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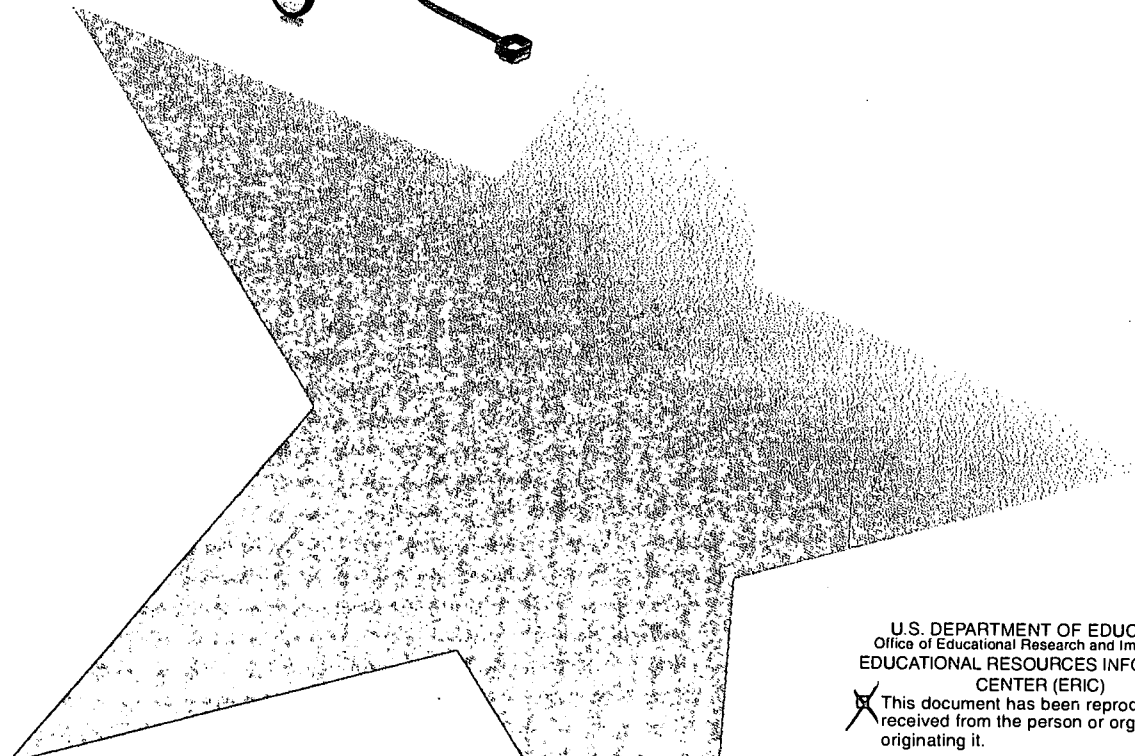
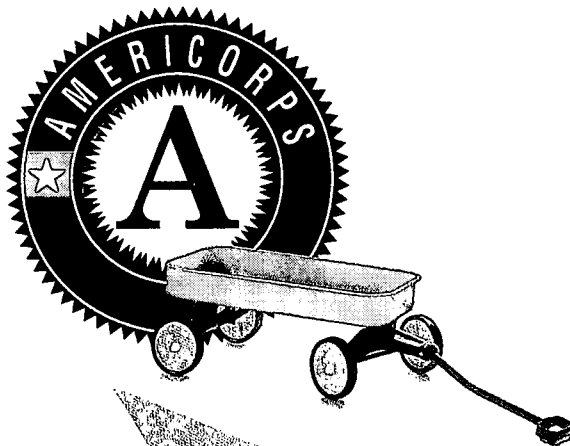
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ABSTRACT

This handbook provides AmeriCorps Promise Fellows with important information about their participation in this special initiative of AmeriCorps and America's Promise--The Alliance for Youth. Section 1 is an overview of AmeriCorps, including its mission, the mission of America's Promise--The Alliance for Youth, and the role of AmeriCorps Promise Fellows. Section 2 is a history of national service in America, leading up to the establishment of AmeriCorps in 1993. Section 3 discusses the Corporation for National Service, which administers AmeriCorps. Section 4 describes rights and responsibilities of AmeriCorps Promise Fellows; lists prohibited activities; provides information about education awards, such as loan postponement or forbearance and compelling personal circumstances; and provides information on living allowances, taxes, health care and child care, AmeriCorps training, and administrative procedures. Section 5 makes suggestions for how to make service a lifetime commitment. A glossary of AmeriCorps terms is provided. (YLB)

AMERICORPS PROMISE FELLOWS HANDBOOK

ED 439 227



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Delivering on America's Promise to Youth

I will get things done for America—to make our people safer, smarter, and healthier.

I will bring Americans together to strengthen our communities.

Faced with apathy, I will take action.

Faced with conflict, I will seek common ground.

Faced with adversity, I will persevere.

I will carry this commitment with me this year and beyond.

I am an AmeriCorps Promise Fellow, and I will get things done.

