



PUBLIC SERVICE
RECOGNITION WEEK 2009
MAY 4-10



**GOVERNMENT
GOES GREEN**



PARTNERSHIP
FOR PUBLIC SERVICE



PUBLIC EMPLOYEES
ROUNDTABLE

CELEBRATE PUBLIC SERVICE 2009



AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
ASSOCIATION OF TECHNICAL AND SUPERVISORY PROFESSIONALS
COUNCIL OF FORMER FEDERAL EXECUTIVES
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PARTNERSHIP FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

JOIN US IN CELEBRATING PUBLIC SERVICE RECOGNITION WEEK

MAY 4-10



PSRW 2009 THEME GOVERNMENT GOES GREEN

The Partnership for Public Service and Public Employees Roundtable have developed this Teacher's Guide to provide resource materials on public service.

Our objectives are to:

- Help young people understand and respect the value of a quality government work force and the important role it serves in providing essential services;
- Stimulate a meaningful dialogue among students, teachers, families and communities about challenges confronting the United States at home and abroad;
- Provoke research and thought by students about the role of public service in a democratic society and their future;
- Educate students about the scope and nature of government and distinctions between executive, legislative and judicial functions; and
- Encourage interest in public service careers.

We hope this information will facilitate a deeper and broader dialogue and understanding of government, especially during *Public Service Recognition Week (PSRW)*, the first Monday through Sunday in May. The week offers a unique opportunity to provide an interactive learning experience combining school activities and field trips with local and national celebrations.

During *PSRW*, many communities and agencies arrange exhibits that provide an overview of key facets and functions of government. This year's theme, "Government Goes Green," offers a specific opportunity to highlight the ways government promotes sustainable communities and a healthy environment.

Thank you for your interest and excitement about engaging students in public service and citizen engagement. If you have any ideas or feedback about the Teacher's Guide, please e-mail us at: psrw@ourpublicservice.org.

GET INVOLVED!

Call us at (202) 775-9111 or e-mail psrw@ourpublicservice.org for more information about how your organization can participate in *Public Service Recognition Week*. Complete program details are also available at ourpublicservice.org/psrw.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

The following suggestions serve as conceptual foundations for classroom exercises. They allow for considerable latitude and flexibility on the part of teachers and can be tailored to specific topics.

Link an Issue Area to a Department or Agency

Choose a particular issue area, such as space exploration, and then discuss how the relevant agency (NASA) might set goals and policies. Issues can be local, statewide or national in scope.

Writing a Constitution

If you were drafting a new constitution what would you include? Assume the class is responsible for developing a constitution for one of the newly democratized states of Eastern Europe. Is the U.S. Constitution a useful model? What else should be included? Class exercise: Stage a constitutional convention with two-thirds of class support required to adopt an amendment.

Checks and Balances/Elections/Political Issues

In the United States, the principle of checks and balances has endured for more than two centuries. What does the Constitution say about elections? Examine the Hatch Act limiting political activities of civil servants. Discuss differences between the mandates of elected and appointed officials: What are their respective roles in government? How are they influenced by campaigns, fundraising or election cycles?

The Hidden Aspects of Government

Have the class list as many government functions as they can and then reduce the list by 10 percent, 20 percent, 50 percent — What are the effects at each level? What could you afford to live without? What are some of the hidden effects? This lesson is designed to emphasize range of services and functions of government while highlighting invisible aspects of a “smooth operation.” How visible are government functions: obvious/less obvious/obscure/hidden? What is their nature: critical/valuable/quality of life/ceremonial?

Run the City...State...Nation for a Day

Divide the class into executive and legislative sections, assigning specific tasks, challenges and issues — Encourage honest, realistic roleplaying and debate asking students

to weigh political considerations. Deduct points for action out of character. Break down a federal department and detail how things get done. Chart the passage of a bill through Congress.

GENERAL DISCUSSION ACTIVITIES FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

LOCAL ISSUES

1. What are the biggest problems in our school system today?
2. What are the biggest problems in our community today?
3. Who is affected by each of these problems?
4. What are the causes of the problems?
5. Who is trying to deal with the problems?
6. Is the government involved? How?
7. What solutions can you offer?
8. How can you help?

