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## MICHIGAN'S AMERICORPS NEWSLETTER AMERIVOICE MARCH 2013



### MEET YOUR 2012 - 2013 LEADERCORPS MEMBERS



Michigan's AmeriCorps LeaderCorps members at their January retreat.

The Michigan's AmeriCorps LeaderCorps is a state-wide network of Michigan's AmeriCorps members who share ideas, experiences, and a spirit of service while taking a leadership position in their AmeriCorps program. In addition to promoting awareness of AmeriCorps across the state and enhancing the member experience for fellow Corps members, LeaderCorps representatives have the chance to network with each other, build a forum for member exchange, and develop relationships with other programs throughout the state.

We are excited to share more about our experiences and that of other Michigan's AmeriCorps members in this, our first LeaderCorps newsletter!

Jamie Bellinger  
*Superior AmeriCorps*

Lauren Jordan  
*Mentor MI College Coaching Corps*

Travis Boeskool  
*Michigan's Habitat AmeriCorps*

Vann William Robert Lee  
*MPCA Community HealthCorps*

John Bolan  
*Michigan's AmeriCorps Alum*

Michelle McGlaun  
*Cherry Street Community Health Corps*

Austin Broderick  
*Detroit Youth Energy Squad*

Robb Morford  
*Together We Prepare AmeriCorps*

Kimberly Chipps  
*MI Foreclosure Prevention Corps*

Benjamin Oliver  
*Schools of Hope AmeriCorps*

Tamika Davis-Moore  
*MI Campaign to End Homelessness*

Anji Reynolds  
*Power of We Consortium*

Michael Dirksen  
*Faith in Youth Partnership*

Joe Servia  
*MARESA AmeriCorps*

Kathleen Egan  
*AmeriCorps\* VISTA Alum*

Amira Soliman  
*City Year Detroit*

Jocelyn Fox  
*Huron Pines*

Rachel Wenzlick  
*Saginaw Substance Abuse  
Prevention Partnership*

Ana Galloway  
*Goodwill Grand Rapids  
AmeriCorps Partnership*

Charisse Welborn  
*Michigan GEAR UP*

Epic George  
*AmeriCorps Urban Safety Project*

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Both Michigan's AmeriCorps and the LeaderCorps are supported by the Michigan Community Service Commission. For more information about Michigan's AmeriCorps or the MCSC, visit [www.michigan.gov/mcsc](http://www.michigan.gov/mcsc).

# ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Anji Reynolds

Power of We Consortium

Emily Cook studied Natural Resources Management at Grand Valley State University and has always had a passion for the outdoors. As a staunch supporter of conservation, she decided to serve a year in New Hampshire with the Student Conservation Association in 2011. During her term of service, Emily worked with youth to teach them about conservation.

As she continued with her service, Emily was able to recruit a local Boy Scout chapter to help create new trails and signage for the newly acquired Sturgeon River Preserve. She also had an opportunity to collaborate with a scout who was passionately working towards his Eagle Award.

Later in her service, Emily was a key contributor to a project that provided access for park visitors to walk the forests along the Sturgeon River on Saturdays.

Currently, Emily is a second-year AmeriCorps member serving at the HeadWaters Land Conservancy through the Huron Pines AmeriCorps program. Today, Emily's position as a land protection specialist involves working one-on-one with landowners to preserve their private land by creating conservation easements and ecological reports on each property. She says her time in service and her new position permits her to explore northern Michigan and enjoy the surrounding environment. Outside of her service, Emily is a photographer and artist. Her love of nature is evident in her scenic photographs and artwork.



