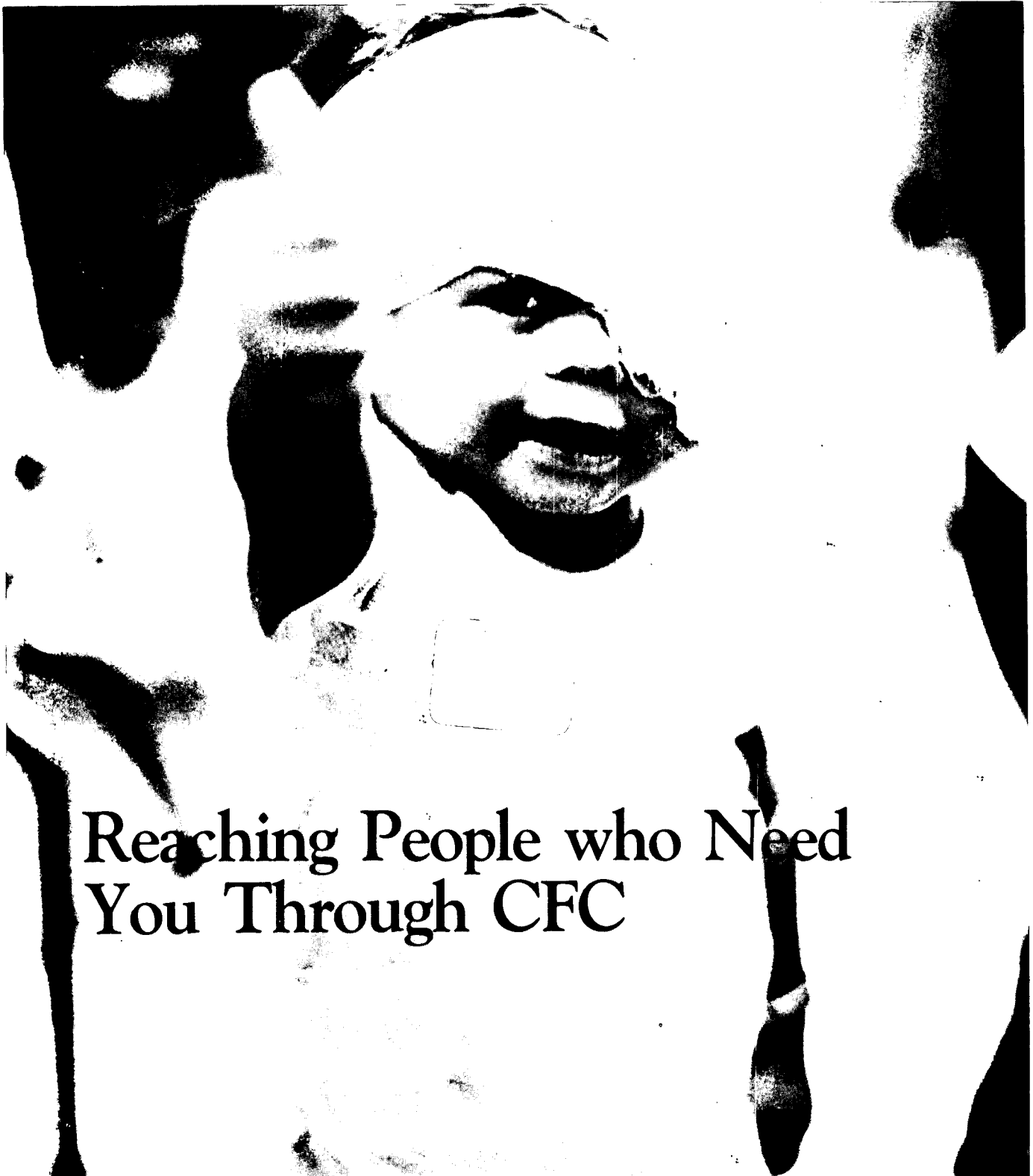


ACTION

October 15, 1980

update...



**Reaching People who Need
You Through CFC**

ACTION/PC Drive October 20–November 14

How much money does it take to provide daily comprehensive residential care for abused infants and children, or two home visits by a professional visiting nurse? Only \$2.75 per pay period. And \$6.00 out of each one of your paychecks would cover the cost of 15 clinical visits for medical services to the ailing indigent in rural poverty-stricken areas.