THE PURPOSE OF GOVERNMENT

1. What feature of our system do you most value? Why?
2. What would you include in a charter for governing your class?
3. What are the biggest threats to our system?
4. What can you do to protect it?

ROLE OF CITIZENS IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The city is considering an ordinance to regulate skate boarding or talking on a cell phone while driving. What would you do to support/oppose such an ordinance?

FUNCTION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

1. How does the Student Council operate?
2. How is the Student Council similar to the City Council?
3. How is it different?
4. Where would a city or county manager fit in?

HOW WE CHOOSE OUR LEADERS

Present the following situation and ask students to each make a decision:

- Two of your best friends are running for Student Council. Both will want you to vote for them.
- One has a great personality and is a hard worker. The other has some terrific ideas for the Council, which she has shared with you, and she is very shy.
- What will you do?

Use answers to facilitate a discussion of the qualities we look for in elected officials.

Adopted from *Investing in Our Future: A Handbook for Teaching Local Government* (ICMA, 1990 pp. 35-36)

LESSON PLANS

The following lesson plans represent just a sampling of materials available to stimulate interest and understanding of the complexity of public policy issues and the democratic process. Each citation is fully referenced in the Sources section so an unabridged version of the original source can be ordered.

I. SETTING UP A NEW GOVERNMENT

TOPIC

Introduction to Local Government and the Law

OVERVIEW

This lesson plan introduces local government in City X. What is it? How do citizens participate? What competing forces are involved? How might high-school students be affected?

OBJECTIVES

Students will understand the purpose of establishing government for City X. Students will comprehend how city government, the local political process and laws function. Students will learn about voting requirements for their state, the traditional differences between the two major political parties and how these differences blur in the process of getting elected and remaining in office. Students will identify the types of government in their city and/or county. Students will prepare their own municipal or county budgets and will identify and demonstrate various propaganda techniques.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

Provide students with insight into the political process. Help them view the process as an ebb-and-flow situation. Offer opportunities for them to recognize and analyze the effects of labeling on people, on issues and on operations. Expose students to opportunities for government and volunteer service. Introduce students to the budgeting process.

MOTIVATION

Relate the factual material to information that is current, interesting and relevant to the student's life (e.g., politics of a bond referendum for a county baseball stadium).

DEVELOPING THE LESSON

Review voting requirements for the state and the traditional difference between the two political parties. Present information on varying types of local governments. Discuss city organizational chart. Develop a mock bud-

get. Draft a position paper on a specific issue facing a particular city department.

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

Learn voting requirements and the political process at the local level. Learn to prepare a budget.

EXTENDING THE LESSON

Visit the City Council or County Commission or invite local officials or budget officers to discuss key questions and careers. Encourage students to think about their interests. Invite representatives from the local political headquarters to discuss their functions and careers, and encourage volunteerism.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The U.S. Constitution, a city charter.

Adopted with permission from Cleveland State University and Martin Luther King Jr. Public Service and Law Magnet School, "Introduction to Local Government"

II. COMMUNITY SERVICE

TOPIC

Introduction to Social Services

OVERVIEW

This unit introduces students to the field of social services. What is it? Who does it? How are social services delivered? What are the qualifications for entry-level positions?

OBJECTIVES

Introduce and define the field and role of human/social services. Suggest alternatives for problem solving.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

Summarize key aspects related to the field of social services. Help students identify problem situations. Help students improve skills in intergroup relations. Give students opportunities to improve communications skills.

MOTIVATION

Allow small-group interaction. Encourage brainstorming. Encourage role-playing.

DEVELOPING THE LESSON

Write the words social services on the blackboard. Read aloud or watch a video of a series of vignettes that portray troubling situations. Ask students what might be helpful in any of the situations. Stress the uniqueness of each person and situation, and the importance of offering

an individualized response. Have students analyze each vignette to determine what is happening. List varying perceptions on the board. Organize students into small groups to identify the problems and devise ways to solve them.

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

Learn about the field of social services. Improve analytical skills. Improve communication skills. Gain experience in teamwork.

EXTENDING THE LESSON

Interview social service professionals about their goals, qualifications and job satisfaction. Research the social services available in the community.

