

Fort Scott – Preliminary Needs Assessment

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11/15/09

Introduction

From 1846 to 1994, the Presidio served as a military post for the US Army. Within the Presidio, Fort Scott was developed at the foot of the Golden Gate Bridge in 1912 to serve as a preeminent training facility for the Coastal Artillery division. The core of Fort Scott consists of eleven Spanish colonial barracks organized around a parade ground, now a wide green space. Located on 132 acres, Fort Scott offers a commanding view of the Pacific Ocean and the Golden Gate.

Today, Fort Scott remains the last un-redeveloped property of the Presidio Trust, a unique federal agency charged with managing the Presidio military base conversion to civilian use. The Trust is exploring the dedication of Fort Scott to advance the field of service. To begin this process, the Trust engaged sagawa/jospin, consultants with expertise in national service, nonprofit management, and policy, to assess the needs of the service field and propose a plan that would make the best use of the asset represented by Fort Scott. This assessment took the form of over 50 interviews with leaders in the service field plus three focus groups (see appendix).

Findings

The service field is poised for transformation. The election of a President who has pledged to make service “a cause of my presidency,” unprecedented bi-partisan support, and a high level of public interest led to the enactment of the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, the first expansion of national service since AmeriCorps was created in 1994. This legislation stands to take AmeriCorps from 75,000 members to a quarter million while expanding other existing programs and creating new ones. The expansion of AmeriCorps alone will require hundreds of additional programs and leaders.

In addition to growing, the field is changing. Increasingly service is being looked at as a strategy to solve key problems facing the country, from energy conservation to poor performing schools. Programs are being pushed to be outcome oriented and to innovate to achieve higher impact. Technology is reshaping the volunteer field, changing the way people are recruited and organized, as well as presenting new ways to disseminate tools that allow people to perform service without reporting for duty at an organization.

Conversations with today’s service leaders pointed almost universally to a single need: to develop the individuals who will lead service organizations over the next half century. These leaders not only manage nonprofit organizations, but also state service commissions, federal programs, service-learning projects in schools, college service centers, corporate volunteer programs, and a host of other entities in the public and private sectors. Other suggestions included the need to build knowledge within and about the field; to create cutting-edge service-learning opportunities onsite at Fort Scott for local students; and to host a service corps onsite. All of these additional suggestions could be incorporated to enhance the leadership development opportunities proposed to be conducted at Fort Scott.

In addition to the ideas presented above, the interviewers consistently heard several themes:

- The site should be an inspiring **national symbol**, but also a **place of active service**
- The **definition of service should be broad and inclusive**, to include all ages, types of commitment, business as well as nonprofit, social entrepreneurs, and civilian and military
- The site should be **national** but also **benefit the local community**
- Programs and organizations using the site should interact with one another and become a **strong community**

Symbolism

The Fort Scott site already has great history connected to service. The site has been a place of service since 1776 and its position at the foot of the Golden Gate Bridge – the Gateway to a Continent -- offers important symbolic value. The Presidio as a whole already houses over 200 nonprofits, including the Tides Foundation nonprofit center, and more than 5,000 volunteers serve there each year.

To enhance the symbolism of Fort Scott as a center for service, the Trust should imbue it with an even stronger sense of symbolism, reflecting the goal and values/beliefs through a variety of means, such as:

- Visibly displayed artifacts and photographs
- A “Wall of Fame” honoring service alumni and those who have advanced the field
- Art with strong symbolism
- Inscriptions (such as quotations that resonate with the values/beliefs)
- Naming rooms, buildings, and other spaces for service “heroes”
- Using service “to build it” – both physically in some fashion and intellectually (perhaps by engaging skilled volunteers to help with program development, artifact acquisition, etc.)
- Flagship programmatic initiatives, discussed below

Over time, as important meetings or speeches take place at the site, these will also add to the symbolic importance of Fort Scott.

Flagship programs

While some programmatic activity should occur by organizations leasing the Fort Scott facilities, the Presidio Trust will orchestrate flagship programs that define the Center for Service at Fort Scott. These programs can be conducted directly or through contract with private organizations. The programs recommended by interviewees are discussed below.

