



TALKING POINTS AND MESSAGING

For a quarter century, the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) has led the federal effort to guide national service and volunteering in the United States. Join our silver anniversary celebration marking AmeriCorps' 25th anniversary and Senior Corps' continued legacy of service.

ABOUT CNCS

The Corporation for National and Community Service, a federal agency, was created 25 years ago and guides the AmeriCorps and Senior Corps national service programs, leads two national days of service on Martin Luther King Day and September 11th, and supports volunteering across the United States. Our agency's mission is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering.

Through grantmaking, CNCS supports high-impact service to meet pressing needs that include boosting education outcomes, improving economic opportunity, promoting healthy futures, providing disaster response and recovery services, protecting the environment, and supporting our veterans and military families.

CNCS TALKING POINTS

- The Corporation for National and Community Service is the federal agency dedicated to improving lives, strengthening communities, and fostering civic engagement through national service and volunteering.
- For a quarter century, CNCS has led national service and volunteering in the United States. Join our celebration of AmeriCorps' 25th anniversary and Senior Corps' continued legacy of service.
- **For more than 25 years, AmeriCorps and Senior Corps** programs have made a tremendous difference in communities across the country. To celebrate these members, volunteers, and projects, we are highlighting their impact and paving the way for another 25 years.
- **Service is a solution to our nation's challenges:** National service participants improve the lives of millions of our most-vulnerable citizens each year. The impacts of our interventions are proven and measurable.

- **Education and Youth:** National service places thousands of teachers, tutors, and mentors into low performing schools, helping students succeed in school, improve attendance and behavior, and gain skills necessary for 21st-century jobs.
- **Veterans and Military Families:** National service supports the military community by engaging veterans in AmeriCorps and Senior Corps service, helping veterans readjust to civilian life, and providing support to their fellow veterans and military families.
- **Disaster Response and Services:** From forest fires and floods, to hurricanes and tornadoes, national service members and volunteers have provided critical support to millions of Americans affected by disasters since 1994.
- **Environmental Stewardship:** National service members build trails, restore parks, protect watersheds, run recycling programs, and promote energy efficiency, weatherization, and clean energy.
- **Healthy Futures:** Through programs that support anti-hunger initiatives, community health centers, opioid abuse prevention, and service that encourages physical activity, national service members perform service that enhances the health and well-being of people across the nation.
- **Economic Opportunity:** National service members expand economic opportunity by enhancing workforce development and job skills training programs, strengthening wraparound services for the homeless, supporting financial literacy programs, and providing free tax preparation services.
- **Bipartisan Support:** There is a continued recognition from members of Congress, Governors, and Mayors of both parties that national service is an essential strategy to address critical problems. Thousands of leaders representing more than 100 million Americans acknowledge their support during the annual National Service Recognition Day each April.

NATIONAL SERVICE FAST FACTS

- **Nearly 300,000 people serve in Senior Corps and AmeriCorps each year**
 - **Approximately 75,000 AmeriCorps members**
 - **More than 200,000 Senior Corps volunteers**
 - **45,000 service locations**
- These programs generate almost \$1 billion in leveraged resources every year
- **CNCS leads two national days of service**, the Martin Luther King Day of Service each January and the September 11th National Day of Service and Remembrance.
- **Over 1.1 million** men and women have served as AmeriCorps members since 1994.
- **\$3.6 Billion** in education scholarships have been earned by AmeriCorps members.

ABOUT AMERICORPS

This fall marks the 25th anniversary of the AmeriCorps national service program.

AmeriCorps engages approximately 75,000 men and women in intensive service each year at more than 21,000 locations across the country, including nonprofits, schools, public agencies, and community and faith-based groups.

Civic-minded Americans of all ages commit to service terms that range from three months to one year to address critical community needs such as increasing academic achievement, mentoring youth, fighting poverty, combating the opioid epidemic, sustaining national parks, preparing and responding to disasters, and more.

Since its inception in 1994, more than 1.1 million AmeriCorps members have served and provided more than 1.5 billion hours of service in America's communities. AmeriCorps members mobilize and coordinate millions of volunteers to serve alongside them that promotes a lasting impact on the volunteers and the communities they serve.

Through their service these members have earned more than \$3.6 billion in education scholarships (known as Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards) that may be used to repay qualified student loans or pay for college or trade school. More than \$1 billion of these funds have been used to pay back student debt, reducing the costs of higher education for tens of thousands of AmeriCorps alumni.

AMERICORPS PROGRAMS

AmeriCorps State and National members serve with thousands of nonprofit and community groups across the country, including United Way, Habitat for Humanity, City Year, and Teach for America.

AmeriCorps NCCC members are 18-24 and serve in a team-based, residential program meeting the needs of rural and urban communities. FEMA Corps, a partnership with FEMA, mobilizes NCCC members for disaster preparedness and response and prepares them for careers in emergency management.