—the AmeriCorps Promise Fellow Pledge

Created in 1993, the Corporation for National Service engages Americans of all ages in service through three national initiatives:

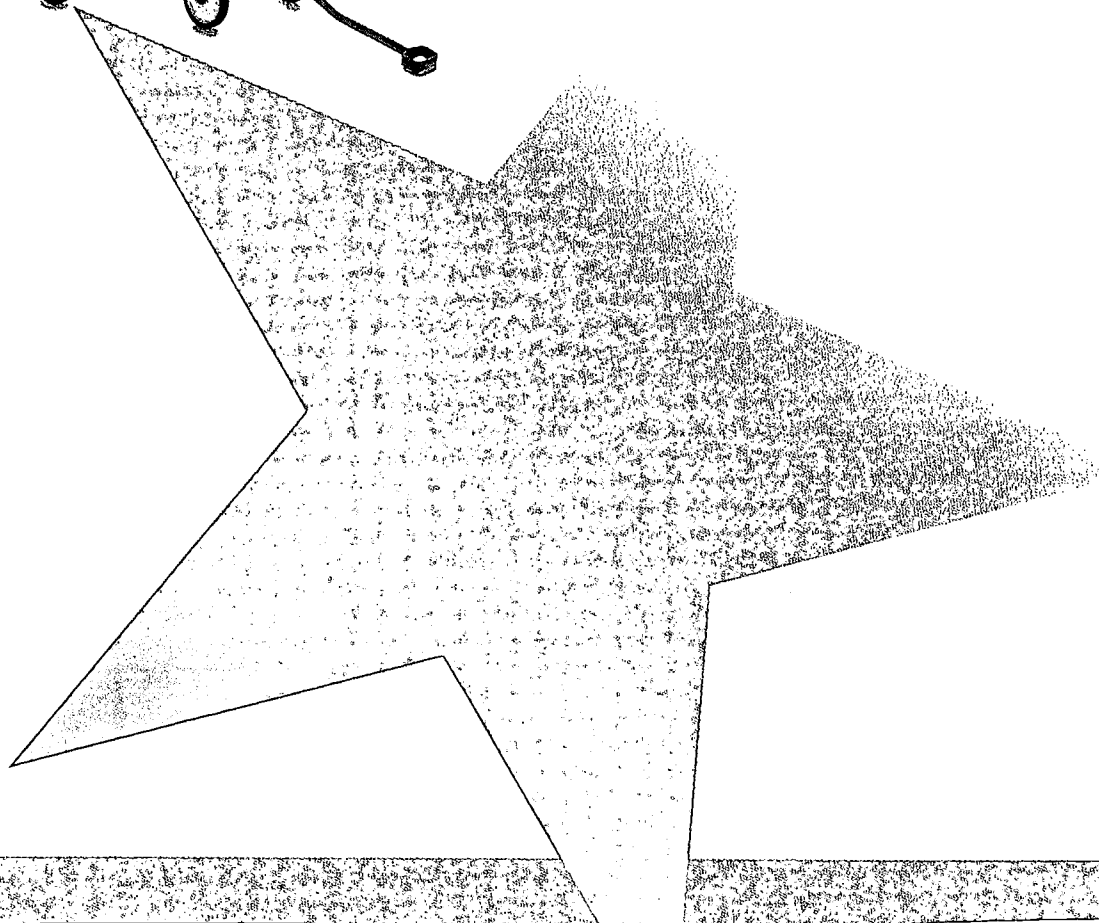
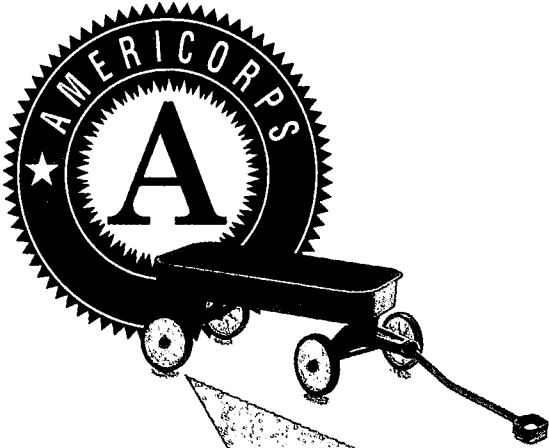
- AmeriCorps, which includes more than 600 local and national programs, AmeriCorps*VISTA, and AmeriCorps*NCCC;
- the National Senior Service Corps, which includes Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions, and the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program; and
- Learn and Serve America, which combines service and learning for students from kindergarten through college.

February 1999

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Washington, D.C. 20525
www.nationalservice.org

Upon request, this material will be made available in alternative formats for people with disabilities.

AMERICORPS PROMISE FELLOWS HANDBOOK



*Delivering
on America's
Promise to Youth*

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FOREWORD

Welcome to the national service family! I salute you for answering this distinctive call to service. By becoming an AmeriCorps Promise Fellow, you have set an example of caring and community spirit that America needs.

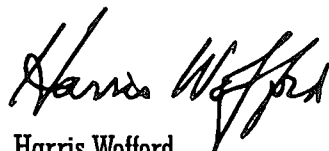
You are on a journey of discovery. This year you will discover not just America the Beautiful, from sea to shining sea. You will be directly and deeply engaged in the America of hard problems and big challenges. You will rediscover the secret heart of America and the secret of our success: the idea that it is better to serve than to be served.