There are few bargains left in these days of runaway inflation, but contributing to the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) through payroll deductions gets you a double bonus. Certainly the price is right, and the satisfaction of helping others incalculable.

The theme of the 1981 campaign is "Reaching People Who Need You" and this will be done through 212 voluntary organizations—20 more than last year—in the greater metropolitan area. Agencies include health organizations, refugee organizations, international service agencies, organizations for the physically and mentally handicapped, day care centers, counselling services and many more that answer a variety of human needs.

ACTION/PC's October 20th kick-off will begin a month-long drive to meet the agency's 1981 goal of \$30,000 from headquarter's donations, and 33

keyworkers will be contacting employees in both the Maiatico and Paramount buildings. (The list of keyworkers appears at the end of this article).

ACTION Director Sam Brown and Peace Corps Director Richard Celeste recently issued a joint statement urging all headquarter's employees to once again support the CFC drive. "This campaign means very much to the millions of people who are touched by the services of the 212 voluntary agencies," they said. "For people in need, there is often no place else to turn. Your contribution makes possible a continuous effort, a year-round devotion to meeting human needs..."

Last year, ACTION/PC contributed over \$26,000 to CFC's total pledges of \$11.7 million and this year, employees will be responding to the campaign's goal of \$12.9 million.

Between October 20 and November 14, there will be a series of four brown bag luncheons where representatives from the participating agencies will talk to staff about their organizations, the work they do and the recipients of their services.

"I believe that many employees will be struck by the similarity of the work these voluntary organizations do and the work that we do here at ACTION and Peace Corps" says Jim Duke, direc-

Sam Brown and Richard Celeste sign their CFC pledge cards.



tor of the Office of Recruitment and Communications, and head of this agency's CFC drive. "In many ways, this contribution is an extension of the commitment all of us who work here have to helping people."

Celeste also stresses this dual commitment, recognizing that "those of us who work in volunteer and service agencies are keenly aware of the needs met by the CFC. And I hope you'll be generous in your support of these important programs."

Duke explains that employees have the option of selecting a particular organization to receive their pledges. "There is a space on the pledge card for those who want to specify where their contributions should go—for others, the money will go directly to the CFC to be distributed at their discretion."

"Personally, this choice is an aspect I like," says Sam Brown. "This way, our money can go directly to programs that are of special concern to us as individuals."

The ACTION Employees Union has also given a strong endorsement to the CFC... "We are eager to assist in the Combined Federal Campaign. We believe that through active participation we can help strengthen our communities."

Sam Brown says, "Participation, giving, need—these are all words we hear daily—and through CFC we have an additional and valuable opportunity to make these words a reality, an opportunity to reach out and give."

CFC KEYWORKERS

Linda Pettaway, ORC	47080	Laurie Sand, D.	47607
Don Garner, C/PA	49814	Naty Beetle, D.O.	47606
Jim Bland, RC/M	43867	Barbara Pierce, OPP	48523
		Larry Beck, OPP	47983
Maxine Gerald, PM	48050	Carol Wagner, PC/A&F	49696
Jean Smith, PM	46340	Sarah Smith, PC/A&F	47004
Fred Smith, AC	43570	Yvonne Austin, PC/LA	49676
Emily Towels, AC	43148	Gene Twitty, PC/LA	48794
Connie Angotti, AC	47570	Laura Monaco, PC/OVP	26590
Isetta Browning, AS	48941	Dee August, PC/OVP	45230
Bob Miller, AS	46870	Melaine Taylor, PC/OSS	47280
Bedelia Golding, CS	47412	Karen Harrison, PC/OPTC	48890
Evelyn Jackson, CG	43513	Aarlen Hunt, Pers	46950
Juanita Morris, HS	632-8795	John Guerre, PC/ORM	46896
		Arlene Thomas, PC/B	47960
Bryan Anderson, OVCP	48079	Michele Kennedy, PC/E	47983
Peter Bender, OVCP	48867	Barbara Griffith, PC/D	47970
Lynn Miller, OVCP	48406		

