

Talking Guide for AmeriCorps Week

- **Identify groups & audiences you are comfortable with:** AmeriCorps can impact lives across all sorts of groups and ages. As you think about lining up a speaking opportunity, think first of groups you feel comfortable interacting with. These may include civic clubs, school groups, business associations, neighborhood gatherings, faith-based groups, or any other group you can dream up. Many of these hold regular meetings and need speakers. Feeling brave? Expand your comfort zone and approach groups with whom you do not normally interact.
- **Start your discussion with ServeNebraska:** ServeNebraska nurtures and monitors the effectiveness & efficiency of AmeriCorps in Nebraska. Its mission is to mobilize Nebraskans to strengthen their communities through volunteering, collaboration and national service programming. In addition to its role with AmeriCorps it celebrates volunteerism through sponsoring a series of awards, increases personal and organizational capacity through training & technical assistance, and promotes involvement of all through its disability inclusion efforts.
- **Tell them what AmeriCorps Is:** AmeriCorps members are getting things done. Because the work of AmeriCorps goes on quietly and without fanfare in local communities, and because AmeriCorps members serve through thousands of organizations, the value and impact of AmeriCorps is often hidden. Currently 83,000 members nationally are engaged in direct service and capacity building activities. Members serve in both full-time and part-time positions and address critical community needs in education, economic opportunity, disaster services, healthy futures, environmental stewardship, and with veterans and military families.
- **Tell them what you do, where you do it, and why it's important:** You are making lives better. Why does your AmeriCorps program exist? What needs does it meet? How does it meet those needs? Share your passion for your service through highlights and examples. Focus on the changes you are making in lives and the impact your service has had on you.
- **Invite Questions:** You can share a lot, but there may be things on their minds you cannot anticipate. Asking questions also gets your audience more engaged.
- **If you don't know an answer, admit it. Don't make stuff up. Tell them you will get back to them, encourage them to go online to www.serve.nebraska.gov , or ask them to reach out to ServeNebraska at 800-291-8911.**
- **Let us know how it went. Send a quick email to Cathy Plager of ServeNebraska at Cathleen.plager@nebraska.gov after your talk letting her know who you spoke to, how many people were there, and how it went.**

