

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

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NATIONAL SERVICE:
REBUILDING AMERICA'S CIVIC FABRIC

AN EVENT CO-HOSTED BY THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION
AND SERVICE YEAR ALLIANCE

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Welcome:

JOHN R. ALLEN
President
The Brookings Institution

Keynote Panel:

ISABEL SAWHILL, Moderator
Senior Fellow, Economic Studies
The Brookings Institution

JESSE COLVIN
Chief Executive Officer
Service Year Alliance

JOE HECK
Chairman of the National Commission on Military,
National, and Public Service
Former U.S. Representative (R-NV)

THE HONORABLE DEVAL PATRICK
Former Governor
State of Massachusetts

BARBARA STEWART
Chief Executive Officer
Corporation for National and Community Service

Panel: Why We Need National Service:

WILLIAM GALSTON, Moderator
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Panel: National Service in Practice:

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Closing Remarks:

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P R O C E E D I N G S

GENERAL ALLEN: I'm John Allen; I'm the President of Brookings. On behalf of the institution and our partners at Service Year Alliance, I want to welcome you all to this important event today. I want to welcome those coming in over the webcast, and of course we always welcome the media.

This morning you will be hearing from a distinguished group of leaders and volunteers on the matter of national service. But let me make a few brief comments to begin with. In such divided and turbulent times, we must look for ways to bridge society, to bridge the divides, and to restore a sense of community. In recent years, much has been done, sadly, to burn rather than to build the bridges in our civic nation, leading to a growing culture of fear and distrust, incivility, and a reflex to retreat into the safety of tribalism.

Our trust in institutions and our trust in each other have taken a beating and have in fact declined. And that decline makes it harder for us to solve some of the key problems we face as a country and as a people. From my personal experience, I know that when individuals from different walks of life have an opportunity to serve together and to serve their country and to do something bigger than themselves, they almost always live up to the challenge. In fact, they almost always perform magnificently, emerging from the experience better young women and men. And in the process they learn a crucial lesson, that when you serve side by side with another person it really doesn't matter who they are or where they're from, bonds of trust will form and endure and often last a lifetime.

It's time to consider whether we should be providing more opportunities for service, not just in the military, but importantly in the civilian sector as well. Research by our scholar Isabel Sawhill shows that Americans are enthusiastic about national service. And what she calls an American exchange program that would ask American families across the country to voluntarily host a young person from another community for as much as a year while they perform their service, that's groundbreaking. If provided with the right opportunities, Americans can work together across so many areas to prepare and to respond for emergencies and disasters, to improve public spaces, to help our elderly American to stay

in their homes, and provide training or career opportunities to low income youths. And that doesn't even begin to scratch the long list of opportunities and possibilities that lie before us.

This event this morning -- by virtue of those who are participating, and certainly those in the audience -- this event this morning importantly lies at the intersection of where policy meets action. And the people that you'll hear from this morning, the conversations that you will listen to this morning, will be all about translating policy into action. And that is so important.

So we welcome our panelists, we welcome our guests, we welcome the conversation this morning, and most importantly, we welcome you. We're going out over webcast and we're very much on the record.

And with that, Belle, may I offer you the floor please for your remarks and the first panel.

Thank you. (Applause)

MS. SAWHILL: Our first panel should probably come right on up. I don't think they're a shy group.

So, good morning, everyone. It's great to see this group and I am so thrilled to be on the stage with so many leaders in the national service area.

Let me start by saying just a few words about national service itself. I'll be echoing to some extent what our President, John Allen, has just said, but I'm not sure it can be said too many times. We are a very divided nation, you all know that. It's a cultural problem, it's a political problem, it's an economic problem.

So I do want us not to forget about that. One writer recently said we are texting and tweeting ourselves into disunion. I thought that was an interesting way of putting it. So we really need to have a good conversation about the potential of national service to bring us together again and to get us off of our phones and into our communities.

So there are many benefits to national service in addition to the role it can play in bringing us together. It has benefits for the participants, the young people who serve, it has benefits for the communities they serve. And you're going to hear much more about that through the rest of the morning.

But the basic point I think is that democracy cannot flourish when we do not trust each other and do not trust our institutions. And I think national service can play a role. This is not easy task, but we should do everything we can to repair some of these divisions.

There is considerable evidence -- now I'm just putting on for a second my hat as a researcher because I've delved into this a bit -- lots of evidence that when people work together on a common task across divisions that would normally keep them apart, they learn, as John Allen said, to trust and respect each other and to form bonds. And the military is the classic example of where we have seen that happen, as he said.

Now, I personally got interested in this issue when I was working on a book last year called "The Forgotten Americans" and I got interested in all the usual policy solutions to the problem of people who have been left behind in our society or our economy. But I came to the conclusion at the end that public policy alone, or the usual kinds of policies that we talk about here at places like Brookings, aren't sufficient. They are necessary, but we also have to really start talking a lot more about relationships and about respect. And in some work we're going to be doing in the future, we'll be saying a lot more about that.

After I finished my book I decided I needed to field test the ideas and take them on the road. So I went out and I did focus groups in three cities in America with middle and working class Americans. And one of the things that really surprised me was the degree of concern about these divisions and the degree of enthusiasm amongst the public. And I'm not talking about a sophisticated public here, I'm talking about ordinary everyday working Americans, for doing something about those divisions and national service appealed to them a lot.

So I then came back and realized that at this point I didn't know nearly enough. In fact, I knew very little about the work that was going on by all the people who are sitting up here on this stage. And I think it's just remarkable that they're all here today. I couldn't be more thankful to the fact that they made time to be here. I want to particularly call out our partnership with Service Year Alliance. This meeting would not have happened without their participation. And we got lots of help from the other

groups on this stage as well.

Now, I'm not going to do long introductions, but before I turn it over to them -- because I know you want to hear from them now -- I think I'll just say a brief word about each person.

So Dr. Joe Heck is the chairman of the Commission on Military, National, and Public Service -- did I get that right? And that Commission is going to be reporting back to Congress in March and you will be hearing more about their work. But I think it's very important.

Barbara Stewart is the CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service, the major federal agency that has responsibility for AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and other service programs in the government. She has a wonderful background in nonprofit management, and from everything I've been told, Barbara, you are fulfilling that role very well in your current post.

And next we have Deval Patrick, former governor of Massachusetts. I just finished reading your book about how you began on the south side of Chicago, went to Milton Academy, ended up at Harvard and Harvard Law School, if I remember correctly, and have now served in some of the highest positions in the land. It's an inspiring story. So thank you, Governor, for being here.

And last, but definitely not least, is Jesse Colvin, the CEO of Service Year Alliance, who also has one of these multifaceted backgrounds that is equally impressive to everyone else's.

But, without further ado, I'm going to turn this now over to Dr. Heck.

DR. HECK: Well, thank you, Belle. Good morning, and my thanks to Brookings and Service Year for putting this together and for hosting us this morning, as well as my thanks to all of you, either in the audience or watching over the web who have served, will serve after hearing this morning's conversations, or are currently serving.

It's an incredibly important time in our Nation's history, as people talked already this morning, about how do we heal the rifts that we see in our society and how national service is one of the potential solutions to healing these divides. It's my honor to serve as Chairman of the National Commission on Military National and Public Service. And for those who have not heard about the Commission previously, we were chartered by Congress in the fiscal year '17 National Defense

Authorization Act. It originally started as a commission to review whether or not women should have to register for selective service. However, the late Senator John McCain and Senator Jack Reed saw an opportunity to do much more with the Commission than just answer that single question. And so they expanded the scope of the Commission's mandate to look at how can we actually encourage more Americans to participate across all service lines, whether it be in uniform in the military, whether it be in a national service program, which we also include local community similar programs, or in public service, which is finding a job in state, local, federal, or tribal government, or running for elected office. There are 11 bipartisan members appointed by leadership from congress. I am blessed to have a very incredible group of thought leaders across the service spectrum representing diverse ideas. And we have worked over the last two years in listening to the American public about their views on service.

As Belle mentioned, our goal is to issue a final report in March of 2020 with recommendations back to congress, the American public, and the President about how we can actually encourage more Americans to serve.

I also want to thank John Bridgeland and John Dilulio, who are in the audience for their recently released report on "Will America Finally Embrace National Service" because it segues perfectly into our Commission's vision, which is every American, inspired an eager to serve.

So what have we been doing over the last two years since we started? Our first year was a fact-finding tour. We traveled around the country, all 9 census districts, 15 states, 24 cities, met with over 300 organizations, and received literally thousands of public comments, either at our public meetings or via the internet via our website. We looked at what encourages people to serve, why aren't people serving, what are the obstacles they are facing for those who desire to serve but aren't. And so after we went around the Nation on this listening tour, we came back and issued our interim report, which for those for you who have not yet had an opportunity to read, is available at our website, inspire2serve.gov. In that report we talk about who we are, where we have been, and where we are heading. So based on that year's worth of research and public listening, we came up with some potential recommendations on how to encourage more Americans to serve.

In the second year, we travelled to another 10 states, held public hearings where we listened to 68 policy experts, received 40 statements for the record, issued 8 staff memorandum, and started to vet some of the potential policy recommendations that we have under consideration. Upon completion of those public hearings, the Commission is now in its deliberative phase. We are now reviewing all of that information with the goal of compiling our report, which hopefully will be on time in March of 2020. That will lay out the recommendations that the Commission does want to put forward.

So in my remaining time I want to state kind of the 30,000 foot level, speak generally about where we are headed, because in the interest of time, as a recovering politician, brevity in public speaking is not necessarily one of my strong suits, so I'll stay general and leave specifics to questions and answers.

So what are some of the common themes that we've heard? What we first heard -- and I guess isn't too surprising -- is that we do have an incredible culture of service in this Nation today. Wherever we went, we heard from Americans who currently serve and we heard from Americans who want to serve, they just want to know how. So we look at this culture of service that we actually have now, what de Tocqueville described as one of the exceptional pieces of being an American in wanting to help our neighbors. And how can we nurture that culture of service into an ethos of service, to where service is not just encourage but expected, so that at a certain point in time it's the individual who doesn't serve that is the odd person out and not the person who does serve, so that it becomes almost automatic as a right of growing up, the conversation goes to so what are you going to do for your service project. And how do we change that mindset and how do we change that culture?

It begins, we believe, with a strong and robust civic education program. We feel that over time, as academic curricula get more and more compressed, and pressed for time for other subjects, that civic education has fallen by the wayside. Now, while there are some great programs in some states, by and large civic education has fallen away. And how can you expect to encourage someone or expect someone to serve their community, their state, their nation, when they don't truly understand the rights and responsibilities that go along with being a citizen of this democratic republic? And it's not just simply

a high school U.S. history class, it's how do we weave common themes of civic education throughout the curricula, regardless of subject so that our youth are exposed to these important principles throughout their academic life.

It builds into experiential and service learning, where perhaps in middle school there is a finite service project that a middle school class has to do, a project with a specific goal done over a specific period of time to introduce them to the concept of actually serving. Moving to high school with perhaps a semester of service. We all know that spring semester is pretty much -- of your senior year is kind of shot, you're either waiting to start your job or go to school. What if that was spent in completing a service project over the course of a semester? Perhaps there should be service fellowships, where post high school or even post college you have the opportunity to get a voucher to go serve a fellowship in a service program of your choice. Kind of have the money follow the service individual.

So it begins with that piece. It then grows into how do we get more individuals aware of service opportunities, how do we make them aspire to serve, and then how do we grant access. The three buckets that we are really look at. You can't be or do what you don't know doesn't exist. You think about it, when I was growing up I saw Peace Corps commercials. I haven't seen one in over 20 years. We spoke to military cadets in ROTC down at Fort Knox, many of whom were two or three year scholarship students, because none of them knew about the opportunity for a four year scholarship while they were in high school -- no one talked to them about it. Less than 5 percent of today's youth take the ASVAB test in high school.

So how do we increase awareness, number one. Once we make them aware, how do we inspire them? What are the incentives -- whether they be direct financial incentives, whether it be an educational award, whether it's appealing to their sense of patriotism or some altruistic characteristic that they want to follow. But we then have to have them be inspired to want to serve. And then we have to have access.

What we hope is beyond our wildest dreams, the Commission is overwhelmingly successful and all 329 million Americans want to serve. We know we won't have 329 million service

opportunities. But what we must do is make sure that for those who are aware and inspired, that they have access to a clear and supported path to service. And that service opportunity has to be meaningful and worthwhile to that individual, because we know that once you have someone serve one time in a meaningful way, they are hooked for life. They will come back and serve again. It may not be right after the first service opportunity, they may go out and start their career, start a family, at mid-career say I now have the time, I want to go back and serve again. Post retirement, they may want and come into the RSVP program and start to serve against as a senior.

You know, as a physician I always bring things back to a medical analogy. I believe that every American has a service gene. My job is to figure out how to activate that gene, because we want every American inspired and eager to serve.

And so, with that, I call for your help. Not only do we value your input, but we need your input as we consider our final recommendations and continue to draft our final report. Our public comment period remains open until December 31 of this year, so I encourage anybody who is either here today or listening who has a comment on these important issues, (1) to read our interim report, see where we might be headed, and (2) to provide your comments on where you think we are headed and whether it's right or wrong. Please do so via our website, again at inspire2serve.gov, because it is only through your help that we will achieve our vision of every American, inspired and eager to serve.

Thank you. (Applause)

MS. SAWHILL: That was inspiring hearing about inspiring. (Laughter)

Barbara Stewart.

MS. STEWART: Thank you so much, thank you for having me here this morning. I appreciate Brookings and Service Year Alliance for putting this on. It is wonderful to be in a room full of people who know about service, are supporters of service. I am interested very much in the first two panels. For those of you who thought you might slip out and not hear the last panel, you're making a big mistake. The last panel is going to be fantastic. It's an opportunity to hear from our AmeriCorps members and alumni about how service has impacted their life. So I encourage you all to stay for what

will be the best panel -- no offense to all of you. (Laughter)

So, again, it's a pleasure to be here with you this morning. As Belle said, I lead the Corporation for National and Community Service. And for those of you who may not be aware, we're the federal agency for service and volunteering. So we promote service and volunteering and we administer the multiple AmeriCorps programs as well as the Senior Corps programs. We also work to inspire all Americans to volunteer outside of national service, and I am pleased to report that the percentage of Americans who are volunteering in this country is slightly on the rise, which is terrific -- 77 million Americans volunteered in their communities last year. But today our focus is in national service and the impact that will have on our community at large.

So a couple of things. We are actually celebrating the 25th anniversary this year of the first swearing of the first class of AmeriCorps members. More than a million Americans have served in AmeriCorps programs. That's a huge alumni network. But we continue to struggle with awareness of our programs. As Dr. Heck was saying, if you don't know about your opportunity to serve, then you're not going to serve. We need to be broadening that. And I'll touch on that a little bit further. But it is exciting to think about the impact that these over a million Americans have had in our community.

Again, I feel like I'm in a room of friends, but I'm going to just take a brief moment to touch on some of our community impact, again, that you're probably well aware of. More than half of our resources support national service programs that support education, education which could be mentoring, it could be working with underprivileged children to make sure that they are grade ready, education in various forms. We also have the ability to work on a broader array of programming and so many of our AmeriCorps members are engaged with workforce development helping veterans and military families achieve their potential, working to improve the environment, helping after disasters. And I am forgetting some of the other fantastic things that we do, that our AmeriCorps members do, but the kind of impact that they're having in communities is demonstrative and really meaningful.

Something that we maybe haven't talked about as much historically is the impact that service has on the member. So we do an alumni member survey and, again, this won't surprise you if

you have interacted with our AmeriCorps or Senior Corps alumni, but there are so many significant benefits to service for the individual who serves. One, particularly for older volunteers, is a health benefit. But when we see the developmental benefits of younger people who serve in AmeriCorps, it's really awesome. We see that they are better at problem solving, we see that they are better at working with individuals who are from backgrounds that are different than theirs, we see that they're better at time management, they're better at financial management, they are more confident and self assured. In short, they are developing into the kind of individuals that any employer would seek to hire, and frankly, anyone would want to be a neighbor with. So service is really a developmental experience that is significantly meaningful for the individual that participates.

Also it' been touched on a little bit so far this morning, and I anticipate we will continue to discuss, is the impact that service has on society. At a challenging time of divisions within our country, serving shoulder to shoulder with someone who may be from a different socioeconomic, geographic, philosophical, different background from yourselves is arguably the best way to learn understanding about other people. And I see this time and again.

