

AmeriCorps 101 Speaking Script (In Person)

Slide One

- Welcome everyone! Thank you for joining us this (morning/afternoon/evening) I am (name) and I am (name). We are (insert role) at AmeriCorps and we are excited to share more about our service opportunities and get you started on your AmeriCorps journey.

Slide Two

- What is AmeriCorps? AmeriCorps is the federal agency for volunteerism and community service in the U.S. We provide opportunities for American adults of all ages and backgrounds to give their time and talent to get things done. No matter what you're passionate about, where you're from, or why you choose to serve, AmeriCorps is your chance to bring out the best of America. It's also your chance to learn new skills, meet new people, and gain valuable professional opportunities.

Slide Three

- How does it work? There are multiple ways you can customize your AmeriCorps experience to find the service opportunity that fits you.
 - First, you can choose the length of your service. AmeriCorps members can serve part-time or full-time for terms lasting from 3 months to one year. Summer terms also are available for some programs.
 - You can choose your service location. Apply for service opportunities in your own community or pick from a list of locations across the country. If you're flexible on location, some of our opportunities allow you to travel throughout the country during your service term. All opportunities are based in the U.S.
 - Finally, you can pick your passion by searching for organizations that advance causes you care about whether that's environmental stewardship, disaster response, education, economic opportunity, health, or veterans and military families. We have thousands of opportunities to choose from in just about any issue area, and there are also opportunities that allow you to gain experience in multiple areas during your service term.
- AmeriCorps is above all, a customizable experience. We have a handful of different program models you'll learn about a little later. We truly have an opportunity for everyone!

Slide Four

- Who do we work with? We work with many national and local nonprofits, community organizations, local and tribal governments, faith-based organizations, and others. These organizations rely on AmeriCorps members to accomplish their mission and drive greater impact. Here are just a few of our many partners.

Slide Five

- Our model helps advance local solutions, which means communities determine what they need to address the challenges on the ground, and we provide the people power or funding to make

that happen. As an AmeriCorps member you will immerse yourself in projects that respond to community needs. You will serve alongside organizations improving the lives of others and creating change that lasts.

Slide Six

- Now that we have shared some info about how your AmeriCorps service may look, let's share some of the benefits you'll receive as an AmeriCorps member.

Slide Seven

- There are multiple benefits, both during and after your service. These are the benefits most AmeriCorps members will receive during service. Each program also offers unique benefits we will cover later in the presentation.
- ***During your service:***
 - First and foremost, our AmeriCorps members are driven by their motivation to make a difference. – Whether you're building homes with Habitat for Humanity, writing grants for a nonprofit, or responding to disasters, the impact you make will be felt by your organization and the community you're serving. Altruism is the main reason people serve with AmeriCorps, but there are several tangible benefits as well.
 - As we mentioned on the "How it Works" slide, you can serve just about anywhere in the United States. AmeriCorps is a domestic program, and we are in all 50 states plus the U.S. territories. You can serve locally in your hometown, relocate to a new city to start your career, or travel throughout a region or the entire country.
 - You'll receive financial benefits – AmeriCorps programs offer a modest stipend or living allowance whose amount will vary depending on your program; some also offer limited health/medical coverage, travel, and other benefits.
 - You'll also have unique and valuable professional development experiences. Take the next step in your career and gain transferable skills employers value including leadership, teamwork, and problem-solving. You may also gain more technical skills depending on the project you're working on. AmeriCorps experience looks great on any resume and will give you a competitive edge in your job search after service.

Slide Eight

- You'll also receive benefits after you complete your service
 - Like money for school- The [Segal AmeriCorps Education Award](#) is offered to individuals who complete a full term of service and can be used to pay for a range of educational expenses, like repaying qualified student loans or future tuition payments. This money can be used at most colleges, universities, and trade schools. Note, the total award is based on number of service hours completed; the current rate for fiscal year 2023, \$6,895, is equitable to the amount of the Pell Grant and is awarded after a full year of full-time service. The rate typically changes at the beginning of each fiscal year. Keep in mind, many schools provide financial incentives to AmeriCorps alumni – check out the [Schools of National Service](#) section of the website. Finally, you could be eligible for loan deferment or forbearance while serving; most federally backed students loans qualify, so just check with your lender prior to starting your service.

- You'll also receive a competitive edge in your job search with over 600 Employers of National Service. Once you complete your service, leverage the [Employers of National Service](#) network, which connects you with hundreds of employers from the private, public, and nonprofit sectors who are committed to hiring AmeriCorps alumni. Having AmeriCorps on your resume will definitely be a valuable addition when searching for career opportunities. Many alumni also go on to work for the organizations they serve with, depending on availability of open positions, performance, and other factors. Ultimately, AmeriCorps is a great way to kickstart your career in public service or another field, or help you pivot from one career path to another. We'll help you get where you're going.

