Volunteers Invited to Join Service Project

24-hour build blitz aims to build 500 beds for Kentucky children

Governor Steve Beshear and First Lady Jane Beshear are calling on all Kentuckians to join a service project that will put the state in the national spotlight later this spring.

May 8-15 is AmeriCorps Week, and this year the national kickoff will be in Frankfort.
On May 8, members of Kentucky's AmeriCorps programs will sponsor a 24-hour "Build-A-Bed" project to benefit children across the state. The goal of the project is to have participants working in shifts throughout the day and night to build 500 beds for children in need.

"Jane and I see this project as providing a basic need that, unfortunately, some families might not be able to fill," Gov. Steve Beshear said. "For success in school, for overall health and development, and for personal pride, every child should have a bed of his or her own."

First Lady Jane Beshear said she and Gov. Beshear plan to participate in the Build-A-Bed project by helping with woodworking and lumber preparations the week before the event.

"There is so much to do for this worthy cause," she said "We encourage all Kentuckians to register to help this cause or to make plans to help in the days before the actual construction."

The build will take place in a hangar at the Kentucky National Guard Headquarters at the Boone Center in Frankfort.

In Kentucky, AmeriCorps is administered by the Kentucky Commission on Community Volunteerism and Service (KCCVS) in the Cabinet for Health and Family Services.

CHFS Secretary Janie Miller said the remarkable building blitz will likely help several clients of her agency.

"There's never been a project like this to construct hundreds of beds for youth across the state," she said. "Our social services workers try to help improve poor living arrangements – like a child without a bed -- when they can. This Build-A-Bed effort is taking community action to another level by empowering volunteers and improving the quality of life for hundreds of Kentucky youth."

Last year was the first for the Build-A-Bed project. Two program directors and many members from two state AmeriCorps programs and other volunteers built and delivered 57 twin-sized beds to children. Each child also received a mattress and a "bedtime bag," which contained items like sheets, pajamas, books, nightlights, pillows, blankets and a toy or cuddly animal. These bags, including a handmade quilt or blanket, will again be a part of the bed deliveries this year.

AmeriCorps is a network of national service programs that engages more than 50,000 Americans each year in intensive service to meet critical needs in education, public safety, health and the environment. In Kentucky, AmeriCorps is administered by KCCVS.

KCCVS Executive Director Eileen Cackowski said AmeriCorps members got the idea for the project through their involvement with families in their communities.

"We've heard stories of families where several children sleep in one bed, or some family members are sleeping on the floor," she said. "We felt we could give young people a great advantage if we could just give them a peaceful place to rest."

About 2,500 volunteers are needed to complete the project. AmeriCorps groups from as far away as California have committed to the kickoff event, Cackowski said.

Cackowski said on the day of the project, beds will be built by teams of four or five people in multi-hour shifts. Volunteers should register online in advance.

Cackowski said participants who don't want to build or who are unable to build can pass out refreshments, help register volunteers and complete a number of other tasks. Volunteers can also help by:

- Donating tools, surplus lumber, screws or other materials.
- Making a donation to the volunteer efforts.
- Making blankets.
- Helping with bed delivery.

The project could be a potential spring volunteer effort for school, church or community groups, Cackowski said.

For more information or to sign up to help, please call (502) 564-4986, ext. 4037, or visit http://build-a-bed.org.

For more information about volunteering or the AmeriCorps programs visit www.volunteerKY.ky.gov.

Change Made to Printing Process

A change has been made in CHFS printing procedures that may require extra time for print orders to be processed.

Due to a requirement from the Finance and Administration Cabinet (FAC), employees requesting printing services will need to complete the CHFS 96 Requisition Request form along with the COT F029 and submit both to the Office of Procurement Services when placing a print order.

Because of the extra step, employees should allow time for order processing by the procurement office and FAC when planning a printing project.

Those who are ordering publications that require review by the Office of Communications should also remember to have their CHFS 96 Request for Purchase signed by Publications

Manager Emily Moses before submitting to the procurement office. Unsigned requests will be rerouted by procurement staff to Communications and could delay your printing order.

Questions may be directed to Sarah Smith in the Division of Procurement Services or Emily Moses in the Office of Communications. Read the CHFS publications policy or a condensed version online at http://chfsnet.ky.gov/os/ocar/.

Cabinet Wins Best of Kentucky Technology Awards

The CHFS Office of Administrative and Technology Services (OATS) received two Best of Kentucky Technology Awards at last week's Kentucky Digital Government Summit presented by the Commonwealth Office of Technology (COT).

The Kentucky Integrated Child Care System (KICCS) provider portal system was named Best Application Serving Public Agencies at the conference. The award honors individuals and teams for application design, development and deployment or improvements to existing systems that directly deliver services to state or local government agencies.

