

2020



AmeriCorps Week Toolkit

March 8-14, 2020

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THINGS TO KNOW

The Corporation for National and Community Service is joining with AmeriCorps programs, partners, members, and alums across the country to celebrate AmeriCorps Week 2020 on March 8-14.

Help us tell the story of how AmeriCorps “gets things done” and recruit new members!

- **Host a Member for a Day Invite:** local celebrities, community leaders, or elected officials to serve as AmeriCorps members for a day. Have them take the AmeriCorps Pledge; give them AmeriCorps gear, and have them set out on a day of service. You can invite local media and share on social media using #MadeInAmeriCorps and #AmeriCorpsWorks to join the national conversation.
- **Ask Your Mayor to Issue a Proclamation:** Ask your Mayor or other elected official to thank your members/alumni by issuing a proclamation to recognize AmeriCorps Week. We’ve created a sample proclamation to get you started. Be sure to share a link to the proclamation on social media.
- **Share on Social Media:** Read our social media toolkit to get more ideas for spreading the word. Post stories about how you’ve seen AmeriCorps change lives and use #MadeInAmeriCorps and #AmeriCorpsWorks to join the national conversation. Be sure to use eye-catching images or videos to attract more likes and shares.
- **Plan an Event:** Holding a service activity or other noteworthy event? Keep us in the loop by submitting your event information to jamal.williams@adhe.edu. We have a sample press release and media advisory you can use if you are interested in sharing the event with your local news outlets.
- **Write an Op-ed or Letter to the Editor:** Keep them short and personal. Write about your AmeriCorps experience, or thank AmeriCorps members for their service in your community. Check out the opinion section of your local newspaper for information on how to submit articles.
- **Make a Video:** There is no more powerful way to tell your story than through video. Create something amazing and share your AmeriCorps story with the world using social media.

AMERICORPS WEEK 2020 EVENTS

Monday, March 9th - Governor Asa Hutchinson Proclamation Ceremony

We will kick off AmeriCorps Week with a proclamation ceremony by the Governor of Arkansas, Asa Hutchinson. Proclamations are issued by the Office of the Governor to increase awareness of important issues across the state. AmeriCorps Week, March 8-14, 2020, is a celebration of all things AmeriCorps – from the programs and organizations that make this national service initiative possible in communities across the country, to the members who have pledged to “Get Things Done” since the program’s inception in 1994. **The proclamation ceremony will be held at the Arkansas State Capitol.**

Tuesday, March 10th - Arkansas National Service Convention

AmeriCorps Alums Little Rock and Engage AR is excited to host the first annual Arkansas National Service Convention this year during AmeriCorps Week 2020 and we would love for you to attend! With the theme being Past, Present, and Future - we hope to bring together alumni, currently serving national service members, prospective candidates, the community, and more. **The convention will be held from 9AM - 1PM with Lunch | Heifer Village & Urban Farm - 1 World Ave. Little Rock**

Wednesday, March 11th - Day of the 'A'

Show your service spirit by posting photos of the AmeriCorps “A” with #DayoftheA. Show us how you served. Challenge your friends or other programs to a #DayoftheA photo contest. Check out the AmeriCorps Week 2020 Facebook Album for inspiration.

It's #DayoftheA! Show your @AmeriCorps pride and bring your “A” game!



