

2017-2018 AmeriCorps\*Texas Grantee

# Communications Toolkit

## Supplement: AmeriCorps Opening Day

Updated: October 1st, 2017



AmeriCorps\*Texas Programs,

AmeriCorps\*Texas programs and our members are getting things done in Texas and making a real difference in the lives of those in our state. This year, we have almost 3,000 members serving in 25 organizations across hundreds of sites statewide. Our members will provide tutoring, mentoring, and college readiness and completion services to at-risk children and youth; early intervention programming to young children in low-income homes; disaster services to those impacted by natural disasters; job training and placement, literacy skills, and housing services to adults; and services to alleviate food insecurity and long term hunger in Texas families. During the 2017-2018 service year, members will serve 3.4 million hours in our local communities.

Not only do our AmeriCorps members get things done, but they also learn valuable skills and gain experience to grow professionally. AmeriCorps members come to our programs with a commitment to national service and a desire to make a difference in our state. Our programs are able to nurture those qualities and help them gain the tools they need to launch into their futures.

Already this service year, AmeriCorps members have answered the call to respond to Hurricane Harvey. Members were asked to activate for disaster relief efforts and the response was overwhelming as they stepped up to fill this need in our state with the same commitment that they apply to their typical service duties. If this is how our members start the service year, we can't wait to see what they will accomplish next.

We are releasing this supplement to our 2017-2018 Grantee Communications Toolkit to provide you with some templates and guidance surrounding Opening Day Ceremony communications. We are making these resources available to assist you in promoting Swearing In and Opening Day events, although it is not required that you use them. We hope everyone is looking forward to Opening Day events being a celebration of what AmeriCorps\*Texas programs and members do best – serve the needs of Texans.

AmeriCorps\*Texas programs and AmeriCorps members bring people together and strengthen our communities; faced with apathy, you take action; you seek common ground in the face of conflict; and above all, you persevere.

In Service,

The AmeriCorps\*Texas Team

## **How to use this supplement:**

We have included both a press release template and a media advisory template. Press releases can, and should be sent out 3-5 days before you want the coverage to appear. Media advisories are aimed to encourage members of the press to attend your event so please send them 5-7 days before your event. Social media templates and hashtags should be used on the day of the event as well as days prior to the event to build interest. We have designed the talking points and templates to highlight members themselves so please encourage pictures and personalization when possible.

We encourage all programs to work with other AmeriCorps programs in their region to hold joint Opening Day events. To this end, all of the press releases and templates can easily be modified to include the region instead of local area/community, multiple organizations instead of one organization, and more than one type of member activity.

**For example**, this excerpt is designed for one organization: This year XYZ organization will recognize 100 members who will spend 170,000 hours providing job placement and housing support to individuals experiencing homelessness in Williamson County, TX.

**It can easily become** this excerpt designed for multiple organizations in the same region: This year XYZ and 123 organizations will recognize 250 members who will spend 425,000 hours providing needed services within the Austin area including housing support for those experiencing homelessness and mentoring for at-risk youth.

## TALKING POINTS/KEY MESSAGES:

- Opening Day Ceremony recognizes and celebrates the new class of AmeriCorps members as they embark on their year of national service.
- AmeriCorps members possess a commitment to national service and the need to make a difference in Texas. This year members serving with [ORGANIZATION NAME] will spend [TOTAL NUMBER OF HOURS ALL MEMBERS WILL SERVE] [DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES]. (Example: This year members serving with XYZ organization will spend 170,000 hours providing job placement and housing support to individuals experiencing homelessness in Williamson County, TX).
- Already this service year, AmeriCorps members have answered the call to respond to Hurricane Harvey. In the first weekend alone, they answered a backlog of 4,000 phone calls to individuals experiencing storm related property damage. If this is how our members start the service year, we can't wait to see what they will accomplish next.
- AmeriCorps members bring people together, strengthen communities, take action in the face of apathy, seek common ground during conflict, and above all, they persevere.
- AmeriCorps\*Texas engages nearly 3,000 men and women in intensive service each year at hundreds of locations across Texas, including nonprofits, schools, public agencies and community and faith-based groups.
- AmeriCorps members will provide services to approximately 88,000 at-risk children and youth through AmeriCorps\*Texas programs this year including tutoring, intensive mentoring and programs to increase college readiness.
- AmeriCorps\*Texas programs will provide services to over 7,000 college students to support them in successfully completing their degree.

