



# **Inventory of National Service Programs That Engage Veterans and Military Family Members**

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# I. Overview of the Serve America Act and the Engagement of Veterans and Military Families in National Service

In 2009, the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act (SAA) called on the Corporation for National and Community Service to “recognize the expertise that veterans can offer to National Service programs, expand the participation of the veterans in the National Service programs, and assist the families of veterans and members of the Armed Forces on active duty” [Sec. 1101]. The legislation furthermore identified nine areas that CNCS grantees should address through their programs in order to increase the involvement of veterans and military families in National Service:

1. **Services and Supports to Military Families.** Promote community-based efforts to meet the unique needs of military families while a family member is deployed and upon that family member’s return home.
2. **Volunteer Opportunities for Veterans.** Recruit veterans, particularly returning veterans, into service opportunities, including opportunities that utilize their military experience.
3. **Education and Certifications.** Assist veterans in developing their educational opportunities (including opportunities for professional certification, licensure, or credentials), coordinating activities with and assisting State and local agencies administering veterans’ education benefits.
4. **Employment.** Coordinate activities with and assist entities administering veterans’ programs with internships and fellowships that could lead to employment in the private and public sectors.
5. **Access to Benefits.** Promote efforts within a community to serve the needs of veterans and active duty members of the Armed Forces, including helping veterans file benefits claims and assisting Federal agencies in providing services to veterans.
6. **Youth Mentoring.** Provide mentorships to military children, including assisting veterans in developing mentoring relationships with economically disadvantaged students.
7. **Transportation.** Develop projects to assist veterans with disabilities, veterans who are unemployed, older veterans, and veterans in rural communities, including assisting veterans described in this clause with transportation.
8. **Disaster Preparedness.** Coordinate with entities in establishing the National Service Reserve Corps, through which veterans can serve in disasters and emergencies.

9. **Wellness and Other Support Services.** Assist veterans and their family members through establishing or augmenting programs that assist such persons with access to legal assistance, health care (including mental health care), employment counseling or training, education counseling or training, affordable housing, and other support services.

In 2011, CNCS awarded a contract to Westat<sup>1</sup> to assist the agency in assessing grantees' recent and ongoing efforts to meet the needs of veterans and military families through National Service. Based on a review of the activities proposed by organizations in their grant applications, as well as guidance from CNCS program staff, we identified 99 organizations that are using CNCS funds (AmeriCorps State and National, AmeriCorps VISTA, or Senior Corps) to develop programs or projects that are making strategic and/or significant efforts to engage veterans and military families as participants in, or beneficiaries of, National Service. Eighty-five of these 99 organizations are direct recipients of National Service grant awards. Of these 85, 12 are "umbrella organizations" in that they distribute their grants to sites where veteran-focused activities are being implemented. We conducted interviews with six organizations whose programs are supported through the American Legion Auxiliary's AmeriCorps or VISTA grant, and with an additional six sites supported by other umbrellas. One of the 99 organizations did not participate in the interview, which gave us a final sample size of 98. In order to streamline the language of this report, we use the term "organization" to refer, generally, to those programs or projects interviewed as part of this study. When talking about specific organizations, however, we use "grantee" or "umbrella organization" and "site" to clearly distinguish those organizations that are grant recipients from those that are not directly funded by the Corporation.

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<sup>1</sup> Westat is a large social science research company that has extensive experience conducting not only evaluations for the Corporation for National and Community Service, but also studies related to the needs of military personnel (both Active Duty service members and veterans) and their families.

**Table 1. Number of Organizations by Issue Area\***

<b>Issue Area</b>	<b>Number of Interviews</b>	<b>Grantees<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Sites<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>AmeriCorps</b>	<b>VISTA</b>	<b>AmeriCorps and VISTA<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>Senior Corps (RSVP &amp; FGP)</b>
<b>Total*</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>1. Services and Supports to Military Families</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>2. Volunteer Opportunities for Veterans</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>3. Education and Certifications</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>4. Employment</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>5. Access to Benefits</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>6. Youth Mentoring</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>7. Transportation</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>8. Disaster Preparedness</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>9. Wellness and Other Support Services</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>10. Community Coordination</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>

\*Grantees typically offer services in more than one Issue Area; therefore, the total count for all Issue Areas is greater than the total number of grantees.

We conducted in-depth telephone interviews with representatives of these grantee organizations and sites to learn:

- What services they are offering to this population;
- The extent to which they are recruiting veterans or their family members as either National Service members or community volunteers;
- What data they may have to indicate the effectiveness of their programs; and

<sup>2</sup> This column includes the 12 umbrella organizations mentioned in the text; those organizations are further identified as umbrellas in the tables at the end of this report.

<sup>3</sup> Sites sometimes receive a sub grant from an umbrella organization while in other cases they serve as a service point with the umbrella providing centralized supervision. Sites are *not* CNCS grantees but sub grantees or service points for CNCS grantees.

<sup>4</sup> This column includes those organizations that received both AmeriCorps State and National and VISTA awards to support activities that involve veterans and military families.

- Which of their activities may be identified as promising practices.

Westat interviewers audio-recorded all interviews and wrote summaries of key findings immediately after each interview was completed.

This document represents an initial step in our analysis of these data. What follows is an “inventory” of grantee and site activities as they relate to the Issue Areas spelled out in the SAA. The following section of the report is divided by Serve America Act Issue Areas and offers the reader a brief summary of the kinds of activities that grantees are conducting within each Issue Area. Based on our review of the findings, we have added a tenth service area to the above list, specifically: Community Coordination. In our discussion of Issue Area 10, we offer a description of grantee objectives and activities that we believe support the creation of this additional category. After our discussion of each Issue Area, the reader will find a table that lists those organizations in our study that reported they are carrying out activities that directly address that area. Because most organizations are addressing more than one area, their names may appear in multiple tables. It is also important to note that while all Issue Areas are addressed by at least one organization, certain areas are receiving more attention than others, as indicated in the table above. The implications of this will be explored in the analytic report that will be completed for this study and will be available early in 2013.

## II. SUMMARIES OF SERVE AMERICA ACT ISSUE AREAS

### Issue Area 1: Services and Supports to Military Families

*Promote community-based efforts to meet the unique needs of military families while a family member is deployed and upon that family member's return home.*

For this Issue Area, the SAA calls on National Service grantees to promote or provide supports and services to military families. Because the language specifies the need for assistance during deployment and reintegration, we have interpreted “military families” to mean those families who have sent a member to combat in Iraq and/or Afghanistan, although many programs are doing exceptional work with all generations of veterans. In addition, because Issue Area 6 addresses youth education and mentoring, grantees whose sole objective is to provide these youth services have not been included here.