I've had the pleasure in the 20 months that I've been in this current role to see an awful lot of amazing AmeriCorps members and Senior Corps volunteers, but if you'll indulge me, I'm just going to be briefly about an opportunity I had to see a team of AmeriCorps members serving in Florida after Hurricane Michael and to see individuals from such very different backgrounds. I had a chance to chat with the teams and to speak with a young woman who had a master's degree in anthropology who was serving right next to a young man who told me that he had been in a gang in LA, working with a gentleman who was taking a gap year before he went to Columbia. And I could go on and on. But just a really interesting mix of committed individuals who were serving in a community that wasn't even their own. They had traveled to Florida to help people that they will never see again but whose lives they changed. This is just one little anecdote. There are hundreds and hundreds of thousands of similar anecdotes going on every year with AmeriCorps members.

So I just share that as an example of the bridge building that occurs when people are

working shoulder to shoulder with people who are very different in terms of their original background and how that does serve to bring us together as a country.

So do we need more national service? I think that's going to be also a topic of the day, and I would argue absolutely. We absolutely need more national service. As the individual leading the organization that implements our national service programs though, I would just throw out a couple of cautionary comments. One, if we're to grow national service significantly, we need to be investing in our nonprofit infrastructure. The way our national service programs currently are funded through the Corporation for National and Community Service is a combination of a variety of programs, but our biggest program is both a formula program where money is given to states to fund national service programs in their communities, and a competitive program. And while there is certainly a demand for more national service opportunities, there is certainly more capacity out there now to provide a high quality national service opportunity for Americans. It's not unlimited. If we were to double the amount of resources in a year, we would really need to be also committing to strengthening our partners in the field, we would need to be building the nonprofit capacity.

We also need to be building the capacity of the Corporation of National and Community Service, and that's something that I have been very focused on in the time that I have been with CNCS. We need to strengthen our infrastructure so that we are well positioned for the long-term growth of national service. And that is something I'm very committed to doing.

The last point I would want to make really piggybacks on what Dr. Heck said, and that is that we need to broaden awareness of these programs. I'm going to make the assumption that folks in this room are familiar with AmeriCorps and its life changing impact, familiar with the importance of volunteerism, but there are 100 million -- well, let me be more specific -- our research indicates that only half of Americans have ever heard of AmeriCorps. And that's unfair to the other half who never have, because you can't serve in these programs if you don't know about them. Service is a life changing opportunity. Again, you're going to hear that throughout the morning and you will see that in living color when you see our AmeriCorps members and alums speak to you. But if you don't know about the

opportunity, you can't take advantage of it.

So one of the things that I hope that we will all focus on, and certainly the Corporation for National and Community Service will be working on and piggybacking off of the great work of the National Commission, is how do we broaden the number of Americans who are aware of service opportunities so that they can take advantage of them.

So, again, I really appreciate this opportunity to be with all of you this morning and I look forward to hearing from my fellow panelists. (Applause)

MS. SAWHILL: Barbara, thank you, and thank you for your service.

Governor.

MR. PATRICK: Thank you, Belle, and good morning, everybody. My thanks also to Brookings and to the Service Year Alliance for convening us all here today.

I am not surprised that there is a through line quite common from General Allen through Belle and my fellow panelists. I'm just a little sorry that I have to come near the end because you've all heard it before and I think most of you are here because you already believe it. Jesse, I'm sorry for you. (Laughter) You're the very last.

I too very strongly believe in the importance of national service. I want to make a point about the urgency of moving toward national service, indeed universal national service, and tell you why. As Belle said at the outset, I grew up on the south side of Chicago in the '50s and '60s, some of that time on public assistance. Generally not thought of as the garden spot, it's usually thought of and aptly and rightly described as a place of deprivation and often about things we didn't have. But one of the things we did have was a very strong sense of community, because that was a time when every child was under the jurisdiction of every single adult on the block. You messed up down the street in front of Miss Jones, she'd go upside your head as if you were hers and then call home, so you got it two times. And I think what those adults were trying to get across to us is that membership in a community is understanding that you have a stake in your neighbor's dreams and struggles as well as your own, that we are about common cause and common destiny.

Fast forward a few decades to a meeting I attended a summer ago, so this is 2018, in Aspen of a smallish group on a bipartisan basis of former secretaries of state, NSA leaders, and other senior diplomats and security officials. And we had a briefing in that meeting about what the Russian interference in the 2016 election was really about. Much of this has been reported on since, the pattern and campaign of misinformation and disinformation, the ways in which conspiracy theories were fomented, even to the point of organizing rallies by invisible and unheard of and in fact unreal candidates and causes, to which people came and made their presence felt. The charges of voter fraud and interference that were so often repeated, that they became for some accepted fact and evidence of a rigged election. And now we're learning that much of that effort was organized around race. It struck me then, as I listened to all of that chilling detail, not just how brazen it was to undertake to undermine our democracy, not just how insidious it was to do so essentially by turning us on ourselves, but how easy it was -- how easy. And it was easy because we don't know each other. It's harder to call someone a name, to marginalize someone you know. It's harder to dismiss a different point of view if it comes from someone you know and have learned to respect.

I remember the morning after I was nominated to head the civil rights division in the Justice Department, the very next morning I was asked by Senator Kennedy, my senator, to come up to the Hill and to stand just outside the doors of the Senate and shake hands with senators as they came off the floor for a vote. And this nervous 30-something year old nominee coming in after quite a lot of trouble in filling the position and all the controversy that went around -- you remember this Bill -- and there I was - - and I must have shaken hands with 70 senators. And I remember afterwards asking the Senator why did we do that, and he said because it's a lot harder to attack someone whose hand you've shaken.

I support national service because we don't know each other, because our sense of national community is frayed and in some ways is unraveling, and because unless that is repaired all hope for lasting and meaningful change, change that meets our generational responsibility to leave things better for those who come behind us, all hope of that is in jeopardy. And I know it works. Ten years ago this coming January, as part of the second inauguration of our administration in Massachusetts, we

launched an initiative called Project 351, which brought together eighth graders from each of the 351 cities and towns on the Commonwealth around service. And we gathered in Boston, we had a service project we did together, we talked about service, we celebrated service, and then we charged these eighth graders to go back to their communities and be ambassadors, indeed evangelists, for service. And we focused on that because it tends that the athletes, the scholars, they get their recognition, sometimes the good citizens don't. And this was about elevating that.

Ten years in this initiative is still underway as a functioning nonprofit and the estimates are that those young people have touched 650,000+ lives in our Commonwealth and made each other understand that service is not just about what you do, but who you are. It's about learning and modeling the importance of turning to each other rather than on each other. And that is how community is built, in small ways or nationally. And we are hungry for and needful of this today, right now.

And so I am so glad you are here, but I am so hopeful that we will go from here and advocate for universal national service for our own sake and the future of our democracy.

I'm delighted to be with you. Thank you. (Applause)

MS. SAWHILL: Governor, thank you. And I love what you pioneered in Massachusetts with lifting up citizenship and not just athletic and academic achievement. You really need that.

Jesse, so wonderful to have you here and sorry you had to be last, because you were the key person in helping -- you and your organization -- helping to put this together. So thank you again for that.

MR. COLVIN: I'm Jesse. I'm the CEO of Service Year Alliance. It's great to be here.

The first thing I want to say is we take at Service Year Alliance the alliance part of our organization's name very seriously. So on behalf of my team, I just want to convey to Belle, the Brookings team, to General Allen, Barbara, Governor, and to everyone here, thank you for your partnership, for making this event happen, and for being allies.

As the youngest person on stage, who was hired to be a next generation leader to usher Service Year Alliance into its next chapters, I want to share two things with you this morning. The first is I

want to share the perspective of a leader of a team who aspires to stand on the shoulders of the giants, of those who built the national service movement, and who aspire to take the movement into its next phases. And, second, I'm really excited to tell everybody about our Serve America Together campaign.

I am an elder millennial (laughter), which in plain English means when the 9/11 attacks occurred I was 17 years old. I was a senior in high school and my initial reaction was to get the military recruiters on the phone. That was the first of many near heart attacks I gave my hippie parents. (Laughter) I decided to root and ground my pursuit of service in education, so I went to college and I studied Arabic and I studied the Middle Est. And then afterwards I went to Syria and I taught English to Iraqi refugees. This was 2006, so the war in Iraq was nearing its lowest point. I could see from Damascus that if that if it got it wrong in Baghdad the violence would spread over from Iraq into Syria and throughout the rest of the region.

So I came home and I joined the military. I served in the Army, I served as an Army Ranger, I served as an intelligence officer, I served four combat deployments to Afghanistan. It's in my military experience, especially in Afghanistan, where I learned the power of what happens when Americans from all walks of life join together to tackle shared problems. It's the powerful connective tissue that occurs when you share a foxhole with your fellow Americans. We learned to trust in each other, we learned to trust in the institution that sent us to man the foxhole in the first place.

If you've been to a Habitat for Humanity worksite or an AmeriCorps classroom, you're seeing that same connective tissue. Different type of foxhole, but same connective tissue. My national service experience transformed my personal relationship with my community, with my country, with my own sense of my own citizenship. When I met my wife on a blind date, my wife served in a police uniform actually here in Washington, D.C. and had worked for members of congress on the other side of the political aisle. What got us to date number two was not my wit or my charm, it was our common experience around our service.

Flash forward to 2017, my wife and I heard that the first year of marriage is particularly easy, so we just went ahead and had a baby and ran for congress. (Laughter) On the campaign we built

a coalition that extended from a Bernie Sanders chapter over here, all the way to members of the President George H.W. and W. Bush Administrations. But to be a candidate on the campaign trail in 2018 was to have a front row ticket to the divide, to the tearing apart of our civic fabrics along socioeconomic, political, religious divides. And it was a glimpse into a very dystopian future, which will be our country if we don't invest in solutions that unite us.

So that's why I'm so excited about national service, especially service years, because I believe they have a power and we at Service Year Alliance believe they have the power to bring people together in common causes.

At Service Year Alliance we see the best antidote to the divides that we have been talking about this morning as service years, and that's why I'm really excited to talk about our Serve America Together campaign. So Serve America Together campaign, the purpose of the campaign is to make national service a part of growing up in this country. It has three goals. The first, we want to elevate and make national service a key issue in the 2020 presidential campaign. We want candidates to be asked about and be expected to have plans, the same way you would expect for healthcare or trade or foreign policy. That's number one. Number two, we want to advance and elevate and push forward legislation at the federal level around national service. And, number three, we want to advance an ecosystem of partnerships and ideas and policies that are going to make national service something that every young American, it should be a common expectation and opportunity that they have.

It is a first of its kind coalition and we are drawing upon leaders from both the civilian and military spheres, but we have a phenomenal group of leaders lending it. That's General Stanley McChrystal, who happens to be our board chair at Service Year Alliance, we have Secretary Bob Gates, Secretary Condoleezza Rice, Arianna Huffington, Governor Patrick as one of our co-chairs. We are very honored and lucky to have your voice and to be in our corner, sir.

When we launched the campaign in June we also launched a Presidential Challenge. So the challenge is to the 2020 candidates to make national service a priority in the first 100 days of their administration and to roll out big, bold, ambitious plans to scale and make national service a priority.

Three candidates have directly accepted the challenge. Mayor Pete is the highest profile of those. Many other candidates have rolled out -- they have not accepted the challenge, but they have rolled out big bold plans around national service. We want every candidate to accept the challenge. We can live with at the end of this every candidate having a plan for national service, the same way you would expect them to have a plan for healthcare.

We here at Service Year Alliance think national service is actually inevitable. We think it's inevitable because we're talking about the civic divides. We are about to enter a political phase beginning in Washington where those divides are only going to deepen. We think at some point as these divides get deeper and deeper and our fabric is continuing to be torn apart, that we're going to have leaders grasping for solutions to help bring us back together, to unify us. And we think national service is the best antidote.

So for us, our message is rather than start 5, 10, 15 years from now -- to echo what Governor Patrick said -- it's an urgent moment and let's get started right now.

If we are going to get there, we're going to need leaders from both sides of the aisle who are thinking about the day after tomorrow, or the day after the day after tomorrow, looking for ways to unify the country. And if we're going to make national service part of growing up in America, we need to grow and strengthen our alliance. So if you have a child or a grandchild at home who is over the age of 18, and this sounds like an opportunity they should be thinking about, come talk to us, we can help.

If you are a Hill staffer, please go back to your boss and tell them that this is an issue they should sink their teeth into. We need champions on this issue and there's an opportunity for leadership. If you're connected to a presidential campaign, go talk to your candidate, tell them to answer the challenge, tell them to make national service, his or her national service a big part of their plan.

And to everyone else, come join our alliance and help make a year of paid full-time service, a service year, part of growing up in America and a common expectation and opportunity for all young Americans.

Now, you can tell I ran for office but didn't win because I have left some time on the clock

(laughter) So what I'm going to do is I'm going to ask member of my team here to raise their hand. We have a good chunk of our team here. So if you have questions about Service Year Alliance, about service years, about how you can get involved, there are some great Americans raising their hands right now.

So I just want to echo once again, thank you very much and thanks for the panel, thanks for being here, and can't wait. (Applause)

MS. SAWHILL: Thank you, Jesse. And if any of you have questions you'd like to ask each other or further comments you'd like to make in response, now is the time to do it. I have a few questions if you don't. And then in a few minutes we'll turn to the audience itself. So those of you who are out there, be thinking what you might want to ask when we get to that point.

While everybody is thinking, I'll start out by throwing a question back to Dr. Heck. You talked a lot about getting out around the country and listening to people, which I think is so commendable. And it sounded like the reaction was very positive. I just want to push a little bit on where were the divides in the divide? In other words, where were people saying, yeah, it's a good idea to have national service, but what about X? What were some of the push backs as well as the enthusiasm?

MR. HECK: Well, interestingly, Belle, there really wasn't much push back to the concept of national service. I think where there was some debate that we encountered was over whether or not it should be mandatory/universal versus remain a voluntary program.

Certainly, those that want to keep national service as a volunteer program feel that that is one of the most important underlying premises of service in this country, is the willingness for somebody to actually volunteer. Now, as we define national service for the Commission, it's, you know, the personal commitment of time, energy, and talent to a mission that contributes to the common good by protecting the nation and the citizens, strengthening communities, or promoting the general welfare. And folks feel that the most benefit comes from volunteering.

And it's interesting -- we met with high school students all around the country, we talked to them about this idea of a semester of service or perhaps a gap year where it would be a year of

service. Universally they were all for it, but they said just don't make me have to do it. They want it to do it, but they want it to be their idea. So that's the one side. The other side, as we've heard, is it should be a kind of a rite of passage, as in many foreign countries. And we actually spoke with many foreign countries that have some type of requirement for national or military service.

So I think that that was the biggest divide. But it encouraging to us was the fact that no one really said I don't think national service is a good idea.

MS. SAWHILL: Okay. Barbara Stewart and also Governor Patrick, I think that this is a very complicated issue when you think about what's the role of the federal government and what's the role of states and communities in the nonprofit sector. And I'm sure as a management challenge in your current position, you have had to struggle with that, as has someone who served as governor.

Would you like to say anything more about this difficulty of making these very complicated partnerships work and managing a federal agency, like the one you're in right now?

MS. STEWART: I'd be happy to take a stab at that and then the Governor may have some ideas as well.

Our programs really are all about partnership. So, for example, the federal government is the largest funder, but all of the resources that we deploy against national service are matched. And so the \$1 billion that the federal government makes in national service, it actually translates into over \$2 billion of investment. States, local governments, and nonprofits are a big piece of that. A significant amount of our funding flows through state government, so we have partnerships with state commissions.

It does create some complication. It also creates a big web of partnerships and alliance, as Jesse was saying, which I think is one of the strengths of the national service ecosystem, but it also creates some real complications. When you want to make change, some people embrace that change and others don't embrace it as quickly. So as we try and improve the national service ecosystem, you really have to get the buy-in of a whole lot of folks.

I also was frustrated in my early months at CNCS to learn that many governors don't know about this wonderful resource that they have. So the expectation when AmeriCorps was first

developed was that the governors themselves would be deeply involved. And that hasn't fully occurred over the years. And so I think one of our continuing challenges it to make sure that state government recognizes what a wonderful asset national service is in governors' ability to promote their own policy agendas because of the nimbleness and the local nature of national service.

Anything you want to add to that?