## RECIPE

*on an AmeriCorps budget*

*This substitute sauce is as good as the real deal, but better for you and less expensive (only about \$1.35 per serving). Add whatever vegetable combination you like and feel free to use cheaper chicken cuts to make this even more budget-friendly.*

Hands-On Time: 10 minutes

Ready In: 30 minutes

Yields: 4 servings

### Ingredients

- 1/2 pound dry rotini
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 pound boneless skinless chicken breast - cubed
- 1 pound frozen vegetable mix - thawed
- 4 ounces reduced fat cream cheese
- 1/2 cup lite Italian dressing
- 1/2 cup 2% fat milk

### Directions

1. Cook rotini per package directions to desired doneness. Drain well and keep warm.
2. Heat oil in a heavy skillet over medium-high heat. Add chicken cubes and cook until no longer pink.
3. Combine cream cheese, dressing and milk and whisk until smooth.
4. Add thawed frozen vegetables to chicken along with sauce mixture.
5. Stir well and heat through - about 5 minutes. Serve.

# THE CORPS RAPPORT

## Great Collaborations in Michigan

Austin Broderick  
Detroit Youth Energy Squad

In 2013, collaboration between the Detroit Public School (DPS) district and Detroit-based nonprofit WARM Training Center will offer students in more than 50 DPS schools the opportunity to learn about a variety of environmental topics as part of the DPS Go Green Challenge. The goal of the Challenge is two-fold: to equip students with the tools to make a difference in their schools and communities; and to help the district achieve new heights in financial stability, student achievement, and community impact.

As part of the challenge, students will explore a variety of topics including energy, building science, environmental-quality, nutrition, and food and water justice. Ten AmeriCorps members from the Detroit Youth Energy Squad AmeriCorps program at the WARM Training Center have been appointed to design and implement the curriculum, which is intended to expand learning beyond the classroom and inspire resource conservation and “going green” throughout the Detroit community.

The DPS Go Green Challenge is truly a community effort, with many supporters and numerous organizations collaborating to provide a successful educational plan for the city and its youth. In addition to the WARM Training Center, a regional leader in sustainability for three decades, the Challenge is working closely with DPS Energy Manager Emile Lauzzana. The Challenge is also supported by the local chapter of the U.S. Green Building Council’s Green Schools committee, a partnership which provides an innovative approach to professional collaboration and joint initiatives.

**“THIS IS OUR  
CHALLENGE.  
THIS IS WHY WE  
SERVE.”**

As one of ten Green School Coordinators in the Detroit Youth Energy Squad, I serve alongside an outstanding crew of peers, including two environmental engineers, a Peace Corps volunteer, an architect, a Reverend, and an art teacher, among others. The diversity of our experience is a great resource for the Challenge as we can each use our unique knowledge to implement place-based environmental education. By using DPS as the foundation on which to initiate this new project, I truly believe this program has the power to transform Detroit into a model for urban sustainability. The DPS Go Green values are reflected in the teachings we provide and the mission aims to instill the values of environmental stewardship and community engagement. This is our challenge, and this is why we serve.



Members from the Detroit Youth Energy Squad



## WHAT DO YOU THINK?

- In what ways could your host site collaborate with community partners or organizations?
- How could your program collaborate with other AmeriCorps programs in Michigan?
- Are your host sites or programs already collaborating with others? Tell us about it!

# PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

## *Getting Things Done - Michigan GEAR UP AmeriCorps\* VISTA Program*

*Charisse Welborn  
Michigan GEAR UP*

GEAR UP stands for Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs. GEAR UP increases the number of low-income, minority, and first-generation students who are prepared to enter and succeed in post-secondary education. The program utilizes interventions that include tutoring, mentoring, rigorous academic preparation, financial education, and college scholarships to help improve access to higher education for students and their families.

GEAR UP works with K-12 students. Students must start the program by 7th grade (middle school), and can continue the program throughout high school and college. GEAR UP is an effective solution for creating systemic change, influencing academic achievement, and improving high school graduation and college enrollment rates among low-income students.



The program serves more than 580,000 low-income, minority, and disadvantaged students in 42 different states, as well as the District of Columbia and three U.S. territories. GEAR UP has been instrumental in preparing students for high school graduation and success in post-secondary education.

