

# AmeriCorps\*VISTA Supervisors Training Manual

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## **DAY ONE**

### **A. Opening & Learning Community**

**Supervisors will...**

- **Feel welcomed and appreciated.**
- **Be provided an overview of the training agenda.**
- **Be invited to build familiarity with each other and the proposed learning process in an effort to nurture and initiate a learning community.**
- **Learn about the training process and content with their needs, expectations and working guidelines.**

## **Corporation for National and Community Service Mission Statement**

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The Corporation's mission is to provide opportunities for Americans of all ages and backgrounds to engage in service that addresses the nation's educational, public safety, environmental, and other human needs to achieve direct and demonstrable results and to encourage all Americans to engage in such service. In doing so, the Corporation will foster civic responsibility, strengthen the ties that bind us together as a people, and provide educational opportunity for those who make a substantial commitment to service.

## **AmeriCorps\*VISTA Mission/Legacy**

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AmeriCorps\*VISTA builds permanent infrastructure and capacities in nonprofit organizations and communities to help bring individuals and communities out of poverty.

VISTA's unique mission of building sustainable infrastructure requires that sponsoring organizations and supervisors develop multi-year programs with clear and sustainable objectives and that VISTAs are prepared to assume key roles in those capacity-building efforts.

## **Overall Goal of All AmeriCorps\*VISTA Training**

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- Increasing Program Impact
- Maximizing On-Board Strength

## **Core Objectives of AmeriCorps\*VISTA Supervisor Training**

As a result of the VISTA Supervisors Training, Supervisors will ...

- 1.0 Understand the Corporation for National and Community Service and AmeriCorps\*VISTA as they relate to national and community service
- 2.0 Understand the importance of and key strategies involved in designing and managing clear, realistic, outcome-based member assignments within multi-year programs designed specifically to build permanent infrastructure to bring people and communities out of poverty
- 3.0 Understand their responsibilities vis-à-vis CNCS, AmeriCorps\*VISTA, and the member, and be able to articulate the benefits, terms and conditions of AmeriCorps\*VISTA service
- 4.0 Draft an effective one-to-three week AmeriCorps\*VISTA on-site orientation and training plan and a plan for ongoing member development
- 5.0 Understand the CNCS web-based recruitment system and develop and implement an effective AmeriCorps\*VISTA recruitment strategy – including effective screening and selection
- 6.0 Provide quality member support to optimize member satisfaction and impact and to reduce attrition
- 7.0 Understand their role and responsibility in program monitoring, evaluation, and reporting
- 8.0 Participate in a manner that maximizes opportunities for learning, sharing and networking.



# 11 1/2 THINGS ABOUT ME

My Name:

1.

2.

3.

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9.

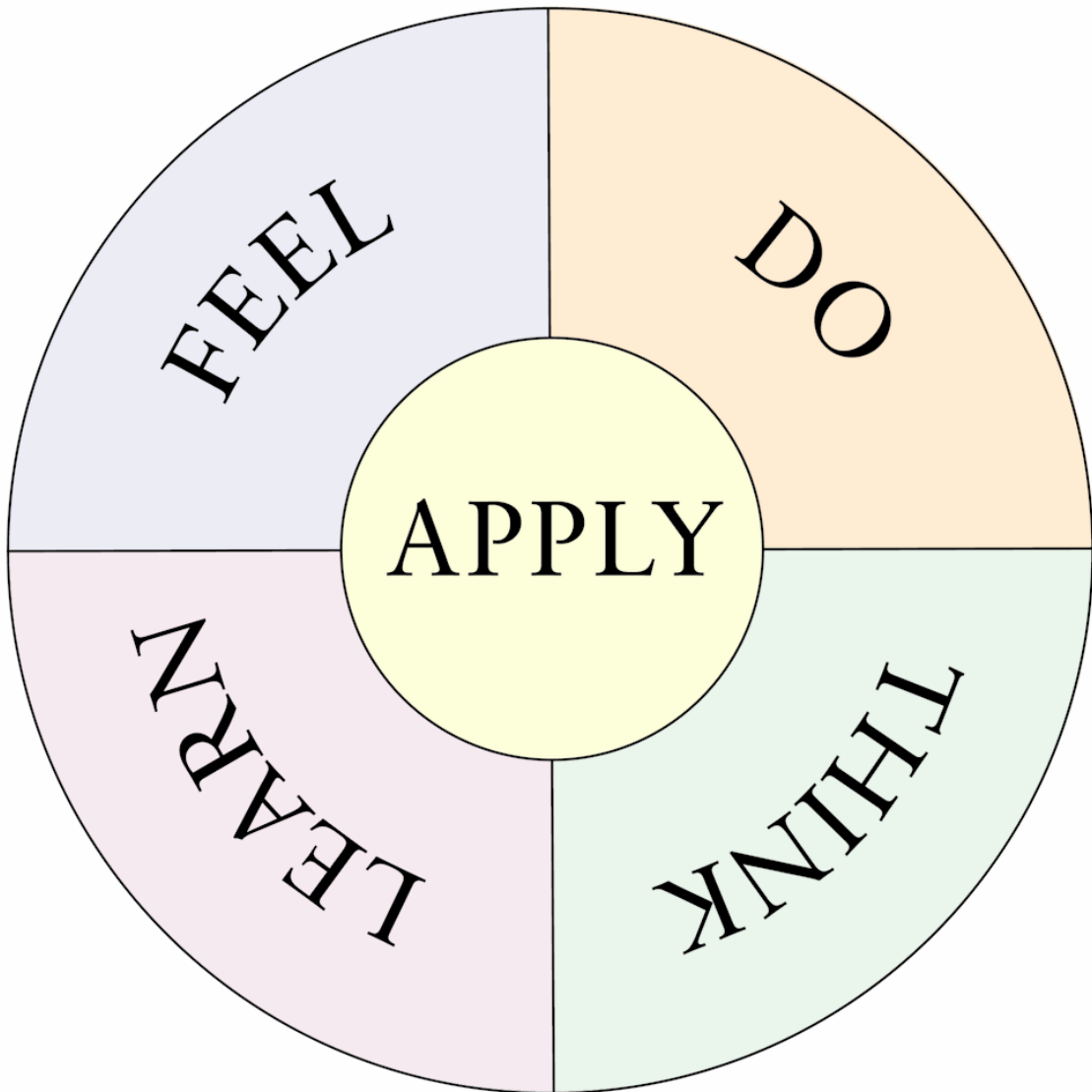
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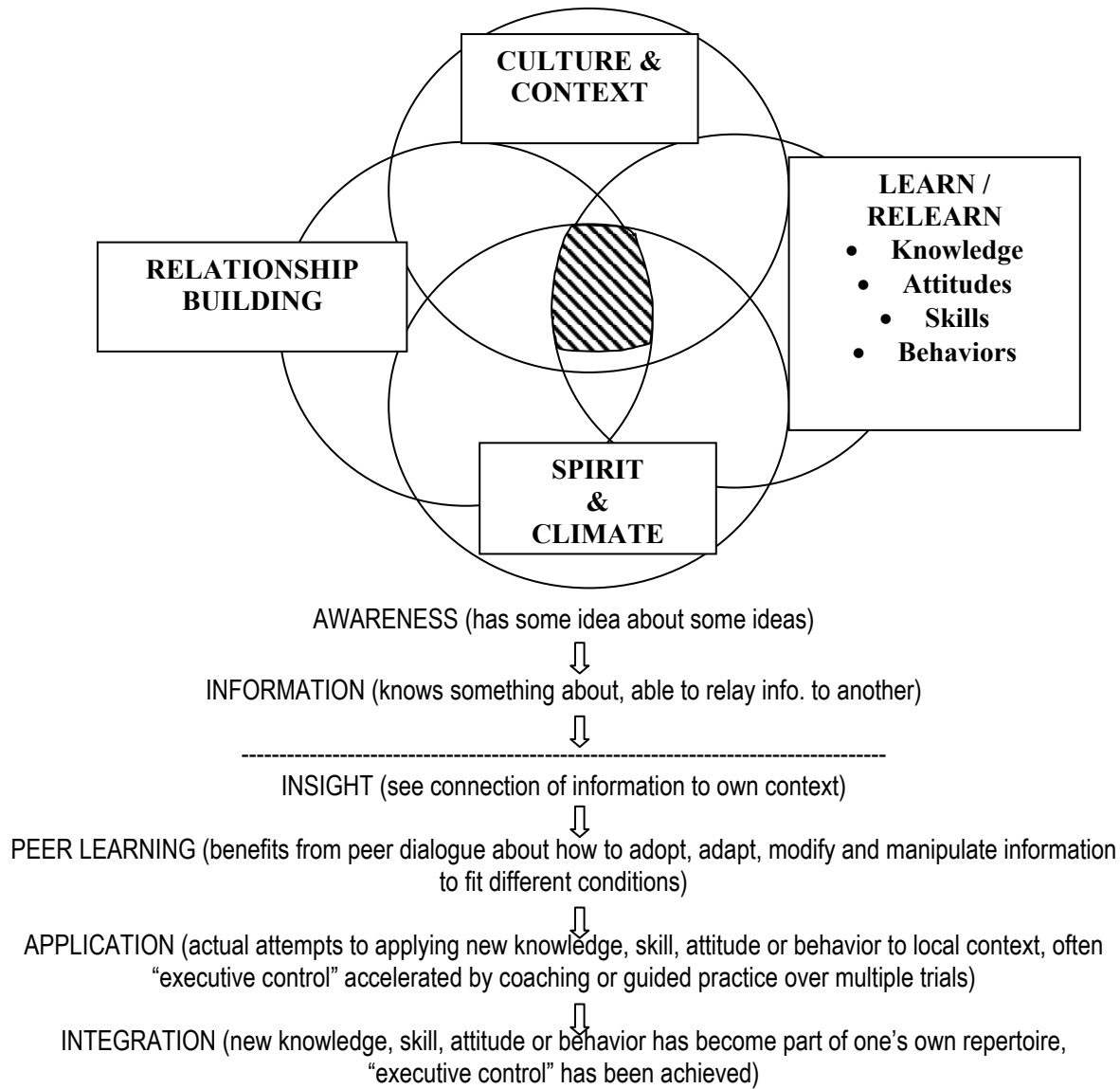
# LEARNING WHEEL



## Learning Community Attributes

- Every member shares the responsibility of being both a teacher and a learner
- Emphasis is on learning and discovery and expanding each other’s awareness, not on being right or wrong
- Everyone’s perspective is valued
- The more diversity of thought the group is able to generate, the more opportunities the group will have to make new discoveries

## Training Concepts Applied to VISTA Supervisor Training



[Adapted by G. Woo from work of R. Bixler and M. Calderon]



## VISTA Member Interview Questions

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Instructions:

To help our conversations about Recruitment and On-Site Orientation and Training it would be helpful to have each supervisor gather perspectives from 2-3 of the VISTA members attending the PSO. Take the opportunity to ask a few members the following:

<p>On-Site Orientation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ What would you like to see included in your VISTA On-Site Orientation? _____ _____ _____</li><li>➤ What do you feel most fearful and nervous about? _____ _____ _____</li><li>➤ What things would make you feel welcome? _____ _____ _____</li></ul>
<p>Recruitment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ How did you first hear about AmeriCorps*VISTA? _____ _____ _____</li><li>➤ What convinced you to apply to be a VISTA? _____ _____ _____</li><li>➤ If it were your job to recruit others like yourself, what strategies would you use? New ways? _____ _____</li><li>➤ How do you think we could bring in even more diversity to the pool of VISTAs we recruit? _____ _____ _____</li></ul>



## **“WISDOM AND WELCOME WALL” Project**

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### **What and Why?**

A year of national service is very important not only in the life of the individuals that apply to serve as AmeriCorps\*VISTAs, but also for our organizations, communities, and country. The year begins when a VISTA member takes the Oath of Service during the Swearing in Ceremony. At an early pilot of the current PSO curriculum, the supervisors who were attending a VISTA Supervisors Training event, that was co-located with the PSO, were asked to help with the Swearing in Ceremony. This was accomplished with their thoughts, expressions of hope, well wishes, artistry, and creativity.

The “Welcome Wall” canvas mural was paraded in at the beginning of the Closing Ceremony event. It was colorful, spirited and beautiful. The collage that hung from a dowel was approximately 10’ by 8’ was completed by all of the supervisors who had attended. In making the presentation at the Closing, three supervisors briefly spoke to the VISTAs on behalf of all supervisors. Their words conveyed excitement, inspiration, appreciation, and commitment. It was quite a wonderful way to help launch the year of service.

Supervisor involvement with PSO and the VISTA Swearing in Ceremony is a new and much welcomed effort. Supervisors are critical partners. While your VISTA members are not attending this PSO, we have an opportunity to represent Supervisors as a group in a rich and symbolic way.

### **How?**

- Please use the collection of art materials we’ve gathered and begin to craft together a “Welcome Wall” that will be used to welcome the VISTAs to their year of service, as well as back to their EST. You’ll find markers, pipe cleaners, beads, feathers, etc. LET YOUR IMAGINATION GO! Make sure every supervisor makes a contribution to the project.
- Work together to decide as a group how the first 5 minutes of the Closing Ceremony will be used to present the “Wall.”

*On behalf of all partners in national service, thank you for putting forth this effort!*



## **B. VISTA History and Legacy**

**Supervisors will...**

- **Feel welcomed and enthusiastic to be a part of the trainings.**
- **Understand the big picture related to the Corporation for National and Community Service and its programs.**
- **Begin training with a sense of pride and inspiration about becoming part of the great legacy and mission of AmeriCorps\*VISTA.**

## Reflections on Poverty

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"Today it is fashionable to talk about the poor.  
Unfortunately it is not fashionable to talk with them."

~ Mother Teresa

"Do not romanticize the poor...We are all people,  
human beings subject to the same temptations  
and faults as all others. Our poverty damages our  
dignity."

~ César Chávez

"If you can't feed a hundred people, then feed just  
one."

~ Mother Teresa

"From the depth of need and despair, people can work  
together, can organize themselves to solve their own  
problems and fill their own needs with dignity and  
strength."

~ Cesar Chávez

"There is nothing new about poverty. What is new,  
however, is that we now have the resources to get rid  
of it."

~ Martin Luther King Jr.

"The curse of poverty has no justification in our age. It  
is socially as cruel and blind as the practice of  
cannibalism at the dawn of civilization, when men ate  
each other because they had not yet learned to take  
food from the soil or to consume the abundant animal  
life around them. The time has come for us to civilize  
ourselves by the total, direct and immediate abolition  
of poverty."

~ Martin Luther King, Jr.,

Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community?,  
1967.

"Poverty is the deprivation of capability."

~ Amartya Sen

"Societies that have satisfied the basic needs of their  
population tend to reduce pollution and environmental  
destruction."

~ Gro Brundtland

"If a free society cannot help the many who are poor,  
it cannot save the few who are rich."

~ John F. Kennedy

"I am aware that there are many who wince at a  
distinction between property and persons--who hold  
both sacrosanct. My views are not so rigid. A life is  
sacred. Property is intended to serve life, and no  
matter how much we surround it with rights and  
respect, it has no personal being. It is part of the earth  
man walks on; it is not man."

~ Martin Luther King, Jr., The Trumpet of Conscience,  
1967.

"Let not him who is houseless pull down the house of  
another, but let him work diligently and build one for  
himself, thus by example assuring that his own shall  
be safe from violence when built."

~ Abraham Lincoln

"Anyone who has ever struggled with poverty knows  
how extremely expensive it is to be poor." ~  
James Baldwin

"Poverty is the worst form of pollution."

~ Indira Gandhi

"If all you want to do is make money, the very last  
thing you need is imagination."