- Over 5,000 Texan adults will receive services through AmeriCorps\*Texas programs including job training, literacy skills, housing services, job placement services and services to alleviate food insecurity and long term hunger.

**PRESS RELEASE TEMPLATE: AMERICORPS\*TEXAS OPENING DAY  
AND SWEARING IN**



Corporation for  
**NATIONAL &  
COMMUNITY  
SERVICE**



(add grantee logo)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date:

Contact: [MEDIA CONTACT]

Telephone: [PHONE]

Email: [EMAIL ADDRESS]

Website: [ORGANIZATION WEBSITE]

**[ORGANIZATION NAME] announces Next Class of  
AmeriCorps Members**

**Members will be recognized at an Opening Day and Swearing-In Ceremony**

City, State – [ORGANIZATION NAME] announces the next class of AmeriCorps members who will start their service on [DATE], made possible by federal AmeriCorps funds administered by the OneStar Foundation. Each year, AmeriCorps members serving with [ORGANIZATION NAME] make a powerful impact on critical issues facing the community of [LOCAL COMMUNITY OR 'OUR COMMUNITY']. This year, [ORGANIZATION NAME] will recognize [NUMBER OF MEMBERS] as they begin their year of national service.

AmeriCorps members tackle pressing needs locally while also learning valuable skills and gaining experience to grow professionally. Members come to [ORGANIZATION] with a commitment to service and with the need to make a difference in Texas.

[ORGANIZATION NAME] is honored to have the opportunity to nurture those qualities and help them gain the tools they need to launch into their futures. This year members serving with [ORGANIZATION NAME] will spend [TOTAL NUMBER OF HOURS ALL MEMBERS WILL SERVE] [DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES]. (Example: This year members serving with XYZ organization will spend 170,000 hours providing job placement and housing support to individuals experiencing homelessness in Williamson County, TX).

AmeriCorps members bring people together, strengthen communities, take action in the face of apathy, seek common ground and above all, they persevere. Already this year, before they were sworn in, AmeriCorps members answered the call to respond to Hurricane Harvey. Members were asked to [DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES] (Example: provide support to a call center assisting those with storm related property damage, providing shelter care, or sorting donated goods in a warehouse) and the response was overwhelming as they stepped up to fill this need in our state with the same commitment they apply to their daily service within our communities. If this is how the members serving at [ORGANIZATION NAME] start their year, we look forward to their continued accomplishments during the rest of the service year.

##

[ADD ORGANIZATIONAL BOILERPLATE MESSAGE]

OneStar Foundation is the Governor-designated National Service Commission in Texas and administers the AmeriCorps State grant program. Governor-appointed board

members oversee the legal and policy governance of the AmeriCorps\*Texas program portfolio. Learn more at [www.onestarfoundation.org](http://www.onestarfoundation.org).

AmeriCorps is administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service, a federal agency that engages millions of Americans in service through AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, the Social Innovation Fund, and the Volunteer Generation Fund, and leads the President's national call to service initiative, United We Serve. For more information, visit [www.NationalService.gov](http://www.NationalService.gov).

