

Life After AmeriCorps Guide

Dear AmeriCorps Member or Alum:

You have joined a 25+ year legacy of getting things done and strengthening America's communities. In return, we want to help you. Whether you served in an AmeriCorps State and National, VISTA, or NCCC program, this tool is for you.

Serving with AmeriCorps can be the catalyst to launch a career, switch to a new field, or start a new chapter post-retirement. We know that you gain valuable skills and experiences through service, which will help you transition to the next step. Serving in AmeriCorps provides you with a unique professional edge while making a difference.

This guide is a tool to assist your transition from service to Life After AmeriCorps, in whatever form that may take: continuing your education, finding a job, or serving again. Begin by reflecting on your interests and exploring the "Find Your Fit" section.

We hope you will find this guide useful as you navigate life after AmeriCorps.

Thank you for your service.

Your Friends at AmeriCorps

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Stay Connected & Share Your Story

As an AmeriCorps member, you're joining a network of 1 million individuals who have committed to a lifetime of service to their country and community. This decision sets you apart as a leader, and puts you in a unique position to inspire others to serve-- including your friends, family, and neighbors. Here's how to get started:

Share your story and inspire others to serve

1. Create/share videos of you during your service or reflections after service.
2. Post pictures from your service and tag us on social media using #MadeInAmeriCorps, @AmeriCorps, and @NationalService.
3. Help recruit the next generation of AmeriCorps members by presenting at your high school or college. Visit NationalService.gov/Alumni for our recruitment PowerPoint, which you can also customize with your service story.
4. Upon completion of service, continue to give back by volunteering (and bring your friends, too!). Find an opportunity at NationalService.gov/Serve.

Use the network

Connect to your fellow alumni using the AmeriCorps Alums network, LinkedIn, or your sponsor or service site.

Display your AmeriCorps pride

Whether on social media, on your resume, in your online bio, or in real life, display the "A." Keep wearing your polo or t-shirt and use an AmeriCorps water bottle/pen/backpack as you go through your daily life. Need AmeriCorps gear? Visit NationalServiceGear.org.

Stay in the Know

Make sure you keep your email address up to date on My.AmeriCorps.gov so we can share AmeriCorps news, jobs, and events. Also, sign up for email updates on NationalService.gov.

AMERICORPS SERVICE TIMELINE

Below is a suggested timeline to prepare for Life After AmeriCorps. It's never too early to start planning for your future. Also included are key reminders related to your service benefits. If your term of service is shorter, it may be appropriate to condense your timeline.

First month of service

- Reminder to put student loans in deferment or forbearance
- Start tracking your accomplishments
- Create a list of personal and professional contacts
- Follow AmeriCorps on LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram
- Add your service to the experience section of your LinkedIn profile

Two to three months into service

- Participate in professional development webinars
- Continue tracking accomplishments and contacts
- Research post-secondary or professional schools

Four or five months before end of term

- Attend virtual and in-person career fairs
- Continue tracking accomplishments and contacts
- Set up informational interviews
- Consider whether another year of AmeriCorps service is right for you
- Check out the various national service job boards
- If interested in federal employment:
 1. Create profile on USAJobs.gov
 2. Build a master federal resume
 3. Search for positions of interest

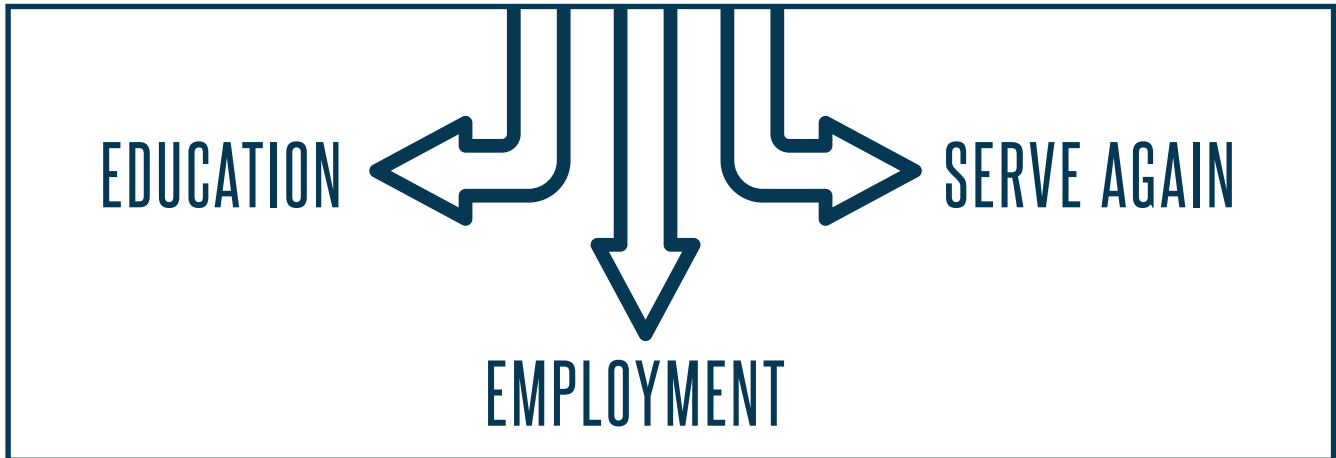
Two to three months before end of term

- Start applying for jobs
- Continue tracking accomplishments and contacts
- Make sure your accomplishments are reflected in your resume
- Use the AmeriCorps Alums site to connect with AmeriCorps chapters in your area
- VISTAs: Complete your close of service travel voucher on My.AmeriCorps.gov

Post Service

- Download your Verification of Service letter from My.AmeriCorps.gov
- Complete student loan Interest Accrual form (if applicable)
- Update email address on My.AmeriCorps.gov
- Share your experience on social media and stay involved
- Use your Education Award within seven years of completing service

FIND YOUR FIT



It's ok to not know what you want to do. What's important is figuring out what you are interested in before you start looking for it. There are many resources available to assist you with this process.

- Take a free online career assessment to determine how your values, skills, and interests can guide you toward certain professions.
- Describe your dream career in a few words, browse careers by industry, or take a quick survey to match your interests and training with the type of work you might enjoy on [CareerOneStop.org](https://www.careeronestop.org), a search and explore tool sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor. Additionally, you can search the web for career aptitude tests.
- Start your education search by comparing degrees and programs or search based on what employment options you're most interested in. Get started with tools from [CollegeBoard.org](https://collegeboard.org) and don't forget to get information on application deadlines.
- You've proven your dedication and you know what it takes to serve. Consider another term of service. Would you like to stay with your program or take on a leadership role? What about a different AmeriCorps program? Or maybe you're interested in the military or Peace Corps?
- Want to work for the federal government, but are not sure where to begin? Get the big picture of what your options are and how to navigate the application process at [GoGovernment.org](https://www.gogovernment.org).

Need more assistance? Consider working with a career counselor or coach. Visit the National Career Development Association's website to find someone near you. Many of them have a sliding scale fee structure and can work with your budget.

Discover more resources available to AmeriCorps Alumni.
Visit [AmeriCorps.gov/Alumni](https://www.americorps.gov/Alumni)



TIP:

Try journaling

It's wise to try and capture the transformational power of your AmeriCorps experience as you're going through it. Send yourself an email with highlights from your day to keep a record of your developing skills, contacts, and accomplishments.





Education

For some of you, your next step after service may be starting, finishing, or continuing your education. Either way you're in luck because in exchange for completing a successful term of service, you will receive the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award*.

Segal AmeriCorps Education Award Resources

The Education Award is a valuable benefit for AmeriCorps members. It can be used to repay eligible student loans or pay for educational costs at qualified colleges, universities, and technical schools.

Use the Education Award site on NationalService.gov to learn more about the award, how to use it, and how to navigate the tax process (see item #2 below).

Five important facts to know about the Education Award:

1. It must be used within seven years of your close of service date.
2. The award is considered taxable income at time of use. This means if you use part or all of your education award, the amount used counts towards your income for the year, so be sure to include it when filing your taxes.
3. Some institutions match the Education Award or offer financial aid benefits to AmeriCorps alumni (scholarships, tuition waivers, in-state tuition, etc.). If the school you want to attend does not currently offer any benefits, ask officials to consider offering benefits to AmeriCorps alumni. You can also find a fact sheet to provide to your school on the Education Award site.
4. Your award can be used for qualified educational expenses such as: tuition, books, room and board, transportation, and other costs. View the full list of qualified educational expenses on AmeriCorps Education Award page.
5. Qualified international schools, adventure/outdoor programs, and technical/trade schools may also accept and/or match the education award. **

**AmeriCorps VISTA members may choose between the Segal Education Award benefit or a cash stipend.*

***Qualified institutions are defined as those that currently participate in the Department of Education's "Title IV schools" and G.I. Bill approved programs.*

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MY.AMERICORPS.GOV PAYMENT REQUEST

Access your online Education Award account via My.AmeriCorps.gov. Requests are submitted electronically to your lender or Title IV school.

