



# AMERICORPS ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

A GUIDE FOR STATE  
SERVICE COMMISSIONS

AMERICA'S  
SERVICE  
COMMISSIONS



# Overview and Summary

In 2020 and 2021, America's Service Commissions (ASC) managed AmeriCorps Alumni Support Opt-In projects that included two cohorts of state service commission working groups and research on AmeriCorps alumni engagement strategies. This resource was informed by those efforts and is designed to offer state service commissions a menu of strategies to engage AmeriCorps Alums and tools to support action planning. This guide was developed for ASC by Kristen Henry, Consultant, in 2020 and updated in 2022. ASC is grateful for the contributions, ideas, examples, and strategies shared by state service commissions and national service partners.

AmeriCorps Alumni engagement represents a wide range of activities and varies state-to-state. The intent of this resource is to guide state service commissions in developing an action plan for AmeriCorps alumni engagement that is responsive to and reflective of individual state needs and contexts. This resource has the following sections:

- **AmeriCorps Alumni Engagement Highlights:** This section provides a few examples of how state service commissions around the country are supporting and engaging AmeriCorps Alums.
- **Pathway to AmeriCorps Alumni Engagement:** This section outlines a series of suggested action steps with example activities that state service commissions can consider as they begin to create an action plan to support AmeriCorps alums in their state. State service commission staff can use this section to brainstorm strategies and take notes on activities appropriate for the state.
- **Appendix:** The appendix includes templates and resources to support state service commissions in planning action steps, collecting feedback, and developing an online hub for AmeriCorps alumni engagement.

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# AmeriCorps Alumni Engagement Highlights

This section highlights a few examples of how state service commissions are engaging and supporting AmeriCorps Alumni.

**Arkansas:** EngageAR promotes the development and growth of local AmeriCorps Alumni chapters in the State of Arkansas by providing training, technical assistance, and commission staff liaison support. EngageAR leverages Commission Investment Funds to support these alumni engagement activities as well as mini-grant opportunities that fund chapters to hold special events during national days of service. For AmeriCorps Week 2020, EngageAR funded the Little Rock AmeriCorps Alumni Chapter to host a "National Service Convention" that brought together currently serving members, alumni, and prospective applicants for a day of service-focused speakers and workshops. The Chapter was able to receive the mini-grant funding through an AmeriCorps program acting as an intermediary. In 2021, the Little Rock Chapter shifted to a statewide approach and was renamed AmeriCorps Alums Arkansas. The Chapter now has leadership representation from across the state and intends on offering regional events for alumni.

**California:** In 2019, California Volunteers allocated \$9.31 million to fund the state education award for all full-time AmeriCorps members for the 2019-2020 program year. Upon successfully completing 1700 hours of service, AmeriCorps members could earn an Eli Segal Education Award from the National Service Trust and an additional Education Award from the state. When combined with the Segal Education Award, full-time AmeriCorps members can earn \$10,000 in total education awards for their year of service. The education awards may be used to cover educational costs at post-secondary institutions and other education expenses allowed by the Segal Education Award.

**Delaware:** Volunteer Delaware — The Governor's Commission on Community and Volunteer Service (GCCVS) hired a contractor for "Auxiliary Member and Alumni Experience Coordination" and budgeted alumni engagement activities using Commission Investment Funds. The contractor has the unique experience of serving two terms as an AmeriCorps member. She also served as an AmeriCorps VISTA and AmeriCorps State Program Director along with being a Grant Writer/Manager. The contractor is responsible for planning, coordination, and oversight of member and alumni events, training sessions, and service projects as well as creating the member calendar for events throughout the service year. The contractor is also responsible for coordinating the Xtra Corps Council that serves as an advisory council to the GCCVS for statewide volunteer events and engaging members throughout the service year. The commission invites alums to attend all member training sessions, including the Life After AmeriCorps Conference, AmeriCorps Week, AmeriCorps Recognition Week, AmeriCorps Awareness Day, and Alumni Reunion Weekend & Service Project. Current members and alumni accomplishments are highlighted in the AmeriCorps Delaware Newsletter. The commission's Xtra Corps Council includes alumni slots and engages alums with currently serving members to support enhancing the member and alum experience. The commission utilizes research, small groups, and survey and data analysis to determine the needs of program managers and service members to get real-time feedback throughout the service year. The commission has a high level of success with the methods implemented for the member and alumni experience.

**Indiana:** In 2020, Serve Indiana launched a Serve Indiana Ambassador Program that focuses on identifying, uplifting, and engaging AmeriCorps alumni in Indiana. This program was included as a strategy in the 2019-2022 Indiana State Service Plan to provide Serve Indiana commissioners, AmeriCorps alumni, and program staff, as well as other community supporters, with a productive platform to tell the Serve Indiana story and promote AmeriCorps. In fall 2020, Serve Indiana began working with partners to identify alums and then uplift those alumni by capturing key and compelling stories of their leadership, impact, and personal and professional

trajectory since completing AmeriCorps. Once stories are compiled, Serve Indiana will share them on social media and other communications platforms. Future plans are to engage a broad base of Indiana alumni in special opportunities to advance the awareness of Serve Indiana and AmeriCorps service in Indiana as well as build pipelines for advocacy and education about national service.

