



Volunteer Iowa (Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service)

Quarterly Report:

April 1 – June 30, 2020

- **AmeriCorps:**
 - Volunteer Iowa has approved federal and state AmeriCorps funding that will leverage private and local match for a total of \$12.5 million in support of nearly 900 AmeriCorps State members for the 2020-2021 program year. These AmeriCorps members will be eligible to earn over \$2.9 million worth of Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards to use to advance their education or pay back qualified student loans. AmeriCorps State members have been involved in recent efforts to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. These grants provide funding to local organizations for AmeriCorps members to address public health and other critical community needs in the areas of education, disaster services, health, environmental stewardship, and economic opportunity.

Grantee Organization	Program Name	Total Grant Award
Bur Oak Land Trust	Bur Oak Land Trust AmeriCorps	\$308,679
City of Davenport	City of Davenport AmeriCorps & Youth Corps Program	\$1,000,247
City of Dubuque	AmeriCorps Partners in Learning	\$410,585
City of Dubuque	City of Dubuque Creating Opportunities AmeriCorps Program	\$169,046
College Possible	College Possible Iowa AmeriCorps	\$52,000
Conservation Corps of Minnesota and Iowa	Conservation Corps Iowa AmeriCorps	\$278,622
Ethnic Minorities of Burma Advocacy and Resource Center (EMBARC)	RefugeeRISE AmeriCorps	\$1,063,878
Graceland University AmeriCorps Youth Launch	AmeriCorps Youth Launch	\$334,051
Habitat for Humanity of Iowa, Inc.	Habitat for Humanity of Iowa AmeriCorps	\$750,544
Iowa Children's Museum	Summer Ladder AmeriCorps Program	\$61,106
Iowa College Student Aid Commission	Course to College - College Success AmeriCorps	\$365,971

Iowa College Student Aid Commission	Course to College - College Access AmeriCorps	\$331,012
Iowa Economic Development Authority	Iowa COVID-19 Recovery AmeriCorps	\$326,456
Iowa Legal Aid	Iowa Legal Aid AmeriCorps	\$342,802
Iowa State University	AmeriCorps Partnering to Protect Children	\$432,425
Iowa State University	Iowa AmeriCorps 4-H Outreach Program	\$897,075
Iowa State University	Iowa AmeriCorps Environmental Education Program	\$659,522
Iowa Western Community College	Campus Compact AmeriCorps Program	\$865,544
United Ways of Iowa	Iowa Reading Corps AmeriCorps Program	\$1,811,487
University of Northern Iowa	Green Iowa AmeriCorps	\$1,317,461
University of Northern Iowa	Land & Water Stewards AmeriCorps	\$282,150
Zach Johnson Foundation	Kids on Course AmeriCorps	\$433,425

- **Commission Business**

- Outgoing Commissioners: Volunteer Iowa held its commission meeting virtually on Tuesday, May 19. During the meeting, the commission bid farewell to three commissioners whose terms have expired. Cheri Doane, Traci Kirtley and Charlie Minnick have all made tremendous contributions to the commission during their terms of service, and they will be greatly missed.

- **Disaster Response:**

- Volunteer Iowa's COVID-19 Response: Volunteer Iowa has been deeply engaged in the COVID-19 response effort since Iowa had its first positive cases in March. With over 38% of Iowa volunteers being 55+ and the most common volunteer area for older volunteers being food collection and distribution, we focused our response on filling gaps left in those areas experiencing increased need. By reassigning and deploying AmeriCorps members, and coordinating with younger volunteer groups like FFA and 4H, we are working with organizations statewide to innovate ways volunteers can assist safely while the need is greatest.
 - Volunteer Iowa has provided assistance by:
 - 221 members reassigned*
 - 8,723 service hours accumulated
 - 14 AmeriCorps Iowa programs reporting response activities
 - 36 different service locations responded
 - Main area of support has been food response (food banks, food pantries, local school food grab & go locations)
 - Foodbank Deployment:
 - 19 AmeriCorps members from Conservation Corps of Iowa AmeriCorps and Habitat for Humanity of Iowa AmeriCorps

Mobile Response Team deployed to River Bend Foodbank and Northeast Iowa Foodbank

- 2,071 hours served
- 272,149 pounds of food collected or distributed
- Main activity has been sorting and boxing food for distribution for backpack programs, mobile food pantries, etc.

*Number includes 30 AmeriCorps NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps) members based in Vinton returning to serve at the Northeast Iowa Foodbank