MR. PATRICK: No. (Laughter) I guess I would just say this, Belle, because I want to be respectful of your question, and I think Barbara did really nail it, but I think we should be careful not to let the complexity of broadening a program of national service -- and in my view it should be everybody -- dissuade us from the importance of doing so. It may have something to do with the pace at which we get to everybody. But the notion that service would be available only to those could afford to take the time and not everybody, including those who need an income in order to be able to do it, the notion that there isn't profound unmet need all over the country, that is met in part by people taking responsibility for that dimension of their community and, indeed, the development opportunities that have been talked about over and over again here today in doing so.

And I think in a way sooner or later, America, we're going to have to decide whether we're a country or not and, you know, do we really mean to be one nation.

And so I have a little bit that reaction when I'm saying, well, here comes the federal government again. This is not the federal government as if it is some thing out there, this is us, you and I. This is our democracy, our national community. And I think that the point that has been made a couple of times about the importance of collaborating through other agencies, local organizations and leaders, to make service real across all of our differences is the strategy that worked for us in Massachusetts and I think has worked nationally and can and needs to be scaled.

MS. SAWHILL: Thank you.

Jesse Colvin, I am sitting here wishing I was an elder millennial when I'm actually an elder elder (laughter). But I think it's great that your new energy is being added to all the efforts that are under way here. And you mentioned a lot about the democratic political candidates who are or are not

jumping on board with this. Do you want to say a little bit more about the politics of this? I think what you're hearing from most of the people up here is we'd like this to be a bipartisan effort and hope it can be. And I don't want to put you on the spot, but is that going to be a challenge?

MR. COLVIN: I'm an Army Ranger, which means I'm trained to be on the spot, so that's okay. Appreciate the question.

This is a bipartisan issue. There are challenges we're going to have to deal with navigating Capitol Hill, so let's just start with real ordinary people. So if you look at polling across the country, this poll is at 75-80 percent among republicans across the country. It's higher among democrats and independents, it's higher among young people. Every moment in the national service movement where we've had significant progress, it has been a bipartisan effort, regardless of which party was in the White House at the time.

In a second the vice chair of Service Year Alliance, John Bridgeland, who co-authored this paper we're talking about -- Bridge led the Domestic Policy Counsel for President George W. Bush. So that's part one. Part two is there are some things we're working on to help make the case. So we recognize that -- we convened a summit several weeks ago. We worked with 10 impact communities, what we call impact communities. It's place based work around the country and it's 10 communities around the country. It's from Boston to Austin, Texas, the coasts are represented, the heartland is represented, the south, it's big cities, it's rural Appalachia, Kentucky. Service looks a little bit different in each of those communities, and that's just fine. We want it to be locally driven. And some of those communities, service years are being used to tackle opioids and the opioid epidemic. Elsewhere it's how do we give people we all opportunity youth -- have been out of work or school for a year -- an opportunity to really change their career trajectories, and open up service years to people who frankly don't look like me. The more we do that, the more tangible -- if I can take somebody hypothetically to say Toledo, Ohio or Austin, Texas or East Boston three years from now and show them this is what a community with universal national service looks like, that's going to make our case easier on Capitol Hill.

And the last thing I'll say is the teenagers in your life, they probably frustrate you because

they can be frustrating and they have very little trust and patience for their parents and grandparents. They are out on the streets marching. The other side of that coin is they feel the urgencies and they have no patience, and they want this. So what might be frustrating in your personal lives, we actually see as one of the main reasons this movement is going to get across the finish line.

MS. STEWART: And if I could put an exclamation point on that. For my experience, national service is one of the few truly bipartisan issues that are being discussed in this town, in Washington, D.C., which makes it a pleasure to be part of. We've seen increases in our appropriation the last two years under a republican House and Senate. There's a lot of bipartisan support for national service and we should be capitalizing on that. We need to be taking advantage of the breadth of support because it's really one of the great assets of national service.

MS. SAWHILL: Thank you. Those were really important comments I think. And I want to reinforce something that Jesse said about two of the people who are sitting in the audience and that are going to be on the next panel. They are sitting next to each other and I'm looking right at them. One is Bill Galston, who was deputy director of the Domestic Policy Council in the Clinton Administration and I was there as well and we worked hard on this. But then there is John Bridgeland, who played a very important role as director of the -- was it also called the Domestic Policy Council -- in the Bush Administration. So I think we have that represented here today and I'm so glad you will all speak to that.

All right. Unless anybody up here has anything more they'd like to say, I'm going to open this up to the audience. Wait for someone to bring you a microphone, please introduce yourself and your affiliation, and try to keep it relatively short. I may collect a few different questions and then let the panel here decide which ones they want to tackle.

All right, start right here in the front row.

MS. WERTHEIM: I'm Mitzi Wertheim with the Naval Postgraduate School, but I was the first person to join the Peace Corps Task Force the day that Kennedy announced he was making it a program. So I went from the Peace Corps to the War Corps. I believe in public service.

I just have a recommendation. I think the most important thing in life is relationships and

I think that's a phrase that would be really useful to incorporate in what you're talking about. And when we live in a city where the President just destroys relationships, we really need to have other voices saying this really matters.

MS. SAWHILL: Thank you. Back there -- yes, you. Yes, right.

MR. GALVIN: Good morning.

MS. SAWHILL: Actually, I was pointing to this guy right here, but go ahead and then you can pass the microphone over to him.

MR. GALVIN: Okay. I'm Bill Galvin and I'm with the Center on Conscious & War.

We have heard a lot of talk about universal service and an expectation of service. We also heard from Dr. Heck about young folks who said we like service, but we don't want to -- don't force us to do it.

So my question is, if you're talking about universal service, are you thinking it's going to be mandatory and, if so, how will you deal with the people who say I'm not going to do it. And if it's not going to be mandatory, how are you envisioning making it universal?

MS. SAWHILL: That's a really great question, but let's hold and get a couple more.

MR. REEG: Hi, good morning, I'm Bob Reeg with Peach Through Action USA. We aspire to implement national service.

My question -- any of you could answer it if you choose -- is about income disparity between the service lines. I'm working on budgeting for some privately funded positions right now and boy, am I having like an awareness check about what it costs to actually afford housing in different communities in the country. And an AmeriCorps living allowance at its highest level doesn't cut it. So I just think as we move forward growing national service, we need to pay attention to are we properly compensating the people serving and also looking at the differentials, like a public service, federal employee is getting a lot more than an AmeriCorps member, and of course military pay is all over the place.

So I just would be interested in that.

MS. SAWHILL: Thank you. Right here.

MS. BABCOCK-LUMISH: Great, thank you. First of all, a huge thank you to this panel. My name is Terri Babcock-Lumish. I'm the executive secretary of the Harry S. Truman Scholarship Foundation. So I share with you this business of public service and I love your sentiments as far as this genuinely being an alliance.

So first of all, what I would say is I'm keen to work with you. For those of you who are not familiar with us, we are the presidential memorial to President Truman. He didn't go to college. And so rather than having a brick and mortar monument on the Mall -- I love those, they're beautiful -- but unlike the Washington Monument or Lincoln Memorial, we provide a \$30,000 scholarship for each state by state competitive process for the most outstanding junior college --

MS. SAWHILL: Pull the microphone closer.

MS. BABCOCK-LUMISH: My apologies. Basically, we are a scholarship for young people making commitments to career in public service.

Dovetailing on the economic question, I agree wholeheartedly with the sentiments here, but for so many of our scholars, it's an economic question. So it's not that they're not interested, it's not that they're not keen, but with college debt being what it is, with affordable housing being questioned in so many cities, we want to make sure we can support them.

So it's a way of saying I hope this is the start of an ongoing conversation. We'd love to work with you. But I really think, as also a former government economist, we need to be thinking about how we make this sustainable and sustained, because the sentiment, the interest, the appetite is there, it's just hard when it comes to dollars and sense.

MS. SAWHILL: Okay. Thank you. I'm going to take one more, Bob, and then we'll come back to the panel to see if you all have comments on issues that have been raised.

MR. STEIN: Thank you. Bob Stein is my name. Like Belle, I am an elder elder. I consider myself refocused. (Laughter)

The panel emphasized the arguments and evidence that people would want to serve and

would benefit from it. But how do you get the institutions who you want them to work within -- Barbara Stewart, you briefly mentioned that -- because it takes time to mentor, train, and advise people. If you don't spend the time, their experience isn't that good.

So what incentives can you provide for institutions to take on these volunteers?

MS. SAWHILL: These are all great questions and really do need to be grappled with. Anybody want to tackle one or more of them?

DR. HECK: So, if it's okay, I'll kind of give the perspective of where the Commission has one on these issues, because we have looked at all of them.

Certainly, the idea of when I say everyone who wants to serve should have a clear and supported path to service, means that they should have the opportunity to serve and be paid a wage or a stipend that allows them to serve without suffering any economic detriment. We want all Americans inspired and eager to serve, regardless of socioeconomic class.

We hear a lot about the gap year. Well, it shouldn't just be about the affluent who can afford to take a year off between high school and college. If we truly want to heal the divides in this nation, then it goes to what's been said by other panelists of putting people from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds together in service to a common cause. And so that means we have to be able to provide the resources necessary for all individuals to have that opportunity.

So long story short is one of the areas that we are looking at is how do we better define or reestablish or change the benefits packages that are associated with the various forms of service so that all those who want to serve actually have that clear and supported path. I do not plan to reveal any of the recommendations. That will be coming out. I would say I would not be surprised to see a portion of the final report that addresses this area in great detail.

MS. SAWHILL: (Laughter) Terrific.

Yes, Jesse.

MR. COLVIN: I'm going to try to answer four questions at once quickly.

We are very clear at Service Year Alliance, we are advocating for voluntary years of

national service. We think the way to get there is through peer pressure. That's when we talk about common expectation and opportunity. We think we will hit a tipping point meet and say where did you serve, and if you haven't served -- General McChrystal likes to talk about when people start looking at their shoes because they're embarrassed because they didn't serve, that's how you get to universal.

Cost. I mentioned the Alliance. There's a great member of our broader community, broader alliance, called Silvernest. I encourage you to check them out. So in San Jose, for example, where housing costs are through the roof, they are one of our impact communities, we recognize that folks doing service years cannot afford the rent based on their living stipend. It's a nonprofit that we've brought in and they are helping match refocused elder elders with perhaps an empty room in their home with a young person who is doing a service year. And there are all sorts of wonderful byproducts that come out of those relationships.

Cost and who does service years. The reason we advocate our mission is a year of paid full-time service -- when I joined the military in 2006, the word privilege wasn't really in the lexicon, but had I wanted to go in a different direction and done a service year, I would have had the economic privilege. My parents could have supplemented me. If we want to get to the number of people doing service years, we're going to have to unlock communities who don't have that privilege, which means some of these service years are going to be around workforce development. So rather than sign up -- perhaps a recruiting message around service for service sake, because you don't have the privilege to think about it that way, you have to help a family member put food on the table, it's about giving you a job opportunity and a career trajectory you wouldn't have if not for the service year.

And the last thing is just cost in general. You hire an Army Ranger, you get a blunt answer, so let us be blunt. Service years are expensive. Average is about \$22,000 a year per person. Big bold ideas often cost a lot of money. What you probably don't know, and if you're a Hill staffer I encourage you to take this back to your boss, the federal government gets \$2 back for every \$1 it invests in service years. So it gets \$1 back in terms of taxes. If you look at the data, people who do service years tend to earn more over their lifetime. And that comes back in the form of taxes. That's a really

good thing.

And the second thing is, if the federal government gets \$1 back in terms of federal social safety net programs, so in plain English that means people who do service years tend to have to rely upon federal social safety net programs. This might sound counterintuitive, but if you work for a member of congress who is interested in reducing the size of the federal programs that we call social safety net programs, service years are actually a great place to invest federal dollars, because for every \$1 that goes in, \$2 comes back.

So trying to answer four questions very quickly.

Thank you, Belle.

MS. SAWHILL: Terrific. Any other comments from up here?

MS. STEWART: I love what Jesse had to say and I love your examples. I think that was terrific. I would only elaborate to say partnerships is the way we make service years more available to a greater population, and some creativity. So in some of the communities where we operate, the local transportation authority has offered free transportation. In other places we have additional benefits offered by local partners. And we need to be continuing to develop those partnerships. Our partners at the state and local level need to continue to develop them, but we need to make these service years available to all Americans, regardless of their background, and those kind of partnerships are how we are going to do it.

MS. SAWHILL: Okay. Well, I think it's time to thank all of you for being here and taking the time to do this. It's been a terrific discussion.

We're going to take a 10 minute break now -- no more please. Come back because the next panel is going to be very interesting and the final panel, as we said earlier, is going to be dynamite.

So many thanks to all of you and reconvening soon.

(Applause)

(Recess)

MR. GALSTON: Well, it's my happy duty to introduce and moderate the Second Panel.

Let me just begin by introducing myself briefly. I'm Bill Galston, a Senior Fellow in the Governance Studies Program here at Brookings. I'm delighted to be a small cog in the Brookings Service Year Alliance machine that has produced this meeting.

I want to thank two people in particular, Belle Sawhill, for conceiving of this day and working tirelessly over a period of at least six months to bring it about. And also our President, John Allen, for lending his vast experience and immense moral authority to our enterprise this morning. And I think it's a sign that Brookings is spiritually aligned with the National Service Movement.

Let me introduce the question this way. If national service is the answer, what's the question? And we have heard, and I think we'll hear, three very different kinds of answers to that question, and it's useful to keep them separate.

You know, the first has to do with service and as an avenue of personal growth, the expansion, the deepening of character.

The second has to do with actual good done for others, service in the root sense.

But the third, and this is where the paper by John Bridgeland and John Dilulio begins, is with our broader civic challenges, and with national service as a potential response to those challenges.

What are those challenges? Well, first of all a decline of mutual trust among fellow citizens, sorts of things that the survey researchers call general social trust.

Second, is a precipitous rise in divisive partisanship, there is a difference between a party system and partisanship, and sometime in the past two generations we have crossed that line, and now find ourselves in a very uncomfortable and unproductive place.

And third is what I would call the erosion of the problem-solving mentality. The idea that elected and appointed officials are engaged in a common civic enterprise where the problems that the public has identified call out for responses -- solutions that the public itself cannot specify, and the job of public service is to turn public ends into public means.

I've personally been deeply impressed with the quality of the Iraq and Afghanistan veterans who have entered public service. They have this problem-solving mentality in spades, and one

of the questions is whether the national service experience, on the civilian side, can replicate that kind of: we're all in it together in the same foxhole now, you know, how do we find a way to prevail?

Will that mentality -- will that mentality spread? Or to put it in very old-fashioned language that goes all the way back to William James: is national service the moral equivalent of war? Or is there no moral equivalent of war?

Well, we have a fantastic panel to help us address these questions. I'll begin to my immediate left with John Bridgeland who is the Former Director of the White House Policy Council under President George W. Bush, and currently serves as the Vice Chair of the Service Year Alliance, about which you've already heard, and from whom you've already heard.

His partner in crime, John Dilulio Jr., who is the Professor of Politics, Religion And Civil Society, which sort of means you're a Professor of everything, at the University of Pennsylvania. You know, and John also has White House experience as the first Director of the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives in 2001, which means that Bridge and John were colleagues, perhaps a little bit more briefly than might have been expected. But, yes, they were.

To their left is Tai Adams, who is the Director of Government Relations for the Service Year Alliance, which means she is where the Service Year hits the political road, and that is a very important nexus that she's going to help us explore.

And finally, Pete Wehner who is currently a Vice President and Senior Fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center, he also has very substantial White House experience as a Speechwriter, as the Director of Strategy, and also, I would say, as a moral voice, right. Very few have reflected more deeply than Pete on what it means to have a healthy society, and what our current ills are, and to what they can be traced. And he will offer some reflections from a distinctively conservative, and I would add faith-based perspective on national service.

So, without further ado, John Bridgeland and John Dilulio are going, jointly, to present their paper: *Will America Embrace National Service?*

Let me just add one note, I think there is a broad commitment to shared ideals and goals

in the room, but we can't get carried away with ourselves, all right.

This is Brookings, so empirical inquiry matters a lot because it's where we test the feasibility of the ideas that we cherish, and may have to change those ideas in some respects as the result of what honest inquiry discovers. And in this paper, if I may say so, is a model of honest inquiry and it does its co-authors proud, and Brookings is proud to be associated with it.

John Bridgeland?

MR. BRIDGELAND: Good morning everyone. It's nice to see a packed house. We need packed houses for national service all across America. I want to thank Bill Galston, without whom actually AmeriCorps, and together was Susan Stroud, who I see in the back; Alan Khazei, a lot of people, Belle in the audience, actually it wouldn't have come into existence in a time in the life in the country when President Clinton said, "You invest in your country, we'll invest in you." And it was a galvanizing moment.