**Massachusetts:** The Massachusetts Service Alliance acts as a fiscal sponsor and has a voluntary staff liaison to support the AmeriCorps Alums Boston Chapter. This relationship has allowed the chapter to receive donations of cash and other revenue to support alumni engagement activities. In addition to managing the fiscal sponsorship, the staff liaison maintains regular communication between the commission and chapter to support collaboration.

**Montana:** Serve Montana supports and partners with the Montana Campus Compact as they actively engage higher education institutions in Montana to match the Education Award at different levels. In November 2014, the Montana Campus Compact's board voted to match the AmeriCorps Education Award up to a certain limit and currently most of the affiliate campuses in the network match the Award.

**Nebraska:** In August 2020, the Governor of Nebraska approved LB477, which provides a Nebraska state income tax exemption for use of the Segal Education Award. ServeNebraska prepared commissioners to be able to educate state legislators on AmeriCorps, including how AmeriCorps service impacts the state and individual districts; how the award is used as a tool for accessing higher education; and why removing barriers to using the award benefits alums. They also highlighted how and where the Segal Education Award fosters economic impact through its use across the state. ServeNebraska held a Senator's Breakfast event, where they paired commissioners and program directors with state legislators in order to educate them on the Segal Education Award, including inviting AmeriCorps alums to share their personal stories about the burden of being taxed on the use of the award.

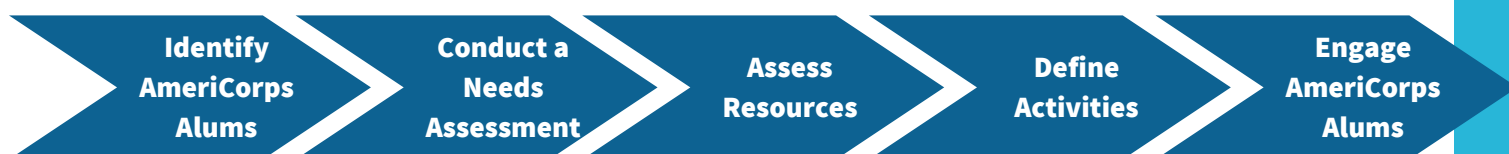
**New Hampshire:** In 2019, a commission was established to study career pathways from full-time service year programs to postsecondary education and employment opportunities in support of New Hampshire's future workforce needs. The commission researched existing career pathway models between service year programs, higher education institutions, and employers, including hiring/admission policies, credit-for service, scholarship-for-service, and residency requirements. A final report of the commission was released in November 2020 with several recommendations that included extending the commission's work by establishing a new Service Year Workforce Committee under Volunteer NH's existing governance structure, continuing to engage leaders from the national service field; higher education; state government; and employers across the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. Other recommendations included strengthening and establishing new pathways from service year to postsecondary education and employment in New Hampshire.

**Pennsylvania:** PennSERVE supports the Philadelphia AmeriCorps Alumni Chapter through involvement with the Philadelphia National Service Task Force Steering Committee managed by the Mayor's Office of Civic Engagement and Volunteer Service — City of Philadelphia (MOCEVS). In 2019, PennSERVE introduced the volunteer AmeriCorps Alums chapter leader to MOCEVS and facilitated a dialogue about chapter management and sustainability. As a result of this discussion, the chapter was relaunched with structural support from MOCEVS. The Chapter Board was announced in April 2020 and MOCEVS has a staff liaison to the Chapter. The Chapter relaunch started with a visioning session and was informed by the structure of the previous Philadelphia AmeriCorps Alumni Chapter.

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# Pathway to AmeriCorps Alumni Engagement

This section outlines a pathway that state service commissions can take to build an action plan for AmeriCorps alumni engagement. Each step includes example activities to consider.



Action Steps	Example Activities	Commission Notes
Identify AmeriCorps Alums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Collaborate with AmeriCorps State Programs to provide opportunities for members to opt-in to receive commission communication</li><li>Conduct outreach to alums at events, on social media, and through commission communications outlets and consider the different audiences when developing messaging and identifying platforms</li></ul>	



Action Steps	Example Activities	Commission Notes
Identify AmeriCorps Alums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilize the commission's eGrants account to locate, download, and preserve the state's available AmeriCorps alumni data (including contact information) to keep on file for future outreach; develop a strategy to make contact with these alumni to confirm interest in receiving AmeriCorps-related job opportunities and invitations while ensuring data privacy compliance</li> <li>Research alumni profiles on LinkedIn</li> <li>Research alumni chapters on Facebook and other social media platforms</li> <li>Create an AmeriCorps member directory that can be used for follow up at the end of the service term</li> <li>Create a directory of existing alumni networks and/or chapters in the state</li> <li>Collaborate with AmeriCorps National Direct, VISTA, and NCCC programs to connect with exiting members and alums</li> </ul>	



