Community

Involve your class in a local, regional, or international **service project** whose aims, like the ERP, strive to help those in need help themselves. The Peace Corps hosts an extensive website about its volunteer projects world wide and offers many ways classrooms can get involved. **Peace Corps Partnerships** directs 100% of contributions to these specific local self-help projects. For more website information visit www.peacecorps.gov/contribute/partnership.html. Telephone for the Peace Corps Partnership Programs is (800) 424-8580 ext. 2170.

A well-known non-profit organization also with links to schools is **Heifer Project International**. HPI sends food- and income-producing animals to struggling families all over the world (these families in turn pass on the first animal offspring to other local families in need, and so on). Donors "buy" an animal or share of one to send overseas. Initiated by an American farmer in 1944 as a direct response to dire need in Europe, the program has helped more than 4 million families in 118 countries. For more information, see the HPI website at www.heifer.org
See also Community Connection, **Part of A Bigger Picture.**

SUPPORT

Teaching Tips

Many historians and analysts now consider the Marshall Plan the most significant governmental achievement of the twentieth century, according to a recently released findings from the Brookings Institute, a respected Washington think-tank. Learning about the Marshall Plan offers students an excellent foundation for understanding related historical issues such as the Cold War and policies of communist containment, the Berlin blockade, the rise of McCarthyism and the founding of NATO, and subsequent East-West conflicts in Korea and Vietnam.

Background

Most nations of western Europe became partners in the Marshall Plan with a few exceptions. Spain was not invited to participate because it was then under Franco's dictatorship. West Germany did not fully participate until 1949. Switzerland remained neutral. The Soviet Union declined to participate as did nations of the Eastern Bloc which had been under Soviet occupation since the Soviets had driven out the Nazis in 1945. The Soviets were leery of fully disclosing their economic needs and reluctant to be part of any economic plan that encouraged Europeans to trade west, with the United States, rather than east with the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union successfully pressured nations under its influence to decline participation with the Marshall Plan as well.

Help students consider ways in which Marshall's forward-thinking plan exemplifies values central to Marshall himself. While certainly in U.S. economic interest, the Plan was also an act of compassion. It called Americans to surrender self-interest for a greater good. Among the Europeans, it encouraged initiative, cooperation, and hard work. Furthermore, it is a stunning example of how we can learn from the past to create a better future.