

# Realizing an experience dividend

HELPING THE LONGEVITY REVOLUTION  
ADD UP FOR AMERICA

# 20

Doomsayers see the aging boom as a problem to be solved, a costly gray wave. Civic Ventures sees this longevity revolution differently—as the springboard for an America made better by experience.

# 06

## Now arriving: the experience generation



### What a waste

Dorothea Glass retired as chair of a medical school department and moved to the ocean. She approached a local hospital with the offer to put her decades of experience as a physician and medical executive to work—for free. The hospital offered her a volunteer job filling water pitchers.

**The first of 77 million baby boomers** turn 60 in 2006. They are on the front edge of the largest, healthiest, best educated population of Americans ever to move through and beyond their fifties.

They are pioneers in a new stage spanning the decades between middle and late life. Neither young nor old, they represent an extraordinary pool of social and human capital. And, in large numbers, they want to do work that serves a greater good.

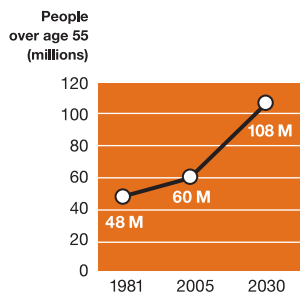
Millions are determined to apply their experience to make a difference for others. Some are able to do so as unpaid volunteers. Many are looking to combine aspects of work—income and health benefits—with elements of service through second careers tailored to their interests and circumstances.

But too often, their individual enthusiasm is stymied by perceptions, policies, and practices that discourage the sharing of experience. As a result, this growing number of Americans represents a largely untapped resource in a nation with many unmet needs.

Imagine unleashing their potential.

# Achieving a national return on experience

## THE FACTS



### A longevity bonus

The number of Americans over age 55 will grow dramatically in the next 25 years.

**60 is the new 40.** In the last century, the average U.S. lifespan has grown by 30 years. In 1900, the typical American lived to age 47; today it is age 77. Many Americans over 60 feel approximately two decades younger than their chronological age.

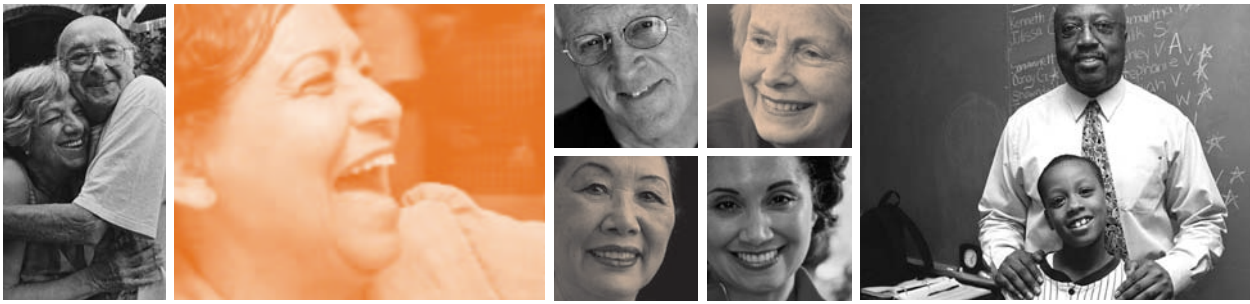
**A second half of work.** Americans don't expect—or want—to put their feet up and not work in the “retirement years.” Four out of five people over 50 say they will work in retirement, whether full time or part time, whether for money or enjoyment.

**From doing well to doing good.** People who plan to continue working say it is very important that their work in retirement gives them a sense of purpose, keeps them involved with people, and helps them improve the quality of life in their communities.

Ask not...  
the sixties  
generation  
turns 60.



The first of the 77 million baby boomers turning 60 is the same generation that John F. Kennedy famously challenged to ask themselves what they could do for their country. The Peace Corps was one of many vehicles that channeled their idealism into action. This same generation, freed from the responsibilities of raising children and doing the work “I have to do,” is now positioned to lead another social movement based on sharing life experience. They couldn't come along at a better time.



## THE FACES

**Ed Speedling** worked as a hospital administrator and organizational change specialist for years. Then he changed himself. He's now the outreach coordinator for Project HOME in Philadelphia, one of the country's most innovative initiatives responding to homelessness.

**Naomi Baskin** retired after 25 years in real estate to join Experience Corps, a national service program for older adults. She now spends 15 hours each week tutoring elementary school students in some of San Francisco's most challenged neighborhoods. "I can tell you unequivocally that I have at last found my passion," she says. "Too bad it took me into middle age to do so!"

**Susie Cavanaugh** retired after 30 years as a public school teacher and stepped into a full-time paid role with United Way. She coordinates its Get on Board program and recruits, trains, and places people from underrepresented populations on the boards of nonprofit organizations in Lexington, Kentucky.

**Dave Miller** spent 30 years at BellSouth, then took early retirement and went looking for new challenges. He's now the full-time director of operations at Crisis Assistance Ministry, a nonprofit group in Charlotte, North Carolina, providing assistance and advocacy for people in financial crisis.

### Many good paths

The transition to a next chapter can involve recycling, changing, or starting a career.

A 30-year executive in advertising now teaches the subject at a local college. A Marine Corps brigadier general now runs an urban hunger relief program. An avid recreational biker now helps adults learn about the importance of being active.

# Civic Ventures is leading with experience

**Civic Ventures** is a think tank as well as an incubator. We create ideas and invent programs that help society achieve the greatest return on experience.

