



Washington Service Corps

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Washington Service Corps created in 1983

The Washington Service Corps was created by the state legislature in 1983 to provide citizens with opportunities to serve their communities. It is the oldest publicly funded service program of its type in the nation. Administered by the Employment Security Department, the Service Corps partners with private, non-profit organizations and local governments to address critical community needs and provide citizens with meaningful service experiences.

Service Corps programs address compelling needs for education, public safety, health and human services, environmental stewardship and services to veterans and their families. Participants may tutor children, build and rehabilitate housing for low-income families, immunize children, respond to natural disasters, mentor young people, manage after-school programs, and help people with disabilities and the elderly maintain their independence.

For the 2013-14 service year, the Washington Service Corps has 651 members placed with organizations across the state. Members receive a monthly stipend and health insurance, and they get an education award when their service assignment is satisfactorily completed.

Washington Service Corps programs and projects

Washington Reading Corps

Due to the federal sequester law, the Reading Corps did not receive funding from the federal AmeriCorps program for the 2013-14 service year. Instead, the program is supported with \$950,000 in education grants from the state Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and administered by the Employment Security Department.

For the 2013-14 service year, the program placed 56 Reading Corps members in 36 different schools and early-learning centers. The goal is to improve the reading abilities of struggling readers through research-based tutoring and effective collaborations among schools, families, community members, business and state partners, and the federal AmeriCorps program. Reading Corps members help to improve the literacy of students in kindergarten through fourth grade. They also work with pre-school-age children in early-learning centers to help prepare them for kindergarten.

Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA)

In Washington state, VISTA is composed of 30 members. The VISTA program assigns members to nonprofit, faith-based and community organizations, as well as public agencies. They work to create and expand programs designed to bring low-income individuals and communities out of poverty by helping raise funds, write grant applications and recruit volunteers to assist low-income clients.

Programs include WSC team-based projects, individual placements, special initiatives, Washington Reading Corps and Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA)

Additional Washington Service Corps team and individual placements

For the 2013-14 service year, the Service Corps has placed 278 members in 13 team-based projects and 287 members in individual projects with local agencies. In addition, the Service Corps has established special projects with:

- The WorkSource employment system, to help job seekers with computer e-learning and other computer-based employment resources; and
- The Department of Social & Health Services to help 1,111 disadvantaged youths do better in school, graduate and move into careers.

Facts about Service Corps members

- 79 percent of all members have associate, college or graduate-level degrees.
- 32 percent are of diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds.
- Members are based in 31 counties, but serve all 39 Washington counties –16 percent of members serve in Eastern Washington.
- 73 percent of members were Washington residents at time of application.
- 76 percent are female.
- 74 percent are age 25 years or under; the average age is 29.
- 50 percent of members who completed their terms of service in the Washington Reading Corps during the 2012-13 service year planned to pursue a career in education.
- 96 percent of all Service Corps members in the 2012-13 service year reported gaining career-development skills.
- 52 percent will use their education award in the state of Washington.
- 698,444 community volunteers were recruited and supported through Service Corps efforts in the 2012-13 service year. The volunteers contributed 704,336 hours of service.

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