



# AmeriCorps Partnership to End Homelessness

— Making a Difference by Restoring Hope to the Homeless

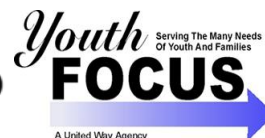
## Program Overview

### I) What is AmeriCorps?

- A) AmeriCorps is a network of national service programs that engages more than 75,000 Americans annually in intensive, results-driven service to meet educational, public safety, environmental, homeland security, and other human service needs. Participants, called “Members,” are placed in non-profits, public agencies, and faith-based organizations throughout the United States. More than 500,000 individuals have served as AmeriCorps Members since the program’s inception in 1993. The Corporation for National and Community Service, based in Washington, D.C., administers AmeriCorps. More than three-quarters of AmeriCorps funding flows from the Corporation to State Commissions. State Commissions then distribute grants to local agencies and monitor grantees to ensure compliance with federal and state requirements.
- B) The N.C. Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service was created in 1994. A bipartisan group of 25 individuals, all appointed by the governor, serve as commissioners. Since 1994, nearly 5,000 AmeriCorps Members have served in North Carolina. AmeriCorps Members in North Carolina have tutored and mentored school-age youth, served preschool children in childcare centers, built houses for low-income homeowners, provided services for the homeless, protected the environment, provided immigrants and refugees with interpretation and translation services, and assisted individuals with disabilities.
- AmeriCorps strengthens communities by uniting diverse individuals and agencies in a common effort to improve our communities.
  - AmeriCorps helps communities meet their educational, public safety, environmental, and human service needs through direct service.
  - AmeriCorps builds leaders through service and civic education. AmeriCorps Members solve problems and motivate others to follow their example.
  - AmeriCorps Members learn new skills, gain valuable experience, and receive funds to further their education thus expanding their horizons.
- C) AmeriCorps is a very intensive program that requires a full time staff to run and a substantial amount of direct involvement from its partner agencies.



**Mary's House**  
520 Guilford Avenue  
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### II) What is the AmeriCorps Partnership to End Homelessness?

- A) *The Partnership to End Homelessness is a State AmeriCorps Program dedicated to alleviating homelessness in Guilford County. Our Members are deployed across 6 Partner Agencies to serve the needs of homeless men, women, youth, the disabled, the recovering, and those in crisis situations. There are both part time (20 hr/wk) and full time (40 hr/wk) positions on the team. Full time positions require a college degree. Part time positions require a High School Diploma.*
- B) *The Partnership to End Homelessness serves to restore hope in the Greensboro Homeless Community. Members work directly with our homeless clients to provide food, shelter, clothing, emergency financial assistance, life skills coaching, and case management. In addition to serving at their sites, each month the team implements community service projects to benefit the homeless and hungry.*
- C) *The AmeriCorps Partnership to End Homelessness Team is active in the community. In addition to the service they perform at their service site, Members get involved as a team with the community. Members have raised funds and awareness through the CROP Walk for hunger, given away turkeys and groceries to the needy at Thanksgiving, led the candlelight walk of remembrance at the Homeless Memorial, helped serve the homeless veterans at the Triad Stand Down, made and served chili to those on the street who are hungry, cleaned up camps where homeless people live, walked in the Martin Luther King Day Parade, and interviewed homeless people for the annual Point in Time Count.*
- D) *The Partnership to End Homelessness has 4 main goals for the 2010-2011 service year:*
- **Emergency Assistance**
    - Members will provide emergency assistance to 1,200 people who are homeless or at risk for homelessness.
    - Members will provide food on 4,000 occasions to individuals and families who are homeless or at risk for homelessness.
  - **Housing and Income**
    - More than 400 homeless clients will be given information on housing and/or income options through case management by Members.
    - More than 250 homeless clients will apply for housing and/or income.
    - More than 125 homeless clients will obtain housing and/or income.
  - **Volunteers to serve the homeless community**
    - 100 new volunteers will be recruited by Members and will provide at least 1,000 hours of direct service to the homeless or those at risk for homelessness.
  - **Disaster Response**
    - At least 12 Members will attend CERT training and be qualified in Emergency Response by Guilford County.



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### III) Who are the Members?