I also want to thank Belle Sawhill, you know, she launched the Social Genome Project, and a whole host of initiatives. And it seems like anything Belle gets behind actually happens, so I'm more optimistic about national service now that you're conducting this panel.

I also want to thank John Dilulio and Pete Wehner. I had 15 years in public service, greatest years of my life, and having the opportunity to serve side-by-side with John and Pete after 9/11, and seeing this emergence from the country of people all over the globe wanting to make common cause, to make a better country and world together, it was really quite extraordinary.

When I came in this morning I met a General, a Congressman and Dr. Joseph Heck. And I said, is that all? And he goes, no, actually I founded the Medical Reserve Corps after 9/11. So, that's the model of what we're trying to achieve in America, people who view national service, citizen service as fundamental and foundational.

I wasn't going to go into it, but now that Joe said that the Commission is going to focus on civic education, it just reminds me that the people who founded our country, George Washington said: when we assumed the soldier we did not lay down the citizen. John Adams said: our duty to serve our country ends but with our lives. When Jefferson penned this mystical notion of the pursuit of happiness, it

wasn't just an individual right. But as Governor Deval Patrick reminded us: it was actually a cooperative, a collective enterprise that we help one another achieve.

And I can't be truly happy if I'm not worrying about the happiness of my neighbor, and someone who is homeless, or vulnerable, or worried. And it was that spirit, you know, "We the people," that really was the foundation of our democracy, and the foundation of this country. And I think we have to rescue that spirit.

So, why now? Why always for national service? What's the problem we're trying to address? The first panel spoke so eloquently about our civic collapse, but I want to share a story. I grew up on Drake Road in Cincinnati, Ohio, just a few doors down from a man named Neil Armstrong. And this very shy, reclusive man used to come over for dinner, and when I was at a very impressionable age he said, you know, the audacity of this young President to go to the well of the House, and summon the nation to put a man on the moon within a decade, and return him safely, you know, within 10 years.

And we actually had no idea how to pull it off, and yet 400,000 engineers around the country worked together to make it happen. And I remember being a nine-year-old kid on the screen porch watching Neil Armstrong land on the moon.

And it seems to me that as Governor Patrick and others mentioned, we have so many challenges in this country that national service can actually help address, I don't see why we don't have opportunity millennium goals in the country, to take on education, and conservation, and poverty, and a whole host of issues that national service, there's evidence that national service could help address.

It's also interesting to note, you know, what's the problem we're trying to address? Robert Putnam wrote two wonderful books, *Bowling Alone*, *Better Together*, actually a third called *Our Kids*. And when I asked him for a historic perspective he said, you know, that social cohesion, or social fragmentation, political polarization, economic inequality, and civic collapse, all actually work in virtual lockstep.

And if you look at trends from the Gilded Age through the 1960s and '70s, and even today, you see them moving together. And so what we do as a nation civically, how we take care of our

communities, as Deval was talking about so eloquently, matters significantly to how we view one another, how we view inequality economically, and of course I think we're having a political, cultural, and economic nervous breakdown in this country.

So we see the effects of a lack of understanding of the Constitution. Mortimer Adler wrote this wonderful book called *We Hold These Truths* on the 200th Anniversary of the celebration of the Declaration that said, "The highest office of the United States is not the presidency, its citizen." And we need to remind young people all over this country that big citizenship is really the wave of the future.

I want to talk concretely though, because I know, you know, I can't tell you the number of audiences we speak to all over the country, and Stan McChrystal, who's our Chair, comes back from speaking in a -- you know, rallying the course of union, but there's all the -- always this wonder: could we actually pull it off? Why for such a big idea that it's Jesse Colvin our CEO, has mentioned, attracts widespread public support among Republicans, Democrats, Independents.

We talk about the civic healing effects. I've co-chaired something called the Earth Conservation Corps for over a decade with Ethel Kennedy and Bob Nixon. And we work with the most vulnerable kids in the Anacostia, Congress Heights, Kenilworth, and interestingly one day they were serving on the Anacostia, and we had brought kids from McLean and Potomac, and had this great mixing in our service efforts.

And I sort of had the audacity to ask, you know, what politics are you? And there were Republicans, there were Democrats, there was even a Libertarian.

What faiths are you? There were Christians, Jews, Muslims, and the project that they were working on was actually bringing the bald eagle, our nation's symbol, back to the nation's capital. And we have bald eagles who fly over this beautiful landscape day in and day out, because of the work of those national service participants.

But I want to talk just briefly about, could we bring this idea to scale, and what have we learned from various models? Interestingly, in 1933 Franklin Roosevelt calls Congress into an Emergency Session, and by summer has 250,000 young unemployed men in the woods through the

Civilian Conservation Corps. By the end of the program three million had served, three billion trees had been planted, 84 million acres of land had been saved, which is the entire acreage of our National Park System today.

And when you talk to the CCC boys, it was a spiritual experience for them. It changed the trajectory of the rest of their lives. It was also run by the U.S. Army, and a young George C. Marshall organized the CCC camps. So the thought that we would have, for the first time since 1933, a commission looking at how we marry military, civilian and the national service opportunities together is really compelling.

Second, the Peace Corps, the thought that we'd have U.S. policy to send our sons and daughters, our mothers and fathers, eventually our grandmothers and grandfathers, to remote areas all across the world to meet needs in other countries, was sort of a bold experiment.

But when Shriver sent his memo to John Kennedy in 1961 he actually didn't want to just create a Federal program called Peace Corps, he wanted to run Peace Corps through nonprofit organizations, colleges and universities, agencies at all levels.

And Peace Corps remain small today because that vision wasn't fulfilled. And then came AmeriCorps, roaring along, which actually took that, had that instinct to go to the strength of America, to its nonprofit institutions, and colleges and universities, and to give support to those institutions, and build off the strength of civil society.

And so I think those models are really instructive as we think about: how do we marry military, civilian and public service? And how do we go to where the strength of the country is today, which is in its institutions of civil society? So, over to Brother D, to talk about other elements of our report, including mandatory versus civilian national service.

MR. DILULIO: Thank you very much. Thanks, Bridge. And I know some of you are wondering what these socks are, and they are Philadelphia Eagles' socks. So, go Birds, I feel your pain Redskins fans. I really do.

SPEAKER: Go (inaudible), go Nats, and feel everybody else's pain.

MR. DILULIO: Go Nats? Well, I'm not going to say anything. No comment. But I want to thank the wonderful Belle Sawhill for inviting me to participate in this. And it's a special treat and honor to be here with three dear old friends, the amazing Bill Galston, the inspiring John Bridgeland, and the brilliant and the bold Pete Wehner. A Tai it's, you know, you're the only one up here who's practicing what everybody is preaching for real, for real. So it's a special treat and honor to meet you and be with you.

What I'm going to do is, I'm going to take a little time. I will, as they say in Congress, yield the balance of my time back to Brother Bridgeland, and just talk a little bit about two aspects of this, *Will America Embrace National Service Report*. The part that deals with public opinion and the part that deals with evidence on the benefits of national service.

So, if you go back and you look at the polling data on national service, all the way back to the creation of AmeriCorps, from 1993 to the present. So I'm looking at all the surveys that have been done. I think it's fair to say that there is one overarching conclusion, there are two corollary findings, and there's one caution. And I'm going to be very brief in expressing these.

The overarching conclusion is that indeed most Americans do support national service, that's every demographic description, that's every socioeconomic status, it's without regard to partisan identification, or ideological disposition they favor national service, if it is voluntary. That is unpaid, not required by law, or both.

And majorities tend to oppose it if it is mandatory or compulsory, defined as, as in required by law, or enforced administered by the government. One corollary finding is that the in-favor majority shrinks if voluntary, is government-supported. If you say expressly, oh, by the way government's got a nickel on the quarter, or 25 cents in the dollar, it shrinks a bit.

And if it is mandatory or compulsory, again, it goes down even more. But there's no question that the overall finding still is that Americans of every demographic description favor national service.

Another corollary finding is that most people believe that service, and that's whether the

service is national or community, paid or unpaid, benefits the servers, people believe that, that it develops skills, it enhances civic responsibility, they believe it benefits the persons, organizations and communities where people serve, by supplying direct services, or performing vital work in the community. And they believe it benefits the wider society.

That is, that it elevates citizenship, helps to model civic responsibility, helps to bridge, which we've heard a lot about this morning, socio-economic, political and other divides.

So, that's what the folks believe. But there is one caution here, and the caution is that for all the polls that have been done the fact is we still have a relatively limited universe of polls, and they're not all entirely well constructed and well conducted.

There are all kinds of stratification, and sampling issues, interpretation issues, and so forth. In fact, even if you compare the polling, the research, the survey research on national service, to polling data and survey research on other not top-top line issues, like faith-based initiatives, and so forth, it is a relatively anemic survey research literature, so what's needed there is a tune-up, a tune-up.

And if you're interested in that, if you look at the appendix to our report you'll find that we have some suggestions about how you could go about, at a relatively inexpensive -- good polls are expensive and doing them right is expensive -- how you might be able to -- might be able to improve the research, survey research on national service.

Let me now turn quickly to the benefits of national service. We know -- I mean we could probably fill this very nice room here at Brookings with all the studies that have been done with looking at the -- empirically looking at the benefits of national service. And the vast majority of those suggest that national service works.

But we need to make a couple of distinctions here. We know that volunteering works, we know that compared to otherwise comparable people who volunteer, right, people who do the volunteering have higher life satisfaction, higher self esteem, better self-rated health, better occupational and academic outcomes, longer lives; I'm getting to elder -- elder myself these days -- longer lives, and lots of other positive outcomes.

But we need to remember that the evidence on the benefits of volunteering is not of course synonymous with the evidence on the benefits of volunteer programs, per se, or of national service programs in particular. And so whether with respect to helping out at one's church, or a neighborhood school, or community elder-care facility, or in other ways, much of what counts and gets counted as volunteering, occurs wholly outside the context of any regular commitments, and any quasi-formal, or formal programmatic organizational setting or context, right. We have to just make that distinction.

Now, that duly remembered, that duly said, the fact is that when you do look at the research literature that does address national service programs in particular, the findings are very positive. There was a landmark literature review done in 2004, nothing has quite been done at that level of sophistication since, that looked at 139 pretty good studies, and the bottom line conclusion of that literature review on national service programs was that in the vast majority of cases you have national service program outcomes exceeding null or negative effects by a lot, like 6 and 7 to 1. And that's a lot. I mean that's gargantuan actually.

And many of the benefits in most of the studies -- I guess if you were to say: what benefits are most well documented? It really would be the server's skill development, the benefits, direct benefits to beneficiaries of the programs, service expansion and harder-to-measure improvements in service quality. It's all there.

So, we also have made a promising start, I would say, with respect to benefit cost analyses of national service programs. There was a wonderful study done in 2013 by Clive Bellfield, a study that was done for -- I guess it was for the Franklin Project and Civic Enterprises, and Voices for National Service, which found a benefit cost ratio of Federal national service programs, AmeriCorps in particular, of about 4 to 1, and that's a -- that's also a gargantuan finding.

But our benefit cost analyses still, too, are surprisingly in their infancy. I hate to -- I hate to mouth and conclude with the cliché that more research is needed, but more research is needed. And I think that it's -- but that all said, and I want to just conclude before I turn it back to Bridge, I want to

conclude by saying that I wouldn't be afraid in this particular area, to go with, the plural of anecdote is data.

And let me just tell you why, this is not in our report, but I've been, you know -- and in fact I met one of my former Princeton students here who worked at the Brookings Institution a moment ago, back to 1999. I've been in the academic dodge for -- I haven't had a real job -- for almost 40 years, and I could tell you that in all those years, in the last 15, 20 years at the University of Penn, running an Academic Leadership and Service Learning Program, hundreds and hundreds of former students, I get letters, and cards, and emails all the time.

And they say, boy, Prof-D, the best thing that we ever did was all those service programs like participating in the human physical and financial recovery process, and post-Katrina in New Orleans over 10 years, it was transformational. It was a laboratory for learning.

So, you know, I believe it, I think we're close -- I won't say we've proven it, but we're getting closer, and a little bit more research, but I'm not afraid of those data that are based on those anecdotes. So, Bridge, you can go from there.

MR. BRIDGELAND: Very good. Way to go. I think we're going to go into construction with Cousin Jimmy, and turned out to be a Professor, and we're so glad.

MR. DILULIO: Yes. What are you going to do?

MR. GALSTON: Cousin Jimmy is pretty happy about it too.

MR. DILULIO: Yeah, yeah, I think so. (Laughter) Very quickly, in the paper: *Will America Embrace National Service?* Which really is an open question, we sort of throw down the gauntlet. We actually outlined a plan of action that we also submitted with General McChrystal, Secretary Gates, Secretary Rice, and others, to the National Commission that Joe is leading.

And after 9/11 we actually talked about mandatory national service, and our White House Council came down to the office and said, well, it probably violates the Thirteenth Amendment, prohibition on involuntary servitude, probably violates the Fifth Amendment, deprivation of liberty, and may violate, depending on the circumstance, the First Amendment on religious free exercise, and free speech.

We did a two-year study of mandatory national service in the United States. A lot of people are sympathetic to it, and found that there is a zone of constitutionality you could actually structure a mandatory national service program that would satisfy the constitutional requirements, but there is almost zero political support for it. Charlie Rangel introduces the "lonely bill" in the U.S. Congress every year, and a few people join on to it, and nothing ever happens.

So, politically it's not feasible. But what we think is feasible is something approaching mandatory national service, which is large-scale, universal, voluntary national service. And I want to just quickly outline what we propose in the Service Year Alliance, and sent to the Commission, in terms of its core elements.

The first, we've done it before, is to actually set a national goal of 250,000 full-time national -- civilian national service opportunities for 18- to 28-year-olds, that's actually the exact number that the Edward M. Kennedy, Serve America Act that Orrin Hatch, Conservative Republican Orrin Hatch, he was the first person to call me after 9/11 said, I'm a Mormon, I did my Mormon Mission in the Great Lakes when I was a young man.

It ignited my 34 years of service in the U.S. Senate. It can change the trajectory of young people in this country. And so we know we can get there historically, we're only at about 66,000 full-time service opportunities today.

Second, we can link military and civilian national service together. So it might surprise you, 75 percent of the people who apply for the military are disqualified because they're high school dropouts, bad behavior, some are in prison or they're in poor health, 75 percent.

Why couldn't the U.S. Selective Service System be a conveyor belt for civilian national service? And so when I got my notice at 18, in addition to learning about the five branches of the Military, why didn't I learn about City Habitat, and Teach For America, and all these other wonderful opportunities.

In turn, the Military tells us that there are communities where the communities don't -- aren't interested in Military recruiting, and having civilian national service opportunities as part of that system may even help a Military recruitment.

Third, linking national service to college access, Jessie Colvin mentioned all these presidential candidates are coming forward with plans. Why isn't it that if you invest in your country, your country invests in you? Why don't you get a full year of college in the state you're from, or attending, for every year you do of national or other service, just like the GI Bill?

Fourth, recognizing national service is a civic apprenticeship, that when you finish your year or more of national service you actually get a credential that's relevant to getting a job, and that employers see all the skills, leadership, collaborative problem-solving, all the social-emotional skills that many employers think are missing in our workforce.

Finally, I think a very big idea is actually to democratize and open up national service by creating Service Year fellowships, they could be called AmeriCorps Service Year Fellowships, but basically giving it to the individual, that individual can make a choice about what accredited national service organization they want to serve in.

And instead of having just large grants going to a few non-profit organizations in the country, you would open up and really fulfill Sargent Shriver's vision, which is colleges and universities non-profit organizations, institutions of civil society, you'd have this Diaspora, this growing community of institutions and young people with choice, who would really be accelerated in advancing the national service idea.

So that's it from us. We worked hard on this paper. Please read it. It will make us feel better. And back to you.

MR. GALSTON: Thanks, John and John. Well, you've just -- you've just heard from the best of academic research on national service, now for some reality therapy. Tai, how does this translate into actual legislation, and how's that working for you?

MS. ADAMS: Can you hear me? Okay, perfect. Thank you.

MR. GALSTON: The trick is to hold it really close.

MS. ADAMS: Okay. And remind me if I let the mic slide a little bit. But it's a thrill to be here, and a great pleasure to be on the panel. Thank you Belle, thank you Brookings, and thank you for

this great paper.

And before I actually talk about what this looks like on The Hill and the policy proposals that Service Year Alliance is moving toward, I just want to tell you a little bit about myself, and my connection to service.