Twenty grantees and 4 sites carry out activities under this Issue Area. Seven are AmeriCorps programs, 7 are operating VISTA projects, 3 have both AmeriCorps and VISTA grants, and 7 are operating Senior Corps programs. Several examples follow, by state:

- **Alabama.** Both the American Red Cross of West Alabama and the American Red Cross of Mid-Alabama provide education to families about both deployment and reintegration, offer support for families that have a member deployed (e.g., facilitate communication between the family and deployed service member), and support Welcome Home ceremonies and other events aimed at reconnecting the service member with his/her loved ones.
- **Arizona.** The Red Cross of South Arizona provides case management assistance to connect military families with any support services they may need, such as making referrals for youth case management. They also run after-school and tutoring programs as well as in-service days at local schools to offer support to military spouses and children who may have issues resulting from the service member having one or multiple deployments.
- **Kentucky.** The primary goal of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Kentucky is to provide mentoring and other supports to military children facing a parent's (or parents') deployment or multiple deployments. In this area military families are geographically dispersed and thus often do not have a local support system.
- **Oklahoma:** The Ki Bois Community Action Foundation's RSVP volunteers who are located on McAlester Army Base will call the spouses of deployed service members to check in on them and see if they are in need of any services or supports (e.g., assistance with child care, car repair).

- **Montana.** RSVP volunteers with the Rocky Mountain Development Council work with the National Yellow Ribbon Program, which provides an array of services to active duty and veteran families, such as assistance with moving and post-deployment check-ins with family members.
- **Vermont.** The Washington County Youth Service Bureau focuses its efforts on the needs of children from military families; they implement a number of statewide programs - like Operation Military Kids - to identify youth from military families and help them combat isolation and increase their engagement with their local communities. Volunteers are also trained specifically to deal with veterans and military families experiencing deployment and reintegration issues.

Among other organizations that make a concerted and systematic effort to link military families with services and supports are Volunteer Macon (Georgia), Idaho National Guard (Idaho), National Military Family Association (Virginia), Volunteers of America of Illinois, Virginia Department of Veteran Services, and Waynesville RVI School District (Missouri). Organizations in this list that also create resource guides and train their volunteers to help families discover what is available to them locally are also listed under Issue Area 10.

**Issue Area 1: Services and Supports to Military Families**

<b>Organization Name</b>	<b>Program Type</b>	<b>State</b>
Georgia Perimeter College	AmeriCorps	Georgia
National Military Family Association (NMFA) **	AmeriCorps	Virginia
Lessie Bates Davis Neighborhood House	AmeriCorps	Illinois
American Red Cross, Southern Arizona Chapter	AmeriCorps	Arizona
American Red Cross, St. Joseph County Chapter	AmeriCorps	Indiana
Volunteers of America of Illinois	AmeriCorps	Illinois
Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs	AmeriCorps	Washington
Virginia Department of Veterans Services	AmeriCorps and VISTA	Virginia
Washington County Youth Service Bureau / Boys and Girls Club	AmeriCorps and VISTA	Vermont
Waynesville RVI School District	AmeriCorps and VISTA	Missouri
Clinch Valley Community Action Agency	RSVP	Virginia
Coastal Community Action Program	RSVP	Washington
RSVP of Montgomery County PA	RSVP	Pennsylvania
Southwestern Illinois College	RSVP	Illinois
Volunteer Macon	RSVP	Georgia
Ki Bois Community Action Foundation	RSVP	Oklahoma
Rocky Mountain Development Council, Inc.	RSVP	Montana
American Red Cross Mid Alabama Region	VISTA	Alabama
American Red Cross of West Alabama	VISTA	Alabama
Brain Injury Association of Utah	VISTA	Utah
Big Brothers Big Sisters **	VISTA	Kentucky
Blue Star Families **	VISTA	Virginia
Give an Hour **	VISTA	Virginia and North Carolina
Idaho National Guard	VISTA	Idaho

## Issue Area 2: Volunteer Opportunities for Veterans

*Recruit veterans, particularly returning veterans, into service opportunities, including opportunities that utilize their military experience.*

This category includes those 53 grantee organizations and 9 sites that indicated they make a concerted effort to recruit veterans into volunteer opportunities. Twenty-five organizations received funds through AmeriCorps, 19 through VISTA, 4 through both AmeriCorps and VISTA, and 14 through Senior Corps. Included in the total for this Issue Area are those organizations that are actively trying to recruit veterans, even though some have been having limited success. Not included here are those grantees who indicated the recruitment of veterans or military family members is incidental and not deliberative to their program (“We probably have some veteran [National Service Participants], I’m not sure”). Interviewees offered several explanations for the importance of providing such opportunities for veterans:

- A. Civic Engagement and Reintegration.** Research<sup>5</sup> has suggested that civic engagement by returning veterans can be an effective reintegration strategy. Examples of programs or projects that were developed with an eye towards volunteering as a reintegration approach include:
- **Louisiana.** The St. Bernard Project is an AmeriCorps program that rebuilds homes in St. Bernard Parish, New Orleans that were damaged or destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. The program felt veterans would benefit from participation because it would give them a way to transition into civilian life by gaining skills (e.g., carpentry, electrical) that could result in employment. In addition, they said, the veterans’ energy would be an asset to the project. Approximately 15% of their current AmeriCorps members are veterans.
  - **Washington DC.** The Veterans Community Service Initiative is a VISTA project at George Washington University that connects student veterans with short-term volunteer opportunities in the community, such as the Veterans’ Day of Service or making lunch for homeless individuals in the community. This project was motivated explicitly by research on the value of civic engagement for returning service members.
- B. Volunteering As Pathway to Employment.** As suggested above, volunteering is also viewed as a way for a veteran to learn new skills that may translate into civilian employment:
- **West Virginia.** United Way of Central West Virginia’s Lifebridge AmeriCorps Veteran Corps aims to help veterans translate their military skills and experience

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<sup>5</sup> See Yonkman, MM, Bridgeman, JM (2009) *All Volunteer Force: From Military to Civilian Service*. Civic Enterprises. November 11, 2009.

into a civilian resume. AmeriCorps members are placed with several different organizations. For example, AmeriCorps members at the Red Cross are working with displaced veterans who need immediate assistance; members at transitional shelters are helping veterans obtain employment and gain financial literacy skills; one AmeriCorps member at the United Way is working on community education projects to lessen the gap between military and civilian culture; one member is certified nationally to do peer support for depression and PTSD.; and, finally, there are AmeriCorps members at a local university providing tutoring and peer mentoring services to other veterans.

