# PARTNERSHIPS for the COMMON GOOD

## A Partnership Guide for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Organizations

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

**The White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships**

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This toolkit was produced by the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, led by the Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Martha's Table

"For as much as government can do and must do, it is ultimately the faith and determination of the American people upon which this nation relies. It is the kindness to take in a stranger when the levees break, the selflessness of workers who would rather cut their hours than see a friend lose their job… a parent's willingness to nurture a child that finally decides our fate.

What is required of us now is a new era of responsibility — a recognition, on the part of every American, that we have duties to ourselves, our nation, and the world, duties that we do not grudgingly accept but rather seize gladly, firm in the knowledge that there is nothing so satisfying to the spirit, so defining of our character, than giving our all to a difficult task."

**– President Obama,**
Inaugural Address
January 20, 2009

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# THIS IS AN INVITATION.

This is an invitation to partner with the White House and Agencies across the federal government to roll up our sleeves and work together to improve our communities. We all know that government cannot solve our nation's problems on its own. But in partnership with organizations like yours, we can accomplish amazing things together on behalf of those in need.

This Guide is an invitation to our nation's houses of worship, neighborhood associations, and community-based nonprofits of all stripes – to join with us to strengthen the common good.

This Partnership Guide will point you to particular opportunities to form partnerships with Centers for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships across government, as well as helpful information on how to apply for federal grants and access capacity building resources to support the great work that you are already doing.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

# HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This Guide is designed to give local faith and community leaders a menu of opportunities to partner with President Obama's Office for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships to address a variety of challenges and issues critical to local communities. This list is not by any means exhaustive. Use this Guide to review the kinds of partnerships that can be formed in the areas that are most important to your local congregation or organization.

The staff at our Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnership Centers stand ready to support your local group in forming the partnerships described in this Guide and to answer any questions you have about how to move forward.

**Learn more about our office and stay up to date on all of our work at: www.whitehouse.gov/partnerships**

# THE WHITE HOUSE OFFICE OF FAITH-BASED AND NEIGHBORHOOD PARTNERSHIPS

The White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships forms and supports partnerships between government at all levels and nonprofit organizations, both secular and faith-based, to more effectively serve Americans in need.

The White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships coordinates **13 Federal agency Centers for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships.** Each Center forms partnerships between its agency and faith-based and neighborhood organizations to advance specific goals. This resource guide highlights some of the programmatic work our Centers are engaged with across all aspects of government.

The White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships and its Federal Centers **do not award grants or make grant award decisions**. Organizations must apply for grants through a competitive process. This guide shares more information about how to begin the process of applying for a federal grant. Because of the trust that government agencies and clients place in these organizations, financial partnerships with the government must be characterized by their ability to both uphold the free exercise of religion and to prevent the establishment of religion.

The White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships also coordinates the **President's Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships**. This Advisory Council is a group of leaders from both faith-based and non-sectarian organizations, each serving a 1-year term. The Advisory Council forms recommendations on how the federal government can more effectively partner with faith-based and neighborhood organizations to better serve families and communities.

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# STRENGTHENING ADOPTION

President Obama recognizes adoption as a positive and powerful force in the lives of millions of Americans. The White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships works with the Department of Health and Human Services to support adoption and help youth in foster care.

Today, 115,000 children in foster care in this country are waiting to be adopted. Fortunately, there has been a significant decline in the number of children in foster care overall, down from 523,000 in 2002 to 424,000 in 2009, while the number of children being placed in permanent homes for adoption has continued to increase, up to 57,000 in 2009, the latest year data is available. Childhood is fleeting, however, and no child should grow up without or have to endure the uncertainty that they will receive the stability love, and nurturing that a permanent family can provide. Every child needs and deserves a family, up to age 18 and beyond.

The President and this Administration have proved their commitment to adoption in several ways:

- First, through the Affordable Care Act, the President signed into law a substantial increase in the Adoption Tax Credit, extended the Adoption Tax Credit through 2011, and made the credit refundable.
- Then, in December 2010, the President signed into law legislation extending the Adoption Tax Credit through 2012.
- The President has also maintained support for critical programs, including the Adoption Opportunities Program, the John F. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program, and Adoption Assistance funding to states.

Still, despite the powerful role government can play in supporting adoption, the responsibility is always shared with families, communities and faith-based organizations to support children and families who need homes. So many faith-based and community organizations across the country are doing tremendous work to ensure that every child has a happy, safe home. This includes houses of worship that encourage their members to adopt and commit to supporting adoptive and foster families in their congregations. Here are some areas where we can partner together.

# WORKING TOGETHER

## 1. Host an event providing information to prospective adoptive families and encourage them to take the first step!

Adoption isn't for everyone, but you can help make it easier for families who may be considering adoption to have all the information they'll need to take that first step. Using resources provided by www.adoptuskids.org, a collaboration funded by the Department of Health and Human Services, you can help put on a seminar offering prospective families what they'll need to start the adoption process.

## 2. Connect to the National Foster Care & Adoption Directory

**The National Foster Care & Adoption Directory** is a comprehensive resource that provides individuals with information about foster care and adoption resources in their state, public foster care and adoption agencies, domestic and international private adoption agencies, foster care and adoption support groups, and other critical information. The directory is located at www.childwelfare.gov/nfcad.

## 3. Partner to connect families to the Adoption Tax Credit

The Adoption Tax Credit is a tremendous tool for families exploring adoption. Adoption advocacy and community organizations can share helpful information with adoptive families about the Adoption Tax Credit.

You can learn about adoption assistance in your state by visiting www.childwelfare.gov/adoption/adopt_assistance.

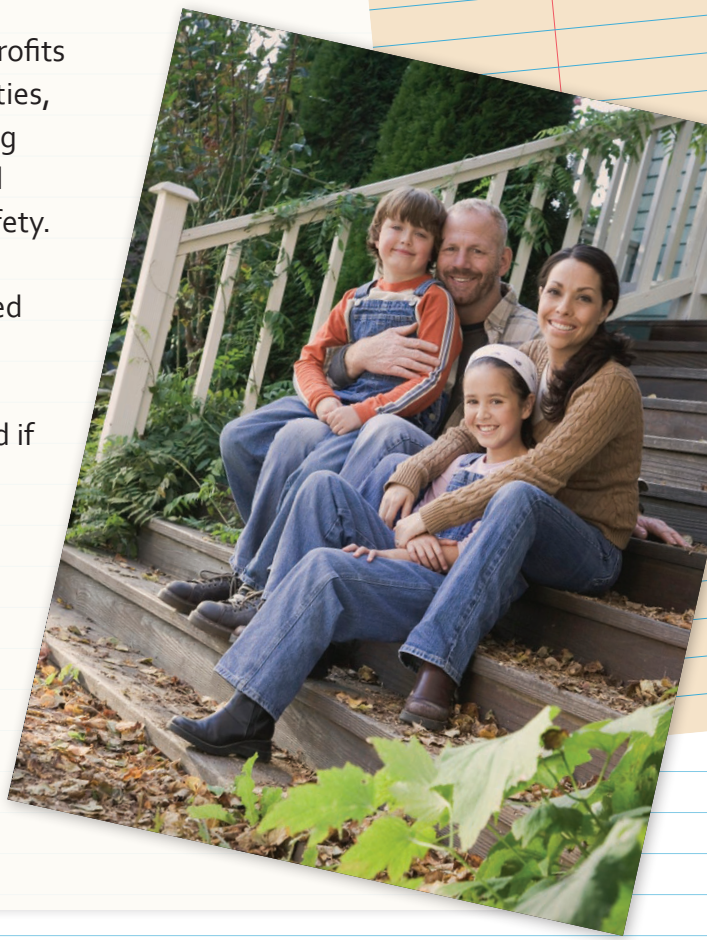
**For more information, please contact our Center at the Department of Health and Human Services at partnerships@hhs.gov.**

# PREPARING FOR AND RESPONDING TO DISASTERS

Disaster can strike anytime, anywhere. Some come with warning and forecasts while others, like earthquakes, can strike without notice. Unfortunately, for many people, planning for an emergency or disaster is not a priority. Many of us think that it will be easy to grab items from the pantry if disaster strikes. However, what if you are not at home? What if your family is separated? What if you have to leave quickly? What about your elderly or disabled neighbor?

Nonprofit organizations, including faith-based and community organizations, play a vital role in both preparing for disaster, and in ensuring an inclusive and participatory community-wide recovery from a disaster. Nonprofit sector support is provided by a range of organizations, from small community-based nonprofits to national organizations with extensive experience with disaster recovery. These organizations directly supplement and fill gaps where government authority and resources cannot be applied.

If organizations and businesses — including nonprofits — are ready to survive and recover, our communities, country, and our economy are more secure. Taking steps now to prepare for all types of disasters and emergencies will go far in ensuring everyone's safety. We must work together as a team to ensure that individuals, families and communities are prepared for emergencies and disasters. It is better to be prepared and have essential resources on hand, even if you don't use them, than to be unprepared if a disaster occurs.



# WORKING TOGETHER

Your organization can help your community be ready for a disaster. Here are three ways you can help your community be properly equipped:

- Host a "Ready America" Preparedness Workshop
- Ensure your organization is prepared
- Join or start an emergency response team in your community.