Leadership institute

The fact finding process found virtually unanimous interest in a renewed leadership training effort to be led by the Presidio Trust. In fact, those individuals interviewed typically volunteered the idea of a leadership academy spontaneously, rather than in response to a suggestion by the interviewers. This was true across all fields of service, from youth corps to state commissions to service-learning programs. It was also echoed by staff of the Corporation for National and Community Service. In addition to

making an important contribution to the future of service in America, and potentially even globally, a national leadership training center would expose many potential customers to the Fort Scott facilities, enhancing its revenue potential.

When AmeriCorps was created in 1994, the Corporation for National Service supported the development of a National Service Leadership Institute at the Presidio to prepare leaders of AmeriCorps and other national service programs. The NSLI was operated under contract with the Interaction Institute for Social Change, California Association of Student Councils, and the Center for Creative Leadership. Open to any manager of an organization funded by the Corporation, the Institute incorporated three core components: a feedback tool to help participants understand their strengths and weaknesses as a leader; training in Facilitative Leadership®, a trademarked program created by the Interaction Institute; and follow up coaching for the trainee after completing the five day training. During the course of a typical training, participants learned to:

- Create a vision of success and enroll others in its pursuit;
- Lead collaborative planning and problem solving discussions;
- Decide who should be involved in making decisions and how to involve them;
- Coach and inspire others to perform at their best;
- Design meetings, project plans, and change strategies with concrete milestones and accountabilities that people understand and support;
- Consider three dimensions of success: results, process, and relationships; and
- Celebrate accomplishments in authentic and motivating ways.

According to a case study of NSLI, “never before or since has there been a federal program that provided community-based leaders with such comprehensive training: personal development, collaborative skill building, culture competence, team building, practice sessions, professional mentoring, visioning work, strategic planning practices, case study reviews, and periodic peer follow-up for months following the training experience.”

In 1997, the Corporation moved the NSLI from the Presidio and added a “train the trainer” system in order to reduce costs in response to tightening of finances by Congress. The program was discontinued in 2004. However, it still pays dividends as individuals who were trained in the 1990s remain as leaders in the field. In fact, a survey of a sample of participants found that 98% agreed that the program made them a stronger leader, 90 percent thought it helped them contribute to the overall success of their programs and organizations, and half reported that over 100 other people had benefited directly from their training. As a testament to its value, staff at the Corporation for National and Community Service note that they “hear from people every week who want to bring back NSLI.”

As the service field is poised to grow exponentially, a new state of the art leadership training center would help ensure that this growth is supported by a “talent pipeline.” Developing leaders will be critical to ensuring that growth will not undermine the quality of the field. And while many kinds of training can be done online, “the thing that can’t happen online is changing behavior,” according to the Corporation’s director of training.

Other fields of public service face junctures similar to that confronting the service field.

- **“Social entrepreneurship”** has received unprecedented attention from the new administration and support from philanthropy. Substantial numbers of Americans, young and old, are pursuing innovative initiatives that have the potential to pose new solutions to intractable problems. The new Social Innovation Fund, authorized by the Serve America Act, represents the first federal fund dedicated to growing successful innovations by seeding private sector grantmaking institutions. In the private sector, the Purpose Prize for the first time recognizes older adult innovators, and draws over 1,000 applications for the 15 awards each year, while the echoing green fellowship aimed at younger entrepreneurs draws a similar response. Every day, 100 new nonprofits are started. Yet no systematic widely available leadership program supports these entrepreneurs in their efforts to build organizations and manage in a time of change.
- The **nonprofit sector** in general is facing a leadership crisis, with the need to fill more than 640,000 top management positions in the next decade. While young adults express great interest in public service careers, and often find an entry point through AmeriCorps, there is no well-constructed pipeline to help them advance in to leadership positions.
- **Federal government service** in past generations has been a sought after career path for civic minded Americans. But today, the federal government faces a potential talent crisis, as one third of the federal workforce will soon retire and hundreds of thousands of critical positions need to be filled. State government agencies in most states are experiencing similar shifts in demographics and need to prepare new leaders.
- **Corporate volunteer programs** and other business units concerned with corporate social responsibility represent a desirable career path for many public service-oriented future leaders. However, these managers can be disconnected from the community organizations that should be their partners. They may face cultural barriers that arise from the different priorities and practices of the two sectors. Stronger partnerships could be forged if leaders from both the corporate and nonprofit worlds receive similar training.
- Organized **philanthropy** struggles to bring diverse talent into the field. These new leaders often need orientation to the world of nonprofit management and to build their own leadership skills.
- A growing number of **military** experts are pointing to the need to broaden the skill set of the military to include building civil society institutions in the wake of a military intervention. Key military personnel could learn these skills through the kind of leadership training envisioned by civilian service leaders.