Action Steps	Example Activities	Commission Notes
Identify AmeriCorps Alums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outreach to state and local government agencies, institutions of higher education, community-based organizations that serve as volunteer and civic engagement hubs (Service Enterprises, etc.), and professional networks (YNPN, etc.) to identify alums</li> <li>• Collaborate with Service Year Alliance AmeriCorps Alums engagement efforts</li> <li>• Collect information on AmeriCorps alumni engagement during the AmeriCorps National Direct consultation process</li> <li>• Utilize event and other registration forms to request alumni status</li> <li>• Collect and manage AmeriCorps member contact information to distribute an AmeriCorps member welcome letter, exit letter, and certificate of completion</li> <li>• Issue the AmeriCorps Legislative Survey to your state's legislative offices to identify AmeriCorps alumni working or serving in the State Legislature each year (See Appendix A)</li> </ul>	

Action Steps	Example Activities	Commission Notes
Conduct a Needs Assessment: Determine How Alums Can Support the Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start a conversation with commission staff and commissioners to identify needs and opportunities to engage AmeriCorps alums and define what is meant by “engagement”</li> <li>• Create a staff and/or board committee to explore and support alumni engagement efforts</li> <li>• Develop a logic model focused on alumni engagement</li> <li>• Create an action plan for alumni engagement (See Appendix B)</li> <li>• Include goals and strategies for alumni engagement in the State Service Plan and/or other strategic plans</li> </ul>	
Conduct a Needs Assessment: Determine How the Commission Can Support AmeriCorps Alums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey AmeriCorps State programs to identify alumni engagement efforts and opportunities for state commission support (See Appendix C)</li> <li>• Include trainings and discussions about AmeriCorps alumni engagement in AmeriCorps State Program Director meetings</li> </ul>	

Action Steps	Example Activities	Commission Notes
Conduct a Needs Assessment: Determine How the Commission Can Support AmeriCorps Alums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey exiting members and alums to assess needs, motivation, and interests (See Appendix D)</li> <li>• Meet with AmeriCorps alumni network leaders to learn how alums would like to connect and be engaged</li> <li>• Utilize the AmeriCorps State program monitoring process to collect information from program staff and members about Life After AmeriCorps activities, AmeriCorps alumni network awareness, and alumni engagement needs</li> <li>• Promote Service Year Alliance AmeriCorps Alums resources to support chapter development and management</li> </ul>	
Assess Resources to Engage AmeriCorps Alums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assign a staff member or commissioner to serve as a liaison to an alumni chapter or network</li> <li>• Create responsibilities within a current commission staff role to support alumni engagement activities</li> </ul>	

Action Steps	Example Activities	Commission Notes
Assess Resources to Engage AmeriCorps Alums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hire a consultant or contracted position to manage alumni engagement activities</li> <li>• Create a board committee or working group to focus on alumni engagement activities</li> <li>• Create a volunteer, intern, fellow, or VISTA role assigned to alumni engagement activities</li> <li>• Identify state commission funding that can support alumni engagement activities</li> <li>• Consider requiring, funding, and/or incentivizing AmeriCorps State programs to have an alumni engagement coordinator or program in place for long-term alumni tracking and engagement</li> <li>• Consider opportunities for alumni chapter fiscal sponsorship</li> <li>• Support alumni chapters in identifying fiscal sponsor organizations and identify vehicles to support chapters that may not be able to receive funding directly</li> </ul>	

Action Steps	Example Activities	Commission Notes
Assess Resources to Engage AmeriCorps Alums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore opportunities for the commission and/or community partners to co-sponsor alums chapters for events and activities</li> <li>• Explore opportunities to strengthen the AmeriCorps member service experience to build an AmeriCorps identity while members are in service</li> <li>• Explore opportunities with partners to create incentive or discount programs for alums (examples: free or discounted professional development, certifications, partnerships with local businesses, events, etc.)</li> </ul>	
Define Activities: Strategize with Alums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruit alums for state commission staff positions</li> <li>• Recruit alums to serve as commissioners</li> <li>• Create an AmeriCorps leadership council or working group that includes alumni to advise and support AmeriCorps alumni engagement and DEI activities</li> <li>• Invite alumni input for the State Service Plan and other strategic plan development</li> </ul>	

Action Steps	Example Activities	Commission Notes
Define Activities: Strategize with Alums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruit alums for commission working groups, advisory groups, and committees — especially Public Policy/Advocacy Committees</li> </ul>	
Define Activities: Support Alumni Employment Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore the commission joining <u>Employers of National Service</u> and/or create a hiring preference for alums</li> <li>Encourage community, government, and corporate partners to become Employers of National Service</li> <li>Establish an alumni job board</li> <li>Connect alums with state and local workforce development agency resources to support professional and career development</li> <li>Incorporate state workforce development programming and goals with member professional development</li> <li>Provide training, webinars, and/or guides on topics such as how to incorporate AmeriCorps service in your resume and interviews</li> </ul>	

Action Steps	Example Activities	Commission Notes
Define Activities: Support Alumni Education Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote <u>Schools of National Service</u></li> <li>Engage institutions of higher education in matching the Segal Education Award and collaborate with higher education networks in the state</li> <li>Support alums in receiving in-state college tuition</li> <li>Support waived application fees for alums</li> <li>Support income tax exemption for the Segal Education Award</li> <li>Support service for credit models</li> <li>Provide training, webinars, and/or guides on how to finance higher education and use the Segal Education Award</li> </ul>	
Define Activities: Provide Support to Current Members and Alums for Life After AmeriCorps (LAA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Survey AmeriCorps program needs related to LAA and alumni support as part of program monitoring or needs assessments for training and technical assistance planning</li> </ul>	