To request a student loan interest payment:

1. Click "Create Interest Payment Request" in your My.AmeriCorps.gov account under "My Education Award."
2. Certify and submit the form.
3. Form is automatically forwarded to loan holder to complete and returned to the National Service Trust.
4. You can track the status of your request and see when a payment has been made in your My.AmeriCorps.gov account.

To make a payment with the Education Award:

1. Click "Create Education Award Payment Request."
2. Complete and submit the form.
3. Check the status of your payment request through My.AmeriCorps.gov. You should also follow-up with your school or lender to verify that the payment is received.

FINDING THE SCHOOL FOR YOU

Starting college, finishing a degree, or getting an advanced degree is a decision that will benefit you in the long run. Still, it can feel daunting when choosing the school that is right for you. You may know what degree you want to pursue or where you wish to attend school, but some questions may be harder to answer. When deciding your next move, use the factors below to determine which school and program is right for you.



1. Type of majors or degrees available
2. Cost
3. Location
4. Admissions criteria
5. Internships and hands-on opportunities
6. Campus amenities
7. Support services
8. Post-college earnings



Fact: On average, people with a bachelor's degree earn \$468 more per week than people with a high-school diploma. (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018)



Employment

SEARCHING & APPLYING

Searching and applying for jobs can be overwhelming, as there are many job search sites. There are many resources available to help you find different types of jobs. These sites will help you view job listings and discover different types of positions and organizations that may pique your interest.

We recommend starting your search process after you are at least halfway through your service. By then, you should have a general idea as to what you're interested in doing after service. The process will also prepare you for a more-active search in the last three months of your service term.

Please note: We highly recommend you do not leave service early to accept a job offer, for the following reasons:

- Completing your service term shows your commitment to an employer.
- Your project may not be able to replace you if you terminate early.
- You risk losing all or part of your end-of-service benefits.

Here's a summary of select resources and why you might want to explore using them:

AmeriCorps Alums

This organization supports national service alumni and offers virtual career/grad school fairs throughout the year. Use local chapters to connect with alums from all streams of service.

Employers of National Service

This initiative connects AmeriCorps and Peace Corps alumni with hundreds of employers from the private, public, and nonprofit sectors. These employers sign up because they understand the value of national service and they commit to hiring alumni.

Glass Door

Job and recruiting site that allows you to see which employers are hiring, what it's really like to work or interview there according to employees, and how much you could earn.

Google for Jobs

Search for "Jobs near me" or use a specific location or field (e.g., "teaching jobs") and the Google search engine will generate an extensive list of postings from other job search companies and from across the web.

GovLoop

An online community connecting people working for and pursuing careers in government and that offers tools and trainings.

Go Government

A one-stop shop for how to find and apply for federal government jobs.

Idealist

A global clearinghouse of nonprofit and volunteering resources.

Indeed

The site enables you to search jobs posted on thousands of websites.

LinkedIn

This professional networking site allows users to create profiles and connections to each other through an online social network.

Peace Corps Career Link

Hundreds of postings from employers who understand the value of service (particularly those with non-competitive eligibility which VISTAs receive at the end of their service)

The Muse

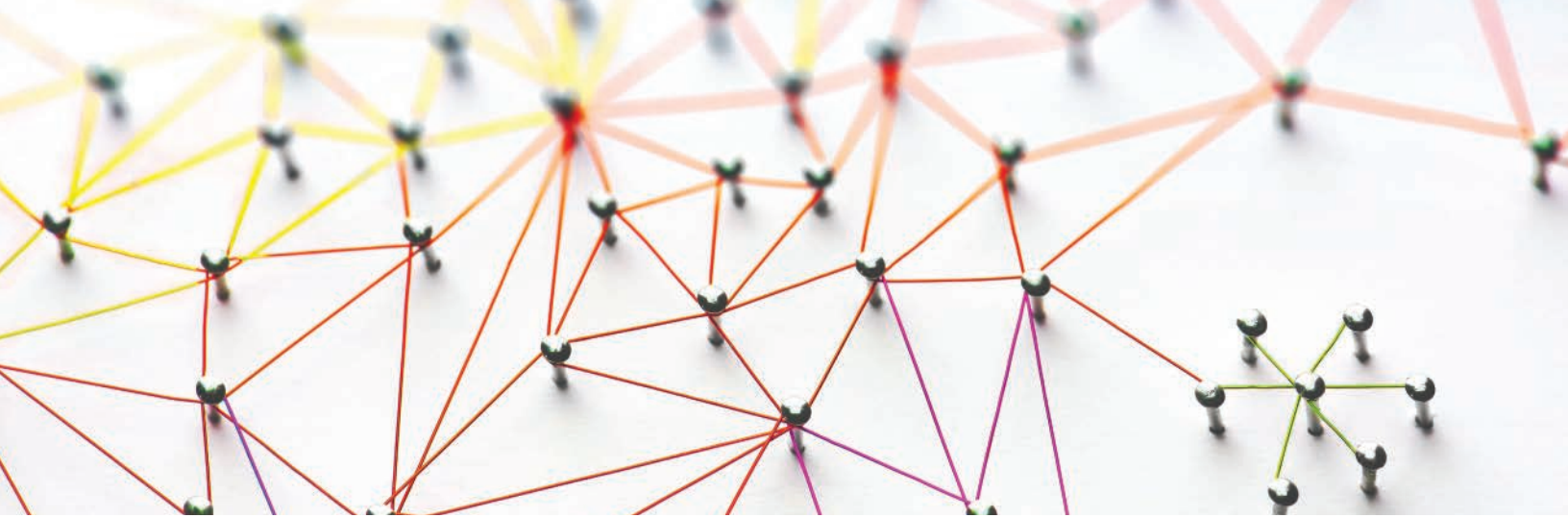
Online career resource that offers a behind-the-scenes look at job opportunities with hundreds of companies, original career advice from prominent experts, and access to coaches for career help.

USAJobs.gov

The official website for federal employment.

VISTA Campus Job Board

Federal employers looking for candidates with Non-Competitive Eligibility can post here along with other organizations looking to hire AmeriCorps alumni.



NETWORKING

Networking is a key component of any job search. At its core, networking is about making connections with people. It's about sharing useful resources and information. Ideally, you are keeping up with former professors, co-workers, bosses, neighbors, family friends, and others from various aspects of your life in your network. It's an exchange – a give and take. You help people in your network and when you need help, they should be there for you.

Before you start setting up coffee appointments, do some exploration so you're more certain about what you're looking for and with whom you want to connect. Go through your contacts to determine who you know working at organizations of interest to you. In addition, seek opportunities of interest such as lectures, social gatherings, and meet-ups; increasing your chances of meeting individuals to add to your network. Consider joining alumni groups from your college or the AmeriCorps Alums network. These groups often host events, giving you a natural environment for networking.

Perfect Your “Elevator Pitch”

Use this guidance to speak with confidence about your service experience to potential employers and contacts.

In 60 seconds or less:

- Connect to the person you're addressing.
- Describe outcomes, not activities when sharing the impact you've had.
- Educate but be brief, never assume someone knows what your organization does.
- Make your request (e.g., informational interview).
- Find out the best way to follow up.



Tip: Consider setting up informational interviews with new contacts in roles that interest you. The goal is not to find a job but to learn how this person reached this position or got started with their company. Asking may feel awkward at first but many people enjoy taking the time to give advice based on their career path.

Try this framework: My name is (name) and I am an AmeriCorps member with (organization). (Organization) believes (deeply held value). Every day, we (verb) (object) for (beneficiaries), because (problem statement).

Sample:

Hello Ms. Gomez, I'm Lucia. I was inspired by the speech you just gave. It especially resonated with me as I've been serving as an AmeriCorps member with the Food Bank of Springfield. I've had a great experience helping the organization expand its services to reach families in urban food deserts. Since I've been with the organization, I've doubled the number of community garden volunteers and developed new relationships with local businesses. I'm very interested in pursuing a career in food security. Do you have 15 minutes in the next couple of weeks for Ame to give you a call or stop by your office to learn more about your career path?

BEST WAYS TO USE LINKEDIN



LinkedIn is the world's largest professional network. Whether you've been using this social media platform or not, now is the time to create or update your profile. The free standard account is sufficient to create a searchable profile. It is also important that you stay connected with other alums.