- **Various Conservation Corps.** Perhaps the preeminent examples of this approach are with the various Conservation Corps in the western states (Utah Conservation Corps, Montana Conservation Corps, Southwest Conservation Corps, the Great Basin Institute - Nevada Conservation Corps, and the various branches of the Student Conservation Association – an umbrella organization), all of which are training veterans in natural resource management, habitat restoration, or wildfire fighting. All of the grantees teach veterans new skill sets, and many provide veterans with certifications that may allow them to explore jobs in these areas (see also Issue Areas, 3, 4, and 8).

**C. The Veteran-Serving-Veteran Model.** Organizations that provide services to veterans say that their beneficiaries are more likely to accept services (e.g., homeless outreach) if they are offered by another veteran. Many interviewees said they are recruiting veterans as National Service participants or community volunteers in an effort to better engage their target populations. Examples include:

- **Colorado.** The Veterans Helping Veterans Now program of the Non Profit Development Center (Colorado) is a grassroots organization that uses a peer support model to link veterans to benefits and services and to provide substance abuse help groups. The interviewee noted that many veterans will not admit to needing assistance, but are willing to help others. Once these volunteers begin to interact with other veterans, however, they realize that their feelings and experiences are quite common and the volunteers, in turn, may begin to seek needed supports and services. The model has thus been effective for all veterans engaged with the program.
- **Wisconsin.** RSVP of Dane County provides peer-to-peer transportation services to veterans. The interviewee said the passengers are more comfortable being driven by someone who is more likely to be able to relate to their situation. This assessment was supported by data: Each passenger is given a survey and reportedly 100% of respondents said they were satisfied with the service provided and 100% said the service made them more independent. In addition, the drivers report they also benefit from helping other veterans.

## Issue Area 2: Volunteer Opportunities for Veterans

Organization Name	Program Type	State
American Red Cross, Southern Arizona Chapter	AmeriCorps	Arizona
AMVETS Career Center	AmeriCorps	Ohio
Family Services of Butler Memorial Hospital	AmeriCorps	Pennsylvania
Georgia Perimeter College	AmeriCorps	Georgia
Goodwill Industries of the Southern Rivers, Inc.	AmeriCorps	Georgia
Great Basin Institute	AmeriCorps	Nevada
Idaho Department of Labor	AmeriCorps	Idaho
Iowa Department of Natural Resources	AmeriCorps	Iowa
Lessie Bates Davis Neighborhood House	AmeriCorps	Illinois
Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska	AmeriCorps	Nebraska
Minnesota Council on Crime and Justice	AmeriCorps	Minnesota
Montana Conservation Corps	AmeriCorps	Montana
National Military Family Association (NMFA) **	AmeriCorps	Virginia
Northwest Justice Project **	AmeriCorps	Washington
Rebuilding Together, Inc	AmeriCorps	DC
Rhode Island School of Design	AmeriCorps	Rhode Island
Southwest Conservation Corps	AmeriCorps	Colorado
Spartanburg County, SC District 7 AC 2009	AmeriCorps	South Carolina
St Bernard Project	AmeriCorps	Louisiana
Student Conservation Association *	AmeriCorps	Multistate
United Way of Central West Virginia	AmeriCorps	West Virginia
Utah Conservation Corps	AmeriCorps	Utah
Volunteers of America of Illinois	AmeriCorps	Illinois
Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs	AmeriCorps	Washington
WestCare Foundation Arizona, Inc. **	AmeriCorps	Arizona
CADCA *	AmeriCorps and VISTA	Multistate
Virginia Department of Veterans Services	AmeriCorps and VISTA	Virginia
Washington County Youth Service Bureau / Boys and Girls Club	AmeriCorps and VISTA	Vermont
Waynesville RVI School District	AmeriCorps and VISTA	Missouri
Area Agency on Aging	RSVP	Pennsylvania
Brooke County Committee on Aging	RSVP	West Virginia
Clinch Valley Community Action Agency	RSVP	Virginia
Coastal Community Action Program	RSVP	Washington
Collier County	RSVP	Florida
Columbia River Fire and Rescue	RSVP	Oregon

Issue Area 2: Volunteer Opportunities for Veterans (continued)

Organization Name	Program Type	State
Cumberland County Coordinating Council on Older Adults	RSVP	North Carolina
Ki Bois Community Action Foundation	RSVP	Oklahoma
Northern Arizona University	RSVP	Arizona
Rocky Mountain Development Council, Inc.	RSVP	Montana
RSVP of Dane County, Inc.	RSVP	Wisconsin
RSVP of Montgomery County PA	RSVP	Pennsylvania
Southwestern Illinois College	RSVP	Illinois
Volunteer Macon	RSVP	Georgia
Big Brothers Big Sisters **	VISTA	Kentucky
Blue Star Families **	VISTA	Virginia
Chester County Veterans' Affairs **	VISTA	Pennsylvania
City of Charleston	VISTA	South Carolina
Colorado Nonprofit Development Center	VISTA	Colorado
George Washington University	VISTA	DC
Give an Hour **	VISTA	Virginia and North Carolina
Habitat for Humanity International, Inc.	VISTA	Georgia
Hands On Volunteer Network of the Valley	VISTA	Ohio
Idaho National Guard	VISTA	Idaho
Maine Commission for Community Service	VISTA	Maine
Mission Solano Rescue Mission	VISTA	California
Municipality of Maunabo, Office of Veterans Services	VISTA	Puerto Rico
National Alliance on Mental Illness	VISTA	Tennessee
Ohio Association of Second Harvest Food Banks *	VISTA	Ohio
Points of Light **	VISTA	Multistate
Prescott College	VISTA	Arizona
Student Veterans of America **	VISTA	DC
The Service Collaborative of WNY	VISTA	New York

## Issue Area 3: Education and Certifications

*Assist veterans in developing their educational opportunities (including opportunities for professional certification, licensure, or credentials), coordinate activities with and assist State and local agencies administering veterans' education benefits.*

With Issue Area 3, the SAA asserts the importance of providing assistance to veterans so they can best utilize the variety of educational benefits and services available to them. The GI Bill 2.0 of 2010 expanded coverage for professional certifications, including all levels of education through the doctoral level, vocational training and technical certifications, as well as funding for pre-enrollment testing. It also expanded educational benefits to certain members of the military and their families. Twenty-five of the organizations we interviewed provide services that support veterans' use of educational services and benefits; twenty-two are grant recipients and 3 are sites. Twelve of the 25 are AmeriCorps grantees, 10 operate VISTA programs, one program is supported by both AmeriCorps and VISTA funds, and 2 are operating programs with Senior Corps funds.

