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Dear Community Organizations,

I am writing to you to announce the creation of the Mayor's Volunteer Corps, and to invite you to participate. Since I first ran for public office, I have been inspired by a deep commitment to civic engagement. I believe that there is no better way to stay engaged in one's community than to volunteer time and effort in service to people and causes which transcend our self interests. As the employee of an organization that advocates for those in need of assistance, I am sure you are no stranger to this call.

The history of our country is replete with instances when we have been forced to look beyond our self interests to the greater welfare of society. It is punctuated by leaders who have inspired us, particularly in times of crisis, to give something of ourselves to our community. In his inaugural address in 1961, President John F. Kennedy famously challenged us to "ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country." That exhortation to service resonates especially loud today, as worsening economic conditions impact so many families and communities across the Commonwealth. In a more recent inaugural address, President Barack Obama declared: "What is required of us now is a new era of responsibility – a recognition on the part of every American – that we have duties to ourselves, our nation and the world, duties that we do not grudgingly accept but rather seize gladly." As an organization dedicated to the welfare of others, I am sure you can identify with this exhortation.

The Mayor's Volunteer Corps is a vehicle to help us answer this call to service. My office will work with neighborhood associations, human and social service organizations, local churches, colleges and universities to identify avenues for volunteering and to connect residents of Cambridge with these opportunities. By participating in the Mayor's Volunteer Corps, your program will have the advantage of gaining the assistance of one or more volunteers who are enthusiastic about serving our community. I invite you to join this noble endeavor as soon as possible. Please contact Muna Kangsen, my Coordinator of Special Projects, at 617-349-4329, or via email at mkangsen@cambridgema.gov to express your interest in joining the Mayor's Volunteer Corps. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mayor E. Denise Simmons