If appropriate partners can be enlisted, emerging leaders in any of these public service fields might join in the leadership institute, creating a larger potential resource base and broader potential impact.

The facility at Fort Scott could easily be developed into a world class training site. The content of the training would include a core set of training modules focused on service and leadership, to be delivered by staff or contractors. Additional training modules could be customized for different groups: national service organization leaders, social entrepreneurs, corporate volunteer leaders, state commission directors, service-learning coordinators, youth leaders, etc. The length of training might vary based on market research and curriculum design. Some or all participants could contribute financially through a

sliding scale fee-for-service arrangement, although we are aware that many target groups have minimal or no budget for professional development.

A memorandum of agreement with the Corporation for National and Community Service could give the Presidio Trust access to the curriculum materials used with the NSLI, as well as ongoing advice from and involvement of Corporation staff.

Knowledge Center

The needs assessment also identified several additional, related purposes to which Fort Scott could be dedicated that would serve to advance the service field by **advancing knowledge** and providing service-learning opportunities for students and others. These components would fit well with a leadership institute at the Presidio, and might include:

- **Fellowships** – Many people expressed enthusiasm for the idea of a service fellowship that would enable field leaders to take a sabbatical from their programmatic responsibilities. These individuals would use the time to work on a project that would advance the knowledge of the field while in residence at Fort Scott. Fellows might also be enlisted to contribute to the Fort Scott programs in a variety of ways, such as teaching a seminar or giving a lecture. Fellowships could be sponsored by corporations or individual philanthropists and could be endowed. With two full-time equivalent slots, the Trust might host up to eight fellows a year (two for each of the fall and spring semester, two for a brief January term, and two for the summer).
- **A “Semester at the Presidio” program** – Universities sponsor “Semester in Washington” programs, typically contracting with one of the established programs in Washington to serve their students. During these programs, students are housed, take one or two academic classes, and intern for 20 – 30 hours a week with a Washington policymaker or advocacy group. A similar program focused on service with internships at nonprofits in San Francisco could be developed at Fort Scott. Universities would pay a fee for service for their students to participate. Local higher education institutions could be partners in this endeavor to provide academically rigorous course offerings and any resident fellows could offer seminars or other enriching programs.
- **Museum and archive** – There is no central repository of papers and information regarding service in America. Fort Scott could incorporate a small service-focused library and archive that would support the fellowships and “Semester at the Presidio” programming, and serve as a resource for other researchers interested in service. This collection could also include stories of service shared by all those who come to Fort Scott for training or other purposes, which would present a unique resource. A service-learning project could be the collection of oral histories of service, another way that “service could help build it.” At a minimum, a collection of books on service should be housed with the academic programs. In addition, Fort Scott could incorporate a small “museum” of important service artifacts, such as original copies of enhancing legislation; photographs of important service moments; uniforms; and other items of

importance to the history of service. The display of such items could enhance the symbolic purpose of Fort Scott.

- **An annual retreat or symposium and awards ceremony** – There is no opportunity for the leaders of the service movement to convene periodically to plan next steps for the field. The Trust might invite leaders and “big thinkers” of the movement to come together at Fort Scott once each year as a way to further advance knowledge, as well as the symbolic nature of the site. An invitation to the “Presidio Symposium” might become a sought after honor by service leaders. Resident fellows as well as a representative group of students from the service semester program and a member of the resident corps might also be included to add richer perspectives. As part of the symposium, awards could be made to significant contributors to the field, including a notable speaker who could be added to the Wall of Fame and invited to give a key note speech that would be open to the public.
- **A resident corps** – Many people recommended that Fort Scott be a place where service takes place on a regular basis. The Presidio Trust need not operate a corps directly. This component could be accomplished by arrangement with an existing Bay Area corps or the National Civilian Community Corps, currently based in Sacramento. A team of eight to ten youth corps members could provide needed infrastructure for the service-learning projects described below as well as leadership for service performed on site by service semester students.
- **A model service-learning facility.** There was a strong desire on the part of many interviewed to see Fort Scott as a place where service-learning could take place, and where teachers and other practitioners could learn to develop service-learning projects. In this way it could be a teaching platform and a “living laboratory” for experiential learning, as one interviewee put it. Toward these ends, Fort Scott could incorporate model urban agriculture, green building, and facilities for other popular service-learning programs. These could be an asset to local teachers and students, who might spend a day at Fort Scott to learn while they do service, and provide service experiences for service semester students and leadership institute participants. A second line of training opportunities could arise from these model programs, such as a service-learning teacher institute.