- A. The Student Veteran Corps Model.** A number of the grantees we interviewed run Student Veterans' Offices or Student Veterans' Corps, all with the general goal of ensuring that veterans are integrated into college campuses and have high retention rates.
- **Washington.** Washington State Department of Veteran Affairs helps veterans and military family members attending 40 different colleges navigate college campuses, achieve educational goals and find employment. The program provides counseling and help with family issues, tutoring, help with disability issues, and assistance with navigating the VA.
  - **Nebraska.** Metropolitan Community College strives to assist veterans, service members, and military family members in transitioning from military life to college life as smoothly as possible. The VISTAs have supported the development of numerous services, including a resource guide, a website that serves as a "one stop" for the student veteran, a list of faculty members with military experience who can serve as mentors, and events such as the September 11, 2011 Day of Remembrance.
  - **Georgia.** Georgia Perimeter College engages veterans to help other veterans pursue their educational goals by offering assistance with financial aid, tutoring, and referrals to various veteran organizations and resources.
  - **Rhode Island.** Rhode Island Campus Compact helps veteran students adjust to civilian life, navigate college campuses and explore future career paths.

AmeriCorps members do on campus peer to peer coaching, primarily on veteran benefit, educational, and employment issues.

- B. Professional Training Programs.** We also have included in this Issue Area organizations that provide professional training programs, some of which lead to professional certifications. Because the intent of these programs is to promote employment opportunities, they are also listed under Issue Area 4. Examples of such programs include:
- **Nevada.** The Great Basin Institute offers internships to veterans who wish to pursue environmental careers.
  - **California.** California Conservation Corps runs five veteran-only crews that gain professional skills and training in firefighting, energy conservation, or the fisheries industry.
  - **Montana.** Montana Conservation Corps trains veterans in wildland firefighting and provides them with the opportunity to become certified in the area of natural resource management.
  - **Multi-State.** Student Conservation Association (SCA) provides college and high school-aged members with a variety of conservation service opportunities – both short and longer term. Members are able to build hands-on green career skills and thus expand their employment opportunities.
- C. Basic or Remedial Education.** Finally, some of the organizations we interviewed such as Municipality of Maunabo (Puerto Rico) and RSVP of Dutchess County (New York) provide basic or remedial education training in various areas, including (among others) computer skills. These services were developed in response to observed needs among the (often older) veterans' population in these communities.

### Issue Area 3: Education and Certification

Organization Name	Program Type	State
CA Department of Veterans Affairs	AmeriCorps	California
Georgia Perimeter College	AmeriCorps	Georgia
Great Basin Institute	AmeriCorps	Nevada
Iowa Department of Natural Resources	AmeriCorps	Iowa
Montana Conservation Corps	AmeriCorps	Montana
Rhode Island School of Design	AmeriCorps	Rhode Island
Southwest Conservation Corps	AmeriCorps	Colorado
Spartanburg County, SC District 7 AC 2009	AmeriCorps	South Carolina
Student Conservation Association *	AmeriCorps	Multistate
Utah Conservation Corps	AmeriCorps	Utah
Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs	AmeriCorps	Washington
WestCare Foundation Arizona, Inc. **	AmeriCorps	Arizona
CADCA *	AmeriCorps and VISTA	Multistate
Dutchess County Community Action Agency	RSVP	New York
Volunteer Macon	RSVP	Georgia
California Conservation Corps	VISTA	California
Give an Hour **	VISTA	Virginia and North Carolina
Maine Commission for Community Service	VISTA	Maine
Metropolitan Community College	VISTA	Nebraska
Mission Solano Rescue Mission	VISTA	California
Municipality of Maunabo, Office of Veterans Services	VISTA	Puerto Rico
New Directions	VISTA	California
Prescott College	VISTA	Arizona
Student Veterans of America **	VISTA	DC
The Service Collaborative of WNY	VISTA	New York

## Issue Area 4: Employment

*Coordinate activities with and assist entities administering veterans' programs with internships and fellowships that could lead to employment in the private and public sectors.*

Veterans' utilization of employment benefits and services is at the heart of the SAA and thus an important Issue Area for the Corporation for National and Community Service. Forty-three organizations that we interviewed - 39 grantees and 4 sites - provide employment-related services to veterans: 24 are funded through AmeriCorps, 13 are VISTA projects, and 6 operate Senior Corps programs. Organizations we have included in this area provide a range of employment services to veterans, including professional training programs, job search skill-building programs, and job seeking and retention services and supports.

- A. Education and Training.** As noted previously, professional training programs have also been included under Issue Area 3. Additional examples of programs that meet both of these Issue Areas are:
- **Iowa.** The Iowa Department of Natural Resources runs a variety of programs that result in green energy and environmental training for veteran AmeriCorps members.
  - **Multi-State.** The Southwest Conservation Corps encourages veteran career training and job readiness by placing veterans in crews that work on fuel mitigation projects to prevent forest fires.
- B. General Employment Support.** Many organizations we interviewed provide a range of supports to help veterans find meaningful employment. Many of the grantees we interviewed mentioned specifically assistance with resume writing. Another service provided by some is interview skill building, such as how to dress and prepare for an interview, and what to expect in the interview process itself. Among the grantees who offer such services are: Volunteer Macon (Georgia), Goodwill Southern Rivers (Georgia), and Red Cross St. Joseph (Indiana).
- C. Assistance with Finding Jobs.** Finally, several grantees provide help with finding work and, as importantly, keeping jobs. To help veterans find jobs, a few grantees host job fairs. These include: Red Cross St. Joseph (Indiana), Metropolitan Community College (Nebraska), Goodwill Southern Rivers (Georgia), and the California Department of Veteran Affairs.

