

social capital has declined. That is why it is so important to embrace the American tradition of service and invest in our communities nationwide," said Rep. Matsui.

"We can address the challenges that face American families, from illiteracy to disaster recovery, when we all have a shared interest in investing in each other."

"Americorps members provide us with a wonderful example of how civic engagement can build up our country, and serve as an inspiration to us all. We must make investments now to ensure a better America for the future.

The dedication and leadership of Americorps members will help us achieve that vision," said Rep. Matsui.

Americorps Week includes hundreds of service projects and recruitment events, the release of a major and rigorous longitudinal study of the impact of AmeriCorps service eight years later; the announcement of new recipients of AmeriCorps competitive funding, and participation of Federal, state and local officials as well as nonprofit leaders. Citizens can find local opportunities and events at www.americorpsweek.gov

In the past 15 years, more than 540,000 men and women have taken AmeriCorps's pledge to "get things done for America," providing more than 705 million hours of service, mobilizing tens of millions of volunteers, and improving the lives of countless citizens.

“In our great country, we have a long-established tradition of service and volunteerism. When we have been confronted with some of our gravest challenges, the true spirit of the American people comes out: we dig in our heels, face tough tasks head-on, and extend a helping hand to our neighbors.

I commend the Americorps members nationwide who are working everyday to keep people safe, secure, and on the path for continued success,” said Rep. Matsui.

One of five Americorps National Civilian Conservation Corps (NCCC) campuses resides in Sacramento. The NCCC was integral in the recovery efforts in the wake of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. When not deployed, the Sacramento NCCC takes an active role in the Sacramento region, addressing critical needs in public safety, education, and the environment.

AmeriCorps was established in 1993 as a way for Americans to give back to their communities and country and earn money for college in return. President Bush embraced AmeriCorps and expanded the program by 50 percent to support 75,000 AmeriCorps positions annually. Today AmeriCorps enjoys widespread bipartisan support in Congress and among the nation's Governors, and all three presidential candidates have embraced national service and have proposals to strengthen and expand it.

AmeriCorps members serve with more than 4,100 groups each year, helping organizations like Habitat for Humanity, Boys & Girls Clubs, the American Red Cross and numerous other nonprofit and faith-based groups expand their reach and better meet their mission. AmeriCorps

members recruit volunteers, expand services, build capacity, develop new partnerships, and create innovative and sustainable programs. Last year AmeriCorps members mobilized or managed 1.7 million volunteers for the organizations they serve.

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