~ James Baldwin

"Poverty is the worst form of violence"

~ Mahatmas Gandhi

"Our world has always had two kinds of changers, the  
social changers and the money changers. "

~ Saul D. Alinsky

"The Earth has enough for everyone's needs, but not  
for some people's greed."

~ Mahatmas Gandhi

"It is not wealth one asks for,  
but just enough to preserve one's dignity,  
to work unhampered,  
to be generous, frank and independent."

~ W. Somerset Maugham

Those who produce should have, but we know that those who produce the most--that is, those who work hardest, and at the most difficult and most menial tasks, have the least.

~ Eugene V. Debs

One of the most fashionable notions of our times is that social problems like poverty and oppression breed wars. Most wars, however, are started by well-fed people with time on their hands to dream up half-baked ideologies or grandiose ambitions, and to nurse real or imagined grievances.

~ Thomas Sowell

## Reflections on Service

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"We must use time creatively,

And forever realize that time is always ripe to do right."

~ Nelson Mandela

"You must do the thing you think you cannot do."

~ Eleanor Roosevelt

"Humankind has not woven the web of life  
We are but one thread within it,  
Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves.  
All things are bound together.  
All things connected."

~ Chief Seattle

"Service is the rent we pay for being,  
It is the very purpose of life  
And not something you do in your spare time."

~ Marion Wright Edelman

- If you want one year of prosperity, grow grain.
- If you want ten years of prosperity, grow trees.
- If you want one hundred years of prosperity, grow people.

~ (old Chinese proverb)

"The journey is the reward."

~ (Taoist saying)

Everybody can be great,

Because anyone can serve,  
You only need a heart full of grace,  
A soul generated by love.

~ Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

"Remember, we all stumble, every one of us.  
That's why it's a comfort to go hand in hand."

~ Emily Kimborough

"You don't get harmony when everybody sings the same note."

~ Doug Floyd

Out of clutter, find Simplicity.

From discord, find Harmony.

In the middle of difficulty lies Opportunity.

~ Albert Einstein, Three Rules of Work

"To laugh often and much,  
to win the respect of intelligent people  
and the affection of children,  
to earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure  
the betrayal of false friends,  
to appreciate beauty, to find the best in others,  
to leave the world a bit better,  
whether by a healthy child, a garden patch, or a  
redeemed social condition;  
to know even one life has breathed easier because  
you have lived.

THIS is to have succeeded."

~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

## Legacy Text

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Service to others has been a central part of the American heritage since our nation was founded.

Thomas Jefferson: *"That my country be served is the first wish of my heart. I shall be doubly happy if I were to render it a service."*

Booker T. Washington: *"In proportion as one renders service, he becomes great."*

Cesar Chavez: *"We cannot seek achievement for ourselves and forget about progress and prosperity for our community. Our ambitions must be broad enough to include the aspirations and needs of others, for their sakes and for our own."*

The Corporation for National and Community Service, which includes AmeriCorps\*VISTA, is based on this great American ideal of service. It calls upon Americans of all ages, races, and faiths to contribute in meaningful ways to their communities, to fortify the civic connections that make us strong as a nation: to serve one another.

The Corporation for National and Community Service is itself a community of service opportunities. It includes three broad programs:

- The AmeriCorps Program
- Learn and Serve America, a program that engages young people from kindergarten to higher education in community service connected to learning.
- The National Senior Service Corps, which includes Foster Grandparents (low-income seniors who mentor youth), Senior Companions (low-income seniors who provide friendship and support to other seniors), and Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (a wide array of volunteer programs for low-income seniors).

AmeriCorps itself is comprised of three programs:

- The National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC), in which 18-24 year olds live on campuses and engage in direct service projects in teams - building homes, cleaning parks, tutoring children, providing disaster relief, and much more.
- The AmeriCorps State and National Program (sometimes referred to as just "AmeriCorps") whose members serve full or part-time, usually providing

direct service, with organizations around the country, including Teach for America, City Year, Public Allies and many others.

- And AmeriCorps\*VISTA, the anti-poverty arm of AmeriCorps that was begun in 1965.

What makes AmeriCorps\*VISTA unique within AmeriCorps?

First, AmeriCorps\*VISTA members are the only one of the three AmeriCorps programs that focus exclusively on fighting poverty. VISTA members commit a year or more of their lives to help those who, in the words of President George W. Bush, "prosperity has left behind." AmeriCorps\*VISTA is dedicated to this proposition: that no one should go hungry in America, no one should be without a home, a good education, and a livable income.

Second, AmeriCorps\*VISTA members focus exclusively on building the capacity of organizations and communities. AmeriCorps\*VISTA members do not perform direct service; they don't directly tutor children, or build homes, or feed the hungry. Instead they help create or expand community-based programs, services, and systems that help individuals in poor communities improve their lives for the long term.

Third, AmeriCorps\*VISTA members totally immerse themselves in their communities and projects – 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. The AmeriCorps\*VISTA members live and work with the poor to help them develop their own solutions to poverty. They engage in no outside employment or in any education not directly related to their assignment.

These three guiding principles of VISTA, its exclusive focus on poverty, building sustainable solutions, and total immersion in the project and community, are the same that have guided the more than 140,000 Volunteers in Service to America who have served since 1965.

The VISTA legacy has its roots in a small group of people charged by President John F. Kennedy with the task of combating poverty at home and abroad. In 1963, Kennedy launched the Peace Corps, which sent volunteers overseas, and in 1964 President Johnson created Volunteers in Service to America



(VISTA) as one his centerpieces to the War on Poverty at home.

The first 20 VISTAs, who began their service in January, 1965, were welcomed to the White House with these words by President Johnson:

*"Your pay will be low; the conditions of your labor often will be difficult. But you will have the satisfaction of leading a great national effort and you will have the ultimate reward which comes to those who serve their fellow citizens."*

These first VISTA members were inspired by the spirit of the 1960s to do all that could be done to address the social ills of the time. They heeded by their actions the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr: "The curse of poverty has no justification in our age."

Those first VISTAs jump-started a decade of service that would lead to numerous new Head Start programs, neighborhood watch groups, credit unions and agricultural cooperatives, all of which built capacity within low-income communities.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, through both Republican and Democrat administrations, VISTA proudly carried on with its antipoverty mission.

Quietly, persistently, VISTAs helped establish day care centers in migrant communities, adult education programs in inner cities, and community health centers on Indian reservations. Then, in the early 1990s, the VISTA program gained new prominence when President George Bush established the Commission on National and Community Service as part of his Thousand Points of Lights initiative. President Bush stated, ". . . Theirs is a quiet mission, but. . . no light is more dazzling, brighter, than that of the VISTA Volunteers."

In 1993, President Bill Clinton created the Corporation for National and Community Service and the AmeriCorps program and by the end of the decade, the newly named AmeriCorps\*VISTA program was fielding an all-time high of 6,000 members each year. But the great living legacy of VISTA belongs not only to past, current and future VISTA members, but also to the people they serve - the people they come to know, live with, work with, befriend and respect during their service.

Surrounding every successful VISTA member is a community committed to improving their lives and

offering a helping hand to one another. By joining with the communities they serve, AmeriCorps\*VISTA members ensure that the solutions they help build will live on. The VISTA legacy is the story of countless unsung heroes. It's the story of Theresa Undum, who tripled funding for a Minneapolis Shelter; Damita Wells, who helped start a Nashville tutoring program for prison inmates; Nick Flores, who helped found a New Mexico drug and alcohol treatment program; and Susan Schotten, who integrated services for the homeless in Washington DC. It's the story of VISTA members creating reading and childcare programs for the poor in different parts of the country - 30 years and 3,000 miles apart.

But the VISTA legacy spans not only time and geography; it also spans race, religion, gender, political views, and physical abilities. Though VISTA members come from different backgrounds, each has something in common: the choice they make to serve a community in need. Another common characteristic of VISTA - one every VISTA member will tell you about his or her service: that they gained far more than they gave - through new skills, experiences, wisdom, and friendships - that have transformed their lives and last a lifetime.

In addition to the many unsung heroes, VISTA has its share of famous alumni. Senator Jay Rockefeller, Xerox CEO Ann Mulcahey, Car Talk Radio Host Ray Magliozzi, Land O Lakes President Jack Gherty, Supreme Court Justice Paul Anderson, and Wisconsin Senator Gwendolynne Moore. . . All were Volunteers in Service to America. And each of them cites their VISTA service as one of the most powerful and rewarding experiences of their lives.

Or as former VISTA Karen Stronen puts it: "The experience changed my whole focus. You walk in expecting to give something back and then receive so much more."

VISTA is nothing if not a shared experience - one that crosses all boundaries. Whether a AmeriCorps\*VISTA member raises a half million dollars for a housing effort or helps improve a literacy program for a community of fifty people, each member feels the inspiration and pride of having contributed to a noble mission.

AmeriCorps\*VISTA members may have not eradicated poverty. But they are making a difference - one person, one family, one community at a time.



## Sample of VISTA Projects “Making a Difference”

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- Family Pathfinders is a Texas community-based partnership of volunteer teams from faith-based organizations, civic groups, and businesses helping families along the path toward self-sufficiency. The program is helping families receiving welfare (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families/TANF) overcome barriers to getting and keeping a good job. AmeriCorps\*VISTAs have supported more than 3,000 Family Pathfinders volunteers, trained as teams and have sponsored more than 600 families. Eighty-three percent of these welfare-to-work families are no longer receiving welfare, and more than sixty percent have verified employment. VISTAs are currently assisting in developing three additional program sites that will be added this year, increasing the total number of sites to 14 statewide.
- Teaming for TEChnology San Francisco is collaborating with San Francisco State University’s Office of Community Service Learning and the College of Extended Learning’s Multimedia Studies Program. The program helps pre-screen non-profit organizations develop websites with the help of students enrolled in SFSU’s Web Design Intensive Program. The program also generates publicity for the project in the Bay Area and works to acquire training and software donations for the non-profit agencies receiving websites. SFSU students provide commercial-quality websites and website maintenance training to non-profit community-based organizations serving low-income populations in the San Francisco Bay Area—such as the Chinese Newcomers Service Center, Nihonmochi Little Friends, Samoan community Development Center, and the South of Market Childcare Center.
- An example of a successful project in literacy is the Washington Reading Corps (WRC), in which AmeriCorps played an important part. It started in 1998, mobilizing thousands of volunteer tutors in a statewide effort to raise reading levels of children who have struggled with reading. WRC directs public, private, and community resources to those schools performing the poorest on state reading tests. More than 120 AmeriCorps\*VISTA members helped set up programs and recruit community
- volunteers and other AmeriCorps members to tutor 22,000 students in grades K-6.
- The Tennessee Community Assistance Corporation (TCAC) is a non-profit organization that provides services to public housing residents in Tennessee. Over the past two years, TCAC’s program served 27 public and assisted housing authorities, affecting 105,000 low-income residents. AmeriCorps\*VISTA members are engaged in establishing resident initiatives in the public housing communities that will improve the quality of life within those communities. TCAC annually cost shares approximately 25 AmeriCorps\*VISTA members. Consequently, TCAC is able to promote a better working relationship between the housing authority, the residents, other service organizations, and the private sector. Additionally, members develop services that make a positive impact on all age groups. Members promote family self-sufficiency and home ownership. They enhance the self-esteem of the communities and build relationships between neighbors through mediation programs. VISTAs serve to decrease crime and substance abuse. They increase the number of working families through education, job banks, and economic development; establish youth mentoring programs, and partner with HUD Community Builders to define and address deficiencies in public housing communities. For example, one member serving with Bristol Housing established a Clothing Closet that residents manage. This self-sustaining program provides clothes for job-seeking residents. Partnerships include Cato Fashions, area consignment shops, and the local community. Each week, 100 residents frequent the Closet on a weekly basis.
- Through a statewide AmeriCorps\*VISTA health project, members in one community promoted women and children’s health services in low-income neighborhoods by providing information and mobilizing resources. The project focused on capacity-building and “leaving something behind.” By means of more than 20,000 home visits, member increased awareness of personal and public health issues in communities. Members recruited volunteers to continue their outreach efforts and build partnerships in the community,



with the goal of making the neighborhood a healthier place to live. In one community, AmeriCorps\*VISTA members recruited volunteers and trained them to serve as volunteer health advisors. The project supervisor stated, "This is truly a project that will remain in the community and will continue to grow."

- One project reported that they "could not reach out, network, inform or support families of people with disabilities without the assistance of the AmeriCorps\*VISTA members." At this project, one AmeriCorps\*VISTA member produced statistical data to reflect the status of adults with disabilities who graduated from high school and were in need of pursuing continuing education or employment. According to the project supervisor, "through the research skills of [this] AmeriCorps\*VISTA member we will bring much ignored information to light, which is crucial for developing an awareness campaign that will address the needs of mentally-retarded adults in the community."
- One AmeriCorps\*VISTA project focused on recycling and reducing environmental waste through an innovative approach to dispose of computers that are outdated or in disrepair. Two members completed the construction of a computer reuse workshop and enrolled 14 homeless trainees in a computer and electronic repair program. They enabled over 17 low-income families and individuals to purchase computers, generated \$16,340 of income from these sales, and coordinated more than 20 volunteers who contributed over 400 hours of service. By diverting hundreds of usable computers from the waste stream, AmeriCorps\*VISTA members recycled reusable and repairable goods, while putting tools and skills to work again in low-income households.
- One AmeriCorps\*VISTA project created in the Panhandle Area Literacy Services Network (PALS NET). Members were responsible for building infrastructure within their communities and uniting them across county lines under the PALS NET umbrella. According to the project supervisor, "Impoverished counties fight to survive, and creating a cooperative partnership was not a simple task. PALS NET counties met once a month to share training resources, trade information on possible grant funds or administer in-common grant funds, look for more funding avenues, or discuss

problems and solutions. Representatives from the county Adult Basic Education Departments, public libraries, Local Volunteer Associations and the State Department of Education regularly attended these meetings. There were usually 20 to 30 people attending and some traveled one and one-half hours to participate."

## VISTA Impact Facts

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- In one year, VISTAs help raise \$85 million in funds and in-kind contributions for antipoverty efforts.
- In one year, VISTAs help recruit 283,000 community volunteers who donated 6.6 million hours to antipoverty programs.
- Independent evaluations show that VISTA tutoring projects have raised children's reading levels in poor communities to national averages.
- In the past 35 years more than 130,000 people have worked with over 13,000 local organizations to strengthen poor communities and help people to escape poverty.
- In one year approximately 5,000 VISTA members reached more than four million beneficiaries, including children, students, adults, families, senior citizens, welfare recipients, unemployed job seekers and those in need to housing or health care.
- Independent evaluations conclude that the VISTA program is clearly "fulfilling its legislative mandate to alleviate poverty and poverty-related problems, generate private sector resources, encourage volunteer service, and strengthen the capacity of local agencies and organizations to deliver and expand services for those in need."
- In one year, VISTAs provided more than \$1.8 million in technology hardware, software, and services to 800 nonprofit agencies.
- In one year, VISTAs placed more than 6500 individuals in jobs and enabled 260 commercial establishments to open in low-income neighborhoods.
- Nearly 70 percent of all VISTA projects continued to operate three to five years after the members left their assignments.



## C. Terms, Conditions and Benefits

Supervisors will be able to ...

- Understand major CNCS policy, procedures, and practices relevant to VISTA service.
- Locate major documents that address the VISTA terms, conditions, and benefits.