I do lead the Government Relations work at Service Year Alliance, and unlike a lot of the panelists, I didn't complete a Service Year, I didn't serve with the Military, didn't serve in office -- serve in office -- excuse me.

So, my connection to service in a real way really started about 10 years ago when I was working in Philadelphia, I had just transitioned from a career practicing law into something that was a bit more meaningful to me, and for me that was public education. And one of my co-workers at the time was doing a similar career transition, but for her she was transitioning from teaching, from the New Teacher's Project, which is an AmeriCorps program, into the policy side.

And so it was really the deep commitment that I saw from her to the students, that even though she wasn't teaching anymore, she was still very much involved in their lives, we'd walk down the street and people would run down and say, Mrs. Gardner, Mrs. Gardner. She was invited to their graduations, proms, unfortunately sometimes their funerals.

But it was that deep connection that I saw at that point that really introduced me to service. And through my career in Philadelphia, and then in D.C., the exposure to AmeriCorps programs, TNTP, City Year, Urban Teachers, it really kind of developed my commitment.

And what was interesting to me also is you have this idea of who serves and who was serving whom, and what I noticed is you had people coming from within their communities to serve in their community, outside of the community from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, socioeconomic.

And so that's really where I got inspired. As Bridge said, they must join the revolution. And so when I had the opportunity to join Service Year Alliance I jumped at the chance to join an organization that wanted to bring service at scale for young people, and make sure that it's a common opportunity.

And so what I wanted to talk about today is actually: what does this look like? How do we make this happen? And we know that the Federal piece is going to be a large piece, and so I wanted to elaborate on the piece of Federal legislation that we are trying to move forward, as part of our Serve America Together Campaign.

And we do call for universal national service, but I did want to make sure that I clarify once again that we don't advocate for mandatory, by universal we mean a common expectation and opportunity for all young people to serve.

And so what we've done is we've drafted a bill that we think fills the gaps that we see on the Federal level, and we also think that it's a bit strategic, we know this is a bipartisan issue, but we wanted to address something that we could really create a true bipartisan bill.

And so we're calling it right now the National Service Choice Act, and it does four things which I'll talk about, and then kind of play out what that actually looks like in reality. So, first and foremost what we think is key, is that it focuses on local communities. This is from the bottom up, what we're hearing from communities, how they view national service meeting needs in their community.

It also connects military and civilian, which is very important, on the Federal level, and then provides the flexibility of fellowships, which right now are named in the honor of the late Senator John McCain, so these would be McCain Fellows that would be issued to states that develop these service plans.

And then, very important, it makes sure that everyone can serve, and then also brings together young people in the community who are serving to form those relationships. I know the word "relationships" came up a little bit earlier, and so bringing people together in a real way.

So what does this look like? What we're proposing is a new Interagency Council that would be managed between CNCS and DoD, the Department of Defense, really making that connection on the Federal level between civilian and national service.

As Bridge had mentioned earlier, a lot of people that are interested in serving in the Military are not qualified. And why shouldn't they then be directed to national service opportunities? And

we also foresee a world where the Department of Defense could also do some type of joint promotion with national service programs. So we have that connection on the top level.

And then we have states that want to raise their hand and say, we see service as a strategy to meeting our community needs. And so what this would do is the Interagency Council would review these local plans developed by states, talking about how service would be a strategy to meeting needs, how they would make sure that every young person would have an opportunity to serve, how they would bring those young people together through professional development activities. So there's, you know, cross cultural, and there's interaction between different programs.

And then also how states would incentivize. We know this isn't just, you know, a Federal program as we discussed before. So what Local Incentives would they be? It could look like housing which we see in Flint, Michigan, it could look like, you know, college access. So how would states also provide individual incentives, and then this flexibility that is provided through these McCain Fellowships that would be issued through the Interagency Council, where a young person could get this fellowship and then also create their own service opportunity in a local non-profit.

And so that is what we envision, and what one of the great things has been is that when we have been meeting on The Hill there's a great appetite for this, there's interest in, especially the local focus, and we've drafted it in a way to support other legislation that is currently out there.

So, you might have heard of the Action Bill that has been introduced by some of our great champions, from Senator Reid, Senator Larson in the House. And the Action Bill is big and comprehensive, and provides a lot of education incentives, and so we've tried to be very deliberate in crafting a bill that complements some of the bills that are already out there.

And so we're kind of in the testing phase, getting feedback making -- incorporating that feedback into the legislation, and we hope to move this forward in the upcoming year and get a true bipartisan bill.

And before I, you know, turn it over. Why now? Like, you know, we know we're in a very tough environment, but what's been really encouraging to see is despite the proposed cuts to CNCS, as it

was mentioned earlier by Barbara Stewart, the appropriation has gone up the past two years.

We have a true bipartisan bill with an Education Award. As you probably know, the Education Award is taxed, and our partners at Voices for National Service have done a great job in moving a bill forward that would remedy that, and it's a true bipartisan bill in both the Senate and in the House.

We have the Commission that's going to be coming out with recommendations, and we have communities that are coming to us every day wanting to become a Service Year Impact Community, raising their hands saying we see service as a strategy. So we very much believe now is the time, we've tried to be very deliberate in crafting a bill that would move us forward towards a scale, and build upon the infrastructure that we already have. I'm just thrilled to be part of this discussion today.

MR. GALSTON: Let me just briefly bridge from number three to number four. First of all, Tai, thank you very much for a very clear and -- very clear and compelling summary of a piece of legislation that I think most people didn't know very much about until you laid it out. So thank you for that.

I also want to thank you for giving me an idea for a new Service Corps. It would be made up of lawyers searching for meaning, and it would be -- (laughter) -- and it would be massive.

MS. ADAMS: And I think one of our talking points is that demand very much outweighs supply. And I can guarantee you that Corps would be very much the same.

MR. GALSTON: I'm married to a recovered lawyer, so I can say that. Okay, now Pete Wehner, we heard a little bit earlier that from a public opinion standpoint support for national community service might be a little stronger on the Democratic and Independent side, than it has been historically on the Republican side, though it's not nonexistent there. So, from your perspective, what does the case for a national service look like?

MR. WEHNER: Thank you. Thanks ladies and gentlemen for being here. Belle and the Brookings Institution for organizing this, hosting it, for the colleagues here, two of whom are long-time friends, great scholars, but they're better people and better friends than they are scholars. And in my book friendship and character matters more even than scholarship, but they have both.

And I do want to say, just agreeing with what Bill said, which is this report. First, it's a short report, so you should read it. It's interesting, and it is a model of honest inquiry, and that's not always the case with reports, but this is.

But the question here is: Should America embrace national service? Will it? I don't know. Should it? I do know. Yes, it should. But often the resistance to national service is found most on the Republican side or the Conservative side, as Bill was saying. As a lifelong Conservative; and for most of my life a Republican up until about three years ago or so -- (laughter) -- let me make the conservative case for a national service.

There are three areas that I wanted to briefly touch on. One is, I think, it's good for the unity of the country. Second is, I think it's good for the people who engage in national service. And third I think it's good for the people who are on the receiving end of national service, the receiving end of relationships, of care, and of love.

So let me take those in order. I think it's good for the unity of the country, and that's something that Conservatives actually once cared a great deal about, in a nation of immigrants which Conservatives have traditionally celebrated. They often also spoke about the importance of assimilation. It respected -- the belief was that we should respect diversity, but there was also a need for a sense of unity, that the idea of love of country involved a sense of citizenship.

And I think that that's right. And I think that needs to be recovered, that the motto, the American motto, is *E Pluribus Unum*, and I think you could argue that there's too much focus on the *pluribus*, and not enough on the *unum* these days. And it's not just a theoretical concern.

I think today there are so many sources of social fragmentation and disunity. The social media we see it, and that's I think an (inaudible) driving force, economic inequality, polarization, the rise of identity politics on both the left and the right, a lack of trust in institutions, and in one another.

The term political tribalism, I really don't recall that being used much prior to a decade or so ago, but now it's really on the lips of almost everyone who speaks about politics. So, the centrifugal forces are overwhelming, the centripetal forces in American life. I think we're more falling apart than

we're coming together, and I think national service will help the centripetal forces to gain strength.

And national service provides shared experiences in solving public challenges, it connects people from different classes, and ethnicities, and races, and life experiences in ways that they often would, otherwise, not connect. And I'm guessing a lot of you know this from your own personal experience, your own lives, which is, when people work together side-by-side for a common purpose, political differences de-intensify. And if there's one thing that we can use in America today it's de-intensification of political differences.

At the Panetta Institute for Public Policy did a "Yes" Study, and they said that reports -- that the participants of all races and backgrounds describe how their service has taught them new perspectives and approaches, and expose them to groups of people with whom they would not have identified in the past.

And if you ask me what one of my wish lists were for the country, and for us as individuals, one of them would be, help me to see the world through the eyes of others, to better see the world through the eyes of others. Not necessarily to agree with them, not necessarily to buy into everything they believe, but to understand their perspective more.

And without going too much into philosophy, epistemological modesty has been central to Conservatism as I've understood it. It's the notion that none of us, by ourselves, can have anything like a full understanding of the nature of truth and reality. We need other people to gain those things, and part of that is having experiences with people who then have standing in your life to be able to impart those -- those different perspectives.

In 1990 Bill Buckley was a really a Founder of Modern Conservatism, wrote a book actually called, *Gratitude: Reflections On What We Owe Our Country*, and he called for a year of voluntary national service for young people as a way to strengthen their feelings and appreciation for the Nation.

And he said, "Materialistic democracy beckons every man to make himself a king, or a republican citizenship incites every man to be a knight." And he said that, "Service to one's country calls

forth the better angels within our nature, and can ever so slightly elevate us from the trough of self-concern and self-devotion."

And he spoke about his own experiences in World War II, and he talked about this close affinity that developed between the Hawaiian beachcomber, and the Laramie cowboy, and the college campus student in Greenwich Village. In a sense we become links in a golden civic chain when we're a part of national service.

Secondly, I think it's good for people who engage in national service, it benefits the helper as well as the helped. I think national service helps shape human souls. I think it can help touch the human heart, and I think can advance human flourishing. The premise here is that there is, and I think this is a premise that's based on data, which is there is loss of connection, and a feeling of lost community in America today.

You have the iPhone generation, a lot has been written about that. This report makes reference to the latest findings in neuroscience, which is that we're hard-wired to be in community, to coalesce, to cooperate, to empathize with one another. So, in a sense I think national service aligns with human anthropology, with really the way that we are and how we -- how we thrive. It develops practical skills, it furnishes educational opportunities.

If you go through the data, the people who are engaged in national service report higher life satisfaction, self-esteem, better academic achievement, lower rates of drug abuse, and school truancy. And it instills an ethic of responsibility, and a sense of gratitude.

I actually think that in national life and in individual lives, gratitude is one of the most underrated virtues. I think it's extremely important, and when you find people who have gratitude, it has radiating effects outward.

Third, I think it's good for the people on the receiving end of the national service, it helps repair shattered lives, it helps broken communities rebuild, it reaches out often to people who are in the shadows of society, and creates human connections, which we all need. And it makes people feel like they are the object of love and sacrifice and that actually matters as well.

Another conservative reason I favor national service, is it's doable, it works, it solves problems. John Dilulio mentioned earlier that a review of the literature that was done, it was 15 years ago, in a book called *Civic Service* of those 139 studies. And as he mentions the positive outcomes exceed the negative outcomes by roughly 7 to 1. That sounds pretty good to me, actually.

Conservatism in my understanding is the negation of ideology, you wouldn't know that often today, but once upon a time that's what it stood for, embodied. And it puts a premium on human experience and what works on problem-solving. And I think national service can help solve problems. Not all of them. It's not a magic bullet. But I think it can nudge things in the right direction.

I'll just conclude by saying, I think the public is tired, in many ways, of where we are. We're tired of the acrimony and the antipathy, the divisions, and disconnection, the loneliness and isolation, the pulsating anger, and the feelings of grievances toward the other, and the pernicious belief that we don't have opponents but we have enemies. And I think national service can be a kind of civic balm for this moment.

I'll just conclude with one of my favorite lines in poetry is from Wordsworth in *The Prelude*, it's a very long poem, but he has a great line in it where it says, "What we have loved, others will love, and we will teach them how," and I think that a national service can teach people how to do certain things. How to create greater respect for one another, greater understanding, and that it can help heal the wounds of a wounded land, and wounded lives.

And I think that's an enterprise that conservatives should be able to get behind, and all Americans. Thanks. (Applause)

MR. GALSTON: Pete, that sounded so much like a benediction that I'm almost -- (laughter) -- I'm almost unwilling to continue. But it is my duty to continue. So, you know, let me -- let me just make a couple, a couple of remarks before we segue to the next phase of this panel.

Remark number one is that for those who have ever doubted Brookings bipartisanship, I would like to point out that we have organized one of the -- one of the largest reunions of Bush administration alumni that Washington has seen for quite some time.

So this, you know -- but the second point is a little bit more serious, and it pivots off a piece of what Pete Wehner just said that jumped out at me, and it isn't anything that probably jumped out at any of you, but it's what hit me phrase, "the nature of reality." Okay. And it struck me that what liberals and conservatives have in common is a belief in an ascertainable nature of reality, although we may have different views as to the best paths to it.

What right-wing populists and left-wing postmodernists have in common is the abolition of the idea of the nature of reality. And so that in my judgment is the real struggle in which we are engaged, and one of the great things about national service is that it is intense reality therapy, in addition to all of its other benefits.

Now, on this side of my notes I have a long list of rivetingly brilliant questions that I was going -- that I was going to put to the panel, but you've anticipated me. You know, I'm going to call inaudible here. I'm not going to do that because we have a large and well-informed audience. You know, of people who have been connected with this movement in one way or another, or who have important questions to put to its advocates.

And so I'm going to suppress myself which, you know, after 25 years of Yom -- it felt like 25 years -- 25 hours of Yom Kippur -- (laughter) -- this represents a continuation of self-sacrifice because it -- you know, you've been very patient. It's your turn.

So, let me just take hands as I see them. Please identify yourselves, and then ask a question. Yes, sir? And there's a roving microphone that's coming around.

MR. GOLOVIN: Thank you. I'm Karl Golovin, Retired Special Agent U.S. Customs, domain reference, AnIdeaLives.net. Your reference to lawyers seeking meaning, I just have to share perhaps enabling document for that organization would be Frédéric Bastiat, *The Law*, from 1850. If anyone hasn't read it, it gives new meaning to the purpose of lawyering.

But national service, does it qualify as a national service to seek government transparency in all things? Because if that something that the Federal entity will never legislate to support, and as a 9/11 responder I'd just like to share with you the national service of thousands of

architects and engineers, as AE911truth.org, they have documented that the official story of the collapse of the three towers in New York is not true, and there's evidence of explosive demolition. So, is seeking government transparency a form of national service?

MR. GALSTON: Let me take three questions, and then we will -- I'll try to deal with, okay, I'm going to take one more there, and then shift over here, and then I'll come back, don't worry.

SPEAKER: Thank you. Peter Shetley, retired from Brookings but 29 years of Federal Service, State Department and the Military. My question is about mandatory national service. During the Vietnam years one of the things that aggravated dissension in this country, disunity, was the number of people who escaped the draft through all kinds of devious, nefarious ways.

I conclude from that that a mandatory system whereby everybody serves if you're flat-footed or not, would overcome those differences and those antagonisms. So, my question to the group is: wouldn't mandatory, despite its challenges, have that benefit?

MR. GALSTON: And now over here; the microphone, please. Thank you.

MR. MARRAPESE: Good morning everyone. My name is Cameron Marrassese. I'm a Research Fellow at Civic Enterprises. And my question of the panel is, as a recent college graduate, and a millennial, what are some tools that I can use to motivate and inspire my peers to get involved in national service?

MR. GALSTON: Panel?

MR. BRIDGELAND: All right. Let me start with that one. So, we got a call many years ago from a college student at Yale, and he said I'm going to start, Ask Not, an Asked Not Chapter at Yale and try to get colleges all across the country to create Ask Not Chapters.

One to make -- Barbara talked about the lack of awareness of all these programs and opportunities, one to make young people aware that, you know, you don't just have to go into a job, or undergrad school, or some other opportunity, but you could actually invest a year or more of your life in service to the nation.

So, my first reaction would be in Florida, in your community get them to start an Ask Not

Chapter, and get other colleges to do the same.

Second, the Service Year Alliance has created ServiceYear.org which is actually, you can GoCam and put your profile on ServiceYear.org, and then find a whole host of opportunities, national service opportunities to connect to. And the beauty of that is it's driven again by choice, and was sort of reflective of Shriver's vision of democratizing national service, and getting all these institutions across the country, including colleges, to create Service Year programs.