The AmeriCorps Promise Fellows program grew out of the great goal set for our nation at the 1997 Presidents' Summit for America's Future in Philadelphia: to turn the tide for millions of at-risk children and youth now lacking the conditions for success in life. The strategy agreed upon at the Summit is to take concerted action to ensure that every young person has five fundamental resources they need to live healthy, fulfilling, and productive lives. The campaign launched in Philadelphia is well underway, led by General Powell and America's Promise—The Alliance for Youth. AmeriCorps, in partnership with America's Promise, created the AmeriCorps Promise Fellows program to provide a cadre of leaders dedicated to delivering the "five fundamentals."

As you begin your tour of duty, remember the watchwords of national service: "getting things done." That's our mantra and our mandate. As an AmeriCorps Promise Fellow, your mission is to get things done and "Deliver on America's Promise to Youth." Your role calls for extraordinary leadership, dedication, and imagination in helping to organize the necessary community efforts around the country.

In rural areas and urban centers, whether coordinating childhood immunization programs, developing new partnerships between private businesses and youth mentoring projects, enlisting college and secondary students to tutor elementary students, and in other ways, you and other AmeriCorps Promise Fellows will create an enduring network of resources and relationships that meet the pressing needs of youth and strengthen our communities. Together with more than 40,000 AmeriCorps members and millions of students and older Americans who are serving communities, you are part of a powerful movement that is changing America.

As an AmeriCorps Promise Fellow, you represent America at its best. Good luck and thank you for your readiness to serve and lead our country.



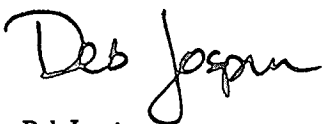
Harris Wofford
Chief Executive Officer
Corporation for National Service

Welcome to the AmeriCorps Promise Fellows program. You have seized a unique and wonderful opportunity to make a real difference in the community or communities where you serve, to gain new skills, and to serve alongside others who are devoted to service.

You also now have a significant responsibility. As an AmeriCorps Promise Fellow, you are a representative of AmeriCorps, which has included more than 100,000 men and women. Because you have made a commitment to serve, you are a role model for people of all ages in your community. Show others the importance of serving. Demonstrate what it means to be an active citizen. Provide opportunities for others to serve. Uphold and pass on the ethic of service—whether organizing a service project for local children, telling others about your experience as an AmeriCorps Promise Fellow, or encouraging your friends to join AmeriCorps.

As an AmeriCorps Promise Fellow, you are an AmeriCorps member with the specific mission of delivering the fundamental resources identified by the Presidents' Summit to children and youth around the country. This handbook provides you with important information about your participation in this special initiative of AmeriCorps and America's Promise—The Alliance for Youth. It includes an overview of AmeriCorps, a description of your rights and responsibilities, information about your education award, and suggestions for how you can make service a lifetime commitment. If you have questions about issues that are unclear or not covered in the handbook, please ask your project director. You can also receive up-to-date information on the AmeriCorps website www.americorps.org.

Best wishes for a productive and enjoyable year of "getting things done" as an AmeriCorps Promise Fellow.



Deb Jospin
Director

AMERICORPS AND AMERICA'S PROMISE— THE ALLIANCE FOR YOUTH

AmeriCorps is the national service movement that engages Americans of all ages and backgrounds in service to address the most critical problems in our nation's communities in the areas of education, public safety, the environment, and other human needs. In exchange for a year of service, AmeriCorps members earn a living allowance and an education award to pay back student loans or to finance college, graduate school, or vocational training.

Through AmeriCorps*VISTA, AmeriCorps*NCCC, and AmeriCorps*State and National programs (which includes the AmeriCorps Promise Fellows and AmeriCorps Leaders), AmeriCorps involves more than 40,000 committed men and women this year in results-driven community service.

AmeriCorps*State programs are administered by bipartisan state commissions appointed by governors through grants from, and in partnership with, the Corporation for National Service. Most members serve in local nonprofit organizations or education institutions; others serve in state or local government-sponsored programs.

In the *AmeriCorps*National* program, members serve in national or multi-state nonprofits that receive grants directly from the Corporation for National Service.

AmeriCorps*NCCC (the National Civilian Community Corps) is a 10-month, full-time residen-

tial service program for men and women age 18 to 24. AmeriCorps*NCCC members work in the environment, education, public safety, and other areas of community needs. AmeriCorps*NCCC combines the best practices of civilian service with key aspects of military service, including leadership and teambuilding. Campuses are located in Charleston, S.C.; Denver, Colo.; Perry Point, Md.; San Diego, Calif.; and Washington, D.C.

AmeriCorps*VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) serves economically challenged communities. For more than 30 years, AmeriCorps*VISTA members have helped increase the capability of people to improve the conditions of their own lives through literacy programs, housing assistance, health education, entrepreneurship, employment training, and neighborhood revitalization. Members of AmeriCorps*VISTA work full-time and live in the communities they serve, creating programs that will continue after they complete their service.

THE MISSION OF AMERICORPS

The mission of AmeriCorps is to provide opportunities for Americans of all ages to help improve the nation through service to communities-making our environment cleaner, our children healthier, our schools better, and our streets safer. A special emphasis of AmeriCorps is on the critical problems of chil-

dren and youth, and the need for all young people to serve, not just be served. A large proportion of AmeriCorps members serve in programs seeking to achieve the goals for America's youth set at the 1997 Presidents' Summit for America's Future. AmeriCorps works on the simple idea that those who take responsibility for their community ought to be rewarded with opportunity.

The four main objectives of AmeriCorps are:

Getting Things Done. AmeriCorps members help communities solve problems in the areas of education, public safety, the environment, and other human needs, both through their own direct service and by mobilizing the volunteer service of other Americans.