AmeriCorps VISTA members serve full-time for one year and continue a 50+ year legacy addressing poverty and building the capacity of nonprofit organizations nationwide. AmeriCorps VISTA Summer Associates serve shorter terms to support anti-hunger and education programs during the summer.

AMERICORPS KEY MESSAGES

- Approximately **75,000** AmeriCorps members serve in this national service program at approximately **21,000** locations each year.
- More than **1.1 million** members have served in AmeriCorps since 1994.

- **AmeriCorps is a cost-effective solution to America’s toughest challenges:** AmeriCorps increases the efficiency of its programs by leveraging **more than \$1 billion** in private investment each year from businesses, foundations, and other sources. These approximately match the federal investment, allowing CNCS to support more members with fewer taxpayer dollars.
- **AmeriCorps strengthens the impact of our nation’s nonprofits:** Strengthening nonprofits and faith-based groups: AmeriCorps members help nonprofits, faith-based organizations and community groups expand services, build capacity, raise funds, develop new partnerships, and create innovative, sustainable programs.
- **AmeriCorps advances innovative solutions to the nation’s challenges:** AmeriCorps invests in organizations such as Citizen Schools, City Year, Experience Corps, Teach For America, and YouthBuild USA to train its members and those they serve to develop and implement creative and sustainable community solutions.
- **AmeriCorps responds to natural and other disasters:** When disaster strikes, AmeriCorps members respond, leveraging volunteers while assisting communities in their hour of greatest need. Thousands of AmeriCorps members respond annually to disasters across the country, providing comfort to survivors and progress for recovery.
- **AmeriCorps mobilizes millions of volunteers each year:** AmeriCorps is a powerful catalyst and force-multiplier for community volunteering. Each year, AmeriCorps members recruit, train, and manage millions of community volunteers, which frees resources and expands the capacity of the organizations they serve.
- **AmeriCorps expands economic opportunity by creating tomorrow’s workforce and leaders:** AmeriCorps leads to economic opportunity and professional growth; it provides members with the leadership and problem-solving skills all employers seek and specific competencies that open career pathways. Member skillsets include grant-writing; environmental, drug abuse prevention, and general education; construction; home weatherization; disaster preparedness and response; land management; and more.
- **AmeriCorps expands educational and economic opportunity for its members:** Alumni have earned approximately **\$3.6 billion** in education scholarships to repay qualified student loans or pay for other education expenses.
- **AmeriCorps improves civic participation and encourages community involvement:** More than 1.1 million people have served in AmeriCorps since 1994, engaging in service that increases their civic participation. This service brings communities together to address pressing needs and develop long-term solutions, all while expanding these national service members’ understanding of their fellow citizens.

AMERICORPS FAST FACTS

- Approximately **75,000** members serve in AmeriCorps programs at approximately **21,000** locations each year.

- More than **1.1 million** members have served in AmeriCorps since 1994.
 - AmeriCorps alumni are more likely than the average American adult to attain a bachelor's degree or higher.
 - AmeriCorps Alumni have earned approximately **\$3.6 billion** in education scholarships to repay qualified student loans or pay for other education expenses since 1994.
 - **90%** of AmeriCorps alumni report that their national service experience improved their ability to solve problems. **80%** of alumni say that AmeriCorps benefited their career path.
 - A longitudinal study found that AmeriCorps alumni are more likely to be civically engaged; go into public service careers such as teaching, public safety, social work, and military service; and volunteer in their communities.
 - **79%** of AmeriCorps alumni are, or plan to become, actively involved in their community after service, compared to 47% prior to service.
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ABOUT SENIOR CORPS

Senior Corps taps the skills, talents, experience, and wisdom of more than 200,000 Americans age 55 and older to address a wide range of community challenges and critical needs through three volunteer service programs: Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions, and RSVP.

For more than five decades, older Americans have been serving their communities through these Senior Corps programs by providing services that improve the quality of life for all generations to meet needs in education, health care, and other safety net services across the country. These volunteers contribute more than 55 million hours of service annually, which is worth more than \$1 billion to the U.S. economy.

SENIOR CORPS PROGRAMS

Foster Grandparents help children in their communities develop academic and life skills critical to their development and future success. They serve as tutors, mentors, and role models to children at risk of falling behind in school and those with physical disabilities and/or other special needs. The intergenerational exchanges that occur build lasting bonds that benefit those being served *and* those who perform the service.

Senior Companions help other older adults, most of whom are homebound, live fuller, more independent lives. They provide companionship and assistance with daily tasks such as shopping or paying bills and gives respite to family caregivers. As a result, seniors can maintain their independence longer, allowing them to age in place, and their caregivers can take time to recharge or perform errands.

