



Office of Mayor Muriel Bowser
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**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
SERVEDC – MAYOR'S OFFICE ON VOLUNTEERISM &
PARTNERSHIPS**



**Fiscal Year 2024-2025
Performance Oversight Hearing**

Testimony of
Dominique Scott
Chief Service Officer

Before the
Committee on Executive Administration and Labor
The Council of the District of Columbia
The Honorable Anita Bonds, Chairperson

January 29, 2025
(In-Person)



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Good morning, Chairwoman Bonds, members of the Committee, our witnesses who are joining us today, and members of the public. My name is Dominique Scott, and I have the distinct honor of serving as the Chief Service Officer for the District of Columbia and the Director of the Mayor's Office on Volunteerism and Partnerships, known to most as ServeDC. I am pleased to be here today, before you to discuss the progress and performance of the agency over Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24) .

ServeDC is the Mayor's Office on Volunteerism and Partnerships and in the past year, we have worked relentlessly to create cohesive systems and programming that reflect the Mayor's vision. Today, I am proud to share evidence of how we have crystalized the power and possibilities of our mission by bringing diverse constituent groups and resources to the table – connecting funding, knowledge, and service opportunities to residents, business leaders, and philanthropic entities alike—to create shared solutions for our city.

ServeDC's collective actions support Mayor Bowser's commitment to actualizing our city's comeback by supporting opportunity-rich neighborhoods, impactful businesses, and thriving people. Our approach is fueled by this vision and our ability to curate an energized civic ecosystem that connects each act of service from need to action in response to our city's most significant challenges and needs. Through grant funding, strategic partnerships, volunteer service opportunities, and targeted capacity-building, ServeDC continues to meet this moment with dexterity, action, and impact.

I plan to use my time with you today to provide evidence from our FY24 performance outcomes on how we are actively answering Mayor Bowser's call to be bold, think big, push the envelope, and, above all else, win for ALL Washingtonians. We recognize ServeDC's critical role in achieving this goal and continue to posture our time and efforts to serve as a connector, curator of service, community convener, capacity builder, and conductor of donations and resources that our city and residents, across all eight wards, deserve.

ServeDC as a Connector



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In FY24, ServeDC maximized our impact by being a chief connector, not only collaborating with our intra-district government agencies but also by connecting socially responsible corporate and philanthropic partners to our most deserving communities and needs and connecting local community and faith-based organizations to meaningful volunteer, funding, and capacity building possibilities.

Our Volunteer and Donations Portal is one of our most vital vehicles for connecting ServeDC to its thousands of constituents and partners. This virtual platform, launched during the onset of the global pandemic, enables ServeDC, along with 308 DC-based organizations and agencies, to highlight their programs' missions, programmatic features, and diverse volunteer opportunities. To date, 11,171 registered volunteers have joined our network and remain ready to respond to any of the 200+ active volunteer opportunities hosted by organizations across each ward.

Through our volunteer portal, ServeDC connects and deploys Mayor Muriel Bowser's DC Volunteer Snow Program in times of inclement weather. A team of 481 "Snow Heroes" and 8 nonprofit organizations readily answered the call for service by shoveling the sidewalks and walkways of homes belonging to seniors and residents with disabilities, access, and functional needs. With services rendered, snow heroes helped ensure that residents had clear pathways to access essential services like food delivery and medical appointments.

In Q2 FY25, we deployed more than 481 snow heroes to 537 residents across all eight Wards. In addition to this, ServeDC continues to work to enhance our program by bolstering our data tracking of senior residents, deepening coordination with our partners at the Office of Unified Communications and Department of Public Works, and most importantly, addressing the disparity of number of volunteers in wards 4, 6, 7 & 8. In the spirit of equity, we are developing an ongoing engagement plan that aptly identifies vital recruitment and retention strategies and increased engagement of old and new volunteers alike, especially within these targeted areas. By engaging trusted community-based organizations within each ward and hosting info-sessions with local fraternities, sororities, and civic groups, we are working to make



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significant strides to closing this gap and look forward to continuing our efforts year-round.

In the same way that ServeDC connects people to purpose via our portal, our Funding and Resource Alert connects thousands of residents and nonprofits to funding power and possibilities. This monthly publication is a touchstone tool within our office that provides a customized offering of local, federal, and private funding opportunities, supporting critical focus areas such as education, health, human services, youth and families, racial equity, public health, and environment. Additionally, we include Mayoral initiatives and other free offerings, training, and resources that will better position nonprofits to build and sustain capacity. Finally, through this Alert, we amplify our District government funding opportunities and platforms, including live links to our city-wide clearinghouse, DMPED's Obviously DC site, and DSLBD's funding alert. While we place prior alerts on our MOCA website, we also share a schedule. Hence, readers know when to expect this valuable tool and amplify our funding features via our social media and monthly newsletter.

In FY24, ServeDC also played an instrumental role in connecting the business and philanthropic communities to organizations and government entities as we worked collaboratively to address social challenges. For example, our connections and efforts aimed to make the holidays brighter for our city's senior residents through our annual signature holiday partnerships, including the Safeway Feast of Sharing. This unique and festive event, powered by partnerships with Safeway, Events DC, and hundreds of volunteers, hosted over 2,000 senior residents to engage with friends and provided them an opportunity to sit down for a traditional Thanksgiving meal.

