



AmeriCorps

Dear School of National Service:

We are delighted you have chosen to honor the service of AmeriCorps alumni by committing to become a [School of National Service](#). You are a part of an exclusive network of higher education institutions that recognize the unique and tremendous value that national service brings to our country - and to the benefits AmeriCorps alumni can bring to the college experience.

In order to help support your efforts to highlight your status as a School of National Service and promote this important commitment to AmeriCorps alumni, please reference this set of guidelines and resources for announcement ideas, suggested social media posts, and sample templates. We've also included links to agency photo galleries and other assets available for your use.

Included in this toolkit are:

- Available Resources
- Fast Facts
- Ideas for Promotion
- Social Media
- Sample Press Release
- Key Messages
- Fact Sheet

It is our hope that this toolkit not only serves as a resource for any current announcement you're making, but is also a resource to utilize for future opportunities to strengthen your continuing relationship with AmeriCorps and all its service programs.

AmeriCorps is here to be a resource for you and your program. If you are planning an event or announcement, need sample materials, or need assistance or advice, please contact us at pressoffice@cns.gov. We look forward to working with you and thank you for your continued support of AmeriCorps!

In Service,
AmeriCorps

For assistance with any communication and promotional elements of your Schools of National Service commitment, please contact pressoffice@cns.gov. Updates and new requests to your commitment can be directed to SegalAward@cns.gov.





Available Resources

- **Photo Gallery:** As a government agency, AmeriCorps' photos are rights-free. Stock photos of AmeriCorps members and projects can be found at [AmeriCorps Photos](#).
- **B-Roll and Video:** AmeriCorps also has b-roll available for video needs, and many video segments from the agency's YouTube page may be repurposed. To request access to b-roll, please email pressoffice@cns.gov.
- **Segal AmeriCorps Education Award Data:** To help provide as many tools and resources for those supporting AmeriCorps members and alumni, AmeriCorps has published a [new 2019 dataset](#) showing Segal AmeriCorps Education Award by state and institution in 2019 and since 1994. An updated version will be released in 2020.
- **National Service in Your State:** Information about the footprint of AmeriCorps in your state is also available online. This includes the annual financial investment by AmeriCorps, as well as the number of AmeriCorps members and current projects. These reports will also provide the number of alumni from each state since 1994, along with the amount they've earned in Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards. These reports can be found by state at nationalservice.gov/stateprofiles. Custom reports by city and county can be created upon request; see your state's page for more information.

Fast Facts

- **75,000** AmeriCorps members each year
- AmeriCorps members serve at more than **20,000+** sites
- Nearly **1.2 million** Americans have served in AmeriCorps since 1994
- AmeriCorps alumni have earned more than **\$4 billion** in Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards since the program was created; more than **\$1 billion** of which has been used to pay down student loan debt

School of National Service Badge

The School of National Service badge can be downloaded in both full-color and single-color versions in EPS, JPEG, and PNG formats. [Visit our website](#) to download a badge for use on your website or to pin on your social media accounts.





Promoting Your School as a 'School of National Service'

- **Press Release:** Send a press release announcing that your institution is now a 'School of National Service,' committing themselves to help Americans who have served to achieve their education goals. Whether you are making a new commitment or an institution who already matching the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award, you are all new 'Schools of National Service.'
- **Website:** Add the 'School of National Service' badge to your website and pin to your social media accounts, identifying your institution as an organization as such to the nearly 1.2 million AmeriCorps alumni who have earned Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards.
- **Social Media:** Announce the good news on your social media channels by using the #SchoolsofService hashtag along with the new badge. Be sure to tag @AmeriCorps accounts so we can see what you're up to! Make the Schools of National Service commitment part of your regular content calendar. Build the commitment into your regular content and recruitment calendar. See more social media resources below.
- **Blog Post:** Use your blog or story-telling platform to highlight why community or civic service and civic engagement matters to your institution. Consider having an alumnus - of both AmeriCorps and the school - author a guest post about why they chose your institution or publish a Q&A with an admissions or other leader who can speak to why AmeriCorps alumni are of such value to your institution.
- **Recruitment Events and Materials:** As you create recruitment materials or plan events, be sure to make Schools of National Service part of your package. By promoting the benefits you offer to AmeriCorps alumni, you'll be communicating the value your institution puts on service and civic engagement.
- **Newsletter:** Include the news about your new status as a School of National Service in upcoming newsletters. This is a great opportunity to share details about the benefits you're offering and how those interested might take advantage of them.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Be sure to share the important commitment the school has made with key university stakeholders, such as your Board of Trustees.
- **Identify Alumni:** Find AmeriCorps alumni who are proud to call your college their alma mater. Whether they chose it because of the benefits it provides to alumni or its commitment to a life of service, they are powerful advocates for the story you're trying to tell. With nearly 1.2 million AmeriCorps alumni who sit in boardrooms, classrooms, courtrooms, and even the halls of Congress, each of them is part of a network that grows stronger by the day.