## 1. Host a "Ready America" Preparedness Workshop for your Community

Ready America
Prepare. Plan. Stay Informed.

A "Ready America" Preparedness Workshop is a community-wide event. This workshop is a great way for community and faith leaders to work in conjunction with their first responders and the emergency management community. Together, community and faith leaders host events that demonstrate that when individuals and communities are prepared, emergency response personnel can better focus on those survivors with medical and rescue needs.

**Here's how to host a "Ready America" Preparedness Workshop:**

To start, learn how to build an emergency kit using free publications, including our Ready Emergency Supply Checklist," and walk through how to develop a Family Emergency Plan by using Ready's Family Emergency Plan Template. Both are available at **www.ready.gov** under Make a Plan.

Then, be sure to invite local government officials, first responders, your local Voluntary Organization Active in Disaster representative (American Red Cross, Salvation Army, etc.), your local Citizen Corps Council, and Community Emergency Response Teams to give brief emergency preparedness presentations at community recreation centers, houses of worship, libraries, etc.

Present the community's emergency preparedness plan so people are aware of it. The local first responders can discuss emergencies that could affect your area and the appropriate responses.

Lastly, show the latest Ready Public Service Advertisements on a video monitor. Visit The Ready Campaign at **www.ready.gov** and **www.citizencorps.gov** for more information on partners and resources available for this event.

## 2. Ensure Your Organization is Prepared

How quickly your nonprofit organization, congregation or company can open its doors again after a terrorist attack, tornado, fire or flood often depends on emergency planning done today. Start planning now to improve the likelihood that your company will survive and recover.

*Ready Business* at **www.ready.gov/business** outlines commonsense measures that nonprofit leaders and business owners can take to start getting *ready*. It provides practical steps and easy-to-use templates to help you plan. These recommendations reflect the Emergency Preparedness and Business Continuity Standard developed by the National Fire Protection Association and endorsed by the American National Standards Institute and the Department of Homeland Security. The site also provides useful links to resources providing more detailed business continuity and disaster preparedness information.

**Business continuity** and **crisis management** can be complex issues depending on the particular industry, size and scope of your organization or business. However, putting a plan in motion will improve the likelihood that your nonprofit organization or company will survive and recover.

**Preparing makes good sense. Get ready now.** For more information, go to **www.ready.gov/business**.

## 3. Join or Start an Emergency Response Team in Your Community

Following a major disaster, first responders who provide fire and medical services may not be able to meet the demand for these services. In some cases, survivors may need to rely on each other for help in order to meet their immediate life saving and life sustaining needs.

Members of a house of worship, neighborhood association, or workplace can form community Emergency Response Teams (CERTs) through partnership with local emergency service personnel that to be better prepared for hazards that can threaten their communities. CERTs are an active and vital part of community preparedness and response.

To get started, become familiar with CERT Program basics at the CERT website, **www.citizenscorps.gov/cert/**. The CERT Basic Training course will enable individuals to be better prepared to respond to and cope with the aftermath of a disaster. Additionally, if local government wants to supplement its response capability after a disaster, CERT members can be organized as neighborhood, workplace, school, and government teams.

Community Emergency Response Team members are our country's citizen heroes when disaster strikes. Find out more at **www.citizencorps.gov/cert/**

To determine if your community has a CERT Program, go to **www.citizenscorps.gov/cert/**. A local CERT Program will be sponsored by the fire department, or the local law enforcement or emergency management agency. You can encourage your membership to register for community-wide CERT training. The local CERT program might also be able to conduct the CERT Basic Training just for members of your congregation if a large enough group is interested in attending.

If there isn't a CERT Program already established in your community you can play an important role with the sponsoring government agency in getting the program started. To determine how you might help, see "Start a CERT program" at the CERT website: **www.citizencorps.gov/cert/start**.

For more information on how to tie in to the local preparedness efforts, contact your local or State Emergency Management office by going to **www.fema.gov**.

**For more information about any of these programs, contact our Center at the Department of Homeland Security at infofbci@dhs.gov.**

# IMPROVING EDUCATION FOR OUR CHILDREN

"The question is whether all of us — as citizens, and as parents — are willing to do what's necessary to give every child a chance to succeed. That responsibility begins not in our classrooms, but in our homes and communities."

**– President Obama,**
State of the Union Address
January 25, 2011

Education is a critical pathway to success for individuals and families. Partnerships between schools and faith-based and community organizations can help to achieve this goal of educational success for all students. That is why the Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships at the Department of Education works to promote student achievement and build a culture of educational excellence within communities across the country.

# WORKING TOGETHER

There are many ways we can work together to help the students in your community. We have highlighted four ways to get started.

## 1. Partner with Local Schools

Community and faith-based organizations can support academic achievement by partnering with school districts to help them in their efforts to improve low-performing schools. Organizations can create, implement, and support programs that have been shown to be successful in boosting school attendance, decreasing negative student behavior, improving academic performance, and increasing access to post-secondary education.

We want to help you partner with schools in your community. Contact the Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships at the Department of Education at **edpartners@ed.gov** for more information.

## 2. Sponsor Summer and Afterschool Programs

Another option is to partner with the local school district to develop or continue a quality summer or afterschool program.

Under the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program, the Department provides grants to states for summer and before- and afterschool programs. Your community or faith-based organization may be eligible to receive a sub-grant.

Be sure to visit **www.ed.gov/programs/21stcclc** for more information.

Your organization can also help children in low-income areas get the nutrition they need to learn, play, and grow throughout the summer months when they are out of school. You can participate in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Summer Food Service Program and provide children with subsidized meals as part of your summer program. For more information, visit **www.fns.usda.gov/CND/summer**.

## 3. Help Students with College Access and Federal Student Aid

For our young adults to become competitive global citizens, more and more of them will need to attend and complete college. Many students are not aware of the opportunities they have to attend college. Your community or faith-based organization can help improve college access by providing information to local families through hosting college fairs, college tours and family education events.

Applying for federal student financial aid has been simplified over the years. Many faith leaders and community organizations can host workshop and college nights, and provide resources for families on the process of applying to college. Too often students and families disqualify themselves without knowing all the facts.

**Host a college night at your organization**

1. Visit local high schools, recreation centers, and community organizations to publicize your college night.
2. Invite school guidance counselors, teachers, students, and parents to participate.
3. Walk participants through postsecondary education options.
4. Present information on the financial aid process.

For more information, please visit: **www.college.gov**.

**For additional information please visit www.ed.gov/edpartners or contact the Center at edpartners@ed.gov or (202) 401-1876.**

# PARTNERING ON RESPONSIBLE FATHERHOOD

Being a dad is one of the most important jobs any man can have. However, almost one-third of American youth live in a single-parent home and far too many children in America grow up without the love and support of their father. Without the active involvement of dads, young people are more likely to drop out of school, be involved in the criminal justice system, and become teen parents themselves.

As the father of two young girls and someone who grew up without his dad in the home, President Obama knows firsthand the power of fathers being present in the lives of children -- and the holes dads leave when they are absent. Over the past year, the Obama administration has led forums across the country to discuss how we all can impact father absence through personal and community responsibility. Now, President Obama is launching a major next step in his longstanding agenda on fatherhood: The President's Fatherhood and Mentoring Initiative.

# WORKING TOGETHER

The President's Fatherhood and Mentoring Initiative is a national effort to impact father absence in America through partnerships with fatherhood and family-serving groups and role models around the country. The following are many ways you can join with the President in this national effort to address the crisis of father absence across the country.

## 1. Join the President in the Fatherhood and Mentoring Initiative

FATHERHOOD.GOV
National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse

Go to **www.Fatherhood.gov/initiative** to sign up others and get more information about being a father or mentor, and supporting fatherhood and mentoring in your community.

## 2. Distribute cards in your community for others to join the effort

Fatherhood and Mentoring Initiative Cards are available in English and Spanish. Community members who might not have access or opportunity to visit the website can sign up to join with the President in this effort. To request cards, please send your request to **partnerships@hhs.gov**.

## 3. Become a Mentor

You can be involved by serving as a mentor or asking for a mentor. Sometimes, we know a father can't be present. That is when we need others to step up even more to be involved and be a positive role model in the life of a child. For more information on mentoring, visit the website for the Federal Mentoring Council at **www.federalmentoringcouncil.gov** or **www.serve.gov**.

For more information or opportunities to be involved, **www.Fatherhood.gov** provides a wide range of resources and information on fatherhood programs in your community, descriptions of efforts by State and much more.