We focus on the vanguard of a new movement made up of a growing number of Americans who are redefining the second half of life.

These people are not just extending their years on the job; they are doing work that adds meaning to these years. They want to share their experience while acquiring new experiences. They are inventors, organizers, leaders, activists, teachers, and entrepreneurs who attach deep meaning to the notion of giving back.

They are the chief ingredient in a formula for capturing the opportunity that resides in a nation rich with experience.

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## What do you want to do *after* you grow up?



**The story I like to tell** is about my little man, Herbie. He didn't want to come for tutoring. He was literally on the floor screaming, "No, no, they think I'm stupid. I don't want to come." I finally got him to join me, and Herbie turned out to be just wonderful. He accomplished a great deal, did well in school, and developed a sense of self that was just marvelous.

ELLEN KELLY · BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

## A FORMULA FOR SOCIAL GAIN

The phenomenon of the baby boom generation turning 60 provides America with new assets in the form of unprecedented human capital. In short, there are more people with experience who have more time to use it. And many have a personal determination to contribute. When this impetus finds the right vehicle—and people engage in pathways that bring about greater good—a return is generated. This return is, in effect, an experience dividend: a significant gain derived from a deep national repository of life experience. Of course, the dividend payout is twofold—it benefits society as a whole as well as all individuals who actively share their experience.

THE PHENOMENON  
boomers turn 60

THE ASSETS  
unprecedented human capital

+

THE IMPETUS  
determination to contribute

+

THE VEHICLE  
pathways to greater good

=

THE RETURN  
experience dividend



## What looks good to people who want to do good work?

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Civic Ventures survey research of Americans age 50 to 70 indicates that:

- Most see retirement as a time to begin a new chapter in life by being active and involved, starting new activities, and setting new goals.
- Two-thirds of those age 50 to 54 are interested in taking jobs now or in the future to help improve the quality of life in their communities.
- More than three-quarters of those who say they'll work in retirement are interested in working to help the poor, the elderly, and people in need.
- Nearly half strongly support funding to enable older adults to get training for work in schools or social services after retirement.

# A brief history in highlights

Civic Ventures set out to reframe the debate about aging in America, and to redefine retirement in terms of social and individual renewal. Today, we report on the growth of the experience movement, while helping to connect its participants and expand their opportunities.

## 1993

The late John Gardner, Health, Education, and Welfare Secretary and recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom, drafts a concept paper titled "The Experience Corps." In 1994, Gardner meets Marc Freedman, a researcher and social entrepreneur.



inspiring a movement

## 1996-1999

Gardner and Freedman collaborate with other leaders in the aging, service, and mentoring fields to help found the Experience Corps program and its parent nonprofit organization, Civic Ventures.



*Prime Time* captures stories and connects themes that are redefining retirement today.

## 1999 and 2002

*The New Face of Retirement* survey series reports changing attitudes toward personal contribution and service in the post-midlife years.

## 2001 (ongoing)

Successful Aging Initiative, implemented by The Cleveland Foundation with consulting from Civic Ventures, leads the way for community programs focused on experience gains.



*Coming of Age* annual conferences bring together innovators who are mobilizing experience for social good.

connecting its participants



Civic Ventures ideas and information fuel media coverage that counterbalances the typically negative reporting of an older America.

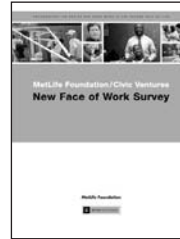
**2001**

Innovations series depicts groundbreaking work of experienced Americans addressing significant social problems.



**2004 (ongoing)**

The Next Chapter™ Initiative provides resources for local organizations helping people over 50 pursue new life options.



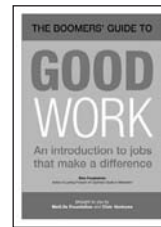
**2005 and beyond**

*New Face of Work* survey documents the desire for meaningful work after age 50.

*Still Working™* chronicles the experience of individuals moving into post-midlife careers in education, health care, and the nonprofit sector.

launching programs

With help from Civic Ventures programs and consultants, dozens of communities have established new ways for people to do good work in the second half of life.



*The Boomers' Guide to Good Work* provides options and tips for those looking to apply their experience.

Social innovators generating an experience dividend are rewarded and supported through a new national program.

providing pathways for good work

# Here comes the future

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**The number of Americans over 55** will grow to 108 million in 2030. That's up from 60 million in this age group today.

Never before have so many people had so much knowledge—and so much time to use it. Here's the even better news: In large numbers, they are ready and willing to put their experience to good use.

Unleashing this vast human potential is a social imperative. It requires fresh attitudes, policies, and practices that welcome the contributions of baby boomers who want work with meaning. It's how the nation can embrace a new stage of life that will soon include one-quarter of its citizens. It's how the inevitable costs of an older population can be offset through incalculable gain.

It's how America—and Americans in the second half of life—can achieve an experience dividend.

**The nation today faces breathtaking opportunities disguised as insoluble problems.**

JOHN GARDNER

## Happy beginnings

Dr. Jack McConnell un-retired from golfing to start Volunteers in Medicine, a growing network of free clinics staffed by medical professionals over age 55. Dorothea Glass (see page 1) found work that suited her purpose in a local clinic inspired by this organization.

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The longevity revolution raises important questions—not only of national economics, but of national values. Civic Ventures answers by helping America achieve a national return on experience.



**LEADING WITH EXPERIENCE**

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