Here are some ways you can start utilizing LinkedIn:

- Follow AmeriCorps to get career advice and learn about job opportunities.
- Create or update your profile to reflect your AmeriCorps service:
- Post your service year under "Experience".
- Populate your profile with relevant information including previous employment, education and volunteering.
- Use a professional photo. Per LinkedIn, profiles with a photo receive 21 times more profile views.
- Stand out with your headline and personal summary. These pieces of your profile should include your job title, the agency you work for, keywords employers can search and something that makes you notable.
- Make yourself searchable for employers.

Don't forget to include a brief description of AmeriCorps:

"AmeriCorps is a national service program that utilizes approximately 75,000 members each year to address critical community needs related to education, public safety, poverty, health, disaster relief and the environment. Members commit to a year of service in various settings including schools, public agencies, and community and faith-based groups across the country."

LinkedIn Profile Samples:



Corps Member

AmeriCorps NCCC

October 2020 – August 2021

Served in a 10-month federal service program focused on land management

Distributed over 5,000 trees, removed 9,000 pounds of debris and repaired over 10,000 feet of fencing

Aided local land management with prescribed burns, cleared of unwanted vegetation, and refurbished of campsites

Type II Firefighter certified



AmeriCorps VISTA–Volunteer Recruitment and Management Systems Specialist

Volunteer Houston

May 2020 – May 2021

Houston, TX

Managed Volunteer Houston's online presence during a year of service with AmeriCorps, a federal program in which members make a one-year commitment to building the capacity of a community organization

Increased user registration by 70% by creating a new marketing plan for the Volunteer Connection platform focused on simplifying the user experience and increasing awareness of the platform among local residents and nonprofits

Developed a mobile app (available on iOS), redesigned the website, modified the user registration process, and launched a search marketing campaign



College Possible Coach

AmeriCorps

August 2020 – August 2021

Portland, OR

Led 40+ sessions on ACT preparation, college application processes, writing college application essays and navigating FAFSA

Provided weekly one-on-one sessions for 25 low-income high school students to identify academic resources to increase the school's number of students accepted to four-year colleges

Skilled in Salesforce software documentation

Wrote detailed summaries of students' needs to ensure continuity of service at the close of the school year

OPPORTUNITIES ARE ALL AROUND YOU

Your commitment to service gives back to the community while building new professional skills but don't forget about the people you meet along the way. Whether you're creating a community plan to address homelessness, registering disaster survivors for assistance, or inventing unique ways to increase credit recovery for students, you're demonstrating institutional knowledge and an ability to improve your service environment. Throughout your term of service and as you look toward employment, consider if your current service site is an opportunity for employment.

- Attend conferences hosted or promoted by your service site. This allows you to gain knowledge in your field and introduce yourself to others connected to your site. Be sure to follow through with your new connections by tracking who you've met and their contact information. Don't forget to send a LinkedIn message and invite.
- Capitalize on the access to your service site's trainings. Training on the skills needed to work for your organization will give you a leg up if you choose to apply to a position there.
- Be sure to track resource needs and funding you have identified or secured for your site. This information can be presented to leadership, making the case for a new position which you are well-poised to take on.
- Talk to your service site sponsor or supervisor about how their organization operates in your home state. Consider asking for an introduction to staff in that state or community and set up an informational interview with your new contact.
- Open communication can go a long way. As you see positions open at your site, be sure to communicate with your supervisor or other related staff about why you're interested in staying with your service site as well as the skills you've gained related to these positions.
- Even if you're leaving the organization at the end of your term, consider asking your supervisor, or other staff who inspire you, to continue a mentoring relationship. This is a great way to stay connected to the organization and potentially learn about future opportunities before others do. Maintain the relationship by updating them on your work.



Fact: More than 1 in 5 AmeriCorps alumni report being employed in a new or existing position at their AmeriCorps host organization after their service term. (2016 AmeriCorps Alumni Survey)



The Resume

THE BASICS

A well-crafted resume is essential to securing a job interview. Investing the time to carefully capture and curate your experiences, skills, and talents is critical to putting together a stellar resume. Here are some basic tips, as well as suggestions on how to highlight your national service experience.

GET STARTED

Create a master resume that is a comprehensive summary of your experiences, accomplishments, and talents.



Tip: Keep a list of your accomplishments somewhere easy to access, like your smartphone. Record stories and quantifiable information (\$ raised, # of partnerships created/ volunteers recruited, etc.) Then turn this information into resume bullets!



essentials OF RESUME WRITING

1. Tailor your resume to each job.
2. Use consistent formatting.
3. Be clear and concise.
4. Quantify your accomplishments.
5. Incorporate key words from the job announcement.
6. Use no more than 2 pages (for non-federal resumes).
7. Don't be afraid of white space.
8. Have adequate margins (no larger than 1" and no smaller than .8").
9. Proofread! Ask someone else to review it too.
10. Submit as a .pdf, not a Word document.

ANATOMY OF A RESUME

Trends come and go in resume writing. The following recommendations are based on current research. The key to a winning resume is to keep it clean and concise. Include keywords and achievements that are relevant to the position for which you are applying.



KEY COMPONENTS

- Header
- Professional experience
- Education

OPTIONAL COMPONENTS

- Profile
- Summary
- Notable skills
- Technical skills
- Language skills
- Volunteer/community experience
- Trainings/certificates
- Awards/honors
- Publications/presentations



THINGS TO leave off YOUR RESUME

1. Objective statement
2. Unprofessional email address
3. Your photo
4. Fancy designs or fonts
5. Acronyms
6. Full paragraphs
7. Use of first person, "I"
8. Implied or out-of-date skills
9. "References available upon request"
10. Typos

6 seconds The average amount of time recruiters spend reviewing an individual resume. Make it count!



Be you

Tip: Don't be afraid to add information beyond your education and professional experience. Highlight different skills and experiences depending on the job you are applying for. Employers will gain insights into your personality that can make you stand out as a candidate!

CREATING YOUR HEADER

When someone is viewing your resume, your name should stand out – make sure the font is large and the layout is clean. Also, keep these points in mind:

- It is no longer essential to include your mailing address on a resume.
- If you want it to be clear to recruiters that you are local, include the address. An alternative is to include city/state/zip.
- If you don't live in the area but are trying to relocate, ask a friend or relative if you can use their local address on your resume.
- Try to limit your header to two lines.
- Consider including your LinkedIn address.

SAMPLE RESUME HEADERS

Isabelle Martinez

1234 Main Street, Springfield, IL 62701 | isabellem@email.com | 217-400-2323

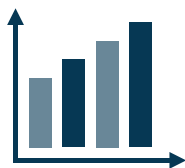
JUSTIN WU

WASHINGTON, DC 20009 ◦ JUSTINW@EMAIL.COM ◦ LINKEDIN: IN/JWU23 ◦ 202-400-4322



Tip: Make sure to hyperlink your email and LinkedIn profile to make it easier for employers to contact you.

CRAFTING YOUR BULLETS



QUANTIFY YOUR EXPERIENCE

- \$ raised or budget managed
- # of partnerships developed
- # of events managed
- # of volunteers recruited
- % of increase in volunteers participating or dollars raised

DEMONSTRATE YOUR QUALITIES AND SKILLS

- Leadership
- Project management
- Problem solving
- Adaptability
- Technology
- Languages
- Collaboration
- Critical thinking



INCLUDE ACCOMPLISHMENTS



- Provided community education classes
- Coordinated, created, established new partnerships
- Led teams, projects, initiatives
- Organized, revamped, implemented trainings
- Wrote, designed, edited publications
- Remodeled affordable housing

Use active voice and strong verbs to describe your skills and experience.

ORIGINAL:

Responsible for helping recruit volunteers and train them.

BETTER:

Recruited and trained volunteers.

EVEN BETTER:

Recruited and trained volunteers to provide job development services for homeless veterans.

Quantify whenever possible

ORIGINAL:

Tutored low-income students.

BETTER:

Tutored more than 30 low-income students.

EVEN BETTER:

Tutored more than 30 students leading to 60% of participating students showing academic improvement.



Tip: As you advance through your career, your earlier experiences should be edited down to 1-3 bullets or eventually omitted, especially if the experiences are not relevant to the position you are seeking.

TRANSLATING YOUR SERVICE EXPERIENCE

The Importance of Using Strong Verbs

Here is a list of useful verbs you can use in your resume to translate the skills you developed, activities you completed, materials you created, responsibilities you held, and more during your year of service.

You Transformed Something

Did you create or manage your organization's Facebook account? Did you redesign their website? Did you create a new system your service site can use to track all of their volunteers?