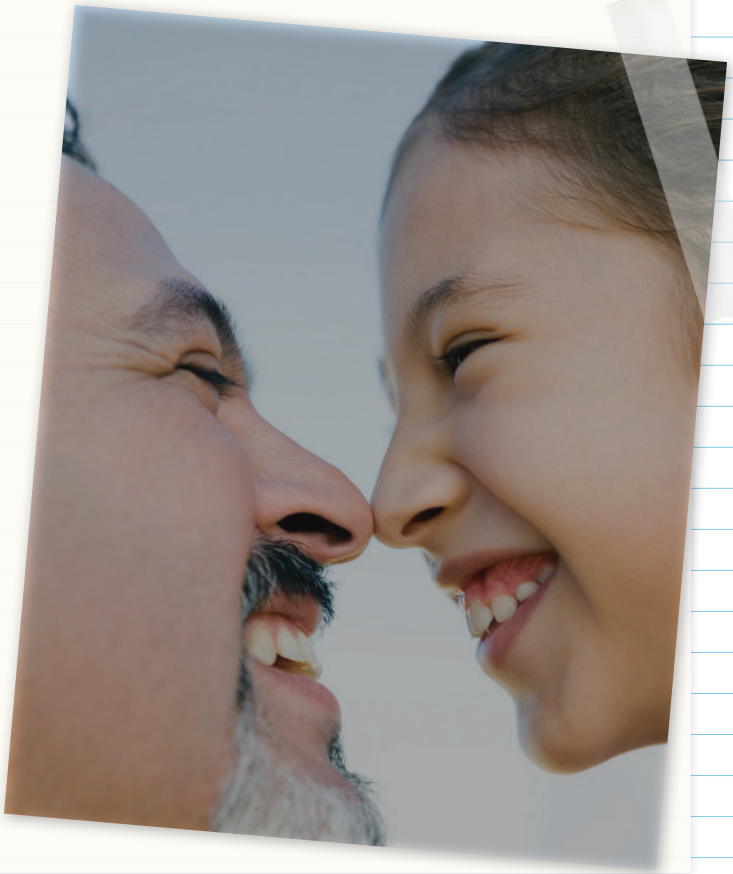
## 4. Support Responsible Reentry

Hundreds of thousands of men and women return to our communities from incarceration each year, and many of them are parents. Community and faith-based organizations play a critical role in helping formally incarcerated individuals transition back into our communities in a way that is safe, healthy, and responsible.

The Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships at the Department of Justice works with community- and faith-based groups to support responsible reentry.

You can reach this Center, learn more about grant opportunities, and share your good work at **(202) 307-0588** or partnerships@ojp.usdoj.gov.

**For additional information on Fatherhood, contact the Center at the Department of Health and Human Services at** partnerships@hhs.gov.



# GREENING YOUR BUILDING

Caring for our planet is an integral part of living out the values shared by millions of Americans, including communities of faith and nonprofit organizations. You can be a good steward of our environment and help your organization save money through energy efficiency. Let's look at the statistics. There are more than 370,000 congregations in the United States with hundreds of thousands of nonprofit buildings. If American houses of worship all reduced energy waste and saved a modest 10 percent of current use, they would achieve:

- Savings of about $315 million that could be redirected to programs and ministries;
- Prevention of more than 1.3 million tons of greenhouse gas emissions – equivalent to the emissions of about 240,000 cars, or to planting nearly 300,000 acres of trees.

# WORKING TOGETHER

Not only will greening a congregation or nonprofit reduce energy bills and carbon emissions, and protect the environment, it will also encourage job growth among thousands of U.S. energy efficiency design, construction, service and product providers, as well as among manufacturers of products and equipments.

Retrofitting a building can be a complicated process. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) created ENERGY STAR for Congregations to help faith-based and community organizations operate and build green, environmentally friendly facilities.

## 1. Learn about what ENERGY STAR provides your Congregation and Business

ENERGY STAR

You will receive free, accurate, unbiased information on energy efficiency, along with online technical support, through the **"Email a Technical Question"** service and other technical resources. Be sure to review "Putting Energy into Stewardship," a **"how-to"** guide for analyzing and upgrading your facility efficiency, more tips for greening, and an even more detailed guide, the **"Building Upgrade Manual"** for your facility manager. You will also be able to review links to energy efficient equipment, service contractors and utilities. There is also information, calculators and specifications on ENERGY STAR labeled products.

Please visit **www.energystar.gov/congregations.**

## 2. Join ENERGY STAR as a Partner and sign the ENERGY STAR Challenge

After you sign up, help your members learn how to save money and **reduce energy waste** at home and at their workplaces. Then, "benchmark" your congregation's baseline energy use, costs and greenhouse gas emissions with the free, online Portfolio Manager tool, found at **www.energystar.gov/benchmark**. Don't forget to prepare a strategic energy management plan and track your energy savings. You could earn the ENERGY STAR label for your facility. ENERGY STAR Congregations offers national and local recognition of success through annual awards and the ENERGY STAR label for worship or community facilities.

## 3. Educate others about what you are doing and the simple steps to become more "Green."

You can review our website for information materials and marketing resources to communicate your efforts. Find expert help for remodeling, upgrading or expanding your worship facility from **Professional Engineers**, Registered Architects or **service and product providers**. Work with qualified **Architecture & Engineering Firms** to build new facilities "Designed to Earn the ENERGY STAR" and purchase ENERGY STAR qualified products for your facilities. Finally, you can also **apply for a national award for your congregation!**

**For more information on how to get started, contact ENERGY STAR. For houses of worship, visit www.energystar.gov/congregations.**

**Nonprofit community organizations can visit www.energystar.gov/smallbiz.**

**You can also contact us at EPACongregations@energyandsecurity.com.**

**For additional information, contact the Center at the Environmental Protection Agency at Partnerships@epa.gov or (202) 564-8368.**

# SUPPORTING HEALTHY CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Millions of Americans lack access to health care. Access to quality health care and healthy choices are essential to healthy children, families and communities.

As leaders of faith and community-based organizations, you play essential roles in your community's health. Through health ministries, outreach programs, education, and other creative efforts, you already connect people to health care and help them achieve health and reach their potential.

As trusted leaders and messengers, your support for healthy choices has a tremendous impact. You are able to motivate people to live healthy lives in a way government cannot. You are often the link between those who are most vulnerable and hardest-to-reach and the health services they need. We thank you for your leadership for health and we are excited to share five ways that your organization or congregation can help promote the health of your community.

# WORKING TOGETHER

## 1. Offer your Community a Tour of HealthCare.gov

HealthCare.gov

HealthCare.gov is an easy-to-use website that helps Americans take control of their health care and make the choices that are right for them by putting the power of information at their fingertips. You can empower your members to learn about these important new health care benefits made possible by the Affordable Care Act and how to access them by offering a simple guided tour of the website. On the site, your members can learn:

- How families can now keep their college-age and young adult children on their family health insurance plan until the age of 26;
- How people with pre-existing conditions can access coverage;
- Timeline for implementation of the law;
- And much more!

Visitors can compare health coverage options and prices available to them in their zip code. The website also enables users to compare the quality of care for hospitals, nursing homes, home care and dialysis facilities in their region.

Visit **www.HealthCare.gov**.
Also available in Spanish, at **www.CuidadoDeSalud.gov**.

## 2. Link Adults and Kids to Health care

InsureKidsNow.GOV

### Connect Kids to health care coverage

Through the Connecting Kids to Coverage Challenge, community stakeholders can join the effort to enroll 5 million eligible uninsured children in Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) within 5 years. You can help families enroll their eligible kids in your state's Children's Health Insurance or Medicaid program by providing information at your community center or house of worship. Check out **www.InsureKidsNow.gov** for fact sheets, posters and other resources to connect kids to coverage!

### Partner with your Local Community Health Center

You can easily link your members who need care to a health center in your area. Community Health Centers provide primary and preventive care to low-income individuals and families. They serve as

medical homes for millions of people who receive health services, including primary care, dental care, prevention screenings for disease, and nutrition programs.

To start, you can find your local community health center by looking it up at **www.hhs.gov/partnerships**. Visit or call your local community health center to find out what services and programs it offers, and how individuals and families can make the health center their medical home. Make sure that the staff in your organization who work with individuals and families who may lack health insurance understand the services that are available and how people can sign-up. You can make sure that your entire community is aware of the services provided by your local community health center.

## 3. Join the First Lady's *Let's Move!* Initiative

The First Lady's *Let's Move!* initiative focuses on an ambitious goal: to solve the problem of childhood obesity within a generation. Childhood obesity rates in America have tripled over the past 30 years and childhood obesity is associated with increased risk of asthma, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, sleep problems, and more.

*Let's Move! Faith and Communities* is a unique effort within *Let's Move!* that recognizes and engages the efforts of faith and community-based organizations in the *Let's Move!* goal.

We invite your faith or community-based organization to join the hundreds of groups that have already stepped up to help achieve the *Let's Move! Faith and Communities* Challenges!

**The four nationwide challenges are:**

1. **Walk three million miles together – Consider starting a walking club in your community to log miles together;**
2. **Earn 500,000 Presidential Active Lifestyle Awards;**
3. **Start 10,000 new community gardens or farmers markets at congregations and community centers; and**
4. **Host 1,000 new Summer Food Service Program sites at congregations or community organization.**

We created a special toolkit and website for congregations and community organizations participating in *Let's Move!* You can view and download the toolkit at our HHS Partnership Center website: **www.hhs.gov/partnerships/letsmove**

To learn more about *Lets Move!* go to **www.LetsMove.gov**.

## 4. Encourage Moms and Dads to Sign Up for Text4Baby

Text4Baby is a free texting service to help promote healthy pregnancies and babies. Women who sign up for the service receive three SMS text messages each week timed to their due date or baby's date of birth. Text4baby messages also connect women to local clinics and support services for prenatal and infant care. Dads can also sign up for Text4Baby.