ACTIVITY

Unified Research Methods Vignette

1. A 14-year-old girl ran away, was picked up by the police and placed in a detention home. The father is a businessperson. The mother is a schoolteacher. They are concerned about their daughter and are asking for help from the court to resolve the problems they are facing.
2. Neighbors called Western Reserve Psychiatric Hospital to report a man living next door to them (recently released) who was playing loud music all day and night, and throwing garbage on the lawn. They believe that he has stopped taking his medication and they are fearful for their children.
3. A woman called the community center to report that her landlord is not providing any heat, and that since the pipes are frozen, there is lack of water. The landlord refuses to answer her phone calls and the city has not sent an investigator to assess the situation. Others are living in the apartment house, including three elderly persons with special needs.
4. A young mother of an eight-month-old infant brings the baby into the emergency room of the hospital with a concussion and two broken limbs. The mother indicated that when she came home from shopping she found the baby unattended. A boyfriend had been baby-sitting while the mother was out.

Adopted with permission from Cleveland State University and Martin Luther King Jr. Public Service and Law Magnet School curriculum

III. WRITE A LETTER TO A PUBLIC OFFICIAL

OBJECTIVE

Students analyze a specific community problem and communicate that problem to the appropriate official.

The student will:

- Identify a community problem.
- Review business letters and envelope formats.
- Discuss possible situations that call for the attention of public officials.
- Select a situation and determine the purpose of the letter.
- Organize the letter based on evidence and reasoning.
- Direct the letter to the appropriate public official.
- Use the correct format for writing to a public official.
- State the purpose of the letter in the opening paragraph.
- Use language and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose of the letter.
- Include all necessary information.
- Revise the letter focusing on clarity, word choice and conciseness.
- Edit the letter correcting all grammatical, mechanical and usage errors.

ACTIVITIES

Letter Checklist

- Is the heading correct?
- Is the inside address correct?
- Does the greeting address the individual properly? Is the punctuation correct?
- Is the purpose of the letter in the opening paragraph?
- Are the language and tone appropriate to the audience?
- Are the evidence and reasoning sound and complete?
- Is the vocabulary clear, concise and accurate?
- Have all the grammatical, mechanical and usage errors been corrected?
- Is the closing correct and punctuated correctly?
- Is the spacing of the letter correct including margins?
- Does the envelope follow the correct format?

Finding an Issue

- Discuss possible situations that call for the attention of a public official.
- List student responses on the board.
- Have students bring in an article or editorial from the newspaper for the next day's exercise.
- Ask the students the following questions:

1. How can you call this issue to the attention of an official?
 2. What would be the purpose of that attention getter?
 3. What necessary information from the writer should be included?
- Choose the public official that you think should receive your letter.
 - Choose the correct format and write the letter.
 - Have the students exchange letters and proof read them using the above “Letter Checklist.”
 - Return the letters to its owner and discuss the edits in small groups before revising and mailing them.

Adopted with permission from Cleveland State University and Martin Luther King Jr. Public Service and Law Magnet School curriculum “Letter to a Public Official”

IV. PUBLIC POLICY FORMULATION

TOPIC

Developing Public Policy Alternatives

PURPOSE

To enable students to identify public policy alternatives and to form a tentative judgment as to a preferred alternative.

OBJECTIVES

Given information on a general policy topic area, students will be able to:

1. State at least three public policy alternatives to address that problem.
2. Select their preferred alternative among the three policies, and explain why they consider it to be their preferred choice over the other two.

PROCEDURES

1. Discuss the terms “feasibility” and “effectiveness.” Mention examples of policies that might be effective, but not feasible to implement (e.g., it was feasible to enact a mandatory seatbelt law in New York State, but its effectiveness may be low due to lack of compliance).
2. Have students suggest other examples of existing or proposed policies and have the class apply the feasibility and effectiveness matrix.
3. Arrange the class into competition groups. The task for each group is to develop a group consensus on a selected topic.
 - Example: Taxation. Types of taxes — How are they collected? What do they fund? Should the local/

state/federal system be changed? Examine alternatives: Pay-as-you-go? User fees?

4. Within each group, students should explore a range of alternatives. From these five or six suggested policies, the groups should each determine three feasible alternatives. From these, further arguments and discussions within the groups will ultimately result in each group determining its preferred alternative and the reasoning for its preference. Some students may feel a stronger sense of ownership in stating a preferred policy. For these reasons, some classes may need an entire class period to explore alternatives.
5. When the groups have prepared their preferred policy and a rationale for their selection, an entire class period should be devoted to competition between the groups. The teacher should amplify or augment information offered by each group to ensure that students are able to justify their positions.