Strengthening Communities. AmeriCorps unites individuals from all different backgrounds—and organizations of different kinds—in a common effort to improve our communities.

Encouraging Responsibility. AmeriCorps encourages members to explore and exercise their responsibilities to their communities, their families, and themselves—during their service experience and throughout their lives.

Expanding Opportunity. AmeriCorps helps those who help America. AmeriCorps members receive awards to further their education or to pay back their student loans—as well as invaluable job experience, specialized training, and life skills.

If you have questions about how your program helps fulfill the overall mission and objectives of AmeriCorps, discuss it with your fellow members or your project director. And if you have suggestions about how AmeriCorps can better serve the nation and the communities in which you work, please discuss them with your project director, the state commission on service in your state, or the staff at the Corporation for National Service.

THE MISSION OF AMERICA'S PROMISE—THE ALLIANCE FOR YOUTH

Led by its chairman, General Colin Powell, America's Promise—The Alliance for Youth is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of the nation's youth. Founded in Philadelphia at the Presidents' Summit for America's Future, the foundation of America's Promise and the heart of its program is a set of five fundamental resources that are essential for all children in order for them to grow up strong and ready to take their place as successful adults:

- An ongoing relationship with a caring adult—parent, mentor, tutor, or coach;
- Safe places and structured activities during non-school hours;
- A healthy start;
- A marketable skill through effective education; and
- An opportunity to give back through their own community service.

America's Promise works through the synergy created by pulling together and focusing the collective resources and efforts of its partners. Today, through their individual commitments to America's Promise, corporations of every size, governments at every level, nonprofit organizations of every type, communities throughout every state, educational institutions public and private, and the fullness of the faith community are working together in collaborations never before achieved to bring their unique talents and resources to bear.

THE ROLE OF AMERICORPS PROMISE FELLOWS

With the creation of the AmeriCorps Promise Fellows program, AmeriCorps has joined forces with America's Promise to create a specialized group of AmeriCorps members, the AmeriCorps Promise Fellows, who will devote their year of service to spearheading community efforts to provide young people with the five fundamental resources identified at the Presidents' Summit.

Drawn from many walks of life, AmeriCorps Promise Fellows serve with national, state, and local nonprofit organizations to develop and coordinate large-scale activities in support of children and youth. AmeriCorps Promise Fellows lead efforts to recruit and mobilize volunteers for after-school programs, coordinate statewide youth leadership initiatives, develop new partnerships between private organizations and youth-serving programs, and design and develop long-term community service projects. As Fellows, you represent the leaders in our country's efforts to "Deliver on America's Promise to Youth."

THE HISTORY OF NATIONAL SERVICE

Service is and always has been a vital force in American life. From the American Revolution to the Civil Rights Movement and from the smallest farms to the largest cities, Americans have worked together to improve their communities and their lives.

America's tradition of service has always had strong roots in its communities. The country's vast network of civic and religious organizations; schools, colleges, and universities; and businesses and labor unions has brought people together to meet common goals. Since the nineteenth century, foreign observers have noticed how through these groups and other citizen action Americans have shown an unusual commitment to service—whether starting educational institutions, building new homes, protecting public spaces, or helping those in need.

During the Great Depression of the 1930s, President Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Congress created the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Four million young people joined in response—restoring the nation's parks, revitalizing the economy, and supporting their families and themselves. Through 11 years of Depression, the CCC provided millions of dollars in services and enabled millions of families to live in dignity.

With World War II, the GI Bill linked service to education, offering educational opportunity in return for service to the country. Through the GI Bill, millions of veterans improved their own lives by attending college. They also contributed to America's future. With the education they received, they helped to spark the economic boom that gave America the world's leading economy. The principles of the CCC and the GI Bill—encouraging Americans to serve and rewarding those

who do—inspire AmeriCorps today, including AmeriCorps*NCCC, which is directly carrying on the heritage of the CCC.

The call to service from President John Kennedy led to the formation of the Peace Corps. Since then, almost 150,000 Peace Corps volunteers have left the comforts of home and traveled to the poorest corners of the globe, teaching, helping farmers feed the hungry, and taking health care to remote areas. After meeting vital needs overseas, returned Peace Corps volunteers have put to work at home their new knowledge and spirit of citizenship, changing America for the better.

The 1960s also saw the birth of Volunteers in Service to America, or VISTA, which is now part of the AmeriCorps family. Originally authorized in 1964 by the Economic Opportunity Act, VISTA has provided full-time members to thousands of low-income communities across the nation to address a multitude of problems as defined by those communities. By the time VISTA celebrated its 30th anniversary in 1994, nearly 100,000 VISTA volunteers had served in more than 12,000 projects in an effort to build communities and help Americans achieve self-reliance.

Then came the Foster Grandparent Program, the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), and the Senior Companion Program. Together, these programs engaged older Americans, using their experience, skills, talents, and interests in a variety of service activities. Today, they constitute the National Senior Service Corps—AmeriCorps' partner in the Corporation for National Service—with approximately half a million older Americans in service.

The 1970s also saw the birth of ACTION, a new federal volunteer agency. Transferred from the Office of Economic Opportunity, VISTA joined the Foster Grandparent Program, the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, and the Senior Companion Program under the ACTION administration.

