



## **Volunteer Iowa (Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service)**

### **Quarterly Report:**

**July 1 – September 30, 2022**

#### **AmeriCorps:**

The new AmeriCorps program year began in August. Across the 20 AmeriCorps state programs in Iowa, nearly 800 members will serve in organizations throughout the 2022-2023 program year. In addition to the 20 operational programs in Iowa, two planning grants started in late July. These planning grantees will be focused on redesigning their current AmeriCorps program to determine which program design and interventions will meet the changing needs of Iowa communities. The Request for Applications for competitive 2023-2024 AmeriCorps grants was released in September. This includes a specific Notice of Funding Opportunity for the Public Health AmeriCorps program.

#### **Commission Business:**

Angela Jiskoot was named Commission Chair, with Dan Cataldi as Vice Chair. Kevin Brown and Jamarco Clark were appointed to co-chair the Volunteer Engagement Committee. Greg Sutherland will continue to chair the Programs and Development Committee. Dan Cataldi will continue to lead the Grant Review Committee.

#### **Disaster Response:**

During the early morning of Tuesday, July 26th, 2022, a complex of thunderstorms set up roughly along the I-70 corridor in Missouri and I-64 corridor in Illinois. The state of Missouri requested support from the AmeriCorps Disaster Response Team (A-DRTs) and on September 13, FEMA requested Volunteer Iowa's Disaster Program officer to lead the operation as the Incident Commander, leading a three-state joint mission assignment to assist with flood recovery in MO. Volunteer Iowa's Disaster Program Officer and 10 Iowa AmeriCorps members joined 20 members from TX and MN in the late September deployment. All costs and staff time were fully reimbursed by FEMA. The deployment carried into quarter 2 and concluded on October 13. A full briefing will be included in the Q2 report.

#### **Iowa Mentoring Partnership (Iowa MENTOR):**

- ***Youth Mentoring:***
  - Closeout is being completed for the 2018 Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Grant which ended on September 30<sup>th</sup>.
  - Seven programs completed the National Quality Mentoring System self-assessment and quality for recertification.
  - MENTOR National staff provided free training to programs on the new Become a Better Mentor resource.
- ***Future Ready Iowa Mentoring Program:***
  - ***Virtual Career Mentoring***

- We have recently welcomed mentors from the following partners/employers: the US Army Corps of Engineers, Dwolla, EMC Insurance, UnityPoint Health, and PPI
- 159 Mentoring activities occurred through the Chronus e-mentoring platform (e.g., goals completed, resume review, job shadows)
- Staff presented 4 speed showcase sessions in presenting at the 2022 Future Ready Iowa Summit organized by the Governor's STEM Advisory Council
- Program staff began implementing Gallup Certified Strengths Coaching and is in the process of integrating resources and activities into the existing mentoring curriculum to help fuel match engagement
- Fall enrollment for new students will take place in November.
- Enrolled Students: 160
- Colleges: 15

- **College Coach/Student Leader Programs**

Consistent with overall workforce shortages, AmeriCorps member recruitment has been more challenging this fall. Iowa College Aid has started conversations with host sites who have not filled their positions to think ahead for a January recruitment for on-campus coaches. This allows time for NSCHC requirements, onboarding and training. We are also considering increasing the number of our virtual coaches as we move forward on expansion of the Virtual Coach Program (being opt out versus opt in). We are optimistic in general as recruitment in other AmeriCorps programs statewide has picked up.

#### College Access Coach and Student Leaders

- # of Participating Sites: 12
- # of Members Serving: 24

#### College Success Coach

- # of Host Site Campuses: 6 (DMACC, Hawkeye, IHCC, Kirkwood, SECC, SWCC; plus virtual coach w/ Iowa College Aid)
- Campus Positions filled: Kirkwood, SWCC, Virtual College Coach
- # of Members Serving current: 3

#### Virtual College Coach Program

##### **Texting - Current Stats from Aug 1, 2021 to present across all populations:**

- Total students receiving messages: 2,796
- Total messages sent (*since Aug 1, 2021*): 12,575
- Messages received from students (*since Aug 1, 2021*): 1,402
- Engagement rate range: 38.2-66.5%