On mandatory national service, it's a brilliant point. But first of all, thank you for your service to the nation in the State Department. We're organizing a U.S. Delegation to Israel, because the question we usually get in discussions like this, is Israel has done this successfully at many levels, it's had a profound impact on their society, their economy, entrepreneurship. So we're actually going over to learn from Israel components that are relevant to our system here, knowing we have a little bit of a libertarian, an instinct, and there's a lot of opposition to mandatory national service.

But I will say by having a requirement for 18-year-olds to go into the IDF, and then there are exceptions for orthodoxy, or religious views, or certain exceptions, disability, it has created this environment where more than 35 percent of those who aren't conscripted, voluntarily sign up for civilian national service.

And just by contrast, in the United States it's less than 1 percent who were serving from these cohorts. So, we think it does have a profound effect. We're going to go study the program and learn what we can. And I'll let somebody else talk about government transparency.

MR. DILULIO: Thank you. One thing I want to say, I think there is a tremendous need for greater awareness of these programs, and so forth, on the one hand. On the other hand, and every year, really, since the creation of AmeriCorps, there have been more people that wanted to do it than there were funds for it. And in some years it's been a dramatic gap between the number of people who, you know, ready to go through the process, I want to do this, and the funding is not there.

At colleges and universities that have the equivalent of, you know, Four Plus One Programs, or at least some degree of fully paid, right, so that's a very practical reality for -- especially for,

you know, the vast majority of students who don't have means to just take off a year, and will be supported by, you know, family or by a trust fund or something.

If you offered that -- the little program I referenced at one point we did summers and spring breaks, but we also had a full year of service that we would do in -- it was in post-Katrina in New Orleans, and over the 10 years of our commitment we must have had 50 students do those one-year commitments. But we had about 300 students that wanted to do it, and if we could have funded 300, we would have had 300 and then we'd be running New Orleans from Philadelphia.

So, I think there is a there is a need to figure out how to inspire, and engage, and spread information on the one hand, but on the other hand there's a lot of latent, unmet demand that's just about having the human and financial infrastructures, organizational infrastructures to make happen.

With regard to the mandatory national service, I just would underline what Bridge said. The constitutional questions have been answered. There is a zone of constitutionality, but the political question is the thing. I actually think mandatory service would be great, but the political support for it isn't there.

MR. WEHNER: I'm happy on the transparency question. Yeah, I think there's an obligation for government -- for transparency, but I'd say that transparency is the means, and the ends, is truth in reality. And I would say that government has an obligation for transparency but there's a civic obligation also to accept reality as well, and to make sure that transparency isn't used to twist reality into things that there aren't, that aren't true.

MR. BRIDGELAND: One thing on colleges, a lot of schools are now looking at making -- if you do a service year it's actually really relevant to getting into the college. Or like, William & Mary has created these Service Year Fellowships because Robert Gates is the Chancellor and believes in this idea, and is the Co-Chair of our campaign.

And is, you know, advancing actual Service Year opportunities through the college system. So, imagine if you even had a third of the colleges in the United States creating Service Year Fellowships, real opportunities connected to courses of study, and it could, you know, have mutually

reinforcing benefits, and that's something you could advocate too.

MR. GALSTON: Before we get to the next round of questions, I just want to address a question to Tai, based on, you know, what John Dilulio just said. He pointed out absolutely correctly, you know, that the problem for service at this point is not on this -- is not on the demand side it's on the supply side.

And with regard to government's role on national service, I can report to you that from the very beginning of AmeriCorps, there's been a gap between the authorization process and the appropriations process.

And so my question -- you know, and this report makes clear, you know, that the Edward M. Kennedy Service Act has authorized four times as many positions as are actually funded. So, as you redesign the architecture of national community service and in the admirable way that you've proposed, do you have a strategy for closing that gap between authorization and appropriation?

MS. ADAMS: Yes. Hello? Okay, there we go. I continue to struggle with the mic. So, we do, and I don't know if it's the perfect answer. But one of the first things, or ways that we look at this is because there's that gap. As Bridge was talking about we do have ServiceYear.org, and programs can certify positions, we very much mirror the certification process that CNCS goes through to create their own service years.

And so we do want a way where we can move forward and experience growth even if we're not seeing it on the Federal level. I think one of the ways that we drafted our legislation, because it is going to be, at the end of the day, very much tied to a reauthorization of AmeriCorps, but that focus on the local communities creating these evidence points at scale and that demand, and raising their hands, and then also providing incentives on the community level to incentivize services, we see that as one of the first steps to get towards that growth.

But by no means do we have the complete answer, but we really think it's really kind of starting at that local level, and then also growth through our Service Year exchange.

MR. GALSTON: Thank you. We have time for one more round of three. So, I'm going to

take this gentleman, I promised him, and then the woman in the aisle, and then there are two hands in the back, and I'm only going to be able to take one of them. I will take the gentleman on the aisle as well; so, over here first.

MR. FINBERG: Thank you, Bill. And I hope your fast was easy.

MR. GALSTON: It was not.

MR. FINBERG: Max Finberg, a proud successor to Sargent Shriver as Director of AmeriCorps VISTA, a proud Truman Scholar as well. And the last time I was here at Brookings was on a panel on the faith-based initiative that both of you had a hand in. Speaking of that, especially for this panel, what's the role of faith in national service especially looking forward to the future?

MR. GALSTON: Yes. And now, two questions on the aisle. Do you have the microphone? Good,

MS. LAWSON: Hi. Jenny Lawson, Chief Civic Innovation Officer at Points of Light. In my role there I work a lot with the business community, so my question is a corollary which is: what's the role of business? I know there's been some demonstration of national service projects, but how does business play into solutions for national service?

MR. GALSTON: And then the gentleman on the aisle. There you go. Thank you.

SPEAKER: So that was my question, so I will yield to the other hand. (Laughter)

SPEAKER: Actually mine is a perfect corollary. I'm Sean Riley with the Philanthropy Roundtable. What's the role of philanthropy?

MR. GALSTON: I could not have planned these -- (laughter) -- these questions better, but I assure you I did not. Okay panel, we have 3 minutes and 7, 6, 5 seconds to answer these three questions.

MR. DILULIO: All right. Bridge asked me to do faith, so I'll do faith. I think the most important observation to make in the time we have, is to note that if you look at all the partnerships, the word partnerships and relationships, those words have come up a lot. In the actual administration, the translating of the -- you know, ideals and ideas of national service into action, the faith-based

communities are all over it. They have been, they continue to be, it's inconceivable without them.

The problem there, too, is a problem of resourcing and capacity, a problem of doing the knitting, of doing the dot connecting. That has long been the problem, and without getting very sidetracked, I think it was a problem on which we were making some nontrivial progress in the not too distant past.

But I think a lot of those programs and policies have fallen away. When you start a couple of years ago with a proposal to eliminate the Corporation for National and Community Service, that means eliminating all that it does, and all of its partnerships. That's a bad idea.

And so that also creates a chilling effect for the partners out there. You talk to people in the faith communities across the board, whether big power churches, or small community-based congregations, or networks, and they worry about getting involved, to the extent that, you know, is this going to be sustainable, because they know there's a tough politics of this.

But the faith communities remain I would say, if not the primary partners, you know, a substantial partner in the cause of the national service programs.

MR. BRIDGELAND: I'd say quickly on business and philanthropy, the encouraging note is that they invest \$1.2 billion for the \$1 billion invested by the Federal Government today, and that's really encouraging. But I think businesses can look at what are the institutional changes we can make to foster and ignite a culture of service, i.e. it's highly relevant to get a job at this company or that company if you've done a year or more of national service. Just like Terry McAuliffe did.

In State Government if you served in the Peace Corps or AmeriCorps VISTA you actually had preference to get a public service job in State Government, if we can get every governor in the United States to do that we'd get every business.

But I'd go further, now that the Business Roundtable has redefined the purpose of a corporation, and more than 200 CEOs have signed on to it, which was actually quite up sea change, including giving back to communities. Why not challenge America's businesses to take on large public challenges like AT&T? Over a dozen years said we're going to move the high school graduation rate

from 66 percent to 90 percent, and they've stuck with it, invested \$500 million in it, and national service through City Year, Alan Khazei's co-founded organization, communities and schools. And these organizations are actually at the center of providing the students supports to keep those kids on track.

So I think issue-based, investment, and then finally impact communities. Why can't they help organize with us in Flint, and in San Jose, and all these communities we're working in, universal national service efforts where we knit military, public and civilian national service together, and Points of Light, your legacy, is so extraordinary with President George H.W. Bush. And thanks for what you do.

MR. GALSTON: Tai, Pete, any concluding comments? No. Well, very good. Let me just bridge to the next panel by saying that Alan Khazei, whose name was just invoked, will be leading it. I can report you that I learned everything I brought with me into the White House about national service from Alan Khazei, because of a site visit that I did to the City Year Program back in 1992.

And so never doubt the possibility of a small band of determined people making a very, very big impact. And with that, on to the final panel.

(Applause)

(Recess)

MR. KHAZEI: Okay, I think we're reconvening. If people could take their seats. People can take their seats. If folks are having conversations, if you could take them into the hall, please.

All right. Well, this has been a fabulous day. I want to thank Barbara, who walked in. I agree with Barbara, we have saved the best for last. There's no question. Whenever I do a service event, I always say, we have to hear from young people who are serving or have served because they understand what it's all about because they're at the ground level. So, I'm so excited about this panel. I want to thank my dear friend, Bill Galston for his over the top comments and I did have the privilege of helping to start City Year, but it wasn't me. It was a group of people that came. I did it with my best friend and college roommate, Michael Brown, and others, and it was a small group of thoughtful, dedicated people. And what made it work, it wasn't me, it wasn't Michael, it was that people, when they experienced this, loved this idea, and I am incredibly honored to be here.

It's like a family reunion for me with service legends and giants. My brother John Bridgeland, who I've worked with closely for 20 years, who still, thanks to Bridge and President George W. Bush, they got the largest increase in AmeriCorps ever, 50 percent. Amazing. Bill Galston, who yes, he visited City Year, but then he went into the White House and made it happen. Susan Straud who's been carrying this torch forever, domestically and internationally, helping to spread this idea all over the world. Steve Culbertson, who was here -- who's here, who has built the service movement for young people. Service learning, changing the world, showing that you can be 9, 10, 8, 12-years old and change the world through service. So many people here have built this movement. It's really amazing.

I want to thank Bell and Brookings. Bell, is a hero. I mean, she has put the issue of poverty, opportunity, the middle class on the national agenda and it's amazing how she just keeps coming up with new ideas, advance the cause, but she also is action oriented and I'm so glad that we've been able to embrace the service woman Brookings and the Service Year Alliance together. I want to thank Jesse, who is fabulous. When I called Jesse about taking this job, he said, well, I do believe that it's time for a new generation to take the lead, and honestly Jesse, I can't wait.

And also, Deval Patrick, who is a dear friend. I mean, there is no one who gets this more from his own personal experience and speaks so eloquently. I want to thank them. My chairman, Joe Heck. I am so honored to serve on this commission with Joe. We are so fortunate. He has done an amazing job leading us. I think that we've come together in such a great way showing that it doesn't matter if you're republican or democrats, serve in the military or civilian service; we can find common ground on this issue and you've provided amazing leadership Joe. And Barbara, of course, who's doing such a fabulous job leading the Corporation for National Service. You've really put wind in the sails for the whole movement and we are blessed to have your leadership.

Just a couple of thoughts. So, I love what everybody's talked about. I am with the folks who've said, we have to take this to scale. It's urgent. I honestly believe there is no idea that is more important to helping us fulfill our fundamental mission of a country, which is to form that more perfect union and to have liberty and justice for all and National Service. And when I say that, I'm reminded of

two of my great mentors, who I know are with us here, who's on shoulders we stand. Harris Wofford, who always emphasized the for all, from his days in the World War II Army Air Corps, literally to his last breath was advocating for and fighting for, and saying, we have to have universal National Service.

Unbelievable hero. And Eli Segal, who is the founder of AmeriCorps, who without whom, President Clinton had the vision and Bill Galston was there in the White House, but it was Eli, who'd been an entrepreneur who understood politics, who knew how to get things done. You think about how Washington is today, that AmeriCorps legislation got passed within nine months, big bi-partisan vote and then the program was launched within a year. And thanks to Eli and Harris and other champions, Senator Kennedy, Senator Hatch, et cetera, 1.1 million people have served in AmeriCorps in the past 25 years. Over 250,000 people have served in the Peace Corps, 58-years old. We know this works. It's not rocket science and as you'll hear from these young people, we have to take it to scale.

From my own personal experience, I can tell you, National Service changes your life. I met my wonderful wife, Vanessa Kirsch, who founded Public Allies, at a conference for service leaders and social entrepreneurs. So, if you're looking for love, join the service movement. (Laughter) It works. And I say that, because at its essence, what the service movement is about, is spreading more love in the world. I love what Peter said. I agree with you Bill, it was like a benediction. He said that National Service touches people's souls. And if we could get to a million people a year, it will touch and change America's soul and we need that. There is nothing more powerful than love. As Dr. King said, who said, "everybody should be great because everybody can serve." He also said, "darkness cannot stamp out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot stamp out hate; only love can do that", and that's what the movement's about.

So, I want to turn it over now to these fabulous young leaders who are every day, showing us what the service movement is about. I'm just going to briefly say who they are and then give each of you a couple of minutes just to share your story. Why you joined the service movement. What you did. What you've gotten out it.

We have William Gartnan, who's an AmeriCorps Alumnus from YouthBuild, amazing

program. Dorothy Stoneman is a national hero and icon force of justice. YouthBuild USA and Educational Alliance, we have Andrew Hansen. I'm not sure if we've got these all in the right -- we've got Tojuan, sorry, Reed, who's a field team leader with FEMA Corps and AmeriCorps and Triple CCC. We've got Kayla Whetzel, an AmeriCorps member from City Year D.C. We've got Andrew Hansen, who's the Environmental Stewardship Program team leader for the Delaware State Parks and we have Taylor Stone, who's an AmeriCorps VISTA member project development Habitat for Humanity. So, why don't we just start right here.

MR. GARTNAN: All right. My name's William Gartnan. I'm from Elkins, West Virginia and I completed an AmeriCorps term with YouthBuild North Central and with the Education Alliance. And -- I

MR. KHAZEI: It's okay.

MR. GARTNAN: Now, after completing my AmeriCorps term, I've continued to be involved with YouthBuild. I'm the head of the mentor program and I sit as the sous chef at the Vintage where we take in other YouthBuild members and train them to do that as well.

MR. KHAZEI: Perfect.

MR. REED: Hello, my name is Tojuan Reed. I am, as Allan said, a field team leader for FEMA Corps. I served for about six months in Puerto Rico helping to support disaster recovery efforts from Hurricanes Irma and Maria. We're now currently serving with the Office of External Affairs here in D.C. It's been an amazing opportunity. I'm sure I'll have time to talk about that in a minute, but it's honestly changed my life. One of the first things that I ever read about the program before I actually learned about any details was, a team leader said that it was the hardest, but most rewarding year of their life and now that my service term is up next month, I can completely agree. So, I'm grateful.

And I also want to say, just really quickly, very briefly, that I'm extremely honored to be here. So, I want to thank Samantha Warfield for reaching out to my campus and allowing me this opportunity to be able to speak. So, thank you very much. Also, to Barbara Stewart, the President of CNCS, I'm very grateful -- director, sorry, very, very grateful to be here, as well as among, I mean,

generals and some of the most intellectual people I've heard speak in a long time. This is great. I'm so excited. I think that's why I'm just rambling, but I'm very grateful, so thank you.

MS. WHETZEL: Good morning everyone. I'm Kayla Whetzel. I am from Glendale, Maryland. I currently serve at City Year Washington, D.C. as a team leader. This is my second year serving. Last year, I served at Bancroft Elementary School, which is a bi-lingual elementary school. We focus on making sure that all of our students are bi-lingual in Spanish. I served in 3rd grade mathematics, which is in English and in Spanish. I'm not very fluent but the students are teaching me as well. So, I am a student to them.

I came across City Year at my college university. I went to Delaware State University and we had a career fair. At first, I was not interested because I was looking for internships, however, last summer I came across an Instagram post and it really just sparked my interest in City Year once again. I love the mission and it really aligned with my general purpose, and ultimately, is the reason why I'm here today. I'm very grateful to be here and thank you.