Signing up is easy: just text the word "BABY" to 511411. For text messages in Spanish, text the word "BEBE." Put up a poster for Text4Baby in your community or announcement board and highlight Text4Baby for youth in your community.

For more information, visit **www.text4baby.org**.

## 5. Host HIV/AIDS Testing Day in your Community

Last year, President Obama issued the first ever National HIV/AIDS Strategy (NHAS) for the United States. This strategy includes concrete action steps to engage faith and community groups to address HIV/AIDS and related issues. Faith and community leaders are trusted messengers on health issues. Your ability to raise awareness, support prevention and encourage early detection makes you a key partner in addressing HIV/AIDS. HIV Testing Day is held each year in June to coincide with national testing month.

To help raise awareness and support the National HIV/AIDS strategy in your community, consider hosting an HIV testing event during the month of June. Your congregation or community organization can partner with a local health clinic or other health and wellness organization to sponsor a testing day. For more information, please visit **www.AIDS.gov**.

**Contact the Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships at the Department of Health and Human Services to learn more about all of these opportunities for partnership at partnerships@hhs.gov and www.hhs.gov/partnerships.**

# CREATING HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

With hundreds of thousands of American households facing the possibility of foreclosure, there is a great amount of help that faith-based and community organizations can provide to their communities in this area.

In addition, on any given night, hundreds of thousands of individuals across the country are homeless, seeking shelter on the streets, in cars, and in other inadequate facilities as well as in emergency shelters, transitional housing or other supportive housing. Homelessness affects people of all ages, all ethnicities, and various backgrounds. While many cities and states are already working hard to assist the homeless, the need is still great.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and our Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships at HUD would like to work with your organization to help those in your community prevent foreclosures and impact homelessness.

# WORKING TOGETHER

There are many ways you can help families and individuals in your community avoid foreclosure. Through partnerships with faith-based and community organizations around the country and capacity building resources, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development is working to stem the tide of high foreclosure rates and to support the development of affordable housing. Here are three key ways that you can help prevent foreclosures and aid the homeless.

## FORECLOSURES

### 1. Partner to Prevent Foreclosures

The Obama administration's Making Home Affordable Program includes opportunities

MAKING HOME AFFORDABLE.GOV

to modify or refinance a mortgage in order to make monthly payments more affordable. It also includes the Home Affordable Foreclosure Alternatives Program (HAFA) for homeowners who are interested in a short sale or deed-in-lieu of foreclosure.

Let's work together to spread the word about the Homeowner's HOPE Hotline. You can ask folks in your congregation and community to call (888) 995-HOPE (4673) to learn about the Making Home Affordable program and to speak with a HUD-approved housing counselor for free. If you are having difficulties working with your mortgage company, ask for "MHA Help".

888-995-HOPE
Homeowner's HOPE™ Hotline

(888) 995-HOPE (4673)
(877) 304-9709 TTY

Or visit:
www.makinghomeaffordable.gov

### 2. Raise awareness of foreclosure scams

We have created a new "Toolkit on Foreclosure Prevention & Scam Awareness for Faith-Based and Community Organizations." You can find this toolkit under "Publications" at www.hud.gov/offices/fbci. This document provides 10 tips for avoiding foreclosure, explaining how to identify a scam, and highlights ways to promote an event and other valuable resources and websites. You can spread the word about this toolkit in your community.

Foreclosure rescue and mortgage modification scams are a growing problem. Homeowners must protect themselves so they do not lose money—or their home. Faith-based and community organizations can play a tremendous role in raising awareness in their congregations and local communities about foreclosure prevention scams.

Scammers make promises that they cannot keep, such as guarantees to "save" your home or lower your mortgage, oftentimes for a fee. Scammers may pretend that they have direct contact with your mortgage servicer when they do not. For more information visit: **www.makinghomeaffordable.gov**.

# HOMELESSNESS

## 3. Partner to Provide Assistance to the Homeless

The Obama administration is committed to ending and preventing homelessness across all vulnerable populations, including families, youth, children, and Veterans. For example, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provided $1.5 billion in targeted homeless assistance through the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program. The Affordable Care Act provides new and more effective models for serving uninsured, chronically ill individuals as well as children, youth, and adults experiencing homelessness. The United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) works across the federal agencies to develop and implement the federal government's efforts to end homelessness.

There are many ways to get involved in these efforts, including educating the public about homelessness, partnering with local government leaders to renew their commitment to ending homelessness, and promoting volunteerism to fuel the work that needs to be done. Here are some things you can do:

- Share information on the National Call Center for Homeless Veterans: **www.va.gov/homeless**
- Visit the Homelessness Resources Exchange web site for information on homeless assistance and contacts for local providers: **www.hudhre.info**
- Find and partner with nonprofit grantees coordinating homeless services programs across HUD, Health and Human Services, Labor, and Veterans Affairs. To find out more about these programs visit the InterAgency Council on Homelessness and read their "Opening Doors" report: **www.usich.gov**
- Volunteer your time at an existing local homeless shelter. From serving food to watching children to assisting with the daily operations, such opportunities fulfill a critical need and foster a deeper understanding of all members of your community.
- Open your own homeless shelter. HUD administers a variety of homeless assistance grant programs to help alleviate operating costs.

  To learn more, visit: **www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/homeless**.

- Start a food or clothing drive at your place of worship or in your community to collect non-perishable foods, clothing, and personal hygiene products and donate them to a local shelter or food bank.

For more information about these opportunities to help, visit: **www.hud.gov**. Under "Topic Areas," click on "Homelessness."

**Contact the Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships at the Department of Housing and Urban Development to learn more about all of these opportunities for partnership at (202) 708-2404 or Talk_to_us@hud.gov.**

# IMPACTING HUNGER AND NUTRITION

Almost one in six Americans struggle to put food on the table at some point during the year. In 2009, over 50 million Americans, among them 17 million children, had limited access to adequate food due to lack of money or other resources according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

People of all faiths and people of good will share a common concern to feed hungry people and serve those in need. Many congregations and nonprofit organizations are doing that already. USDA values the role of faith- and community-based organizations as critical partners in helping spread the word about America's primary food safety net, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as Food Stamps.

Unfortunately, only 67% of those who are eligible for SNAP participate, with some groups like seniors, the working poor, and Latinos participating at disproportionately lower rates. When eligible individuals do not participate in SNAP, they lose out on nutrition assistance that could stretch their food dollars at the grocery store, and their communities lose out on the economic benefits provided by new SNAP dollars flowing into the local economy. Faith-based and neighborhood organizations can help address the needs of the most vulnerable by doing SNAP outreach in their congregation and community.

# WORKING TOGETHER

## 1. Provide Access to Nutritious Food for Those in Need

SM SNAP Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
Putting Healthy Food Within Reach

SNAP helps families buy the groceries they need to put food on the table. Sharing information about SNAP can help your congregation or nonprofit organization ensure that people in need have access to nutritious food. Use a variety of outreach ideas to help your congregation or community promote the benefits of SNAP, such as displaying SNAP posters and flyers in your place of worship or community organization. You can order these free materials at http://snap.ntis.gov. Be sure to include SNAP information in bulletins, newsletters, and in religious and community radio and TV programs. USDA has ample information in English and Spanish available to assist you.

In addition, you can provide information about SNAP during meetings and other activities. Form an outreach group and train staff and volunteers in the group with basic information about SNAP and how to apply for this and other federal nutrition assistance programs.

Take the opportunity before or after services or events to host an information table where volunteers can help eligible congregants apply for SNAP. Your local SNAP office can partner with you by providing training and materials. They might even be able to have someone attend and register people on the spot. Please contact us at collaborate@usda.gov to learn more.

## 2. Feed Children When They Are Out Of School

Over 22 million children receive free or reduced-price lunch during the school year, but only three million receive a meal through USDA programs during the summer months. Many houses of worship and community groups host programs for kids, but too many children still go without meals when school is out. Did you know that you can partner with USDA to provide free, nutritious meals during these times?

There are two ways your congregation or community organization can help feed kids when they are out of school. One way is to become a sponsor "of a feeding site" for the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP. SFSP reimburses approved sponsors for serving meals that meet federal nutritional guidelines. Sponsors prepare or procure meals and receive payments from USDA, through their state agencies, based on the

number of meals they serve. Sites are the actual places where the meals are served free to eligible children.

Visit **www.summerfood.usda.gov** for additional information.

A second way you can help is to provide a nutritious meal or snack through the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) in your afterschool program, childcare center, emergency shelter, or daycare home. Thanks to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act becoming law, participants in every state can now serve supper to at-risk youth through the same program.

Visit **www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/care** to learn more.

For more information on how to get started in applying for these programs, please contact the Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships at USDA at **collaborate@usda.gov** or by calling **(202) 720-2032**.

## 3. Plant a Community Garden

Help people access more fruits and vegetables in your neighborhood by planting a community garden. Community gardens beautify neighborhoods and help bring neighbors closer together. They can reduce neighborhood crime, particularly when vacant lots are targeted for garden development. Community gardens are a great addition to faith- and community-based organizations interested in being good stewards of the land and sharing their harvest with congregants and neighbors in need. They also provide safe, recreational and learning space in urban areas with little or no park land and can contribute to keeping urban air and water clean. Finally, produce can be donated to local food pantries to provide people in need with fresh food.