- Centralized
- Clarified
- Converted
- Customized
- Integrated
- Merged
- Modified
- Overhauled
- Redesigned
- Refined
- Remodeled
- Reorganized
- Replaced
- Restructured
- Revamped
- Revitalized
- Simplified
- Standardized
- Streamlined
- Strengthened
- Switched
- Translated
- Updated
- Upgraded

You Were a Leader or a Manager

Did you organize an initiative? Supervise other members? Recruit or manage volunteers?

- Aligned
- Chaired
- Controlled
- Directed
- Executed
- Headed
- Hired
- Mobilized
- Operated
- Orchestrated
- Organized
- Oversaw
- Produced
- Ran
- Recruited
- Supervised

You Assessed and Addressed Needs in Your Community

Did you respond after a disaster? Connect communities to healthy food? Develop a community resource library?

- Administered
- Built
- Charted
- Created
- Designed
- Founded
- Established
- Formalized
- Formulated
- Implemented
- Incorporated
- Initiated
- Instituted
- Launched
- Pioneered
- Spearheaded

You Were a Teacher or an Instructor

Did you lead a skills class? Educate the community about disaster preparedness? Increase reading or math scores?

- Advised
- Boosted
- Cultivated
- Enabled
- Enriched
- Facilitated
- Fostered
- Guided
- Inspired
- Mentored
- Motivated
- Planned
- Prepared
- Programmed
- Shaped
- Trained

You Utilized Your Verbal and Written Communication Skills

Did you write grants or press releases? Speak for your non-profit at a community meeting? Author a curriculum or develop language for marketing collateral?

- Authored
- Briefed
- Co-authored
- Composed
- Conveyed
- Convinced
- Corresponded
- Counseled
- Defined
- Documented
- Edited
- Illustrated
- Persuaded
- Promoted
- Publicized
- Reviewed

You Were a Tech Expert

Did you stand up communication systems in remote locations? Develop a new portal for a city to better meet critical needs?

- Administered
- Analyzed
- Created
- Developed
- Installed
- Maintained
- Monitored
- Operated
- Reported
- Serviced
- Tested
- Upgraded

You Accomplished Something as a Team

Did you bring community members together? Manage a donation center?

- Collaborated
- Co-produced
- Delegated
- Joined
- Organized
- Supported
- Synchronized
- Teamed

TRANSLATING YOUR SERVICE TO A RESUME

Here are some examples of position descriptions and how they translate to powerful and concise resume bullets.

POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

Construction Crew Leader

Construction crew leaders play an integral part in building and repairing more homes, leading to better neighborhoods and communities. As a construction crew leader, you will lead and develop groups of skilled and unskilled volunteers and homeowner families in construction activities all while maintaining a safe, efficient work environment. Using volunteer management techniques, you will manage volunteers and homeowner families as they assist in the building of new homes and/or repairing existing homes or completing weatherization projects. Together, you will perform hands-on construction tasks including, but not limited to, demolition, framing, insulation, drywall, flooring, roofing, finish carpentry, and landscaping.

FQS (FEMA Qualification System) Position Description: Individual Assistance (IA)

The trainee assists in responding to individual applicant case inquiries and providing information on Individual Assistance (IA) programs to individuals and families applying for disaster assistance. The trainee assists in providing information on Disaster Recovery Centers and community relations outreach, and assists in responding to congressional inquiries. This position may be located at the Joint Field Office, a fixed or mobile Disaster Recovery Center, shelter, call center, or other disaster field office.

RESUME BULLETS

- Train and lead a dozen volunteers in home construction every week
- Instruct volunteers daily and implement standards to comply with Occupational Safety and Health Administration guidelines on each work site
- Serve 38 families annually through home construction and repairs
- Responded to federally declared disaster in South Carolina and registered more than 70 individuals for disaster relief assistance
- Replied to 18 benefits inquiries and educated applicants on the appeal process
- Authored a directory of 40 voluntary agencies providing disaster recovery resources

POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

Volunteer Assignment Description (VAD)

Outreach Coordinator:

1. Identify trends in community gardens nationwide through research.
2. Visit community garden projects in the region to gain better understanding of their goals and objectives.
3. Create partnerships with other non-profit agencies who specialize in this area.
4. Research best practices on outdoor learning information into a toolkit for future projects.
5. Engage and educate local farm community and seek involvement.
6. Engage with Halls Cross Roads Elementary School on project involvement.

RESUME BULLETS

- Informed agency's strategic plan and provided recommendations to leadership.
- Established a social media presence on Facebook and Twitter for the Community Coalition for Healthy Food.
- Planned, tracked, and supervised the activities of more than 100 volunteers for community gardening days.

Michael Thompson

Contact Information

✉ mike1234@gmail.com

☎ 603-333-1234

🌐 [LinkedIn.com/in/miket](https://www.linkedin.com/in/miket)

📍 Concord, NH

Skills Summary

- Web Development
- Written & Verbal Communication
- Volunteer Management
- Peer Teaching/Mentoring
- Salesforce, MailChimp, Hootsuite
- Microsoft Suite

Education

University of New Hampshire May 2017

Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)
Communication: Business Applications

Academic Honors:

- University Honors Program
- Summa cum laude (GPA 3.93)
- Dean's List (all semesters)
- Wilburn Sims Award (2016)
- Tad Ackman Scholarship (2015)

Professional Development

*New Hampshire Association for
Volunteer Administrators*
Public Relations Committee Member
October 2017 – Present

Governor's Conference on Volunteerism
May 2017

VISTA Course: Volunteer Mobilization
September 2018 – November 2018

Professional Profile

Resourceful and dedicated communications professional with experience working with developmentally disabled populations within civically responsible organizations. Proficient in donor and volunteer management. Proactive problem solver.

Work & Volunteer Experience

AmeriCorps VISTA Outreach Coordinator

NH Council on Developmental Disabilities / June 2017 – Present
AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) members commit to serve 12 months working to advance local solutions, while building valuable nonprofit management and community development skills.

- Manage communications to donors and volunteers through email marketing, website updates, and social media.
- Formalize volunteer program by updating all outreach materials.
- Develop curriculum and provide training for 75 volunteers and 2 staff with developmental disabilities.
- Conduct donor research using Salesforce to help fund future Council initiatives.
- Create and edit flyers/brochures for educational and promotional purposes.

Website Editor

Village Ski & Snowboard / December 2016 – June 2017

- Edit copy and improve overall usability on website.
- Increase daily web traffic by 30%.

Web Content Specialist

University of New Hampshire / August 2016 – December 2016

- Converted all UNH webpages in Drupal resulting in a highly streamlined, user-friendly, and consistent design.

Honors Peer Mentor

University of New Hampshire / August 2015 – December 2015

- Assisted 340 first year students in the UNH Honors Program in transitioning to college life.
- Provided resources specific to their academic needs.
- Informed students of services available at UNH.

RESUME SAMPLE #2

Sabrina H. Martinez

123 Street, Springfield, IL 12345 | SHMartinez@gmail.com | 545.123.4567 | [Linkedin.com/in/SHMart16](https://www.linkedin.com/in/SHMart16)

Professional Experience

AmeriCorps Individual Assistance Specialist August 2020 – Present

AmeriCorps NCCC – Vicksburg, MS

- Responded to federally declared disaster in South Carolina and registered over 70 individuals for disaster relief assistance
- Replied to 18 benefits inquiries and educated applicants on the appeal process
- Authored a directory of 40 voluntary agencies providing disaster recovery resources
- Coordinated and supported one shelter management training for Red Cross volunteers

Sales Associate

May 2017 – August 2020

H&M – Chicago, IL

- Provided excellent customer service to over 3,200 guests over the course of 3 months
- Demonstrated time management and organizational skills by processing and displaying inventory

Marketing/Public Affairs Intern

May 2016 – August 2016

American Red Cross – Madison, WI

- Solicited in-kind and cash donations from over 50 local businesses in Dane County
- Wrote and edited articles for bi-weekly newsletter distributed to 1,000 individuals

Education

University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI

May 2017

Bachelor of Arts, Communication Studies

School for International Training, Buenos Aires, Argentina

February – June 2016

Community Leadership

Orientation Lead, University of Wisconsin – Madison Student Life

August 2016 – December 2016

- Recruited, hired, and trained over 300 peers to be small group facilitators and resources for 1,000 new students and their families

Construction Volunteer Coordinator, Habitat for Humanity Springfield

June – August 2016

- Instructed 10 teams of volunteers on roof maintenance and weatherization

Specialized Skills

Proficient in Adobe CreativeSuite, Social Media Management – familiar with Hootsuite, Facebook and Google Analytics, Proficient in Spanish, CPR certified

COVER LETTERS

Always submit a cover letter. You can create a general template and tailor it for each job that you are applying to. Save your cover letter as a PDF and submit it along with your resume.

