

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **ServeNebraska Announces \$1.4 Million in AmeriCorps Funding to Nebraska** *Federal Grants Will Support 212 AmeriCorps Members*

**Lincoln, Nebraska** – ServeNebraska, the Governor-appointed State Volunteer Service Commission, announced today that Nebraska has received \$1,427,216 in AmeriCorps funding from the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), the federal agency for volunteering and service programs.

“We’re continually humbled to work with an all-star lineup of service organizations across the state each year, and this year is no exception,” said ServeNebraska Executive Director Cathleen Plager. “By furthering the national service mission, we help strong community programs secure additional people and funding to reach new levels of service to Nebraskans in need.”

The federal investment is delivered to ServeNebraska, which uses these funds to make grant awards to AmeriCorps programs in Nebraska. This year, 15 AmeriCorps programs received a total of \$1,427,216. As a result, 212 Nebraska AmeriCorps members will tackle some of the toughest problems facing communities from Scottsbluff to Omaha, including youth fitness, college preparatory, life skills, mentoring and after-school programs; behavioral health services to underserved rural communities; reducing hunger; achieving affordable housing; and skill building for high-risk juveniles serving probation.

Between all grants announced today, CNCS will also provide up to \$654,617 in education scholarships for the AmeriCorps members funded by these grants to help pay for college, vocational training, or pay back student loans. The federal investment is projected to generate an additional \$1,222,327 million in matching local support to increase community impact and return on federal investment.

ServeNebraska will be making the following 15 grants through formula funding:

□ HEAL, City of Lincoln: AmeriCorps members offer physical activity programs for low-income, minority students including: Fit4Life at selected after-school programs and recreation centers; Crunch & Lunch summer camp focused on food, fitness and nutrition, and weekly family fitness and nutrition programs for participants. (Eight AmeriCorps members)

□ College Possible Omaha: AmeriCorps members help make college admission and success possible for low-income students through an intensive curriculum of coaching and support. The organization serves more than 700 high school students in the Omaha area at 10 partner high schools in six different school districts for the 2016-2017 academic year. (29 AmeriCorps members)

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- Community Crops, Lincoln: AmeriCorps members help promote urban agriculture as economic opportunity, a community health initiative, and a way to fight hunger. The organization hosts a Youth Garden Education Program through Lincoln Public Schools and a Community Garden Program that serves 300 Lincoln area families. (Five AmeriCorps members)
- Goodwill Industries Youthbuild, Omaha: AmeriCorps members, ages 16 to 24, work toward their GED and gain construction and trade skills while building homes for low-income families. Houses are built in collaboration with multiple partners. (33 AmeriCorps members)
- Nebraska Conservation Educational Fund: AmeriCorps members serving with the statewide Common Ground Program build local capacity to improve environmental stewardship in Nebraska by increasing knowledge of and concern for the most important conservation issues facing the state. (10 AmeriCorps members)
- Nebraska Supreme Court Office of Probation Administration: AmeriCorps members in the Nebraska Administrative Office of Probation's Rural Improvement for Schooling and Employment (RISE) Program facilitate a skill-building curriculum to adjudicated youth with an identified high-risk criminogenic factor in 15 Nebraska counties. They teach juvenile probationers the education and life skills needed after program completion. (13 AmeriCorps members)
- Peru State College, Nebraska City: The AmeriCorps CHANCE Initiative gives Nebraska City elementary and middle school children more opportunities to achieve the recommended number of minutes of physical activity per day. The mission is to curb the obesity epidemic in rural southeast Nebraska. (12 AmeriCorps members)
- Public Health Solutions, Crete: AmeriCorps members provide disaster preparedness training and education to vulnerable populations (older adults, non-English speakers, etc.) in five counties in Southeast Nebraska utilizing curriculum from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and CNCS. (six AmeriCorps members)
- Scottsbluff Public Schools, Scottsbluff: This program improves educational outcomes for students through mentoring, individual and small group educational assistance, family involvement, career support services and skill building. The primary goal is to give students the ability to build relationships that engage them in the classroom and surrounding environments. (13 AmeriCorps members)
- University of Nebraska at Kearney, Department of Counseling and School Psychology, Kearney: The UNK-CSP Rural NE Behavioral Health Services program increases access to behavioral health care in rural Nebraska. AmeriCorps members are graduate-level counselors-in-training that provide behavioral health and substance abuse screenings and treatment services in underserved areas. The program is expected to provide 2,500 screenings, assessments and treatments. (12 AmeriCorps members)
- University of Nebraska Medical Center Munroe Meyer Institute (MMI) Autism Center for Toddlers (ACT), Omaha: The clinic provides early intensive behavioral intervention services to young children (two to four years old) diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder. Through the “Service Through Learning” model, students help alleviate a statewide shortage professionals trained to treat autism spectrum disorder. (56 AmeriCorps members)

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□ YWCA Adams County, Hastings: AmeriCorps members provide direct service to clients, including: after-school programs; health and nutrition education; homework assistance; job training for women; English as a Second Language (ESL) and general education degree (GED) classes, and connection to services for homeless and/or youth in the court system. Programs are offered in Adams, Nuckolls, Clay, Kearney and Webster counties. (15 AmeriCorps members)

ServeNebraska granted out a total of \$80,000 to three nonprofit organizations to begin planning for AmeriCorps programing in the next funding cycle. Those nonprofits are Mediation of the West in Scottsbluff, The Groundwater Foundation in Lincoln and The Nebraska Children and Families Foundation in Lincoln.

Organizations are currently recruiting for AmeriCorps members to begin service this fall. AmeriCorps members typically receive a modest living stipend and a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award, or scholarship, upon completion of their service. The award can be used to pay for future education costs or to pay back student loans. Those interested in serving can learn more by visiting [americorps.gov/join](http://americorps.gov/join).

More than 80,000 AmeriCorps members are serving across the country in 21,600 locations. These members help communities tackle pressing problems while mobilizing millions of volunteers for the organizations they serve.

More than 6,100 members have served in AmeriCorps in Nebraska since 1994, serving more than 9.8 million hours and have qualified for more than \$22.7 million in Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards.

Since the program's inception in 1994, more than 1 million men and women have served in AmeriCorps nationally, providing more than 1.4 billion hours of service and have earned more than \$3.3 billion in education scholarships to pay for college or pay back student loans. More than \$1 billion in educational awards has been used to pay back student loan debt.

#### **About ServeNebraska**

ServeNebraska is governed by a 20-member, bipartisan board appointed by the Nebraska governor. Its mission mobilizes Nebraskans to strengthen their communities through collaboration, volunteering and national service. ServeNebraska oversees AmeriCorps programming, hosts the state's most prestigious volunteer awards, the Step Forward Awards, and provides training and technical assistance. To learn more, visit [www.serve.nebraska.gov](http://www.serve.nebraska.gov).

#### **About the Corporation for National and Community Service**

The Corporation for National and Community Service is a federal agency that engages millions of Americans in service through AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and the Volunteer Generation Fund, and leads volunteer initiatives for the nation. For more information, visit [www.NationalService.gov](http://www.NationalService.gov).

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