- A) *Members are diverse. They range in age from college students to retirees. They come from all socio-economic backgrounds. Some are college graduates while others have homelessness in their personal history. They share in common a heart for the homeless and a desire to serve their community.*
- B) *Members must spend their service hours doing direct client contact service.*
- C) *Members are not employees. Members are not volunteers. Members are people who have chosen to dedicate one year of their lives to serving their community. In exchange Members receive a small stipend and an award to use for their education.*

### IV) Who are the Partners?

- A) *Greensboro Urban Ministry has 10 Members. Members serve in Emergency Assistance, the Food Bank, the Clothing Bank, the Weaver House Shelter, and at Partnership Village*
- B) *The Servant Center has 6 Members. Members serve in Disability Assistance, Life Skills coaching, Case Management, and the Food Pantry.*
- C) *Youth Focus Act Together Crisis Care has 4 Members. Members serve as Child Care Assistants.*
- D) *The Barnabas Network has 2 Members. Members serve as Shopper Assistants.*
- E) *Family Service of the Piedmont has 2 Members. Members serve as Consumer Credit Counselors and DV Shelter Assistants.*
- F) *Mary's House has 2 Members. Members serve as Case Managers.*

### V) What have the Members done to help the Partners?

- A) *At the Greensboro Urban Ministry, Members have managed hundreds of volunteers in the Food Bank; greatly increased the capacity of Emergency Assistance during a time of great economic need; and provided continuity and case management-type help to the homeless residents in the Weaver House Shelter.*
- B) *At the Servant Center, Members have increased the capacity of the Food Pantry by allowing a new International Pantry to be added and staffed; increased the capacity of the Disability Assistance area, allowing it to branch into new areas, like helping people in homeless shelters; and increased the quality and capacity of the case management of the homeless, disabled Veteran residents of Servant House and Glenwood House.*
- C) *At Youth Focus Act Together Crisis Care, Members have provided much more one-on-one time with the homeless Youth and brought a youthful energy to their care.*
- D) *At Mary's House, Members have doubled the capacity of the Emergency Assistance area and increased the capacity of the case management in the Mary's Homes area.*

### VI) How does the Program Work?



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### A) Agencies Apply to be Partners (December-January)

#### ➤ Financial Commitment

- Partner agrees to pay approximately \$3,500. per year for a Full Time Equivalent
- Note: 1 Full Time Equivalent is equal to **1** Full Time Member or **2** Part Time Members.

#### ➤ Supervisory Commitment

- Partner's Site Supervisor must ensure that the activities the Member engages in fit within the agreed service categories and that no Member participates in unallowed activities.
- Partner's Site Supervisor reviews all timesheets for their Members and has them completed and approved by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month.
- Partner's Site Supervisor ensures that all Performance Measure data is correct and delivered to the AmeriCorps Director by the 7<sup>th</sup> of the month.
- Partner's Site Supervisor completes both a mid-year and end-of-year Performance Review for each member he/she supervises.

#### ➤ Training Commitment

- Partner's Site Supervisor should plan to deliver a training module during orientation.
- Partner's Site Supervisor should plan to deliver at least one training module during the year at one of the regularly scheduled Friday trainings.

#### ➤ Service Project Participation Commitment

- Partner's Site Supervisor should plan to participate in at least one Service Project per year.

### B) Members are recruited (May-August)

#### ➤ Partners spread the word to their contacts, encouraging interested people to apply for membership in the AmeriCorps Partnership to End Homelessness.

- Serving as an AmeriCorps member is not employment. It is community service focused on the areas of homelessness and hunger. Members commit a year of their life to serve those in need in their community.
- AmeriCorps offers an award that can be used to pay for education-related expenses and a small stipend. For part time, the education award is \$2,675 and the stipend is \$500/mo; while for full time, the education award is \$5,350 and the stipend is \$1000/mo. Members are only eligible to receive the education award after they complete their term of service (900 hrs for part time, 1700 hrs for full time).
- Full time Members also receive health insurance.



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- AmeriCorps is not allowed to replace Members who leave before their service year is finished, so candidates who cannot commit to the full year should not apply.
- Candidates are screened and interviewed by the AmeriCorps Director
- Candidates are interviewed by the Partners
  - Partners interview candidates that meet their recruiting requirements and that have an interest in serving the goals of the Partner agency. The Partner relays to the AmeriCorps Director which candidates they want to have. Any Partner that has pre-employment drug screening as part of its policies conducts the screening on those candidates they want. If a candidate fails this screening, they are removed from the candidate pool.
- Candidates are matched with the Partners
  - Candidates who pass the Partner interview and screening are offered membership on the team pending the return of their criminal background check. The candidate then must either accept or decline membership.
  - This process continues until all of the team positions are filled.