SNAP helps low-income individuals purchase food so they can obtain a nutritious diet. The average monthly SNAP benefit per household in 2010 was $290.

USDA can help you get the technical assistance and advice you need to start a safe and productive community garden at your house of worship or in your community. We can also help connect you with a Master Gardener who can host a workshop on starting a community garden in your area.

For more information on starting your own garden, including Start-Up Guides and technical assistance, visit our USDA Center website **www.usda.gov/partnerships**.

**Contact the Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships at the Department of Agriculture to learn more about all of these opportunities for partnership at (202) 720-2032 or collaborate@usda.gov.**

# ADVANCING INTERNATIONAL RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT

Faith-based and community organizations have been pioneers in the field when it comes to providing humanitarian assistance and long term development on an international scale. Whether taking teams on medical missions or advocating on behalf of child nutrition, many of you have a long history of providing life-saving support around the globe. There are numerous ways for you and others in your community to continue to take part in this broader effort to help those in need.

Faith-based organizations not only express the moral values of millions of Americas, they also provide some of the most dependable support systems for millions of people in the developing world. In Kenya, for example, 30 percent of all health-care services are provided by faith-based hospitals.

Kendra Helmer/USAID

# WORKING TOGETHER

## 1. Educate

Visit the U.S. Agency for International Development at **www.USAID.gov** to learn more about how the generosity of American taxpayers is combating poverty and disease around the world. On the USAID website you can learn about USAID Forward, President Obama's vision of the United States as the global leader in international development. You can also visit the IMPACT Blog to get up to the minute updates on our work and download Frontlines magazine, an informational publication you can share with those in your community.

You can also find country-specific fact sheets and updates under the Locations section at **www.USAID.gov**.

## 2. Provide Disaster Relief

Be familiar with this list of do's and don'ts when responding to a crisis. Following these simple guidelines can ensure that your monetary ensure contribution is most helpful.

Monetary donations are the most effective way to provide immediate relief in a disaster situation. Many organizations already have the materials, staff, and expertise needed but face real financial limitations. Taking up a collection to give to the relief organization of your choice is a great way to help.

While monetary donations are preferred, there may be instances when commodity contributions could be useful to a relief organization.

**Don't let contributions go to waste:** Have you received a collection of goods to donate which are not appropriate for the crisis? Hold a garage sale and donate the profits, or consider giving them to a U.S. organization that can use them.

***As part of the U.S. Government's response to care for the most vulnerable, President Obama has two signature development initiatives focusing on global health and food security.***

## Global Health Initiative

The Global Health Initiative (GHI) is the next chapter in the way U.S. Government agencies conduct global health activities, building on successful bipartisan leadership in global health and expanding their impact for sustainable results around the world. GHI helps partner countries improve health outcomes through strengthened health systems - with a particular focus on improving the health of women, newborns and children through programs including infectious disease, nutrition, maternal and child health, family planning, safe water, sanitation and hygiene.

## Feed the Future

Feed the Future (FtF) is President Obama's signature initiative on global food security with a pledge of $3.5 billion over five years. FtF recognizes that food security is not just about food, but it is also closely linked to economic security, environmental security, and human security. USAID is working with partners and stakeholders to advance action that addresses the needs of small scale farmers and agri-businesses, and harnesses the power of women to drive economic growth. We will increase our investment in nutrition and agriculture development while maintaining our support for humanitarian food assistance.

Through our leadership in this initiative, we advance global stability and prosperity by improving the most basic of human conditions: the need that families and individuals have for a reliable source of quality food and sufficient resources to purchase it.

**For more information on these initiatives visit:**
**www.ghi.gov**
**www.feedthefuture.gov**

## 3. Volunteer

One of the best resources we have to give is ourselves. Do a quick survey of your congregation; you may be surprised at the skills and expertise your community has.

USAID's **Volunteers for Prosperity** Service Incentive Program helps to match highly skilled professionals with NGOs seeking volunteers. **Volunteers for Prosperity** is committed to continue finding innovative ways to incorporate volunteers into the design and implementation of development work around the world. Highly-skilled American professionals such as doctors, nurses, teachers, engineers, economists, computer specialists, financial sector professionals, business executives and others with specialized technical expertise and significant practical experience are eligible volunteer candidates.

Additionally, the **Volunteers for Prosperity Service Incentive Program** provides competitive grants to U.S. partner organizations to assist Americans with relevant professional experience who wish to volunteer. These grants (ranging from $500 to $1000) are individual, non-renewable and are designated to offset volunteer travel and living expenses while on assignment. The program provides a dollar for dollar match for funds raised by volunteers up to a $1000.

For more information, visit: **www.volunteersforprosperity.gov**.

Another way that individuals can volunteer is through the **Peace Corps.** For nearly 50 years, **Peace Corps Volunteers** have been dedicating 27 months to serving and partnering with communities in over 70 countries. They work with communities to develop and implement improvements in education, youth and community development, health, business and information and communications technology, agriculture, and the environment. In addition to the incredible reward of knowing they improved the lives of community members, **Peace Corps Volunteers** gain invaluable professional skills and are eligible for student loan deferment or partial cancellation and transition funding upon return.

Contact a **Peace Corps** recruiter to learn about necessary qualifications by calling **(800) 424-8580**. To learn more and apply online, visit: **www.peacecorps.gov**.

**Contact the Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives at USAID with any questions about all of these items at (202) 712-4080 or fbci@usaid.gov.**

# CREATING JOBS AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

While the economy is recovering, job loss impacts almost everyone. Now more than ever, individuals need support and assistance to find and sustain employment, and to enhance their skills and talents. However, many people don't know where to turn. Fortunately, there are many partnership opportunities in these key areas, where you and your organization can be part of the solution!

# WORKING TOGETHER

## 1. Connect those in your organization or congregation to your local One-Stop Career Center

The Department of Labor coordinates a nationwide network of approximately 3,000 One-Stop Career Centers. These centers provide job seekers a range of employment and training services, including helping those who need to apply for unemployment benefits. Many of these Centers across the country are not connected to local faith and community-based leaders and organizations. Your organization can play a vital role in referring those in need to these centers and their available resources.

To start, reach out to your local One-Stop Career Center. You can find your nearest Center at **www.careeronestop.org**. Call the Center to inquire about establishing a referral relationship or other partnership with your congregation or organization.

Also, check out the Department of Labor's newest career websites **www.myskillsmyfuture.org** and **www.mynextmove.org**. You can share these websites with your members and create bookmarks to these sites on public access computers in your congregation or community center.

The Department of Labor also directly funds job training programs in communities across the country. Two of the largest training programs focus on at-risk youth ages 16 to 24. The YouthBuild program provides job training and educational opportunities combined with on-the-job experience renovating or building affordable housing in low-income communities. There are over 220 YouthBuild programs in 43 states. Job Corps is a residential-based program that helps young people learn a career, earn a high school diploma or GED, and find and retain employment. Job Corps currently trains more than 100,000 students at 124 centers nationwide. To learn more or connect to these programs in your area, contact our Center at **cfbnp@dol.gov.**

The Department of Labor encourages faith-based and community organizations to participate in its competitive grant programs either as a lead applicant or partner, depending on the program and eligibility. Find the nonprofit organizations in your region that are DOL grantees and reach out to discuss partnership development. You can also learn about open DOL grant solicitations and reach out to organizations in your area to develop a joint grant application.
Visit **www.dol.gov/cfbnp/grant.htm**

to find nonprofit grantees and open solicitations.
For guidance on applying for grants, go to **www.workforce3one.org/page/grants_toolkit**.

## 2. Create a Job Club

Across the country, places of worship and local community organizations host job clubs or unemployment ministries for their community members. These clubs tend to be informal and are often organized by an enterprising volunteer coordinator. However, they can serve as a very valuable resource for job seekers. Part peer support group and part employment network, job clubs help individuals manage the stress associated with unemployment while learning strategies for their job search and connecting with employers and other job seekers.

The Department of Labor's Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships is a resource for job clubs. We can provide technical support to help you set up a job club and we can link you to existing clubs. We can also help connect your job club to the local public workforce system, employers, and workforce professionals who can speak at your job club meetings. For more information contact the Center at **cfbnp@dol.gov** or **(202) 693-6017**.

We also manage a Community of Practice website for local organizations, congregations, and community members across the country who host job clubs, or are interested in starting one, to share ideas, resources and learn from one another at: **https://partnerships.workforce3one.org.**

## 3. Promote Small Business Programs within Your Community

Small businesses are the largest job creators in the country. They also generate the majority of the innovations from companies within the United States. Small businesses are critical to our country's economic development. Over the past 15 years, 65% of all new private sector jobs have been created by small businesses and today 50% of all U.S. workers either own their own business or are employed by a small business.

Community and faith-based organizations are integral to helping to sustain economic development in our country. Because you have credibility and have earned the trust of the communities you serve, you can work with the Small Business Administration (SBA) to promote programs that encourage entrepreneurship, community development, economic growth and job creation.

