

## AmeriCorps 101 Youth Presentation Speaking Script

### Slide One

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

### Slide Two

- Let's jump into what we are going to cover today. We'll start by exploring why AmeriCorps may be a great option for you after high school, college, or during a gap year. We'll explain more about how AmeriCorps works and we'll look at the benefits of choosing AmeriCorps service. We'll share with you the thousands of AmeriCorps service opportunities available to you. Last, we'll show you how to find and apply for open service opportunities. Let's get started!

### Slide Three

- Why Join AmeriCorps? Let's learn more about what AmeriCorps is and why it may be the best opportunity for you after you finish school.

### Slide Four

- 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 Five

- Why Choose AmeriCorps? You can explore new places. Depending on the service opportunity, you can choose to travel to a new city or state. Some service experiences give you the chance to travel throughout entire regions of the US. This can be a great way to learn about and experience new locations you may be interested in living in the future. For those who are interested in travel and adventure, AmeriCorps service opportunities offer new and unique living and travel environments.
- AmeriCorps programs help you build your network. You'll create connections with professionals and experts in your chosen field. This is a great way to kickstart your educational or professional journey. Building a network while new to a school or city can be difficult, but AmeriCorps service sets you up with mentors and thought leaders in your project area. Leading to potential letters of recommendations, interviews, and internship opportunities.
- AmeriCorps builds friendships and connections. It can be difficult to build meaningful friendships in new environments. AmeriCorps connects you with likeminded individuals who are passionate about the same causes. You'll connect with your fellow service members, many of which will be your age or at similar stages in life. You'll also connect with those you're serving and professionals at the organizations you're working with, providing more opportunities for

relationship building. The connections you make during service can be the beginning of lasting bonds. Many service members meet their lifelong friends and partners during their service.

- Service can open the door to new opportunities. You'll receive training and resources from your program and organization, preparing you for future roles. Many AmeriCorps members go on to work for the programs they serve with, sometimes offered roles specifically because of the expertise they gained while during their service year.
- AmeriCorps gives you the opportunity to give back to your community. Many of us have served with organizations in our local or home communities, who supported us during our educational journey. You may be passionate about helping those around you and uplifting those who uplift you daily. There are thousands of AmeriCorps opportunities across the US and likely many in your own community. Who knows how to tackle the unique issues in your community better than you?

#### **Slide Six**

- Now that you know more about why AmeriCorps may be a great fit for you, let's explore how it works and how to begin selecting a service opportunity.

#### **Slide Seven**

- 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 support for 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 Eight**

- 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 Nine

- 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 10

- 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.

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- 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 of which the 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.

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- 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 the fiscal year 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 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.

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- AmeriCorps can also be a great option for those looking to take a break and reflect on their upcoming educational or professional endeavors. While you may hear the term gap year, we prefer growth year, as a service year helps you develop personally and professionally, preparing you to be a stronger candidate on your upcoming educational or career journey. AmeriCorps service is an opportunity for growth and exploration.
  - A year of service as a part of your growth year will help you personally and allow you to focus on self-discovery. You'll build confidence, discover your skills, and practice self-care. A growth year allows space to become your best self.
  - A growth year doing service will help you stand out on college applications, resumes, and scholarship applications. During service, you'll also learn leadership, communication, and other interpersonal skills to help you get ahead.
  - A growth year also allows you to take a break from routine, develop new skills and discover the work that drives you. With thousands of opportunities and flexible time commitments, a year of service can help you rest, recover, and plan your roadmap for the future.
  - Serving during your growth year can prepare you for the workforce. Gain unique experience and leadership skills to enhance your job opportunities after your service term. A service year is a great way to take a break from your current path while still working towards your future. Take the time to pause and explore your passions while gaining skills and job experience.

### Slide 14

- Now that you know about the benefits of service, let's take a look at our programs and the thousands of opportunities available to you.

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- 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 16

- Our newest AmeriCorps NCCC program is Forest Corps. Forest Corps is a program partnership between AmeriCorps NCCC and United States Forest Service. This program is open for young adults 18-26\* passionate about serving their nation, combating the climate crisis, launching rewarding careers, and protecting our public lands.
- You'll serve for 8-10 months full-time and perform direct, hands-on service in the areas of wildfire risk mitigation, reforestation, environmental conservation, and resource management. Your service project could include hazardous fuels reduction, protecting threatened habitats, conducting prescribed burns, wildlife surveys, infrastructure or trail maintenance, or providing nursery services to support growing seedlings. Adaptability is key! You'll also undergo intensive training with the United States Forest Service to prepare you to take on leadership roles and specialized assignments along the way. Learn and grow with a team of your peers and get a foot in the door to work environmental conservation as a career.
- As a part of NCCC, you'll receive the benefits of AmeriCorps NCCC members both before and after your service.
- Forest Corps work is field based and rigorous. You must be prepared to handle hiking long distances while carrying a heavy backpack, uneven terrain, carrying tools, and be able to complete trail work, surveys, prescribed fire burns, planting seedlings, and other labor-intensive outdoors projects. Please carefully weigh these considerations before applying.

## Slide 17

- 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.

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- 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 19

- 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.
- 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.

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- 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 21

- Are you ready to apply? Let's see how you can find and apply for service opportunities.

#### Slide 22

- **Here are the four steps to apply for AmeriCorps service.**
  - **Step One: Research opportunities** at [My.AmeriCorps.gov](https://my.americorps.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](https://www.americorps.gov/national-service-hotline) by phone (1-800-942-2677) or direct message.

## Slide 23

- 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, X formerly known as 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](mailto:Join@AmeriCorps.gov) or [explore our website](#). Have a wonderful day!