### ***C) Member Orientation (mid-September)***

- **Partners actively participate in Member Orientation**
  - “Meet the Partners” on Day 1
  - Tours of the Partner Agency Site on Day 3 and Day 4 (led by the Partner’s Site Supervisor)
  - Training module delivered by Partner’s Site Supervisor

### ***D) Member Service***

- At the Partner agency site
- Training: Every other Friday afternoon throughout the entire service year.
- Community Service Projects: 1-2 per month
  - Partner’s Site Supervisor should plan to participate in at least one Service Project per year

### ***E) National AmeriCorps Week (mid-May)***

- Partners provide appreciation to the Members. It should be something somewhat special like having a party, taking them to lunch, etc.

### ***F) Graduation (mid/end August)***

- Partners formally thank the team for their service to the community and to the agency.
- Partner Site Supervisors describe the service contributions of each member serving at their site as part of the member receiving his/her graduation certificate.



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### VII) Frequently Asked Questions

#### A) What types of activities are unallowed for the Members to do?

- AmeriCorps Members must participate in direct client contact service. They are not allowed to participate in administrative activities (such as answering the phone, filing, grant-writing, fund-raising, etc.).

#### B) What types of activities are prohibited for the Members to do?

- AmeriCorps Members are prohibited by the government from participating in any of the following activities as part of their service: efforts to influence legislation, including lobbying for your program or state or local ballot initiatives; organizing a letter-writing campaign to Congress; engaging in partisan political activities, or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office; organizing or participating in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes; participating in, or endorsing, events or activities that are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation, or elected officials; taking part in political demonstrations or rallies; voter registration drives; assisting or deterring union organizing; impairing existing contracts or collective bargaining agreements; religious activities such as religious instruction, conducting religious services, and proselytization; activities that pose a significant safety risk to participants; assignments that displace employees; providing assistance to a business organized for profit; fundraising (unless it meets the Corporation's approved fundraising guidelines).

#### C) What types of activities are required for the Members do?

- Allowed Member activities are those defined in the grant and the performance measures. They are clearly listed as the service categories on the Member time sheet. Not all AmeriCorps activities are allowed for our Members. For example, the AmeriCorps program The Spirit of Excellence tutors children and Habitat for Humanity builds houses; however, our Members cannot do either of these activities as a part of their service for the Partnership to End Homelessness because they are not within the scope of our grant.

#### D) What happens if a Member quits?

- If a member leaves before completing his/her term of service, they cannot be replaced. Since the education award is tied to the completion of the contracted number of service hours, once the program is more than a few weeks in, there is not sufficient time for a replacement to get the required number of hours to finish the contract. Thus replacements are not allowed. It is critical in the recruiting process to identify those people who will stay the entire year and for the Partners to make sure the Member is well-supervised and happy in their placement. The Partner is responsible for paying the cost of the member for the full year regardless of whether or not the member serves the full year. Thus it serves both the Partner and the Member for the Member to have a good experience and stay the entire year.

#### E) How much time does it take to perform the Site Supervisor role?



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- Being a Site Supervisor takes both time and effort. Supervisors should plan on spending between 30-60 minutes per week per member providing supervision and direction, and reviewing accomplishments. In addition, supervisors should plan on spending 30-90 minutes per month reviewing and completing timesheets and performance measures.

### ***F) What kind of training do the Members receive?***

- There are two types of training: training required by the AmeriCorps grant and training to improve the success of the AmeriCorps Member.
  - Training required by the AmeriCorps grant: Citizenship, Civil Rights and Harassment, Communication, Conflict Resolution, CPR/First Aid, Disaster Preparedness, Diversity, Race Relations, and Volunteer Management.
  - Training to improve the success of the AmeriCorps Member: Homelessness Issues, Mental Illness Issues, Substance Abuse Issues, Boundaries, Goal Setting, Leadership Skills, Teenage Gang Understanding, Youth Homelessness Issues, Grant Writing, and other relevant topics.