The KICCS Provider Portal system was built through collaborative efforts among the Department for Community Based Services' Division of Child Care, OATS and the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), along with individuals and agencies that provide child care for state subsidy-eligible families. This Web-based application is designed to be used by child care providers or providers pending approval to participate in the state's child care subsidized assistance program. The portal provides a paperless process providers can use to complete and submit CCAP billing forms and view/print payment remittances online.

The system offers many benefits, including:

- Decreased administration costs for providers and state agencies.
- Ability to communicate with providers via the portal provider Web site.
- Decreased travel costs related to conducting audits.
- Faster payment remittance to providers and on-demand ability to view/modify billing forms and the amounts paid for services.

"The KICCS team and CHFS management are very proud to receive this honor," said Kathy Frye, CHFS chief information officer. "Everyone worked hard on this project, and the KICCS team looks forward to working on an upcoming project that will create online registration and application processing for all child care providers."

OATS also received the Best Risk Management Initiative award for implementing a plan to use Sharepoint as its audit management tool. The award is given to individuals/organizations that have demonstrated special efforts in the identification, assessment and prioritization of risks.

To comply with security requirements from multiple sources, the Cabinet maintains multiple data sets and software applications that are subject to HIPAA, federal security requirements and various state laws. These requirements are audited and checked for compliance regularly.

OATS needed an outlet for tracking compliance with an increasing complex set of security requirements and no additional staff or investment. The agency identified Sharepoint as an existing tool that could provide the framework for the solution because it has the ability to provide a workflow management process for responding to audits and can serve as a document repository.

Implementing the fully automated process plan increased the efficiency of workflow, improved the acceptance rate of answers by auditors and reduced the amount of time needed for staff to complete audit responses, in turn reducing the need for additional staff.

Living Well: Weekly Fitness Plan

Are you counting down the days until the pool opens for the summer? Pool season means recreation for some people, but can be angst-ridden for others who view it as “swimsuit season.” Add spring cleaning and family activities, and you may be wondering how you will find the time to get back in shape before the end of May! Lara Rosenbaum, from Exercise TV, breaks down one week and helps you plan activities that will fit into your weekly schedule and leave you feeling fit and healthy.

Monday: This is the day to put things together for the week, checking work schedules, spouse’s schedule, and kid schedules. She recommends trying a circuit-style workout that gets the heart pumping and also strengthens muscles.

Tuesday: A British survey of more than 3,000 people revealed 11:45 am on Tuesday is the most stressful time of the week. The research discovered that this is when most people feel overwhelmed about their workload. Tuesdays are also the days when more people will work through lunch or work a longer day. Stress can cause a negative response in the body so do not add any more, take the day off from exercise and relax. If you have been sedentary for most of the day, do some light stretches to relax. Try to get to bed early.

Wednesday: After a stressful Tuesday, research found that more workers were depressed on Wednesday. To fight off depression, find an aerobic or cardiovascular activity to boost endorphins, which make you feel happy. Head out for a 30-minute brisk walk, or make it a point to walk during your breaks.

Thursday: You made it past the mid-week mark and, depending on your energy levels, you can incorporate another strength-based circuit workout or take the day off (this will depend on how your week has gone).

Friday: The work week is coming to a close. With the thought of relaxing and unwinding for the weekend, try yoga. It’s great for both the mind and body.

Saturday: Become a weekend warrior. The work schedule does not come into play, so there is no need to plan a quick routine. Plan to participate in a long, easy to moderate cardio session. A longer, moderate cardiovascular session will help burn more fat and release fluid retention.

Sunday: A day of rest and planning for your weekly fitness routine.

If you have a week that goes exactly as you planned, that is wonderful, but most of us will experience some unexpected activities or errands throughout the week. Plan your fitness activities around your weekly schedule. Don't beat yourself up if something goes awry. Physical activity should become a priority, but not the main focus of each day. Perhaps you have to skip one day. Just try to make up for it by jumping right back into your routine for the rest of the week.

Employee Enrichment

By Anya Armes Weber

Do you have a bad workplace habit you'd like to break? Bad habits like procrastinating, using sloppy language or spending too much time on personal phone calls could hurt your career. Your bad habit is a learned behavior that you repeat again and again, but you can take steps to successfully stop it. From Career-success-for-newbies.com, here are some steps to breaking your worst workplace habits.

Set a goal to succeed. Tell yourself that you will conquer this bad habit. People who think they will fail usually give up soon after they've started.

Devote your time and energy to your goal. Give yourself a plan and work it. For example, if your goal is to stop procrastinating when you arrive at the office each morning, make a list of what you expect to accomplish each day before you take a break.

Try something new. Think about alternatives to the bad habit you can replace. Pick an easy one you can start with first. Listen to music quietly while you work instead of making personal phone calls.

Be aware of the bad habit. As soon as you realize your behavior, stop. Notice what triggers your bad habit, and try to avoid those situations.

Be patient. Behavioral change takes time and support. Tell friends and co-workers about your plan and get their support. With some encouragement, you can break that habit.