In the 1970s and 1980s, a variety of programs at the local, state, and national levels expanded to offer young people opportunities to serve. Youth corps, conservation and service corps, and school- and college-based programs energized young people in service to their communities. The movement for service-learning grew in primary and secondary schools and in colleges and universities. In the 1990s, Congress gave new impetus to this movement in the national service legislation, establishing the Learn and Serve America grant program—the vital third part of the Corporation for National Service.

Twenty years later, President George Bush signed the National and Community Service Act of 1990. Building upon this, in 1993, President Bill Clinton proposed legislation to expand opportunities for Americans to serve their communities and receive education awards. Congress enacted the National and Community Service Act, creating the Corporation for National Service. President Clinton signed the legislation on September 21, 1993, and AmeriCorps was launched the following year.

THE CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL SERVICE

The Corporation for National Service administers AmeriCorps. The program's expenses—such as the education award and other forms of member support—are provided through appropriations from Congress and support from local and private sector partners.

The Corporation for National Service offers a range of national and community service opportunities for Americans to serve full-time or part-time. In addition to AmeriCorps, the Corporation also oversees the service-learning programs of Learn and Serve America and the three programs of the National Senior Service Corps.

Learn and Serve America engages students from kindergarten through college in community projects that integrate service and learning. Learn and Serve America builds on the grassroots service-learning movement by promoting service as a learning opportunity and providing models and resources to schools, universities, and community groups. Participants in Learn and Serve programs use academic skills to solve real-world problems and learn the value of service, citizenship, and responsibility. Grants also are made to support technical assistance for expanding the field of service-learning.

The National Senior Service Corps, or "Senior Corps," engages a half million Americans age 55 and older in results-driven service as Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions, and volunteers in the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP). The Senior Corps taps the vast wealth of experience, skills, and talents of older citizens to meet community challenges.

The Corporation for National Service is structured to keep most of the decisionmaking at the state and local level. The programs in which AmeriCorps members serve work as partners with the Corporation for National Service to "get things done." The national office is focused on oversight and evaluation to ensure that all AmeriCorps programs are meeting their goals. State Commissions on National and Community Service or similar entities appointed by the Governor of each state have significant responsibilities for the Corporation's programs.

Most AmeriCorps members serve in local public and private nonprofit organizations, competitively selected by the State Commissions. With AmeriCorps*National Direct programs, the Corporation awards the grants through a national competition, but the selection and supervision of members are the responsibility of the national or multi-state nonprofits. The AmeriCorps Promise Fellows program includes both state and national grantees. AmeriCorps*NCCC is the only program in which members are recruited, selected, and administered by Corporation staff. With AmeriCorps*VISTA, in most cases the assignment of positions to local nonprofits is made by the Corporation's state offices, but in all cases the supervision of AmeriCorps*VISTA members is by those local organizations.

The Corporation seeks to ensure that all programs achieve certain goals and that programs have the flexibility to meet those goals. The Corporation for National Service and the programs in which AmeriCorps mem-

bers, including the AmeriCorps Promise Fellows, serve operate in accordance with the principles of equal opportunity and do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, or political affiliation.

For more detailed information about any of the Corporation's programs, visit the organization's website at www.nationalservice.org.

AMERICORPS POLICIES

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Like any group of individuals working together, AmeriCorps Promise Fellows must follow certain rules and regulations in order to be effective. The rights and responsibilities listed below are not inclusive, and project directors, team leaders, and project sponsors may identify other important procedures.

Rights:

- All Fellows have a right to participate in the AmeriCorps Promise Fellows program on the basis of equal opportunity and merit.
- Fellows will not be discriminated against or harassed on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, or political affiliation.
- Fellows have a right to reasonable accommodation for disabilities. AmeriCorps Promise Fellows programs will furnish reasonable accommodations for the known physical and mental limitations of qualified Fellows.
- AmeriCorps Promise Fellows who believe their rights have been violated may report such violations to the directors of their programs, who must establish and maintain a procedure for filing and adjudicating certain grievances. Fellows may also file discrimination-related grievances with the Equal Opportunity Counselor of the Corporation for National Service at (202) 606-5000, ext. 312 (voice), or (202) 606-5256 (TDD).

Responsibilities:

- In order to earn an education award, each AmeriCorps Promise Fellow must satisfactorily complete a term of service of at least 1,700 hours during a period of not less than 10 months and not more than 12 months.
- Satisfactory service includes attendance, adherence to general laws, a positive attitude, quality service, and respect toward others in the program and in the community.
- AmeriCorps Promise Fellows may be asked to sign contracts stating their rights and responsibilities while in AmeriCorps. Fellows must abide by their contracts and follow the rules of their specific program. Programs may suspend or terminate Fellows who violate the stated rules of behavior.

PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

There are certain activities, including lobbying, political, religious, or advocacy activities, that AmeriCorps Promise Fellows and staff may not perform in the course of their duties, while charging time to the AmeriCorps program, or at the request of program staff. Furthermore, Fellows and staff may not engage in any conduct in a manner that would associate the national service program or the Corporation with the prohibited activities. Programs must become familiar with the specific prohibitions described in the Corporation's formal regulations (45 C.F.R. 2520.30) and the grant provisions. The list of these prohibited activities includes:

- engaging in any effort to influence legislation, including state or local ballot initiatives or lobbying for your AmeriCorps program;
- organizing a letter-writing campaign to Congress;
- engaging in partisan political activities, or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office;
- participating in, or endorsing, events or activities that are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation, or elected officials;
- printing politically charged articles in a Corporation-funded newsletter or listserv;
- taking part in political demonstrations or rallies;
- participating in voter registration drives; and
- organizing or participating in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes.