Your cover letter should elaborate on how you meet the job qualifications, not repeat your resume bullets. Keep in mind that a cover letter serves as a writing sample to the employer and provides another way for you to stand out among other applicants.

Top 5 Essentials for Cover Letters

1. Address it to the person doing the hiring (if you're uncertain, reach out to the organization for the point of contact or use "Dear Hiring Manager:").
2. Keep it brief (one page) and upbeat.
3. Demonstrate to the employer how your skills and experience can help meet the organization's needs.
4. Reiterate your knowledge about the organization and the industry.
5. No typos!

Basic Cover Letter

Dear Hiring Manager:

INTRO - Start with an attention statement. This is your opportunity to tell the employer how you heard of the position and/or mention a personal connection you have with the organization.

BODY - This paragraph should demonstrate two things: 1) Why you are a good fit for the job, and 2) why you want to work for this specific employer. Bullet points make for an easy read!

WOW FACTOR - Demonstrate what you know about the employer; their mission, recent achievements, etc., and link that knowledge to your own skills and achievements relevant to doing the job.

CONCLUSION - Restate why you're a good fit and mention any additional relevant information such as your Non-Competitive Eligibility status. You can also transition by stating: "I look forward to hearing from you" along with including your contact information.

SIGN-OFF - Simple and formal ending.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Parker

123.456.7890

Basic Cover Letter

INSERT DATE

INSERT NAME

INSERT ADDRESS

Dear Hiring Manager:

I recently learned about the Environmental Educator position at Wildlife Now while volunteering with one of your community partners, Environment 101. I am excited to submit my resume as I believe my skills and experiences match well with your organization's needs and overall mission. In my current role as an AmeriCorps member, I research and implement projects to tackle environmental crises within the Central Valley Region. During the past year, I have done this in a variety of ways:

- Created and posted content for one website, five handouts and 12 email marketing campaigns
- Worked in a team to bring two cities in compliance with solar permitting ordered by state law
- Organized 13 community events where I presented information on energy efficiency

My experience is well suited to your goal of increasing overall awareness in the community about the important work of Wildlife Now. In addition, I've worked in event planning for three years. I've attached my resume for your review. I would welcome the opportunity to join the dedicated staff at Wildlife Now.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Darius

Darius Adams

123.456.7890

[Linkdin.com/in/dadams](https://www.linkedin.com/in/dadams)



Tip: Add a personal touch. A handwritten signature adds a nice touch. You can do this digitally by signing a blank piece of paper and scanning into your computer. Or you can download a scanner app on your smartphone to create an electronic signature.



INTERVIEWING SKILLS

Think about the interview process in terms of before, during, and after the appointment. There are certain steps you want to take to prepare yourself for each phase of the interview process.

BEFORE

Research the employer from the inside:

- Read the organization's website thoroughly. If you're applying for a job in a specific department, research that department's subpage.
- What can you learn about their mission and culture?
- What can you learn about their current priorities or initiatives?

Research the employer from the outside:

- Google the company's name and see what you find. Is it good news, bad news, have they been featured locally/nationally/internationally? If so, what for?
- What are the trends in this industry?
- Is the organization financially viable? Is the company reputable? Use online resources such as **Guidestar.org** and the **Better Business Bureau** to find out.

Find out who you know:

Use your online and in-person networks to find out if you know someone who works there. LinkedIn is a great tool for this task, as you can learn how many degrees of separation you have from someone. If you do have a connection, reach out and let the person know you have an interview. Try to get any insights into the mission and culture of the organization.

Find out who will conduct the interview and research them. How long have they been at the organization? What is their previous work experience? Where did they go to school? Are they members of any organizations that you are also a member of? Do they have similar interests? Use this information as a conversational tool and to better inform your questions.

Prepare Your Questions (both questions you will be asked and questions you want to ask):

- Google "common interview questions."
- When the interviewer asks if you have any questions, your answer should be "yes." Prepare 3-5 **thoughtful questions** to ask the employer during your interview.
- Re-read the job announcement and have examples ready to demonstrate you have the experience required to do the job.
- Be prepared to offer responses for specific scenarios as this is a common interview technique. For example, you have just been asked to complete three different assignments that have the same deadline. How do you prioritize your tasks? **OR** Tell me about a time when you disagreed with a colleague and had to come to a resolution.

The reason employers ask these questions is because they want insight into your thought process. Do you crack under pressure or can you handle multiple deadlines? They want to know how you will handle yourself. Past behavior is a strong predictor of future behavior.

Prepare a succinct description of your service experience accomplishments, and focus on the outcomes. Example:

My role at Volunteer Houston was to recruit volunteers and agencies to use our Volunteer Connection Platform to stay engaged. I conducted an analysis of how we could improve the Platform's performance, and over the course of my VISTA term, we revamped our website, launched a Google AdWords campaign, and became the first Volunteer Center in the country to develop a mobile app for finding volunteer opportunities. I'm proud to say we increased our registrations by over 50%.



Tip: Take the position description, copy it into a Word document, and write out examples of your experience underneath each of the qualifications from the job announcement.

For in-person interviews:

- Plan your route ahead of time and arrive early.
- Use a firm handshake.
- Don't text, chew gum, or wear strong perfumes/cologne.
- Put your mobile phone on "do not disturb."

For phone or video conferencing interviews:

- Test your setup.
- Make sure you have good lighting and quiet space.
- Test your audio connection.
- Keep your computer or phone plugged into a charger.
- Practice with a friend.
- For reference, keep notes and a pen close by but out of the camera's view.
- Don't forget to dress as though you are attending the interview in person, especially if you're going to be in front of a video camera.



Tip: If you're in the early stage of your career, make sure to prepare examples from different experiences and not just your time as an AmeriCorps member, even if that experience is from other volunteer work, short-term jobs, or school. No one wants to hear, "And when I was an AmeriCorps member. . ." over and over again.

DURING

- Anytime you can insert yourself into the role when answering a question, do so. That way, the employer actually envisions YOU in the role. For example, "Can you tell me a little bit more about the position and what I might be doing on a daily basis?"
- Let them know how much you've researched the company through the questions you ask, "I noticed in your company is going through some changes. What new opportunities do you expect for someone in this position to take on as you reorganize?"
- Articulate to the interviewer why you are the right fit for the job and how AmeriCorps alums make great employees.

When answering the question, "Why should I hire you?" remember that serving as an AmeriCorps member instills certain attributes that are highly valued by employers. What you learn through serving for one year with AmeriCorps is invaluable. Employees in entry level positions are rarely given the amount of responsibility that comes with being an AmeriCorps member. Do not underestimate what you have gained through your service experience.

There are certain questions that are illegal or improper for employers to ask. Know what they are. Employers should not ask you questions related to the following topics:

- Age
- Race, ethnicity, or color
- Gender or sex
- Country of national origin or birth place
- Religion
- Sexual orientation or preference
- Gender identity or expression
- Disability
- Marital or family status or pregnancy
- In some states and localities, it is also illegal to ask about previous salary. Consider researching this ahead of time based on location.

If you are asked any of these questions during an interview, you can opt to end the interview or decline to answer the question. *The Balance* has guidance on how to handle illegal or inappropriate interview questions.



Tip: Be sensitive to the length of time scheduled for your interview. If it is your turn to ask questions and it is past or almost past the allotted interview time, acknowledge to your interviewer that you are aware of the time. For example, "I realize that we only have a minute left, but I do have one more question."

AFTER

Follow-up:

- Always send a thank you email within 24 hours.
- Keep it short and simple: acknowledge the individual(s) you interviewed with, reiterate something you like about the company, remind the employer of your unique skills and experiences.
- If you haven't heard back from the employer, don't be afraid to follow-up 2-3 weeks after your interview.

Thank You Letter/E-mail

Dear Mr. Patel:

Thank you for the opportunity to interview with you and your team yesterday afternoon.

One of my favorite things about the Central Homeless Shelter is the commitment of your staff to its mission. The innovative partnerships you are creating are clearly making a difference in providing safe and affordable housing to our community's veteran population.

I would welcome the chance to bring my five years of experience as a graphic designer and my passion for ending veteran homelessness to your organization.

I look forward to hearing from you.

All the best,
Calvin

Calvin Hobbes
202.222.3333
chobbes@zmail.com

CONSIDER A CAREER IN STATE OR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Your time in service can teach community outreach skills, data analysis, or give insight into city or state needs. Whether you served in a new community and want to continue your investment into the neighborhoods you served or if you plan to bring your passion back home, your experience with problem-solving and public service lends itself well to a career in local or state government.