AMERICORPS WEEK SERVICE DAYS

- **FoodCorps Jones Elementary Project (Springdale, AR)** - FoodCorps AmeriCorps members will work with local farmers and organizations to host Jones Elementary's very first "Farmers Market." Elementary students will learn about local food production and healthy eating and will have the opportunity to taste produce.
- **FoodCorps Cedarville Elementary Project (Cedarville, AR)** - FoodCorps AmeriCorps members and community volunteers will build an in-ground garden space at Cedarville Elementary School. The in ground garden will expand the school's community garden, which is used to teach students about food production and healthy eating.
- **FullCircle Farm Corps/ AmeriCorps Alums National Service Convention (Little Rock, AR)** - FullCircle Farm Corps, in partnership with Our House and AmeriCorps Alums, will host the first ever National Service Convention. This convention seeks to bring together AmeriCorps Alumni, currently serving members, and potential AmeriCorps applicants to network and learn about national service opportunities, local community resources, and future job opportunities.
- **UAFS Jumpstart Arkansas Project (Fort Smith, AR)** - Jumpstart AmeriCorps Members is partnering with Mercy Hospital to offer a story time for children visiting the hospital. They will also create a mini library in the waiting room for the Hamilton House Child and Family Safety Center housed in Mercy.
- **Community Service Inc. Project (Conway, AR)** - AmeriCorps members and volunteers will partner with two local elementary schools to host a reading day with games and activities in order to promote literacy and reading comprehension.
- **Southern Arkansas University Project (Magnolia, AR)** - SAU+VISTA members are leading a "National Service Blitz" to inform the SAU community about AmeriCorps national service opportunities in the region. Each day during AmeriCorps Week members will participate in activities to build awareness of national service and civic engagement among students, graduates, and the Magnolia community at large.

For more information on how your program can get involved with AmeriCorps Week Service Day opportunities, visit www.volunteerar.org/ameriCorpsweek.

10 IDEAS TO GENERATE COVERAGE FOR AMERICORPS WEEK

- **Show How AmeriCorps is Meeting a Local Need:** Every day AmeriCorps members are tackling tough problems that people in your area care deeply about – poverty, illiteracy, hunger, health, and crime. Pitch your local media with real-life examples of how AmeriCorps is having an impact on those issues. Show how service isn't just nice, it's necessary – and is making a difference in your hometown. Find out who covers your issue beat and prepare a member and someone they helped to be ready to tell their story.
- **Focus on the Economic Recovery:** In today's economic climate, more people than ever are in need of the services that AmeriCorps members provide. How are the AmeriCorps members in your program helping your community respond to those needs? Whether through preventing foreclosures, running food drives, or helping people without jobs sharpen their employment skills, AmeriCorps members provide vital services to those in need. Develop story ideas around these areas, showing specific accomplishments of your AmeriCorps members.
- **Invite a Local VIP:** To add to the media draw of your event, invite a local celebrity, elected official, or VIP. It can be the Mayor, Governor, your Member of Congress, a local news anchor or weather reporter, or a business or community leader. Ask them to be an AmeriCorps Member for a Day – or an hour – to get a first-hand look at how AmeriCorps works. Work with their communications staff on media outreach. In addition to attracting media, this will also provide an opportunity for you to build support for your organization with elected officials and the business community.
- **Profile a Member:** Tell the AmeriCorps story through the eyes of one member. Newspapers are always looking for compelling human interest stories. Do any of your members stand out? Perhaps a member who overcame great odds to serve, or was served by an AmeriCorps member when they were younger and now wants to return the good deed. Or someone who was inspired to join AmeriCorps member by a parent who was in VISTA or in the Peace Corps, or a grandparent in the Civilian Conservation Corps. If several members of a family have served with AmeriCorps, that can be the basis of a great story.
- **Honor Alums:** AmeriCorps Week is the perfect opportunity to invite AmeriCorps alums back for an event. Encourage them to be available to the media to share their stories of service and reconnect with the people they helped in your program. Make sure to include information on what the alums are doing now and how their AmeriCorps service continues to impact their lives.
- **Honor AmeriCorps VISTA and VISTA Alums:** Invite VISTA alums to join in your celebrations and events, and encourage them to speak to school groups and service organizations about their VISTA experience. Highlight sustainable accomplishments that continue to impact your community. Recruiting VISTA alums is also a great way to expand your volunteer pool.