Other Ways to Support Service

- **Employers of National Service:** This initiative connects AmeriCorps and Peace Corps alumni with leading employers from all sectors. By committing as an [Employer of National Service](#), more than 600 private sector companies, nonprofits, universities, and government agencies have increased access to a dedicated, highly qualified, and mission-oriented pool or potential employees. Sign on as an Employer of National Service to join this network!
- **National Days of Service:** Each year, millions of Americans engage in service through two nationally recognized days of service. Colleges and universities are key partners



in helping to create more service opportunities in their community. Whether its hosting a service project, holding a training, or collaborating with community organizations, consider making the [MLK Day of Service](#) (January 18, 2020!) and [September 11 National Day of Service and Remembrance](#) a tradition on your campus.



Social Media Guidance

- **Follow AmeriCorps** on Social Media and tag our account in your posts.
 - **Facebook:** facebook.com/amicorps
 - **Twitter:** twitter.com/amicorps
 - **Instagram:** instagram.com/amicorps
 - **YouTube:** youtube.com/nationalservice
- **#SchoolsofService:** Incorporate the Schools of National Service hashtag in your social media content to join the conversation and highlight how AmeriCorps can make higher education a possibility for more Americans.
- **Tell Alumni Stories:** Use the power of AmeriCorps alumni to help achieve your school's communication goals. Highlight them in recruitment content and allow them to share why they chose your institution.

Sample Social Media

- [INSTITUTION] is proud to be a School of National Service, offering benefits and incentives to @AmeriCorps members and alumni. Visit [LINK] to learn more.
#SchoolsofService
- We are proud to announce that [INSTITUTION] is a School of National Service, offering benefits and incentives to @AmeriCorps members and alumni. Want to learn how Schools of National Service can benefit your institution? Visit [LINK] #SchoolsofService
- The Schools of National Service initiative allows us to offer greater benefits and incentives to students who dedicated themselves to national service through @AmeriCorps. Learn more! [LINK] #SchoolsofService
- For more than two decades, @AmeriCorps has been helping Americans reach their education goals. That's true for [STATE RESIDENTS; ex: ALASKANS], who have earned more than \$[AMOUNT] in AmeriCorps education awards since 1994. Today, we announce that [INSTITUTION] is partnering with @AmeriCorps to help and will provide additional benefits to AmeriCorps alumni who choose our school to continue their education.
- Over the last 25 years, [HUNDREDS/THOUSANDS] of @AmeriCorps alumni have chosen to continue their education at [INSTITUTION], spending \$[AMOUNT] in AmeriCorps education awards. It's time we make a commitment to them. That's why today we're announcing that we've become a School of National Service to provide new benefits to the @AmeriCorps alumni who choose us.
- [INSTITUTION] is proud to be a School of National Service. Are you an @AmeriCorps alumni who used your Segal Award here? We want to hear your story! #SchoolsofService



Sample Press Release

Below is a sample press release announcing your institution as a School of National Service. If you need more information or assistance, or would like to include a quote from AmeriCorps, please contact **Samantha Jo Warfield** at (202) 606-6775 or pressoffice@cns.gov.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DATE

CONTACT
PHONE & EMAIL

[SCHOOL] Named 'School of National Service' for Commitment to AmeriCorps Alumni [SCHOOL] Offers New Benefits for AmeriCorps Alumni

[DATELINE] - Beginning in [YEAR], [SCHOOL NAME] will provide new benefits to incoming students in the [PROGRAM, IF APPLICABLE] who are AmeriCorps alumni. [SCHOOL] is one of only [NUMBER] universities in [STATE] named as a School of National Service for their commitment to AmeriCorps alumni. [ALT: [SCHOOL] will be only the [FIRST/THIRD/ETC] named a School of National Service in [STATE].]