One example of how you can help in this important endeavor is to build awareness! With the economy rebounding, your congregants, members and neighbors need to be aware of the all the opportunities available for them to participate in the

economic recovery. SBA has programs that can transform neighborhoods and change lives; but too often the people who could take advantage of these programs are not aware of them.

One of these opportunities is SBA's 8(a) Business Development Program. This nine year program assists eligible small businesses owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals compete in the American economy and access the federal procurement market. Firms approved to participate in the 8(a) program receive a broad scope of benefits and assistance, including one-on-one coaching; training workshops; specialized management and technical assistance; enhanced subcontracting opportunities; and access to sole source and limited competition federal contracts. For more information about contracting with the federal government visit **www.sba.gov/contracting**.

**For more information on SBA programs, and how to raise awareness about them in your local community, contact the Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships at SBA at partnerships@SBA.gov or (202)205.6452.**

## 4. Become an Intermediary for Micro-lending

At a time when credit for small businesses is still not always available - especially in underserved markets - your organization can provide a local financing option for your congregants, members and neighbors by becoming an SBA Microloan Intermediary. Having a "microlender" in a community is important because the Microloan Intermediary often acts as a bank for entrepreneurs and small businesses that might otherwise not get a loan. Dollars through Microloans can be used for working capital, machinery and equipment, furniture, fixtures, supplies and inventory. Microloans to individual borrowers are capped at $50,000.

To become an SBA Microloan Intermediary, the applicant must be a nonprofit and have at least one year of experience making loans of $50,000 or less to small businesses and providing technical assistance to its borrowers. Additionally, the Intermediary is required to contribute not less than 15% of its loan amount in matching funds. The

match must be in cash and obtained from non-federal sources.

Because of the risk associated with these Microloans, Intermediaries are required to provide borrowers with technical assistance. SBA does provide grants to help offset the technical assistance costs. The match against the grant is 25% of the grant amount.

For more information about SBA's Microloan program go to: **www.sba.gov/content/microloan-program**.

## 5. Promote Good Jobs for Everyone

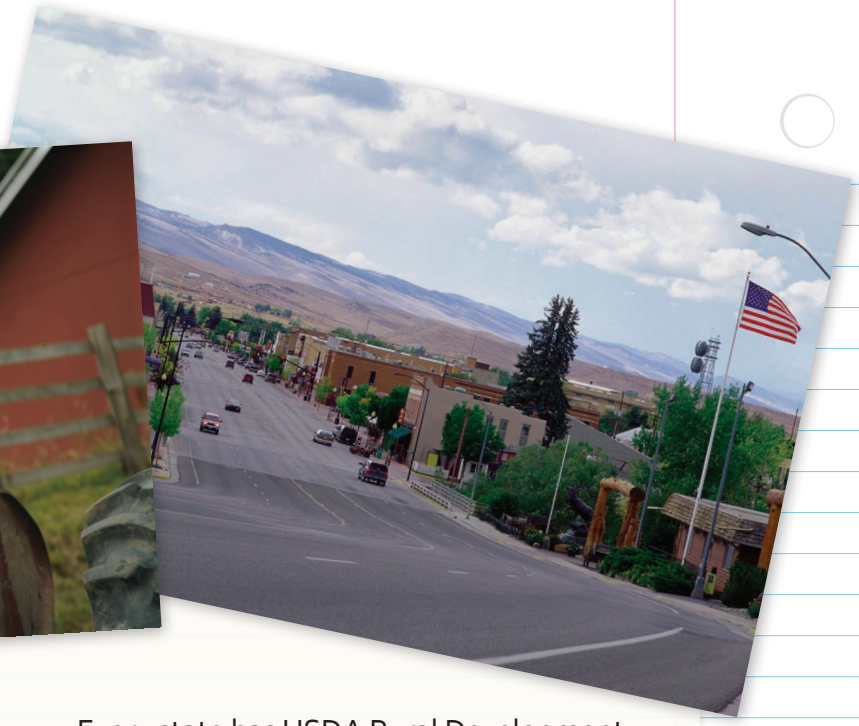
Department of Labor offices across the country enforce laws and regulations that protect workers in the areas of wages paid, hours worked, on-the-job health and safety, employment discrimination, and more. These are important protections that help workers keep what they earn and ensure they return home safely from work every day.

Many workers are victims of labor law violations. They may be paid less than the minimum wage, not receive overtime pay, or they may be misclassified as an independent contractor. Often times, workers are not aware of their rights or how to report violations. When workers aren't sure where to turn, they often consult their pastor or community leader for guidance and help.

You can work with the Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships at the Department of Labor to address any of these concerns that might arise in your community. Our public outreach campaign, "We Can Help", provides basic information on worker protections in the form of written materials in multiple languages and public service announcements (PSAs). Visit **www.dol.gov/wecanhelp** to download or request materials.

You can also invite local staff from the Department's worker protection agencies, including the Wage and Hour Division and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to your congregation to make presentations on worker protections and the process for filing complaints.

**The Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships at the Department of Labor can help connect you to your regional and district offices and answer any questions at cfbnp@dol.gov or (202) 693-6017.**



## 6. Revitalize Rural Communities

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development programs help create jobs and promote economic development in rural communities. Grants, loans, and technical assistance are available to support the growth of rural businesses and cooperatives, which creates employment opportunities for rural residents around the country.

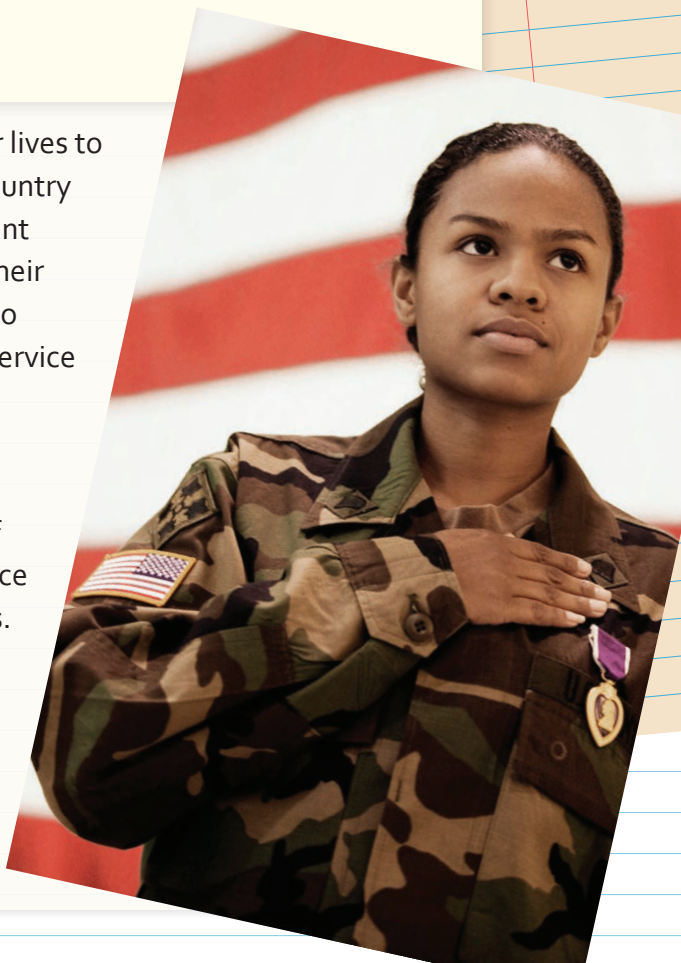
Faith-based and neighborhood organizations play a critical role in building our rural communities. Non-profit organizations, both faith-based and secular, may be eligible to apply for several Rural Development programs, including Rural Business Enterprise Grants and Rural Community Development Initiative grant funding. USDA also has resources to help new farmers access capital through the Beginning Farmers and Ranchers program and the Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers program.

Every state has USDA Rural Development offices that can provide more information about these programs, as well as guidance about the application process. Learn more at **www.usda.gov/partnerships** and **www.rurdev.usda.gov**.

# SUPPORTING VETERANS AND MILITARY FAMILIES

"For their service and sacrifice, warm words of thanks from a grateful nation are more than warranted, but they aren't nearly enough. We also owe our Veterans the care they were promised and the benefits that they have earned. We have a sacred trust with those who wear the uniform of the United States of America. It's a commitment that begins at enlistment, and it must never end. But we know that for too long, we've fallen short of meeting that commitment. Too many wounded warriors go without the care that they need. Too many Veterans don't receive the support that they've earned. Too many who once wore our nation's uniform now sleep in our nation's streets."

**–President Obama,**
April 9, 2009



Every day, our men and women in uniform risk their lives to provide invaluable protection and services to our country both domestically and around the world. As President Obama said, "to our Veterans, to the fallen and to their families – there is no tribute, no commemoration, no praise that can truly match the magnitude of your service and your sacrifice."

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is committed to ensuring that we honor the service of our Veterans. Many of our Veterans require assistance accessing the benefits and support that VA provides. And at this time when enrollment in VA is expected to increase by 800,000 in the next two years, it is especially critical that Veterans can access the assistance they deserve.