#### Issue Area 4: Employment

<b>Organization Name</b>	<b>Program Type</b>	<b>State</b>
American Red Cross, St. Joseph County Chapter	AmeriCorps	Indiana
AMVETS Career Center	AmeriCorps	Ohio
CA Department of Veterans Affairs	AmeriCorps	California
Family Services of Butler Memorial Hospital	AmeriCorps	Pennsylvania
Goodwill Industries of Greater Grand Rapids, Inc.	AmeriCorps	Michigan
Goodwill Industries of the Southern Rivers, Inc.	AmeriCorps	Georgia
Great Basin Institute	AmeriCorps	Nevada
Idaho Department of Labor	AmeriCorps	Idaho
Iowa Department of Natural Resources	AmeriCorps	Iowa
Lessie Bates Davis Neighborhood House	AmeriCorps	Illinois
Minnesota Council on Crime and Justice	AmeriCorps	Minnesota
Montana Conservation Corps	AmeriCorps	Montana
National Association for Public Interest Law d/b/a Equal Justice Works*	AmeriCorps	DC
Rhode Island School of Design	AmeriCorps	Rhode Island
Southwest Conservation Corps	AmeriCorps	Colorado
Spartanburg County, SC District 7 AC 2009	AmeriCorps	South Carolina
St. Bernard Project	AmeriCorps	Louisiana
Student Conservation Association *	AmeriCorps	Multistate
Tennessee Community Assistance Program	AmeriCorps	Tennessee
United Way of Central West Virginia	AmeriCorps	West Virginia
Utah Conservation Corps	AmeriCorps	Utah
Volunteers of America of Illinois	AmeriCorps	Illinois
Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs	AmeriCorps	Washington
WestCare Foundation Arizona, Inc.**	AmeriCorps	Arizona
Area 10 Agency on Aging Bloomington	RSVP	Indiana
Coastal Community Action Program	RSVP	Washington
Rocky Mountain Development Council, Inc.	RSVP	Montana
RSVP of Dane County, Inc.	RSVP	Wisconsin
RSVP of Montgomery County PA	RSVP	Pennsylvania
Volunteer Macon	RSVP	Georgia
California Conservation Corps	VISTA	California
Chester County Veterans' Affairs**	VISTA	Pennsylvania
Give an Hour**	VISTA	Virginia and North Carolina
Habitat for Humanity International, Inc.	VISTA	Georgia
Metropolitan Community College	VISTA	Nebraska
Mission Solano Rescue Mission	VISTA	California
Municipality of Maunabo, Office of Veterans Services	VISTA	Puerto Rico

Issue Area 4: Employment (continued)

<b>Organization Name</b>	<b>Program Type</b>	<b>State</b>
New Directions	VISTA	California
Points of Light **	VISTA	Multistate
Prescott College	VISTA	Arizona
Swords to Ploughshares	VISTA	California
The Service Collaborative of WNY	VISTA	New York
United Way of Central KY*	VISTA	Kentucky

## Issue Area 5: Access to Benefits

*Promote efforts within a community to serve the needs of veterans and active duty members of the Armed Forces, including helping veterans file benefits claims and assisting Federal agencies in providing services to veterans.*

The SAA summons the community to help veterans obtain the benefits and services to which they are entitled. Veterans have earned a wide array of benefits, including education, health, disability, and pension benefits. Since education benefits are covered under the third Issue Area, Issue Area 5 focuses on those grantees who offer assistance with completing applications for specific benefits or filing health or disability claims.

Eleven of the 26 organizations working in this Issue Area have AmeriCorps programs, 5 have VISTAs, and 10 are operating Senior Corps programs. Twenty-three of the organizations interviewed are grantees and 3 are sites. A wide array of services is provided, such as assisting veterans with the completion of the necessary forms to get health or disability benefits (including obtaining paperwork about a veteran's service history), helping veterans navigate the VA system to receive their mental or medical health care, or helping veterans attain other benefits, such as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) vouchers or housing vouchers. Several organizations provide training or expressed a need for training for their volunteers on available veterans' benefits and claims filing processes.

- **Washington.** Washington State Department of Veteran Affairs assists student veterans obtain their GI bill benefits, financial aid benefits, disability benefits, health benefits, and all types of necessary screenings (e.g., TBI, PTSD) Similar assistance is provided to military spouses as well. Also provided is guidance on how to navigate the bureaucracy, as well as assistance filling out any required paperwork.
- **Illinois.** The Lessie Bates Davis Neighborhood House locates veterans who are living on the street and encourages them to come to this facility. Among other services, Lessie Bates provides assistance in obtaining birth certificates, Social Security papers, counseling on health, disability and other benefits, and referrals to family counseling services, substance abuse, and group therapy services.

**Issue Area 5: Access to Benefits**

<b>Organization Name</b>	<b>Program Type</b>	<b>State</b>
American Red Cross, Southern Arizona Chapter	AmeriCorps	Arizona
CA Department of Veterans Affairs	AmeriCorps	California
Family Services of Butler Memorial Hospital	AmeriCorps	Pennsylvania
Georgia Perimeter College	AmeriCorps	Georgia
Lessie Bates Davis Neighborhood House	AmeriCorps	Illinois
Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska	AmeriCorps	Nebraska
National Association for Public Interest Law d/b/a Equal Justice Works *	AmeriCorps	DC
National Military Family Association (NMFA) **	AmeriCorps	Virginia
Student Conservation Association *	AmeriCorps	Multistate
Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs	AmeriCorps	Washington
WestCare Foundation Arizona, Inc. **	AmeriCorps	Arizona
Area Agency on Aging	RSVP	Pennsylvania
Coastal Community Action Program	RSVP	Washington
Columbia River Fire and Rescue	RSVP	Oregon
Community Service Society of NY (CSS)	RSVP	New York
Cumberland County Coordinating Council on Older Adults	RSVP	North Carolina
Dutchess County Community Action Agency	RSVP	New York
Northern Arizona University	RSVP	Arizona
Olympic Community Action Programs	RSVP	Washington
Southwestern Illinois College	RSVP	Illinois
Volunteer Macon	RSVP	Georgia
Give an Hour **	VISTA	Virginia and North Carolina
Mission Solano Rescue Mission	VISTA	California
Municipality of Maunabo, Office of Veterans Services	VISTA	Puerto Rico
Swords to Ploughshares	VISTA	California
Tabor Community Services	VISTA	Pennsylvania

## Issue Area 6: Youth Mentoring

*Provide mentorships to military children, including assisting veterans in developing mentoring relationships with economically disadvantaged students.*

In our interviews, we identified 18 organizations that support youth mentoring programs, 13 grantees and 5 sites. In some cases, the National Service participants (veterans and civilians) are mentoring military children. In other instances, veterans provide mentorship to disadvantaged youth. Four of these organizations are funded through AmeriCorps grants, 4 through Senior Corps, and two through both AmeriCorps and VISTA, which allows the National Service participants to provide direct services. The 8 others, however, are VISTA programs wherein the VISTAs support the organizations' capacity-building efforts. For example, the VISTAs of Big Brothers Big Sisters (a sub-grantee of United Way of Central Kentucky) recruit volunteers to be mentors, but also help with all aspects of programming, including helping get families enrolled in the program, organizing program orientations, interviewing potential mentors, and checking in with the parent/child and mentor to see how things are going.

