carolina (11.7%), California (11.2%), Rhode Island (11.2%) and Oregon (11.1%).<sup>18</sup>

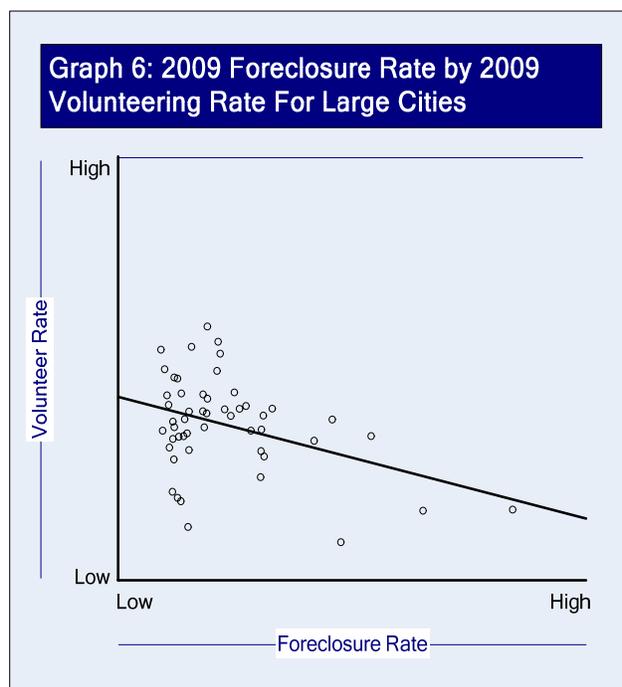
Looking at the relationship between unemployment and volunteer rates, the Corporation found that states with higher rates of unemployment had lower rates of volunteering, as Graph 5 illustrates.<sup>19</sup> Our findings show that a one percent decrease in unemployment would be associated with a 1.2 percent increase in volunteer rate. Readers are cautioned, however, from extrapolating from these findings because the relationship between unemployment rates and volunteer rates varies from year to year, is dependent on the geographical level of analysis and is discussed here in terms of a specific point in time.<sup>20</sup>



### *Volunteer Rates Lower in Cities with Higher Foreclosures*

In addition to unemployment, a housing and foreclosure crisis further exacerbated the economic downturn in 2009. Although there were signs of housing stabilization towards the end of the year,<sup>21</sup> 2009 started with a downward slide in the first quarter. According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, “the numbers of single-family building permits, starts, and completions all declined,”<sup>22</sup> sales of new and existing homes weakened, and “the percentage of foreclosure starts was the same since the second quarter of 2008, when the rate of new foreclosures set a record.”<sup>23</sup>

Looking at the relationship between foreclosure and volunteer rates, the Corporation found that cities with higher foreclosure rates tended to have lower volunteer rates. Our findings show that a one percent decrease in foreclosure rates would be associated with a 1.2 percent increase in