## Terms, Conditions and Benefits

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**Attention: You Must Read This Document and Sign the Last Page Prior to Coming to Pre-Service Orientation!!!**

**(Please fill out and sign the enclosed forms and bring them and this document with you to your Pre-Service Orientation.)**

This document provides an overview of the most important terms, conditions and benefits of service in AmeriCorps\*VISTA. It must be read by all individuals who wish to be considered for AmeriCorps\*VISTA service prior to their arrival at Pre-Service Orientation (PSO). Please read the following pages and then sign the last page prior to arriving at your PSO. (If you are uncertain about something that is included in this document, feel free to call your state office. Additional clarification will also be provided at PSO. You may wait and sign the last page at that time.) Greater detail about service in AmeriCorps\*VISTA is provided in the AmeriCorps\*VISTA Member Handbook that you will be provided at your Pre-Service Orientation.

May 15, 2001

**Note: This Terms Conditions and Benefits Information, your Member Handbook, and other important Member information can be accessed online at:**

[www.americorps.org/vista/member.html](http://www.americorps.org/vista/member.html)



## Basic Terms of Service

### Term of Service

- **AmeriCorps\*VISTA service is a one year commitment.** Members are expected to serve 12 months, full-time, excluding Pre-Service Orientation. AmeriCorps\*VISTA service is unique in that it involves a full immersion in the project and community. This is not a 9 to 5 job. You are expected to be available for the needs of your community and project at all times. If an individual believes he or she cannot fulfill this commitment, they should not become an AmeriCorps\*VISTA member.
- An individual may serve up to three one-year terms with the approval of the Corporation for National Service State Director. If an individual successfully completes a one-year term of service, he or she may apply for another term, but there is no entitlement to any continuation of service, or additional terms of service in AmeriCorps\*VISTA. In extremely rare circumstances, the Corporation for Nat'l Service may approve service for up to five years. Note: This three-year service limit applies to service in any combination of AmeriCorps programs.
- VISTA Leader positions are available to outstanding VISTAs who have completed a year of service. VISTA Leaders work on projects of eight or more members, providing those members personal and project support, coaching, and technical assistance.

### Personal and Medical Leave

- With prior approval from your supervisor, AmeriCorps\*VISTA members are authorized 10 work days per year of personal leave and up to 10 work days per year of sick leave. Under special circumstances, five additional days of sick leave may be approved by the Corporation for National Service (CNS) State Director.
- Jury duty and military reserve leave do not count against personal leave.
- All leave must be approved by the project supervisor.

### Emergency Leave

- Members are authorized seven days of emergency leave for death or critical illness of an immediate family member. The State Corporation Director may request documentation substantiating the need for emergency leave. In very special circumstances, additional time may be authorized by the State Director.
- The Corporation for National Service will pay for reasonable round trip transportation required by circumstances of emergency leave when approved by the Corporation State Director. Your state office must make travel arrangements.

## Employment and Educational Courses During Service

- Because AmeriCorps\*VISTA service requires a full immersion in the project and community, both full and part-time employment are prohibited. Members must remain available for service without regard to regular working hours at all times.
- For the same reason, full-time enrollment in an educational institution is prohibited.
- Part-time enrollment in an educational institution is generally prohibited. One course may be authorized if: (a) the course is directly related to project assignment; or (b) the course is part of the member's career development plan developed in coordination with his or her supervisor. More than one course may be authorized if enrollment in the course(s) (6 hours or less) is required for Pell Grant eligibility. Note: Additional educational credit(s) may be received for AmeriCorps\*VISTA service and training if allowed by the institution, but this cannot include enrollment in additional school courses or class time.
- Enrollment in an educational institution requires approval from the project director and State Director.

### Housing

- AmeriCorps\*VISTA members are expected to live and work in their community of service. Members are responsible for finding housing and paying their own rent. In some cases, sponsor organizations may find and/or provide free or low-cost housing to their members.

## Financial Support

### Subsistence Allowance (a.k.a. Living Allowance)

#### *What you need to know . . .*

- Subsistence allowance is an amount of money provided to each AmeriCorps\*VISTA member to cover basic living necessities during your service.
- It is set at approximately the poverty level of a single individual. It varies based on where the member serves.
- It is paid every two weeks (NOT twice a month).
- It will be electronically deposited into your bank account (the form should be completed and returned).
  
- Note: The United States Treasury requires that federal payments be made by direct electronic deposit except when this would cause the unusual “hardship” on the payee due to a physical or mental disability, or a geographic, language, or literacy barrier, or would impose a financial hardship. If you would experience a such hardship, a U.S. Treasury check mail can be mailed to you or to the project address closest to your assignment.
- Federal taxes are withheld from the subsistence allowance. State, local, and Social Security (FICA) taxes are NOT currently withheld. You are responsible for including your subsistence allowance on your state and local tax returns.
- Your sponsor organization may NOT supplement your subsistence allowance.

The subsistence allowance is not considered income for purpose of unemployment compensation. AmeriCorps VISTA service is not a “job.” In most states, however, you will not be able to collect unemployment compensation because you are not available to look for a job. Check with your state unemployment office.

### Relocation Allowance

#### *What you need to know . . .*

A modest relocation allowance is provided to you if you must relocate in order to serve for a one-year term of service. This allowance is not available for part-time terms of service such as the Summer Associate program.

- The relocation allowance is intended to cover initial moving-in expenses (security deposit, utility deposit, etc.). The

#### *What you need to do . . .*

- Confirm with your supervisor or Corporation State Office about the amount you will receive.
  
- Fill out the direct deposit form, have your bank fill out Section 3, and mail it to the address on the form. Or a form 1199A can be obtained from any bank and sent in to:

**VMS Payroll, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor**  
**The Corporation for Nat'l Service 1201 New York Ave, NW Washington, DC 20525.**

If you do not currently have a banking account, you can open an Electronic Transfer Account (ETA) for a nominal monthly fee. You can find out about ETAs at: <http://www.eta-find.gov>.

- If you believe that receiving your pay by direct deposit payment would cause you hardship, please put this in writing and submit it to your Corporation State Office and your payments may be made by check.

#### *What you need to do . . .*

relocation allowance amount will not exceed \$550.00.

- The relocation allowance is paid to you in your first regular biweekly allowance payment. Taxes are withdrawn.
- AmeriCorps\*VISTA members are authorized a baggage allowance for shipment of personal effects between home of record and your project site, both on initial assignment and on termination. The baggage allowance, based on the direct mileage between two points, is \$25 per 100 miles, rounded to the nearest hundred, with a maximum of \$500.

- Turn in receipts to the Corporation State Office within 30 days of your travel.

### Earned Income Credit (EIC)

#### *What you need to know . . .*

- The EIC is an amount members may be able to subtract from their taxes if they have dependent children and meet other qualification criteria. Eligibility is determined by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Find out from the IRS whether you qualify for the EIC before you submit the W-5.
- If you qualify, you can choose to get part of the credit in advance. To qualify, you must have a child under the age of 18 who lives at home with you and you must meet income criteria. The W5 form is for advance payment only and filling one out does not affect your eligibility for earned income credit in any given tax year.

#### *What you need to do . . .*

- For a detailed description, call the IRS at: 1-800-829-3676, or visit [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).
- If you qualify, fill out the enclosed W-5, Earned Income Credit Advance Payment Certificate and bring it to PSO. Once we have this form, we will include part of the credit regularly in your biweekly subsistence allowance if you qualify. **This form must be re-filed every December!**

### Treasury Offset Program

#### *What you need to know . . .*

- The U.S. Treasury Department has begun implementing a program aimed at collecting delinquent debt owed to the United States. The program is called the Treasury Offset Program and it automatically reduces amounts of federal payments made to individuals or companies who are listed in a Treasury database as having delinquent federal debt.
- The Treasury Department has entered into reciprocal agreements with some states for the collection of debts, so debts to those states are also being collected.

#### *What you need to do . . .*

- Pay back any delinquent debts owed to the government (state or federal).

If you have outstanding debts to the government, travel and other payments made to you by the federal government may be automatically reduced by the U.S. Treasury.

## Benefits

### End of Service Education Award or End-of-Service Stipend?

#### *What you need to know . . .*

- Upon satisfactory completion of a full year of AmeriCorps\*VISTA service, members are eligible to receive a \$4,725 education award paid in the form of a voucher for education expenses OR a \$1,200 cash stipend. (See details below.)

#### *What you need to do . . .*

- Read the next two sections of this document before deciding to select the Education Award or the Stipend.



## End of Service Education Award

### *What you need to know . . .*

- The End-of-Service Education Award is a \$4,725 voucher.
- The Education Award can be used to (1) repay qualified student loans; (2) to pay all or part of the cost of attending a qualified institution of higher education; and (3) to pay expenses incurred while participating in an approved school-to-work opportunities system program. (See description below of “qualified”/“approved” programs and institutions.)
- You must complete a full twelve months to receive the Education Award. Partial awards are not allowed except for RARE cases - i.e. the Corporation closes the AmeriCorps\*VISTA project, critical illness of member, or critical illness of a family member.
- You can only receive two education awards in your lifetime regardless of the amount of each award. (Note, if you have ever been a VISTA Summer Associate, the \$1,000 education award received counts as one award.)
- Federal taxes are owed during the tax year that the education payment is made from your education award account for only the amount used in that tax year.
- The Education Award can be used at qualified and approved “Title IV” educational institutions and programs – those where students can get federally backed assistance, like Perkins loans, Stafford loans, Pell Grants, etc.
- The education award is not transferable to a spouse, children, or other family members. Only you can use the award.
- The Education Award must be used within seven years of the date you finish your service.
- After your service is successfully completed, the Corporation State Office notifies the AmeriCorps Trust Fund to establish an account for you and to mail an education award voucher to you.

### *What you need to do . . .*

- Fill out the enclosed “AmeriCorps VISTA Members Benefits Election Form” - electing the Education Award OR the Stipend - and bring to PSO. (If you have questions about your options, you may wait and complete this form at PSO.)
- Check with your loan holder to make sure that your loan is a qualified student loan under the education award program.
- A 1099 tax form will be sent to you for inclusion on your tax submission (like interest from a savings account).
- You must verify your institution’s eligibility! Ask the Financial Aid Office if they are a Title IV school. Or go to the Department of Education website:  
[http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSFAP/student\\_s/apply/search.html](http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSFAP/student_s/apply/search.html)
- First, you must complete an End of Term/Exit Form and submit this to the Corporation State Office.
- You will then be sent a voucher, which you must send to the school or loan company. They complete their portion and submit to the Corporation Trust Fund for payment. The Trust sends payment



### End of Service Stipend

#### *What you need to know . . .*

- If you choose the stipend, it provides you a payment of \$1,200 for twelve months of successful service.
- You must complete a full twelve months to receive the stipend. Partial stipends are not allowed except for RARE cases - i.e. the Corporation closes the AmeriCorps\*VISTA project, critical illness of member, other compelling reason.
- Federal and FICA taxes are deducted from the Stipend when payment is made.

**Remember:** You cannot receive both the Education Award and the Stipend. You must choose one at PSO.

### Option to Change from Stipend to Ed Award

#### *What you need to know . . .*

- At any time prior to the end of your 10<sup>th</sup> month of service, you may switch from the stipend to the Education Award. You may **not** switch from the Education Award to the stipend!  
**Note:** You will not be informed about this opportunity to switch. It is your responsibility to be aware of this option and to submit the necessary paperwork prior to the end of your tenth month of service.

- directly to school or loan company; you'll receive another voucher reflecting your revised balance.
- If you have questions about your education award, you should call the Trust Fund at 202-606-5000, ext. 347.

#### *What you need to do . . .*

- Fill out the enclosed "AmeriCorps\*VISTA Members Benefits Election Form" - electing the Education Award OR the Stipend - and bring to PSO. (If you have questions about your options, you may wait and complete this form at PSO.)
- If you have questions about your end-of-service stipend, you should call Alice Burke at 202-606-5000, ext. 225.

#### *What you need to do . . .*

- If you wish to switch from the stipend to the education award, fill out the "Second Choice Prior to End of 10<sup>th</sup> Month AmeriCorps\*VISTA Members Benefits Election" form from your Corporation State Office. Submit this form to your state office before the end of your tenth month of service.

### Postponement of Repayment of Student Loans – Ed Award

#### *What you need to know . . .*

If you choose the Education Award:

- You can receive a "forbearance" on your loan based on national service.

#### *What you need to do . . .*

- Obtain a "Federal Education Loan Forbearance Request" from lender, State Office, PSO staff or <http://www.americorps.org/resources/forms.html>. Complete and return this form to: CNS Trust Fund Office 1201 New York Ave, NW Washington, DC 20525. The Trust will certify you are receiving an education award and forward the form to the lender.

- Interest continues to accrue. The Trust will pay interest on your behalf upon completion of service after receipt of an Interest Accrual Form. The interest payment is not deducted from your Education Award.

- Request an Interest Accrual Form from your Corporation State Office, complete, and send to lender after you have completed your service.

You are responsible for taxes owed on the interest payments we make on your behalf. These payments will be included on your 1099 tax form.

## Postponement of Repayment of Student Loans – Stipend

### *What you need to know . . .*

- If you choose the Stipend, you may be eligible for loan deferment based on criteria such as economic hardship – at the discretion of the lender. The type of deferment will depend on the type and date of the loan.

### *What you need to do . . .*

- Obtain deferment form(s) from the lender. Complete and return the form to:  
**AmeriCorps\*VISTA Certifying Officer**  
**1201 New York Ave, NW Washington, DC 20525**  
and verification will be made and the form will be sent to the lender. (The Corporation State Offices do not have these forms.)

Accrued interest is automatically paid by the Department of Education on subsidized loans when deferred.

## Health Coverage

### *What you need to know . . .*

- Health coverage begins on your first day as an AmeriCorps\*VISTA trainee, and ends at midnight on your termination date. Coverage is continuous during your service.
- Health coverage can be waived for any reason.
- Coverage includes payment for most medical and surgical costs, hospitalization, prescription drugs, and certain emergency dental, vision, and maternity care.  
Some medical costs not covered include: Routine physicals, dental exams, and eye exams; medical costs associate with pre-existing conditions (except prescription medicines); chiropractic visits and procedures; substance abuse; allergy tests.
- Coverage applies to you only – dependents cannot be covered under this plan.
- A \$5.00 co-pay is required for all medical office visits.
- A \$25.00 co-pay is required for any visit to an emergency room that does not result in admission to the hospital.
- The AmeriCorps health care administrator, OASYS, will send a Participating Provider list and a insurance card to you within four to six weeks of your PSO. The card is both a medical

### *What you need to do . . .*

- Fill out the enclosed “New Enrollment Questionnaire” (health insurance form) and bring it to the PSO.
- A waiver form is available from your Corporation State Office or at PSO.
- Read the enclosed “Medical Care Program Benefits Guide” for a description of what is covered under this plan.
- Whenever you have any questions about your coverage, call 1-800-VISTA-17.
- For a list of preferred providers prior to receiving your list from OASYS, call 1-800-486-4220 or go to [www.formost.net](http://www.formost.net), click Current Client; click

benefits and a prescription drug card.

In the absence of the OASYS card, the provider should call OASYS with the member's SSN to confirm coverage.

- Limited Benefits:
- Dental: Accidental injury repair, and emergency care for relief of pain.
- Glasses: Repair for an assignment related accident. Exam up to \$25 paid; replacement glasses up to \$50.00 is paid.
- OB/GYN: one routine annual exam per benefit year; one mammogram for women over 40 per benefit year.
- Outpatient psychiatric: 3 visits per benefit year even if pre-existing
- Tests: covered if symptoms are shown.
  
- Claims Filing: Preferred providers will submit claims for you. You may need to provide claim form if using other providers.
- Coordination of Benefits: Medicare and Medicaid are secondary; private insurance when covered as a dependent is secondary; other private coverage is primary.  
Note: Payment may be delayed if and when OASYS needs to verify that treatment was unrelated to a pre-existing condition.
- Prescription Drugs: Merck-Medco is the Pharmacy Network.
- Most prescription drugs are covered. Use mail order for maintenance drugs; filled within 14 days for up to a 90 day supply.
- For emergency drugs, you can use your health card at over 53,000 pharmacies nationwide.

