

Biography of J. Russell George

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J. Russell George, Inspector General of the Corporation for National and Community Service, has a long and distinguished record of public service, with a strong emphasis on community service programs and government accountability.

The independent Office of Inspector General oversees the fiscal and administrative operations of the Corporation and its state and local partners, which field community problem solvers through such programs as AmeriCorps, VISTA, the National Civilian Community Corps, Learn and Serve America and the Senior Volunteer Program.

George, who was nominated by President George W. Bush and confirmed by the Senate, was sworn into office on September 4, 2002, by his mentor and longtime friend, former Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole, R-KS.

“I seek fairness and I’ve always had a desire to see justice done,” said George who, from an early age, aspired to be an attorney.

George began his legal studies at the highly selective Brooklyn Technical High School, where he took pre-law preparatory courses. He went on to study at Howard University in Washington, D.C., where he majored in political science and minored in history.

While at Howard, George worked as an intern and later as a clerk on the staff of Sen. Dole. He also served as the student-elected undergraduate representative to the university’s Board of Trustees. George earned membership in Phi Beta Kappa and graduated, magna cum laude, from Howard in 1985. He entered Harvard University Law School that same year.

Following his graduation from Harvard in 1988, George worked as an assistant prosecutor for the District Attorney’s Office in Queens, N.Y. He returned to Washington in 1990 to join the administration of President George H.W. Bush and served as Assistant General Counsel in the Office of Management and Budget from 1990 to 1991. He also served as Associate Director for Policy in the White House Office of National Service, where he helped to shape many of today’s national volunteer and service programs, from 1991 to 1993.

From 1993 to 1994, George was an associate with the New York City law firm of Kramer, Nevin, Naftalis, Nessen, Kamin & Frankel. He was called back to Washington in 1995 by former Rep. Stephen Horn, R-CA., chairman of the House Government Reform Subcommittee on Government Efficiency, Financial Management and Intergovernmental Relations, to serve as staff director and chief counsel.

Rep. Horn, who retired from Congress in January, 2003, lauded his chief aide and advisor in a House floor speech on September 5, 2002. "He (George) was the key force in pressing for legislation to collect debts owed to the taxpayers," said Horn. "And he has directed many other subcommittee initiatives that have saved hundreds of millions of dollars while making government programs more effective in meeting the needs of our citizens."

Since taking office, George has supervised a number of investigations and audits of the Corporation's operations and activities. He recently launched a new Evaluation Section in the Office of Inspector General with the goal of assisting the Corporation, and its state and local partners, in dealing with a wide range of regulatory and fiscal issues.

"We want to help the Corporation and its' community problem solvers avoid potential pitfalls before they become problems," George said of the new initiative.