

From: Be the Change, Inc.
Tim Zimmermann (703) 850-0735, tzimmermann@bethechangeinc.org

Additional Contacts: Rubenstein Communications, Inc.
Germaine Febles 212-843-9347, gfebles@rubenstein.com

Columbia University
David M. Stone (212) 854-5573, dmstone@columbia.edu

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEES JOHN MCCAIN AND BARACK OBAMA TO SPEAK
AT FORUM ON SERVICE AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT ON SEPT. 11 HOSTED BY
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY IN NEW YORK CITY**

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***PBS NewsHour Senior Correspondent and Political Editor Judy Woodruff Will Join
TIME Managing Editor Richard Stengel to Co-Moderate***

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Public Can Submit Questions on Service for the Candidates at <http://tinyurl.com/6jmhd5>

September 3, 2008 [New York, NY] – In their first joint appearance since the party conventions, Presidential nominees John McCain and Barack Obama will discuss in-depth their views on service and civic engagement in the post-9/11, post-Katrina world during the primetime “ServiceNation Presidential Candidates Forum” on the evening of September 11 at Columbia University in the City of New York.

The Forum is being organized by ServiceNation (<http://servicenation.org>), a dynamic new coalition of 110 organizations that has a collective reach of some 100 million Americans and is dedicated to strengthening our democracy and solving problems through civic engagement and service.

PBS NewsHour Senior Correspondent and Political Editor Judy Woodruff will join previously announced moderator Richard Stengel, managing editor of TIME, to question the candidates—who will appear separately—about their views on the meaning and importance of service.

“I am so pleased that my colleague Judy Woodruff will be there with me to moderate this historic event,” said Stengel. “This forum, timed to the anniversary of one of the greatest challenges our country has faced, is an opportunity for the next President to explain how the ideal of service fits into his vision for America.”

“The ServiceNation summit and the broader efforts to promote service across our great country will undoubtedly help millions of Americans and bring our communities closer together,” said Woodruff. “I look forward to helping facilitate a serious discussion of the role service can play in determining what kind of country we live in.”

The in-depth, back-to-back interviews will begin at 8:00 p.m. ET before a live audience of September 11 family members, military veterans, thought leaders, and Columbia University students. New York Governor David Paterson will welcome the audience before the start of the event.

The event will be open to all broadcast networks, and the public is encouraged to submit on-topic questions for the candidates at <http://tinyurl.com/6jmhd5>.

The presidential candidates forum will kickoff the bipartisan, Sept. 11-12 ServiceNation Summit and ServiceNation's national campaign to expand voluntary community and national service opportunities for all Americans. The Summit is attracting hundreds of notables from the worlds of government, academia, arts, business, and not-for-profits, including: New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg; Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger; Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton; Martin Luther King III; Bobby Kennedy, Jr.; Her Majesty Queen Noor of Jordan; Caroline Kennedy; Wendy Kopp of Teach for America; Admiral Mike Mullen, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Governor Charlie Crist; Vartan Gregorian of the Carnegie Corporation of New York; and many others (full program and list is available at: <http://www.bethechangeinc.org/servicenation/summit/schedule>).

The Grammy Award-winning recording artist Usher serves as the Youth Chair for the Summit. Facebook serves as the Lead Social Media partner for the ServiceNation campaign.

“ServiceNation is excited to have Columbia University join us in this unique forum to hear Senators McCain and Obama lay out their visions for service in post-9/11 America,” said Michael Brown, CEO and co-founder of City Year of one of the four organizations—along with the Points of Light Institute, Civic Enterprises and Be the Change, Inc.—coordinating the ServiceNation effort. “Given Columbia’s commitment to civic engagement in many forms in and outside the classroom – with its wide array of service learning, volunteer action and social entrepreneurship programs -- it is especially appropriate for us to hold the presidential candidates forum of the ServiceNation Summit at the University.”

“On a day of remembrance through renewed civic commitment, we are honored to join with ServiceNation in providing a national Forum for our two Presidential candidates to speak about an idea that is so central to our society and to the mission of higher education,” said Columbia University President Lee C. Bollinger. “Columbia has long been a place of robust engagement in the challenges facing our City, our country and our world. Thousands of our students, faculty and staff from across all of our schools participate in service programs and civic partnerships that make a difference in the lives of people and communities here and abroad. We look forward to welcoming Senator McCain and Senator Obama back to our campus for this important conversation.”

The ServiceNation Summit in New York City is being co-chaired by Caroline Kennedy, Alma Powell (Chair of America’s Promise Alliance), TIME’s Richard Stengel, Vartan Gregorian (President of Carnegie Corporation of New York), Bill Novelli (CEO of AARP), and Laysha Ward (President, Community Relations and Target Foundation). It is underwritten by a grant from Carnegie Corporation and Presented by TIME, AARP and Target.

The two-day event will bring together some 600 leaders of all ages and from every sector of American life—from universities and foundations, to business and politics—to celebrate the power and potential of citizen service, and lay out a bold policy blueprint for addressing America’s greatest social challenges through expanded opportunities for volunteer and national service. The September 12 Summit Day at the New York Hilton will open with welcoming remarks from New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg and close with a Call to Action with Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton and Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Following the Summit, on Sept. 27, ServiceNation will organize a national Day of Action to engage tens of thousands of Americans in events across the country that will showcase the power, potential and impact of service. To date, more than 1100 events spanning all 50 states have already been organized. The public can sign up to host, or find events to attend, at <http://events.servicenation.org>.

For more information on ServiceNation and a full Summit program, visit: <http://servicenation.org>.

For more information on Columbia University’s many service-learning, volunteer action and civic partnership programs, visit: http://fiveyear.columbia.edu/civic_engagement.php

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NOTE TO THE MEDIA: To request media credentials for the Forum and the Summit on September 11 & 12, 2008, please contact Rubenstein Communications, Inc. at servicenation@rubenstein.com or 212-843-9247. Networks interested in carrying the event live should contact Elizabeth Wilner at ewilner@pgpf.org or 212-542-9261.