"OLD PEACE CORPS HANDS"

—We Need You—

As part of the Peace Corps' 20th anniversary activities, we will periodically publish comments of current ACTION/PC staffers who were with Peace Corps prior to 1971—either as volunteers or employees. We believe our readers will be interested in their views on Peace Corps—then and now and the changes that have taken place in its philosophy, its volunteers and its programs. We need your help in identifying these people. If you fit the description or know someone who does, please contact Judy Kusheloff or Patita McEvoy at the ACTION Update office - FTS 254-7595. Note: this request is not only for headquarters' employees, we are definitely interested in hearing from the field!

Continuing Resolution Funds ACTION/PC Until December

On October 1—some 14 hours after the end of fiscal year 80—the Congress passed a continuing resolution through December 15. This means that ACTION, along with all of the other programs under the Labor/HEW bill, as well as most of the federal government, can continue to spend at current budget levels. Or, they can spend at the level contained in the House version of the 1981 Labor/HEW bill, whichever is lower.

On December 15, Congress will either have to pass an appropriation for FY 81 or extend the continuing resolution into the next calendar year.

While waiting for the next congressional move, ACTION will be held to its FY 80 spending level of \$145.5 million. Peace Corps operated under a continuing resolution throughout FY 80, and was tied to its FY 79 budget. The new continuing resolution, however, allows PC to operate at the funding level agreed upon by the House and Senate conference committee during their FY 80 budget deliberations, on the foreign aid appropriations bill. That is \$105 million, \$5 million more than last fiscal year...PC moneys are contained in the Foreign Assistance Act which did not receive final congressional approval in FY 80.

In March, the President sent to Congress his revised proposal for ACTION and Peace Corps' FY 81 budget. The total request was for \$284 million, versus last year's funding of \$245 million. On August 27, the House voted a lower figure on ACTION's budget, but the Senate appropriations process was not begun before the end of the fiscal year. Neither house took final action on the Peace Corps proposal.

The President's request, and the House recommendations broke down as follows:

Peace Corps - The President's submission was for \$114.7 million, but the House Appropriation Committee recommended \$118.8 million.

The proposed increases for the current fiscal year are slated to fund more trainee entries, volunteer years and multi-lateral programs, enhancement of recruitment activities through a recently modified delivery system; the purchase of new PC vehicles overseas and a budget for the 20th anniversary activities.

Domestic Operations - The total D.O. budget request for this fiscal year was \$169.2 million, and the House vote was for \$158 million. Included in the FY 80 D.O. budget of \$145.5

million, was a \$4 million supplemental voted by Congress on July 2. These moneys were allocated to VISTA, NCSL, OVCP, volunteer demonstrations and program support. However, under the continuing resolution all D.O. programs will operate at FY 80 levels.

VISTA - Although the request was for \$37.8 million, including \$298,000 for evaluations, the House approved \$33.8 million plus \$250,000 for evaluations— an increase of \$4 million over last year's \$29.8 million.

The higher budget submission primarily will be used to increase volunteer strength, provide for in-service training, and additional technical assistance to the field—including career development counseling for volunteers.

Service Learning Programs - Funding for these programs was submitted at \$4 million, but the House voted \$2.8 million—the same budget as in FY 80.

OAVP - A budget of \$85.9 million was proposed for the Older American Programs, which included an increase of \$2.6 million for SCP. The House not only agreed to the SCP request, but also recommended a \$1.5 million increase each for both RSVP and FGP.

The additional money for SCP—funded last year at \$10.2 million—is for 14 new projects and more volunteers, as well as the expansion of some existing projects.

RSVP's FY 80 budget was \$26.2 million and FGP's was \$46.9 million. Although the request for FY 81 was submitted at the same level, the additional funds mentioned above were voted by the House.

Citizen Participation and Volunteer Demonstration Programs - A budget of \$11.9 million was submitted for these activities, but the House, citing a tight fiscal situation and what they felt were other priority programs in ACTION and Peace Corps, recommended only \$3.4 million—the FY 80 budget figure.