- **Highlight Recruitment:** It's high school and college graduation season. Grads are looking for what comes next, and the media is looking to write graduation stories. Use this opportunity to highlight how more grads are going into public service programs like AmeriCorps. Show how this is part of a growing community service trend among today's young people – an emerging civic generation inspired into action by 9-11, Hurricane Katrina, and the growth of service-learning in schools. Include the facts that teen volunteering is double what it was in the 1980s and that college student volunteering is on the rise. Emphasize the career benefits of joining AmeriCorps – how AmeriCorps members gain leadership, problem-solving, and management skills that can jumpstart their careers and expose them to new fields.
- **Highlight the Convergence of Support:** More and more we are seeing a convergence of support from all sectors that service is the solution to our toughest challenges. Bipartisan support for national service is stronger than ever – from the White House and Congress to Governors and Mayors. Businesses are recognizing that corporate citizenship is good for the community and the bottom line. During AmeriCorps Week, highlight how this convergence is happening in your community by pointing to the government and corporate leaders who support and invest in AmeriCorps, and show how this is part of a national trend.
- **Write a Letter to the Editor or Op-ed:** Letters to the Editor are one of the most popular parts of the newspaper. They are also easy to write and get placed. Keep them short and personal. Write about your AmeriCorps experience, or thank AmeriCorps members for their service. Ask people or organizations that your AmeriCorps members have assisted to write letters relating their positive experiences. You can also submit a longer op-ed column. An op-ed can be written by a staff member, an AmeriCorps member, or someone who has benefitted from the service of an AmeriCorps member. Check out the editorial pages of your local newspaper for information on the submission process.
- **Get on Radio or TV:** As you reach out to the media for AmeriCorps Week, don't forget public affairs and talk shows on your local TV and radio stations. Contact your local public radio, talk radio station, or a popular radio show (drive-time radio shows are a particularly good idea) and ask to be a guest on one of their shows. Try to get on more than one show, keeping in mind the demographics of the station and the specific show. Likewise, find the public affairs shows on your network affiliates and cable channels, including the public access channels. Offer all stations AmeriCorps video including the PSAs and program videos in the AmeriCorps Presentation Kit to run during the segment. The PSAs are more likely to be used if a station knows it's important to you.



AmeriCorps Week 2020

Social Media Toolkit



TAKE ACTION

Monday, March 9th - Governor Asa Hutchinson Proclamation - Arkansas State Capitol

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9:00AM - 1:00PM with Lunch | Heifer Village & Urban Farm

- [Click Here for Directions](#)

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It's #DayoftheA! Show your @AmeriCorps pride and bring your “A” game!

SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS, GRAPHICS, AND SAMPLE MESSAGES

Show that your service project is part of a nationwide day of volunteerism. **Click the graphic below you wish to download:**



@Engage_AR
@AmeriCorps



#MadeInAmeriCorps
#AmeriCorpsWorks



@Engage Arkansas
@AmeriCorps



@AmeriCorps

SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA MESSAGES:

Were you #MadeInAmeriCorps? What is your favorite memory from AmeriCorps? How has service changed your life or your community? Share your passion for service and “getting things done” for America.

This @AmeriCorps Week, we honor outstanding AmeriCorps members and alums whose commitment to [activity] benefits [community/state] and our nation in so many ways.
#MadeInAmeriCorps #AmeriCorpsWorks

I'm currently an @AmeriCorps member with _____, and I'm gaining valuable skills I hope to use in the future as a _____.

_____ years ago, I joined @AmeriCorps and _____. The experience taught me _____. #MadeInAmeriCorps #AmeriCorpsWorks

I'm proud of the positive impact I had on the community while serving in @AmeriCorps. It was a beneficial experience that helped shape my career as a _____. #MadeInAmeriCorps

SHARE VOLUNTEER PHOTOS AND UPLIFTING STORIES OF SERVICE, PATRIOTISM AND REMEMBRANCE:

Tag them with @EngageAR. Post them to Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram.

E-mail: Engage.AR@adhe.edu.

QUESTIONS?

If you have questions about this toolkit, please contact Jamal.Williams@adhe.edu.