Developing Public Policy Alternatives and Choosing the Preferred Alternative

Provide at least three proposed public policy alternatives to deal with a problem you have identified. Each alternative must specify the government agency that will carry out the proposed action. Indicate which proposal you think is most promising by listing it first. Discuss why you consider it to be the preferred choice over the other two. For example:

Three possible proposals for attacking the drug problem among youths eighteen and younger are:

1. A community teen court to sentence young drug offenders to hours of community service, not time in jail.
2. Increased education in grade schools about drugs and their effects.
3. A program that uses undercover narcotics agents in public high schools.

Neither increased education nor the use of undercover narcotics agents is likely to have much of an impact on drug usage among teenagers. Many educational programs have not proven to be effective. The use of undercover narcotics agents would only push the drug problem outside school and do little to reduce drug usage among teenagers. It would also be opposed by important players in the community. The community teen court would not eliminate the drug problem, but it could use peer pressure to reduce it significantly. In addition, it is likely to be supported by most key players in the com-

munity because it is a new approach and does not involve significant public spending.

- Identifying alternative policies are useful because it helps the analyst anticipate both support for and opposition to a proposal. It also forces the analyst to weigh the costs and benefits of different policy prescriptions. Moreover, in the process of developing alternatives, new prescriptions may evolve.
- There are several ways to develop public policy alternatives. One way is to look at factors contributing to the problem. By selecting one or more major factors and listing alternatives that would lessen the factors. Another way is to make adjustments in current policies.
- Once alternatives have been listed, a tentative choice should be made. Two key questions should be asked to make your choice:
 1. What policy is most likely to be accepted by those who will determine whether or not the policy is implemented? (Feasibility)
 2. Which alternative appears to have the maximum beneficial impact with the minimum costs? (Effectiveness)
- It is ideal to find policies that are highly feasible and highly effective, but this almost never happens in the real world. Usually it is necessary to choose among policies that have some attractive features in both feasibility and effectiveness.

V. THE PUBLIC SERVICE CHALLENGE — A CALL TO ACTION

OBJECTIVES

- To demonstrate constructive steps that can be taken to influence public policy.
- To encourage students to take active roles in their communities through civic education/participation.

EXERCISE

Discuss with the class ways in which they might influence or affect a public policy of specific interest to them.

1. If the class wanted to influence the development of local homeless policy or the availability of student loans, what steps might they take? Have the class list possible approaches.
 - Would they gripe to their friends?
 - Educate themselves to government/political issues?
 - Write a letter to Congress?
 - Volunteer for a political campaign?

2. The following issues can be influenced by the last three methods listed above:
 - AIDS research;
 - Middle East policy;
 - Housing mortgage rates;
 - Education;
 - Public transportation;
 - Student loans; and
 - Environment.
3. Possible approaches include:
 - Writing to public officials;
 - Attending public forums or town meetings;
 - Organizing petitions;
 - Learning about issues;
 - Campaigning for candidates who support particular issues;
 - Drafting letters to the editor;
 - Requesting information from government agencies;
 - Joining associations that are issues oriented (e.g., Maryland's "Save the Bay" campaign); and
 - VOTING!!!

4. Background Information:

Environment

- Learn about local environmental initiatives, pollution abatement proposals and emerging technologies.
- Volunteer for grass-roots environmental organizations.
- Arrange internships with local or state natural resource departments.

AIDS

- Information on AIDS and other public health issues can be obtained from the Department of Health and Human Services or the local health department.
- Specific concerns can be voiced through letters to congressional representatives or to local newspapers.

VI. INTERNATIONAL SERVICE

TOPIC

Internationalization of the Public Service

OBJECTIVES

- To heighten awareness of the many issues that cannot be handled within individual countries' borders.

- To identify federal agencies that have foreign service assignments abroad.

ACTIVITIES

- Have the students list the issues that cannot be controlled by one country, e.g., terrorism, trade, environment.
- Divide the class into groups to look at the different issues and identify the federal agencies that would be involved.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

U.S. Department of State

Foreign Service personnel staff more than 250 embassies and consulates abroad. Foreign Service Officers serve in political, economic, consular and administrative positions around the world. Foreign Service Specialists include secretaries, communicators, engineers, financial officers, physicians and nurses.

