



## 2009 AmeriCorps Week Recap

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### National AmeriCorps Week

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#### **2009: The Best AmeriCorps Week Ever!**

The 2009 AmeriCorps Week, which took place May 9-16, has been deemed the best AmeriCorps Week in history as thousands of individuals participated in events throughout the country. AmeriCorps members were recognized through news articles and other media outlets while multiple Governors and state legislatures officially declared the week across the U.S.

Members and alums celebrated AmeriCorps Week by doing what they do best – service! Projects varied from community beautification to a disability inclusion film festival and everything in between. Members also took the time to thank their community partners and recruit more Americans into service. Millions of Americans learned about AmeriCorps through school presentations, recruitment fairs, service projects, and media coverage during the week.



#### **What is AmeriCorps?**

AmeriCorps is commonly described as the domestic Peace Corps. Individuals, called members, commit to a specific term of service (usually one year) and are housed in nonprofit organizations, schools, or other agencies. Members range in age from 17 to 70+ years and represent a wide spectrum of other demographics. Upon successful completion of their service, members earn an education award to pay for college, graduate school, or to pay back qualified student loans. During their service, members may also be eligible to receive a modest living allowance, health insurance, childcare, and student loan deferment. More than 574,000 AmeriCorps members have helped recruit, train, and supervise community volunteers, tutor and

mentor youth, build affordable housing, teach computer skills, clean parks and streams, run after-school programs, respond to disasters, and build the capacity of faith-based and community organizations since 1994. Together with the federal initiatives Senior Corps and Learn and Serve America, AmeriCorps is meeting critical needs in communities and promoting civic participation.

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## Michigan's AmeriCorps Week

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### **Russ Mawby Signature Service Project Impacted City of Flint**

More than 250 Michigan's AmeriCorps members gathered together to help restore Flint's Grand Traverse neighborhood as part of the 2009 Russ Mawby Signature Service Project (SSP). Each year AmeriCorps members from across Michigan join together for two days of training, teambuilding, and service. By the end of the second day, several projects are completed, visibly demonstrating the power of Michigan's AmeriCorps members in action.

To read the complete 2009 SSP recap, [click here](#).

### **Michigan Nonprofit SuperConference**

Prior to the 2009 AmeriCorps Week, Michigan's AmeriCorps took its efforts to the 2009 Michigan Nonprofit Association SuperConference. On May 5 and 6 in Dearborn, Michigan, AmeriCorps members conducted an on-site service project engaging conference attendees, and exhibitors. The conference has become a major celebration for community volunteers throughout the state.



As part of the service project, 50 fleece blankets were created and donated to the Michigan Department of Human Services' Wayne County Central Operations. The blankets will be given to area youth being placed in foster care.

### **Michigan's AmeriCorps Week Service Projects**

Governor Jennifer M. Granholm declared the week of May 9, 2009, as Michigan's AmeriCorps Week. AmeriCorps members from all across Michigan engaged in various service projects as they aimed to "get things done" for their local communities and throughout America.

2009 AmeriCorps Week activities took place in Detroit, Grand Rapids, Holland, Houghton, Midland, Ovid, Rogers City, West Olive, and other locations throughout Michigan. Examples of specific projects include:

#### **Clinton County, Michigan – Week of May 9**

##### *Michigan State University Extension 4-H Mentor Michigan Initiative*

Clinton County 4-H Key Mentoring Programs worked to plan multiple AmeriCorps Week service projects. The Gateway Key Mentoring site collected coloring books, play dough, and stress balls for local children living in homeless shelters; the Leonard 4-H HABIT site visited an area nursing home and delivered flowers and spring decorations; the Waldron 4-H HABIT site cleaned up a community park; and the Bath Elementary 4-H HABIT site collected dog and cat toys for the county's Humane Society. Each of these four sites also discussed the importance of participating in service projects, reflected on their efforts, and celebrated their success.



#### **Detroit, Michigan – May 11**

##### *City Year Detroit, Downriver CARES AmeriCorps, Jumpstart Michigan, Michigan AIDS Partnership, Michigan AmeriCorps Partnership, & the readetroit corps*

Nearly 100 Southeast Michigan AmeriCorps members gathered together at Detroit's Gleaners Community Food Bank to kick off the 2009 AmeriCorps Week. Several prominent guests were on hand to

thank them for their efforts, including Michigan Community Service Commission board member and WJR Assistant News Director Lloyd Jackson and Detroit City Council President Pro-Tem Monica Conyers. Following the festivities, members spread out to various service projects, including Capuchin Soup Kitchen and the Heidelberg Project. Additionally, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual AmeriCorps Excellence in Service Award was presented to Capuchin Soup Kitchen.

### **Grand Rapids, Michigan – May 11 – May 14**

#### *Cherry Street Health Services AmeriCorps*

Members of the Cherry Street Community HealthCorps visited four Grand Rapids-area high schools, two colleges, Michigan Works, and a public library to make 16 presentations on national service. The members connected with more than 200 citizens and spread the word about AmeriCorps and how it gets things done!

### **Houghton, Michigan – May 11 & 12**

#### *Superior AmeriCorps*

Members of Superior AmeriCorps hosted a luncheon for more than 30 community leaders to highlight the success and impact of their service efforts in the Western Upper Peninsula. In attendance were a local State Representative, Chief of Police, Sheriff, and area school district Superintendent. Guests also took part in a service project that involved putting together activity kits for local hospitals. The following day, May 12, several luncheon attendees participated in “AmeriCorps for a Day” where they shadowed a member and learned first-hand what members do on a daily basis.