MR. HANSEN: Morning or afternoon, I don't know what we're at at this point. My name is Andrew Hansen. I'm originally from Philadelphia or just outside of Philadelphia, so, go Birds again. I am a U.S. Army Veteran. I served four and a half years. A few years ago, I moved to Delaware. Kind of just happened. I didn't really have a plan in mind. I was looking to transition into natural resources, but I do not have a college degree and to be a field biologist, that's kind of a thing you kind of need. While I was in Delaware, I started doing a lot of volunteering and I heard about the Delaware State Parks Veterans Conservation Corps, an award winning AmeriCorps grant program and part of the Corps network. Did I get all that? Thank you. She usually throws M&M's at me if I get it all right. I served two tours with -- or I should say, I served two terms with the Vet Corps. They were close enough to tours at that point, before ultimately being hired by Delaware State Parks as the -- and this doesn't really fit on a business card, but Seasonal Environmental Stewardship Program Team Leader. In the summertime, there's an additional title added to the bottom of that, which is for the Coastal Parks Internship Program. So, I just tell people I'm a biological aid for the State of Delaware because apparently the state pays for

business cards by the letter and I don't get many to give out.

Ultimately, I'm here to ask each and every one of you and anyone who gets to see this a question. Barbara has heard me ask this question before, but the question is this; if you have the ability to affect positive change, do you have the moral obligation to do so? Thank you.

MS. STONE: Hi everyone. My name's Taylor. I am currently serving as an AmeriCorps Vista with Habitat for Humanity International. I also served a previous term with a Habitat for Humanity affiliate in Denver, Colorado and there I was working as a construction crew leader on the build site. So, leading volunteers and building homes and now I'm doing something a little bit different. I'm back in the office and I help to create learning resources that we can spread to Habitat organizations throughout the nation to help educate and mobilize our volunteers and the general public.

So, a little bit about me. I got into Habitat in college and that was also my first experience with AmeriCorps. I actually did a quarter time AmeriCorps program in college called Jump Start. For those of you who aren't familiar, it's an early literacy program where a team of corps members goes into pre-schools and helps them develop their early literacy skills. So, that was my first exposure to AmeriCorps and then, when I started to develop a passion for housing affordability and Habitat's mission in college, through our Habitat campus chapter, I decided to blend those two experiences with AmeriCorps, with Jump Start and through Habitat and decided to do my year of AmeriCorps with Habitat after college. And then I got a lot out of it and loved it so much that I decided to come back for a second year.

MR. KHAZEI: True service warrior there. Andrew, I love what you said. If you have the opportunity to affect change do you have a moral obligation to do so? So, you have served in the military, civilian service, you've done it all. Senator McCain said that really military and national civilian service are two sides of the same coin. General McChrystal, who I've had the honor of working with at the Service Year Alliance, is (inaudible) some of the country saying exactly the same thing. Tell us, what was similar about your service in the military and your AmeriCorps service and what was different, and what did you learn from each, and why was it valuable for you to do both?

MR. HANSEN: It -- take a moment here, I'm sorry about that. Task and purpose. Everyone operating together for the same cause. My particular program was a little bit different because it was made up of Veterans and dependents, so everyone had already known the mission, had been on the mission, but it's definitely the teamwork aspect. Working together, common tasks and purpose towards a goal. Something in mind to do and you get that sense of accomplishment. It was a little bit different because working with dependents were also in our program, so there wasn't necessarily that drive in them already, that sense of duty to, let's accomplish a mission, and there was a mentorship factor to that. How can we bring them into our group so they understand where we're coming from?

MR. KHAZEI: Terrific. Thank you. Kayla, I'm a little bit familiar with the program you serve in. (Laughter) Can you share what some of the most important things you've gained personally from your City Year experience in AmeriCorps?

MS. WHETZEL: Well, I -- some of the things that I personally gained -- sorry -- personally gained was a sense of commitment. Completing a service year takes a lot. From the long hours to commuting to your service site everyday and as well as personal challenges that you may face. It really took a lot of me, but I knew that I was showing up everyday for my students, so I had to really -- even on the days that I might not have wanted to get up because we have to get up really, really early, but I knew that what motivated me the most was to show up every day for my students because they need someone that's going to ultimately be there for them.

I would say also a sense of independence. I am from Maryland; however, you really have to drive everywhere, but coming into D.C. every day I learned how really ride the Metro; get around to various places within Washington, D.C. as well. I would say that being in an elementary school setting you really have to learn how to control your own emotions because the students are -- they're still very young and they don't always have a sense of their own emotional awareness, so I really learned a lot about that this year and last year, my first service year, because sometimes we want to just react, but in an elementary school you can't just react because you have to see how your actions take an account on your students.

The last thing that I learned, is having empathy for English language learners. Like I previously said, my school is a bi-lingual elementary school, so a lot of the students there are not from the United States of America. They're from all over the world, honestly, but it's hard when you're learning two different languages, especially if you're -- we have one student, he's from Finland. He doesn't really know English and he doesn't really know Spanish so it's hard for him to necessarily grasp all the concepts. And even with our Latino and Hispanic students as well, learning, getting a grasp on English so they can learn, as well as being on grade level with their Spanish as well. So, these are all things that I've gained through service.

MR. KHAZEI: Thank you, Kayla, that's great. William, the needs and the job prospects in a rural community like Elkins, where you've served, is a great difference from urban areas. How has your experience with YouthBuild helped you in your career decisions? And what should policymakers and people know about how to be effective and what National Service can do in rural communities?

MR. GARTNAN: So, before I joined YouthBuild I was already working as a chef, but there was some reluctance to move me up or promote me or increase my pay based on my lack of schooling and YouthBuild obviously helped me get my high school equivalence and achieve a lot of leadership skills and that's the case for a lot of people in West Virginia because we have a very high student to teacher ratio. It's about 50 students to one teacher. So, we have a lot of people struggling in classrooms and unfortunately, a pretty high dropout rate. But when I got to YouthBuild, I was taught, you know, everybody's taught when they're in school and they do something bad their labeled as a failure and when you fail something it can start to leave you broken inside, and when I got to YouthBuild, I learned that it's okay to break sometimes because if you never break then you never learn to put yourself back together. And after I repaired myself at YouthBuild with their help, it really gave me my confidence back and that was something I needed to negotiate a pay raise and to get to that next level and it helped me a lot with my next AmeriCorps term too, because I had gone back into the school that I failed at and was going to mentor the youths and face those same people. I tried not to keep that in mind. I kept my focus on the youth and wanted to do the things for them that I never had as a student myself.

So, with that in mind, I had great success in that program and I made great bonds with those kids and at the end of the year I had a 90 percent turnaround rate in their ABC criteria, so to be able to do a good job and to contribute AmeriCorps and YouthBuild for that happening is amazing and for me to be able to sit here and talk to you guys, I would have never had thought -- if you would have come here and pulled me off the dish tank about four years ago and told me I'd be sitting in front of a lot of people in D.C., I would have asked if that warranted me a break for the night, but here I am. (Laughter)

So, when I went into YouthBuild I learned a new thought process because when you get out of school and get into something like that you have a certain way of thing about yourself and it's almost like, we call them sheep nowadays, you're thinking kind of reluctantly and moving on, but in the words of Alexander the Great, "I'm not afraid of an Army of lions led by a sheep. I'm afraid of an Army of sheep led by a lion." And today I stand before you a lion and I tell all the kids I work with; be a lion because that's the most important thing you can do for yourself. (Applause)

MR. KHAZEI: William, thank you for sharing that very powerful story. I've known Dorothy -- she was one of the first people to get behind us when we were starting City Year and I've had the privilege of meeting with a lot of young people who've done YouthBuild and that's a very powerful story, but I also know it's not a unique story. It's an incredibly powerful, impactful program and thank you for sharing that and we need to get you in front of more people in Washington, D.C. down the street.

Taylor, I love that you did Jump Start. I didn't know that and we've often talked about a continuum of service and I had mentioned Steve. People can start with service learning in school and they can do service in college and then you decided to do Habitat and you were in your second year, so can you tell us, how do you know you've had an impact and what's the difference sort of between your first year with Habitat when you were doing more direct service work and now this year where you're really trying to help the organization as a whole?

MS. STONE: Sure. I think the impacts obviously look drastically different, so you know, on the work site I was able to lead volunteers in the building of two duplexes during my year there, so that is an additional four families that we were able to serve through my service, which is awesome and that's

a more tangible impact that I can see. And what I'm doing now is a little more bit behind the scenes, but I still know I'm making an impact and how I draw a connection between my two years of service is, when I was on the build site last year a lot of times what would happen is volunteers would come out and it would be their first time volunteering with Habitat for Humanity and they would love it and I am a firm believer that it is through volunteer service that we can change minds and hearts and I saw that first hand on the work site. You've get these people who don't know about Habitat, or who don't know about the importance of home affordability and their volunteer experience gets them to care. And I think that that's the first step and that also kind of happened with me in college with Habitat. My own volunteer experience is what got me to care about these important issues.

So, now you have a volunteer who cares and they want to do something more and that's where I see my role fitting in this year. I help create, like I said, those resources for Habitat organizations across the country to help educate their volunteers and their audiences more on the issue of home affordability and so, these resources that I'm helping to create now are going directly back to those Habitat organizations that I've worked with in the past. Those same volunteers and giving them more of an educated view on the issue and helping them learn next steps. So, what can I do next now that I can about the issue? How can I influence my elected officials or whoever to also care? And that's the resources that I'm helping provide to those volunteers that I just spent the last year serving with. So, I think it's two very different years of service. One's a little more concrete, but they both connect in bringing the issues and helping our communities care.

MR. KHAZEI: Thank you very much, Taylor. That's a great story. Tojuan, you also -- you're in your second year, almost finishing up your second year with -- first, sorry. First year. Excuse me. Within Triple CCC FEMA Corps, I was thinking more about your plans after. So, tell me -- you were telling me a little bit before this, why you decided to join? And how do you know you've had an impact? And what are you thinking about because you're finishing up in November, right? What do you think about doing next?

MR. REED: Okay. So, to backtrack just a little bit, I guess in my own personal story, I

grew up in Memphis, Tennessee and if you know much about the place it's not exactly a friendly place. And in the inner city there really aren't a lot of options, I think, for a lot of people. I remember my senior year, specifically, every Tuesday and Thursday we had military recruiters setup outside of the cafeteria and I am not against military at all. I have several members of my family were part of the military. I think it's an extremely honorable thing to do, but it's not for me personally. So, since that point, I've always wanted to do something that would allow me to give back to this country because I do love the U.S. Of course, it's not perfect, nothing is, but this country, I think, gives people so much, so much opportunity. There's so much freedom and democracy that is here and I wanted to do something that would allow me to give back to people to serve my country, but I knew that being in the military wasn't for me. So, I had to find a way to do something that would allow me to still do that and still have an impact on people and to not think about myself for once because that was something that I struggled with for a while.

So, fast forward a bit, after college I truly had no idea what I wanted to do. I was extremely just lost. I got my degree in IT, and everybody likes doing IT, so they made it a little difficult when it came to finding a job. So, I wanted to do something that would allow me to give back. I spoke with Allan earlier this morning and I told him a little bit of my story as far as how my family was affected by Hurricane Katrina and what that did to me. FEMA helped my family out quite a bit. Quite substantially. I mean, going from being homeless with a lot of my family to actually being put up in homes and being able to sustain their lives to this day. So, sorry, I'm getting a little choked up, but because of that I always wanted to do something to give back and so, when I heard about AmeriCorps specifically, and then I heard about FEMA Corps, I was like, wow, okay. So, this gives me an opportunity to be able to serve people, but also to be able to give back to the exact same agency that provided my family with the help in a time in which they really needed it. I am extremely grateful for FEMA for that.

And so, after my term of service, I'm still a little unsure. There are a lot of things that I want to do. I really would like to work for FEMA. That's just a dream is doing things in emergency management. Prior to that I did wildlife firefighting for a bit. I served in Ohio, Oklahoma, Colorado. Really enjoyed doing that. So, they gave me my first taste, so to speak, into what emergency

management looks like. And then I actually worked for FEMA, which is a little bit different because I'm not digging handlines anymore, I'm in an office, so that's been a big change, but I still felt that I am impacting the world in some way.

I think the best example I can give of that is, during my first round of service this year, we served in Puerto Rico and we went out to Utuado which is a more mountainous regions within Puerto Rico and we went out to inspect bridges and a few different rivers that traveled along that particular municipality, and it was really heartbreaking and heartwarming at the same time. It was heartbreaking because they talked about during the hurricanes how people could not get food and water to those more mountainous regions because bridges were completely destroyed. There were no ways for them to get those supplies to those people, but it was heartwarming to know that I was actually there trying to do what I could to help to get some inspections done. To submit this information to people that can actually affect policy change on a much larger scale than I ever could as one individual. And I think to me, that's what National Service is supposed to be about is an entire community of people trying to come together to build a better and more sustainable future for everyone within the U.S. and, of course, things like Peace Corps are very focused on doing things outside of the U.S., but my mom always says, how can you take care of someone else if you can't take care of yourself? And so, for me that's a really big thing about doing community service, especially within the U.S., is we have some of the same problems other countries have, so I believe that we should definitely focus our efforts and things into making sure that our country is doing well as well. Then, I think we're much better prepared to handle other countries issues as well. So, I think I just skipped over that one question, but --

MR. KHAZEI: No, you're doing great.

MR. REED: -- afterwards though, I really would like to work with FEMA. That's my plan. Specifically doing IT because I love computers. Anything network related, I love it. So, I really would like the opportunity to do it, or for some other government agency. I want to do something in emergency management. I can't say that enough. I want to do something that will allow me every day at my job to be doing something to benefit myself. Very last thing I'll say is, one of the first things they taught us

during team leader training for FEMA Corps, they made us repeat this mantra constantly, over and over, and it's not about you. That was something that really got drilled into my head and I feel that I live that now because doing community service is not about me. It's not about the things I got out of it, it's about what I can do to benefit other people, so.

MR. KHAZEI: Thank you. Thank you for sharing that very powerful story. I see my chairman's head nodding because we've talked a lot about how there's military recruiters everywhere. A lot of people don't join the military. They're not even eligible, but then they should have the option to do what you did on own, which is find civilian service and FEMA will be lucky to get you. And as a taxpayer, I would be lucky to have you to continue your service.

So, the previous panel talked about how there's been this big authorization for AmeriCorps, 250,000 people in the serve America Act, and yet we don't get them funding. Kayla, I love what you said about, you did it because of your kids. Because of the students, that's what kept you going. Getting up at five in the morning, very early, staying really late. So, I want to start with you, but anybody else who wants to jump in. So, we are in the nation's capital. Just down the street there are people who are very powerful who make decisions about resources. I wish they were all in this room right now. But if you had a chance to talk to the policymakers' who decide should we invest more money in National Service or not, what would you say to them to try to convince them that it's worth it? I'll start with Kayla, but if anyone else want to jump in on that.

MS. WHETZEL: I believe that all millennials and people of the generations younger than me, even older, should be invested in National Service. What would get more people into National Service is that there were I think more benefits. I say this because as a millennial I know that a lot of my peers are really invested into getting big paychecks and getting cars and houses and things like that and really building their careers and lives. But one thing that I know is that I'm not chasing the money, so, you have to get more people that have the same mindset as myself because giving back, it takes a lot and is a huge time commitment, however, it is worth it. I think I answered the question.

MR. KHAZEI: Yes, you have.

MS. WHETZEL: Okay.

MR. KHAZEI: Very well. Thank you. Anybody else want to take a stab at that? If you can sit in front of the policymaker's and say, here's why you should make the decision to invest more resources, what would you say?

MR. HANSEN: Well, I think if you want to attract more people into these kinds of programs, you do have to give them a little bit of an incentive. At the same time, you can -- and I don't want to say, the quality of a volunteer would go down or the quality of service would, if there was too much of a benefit and then you might end up with somebody who's just there for a paycheck, but I think there is a way to help the people actually running the programs so that they are able to offer something to the people who come into these programs. Because you have the individual, yes, they'll get something out of it, even if they didn't want to they're going to get something out of it, but the people who have to run the programs who are on the ground with these guys, who are the boots on the ground, there's people who have to run that, and they just need access to just a little bit more to make things get done. I'm sure we could have much larger programs out there if they had access. And it doesn't necessarily even have to be funding so much as guidance. How can I improve my program? Where can I take it? Things like that.

MR. KHAZEI: Terrific. This is the last question before we go to the audience. So, let's step into the time machine. So, General McChrystal leads Service Year Alliance has put out the goal that we should get to a million people in full-time National Service within 10 years. So, let's say it's 10 years from now and we've achieved that goal. From your experience, what kind of impact would that have on our country? On our communities and our country? How would America be different if we had a million people a year doing what you all are going? Who wants to go first on that? Tojuan, go for it.