Action Steps	Example Activities	Commission Notes
<p>Define Activities: Provide Support to Current Members and Alums for Life After AmeriCorps (LAA)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create resources, training, and professional development opportunities for AmeriCorps program staff on LAA and alumni engagement strategies (also consider LAA needs and support activities for Professional Corps members)</li> <li>• Engage alums as presenters and speakers at state commission events and training sessions; consider developing an AmeriCorps alumni speaker directory</li> <li>• Create and post LAA guides, training tools, webinars, or an online resource hub (see Appendix E)</li> <li>• Encourage AmeriCorps State programs to provide exiting members with the AmeriCorps Alums website and Service Year Alliance resources</li> <li>• Provide in-person and virtual career, education, and LAA support and training sessions</li> </ul>	

Action Steps	Example Activities	Commission Notes
Define Activities: Provide Support to Current Members and Alums for Life After AmeriCorps (LAA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide AmeriCorps programs with guidance and technical assistance for supporting a strong LAA component</li> <li>• Survey alums to track their employment and education pathways to identify where they are now, how they used their Education Award, and if they remained in the state</li> <li>• Educate commissioners on topics impacting AmeriCorps alums to champion expanding and strengthening post-service opportunities for education and employment</li> <li>• Engage AmeriCorps alums as trainers and presenters for LAA support</li> </ul>	
Define Activities: Involve Alums in AmeriCorps State and Other Commission Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep chapter leader email addresses and contact information for quick invitations, requests, etc.</li> <li>• Recruit alums to participate as grant reviewers in commission grant competitions</li> <li>• Engage alums in fundraising activities to sponsor AmeriCorps member events, training sessions, and activities</li> </ul>	

Action Steps	Example Activities	Commission Notes
<p>Define Activities: Involve Alums in AmeriCorps State and Other Commission Programs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage alums in recruiting prospective AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps programs (provide training, talking points, and outreach materials to alums)</li> <li>• Involve alums in advising AmeriCorps applicants and new programs on how to create effective AmeriCorps member management and training strategies to enhance the member experience</li> <li>• Encourage alumni chapters to apply for mini-grant and other state commission funding opportunities</li> <li>• Develop mentoring opportunities for alums to support current members throughout the service term</li> <li>• Identify opportunities for alums to support members who are relocating to serve in finding housing options or host members as they transition</li> <li>• Plan social events for alums and members to meet and connect</li> </ul>	

Action Steps	Example Activities	Commission Notes
Define Activities: Involve Alums in AmeriCorps State and Other Commission Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider opportunities to provide compensation, stipends, and/or discounted resources to alums for their contributions to commission activities</li> </ul>	
Define Activities: Mobilize Alums as Volunteers and Service Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage alums as volunteers and in volunteer mobilization roles</li> <li>Engage alums in delivering volunteer training sessions</li> <li>Engage alumni networks in days of service, AmeriCorps Week, and other volunteer events</li> <li>Engage alums as speakers to promote AmeriCorps and volunteer programs at K-12 schools, higher education institutions, and community-based organizations</li> <li>Recruit and engage alums in disaster response</li> <li>Recruit alums to participate in disaster preparedness training sessions and activities</li> </ul>	
Define Activities: Create Systems to Stay Connected with Alums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a database with alumni contact information</li> </ul>	

Action Steps	Example Activities	Commission Notes
Define Activities: Create Systems to Stay Connected with Alums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain an alumni email list, group, or listserv</li> <li>• Establish social media platforms for alumni engagement</li> <li>• Create an alumni newsletter or include alumni features in the state commission newsletter</li> <li>• Develop an alums LinkedIn page</li> <li>• Create an online alumni portal on the state commission website to connect alums to training, career resources, volunteer opportunities, and other alums</li> </ul>	
Define Activities: Recognize Alums and Elevate Their Service Stories to Promote AmeriCorps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify opportunities to recognize alums in volunteer recognition plans (designate an alum award, etc.)</li> <li>• Develop a brand ambassador program to highlight alumni service stories on social media and in the community</li> <li>• Share alumni testimonies at meetings, trainings, and events</li> <li>• Invite alums to contribute to commission social media</li> </ul>	

Action Steps	Example Activities	Commission Notes
Define Activities: Recognize Alums and Elevate Their Service Stories to Promote AmeriCorps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite alums to speak to legislators about AmeriCorps</li> </ul>	
Define Activities: Mobilize AmeriCorps Alumni in Advocacy and Public Policy Efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage alums to join ASC's <u>States for Service Coalition</u> to protect and expand national service</li> <li>• Identify a small group of alums who are passionate about AmeriCorps to become year-round advocacy leaders and representatives for the commission; connect them to ASC/States for Service or other advocacy trainings to develop their skills (ASC/S4S monthly webinars, boot camps, Hill Days, internship opportunities, certification trainings, etc.)</li> <li>• Form a state commission Public Policy Committee that includes alumni as well as commissioners</li> <li>• Issue the AmeriCorps Legislative Survey to the state's legislative offices to identify AmeriCorps alumni working or serving in the State Legislature each year (See Appendix A)</li> </ul>	