**Life Insurance**

*What you need to know . . .*

- Enrollment in the life insurance policy is voluntary and takes place during Pre-Service Orientation.
  
- The premium that you pay for this insurance (currently about \$1.62 every two weeks) is deducted from subsistence allowance payment.

**Life Insurance Coverage**

Members who are less than 60 years of age:	\$19,600
Members who are 60-69 years of age:	\$9,800
Members who are 70 and older:	\$4,900

- Coverage may be waived during training, but you cannot subsequently be covered during service without having a physical examination at your own expense. Acceptance at

AmeriCorps\*VISTA as the Employer Group; type 'volunteer' as the Employer Group ID.

- To locate a pharmacy near you, call 1-800-818-0093 for customer service.

*What you need to do . . .*

- If you wish to participate, fill out the Life Insurance enrollment form. If you wish not to participate, fill out the waiver portion of the form. Submit the enrollment form at PSO.



that time is determined solely by the insurance company.

- Can be converted to a private plan at the end of service.

### **Child Care**

#### ***What you need to know . . .***

- Members who have dependent children may be eligible for child care support administered through the National Association of Child Care Resources & Referral Agencies (NACCRRRA).
- Members must be income eligible to participate in the Child Care program. All family income, including your VISTA allowance, is calculated when determining eligibility. Each state has unique eligibility criteria for child care.
- Children must be under 13 years of age and live with you.
- You must not be receiving child care benefits from another public source.
- You must need child care in order to serve as an AmeriCorps\*VISTA member.
- Child care is limited to \$300 per month per family regardless of the number of children.
- Providers and parents must complete timesheet coupon each month.
- Parents are responsible for paying excess fees.

### **Worker's Compensation**

#### ***What you need to know . . .***

- If you are injured while performing service, you are eligible to apply for Workmen's Compensation - under the Federal Employees Compensation Act (FECA) NOT your state - after your service ends.
- Benefits include lost wages (if the injury prevents the member from working after termination of service); and, medical bills.
- The Department of Labor determines the validity of claims, and whether payments for a claim will be approved.
- Until a term of service is over, the AmeriCorps\*VISTA Health Benefits Program administers costs/care related to the injury.
- You will not be covered by FECA if the injury or disability results from misconduct, intoxication, or willful intent to bring about injury or death to yourself or others.

#### ***What you need to do . . .***

- If you are interested, contact your Corporation state office for an enrollment package. Fill out the required forms and return to your Corporation state office. Forms and more information will be provided at PSO.

#### ***What you need to do . . .***

- Fill out and submit a Worker's Compensation claim form available from the Corporation State Office or <http://www.dol.gov/dol/esa/public/regs/compliance/owcp/forms.htm>

## Non-Competitive Eligibility for Federal Government Service

### *What you need to know . . .*

- When you satisfactorily complete one full year of AmeriCorps\*VISTA service, you earn non-competitive eligibility for federal government jobs for one year after your service. This means that a federal government hiring official may hire you without having to compete with the general public provided that you meet the minimum qualifications for the job.
- Non-Competitive Eligibility does not mean that you are guaranteed a federal civil service job. You must locate an agency with a vacancy and interest that agency in hiring you.
- To establish your non-competitive status, you'll need proof of eligibility from the AmeriCorps\*VISTA Certifying Officer at:

**AmeriCorps\*VISTA Certifying Officer**  
**CNS/AmeriCorps\*VISTA**  
**1201 New York Avenue, NW**  
**Washington, DC 20525**

### *What you need to do . . .*

- Once you've completed service, send a letter to the AmeriCorps\*VISTA Certifying Officer giving your full name, Social Security Number, and dates of service. A letter will then be sent to you. Copy that letter and submit copies with your federal job applications.

## Income Exclusion from Public Assistance Calculations

### *What you need to know . . .*

- Persons receiving assistance or service under any federal, state, or local governmental program **before** joining AmeriCorps\*VISTA should not lose those benefits, or have benefits reduced, as a result of service. (For example, if you receive food stamps prior to joining AmeriCorps\*VISTA, the food stamps will not be reduced or eliminated as a result of the AmeriCorps\*VISTA allowances. If, on the other hand, you did not receive food stamps prior to your service, but wish to apply once you become a member, your subsistence allowance would be counted.)

Provided you were receiving assistance prior to beginning your service with AmeriCorps\*VISTA, benefits should not be reduced for the following:

- Food Stamps/WIC
- Social Security Insurance
- TANF (replaced AFDC)
- Assisted Housing
- Veterans Assistance

### *What you need to do . . .*

- Advise your public assistance provider that your benefits should not be affected by your service. It is recommended that you begin this process before beginning your service. Be sure to identify yourself as a "VISTA," since income disregard provisions of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act do not apply to other AmeriCorps members. If your provider disagrees, contact your Corporation State Office. Ask the State Office to send a letter on your behalf. Always keep the State Office informed on the status of your case. If you have a formal notice that your benefits will be reduced because of your VISTA allowances, seek the assistance of a legal aid attorney immediately and provide the information to the **Corporation State Office**.

Under the regulations and rulings issued by the Social Security Administration, neither payments or activities performed by AmeriCorps\*VISTA members are to be considered in determining the member's continued eligibility for Social Security benefits, including Social Security Disability payments.

If a member reaches age 65 while serving as an AmeriCorps\*VISTA member and becomes eligible for Social Security benefits, the AmeriCorps\*VISTA income is not counted in determining eligibility for, or the level of, Social Security retirement benefits.

### Personal Responsibility & Work Opportunity Act of 1996 (Welfare Reform Legislation)

#### *What you need to know . . .*

- The Personal Responsibility & Work Opportunity Act imposes a maximum 5-years time limit on receiving cash for public assistance; some states have decreased that time limit to 2 years. AmeriCorps\*VISTA income exclusion does NOT stop any state from imposing these time limits. Any cash assistance received while in AmeriCorps\*VISTA will count against a state's time limits.
- The 1996 legislation requires welfare recipients to work or enroll in job training or vocational education programs.

#### *What you need to do . . .*

- Consult with your state welfare administration office.
- Welfare recipients must check with caseworkers to make sure AmeriCorps\*VISTA service meets state's requirement. Again, be sure to identify yourself as a "VISTA."

### Other Important Terms and Conditions

#### Termination from Service

#### *What you need to know . . .*

- You may be terminated from service for failure to perform assigned duties, unauthorized absences from your site and project, and failure to follow AmeriCorps\*VISTA policies and procedures.
- Only the Corporation State Office can terminate or suspend an AmeriCorps\*VISTA member. The sponsor can request your removal from their project. A request for removal of a member must be made in writing, addressing the circumstances of the situation, to the State Director. The State Director will contact you to investigate the circumstances.
- You may be suspended, or placed on administrative hold, with or without allowances by the State Director in order to determine whether sufficient evidence exists to start termination proceedings.

#### *What you need to do . . .*

- See the AmeriCorps\*VISTA Member Handbook that will be given to you at PSO for details on the reasons for which a member may be terminated and the process.
- See the AmeriCorps\*VISTA Member Handbook that will be given to you at PSO for information on how to appeal a termination decision.

### Political/Religious Activities, Outside Compensation, Nepotism and Discrimination

#### *What you need to know . . .*

- AmeriCorps\*VISTA members are prohibited from participating in political campaigns or voter registration drives, providing transportation to polls, lobbying and pro- or anti-

#### *What you need to do . . .*

labor organizing, or taking any action with respect to partisan or nonpartisan political activity while on duty or perceived to be on duty as an AmeriCorps\*VISTA member.

- AmeriCorps\*VISTA members may not give religious instruction, conduct worship services, proselytize, or engage in any other religious activity as part of their duties. Members may participate in religious activities outside of official duties.
- There should not be any request or receipt of compensation (financial or otherwise) for the services performed by an AmeriCorps\*VISTA member beyond standard allowances. Members may accept in-kind support in the form of housing, child care, meal cards, etc. A sponsor may also wish to include members in their organization's group health insurance program, and members may accept.
- Any applicant, trainee, or AmeriCorps\*VISTA member who believes he/she has been subjected to discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, sex, handicap, or political affiliation, or to harassment, may use the discrimination complaint procedures outlined in the AmeriCorps\*VISTA Handbook.
  - See the AmeriCorps\*VISTA Member Handbook that will be given to you at PSO for details on discrimination or harassment complaint procedures.
  - The Corporation for National Service Equal Opportunity office is always available for consultation at: 202-606-5000,ext. 312. TDD: 202-565-2799.
- Persons selected as AmeriCorps\*VISTA members shall not be related by blood or marriage to project staff, sponsoring organization staff, officers or members of the sponsoring organization's Board of Directors, or Corporation for National Service program staff responsible for that AmeriCorps\*VISTA project.

# TERMS, CONDITIONS, AND BENEFITS

Please provide the information requested below. Sign your name to indicate that you have read and understand the terms, conditions, and benefits of AmeriCorps\*VISTA service. You must turn this form in at your PSO. (If you are uncertain about something that is included in this document, your questions will be answered at the PSO. You may wait and sign this page at that time.)

Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Your Corporation State Office: \_\_\_\_\_  
(The state you'll be serving in.)

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*This form shall be collected at PSO prior to swearing in as an AmeriCorps\*VISTA member and kept in the Member's file in the Corporation State Office.*





## A Quick Summary of Key AmeriCorps\*VISTA Regulations

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*(This is not an exhaustive list — it is important that you read your Handbook!)*

1. AmeriCorps\*VISTAs are required to work an average of 40 hours per week, but may work in excess of that amount in order to complete their assignment. Members are always on call 7 days a week, 24 hours a day.
2. Each Member is authorized 10 personal leave days and 10 sick leave days per year. Once the total number of days in each category has been used, the Member is not authorized any more absences except in unusual circumstances which must be approved by your Corporation State Office. These 20 days do not include legal Federal holidays.  
  
Any leave in excess of 10 days in each category may be grounds for termination from AmeriCorps\*VISTA service. Normally, no personal leave is approved during the first 3 months of service.
3. AmeriCorps\*VISTAs cannot have part-time jobs or be employed in any other paid position while serving as an AmeriCorps\*VISTA because they are on call 7 days a week, 24 hours a day.
4. AmeriCorps\*VISTAs cannot be full-time students or attend classes more than part-time while in service. All class attendance must be approved in advance by the Corporation State Director and the Project Supervisor. Class work must be related to the project emphasis. A full written justification must accompany any request. Under certain circumstances an AmeriCorps\*VISTA Member may be enrolled in an institution of higher education in order to maintain eligibility for a Pell Grant.
5. All AmeriCorps\*VISTAs are required to read the Grounds for Termination in the AmeriCorps\*VISTA Handbook, pages 69, 70 and 71. A sponsor may request the removal of a Member based upon the information contained in the Handbook, pages 69 through 71.
6. Re-enrollment or Extension of Service beyond the initial year of service is not automatic and will be granted to AmeriCorps\*VISTAs who have served in an exemplary manner. The Supervisor must write a full justification. Completion of service will be 1 year from the date the AmeriCorps\*VISTAs enters

service. Entry into service begins the day after the completion of PSO.

7. AmeriCorps\*VISTAs serve under the conditions of the Hatch Act.
8. AmeriCorps\*VISTA may not register people to vote or drive people to the voting polls.
9. AmeriCorps\*VISTAs may not engage in any pro or anti-labor organizing activities.
10. AmeriCorps\*VISTAs cannot be involved in lobbying.
11. AmeriCorps\*VISTAs may not conduct religious instruction, worship or proselytizing, or other religious activity as part of their duties.
12. AmeriCorps\*VISTAs may not take any action with respect to a partisan or nonpartisan political activity that would result in the identification or apparent identification of the AmeriCorps\*VISTA program with such activity.

### Terms, Conditions, Benefits Hunt for Answers

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**Use the AmeriCorps\*VISTA Handbook to hunt for the answers to the following situations. Some solutions will be specific, some will be general. The purpose of this exercise is to demonstrate that nearly all A\*VISTA questions may be answered by using the Handbook and appendices.**

**Situation 1:** Rachel was involved in a car accident one Saturday afternoon on the way to a community education site in Austin, TX. She was authorized to use her own car for work purposes and was driving that vehicle at the time. Rachel car was hit by a truck that subsequently fled the scene. Rachel was not injured but her car suffered significant damage. Will the Corporation for National and Community Service cover the expense of fixing Rachel's car?

**Situation 2:** Nancy is serving at a food bank in Providence, RI. She receives word that her only brother is critically ill in Minnesota. Nancy is very upset. What should she do?

**Situation 3:** Sarah has served in El Dorado, California, for seven months and recognizes her need for a



vacation. She wants to visit New Orleans. She has already taken three vacation days previously. How many vacation days can she take now? Who does she need to talk to?

**Situation 4:** Sally was told that she would receive \$740 per month for her living allowance. But when she receives her paychecks, she notices that they don't equal \$740 divided by 2 = \$370. Why not? How many paychecks do AmeriCorps\*VISTA members receive in a year?

**Situation 5:** Pete has been directed to mobilize resources at the local bar association for local correctional services. It becomes apparent to Pete that little progress will be made until Judge Stern is out of office. An enlightened, sympathetic, active person is running against Judge Stern in the next election. What, if anything, can Pete do to support his favorite candidate for judge?

**Situation 6:** Carol is serving as an AmeriCorps\*VISTA member in Columbus, Ohio. She is about to finish her year of service, but would like to serve a second term. What should she do?

**Situation 7:** Elaine has been accepted to serve in a small community near Birmingham, AL, and has decided to select the education award instead of the end-of-service stipend. She wants to keep her expenses down, so she wants to look into getting forbearance on a college loan. How does she apply to have this done?

**Situation 8:** Sharon will be serving in Roxbury, MA. She has her own car and intends to use it for her assignment. What does Sharon need to do to begin using her car? Who, if anyone, will reimburse her for transportation costs?

**Situation 9:** Jerry has not received his living allowance check and it's six days late. It must have gotten lost in the mail or stolen. What should Jerry do?

**Situation 10:** Victoria has been receiving TANF for the past year for her and her three children. Victoria's case worker is delighted to hear that now she will be receiving a living allowance and says, "Well, you won't be eligible for TANF anymore because of your A\*VISTA allowance."

She remembers hearing something about "Protection of Benefits" and "Income Exclusion" at her PSO. Is it true that her A\*VISTA allowance will be counted against her TANF benefits? What should Victoria do?

**Situation 11:** Ned had a pretty good paying job right before starting his A\*VISTA assignment, but now that he's an A\*VISTA, on his living allowance, he decides to apply for food stamps. Is his living allowance counted as income when he applies for food stamps?

**Situation 12:** Mark has completed his year with A\*VISTA and he would like to use some of his \$4,725 education award. He wants to go to Massage Therapy Institute in Montana. How can Mark find out if the MTI is a qualified institution of higher education?

**Situation 13:** Julie signed up for the stipend during her PSO. Now that she has started her service, she realizes she would like to go to school after VISTA, and would like to change to the education award. Can she change her mind and get the education award?

**Situation 14:** George is in his first year as an A\*VISTA member in Butte, Montana. He just received his first living allowance check and noticed that it is less than his friend Lisa's check. Lisa is an AmeriCorps\*VISTA Leader supporting the efforts of seven other A\*VISTA members on the same project. Lisa lives in the same community as George. Why is Lisa's check larger?