Many of the same tools and strategies you use for landing other jobs apply to finding your place in local or state government. It's about knowing the qualifications, doing your research, and networking. Ultimately, government employment is about being in service to the public so be sure to emphasize your AmeriCorps experience.

- **Join a network:** Organizations like Engaging Local Government Leaders (ELGL) provide a space for government employees to learn from one another and build a community. They organize dinner meet-ups, host a podcast on business practices and provide mentorship to new government leaders. Other options include the National League of Cities and the International City/County Management Association.
- **Use job search engines:** Utilize job boards geared towards community government such as PublicServiceCareers.org or the Engaging Local Government Leaders website. Also, don't forget to look for government jobs in your area using Employers of National Service.
- **Focus on the big picture:** Government employment offers great opportunities to grow and exceptional benefits. You may not meet the all the requirements for that data analyst job you're striving for but maybe you are ready for another position in that same department.



Tip: Stay current on the issues and needs of the state or local community you wish to work in. Be sure to showcase this knowledge in your interview!

FEDERAL TRACK

As a national service participant, you are a great candidate for the federal workforce. If you're interested in working for the federal government, you will need to submit an application through USAJobs.gov, which usually requires a federal resume.

Differences between Traditional and Federal Resumes

	TRADITIONAL	FEDERAL
LENGTH	1-2 pages	Multiple pages
DATES LISTED	Optional to include month	Must include month AND year
# OF HOURS WORKED	Not included	Must include how many hours/per week for each position
SALARY	Highly recommended to NOT include	Optional, include grade level if you have previously worked for the government
SUPERVISOR	Not included	Must include name and contact information for current and former supervisors (have option for person not to be contacted).

One strategy for creating a successful federal resume is to use the "Resume Builder" tool on USAJobs. First, you must create a profile and then you can opt to "upload or build resume." Whether you use the resume you've built on this site or simply use it as a guide, this will ensure you do not leave out any required information (for example, month and year must be included in order to calculate amount of time worked at each position).

Here are key resources to help applicants build resumes and navigate the overall federal hiring process:

- **Go Government** – One-stop shop for how to find and apply for federal government jobs created by the Partnership for Public Service.
- **GovLoop** – An online community connecting people working for and pursuing careers in government.



Tip: When applying to a federal job, be sure to review the "specialized experience" required as well as the position questionnaire. Then, tailor your resume and cover letter to demonstrate how your experience matches the position qualifications.

FEDERAL RESUME SAMPLE

SABRINA H. MARTINEZ

111 President Drive
Washington DC 20005 US
Mobile: 202 200 2222
Email: SH.Martinez@gmail.com

Country of Citizenship: United States of America
Veterans' Preference: No
Highest Grade: GS-02-07, 06/2019-08/2020

Availability: Job Type: Permanent, Temporary, Recent Graduates
Work Schedule: Full Time

Desired Locations: US-DC-Washington/Metro
US-VA-Arlington
US-VA-Alexandria

Work Experience: **Department of State (Educational and Cultural Affairs)** Washington, DC US **9/2019–8/2020**
Grade Level: GS 07
Hours per week: 40
Public Affairs Assistant
Supervisor: John Smith (XXX-222-2222)
Okay to contact this Supervisor: Yes

- Supervised ten contractors on communications, ensured project was delivered on time and budget
- Contacted and pitched media for program publicity resulting in four newspaper articles and two interviews
- Researched public affairs best practices in private sector and government, resulting in five adopted measures that improved agency performance
- Facilitated biweekly team meetings and conducted monthly diversity training presentations for 20 to 30 internal staff members
- Participated in team brainstorm sessions to analyze organizational problems and improve efficiency

Department of State (Educational and Cultural Affairs) Washington, DC US **9/2018–8/2019**
Grade Level: NA
Hours per week: 20

Intern
Supervisor: John Smith (XXX-222-2222)
Okay to contact this Supervisor: Yes

- Wrote 15 articles about foreign education initiatives in Bureau newsletter and press releases
- Drafted 20 memoranda for the Undersecretary of State
- Assembled financial and budget information for use in Educational and Cultural Affairs internal materials
- Assisted with administrative tasks such as filing documents and organizing meeting logistics

The General Schedule (GS) is the predominant pay scale for federal employees.

Don't forget to include past salary or GS Level.

Include the number of hours worked per week.

Great way to highlight subject area expertise.

Note: do not use abbreviations, write out Educational and Cultural Affairs not ECA

FEDERAL RESUME SAMPLE

U.S. Consulate (Department of State)
Madrid, Spain

6/2017–8/2018
Grade Level: NA
Hours per week: 45

Political and Economic Section Intern

Supervisor: Jane Doe (XXX-111-1111)

Okay to contact this Supervisor: Yes

- Researched and wrote five regional economic and political briefs for US Ambassador’s Madrid consulate district visits
- Collaborated with 15 professionals in regional chambers of commerce, banks’ nongovernmental organizations, and government offices to compile briefs enabling a shared understanding of material
- Synthesized information from external research and interviews
- Provided administrative support through sorting mail, filing documents, and answering multi-line phone system
- Utilized Spanish language skills and political and cultural knowledge in a variety of settings

ABC Afterschool Program
Philadelphia PA US

9/2016–4/2017
Salary: 15 USD per Hour
Hours per week: 40

Program Coordinator

Supervisor: John Doe (XXX-000-0000)

Okay to contact this Supervisor: Yes

- Developed and monitored program goals and policies resulting in the highest recorded performance in ten years
- Oversaw three mentoring programs in limited resource communities to promote a safe and healthy youth development
- Recruited, trained, and managed 25 adult mentors and 20 youth
- Developed marketing and training materials for use in programs and mentoring initiatives
- Wrote and managed two program grants, hired three outside contractors for grant implementation
- Coordinated weekly ten-minute presentations on mentoring initiatives
- Communicated daily in Spanish with program participants and their families

Education:

B.A., (May 2016), Marble House College, Philadelphia, PA 19019 US

35 Semester Hours

GPA: 3.50 out of 4.0

Major: Economics, Spanish Language (double major)

Relevant Coursework, Licenses and Certifications:

Macro Economics, Micro Economics, Statistics, Public Policy Process

Language Skills:

English

Spoken: Advanced

Written: Advanced

Read: Advanced

Spanish

Spoken: Advanced

Written: Advanced

Read: Advanced

Federal Resumes require you to include # of semester hours to ensure eligibility.

FEDERAL RESUME SAMPLE

Affiliations: National Spanish American Member (2018 – present)
Foundation

References: Name: George Washington
Employer: Marble House University
Title: Professor, Spanish Language
Phone Number: XXX-333-3333
Email Address: g washington@pastpresidents.org
Reference Type: Personal

Name: James Madison
Employer: Department of State
Title: Director of Foreign Affairs
Phone Number: XXX-444-4444
Email Address: jmadison@pastpresidents.org
Reference Type: Professional

Additional Information:

Skills:

- Grant writing experience (awarded “Dream Catchers Award” by Community and Recreation Services, Delaware County Government, Dec. 2018)
- Regional expertise in Balkan, Post-Soviet, and Western European political issues (including extensive regional travel)
- Proficient in Microsoft Office programs (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook)

Class Projects

Western European Economy: Then and Now, April 2015

- Completed a 75 page capstone paper including in-depth economic analysis of past and present financial concerns of Western Europe
- Conducted research on historical implications of changes in economic wealth in Western Europe
- Presented research in a twenty-slide PowerPoint to 50 students and ten staff in the economics department

Leadership and Service Roles:

Tri-College Institute, **Diversity Workshop Facilitator**, Oct. 2015-May 2016

- Developed twelve forums for dialogue between diverse student groups
- Built five partnerships between student groups through cultural programming

Marble House Business Society, **President**, Sept. 2014-May 2015

- Recruited four executive committee members, planned meetings
- Managed a membership base of 40+ students
- Organized club involvement in business related workshops/events

Tucker Recreation Association, **Basketball Coach**, Nov. 2014-Feb. 2015

- Taught twelve, ten-year-old boys the fundamentals of basketball, sports ethics, and mental focus
- Coordinated travel logistics for away competitions

Habitat for Humanity, **Volunteer**, New Orleans, LA, M

- Contributed to rebuilding a home in St. Bernard Parish, New Orleans

Use this section to highlight relevant class projects, volunteer work, and other leadership roles that may not be on your private sector resume.

Be specific in the programs you are proficient in.