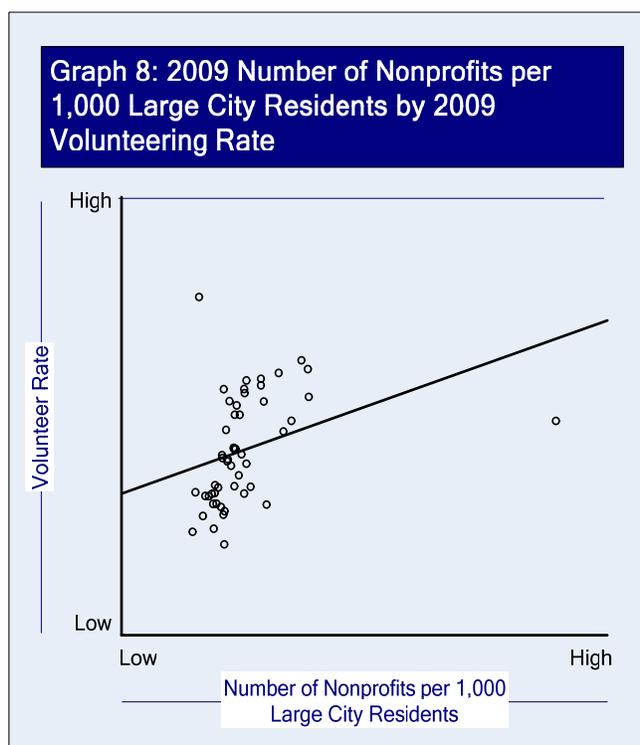
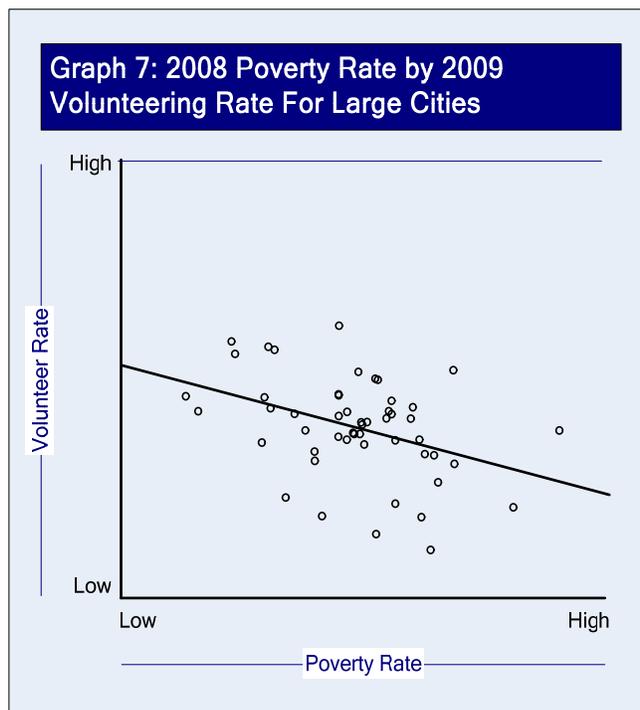
volunteer rate. As illustrated in Graph 6, in 2009 there was a negative association at the Large City level.<sup>24</sup> Among large metropolitan areas, Las Vegas, NV, Riverside, CA, Phoenix, AZ, Miami, FL, and Orlando, FL, had the highest foreclosure rates in 2009.<sup>25</sup> Four of these cities had volunteer rates that ranked in the bottom 10 among Large Cities. Readers are cautioned, however, as the relationship between foreclosure rates and volunteering varies from year to year and is dependent on the geographical level of analysis.

### *Volunteering is Less Common in Higher Poverty Areas*

Poverty is another socioeconomic characteristic that tends to be strongly associated with lower volunteer rates. However, it is difficult to determine whether higher poverty rates reduce the overall propensity to volunteer, whether higher volunteering in a community leads to a reduction in poverty, or if both effects occur. In some areas, higher concentrations of people living in poverty might discourage volunteering by creating the type of stressors that place greater demands on individuals and families. States and large metropolitan areas that have higher poverty rates also tend to have lower volunteer rates, as shown in Graph 7.

### *Greater Numbers of Community Associations Correlate with Higher Volunteer Rates*

To volunteer successfully there must be an infrastructure that can recruit, place, and manage prospective volunteers. There must be nonprofits with missions that engage volunteers, as well as provide the kinds of activities that interest volunteers. Supply and demand need to be in balance. Cities with fewer nonprofits may find themselves with smaller numbers of volunteers because of the lack of opportunity and options. Not surprisingly, then, communities with more nonprofits per capita are likely to have higher volunteer rates. As shown in Graph 8, as the number of nonprofits per 1,000 city residents increases, the volunteer rate also increases.



## Conclusion

As the nation starts to recover, it is critical that the country continue its forward momentum and dramatically expand opportunities for Americans to volunteer. Service is a key solution to many of the challenges facing this nation – not only the challenges brought on by the recession, but also those challenges the nation faced previously. Now is the time to focus on volunteering, to ask the nation to commit to helping others, to find ways for volunteers to continue volunteering, and to develop opportunities for service.