**Situation 15:** Harry has not been doing well on his project. He has not been showing up to his assignment and has alienated his fellow A\*VISTA colleagues by refusing to carry out his duties. His supervisor wishes to end Harry's service. Can his supervisor "fire" Harry – e.g., terminate his service?

**Situation 16:** Kathy has decided not to complete her 12 month service commitment. Instead, she has accepted a job with IBM and will quit her service after 6 months. Because she had selected the end-of-service stipend, can she receive a pro-rated 6 months of stipend?

**Situation 17:** Brian is working with the Mexican immigrant population in Southern Texas. He thinks that greater Spanish fluency would really help his work. Can Brian take a course in intermediate Spanish conversation at the local community college?

**Situation 18:** Cindy received a \$1000 education award for serving as a Summer Associate AmeriCorps\*VISTA member. Then she served a full year as an AmeriCorps member and received a full \$4725 education award. Cindy would like to serve with A\*VISTA again and receive one more education award. Can she?

## **D. CNCS Geography**

**Supervisors will be able to ...**

- **Engage every participant in understanding the national service family of programs.**
- **Strengthen opportunities to collaborate with other CNCS family programs in Learn and Serve, National Senior Service Corps and AmeriCorps programs.**

## CNCS Network Cross-Program Collaboration Questions

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>1</b></p>	<p>➤ What are some examples of successful national service cross-stream collaborations that you already know about? Who? Where? How? To what benefit? _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>2</b></p>	<p>➤ Given your programs and organization, what CNCS cross-stream opportunities do you think would be good for your VISTA to pursue? _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>3</b></p>	<p>➤ What are some things that a supervisor can do to encourage or coach his or her VISTA member to consider collaborating cross-stream? _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>

## E. Securing Deeper Levels of Sustainability

Supervisors will be able to ...

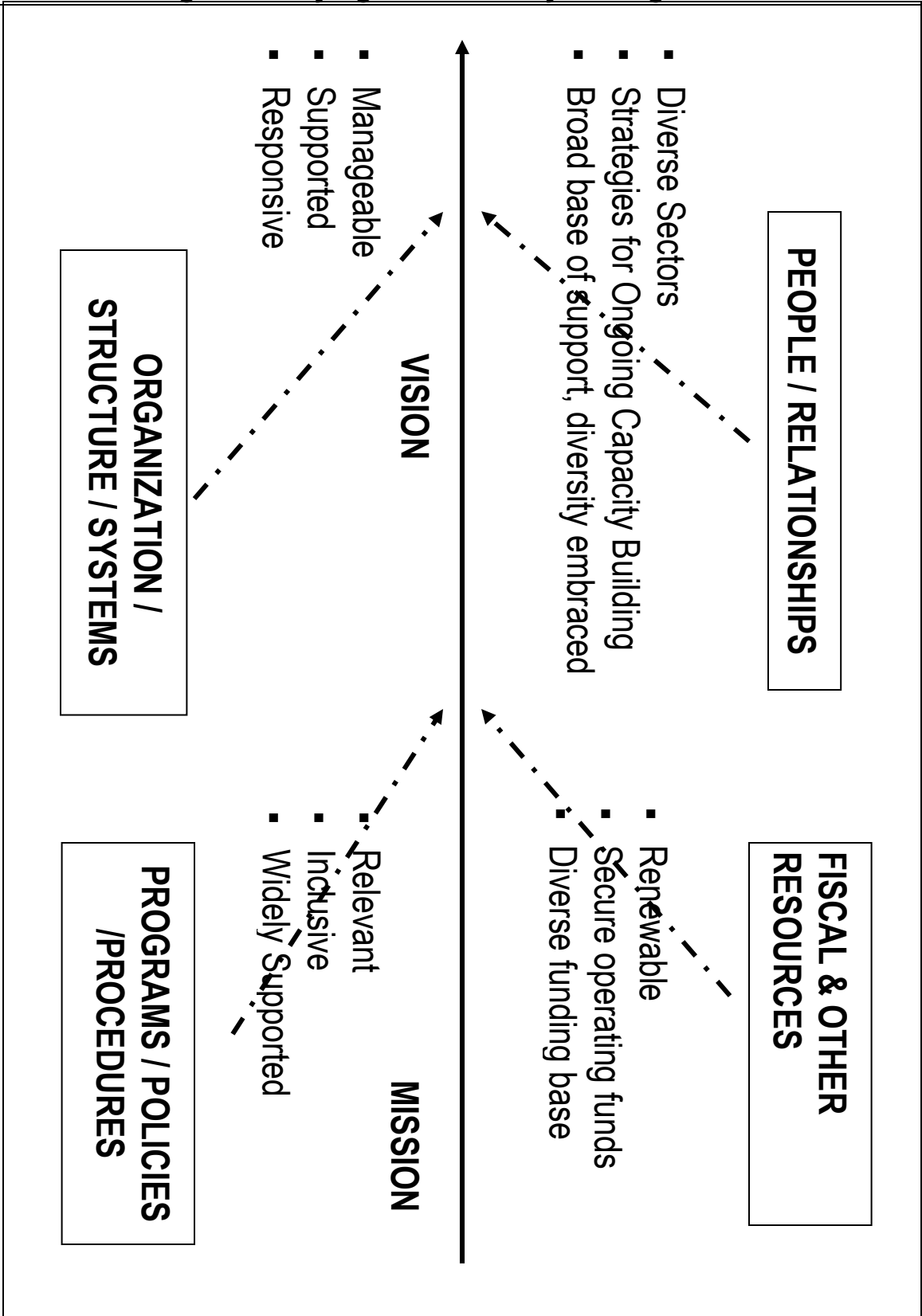
- Understand the AmeriCorps\*VISTA approach to sustainability.
- Understand the difference between direct and indirect service.
- Discuss the factors that lend themselves to real program sustainability in antipoverty programs.

# STRATEGIES AND IMPACT

## SECURING DEEPER LEVELS OF SUSTAINABILITY

Challenge or Problem	→ Strategy	→ Short Term Impact? → Long Term Impact?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hunger</li> </ul>	(1) → Hand out fish	→ →
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hunger</li> </ul>	(2) → Teach folks to fish	→ →
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hunger</li> </ul>	(3) → Build fishing school	→ →
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hunger</li> </ul>	(4) → Train local leaders to fish, help community secure access to river	→ →

### Fishbone Diagram –Varying Sustainability Strategies



## Sustainability Scenario #1

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A VISTA was assigned to create a Family Resource Center for the residents of a rural area near the Twin Cities. She surveyed the community, asking what their needs were related to family support and how they would like to see those addressed. They described needing to be able to have a resource to ask questions about parenting and even some hands on activities or classes for parents and families. So, the VISTA asked for and received donations of books and activities for the center. She contacted local schools and churches and made arrangements to use their facilities for the center. Then she used flyers to advertise in the community the dates, times, and locations of the center.

The concept of the center and its services were embraced enthusiastically by the community. Attendance started off well, but over time began to fluctuate. The VISTA began thinking about and started asking families why they were no longer attending. The answer was that families had a hard time remembering where and when the center was open because the location and time changed from week to week. The VISTA decided she needed to find a permanent home for resource center.

With no financial resources readily available, the VISTA had to get creative about finding a home for the center. She found a building for rent and the owner agreed to delay the rent payment for a month or two. She then organized and opened a used bookstore in the front part of the building and put the Family Resource Center in the back. She organized volunteers from the community to completely run the store, from soliciting books, to stocking shelves, to selling the books. They created a schedule for the workers and a training program for new volunteers.

- **Do you think this center will last? Why? Why not?**

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## **Sustainability Scenario #2**

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Two VISTAs were assigned to address the food needs of an inner city community in the Chicago area. They interviewed members of the community to see what their needs were and how they thought those needs could best be addressed. The VISTAs responded to the community by helping them to create a food co-op. The VISTAs found out what kinds of food the members wanted and where to buy such food. The VISTAs used their truck to go and pick up the commodities for the co-op and they trained and arranged for volunteers to staff the co-op, stock the shelves, and bag the groceries.

The community adored the food co-op! They were able to get the food they wanted to eat, at reasonable prices, and it was close by. They enthusiastically signed up for their shifts each month and enjoyed the added benefit of a renewed community spirit.

At the end of their two-year commitment, the two VISTAs packed up their belongings in their truck and left the community.

- Do you think the co-op will last now that they are gone? Why? Why not?**

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## F. Drafting and Implementing Effective Plans

Supervisors will be able to ...

- Identify and discuss key indicators of an effective multi-year plan within the VISTA context.
  - Discuss their work plans in relationship to the set of key indicators.
- Explain VISTA's focus on multiyear programs and how that translates to the project level.

## Key Indicators of Effective Multi-Year Plans

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- **Clear program outcomes (that can be tied to an antipoverty outcome)?**

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- **An evolution of member assignments from the first year of the project to the last?**

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- **Measurable objectives (member outputs)?**

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- **Realistic objectives?**

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- **Meaningful assignments for the members?**

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## Sample Multi-Year Plans

### Volunteer Child Literacy – Family Literacy Project

Goal: To establish a comprehensive family literacy program to serve 25 families in Fountain Square community, Indianapolis, Indiana.

#### Specific Program Strategies

1. What are the specific program strategies – program elements, approaches and/or characteristics – needed to achieve the program outcomes?

#### Strategies:

- potluck with participants
- “gifted” child
- parent education seminar
- GED “prep”
- summer readings
- childcare\*

#### Specific Organizational Sustainability Strategies

2. What are the specific organizational sustainability strategies – the institutions, practices, skill sets and organizational characteristics – that have to be in place in order to sustain the program and outcomes?

- site (multi-activity center), physical space
- public awareness
- endorsements, exposes

- computers
- fundraising/cost-sharing with partners
- relationships with schools, bookstores
- volunteer management system
- measurement – program
- “library”-type space
- information & referral network
- curriculum development
- literacy assessment

#### Potential Partners/Collaborators

3. Who should be your partners/collaborators and what do you have to do to effectively work together?
- faith-based organizations
  - school district/Head-Start
  - bookstores/library/private sector
  - law-enforcement departments
  - institutions of higher ed

#### AmeriCorps\*VISTA Three Year Output Plan

What are the desired AmeriCorps\*VISTA member outputs (accomplishments) that should have occurred in each of the three years in order to advance the program strategies and achieve sustainable program outcomes?

Year I	Year II	Year III
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- identified 25 families</li> <li>- identified a restaurant to donate food</li> <li>- find funding sources, grants</li> <li>- newsletter, press releases</li> <li>- establish computer lab</li> <li>- create operational manuals</li> <li>- community needs assess</li> <li>- curriculum development</li> <li>- community partners (min. 5 made)</li> <li>- school relationships</li> <li>- program partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- develop measurement database</li> <li>- media attn: newspaper</li> <li>- internal evaluation</li> <li>- receive grants</li> <li>- volunteer recruitment</li> <li>- establish computer give-away program</li> <li>- expand outreach to other schools and head start centers</li> <li>- do survey of participants</li> <li>- do family essay book</li> <li>- revise/refine curriculum</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- expand to other sites</li> <li>- establish partners</li> <li>- 2<sup>nd</sup> annual community fund raising</li> <li>- look for funding</li> <li>- volunteer recruitment</li> <li>- survey/evaluation</li> <li>- VISTA workplan revised</li> <li>- Recruit celebrity readers to read to children</li> </ul>



**AmeriCorps\*VISTA Three Year Activity Work Plan**

What are the suggested AmeriCorps\*VISTA activity work plan items that should have occurred in each of the three years in order to achieve the desired member outputs?

Year I	Year II	Year III
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- establish 5 partnerships:                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Faith Based Orgs.;</li> <li>2) University;</li> <li>3) Local schools;</li> <li>4) Private/business partners.</li> </ol> </li> <li>- identify a list of (25) potential partners</li> <li>- establish advisory council</li> <li>- establish computer lab</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- potential partners</li> <li>- advisory council, expand</li> <li>- computer lab upkeep</li> <li>- expand service learning</li> <li>- summer program/camps</li> <li>- resource mobilization plan</li> <li>- fundraising grants</li> </ul>	To be determined.

**Measurements for Success**

Identify the benchmarks – the key indicators of success– for each of the three years and the method(s) you would use to measure these incremental indicators of progress.

Benchmarks	Methods
Year I	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 5 partnerships of 25, 1<sup>st</sup> year</li> <li>2. 12 member advisory council in place</li> <li>3. Computer lab facility</li> <li>4. 6 computer; 1 printer; 5 volunteer tutors</li> <li>5. 1300 hours of computer lab hours logged</li> <li>6. Create service-learning opportunities</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Letter of support (memorandum of agreement)</li> <li>2. Diversity of membership</li> <li>3. Inclusion of key stakeholders, 80% attendance</li> <li>4. Resource contributions</li> <li>5. Evaluation Recognition – hours of service, networking capabilities, hours logged, number of people, Internet</li> </ol>
Year II	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Potential partners</li> <li>2. Computer lab</li> <li>3. Advisory council expanded</li> <li>4. Summer program/camp</li> <li>5. Fundraising committee: \$ amount, one-time grant, renewable, multi-year</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Evaluate, maintain 5 partners</li> <li>2. Add 5 partners (same as year one)</li> <li>3. 10% of families completing program</li> <li>4. develop tailored software</li> <li>5. Variety of partners – FBO's, CBO's, AmeriCorps</li> <li>6. Viable, sustainable with staff</li> </ol>
Year III	
To Be Determined.	

**Recommendations**

- member recruitment
  - more PSA – copies of recruitment information
  - more visibility in communities
  - make paper applications available at public or government sites. Ex. Libraries
- member orientation/training
  - more regional leader VISTAs would help to train and accumulate
  - attach VISTA leader geographically rather than just to the sponsor
- organizational structure
  - identify + eliminate barriers
  - cross-stream collaboration
  - teleconferencing training
  - outreach to faith-based organizations
    - have VISTA more visible in area churches
    - have someone clearly state what a VISTA can and can not do
  - outreach to small community organizations
    - more visibility
    - help identify other resources or assistance
    - more networking



## Homeownership Makes Economic Sense (HOMES) Project

Goal: To create a comprehensive home ownership program (including promotion, education, financial, construction and renovation) for low income individuals in community X.