ServeDC as a Curator of Service

From addressing food insecurity through large-scale days of action to supporting D.C.'s Comeback, our District volunteers and community-based organizations continue to rely on our ability to curate meaningful service opportunities across our city. In FY24, ServeDC's signature service days fueled our efforts to become the premier service provider for traditionally service-oriented days such as MLK Day of



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Service, Global Youth Service Day, 9/11 Day of Service, World AIDS Day, and Mandela Day of Service. Across these Seasons of Service Days we:

- Partnered with U.S. Hunger to package over 200 boxes of groceries and senior care kits during the MLK Day of Service.
- Activated more than 1,000 volunteers to pack over 450,000 bags of food during the 9/11 Day of Service
- Provided DCPS students an opportunity to assemble 100 care kits for teens and residents facing homelessness at the MLK Library during the Global Youth Service Day
- Recruited and depolyed volunteers in support of the Mayor's Office on African Affairs Mandela Day of Service Community Cleanup at Shepard Park
- Secured philanthropic support for the Mayor's Office on LGBTQ Affairs World AIDS Day of Remembrance

ServeDC as a Grantmaker

As the District's Commission for National and Community Service, ServeDC continues to commit to increasing the capacity of residents, local communities, faith-based organizations, and nonprofits. Our approach is anchored in awarding grant funding via our federal funding from AmeriCorps and providing training and technical assistance that increase organizational capacity. As part of ServeDC's annual federal AmeriCorps grants, in FY24 the agency awarded approximately \$6 million to District-based nonprofit organizations. These grants facilitate programing and AmeriCorps member service meeting critical challenges within our city. These areas include education, racial inequity, economic mobility, and gun violence prevention. Our responsibility is to direct resources to address our city's greatest needs through funding direct service. Through our AmeriCorps programs, ServeDC is best positioned to deliver critical services to our residents.

In FY24 ServeDC was able to award AmeriCorps Planning Grants to three organizations. These grants are critical for supporting organizations in their efforts



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to assess needs, develop effective strategies, and build the infrastructure necessary to launch successful AmeriCorps programs. They enable organizations to thoroughly plan and refine their service projects, develop new AmeriCorps member positions, and prepare organizations to create sustainable impact.

ServeDC as a Conductor of Donations and Resources

In FY24, ServeDC served as a compliance conductor for over \$24 million in in-kind and financial donations to support some of our city's most significant priorities. These priorities include education and recreation, health and human services, public safety, the environment, and government operations. Additionally, our team provides regularly scheduled donation management training to district agencies to each is aware of and aligned with compliance rules of conduct as outlined in our 2022 Mayor's order. ServeDC continues to play an integral role in our city's review and approval of donations. This is done in consultation with the Board of Ethics and Government Accountability ("BEGA"), the Mayor's Office of Legal Counsel ("MOLC"), or the Mayor's Office of General Counsel ("OGC"). In FY24 ServeDC continued to enhance and use its quarterly donation reports to provide a clear visual representation using charts to more clearly demonstrate essential data such as donation type, source, allocation, names, dates, and amounts of each donation; this is now housed on the Mayor's Office of Community Affairs (MOCA) website.

At ServeDC, we maximize our knowledge and understanding of our city's most significant challenges and design and curate active and equitable pathways for all to create shared solutions. To do this, we ensure that the Mayor's priorities are met. This statement has provided all we have done to promote the Mayor's vision of revitalizing downtown, promoting public safety, and promoting hiring in FY24.

Community Resilience and Public Safety

ServeDC also seeks to increase the capacity of our community's resilience in response to any natural disaster, emergency, or crisis. We aim to achieve this by



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equipping residents and community-based organizations with lifesaving, sustainable training and skills. We continue to provide a “whole community approach” as preparedness is a shared responsibility and calls for the involvement of everyone, not just the government, in the preparedness effort. In FY24, through our Community Emergency Preparedness Response Team (CERT) program, CPR/FA/AED training, and our Summer Youth Emergency Preparedness Academy (SYEPA), we provided over 120 community resilience trainings to residents and stakeholders. Additionally, we partnered with community-serving organizations and graduated 82 DC CERT adult volunteers and 38 DC CERT youth volunteers. Graduates included a participants at the Fauntery Center, located East of the River in Ward 7 and, for the first time, a cohort comprised completely of deaf, hard of hearing, and low vision students from Gallaudet University in Ward 5. To expand our reach, we aim to train 20 new residents per ward, totaling 160 new CERT members by the end of FY25.