The information found in the *Volunteering in America 2010 Issue Brief* and at [www.VolunteeringInAmerica.gov](http://www.VolunteeringInAmerica.gov) can start the discussion with community leaders, political representatives, and interested individuals on what is happening with volunteerism, how to sustain current volunteers, and how to help new interested parties begin their commitment to service. Through service, we can come together to ensure that we emerge a stronger nation. To find a volunteer opportunity, visit [Serve.gov](http://Serve.gov).



*A volunteer working with school-aged children. The *Volunteering in America 2010* findings show that on average 19 percent of adults tutor or teach and 17 percent mentor youth at a national level. Both of these activities provide valuable support to children and schools.*

## State Ranking

Between 2007 and 2009, average volunteer rates for states ranged from 19.0 percent to 44.2 percent. Rankings are based on a three-year moving average (an average that uses aggregated data from 2007 to 2009 to increase reliability of the rank and rate).

State	2007-2009 Volunteer Rate	2007-2009 Volunteer Rate Ranking	2007-2009 Volunteer Hours per Capita
Utah	44.2%	1	86.9
Iowa	37.8	2	40.1
Minnesota	37.5	3	42.1
Nebraska	37.4	4	47.9
Alaska	37.3	5	59.2
South Dakota	37.2	6	38.6
Vermont	36.3	7	40.9
Kansas	35.9	8	43.7
Montana	35.5	9	44.0
Washington	34.2	10	42.9
Oregon	33.8	11	44.7
North Dakota	33.6	12	34.0
Wisconsin	33.5	13	36.0
Idaho	33.4	14	51.3
Maine	33.3	15	48.6
Colorado	32.4	16	44.0
Connecticut	31.7	17	37.6
Wyoming	31.4	18	37.2
Indiana	29.9	19	42.0
Oklahoma	29.8	20	38.5
Ohio	29.6	21	31.8
District of Columbia	29.5	22	41.8
Maryland	29.4	23	45.7
New Hampshire	29.3	24	33.2
Michigan	29.1	25	39.5
Missouri	29.0	26	34.8
Virginia	28.0	27	37.8
Pennsylvania	27.9	28	33.9
New Mexico	26.8	29	33.4
South Carolina	26.8	29	34.4
Illinois	26.4	31	32.1
Kentucky	25.9	32	30.6
Tennessee	25.9	32	33.7
Massachusetts	25.5	34	31.1
Delaware	25.3	35	33.1
West Virginia	25.2	36	35.8
Georgia	24.7	37	31.2
Alabama	24.6	38	28.5
North Carolina	24.6	38	30.6
Texas	24.5	40	31.6
California	24.2	41	33.3
Hawaii	24.1	42	34.9
Rhode Island	24.1	42	28.9
Arizona	24.0	44	34.5
Arkansas	22.8	45	27.8
Mississippi	21.3	46	28.2
Florida	20.9	47	31.5
Louisiana	20.9	47	27.3
New Jersey	20.8	49	24.0
Nevada	20.0	50	29.6
New York	19.0	51	26.5

## Large City Ranking

Between 2007 and 2009, the average volunteer rates for Large Cities ranged from 14.8 percent to 37.4 percent. Rankings are based on a three-year moving average (an average that uses aggregated data from 2007 to 2009 to increase reliability of the rank and rate). All city statistics are collected from Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs). MSAs are clusters of cities that share significant economic and social ties with, and are often identified by, one or more principal cities. The names of the principal cities are used as designations for the city data published here. The MSA definitions used in the CPS Volunteering Supplements can be found in the Appendix to OMB Bulletin #03-04, issued June 30, 2003.