FEDERAL RESUME SAMPLE

Other Roles at Marble House College:

War News Radio, **Weekend Co-Host**, Aug. 2018-May 2019

- Recruited executive committee members, planned meetings
- Managed a membership base of 40+ students

Spanish Department, **Representative**, Sept. 2017-May 2018

- Represented 100+ students at language department meetings
- Partnered with a local high school to plan and execute an hour-long Spanish song and dance course of 30 students

WRITING YOUR AMERICORPS SERVICE IN A FEDERAL RESUME SAMPLE

Here is an example of a master resume listing for an AmeriCorps term of service. When completing your resume, you can pull the most relevant bullet points from your master resume, based on the specific job role.

JACOB PRICE
111 President Drive
Washington DC, 20005
Mobile: 202 200 2222
Email: jacob.price@email.com

AmeriCorps VISTA Leader

Champlain College
123 South Street, Burlington, VT 05402
Supervisor: XX (123-456-7890), may contact

08/2016–08/2017
40 Hours per Week
Salary: \$1,018 per Month

Duties and Responsibilities

Outreach and Recruitment

- Served as primary liaison between Champlain College and the Sustainability Academy at Lawrence Barnes; worked with college and school administration, teachers, PTA, and other stakeholders.
- Contacted community organizations, helped them develop projects for America Reads participants, and matched college students with appropriate placements.
- Recruited applicants for America Reads, using a variety of outreach techniques including tabling, job fairs, and classroom presentations.

Program Management and Administration

- Provided on-boarding training to AmeriCorps members about policies and procedures, tracking hours, and reported hours and grant deliverables to the Vermont Campus Compact program administrator.
- Recorded and verified America Reads work-study hours and reported them to the campus work study administrator.

Meeting and Travel Coordination

- Arranged travel, meals, transportation, and hotels for staff and students participating in service trips.
- Coordinated logistics for student volunteer activities, including scheduling meeting rooms, arranging transportation, and procuring supplies.

Leadership and Supervision

- Provided day-to-day supervision of mentors in the AIM mentoring partnership, including providing students with feedback and areas for improvement, resolving conflict between mentors and school administration, and providing official performance evaluation when required.

Training and Professional Development

- Developed and presented trainings on tutoring English Language Learner students.

Key Accomplishments

- Developed and managed lunch/recess time mentoring partnership between Champlain College and the Sustainability Academy at Lawrence Barnes, resulting in 10 mentors providing over 275 mentoring hours in 19/20 academic year.
- Recruited and placed more than 20 college students in six community institutions through the America Reads program, which provides tutoring to academically at-risk children.
- Conducted research project with campus staff on the motivations for volunteering among Champlain students, including designing and distributing a survey. Performed quantitative and qualitative analysis on survey results, which informed 2020 Strategic Plan and campus marketing campaign for the Center for Service and Civic Engagement. The research was presented at the New England Campus Compact Regional Conference and published in *The Journal of the First Year Experience and Students in Transition*.



Serve Again

Serving more than one term with AmeriCorps comes with perks.

1. You can do a lot more with TWO education awards (Note: The limit is two full education awards. In order to receive an additional benefit during a third term, you would need to serve in a VISTA program and opt for the cash stipend).
2. Consider becoming a leader. Many programs have specific leadership roles. You know what the member experience is like, which puts you in a great position to lead others. This is a unique opportunity to gain supervisory experience that you normally wouldn't attain without climbing the ladder at an organization. Check out all the options by searching MyAmeriCorps.gov for a NCCC Team Leader, VISTA Leader, or State and National position by filtering for those that list leadership as a requested skill.
3. Expand on the work that you've already started and continue to deepen your ties to the community.
4. Apply to serve in another location and extend your service adventure!

Additional Service Options:

1. Consider serving in another AmeriCorps program (NCCC, State and National, VISTA)
2. Interested in international service? Check out the Peace Corps and/or Peace Corps Response (3-12 month, high impact international assignments).
3. Use your leadership, determination and sense of duty to serve your country in one of the military's five armed service branches.

Individuals can serve up to the following number of terms for each program (the amount of time per term for each program varies):

- **AmeriCorps VISTA** – Five years total, usually five terms
- **AmeriCorps State and National** – Four terms
- **AmeriCorps NCCC** – No term limit but no more than two consecutive terms


APPENDIX A: HOW TO ACCESS YOUR VERIFICATION OF SERVICE LETTER

You will have access to your Verification of Service letter after you complete your service term. This letter provides proof of your dates of service and non-competitive eligibility (NCE) status, if applicable. Include this letter when applying to federal positions and meeting with potential federal employers.

1. Go to **My.AmeriCorps.gov**.
2. Enter your username and password.
3. Click on "My Service Letter" from the left-hand column.
4. Select the appropriate "Service Term" from the first drop down menu.
5. Select "Verification of Service" from "Letter Type" drop down.
6. Enter recipient or leave blank
7. Print or save as a PDF

If you have any difficulties accessing your letter, contact the National Service Hotline, 800-942-2677.

Corporation for National and Community Service
NationalService.gov



To Whom It May Concern:

This is to verify that the following individual served full time as an AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteer In Service To America) for the term of service indicated below:

Name:
*Dates of Service:
**Stipend or "deemed" value of Education Award: \$/per month

AmeriCorps VISTA, a program of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), places individuals in nonprofit organizations and public agencies to support efforts to alleviate poverty. Since 1965, more than 200,000 VISTAs have served low-income communities in every state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.

While AmeriCorps VISTAs are authorized, trained and supported throughout their service by the VISTA program and CNCS, the sponsoring organization operates the service project. Should you wish to gather information about the VISTA's service activities or performance, you should contact the sponsoring organization directly.


INFORMATION FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYERS

Federal Employment Non-Competitive Eligibility (NCE):
VISTAs who successfully complete a year of service have noncompetitive eligibility for federal hire for a period of one year after completion of the VISTA's service (dates listed above). This is in accordance with Executive Order No. 11105 as applied to service under Title I of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act (DVSA) of 1973, or under Title VIII of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. See 42 U.S.C. § 5055(d); 45 C.F.R. § 2556.340. An employing agency may extend the period for two more years to a total of three years if the former VISTA, after the qualifying service, is in the military service or studying at a recognized institution of higher learning, or is engaged in another activity which, in the opinion of the appointing authority, warrants an extension.


Federal SCDs for Leave, RIF and Retirement:
Having enrolled on or after October 1, 1975 for an enrollment period of at least one year under Title I of the DVSA, the former VISTA should receive credit for the purpose of computing federal Service Computation Dates (SCD). See 42 U.S.C. § 5055(c). VISTA service shall not be credited toward completion of any probationary or trial period. This service is creditable to SCD for Leave and SCD for Reduction in Force (RIF) upon hire. This service is also potentially creditable for CSRS/FERS retirement under the same conditions that apply to a creditable period or periods of non-deduction service. Both CSRS and FERS employees may make a service credit deposit for VISTA service. (Federal HR - see CSRS and FERS Handbook Ch. 20 Section 20A 2.1-2)

*Indicates period of service which is creditable for SCD for Leave and SCD for RIF, and potentially creditable for CSRS/FERS retirement.
**Indicates payment to be used for computation of civilian service credit deposit.

If this office can be of further assistance, please contact us at 800-942-2677 or VISTAverify@cncs.gov.

Sincerely,

Eileen Conoboy
Acting Director, AmeriCorps VISTA

250 E Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20525
202-606-8000 | 800-942-2677 | TTY 800-833-3722





APPENDIX B:

Guidance specific to AmeriCorps VISTA

Understanding Your Non-Competitive Eligibility (NCE) Benefit

As a national service participant, you are a great candidate to work for the federal government. Not only can your **Non-Competitive Eligibility (NCE)** benefit help you get hired more quickly and with less hassle, but once you're in the job, your time serving as a VISTA member may count toward leave accrual (= more vacation days, sooner!) and retirement. Read below to access resources to help you navigate the federal hiring process and fully understand your NCE benefit.

Once you've successfully completed service, you will receive one year of Non-Competitive Eligibility (NCE) for employment in the federal government.

This special hiring path enables you to apply for federal jobs with the advantage of not having to go through the standard public competitive selection process. That means that you can be appointed to federal positions that may or may not be available to the general public. In addition, your application could be processed faster than others.

NCE does not guarantee you a federal job, but it does make it easier for federal hiring managers to bring you on board. NCE is good for one year after close of service, but there are specific reasons it can be extended for an additional two years – for a total of three years post-service. Please note that the hiring agency—not the Corporation for National and Community Service—makes this determination.

Reasons for extension:

Federal agencies may extend your NCE status if, after you have completed service, you are:

1. Serving in the Military or Peace Corps
2. Studying at a recognized institution of higher learning
3. Engaged in another activity which, in the agency's hiring view, warrants extension*

**This could be a paid or unpaid position that helped you gain skills and experiences required for the job for which you are applying.*



GUIDANCE SPECIFIC TO AMERICORPS VISTA

To make sure your Non-Competitive Eligibility (NCE) status stands out, insert a sentence in your cover letter and on your resume to better ensure the federal hiring manager knows s/he can onboard you using this unique hiring path.