Action Steps	Example Activities	Commission Notes
Define Activities: Mobilize AmeriCorps Alumni in Advocacy and Public Policy Efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Host an annual State Capitol Day or Congressional District Office Visit Day and invite AmeriCorps alumni to participate and attend or lead meetings with legislators to educate them on the return on investment and impact of AmeriCorps in the state</li> <li>• Encourage AmeriCorps alumni to consider careers in politics and run for local, state, or federal elected office by encouraging them to sign up for the <a href="#">New Politics Academy</a>.</li> </ul>	
Engage AmeriCorps Alums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Announce the launch of alumni engagement activities</li> <li>• Track progress towards goals and regularly analyze data and results to inform program improvement</li> <li>• Regularly revisit earlier steps and opportunities in the pathway to AmeriCorps alumni engagement</li> </ul>	

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# Appendix A: AmeriCorps Legislative Survey Template

Developed by SPPG for America's Service Commissions

This survey can be used in email format or input into an online survey service such as SurveyMonkey to collect data from legislators. SPPG recommends sending this short survey to legislators via email.

## Introduction

The [state commission] is seeking information from legislators regarding your knowledge of and interest in national and community service in the state. We would like to know if you are familiar with programs such as AmeriCorps, AmeriCorps Seniors, [state program(s)], and volunteering in your community, as well as your level of interest in volunteerism in [state] regardless of your knowledge of programs. Thank you in advance for your time responding to this short survey.

For questions regarding this survey, please contact [name and contact info].

## Definitions *(put in a word document and attached to your email)*

- AmeriCorps — Grants are provided to organizations through the state and directly from the federal government to support organizational capacity-building, education, healthy futures, environment, veterans, economic opportunity, and other areas. AmeriCorps members focus on direct service in local communities and are provided a living stipend equitable to sub-minimum wage. They are also given an Education Award upon successful completion of their service to spend on education and training.

- AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) — AmeriCorps VISTA focuses on anti-poverty, community empowerment, and sustainable solutions by having members provide capacity-building services at host organizations. VISTAs are not involved in direct service like their AmeriCorps counterparts. They are also provided a sub-minimum wage stipend and Education Award.
- [Other programs as examples of national and community service and volunteerism in your state]

### Survey Questions

1. Have you or a family member been a member or worked with a member of a national and community service program, such as AmeriCorps, AmeriCorps VISTA, and/or others (see definition document attached to this email)?

- Yes
- If yes, how?
- No

2. Do you know of local examples of volunteerism and/or national and community service in your community?

- Yes
- If yes, what?
- No

3. Can we contact you regarding your interest in national and community service and volunteerism and connect you to service and volunteerism in your community?

- Yes
- No

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# Appendix B: State Commission AmeriCorps Alumni Engagement Action Plan Template

**Name:**

**State Commission:**

## **Summary**

This document is designed to support a state commission in setting short-term and long-term goals for an AmeriCorps Alumni Engagement Action Plan. Please modify the format as needed.

## **I. Assessment**

Describe the current state of alumni engagement at your commission.

Describe a desired future state for alumni engagement at your commission.

Describe gaps and/or barriers that limit alumni engagement at your commission.

Describe strengths, resources, and/or opportunities for alumni engagement at your commission.

## II. Goal Setting

### Short Term Goals

Create specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, timely, inclusive, and equitable goals for the next six months, starting on \_\_\_\_\_.

#### Goal:

Tasks	Resources and Support Needed	Measure of Success	Due Date
1.			
2.			
3.			

#### Goal:

Tasks	Resources and Support Needed	Measure of Success	Due Date
1.			
2.			
3.			

#### Goal:

Tasks	Resources and Support Needed	Measure of Success	Due Date
1.			
2.			
3.			

### Long Term Goals

Create specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, timely, inclusive, and equitable goals for months seven through twelve. Dates: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Goal:**

Tasks	Resources and Support Needed	Measure of Success	Due Date
1.			
2.			
3.			

#### **Goal:**

Tasks	Resources and Support Needed	Measure of Success	Due Date
1.			
2.			
3.			

#### **Goal:**

Tasks	Resources and Support Needed	Measure of Success	Due Date
1.			
2.			
3.			

# Appendix C: AmeriCorps State Program Alumni Engagement Survey Template

## Overview

[Commission] is seeking information about how AmeriCorps State Programs in [state] engage their program alumni and how [commission] can strengthen alumni engagement statewide. The responses collected from this survey will inform [commission]'s strategy for engaging AmeriCorps alums. This survey should take approximately [X] minutes to complete and responses are requested by [date]. Please contact [name, contact info] if you have any questions. Thanks for your input!