- Volunteer Iowa is working with an additional 68 community organizations across the state to place VISTA and AmeriCorps state members in over 90 NEW full-time COVID-19 recovery related positions this summer and beyond, to support ongoing needs as a result of the impact of COVID-19.
- Feeding Iowans Taskforce: Volunteer Iowa supported Feeding Iowans Task Force Efforts on many fronts including many mentioned above with AmeriCorps support. In addition, Volunteer Iowa in partnership with Food Bank of Iowa, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Iowa State Extension launched a gleaning effort to better capture unused agricultural products for food banks. Programming will start this summer from 8 locations across Iowa.
- **Iowa Mentoring Partnership (IMP):**
 - The IMP supported youth mentoring programs and their 9000+ volunteer mentors in adapting to virtual meetings due to restrictions during the Covid-19 pandemic. Programs pivoted quickly to continue to provide supportive adult relationships for young people. Mentors and mentees connected virtually to provide much needed social connections during a time when social distancing created isolation for many.
 - **Future Ready Iowa Virtual Career Mentoring:** Orientations for both students and mentors were facilitated in April, after which initial matches were made. 37 Last-Dollar Scholarship recipients representing 14 different colleges throughout the state enrolled in the program during this period, with the majority pursuing degrees in healthcare (46%) or information technology (30%). The average age of mentees is 31 years. 38 mentors representing each region of the state enrolled in the program. Mentoring matches have been established in the fields of nursing, information technology, dental hygiene, business administration, manufacturing, agricultural science, veterinary tech, emergency medical services, and physical therapy. (Data does not include Future Ready Iowa Student Success Mentors or Text Mentoring).
- **Recognition**
 - **Iowa Volunteer Hall of Fame and Excellence in Mentoring Awards:** Postponed
 - **Give Back Iowa Challenge has been extended:** Due to the COVID-19 crisis and the impact social distancing has had on in person volunteering, the Give Back Iowa Challenge has been extended through June 30. We want to allow additional time for businesses to accrue volunteer hours towards the challenge, as we know it has been more difficult to encourage individuals to serve while also maintaining safe social distancing practices. “Volunteer needs are increasing statewide, at the same time our largest pool of volunteers – those 55+ - are needing to stay home to stay safe,” stated Adam Lounsbury, Executive Director of Volunteer Iowa. “This 30-day extension will allow employers to engage their employees in volunteer service at a time they are

- needed most.” Volunteer Iowa and the Give Back Iowa Challenge sponsors want to encourage all participating employers and employees to continue to be creative in the ways they are logging volunteer hours. For example, United Way of East Central Iowa created a [virtual volunteer engagement bingo card](#) that can be used for ideas or an internal volunteer competition. In addition, there are several resources and ideas for virtual, at home, and low risk opportunities that can be found [HERE](#).
- **Governor’s Volunteer Awards Postponed:** Due to the COVID-19 crisis, the 2020 Governor’s Volunteer Awards will be postponed. Volunteer Iowa asks that any Iowa nonprofits, charitable organizations, schools, non-state government entities and state government agencies who were planning to nominate an outstanding volunteer for an award this year will submit that individual for an award in 2021. “I have made the difficult decision to postpone the Governor’s Volunteer Awards for 2020,” said Governor Reynolds. “The health and safety of all Iowans is of utmost importance during this time. I know Iowans have been and will continue to help their neighbors and serve their communities through volunteerism, while following recommendations to mitigate community spread of the virus.” Volunteer Iowa will be considering options for recognizing volunteers who contributed to the COVID-19 response. Please follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for updates.
 - **RSVP:**
 - RSVP volunteers, who are 55+, stepped up and focused their volunteer efforts on safe ways to contribute to the COVID-19 response. RSVP COVID-19 response related activities:
 - Community gardening and produce gleaning from farmers market producers, which provides free produce to area food pantries
 - Writing pen pal letters to nursing home residents instead of students
 - Delivering mobile meals with no contact delivery/drop off at door for Meals on Wheels across the state
 - Sewing masks and gowns for organizations and hospitals across the state
 - County Emergency Management Call Center coverage or remote hotline work
 - **Service Enterprise**
 - The final sessions of the Service Enterprise Initiative cohort that began in Qtr 3 were completed virtually as a result of COVID-19. Organizations will receive coaching and support virtually as they work toward certification. Participating organizations included Meals from the Heartland, Blank Park Zoo, and the Young Women’s Resource Center.
 - The following organization received Service Enterprise re-certification, which is required every three years:
 - Volunteer Center of Cedar Valley
 - **Training**
 - Volunteer Iowa Innovation Exchange Training: In April, Commission staff hosted a virtual training session (due to COVID-19) for our programs titled Innovation Exchange: Impact of Equity and Inclusion in Volunteering The webinar was facilitated by Manisha Paudel, Equity Coordinator for the City of Des Moines.

- Volunteer Iowa continues to review and evaluate training options and make the move to offer more virtual sessions as a result of COVID-19.
 - In April, Volunteer Iowa hosted a training provided at no cost to nonprofits across the state on how to engage volunteers virtually and remotely to meet needs. In May a “train the trainer” was held for Volunteer Centers on the same topic to help them provide to support to local organizations on virtual volunteer engagement.
 - The Iowa Mentoring Partnership hosted a series of 5 webinars to guide programs moving to virtual programming during the pandemic.
- **Volunteer Generation Fund**
 - Currently in year three of a three-year grant; a new federal application for \$332,000 was submitted in May, and notification of award is expected in July.
 - A grant from Youth Service America was received for a partnership between Volunteer Iowa, the Iowa Mentoring Partnership, and the Iowa Afterschool Alliance to provide training and resources to support youth service and service learning. An AmeriCorps VISTA member has been recruited to help lead the project and will begin service in July.