



How to Approach a School to Match/Augment the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award

There are a number of wonderful schools out there who know about AmeriCorps, love AmeriCorps, and most importantly, support alumni by matching the education award or providing exclusive scholarship opportunities to former members. Not all schools offer financial incentives to AmeriCorps alumni, however, so if the school you would like to attend—or attended—is not a participant in the Education Award Matching Program, you can help get them involved (and help yourself pay for school)!

This process should be initiated and lead by you, but CNCS is here to offer you support by providing all the tools and resources needed to reach out to schools. The steps below outline how a prospective student would reach out, but the same process would work for a alumnus who wants to encourage their alma mater to support AmeriCorps.

Step 1: Contact your school (the financial aid office is a good place to start). Briefly explain your situation (that you are an AmeriCorps member, would like to attend their college/university, that you will be receiving an education award (tell them the amount of your award), and that you are inquiring about the possibility of them matching or augmenting your award. Ask them how you can go about making that request and who you should send it to. Be sure to ask whether they will contact you or who you should call to follow up on your request.

Step 2: Write your request. Use our template to get started. Your letter should be supplemented by a copy of of the [current list of schools that match/augment the education award](#) and an [AmeriCorps fact sheet](#).

Step 3: Once you have all your request materials ready, send them to your school and **FOLLOW UP!** Call and/or email after a few weeks and ask about the status of your request. Find out if the school needs any additional information from you.



How to Request an Application Fee Waiver

While college application fees may not seem like a tremendous expense, they can be challenging to afford on a member living stipend. This is especially difficult for members applying to several schools.

In our efforts to support you with life after AmeriCorps, we would like to help you request an application fee waiver from the school(s) you are applying to.

Here's how it works:

Step 1: Call your school's admissions office and ask what you need to do to request an application fee waiver. Some schools may have a formal application while some may only require a short letter from you. Get the details;

- To whom or to what office/department should the request be addressed?
- What is the mailing address, email address, or fax number?
- Will they contact you or should you follow up?
- What phone number should you call to follow up?

Step 2: Contact your school. You can use the included message template as a starting point but make sure to include:

- A brief description of AmeriCorps
- A summary of your AmeriCorps experience
- Information about the AmeriCorps stipend and education award
- The AmeriCorps Fact Sheet

Once you've sent your message, **FOLLOW UP!** Call or email to ask about the status of your request.



How to Approach a School to Match/Augment the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award Sample Message Template

To: Dean Sample

Subject Line: Opportunity to Recruit AmeriCorps Members

Dear Dean Sample,

[Use this intro if you are writing to your alma mater]

I'm writing to you as both an XX University and a national service alum. I had a wonderful educational experience at XSU followed by XX years serving as an AmeriCorps XX (NCCC, State/National, VISTA) member in City, State. Both of these opportunities have shaped who I am today.

[Use this intro if you are writing to a school that does not currently accept the Ed Award]

I'm writing to you as a potential applicant to your school and as a proud national service alum. I served as an AmeriCorps XX member from xxxx to xxxx in City, State and it profoundly influenced who I am today. I would like to bring my skills and experiences to your school.

I am calling upon you to join colleges and universities from around the country to recruit and honor citizens who have served in AmeriCorps by offering a tuition match to students who have successfully completed a year of volunteer service.

[AmeriCorps](#) is a national service program administered by the federal agency, the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), that enables hundreds of thousands of Americans to give a year serving our country. There are several AmeriCorps programs including VISTA (Volunteers In Service To America), the NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps), and numerous national and local non-profit organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, Equal Justice Works, Teach for America, and Public Allies. Members serve in diverse communities across the country, carrying out service projects in the areas of, education, public safety, community health, environmental restoration, and veteran's affairs. Selection is extremely competitive and individuals must be hard working, determined, and committed to complete their term.

At the completion of a year of service with AmeriCorps the participant receives a [Segal AmeriCorps Education Award](#), a tuition or loan reimbursement of up to \$5,550, modeled after the Montgomery GI Bill and tied congruently to the Pell Grant. A dollar-for-dollar match of this award provides significant incentive for AmeriCorps alumni to apply to undergrad and graduate school and is also an extraordinary way to honor individuals who have dedicated themselves to national service.

We provide matching funds and additional financial assistance including one full scholarship a year to AmeriCorps alums because we share their passion for service. We look for students who are going to make a difference to the most vulnerable and address the most pressing social problems. AmeriCorps students have demonstrated this commitment and come with considerable leadership skills. They embody our school motto, Knowledge Advancing Social Justice. Their presence provides energy and is a major asset to our entire program.

~Michael Doonan, PhD, Assistant Professor and Director of the MPP Program, The Heller School for Social Policy and Management, Brandeis University

I hope that you will consider joining the growing number of institutions that have expressed a willingness to recruit and reward AmeriCorps members for their service. To join, please visit www.nationalservice.gov/edawardmatch or contact CNCS for more information at edawardmatch@cns.gov. Please let us know if we can add your institution to the list. Thank you for your consideration and support of AmeriCorps!