### **Ottawa County, Michigan – May 12**

#### *Michigan State University Extension 4-H Mentor Michigan Initiative*

An AmeriCorps member with the Ottawa County Mentoring Collaborative planned an open house at the Fillmore Complex in West Olive in honor of the 2009 AmeriCorps Week. As part of the festivities, 11 area programs were on hand to present; including Community Action House from Holland, Pioneer Resources from Muskegon, Communities Overcoming Violent Encounters from Ludington, Muskegon YFCA and the Child Abuse Council.

### **Petoskey, Michigan – May 9**

#### *Char-Em ISD AmeriCorps*

Char-Em ISD AmeriCorps members hosted their inaugural “Spring Into Action” event as part of the 2009 AmeriCorps Week. This event brought together 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grade students to participate in physical activity and learn about nutrition. One hundred and eighty-seven students from Charlevoix, Emmet, and Northern Antrim Counties participated in 13 different workshops, including football, golf, hockey, lacrosse, Martial Arts, Pilates, running, soccer, softball, swimming, volleyball, yoga, and zumba.



### **River Rouge, Michigan – May 13**

#### *Downriver CARES AmeriCorps*

Downriver CARES AmeriCorps hosted an open house at the former Walter White Elementary School, which now serves as The Guidance Center’s community resource center. The event promoted AmeriCorps, as well as the center’s services, including Head Start, GED classes, play groups, mental health recovery programs, and clothing closet. Hundreds of local children attended to play carnival games and enjoy free BBQ.

## Tower, Michigan – May 9

### Huron Pines AmeriCorps

Members of Huron Pines AmeriCorps and nearly 60 volunteers gathered to protect the state-threatened lake sturgeon through erosion control on the Black River. Volunteers placed rock, topsoil, seed, and landscape fabric on the riverbank and then planted over 3,000 native plants to reduce erosion. Huron Pines AmeriCorps was assisted by Sturgeon For Tomorrow, Boy Scout Troop #645 of Harrison, and Cheboygan Archers.



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## Opportunities

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### BLOGS

#### Michigan's AmeriCorps Member Council Blog

Join members of the Michigan's AmeriCorps Member Council as they "Get Things Done!" through one year of service. Each week a different participant of the Member Council will share a story about their service. To read more, [click here](http://miacmembercouncil.blogspot.com/). (<http://miacmembercouncil.blogspot.com/>)

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## National Service News

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### Recovery Act to Fund 289 New AmeriCorps Positions in Michigan

The Michigan Community Service Commission (MCSC) today announced 12 state organizations will receive Recovery Act Grants to place additional AmeriCorps members in underserved communities to address critical social needs resulting from the economic crisis.

These programs, currently 2008-2009 Michigan's AmeriCorps grantees, will use the funding to engage 289 additional members in providing employment training, financial planning, and housing assistance; prevent home foreclosures, support tutoring and literacy programs, weatherize homes, strengthen food banks, expand nonprofit capacity, recruit and manage volunteers, and provide other services to economically challenged communities.

"The need for volunteers and the service they provide is extremely high in Michigan," said Paula Kaiser VanDam, Executive Director of the Michigan Community Service Commission. "These additional AmeriCorps members will help 'get things done' in our communities while we work through these tough economic times."

The following 12 Michigan's AmeriCorps programs will receive Recovery Act Grants:

- American Red Cross of Greater Grand Rapids – Together We Prepare AmeriCorps: 26 positions
- BHK Child Development Board – Superior AmeriCorps: 9 positions
- City Year, Inc. – City Year Detroit: 8 positions
- Communities In Schools Detroit – *readetroit corps*: 26 positions
- The Guidance Center – Downriver CARES AmeriCorps: 12 positions
- Good Samaritan Ministries – Faith in Youth Partnership: 2 positions
- Habitat for Humanity of Michigan – Michigan Habitat's AmeriCorps: 17 positions
- Michigan Campus Compact – Michigan Service Scholars: 100 positions

- Michigan Coalition Against Homelessness – Michigan’s Campaign to End Homelessness AmeriCorps: 20 positions
- Michigan Primary Care Association – MPCA Community HealthCorps: 15 positions
- Michigan State University – MSU Extension 4-H Mentor Michigan Initiative: 20 positions
- University of Michigan – Detroit Center – Michigan’s AmeriCorps Partnership: 34 positions

“Our organization helps individuals and communities significantly affected by Michigan’s economic downturn,” said Jason Weller, Executive Director of the Michigan Coalition Against Homelessness. “Thanks to this funding we can continue to bolster our efforts in the eight counties currently served by AmeriCorps and branch out into another six by placing the additional 20 members at foreclosure prevention sites and homeless providers.”

The AmeriCorps positions funded by the Recovery Act are one-time investments to improve the country’s disparate economy, and are in addition to the nearly 75,000 AmeriCorps positions that will be funded through the regular Fiscal Year 2009 budget through AmeriCorps State and National, VISTA, and NCCC. This past year more than 1,200 AmeriCorps members impacted Michigan and its communities.

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### About the MCSC

The Michigan Community Service Commission builds a culture of service by providing vision and resources to strengthen communities through volunteerism. In 2008-2009, the MCSC is granting more than \$5.3 million in federal funds to local communities for volunteer programs and activities. The MCSC is funding 18 AmeriCorps programs and 24 Learn and Serve programs. The Governor’s Service Awards, Mentor Michigan, and Volunteer Investment Grants are also premier programs of the MCSC.