



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Pritzker Administration Celebrates National Service Opening Day**

***14,700 National Service Members Honored***

**SPRINGFIELD** – Governor JB Pritzker is declaring October 10, 2019 National Service Opening Day. Nearly 1,000 AmeriCorps members will pledge their continuing commitment to help their communities at the 25th Annual Illinois’ National Service Opening Day.

The day will begin with several service projects from 9 to 11am at Springfield School District’s 186 schools and the Old State Capitol. All attendees will gather at the Bank of Springfield (BOS) Convention Center at 11 a.m. Twenty-five AmeriCorps Alums will receive awards in celebration of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of AmeriCorps. There will also be several professional development sessions and the Central Illinois Blood Center will be on hand collecting donations.

Following the morning’s activities, there will be a parade to the Old State Capitol at 3 p.m. led by the Lanphier High School drum line. At the completion of the parade, the AmeriCorps members will take their pledge to “Get Things Done” for America. The morning events, parade, and swearing in ceremony are open to the media.

The national Director of AmeriCorps, Chester Spellman, will be on hand to lead the members in their pledge. “For more than two decades, Americans who want to serve have been pledging to “get things done” as AmeriCorps members,” said Spellman. “As AmeriCorps marks its 25th anniversary, it’s an honor to watch a new generation speak those same words today in Illinois. Thanks to their dedication and sacrifice, I know our nation is in good hands.”

“Illinois’ AmeriCorps members and Senior Corps volunteers are working on the front lines to improve our communities,” said Scott McFarland, AmeriCorps Executive Director of Illinois. “They dedicate millions of hours a year at more than 1,600 locations throughout Illinois. These members and volunteers represent the best of us, and they serve as a beacon of hope for the country.”

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*Improving Illinois communities by enhancing volunteerism and instilling an ethic of service throughout the State.*





Senior Corps members use their lifetime of experience to support communities through the RSVP, Foster Grandparents, and Senior Companions programs. These 55-years and older volunteers serve as mentors, coaches, and companions to people in need. There are more than 12,400 Illinois seniors serving.

The Serve Illinois Commission is a 40 member (24 voting and 16 non-voting), bi-partisan board appointed by the Governor and administered by the Illinois Department of Public Health. Its mission is to improve Illinois communities by enhancing volunteerism and instilling an ethic of service throughout the state. The Commission accomplishes this mission through the support of local community-based efforts to enhance volunteer opportunities and the administration of Illinois' AmeriCorps program. For more information on Serve Illinois, or to find a place to volunteer, please visit [www.Serve.Illinois.gov](http://www.Serve.Illinois.gov).

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