## Program Contact Information

[Fields: Name, Title, AmeriCorps Program Name, Email Address, Phone Number]

## Questions

- Does your program have a defined AmeriCorps alumni strategy or plan? If yes, please describe.
- Does your program have a formal alumni program or structure in place to engage alums (committee, working group, etc.)? If yes, please describe.
- Does your program have a staff member or volunteer assigned to supporting alumni engagement activities? If yes, please describe.
- Does your program have a system to manage alumni data and contact information? If yes, please describe.
- Does your program have a mechanism to communicate with alums? If yes, please describe.
- Does your program provide professional development and training to alums? If yes, please describe.

## Questions

- Does your program engage alums as presenters, trainers, or speakers at events? If yes, please describe.
- Does your program engage alums in service opportunities? If yes, please describe.
- Does your program engage alums in mentoring current members? If yes, please describe.
- Does your program partner with other national service programs to support alums? If yes, please describe.
- What type of Life After AmeriCorps programming do you provide to members?
- What types of resources or support would help strengthen your Life After AmeriCorps programming?
- Would your program be interested in collaborating with [commission] to create local and/or statewide networks for AmeriCorps alumni engagement? If yes, please describe.
- How do think [commission] can best support alumni engagement in [state]?
- Please share any additional feedback or ideas for AmeriCorps alumni engagement.

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# Appendix D:

# AmeriCorps Alumni

# Survey Template

## Overview

This AmeriCorps Alumni Survey is being conducted by [commission], the commission for national and community service in [state]. [Commission overview]. The responses collected from this survey will inform [commission]'s strategy for engaging AmeriCorps alums. This survey should take [X] minutes to complete and responses are requested by [date]. Please contact [name, contact info] if you have any questions. Thanks for your input!

## Contact Information *(optional)*

[Fields: Name, Email Address, Phone Number]

## Questions

- Which stream(s) of AmeriCorps service did you serve in? Please select all that apply. [Options: AmeriCorps State and National, AmeriCorps NCCC, AmeriCorps VISTA]
- How many terms of service did you complete? [Field]
- Which program(s) did you serve with? [Field]
- What year(s) did you complete your service? [Field]
- Did you serve in (state)? [Y/N]
- If not, which state(s) did you serve in? [Field]
- Do you live in (state)? [Y/N] If you live in (state), what is your zip code? [Field]
- Did you have a positive AmeriCorps experience? [Y/N] Please explain your response. [Field]
- Do you feel you received adequate preparation for Life After AmeriCorps during your term of service? [Y/N] Please explain your response. [Field]

- How did you use your Education Award? Please select all that apply. [Options: Repay student loans; Pay educational expenses; End-of-Service Stipend (VISTA); Transferred to a child, step-child, grandchild, step-grandchild, or foster child; Have not used the Education Award yet; Other [Field]]
- Do you feel your career and/or education plans were influenced by your AmeriCorps service? [Y/N] Please explain your response. [Field]
- Are you currently involved with an AmeriCorps alumni chapter or network? [Y/N] If yes, please describe your involvement. [Field] If no, are you interested in getting involved with an AmeriCorps alumni network? [Field]
- What types of activities would you like to see offered in an AmeriCorps alumni network? Please select all that apply. [Options: Professional development and career support; Leadership development; Service; Advocacy; Social and Networking; Outreach and Communications] Please share any additional activities. [Field]
- What professional development and training topics are you most interested in? Please select all that apply. [Options: Job search; Career development; Education planning; Leadership development; Advocacy; Other [Field]]
- [Commission] is highlighting AmeriCorps alumni stories. Would you be willing to share your AmeriCorps story? [Y/N]

### Contact Preferences

- Would you like to be added to the [commission] AmeriCorps Alumni Directory? [Y/N]
- Would you like to be added to the [commission]'s database? [Y/N]
- Would you like to be added to the [commission]'s newsletter distribution? [Y/N]
- Please provide your contact information if you would like to be in contact with [commission]. [Optional Fields: Name, Email, Phone]
- Please share any additional feedback. [Field]

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# Appendix E: Life After AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps Alumni Online Resources

Consider adding an AmeriCorps alums page on your state commission's website to share helpful resources for AmeriCorps alums and Life After AmeriCorps planning. Also include links to alumni chapters in your state as well as state commission developed guides, webinars, and tools for post-service planning. Ensure the AmeriCorps alums link is clearly positioned on the home page and easy to find.

## **America's Service Commissions Service Job Board**

<https://www.statecommissions.org/service-job-board>

## **AmeriCorps Resources**

- [AmeriCorps Alumni](#)
- [Employers of National Service](#)
- [Schools of National Service](#)
- [Segal AmeriCorps Education Award](#)

## **New Politics Academy** *(for alumni interested in running for elected office)*

<https://www.newpolitics.org/>

## **Service Year Alliance Resources**

- [Alums Chapters](#)
- [AmeriCorps Alums](#)
- [“Best Practices for Starting and Running a Service Year Alums Chapter”](#)
- [Service Year Alums](#)
- [Service Year Alliance: Alumni Chapter Steering Committee](#)

# Appendix F: AmeriCorps VISTA Assignment Description (VAD) Considerations for AmeriCorps Alumni Engagement

## Summary

AmeriCorps VISTA members are well positioned to support state service commissions in developing and supporting AmeriCorps alumni engagement efforts in their states. While AmeriCorps alumni engagement may not be a primary focus of a VAD, commission staff can review VAD activities with an AmeriCorps alumni engagement lens to identify opportunities to collaborate with alums. This summary outlines potential strategies to consider for VISTA VADs based on the VISTA Service Activity categories and general activities to support state commission engagement of AmeriCorps alums.