U.S. Agency for International Development

Employees in this agency help people in more than 70 developing countries acquire the knowledge and resources to build the economic, political and social institutions needed for a better life. Programs focus on poverty, hunger, health, education and population pressures.

U.S. Department of Commerce

The U.S. Commercial Service is a worldwide network of 1,300 men and women dedicated to the important task of increasing the exports of American companies, at a time when the economic health of our nation requires enhanced competitiveness abroad.

U.S. Department of Agriculture

The Foreign Agricultural Service has staff in 75 countries to help American farmers and traders take maximum advantage of opportunities to sell U.S. agricultural products abroad.

Peace Corps

This agency, established by President Kennedy in 1961, remains active, placing volunteers throughout the developing world in projects in education, health and nutrition, community development, agriculture, fisheries and forestry. Staff train and direct the volunteers.

Central Intelligence Agency

The CIA coordinates the nation's intelligence activities and provides much of the information needed by the president and other policymakers to formulate foreign policy. Skills needed encompass a wide variety of interests and academic backgrounds.

PUBLIC SERVICE RECOGNITION WEEK

WHO ARE PUBLIC EMPLOYEES?

Public employees perform a wide variety of essential tasks, such as:

- Educate our children.
- Deliver our mail.
- Administer our Social Security System.
- Staff our embassies.
- Staff veterans hospitals.
- Fight crime.
- Assist with national defense.
- Negotiate international agreements.
- Guard our prisons.
- Fight fires.
- Manage parks.
- Support research.
- Fight epidemics cure and prevent diseases.
- Clean our environment.
- Protect our borders.

Occupational areas in which 20,000 or more people are employed include: computing, nursing, contracting, criminal investigations, engineering, air traffic control, accounting, tax examining and social insurance administration.

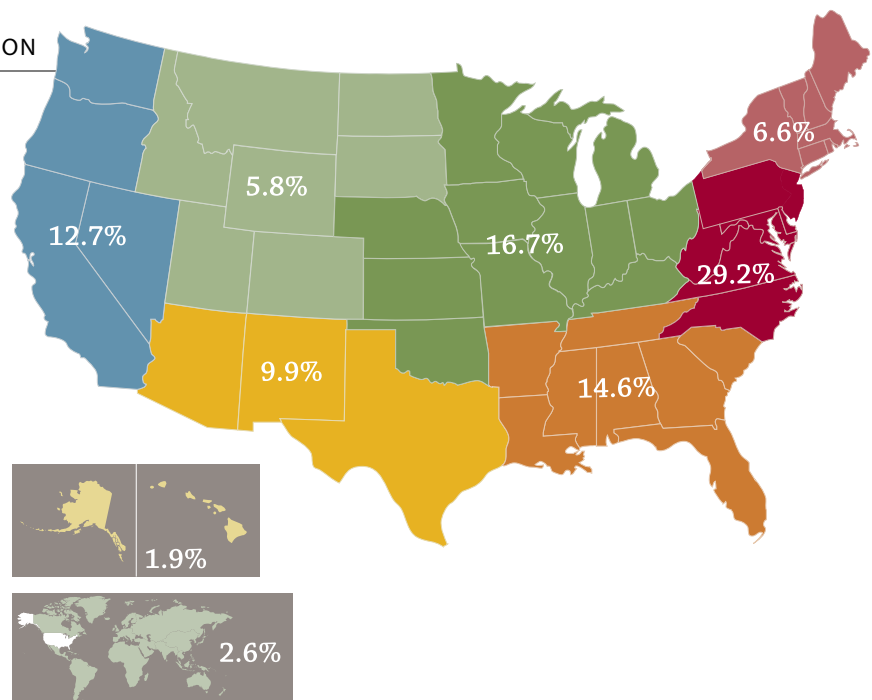
Occupational areas in which fewer than 20,000 people are employed include: community planning, clothing design, general anthropology, ecology, physiology, toxicology, park services, psychology, microbiology, zoology, entomology, botany, horticulture, architecture, photography, hydrology, metallurgy, library science, mine safety and health, border patrol, medical officer, speech pathology, public affairs, physics, chemistry, geology, printing management, aviation safety, legal and related professions, and pharmacist.