The First Lady and Dr. Jill Biden have launched the Joining Forces initiative, calling on all of us to come together to help support America's military families and Veterans. Faith and community leaders are on the forefront of such efforts already, and the First and Second Lady want to invite more to join together to help make a difference for military families. Joining Forces is a comprehensive national initiative to mobilize all sectors of society to give our service members and their families the opportunities and support they have earned. For more information on Joining Forces and how you can become involved, please visit **www.whitehouse.gov/joiningforces**.

## WORKING TOGETHER

Community groups and faith-based organizations can provide some of the most effective support, resources and opportunities to help Veterans and their families. You can play a critical role in joining VA's efforts to help those who have served our country.

### 1. Start a Ministry or Program to Support our Military and Veteran Families

Take a close look at your current ministries or community programs. Consider how your program or group may assist our military women, men and Veterans, their families and survivors. This may include providing Veterans with transportation to appointments or even clothing to Veterans and their family members who may have hit a rough spot. A food pantry may provide extra meals for families who may be having a greater difficulty adjusting to life post-deployment.

For more information, be sure to contact your local VA medical center Chaplain Service or VA Mental Health Department. When you contact a VA medical center you may be connected with any or all of the following:

- Chaplain
- Operation Enduring Freedom/ Operation Iraqi Freedom Program Coordinator
- Network Homeless Coordinator
- Mental Health Worker
- Women Veteran Program Coordinators
- VA Volunteer Office

These key resource people will assist you in working with our Veterans, their families and survivors.

You and your team may also host a family night for Veterans. Invite all the Veterans in

your community and thank them for their service. This kind of gathering provides an informal support group for Veteran families, which will come in handy as there is always be a period of adjustment for each family member. For more information contact: **www.oefoif.va.gov** and click on Welcome Home Outreach.

You can refer a Veteran or his or her family member to the VA telephone-based program, Families at Ease (888) 823-7458, which operates 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Eastern Time. You also may call this resource for support and suggestions about how to talk to a Veteran about seeking an evaluation or treatment. A call responder will ask the right questions about the Veteran's situation and will readily provide information on how to get the Veterans enrolled in VA or other care. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has resources in place to help your Veteran get the treatment and support he or she needs, all in complete confidence.

You can also help veterans and their families connect to their local Vet Center for support and help. Vet Centers are a wonderful resource offering free peer-counseling to combat Veterans and their families. To find out more about the resources and benefits available to Veterans, call the VA Health Benefits Service Center at **1-877-222-VETS** or visit **www.vetcenter.va.gov**.

If your congregation is interested in helping Veterans get important information on health care and other benefits, attend a VA sponsored Welcome Home Event held around the country for returning military service members and their families. For more information, contact your local VA Voluntary Service office at your local VA medical center.

## 2. Watch for Signs of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Mental Health Needs

Although most Veterans will readjust smoothly, the most common mental health problems faced by returning troops are Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Depression. Anyone who has gone through an event such as combat can develop Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Many Veterans, who are struggling with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), the effects of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) or depression may not understand what they are experiencing before they seek treatment. They may also be avoiding help that VA offers due to a concern about the stigma of mental health treatment or be in denial about their problems.

The symptoms of PTSD may appear suddenly or may be triggered by something that reminds the individual of their traumatic experience. Each person who has PTSD experiences it differently, but symptoms fall into three main clusters: 1) re-experiencing the event, either through flashbacks, nightmares or a physiological reaction such as pounding heart, muscle tension, sweating, etc.; 2) avoidance and emotional numbing, which can include an inability to remember the event or loss of interests in activities and daily life; and 3) hyperarousal: symptoms associated with increased stimulation, such as difficulty concentrating, falling or staying asleep, or outbursts of anger.

Veterans and their families can turn to their local VA medical center or Vet Center for help. Vet Centers are also a wonderful resource offering free peer-counseling to combat Veterans and their families. To find out more about the resources and benefits available to Veterans, call the VA Health Benefits Service Center at 1-877-222-VETS.

Religious and community leaders are in an important position to recognize the signs of PTSD in our returning veterans and help connect them to care and help they might need.

Learn how to recognize signs of trauma and how to connect returning veterans to care. Learn more at: **www.mentalhealth.va.gov**.

## 3. Homeless Veterans

Sadly, Veterans are overrepresented among the nation's homeless population. At a point in time in 2009, approximately 12 percent of all people (and 16 percent of adults) experiencing homelessness were identified as a Veteran. There are many reasons that contribute to the downward spiral of Veteran homelessness but one of the main reasons is due to the effects of PTSD and substance abuse. These challenges are compounded by a lack of family and social support networks.

Faith and community-based organizations such as yours can help link homeless Veterans to the services they need most. This is a great opportunity for you and your group to join the VA in helping homeless

Veterans and help President Obama and Secretary Shinseki reach the goal of zero homelessness among Veterans in five years.

As members of your organization conduct outreach to homeless Veterans in your community, you may refer Veterans to the Department of Veteran Affairs National Call Center for Homeless Veterans **1-877-424-3838**.

You may call this number on behalf of a homeless Veteran or a Veteran at risk for homelessness.

When a Veteran family member or concerned individual calls on behalf of a Veteran, they will speak to a trained VA staff member. The VA staff member will conduct a brief screening to assess the need and the homeless Veteran will be connected with the Homeless Point of Contact at the nearest VA facility.

For more information, visit:
**www.va.gov/homeless**

To learn more about any of these programs, contact our Center at the Department of Veterans Affairs at **VAPartnerships@va.gov** or **(202) 461-7689**.

TELL ME....I FORGET
SHOW ME....I REMEMBER
INVOLVE ME ... I UNDERSTAND

# ENCOURAGING VOLUNTEERISM AND SERVICE

In 2009, over five million volunteers helped faith- and community-based organizations carry out their missions and assist those in their communities. People are volunteering now more than ever, and more Americans volunteer through faith-based organizations than any other kind of organization. What does this mean for you?

With the passage of the Kennedy Serve America Act, the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) has an expanded mandate to work across programs to demonstrate results in six critical areas: education, economic opportunity, healthy futures, disaster preparation and response, environmental stewardship, and Veterans and military families.

# WORKING TOGETHER

No matter what your congregation or organization is working on in your community, there are many ways to get committed, passionate volunteers to help your program and achieve results.

## 1. Apply for a National Service member to work with your organization to support your mission

CNCS offers many resources to help you recruit volunteers for your projects, including tools to post your service opportunities online. To get started, be sure to review the various volunteer programs we offer. Some programs, such as AmeriCorps State and National, award financial support through competitive grants to community groups that sponsor service activities, whereas others, such as VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America), allow your organization to receive volunteers as they become available.

## Below is a brief summary of each volunteer program.

| | AmeriCorps State and National | AmeriCorps VISTA | AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) | Senior Corps |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ABOUT | National Service members provide the human capital that is essential for sustaining numerous nonprofit organizations. | National Service members build capacity by putting in place systems and tools to support faith-based and community based efforts to alleviate poverty and related issues. | Young adults live and work in teams at five regional campuses across the country.<br>NCCC teams can help you with short-term intense service projects such as youth camps, coordinating large groups of volunteers for events, disaster response, and physical plant rehabs. | Senior Corps promotes service opportunities for older Americans. Using Senior Corps members helps organizations meet their core missions. Senior Corps volunteers help reduce the cost of service, provide invaluable skills and experience along with their dedication and concern for their communities. |
| APPLY | Competitive process; must apply to receive National Service members. Contact your state service commission to learn how to apply. | Work with your CNCS state office, propose a project and as openings become available you can get a VISTA member. | Contact a regional campus directly to learn more about collaborating with NCCC teams. | Work with your CNCS state office to find out about relevant opportunities. |

Be sure to visit **www.NationalService.gov** and click on resources For Organizations and Grantees to find out which program is most appropriate for your organization and your needs, how to apply and relevant contact information.

## 2. Encourage members of your community to serve

**United We Serve**

**SERVE.GOV**

Members of all ages are eligible to apply for a variety of AmeriCorps programs. Research each program to see which one is most appropriate for your community members to apply to, as well as which volunteer opportunities are available to you. Not only can you assist those looking for a way to volunteer in their area of interest, but you can also reap the rewards of having volunteers assist you who are outside your service area.

To post or find opportunities to serve, visit **www.Serve.gov,** where all volunteer opportunities are located in one place.

For more information, current grant opportunities, or to find out which program is right for your organization or community, visit: **www.NationalService.gov**.

# APPLYING FOR A FEDERAL GRANT

As this toolkit demonstrates, there are numerous ways your organization can partner with the federal government. In addition to diverse civic or non-financial partnerships to address community challenges and critical issues, there may be appropriate opportunities where you may decide to pursue a competitive federal grant opportunity. You will want to evaluate the relevant grant opportunity very closely, as well as your organization's size, scope and current capacity with respect to the grant program. Applying for a federal grant is a competitive process. The White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships and federal Centers work to make sure that organizations that receive grants from the federal government, as well as the government officials supporting those financial partnerships, have all of the information they need to comply with relevant law and policy. Because of the trust that government agencies and clients place in these organizations, financial partnerships must be characterized by their ability to both uphold the free exercise of religion and to prevent the establishment of religion.

