



## Points of Light History of Service

### 1989

In his 1989 inaugural address, President George H. W. Bush inspires the nation to take voluntary action in their communities as points of light “spread throughout the nation, doing good.” In response to President Bush’s call to action, the Points of Light Foundation is created in 1990 as an independent, non-partisan, nonprofit organization to encourage and empower the spirit of service.

At the same time, groups of like-minded individuals join together in communities across the country to develop action centers that engage individuals, families and corporate and community groups in service opportunities at nonprofits and schools. These groups make up action centers like HandsOn Atlanta, New York Cares and Greater DC Cares.

### 1992

Action centers like New York Cares, HandsOn Atlanta and Greater DC Cares develop an umbrella organization called CityCares (now HandsOn Network) to provide a national network for sharing resources.

### 1993

The service movement grows under the leadership of each president following President Bush. In 1993, President William J. Clinton signs the National and Community Service Trust Act, which creates the Corporation for National and Community Service, AmeriCorps, SeniorCorps and Learn and Serve America.

### 1997

In 1997, President Clinton, President Bush, President Jimmy Carter, President Gerald Ford and First Lady Nancy Reagan (for President Ronald Reagan) attend The Presidents’ Summit for America’s Future, an event focused on mobilizing Americans’ citizen power in an effort to solve the nation’s problems through voluntary action.

### 2001

The volunteer engagement sector sees its greatest boost in participation when the U.N. announces 2001 as the “Year of the Volunteer.” Points of Light Foundation joins nearly 1,000 national and international partners participating in the year of service.

### 2002

President George W. Bush announces the creation of the USA Freedom Corps in 2002, a coordinating council that works to strengthen our culture of service and help find opportunities for every American to serve.

**2003**

President George W. Bush announces the formation of the President’s Council on Service and Civic Participation to recognize Americans’ important contributions through service. The Council also creates the President’s Volunteer Service Award as a way to thank and honor Americans who take voluntary action in their communities. Points of Light Institute is the administrating entity for the awards. To date, approximately two million awards have been given to deserving volunteers through a network of more than 27,000 community-based certifying organizations like schools and faith groups. This recognition program for our nation’s most active and inspiring volunteers inspires a long-term culture of service.

**2005**

HandsOn Network establishes a Corporate Service Council with 29 founding corporate leaders of Fortune 500 companies. The council has grown to include more than 60 companies representing our nation’s most powerful businesses and industries with a focus on service leadership.

**2007**

Points of Light Foundation and HandsOn Network merge to become Points of Light, creating the largest volunteer management and civic engagement organization in the nation with more than 250 Action Centers in 16 countries. Points of Light includes a powerful network of more than 70,000 corporate, faith and nonprofit organizations that are answering the call to serve and creating meaningful change in their communities.

**2008**

Points of Light co-convenes ServiceNation. Early on in the life of the organization, ServiceNation plays a leading role in the drafting and enactment of the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, which authorized the greatest expansion of national service in America since the Great Depression.

**2009**

President Barack Obama continues the presidential focus on service. In 2009, he signs the historic Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, heralding the next phase in voluntary action. With his initiative, “United We Serve” and Serve.gov, a technology to connect volunteers to projects, his administration is inspiring a renewed call to service.

By putting people at the center of change, Points of Light mobilizes more than 30 million volunteer hours valued at more than 626 million toward our nation’s critical problems.

**2010**

Points of Light launches generationOn, a new division focused on igniting the power of all kids to create meaningful change in the world.

For more information please visit our interactive timeline at [www.pointsoflight.org/tributes](http://www.pointsoflight.org/tributes).