Other prohibited activities include:

- assisting or deterring union organizing;
- impairing existing contracts or collective bargaining agreements;
- religious activities;
- activities that pose a significant safety risk to participants;
- assignments that displace employees;
- placement of Fellows in internships with for-profit businesses as part of the education and training component of the program;
- providing assistance to a business organized for profit; and
- organized fundraising.

AmeriCorps Promise Fellows, like other private citi-

zens, may participate in lobbying, political, religious, or advocacy activities on their own time, at their own expense, and at their own initiative. Fellows may not wear AmeriCorps service gear in such instances.

AmeriCorps Promise Fellows are expected to maintain a code of conduct and professional behavior at all times. Violations of this expectation could result in early termination or suspension.

EDUCATION AWARDS

The GI Bill from the 1940s serves as a model for the AmeriCorps education award. The idea behind the GI Bill was the principle of reciprocity: in return for exceptional service by its citizens, the nation invests in their higher education. Helping AmeriCorps Promise Fellows finance their education is an investment in their future and the future of this country.

To qualify for an education award, Fellows must successfully complete the required term of service for the program in which they are participating. Under special circumstances, Fellows may receive a prorated award in the event that they are unable to complete their full term of service.

The education award for Fellows is \$4,725 per term of service. Fellows may only receive post-service education awards for two terms of service in any AmeriCorps program.

Education awards can be used to pay back qualified student loans and to pay for the cost of attending a qualified institution of higher education or the expenses incurred in participating in an approved school-to-work program. Not all schools or loans are eligible. The payment will be made to the school, program, or loan holder designated by the Fellow. (It cannot be made to the AmeriCorps Promise Fellow.) Schools, however, may reimburse students for certain out-of-pocket expenses. Fellows can split up their award to pay a combination of student loans and/or educational expenses. You have seven years from the end of your

term of service to use the awards.

"Qualified student loan" is defined in the law as a loan backed by the federal government under Title IV of the Higher Education Act (except PLUS loans to parents of students) or under Titles VII or VIII of the Public Health Service Act. Additionally, loans made directly to students by the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education are qualified student loans. Education awards cannot be used to repay any other loans, even if the loan was obtained for educational purposes.

Some of the most common qualified loans are:

- Stafford Loans
- Perkins Loans
- Federal Direct Loans
- Supplemental Loans for Students (SLS)
- Federal Consolidated Loans
- Health Education Assistance Loans (HEAL)
- Health Professions Student Loans (HPSL)
- Loans made directly to Fellows by the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education

The awards are provided from a special account in the United States Treasury called the National Service Trust, which is managed by the Corporation for National Service. Education awards are subject to income taxes in the calendar year they are used. Although the Corporation will not deduct taxes, in late January it will send a Form 1099 to be used in preparing income tax returns to all AmeriCorps Promise Fellows who have made payments from their education awards or for their accrued interest during the previous year. 1099 Forms (Miscellaneous Income) reflect the amount that the National Service Trust reports to the IRS as taxable, miscellaneous income.

Loan Postponement or Forbearance

All AmeriCorps Promise Fellows are eligible to receive forbearance on most qualified student loans, meaning Fellows do not have to make payments while in service. Specific loaning institutions will determine which loans qualify for forbearance. In order to obtain forbearance, you must apply directly to the loan holder with a request "for forbearance in the repayment" of loans at the beginning of your service with AmeriCorps. Once loans have been qualified, the loan holder will give you a form that must be completed and sent to the National Service Trust for verification of service participation. The Trust will fill out its portion and return it to the loan holder. In order for the Trust to proceed, your enrollment form must have been sent to the Corporation for National Service.

AmeriCorps Promise Fellows who successfully complete their term of service will be exempt from paying the interest that accrues on qualified student loans while they are serving. After your service, the interest that accrued while you were serving as an AmeriCorps Promise Fellow will be paid by the Corporation for National Service. In order to have this interest paid, you must mail a bill or statement from the lender that shows the total amount of interest that accrued (or the daily amount accrued), as well as the dates of the forbearance period to the National Service Trust. Since these are benefits beyond the education award, interest payments will not be deducted from the amount of the award.

Unless an AmeriCorps Promise Fellow is released from service for compelling personal circumstances, the National Service Trust cannot pay any interest accrued during the period if you do not complete your full term of service. But if you leave AmeriCorps before completing your service, you should check with your lender to determine whether the student loan qualifies for another type of deferment.

Compelling Personal Circumstances

Directors of individual programs determine the compelling personal circumstances under which AmeriCorps Promise Fellows may be released from a term of service. Examples of circumstances that may be considered are serious injury or illness to the Fellow, the death of an immediate family member, or the premature termination of the program or other programmatic problems beyond the Fellow's control. Reasons such as dissatisfaction with assignments, the desire to return to school, to move to another part of the country, or to take a job, however, would not ordinarily justify such a release.