Mentorship programs vary widely in focus and content.

- **Operation Military Kids.** The University of Arizona Extension VISTA Project, one VISTA with the Maine Commission for Community Service, and the Washington County Youth Service Bureau (Vermont) all support Operation Military Kids (OMK). OMK is a national program that trains volunteers on how to support youth whose parents are deployed. Grantee supports include work at a summer 4H camp, services provided during after-school programs or at teen centers, and a “speak out for digital story telling” project.
- **Missouri.** The Waynesville RVI School District grantee operates in five elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school. The interviewee reported that between 62-99% of children in each of the schools they service are from military families. AmeriCorps members help run a number of programs to provide academic assistance, after school care, fitness activities, enrichment activities and other types of support to these youth.
- **Vermont.** The Washington County Youth Service Bureau places AmeriCorps volunteers in a number of key locations, including after-school programs, teen centers, youth centers, drop-in centers, learning facilities for youth struggling in public schools, among others. Their AmeriCorps members and VISTAs help plan activities for children and youth - such as summer camps - but assist the implementation of national programs directed to military kids, such as Operation Military Kids.

This Issue Area also includes Foster Grandparent Programs, such as:

- **Texas.** The City of El Paso Foster Grandparent Program works with military children at the three Child Development Centers on Fort Bliss. Volunteers work with individual children to develop their cognitive and social skills, provide positive encouragement, offer tutoring and mentoring, and help prepare young children get ready to attend school.
- **Georgia.** Foster Grandparents with the South Central Georgia Senior Volunteer Connection serve the children who attend the child development center at Moody Air Force Base. Volunteers work with teachers at the Center to help these children attain their developmental goals, such as movement tracking for children up to 6 months of age; and cognitive skill development, coloring, playtime, sharing, and learning nursery rhymes for the 2-3 year old group. Foster Grandparents help with these activities and the recording of data on the children’s progress.

Whether operating in the inner cities (such as Spartanburg County, South Carolina District 7) or in rural areas (such as The Washington County Youth Service Bureau), interviewees from many of the organizations included in this group said their National Service participants provide services to disadvantaged youth who have limited opportunities.

**Issue Area 6: Youth Mentoring**

Organization Name	Program Type	State
American Red Cross, Southern Arizona Chapter	AmeriCorps	Arizona
National Military Family Association (NMFA) *	AmeriCorps	Virginia
Spartanburg County, SC District 7 AC 2009	AmeriCorps	South Carolina
Student Conservation Association**	AmeriCorps	Multistate
Washington County Youth Service Bureau/Boys and Girls Club	AmeriCorps and VISTA	Vermont
Waynesville RVI School District	AmeriCorps and VISTA	Missouri
211 of South Central Georgia	FGP	Georgia
City of El Paso	FGP	Texas
Area Agency on Aging	RSVP	Pennsylvania
Southwestern Illinois College	RSVP	Illinois
Big Brothers Big Sisters**	VISTA	Kentucky
Blue Star Families**	VISTA	Virginia
Give an Hour **	VISTA	Virginia and North Carolina
Maine Commission for Community Service	VISTA	Maine
Municipality of Maunabo, Office of Veterans Services	VISTA	Puerto Rico
Ohio National Guard **	VISTA	Ohio
United Way of Central KY*	VISTA	Kentucky
University of Arizona	VISTA	Arizona

## **Issue Area 7: Transportation**

*Develop projects to assist veterans with disabilities, veterans who are unemployed, older veterans, and veterans in rural communities, including assisting veterans described in this clause with transportation.*

Twenty-one programs provide transportation to veterans, 20 of which are direct grantees of the Corporation. Three programs have AmeriCorps members; three have VISTAs; and the remaining 15 operate Senior Corps programs. For some programs, like Collier County Government (Florida), Clinch Valley Community Action, Inc. (Virginia), and the Municipality of Maunabo (Puerto Rico), the transportation of veterans is their project's primary objective. Other programs offer transportation of veterans as one of several diverse services that they provide to veterans. A common objective of these programs is to assist veterans in getting to the VA Hospital or other medical appointments; programs also give veterans rides to job interviews (Area 10 Council of Aging of Indiana and Mission Solano Rescue Mission of California), or to run routine errands, such as to the supermarket, Veterans' Center or barber shop. In many of these communities, getting to medical facilities requires a drive of an hour or more and the veterans are dispersed throughout these rural areas. Thanks to the transportation services provided by these programs, veterans are able to get the medical care they need.

**Issue Area 7: Transportation**

<b>Organization Name</b>	<b>Program Type</b>	<b>State</b>
Lessie Bates Davis Neighborhood House	AmeriCorps	Illinois
Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska	AmeriCorps	Nebraska
WestCare Foundation Arizona, Inc. **	AmeriCorps	Arizona
Area 10 Agency on Aging Bloomington	RSVP	Indiana
Area Agency on Aging	RSVP	Pennsylvania
Clinch Valley Community Action Agency	RSVP	Virginia
Collier County	RSVP	Florida
Columbia River Fire and Rescue	RSVP	Oregon
Community Service Society of NY (CSS)	RSVP	New York
Cumberland County Coordinating Council on Older Adults	RSVP	North Carolina
Dutchess County Community Action Agency	RSVP	New York
Ki Bois Community Action Foundation	RSVP	Oklahoma
Northern Arizona University	RSVP	Arizona
Rocky Mountain Development Council, Inc.	RSVP	Montana
RSVP of Dane County, Inc.	RSVP	Wisconsin
RSVP of Montgomery County PA	RSVP	Pennsylvania
Southwestern Illinois College	RSVP	Illinois
Volunteer Macon	RSVP	Georgia
Mission Solano Rescue Mission	VISTA	California
Municipality of Maunabo, Office of Veterans Services	VISTA	Puerto Rico
Yakima County, Department of Human Services	VISTA	Washington

## Issue Area 8: Disaster Preparedness

*Coordinate with entities in establishing the National Service Reserve Corps, through which veterans can serve in disasters and emergencies.*

While the National Service Reserve Corps has not yet been established, three AmeriCorps grantees and one VISTA grantee provide an opportunity for veterans to continue working side by side, while also receiving training and experience that will prepare them for careers in agencies that are responsible for land management or firefighting.

