



**Volunteer Iowa (Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service)
Quarterly Report:
January 1 – March 31, 2022**

AmeriCorps:

- AmeriCorps Week was March 13-19, 2022. AmeriCorps Week honors the valuable contributions of AmeriCorps members who pledge to “get things done” for Iowa and the nation as a whole. Volunteer Iowa celebrates the contributions and support of the hundreds of local partner organizations that make AmeriCorps Iowa programs possible. Over the past year, nearly 1,500 AmeriCorps and over 4,800 AmeriCorps Seniors members served at more than 800 locations across the state. AmeriCorps engages 250,000 Americans each year in sustained, results-driven service through our AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps Seniors programs. These dedicated citizens help communities impacted by COVID-19, ensure students stay on track to graduate, combat hunger and homelessness, respond to natural disasters, fight the opioid epidemic, help seniors live independently, support veterans and military families, and much more. Many stories and celebrations were shared on social media using #AmeriCorpsWeek.
- Volunteer Iowa launched an AmeriCorps State Member Leadership Council pilot program as part of its National Service Challenge initiatives. This opportunity brings together members from various AmeriCorps State programs to participate in networking, outreach, and professional development activities.
- Placed 7 new AmeriCorps VISTA Members in nonprofits across the state. Project focus areas include developing plans for disaster preparedness for Iowa seniors, supporting immigrant and refugee populations in eastern Iowa, and addressing critical mental health issues.

Commission Business:

- Volunteer Iowa Day at the Capitol was held on February 2, 2022. Program participants, board members and staff participated both in person and virtually. Volunteer Iowa programs, partners, and commissioners informed legislators about the impact of Volunteer Iowa programs in their communities.

Disaster Response:

- March Tornado Response: On March 5, 2022, an EF-4 tornado hit Iowa and caused 7 fatalities, according to preliminary reports. The supercell thunderstorm that produced the destructive tornado also produced damaging wind and hail events. According to the National Weather Service, this tornado was the first EF-4 tornado in Iowa since 2013 and was the second longest tornado path since 1980, with a path length of 69.5 miles. From the outset we understood that this was a significant event that would need the skills and capabilities that Volunteer Iowa would be able to provide. Working with Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management along with other community partners Volunteer Iowa assessed the situation and what resources were going to be needed. Allowing Emergency Management and First Responders to implement their plans, Volunteer Iowa’s first day on the ground in Madison County was March 7th. Working out of Madison County and partnering with Emergency Management, Volunteer Iowa assisted in

opening a MARC & VRC at the Madison County Fair Grounds; Jackson Building which funneled Hundreds of Volunteers looking to help. Volunteer Iowa along with its National Service Programs, provided support with Field Coordination & Leadership, Non-Governmental Organization Coordination, acted as a Local Community Liaison, Public Information Officer, and laid the groundwork for Long Term Recovery in the Madison County Community. The community response continues to be extraordinary. AmeriCorps have supported in multiple facets of the operations and continued to provide support with Damage Assessments, VRC Leadership and capacity support for the Madison County EMA. With systems in place and a transition plan given to what long term recovery team will be constructed, a physical step back will allow the community to continue to rally themselves. As all disasters start and end Local. Volunteer Iowa and Iowa Homeland Security will continue to support the efforts virtually but are ready if there is a dire need of support. Our own Disaster Program Officer Michael Rojas was featured on several news outlets including KCCI, and WHO13 for the work conducted in Madison County.

Iowa MENTOR, the Iowa Mentoring Partnership:

- **Youth Mentoring:**
 - National Mentoring Month: Along with MENTOR, the National Mentoring Partnership, over 70 local mentoring programs celebrated by recruiting new mentors and honoring current matches. 3,000 mentor recognition certificates from the governor were presented to honor mentors. The Governor signed a proclamation declaring Mentoring Month in Iowa.
 - EEP training: Iowa MENTOR staff provided a virtual training on Elements of Effective Practice of Mentoring in March. This was to ground newer mentoring practitioners in best practice.
- **Future Ready Iowa Mentoring:**

College Coach interactions with Last-Dollar Scholars (LDS) Recipients:

 - Text Message: Approximately, 8,728 current and prospective college students are active/participating in text message assistance from the Virtual College Coach Texting program
 - 5,772 are current Last-Dollar Scholars
 - 30,176 messages were sent to Last-Dollar Scholars
 - 4,094 messages were received from Last-Dollar Scholars
 - Emails/in person/phone: 3443 additional LDS Recipients have enrolled in FRI Career Mentoring during the 21-22 academic term. The number of eligible mentors increased to 74. An additional 180 professional development activities took place in the Chronus e-mentoring platform between January – March:
 - 97 additional messages were exchanged between matches
 - 42 video call meetings completed
 - 29 professional goals/tasks completed
 - 12 additional surveys were completed
 - 3 additional meetings took place in person, including Summit/Conference attendance

Volunteer Recognition:

- **50 Faces of Volunteerism:** Nominees have been added to our blog.
- **Iowa Volunteer Hall of Fame and Excellence in Mentoring Awards:** The 2022 Iowa Volunteer Award Ceremony will take place on April 21st at the Capitol. The award ceremony will induct 8 individuals and one group into the Hall of Fame, and two individuals will receive Excellence in Mentoring Awards. Profiles of this year's inductees, ceremony information, and photos are available on our website: <https://www.volunteeriowa.org/hof>

- ***Give Back Iowa Challenge:*** The Give Back Iowa Challenge will kick off on April 1 with an invite to employers to participate. Volunteer Iowa will provide recommendations for at home, virtual and low risk volunteer opportunities to registered businesses.
- ***Governor's Volunteer Awards:*** GVA nominations will close on April 22, with 5 regional ceremonies being planned for June and July.

Service Enterprise:

This research based, change management process trains organizations to effectively leverage the skills of volunteers to meet their mission.

- A new training cohort is being held in Sioux City with the following organizations: Siouxland Center for Active Generations, LaunchPAD Children's Museum, Unity Point Health St. Luke's, Girls Inc. of Sioux City, and Camp High Hopes. Central Iowa RSVP was recertified.

Training:

Volunteer Engagement Training Program: The first in a six-part series of volunteer engagement webinars was held at the end of March and will continue into May. Through a partnership with the Volunteer Centers of Iowa, the program makes consistent, high quality volunteer engagement training available statewide.

Volunteer Generation Fund:

Grant activities began on Jan 1, 2022, for year two of a three-year grant for the following organizations: Volunteer Siouxland, Volunteer Center of Cedar Valley, United Way of East Central Iowa, United Way of Wapello County, City of Dubuque, and North Iowa Area Community College.

Youth Service & Service-Learning:

Service-Learning Professional Development Training: For Martin Luther King Junior Day, Volunteer Iowa partnered with the Bondurant Community School District to provide district staff with training on launching service-learning in their classrooms. After the training was completed, staff participated in seven service projects for their community. The service projects addressed community needs in the realms of food insecurity, winter weather preparedness, plastic usage, mental health & wellbeing of students, animal care, and senior citizen isolation. After the projects were completed, staff were invigorated to incorporate service into their classes.

Building a Successful Family Volunteer Strategy Session: A training session on how to build a successful family volunteer strategy was held in February. This session provided nonprofits with best practices for involving families in their volunteer program and suggestions for overcoming barriers. Nonprofits were encouraged to take what they learned and launch their volunteer program for Global Youth Service Day at the end of April.