<b>Large City</b>	<b>2007-2009 Volunteer Rate</b>	<b>2007-2009 Volunteer Rate Ranking</b>	<b>2007-2009 Volunteer Hours per Capita</b>
Minneapolis, MN	37.4%	1	43.9
Portland, OR	37.1	2	48.2
Salt Lake City, UT	35.8	3	60.8
Seattle, WA	34.9	4	44.1
Oklahoma City, OK	33.9	5	53.2
Hartford, CT	33.1	6	37.8
Kansas City, MO	32.0	7	34.8
Columbus, OH	31.9	8	43.4
Washington, DC	31.1	9	42.9
St. Louis, MO	30.5	10	37.6
Rochester, NY	30.4	11	42.3
Denver, CO	30.2	12	40.4
Milwaukee, WI	30.0	13	34.5
San Francisco, CA	29.9	14	36.0
Cincinnati, OH	29.6	15	25.9
Baltimore, MD	29.4	16	48.3
San Jose, CA	29.4	16	36.3
Indianapolis, IN	29.2	18	40.9
Charlotte, NC	28.2	19	32.4
Dallas, TX	28.2	19	33.4
Louisville, KY	27.8	21	28.2
Birmingham, AL	27.7	22	30.2
Cleveland, OH	27.7	22	28.4
Atlanta, GA	27.6	24	39.5
Pittsburgh, PA	27.5	25	37.4
San Diego, CA	27.2	26	38.6
Buffalo, NY	27.1	27	29.3
Tampa, FL	26.6	28	43.0
Detroit, MI	26.5	29	37.1
Philadelphia, PA	26.0	30	28.9
Virginia Beach, VA	26.0	30	40.1
Sacramento, CA	25.7	32	38.1
Jacksonville, FL	25.6	33	30.9
Boston, MA	25.5	34	29.0
Memphis, TN	25.4	35	28.7

Table 2: Large City Volunteering			
Large City	2007-2009 Volunteer Rate	2007-2009 Volunteer Rate Ranking	2007-2009 Volunteer Hours per Capita
Austin, TX	25.3%	36	31.0
Nashville, TN	25.1	37	31.4
Chicago, IL	24.0	38	27.9
Phoenix, AZ	23.9	39	36.4
Houston, TX	23.8	40	32.7
Providence, RI	23.8	40	27.8
Richmond, VA	23.2	42	34.0
Raleigh-Cary, NC	23.0	43	24.0
New Orleans, LA	22.6	44	31.7
Orlando, FL	21.6	45	31.4
San Antonio, TX	21.3	46	32.1
Los Angeles, CA	20.8	47	28.5
Riverside, CA	18.7	48	29.5
Las Vegas, NV	17.5	49	23.3
New York, NY	15.9	50	21.7
Miami, FL	14.8	51	20.0



*Howard University students participate in a cleanup of the Washington, DC War Memorial as part of the Dr. King day of service. The Volunteering in America 2010 findings show that on average 26.3 percent of college students (ages 16 to 24) volunteer.*

## Mid-Size City Ranking

Between 2006 and 2009, the average volunteer rates for mid-size cities ranged from 15.6 percent to 63.6 percent. Rankings are based on a four-year moving average (an average that uses aggregated data from 2006 to 2009 to increase reliability of the rank and rate). All city statistics are collected from Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs). MSAs are clusters of cities that share significant economic and social ties with, and are often identified by, one or more principal cities. The names of the principal cities are used as designations for the city data published here. The MSA definitions used in the CPS Volunteering Supplements can be found in the Appendix to OMB Bulletin #03-04, issued June 30, 2003.