This set of programs would complement one another and make use of the Fort Scott facility in the following ways:

- At least one building would be dedicated to hotel style rooms for participants in the leadership institute, symposium, and other professional programs. This facility could also be made available to other groups (see below). (approximately 80 to 100 rooms)
- At least one building would be dedicated to dorm style “bunk space” to house the students in the semester program, resident corps members, and other student groups. (space for at least 100 housed in rooms of two, three, or four)
- At least one building would provide classroom space for the leadership institute, service semester, and symposium.

- Additional space would be needed for the archive/museum (could be incorporated into classroom building); dining facilities; and convenience store.
- An outdoor amphitheater could be built for use by all of the programs, as well as to host the keynote speech for the symposium and other significant speeches. (seating 250 or more)

Potential income producing facilities

In addition to these flagship initiatives, the site could generate income by making facilities available to service and nonprofit organization for retreats, trainings, speeches, and other convenings. Many people we interviewed stressed their desire for “places with meaning,” as one interviewee put it, where their organizations might hold board meetings, retreats, or other gatherings. Space might be made available on a sliding fee basis in order to ensure that it enjoys broad usage.

Ideally, four kinds of activities would be promoted for these facilities:

- **Retreats** in which important conversations relating to service can occur, as they have in the past at Wingspread (in Racine Wisconsin) or other similar sites around the country. Many people have urged that the Fort Scott site offer comfortable rooms and meeting spaces, excellent food and drink, and state of the art technology. The Presidio Trust might host a series of discussions in the initial years in order to expose leaders to the space and establish its tone and purpose.
- **Trainings** beyond those connected to the leadership institute.
- **Important speeches** such as an inaugural speech by the President or another pivotal figure.
- **Banquets and receptions** that make use of the dining facility.

Finally, a substantial portion of Fort Scott could be made available by lease to organizations that embody the core values of the project, again based on a sliding fee scale. Such organizations might include:

- A **residential or charter school or camp** that practices service-learning
- A **business committed to innovation** with a strong community social responsibility ethic
- A **government agency**
- A **military-related community service program**
- A **disaster response** staging area
- **Nonprofit organizations**, particularly those with a service focus

These organizations would operate their own programs, with the Presidio Trust as the landlord. However, as part of the lease agreement they would agree to participate in the community at Fort Scott in appropriate ways.

Conclusion

Fort Scott represents a unique potential asset for the service movement. A leadership institute and knowledge center are badly needed to enable the field to grow commensurate with the Serve America Act while maintaining high quality. Other related fields could also benefit from participation.

Appendix: Individuals Interviewed

Adam Lounsbury	Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service
Alan Khazei	Be the Change/ServiceNation
Amity Tripp	AmeriCorps Alums
AnnMaura Connolly	City Year
Bill Basl	Washington Commission on National and Community Service
Bob Grimm	CNCS, Research and Policy Development
Dan Cardinali	Communities in Schools
Dorothy Stoneman	YouthBuild USA
Elson Nash	CNCS, Learn and Serve
Eric Schwarz	Citizen Schools
Evan Hochberg	Deloitte
Gail Nayowith	Laurie M Tisch Illumination Fund
Gene Sofer	The Susquehanna Group
Gretchen Van der Veer	CNCS, Training
Jackie Norris	CNCS, Office of the CEO
Jason Patnosh	Community HealthCorps
Jill Vialet	SportsKids
Jim Kielsmeier	National Youth Leadership Council
John Gomperts	Civic Ventures
Karen Baker	California Volunteers
Kelly Ward	New Profit
Kiff Gallagher	Music National Service Initiative
Kim Mansaray	CNCS, AmeriCorps*State and National
Lester Strong	Experience Corps
Lisa Flick Wilson	Kellogg Foundation
Lisa Spinali	San Francisco School Volunteers
Lois Nembhard	CNCS, AmeriCorps*State and National
Lynn Luckow	Craigslist Foundation
Mal Coles	CNCS, Northeast Regional Manager
Mark Walter	New Yorkers Volunteer
Marlene Zakai	CNCS, Special Projects
Maureen Curley	Campus Compact
Megan McCarthy	National Senior Corps Association
Michael Brown	City Year
Michelle Nunn	HandsOn Network
Mikel Herrington	CNCS, AmeriCorps*NCCC
Mimi Castaldi	AARP
Nelda Brown	National Service Learning Partnership