Slide Nine

- The financial compensation received while serving will vary from program to program. Members of most programs will receive a living allowance. AmeriCorps members earn this modest living allowance, rather than a salary or hourly wage. The amount an AmeriCorps member is paid remains consistent from one pay period to the next. The living allowance is provided to cover the cost of basic expenses while serving.
- Some programs have a predetermined living allowance, such as our NCCC program, which pays members every two weeks for personal necessities outside the food and housing covered by the program.
- Members serving with AmeriCorps State and National and VISTA will receive a living allowance determined by their location and role.
- AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers serving with the Foster Grandparent program or Senior Companion program earn a modest living stipend, rather than a salary. Income eligible volunteers in the Foster Grandparent program and the Senior Companion program receive a stipend to offset the cost of service.

Slide 10

- We'd love to hear from you! Thinking about the benefits of service, both during and after your service, what benefit makes national service more interesting to you?
- *Ask individuals to volunteer to share*
- Thank you all for sharing, before we highlight the different opportunities for service, does anyone [have any questions](#) about AmeriCorps overall or our benefits? There also will be more time for questions at the end of our presentation.

Slide 11

- Now that you know more about the benefits of serving with AmeriCorps, let's look at the different programs and opportunities for service.

Slide 12

- First, we have [AmeriCorps NCCC and FEMA Corps](#), which give members the opportunity to serve on a team of young adults from around the country, embark on an adventure, and build their resume along the way. AmeriCorps members serving in the NCCC and FEMA Corps programs strengthen communities and develop leadership skills through direct (hands-on), team-based

service. In addition to gaining invaluable experience, you will grow as a leader, learn teamwork, and develop meaningful friendships. You can serve as a team member if you're 18-26 years old, or a team leader if you're 18 or older and have some leadership experience.

- How it works: After completing training at an NCCC campus, you and your team will be deployed to serve on a variety of short-term projects in communities throughout the United States. Whether clearing trails for a national park or building homes for families in need, you'll engage in a variety of projects and have a once-in-a-lifetime experience. AmeriCorps NCCC also has the unique benefit of providing members with housing, so you'll live and travel with your team. You'll also receive a modest living allowance, meals, and transportation.
- AmeriCorps members serving in the FEMA Corps program get the team experience and adventure of AmeriCorps NCCC with intense professional development in emergency management. As an AmeriCorps member serving in the FEMA Corps program, you will serve under the direction of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, conducting administrative tasks in an office setting, going door to-door to help disaster survivors apply for assistance, or helping organizations that respond to disasters. FEMA Corps is also a great way to get a foot in the door with the federal government, as FEMA provides a fast-track hiring process for FEMA Corps members completing their service.

Slide 13

- Next is AmeriCorps Seniors, which provides Americans 55 years and older the opportunity to engage in volunteer service. Seniors can choose from three service programs, the Foster Grandparent Program, the RSVP Program, and the Senior Companion Program.
 - In the [AmeriCorps Seniors Foster Grandparent Program](#), volunteers mentor, teach, or act as role models to young people in the local area. Volunteers may serve children experiencing homelessness and youth at local community centers, assist and support students with schoolwork through one-on-one tutoring at local schools or community centers, or provide mentoring to teens at local schools. The Foster Grandparent program offers project-specific training to all volunteers and modest stipends to income-eligible volunteers to help offset the cost of volunteering.
 - Volunteers with [AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP](#) do a wide range of tasks such as recruiting and managing other volunteers, mentoring and tutoring children, supporting workforce development and training, helping with food security, providing disaster preparedness and mitigation assistance, supporting veterans and military families, and addressing a host of other critical community needs. You can lend your skills and experience to the projects you're most passionate about. Volunteers in the RSVP program do not receive financial compensation, but may be reimbursed for meals, mileage, and other cost related to their service.
 - The [AmeriCorps Seniors Senior Companion Program](#) engages persons 55 years and older, particularly those with limited incomes, in volunteer service to meet critical community needs, like befriending older adults and assisting with daily living tasks at a supportive housing program. The Senior Companion program offers project-specific training to all volunteers and modest stipends to income-eligible volunteers to help offset the cost of volunteering.

- To find a volunteer opportunity near you, you can use our [Pathfinder tool](#) to search by location and interest.

Slide 14

- The [AmeriCorps State & National](#) network makes up the majority of service opportunities available to you. It is what we like to call the matchmaker of national service. Interested applicants can select from thousands of organizations that see service as a solution to local, regional, and national challenges. We have members serving in the classroom as teachers, mentors and tutors, in the outdoors preventing forest fires, and updating our recreation and park systems, and everything in between. In addition to having thousands of choices for service, you can also choose the service time commitment that works best for you. This is a great opportunity for individuals of all ages and backgrounds.