Mid-Size City	2006-2009 Volunteer Rate	2006-2009 Volunteer Rate Ranking	2006-2009 Volunteer Hours per Capita
Provo, UT	63.6%	1	149.7
Iowa City, IA	50.0	2	42.2
Ogden, UT	47.7	3	90.5
Fort Collins, CO	40.7	4	55.0
Madison, WI	40.0	5	37.5
Des Moines, IA	39.7	6	45.2
Topeka, KS	38.5	7	62.4
Boulder, CO	38.2	8	41.6
Burlington, VT	37.6	9	42.6
Grand Rapids, MI	37.6	9	36.3
Sioux Falls, SD	36.9	11	32.4
Asheville, NC	36.5	12	33.5
Waterloo, IA	36.4	13	45.2
Portland, ME	35.5	14	36.1
Cedar Rapids, IA	34.8	15	47.9
Greenville, SC	34.6	16	39.9
Rochester, NH	34.6	16	50.6
Toledo, OH	34.3	18	34.8
Omaha, NE	33.8	19	41.6
Charleston, WV	33.7	20	49.2
Billings, MT	33.6	21	39.0
Eugene, OR	33.2	22	48.7
Salem, OR	32.9	23	38.0
Bridgeport, CT	32.8	24	40.1
Lexington, KY	32.8	24	37.3
Fargo, ND	32.5	26	30.5
Colorado Springs, CO	32.2	27	52.8
Tulsa, OK	31.4	28	30.6
Wichita, KS	31.0	29	36.9
New Haven, CT	30.9	30	41.2
Bangor, ME	30.8	31	58.4
Greeley, CO	30.5	32	35.2
Lancaster, PA	30.5	32	39.8
Boise City, ID	29.3	34	41.4
Harrisburg, PA	29.2	35	31.4
Fayetteville, AR	29.0	36	31.7
Palm Bay, FL	28.9	37	64.9
Tucson, AZ	28.8	38	35.7
Oxnard, CA	28.7	39	32.0
Cape Coral, FL	28.6	40	52.0

Table 3: Mid-Size City Volunteering

Mid-Size City	2006-2009 Volunteer Rate	2006-2009 Volunteer Rate Ranking	2006-2009 Volunteer Hours per Capita
Poughkeepsie, NY	28.3%	41	44.6
Chattanooga, TN	28.2	42	44.6
Dayton, OH	27.6	43	41.7
Albany, NY	27.1	44	34.7
Canton, OH	27.0	45	34.0
Greensboro, NC	27.0	45	40.2
Spokane, WA	27.0	45	41.4
Akron, OH	26.9	48	34.4
Knoxville, TN	26.9	48	20.9
Albuquerque, NM	26.8	50	29.4
Norwich, CT	26.7	51	40.0
Davenport, IA	26.3	52	32.9
Allentown, PA	26.2	53	32.8
Jackson, MS	26.2	53	31.6
Columbia, SC	26.1	55	32.0
Worcester, MA	26.1	55	33.4
Reno, NV	25.9	57	45.2
Little Rock, AR	25.0	58	31.7
Lakeland, FL	24.2	59	50.4
Baton Rouge, LA	24.1	60	25.5
Youngstown, OH	23.9	61	27.0
Stockton, CA	23.7	62	31.9
Scranton, PA	23.4	63	22.0
Honolulu, HI	22.9	64	33.8
Augusta, GA	22.8	65	30.8
Lafayette, LA	22.8	65	18.8
Sarasota, FL	22.6	67	37.0
Charleston, SC	21.5	68	31.7
Fresno, CA	21.0	69	35.0
Springfield, MA	21.0	69	14.9
Syracuse, NY	20.9	71	21.3
Bakersfield, CA	19.5	72	31.4
Dover, DE	19.4	73	23.5
Daytona Beach, FL	19.0	74	22.6
El Paso, TX	15.6	75	14.8



*Volunteers help organize library books for Make a Difference Day.*

Volunteers across the country participate in a host of service projects in recognition of Make a Difference Day.

Landscaping, trail maintenance, and food distribution are among the activities that volunteers undertake for the national observance.

## Methodology

The volunteering statistics cited in this brief come from the annual Supplement on Volunteering, which is conducted every September with the Current Population Survey (CPS). 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. The city volunteer statistics reported here are calculated using CPS data collected from Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs). The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) publishes a comprehensive definition of MSA boundaries every 10 years to reflect population changes documented by the decennial Census. Retention rates are calculated using the 50 percent overlap between successive September CPS Volunteer Supplement samples. See the Census publication *Current Population Survey: Design and Methodology*, available at <http://www.census.gov/prod/2006pubs/tp-66.pdf>, for more on the overlapping sample design of the CPS. The retention rate is calculated as the percentage of Year 1 volunteers who also volunteer in Year 2.

