



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Volunteer Center of the Virginia Peninsula Receives State Farm® Lead Agency Designation to Engage the Virginia Peninsula and Gloucester Youth in Large-Scale Projects for Global Youth Service Day, April 26-28, 2013

Hampton, Virginia — YSA (Youth Service America) announces The Volunteer Center of the Virginia Peninsula will serve as a State Farm Lead Agency, organizing Virginia Peninsula and Gloucester young people to lead projects that improve their communities. As a State Farm Lead Agency, The Volunteer Center receives a \$2,000 grant, as well as ongoing training and expert consulting, to develop high-visibility, youth-led community service projects in the lead-up to Global Youth Service Day (GYSD), April 26-28, 2013.

“For the past three years The Volunteer Center has had the privilege of working with State Farm and Youth Service America to engage over 1500 community youth in volunteer service. Our primary objective is to encourage youth to reject drugs, alcohol and gangs while making volunteering a lifelong commitment. We are grateful for the support of State Farm and YSA” states Carolyn Kincaid, Executive Director.

2013 projects on the Virginia Peninsula and in the Gloucester area include “Stop Bullying” presentations at 15 Boys and Girls Clubs with volunteers (ages 5-15) making and distributing peace bracelets to youth who have been abused; nutrition training for 300 youth who will educate parents and siblings about healthy eating habits; and an in-school service learning initiative “Veterans Through the Ages” that educates middle school students in 5 area school districts about veterans and what they have sacrificed for our freedom. Interactive discussions between the students and the veterans also give the students an opportunity to learn more about military life as a career. This initiative features current programs for veterans and culminates in volunteer activities that show veterans how much they are appreciated.

Project planning begins on Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service (January 21, 2013), and projects culminate on Global Youth Service Day, the world’s largest service event. As a State Farm Lead Agency, The Volunteer Center of the Virginia will engage approximately 1,500 youth in their GYSD events.

Now in its 25th year, GYSD reaches more than one million young people via partnerships with schools, community groups and faith-based organizations. Service projects will occur in more than 100 countries and will address community needs such as healthy living, childhood hunger, and environmental conservation.

“We are thrilled The Volunteer Center of the Virginia is stepping up to lead Global Youth Service Day activities in Hampton, Newport News, Poquoson, York County and Gloucester County” said Steven A. Culbertson, president and CEO of YSA. “Every youth should have the opportunity to make a difference.”

“Groups like The Volunteer Center are so critical to today’s youth. Global Youth Service Day helps to strengthen, educate, and create safer communities – and with agencies like The Volunteer Center leading the charge, we feel confident that young people will be at the forefront of these efforts,” said Kathy Payne, senior director of Education Leadership at State Farm.

The Volunteer Center of the Virginia Peninsula is one of 100 recipients of the State Farm Lead Agency grant, which was available to organizations in the United State and the Canadian provinces of Alberta, Ontario and New Brunswick. In partnership with YSA, State Farm awarded a total of \$200,000 in Lead Agency grants to support youth-led projects designed to improve communities.

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Celebrating 25 years of youth changing the world, YSA (Youth Service America) improves communities by increasing the number and diversity of young people serving in substantive roles. Through campaigns such as Global Youth Service Day and Semester of Service; YSA Grants and awards programs; and resources and training opportunities, YSA activates millions of young people each year. Working with—and on behalf of—youth, adult mentors, organizations and schools, YSA promotes a global culture of engaged youth committed to a lifetime of community action, learning, leadership, and achievement. www.YSA.org and www.GYSD.org.

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