## Strategies to Consider Based on Service Activities in the FY21 AmeriCorps VISTA Project Application Instructions

### Community Assessment

*This service activity focuses on conducting an environmental scan of community context and need.*

- Identify and engage AmeriCorps alums employed at or volunteering with stakeholder and community partner organizations to support and collaborate with community assessment efforts
- Engage AmeriCorps alumni networks in community assessment and strategic planning in support of the VISTA program effort

### Community Awareness and Engagement

*This service activity focuses on expanding community knowledge and support of the program effort.*

- Engage AmeriCorps alums when expanding community knowledge and support of the VISTA program effort through targeted communications and outreach strategies to an alumni audience

- Integrate AmeriCorps alumni engagement elements into existing state commission communications efforts to support the VISTA program effort while also connecting alums with the state commission
- Identify and engage AmeriCorps alums employed at or volunteering with stakeholder and community partner organizations that can provide opportunities to support and outreach about the VISTA program effort

### Expand/Strengthen Partnerships/Networks

*This service activity focuses on initiating efforts with other organizations, for example, through applying jointly for funding, collaborating on programming or referrals, sharing staff and resources, developing training and materials that are shared.*

- Outreach to AmeriCorps alumni, alumni networks, and alumni chapters to support the VISTA program effort while also developing partnerships between alums/alumni networks and the state commission
- Explore potential opportunities to share databases and contacts between the state commission and AmeriCorps alumni networks to provide mutual support
- Identify opportunities to formalize partnerships between AmeriCorps alumni networks and the state commission, such as creating a MOU in support of the VISTA program effort and other collaborative activities
- Explore opportunities to engage AmeriCorps alums and alumni networks with state commission working groups, advisory groups, and strategic planning groups in support of the VISTA program effort and broader state commission programming

### Fiscal Resources

*This service activity focuses on developing/expanding a diversified funding stream.*

- Identify and engage AmeriCorps alums at stakeholder and community partner organizations that are involved with fundraising to request technical assistance, training, and/or other pro bono support for diversifying funding streams

## Material Development

*This service activity focuses on improvement or expansion of materials that support programming (e.g., toolkits, curricula, worksheets).*

- Identify and engage AmeriCorps alums at stakeholder and community partner organizations that are involved with graphic design, communications, public relations, and training/technical assistance to request technical assistance, training, and/or other pro bono support for developing materials that support programming

## Outreach

*This service activity focuses on participant recruitment.*

- § Identify and engage AmeriCorps alums at stakeholder and community partner organizations that can support targeted outreach for participant recruitment as part of the VISTA program effort

## Performance Measurement

*This service activity focuses on assessing results of program offerings.*

- Identify and engage AmeriCorps alums at organizations involved with performance measurement and evaluation efforts to request technical assistance, training, and/or other pro bono support for performance measurement and evaluation support

## Program Development and Delivery

*This service activity focuses on program improvement or expansion.*

- Identify program areas where AmeriCorps alums can build capacity of the VISTA program effort and broader state commission programming
- Create and/or enhance a state commission plan for AmeriCorps alumni engagement that includes strategies to identify AmeriCorps alums in the community, define roles for alums, and support ongoing engagement for the VISTA program effort and broader state commission programming

## Technology Use

*This service activity focuses on developing systems for organizational effectiveness.*

- Include mechanisms to track AmeriCorps alums when developing, piloting, revising database (volunteer, client) or internal or external knowledge management system

- Consider the AmeriCorps alumni audience when developing social media tools and strategies to connect alums to the state commission and to each other
- Identify opportunities to highlight AmeriCorps alumni service stories and recognize alums

### Volunteer Recruitment and Management System

*This service activity focuses on establishing or expanding pool of volunteers to assist with service delivery.*

- Consider volunteer leader roles for volunteers with AmeriCorps experience
- Identify and engage AmeriCorps alums employed at or volunteering with volunteer service organizations to strategize on volunteer mobilization, improvement of volunteer management systems, and collaboration
- Survey volunteer generation fund-supported sites, United Way affiliates, Service Enterprise organizations, volunteer service organizations, service year host sites, and volunteer manager professional associations to identify AmeriCorps alums on staff or serving in volunteer roles to engage in state commission volunteer management activities
- Outreach to state commission volunteer engagement database contacts to request AmeriCorps alumni status

### **General Strategies to Support AmeriCorps Alumni Engagement**

#### AmeriCorps VISTA Member Experience Enhancement (VISTA Leaders)

- Identify and engage AmeriCorps alums as speakers, trainers, and technical assistance providers for member training and create a database and/or speakers bureau
- Create a member training and development program that offers a comprehensive Life After AmeriCorps component that is integrated throughout the service term
- Create mentorship opportunities for members to connect with AmeriCorps alums
- Create awareness about AmeriCorps alumni networks and benefits throughout the member service term, including resources such as Schools and Employers of National Service
- Develop and/or enhance AmeriCorps LeaderCorps Councils at the state commission and consider including AmeriCorps alumni representation on the Council