[DATE]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact Information:

Jamal Williams

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Jamal.Williams@adhe.edu

(501) 537-9722



Engage Arkansas Celebrates AmeriCorps Week

Annual AmeriCorps Week recognizes members and alumni for their service

Little Rock, Arkansas – This week Engage Arkansas joins thousands of Americans across the country to celebrate the valuable contributions of the AmeriCorps members who pledge to “get things done” for our nation as part of the annual AmeriCorps Week.

“We are proud to be part of AmeriCorps and grateful for the AmeriCorps members who are getting things done for Arkansas,” said Shana Chaplin, Executive Director of Engage Arkansas. “AmeriCorps members have made a significant impact on Arkansas’ ability to meet so many local needs whether its improving schools, fighting poverty, rebuilding after disasters, providing health services, preserving the environment, or supporting veterans and military families, AmeriCorps members get things done.”

The weeklong AmeriCorps Week celebration also honors the contributions and support of thousands of local organizations that make AmeriCorps programs possible. In Arkansas, 3,200 AmeriCorps members are serving. AmeriCorps members across the state will host collaborative service projects ranging from hosting a national service networking and resource convention, providing healthy food and futures for youth, and promoting of literacy and reading comprehension. For more information on how to find an AmeriCorps Week service project near you, visit <https://www.volunteerar.org/ameriCorpsweek>.

Every year, 75,000 AmeriCorps members serve through more than 20,000 schools, nonprofits, and community and faith-based organizations across the country. These citizens have played a critical role in the recovery of communities affected by natural disasters like Hurricanes Katrina, Sandy, Harvey, and Maria. They also tutor and mentor young people, connect veterans to jobs, care for seniors, reduce crime and revive cities, fight the opioid epidemic, and meet other critical needs.

The Corporation for National and Community Service, the federal agency responsible for AmeriCorps, marked the 25th anniversary of the program last fall, saluting the more than 1.1 million Americans who have pledged to “get things done” since the program’s inception in 1994. Together, they have provided more than 1.6 billion hours of service and earned \$4 billion in education scholarships to pay for college or pay back student loans.

A [growing body of research](#) shows that service has an effect on more than just the communities served, but also on the members themselves. AmeriCorps alumni credit their year of service for developing leadership skills that bridges divides, solves problems, and opens doors to opportunities that advance their careers and education.

To join the celebration, follow Engage Arkansas on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Instagram](#), and join the conversation by sharing pictures and stories, using #MadeinAmeriCorps and #AmeriCorpsWorks. Those interested in joining AmeriCorps can learn more at www.volunteerar.org/National-Service.

###

About EngageAR – Arkansas Service Commission

EngageAR serves as the State Service Commission whose mission is to foster a culture of service to strengthen communities and solve local problems. Civic engagement encompasses service and volunteerism and is foundational to establishing a collaborative programmatic initiative to create a culture of service in Arkansas that permeates activities of family, education, business, government and the nonprofit.

EngageAR partners to provide training, consultation and best practices to equip state agencies, county government, municipalities and private organizations to develop, launch and maintain civic engagement programs, including AmeriCorps programs.

As part of Governor Asa Hutchinson’s Transformation Plan, effective July 1, 2019, EngageAR is housed in the Arkansas Division of Higher Education.

[DATE]
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[DATE]
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact Information:

[NAME]
[ADDRESS]
[EMAIL]
[PHONE]



**[NAME OF GRANTEE OR CITY/STATE] Joins National Celebration of
AmeriCorps**

Annual AmeriCorps Week recognizes members and alumni for their service

[CITY, STATE] – As part of a nationwide effort to celebrate the valuable contributions of AmeriCorps members across the country, [Company/Organization] will honor the [NUMBER] men and women serving with the organization [OR IN CITY] with a [service project, event, etc.] on [DATE].

The event will feature [brief description of event, including speakers and activities]. This is part of AmeriCorps Week, an annual celebration of all things AmeriCorps – from the programs and organizations that make this vital initiative possible to members and alumni who have served in communities across the country.

More than 1.1 million Americans have pledged to “get things done” as AmeriCorps members since the program’s inception in 1994, earning \$4 billion in education awards to continue their studies or pay back student loans. AmeriCorps is a program of the Corporation for National and Community Service, the federal agency for service and volunteering.