In Michigan, the GEAR UP Program (MI GEAR UP) is a collaboration between the Michigan Workforce Development Agency and the U.S. Department of Education. The program partners with 15 public post-secondary institutions, the Michigan Department of Treasury, and the Partnership For Learning to provide services to 38 public school districts and 77 school buildings throughout Michigan. The goal of MI GEAR UP is to improve the entry of students in the targeted areas into post-secondary education.

*\*Information in this article was adapted from "The College Access Program that Drives Education and Economic Success in Your Community" article made available by the National Council for Community and Educational Partnerships in the Fall of 2012.*

## AMERIVOICE SPECIAL

### *The Red Cross and Hurricane Sandy*

*Robb Morford  
Together We Prepare AmeriCorps*



On October 27th, I was deployed to New York with a few of my fellow AmeriCorps members to support the American Red Cross response to Hurricane Sandy. During the next twenty days, I had the pleasure of meeting some of the most incredible, caring, and selfless people I've ever met as we supported Sandy victims in need.

After three weeks of service in New York, I was starting to get tired from the long fifteen-hour days. In situations like that, you sometimes need a reminder of why you are putting yourself through such enormous stress. I got that reminder one cold afternoon as we were driving down our route.

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# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

## *Life After AmeriCorps*

*Tamika Davis-Moore*

*Michigan Campaign to End Homelessness*

How many of you have wondered, “*What am I going to do when my AmeriCorps service ends?*” or “*What do I want to do for my career?*” A great tool to help answer those questions is a professional development plan. A professional development plan documents the goals and required skills you need to accomplish in order to stimulate continuous improvement and career development.

When creating your plan, first complete a self-assessment of interests, skills, values, and personality. Take time to write and reflect on your life and career. Reflection increases self-awareness and helps to organize thoughts. Use the self-assessment to help plan long- and short-term goals. When you are ready to create a plan, you can use an existing template found on the internet or you can create a map of your own.

Your professional development plan can be as long or short as you desire. According to Professor Bowman at the University of Phoenix, plans can range from six months to ten years; however the key to successfully achieving your objectives is to develop clear and concise goals.

### *Resources:*

- *Creating a Professional Development Plan:* <http://tinyurl.com/aobzs39>
- *American Planning Association Professional Development Plan:* <http://tinyurl.com/87pa2ff>



### THE PLAN SHOULD INCLUDE

*(but not limited to):*

- Mission statement
- Beliefs and values
- Dreams
- Skills and talents
- Educational goals
- Career goals
- Financial goals
- Areas of improvement
- Potential obstacles and solutions
- Professional contacts

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After helping one of my regular clients who I had grown close to, my partner in the driver seat told me to step out of the back of our truck and look at this house. I got out of the truck thinking it was going to be more devastation or another houseboat in the street I just had to see. This was not another houseboat or more devastation. It was more impressive than any of that.

Over this client’s garage, in many different colors, was a banner that said, “Thank You Red Cross!”

After three weeks of struggle, frustration, and pure tiredness, that simple banner and knowing that we were doing something good warmed my heart and kept me going. To that family, I say thank you! You make it all worth it.



*AmeriCorps member Robb Morford assists with Hurricane Sandy relief in New York*



*Epic George  
AmeriCorps Urban Safety Project*

*MLK Day is a federal holiday that celebrates the life, legacy, and feats of legendary civil rights leader, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*



The Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK) Day of Service is a national day of service that is meant to induce a desire to support one another and improve our communities through service. For many, it is a “Day ON” in service, not simply a “Day Off.”

Dr. King exuded leadership, passion, and an unwavering commitment to equal rights for everyone regardless of race or class. Dr. King was also devoted to the service of mankind and the plight of under-represented groups who were not treated with justice and fairness. His commitment to human civility and social justice for all became the foundation of the historical Civil Rights Movement in American society.