[SUMMARY OF SCHOOL'S MAIN COMMITMENT]

[QUOTE FROM INSTITUTION LEADER]

[ADDITIONAL BENEFITS BEING OFFERED, IF ANY, SUCH AS FEE WAIVERS; ABILITY TO DEFER ENROLLMENT]

For more information on these benefits, please visit the AmeriCorps website. [OR YOUR OWN, IF YOU HAVE A PAGE CREATED FOR THIS BENEFIT]

[ADDITIONAL QUOTES]

[SCHOOL] has a long commitment to service and civic-engagement, making it a clear choice for service-minded students like AmeriCorps alumni. [ADDITIONAL DETAILS ABOUT SCHOOL'S SERVICE/CIVIC ACTIVITIES].

After completing their service, AmeriCorps members earn a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award which can be used to pay educational expenses at eligible post-secondary institutions, including many technical schools and G.I. Bill-approved programs, or to repay qualified student loans. The education award is equal to the maximum amount of the U.S. Department of Education Pell Grant, currently approximately \$6,400. Since 1994, AmeriCorps alumni have earned more than \$4 billion in education awards, using \$1 billion to repay student debt.

AmeriCorps alumni are students with experience, leadership skills, problem-solving experience, and a commitment to civic engagement. Schools of National Service connects these leaders with higher-education institutions who seek to recognize those qualities and honor the service they've provided to their community and country. By participating in the program, colleges, universities, and other post-secondary institutions benefit by attracting AmeriCorps alumni to enroll in their institutions.

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[SCHOOL BOILERPLATE]



Schools of National Service Fact Sheet

Content below taken from [resources available on our website](#).

The Schools of National Service initiative recognizes that individuals who served in AmeriCorps bring tremendous value to the higher education or other post-secondary experience that benefit the institution, other students, and their community. Their experience, leadership skills, problem-solving experience, and commitment to civic engagement are a welcome addition to any learning environment.

In recognition of the value of their service, Schools of National Service provide incentives and awards that encourage AmeriCorps alumni to attend their institution. By participating in the program, colleges, universities, and other post-secondary institutions benefit.

About the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award

The Segal AmeriCorps Education Award is a post-service benefit earned by individuals who complete an approved term of national service in AmeriCorps programs. The award is named after Eli Segal, a pioneer of national service and the first CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS).

The award may be used to pay educational expenses at eligible post-secondary institutions, including many technical schools and G.I. Bill-approved programs or to repay qualified student loans. The dollar amount of the education award is equal to the maximum amount of the U.S. Department of Education Pell Grant and may change year to year.

In 25 years, nearly 1.2 million AmeriCorps members have earned over \$4 billion in Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards, \$1 billion of which has been used to pay back student loan debt - making college more accessible and affordable for those who serve.

Benefits of Participation

Schools of National Service will help you gain access to AmeriCorps alumni - a network of nearly 1.2 million strong - who have earned billions of dollars in Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards. Participation in the program will give higher education and other post-secondary institutions a way to make education more affordable to a group of Americans that research [LINK] shows are leaders with the determination and skills to succeed.

What AmeriCorps members say about their service:

Serving in AmeriCorps sets up members to succeed in a 21st-century economy

- 8 out of 10 alumni say AmeriCorps benefited their career path.
- 7 out of 10 alumni say that AmeriCorps helped them achieve their educational goals, in part thanks to the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award - one-third of alumni were pursuing their education six months after their service.



- More than half of AmeriCorps alumni said the Education Award gave them the ability to pay for career-benefiting training and education that they otherwise would not have had.

AmeriCorps creates leaders who can bridge divides and solve problems.