[DAY, MONTH, DATE, 2020]

WHO: [Significant speakers/attendees/elected officials/]
WHAT: [Brief description of event/visuals]
WHEN: [Day/Time]
WHERE: [Location. Include any parking or entry specifications, if necessary.]

###

[ORGANIZATION BOILERPLATE]

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EngageAR partners to provide training, consultation and best practices to equip state agencies, county government, municipalities and private organizations to develop, launch and maintain civic engagement programs, including AmeriCorps programs. For more information on civic engagement, or to find out more Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service, visit

<https://www.volunteerar.org/MLK-Day-Of-Service>.

As part of Governor Asa Hutchinson's Transformation Plan, effective July 1, 2019, EngageAR is housed in the Arkansas Division of Higher Education.

NOTE: Below is a sample Governor's proclamation about the 2020 AmeriCorps Week. State-specific data points can be found [here](#). If you'd like more information or need assistance, please contact pressoffice@cns.gov or GovernmentRelations@cns.gov.

Sample AmeriCorps Week 2020 Mayor Proclamation

WHEREAS, service to others is a hallmark of the American character, and throughout our history citizens have stepped up to meet our challenges by volunteering in their communities; and

WHEREAS, AmeriCorps provides opportunities for nearly 75,000 Americans to serve their country through an intensive commitment to service at nonprofits, schools, public agencies, and community and faith-based groups across the country; and

WHEREAS, AmeriCorps enriches the lives of its members, building habits that create engaged citizens who are active participants in civic matters affecting their communities long after their service terms are completed; and

WHEREAS, AmeriCorps members encourage collaboration and partnerships, leveraging millions of volunteers in service and acquiring the support of business partners to increase the effectiveness of their initiatives; and

WHEREAS, in [CITY], more than [Insert Number of Members from State Profile] AmeriCorps members of various ages and backgrounds helped to meet local needs at more than [Insert Number of Service Locations from State Profile] locations in the State by tutoring or mentoring children and youth, supporting veterans and military families, combatting the opioid epidemic, restoring the environment, and responding to disasters [Or Insert other relevant state examples]; and

WHEREAS, in exchange for their service, AmeriCorps members develop valuable work skills; earn money for continuing education; and strengthen the lives of their families, communities, and the [Insert State Name] as a whole; and

WHEREAS, since AmeriCorps was founded in 1994, more than [Insert Number of Members Since 1994] AmeriCorps members in [STATE] served more than [Insert Number of Hours] hours and qualified for the Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards totaling more than [Insert Value of Education Awards]; and

WHEREAS, AmeriCorps Week is an opportunity to recognize the dedication and commitment of the more than 1 million Americans who have chosen to serve their country through AmeriCorps and their community partners, and to encourage more Americans to follow their footsteps in service;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that I, [INSERT NAME], Mayor of [CITY], do hereby designate March 8-14, 2020, as AmeriCorps Week in [STATE], and urge citizens to thank AmeriCorps members and alumni for their service and to find their own ways to give back to their communities.

[DATE]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact Information:

The Honorable FIRST LAST NAME:

[NAME]

[ADDRESS]

[EMAIL]

[PHONE]



Dear TITLE LAST NAME,

I am honored to invite you to serve at the ORGANIZATION AmeriCorps Week Day of Service event on DATE from TIME at LOCATION.

This year's AmeriCorps Week Day of Service will bring together XX volunteers and community members to [INSERT ACTIVITY]. As a result of this event, [END RESULT/GOAL (eg. we will prepare more than 1,000 meals for low-income seniors in our community)].

Each year, on the second Monday in March, AmeriCorps Week is observed in celebration of all things AmeriCorps – from the programs and organizations that make this national service initiative possible in communities across the country, to the members who have pledged to “Get Things Done” since the program’s inception in 1994.

If you are interested in attending, please have your staff contact NAME AND TITLE at CONTACT INFO.

Sincerely,

NAME

TITLE

ORGANIZATION