### Specific Program Strategies:

#### 1. Goals (Activities):

- building houses
- rehabilitating/renovating
- homeownership education – financial literacy
- financing for homebuyers through loans/IDAs

#### 2. First step: create a diverse steering committee to guide the development of the HOMES coalition

- This coalition will create a central office with a small staff, an 800 number, website, resource guide, etc. All of this will be done in an effort to create a wealth of information and resources provided by the steering committee members to be a one-stop shopping place for potential home-buyers and grassroots developers

#### 3. Roles of Major Partners:

- Community Members: will increase their knowledge and use of resources available to them through the

resource center as measured by increased homeownership rate, use of savings programs, and participation in financial education

- Community Groups: will improve their capacity to develop affordable housing by utilizing the coalition's TA resources as measured by an increase in affordable housing stock
- Member Groups: will increase their efficiency because information-sharing tasks will be diverted to HOMES coalition as measured by number of calls and visits to the resource/call center

### Specific Organizational Sustainability Strategies:

1. A steering committee comprised of a diverse collection of representatives from organizations passionate about affordable homeownership
2. Commitment to organization by participants
3. Organizational focus – mission
4. Five-year plan
5. Short/long term fundraising strategies
6. Coalition broad based, inclusive, encouraging membership

### Potential Partners/Collaborators:

1. Partners:		2. Effectively work together:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bankers</li> <li>▪ Government officials</li> <li>▪ Homeowners/Future homeowners</li> <li>▪ Philanthropists</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Religious groups</li> <li>▪ Students</li> <li>▪ Public housing</li> <li>▪ Rotary/Civic clubs</li> <li>▪ Housing agencies</li> </ul>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Accessibility: low-income community/disability friendly/phone and web friendly</li> <li>▪ Host site must establish strong community connections</li> <li>▪ Strong office technical support</li> <li>▪ Homeownership expertise</li> <li>▪ Experience with resource development</li> </ul>

**VISTA member OUTPUTS:**

YEAR I	YEAR II	YEAR III
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recruit steering committee</li> <li>2. Create database of potential coalition members, board members and steering committee members</li> <li>3. Create newsletter and publish regularly</li> <li>4. Research resources for resource guide and assemble a resource library</li> <li>5. Facilitate organizational meetings</li> <li>6. Answering resource questions</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work with steering committee to develop resourcefulness of organization</li> <li>2. Maintain/expand database</li> <li>3. Publish newsletter</li> <li>4. Research resource</li> <li>5. Publish resource guide – maintain materials</li> <li>6. Answer resource questions</li> <li>7. Fundraising</li> <li>8. Create website</li> <li>9. Increase member base</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintain database</li> <li>2. Publish newsletter</li> <li>3. Research resource</li> <li>4. Expand resources</li> <li>5. Hire staff</li> <li>6. Answer resource questions</li> <li>7. Fundraising</li> </ol>

**VISTA Inputs:**

YEAR I	YEAR II	YEAR III
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Computer training</li> <li>2. Facilitation training</li> <li>3. Communication skills</li> <li>4. Housing and financial training</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue YR1 training</li> <li>2. Grant writing training</li> <li>3. Publishing and web design training</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue YR2 training</li> <li>2. Skills on training others</li> </ol>

**Measurements for Success:**

BENCHMARKS	METHODS
<b>YEAR I</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Form steering committee</li> <li>• Create resource library</li> <li>• Identify mission</li> <li>• Information dissemination</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of people and meetings held</li> <li>• Track number of resources and frequency of use</li> <li>• Database of many names/membership of key players</li> <li>• Number of newsletters distributed</li> </ul>
<b>YEAR II</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information dissemination</li> <li>• Increase membership base</li> <li>• Fundraising</li> <li>• Increased information sharing between coalition members</li> <li>• Increased information shared with potential homebuyers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website developed, resource guide published, number of newsletters distributed</li> <li>• Membership and database increased by 50 percent</li> <li>• Number of dollars raised/potential sources identified</li> <li>• Number of participants involved in coalition activities</li> <li>• Number of inquires answered and rate of use of library</li> </ul>
<b>YEAR III</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All of year II activities</li> <li>• Fundraising</li> <li>• Board hires permanent staff</li> <li>• Establish call center hotline</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (see above)</li> <li>• Funds increased to sustain staff and operating expenses</li> <li>• New staff begins work</li> <li>• 40 hours/wk staffed by volunteers</li> </ul>



**Recommendations**

- Member Recruitment:
  1. Be wary of using words like MBA, financial asset development, economics; Use words that communicate positive social change for low-income people and communities.
  2. Increase regular recruitment practices (web based recruitment is good!)
- Supervisor Training:
  1. Train those that directly supervise VISTAs about VISTA's goals and their supervisory responsibilities
  2. Ask supervisors to train/brief other staff, so they fully understand what VISTAs are and are not

- there to do. This is important especially so other staff do not feel their work/jobs are threatened.
3. Provide a list of supervisory responsibilities, perhaps as part of writing the grant.
  4. Supervisors gain an appreciation of level of competency and integrity of VISTAs.
  5. Train supervisors/organizations in broad goals of Entrepreneur Corps and create buy-in for national impact rather than sole interest in their own project.

**Individual Development Accounts Project**

**Goal:** To develop a sustainable individual account program for low-income individuals in community X.

**Specific Program Strategies**

1. What are the specific program strategies – program elements, approaches and/or characteristics – needed to achieve the program outcomes?
  - financial literacy curriculum
  - develop partnerships to ensure gap coverage
  - conduct a needs-assessment for the individual
  - collect input from the community from the start
  - establish volunteer network
  - reporting system/evaluation/documentation
  - establish clear beginning and ending
  - outreach (recruiting, tracking, promotion)
  - funding base (in-kind resources)

- funding sources
- staff/volunteers
- slow, smart growth – establish first year priority, expand in subsequent years
- incentives built in for clients (establish plan)

**Potential Partners/Collaborators**

3. Who should be your partners/collaborators and what do you have to do to effectively work together?
  - community action agencies
  - state banking commission
  - health providers
  - federal home loan bank
  - congregations
  - associations
  - civic organizations
  - contractors, home builders, developers
  - local HUD offices
  - educational institutions
  - local businesses
  - banks
  - small business administration
  - Senior Corps of Retired Executives
  - Chambers of Commerce

**Specific Organizational Sustainability Strategies**

2. What are the specific organizational sustainability strategies – the institutions, practices, skill sets and organizational characteristics – that have to be in place in order to sustain the program and outcomes?
  - business plan
  - demonstrate collaborations/partnerships
  - administration systems in places
  - facilities



### AmeriCorps\*VISTA Three Year Output Plan

What are the desired AmeriCorps\*VISTA member outputs (accomplishments) that should have occurred in each of the three years in order to advance the program strategies and achieve sustainable program outcomes?

Year I	Year II	Year III
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify community collaborators</li> <li>▪ Establish match funding, pool budget, target use of the funds</li> <li>▪ Develop and finalize business plan</li> <li>▪ Establish operating budget</li> <li>▪ Establish management system</li> <li>▪ Identify potential program participants</li> <li>▪ Establish collaboration agreements</li> <li>▪ Establish training program</li> <li>▪ Enroll participants/establish screening process</li> <li>▪ Develop volunteer/mentor training curriculum</li> <li>▪ VISTA member development</li> <li>▪ Final report PPR ongoing yearly</li> <li>▪ Open house/kick-off special event</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continued + expanded fund development</li> <li>▪ Establish + implement marketing plans for funders + participants</li> <li>▪ Continue to implement curriculum</li> <li>▪ Continue enrollment + training</li> <li>▪ Report outcomes to partners</li> <li>▪ Establish a PR tool (eg newsletter) + distribute</li> <li>▪ Partners would be on board to train participants (database)</li> <li>▪ System/network of volunteers (Adopt A Family)</li> <li>▪ Market response &amp; participants</li> <li>▪ Public event</li> <li>▪ Check list. Attendance records.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Funding necessary to hire staff</li> <li>▪ Establish endowment fund</li> <li>▪ Plan for sustainability</li> <li>▪ Exit plan for VISTA for transition</li> <li>▪ Market response &amp; participants &amp; funders &amp; partners</li> <li>▪ Ongoing training event</li> </ul>

### AmeriCorps\*VISTA Three Year Activity Work Plan

What are the suggested AmeriCorps\*VISTA activity work plan items that should have occurred in each of the three years in order to achieve the desired member outputs?

Year I	Year II	Year III
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Asset mapping</li> <li>▪ Begin to raise funds for match</li> <li>▪ Program development</li> <li>▪ Grant writing</li> <li>▪ Recruitment of participants</li> <li>▪ Recruit partners</li> <li>▪ Develop financial literacy curriculum</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue raising funds</li> <li>▪ Develop plan</li> <li>▪ Curriculum (implement)</li> <li>▪ Outreach/recruitment</li> <li>▪ Develop partnerships</li> <li>▪ Writing, publishing, printing</li> <li>▪ Recruit volunteers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Resource development</li> <li>▪ Develop endowment fund</li> <li>▪ Assess indicators of sustainability</li> <li>▪ Coordination financial literacy curriculum</li> <li>▪ Celebrate &amp; recognize participants &amp; collaborators</li> </ul>

### Measurements for Success

Identify the benchmarks – the key indicators of success – for each of the three years and the method(s) you would use to measure these incremental indicators of progress.

Benchmarks	Methods
<b>Year I</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Asset mapping. Identify potential partners</li> <li>▪ Partners - % of what was assessed in the asset mapping that leads to the dollar \$ amount.</li> <li>▪ X number of participants</li> <li>▪ Participants % of total market population</li> <li>▪ Advisory group in place</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ survey map, tax rolls, census book/report from municipalities</li> <li>▪ Minutes of board and policy advisory meetings</li> <li>▪ Applications completed/approved contracts/open accounts</li> <li>▪ Scheduled meetings – minutes</li> <li>▪ Budget approved by Board</li> </ul>
<b>Year II</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Fundraisers - % of fund necessary for project</li> <li>▪ Volunteer network such that there is 1-to-1 mentor match for those who choose partnerships</li> <li>▪ From year 1, contract: # people complete contract, # people complete training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ \$ in account – financial statement</li> <li>▪ volunteer contract for mentor</li> <li>▪ periodic reports</li> <li>▪ Exit interview – contract review; records – title to house, car, etc.</li> </ul>



Year III	
▪ Funding staff and place ▪ Sustainable Plan	▪ Checklist of all program elements

**Recommendations**

- member recruitment
  - recruit from existing that focus on service
  - combine agencies when it makes sense
  - send VISTAs into the churches in communities to speak for their programs
- member orientation/training
  - bring in experts in the field to provide specific education and understanding of issue area
  - Put \$ and time into training grants. Make directory of training
  - Train VISTAs in facilitation skills to use in every meeting and training session.
- supervisor orientation/training
  - train on specific evaluation tools of basic understanding of evaluation process
  - have each "model" program present best practice examples which have been documented by research to be effective
  - train supervisors in facilitative leadership methods, techniques and tools to use in every VISTA-related meeting and training session
- organizational structure
  - identify from existing grantees the needed linkages to business partners and associations, then pursue a formal relationship which local programs can use for partnership development
- outreach to Small Community organizations
  - identify, from previous successful programs, which CBOs to target for partnership opportunities and publish information through state offices

**Example of Plan**

				<b>Program Outcome:</b>		
				<b>New Literacy Program!</b>		
<b>Staff</b>	Secure Location		Develop Policies/Procedures		Develop Transportation Service for Participants	
	<b>VISTA</b>			<b>Buy-in From Teachers/Community</b>		
	Develop Curriculum		Create Database		Create Directory	
<b>Staff</b>	Plan Budget		Raise Funds		Recruit/Train Volunteers	
	<b>VISTA</b>			<b>Get Donated Equipment, Books, etc.</b>		
	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3	

# **Supervisor's Reflection Sheet**

**Sustainability  
And Multi-Year Planning  
Ideas I Want To Remember And Apply. . .**



## **G. Administrative Responsibilities of Supervisors to CNCS**

**Supervisors will be able to ...**

- **Understand the managerial and administrative requirements of the AmeriCorps\*VISTA sponsor.**
- **Identify the forms and procedures associated with sponsoring an AmeriCorps\*VISTA member or project.**

# The Four R's of Project Sponsorship

## Supervisors' Administrative Roles and Responsibilities

### AmeriCorps\*VISTA

- ▶ **Memorandum of Agreement is between the Corporation for National Service and Sponsoring Agency**
  - At project start, the dates will usually coincide with the placement of your first VISTA
  - The MA is a legal agreement
- ▶ **Memorandum of Understanding is between Sponsor and subsites**
  - If VISTAs will be assigned to other agencies, an MOU should be signed before placement of the VISTAs.
- ▶ **Notice of Grant Award is only issued if a program or supervision/transportation grant is awarded**

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**On-Site Orientation and Training:** All project sponsors must provide their members a one-to-three week on-site orientation and training (OSOT) when they first arrive at their project. The length and content of the OSOT will depend on the circumstances of the project and background of the member.

- See the OSOT Guidance in your training binder. This should be your guide.
- Additional guidance on preparing your OSOT plan will be provided during this training.
- You must submit an OSOT plan for review and approval to the State Office 30 days prior to the member(s)' EOD.

☒ **Sponsor Verification Letter**

Every sponsor will receive a fax every two weeks with a list of the AmeriCorps\*VISTAs assigned to your project and their end dates. You MUST sign this form and send the fax back to your State Office **within 3 days**, noting if any of the VISTAs should not be listed or a change in status.

**Reminder:** VISTA service is a full-time assignment; keep attendance and use of leave time

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- ▶ If your members are paid by CNCS, make sure they fill out and submit their **direct deposit form**.
- ▶ Procedure for missing living allowance checks: Contact the State Office with specific information about the individual and the pay period of the missing check.

- ▶ **Early Terminations**
  - VISTA member & Supervisor must complete Future Plans form and CNS Exit Form
  - Ability to replace VISTA is not automatic
- ▶ **Sponsor-requested removal from project**
  - Can request removal from project, NOT removal from AmeriCorps\*VISTA program
  - Living allowance payments cannot be withheld from the VISTA
  - Request must be in writing to State Office and should include description of corrective actions/meetings taken to this point. Please read Handbook for specific steps

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**Site visits** are conducted by State Offices and occasionally by Headquarters offices. Visits may be informational, or specifically for monitoring. Monitoring visits involve interviews with project staff, the VISTAs, members of the Advisory Council, and the local community. The visits are usually set-up in advance, and a letter outlining the results is sent to both the project director and agency head.

**Special events** include "National Service days" (MLK Day, Make a Difference, etc.) and training days. State Offices, either alone or in conjunction with State Commissions may organize In-Service Trainings which VISTAs will be required to attend.

### Project Progress Report

- ▶ PPR - CNS Form 1433
- ▶ Supervisor's Narrative
- ▶ Member(s)' Narratives
- ▶ Sampling of press coverage, newsletters, curriculum, fundraising information, grant awards
- ▶ Workplan - report progress in Column C

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### Reporting - (Quarterly)

Project Period Covered	Date Report is Due
▶ July 1 - Sept. 30	▶ <b>October 30</b>
▶ Oct 1 - Dec. 31	▶ <b>January 30</b>
▶ Jan 1 - March 31	▶ <b>April 30</b>
▶ April 1 - June 30	▶ <b>July 30</b>

### Recruitment and Placement

- ▶ National and Local
  - AmeriCorps Recruitment - Online Recruitment System - more on this later in the training program
  - Selection and Placement Officers
  - Local ads, recruitment campaigns
- ▶ Realistic timelines - Applications to the Corporation State Office at least 45 days prior to training start date - with the Travel Form!
- ▶ The interview and recommendation
  - "It's your choice; make it a good one!"
- ▶ Relocation support
  - Housing, community introductions

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### Training

- ▶ All new VISTA site supervisors should attend a supervisors' training 3 months before their member(s)' projected start date.
- ▶ All new VISTA members must attend a three-day Pre-Service Orientation (PSO) prior to beginning their service that take place within one of five two-week training windows a year. (Consult with your state director about the training dates for your cluster.)
- ▶ All new VISTA members must receive an On-Site Orientation and Training (OSOT) from the sponsor organization.

### PSO Preparation

Supervisor must review the project workplan with the member and ensure that the member brings a copy of the workplan to PSO.

Supervisors must completely fill out the member travel form used by the Corporation State Office and submit that form with the member application to the State Office at least 45 days prior to the PSO.

Supervisors should ensure that the member reviews the Terms, Conditions and Benefits of AmeriCorps® VISTA Service that will be sent to the member in the weeks prior to the PSO.

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### Resources

- ▶ Corporation for National & Community Service website: [www.americorps.org](http://www.americorps.org).  
Site for supervisors: [www.americorps.org/vista/supervisor.html](http://www.americorps.org/vista/supervisor.html)  
Site for members: [www.americorps.org/vista/supervisor.html](http://www.americorps.org/vista/supervisor.html)
- ▶ EpiCenter website: [www.nationalservice.org/resources/epicenter/](http://www.nationalservice.org/resources/epicenter/)
- ▶ LEARNS website: [www.nwrel.org/learns/](http://www.nwrel.org/learns/)
- ▶ National Service Resource Center website: [www.etr.org/nsrc/](http://www.etr.org/nsrc/)
- ▶ National Service Product Catalogue: [www.nationalservicecatalog.org](http://www.nationalservicecatalog.org)

### Resources

- ▶ VISTA Supervisors' Manual
- ▶ AmeriCorps® VISTA Member Handbook
- ▶ Your Corporation State Office Staff

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### How long can I have my VISTAs?