At the discretion of the program, an AmeriCorps Promise Fellow who completes at least 15 percent of his or her service (or 255 hours of full-time service) and is released for compelling personal reasons may receive a prorated award, based on the length of service. For example, if a Fellow serves four months and then departs due to a serious illness, a \$1,575 education award, representing one-third of \$4,725, would be earned. AmeriCorps Promise Fellows who quit for other reasons or who are released for cause are not eligible for any portion of the award. Another option when leaving for compelling personal circumstances is to resume your service within two years of your release.

Fellows may also lose their eligibility for their education award if they are removed from their project due to misconduct. If you drop out without obtaining a release for compelling personal circumstances or if you are convicted of a felony or the sale or distribution of a controlled substance during a term of service, not only will you lose the education award, but the Corporation will also refuse payment on any interest that accrued if you had obtained loan forbearance. Additionally, you may be disqualified from future service through AmeriCorps.

Remember, education awards are in return for successfully completing one year of service. If you have additional questions about your education award, you

may either call (202) 606-5000, ext. 347, or write the National Service Trust at the Corporation for National Service. For questions regarding student financial aid programs, including outstanding loans, you should contact either your campus student financial aid office or the Department of Education at (800) 4FEDAID (800) 433-3243.

LIVING ALLOWANCE

The living allowance provided to AmeriCorps Promise Fellows is \$13,000 for Fellows serving 12 months. Fellows who serve less than 12 months will receive a prorated living allowance. The living allowance will be paid in regular increments. The allowance is intended to assist with basic necessities during your service. It is not a wage.

TAXES

The programs in which AmeriCorps Promise Fellows serve withhold personal income tax from living allowances, requiring each Fellow to complete a W-4 form at the beginning of the term of service as well as a W-2 form at the close of the tax year. These programs also withhold FICA taxes from the living allowance. The Corporation mails a W-2 form to all AmeriCorps Promise Fellows by January 31 of each year showing them the status of their education award.

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT

AmeriCorps Promise Fellows receive educational support services. Fellows who have not completed their high school education will be provided support to obtain a high school diploma or GED certificate before completing their term of service. Some programs may also provide college readiness programs for Fellows going on to higher education. Similarly, programs may offer assistance with resume writing and preparation of college applications and may work with local

employers to arrange job interviews or job placement. Because education is a priority, AmeriCorps Promise Fellows must have their GEDs, or have obtained a waiver, to receive their education awards.

HEALTH CARE AND CHILD CARE

The AmeriCorps Promise Fellows program does not provide health care or child care for Fellows. However, such care may be offered by the local program that is responsible for the Fellows.

AMERICORPS TRAINING

Most AmeriCorps Promise Fellows receive training throughout their service to ensure the success in their work and to foster personal and professional development. Fellows may undergo pre-service, in-service, and close-of-service training as determined by their specific program.

At the start of their service, AmeriCorps Promise Fellows may participate in an intense orientation session. During this orientation, Fellows will review basic policies and procedures, undergo training for their assigned service activities, and be introduced to the AmeriCorps network, the history of service, and the role of citizenship and volunteering. In addition, Fellows may be trained in communication, conflict resolution, and CPR/first aid.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

Grievance Procedures. During an AmeriCorps Promise Fellow's service, a situation may arise that directly affects the Fellow's work situation, or that the Fellow believes violates regulations governing the terms and conditions of service resulting in a denial or infringement of a right or benefit to the Fellow. Because grievance procedures vary among programs, you should direct specific questions to your project director.

Voting. AmeriCorps Promise Fellows are encouraged to register to vote and exercise their voting privileges. If you are unable to vote before or after your assigned hours of service, you will be given an opportunity to do so without incurring any penalties.

Jury Duty. Serving on a jury is a significant responsibility of citizenship. Accordingly, Fellows are encouraged to serve on jury duty when called and will not be penalized for doing so. During the duration of jury duty, Fellows will continue both to accrue their normal service hours and to receive their living allowance. You may also keep reimbursements for incidental expenses received from the court.

Service in the Armed Forces Reserves. Generally, the Reserves of the U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Coast Guard, the Army National Guard, and the Air National Guard requires reservists to serve one weekend a month plus 12 to 15 days a year. If involved AmeriCorps Promise Fellows are able to choose when to fulfill their annual two-week active duty requirement, they should try not to disrupt their AmeriCorps service. In instances where the dates of active duty are inflexible and conflict with AmeriCorps service, Fellows will be granted a leave of absence for the two-week period of active duty. However, Fellows will not receive time-off for additional Reserves-related service beyond the two weeks. Although AmeriCorps Promise Fellows will be credited with service hours and will continue to receive their living allowance while fulfilling their two-week period of active duty, they will not earn service credit for the once-a-month weekend service in the Reserves.

STAYING INVOLVED

Your AmeriCorps experience is only one moment in a lifetime of service opportunities. You may want to commit yourself to another term of service in AmeriCorps or pursue other service options in your community. For example, you may want to volunteer through your school, nearby Voluntary Action Centers (1-800-879-5400), or other local organizations. Or you may choose to work independently, forming your own service projects. Regardless of the path you choose, as an AmeriCorps graduate, you will have a unique opportunity to transform your communities and shape the future of America.

The Recruitment Office at the Corporation for National Service relies on alumni to spread the word about AmeriCorps. (The Recruitment Office may be reached at (202) 606-5000, ext. 566.)