MR. REED: I guess I'll take that. As I said before, the whole it's not about you idea. I think that it's extremely difficult for me to not talk about politics while --

MR. KHAZEI: Go for it.

MR. REED: -- having this discussion because I think there's a lot that goes into play with

a lot of those decisions. However, if this was 10 years in the future everything was going the way that it would, I do think the country would be much more resilient than it currently is. A lot of those things that divide us because I've heard that talked about in pretty much in every single panel, every single speaker has said something to a degree about division, and I actually have a couple of my team members in the back, I'm super happy that they were able to show up. But my team is extremely diverse.

I have met people with different political, religious, socioeconomic background than my own, and yet we are all still able to do the job that needs to be done and I am able to have conversations with them where they're not arguments. I'm able to be able to find ways to deal with people and I think I'm translating that to the question to say, that because I am around these people that are not like me, it makes me, I think, a better person because I have a different understanding and perspective on what other people are going through. What their situations are like. What their lives are like.

I think that a lot of times that a lot of us live from the this tower, so to speak, and we see other things going on but we don't really pay that much attention to it, so being a part of something like AmeriCorps and actually being out there, boots on the ground so to speak, actually dealing with people on a daily basis that really changes your perspective on the entire world. And if we could get a million plus people to all think of every single person as a neighbor, as a community partner, as someone that we can collaborate with, then that makes the entire country that much better.

It allows us to put much more effort and funding into other things, because now our country's at the point in which we can do those things, but until we get to a point where people are able to see everyone -- I don't remember who said it before, but as opponents, not enemies, until we are able to get to that point that I don't think that any of that can change. So, in the future, I really, really think that the country will be so much more resilient. We would have more ability to do other things that we need to do to take care of our country.

MR. KHAZEI: Thank you. That's very powerful. William, you said something which I thought that a lot of people sort of gasped in the room. You said, 50 kids for one teacher. So, if we could get to -- and we should have more AmeriCorps people, if there was funding, we should have -- we could

reduce that ratio to 25 or even 20, if we had more AmeriCorps folks in Elkin. So, what would you say to folks if we get to one million people a year? How do you think that would change the country and also affect rural communities like yours?

MR. GARTNAN: I think it went off again. I think it could benefit West Virginia a lot because then there would be more people willing to get in the schools and volunteer to mentor. It was hard enough to even get me to do it because there's not a lot of people that want to take that initiative or go back into the schools into a realm they failed in. West Virginia does have the most AmeriCorps workers in any state, so, I don't see why we don't have the resources to do that, but if we were to get to a million, I'm sure we could make some wonderful things happen in the schools and in the other YouthBuilds as well.

MR. KHAZEI: Thank you. Taylor, what's your view? What would happen to -- you've worked with Habitat. You did Jump Start. What would happen to America if we actually got to a million people a year? Doing a year of service like you all have done?

MS. STONE: I think overall, we would have a more civically engaged society. I think that we would all start to see each other as neighbors. Kind of similarly to what we've all said, I've never really seen a more diverse spot than a Habitat for Humanity worksite. I encounter people every day of completely different backgrounds, political views, religious views, everything like that, but you're all coming together to get the task done.

To build the house for a family who's also working hard to get that house built. And so, I think that engaging people in service like that makes them start to see somebody who's different, truly as their neighbor, which this idea was mentioned in previous panels, but it really fosters that respect and allows you to see other perspectives. And so, I think that having a million people, sure there's also all of the direct impacts of their service, but I also think it would create a more engaged and more empathetic society that could really help unite us.

MR. KHAZEI: That's very powerful and Habitat's a great example for every single AmeriCorps member who serves full-time, they leverage on average 25 volunteers. So, if we had a

million people that'd be 25 million. Your point is really good. Twenty-five million Americans engaging in service just through those AmeriCorps members.

So, we are now at the fun part where you get to ask questions. So, I want to open up to the audience. Please, love that, you're hand's already up. I'm going to go to you first. Just stand up and say who you are and your name before you ask your question, okay? Thank you. Let's see. Get her another mic.

MS. BIRDS: Good afternoon everyone. My name is Michelle Birds and I'm a Senior Policy Associate at the Century Foundation. Before that I'm a return Peace Corps volunteer in Rwanda and I did some recruitment for Triple CCC and worked at CNCS in the general council's department.

MR. KHAZEI: I just want to say she's not a plant.

MS. BIRDS: I was the first person of color to serve in my village in Rwanda and so, I interested in knowing when you all speak about diversity, what are some of the best practices that you have seen or how can recruitment efforts be promoted to promote diversity for people of different racial and socioeconomic backgrounds?

MR. KHAZEI: Thank you. Anybody want to take a shot at that? How do we promote more diversity and recruitment to make sure that everybody serving represents our country? Tojuan, you want to go first?

MR. REED: Sure. I think that's a good question. I'm trying to think like as I'm talking here. So, I know that -- so really quickly, I know that when I was debating in college that was one of the biggest things that we saw. We saw that there were a lot of people of like particular backgrounds and particular socioeconomic status that tended to dominate the entire arena of debate -- oh, I'm so sorry. That tended to dominate, you know, that entire area and it made it difficult for other people to really join and to be successful.

And so, I think one of the things that helped us out was that my coach, Chris Medina, was extremely big on recruiting people. So, we would go around to different places and try to target areas that were not of that same thing that we always saw. So, going to a lot more inner-city areas. Because I think

that one of the biggest things is not making people feel like they're less than. I think that's very difficult, especially when you're trying to market or promote an idea about doing something, is trying to make everyone feel like they're all a part of the exact same thing regardless of who they are. So, I think that there are simple things that can be done; like providing posters or fliers or things with people of different races, people of different backgrounds because I know that with a lot of different types of media, it's difficult to see representation and I know, of myself of being a person of color, I enjoy seeing representation of myself in like movies and other popular media.

So, I think that's another thing that could really be done to do that, and again, if you're going to do recruiting, I would definitely say go to places that are much more public or much more open because a lot of public areas tend to have a much larger or more diverse mix of people. So, that's my idea on that.

MR. KHAZEI: I would just add, I think it's a great question, when we were first starting City Year, you have to make it a top priority and you have to be intentional about it and you have to be strategic. So, the first person we actually hired and put on the payroll at City Year, it wasn't me, it wasn't Michael, it wasn't our fundraiser, Jenny (inaudible) Riley was Kristen Atwood because she was our recruiting director, and what she did was she went and found mentors and feeders.

So, she built a coalition of faith based leaders, of people working in the community, of people who had been guidance counselors in schools, a very diverse group, and said, just send me one young person or two, and that was a very diverse group and they were excited about the opportunity and that's how we got -- and then she went around. She went to roller skating rinks. She went to churches, and synagogues and mosques. She went into the community. She went to meet people where they were and that's how we got a diverse group, but we made it our top priority, and if you're not intentional, it doesn't happen.

Yes, just say who you are, please.

MR. REEVES: Is it working, yes. It's really working now. I'm Richard Reeves. I'm from the Brookings Institution. First of all, thank you all for your service. My question is, what's the biggest

challenge that you've faced as you've undergone your service, and what if anything could have been done to lessen that challenge?

MR. KHAZEI: Great question. Thank you, Richard. Who wants to take that on? Go ahead, William.

MR. GARTNAN: The biggest challenge that I faced being in a rural area is, there's a big poverty rate. A lot of the people there are poor. So, a lot of the students I had in the middle school were telling me they were hungry. They didn't have food on their table and their parents didn't have money to get it.

So, I would try to urge them to go take food from the pantry in the school or ask the cook for food because usually they'll send them with a take home bag if there's an obvious reluctance to get food and things like that. But I myself couldn't bring them food. So, the hardest challenge I take was trying to get them to do that and finding a resource for their parents' to use to get food, which ultimately I sent them to the Catholic charities food pantry and they were able to get food and be good, so they're all good but that's still a big challenge that I faced and continue to face as I've worked in the middle school.

MR. KHAZEI: Thank you. Anybody else want to -- Andrew.

MR. HANSEN: One word; funding. The biggest issue is, how you can fund these programs? How can I get the equipment that I need to keep this program going? We can get the bodies, as we've heard, there are bodies there that want to do this and there's just not AmeriCorps slots, but then how do we sustain this program and keep it going?

MR. KHAZEI: Thank you. Yes, back here and then to Steve after.

SPEAKER: Oh, sorry.

MR. KHAZEI: No, no, no, you're first. Just say your name.

MR. EYERLY: Thanks. Doug Eyerly, YouthBuild. So, for each panelist, 10 seconds or less, you're talking to a neighbor, a friend, a stranger, a colleague and you're going to say, what was the number one best takeaway from doing a service year? What is it?

MR. KHAZEI: I love that. Speed round. All right. Why don't we start with Taylor. Ten

seconds, best take away.

MS. STONE: My best take away from my previous year and also a little bit from this year, is --hmm -- you put me on the spot.

MR. KHAZEI: I know.

MS. STONE: I think I would say that I -- you know, back in Denver working with the Habitat homeowners that I got an opportunity to build alongside, they were all from very diverse backgrounds. A lot of them were Middle Eastern and we spoke completely different languages, but through that universal language of building, as we like to say at Habitat, we were able to unite across different backgrounds, across different languages and I think that that is a common theme that you will find throughout all AmeriCorps program, is that there's always something that will unite you to the people that you're serving with and you can take that and use it throughout the rest of your life to find ways to unite with people that you may look at or hear about and say, wow, what do I have in common with them? But you can take that throughout your life and keep running with that which will lead to that more engaged society. Sorry, that was a lot longer than 10 seconds.

MR. KHAZEI: That was an outstanding answer for being put on the spot.

MS. STONE: I had to think about it for a second.

MR. KHAZEI: No, that's fine. Okay, Andrew, you had a little time.

MR. HANSEN: Teamwork. Operating as part of a group again. For a lot of the Veterans returning there's a sense of belonging that your kind of looking for and it's hard to find that. Public service in all types of public and private service, when you serve again in a team it gives you that sense of belonging again.

MR. KHAZEI: Kayla.

MS. WHETZEL: My biggest take away is student growth. In the beginning, you have a bunch of kids that aren't necessarily on grade level and seeing how far they've come by the end of the year is honestly amazing. One of my students, she was the highest grower in math from the beginning of the year until the end of the year. She spoke no English when she got there and now, we have full

conversations. It's just amazing to see how far she has come in just a year.

MR. REED: Well, Kayla kind of stole mine, so, no it's okay. But I think that for me it's the development of my members. So being a team leader and having a team of now six people, and seeing just how much that they've grown from the beginning of this service year until now, has been -- I mean, I don't have words to explain it, it's just so amazing to know that they went from being one way and having one particular world view to completely changing that and having a much better outlook on their entire lives.

MR. GARTNAN: My biggest takeaways are that I was able to build myself back up and strengthen my ties with community at the same time because my life is so much different and better now. I owe that to AmeriCorps and the people I met along the way for that.

MR. KHAZEI: Very powerful. What about time? I know Steve you've got a question, so if you could -- we'll just do it very quickly.

MR. CULBERTSON: Mine is also a 10 second -- Steve Culbertson from Youth Service America. Mine's also a 10 second each, so, you've got to talk quickly here. You know, I like to say that nobody flips a thermostat when you're 18 and all of the sudden you're civically engaged. Michael Phelps did not jump in the pool when it was 18 and start swimming. What happened to you as a child? Name a person, or an event that happened to you as a child that gave you the confidence to be providing the service that you did, and by the way, thank you again for that. So, I just want to hear a quick anecdote: person, teacher, parent, or experience?

MR. KHAZEI: I don't want to put anybody on the spot. Who wants to take that one?

MR. CULBERTSON: What triggered you?

MR. HANSEN: My mother taught public school for 25 years just outside of Philadelphia and that essentially to do that for 25 years, yeah, I can go out and give what little bit I have to everybody else.

MR. KHAZEI: William?

MR. GARTNAN: So, from an early age I was always inspired by my grandmother. She

was the most selfless person I ever met and did everything for herself and was very independent. She unfortunately was diagnosed with ovarian cancer about 10 months before I joined YouthBuild and she always wanted to see me graduate and she unfortunately passed away a month before my graduation, but I know she's here with me right now and she's very proud of me.

MR. KHAZEI: Anybody else?

MS. WHETZEL: This question -- I have numerous people that attributed to my service, however, I would give this to my fourth grade teacher, Ms. Munino. She gave me an awarded called the Mr. Goodbar Award for helping one of my fellow peers in the class. She had learning disabilities and Ms. Munino gave me the award because I took time out to help her get her work done, to explain things to her, with patience and so, I feel like that has shaped my experience with City Year as well. So, thanks Ms. Munino.

MR. KHAZEI: Anybody else?

MS. STONE: Sure, I'll go. One of my high school teachers, her name was Ms. Heaverling, she really was the person who taught me how to meet everybody where they're at and she did that with each of her students and I think that that has helped me through my past year of service and my current year because whether you're working with volunteers or you're building along side Habitat homeowners', you have to meet everybody where they're at and grow together toward a greater goal.

MR. KHAZEI: Great. Did I miss anybody on that? Oh, yeah.

MR. REED: So, really quickly, probably my mentor, Mr. Wes Louison. I used to enjoy quitting things. It's super easy to start stuff and it's really hard to finish things and I used to really enjoy quitting because it was easy and Mr. Wes, he challenged me and we took it a step at a time, month by month, he would challenge me different things and I loved fighting for stuff. I loved having a goal to reach, so that's the way he was able to get me to do things consistently was by providing me with some kind of reward at the end of each month every time I did something, and eventually it translated over into doing National Service because as everyone up here, and I'm sure several you out there, especially for those who are in the military, can understand and attest to the fact that it gets really, really difficult

sometimes doing this. Being homesick, being far away from your family, all this, it's really, really hard, but it's extremely rewarding at the same time, so.

MR. KHAZEI: Terrific. So, I want to end with a final question for you all. I was really struck, Andrew, by what you said at the beginning. Raise your hand if you believe that if you have the ability and opportunity to affect positive change in someone else's life, you have a moral obligation to do so. Just raise your hand. I knew we were preaching to the choir. All right. Can we hear it for the best panel of the day? Thank you. You guys did a fabulous job.

MS. SAWHILL: Wasn't that inspiring? I just loved this last panel, but I want to thank everyone who came today. All of the panelist and obviously all of you. It's been really uplifting and inspiring and I want to really acknowledge the people who were key to putting these events together. Above all Morgan Welch, sitting here in the front row. Stand up Morgan. And Anna Dawson and Sara. Where is Sara Ansel? Oh, and Sara, happy birthday. She had to work doubly hard on her birthday, but we'll give her some time off some other time.

So, I want you -- you may be wondering why it is that there's the name Brookings Future of the Middle Class Initiative up here and I want to take just a minute to make the connection here, especially since my colleague, Richard Reeves, who directs the project is here now. Our premise, I think, in working on the future of the middle class is that a democracy doesn't flourish without a strong middle class. And I think we are going to focus in the coming year in producing some kind of report that brings together our work in this area, and we are of course, going to focus on the usual things that people focus on when they talk about the middle class.

What's happening to their incomes? Do we have a big problem with income equality in this country? What about their health? What about jobs and wages? And what about work/family balance? We're going to take on all those issues, but I think what's going to be somewhat distinctive about our approach is reflected in today's meeting. We're also going to care about and do research on and writing about relationships and respect. Relationships in your family, in your workplace, in your community. How you deal with other individuals and an attitude of respect? I think we have, as Allan put

it, been looking at issues through the long lens -- wrong lens and we need to really come back to restoring what he called the soul of America and America's an affluent country.

We have lots of resources but we do need to worry about these less tangible elements of our life together. So, I'm very hopeful that we can address these issues and this has been a great beginning, and as Bill Galston and other said, it's a reality test. It's not just about talking about respect and relationships in a vacuum. It's talking about what we can actually do about it, or as John Allan said, it's the first step from policy to action. So, I think we're very privileged to have had such a great group here today. I certainly want to thank my colleagues at Service Year Alliance, including Tay and Kevin, by the way. And thank you all for coming and for sharing your thoughts and your questions with us. We hope to see you again soon.

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I, Carleton J. Anderson, III do hereby certify that the forgoing electronic file when originally transmitted was reduced to text at my direction; that said transcript is a true record of the proceedings therein referenced; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which these proceedings were taken; and, furthermore, that I am neither a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

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