



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Remarks to the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National & Community Service at the Public Listening Session on May 20, 2009, Washington, DC

Thank you for the opportunity to address the board and this public meeting. I am Wendy Austin, Director of the Southside Virginia Nonprofit Resource Center group. We are a program of the Appomattox Regional Library System and serve the south of Richmond region. I am here to bring to your attention the important benefits of resource centers like ours that serve local small and mid-sized community-based organizations, in the delivery of impactful capacity building opportunities.

The mission of our Southside Virginia Nonprofit Resource Center is to build community capacity in a strategic deliberate way through developing and strengthening the nonprofit sector.

We provide collaborative networking and web-based services through cooperation with the social enterprise, ConnectNetwork.org. We also maintain and staff a specialty resource library of nonprofit management and funding resources and we offer training programs for those working and volunteering in the nonprofit sector.

The goals of our resource center are

1. To be the leading facilitator for nonprofit collaboration and to champion the concept of strong, well-governed, well-funded nonprofits that are better able to deliver services.
2. Develop integrated relevant services and programs that build nonprofit capacity
3. Increase utilization of our services through outreach and relevancy

We also advocate, along with the Virginia Network of Nonprofit Organizations (VANNO) to communicate the critical importance of nonprofits to our economy. VANNO, ConnectNetwork, The Community Foundation serving Richmond and Central Virginia and The Cameron Foundation commissioned a study that shows that in Virginia in 2005:

- Nonprofits are the second largest employer with 350,000 total workers: 211,000 paid and 139,000 FTE volunteer workers
- Provide \$31 billion in state revenues
- Generate \$461 billion in tax revenue

We suggest to the Corporation that the significant economic impact of nonprofits is an important measurement to consider for recognition of funds.

Additionally, we encourage the Corporation to fund organizations like the Southside Virginia Nonprofit Resource Center to enable successful implementation of the Nonprofit Capacity Building Program of the Serve America Act. Our center is ideally situated to provide training and technical assistance to small and mid-sized non-profits in regions of need like Southside Virginia.