



TrainingFocus

Training / TA / Disability Inclusion

APRIL/MAY 2013

The monthly *TrainingFocus* provides Nebraska National Service leadership with informational tips and resources on topics pertaining to training, professional development, technical assistance and disability inclusion.

Programs are encouraged to submit training tips, resources, links and ideas for monthly features. Send to: Kimberle Hall, ServeNebraska Training Officer, kim.hall@nebraska.gov.



How To **RECOGNIZE, REWARD & RETAIN** Volunteers

Following ServeNebraska Week of Service and National Volunteer Week – continue to recognize volunteers

Recognition Ideas

- Spotlight volunteers on Facebook
- Handwritten thank you's
- Crazy awards with funny names
- Create a volunteer recognition board for all to see
- Volunteer alumni quarterly lunch
- Give gift cards at volunteer meetings
- Invite to in-services
- Include free meal coupon with birthday card

Gifts and Clever Sayings

- Chip clip – *You keep us all together*
- Flashlight – *You make us shine*
- PayDay candy bar- *You're priceless*
- Post-it Notes – *Thanks for helping us end on a high note*
- Calculator – *Giving your time adds up*
- Tool Kit – *Volunteers are the tools to our success*
- Sharpie Pen – *You've left a mark*
- Baseball Cap – *Hats off to you*

(Source: www.volunteerpartners.org)

TRAINING SPOTLIGHT...

This month's spotlight is about **Getting the Most from the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award**. The Segal AmeriCorps Education Award is a benefit VISTA and AmeriCorps members receive upon successful completion of their term of service. The award can be used to go to pay for higher education expenses or repay qualifying student loans. There are general terms that guide the use of the award and a process to follow to access funds. The award is subject to taxes when used.

Training Offering:

The online course **Segal AmeriCorps Education Award** is offered free through EnCorps Resources, a subsite of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). EnCorps Resources carry a "field stamp of approval"; veteran program staff reviewed and recommended.

Why Take This Tutorial?

The Segal AmeriCorps Education Award is an incentive for recruiting and retaining Members, but getting the most value out of it can be complicated. With the passage of the Serve America Act and new student loan relief programs, the information is evolving. This step-by-step tutorial will help demystify the education award and explain how it can be used in traditional and nontraditional ways.

This comprehensive and updated learning resource is available to assist members with forming a strategy for their awards. The site uses animated stories and learning pathways to illuminate key points around the award.



To Access the Tutorial:

To access the **Segal AmeriCorps Education Award** step-by-step tutorial click on this link <http://edaward.org/>

Additional Resources

For information on how individual awards are processed, see the [official CNCS web site](#). To learn more about (or sign up for) the AmeriCorps Online Payment System, [click here](#).



www.serve.nebraska.gov

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“Passing the torch” from one group of members to the next serves a number of

purposes. It helps the departing group bring closure to their experience and reflect on lessons they’ve learned that will be valuable to someone else. It gives new members some real-life experience to draw on and hopefully helps them avoid potential mistakes. It also is a way to provide continuity from one year to the next.

There are lots of ways to create opportunities for passing along wisdom:

- One Washington Service Corps group made a series of posters with words of encouragement to hang in their program office.
- Another created a video with parting messages of “graduating” members; it was shown to new recruits during orientation.
- Each of the Washington Service Corps programs has a “sustainability binder.” In the notebook are personal letters from former members to current members, telling them how the year went and offering advice.
- Some programs ask members to write letters on their own time while others incorporate it into an end-of-service reflection exercise.
- America Reads-Mississippi (Jackson, MS) gathered advice from supervisors, team leaders, and members into a booklet “so others don’t have to learn lessons the hard way.” It covers topics such as “One Thing I Wish Someone Had Told Me Early On...” and “It Took Me Awhile to Figure Out...”

(Source: EnCorps)

TA-TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE...

- **Grantee Central** – ServeNebraska has consolidated resources to help you manage your program, <http://www.serve.nebraska.gov/grantee/grantee.htm>.

CHECK IT OUT...

- **The AmeriCorps Nebraska Blog**
<http://americorpsnebraska.wordpress.com/2013/03/13/welcome-to-the-ameri-corps-nebraska-blog/>
Check out the official Nebraska blog! This is a great site for AmeriCorps members statewide to showcase their service through words and photos. Each week the blog will be updated with new stories from around the state. It’s an exciting way to work as a team and more importantly feel like a team. Please feel free to comment on the posts to help start an organic conversation.

DISABILITY/INCLUSION...

- **National Service Inclusion Project: All Inclusion Questions Welcome**
Do you have questions about disability inclusion? Would you like to make your program more inclusive? Have you been unsure of how to support a member or volunteer with a disability?
NSIP provides technical assistance to all CNCS grantees. They provide information, connections to local and national resources and guidance to the national service community on issues related to disability inclusion, e.g., universal design, access and reasonable accommodations. They receive a wide variety of requests ranging from relatively simple inquiries for resources to complex questions that require extensive research. **The following are some examples of the types of technical assistance we have provided to the field:**
 - *An AmeriCorps program director called because she was interested in providing training on disability and inclusion and needed resources. NSIP talked through the training with her and followed up with local and low cost training resources.*
 - *A Senior Corps program director asked for guidance on how to support a volunteer who disclosed he has a mental health related disability. NSIP provided resources on possible accommodations and coached the program director on how to discuss accommodations with the volunteer.*
NSIP would like to remind grantees that all questions are always welcomed and all questions and responses are kept completely confidential.
If you have disability inclusion related questions, NSIP encourages you to utilize them as a resource. **Contact NSIP by email: nsip@umb.edu or phone: 888-491-0236 or www.serviceandinclusion.org.**

SAVE THE DATE...

- **Cornhusker Book Drive – May 4**
- **ServeNebraska Symposium: Celebration of Service – May 23**
Registration Opens: May 2, deadline May 17
Location: Center for People in Need, Lincoln