



**Volunteer Iowa (Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service)
Quarterly Report:
October 1 – December 31, 2024**

AmeriCorps Seniors:

Volunteer Iowa’s Senior Demonstration Program closed out in September. Where possible, active volunteers were transitioned to other volunteer programs.

The HHS Volunteer Iowa Retired and Senior Volunteer Program serves 25 nonprofit, healthcare, state and local government workstations in 14 mostly rural counties. There are currently 268 volunteers age 55+ serving an average of 1385 hours per month over the last year. This quarter focused on replacing departed staff and developing new volunteer opportunities in the areas of warming shelters, veteran transportation, infant care support and refugee services.

AmeriCorps State:

Staff are supporting AmeriCorps State applicants applying to AmeriCorps for federal level competitive funding for 2025-2026. Four AmeriCorps planning grantees have been working through Phase 1 of the planning process to create the foundation of their AmeriCorps program in order to apply for an operational grant for 2025-2026.

AmeriCorps state programs submit data to Volunteer Iowa on various demographic information for AmeriCorps. In comparison to the previous year, the number of individuals who applied to be AmeriCorps members has increased (from 1,626 to 2,257). Volunteer Iowa has provided targeted training and technical assistance to programs to increase recruitment efforts.

AmeriCorps VISTA:

The AmeriCorps VISTA program, through service and volunteering, seeks to create a climate where economically disadvantaged individuals and youth are provided the tools needed for financial well-being and academic success, and communities have the resources needed to address critical needs related to poverty.

This quarter the Volunteer Iowa AmeriCorps VISTA program has 17 VISTA members supporting 12 organizations across the state.

Organization	City
Centrally Rooted	Dubuque
Corinthian Baptist Church, VAX DSM	Des Moines
Des Moines Police Department	Des Moines
Fort Madison Area Arts Foundation	Fort Madison
Independence School District, Mentoring	Independence
Iowa MENTOR	Des Moines
Iowa Youth Writing Project	Des Moines
NAMI Dubuque	Dubuque
NAMI Southwest Iowa	Neola
University of Iowa, Disaster Prepwise	Iowa City

Vinton-Shellsburg Community School District	Vinton
Volunteer Iowa	Des Moines

Disaster Response:

An internal hire has been made to fill the vacant Disaster Program officer position. Jamie Lane started in the role in December, is participating in onboarding and training, and is already making plans for providing training and technical assistance to partner organizations and communities starting in January.

Iowa MENTOR:

The following programs completed the National Quality Mentoring System assessment and were granted certification with Iowa MENTOR 2024-2027:

- M.A.Y. Mentoring
- BBBS of Muscatine County
- North Fayette Mentoring
- Youth Mentoring Helping Services

Volunteer Recognition:

Nothing new to report during this time period.

Events:

Nothing new to report during this time period.

RSVP:

Nothing new to report during this time period.

Service Enterprise:

City of Des Moines Parks & Recreation earned their Service Enterprise accreditation during this quarter. A virtual cohort is scheduled for early 2025 in conjunction with our 9/11 Day of Service grant, and the following organizations have been selected for participation:

- Story County Conservation
- Camp Fire Heart of Iowa
- Everybody Wins! Iowa
- Animal Rescue League of Marshalltown
- Tanager Place
- The Chamber and Development Council of Crawford County

Training:

- Volunteer Iowa continued to support programs through virtual training and technical assistance.
- ***AmeriCorps Program Staff Launch:*** This an annual training offered for all Iowa AmeriCorps program staff occurred October 19 and 20. The training sessions offered networking, learning about state and federal grant requirements and updates, and overall support for program core competency growth.
- ***Iowa MENTOR:*** The following trainings were conducted for mentoring professionals this quarter:
 - Becoming a Better Mentor - November 13-14
 - Attunement in Mentoring - November 19
 - Adopting a Mentoring Mindset - December 5

Volunteer Generation Fund (VGF) ARP:

Service-Learning: Each of the five VGF ARP service-learning continuation grantees continue integrating service-learning within their school districts. This includes Waterloo Community Schools, CAL Elementary Schools, Sioux Center Community Schools, Hamburg Community Schools, and Central Lyon Community Schools. Currently, four service-learning projects have been completed, engaging 86 students in 297 hours of service. Schools engaged 12 community partners in service-learning projects and 30 additional staff were trained on implementing authentic service projects.

Mentoring: Each of the four VGF ARP mentoring continuation subgrantee school districts have created mentoring programs. Carlisle Community School District, Hamburg Community Schools, Cedar Valley Community Schools, and Dike/New Hartford Community Schools each do monthly check-ins with the grant administrator to share updates on progress, success and challenges within their programs. Currently, the four mentoring programs have 29 mentors and 28 mentees involved. The challenge continues to be finding community partnerships and ways to continue the program beyond the grant. Year two of VGF ARP focuses on sustainability. The programs will develop a plan by the end of the program year on partnerships and fundraising and will have an opportunity to learn from existing mentoring programs in the Iowa MENTOR network.

Youth Service:

Volunteer Iowa Service-Learning Training Series engaged 22 educators and community partners. These adult partners learned how to implement service-learning authentically and identified community organizations to connect with for service projects. Volunteer Iowa also partnered with YSS to engage youth not traditionally asked to serve in meaningful volunteer experience. These youth identified bullying as an issue within their school and launched a kindness campaign with friendship bracelets, positivity posters, and a message wall to address this issue.