



Federal Initiatives Take Shape

Written by Ken Larsen, Public Policy Director

While many California nonprofits face massive cutbacks due to the state's huge budget deficit, developments on the federal front are more hopeful and promising. Here are a few of the latest developments, following up on reports in the May/June 2009 CAN Alert:

Serve America Act (www.nationalservice.gov)

Social Innovation Fund

The Corporation for National and Community Service — the federal agency slated to manage this \$50 million fund — will issue a “notice of funding opportunity” this fall. If Congress approves the budget, applications will be due this winter, with funds awarded next spring. The purpose is to help nonprofits expand innovative social projects or start promising new ones. Emphasis will be placed on results and matching fund requirements. Funds will pass through established grant makers and/or partnerships between a grant maker and a state or local agency. Grants will be at least \$100,000 a year for three to five years.

Volunteer Generation Fund

Also under consideration by Congress is a \$10 million appropriation to help nonprofits recruit, manage, or train volunteers. Grantees must submit annual reports on the size and performance of their volunteer programs to the Corporation for National and Community Service, which will distribute the funds. No details have yet been announced about timing of awards if funding does become available.

Nonprofit Capacity Building Program

This public-private matching grant program (the limited federal dollars would be matched dollar-for-dollar by other sources) will help small and midsize nonprofits access nonprofit capacity building services, starting with the \$5 million that Congress previously reserved as part of the FY2010 budget of the Corporation for National & Community Service.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA, commonly known as the stimulus package)

[Americorps](http://www.californiavolunteers.org/index.php/AmeriCorps/detail) (www.californiavolunteers.org/index.php/AmeriCorps/detail)

CaliforniaVolunteers, the nation's first cabinet-level state agency for volunteering and service, has been awarded \$9.3 million to be dispersed to 10 organizations, including regional and statewide programs such as Volunteers in Service to the Environment and Child Welfare System Improvement.

[California Green Job Corps](http://www.californiavolunteers.org/index.php/GreenJobsCorps/) (www.californiavolunteers.org/index.php/GreenJobsCorps/)

Eleven California Green Job Corps pilot programs throughout the state will receive Recovery Act funding to be matched with more than \$10 million in local resources to provide job training and community service opportunities for 1,500 at-risk young adults aged 16-24.

[Workforce Investment Board](http://www.cwib.ca.gov) (www.cwib.ca.gov)

"California's Strategic Plan 2009 and California's Strategic Vision for Implementation of Employment and Training Provisions of the ARRA" includes numerous references to California's workforce investment system working "more effectively with faith-based and community-based organizations." Toward that end, on July 1 three grants utilizing CBOs were awarded under the "Governor's Gang

Reduction, Intervention and Prevention (CalGRIP) Initiative 2008/09 – American Recovery and Reinvestment Act – Workforce Investment Act."

2009 National Conference on Volunteering and Service (www.nationalservice.gov)

First Lady Michelle Obama joined First Lady Maria Shriver in June at Bret Harte Elementary School in South San Francisco for a CaliforniaVolunteers-sponsored playground service project to kick off the 2009 National Conference on Volunteering and Service. The world's largest gathering of volunteer and service leaders from the nonprofit, government and corporate sectors, the three-day conference drew almost 5,000 people to San Francisco. Visit www.CaliforniaVolunteers.org to view a Conference video.