

Harkin Excellence in AmeriCorps Programming and Service Awards



AmeriCorps State and National 2015 Symposium



Corporation for
**NATIONAL &
COMMUNITY
SERVICE** 

Harkin AmeriCorps Excellence Awards

- ✓ Established in 2014
- ✓ Created to honor long-time service and support of Senator Tom Harkin
- ✓ 5 recipients in 2015

Harkin AmeriCorps Excellence Awards



Award Categories:

Program and Member

American YouthWorks: Texas Conservation Corps and Emergency Response Teams



A M E R I C A N
YOUTHWORKS



American YouthWorks: Texas Conservation Corps and Emergency Response Teams

NOMINATED BY:

**Emily Steinberg
OneStar Foundation**

American YouthWorks: Texas Conservation Corps and Emergency Response Teams

In 2012, AYW launched the Texas Conservation Corps and Emergency Response Teams (ERTs). According to FEMA, Texas is the state most prone to disasters in the US. This program enhancement addresses a critical need across the state and builds on existing AmeriCorps resources. The ERTs include two teams of AmeriCorps members who are trained and ready for rapid deployment. The teams are trained to manage volunteers and donations, homeowner assistance registration processes, call centers, temporary shelters, and debris removal efforts. The members also help with search and rescue operations. Of note, during the Memorial Day 2015 flooding in central Texas, AmeriCorps members established Volunteer Reception Centers and processed nearly 1,000 volunteers a day in both Wimberley and San Marcos, Texas.

American YouthWorks: Texas Conservation Corps and Emergency Response Teams



✓ Mobilized during Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005



✓ Recruited 4,000 volunteers during the Bastrop wildfire recovery, over 26,000 volunteer hours recorded



✓ In 2012, launched the Texas Conservation Corps and corresponding Emergency Response Teams (ERTs)

Berea College PartnerCorps



Partners *for* Education

BEREA COLLEGE

Berea College PartnerCorps



NOMINATED BY:

**Dreama Gentry
PartnerCorps**

Berea College PartnerCorps



PartnerCorps is a new program launched in 2013. It placed focused teams of AmeriCorps members in two rural high schools in Kentucky. In 2014, the second year of PartnerCorps implementation in Knox and Leslie County High Schools, Leslie County recorded the highest ACT average among juniors in the school's history. In both program years, overall school attendance has grown at both schools as a result of the AmeriCorps members' service. Leslie County High's Principal counts the arrival of PartnerCorps as one of the reasons the school jumped from 224 out of 230 state high schools in 2010 to 16 out of 230 in 2014.

Berea College PartnerCorps

- ✓ School-wide mentoring program
- ✓ Placed 20 members in two rural schools
- ✓ AmeriCorps members have provided more than 30,000 hours of service
- ✓ In 2014, one PartnerCorps site, Leslie County High School, recorded the highest ACT average among juniors in the school's history.

Berea College PartnerCorps



AmeriCorps

Dubuque National Service Partnership



Dubuque National Service Partnership

NOMINATED BY:

Justin Ellis
Iowa Campus Compact

Dubuque National Service Partnership

The DNSP began in 2013 as a partnership between Loras College, three local nonprofits, and the city of Dubuque in order to strengthen individual efforts to serve Dubuque citizens living in poverty. The partnership leverages the collective impact of higher education, local nonprofits, city government, and the state government, and it draws on multiple AmeriCorps resources available in Iowa. Of note, in the most recent program year, VISTAs serving with the DNSP provided financial literacy services to 257 citizens; provided job training to 194 citizens; mobilized 1,801 volunteers; and expanded the organizational capacity of 60 nonprofits.

Dubuque National Service Partnership



- ✓ Began as a partnership between **Loras College, three local nonprofits, and the City of Dubuque**



- ✓ Received the Governor's Partnership award for **achievement in fostering a culture of service in the community**



- ✓ Mayor Roy Buol recognized two AmeriCorps members serving in the DNSP for their outstanding service at the **3rd Annual Mayor's Day of Recognition.**

Dubuque National Service Partnership



AmeriCorps

Alexander Feest, AmeriCorps Member



Alexander Feest, AmeriCorps Member

NOMINATED BY:

**Chad Harrie
Oshkosh Vet Corps**

Alexander Feest, AmeriCorps Member

Alexander Feest served as an AmeriCorps member with the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh Vet Corps; his service site was Riverview Gardens in Appleton. Alex is a combat veteran from the US Marine Corps. Throughout his AmeriCorps service, Alex used his military experience to reach out to homeless veterans in his community. Because of Alex's efforts, veterans from all branches of service joined Riverview Gardens as community volunteers and participated in the job-training and counseling program. Alex also connected Riverview Gardens with Wisconsin's Veterans Treatment Court, which provides an opportunity for veterans experiencing trauma from military service compounded by mental health issues, alcohol abuse, and other drug addictions to receive treatment as an alternative to incarceration. In 2015, Riverview Gardens and the Treatment Court launched a three-year partnership to support veterans.

Alexander Feest, AmeriCorps Member



- ✓ **Inspired veterans** from all branches of service to volunteer or join Vet Corps

- ✓ Launched a partnership with **Wisconsin's Veterans Treatment Court**



- ✓ Of his service, Alex's nominator wrote: "Not only has Alex **honorably served his country**, he honorably served and helped transform his community."

Bridget Palombo, AmeriCorps Member



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Bridget Palombo, AmeriCorps Member

NOMINATED BY:

**Dr. Norma Alicea-Alvarex
Temple University**

and

**Naida Elena Burgos
Association of Puerto Ricans On March**

Bridget Palombo, AmeriCorps Member

Bridget Palombo served two AmeriCorps terms of service with the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC); her service site was the Association for Puerto Ricans on March in Philadelphia. During her service, Bridget worked closely with the community to develop and launch the community Food Buying Club. The club allows community members and families to purchase produce directly from the Philadelphia Wholesale Produce Market at a lower cost than available at regular grocery stores. The first group 'buy' was held in August 2014 and eight families shared four cases of produce. By the end of Bridget's service term, 77 families shared 86 cases of produce. In its first year, the Food Buying Club provided 25,000 pounds of produce to a community and saved participating residents nearly \$50,000 in their grocery budgets.

Bridget Palombo, AmeriCorps Member



- ✓ In less than a year, **the Food Buying Club has provided 25,000 pounds** of produce to a community and **saved participating residents \$50,000.**



- ✓ Bridget developed a **toolkit to replicate** the Food Buying club at other sites.



- ✓ Of her service, one nominator wrote: **“Bridget exemplifies a genuine spirit of and strong commitment to service.”**

Bridget Palombo, AmeriCorps Member