The Civil Rights Movement of the 1960’s gained global attention for its ability to recruit supporters

and withstand adversity. Though many considered Dr. King’s demand for equality radical and dangerous, his courage to provoke change in others stimulated a desire to believe in a dream many had previously thought was unobtainable. The acknowledgment of the need for change brought many individuals together and gave people hope the world could be a safer, more loving place. Eventually communities, towns, cities, and states came together to provide services that helped achieve MLK’s vision of togetherness and equality. Through service of those involved, national legislation was passed that promoted equal treatment for all regardless of race.

Similarly, AmeriCorps members and program supporters make a difference through their service in countless communities across the nation. They have shown that through service, people can make a change. Devotion to the movement of serving others is what AmeriCorps is all about, and through our service, AmeriCorps members will continue to change communities and the lives of people who believe in a dream – just as MLK believed in a dream several decades ago.

**“DEVOTION TO THE  
MOVEMENT OF SERVING  
OTHERS IS WHAT  
AMERICORPS IS ALL  
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# A DAY ON, NOT A DAY OFF

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To help honor Dr. King's legacy and dreams, the AmeriCorps Urban Safety Project held a community-wide service project on MLK Day 2013. The goal of the project, which was held in conjunction with Wayne State University, was to create safer routes for students and improve the neighborhood for local residents in Detroit's North End community.

The North End neighborhood, near the Detroit International Academy for Young Women, contained multiple vacant and open properties that attracted criminal activity and posed a threat to students who passed them on their way to school. By boarding and cleaning up the area, AmeriCorps members and local residents hoped to restore the appearance of order to the community, which would deter criminals from future vandalism and other illegal activities.

In total, nearly 400 volunteers assisted with the North End MLK Day service project on January 21st, including the Michigan Department of Human Services Director Maura Corrigan. As a result of the large turn-out and dedicated service of so many, the project was extremely successful as volunteers and AmeriCorps members completed the board-up of 14 abandoned homes and apartment buildings on Detroit's north side. This joint effort of the entire community on MLK Day was a true illustration of Dr. King's beloved community, where so many came together to serve for the common good.



*Before and after photos of a house boarded-up by the AmeriCorps Urban Safety Project during MLK Day 2013*



# MICHIGAN'S AMERICORPS UPCOMING EVENTS

**MARCH 9-17, 2013**



## AMERICORPS WEEK

AmeriCorps Week is a weeklong, nationwide event designed to bring more Americans into service, salute AmeriCorps members and alums for their powerful impact, and thank the community.

*For more information and resources:* <http://tinyurl.com/miacwk13>

**APRIL 26-28, 2013**



## GLOBAL YOUTH SERVICE DAY

The Michigan Community Service Commission is excited to mobilize youth across the state in service this April as part of the 2013 Global Youth Service Day. This annual opportunity encourages children and youth to address the world's most critical issues by partnering with families, schools, community and faith-based organizations, businesses, and government.

*For more information and resources:* [www.gysd.org](http://www.gysd.org)

**MAY 16-17, 2013**



## RUSS MAWBY SIGNATURE SERVICE PROJECT

Each year the Russ Mawby Signature Service Project brings together AmeriCorps members from across the state for training, team-building, and service. The 2013 project will take place in Lansing on Thursday and Friday, May 16-17, 2013. This year's project will bring approximately 350 Michigan's AmeriCorps members to a number of Lansing sites where they will build, beautify, clean, or preserve resources that are vital to the surrounding community.

**SEPTEMBER 11, 2013**



## 9/11 NATIONAL DAY OF SERVICE & REMEMBRANCE

The 9/11 Day of Service and Remembrance is a positive way to forever remember and pay tribute to the victims of 9/11, as well as a way to honor those that rose in service in response to the attacks and remind people of the importance of working more closely together to improve our world.

*For more information and resources:* [www.911day.org](http://www.911day.org)