Program Support - The FY 81 proposed budget reached Congress at \$29.4 million—\$3.4 million more than last year. The House vote was for \$28.9 million. The additional FY 81 funds are earmarked for increased recruitment activities, as well as to cover rising administrative and operating costs.

Staff Spotlight:

Margaret Geffken



Margaret M. Geffken, ACTION state director for New Jersey, is a dynamo. Her capacity for work and her attention to detail are legend in Region II and in her state. It is matched by her concern for ACTION's programs and volunteers, and by her care in dealing with people and her respect for them.

It is understandable then, that Senator Harrison A. Williams of New Jersey insisted on swearing in Geffken as state director. He wanted to do this personally because of her background with ACTION's Older American Programs. (Williams chairs the Senate Committee on Human Resources which has jurisdiction for many ACTION programs, and he is personally committed to projects for the elderly throughout the nation).

Geffken came to the agency through a very natural route. In 1966, she was the director of the Staten Island (N.Y.) Senior Center at the time Project SERVE, the prototype for RSVP, was inaugurated.

Geffken holds an M.S. degree from the University of North Carolina in administration and gerontology with particular emphasis on social services. She was one of 32 persons nationwide to participate in HEW's career training program supported by funds from the Administration on Aging under Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965.

Her first job with ACTION was as Region II's Older American Programs coordinator. As such, she was instrumental in developing many of the RSVP and SCP programs in the region. She worked closely with the State Offices for Aging in developing program criteria and volunteer activities in education, consumer rights, legal assistance, advocacy, health and community planning. She is a knowledgeable and tireless advocate for the aging.

When the coordinator positions were folded into the state office systems, Geffken became a program officer for the Metropolitan New York City

office, and expanded her responsibilities to include VISTA, UYA and ACTION's demonstration programs.

In 1977, the Girl Scouts of America chose her as an official role model for her work with volunteers as a coordinator, administrator and program officer.

As the New Jersey state director, she manages and dispenses a federal budget in excess of \$2 million in grant money throughout the

state. That money is matched by local and community funds in excess of \$750,000.

After more than two years as state director, Geffken proudly points to the diversity in programming. She recently swore in a new group of six handicapped VISTA volunteers assigned to the Bergen County Office of the Handicapped. Geffken says, "The volunteers are bright-eyed and ready to go to work. They have extremely positive attitudes and lots of enthusiasm. Their jobs aren't going to be easy because they've got to pave the way for others. They will mobilize resources, catalogue and inspect buildings for barriers to the handicapped, and operate a job finding and referral service."

Another new project is a refugee program in Hudson and Union counties in which eight to 10 locally recruited VISTAs respond to the needs of refugee resettlement and serve Cuban, Haitian and Vietnamese refugees. Their problems are compounded by lack of the legal designation "refugee." Most of the new arrivals are "immigrants or legal aliens" thus not eligible for the refugee funds that have helped to settle people in other parts of the country. Says Geffken, "ACTION, the smallest agency in the government, is responding (to their needs) while other, larger agencies can't respond as quickly. Some agencies won't be able to start up until March or April of 1981. That's much too late for the people arriving right now with a cold winter ahead of us."



The War on Poverty:

Jane Marx, a VISTA volunteer with the New Mexico Solar Energy Association (NMSEA) in Santa Fe, New Mexico was one of more than 500 VISTAs who came to Washington, D.C., for the National Conference on Poverty last June 13-15. The Conference marked the culmination of VISTA's six-month long 15th anniversary campaign to increase public awareness of the program. Following her trip to Washington and her participation in the Conference, Marx wrote a story for the August issue of the NMSEA Sun Paper Bulletin, about her thoughts and impressions on the meeting. Below we present excerpts from her article. (Editor's note: Indented portions of the story are quotes from Si Kahn, long-time anti-poverty activist, songwriter and poet, and one of many Conference speakers.)

Begrudgingly I answered the phone yet another time. Most of the staff was away at the International Solar Energy Association conference. The call was for a VISTA volunteer, so I fit the description. Would I be willing to go to Washington, D.C. next week on VISTA's 15th anniversary, for the National Conference on Poverty? Expenses covered? Yes, I might – in fact I'd be quite excited at the opportunity. Arrangements being made very much at the last minute left little time to have any expectations. Curiosity marked my mood; how could one justify spending so much money to fly VISTAs from around the country to a conference on poverty – a fundamental contradiction? Yes, but no.

