

Creative and Successful Approaches to the Economic Downturn - Part Two



Paula Sotnik National Service Inclusion Project



Corporation for
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COMMUNITY
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A Corporation for National and Community Service Training and Technical Assistance Provider



www.nationalservice.gov

www.serviceandinclusion.org

Toll-free hotline: 888-491-0326 (voice/TTY)



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The Corporation for National & Community Service:

- **A federal agency established in 1993 and reauthorized in 2009, to provide opportunities for *ALL* Americans to give back to their communities through service and volunteering**
- **Mission is to improve lives, strengthen communities and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering**
- **Structured volunteer service opportunities are provided through three major programs: Senior Corps, AmeriCorps and Learn and Serve America. Many new programs to be established with the passage of the 2009 Kennedy Service Act**



The National Service Inclusion Project (NSIP)
A national training and technical assistance provider
for the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS)

1. Develops the capacity of all national service, civic engagement and volunteer communities to actively recruit and support Americans with *all* abilities
2. Advances national service and volunteerism as a valued option for all Americans in the disability community

By expanding opportunities for Americans with disabilities to engage in service, the Corporation for National and Community Service fulfills its mission to engage all Americans of all backgrounds in service toward the strengthening of their communities.

~ excerpt from CNCS Mission Statement



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National Partnerships

The National Service Inclusion Project partners with the following organizations to further enable all CNCS grantees to collaborate with the disability community. These disability organizations are committed to promoting national service and volunteerism as a valued option for individuals with disabilities to their respective communities.

Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD)
Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD)
National Down Syndrome Congress (NDSC)
National Council on Independent Living (NCIL)



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Changing the paradigm...

**from recipients to providers and leaders in
all national service and volunteer
activities**



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Thousands of people with disabilities serve (or have served) in the CNCS three major programs: AmeriCorps, Senior Corps and Learn and Serve America.



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AmeriCorps Awardee: Dwight Owens



At age 23, as a teacher and football coach, Dwight Owens had already mapped out his road to success. But his plans came to a screeching halt on Friday, August 5, 2005, on Highway 84 in Collins, Mississippi, when Dwight was hit by a drunk driver. After coding as a result of suffering several life-threatening injuries, he was on life support for 48 hours and awoke to the news that he was permanently paralyzed. Not expected to live, Dwight endured months of extensive rehabilitation to learn to complete life's basic tasks and regain independence.

Dwight currently serves with LIFE/ Project LINC (Linking Individuals into Neighborhoods and Communities)

AmeriCorps. As an AmeriCorps member, Dwight provided peer support to over 1,200 individuals with disabilities, completed 48 ADA site surveys to ensure accessibility for persons with disabilities, provided over 300 life skills training sessions

to increase independence for Mississippians with disabilities,

helped transition many individuals from institutions to their own homes, and started a "Men with Disabilities" support group encouraging independence and leadership. Dwight also makes presentations

wherever he can to stop drinking and driving – using his own accident to prevent others. As a result of Dwight's AmeriCorps service, Mississippians with disabilities are active, productive members of their communities.



A WIN-WIN Situation!

- People with disabilities are members of their communities and wish to contribute.
- People who serve are more likely to be happy and satisfied with their lives. [CNCS AmeriCorps Longitudinal Study 2008]
- People who serve improve their lives and make a difference in the lives of those they help.
- Communities really learn about what *all* Americans can do!

plus....



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Members receive:

- training and supervision**
- life and job skills**
- networks**
- A living stipend**
- An Education Award**
- Health Insurance, as needed**
- Child care benefits, as needed**



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- Amount is \$4,725 for a full-time award
(will increase and match Pell grant award amount)
- Part-time members receive pro-rated amounts
- Can be used for degree or enrichment coursework
- Can use it at any Title IV school including trade schools (beauty, massage, auto repair, etc.)
- Can pay for tuition, books, and cost of attendance items (which can include a computer and equipment needed for coursework)

http://encorps.nationalserviceresources.org/segal_americo_rps_education_awa.php



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AmeriCorps (AC) supports a broad range of local service programs that engage thousands of Americans in full or part-time volunteering to meet critical community needs. AmeriCorps program grants go to States, National Non-Profits, Indian Tribes and U.S. territories. Individuals 17 years or older, with a H.S. diploma/GED or working on one, or with an Independent Educational Assessment are eligible to apply

AC State and National members are eligible to receive a living allowance, health insurance, child care, and an education award upon successful completion of the service period. The HEART Act of 2008 made it possible for the living stipend to be disregarded as income for SSI eligibility purposes

Limited funds are available through State Service Commissions for reasonable accommodations



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AmeriCorps VISTA provides full-time volunteers to community organizations and public agencies to create and expand programs that build capacity and ultimately bring low-income individuals and communities out of poverty.

AmeriCorps VISTA members or volunteers are eligible to receive a living allowance, health care, child care and an education award upon completion.

The VISTA living allowance is not regarded as income for purposes of SSDI or SSI eligibility



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The AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) is a full-time residential program for men and women aged 18-24 that strengthens communities while developing leaders through direct, team-based national and community service.

NCCC members receive a living allowance, health care and an education award upon completion.



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Senior Corps is for people age 55+ who want to share their experiences with others who are most in need of mentors, coaches or a companion.

- Foster Grandparents, RSVP and Senior Companions

Learn and Serve America promotes learning through active participation from K through higher ed by integrating community service projects with classroom learning.

- doing, learning, reflecting



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