RSVP is one of America's largest volunteer networks for people 55 and older; volunteers use their skills and experience to tackle a diverse range of activities. Volunteers recruit and manage other volunteers,

mentor and tutor disadvantaged children, respond to natural disasters, support workforce development by providing job readiness training, offer free tax preparation, and more.

SENIOR CORPS TALKING POINTS

- As the youngest members of the Baby Boomer generation become eligible for Senior Corps over the next several years, there is a tremendous opportunity to engage a greater number of older Americans in service and expand the social and community benefits of Senior Corps to more citizens.
- **Senior Corps volunteers provide important educational support for early education across the nation:** Foster Grandparents and RSVP volunteers provide mentoring and tutoring services that support early education in community and faith-based centers, preschools, and elementary schools. These important activities give young students extra attention that can help them keep pace with their peers and help educators maintain order in classrooms. Additionally, the intergenerational exchanges that take place benefit the mental and physical health of the students and volunteers.
- **Senior Corps volunteers help battle America's opioid crisis:** As part of our Healthy Futures strategic focus area, Senior Corps is dedicating resources to opioid education, stopping addiction, and supporting recovery with an emphasis on prevention, intervention, and treatment. Senior Corps opioid programming focuses on addressing this crisis by placing volunteers with organizations to support the creation and/or expansion of activities that provide opioid prevention and treatment activities. Throughout the country, Senior Corps is creating or expanding opioid project activities, specifically those that target other older adults and school-aged children.
 - **Providing Drug Abuse Prevention and Education:** In Tennessee, Senior Corps RSVP volunteers serving with the Roane County Anti-Drug Coalition deliver drug education to military veterans, organize training for medical professionals on proper prescribing practices, and participate in drug education and healthy decision-making knowledge programs.
 - **Supporting the Safe Disposal of Prescription Drugs:** Senior Corps has partnered with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to support National Prescription Drug Take Back Day to help Americans safely dispose of unwanted prescription medications. In October 2018, 52 Senior Corps projects in 25 states participated in drug take back events. In Montana, 17 Senior Corps projects helped distribute 100,000 medication disposal bags to all 56 counties in the state.
- **Senior Corps service provides health benefits to program volunteers:** Senior Corps volunteers make a big impact in the communities they serve, and they see a significant difference in their own morale and health. Reports from a CNCS multi-year longitudinal study found that Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion volunteers reported improved health after just one year of service.

- **Volunteers reported decreased depression and social isolation:** Almost two-thirds of Senior Corps volunteers reported a decrease in feelings of isolation, and 67 percent of those who first reported they “often” lack companionship, reported improved social connections after serving.
- **Senior Companion services provide benefits for caregivers:** Nearly 76 percent of caregivers in the critical needs group receiving Senior Companion respite services reported the assistance helps “a lot” with both “personal time” and “household management.”
- **Senior Corps works to protect elders from fraud and abuse:** Senior Corps is one of several federal, state, and local partners in the Department of Justice’s Elder Justice Initiative to support and coordinate the department’s enforcement and programmatic efforts to combat elder abuse, neglect, and financial fraud and scams that target our nation’s seniors.
 - **Across the country, more than 2,000 Senior Corps volunteers support a wide range of Legal Aid and Elder Justice initiatives.** Many are specially trained to recognize the signs of elder abuse. Others educate caregivers and peers about signs of fraud and abuse and teach techniques to protect against becoming victims of various types of fraud and schemes.
- **Senior Corps supports veteran independent living initiative:** Senior Corps has served and engaged the talents of veterans and military families in community-based activities across the country for decades.
 - Through the **Veterans Health Administration’s “Choose Home” Initiative**, Senior Corps volunteers are providing independent living support to veterans as part of a demonstration project being conducted in select communities in Colorado, Montana, Nevada, Pennsylvania, and Texas. This initiative increases local support services for veterans, determines the unique services needed to keep them living independently longer, and demonstrates how peer volunteering can support those needs.

SENIOR CORPS FAST FACTS

- **More than 200,000 volunteers**, including thousands of veterans, serve in Senior Corps each year.
- Senior Corps volunteers serve approximately **50 million hours** at **more than 23,000 locations** each year.
- The service provided by Senior Corps volunteers is valued at **more than \$1 billion** annually to the U.S. economy.
- The three Senior Corps programs have legacies that extend into history as far as the “War on Poverty” in the 1960s. Foster Grandparents was formed in 1965, RSVP in 1971, and Senior Companions in 1974.

- Research studies show that service and the connections built through Senior Corps programs improve physical and mental health of program volunteers.
- Senior Corps volunteers provide important tutoring, mentoring, and emotional support to keep young students on track with their studies, prevent classroom disruptions, and improve attendance.
- Some Senior Corps volunteers receive small stipends for their service that help them with expenses for food and medication.