

AMERICORPS



LISC AmeriCorps Members; Chicago, Illinois

National service and the AmeriCorps Program are important elements in creating a brighter future for America. National service has the potential to help unite the country and to get things done for the people and communities who need it most. Service is a powerful antidote for solving some of our nation's most pressing problems. AmeriCorps members make a commitment to serve at nonprofits, schools, public agencies, and community and faith-based groups across the country. Since 1994, AmeriCorps members have helped further the proud American legacy of commitment to the improvement of society through service. The program not only connects its members with organizations dedicated to the betterment of their communities, but also creates jobs and provides pathways to opportunity for people of all ages entering the workforce.

What is the AmeriCorps Program?

- AmeriCorps is a program administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) to foster civic engagement through service and volunteering.
- CNCS provides funding, on a competitive basis, to national, state and local organizations to place AmeriCorps members in more than 50,000 locations across the country to deliver results-driven service with non-profits to address critical needs in urban and rural communities throughout the country.
- AmeriCorps awardees are required to provide matching funds to augment their award dollars, and to demonstrate impact through standardized performance measures developed by CNCS.
- AmeriCorps efforts are focused on six key areas: disaster services, economic opportunity, education, environmental stewardship, healthy futures, and veterans and military families.

What are the outcomes?

- **AmeriCorps service engages people to address local needs.** Since 1994, more than 1 million Americans have served more than 1.4 billion hours through AmeriCorps.
- **AmeriCorps service is cost effective.** For every dollar invested in CNCS, there is a return to society of \$3.95 in terms of higher earnings and community benefits as well as \$2.20 in savings to other government programs.
- **AmeriCorps service provides participants with opportunity to higher education.** The Eli Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards have provided more than \$3.3 billion to defray college costs for members.
- **AmeriCorps provides opportunity for employment.** Unemployed individuals who serve are 27% more likely to secure employment than those who do not serve their communities. That rate jumps to 51% for individuals who serve and don't have a high school diploma.

What has been LISC's involvement?

- Since 1994, LISC has placed over **3,100 full and part-time members** in more than **83 cities and rural areas**. To date, members have been instrumental in:
 - Helping to develop **11,114 affordable housing units**
 - Providing homeownership counseling and foreclosure prevention counseling to **49,094 people**
 - Helping **21,951** clients with services helping **6,189** to secure employment
 - Recruiting and managing **164,116 volunteers** who served a total of **793,847 hours**
- The program is also a strong career opportunity program. **Since program**



LISC AmeriCorps Members; Biloxi, Mississippi

inception, 76% of our members have earned education awards totaling more than \$9 million. In a 2019 Urban Institute report, "A Pathway to Economic Opportunity for Communities and AmeriCorps Members" it is noted that **92% of members were employed or in school six-months post service.**

Spotlight on Service

In addition to community impact, AmeriCorps service builds local leaders:

REBECCA NIKODEM served two terms with Jefferson East, Inc. as a housing and neighborhood services coordinator to make a difference. She focused on enhancing residents' chances for homeownership within the east Jefferson corridor. She managed over 70 home repair applications on Detroit's lower east side, while providing homeownership counseling to 100 individuals in need of affordable housing. Rebecca remarked, "There is a tremendous need in our service area to help residents with self-sufficiency, financial capability, and resources for foreclosure prevention."

ANGELICA RICHARDS' service focuses on economic security through job training and readiness programming. She helps rural youth (aged 16 -24) gain access to scholarships to get training as welders, linemen, medical office assistants, machine technicians and various other opportunities to be part of the workforce. Angelica said of her service: "A lot of people ask me, when you graduate college what do you like to do? I want to go back to Greenville, MS and help make it a better place. It is very important to serve your community and be a part of your community, and be their voice."



TOP: Rebecca Nikodem, Detroit Jefferson East, Inc. Housing and Neighborhood Services Coordinator. **BOTTOM:** Angelica Richards, Washington County Economic Alliance Workforce Training Coordinator

What can Congress do?

We urge Congress to support a budget of \$545 million for the AmeriCorps State and National Program in the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill.

LISC is a national non-profit housing and community development intermediary with offices in 35 different cities and a national rural network of 89 organizations.

For more information about AmeriCorps, please contact Abigail Santos at asantos@lisc.org.