OUR MISSION

The Global Service Leaders Initiative (GSLI) motivates and connects emerging leaders from around the world to address community challenges through volunteerism. Drawing upon Meridian’s 50 years as a center for international leadership development and its extensive networks in over 180 countries, Meridian helps volunteer leaders strengthen their role as leaders in their community. By connecting these aspiring leaders to a global community of peers and mentors, GSLI supports members in their application of best practices, helps them develop important leadership skills, and provides them the network and resources to overcome inevitable challenges.

OUR APPROACH

GSLI engages leaders on the Network, an on-line community of peers now located in over 100 countries. Members are invited to share best practices, define what volunteerism looks like in other countries, and explore collaboration on international volunteerism awareness campaigns.

GSLI redefines traditional norms, bridging the gap between the volunteer and the beneficiary, testing new volunteer models and recruiting new communities to serve. Among other programs, an ongoing effort of GSLI is to recruit volunteers from marginalized populations, including at-risk youth, the elderly, people living with HIV/AIDS, people living with disabilities, indigenous and other communities.

“Bringing beneficiaries into the solution is empowering in and of itself, giving them a greater voice and stake in community volunteer efforts. Volunteers, and even more so, volunteer leaders, are often the last to get recognized and, with a little acknowledgement and a larger platform to share their story, we can make an even larger impact!”

Meg Poole, Director for GSLI

THE COMMUNITY

GSLI programs target the individual, community leaders uniquely positioned to mobilize resources – including human capital – to address key areas of social concern. Membership in GSLI’s community is open to non-profit leaders, educators, private sector CSR executives, and all tasked with volunteer management. GSLI offers leadership development worldwide in the following ways:

- Access to online network that links leaders in a virtual community of interest, facilitating introductions and sharing of innovative approaches
- Direct hands-on experience to learn strategies for volunteer management and test tools while leading service projects
- Peer-to-peer exchange and mentoring to build bridges, develop skills, share success stories and challenges, and explore collaboration
- Invitations to attend and speak at international conventions, hosted in partnership with the U.S. Embassies around the world, which position volunteerism as a strategy to address the most pressing local social issues.

Meridian honors and supports these leaders, promoting a sustained commitment to civic participation, and inspiring others to make service a central part of their lives.
COMING UP FOR GLOBAL SERVICE LEADERS INITIATIVE (GSLI)

International Day of Service
December 5, 2011

GSLI will honor the UN’s International Day of Service in an International Campaign to develop projects for and recruit volunteers from marginalized communities. We are challenging service leaders in 100 of our VOLUNTEER network countries to reach out to communities of at-risk youth, the elderly, indigenous communities, those living with HIV/AIDS, and many more. We will be working with the State Department’s Office of Alumni Affairs to spread the word and are hopeful that the UN Foundation might take interest in this as a new international campaign.

Service Innovation Summit
January 18-20, 2012

In partnership with Points of Light and the U.S. Embassy in Madrid, we will host the inaugural “Service Innovation Summit,” a call to action for Spanish, EU Regional, and U.S. service leaders to come together and discuss how volunteerism can be scaled to address the most pressing social needs in the host country. In Spain, growing rates of unemployment have halted economic growth. 43% of youth are unemployed – many who lost their jobs in the construction industry when the bubble burst. The summit will present successful solutions for addressing the issues and set the stage for collaborative opportunities to surface.

PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES

Afghanistan
Albania
Angola
Argentina
Armenia
Austria
Bahrain
Belarus
Bosnia
Brazil
Bulgaria
Burkina Faso
Cameroon
Canada
Central African Republic
Chile
Colombia
Costa Rica
Cote d’Ivoire
Croatia
Cyprus
Czech Republic
Democratic Republic of Congo
Djibouti
Dominica
Dominican Republic
Ecuador
Egypt
El Salvador
Estonia
Gambia
Georgia
Germany
Ghana
Greece
Grenada
Guatemala
Guyana
Haiti
Hong Kong
Hungary
India
Indonesia
Israel
Italy
Jamaica
Jordan
Kenya
Kosovo
Kyrgyzstan
Latvia
Lesotho
Liberia
Lithuania
Macedonia
Malaysia
Malta
Mauritania
Morocco
Myanmar
Namibia
Nepal
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New Zealand
Nigeria
Norway
Oman
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Senegal
Serbia
Seychelles
Sierra Leone
Singapore
South Africa
South Korea
Sri Lanka
Sudan
Swaziland
Sweden
Tajikistan
Tanzania
Togo
Trinidad and Tobago
Turkey
Turkmenistan
Uganda
Ukraine
United Kingdom
United States
Uruguay
Vietnam
Zambia
Zimbabwe

Meridian International Center

GSLI is a program of Meridian International Center, a leading non-partisan public diplomacy institution in Washington, DC with a 50-year history of convening U.S. and international stakeholders on key global issues and challenges, and creating a platform for sustained engagement. If you are interested in joining GSLI or learning more about programs, please contact Meg Poole, Director at (202) 939-5895 or mpoole@meridian.org