#### College Access (*prospective LDS high school students & parents*):

*\*Now messaging all high school grades & parents*

- Total Contacts: 1,343
- Total Messages sent (*since Aug 1, 2021*): 3,425
- Total Messages received (*since Aug 1, 2021*): 79
- Current Overall Engagement Rate (*end of day 10/12/2021*): 38.2%

Virtual Appointments:

Total Appointments: 12 completed of 28 requests

Course to College

- # of Registered Schools: 146
- # of Participant Schools: 106
- # of Partner Schools\*: 40

\*Partner schools agree to host college-going events and complete coordinator surveys in exchange for student incentives and professional development opportunities

**Volunteer Recognition**

***Governor's Volunteer Awards:*** The 2022 Governor's Volunteer Awards hosted the last of five regional ceremonies in Storm Lake on September 15, 2022. Nearly 600 individuals and groups serving in 155 communities were recognized for their volunteer efforts over the summer.

**RSVP**

Volunteer Iowa issued contracts to provide state funding to support 20 organizations providing RSVP programming to 67 Iowa Counties. The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) engages individuals ages 55 and older in volunteer service to address community needs and to provide high quality volunteer experience that will enrich the lives of volunteers.

**Service Enterprise**

Several organizations continue to work toward their Service Enterprise recertification, and a new Central Iowa in-person training cohort has begun. Current cohort members include:

- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Iowa
- YMCA Supportive Housing Campus
- Des Moines Parks and Recreation
- RSVP 55+ Volunteer Program of Boone, Greene & Guthrie Counties
- Ankeny Community School District

**Training**

Volunteer Iowa AmeriCorps program staff held an in person New AmeriCorps Program Staff training on August 3 for new program staff to introduce them and train them on state and federal regulations, the basics of operating an AmeriCorps program, and to set expectations for the AmeriCorps program year. AmeriCorps program staff also provided a three-part "AmeriCorps Member Support" virtual training series to program staff. Topics covered included: supervising members, supporting members and member retention strategies. Additionally, fiscal staff working on AmeriCorps grants attended a virtual AmeriCorps financial training webinar provided by Volunteer Iowa.

**Volunteer Generation Fund**

Volunteer Iowa's continuation application (year 3 of 3) was approved this summer by AmeriCorps the agency. A continuation application will be released in mid-late October for VGF sub-grants for the 2023 sub-grant year. Site visits have begun with all Volunteer Generation Fund (VGF) subgrantees who continue to advance the development of quality volunteer opportunities in their communities. Work has begun on the development of a volunteer engagement curriculum specifically for city governments, which will include a pilot of the curriculum, and train the trainer for Volunteer Center and RSVP staff interested in offering the training in their service area. As a result of this project, a network of trainers

will be equipped to provide training and support to city and county governments statewide, resulting in cities utilizing effective volunteer management practices, and citizens being engaged in meaningful roles as volunteers to address local needs.

### **Service Learning**

Volunteer Iowa welcomed a new VISTA member in August to support our service-learning work. Volunteer Iowa's volunteering stakeholder group continues to meet, led by our new VISTA member, Isidro Gonzalez. The Youth committee welcomed three new volunteers who led and participated in a youth focus group on barriers to youth service. Their perspectives were shared with nonprofit partners in a roundtable discussion. Nonprofit partners also participated in a training on how to incorporate youth voice and service in their work. The afterschool committee invited Volunteer Iowa to present on service-learning at the Impact Afterschool 2022 conference. The K-12 committee launched a service-learning e-course for adult partners interested in learning about the topic. Overall, Volunteer Iowa engaged 251 individuals in trainings and events on service-learning for September 11<sup>th</sup> Day of Service.

### **AmeriCorps Seniors**

Volunteer Iowa received a Senior Demonstration Program grant from AmeriCorps. This demonstration grant will allow Volunteer Iowa to pilot AmeriCorps Seniors programming statewide. Volunteer Iowa hosted an informational session for potential partner agencies to learn about the program and how they could utilize it to support their mission. Volunteer Iowa is currently accepting applications for organizations to host volunteers.

### **AmeriCorps VISTA**

A request for applications for new project host sites was released in September. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis.

Volunteer Iowa currently has 30 active VISTAs serving with 17 host sites across Iowa. A new VISTA Leader started in July 2022 to help support member recruitment and development. There are four additional sites in active recruitment for open VISTA roles.