



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Alaska Ranks Number Five in Nation for Volunteering**

#### *Two Alaska Volunteer Programs Win Federal Funding*

(Anchorage, June 15, 2006) According to a study just released by the Corporation for National and Community Service in the first ever Volunteering in America: State Trends and Rankings, Alaska ranked number five in the nation for volunteering.

Governor Frank H. Murkowski said the report merely confirms what Alaskans already know. "Alaskans have big hearts and take care of each other," said Murkowski. "Our philanthropy and volunteer spirit is seen daily and it's just one of the many reasons Alaska is such a phenomenal place to live."

Volunteering in America: State Trends and Rankings utilized data collected over the past four years by the U.S. Census Bureau to look at both the national and regional levels, as well as state rankings on volunteering indicators such as volunteering rate and intensity, and volunteering among seniors and students.

#### Volunteering in America: Alaska Trends & Highlights:

- The number of volunteers in Alaska increased from 163,000 in 2002 to 183,400 in 2005.
- The rate of volunteering from 2003 to 2005 in Alaska (38.9%) was higher than the 3-year rate for the West overall (29.0%) and the nation (28.8%).
- A greater percentage of persons aged 25 to 34 years volunteered in Alaska (42.6%) than in the West (26.2%) and the nation (25.8%).
- Alaska was one of the top states in the nation for volunteering rates among young adults.

According to the report, the typical volunteer in Alaska is a white female, age 43 who volunteers an average of 50 hours for educational or youth services engaged in general labor and supplying transportation for people.

The report states that residents of Alaska on average each year contribute 25,027,339 hours of volunteer service totaling \$451,493,201 of service to the State.

Elsa Sargento Executive Director for the Alaska State Community Service Commission said Alaska should see more volunteerism in the near future with two of Alaska's AmeriCorps applicants recently named recipients of a three-year AmeriCorps Competitive federal award.

"Out of 278 applications from all 50 states and the District of Columbia, only 90 grants were awarded and represent 37 states as well as one program in the District of Columbia," said Sargento. "For Alaska to receive two of these grants is an honor and speaks to the types of programs and volunteers we have."

Award recipients:

- Southeast Alaska Guidance Association (SAGA) was awarded \$1,304,100 to support 120 member slots over three years.
- RurAL CAP's BIRCH program (Building Initiatives in Rural Community Healthcare) was awarded \$719,844 to support 45 full-time members over three years.

Additionally, two existing AmeriCorps programs have received a third year of funding. Together, Nine Star's Alaska Literacy and RurAL CAP's RAVEN (Rural Alaska Village Environmental Youth Network and Youth Development) programs were awarded \$833,544 to support 60 members for the 2006-2007 program year.

Since 1994, the Alaska State Community Service Commission has been increasing volunteerism and community service in Alaska. One of the Commission's primary functions is to oversee grants provided to local non-profit and community agencies to run national service programs like AmeriCorps and Learn and Serve America.

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