



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

[www.volunteeriowa.org](http://www.volunteeriowa.org)

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#### **Quarterly Report:**

***April 1 – June 30, 2026***

### **AmeriCorps State**

The Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service took action at a June 22, 2026, commission meeting to approve grant funding for Iowa AmeriCorps State programs for the 2026-2027 program year. The release of the program funding and the amount of the awards has been embargoed by the AmeriCorps federal agency until July 2, 2026. On that date, Volunteer Iowa will share [the grant award information on our website](#).

### **Commission Business**

Volunteer Iowa held its final regularly scheduled FY26 full commission meeting on Thursday, May 28. During the meeting, the commission bid farewell to four commissioners who are concluding their service on the commission: Commission Chair Monica Chavez-Silva, John Oates, Henny Ohr, and Jerry Armstrong. The Commission selected Tim Jacobsen as Commission Chair and Ray Haas as Vice Chair for FY27.

### **Disaster**

Volunteer Iowa continued to advance the department's disaster preparedness and response capabilities through engagement with local partners. This included volunteer management planning with Johnston, Shelby, and Mahaska counties, as well as preparation for a large-scale Volunteer Reception Center (VRC) simulation involving AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers and University of Northern Iowa faculty, staff, and students. One of the Iowa RSVP programs presented at a national conference in Washington, D.C., highlighting how RSVP volunteers serve as a critical resource for emergency managers during disasters.

Additionally, Volunteer Iowa delivered a presentation at the Iowa Municipal Professionals Academy to provide city clerks with resources and education on post-disaster volunteer management. A Disaster 101 Lunch and Learn was also hosted for AmeriCorps members to strengthen foundational knowledge of disaster operations.

Two VISTA Summer Associate Volunteers joined Volunteer Iowa this summer to support the Iowa Disaster Human Resource Council (IDHRC) by enhancing coordination of members, developing preparedness materials, creating a standard operating procedure for VRC activation, and improving the online VRC toolkit.

Volunteer Iowa is also supporting HHS in ESF-6 efforts by connecting emergency managers with HHS Thrive Program navigators and community partners, and by educating HHS leadership on communication pathways and departmental roles in disaster response in updating the plan.

## Iowa MENTOR

Iowa MENTOR currently has 66 certified program partners, serving 76 counties across the state. Five mentoring programs completed the National Quality Mentoring System (NQMS) process and were granted recertification. Two newly certified programs, CATS Mentoring and Dike-New Hartford (DNH) Edge Mentoring, were founded through the Youth Mentoring Grant supported by the ARP Volunteer Generation Fund grant.

Iowa MENTOR facilitated two virtual roundtable discussions focused on mentor and mentee training practices and will continue offering professional development trainings throughout the summer, with program coaching scheduled for the fall.

The National Mentoring Partnership (MENTOR) is awaiting notification of the National Mentoring Resource Center (NMRC) grant award, which will continue to fund technical assistance passed through to Iowa MENTOR. Iowa MENTOR provides technical assistance to mentoring organizations to support statewide mentoring efforts.

Iowa MENTOR continues to strengthen program quality through certification, recertification, and virtual trainings on theory of change, logic models, and sustainability strategies, ensuring Iowa mentoring programs remain supported during the NMRC transition period.

## Recognition

- ***Give Back Iowa Challenge:*** The 2026 Give Back Iowa Challenge had 24 employers register to participate in the challenge. Over 21,000 volunteer hours were logged during the two-month challenge period. The winners and runners up of the challenge are:
  - Small: Community Youth Concepts (CYC), Des Moines  
Honorable Mention: United Way of Central Iowa
  - Mid-sized: Riverside Casino and Golf Resort, Riverside  
Honorable Mention: Grand Falls Casino and Golf Resort, Larchwood
  - Large: Farm Bureau Financial Services, West Des Moines  
Honorable Mention: Alliant Energy, Cedar Rapids
- ***Iowa Volunteer Hall of Fame Ceremony:*** The Iowa Volunteer Award Ceremony honored five Hall of Fame inductees and four Excellence in Mentoring Awardees on Friday, April 24, 2026, at the State Capitol building. Lt. Governor Chris Cournoyer and Commission Chair Monica Chavez-Silva presented the awards. [Information about the inductees](#) is available on our website.  
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/volunteeriowa/>