Because of AmeriCorps® VISTA's mission to build capacity, a project should have achieved sustainability by the end of the 3rd year of the project - OR begin to cost share for years 4 and 5.

AmeriCorps® VISTA members cannot be assigned to a project for more than five years.

If a new project or a project in a new site is approved, the clock starts over.

### Cost Share Partnerships

<b>What you give:</b>	<b>What Your VISTA gets:</b>
The living allowance: approximately \$9400 per AmeriCorps® VISTA Member per year (varies by state). Billed to the sponsor on a quarterly basis; sites under VISTA grant should reimburse the project sponsor on a monthly basis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$4725 education award or \$1200 post-service stipend</li> <li>• Health insurance</li> <li>• Training</li> <li>• Travel costs for training</li> <li>• Moving allowance</li> <li>• Liability coverage</li> <li>• Child care, if eligible</li> </ul>

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## Sample Sponsor Verification Form

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3/12/2002

Doing Good Organization  
100 Anystreet Drive  
Anytown, CA 94612

Dear VISTA Project Director/Supervisor:

Below is a list of the VISTA Volunteers who are active today as indicated by our records. Along with each name is each VISTA's scheduled termination date.

Please review this list and provide a new termination date for any VISTA who has already terminated or intends to terminate in advance of the date shown. Please sign and date this form in the space provided and FAX it back to your Corporation State Office within three workdays of receipt. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Isabelle Idealistic	11/15/2002
Sam Supervista	01/24/2003

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Sponsor Evaluation Form

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# AMERICORPS\*VISTA SPONSOR EVALUATION OF APPLICANT

Instructions: The sponsor supervisor must complete and submit this evaluation form to the Corporation for National Service for each applicant with the completed application packet.

Name of Applicant	Date
Sponsor	

Request PSO Entry (please check)  January;  April;  July;  August;  November

1. Is the applicant currently involved in community service? Describe work and degree of involvement:

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2. What relevant skills or strengths can the applicant contribute to this program?

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3. What are the applicant's weaknesses?

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4. What type of supervision would the applicant need to function effectively as a VISTA?

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5. Is the applicant available for service on a full-time basis? (Conflicting obligations such as full or part time employment or enrollment in courses not related to the volunteer assignment would render the applicant unavailable for full-time service.)

Yes  No  If no, please explain:



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6. Describe the project and the role to which you plan to assign this person.

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7. Overall recommendation:

- I recommend the applicant without reservation as an excellent candidate for AmeriCorps\*VISTA service.
- On the whole, I would recommend the applicant as a good candidate for AmeriCorps\*VISTA service.
- I have some reservations, but I believe the applicant has a reasonable chance of success in AmeriCorps\*VISTA service.
- I have substantial reservations about the applicant for AmeriCorps\*VISTA service.
- I believe that the applicant is unsuited for AmeriCorps\*VISTA service.

Other comments

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Sponsor/Project Director Signature (if sent via e-mail please type name and e-mail address for verification)	
Date	

Corporation for National Service – Internal Use Only

I have reviewed the attached material for this AmeriCorps\* VISTA Applicant and authorize final clearance.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
CNS State Program Specialist/State Program Director

Date \_\_\_\_\_



**MEMORANDUM TO NATIONAL SENIOR SERVICE CORPS STAFF, AMERICORPS\*VISTA STAFF  
CORPORATION STATE OFFICE STAFF**

**FROM:** Thomasenia P. Duncan, General Counsel

**SUBJECT:** Senior Companions, Foster Grandparent, Retired and Senior Volunteer and AmeriCorps\*VISTA

Programs - Income Disregard Provisions

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It continues to come to our attention that state and local governments, and on occasion federal entities, either lack knowledge or in some cases ignore federal law governing the disregard of payments to Senior Companions, Foster Grandparent, Retired and Senior Volunteer and AmeriCorps\*VISTA members when determining eligibility for assistance and benefits.

Title IV (Administration and Coordination) of the Domestic and Volunteer Service Act of 1973, as amended, (DVSA), states at 42 U.S.C. § 5044 (f) (1) and (2):

(f) (1) Notwithstanding any other provision of law except as may be provided expressly in limitation of this subsection, payments to volunteers under this Act shall not in any way reduce or eliminate the level of or eligibility for assistance or services any such volunteers may be receiving under any governmental program, except that this paragraph shall not apply in the case of such payments when the Director determines that the value of all such payments, adjusted to reflect the number of hours such volunteers are serving, is equivalent to or greater than the minimum wage then in effect under the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. § 201 et seq.) or the minimum wage, under the laws of the State where such volunteers are serving, whichever is greater.

(f) (2) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a person enrolled for full-time service as a volunteer under Title I of this Act who was otherwise entitled to receive assistance or services under any governmental program prior to such volunteer's enrollment shall not be denied such assistance or services because of such volunteer's failure or refusal to register for, seek, or accept employment or training during the period of such service.

In a few cases, government programs have erroneously attempted to substitute their judgements for the DVSA's authority in determining under (f) (1) if volunteer payments are equivalent to or greater than the applicable minimum wage. Only the Corporation for National Service may make this determination, and thus far payments to members under this Title have not been determined to exceed the federal or state minimum wage, whichever is greater.

Title IV of the DVSA also states at 42 U.S.C. § 5058:

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no payment for supportive services or reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses made to persons serving pursuant to Title II of this Act shall be subject to any tax or charge or be treated as wages or compensation for the purposes of unemployment, temporary disability, retirement, public assistance, workers' compensation, or similar benefit payments, or minimum wage laws. This section shall become effective with respect to all payments made after the effective date of this Act [October 1, 1973].

In summary, the law is quite clear that a government program may not consider payments to members under Title IV of the DVSA to reduce or eliminate the level of or eligibility for public assistance or services; that entitlements to assistance shall not be denied because of a volunteer's failure or refusal to seek or accept employment or training, including those established for welfare to work programs; and that no payments to members shall be considered wages or unemployment for the purposes of any tax, unemployment, workers' compensation, or for similar benefit payments.

In addition, the legislative history concerning this matter indicates that Congress did not want to damage efforts to recruit members by reducing or eliminating government assistance for members and placing financial burdens on sponsors of the programs. Under the Supremacy Clause, Article VI of the United States Constitution, the above cited federal law preempts any state law that is an obstacle to the accomplishments and execution of the full purposes and objectives of the Congress of the United States.

This memorandum should be forwarded to anyone with questions concerning this matter. In the event this memorandum does not resolve the issue, please contact this office immediately.



## VISTA Relocation Benefits

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### **- Move-In Expenses**

**- Relocation Allowance** – Up to \$550. Any VISTA who must move to perform his or her service will receive up to \$550 relocation allowance in his or her first or second paycheck. Taxes are deducted.

### **- Travel to Service Site**

**- Plane Tickets** – CNS will issue a government plane ticket for the VISTA to get from his or her home of record to PSO and then on to his or her service site. The travel arrangements will be made based on information provided on the PSO selection form.

**- Mileage for Driving** – Mileage will only be reimbursed if a vehicle is necessary to perform the service and the project supervisor has authorized the car.

**- Authorized Vehicle** – Mileage is reimbursed at .365 per mile plus \$10 for every 100 miles to cover some miscellaneous expenses. VISTAs who are passengers riding with someone else will receive \$10 for every 100 miles to cover meals and lodging. Passengers do not receive mileage reimbursement.

**- Non-Authorized Vehicles** – Mileage will not be reimbursed, but the VISTA will be paid the equivalent of a government issued plane ticket.

### **- Shipping**

**- Baggage** – Baggage is reimbursed at a rate of \$25 for every 100 miles traveled (Except for members serving in Alaska and Hawaii where members are reimbursed for the cost of shipping up to 100lbs from their home of record to their service site,) with a maximum reimbursement of \$500. Receipts should be sent to the CNS State Office within one month of arriving at the service site.

## Questions Often Asked by AmeriCorps\*VISTAs

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**Health Insurance** Members receive health insurance through OASYS (Outsourced Administrative Systems). OASYS is contracted by the Corporation for National Service. They are the experts on all health insurance related questions and issues.

OASYS  
PO Box 78308  
Indianapolis, In 46278-8308  
(800) VISTA-17/(800) 847-8217  
Fax: (317) 614-2186

**Subsistence Allowance Did Not Arrive** Please encourage members to sign up for Direct Deposit. They will receive the forms at the PSO. In other cases members will receive their subsistence allowance check at the

project site. There are instances when the check will not arrive on or before the official pay date. If this happens, the member must wait five days from the official pay date in order to ensure that it wasn't merely a delay in the mail system. If after that period, the check still has not arrived, instruct the member to submit (to VHA) in writing a request for the check to be reissued. If the delay causes extreme hardship, the project is expected to provide up to \$500 as outlined in the Memorandum of Agreement. Encourage the use of the direct deposit option to eliminate this problem.

**Direct Deposit** Members are expected to have their subsistence allowance deposited. They receive the paper work to do so at PSO. These forms should be sent directly to Headquarters for processing.

Corporation for National Service  
Accounting, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor, 1201  
New York Avenue, NW,  
Washington, DC 20525

**Child Care** for members is also provided by a contractor, NACCRRRA (National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies). The CNS State Office must sign off on a number of pieces of the application; however NACCRRRA can address questions regarding coverage. Coverage is available during PSO, however the maximum payable remains \$300 per month.

NACCRRRA  
1319 F Street, NW, Suite 810,  
Washington, DC 20004-1106  
(800)793-0324  
Fax: (202)393-2416

**Student Loans** Forbearance and Deferment gets very confusing for everyone. The action that needs to be taken depends on the end of service option selected. If a member selects the **education award**, they can only choose forbearance based on "national service". At the beginning of their service they should complete a Forbearance Request Form (found in the back of the supervisor handbook) and return it to the Trust Fund Office. At the end of their service they should complete an Interest Accrual Form (found in the Nuts and Bolts packet) and also return it to the Trust Fund Office. If a member selects the **stipend**, they may choose either forbearance or deferment based on "economic hardship." The member should obtain deferment forms from their lender, complete the form and return to the



VISTA Certifying Officer. The Certifying Officer will then send the form directly to the lender.

Trust Fund (education award)  
VISTA Certifying Officer (stipend)  
Corporation for National Service  
1201 New York Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20525

**Future Opportunities** Within the National Service Network for AmeriCorps\*VISTA members

- AmeriCorps\*VISTA Leader positions throughout the US; contact Danielle Neveau: [dneveau@cns.gov](mailto:dneveau@cns.gov) or (202) 606-5000 x 253
- AmeriCorps\*VISTA and AmeriCorps member positions anywhere throughout the country [www.americorps.org](http://www.americorps.org)

## AmeriCorps\*State Commissions

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While AmeriCorps\*VISTA and the National Senior Service Corps are administered through the Corporation for National Service's State Program Offices, the AmeriCorps State programs are administered through the Corporation for National Service's State Commission Offices.

These 15-25 member State Commissions are appointed by the Governor in each state. They are politically bipartisan and are staffed at minimum by an Executive director, and often by additional staff. State Commissions are responsible for performing outreach to potential applicants in their state, administering a grant competition, and selecting AmeriCorps\*State programs.

The State Program Offices and the State commissions maintain a cooperative working relationship. The Corporation State directors of the State Program

Offices serve as non-voting members of the commission in their state. State Program Offices and State Commissions collaborate with other community service organizations to build the state's community service infrastructure.

Through this collaboration, AmeriCorps\*VISTA Members may join with AmeriCorps\*State Members (as well as AmeriCorps\*NCCC, Senior Corps and/or

Learn and Serve participants) in special one-day service activities or training sessions.

Attached is a list of State Commission offices. Your sponsor may suggest you contact the Commission Office in your state to learn about the activities of nearby AmeriCorps projects.

### State Commission Offices

#### Alabama

Governor's Office  
The State House, Suite 224  
Montgomery, AL 36104  
334-242-7174

#### Alaska

153<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Juneau, AK 99811  
907-465-4756

#### Arizona

1700 W Washington Street  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Room 320  
Phoenix, AZ 85007  
602-542-3461

#### Arkansas

Donaghey Plaza South  
7<sup>th</sup> & Main, Suite 1300  
Little Rock, AR 72201  
501-682-6717

#### California

1121 L Street, Suite 600  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
916-323-7646

#### Colorado

1059 Alton Way  
Building 758, Suite 123  
Denver, CO 80230  
303-595-1541

#### Connecticut

Dept. of Higher Education  
61 Woodland Street  
Hartford, CT 06105  
203-566-6154

#### Delaware

Carvel State Offc. Bldg., 4<sup>th</sup> Fl  
820 North French Street  
Wilmington, DE 19801  
302-577-6650

#### District of Columbia

Offc. of Policy and Evaluation  
441 Fourth Street NW  
Suite 920—South  
Washington, DC 20001  
202-727-6979

#### Florida

The Bloxham Bldg., Suite 109  
725 South Calhoun Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32301

#### Georgia

2020 Equitable Bldg.  
100 Peachtree Street  
Atlanta, GA 30303

#### Hawaii

Offc. of Community Services  
830 Punchbowl St, Rm. 420  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-586-8675



**Idaho**

PO Box 83720  
Boise, ID 83720-0081  
208-332-8274

**Illinois**

Dept. of Commerce & Comm.  
Affairs  
100 West Randolph, Suite 3-400  
Chicago, IL 60601

**Indiana**

302 West Washington Street  
Room E220  
Indianapolis, IN 46204  
317-233-4273

**Iowa**

150 East Des Moines Street  
Des Moines, IA 50309  
515-281-9043

**Kansas**

200 SW 6<sup>th</sup>  
PO Box 889  
Topeka, KS 66603

**Kentucky**

State Office Bldg.  
501 High Street, Rm. 923  
Frankfort, KY 40622  
502-564-5330

**Louisiana**

PO Box 44243  
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-4243  
504-342-2038

**Maine**

Maine State Planning Offc/State  
House  
184 State Street—Station #38  
Augusta, ME 04333

**Maryland**

300 W Preston Street, 6<sup>th</sup> Fl  
State Office Bldg.  
Baltimore, MD 21201  
410-225-1216

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87 Summer Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Fl  
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517-335-4295

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683 Capitol Square Building  
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612-296-1435

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Jackson, MS 39211-6453  
601-982-6738

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64 Old Suncook Rd  
Concord, NH 03301  
603-229-3406

**New Jersey**

New Jersey Dept. of Education  
240 West Broad Street, CN 500  
Trenton, NJ 08625  
609-633-9629

**New Mexico**

Children, Youth, and Family  
Dept  
1120 Paseo de Paralta  
Santa Fe, NM 87501  
505-827-8003

**New York**

Division of the Budget  
State Capitol—Rm. #254  
Albany, NY 12224  
518-473-8882

**North Carolina**

NC Governor's Office of Citizen  
Affairs  
121 West Jones Street  
Raleigh, NC 27603  
919-715-3470

**Ohio**

51 North High Street, Suite 481  
Columbus, OH 43215  
614-728-2916

**Oklahoma**

1515 North Lincoln  
Oklahoma City, OK 73104  
405-235-7278

**Oregon**

PSU/CSC—369 Neuberger Hall  
724 SW Harrison—PO Box 751  
Portland, OR 97205

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1304 Labor & Industry Bldg.  
Seventh and Forster Streets  
Harrisburg, PA 17120  
717-787-1971

