



News Release

For Immediate Release

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Volunteer Center of Southern Arizona Forced to Furlough Staff and Reduce Hours

On the heels of President Obama's "Call to Community Action", the very agency Tucson and all of Southern Arizona depend(s) on to recruit, train, organize and mobilize armies of volunteers is facing its own crisis.

The Volunteer Center of Southern Arizona announced today that it will require all nine full-time employees to take unpaid leave one day a week beginning March 1, 2009; in addition the agency will be closed on Friday's through the end of this fiscal year. Further cuts will be necessary if additional funding is not secured to address the deficit.

"I deeply regret the impact that this action will have on our employees and fear the failure to secure desperately needed funding will have on our ability to provide services to the community. The agency faces an end of year budget deficit of over \$150,000. Unfortunately, without a minimum of \$100,000 in additional revenue over the next 30 days, we will be unable to meet our current expenses and payroll and will have to take the next step which will be laying off employees and further reducing services." Said Michele C. Schubert, President & CEO.

How can you help? We need the financial support from you, our community. Donations can be accepted in any of the following ways: Call 881-3300, donate on line at www.volunteersoaz.org, or by mail at 924 N. Alvernon Way, Tucson 85711

The Volunteer Center of Southern Arizona is the only organization offering these services and programs in the state. If the Volunteer Center is without the capacity to assist our community members in answering this call to action, who will? The deficit the Center currently faces is a deficit our entire community bears; failure to meet this challenge will result in drastic and immediate effects in our already vulnerable community. Whether it is supporting food banks, engaging Baby Boomers in meaningful volunteer activities, implementing nationally recognized youth leadership and service learning programs, piloting best practices regarding juvenile delinquency prevention, tutoring children, convening mentoring forums, capacity building through training, or managing volunteers in a disaster, the Volunteer Center has set the standard locally, regionally and nationally.

"We do not take this action lightly," said Board Chair, Kirk Collamer. "Although our employee service hours will be reduced, our National Service member's hours will not, allowing us to continue our work with all our stakeholders and will do our best to ensure that the impact on our partner agencies and the youth and adults we serve will be minimized," Collamer said.

The Volunteer Center of Southern Arizona has quietly carried out this vital work for the last 44 years, impacting over 1.3 million people, to support the programs and services operated not only by the Volunteer Center, but those provided through the Tucson Community Food Bank, United Way, Make Way for Books, and countless area schools to name a few. The Volunteer Center is a shining example of cost-effective service delivery, consistently providing unprecedented quality and quantity of services on a shoe string budget. For this reason, the Volunteer Center is unable to trim the organization's budget without the community suffering immediate consequences. This is particularly significant given our current economic times; when communities, non profits, local government and families are growing ever-more reliant on the services and assistance of volunteers to survive.

In 2008, the Volunteer Center provided and/or assisted in supplying 12,000 volunteer hours within Pima County. Independent Sector estimates the value of their service to the community of \$234,000. The Center supports the mission of hundreds of nonprofit and governmental organizations by recruiting and placing volunteers and National Service members for agencies throughout Southern Arizona. Leveraging the power of volunteerism effectively extends the reach of these organizations and in many cases agencies cannot fulfill their mission without volunteers. Nearly 100 Volunteer Center National Service members serve in local nonprofits and inject over \$622,000 of Federal dollars into the Tucson economy each year, The Center recruited 2,934 adult volunteers to support the United Way Days of Caring in 2008 providing much needed help to 83 nonprofit agencies.