### AmeriCorps Alumni Network Development

- Conduct outreach to state commission stakeholders and community partner organizations to identify and track staff members who are AmeriCorps alums
- Create mechanisms in state commission databases and contact management systems to identify AmeriCorps alums
- Assess state commission programming and strategic plans for opportunities to engage AmeriCorps alumni
- Support formal collaboration between the state commission and existing AmeriCorps alumni networks

### **Resources**

- [AmeriCorps VISTA Handbook \(2021\)](#)
- [FY 2021 AmeriCorps VISTA Request for Concept Papers](#)

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# Appendix G: Meet Prominent AmeriCorps Alumni

This section highlights a few elected officials who are AmeriCorps alums and national service supporters.

## **U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich (D-NM)**

Service Experience: AmeriCorps member for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Biography: Elected in 2012, Martin Heinrich is a United States Senator for New Mexico and the first AmeriCorps Alum to serve in the United States Senate. Prior to being elected to the U.S. Senate, Heinrich served two terms in the U.S. House of Representatives. Before he was

elected to Congress, Heinrich served four years as an Albuquerque City Councilor and was elected as City Council President. After completing a Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering at the University of Missouri, Heinrich and his wife, Julie, moved to Albuquerque where he began his career as a contractor working on directed energy technology at Phillips Laboratories, which is now Air Force Research Laboratory at Kirtland Air Force Base. Heinrich later served in AmeriCorps for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Mexican Wolf Recovery Project. This project shaped his support of public lands and national service. In 2020, Senator Heinrich introduced the Pandemic Response and Opportunity Through National Service Act, legislation to significantly expand national service programs to respond to COVID-19 and shared: "as an AmeriCorps alum, I know first-hand that there is no venture more rewarding than working to improve the lives of those around us. We need to empower a new generation to step up and serve during this national crisis."



## **Congresswoman Gwen Moore (D-WI)**

Service Experience: AmeriCorps VISTA

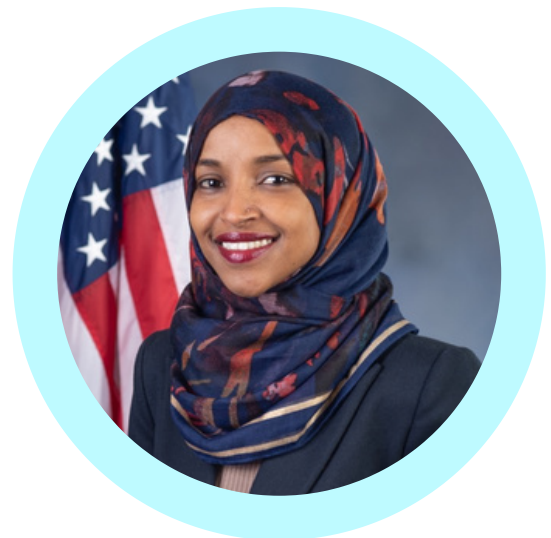
Biography: Congresswoman Gwen Moore was elected to represent Wisconsin's 4th Congressional District in 2004, making her the first African American elected to Congress from the State of Wisconsin. Born in Racine, Wisconsin, in 1951, Congresswoman Moore was raised in Milwaukee. Congresswoman Moore attended North Division High School in Milwaukee, where she served as Student Council President. After graduation, she started college at Marquette University as a single, expectant mother on welfare who could only complete her education with the help of TRIO. Congresswoman Moore earned a B.A. in Political Science from Marquette, and went on to serve as a community leader spearheading the start-up of a community credit union as a VISTA volunteer in Milwaukee for which she earned the national "VISTA Volunteer of the Decade" award from 1976-1986. She was also a member of the Wisconsin State Assembly and Senate before serving in Congress. In a 2019 statement Congresswoman Moore shared "My path to public service and governance was forged through my time serving as a VISTA volunteer in Milwaukee. Through these rich and meaningful experiences, I learned that all of us, regardless of age, race, socioeconomic background, or upbringing, possesses the power and means to support and transform our communities for the better."



## **Congresswoman Ilhan Omar (D-MN)**

Service Experience: AmeriCorps VISTA

Biography: Rep. Ilhan Omar represents Minnesota's 5th Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives, which includes Minneapolis and surrounding suburbs. An experienced Twin Cities policy analyst, organizer, public speaker and advocate, Rep. Omar was sworn into office in January 2019,



making her the first Somali-American Member of Congress, the first woman of color to represent Minnesota, and one of the first two Muslim-American women elected to Congress. Born in Somalia, Rep. Omar and her family fled the country's civil war when she was eight. The family spent four years in a refugee camp in Kenya before coming to the United States in 1990s. In 1997, she moved to Minneapolis with her family. As a teenager, Rep. Omar's grandfather inspired her to get involved in politics. Before running for office, she worked as a community educator at the University of Minnesota, was a Policy Fellow at the Humphrey School of Public Affairs and served as a Senior Policy Aide for the Minneapolis City Council. Rep. Omar served as an AmeriCorps VISTA with the Afterschool Alliance in Minnesota from 2012 to 2013.

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