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Mayor Johnson Announces Chief Service Officer
Position is the first of its kind in California

SACRAMENTO – Today Mayor Johnson announced Keith J. Hart as the new Chief Service Officer for the City of Sacramento. Along with Los Angeles, the position is the first of its kind in the State of California. As a senior ranking official, Hart will be responsible for creating and implementing a citywide plan to increase volunteerism in Sacramento.

“Today’s announcement is a significant win. As Chief Service Officer, Keith will be a vehicle for Sacramento to further its volunteerism efforts and showcase our city as a national model for service in the country. Most importantly, he will help us take service to the next level in working with key stakeholders to target resources to solve some of the most pressing issues and challenges facing our city. We want to thank the *Cities of Service Coalition* and the Rockefeller Foundation for allowing us to have this opportunity,” said Mayor Johnson.

Mayor Johnson’s Office competed in a national competition against other cities for a *Cities of Service Leadership Grant* from the Cities of Service Coalition to fund the position. Sacramento was ultimately awarded a two year \$200,000 grant from the coalition funded by the Rockefeller Foundation.

A selection committee – made up of representatives from the Rockefeller Foundation, national service experts, and Cities of Service Coalition staff – awarded the grants based on the ability of the applicant to outline how they would: conduct an assessment of existing service levels; produce a coordinated citywide plan to increase service; engage local universities; and appoint a Chief Service Officer who would report directly to the mayor or another high-ranking official in the administration. Applications were limited to members of the coalition in cities that have more than 100,000 residents, according to the 2000 census, and have at least one community college or four-year public or private university. In total, 50 cities applied for a leadership grant.

Sacramento joins Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, Nashville, Newark, Omaha, Philadelphia, Seattle, and Savannah, Ga. as the first *Cities of Service Leadership Grant* recipients.

Cities of Service is a bipartisan coalition of mayors from across the country, representing more than 46 million Americans in over 100 cities across the nation, dedicated to engaging more Americans in service and channeling volunteers towards each city’s most pressing challenges. Mayor Johnson is a founding member of the coalition.

Prior to his appointment, Keith Hart served as Director of the Governor's Office on Service and Volunteerism for the State of Maryland, which coordinates volunteer service efforts in the state. He has also worked for Frostburg State University, the first recipient of the CEO's Award Outstanding National Service for Higher Education from the Corporation for National and Community Service. He is a 1995 graduate of the University of Rochester and awarded a fifth year scholarship to further his interests in education and human development at the Margaret Warner Graduate School of Education and Human Development.

"As a capital city, Sacramento is in a unique position to strategically harness the power of its volunteers to solve its most pressing challenges, and I am excited to lead the charge. Mayor Johnson's leadership on volunteer service is nationally known and I'm honored he asked me to help build the capacity of the efforts already happening here in Sacramento," said Hart.

Hart and his team at City Hall have already been hard at work convening service experts and stakeholders, conducting assessments of existing service levels, and identifying collaborative partnerships to deepen the effects of local volunteerism. By December 1, 2010, recipient cities must submit a progress report tracking the results of the comprehensive service plan and launch a website that allows both volunteers to search for service opportunities and service organizations seeking to engage citizens.

Mayor Johnson officially launched his volunteer initiative 'Volunteer Sacramento' in June of 2009 with the goal of becoming the most caring city in California. The initiative is an effort led by Johnson, in partnership with HandsOn Sacramento and Honorary Chair Congresswoman Doris Matsui, to encourage volunteerism and service in the greater Sacramento area.