*-- end--*



## MEDIA ADVISORY TEMPLATE: OPENING DAY CEREMONY



Corporation for  
**NATIONAL &  
COMMUNITY  
SERVICE**



(add grantee logo)

### MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date:

Contact: [MEDIA CONTACT]

Telephone: [PHONE]

Email: [EMAIL ADDRESS]

Website: [ORGANIZATION WEBSITE]

**[ORGANIZATION] to recognize new class of AmeriCorps members in [AREA]**

Who:

What:

Where:

When:

Why: AmeriCorps members tackle pressing needs locally while also learning valuable skills and gaining experience to grow professionally. Members come to [ORGANIZATION] with a commitment to service and with the need to make a difference in Texas. This year, [ORGANIZATION NAME] will recognize [NUMBER OF MEMBERS] who will spend [TOTAL NUMBER OF HOURS ALL MEMBERS WILL SERVE] [DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES]. (Example: This year XYZ organization will recognize 100 members who will spend 170,000 hours providing job placement and

housing support to individuals experiencing homelessness in Williamson County, TX). Already this year, AmeriCorps members answered the call to respond to Hurricane Harvey and they stepped up to fill this need in our state with the same commitment they apply to their daily service within our communities. On [DATE], [ORGANIZATION NAME] will recognize AmeriCorps members' commitment to their community as they start their service year.

[INSERT LANGUAGE WITH SPECIFICS OF AGENDA/ ACTIVITIES FOR THE EVENT]

###

## **SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDANCE:**

Please tag OneStar or AmeriCorps\*Texas in your social media posts so we can assist in amplifying your message.

- OneStar Foundation
  - o Facebook: [@OneStarFoundation](#)
  - o Twitter: [@OneStarFdn](#)
  - o Instagram: [@OneStarFoundation](#)
  - o Flickr: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/89699113@N03/sets/>
  - o [LinkedIn: OneStar-Foundation](#)
- AmeriCorps\*Texas
  - o Facebook: [@AmeriCorpsTexas](#)
- CNCS
  - o Facebook: [@AmeriCorps](#) and [@NationalService](#)
  - o Twitter: [@AmeriCorps](#) and [@NationalService](#)
  - o Instagram: [@NationalService](#)
  - o Tumblr: [NationalService.Tumblr.com](#)
  - o Snapchat: [NationalService](#)
  - o LinkedIn: [Corporation for National and Community Service](#) and [AmeriCorps](#)

Please use the following hashtags:

- #ServeTX (For Opening Day Ceremonies Only)
- #AmeriCorpsTX (For all AmeriCorps\*Texas related posts)

**\*\*We encourage you to post photos of your AmeriCorps members (with their permission) at the ceremony. We also encourage you to include visible AmeriCorps logos in the composition of the photos\*\***

## **SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA TEMPLATES** (change organization names and descriptions as appropriate)

### **Facebook or Instagram:**

- AmeriCorps members at XYZ will be taking their oath of national service today! “Faced with apathy, I will take action. Faced with conflict, I will seek common ground. Faced with adversity, I will persevere.” #ServeTX!
- Today is Opening Day for our AmeriCorps members! With their commitment to national service and their desire to make a difference in the lives of Texans, we can't wait to see what great things they will accomplish this year! #ServeTX
- Today we recognize and celebrate our new class of AmeriCorps members! Our members will serve a total of 170,000 hours (100 members at 1700 hours) in the next year, providing job placement and housing support to individuals experiencing homelessness in Williamson County. We can't wait to see what they accomplish! #ServeTX
- Encourage your members to post pictures of themselves during the ceremony along with a brief description of what they will be doing for the next year and why they are excited about it. #ServeTX

### **Twitter:**

- “Faced with apathy, I will take action. Faced with conflict, I will seek common ground. Faced with adversity, I will persevere.” #ServeTX (with picture of members)
- Welcome new AmeriCorps members! We can't wait to see what you will accomplish this year! #ServeTX
- AmeriCorps members get things done for Texas! #ServeTX
- Post pics of members with a short description of why they serve #ServeTX

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

[2017-2018 AmeriCorps\\*Texas Grantee Communications Toolkit](#)

[CNCS 2016 AmeriCorps Opening Day Communications Toolkit](#)