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Mayor Bloomberg leads the charge to boost volunteering on good deeds Monday

BY Kathleen Lucadamo
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Kempin/GettyMayor Bloomberg kicks off three-day volunteering conference on good deeds Monday.

Mayor Bloomberg and other Big Apple bigwigs will celebrate good deeds Monday during a three-day national conference on volunteering being held in Manhattan for the first time. Bloomberg, who chairs the event, has made volunteering the hallmark of his third term and last year launched NYC Service, an arm of government dedicated to boosting volunteers.

"NYC Service is harnessing the power of volunteers to tackle some of our toughest issues throughout the five boroughs," said Bloomberg.

"It's been a great success, and we're thrilled to host leaders from around the nation who are working hard to do the same thing in their communities.

The event kicks off in Radio City Music Hall with the mayor, Gov. Paterson and others stressing the importance of donating time to build better communities.

There will also be a town hall discussion on AmeriCorps, a forum with business leaders looking at the need for workers to volunteer and a seminar that studies free programs that empower young women.

U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan will deliver a keynote speech on schools that is expected to attract 1,000 attendees. The conference will also feature former First

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Lady Barbara Bush and "Today" host Al Roker.

Katy Keck, the lead volunteer with Infinite Family, which educates South African teens about HIV/AIDS, is one of many being honored at the conference.

"The conference is a wonderful way to give visibility to the countless volunteers who are so inspiring," she said.

The conference, sponsored by Target, is in its third year. The Laurie M. Tisch Illumination Fund is also deeply involved in the event.

"Service is such an essential part of a community and it's so important for people t o give back and solve problems together," said Gail Nayowith, executive director of the Tisch Fund.

klucadamo@nydailynews.com

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