If you want to stay involved in the AmeriCorps network, you may be eligible to participate in a second year of AmeriCorps service—either as an AmeriCorps Promise Fellow, AmeriCorps*VISTA or an AmeriCorps Leader. Fellows who have completed one year of service may earn a second education award and living allowance during their second year of service.

Another way AmeriCorps members may stay involved is through AmeriCorps Alums, Inc. This association provides former members with an ongoing affiliation with AmeriCorps, facilitates continued involvement in communities, and makes connections between AmeriCorps alumni. AmeriCorps Alums may be reached at:

AmeriCorps Alums, Inc.
1400 Eye Street, N.W.
Suite 800
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 729-8180
(202) 729-8102 (fax)
e-mail: acorpalums@aol.com
www.americorpsalums.org

GLOSSARY OF AMERICORPS TERMS

America's Promise—The Alliance for Youth

The multi-year, national campaign that is taking the mission and goals of the Presidents' Summit for America's Future forward. Founded by General Colin Powell, America's Promise is working to ensure that the nation's young people have access to the five fundamental resources by coordinating the involvement of organizations and individuals from the private, public, and non-profit sectors in making and delivering on commitments to youth.

AmeriCorps

The national service initiative organized by the Corporation for National Service in which full-time and part-time members serve in more than a thousand service programs. These programs in which members serve have four common goals for AmeriCorps service:

- Getting things done through direct and demonstrable service that meets communities' education, public safety, environmental, and other human needs.
- Strengthening communities by bringing together Americans of all ages and backgrounds in the common effort to improve our communities.
- Encouraging responsibility by encouraging members to explore and exercise their responsibilities toward their communities, their families, and themselves.
- Expanding opportunity by enhancing members' educational opportunities, job experience, and life skills. In return for full- or part-time service, AmeriCorps members may receive post-service education awards.

AmeriCorps*National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC)

AmeriCorps*NCCC is a ten-month, full-time residential service and leadership program for men and women age 18 to 24. Members meet education, public safety, and other community needs, with a special focus on the environment. AmeriCorps*NCCC combines civilian service with the ethic of military service, including leadership and teambuilding. AmeriCorps*NCCC campuses are located in San Diego, Calif.; Denver, Colo.; Charleston, S.C.; Perryville, Md.; and Washington, D.C.

AmeriCorps*VISTA

AmeriCorps*VISTA has served America's economically challenged communities for more than 30 years. Members increase the capability of people to improve their lives through employment training, literacy programs, housing assistance, health education, entrepreneurship, and neighborhood revitalization. All AmeriCorps*VISTA members live in the communities they serve.

AmeriCorps Leaders

AmeriCorps Leaders are promising leaders in the field of service who are nominated for the program toward the end of their first term as an AmeriCorps member. During their year-long training program, they receive formal classroom training as well as hands-on, experiential training while serving in a leadership role at a service site. Graduates of national service programs are eligible to be chosen for the AmeriCorps Leaders Program.

AmeriCorps member

An individual who is selected to serve in a national service position in a program authorized by AmeriCorps and who is eligible at the end of service to receive an education award.

AmeriCorps national service network

The network of all AmeriCorps programs, including AmeriCorps*State and National, AmeriCorps*NCCC, and AmeriCorps*VISTA.

AmeriCorps Promise Fellow

An AmeriCorps member who is part of the leadership cadre of committed and talented individuals dedicated to building a better future for children and youth by serving in the AmeriCorps Promise Fellows program, a partnership of AmeriCorps and America's Promise—The Alliance for Youth.

education award

A benefit of \$4,725 (full-time) or \$2,363.50 (part-time) that AmeriCorps members may receive after successful completion of a term of service. The award is paid directly to a lending or educational institution and may be used to pay off qualified education loans or to finance qualified college, graduate school, or vocational school training.

five fundamental resources

The five resources identified by the Presidents' Summit for America's Future that are necessary for the nation's children and youth to build healthy, fulfilling, and productive lives. The five fundamental resources are:

- An ongoing relationship with a caring adult—parent, mentor, tutor, or coach;
- Safe places and structured activities during non-school hours;
- A healthy start;

- A marketable skill through effective education; and
- An opportunity to give back through their own community service.

national parent organizations

National nonprofits that operate an AmeriCorps grant for AmeriCorps members or AmeriCorps Promise Fellows serving in more than one state, funded through the AmeriCorps*National programs.

National Service Trust

A trust fund in the United States Treasury Department, administered by the Corporation for National Service, as established by the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, to finance AmeriCorps member education awards.

Presidents' Summit for America's Future

The historic gathering of President Clinton, former Presidents Bush, Carter, and Ford, Nancy Reagan, and 3,000 government, business, and nonprofit leaders held in Philadelphia in April 1997. The Summit, co-sponsored by the Corporation for National Service and the Points of Light Foundation, launched a national campaign to help at-risk youth. Its goals are now being carried forward by America's Promise—The Alliance for Youth, founded by General Colin Powell.

State commissions

The 15- to 25-member, independent, bipartisan commissions appointed by Governors to implement service programs in the states. Each state commission receives funding from the Corporation for National Service and is led by an executive director. The state commission's duties include developing a unified state plan for service, submitting the state's overall applications to the Corporation, making the primary grant decisions for most of the AmeriCorps positions in state and local organizations, and overseeing these grant programs.

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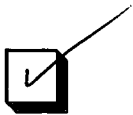


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