- 9 out of 10 AmeriCorps alumni reported that their experience improved their ability to solve problems.
- 80 percent of alumni feel confident they can create a plan to address a community issue and get others to care about it.
- 93 percent of alumni said that after service, they felt comfortable interacting with others different than themselves, as compared to 72 percent before.
- 94 percent said that national service broadened their understanding of society and different communities.

How Your Institution Can Become a 'School of National Service'

A post-secondary institution can qualify as a School of National Service by entering into a written commitment to provide any of the following incentives to AmeriCorps members and alumni.

- Tuition matching for the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award (could be at the undergraduate or graduate level and could be specific to a school or program)
- Scholarship or fellowship to AmeriCorps alumni
- Priority points for admission consideration for AmeriCorps alumni
- In-state tuition for AmeriCorps alumni
- Cover expenses like books and supplies, room and board, other personal costs like transportation for AmeriCorps alumni
- One-year enrollment deferrals for individuals to serve in AmeriCorps
- Academic credit for AmeriCorps experience
- Other incentives that vary by institution

How to Get Involved

Your school can sign up as a School of National Service via an online form or by contacting AmeriCorps via SegalAward@cns.gov. AmeriCorps can provide an estimate of how much your institution has received in Segal AmeriCorps Education Award payments over the last 25 years. If you need more information, email SegalAward@cns.gov.



Schools of National Service Key Messages

Content below taken from [resources available on our website](#).

AmeriCorps alumni are a valuable asset to higher education.

- o 90% of members said they gained new skills while in AmeriCorps.
- o 80% of alumni feel confident they can create a plan to address a community issue and get others to care about it.

Schools of National Service is way for institutions to attract top talent.

- o Nearly 1.2 million people have serviced in AmeriCorps since 1993, and approximately 75,000 people serve in AmeriCorps each year.
- o AmeriCorps alumni are more likely to attain a bachelor's degree or higher degree than the average American adult.
- o 80% of alumni say AmeriCorps benefitted their career path.

National service has a long history of partnering with the higher education community.

AmeriCorps proudly partners with post-secondary education institutions across the country, engaging students in service and strengthening volunteerism. Together, they play a critical role in responding to some of our nation's greatest challenges while developing a culture of service on college campuses and in the communities they serve.

- o A number of colleges and universities operate or host AmeriCorps programs, engaging thousands of men and women of all ages in service. Many of these AmeriCorps members are current college students who continue to enhance their own education as they meet community needs by serving as mentors, tutors, and more.
- o For decades, the AmeriCorps program has helped Americans pursue their dream of higher education by making it more accessible and affordable.
- o Each year, AmeriCorps members help students achieve their dreams of higher education through college counseling programs like College Possible, College Advising Corps, and others.
- o After completing their service, all AmeriCorps members earn a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award that can be used to pay for college or technical school or to pay back student loans, allowing them to further their own education.

COVID-19 has brought unprecedented challenges and inspired innovative solutions

- o Many students are weighing returning to or starting post-secondary education because of the COVID-19 pandemic and changes related to virtual learning.
- o Rewarding students who have served vulnerable communities with a financial incentive to use their education award at participating institutions will encourage enrollment among AmeriCorps alumni.
- o In addition, participating institutions may wish to become an AmeriCorps program or a host site to allow students to serve with their institution; this opportunity may



increase student loyalty to an institution while addressing tough community challenges.

How it Works

How Will Higher Education Institutions Benefit from Schools of National Service?

Higher education institutions increase their applicant pool and establish service-mindedness as an institutional value. A [2018 study found](#) that American college students are more eager to serve than ever, with 61% of respondents indicating a willingness to participate in a national service program in exchange for a grant or financial assistance to help pay for college.

AmeriCorps members are ideal higher education candidates. Upon completing their tenure with AmeriCorps, alumni have a strong sense of purpose, believe that they can solve community problems, and bring their Segal AmeriCorps Education Award which can pay for qualified expenses or tuition. AmeriCorps alumni report that service influenced their career path, making them better prepared to take advantage of their education. They also bring their passion for service and leadership experience to campus.

COVID-19 has increased enrollment stress in higher education. A targeted partnership with AmeriCorps will increase access to nearly 1.2 million AmeriCorps alumni, increase the number of Eli Segal awards used at an institution, and incentivize AmeriCorps members to return to college after pursuing purposeful work during a gap or deferment year.