Four VISTA volunteers from New Mexico attended the conference. Lita Rivera, finishing her VISTA term at the NMSEA, was a resource person for one of the energy workshops. Nearly a thousand people, including the volunteers, participated in the conference held June 13-15. The three days were organized so that individual subjects became the focus of attention through workshops—they ranged from domestic violence to rural economic development to youth to cooperatives to energy. With each subject two workshops were held -- an "issues discussion" followed later by a dialogue about "strategies." First naming the questions and problems, then ways to deal with them -- with an eye toward the 80s. There were other general issues such as community organizing or coalition building. "Skill workshops" were offered on such topics as grassroots fundraising or the media. Rep. Barbara Mikulski and Andrew Young were among those who spoke at the conference. There was also a reception on the White House lawn and an a-

wards celebration at the Kennedy Center -- endless activities.

Are We Losing?

by Jane Marx

The fundamental issue was poverty. For the first time in the fifteen years of VISTA's existence, volunteers came together and shared their various experiences and perceptions. It was an attempt to see clearly where we are in this country, 15 years after declaring the "War on Poverty." Where are we? The answer, as any VISTA knows, is that we are not winning -- that we are not very far along yet in the struggle to eliminate poverty from this land. So conversations worked to understand how poverty manifests, what are the root forces that perpetuate it, and what is the way out. Although the subjects that were discussed varied, the conversations inevitably came back to the question of economics -- both analysis of the present system and strategies for the necessary changes.

I attended the workshops on racism and energy. The racism workshops were filled with emotion and frustration. Fifteen years have shown little change. Black college graduates have a higher unemployment rate than white high school graduates. Average income for "minorities" is 60 percent of average income for white people. Red-lining is still a fact of life in urban communities; strip-mining of native people's land continues.

- We have not eliminated poverty when the cost of energy is beyond the means of most families.
- When the choice between "heating and eating" is a real one.
- When the choices we make are not between luxuries and necessities but between one necessity and another.

(cont. page 8)

(from page 7)

- When for millions of Americans the necessities of life have in fact become luxuries.

This year, low income households will spend 40-57 percent of their annual incomes to heat with oil. 18-24 percent of annual incomes will go toward heating homes with natural gas. As devastating as this information alone is, remember that heating is not spread out over a twelve-month period. The cost during the winter months is actually twice the above figures. The choice between food and heat is no choice; it is a disgrace.

So where do we go? Awareness is the first step — the simple recognition that one-fifth of America's population is at or below the poverty level. It is necessary to see clearly where both the government and the corporations have institutionalized this economic structure. And then the question: what can be done? The shared sense among the VISTAs there was that real change is the goal, not a cosmetic cover. Thus, welfare-type programs were looked at with a discriminatory eye. They presently serve a purpose in meeting the urgent needs of individuals but they do nothing to truly help create self-reliance. It is this re-possessing of control and independence which is the ultimate goal.

Much of the discussion in the energy workshops focused on going past the cosmetic cover-ups such as the Utility Assistance Bill which supplied 1.6 billion dollars to help people pay their utility bills. Consider if that money were redirected toward weatherization, making people's homes energy efficient, so they wouldn't have to rely on emergency funds to make their heating payments.

Individuals involved in energy projects around the country described their varied experiences. The process that seems to make for successful projects was discussed: the Fitchburg, Massachusetts low-cost/no-cost weatherization project being cited as a success due to its community based organizational approach. That model is now being applied to a number of other communities around the country.

Low-cost, low technology solar energy implementation was viewed as a necessity, not a luxury — a sense that in the long run, people's survival depends on the form of energy utilized. In the short run, with energy costs rising way beyond the budget of many Americans, the need is urgent to reduce dependence on the utilities.

With the nightmare-like poverty statistics came a recognition that the time is here to create an economic system that meets the needs of people. That it is necessary to understand into whose hands the money goes, and to bring it back home to the community by building an economic base that is self-sufficient and self-sustaining. It's the old idea



of using local resources to meet local needs. Whether it be wood heating co-ops in Maine, solar retrofitting co-ops in New Mexico or the Small Farm Energy Project in Nebraska: the real goal is to take power back into one's own hands, to create an economics of human scale, which is committed to people before profits.

