

Program aims to ramp up summer volunteerism

By Juan Lopez, Reno Gazette-Journal

Nevada's volunteerism rate of 20.6 percent in 2009 ranked last in the United States, according to the Corporation for National and Community Service.

The "Summer of Service" program wants to change that.

The Summer of Service was launched in Northern Nevada this month. It is a program aimed at enhancing community service during summer months by serving as a base where people looking to volunteer can find opportunities to do so. The program, which is a branch of NPcatalyst, a local firm that connects potential volunteers with nonprofit organizations, ends Aug. 31.

"It's been my goal for three or four years now to address the low volunteerism rate in Nevada," said Pete Parker of NPcatalyst. "It's always bothered me because we live in a great, tight-knit community."

Parker said one of the underlying problems with volunteerism in Nevada is that the organizations offering opportunities fail to reach out to the community.

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