## AmeriCorps Seniors

- ***RSVP (Statewide)***

Volunteer Iowa awarded 16 RSVP Grants with state awards based on legislative appropriation award in June. Initial award amounts ( NOTE- United Way of SE Iowa also received \$92,433 in federal award and will be eligible for state funding in FY28):

| Organization                                      | Project Name                                                                                                           | State Award | Federal Amount |
|---------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Carroll County Board                              | RSVP Carroll County (Carroll, Crawford, Calhoun)                                                                       | \$24,237    | \$167,500      |
| Clinton County                                    | RSVP of Clinton County                                                                                                 | \$7,484     | \$50,000       |
| Decorah Public Library                            | Northeast Iowa RSVP (Allamakee, Howard, Winneshiek, Clayton, Northern Fayette)                                         | \$46,602    | \$332,000      |
| Graceland University                              | Southern Iowa RSVP (Adair, Clarke, Decatur, Ringgold, Union)                                                           | \$33,549    | \$0            |
| HIRTA Public Transit                              | HIRTA RSVP of Madison and Marion Counties                                                                              | \$14,968    | \$150,000      |
| Iowa Department of Health and Human Services RSVP | HHS RSVP<br>Cass, Harrison, Iowa, Keokuk, Mahaska, Louisa, Monona, Montgomery, Shelby, Woodbury and Poweshiek Counties | \$89,807    | \$900,000      |
| Iowa Department of Health and Human Services RSVP | HHS RSVP<br>Fremont, Mills and Page Counties                                                                           | \$34,288    | \$286,500      |
| Iowa Lakes Community College                      | Northwest Iowa RSVP (Clay, Dickinson, Emmet, Kossuth, Palo Alto)                                                       | \$20,975    | \$92,908       |
| Jasper County Agricultural Extension District     | Newton/Jasper RSVP                                                                                                     | \$6,710     | \$0            |

|                                                                             |                                                                                                          |                  |                    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Story City Senior Citizens, Inc.                                            | Central Iowa RSVP - Story, Marshall, Hamilton, & Webster Co.                                             | \$38,989         | \$172,498          |
| The Fellowship Cup                                                          | RSVP Henry, Des Moines & Louisa County                                                                   | \$22,158         | \$162,500          |
| United Way of Wapello County                                                | RSVP of Monroe, Jefferson and Wapello Counties                                                           | \$14,968         | \$73,439           |
| United Way of East Central Iowa                                             | United Way 55+ Initiative (Linn, Jones, Cedar, Benton)                                                   | \$20,129         | \$0                |
| United Way of the Great River Region (formerly Ft. Madison Area United Way) | RSVP of Lee County/ United Way of Great River Region                                                     | \$7,484          | \$50,000           |
| United Way of Muscatine County                                              | RSVP of Muscatine                                                                                        | \$10,509         | \$84,556           |
| Volunteer Center of Cedar Valley                                            | Engaging People to Build a Stronger Community and RSVP of Buchanan County (Blackhawk, Fayette, Buchanan) | \$25,839         | \$206,250          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                                                |                                                                                                          | <b>\$418,696</b> | <b>\$2,820,134</b> |

- ***Volunteer Iowa RSVP***

The Volunteer Iowa RSVP completed the 2025 grant year having engaged over 700 AmeriCorps Volunteers in 15 counties in activities including giving rides to medical appointments, providing companionship and social opportunities to older adults, addressing food security and supporting youth in schools.

## **Volunteer Engagement Capacity Building**

Volunteer Iowa launched the Cass County Day of Service Initiative with 25 participating organizations from within Cass County. Each organization receives \$3,000 for participating in a volunteer management training series and launching what they've learned in a Day of Service on or around September 11th.

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## **Youth Service & Service-Learning**

Volunteer Iowa piloted a new statewide recognition program for Iowa youth with the Waukee Community School District. The program expands the Governor's Volunteer Awards by establishing a uniform standard for student service recognition in Iowa. To earn the award, students complete at least 150 hours of community service and submit a reflective essay. Twenty-seven students in the Waukee Community School District received this award. Common themes from student essays highlight the value of service in building empathy, fostering personal growth, and strengthening community connection. As the inaugural class of award recipients, participating students will be publicly recognized at the statewide Governor's Volunteer Awards ceremony, to be held in July.

## **AmeriCorps VISTA Program**

The Volunteer Iowa VISTA program is hosting ten year-long VISTAs and 19 summer VISTAs across 11 organizations. VISTA Volunteers are working on building capacity of community organizations whose missions envelop a variety of needs and activities such as developing programs to assist with summer learning loss, mentoring youth during school and out of school times, supporting individuals and families with health and mental health support and resources, bridging the gap with community resources with underserved youth and adults, creating diverse funding streams to support the organization through grant writing, fundraising, and events, and much more.