- **California.** The California Conservation Corps has five of its 13 centers in California dedicated to veterans, all of whom are engaged in firefighting, energy, or fisheries management.
- **Montana.** The Montana Conservation Corps program not only trains veterans to be wild land firefighters, but also provides them with the opportunity to become certified in wild land firefighting. At the end of their 12 weeks of service they attend the Colorado Fire Camp for two weeks, after which they receive their certification.
- **Multi-State Corps.** The Southwest Conservation Corps is currently running four AmeriCorps programs, two of which enlist veterans as Veteran Fire Corps members. Veterans are placed in crews where they receive training and work on fuel mitigation projects under the leadership of either veterans or civilians.

Because of their emphasis on training and employment, all three of these grantees also have been included in discussions under both the education and employment Issue Areas.

### Issue Area 8: Disaster Preparedness

Organization Name	Program Type	State
Montana Conservation Corps	AmeriCorps	Montana
Southwest Conservation Corps	AmeriCorps	Colorado
Student Conservation Association	AmeriCorps	Multistate
California Conservation Corps	VISTA	California

## Issue Area 9: Wellness and Other Support Services

*Assist veterans and their family members through establishing or augmenting programs that assist such persons with access to legal assistance, health care (including mental health care), employment counseling or training, education counseling or training, affordable housing, and other support services.*

This ninth priority area, as originally worded (above), was problematic because it includes at least two services (employment counseling or training and education counseling or training) that are called out in separate Serve America Act requirements (Issue Areas 3 and 4, respectively). Thus, in order to create a more discrete classification scheme for this inventory, any organizations that offer education or employment services to veterans, but none of the other services in Issue Area 9, have not been included in this category. Instead, they were counted only in the education and/or employment Issue Area descriptions. In addition, the original language here indicates that any of these services could be provided to veterans or their family members. However, since Issue Area 1 is concerned exclusively with military families, organizations that provide services to families have been included under that first category. Based on these decisions, our approach to this Issue Area should read as follows:

“Assist veterans through establishing or augmenting programs that assist such persons with access to legal assistance, health care (including mental health care), affordable housing, and other support services.”

Fifty-nine interviewees (52 of which are grantees) provide one or more of the services within this category. Eighteen operate programs with AmeriCorps funds, 21 with VISTA resources, 2 with both AmeriCorps and VISTA funds, and an additional 18 operate Senior Corps programs. Of the 59 interviewees who said their organizations provide one of the services within this issue area, nearly half of them (27) said their focus is on housing services (e.g., shelters, home-building). Another 17 indicated that their programs offer some kind of behavioral health support services, including peer supports for PTSD, mental health counseling, or 12-step groups for substance abuse. Ten organizations offer legal assistance to veterans, including mentoring and supports for former offenders, 8 organizations provide financial literacy training or other financial support services to veteran and/or military families, and 8 assist veterans with obtaining food, whether through vouchers, connecting veterans with food banks, or serving hot meals.

Below are some examples of organizations providing services in the various sub-areas identified under issue area 9:

- **Affordable housing and homeless services.** Veterans are, by many estimates, disproportionately represented among America’s homeless population.<sup>6</sup> Several grantees offer outreach and services to homeless veterans, including the Maine Commission for Community Service, the Tennessee Community Assistance Program, and Mission Solano Rescue Mission (California), among others. There are also several grantees that recruit veterans as volunteers to support the grantees’ efforts to rebuild or rehabilitate existing homes. Such grantees include Habitat for Humanity (multi-state), the St. Bernard Project (Louisiana), and the Rebuilding Together Capacity Corps (Washington, DC).
- **Assistance accessing appropriate health care, particularly mental health care.** The AmeriCorps members with Lutheran Family Services (Nebraska) have developed a peer-to-peer mentoring program that was modeled as the national program, Vets4Vets ([www.vets4vets.us](http://www.vets4vets.us)). One of the members holds two veterans’ support groups, one of which is specifically for female veterans. Swords to Ploughshares (California) has a VISTA project that was just getting underway at the time of the interview. The goal of the project is to connect veterans to an array of health resources they may need, including services to help the individual cope with PTSD, TBI, military sexual trauma, and a host of other health and behavioral health disorders. VISTAs with the organization will be developing connections with appropriate resources in the community so that veterans can be readily referred to needed services. WestCare Foundation (Nevada), an umbrella organization, trains veterans to be mental health counselors for other veterans. One of the sites interviewed by the study team was based in Arizona.
- **Legal assistance to veterans.** The AmeriCorps member with the Northwest Justice Project (a grantee under Equal Justice Works in Washington, DC) is an attorney who spends 100% of his time assisting veterans with legal cases, including case assessments and referrals (family, housing, background checks); he also provides technical support to attorneys at Northwest Justice Project who have questions and need resources about their clients who are veterans. Also included in this category is the Minnesota Council on Crime and Justice, whose AmeriCorps members focus on providing stable housing and employment services to veterans who are on probation or parole.
- Finally, we have interpreted **“other support services”** under issue area 9 to include a broad array of activities that grantees conduct on behalf of veterans, including:
  - Financial literacy training: Tabor Community Services (Pennsylvania)

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<sup>6</sup> There are different statistics on the percentage of homeless veterans. For example, the National Coalition for the Homeless has a fact sheet on homeless veterans that offers at least two different estimates (23% and 40%) (<http://www.nationalhomeless.org/factsheets/veterans.html#fn>). And the National Coalition on Homeless Veterans estimates that about 20% of homeless individuals have veteran status ([http://nchv.org/index.php/news/media/background\\_and\\_statistics/](http://nchv.org/index.php/news/media/background_and_statistics/)). By all accounts, however, the percentage of homeless persons who can claim veteran status is much higher than the percentage of veterans in the general population.

- Tax preparation: RSVP of Cumberland County (North Carolina)
- Meal delivery to homebound veterans: RSVP of Cumberland County (North Carolina) and Clinch Valley Community Action, Inc. (Virginia), and
- Grave decorating or other activities to honor veterans: Brooke County Committee on Aging (West Virginia).

