



**Volunteer Iowa (Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service)
Quarterly Report:
*January 1 – March 31, 2023***

AmeriCorps:

- AmeriCorps Week was celebrated March 12-18, 2023. AmeriCorps Week honors the valuable contributions of AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers who pledge to “get things done” for Iowa and the nation as a whole. Volunteer Iowa and our programs recognized the week by sharing stories on social media, sending thank you messages to current members, and promoting AmeriCorps through local news outlets. With more than 7,800 individuals serving at 800 local service sites in Iowa, it’s important to make the time to recognize these members and volunteers for their service to our state and country.
- Volunteer Iowa continued supporting the AmeriCorps Member Leadership Council 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. We also announced several new rounds of emergency financial assistance for members who face an unexpected expense during their term of service.
- Twenty-three VISTA members serve with fifteen nonprofits across the state. Project focus areas include developing plans for disaster preparedness for Iowa seniors, creating mentor programs for youth, supporting immigrant and refugee populations in eastern Iowa, and addressing critical mental health issues.
- Volunteer Iowa recruited and placed two new AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers with early learning centers across central Iowa. Volunteers serve children with exceptional needs and support their academic and personal development.

Commission Business:

- Volunteer Iowa Day at the Capitol was held on February 2, 2023. 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:

- Volunteer Iowa’s Disaster Program Officer facilitated a variety of trainings across Iowa during this quarter. Staff worked with Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COADs) in Dubuque, Cedar Rapids, and Davenport to provide guidance and disaster volunteer management trainings. Staff also engaged University of Iowa students on disaster preparedness and how to become affiliated with disaster response organizations. Volunteer Iowa supported response to the March 2023 tornadoes that struck parts of eastern Iowa, working in partnership with Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management staff to monitor and meet response needs in Johnson 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. 2500 mentor recognition certificates from the governor were presented to honor mentors. The Governor signed a proclamation declaring Mentoring Month in Iowa.
 - Volunteering with mentoring programs was featured in the Healthy State of Iowa Employee newsletter which resulted in increased mentor inquiries.
 - Four youth mentoring programs participated in the National Quality Mentoring System quality improvement process and renewed their state certification.
 - Youth Mentoring program development grant RFA was released in Iowa Grants to support new mentoring initiatives in K-12 schools.
 - Eight organizations are receiving intensive consulting services to strengthen their program and align with evidence-based practice.

- ***Future Ready Iowa Mentoring Updates:***
 - Virtual College Coach (Text Messaging): Approximately 15,492 current and prospective college students are active/participating in text message assistance from the Virtual College Coach Texting program.
 - 8,595 are current Last-Dollar Scholars
 - 236,021 messages were sent to current & prospective college students between July 1, 2022-March 31, 2023
 - 17,225 messages were received from current & prospective college students between July 1, 2022-March 31, 2023
 - College Coaches
 - 3 College Coaches supporting Last-Dollar Scholarship recipients and prospective students within an assigned region in the state, as of March 31, 2023
 - 27 Student Leaders among 15 K-12 school districts/17 schools:
 - Carlisle High School
 - Cedar Falls High School
 - Clarke High School
 - Danville High School
 - Davenport West High School
 - East High School - Des Moines
 - Lincoln High School - Des Moines
 - Roosevelt High School - Des Moines
 - Exira-Elk Horn Kimballton High School
 - Fort Dodge Senior High
 - Liberty High School
 - Maquoketa High School
 - Monticello High School
 - New London Jr/Sr High School
 - South Tama High School
 - Van Meter High School
 - West Liberty High School
 - Wilton Jr/Sr High School
 - Virtual Career Mentoring Updates
 - Total student enrollment in Virtual Career Mentoring increased to 210 Last-Dollar Scholars from fifteen different colleges. Information technology continues to be the field with the highest enrollment and growth.
 - Mentor enrollment increased to 83 professionals in high-demand fields from throughout the state.

- 346 mentoring activities have occurred in the Virtual Career Mentoring program platform during the 2022-23 academic year, including 93 goals completed between mentoring matches.

Volunteer Recognition:

- **50 Faces of Volunteerism:** Nominees have been added to our blog.
- **Iowa Volunteer Hall of Fame and Excellence in Mentoring Awards:** The 2023 Iowa Volunteer Award Ceremony will take place on April 27th at the Capitol. The award ceremony will induct four 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 provides recommendations for at volunteer opportunities to registered businesses.
- **Governor's Volunteer Awards:** GVA nominations will close on April 17, with five regional ceremonies being planned for the summer.

Service Enterprise:

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

- Coaching has begun for organizations participating in the training series last fall, and several organizations have begun the recertification process.

Training:

- **Volunteer Engagement Training Program:** The six-part series of volunteer engagement webinars was held January through March. Through a partnership with the Volunteer Centers of Iowa, the program makes consistent, high quality volunteer engagement training available statewide.
- **City Volunteer Engagement Initiative:** A pilot multipart training and coaching series for cities to develop volunteer engagement strategies launched in February. Participating cities and counties include Cedar Rapids, Davenport, Dubuque, Hardin County, Mason City, Monticello, Nevada, Shenandoah, and Storm Lake. Teams of three or more representatives are participating, identifying roles for volunteers within local government, developing action plans and infrastructure to support volunteers, recruiting and recognizing volunteers, and receiving implementation funding to support the work. Trainings will continue into April, and coaching will continue until June, with ongoing opportunities for resources and support.

Volunteer Generation Fund:

Grant activities began on Jan 1, 2023, for year three of a three-year grant for the following organizations: 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.

Volunteer Iowa was awarded an additional American Rescue Plan (ARP) Volunteer Generation Fund Grant to support the creation of service-learning and youth mentoring programs in schools. Requests for Proposals for sub-grants were released in March, with grants expected to be awarded by July.

Youth Service & Service-Learning:

For Martin Luther King Junior Day, Volunteer Iowa hosted a youth volunteer leaders panel. Youth volunteers from across the state shared their experiences with other youth and adult partners to inspire service and provide insight on ways to address barriers to service. Volunteer Iowa also launched the 50by250 Campaign which encourages organizations to commit to increasing youth service to 50% by America's 250th birthday on July 4, 2026. Volunteer Iowa partnered with the Iowa 21st Century Community Learning Centers to provide an introduction to service-learning for out-of-time programs interested in launching a program.