The conference educated us about each other's efforts. An important support system, and network grew out of that sharing, and even though the individual experiences differed, lessons learned in one project are often very relevant to others. It is important to feel this unity, because another thing the conference showed us was the vastness of the changes that are needed.

- People are also poor in 1980 because the national commitment made in 1965 to eliminate poverty only asked the poor to change and did not demand that the institutions which cause poverty change as well.

Fifteen years after the War on Poverty began, the battlefield is more clearly defined: work is called for on many levels. Each group needs to confront the issues affecting them, with the understanding that they all fit into the greater vision.

- Each skill we teach increases our mutual resources. Each group we build broadens the base of the struggle.

Because we are not affected by just one issue, we need to work together. Beginning at home in our communities, actively organizing to create the alternatives, and carefully forming a network, a coalition that grows in power as it grows in number.

The Conference on Poverty was a powerful event. It brought us all a clearer view of the reality of poverty in America and of the ways that change is being wrought. It brought me to the understanding that, indeed, there may be sides to this War on Poverty where issues need to be forced. With this understanding comes a choice about where your alliances are:

- For each of us there is a turning point; there is a moment in which we recognize our own commitment to the struggle for change.

ACTION is spearheading a renewed effort to develop stronger relationships between the private voluntary sector and the federal government as mandated by an executive order, said Sam Brown, director of ACTION.

That order, which established Peace Corps' autonomy within ACTION, also continued the designation of ACTION as the principal government agency for administering volunteer services and directed the head of the agency to "undertake a series of activities to encourage and stimulate more widespread and effective volunteer action for solving public and domestic problems."

The first meeting was held September 29-30, 1980 in Washington, D.C., where participants shared ideas on the value of expanded citizen involvement, and representatives of the private sector discussed their views on the proper role of the federal government in the work of voluntary organizations.

Brown opened that meeting by stressing the fact that ACTION's present course reflects "a nationwide rededication to community-based programming and a move away from the federal bureaucracy."

A successful example of this programming,

ACTION Spearheading Drive Private Volunteer Sector/Federal Government Seek Closer Ties

In August 1980, a steering committee was formed, made up of nine representatives of private volunteer organizations and six ACTION members, to implement the President's mandate. The committee, chaired by Sam Brown, will:

- gather data on resources of the federal and non-federal sectors to strengthen citizen involvement;
- develop broad policy guidelines to direct federal efforts in support of non-federal volunteering; and
- formulate specific policy recommendations to guide the development and implementation of activities by ACTION in carrying out the President's order.

Brown said, is the Community Energy Project (CEP), the self-help programs initiated in 18 U.S. communities by ACTION with a Department of Energy grant.

"These community efforts," Brown said "met energy saving needs that the federal government alone, could never have done. They showed what can be accomplished when the federal government and the community work together."

Pablo Eisenberg, president of the Center for Community Change in Washington, D.C. and a steering committee member, said that "national networks of community-based organizations are multiplying. There is a growing feeling in the 1980s that nothing can be done except through

(cont. page 10)

Mercedese Miller and Sam Brown.



(from page 9)

self-help.

"But although volunteer work has become vital to the accomplishment of community goals, the volunteers cannot do it alone," Eisenberg said. "They desperately need outside financing to survive and they need government advocacy to give legitimacy to their work. I see ACTION as the only federal agency to serve as a vehicle for bringing this about."

Eisenberg also discussed the need for a sharing of experiences between the U.S. and Third World cultures. "There must be a constant dialogue between our country and other countries," he said, "and a continual exchange of ideas."

Peace Corps Director Richard Celeste, also a committee member, continued that theme. "Peace Corps in the 1980s must respond to a collaborative effort on a global basis," he said. "Just as we have helped other countries attain greater self-reliance, so must we recognize that we can learn by

having volunteers from Third World countries work alongside us. We must realize that we have something to learn as well as to give," he said.