Slide 15

- One of our newest AmeriCorps State & National programs is [Public Health AmeriCorps](#). We have partnered with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to create this unique opportunity for those interested in serving in the field of public health.
 - Public Health AmeriCorps helps meet the public health needs of local communities and provides pathways to quality public health-related careers through onsite experience and training.
- The COVID-19 pandemic intensified existing challenges in our country and highlighted the need for more people to pursue careers in public health. Public Health AmeriCorps provides a valuable opportunity to engage new communities and individuals in public health. Adults of all ages and education backgrounds are eligible to serve with Public Health AmeriCorps. There are a wide range of project areas that members may focus on, including health equity, COVID-19 recovery, behavioral health, and reducing barriers to care. Public Health AmeriCorps can also provide a steppingstone into permanent jobs in the public health field.

Slide 16

- Last, we have [AmeriCorps VISTA](#). AmeriCorps members serving in the VISTA program bring passion and perseverance to organizations fighting poverty. Members serve as agents for change, living and working alongside community leaders to meet our nation's most pressing challenges and advance local solutions. You can serve in a nonprofit or local government agency gaining experience and leadership skills that will set you up for a life of service in the public or private sector. This is an opportunity for individuals 18 and above, and it's great for those looking to kickstart their careers, re-enter the workforce after time away, or pivot to a new career sector. You'll serve indirectly, doing behind the scenes work for organizations, typically in an office space or other professional setting focused on anti-poverty solutions, such as writing grants, recruiting volunteers, and conducting community outreach. Shorter summer terms are also available in addition to the full-time, 12-month terms.
- One of the unique benefits some VISTA members may receive, in addition to the benefits we discussed earlier for all members, is the opportunity to receive one year of Non-Competitive Eligibility for federal hiring after completing a yearlong service term. This status is basically a fast track hiring process for federal government agencies – if you're interested in a career in

government, this is a great perk to keep in mind. There are also opportunities to network and explore employment with your host organization. Finally, the living allowance for VISTA members is adjusted to reflect living costs in the location in which you serve, and you also may receive a relocation allowance if moving from a different city.

Slide 17

- There are many opportunities for service with AmeriCorps, each with unique requirements and benefits. So, how do you know which service opportunities are the best for you? Which activity sounds like something you would be interested in trying? Which activity sounds like a good fit for your skills? Choosing an area of interest can help narrow down your choices and get you closer to finding the service opportunity that fits you.
- Based on the information presented so far, what program opportunity sounds interesting to you?
- *Ask individuals to share their answers*

Slide 18

- How do you know which service opportunities are the best for you? Here are four major factors to consider when selecting your service opportunity.
 - First, your age. Some opportunities may require you be 18 or older, others allow members to begin service at 17, and some opportunities are created for individuals who are 55 and older.
 - Location is also important when selecting your service opportunity. Do you want the opportunity to serve in your own community, or are you looking for the chance to explore new cities or regions?
 - The time you are looking to commit to national service is also an important factor to consider. You may only have the time to serve for three months during the summer, or you may be looking for a full-time, yearlong, or ongoing service opportunity.
 - Last, consider your areas of interest. There are opportunities for service in disaster response, economic opportunity, education, environmental stewardship, healthy futures and public health and veteran and military services.
- Considering these four factors can help you narrow down your choices and best find your fit for service.

Slide 19

- Are you ready to apply? There are four steps to applying for your service opportunity.
 - **Step One: Research opportunities** at [My.AmeriCorps.gov](https://www.myaamericorps.gov). Find the program, location, and time commitment that fits you. Our search features in the MyAmeriCorps portal allow you to filter by these key factors so you can narrow down your search.
 - **Step Two: Create a profile.** Input some basic info and verify your email. Just a note, we do collect social security numbers at this stage to verify citizenship or residency status. This information is kept securely in our system and is not used for anything in the meantime until we initiate the background check process once you're invited to serve.
 - **Step Three: Complete an application.** Input your education, professional experience, skills, and names of two (2) references to create a "common" app.

- **Step Four: Submit your application.** Apply to one or more opportunities at once. You can submit your application to up to ten different service listings at a time.
- If you need assistance at any stage of this process, you can reach out to the [National Service Hotline](#) by phone (1-800-942-2677) or direct message.

Slide 21

- At this time, we would love to answer any questions you may have about AmeriCorps, our programs, or finding your fit.
 - Q&A
- Thank you all so much for joining us today, and for your interest in being a part of the solution through service. We appreciate you taking the time to learn more about AmeriCorps and beginning your journey of national service. Be sure to follow us on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook @americorps. If you are interested in a specific program, please join one of our upcoming webinars for more information. If you have additional questions reach out to us at Join@AmeriCorps.gov or [explore our website](#). Have a wonderful day!