THERE ARE FEDERAL JOBS AROUND THE COUNTRY... AND AROUND THE WORLD

- Nearly 85 percent of federal jobs are located outside of the greater Washington, D.C. metropolitan area.
- More than 50,000 federal employees work abroad.

PERCENTAGE OF FEDERAL JOBS BY REGION

Number of full-time civilian federal employees: 1.9 million



PUBLIC SERVICE RECOGNITION WEEK

DID YOU KNOW?

- It was William Friedman, a civilian employee of the War Department, who ultimately deciphered the Japanese diplomatic code in World War II, thus playing a vital role in winning the war in the Pacific.
- In 1865, approximately one-third of the U.S. currency in circulation was forged, prompting the creation of the US. Secret Service.
- Agricultural Research Service researchers in New Orleans created flame-retardant clothing for fire fighters and astronauts.
- The Pepperidge Farms bread company uses a noncaloric, high-fiber natural flour substitute developed by employees of the Agricultural Research Service in Beltsville, Maryland.
- Government scientists developed new technology to make cotton fabrics as wrinkle resistant as permanent press fabrics.
- Ninety-five percent of America's children are protected against major disease through vaccines administered by public employees. Thanks to the government, polio and measles have been all but wiped out. The vaccine for meningitis and drugs for malaria were also developed by federal government employees.
- Jerry Parr, Thomas McCarthy and Thomas Delahanty were government employees who risked their lives to save President Reagan during a 1981 assassination attempt.
- A government employee invented the plastic cornea, a discovery that has returned eyesight to thousands. A government employee also invented the CAT scan, which helps physicians diagnose cancer, brain disorders and other diseases.
- Clara Barton, an employee of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, founded the American Red Cross.
- The first person to set foot on the moon, Neil Armstrong, was a public employee.
- Dr. Ruth Rogan Benevito, a U.S. Department of Agriculture scientist, developed wash and wear fabric.
- Employees at the U.S. Department of Energy created a plastic bag like those used by grocery stores that is made entirely out of potato peels and is completely biodegradable.
- Football coach Knute Rockne, poet Walt Whitman, pilot Charles Lindbergh, and authors Washington Irving, Nathaniel Hawthorne and James Thurber were all public employees.
- Employees of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have constructed many of our nations' architectural masterpieces.
- Alexander Graham Bell, father of the telephone, worked as an agent of the U.S. Census Bureau.
- Two employees of the National Institute of Standards and Technology invented the neon light.
- A career federal employee with more than 50 patents for his inventions developed radar, while another discovered sonar.
- Half of all U.S. medical doctors in practice today received training as government employees working for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.
- In their search to unlock the mysteries of the universe, NASA scientists discovered the first Black Hole.
- The National Institutes of Health began more than a century ago with a single attic room and a \$300 budget to help Dr. Joseph J. Kinyoun fight the spread of cholera.
- Scientists at the Naval Research Laboratories discovered applications for the substance Teflon, which now covers most modern cookware. These scientists also developed the thin plastic wrap which keeps food fresh in the supermarket.
- More than two million public employees protect our nation through service in our armed forces.
- Instrument landing systems used by all commercial and military aircraft, as well as the basic design of most aircraft, were developed by government employees.
- Employees at the U.S. Department of Energy have developed the world's first device to reveal the exact three dimensional arrangement of atoms in small molecules, which could help determine the impact of acid rain and the chemical evolution of life on earth.
- Thousands of individuals accused of crimes each year are defended in our judicial system by public employees at no cost to the defendants.
- A government employee at the U.S. Department of Agriculture pioneered the bar code scanner that automatically computes the cost of your purchases at the store.
- The Pentagon is one of the world's largest office buildings, covering more than 29 acres and housing 17.5 miles of corridors.
- Herman Hollerith, a U.S. Census Bureau accountant, invented the first modern computer.
- Rachel Carson, author of *Silent Spring*, which helped spark nationwide concern for ecology, was an Aquatic Biologist with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.
- Frederick Douglas held various government positions including Minister to Haiti and Recorder of Deeds for Washington, D.C.

CELEBRATE PUBLIC SERVICE

OURPUBLICSERVICE.ORG/PSRW



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