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**For Immediate Release**

**AmeriCorps Volunteer Infrastructure Project Selects Jewish Family Service to Orchestrate its Return to San Diego**

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San Diego, CA – AmeriCorps Volunteer Infrastructure Project has selected Jewish Family Service to help orchestrate its return to San Diego in 2012/2013. Jewish Family Service will work closely with CalSERVES to recruit eight full-time AmeriCorps members to build volunteer capacity in local nonprofits and educational organizations that serve low-income children, families and youth. The one-year program will begin on August 22, 2012. As a site agent of AmeriCorps, Jewish Family Service will enroll AmeriCorps members who will receive a modest stipend, educational scholarship and invaluable service experience in return for a one-year service commitment. All nonprofits interested in learning more about having an AmeriCorps volunteer, should contact Melinda Wilkes at (858) 637-3050 or [melindab@jfssd.org](mailto:melindab@jfssd.org).

Michael Hopkins, CEO of Jewish Family Service, explained that in 2009, the federal government funded the AmeriCorps Volunteer Infrastructure Project in response to the economic downturn. Nonprofit and educational organizations that provide essential services to struggling children and families have seen demand for their services increase sharply. This increased demand comes at a time of economic hardship that has forced many organizations to take furlough days, reduce key staff, or otherwise cut costs to make ends meet.

As an AmeriCorps supervising organization, Jewish Family Service will recruit, screen, enroll, assign, and orient AmeriCorps members to serve an average of 40 hours per week developing volunteer infrastructure at their assigned partner site. Partner sites are encouraged to participate in the recruitment, screening, and placement process, as desired. Jewish Family Service will also develop a training manual and program for members that include host site information, volunteer development strategies, as well as strategies for recruitment and retention.

“We are truly honored,” Hopkins added, “that AmeriCorps has selected Jewish Family Service to reintroduce the program to San Diego. Our goal, in accordance with AmeriCorps vision, is to recruit 120 new volunteers within selected partner sites, increase the retention of existing volunteers, and develop the tools, policies, and procedures to sustain a larger volunteer program for years to come.”

One of the primary goals of the project is to build a sustainable volunteer program. To that end, members placed at partner sites are intended to enhance the existing staff. The goal is sustainability. Members will spend a majority of their time engaged in activities that promote the growth and support of a volunteer program, allowing organizations to better meet the needs of their low-income clients.

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### **ABOUT JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE OF SAN DIEGO**

Jewish Family Service was founded in 1918 by a consortium of women’s clubs who sought to address the myriad of human needs of the time. Today, JFS is a comprehensive human service organization with eleven locations throughout San Diego County and three in the Coachella Valley. From its early grassroots origins, the agency now serves more than 35,000 people annually. Its programs and services include: Adoption; Case Management; Counseling; Crisis Services; Family Violence; Jewish Connections; Refugee Resettlement; Older Adult/Senior Services; Parenting, Youth & School-based Services; and Training/Education. Learn more about why JFS is *One Source for a Lifetime of Help* at [www.jfssd.org](http://www.jfssd.org)