



VOLUNTEER IOWA

I will go anywhere as long as it's upward.

David Livingston

AmeriCorps engages more than 75,000 Americans each year in intensive service to meet community needs in education, the environment, public safety, homeland security, and other areas. AmeriCorps is administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service, which also oversees Senior Corps and Learn and Serve America.

AmeriCorps is available to all, without regard to race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex, political affiliation, or in most instances, religion.

This brochure is available in other formats upon request.

IOWA
life | changing

Corporation for
NATIONAL &
COMMUNITY
SERVICE 

IOWA
life | changing

Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service
200 East Grand Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa 50309
800.308.5987
icvs@iowalifechanging.com
www.volunteeriowa.org/ameriCorps



A Transformative Opportunity for
Young People with Disabilities

THE BEST WAY TO FIND YOURSELF...

Graduating from school and transitioning into the wider world of work and higher education can be exciting and frightening for students with disabilities and their parents.

Quite often, young people are presented with only two options for the future: pursue additional educational opportunities or work. AmeriCorps in Iowa is an alternative opportunity that young people with disabilities should strongly consider. This publication is an introduction to the program that will help you assist young Iowans in making these important decisions and transitions.

Q. What Is AmeriCorps?

A. AmeriCorps engages members in direct service and capacity-building to address unmet community needs. This program changes the lives of volunteers as they gain valuable work experience and a sense of purpose in relationship with others. Local programs design service activities for a team of members, age 17 and older, serving full- or part-time for one year or during the summer.

AmeriCorps program directors are committed to ensuring that volunteers with disabilities get what they need to have an amazing volunteer experience. Volunteers might tutor and mentor youth, assist crime victims, build homes, or restore parks. AmeriCorps members also mobilize community volunteers and strengthen the capacity of the organizations where they serve.

Q. What Are The Benefits of AmeriCorps Service?

A. AmeriCorps volunteers improve communities, the country and gain satisfaction from knowing that they have incorporated service into their lives, but they also gain benefits in other ways. Volunteers gain experience in areas that interest them while learning responsibility, leadership, and communication skills. They work closely with people their own age, building relationships. Skills learned during a volunteer's service can translate directly into job experience in a chosen field. Most volunteers receive a small living allowance, which covers their basic expenses. Full time volunteers who have completed service receive an AmeriCorps Education Service Award of \$4,725. Part time members receive a prorated Education Award. AmeriCorps*VISTA volunteers may either receive the AmeriCorps Education Service Award or an end-of-service stipend of \$1,200.

Q. How Does AmeriCorps Affect Disability-Related Benefits?

A. While receiving AmeriCorps*VISTA benefits generally does not affect eligibility for any government-provided benefits, serving as an AmeriCorps volunteer can affect eligibility for Social Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI). However, proper planning can decrease the risk of losing benefits. Taking advantage of Social Security's Work Incentives and income exclusions available to SSI and SSDI recipients can decrease the risk of losing benefits. As long as it is not used for room and board or repaying student loans, Social Security will not count the AmeriCorps Educational Award as income. Volunteers under the age of 22, who are receiving SSI benefits, can take advantage of the Child Earned Income Exclusion as long as they are not married or heading a household.

Eligibility for Medicaid is determined on an individual basis. Young people, and their parents where appropriate, should talk with a case manager to determine if their AmeriCorps service will affect their Medicaid benefits. AmeriCorps offers health insurance to some of its members. Members who are eligible for health insurance through AmeriCorps, should take advantage of it because Medicaid may not cover costs covered under the AmeriCorps policy.

...IS TO LOSE YOURSELF IN THE SERVICE OF OTHERS. *GHANDI*