

**Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service (ICVS)**  
**Quarterly Report:**  
***October 1 – December 31, 2014***

**Personnel Items:**

- Michelle Raymer attended Service Enterprise Train-the-Trainer Nov. 3-7 in Atlanta.
- In December, Michelle Raymer and Mary Sheka both reached their one year anniversary as ICVS staff members.
- ICVS VISTA Leader, Lisa Smith, and several ICVS VISTA members finished their service terms at the end of November.
- New Ex-Officio, nonvoting commissioners announced:
  - Kalen Petersen (RSVP program director at Central Iowa RSVP) representing the Iowa RSVP Directors Association
  - Jeanine Nemitz (Foster Grandparent program director in Fort Dodge) representing the Iowa Association of Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion Directors
  - Lauren Finke (Executive Director of the Volunteer Center of Cedar Valley) representing the Volunteer Centers of Iowa
- Dennis Trollope of Urbandale resigned as a commissioner for the ICVS in December.

**Program Updates:**

- **AmeriCorps Grants:**
  - The commission released a Request for Applications (RFA) in October for AmeriCorps State program grants for 2015-2016. Nine pre-applications were submitted for ICVS Staff to review and make recommendations for competitive (direct federal funding) vs. formula (state level) funding consideration.
  - In November, the Corporation for National and Community Service launched a new funding initiative called “Operation AmeriCorps”. ICVS released information and details about this funding opportunity for interested Iowa applicants.
- **AmeriCorps VISTA:**
  - In December, ICVS started accepting applications from organizations interested in hosting year-long AmeriCorps VISTA member(s) focused on projects supporting K-12 academic success (including, but not limited to, mentoring, tutoring, and literacy programs) or veterans and military families.
- **Call to Service / What’s Your 50?:**
  - Staff has started recruiting volunteers to work on a reporting widget and weekly 50 Faces recognition. Open volunteer opportunities are included on the ICVS website at [www.volunteeriowa.org/aboutus/volunteeropportunities](http://www.volunteeriowa.org/aboutus/volunteeropportunities).
- **Employer Volunteer Initiative:**
  - The second planning meeting of the Employer Volunteer Initiative was held in mid-November, with a variety of employers and associations represented. The group established two workgroups:

- a) Increase Volunteerism: Develop a challenge for employers to engage employees in volunteering and tracking tool for employers and individuals to report hours
  - b) Marketing/PR: Develop a public relations campaign targeted at employers on the benefits of employee volunteer programs and available resources to support employee volunteer programs
- A conference call was held on Dec. 9 to continue planning for a statewide volunteerism challenge (tentative challenge dates: April 14 - May 31, 2015) and finalize a survey to collect information about employer volunteer programs.
- **Governor's Council on National Service in Iowa:**
  - During its October meeting, the council discussed how to best partner with the faith-based community to promote volunteerism and national service.
  - Meeting was held on Dec. 10 to review a rough draft of final recommendations that will be submitted to the Governor for review. *The Council's preliminary report, released on July 1, is available [online](#).*
- **Governor's Volunteer Awards:** Nothing new to report this quarter.
- **Iowa Mentoring Partnership (IMP):**
  - 1509 new mentors were recruited through the November reporting date for the football coaches challenge.
  - The 2014-2015 Women's Basketball season marks the inaugural season of the Women's Basketball STEM Coaches' Mentoring Challenge. Drake University head coach Jenny Baranczyk, is partnering with Million Women Mentors and the Iowa Mentoring Partnership, to head this challenge with the support from the other three big Iowa universities. This challenge is intended to motivate Iowans to mentor young women in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) disciplines. More information is available at [www.iowamentoring.org](http://www.iowamentoring.org).
- **RSVP Grants:**
  - In November, ICVS and CNCS staff partnered to provide training to eight new RSVP directors.
  - ICVS staff held meetings with RSVP directors to collect additional feedback on the RSVP rulemaking underway.
- **Service Enterprise Initiative**
  - The ICVS executive committee approved all the pre-applications submitted to ICVS to participate in the 2015 Iowa Service Enterprise Initiative. There will be two cohorts, one in Cedar Rapids and the other in central Iowa with a total of 14 participating organizations. Orientation was held in mid-December.
  - As part of the commission's internal Service Enterprise activities, the ICVS volunteer program has been launched and tracking of volunteers hours has started; commissioners and volunteers contributed more than 200 hours of service directly to commission activities this quarter.
- **Volunteer Background Check Stakeholder Group:** Nothing new to report this quarter.

- **Volunteer Generation Fund:**
  - Request for Grant Applications for Volunteer Generation Fund (VGF) grants, which support development and strengthening of the volunteer infrastructure in Iowa through Volunteer Centers was released in November; 11 applications were received. The 2015 grant represents year one of a three-year federal appropriation.
  - In December, the commission approved the following VGF grants:
    - City of Davenport
    - City of Mason City
    - Iowa Lakes Community College
    - United Way of East Central Iowa
    - United Way of Wapello County
    - Volunteer Center of Cedar Valley
    - Volunteer Center of Story County
    - Volunteer Center of the Big River Region (operational grant funding)
    - City of Dubuque (mini-grant funding)
- **Volunteer Hall of Fame:**
  - 15 nominations were received and reviewed in December. Those selected for this honor will be announced in February and recognized during an April 14 event in the state capitol building.
- **Volunteer Iowa website:** Nothing new to report this quarter.

**Miscellaneous:**

- Staff recently hosted a second meeting with state government agency volunteer coordinators to discuss opportunities for working together on requesting a volunteer management software all state agencies can use, starting a formal association for government volunteer managers, and finding a way to easily communicate with other members of the group to share best practices and materials. The group intends to meet quarterly. Governor's Office is assisting with research on best way to formalize the group (perhaps by Executive Order or recommendation of the Governor's Council on National Service).
- In December dates were selected for the Iowa Nonprofit Summit; this biennial conference will be held Nov. 9 & 10, 2015 at the Scheman Center on the Iowa State University Campus in Ames.