

National Service: *A Bridge to Employment for Individuals with Disabilities*



YOUR WORLD. YOUR CHANCE TO MAKE IT BETTER.

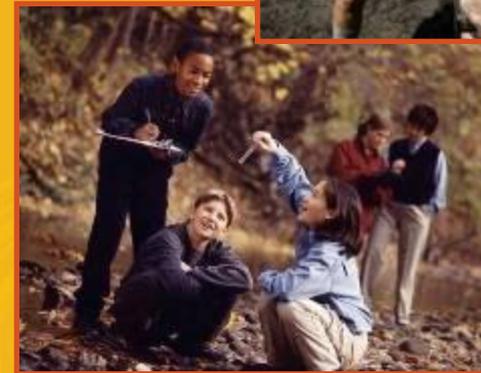
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Corporation for
**NATIONAL &
COMMUNITY
SERVICE** ★★ ★

The National Service Family

There are three programs under the Corporation for National and Community Service:

- **Senior Corps: 500,000 Americans 55+**
- **AmeriCorps: 75,000 members**
- **Learn and Serve America: 1.4 million students in service-learning**



AmeriCorps



Getting Things Done for America

AmeriCorps

Rooted in America's Tradition of Service



1933: Civilian Conservation Corps



1961: Peace Corps



1964: VISTA



1994: AmeriCorps



AmeriCorps Today

Three Programs



**AmeriCorps
State and
National**

**AmeriCorps
VISTA**

**AmeriCorps
NCCC**

AmeriCorps Today

Meeting critical needs across America

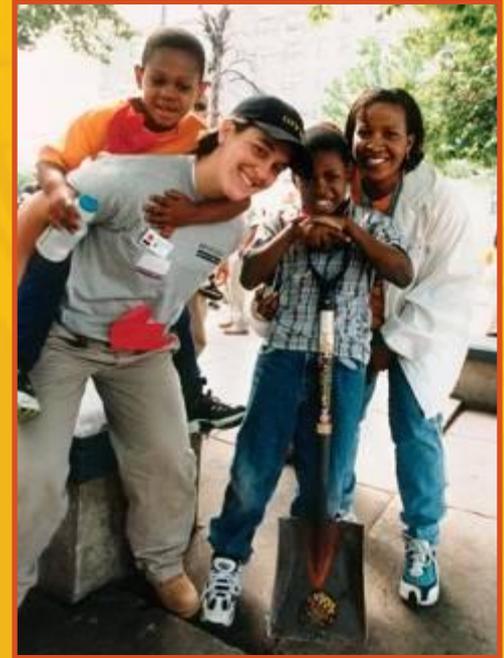
AmeriCorps members:

- Teach and tutor students
- Mentor at-risk youth
- Build homes
- Fight poverty
- Conserve the environment
- Provide health services
- Respond to disasters
- Recruit and manage volunteers
- Much, much, more...



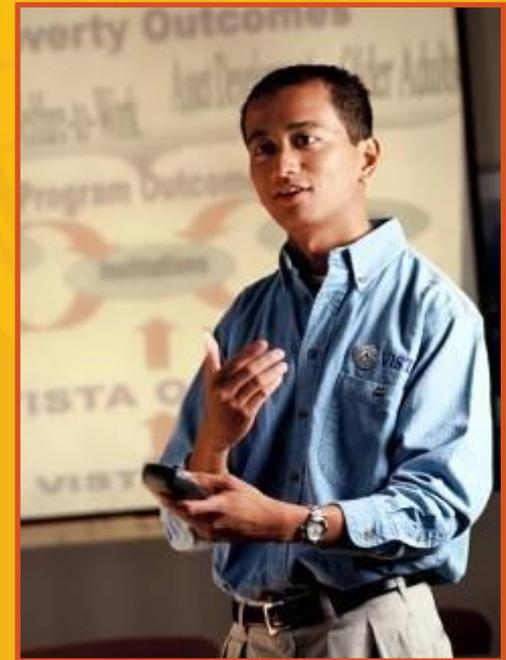
AmeriCorps*State and National

- Largest branch of AmeriCorps
- About 75,000 positions each year
- Members serve with more than 2,900 organizations
- Positions in education, environment, health, housing, disaster response, and more
- Organizations with members include Habitat for Humanity, Teach for America, City Year, American Red Cross, Boys and Girls Clubs, and thousands of other nonprofits
- Full-time and part-time positions



AmeriCorps*VISTA

- AmeriCorps' poverty-fighting arm
- Created in 1964 as part of War on Poverty
- 6,500 positions each year
- VISTAs collaborate with low-income individuals and communities to fight poverty
- Focus on capacity building: raising funds, recruiting volunteers, and designing sustainable programs
- More than 1,200 project sponsors
- Full-time, year-long service