Downtown Revitalization

For the seventh consecutive year, ServeDC participated in D.C. Startup Week (DCSW), the fastest-growing startup community in the D.C. metropolitan area, with over 13,000 entrepreneurs. This convening successfully connects, educates, and fuels the thriving startup ecosystem within our city. ServeDC was honored to design, facilitate, and moderate a discussion entitled - “Collaborative Futures: Leveraging AI for Social Impact in Public and Nonprofit Spheres”, which featured a discussion of leading impact strategists, as they explore collaborative approaches— to how nonprofits and government agencies can maximize the benefits of AI technologies and develop strategies tailored for social good to advance sustainable community investments within our new normal. The discussion featured:

Moderator Alex Swartzel of Jobs for the Future

Panelists: Andrew Patricio of UnidoszUS

Ariel Goldin of Goldin Group CPAs

Joe Paul of OptimaNova AI

Mason Gunter of Elemental Impact



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Nearly 60 attendees walked away with practical strategies and steps on leveraging specific ways AI can address pressing social challenges within nonprofit and public sectors to design thriving businesses focusing on community impact.

Another ServeDC signature community event enhanced in FY24 was the Capacity Building Townhall Conference. In partnership with the Center for Nonprofit Advancement, a leading regional nonprofit member organization, ServeDC brought together with members of local nonprofits for the purpose of enabling nonprofit organizations and their leaders to develop competencies and skills that can make them more effective and sustainable, thus increasing the potential for nonprofits to enrich lives and solve society's most intractable problems. The Capacity Building Conference featured a full day of innovative training for nonprofits with featured topics around fundraising, volunteer recruitment, strategic partnerships, board development, and recruitment. Speakers traveled from around the country to participate and lend their expertise.

ServeDC's role as a community connector in FY24 was marked by excellence, collaboration, and tangible impact. The agency's efforts addressed pressing challenges and laid the groundwork for a more resilient and united city.

SYEPA

In 2024, ServeDC hosted the 12th annual Summer Youth Emergency Preparedness Academy (SYEPA), which introduced 40 high school and pre-collegiate students to Emergency Management professions, public safety experts, and careers with:

- D.C. Fire & EMS,
- U.S Armed Forces,
- DC Department of Behavioral Health (DBH),
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and
- AmeriCorps



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Youth participated in two public safety Peace Walks in coordination with the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice and engaged in civic volunteerism with DC Central Kitchen and the Anacostia Watershed Society. In weekly meetings, SYEPA participants met with industry professionals to map out career goals and learn how to prepare, submit applications, and matriculate into college. This work culminated with organized college visits to the University of Maryland and the University of the District of Columbia.

ServeDC's goal with the SYEPA program is to prepare our city's young people to pursue careers that serve the public good. To that end, students became certified in the Teen Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program. That training encompassed the “Community Bystander” approach and included supplemental training such as Narcan, Active Shooter, and Stop the Bleed. ServeDC also partnered with local district agencies to provide a resource fair for students and their families. In addition to supporting students' professional development, SYEPA offered opportunities for social and emotional development, such as the students attending several "Fun Friday" events to bolster team-building skills and interpersonal relationships among the cohort.

The success of the 2024 SYEPA program was made possible through a partnership with JPMorgan that allowed ServeDC to increase the hourly wage of participants from \$15 to \$20 and hosted its first-ever “College Trunk Party” for high-school graduates participating in the summer program.

OSSE BUS DRIVERS Training

ServeDC partnered with HealthBest and the American Red Cross to train and certify 509 Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) bus drivers in CPR/AED and First Aid. This program ensures public safety compliance when transporting our district students to and from school. I am happy to say that we are continuing our partnership with OSSE for this critical bus driver training.



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Ward 8

ServeDC is a strong champion of shaping and amplifying the spirit of service within our city and has found great synergy and success in celebrating our annual Spirit of Service Awards (SOSA) as a signature event. In FY24, we held the awards ceremony at the beautiful Sycamore & Oak in Ward 8. This empowered us to celebrate and commemorate the rich legacy of connecting people to purpose through service. By celebrating those who seek to do good within our communities, the SOSA awards honored District residents, community-based organizations, and businesses that displayed a remarkable commitment to service in the following areas:

- volunteerism,
- national service,
- philanthropy, and
- community resilience

In addition to recognizing award winners, including Ward 7 resident LaToya Liles-Walker and her organization Tsunami Hair Studio, LLC, along with Calvin Coolidge High School students, Novel Urigisa, and Bethlehem Mekonnen, we celebrated volunteers who represented every ward and acts of service within our city.

This Ward 8 event welcomed over 100 volunteer attendees to fully engage each other, members of MOCA agencies, and Ward 8 business owners such as Dionne's Good Food. This was made possible by the vision and support of our Mayor, our Commissioners, Reid Rodell, ServeDC staff, and our event emcee, a local activist and media mogul, EZ Street.

In conclusion, I would like to thank Mayor Muriel Bowser for the opportunity to lead our city's efforts to advance service and volunteerism. I would also like to thank my staff at ServeDC, who, every day, go above and beyond to execute our mission and bolster the Mayor's vision for our city. I look forward to further



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leveraging the support of our commissioners and many partners to help us champion volunteerism and service in the District of Columbia. Finally, Chairwoman Bonds, I want to thank and acknowledge you for your advocacy of our work and for the opportunity to speak before this Committee today.

I invite anyone who might be interested in contacting our office to please do so by calling us at (202) 727-7925, emailing us at Servedc.info@dc.gov, or visiting us online at Serve.dc.gov. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.