



"We Weren't Born to Follow!" That was the message shared with more than 500 AmeriCorps members at the 2010 Michigan's AmeriCorps Member Celebration.

The Michigan Community Service Commission (MCSC) hosted the annual Michigan's AmeriCorps Member Celebration, which brings together members from across the state for a day of training, motivation, teambuilding, and festivities. The day's events help members see the impact their AmeriCorps service has on communities throughout Michigan and understand they are part of a significant national movement.



Alex Ritzema uses humor as a way to encourage members to follow their passion.

The Celebration highlighted all streams of the national service family, including AmeriCorps*State/National/VISTA, Senior Corps, and Learn and Serve. Throughout the day, members participated in workshops on leadership, professional development, service project planning, and other topics relevant to their year of service. Members networked, shared resources, and listened to speakers from various service backgrounds – including MCSC Executive Director Paula Kaiser VanDam and keynote speaker Alex Ritzema, a motivational humorist and business leader. Members were also treated to an improv performance by Sven Jollies.

The Celebration concluded with an announcement of the 2011 Russ Mawby Signature Service Project, scheduled for May 13 and 14 in Grand Rapids. Jim Vella, chair of the MCSC, and Tony Campbell, MCSC commissioner, also led the swearing-in ceremony reaffirming members' commitment to AmeriCorps and national service. The Celebration was an exciting and enlightening day that will serve as a springboard for a successful program year.



An AmeriCorps member pledges her commitment to service at the 2010 Member Celebration.



Members of the 2010-2011 Michigan's AmeriCorps LeaderCorps.

The 2010-11 Michigan's AmeriCorps LeaderCorps members were also introduced at the 2010 Celebration. These individuals, nominated by their AmeriCorps programs, help strengthen Michigan's national service movement and increase awareness of AmeriCorps in Michigan through outreach presentations, community-wide service projects, and civic engagement. The LeaderCorps had their first meeting on November 18th and 19th to begin developing and implementing their annual goals.

For more information on Michigan's AmeriCorps, visit www.michigan.gov/mcsc.