

Record Type: Record

To: Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP
cc: Laura Emmett/WHO/EOP
Subject: Service-race link

Here's some interesting stuff, via John Gomperts of the Corporation for National Service.

- 1. Apparently Martin Luther King day was designated as a day of service under a 1994 law pushed by Harris Wofford when he was a Senator -- "a day on, not a day off." King was pro-service and made a famous service quote: "Everybody can be great because everyone can serve." So every year, the service world (there is one) organizes all kinds of service events on January 15. The Martin Luther King Commission is apparently designated in the law, along with the Corporation, to implement this. (MLK Commission is apparently somewhat adrift.)

Better yet, the Corporation has \$250,000 in demo money to fund little \$2,000 to \$5,000 mini-grants for local groups to organize local days of service. This is the 2nd year they've done these grants. They got 500 applications, many more than last year. And they will be ready to announce the grants in about two weeks. (I assume they could hold this if we wanted, although not for too long.) Harris was hoping that the President would participate in the MLK day of service this January, and could plug the Corporation's reauthorization then.

- 2. Harris has been approached by Dexter King (King's son) and a service organization called "Do Something" about something called the Kindness and Justice Curriculum. Corp. doesn't know much about it yet, but it might be service learning of some sort. They want to make it part of the MLK holiday celebration. They are also approaching Tom Kean.

- 3. Harris & co. are focusing more on AmeriCorps and less on service learning in their thinking on the race-service link so far. Two prominent AmeriCorps programs -- CityYear and Public Allies -- focus very consciously on race as part of the service experience, and could speak at a town hall. There is a guy named Alan Khazei at CityYear who is a thinker/statesman on service. You could have thinkers talk and then young people from different backgrounds talk about their experience serving together, the good and the bad.

- 4. The Corp. will have a new study soon on problems in racial diversity in AmeriCorps and how to do better. Gomperts says they really wouldn't want to release this report, but perhaps something could be done as an offshoot. I'll try to find out more about it. AmeriCorps is apparently very diverse, and that can create issues.

Bruce/Diana -

Good stuff. Bruce-Diana has spoken w/ J. Gomperts, and Harris will come in to speak with us as soon as we want.

Elena