



## **NJDOE News**

**For More Information Contact the Public Information Office:**

**Tom Rosenthal**

**Richard Vespucci**

**Jon Zlock**

**609-292-1126**

**For Release: January 2, 2003**

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## **New Jersey AmeriCorps Receives \$248,000 Homeland Security Grant**

New Jersey is receiving \$248,000 as part of a federal grant program to support AmeriCorps members and other volunteers in public safety, public health, emergency response and disaster preparedness efforts statewide.

New Jersey is one of 43 grant recipients nationwide to share \$10.3 million in competitive Homeland Security Grants. The new initiative is designed to help meet the President's goal of involving Americans in the war on terrorism.

The program's mission, supported by the New Jersey Commission, New Jersey Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters, state Office of Emergency Management and the Department of Education, is simple: fostering more effective service for people affected by disaster.

"The times we live in have expanded our definition of community service to include activities designed to deter and prevent actions that threaten the safety of our homes and neighborhoods," said Commissioner of Education William L. Librera. "This grant will help our state strengthen its efforts to keep its citizens safe and secure from harm."

New Jersey's grant funds will be used to support 20 volunteers statewide who will assist and developing and supporting county-based Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (VOADs). Corps members will be deployed in groups of six in three regions: North, Central and South.

In each region, AmeriCorps members are expected to organize at least 20 educational and outreach programs per county, including training in public health, family preparedness, volunteerism and donations management. The initiative will also develop a statewide database and communications mechanism in its first year.

AmeriCorps is the national service program that provides thousands of Americans of all ages and backgrounds with education awards in exchange for a year or two of community service.

AmeriCorps members help meet the nation's critical needs in the areas of education, public safety, human needs and the environment. The New Jersey Commission on national and Community Service, which is hosted by the New Jersey Department of Education, administers AmeriCorps in New Jersey.