North Dakota Social Services

Dept. 2020 PO Box 1234

Fargo, ND 58108

04/2016 - 04/2017

Hours per week: 40

AmeriCorps VISTA

Duties, Accomplishments and Related Skills:

Qualified for Non-Competitive Eligibility (NCE), having successfully served as an AmeriCorps VISTA member. Active NCE from April 17, 2017 – April 17, 2018.

- Co-wrote 14 grant applications, resulting in \$130,750 raised
- Established master grants tracking list, the first records management system for the organization
- Implemented application plan and process to standardize VISTA site recruitment procedures

LinkedIn Note

Make yourself searchable for federal employers. If you are interested in federal employment, make sure to include in your description the following phrase: "Current Non-Competitive Eligibility (NCE) status for federal employment, valid through (INSERT DATE ONE YEAR FROM END OF SERVICE MONTH/YEAR)." That way, if federal employers do a search on LinkedIn for NCE, your name will come up!



Tip: You may have to educate federal hiring managers about how they can use NCE to hire you. See the USAJobs homepage under "Explore Hiring Paths" and click on "**Peace Corps/VISTA Alumni.**" Share this link with employers.

GUIDANCE SPECIFIC TO AMERICORPS VISTA

Counting Service toward Federal Leave and Retirement

AmeriCorps VISTA Alumni can count their service year(s) toward vacation accrual and retirement once employed with the federal government. VISTA alumni may make a FERS (Federal Employee Retirement System) service credit deposit payment for any period of VISTA service (excluding training time), regardless of when the service was performed. Paying the service credit deposit will make this volunteer time creditable toward federal retirement. VISTA alumni who become federal employees must contact the Human Resources/Benefits personnel at their federal agency to initiate the deposit process and to make sure they are accruing vacation at the appropriate rate. Learn more about applying VISTA service towards federal benefits/retirement at the OPM website.

To apply your VISTA service toward federal retirement, complete the following steps:

1. Obtain a copy of your VISTA Verification of Service letter through your My.AmeriCorps.gov account.
2. Provide the letter to your employer's Office of Human Capital/Human Resources, and be sure to advise them that you would like to make a service credit deposit.
3. Your Human Capital representative will advise you concerning the submission of your VISTA letter, along with the appropriate form for Application to Make Service Credit Payment, and will submit it to the Office of Personnel Management.

Understanding your VISTA end-of-service benefit

At the start of your service as a VISTA member, you chose one of two end-of-service benefits: cash stipend or education award. If you initially chose the education award, you may change your election to the stipend any time before the end of your 10th month of service on My.AmeriCorps.gov under the "End of Service Benefit" section. If you initially chose the cash stipend, you may not change to the Education Award.

End-of-Service Stipend

(Only for those not choosing the AmeriCorps Education Award)

When?

This stipend is disbursed in the last two living allowance payments.

How much?

Member end-of-service stipend is currently valued at \$1,800 pre-tax.

Leader end-of-service stipend is currently valued at \$3,000 pre-tax.

What else?

You may be eligible for deferment of eligible student loans and payment of accrued interest on deferred loans by the U.S. Department of Education.

Need More Information?

Refer to the VISTA Member Handbook, chapter 6.

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Social media links

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/americorps/>, <https://www.facebook.com/AmeriCorpsNCCC>,
<https://www.facebook.com/AmeriCorpsVISTA>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/AmeriCorps>, <https://twitter.com/AmeriCorpsNCCC>,
<https://twitter.com/americorpsvista>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/americorps/>,
<https://www.linkedin.com/company/americorps-vista>

Create/share videos AND submit your story: <https://www.nationalservice.gov/share-your-story>

Recruitment presentation:

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/documents/2018/americorps-powerpoint-presentation>

Volunteer opportunities: NationalService.gov/Serve

AmeriCorps Alums: <http://www.americorpsalums.org>

CNCS LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/corporation-for-national-and-community-service/National>
service gear: <http://nationalservicegear.org>

AmeriCorps email: <http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/contact-us>

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LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/americorps/>

Webinars: <https://www.vistacampus.gov/vista-webinars>

National service job boards:

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/americorps/alumni/alumni-job-resources>

USAJobs.gov: <https://www.usajobs.gov>

AmeriCorps Alums: <http://www.americorpsalums.org>

Travel voucher (VISTA Member Handbook chapter 7):

<https://www.vistacampus.gov/chapter-7-travel-transportation-support-1>

My.AmeriCorps.gov: <https://My.AmeriCorps.gov>

Interest Accrual form: <https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/americorps/current-members/forms>

Stay involved: <https://www.nationalservice.gov/serve>

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Career One Stop: : <https://www.careeronestop.org/ExploreCareers/Assessments/self-assessments.aspx>

College search: <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/>

AmeriCorps program descriptions:

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/americorps/americorps-programs>

Federal careers: <https://gogovernment.org/career-guides/>

National Career Development Association: <https://www.ncda.org>

AmeriCorps.gov/Alumni: <https://www.americorps.gov/alumni>

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Education award site:

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/americorps/segal-american-education-award/use-your-education-award>

APPENDIX C: RESOURCE LINKS

Matching institutions:

[https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/american-corps/segal-american-corps-education-award/matching-institutions](https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/americorps/segal-american-corps-education-award/matching-institutions)

Qualified educational expenses:

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/american-corps/segal-american-corps-education-award/use-your-education-award>

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AmeriCorps Alums: <http://www.americorpsalums.org>

Employers of National Service: <https://www.nationalservice.gov/special-initiatives/employers-national-service>

Glass Door: <https://www.glassdoor.com>

Google for Jobs: <https://www.google.com> (enter "Google for Jobs")

GovLoop: <https://www.govloop.com/>

Go Government: <http://gogovernment.org>

Idealist: <https://www.idealists.org>

Indeed: <https://www.indeed.com>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com>

Peace Corps Career Link: <https://www.peacecorps.gov/returned-volunteers/careers/career-link>

The Muse: <https://www.themuse.com/jobs>

USAJobs.gov: <https://www.usajobs.gov>

VISTA Campus Job Board: <https://www.vistacampus.gov/jobs>

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AmeriCorps on LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/american-corps/>

LinkedIn headline:

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/williamarruda/2018/05/08/how-to-write-the-perfect-headline-for-your-linkedin-profile/#3bf056331e8a>

LinkedIn personal summary:

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/williamarruda/2017/07/09/how-to-write-a-stellar-linkedin-summary/#641c5443067a>

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GuideStar: <http://www.guidestar.org>

Better Business Bureau: <https://www.bbb.org>

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Thoughtful interview questions:

<https://www.thebalancecareers.com/questions-to-ask-in-a-job-interview-2061205>

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Inappropriate questions:

<https://www.thebalance.com/how-to-answer-inappropriate-interview-questions-2061334>

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Engaging Local Government Leaders: <https://elgl.org>

National League of Cities: <https://nlc.org>

International City/County Management Association: <https://icma.org>

Public Service Careers: <https://publicservicecareers.org>

Employers of National Service: <https://www.nationalservice.gov/special-initiatives/employers-national-service>

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Build federal resume: <https://www.usajobs.gov/?c=create-profile>

Go Government: <https://gogovernment.org>

GovLoop: <https://www.govloop.com/>

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Application tips: http://gogovernment.org/how_to_apply/index.php

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AmeriCorps State/National:

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/ Americorps/ Americorps-state-national/ become-member>

AmeriCorps NCCC: <https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/ Americorps/ Americorps-nccc/>

AmeriCorps VISTA:

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/ Americorps/ Americorps-programs/ Americorps-vista>

Peace Corps: <https://www.peacecorps.gov/apply>

Peace Corps Response:

<https://www.peacecorps.gov/volunteer/is-peace-corps-right-for-me/peace-corps-response>

U.S. Military: <https://www.defense.gov/ KnowYourMilitary/ Our-Forces/>

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Non-Competitive Eligibility (NCE): <https://www.vistacampus.gov/after-vista/career>

YouTube video regarding NCE: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g3nrdUXu4f4>

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Peace Corps/VISTA alumni:

<https://www.usajobs.gov/Help/working-in-government/unique-hiring-paths/peace-corps/>

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Office of Personnel Management: <https://www.opm.gov/retirement-services/fers-information/service-credit/>

VISTA member handbook: <https://www.vistacampus.gov/chapter-6-benefits-toward-education>

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE.



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