How Does an Institution Qualify as a School of National Service?

A post-secondary institution can qualify as a School of National Service by entering into a written commitment to provide any of the following incentives to AmeriCorps members and alumni.

Options for Schools of National Service Include:

- Tuition matching for the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award (could be at the undergraduate or graduate level and could be specific to a school or program)
- Scholarship or fellowship to AmeriCorps alumni
- Priority points for admission consideration for AmeriCorps alumni
- In-state tuition for AmeriCorps alumni
- Cover expenses like books and supplies, room and board, other personal costs like transportation for AmeriCorps alumni
- One-year enrollment deferrals for individuals to serve in AmeriCorps
- Academic credit for AmeriCorps experience
- Other incentives that vary by institution



How to Become a School of National Service

Post-secondary institutions can become Schools of National Service by signing a commitment to incentivize national service through any of the initiatives listed above or one that you work with AmeriCorps to design. Once involved in the Schools of National Service program, participating institutions may sustain or expand their offerings to AmeriCorps members and alumni over time. For more information contact: SegalAward@cns.gov

Key Messages for Target Audiences for Schools of National Service

Higher Education

College administrators can leverage Schools of National Service to increase their applicant pool and establish service-mindedness as an institutional value. Using the 'School of National Service' tagline, higher education institutions can market themselves as schools that value community engagement and produce changemakers.

Financial aid offices, career centers, and work study offices can leverage the benefits of Schools of National Service such as accessible higher education at a lower cost, new post-graduate career paths, and marketable, meaningful work experience. The Schools of National Service program, partnered with [Employers of National Service](#), can increase post-graduate employment rates for undergraduate institutions.

The benefits of their university's Schools of National Service affiliation will create options for service-minded students from clubs and organizations such as Greek life, volunteer organizations, and cultural affinity groups as they pursue internships, gap years, or post-graduate opportunities.

Prospective AmeriCorps Members/Students:

Schools of National Service is an effective recruitment tool for potential AmeriCorps members because it opens a host of options after AmeriCorps. Potential members who are considering continuing education after their term of service or are taking a gap year benefit from the opportunities offered by Schools of National Service institutions.

AmeriCorps members who completed their education before serving can leverage their Segal Education Award at a matching institution in order to pursue a graduate degree.

Member/Student Testimonial

"When I moved from Florida to Washington D.C. in 2014 to attend the George Washington University (GWU), it didn't take long for me to hear about the active role Jumpstart AmeriCorps was playing in the community. That's when I began my journey as an AmeriCorps member and eventually served 4 terms with Jumpstart. AmeriCorps fostered a deep sense of comradery amongst my peers and strengthened my civic identity through meaningful community service. This direct service enhanced my life as a student by providing both an opportunity to gain experience in development work and use my academic skills to enhance the impact of Jumpstart." *Caleb Torres, AmeriCorps Alumnus and George Washington University Graduate*



Prospective Parents:

AmeriCorps can appeal to parents by emphasizing the opportunities and pathways that AmeriCorps and Schools of National Service provide for their student. AmeriCorps is a concrete path for students to gain work experience while earning money for college, whether they are deferring for a year, considering a semester off, or planning their next steps post-graduation.

Parents will find that Schools of National Service incentives make it easier for high school graduates to take a gap year with AmeriCorps, allowing young adults to build their resumes, hone their leadership skills, and gain life experience before going to college. Completion of AmeriCorps service also provides a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award to be used for qualified educational expenses or to pay student loans.

AmeriCorps Programs:

AmeriCorps Schools of National Service is a powerful recruitment tool, incentivizing AmeriCorps participation by providing prospective members with increased options after their term of service. Through Schools of National Service, AmeriCorps helps make college or other post-secondary programs more accessible for national service members and alumni.

Individual AmeriCorps programs can also help to recruit new Schools of National Service. Many AmeriCorps programs are linked to higher education institutions; for those that are, participation in Schools of National Service is a powerful recruitment tool for prospective and current students. This benefit and formal relationship could help both programs and colleges recruit AmeriCorps members and students, creating a win-win.