**Issue Area 9: Wellness and Other Support Services**

<b>Organization Name</b>	<b>Program Type</b>	<b>State</b>
American Red Cross, Southern Arizona Chapter	AmeriCorps	Arizona
CA Department of Veterans Affairs	AmeriCorps	California
Family Services of Butler Memorial Hospital	AmeriCorps	Pennsylvania
Goodwill Industries of Greater Grand Rapids, Inc.	AmeriCorps	Michigan
Lessie Bates Davis Neighborhood House	AmeriCorps	Illinois
Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska	AmeriCorps	Nebraska
Minnesota Council on Crime and Justice	AmeriCorps	Minnesota
National Association for Public Interest Law d/b/a Equal Justice Works *	AmeriCorps	DC
National Military Family Association (NMFA) **	AmeriCorps	Virginia
Northwest Justice Project **	AmeriCorps	Washington
Rebuilding Together, Inc	AmeriCorps	DC
St Bernard Project	AmeriCorps	Louisiana
Tennessee Community Assistance Program	AmeriCorps	Tennessee
United Way of Central West Virginia	AmeriCorps	West Virginia
Volunteers of America of Illinois	AmeriCorps	Illinois
Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs	AmeriCorps	Washington
WestCare Foundation Arizona, Inc**	AmeriCorps	Arizona
WestCare Foundation, Inc.*	AmeriCorps	Nevada
Virginia Department of Veterans Services	AmeriCorps and VISTA	Virginia
Washington County Youth Service Bureau / Boys and Girls Club	AmeriCorps and VISTA	Vermont
211 of South Central Georgia	FGP	Georgia
Area 10 Agency on Aging Bloomington	RSVP	Indiana
Area Agency on Aging	RSVP	Pennsylvania
Brooke County Committee on Aging	RSVP	West Virginia
Clinch Valley Community Action Agency	RSVP	Virginia
Coastal Community Action Program	RSVP	Washington
Columbia River Fire and Rescue	RSVP	Oregon
Community Service Society of NY (CSS)	RSVP	New York

Issue Area 9: Wellness and Other Support Services (continued)

Organization Name	Program Type	State
Cumberland County Coordinating Council on Older Adults	RSVP	North Carolina
Dutchess County Community Action Agency	RSVP	New York
Ki Bois Community Action Foundation	RSVP	Oklahoma
Northern Arizona University	RSVP	Arizona
Olympic Community Action Programs	RSVP	Washington
Rocky Mountain Development Council, Inc.	RSVP	Montana
RSVP of Dane County, Inc.	RSVP	Wisconsin
RSVP of Montgomery County PA	RSVP	Pennsylvania
Southwestern Illinois College	RSVP	Illinois
Volunteer Macon	RSVP	Georgia
American Red Cross Mid Alabama Region	VISTA	Alabama
American Red Cross of West Alabama	VISTA	Alabama
Blue Star Families**	VISTA	Virginia
Central Iowa Shelter & Services	VISTA	Iowa
Chester County Veterans' Affairs**	VISTA	Pennsylvania
City of Houston	VISTA	Texas
Colorado Nonprofit Development Center	VISTA	Colorado
Give an Hour**	VISTA	Virginia and North Carolina
Habitat for Humanity International, Inc.	VISTA	Georgia
Hands On Volunteer Network of the Valley	VISTA	Ohio
Maine Commission for Community Service	VISTA	Maine
Metropolitan Community College	VISTA	Nebraska
Mission Solano Rescue Mission	VISTA	California
National Alliance on Mental Illness	VISTA	Tennessee
New Directions	VISTA	California
ServiceNation - Got Your 6**	VISTA	multistate
Swords to Ploughshares	VISTA	California
Tabor Community Services	VISTA	Pennsylvania
The Service Collaborative of WNY	VISTA	New York
United Way of Central KY*	VISTA	Kentucky
Yakima County, Department of Human Services	VISTA	Washington

## **Issue Area 10. Community Coordination**

*Facilitate the coordination of care for veterans in the local community.*

This category was not identified specifically in the SAA, but has emerged as an important focus of several organizations. As one interviewee noted, her community has many resources available for veterans, but there is no coordination of care among the service organizations. Other interviewees point out that veterans frequently do not know “where to start” when in need of services. Thus, 15 grantees and 3 sites (2 AmeriCorps, 3 Senior Corps, 12 VISTA projects, and 1 AmeriCorps and VISTA program) indicated that their National Service participants are focused on bringing together the various veterans-serving organizations in their communities to reduce duplication of services and/or ensure that veterans are able to find the resources they need.

Hands-on Volunteers of Ohio and the City of Charleston (South Carolina) both have VISTAs working to improve coordination of care, with VISTAs in Ohio creating Regional Work Groups comprised of veterans-serving organizations that meet monthly to coordinate their efforts. The Service Collaborative of Western New York and Public Allies Pittsburgh (Pennsylvania) are working to promote veterans’ service organizations, with the former publicizing veterans’ events and the latter organizing a resource fair with the various veterans’ organizations in the city. The Veterans Health Administration – Homeless and Incarcerated Veterans Service Enhancement Project (District of Columbia) is in the process of creating a one-stop community resource center for homeless veterans in San Francisco. And VISTAs working with the Brain Injury Association of Utah have developed a guide to resources available for veterans living with a traumatic brain injury and their caregivers.

National Service participants working with other grantees, including the Idaho National Guard, Volunteer Macon, Metropolitan Community College (Nebraska), and California Department of Veterans’ Affairs, are developing or have developed resource guides to help veterans and their families identify local organizations that offer the services or supports they need.

**Issue Area 10: Community Coordination**

<b>Organization Name</b>	<b>Program Type</b>	<b>State</b>
CA Department of Veterans Affairs	AmeriCorps	California
Public Allies Pittsburgh AmeriCorps Project**	AmeriCorps	Pennsylvania
Virginia Department of Veterans Services	AmeriCorps and VISTA	Virginia
Olympic Community Action Programs	RSVP	Washington
RSVP of Montgomery County PA	RSVP	Pennsylvania
Volunteer Macon	RSVP	Georgia
Brain Injury Association of Utah	VISTA	Utah
Chester County Veterans' Affairs**	VISTA	Pennsylvania
City of Charleston	VISTA	South Carolina
City of Houston	VISTA	Texas
Hands On Volunteer Network of the Valley	VISTA	Ohio
Idaho National Guard	VISTA	Idaho
Metropolitan Community College	VISTA	Nebraska
Ohio Association of Second Harvest Food Banks*	VISTA	Ohio
Ohio National Guard**	VISTA	Ohio
Tabor Community Services	VISTA	Pennsylvania
The Service Collaborative of WNY	VISTA	New York
Veterans Health Administration	VISTA	DC