

VOLUNTEERS wanted

Make A Difference, Be A Leader: Volunteer

(NAPSA)—There's a new message for people age 55 and over: Be a volunteer, and ask a friend to join you.

This call to service is from Senior Corps of the Corporation for National and Community Service, which has launched a campaign to recruit 100,000 volunteers to support and strengthen their communities.

The campaign is called "Ask a Friend, Share Your Volunteer Spirit." The goal is two-fold: to encourage non-volunteers to begin serving their community and to encourage current volunteers to get a friend involved. The primary reason people volunteer is simply because they are asked, and Senior Corps is asking.

"People age 55 and over have much to offer through their work and personal life experiences. We are asking them to put their valuable skills and experiences to good use to help tackle some of the serious social problems in our communities," said Tess Scannell, director of Senior Corps. Scannell states that the initiative is in response to a challenge from President Bush in his Call to Service message to all Americans.

Volunteering is also good for the individuals who participate. Research studies have documented the physical and emotional benefits of helping others, which include increased life expectancy, well-being and life satisfaction. Volunteering allows people to develop new skills and attain valuable employment experience.

To begin volunteering or to ask a friend to volunteer please visit the campaign Web site at



A new campaign is encouraging people 55 and over to volunteer their time—and to bring a friend. Call 1-800-474-8867 or visit us at www.volunteerfriends.org for more information.

www.volunteerfriends.org. The Web site allows individuals to enter their zip codes and interests to "match" volunteer opportunities with their lifestyles. It also provides helpful resources for getting friends engaged in their communities and Spanish speaking citizens are offered campaign information *en español*. And, there is a link to increase the size of the text, for those who need it. Individuals without Web access can call a toll-free number (1-800-424-8867; TTY 800-833-3722) to get information about the campaign or sign-up to volunteer.

Currently, more than half a million Senior Corps volunteers are engaged in activities such as tutoring and mentoring children with special needs, working with local police and fire departments to keep neighborhoods safe, helping homebound individuals remain independent in their own homes, and building houses for the homeless. They serve in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.