It is important to note that a significant percentage of federal grant dollars are also awarded by state and local government agencies. So in addition to assessing competitive direct federal grant opportunities that may be appropriate to pursue based on your organization's size, scope, and capacity, it is also important to understand the state and local government grant opportunities as well. In addition, it is important to develop non-governmental funding sources and prospects for your nonprofit as well. A resource for understanding private and foundation funding sources is the Foundation Center, at **www.foundationcenter.org**. The Foundation Center also provides webinars and training sessions for nonprofits, especially related to development and grant writing.

**Please note that the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships and its federal Centers do not make grant award decisions. You must apply via the competitive process.**

Below are some helpful hints and tips on the grant process. Some agencies may refer to the process in different terms, such as a RFP (Request for Proposals), RFA (Request for Applications), or FOA (Funding Opportunity Announcement). These letters all mean the same thing for the most part: they are announcing a grant application opportunity.

## 1. Start planning before a grant opportunity has been published

Review previous announcements and determine whether your organization's mission and vision align with the intent of the federal grant program. You can start preliminary planning before an announcement is made. Most federal grant awards are "on the street" for 60 days, sometimes less, and you should be ready to start writing the grant application once it is available, versus planning who your partners are and how you will fulfill the grant requirements.

## 2. Register at Grants.gov

In order to apply for a federal grant, your organization should complete the Grants.gov registration process. You can register your organization at any time. It is a good practice to register your organization if you are considering applying for federal funding in general. Your registration does not need to be tied to a specific grant announcement. Registration can take between three to five business days or as long as two weeks if all steps are not completed in a timely manner. Please go to **www.grants.gov** and click on "Get Registered."

## 3. Partner with other agencies and organizations in your community!

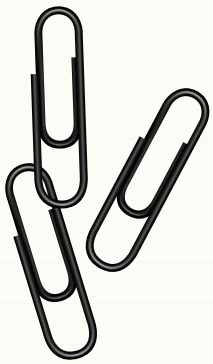
If you haven't done so already, talk to agencies in your community that would be a logical fit with your organization and/or provide a service that will assist your organization and your intended service recipients. By working together, you and your partners will be able to support and strengthen each other's work and the services you each provide to your community.

### 4. Be on the lookout for announcements about pre-award conferences, webinars or other training and technical assistance offered to those interested in applying for a specific grant

Sign up for emails that the Partnership Center, the program office and the Training and Technical Assistance provider provides, including other entities as appropriate, to find out if and when they offer these valuable tools. Please be aware that not every agency and program provides this service for their grants.

### 5. When your grant application has been published, please note the deadline

You must ensure that your grant application is submitted before the deadline or else it will not be reviewed and eligible for funding.



## 6. When the grant application has been published:

1. Download a Grant Application Package. This allows you to complete it offline and route it through your organization for review before submitting. Each grant/funding opportunity will have its own grant application package so if you are applying for more than one grant, be sure to download all appropriate packages.
    a. Make sure your Adobe software is compatible with Grants.gov. Go to **www.grants.gov/applicants/AdobeVersioningTestOnly.jsp** to test your version for compliance.
    b. Instructions on how to open and use the forms in the package are on the application package cover sheet. Agency specific instructions are available for download when you download your application package, which will include required information for your submission.
2. Complete the grant application offline and be sure to save along the way. All required fields must be completed before your application package can be submitted.
3. Submit your grant application. After you have entered all the necessary information, checked the package for errors and saved your package, click the "Save & Submit" button on the cover page. Your application package will automatically be uploaded to **www.Grants.gov**.

A confirmation screen will appear once the submission is complete. A Grants.gov tracking number will be provided at the bottom of this screen, as well as the official date and time of the submission. Record the tracking number so that you may refer to it should you need to contact **www.Grants.gov** for support.

If you do not get a grant please do not get discouraged. Many organizations apply and there is a finite amount of money available. If you do not receive your reviewer comments, please contact the person listed in the grant application package to request the comments. Review them and be sure to take the comments into consideration the next time you apply for a federal grant.

**For additional details on how to apply for a grant go to www.Grants.gov and click on "Apply for Grants."**

## Hints and tips to keep in mind as you write your grant application:

- Avoid acronyms and jargon. Your grant is likely to be reviewed by peer reviewers and they may not be aware of the acronym in your organization or community.
- Make your grant compelling and easy to read. Place all the information in a logical order and follow the format prescribed in the announcement. You do not want people to have to search for the information.
- Use charts and lists when appropriate.
- Avoid assumptions and generalizations. The people reviewing your application do not know what you know so be sure to be clear and explain as appropriate.
- Follow the grant application directions. If something is asked for numerous times, provide it numerous times by referencing the location of the item within the narrative.
- Be sure to note the page limit, formatting requirements (such as font size and type, spacing, etc.) and other required information and forms. Failure to include required information or follow the page limits and formatting requirements may cause your grant to not be read in its entirety, which means you lose points. Awarding a grant is competitive and you want as many points as possible.

# CAPACITY BUILDING

President Obama has emphasized the important role that nonprofit organizations play in our economy and our communities. We recognize that nonprofits, both faith-based and secular, are essential partners in the federal government's efforts to serve those in need. And with an all hands on deck approach to serving our communities, it is important for the government to come alongside and strengthen the work of organizations seeking to address community needs.

Here are several resources you can use right now to support and strengthen your nonprofit and your community. The resources and services are available free of charge to any organization interested in assistance. You do not need to be a funding recipient of that particular agency to access these tools and services.

## 1. Utilize Technical Assistance

Use technical assistance resources developed by the Housing and Urban Development Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships or attend an upcoming workshop.

Find resources and opportunities at **www.hud.gov/offices/fbci**.

HUD has a cadre of seasoned professionals that provide insight on the federal grants process and provide capacity building for emerging, intermediate, and advanced groups. Through the HUD Partnership Center's Capacity Building Workshop Series, faith-based and community organizations work to strengthen their effectiveness in the following areas:

- Organizational Development (Board Development, 501c3 tax status, etc.)
- Strategic Planning and Financial Management Basics
- Performance Measurements and Evaluation
- The Science of Finding and Applying for Grants

For more information go to **www.hud.gov/offices/fbci** and click on "Technical Assistance for My NonProfit Organization."

## 2. Connect with SAMHSA's Capacity Building Materials and Seminar:

Join with the efforts underway at the Department of Health and Human Services' Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Link with other nonprofits both, faith-based and secular, and strengthen your community's ability to support the recovery of individuals working to overcome substance abuse by visiting **www.samhsa.gov/fbci/fbci.aspx**.

## 3. Discover Resources or Events that Support Your Work in the Community

Search for a resource from the federal government that might be of use in your community through the Resource Center at the Corporation for National and Community Service at **www.nationalserviceresources.org**.

On that same site, search the calendar to find webinars and events that can help you serve vulnerable populations in your community.

# CONTACT INFORMATION

White House Office of Faith-Based
and Neighborhood Partnerships
Phone: (202) 456-3394
Email: whpartnerships@who.eop.gov
Website: **www.whitehouse.gov/partnerships**

## Agency Centers for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships

**Center at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)**
Phone: (202) 712-4080
Email: fbci@usaid.gov
Website: **www.usaid.gov/our_work/global_partnerships/fbci**

**Center at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)**
Phone: (202) 720-2032
Email: collaborate@usda.gov
Website: **www.usda.gov/partnerships**

**Center at the U.S. Department of Commerce**
Phone: (202) 482-2770
Email: FBNP@doc.gov
Website: **www.commerce.gov/office-secretary/center-faith-based-and-neighborhood-partnerships**

**Center at the U.S. Department of Education**
Phone: (202) 205-9655
Email: edparters@ed.gov
Website: **www.ed.gov/edpartners**

**Center at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)**
Phone: (202) 358-3595
Email: partnerships@hhs.gov
Website: **www.hhs.gov/partnerships**

**Center at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)**
Phone: (202) 646-3487
Email: infofbci@dhs.gov
Website: **www.dhs.gov/fbci**

**Center at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)**
Phone: (202) 708-2404
Email: Talk_to_us@hud.gov
Website: **www.hud.gov/offices/fbci**

**Center at the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ)**
Phone: (202) 305-7462
Email: **partnerships@ojp.usdoj.gov**

**Center at the U.S. Department of Labor**
Phone: (202) 693-6017
Email: CFBNP@dol.gov
Website: **www.dol.gov/cfbnp**

**Center at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)**
Phone: (202) 564-8368
Email: Partnerships@epa.gov
Website: **www.epa.gov/fbnpartnerships**

**Center at the Small Business Administration (SBA)**
Phone: (202) 205-6452
Email: partnerships@sba.gov
Website: **www.sba.gov/fbci**

**Center at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)**
Phone: (202) 461-7689
Email: vafbnp@va.gov
Website: **www.va.gov/cfbnpartnerships**

**Point of Contact at the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS)**
Phone: (202) 606-6743
Website: **www.nationalservice.gov/for_organizations/faith**

"Progress comes when we open our hearts, when we extend our hands, when we recognize our common humanity. Progress comes when we look into the eyes of another and see the face of God.

That we might do so ... is my fervent prayer for our nation and the world."

– President Obama,
National Prayer Breakfast
February 4, 2010

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