Senator David Durenburger (R-Minn) who last year proposed a bill authorizing a National Commission on Volunteerism, emphasized that "such a commission was necessary for a balanced and healthy partnership between government and non-profit organizations."

Future steering committee meetings will address the needs common to volunteer organizations and determine those groups in greatest need of federal support. ACTION's Office of Voluntary Citizen Participation (OVCP) will provide staff to the committee. "A lot of work is still needed to determine what the federal and the voluntary sector can do together," said Mercedese Miller, OVCP director and a committee member. "We hope to accomplish this over the next six months."



Senator Durenburger and steering committee member Raul Yzaquire.



Steering committee members (l. to r.) Judy Lund, Pablo Eisenberg and Laura Lee Geraghty.

Recruitment Office Opens in San Diego

Nearly 100 former volunteers and applicant hopefuls streamed through room 211 of San Diego's downtown post office on Sept. 8 to view South American artifacts, slide shows, films and assorted agency brochures aimed at raising public awareness among San Diegans of Peace Corps and VISTA projects. The occasion was an all-day open house, announcing the nation's newest full-time Peace Corps and VISTA recruiting office.

The event, according to former volunteer Dennis Ferguson who has been named to staff the new office, was meant to effect "an interchange between applicants and former volunteers." Ferguson, Peace Corps small business advisor in Ecuador until 1977, also sees the new office as a contact point for the more than 300 former volunteers in the area. Late in the afternoon, a group of some 60 ex-volunteers convened for a three hour-plus social event.

Technically, the San Deigo location is a sub-area office which is to be administered through Los Angeles as part of the San Francisco Service Center. However, the booming Southern California city of nearly 1-million is viewed by Ferguson as a promising competitor to its sprawling northern neighbor in generating Peace Corps and VISTA applicants. That optimism draws reinforcement from the 200 inquiries which have been fielded monthly over the past year by a local answering service. Those requests for information about the two programs turned the 33-year-old Ferguson into a virtual commuter between his Los Angeles post and San Diego. Now with the office a reality, Ferguson plans to step up his contact work at five college and university campuses as well as establishing his office in the community. Looking ahead, he is hopeful that a speakers bureau can be formed by ex-volunteers.

Already the subject of some media attention, the office's phones jingle and that's music to Ferguson. They herald, at the very least, an end to his bi-weekly commutes.

The San Diego office can be reached at FTS 895-6331.



Dennis Ferguson

personne

DEPUTY ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OFFICE OF COMPLIANCE

Bob Brooks has recently been named deputy assistant director for Compliance. In his new position, he monitors and guides the day-to-day operation of the Office of Compliance. Brooks came to ACTION with considerable experience in management, most recently with the Colorado State Department of Regulatory Agencies, serving as deputy director from 1976-79. He also was with the Department of Defense for 17 years, serving as a management analyst with the Air Force Accounting and Finance Center from 1958-64, and as the White House briefing officer under the Secretary of the Air Force from 1964-69.

Brooks has taught business administration at the college level in Washington, D.C. and Denver. Immediately before joining ACTION, he performed private consulting work in Denver and Washington, D.C. He has a BS in business administration from the University of Denver, and has performed graduate studies in financial management at George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

PLACEMENT MANAGER CHICAGO SERVICE CENTER

Marge Jeanchild has been named new placement manager of the Chicago Service Center. She manages and oversees selection and placement of VISTA and Peace Corps volunteers from Regions V and VI.

She comes to her new position with extensive VISTA and Peace Corps experience, as both a staff member and volunteer, serving as a VISTA volunteer in 1971 in Imboden, Ark., and as a PCV from 1977-79 in Montassa, Kenya. Jeanchild joined the PC staff as a recruiter in the New York Area Office in 1972, and served in that position until March 1975 when she became an evaluation and placement specialist in the New York Service Center. She reassumed that position after completing PC service and remained there until starting her new position in Chicago.

Jeanchild received a BA in special education in 1970 from Ohio State University in Columbus and taught speech and hearing therapy at the primary level in Ohio the following year.

ACTION UPDATE

Editor Patita McEvoy
Assistant Editor Judy Kusheloff
Editorial Assistant Eileen Gwynn
Graphics Designer William Johnson