AmeriCorps*NCCC

- **Team-based residential service**
- **Focus on disaster response, environment, housing, and youth**
- **Teams travel to projects in neighboring states**
- **Open to 18-24 year-olds**
- **1,100 positions each year**
- **Members live on 5 campuses:
Sacramento, CA; Denver, CO; Vinton,
IA; Perry Point, MD; and Vicksburg,
MS**
- **Full-time 10-month service**



AmeriCorps Benefits

AmeriCorps benefits include:

- **Living allowance**
- **Health care**
- **Student loan deferment**
- **Training & professional development**
- **Segal AmeriCorps Education Award of \$5,350 to pay for college or pay back student loans**
- **Benefits vary by program**



Who Benefits from AmeriCorps?

- **We all do!**
- **Youth, Seniors, and Others in Need** benefit from the tutoring, mentoring, health, housing, and other services members provide.
- **Communities** benefit from having better schools, safer streets, more affordable housing, a cleaner environment, and more engaged citizens.
- **Organizations** gain from having more reach and impact: 92% of sponsoring groups say members helped increase how many people they served to a large or moderate extent.
- **Members** acquire leadership and career skills, earn money for college, and learn how to be active citizens.

AmeriCorps Fast Facts

637,000

AmeriCorps members since 1994

774 Million

Hours served by AmeriCorps members

\$1.77 Billion

Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards earned by AmeriCorps members

2.4 Million

Volunteers mobilized by AmeriCorps members in 2009

3,300

Number of organizations AmeriCorps members served in 2009

\$6.3 Billion

AmeriCorps funds invested in nonprofit and community groups since 1994

AmeriCorps Alumni

Continuing Their Service and Commitment

Longitudinal studies show AmeriCorps alums:

- **are more connected to their communities**
- **continue to participate in community activities**
- **choose public service careers in disproportionately high levels**

Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act of 2009



- **Sets AmeriCorps on a path to 250,000 positions by 2017**
- **Increases the amount of the education award from \$4,725 to \$5,350**
- **Silver Scholar – 55+ may transfer education award to child, grandchild, or foster child (AC*State/National)**
- **Inclusion – Increases money for outreach and placement of people with disabilities**

National Service for People with Disabilities

Many individuals with disabilities have participated in national service programs. This participation has had a positive impact, not only on the communities where they serve, but also on themselves and national service as a whole.

For individuals with disabilities, participation in national service may help:

- **Foster Independence.**
- **Determine what accommodations for a disability are needed to achieve success.**
- **Figure out how to appropriately disclose a disability to a supervisor so accommodation needs are met.**
- **Learn and grow!**



The HEART Act

- **On June 16, 2008 President Bush signed into law H.R. 6081, the Heroes Earnings Assistance and Relief Tax Act of 2008 (“the HEART Act”), making AmeriCorps more accessible to people with disabilities.**
- **Contains a provision that excludes AmeriCorps benefits from being counted as income for purposes of eligibility for Supplemental Security Income (SSI).**
 - **This extends the long-time AmeriCorps VISTA income disregard for SSI to all AmeriCorps positions.**
- **While the law does not extend to Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), it removes a significant barrier to participation for SSI recipients.**



Antoinette Adkins

Downriver CARES AmeriCorps Alum

“My first challenge was to pick a placement that could accommodate me. Fortunately, there were many to choose from. With the help of a great program director, I was able meet the challenge head on and find incredible placements! I have enjoyed being a part of the AmeriCorps family. Serving adults with various mental illnesses - teaching them life skills - has increased my desire to go back to school to achieve my Ph.D. I have formed friendships I never expected, helping me to grow and learn about myself too! AmeriCorps is an experience I will never forget.”

FAQ Benefits Chart

Important questions and answers to think through for students and counselors, along with a WIPA specialist:

- Are there any risks to my SSI/SSDI benefits?
- Will my vocational case be closed?
- Will I lose my health insurance?

****This document can be accessed on the MCSC website at:***

www.michigan.gov/mcsc

Career Path for the Times



It's a Personal Journey

Awareness – Valuing Self – Experience



Examples of Service Leading to Successful Employment

- Between 2002 and 2010, 94 VISTA members have served through the Ann Arbor CIL AmeriCorps*VISTA Program.
- Of 94 VISTA members, 57 identify as being a person with a disability. This number is most likely higher, possibly closer to 65 or 70.
- Of 75 VISTA members who have completed service in program, at least 20 entered employment following their service.
- **18 of 20 persons hired have disabilities.**

QUESTIONS



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www.michigan.gov/mcsc



For more information



AmeriCorps: www.AmeriCorps.gov

Toll free: 800-942-2677 (TTY 800-833-3722)

**Corporation for National & Community Service:
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