### Data Sources for Other Indicators

Data on state unemployment rates used in Graph 5 are calculated using monthly data from October 2008 through September 2009, produced by BLS's LAUS division. These rates are calculated to match the reference period for the CPS Volunteer Supplement rather than the calendar year, see endnote 10 for details. Data on foreclosure rates used in Graph 6 are from unpublished data compiled by RealtyTrac, Inc. The rates represent the proportion of homes in the metropolitan area that were in some stage of foreclosure on September 30, 2009.

The data used in Graph 1 (homeownership rate), Graph 2 (housing units in multi-unit structures), Graph 3 (average travel time to work), Graph 4 (percent high school graduates), and Graph 7 (poverty rate) comes from the American Community Survey's 2008 single-year data, accessed through American FactFinder in March 2010. Finally, data on nonprofit organizations (not counting congregations) per 1,000 MSA residents comes from the Internal Revenue Service's Exempt Organizations Business Master File, July 2009. County data from this master file were downloaded from the Urban Institute's National Center for Charitable Statistics in March 2010 and aggregated to form organizations per 1000 residents for major metropolitan areas using 2009 MSA population estimates, published by the Census Bureau in March 2010. For more details about the data and statistics used in this brief, consult the Technical Note at <http://www.volunteeringinamerica.gov>.

## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> President Obama Unveils 'United We Serve,' Calls on All Americans to Commit to Meaningful Volunteer Service in Their Daily Lives. (2009, June 17). Retrieved April 15, 2010 from [http://www.whitehouse.gov/the\\_press\\_office/President-Obama-Unveils-United-We-Serve-Calls-on-All-Americans-to-Commit-to-Meaningful-Volunteer-Service-in-Their-Daily-Lives](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/President-Obama-Unveils-United-We-Serve-Calls-on-All-Americans-to-Commit-to-Meaningful-Volunteer-Service-in-Their-Daily-Lives).
- <sup>2</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census. (2008). *Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2008 Report*, 60(236), Table B-2. Washington, DC.
- <sup>3</sup> National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty. (2006). *How Many People Experience Homelessness? Fact sheet*. June 2006. Retrieved on April 15, 2010 from <http://www.ckhhi.org/How%20Many%20Are%20Homeless.pdf>.
- <sup>4</sup> Sabol, William J., West, Heather C., and Cooper, Matthew. (2009). *Prisoners in 2008*. U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics. Retrieved on April 15, 2010 from <http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/index.cfm?ty=pbdetail&iid=1763>.
- <sup>5</sup> Annual data collection for volunteering statistics started in 2002. While the national adult volunteer rate increased in 2009 by a statistically significant amount, the statistical significance of other changes highlighted in this brief cannot consistently be determined.
- <sup>6</sup> This calculation is based on the 2009 Independent Sector valuation of \$20.85 per hour. Retrieved on April 15, 2010 from [www.independentsector.org/Volunteer\\_Time](http://www.independentsector.org/Volunteer_Time).
- <sup>7</sup> Large metropolitan areas are referenced as Large Cities within the document. This designation was based on population size.
- <sup>8</sup> The 2009 volunteer rates and volunteer rate increases were as follows: women (from 29.4% in 2008 to 30.1% in 2009); women ages 45-54 (from 33.4% in 2008 to 35.0% in 2009); individuals who were married (from 31.6% in 2008 to 32.3% in 2009); married women (from 35.1% in 2008 to 36.2% in 2009); individuals who were employed (from 28.9% in 2008 to 29.7% in 2009); and individuals working full time (from 27.8% in 2008 to 28.7% in 2009).
- <sup>9</sup> The 2009 volunteer rates for these groups were as follows: individuals with children under 18 years old in the home, 34.4%; individuals with a high school diploma (but no college), 18.8%; and individuals with a college degree, 42.8%.
- <sup>10</sup> The number of African American/Black volunteers increased from 5.3 million in 2008 to 5.7 million in 2009.
- <sup>11</sup> Corporation for National and Community Service, Office of Research and Policy Development. (2007). *Volunteering in America: 2007 City Trends and Rankings*. Washington: DC. Retrieved on May 7, 2010 from [http://www.nationalservice.gov/pdf/VIA\\_CITIES/VIA\\_cities\\_fullreport.pdf](http://www.nationalservice.gov/pdf/VIA_CITIES/VIA_cities_fullreport.pdf).
- <sup>12</sup> The American Community Survey is a survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau in every county, American Indian and Alaska Native area, and Hawaiian Home Land. The American Community Survey provides critical economic, social, demographic, and housing information to this country's communities every year. The questions on the American Community Survey are essentially the same questions that have been asked as part of the decennial census.
- <sup>13</sup> These data were provided by RealtyTrac. See <http://www.realtytrac.com/trendcenter/>.
- <sup>14</sup> Sampson, Robert J. (1988). *Local Friendship Ties and Community Attachment in Mass Society: A Multilevel Systemic Model*. *American Sociological Review*, 53(5), pp. 766-779.
- <sup>15</sup> Oliver, J. Eric. (2000). *City Size and Civic Involvement in Metropolitan America*. *The American Political Science Review*, 94(2), pp. 361-373.
- <sup>16</sup> McPherson, J. Miller and Rotolo, Thomas. (1996). *Testing a Dynamic Model of Social Composition: Diversity and Change in Voluntary Groups*. *American Sociological Review*, 61, pp. 179-202. See also Wilson, John. (2000). *Volunteering*. *American Sociological Review*, 26, pp. 215-240.
- <sup>17</sup> The regional and state unemployment data are based on Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS). These are the "official" year-end state unemployment figures published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics LAUS program. The Corporation also uses LAUS for the state unemployment rates featured on the Volunteering in America website, but they may differ from previously published figures. For VIA, the Corporation measures state unemployment rates using data from October-September, so that the years match up with the reference period used in the CPS Volunteer Supplement survey.
- <sup>18</sup> U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2010, March 3). *Regional and State Unemployment- 2009 Annual Averages*. Economic News Release. Washington, DC.
- <sup>19</sup> U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2010, March 3). *Regional and State Unemployment- 2009 Annual Averages*. Economic News Release. Washington, DC.