Nicola Goren	CNCS, Acting CEO
Paul Davis	CNCS, VISTA
Peter Heinaru	CNCS, Pacific Area Manager
Rhonda Taylor	CNCS, Corporate Relations
Robert Gordon	City Year
Ross Cohen	Be the Change
Sally Prouty	The Corps Network
Sue Fahey	CNCS, Senior Corps
Susan Stern	New Yorkers Volunteer
Susan Stroud	Innovations in Civic Participation
Susannah Washburn	CNCS, Research and Policy Development
Tim Delaney	National Council of Nonprofits
Toby Chalberg	Points of Light Institute
Tom Branen	America's Service Commissions
Tom Endres	National Council on Aging
Vince Meldrum	Creceer Strategies
Wendy Spencer	Volunteer Florida
Zach Maurin	ServeNext

Shirley Sagawa and Deb Jospin

Shirley Sagawa and Deborah Jospin are the principals of sagawa/jospin, a consulting firm specializing in nonprofit strategy and policy. Since the beginning of their partnership in 2001, they have worked with over 45 organizations, including several national service organizations (AmeriCorps Alums, City Year, Citizen Schools, Equal Justice Works, Experience Corps, Playworks, Volunteer Florida, National Association of Community Health Centers, National Service Learning Partnership, and YouthBuild USA). They have also worked with grassroots community based organizations, social entrepreneurs, foundations (including the Entertainment Industry Foundation, the William J. Clinton Foundation, the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation and Annie E. Casey Foundation), for-profit companies, the Harvard Institute of Politics, and the on-line magazine Slate. They are the co-authors of *The Charismatic Organization: Eight Ways to Grow a Nonprofit that Builds Buzz, Delights Donors and Engages Employees* (Jossey Bass, 2008).

In the fall of 2008, Shirley was appointed to be the Team Leader for the Obama Agency Review Transition Team that reviewed the Corporation for National Service. Deb served on the Transition Team as Shirley's Deputy.

Shirley is also a visiting fellow at the Center for American Progress, and former Special Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy and Deputy Chief of Staff to the First Lady during the Clinton Administration, founding Executive Director of the Learning First Alliance, and the founding Managing Director of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). Her previous award-winning book, *Common Interest, Common Good: Creating Value through Business and Social Sector Partnerships* (Harvard Business School Press, 2000) describes how business and social sector organizations can collaborate for mutual gain. In May 2010, she plans to release her third book, *The American Way to Change: How National Service and Volunteers are Transforming America* (Jossey Bass, May 2010). Shirley was named a "Woman to Watch in the 21st Century," by *Newsweek* magazine, and one of the "Most Influential Working Mothers in America" by *Working Mother* magazine.

Deb served as the first Director of AmeriCorps as well as Chief of Staff and Deputy General Counsel of CNCS. Prior to joining CNCS, Deb was an attorney in private practice. Deb is President of the Daniel A. Dutko Memorial Foundation, which supports the Dutko Fellowship program at Tufts University, enabling Tufts graduates who are interested in public policy management to spend ten months in Washington, D.C., working in politics or for a nonprofit organization. Deb chairs the board of the Jonathan M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service at Tufts, and serves as a Trustee of Tufts, chairing the Board's Council of Overseers and serving on its Executive Committee. In 2009, Ms. Jospin received the Light on the Hill Award, the highest honor that the undergraduate student body bestows on Tufts alumni. She also serves on the board of *ServeNext* and the Washington, D.C. Local Advisory Council of Playworks.