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- <sup>20</sup> Readers are also cautioned from making broad causal inferences. For example, we know that individuals who are unemployed have lower volunteer rates. Therefore, some might speculate that the unemployed residents are the individuals influencing a state's volunteer rate (*i.e.*, the relationship between unemployment and volunteering is due to lower volunteer rates among the unemployed). Unemployed residents, however, are highly unlikely to be the explanation, as unemployed residents represent a relatively small population, when compared to all residents within a state (*i.e.*, most residents of a state are employed). There are too few unemployed to have a profound impact on volunteer rates. It is much more likely that a combination of community factors, related to higher rates of unemployment, contributed to the relationship.
- <sup>21</sup> U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Policy Development and Research. (2010). *U.S. Housing Market Conditions*. Fourth Quarter, February 2010, p. 1. Retrieved on April 15, 2010 from [http://www.huduser.org/portal/periodicals/ushmc/winter09/nat\\_data.pdf](http://www.huduser.org/portal/periodicals/ushmc/winter09/nat_data.pdf).
- <sup>22</sup> U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Policy Development and Research. (2009). *U.S. Housing Market Conditions*. First Quarter, May 2009, p. 1. Retrieved on April 15, 2010 from [http://www.huduser.org/portal/periodicals/ushmc/winter09/nat\\_data.pdf](http://www.huduser.org/portal/periodicals/ushmc/winter09/nat_data.pdf).
- <sup>23</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>24</sup> Like unemployment rates, foreclosure rates are associated with volunteer rates only for certain geographic levels. The relationship is significant for large MSAs, as illustrated in Graph 6, but is not significant at the state level.
- <sup>25</sup> These data were provided by RealtyTrac. See <http://www.realtytrac.com/trendcenter/>.