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809-721-7877

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441 Pine Street  
Providence, RI 02907  
401-331-2298





**South Carolina**

Governor's Offc on Volunteerism  
1205 Pendelton Street, Rm. 422  
Columbia, SC 29201  
803-734-0398

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500 Deaderick St, 14<sup>th</sup> Fl  
Nashville, TN 37243  
615-532-9250

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1127  
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**Utah**

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Suite D-03  
Orem, UT 84097  
801-222-2910

**Vermont**

133 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05633-4801  
802-828-4982

**Virginia**

Governor's Offc of Volunteerism  
730 East Broad Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Fl  
Richmond, VA 23219  
804-692-1952

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Insurance Bldg., Rm. 140  
Olympia, WA 98504-3113  
360-586-8292

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304-340-3627

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101 E Wilson Street, 6<sup>th</sup> Fl  
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280 Trumbull St  
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(410) 962-3201 Fax

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(603) 225 1459 Fax

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(617) 565-7011 Fax

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(603) 225 1459 Fax

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Ewing Township, NJ 08628  
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(609) 989 2304 Fax

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Albany, NY 12207  
(518) 431-4150  
(518) 431-4154 Fax

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Robert N.C. Nix Federal Building  
900 Market Street, Suite 229  
Philadelphia, PA 19107  
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(215) 597-2807 Fax

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US Federal Building  
150 Carlos Chardon Avenue  
Suite 662  
Hato Rey, PR 00918-1737  
(809) 766-5314  
(809) 766-5189 Fax

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Providence, RI 02903  
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(401) 528-5220 Fax

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(515) 284-4816  
(515) 284-6640 Fax

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(313) 226-2557 Fax

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Room 2480  
Minneapolis, MN 55415-1854  
(612) 334-4083  
(612) 334-4084 Fax

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225 S. Pierre Street, Room 225  
Pierre, SD 57501-2452  
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(605) 224-9201 Fax

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(614) 469-7441  
(614) 469-2125 Fax

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(414) 297-1118  
(414) 297-1863 Fax

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Little Rock, AR 72201  
(501) 324-5234  
(501) 324-6949 Fax

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999 18<sup>th</sup> Street  
1 Commercial Plaza  
Suite 1440 South 21<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Denver, CO 80202  
(303) 312-7953  
(303) 312-7954 Fax

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Topeka, KS 66683-3572  
(785) 295-2540  
(785) 295-2596 Fax

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(504) 389-0471  
(504) 389-0510 Fax

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801 Walnut Street, Suite 504  
Kansas City, MO 64106-2009  
(816) 374-6300  
(816) 374-6305 Fax

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120 S. Federal Place #315  
Santa Fe, NM 87501-2026  
(505) 988-6577  
(505) 988-6661 Fax

**Oklahoma**

215 Dean A. McGee, Suite 324  
Oklahoma City, OK 73102  
(405) 231-5201  
(405) 231-4329 Fax

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300 East 8<sup>th</sup> Street  
Suite G-100  
Austin, TX 78701-3747  
(512) 916-5671  
(512) 916-5806 Fax

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(206) 220-7736  
(206) 220-4415 Fax

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(310) 235-7709  
(310) 235-7422 Fax



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(510) 273-0151  
(510) 273-0150

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300 Ala Moana Boulevard  
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(808) 541-2832  
(808) 541-3603 Fax

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Room 344  
Boise, ID 83702-5835  
(208) 334-1707  
(208) 334 1421 Fax

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Capitol One Center  
208 North Montana Avenue  
Suite 206  
Helena MT 59601  
(406) 449-5404  
(406) 449-5412 Fax

**Nevada**

4600 Kietzke Lane  
Suite E-141  
Reno, NV 89502-5033  
(702) 784-5314  
(702) 784-5026 Fax

**Oregon**

2010 Lloyd Center  
Portland, OR 97232  
(503) 231-2103  
(503) 231-2106 Fax

**Utah**

US Courthouse  
350 South Main Street  
Room 504  
Salt Lake City, UT 84101  
(801) 524-5411  
(801) 524-3599 Fax

**Washington**

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Suite 3190  
915 Second Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98174-1103  
(206) 220-7735  
(206) 553- 4415 Fax

**Wyoming**

Federal Building  
2120 Capitol Avenue, Room  
1110  
Cheyenne, WY 82001-3649  
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(307) 772-2389 Fax

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Medical Forum  
950-22<sup>nd</sup> Street, North, Suite 428  
Birmingham, AL 35203  
(205) 731-0027  
(205) 731-0031 Fax

**District of Columbia**

1201 New York Avenue  
Suite 9107  
Washington, DC 20525  
(202) 606-5000 x485  
(202) 565-2789

**Florida**

3165 McCrory Street  
Suite 115  
Orlando, FL 32803-3750  
(407) 648-6117  
(407) 648-6116 Fax

**Georgia**

75 Piedmont Avenue, NE  
Suite 462  
Atlanta, GA 30303-2587  
(404) 331-4646  
(404) 331-2898 Fax

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Federal Building, Room 372-D  
600 Martin Luther King Place  
Louisville, KY 40202-2230  
(502) 582-6384  
(502) 582-6386 Fax

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Federal Building, Room 1005-A  
100 West Capitol Street  
Jackson, MS 39269-1092  
(601) 965-5664  
(601) 965-4617 Fax

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Federal Building, Room 131  
300 Fayetteville Street Mall  
Raleigh, NC 27601-1739  
(919) 856-4731  
(919) 856-4738 Fax

**South Carolina**

Federal Building, Suite 872  
1835 Assembly Street  
Columbia, SC 29201-2430  
(803) 765-5771  
(803) 765-5777 Fax

**Tennessee**

233 Cumberland Bend Drive  
Suite 112  
Nashville, TN 37228-1806  
(615) 736-5561  
(615) 736-7937 Fax

**Virginia (and DC)**

400 North 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Room 1119  
Richmond, VA 23240-1832  
(804) 771-2197  
(804) 771-2157 Fax

**West Virginia**

10 Hale Street, Suite 203  
Charleston, WV 25301-1409  
(304) 347-5246  
(304) 347-5464 Fax



### VISTA Cost Share Invoice

**Invoice Date** 01/14/2002    **Due Date** 02/18/2002    **Invoice Period** 09/23/2001 - 12/15/2001    **Invoice Number** PC-02-01-06421    **Questions? Call:** Chuck Bullington at x147

**Non-Federal Sponsors submit payment to:** Corporation for National Service    **Project Codes and Address:** Sitka School District/Community School  
 Attention: Collection Officer    2201 Broadway Suite 510    Curtis Ledford  
 Oakland, CA 94612-3024    Sitka, AK 99835

**Purpose Code:** Q01    **Project Number:** AK050169

01-046-P044    07/29/2001    agreement period

Total

Total

Project	Name	Days	Subsistence	Stipend	FICA	Health	Total
AK050169	Kim Agricola	38	1,181.80			.00	.00
	Dana Weiss	84	2,612.40			.00	.00
Current total		122	3,794.20			.00	\$3,794.20
							\$0.00

Totals 01-046-P044    122    \$3,794.20    \$0.00    \$0.00    \$0.00    \$3,794.20

-----  
 (Negative balance indicates overpayment)

\$3,794.20

Past Due 01-046-P044 Adjustments  
 Total Adjustments  
 Total 01-046-P044    \$7,588.40

Due this billing - Total current agreement lines and past due lines

-----  
 (Negative balance indicates overpayment)

\$7,588.40

Total Invoice Costs: \$8,552.50 vs. Total Agreement Amount: \$12,248.00



## Cost Share Bill Sample

## FY 2004 AmeriCorps\*VISTA Living Allowance Schedule

<b>PayPeriod</b>	<b>StartDate</b>	<b>EndDate</b>	<b>PayDate</b>
200401	12/28/03	01/10/04	01/15/04
200402	01/11/04	01/24/04	01/29/04
200403	01/25/04	02/07/04	02/12/04
200404	02/08/04	02/21/04	02/26/04
200405	02/22/04	03/06/04	03/11/04
200406	03/07/04	03/20/04	03/25/04
200407	03/21/04	04/03/04	04/08/04
200408	04/04/04	04/17/04	04/22/04
200409	04/18/04	05/01/04	05/06/04
200410	05/02/04	05/15/04	05/20/04
200411	05/16/04	05/29/04	06/03/04
200412	05/30/04	06/12/04	06/17/04
200413	06/13/04	06/26/04	07/01/04
200414	06/27/04	07/10/04	07/15/04
200415	07/11/04	07/24/04	07/29/04
200416	07/25/04	08/07/04	08/12/04
200417	08/08/04	08/21/04	08/26/04
200418	08/22/04	09/04/04	09/09/04
200419	09/05/04	09/18/04	09/23/04
200420	09/19/04	10/02/04	10/07/04
200421	10/03/04	10/16/04	10/21/04
200422	10/17/04	10/30/04	11/04/04
200423	10/31/04	11/13/04	11/18/04
200424	11/14/04	11/27/04	12/02/04
200425	11/28/04	12/11/04	12/16/04
200426	12/12/04	12/25/04	12/30/04

Living allowances received by US Treasury checks will arrive approximately five days after the direct deposit date. Unless pre-approved by your State Office, you must receive your living allowance through direct deposit. To set up direct deposit, contact your State Office or your financial institution for a Direct Deposit Sign-Up form.

If your living allowance check does not arrive by the date listed, ask your supervisor to contact the State Program Office.





## **DAY TWO**

### **H. Supervisory Leadership**

**Supervisors will be able to:**

- **Discuss their ideas about leadership and how they can best lead their new VISTAs and help them grow as whole people.**
- **Explore their own leadership style and deepen their understanding of and appreciation for other styles and approaches to leadership.**
- **Clarify their own approach to leading the development and growth of their VISTAs.**

## Leadership Quotes

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“Leading from within” calls upon us to understand that leadership means meeting the challenges within us as a beginning point for meeting the challenges around us. There are “leaders who cast shadow and leaders who cast light.” Each of us has probably known both. Perhaps each of us has had moments of being both kinds of leaders. The shadows we cast upon organizations come from that which we deny in our inner self. Those shadows can include deep insecurity, a perception that the universe is basically hostile to human interests and that life is “fundamentally a battleground,” a denial of the naturalness of endings and death, a fear of the chaos of life, and particularly for those of us who tend toward leadership induced workaholicism, “the belief that the ultimate responsibility for everything rests with me.” The great gift we receive on the inner journey is the certain knowledge that ours is not the only act in town. Not only are there other acts in town, but some of them, from time to time, are even better than ours! On this inner journey we learn that we do not have to carry the whole load, that we can be empowered by sharing the load with others, and that sometimes we are even free to lay our part of the load down.

*Parker Palmer, Leading from Within*

There is a vitality, a life force, an energy, a quickening, that is translated through you into action, and because there is only one of you in all time, this expression is unique. And if you block it, it will never exist through any other medium and will be lost.

*Martha Graham*

Despite my firm convictions, I have been always a man who tries to face facts, and to accept the reality of life as new experience and new knowledge unfolds it. I have always kept an open mind, which is necessary to the flexibility that must go hand in hand with every form of intelligent search for truth.

Malcolm X

If you want to build a ship, don't drum up the women and men to gather wood, divide the work, and give orders. Instead, teach them to yearn for the vast and endless sea.

*Antoine de Saint-Exupery, The Wisdom of the Sands*

Heroes take journeys, confront dragons, and discover the treasure of their true selves. Although they may feel very alone during the quest, at its end their reward is a sense of community: with themselves, with other people, and with the earth. Every time we confront death-in-life we confront a dragon, and every time we choose life over non-life and move deeper into the ongoing discovery of who we are, we vanquish the dragon; we bring new life to ourselves and to our culture. We change the world.

*Carol Pearson, The Hero Within*

I, the Rock, I the Tree, I the River  
I am yours—your Passages have been paid.  
Lift up your faces, you have a piercing need  
For this bright morning dawning for you.  
History, despite its wrenching pain,  
Cannot be unlived, and if faced  
With courage, need not be lived again.  
Lift up your eyes upon  
The day breaking for you.  
Give birth again  
To the dream.

*Maya Angelou, “Inaugural Poem”*



## Selected Leadership Models

On the following pages, you will find excerpts and summaries from selected leadership models commonly used and cited in the field of national and community service:

- ◆ ***The Servant as Leader***, from Robert K. Greenleaf of the Greenleaf Center for Service-Leadership
- ◆ ***Facilitative Leadership***, from the Interaction Institute for Social Change
- ◆ ***Ethical Leadership***, Kenneth Blanchard and Norman Peale
- ◆ ***Leadership and the New Science***, Margaret Wheatley

### The Servant as Leader\*

“The idea of *The Servant as Leader* came out of reading Herman Hesse’s *Journey to the East*. In this story we see a band of men on a mythical journey, probably also Hesse’s own journey. The central figure of the story is Leo who accompanies the party as the *servant* who does their menial chores, but who also sustains them with his spirit and his song. He is a person of extraordinary presence. All goes well until Leo disappears. Then the group falls into disarray and the journey is abandoned. They cannot make it without the servant Leo. The narrator, one of the party, after some years of wandering finds Leo and is taken into the Order that had sponsored the journey. There he discovers that Leo, whom he had known first as *servant*, was in fact the titular head of the Order, its guiding spirit, a great and noble *leader*.

“...to me, this story clearly says—the *great leader* is seen as *servant first*, and that simple fact is the key to his greatness. Leo was actually the leader all of the time, but he was servant first because that was what he was, *deep down inside*. Leadership was bestowed upon a man who was by nature a servant. It was something given, or assumed, that could be taken away. His servant nature was the real man, not bestowed, not assumed, and not to be taken away. He was servant first.”

Robert K. Greenleaf  
From *The Servant as Leader*

\*This article is an excerpt from *The Servant as Leader* (1970) by Robert K. Greenleaf. For more information about the Greenleaf Center for Service-Leadership, contact them at (317) 259-1241 or [greenleaf@iquest.net](mailto:greenleaf@iquest.net) or visit their website at [www.greenleaf.org](http://www.greenleaf.org).

### Facilitative Leadership\*

Tapping the Power of Participation

The Facilitative Leadership curriculum is based on the principle that people you work with have more buy-in and are more accountable for results when you involve them in brainstorming and making decisions. People tend to support that which they help to create.

This model is based on the following seven fundamental practices of leaders:

- Share an Inspiring Vision
- Focus on Results, Process and Relationship
- Seek Maximum Appropriate Involvement
- Design Pathways to Action
- Facilitate Agreement
- Coach for Performance
- Celebrate Accomplishment

\*For more information about Facilitative Leadership workshops, contact the Interaction Institute for Social Change (415) 241-8000/(617) 234-2750 or the National Service Leadership Institute (510) 273-0147.

### Ethical Leadership

**What are Ethics?** *At its most basic, ethics is deciding what is right (or more right) in a particular situation -- determining what ought to be -- deciding what is consistent with one's personal or organizational value system.*

**What is Ethical Leadership?** Ethical leadership combines ethical decision-making and ethical behavior, and it occurs in both an individual and an organizational context. A major responsibility of a leader is to make ethical decisions and behave in ethical ways -- and to see that the organization understands and practices its ethical code.

**Suggestions for Behaving Ethically** If the ethical leader has his or her own personal ethics clear, and has a sense of the organization's ethics, then ethical behavior is that which is consistent with these codes. A few suggestions that have been adapted from Blanchard and Peale (1988) are:

Behave in ways that are consistent with your purpose (which Blanchard and Peale define as a particular road you choose to travel in your life -- that which gives meaning and definition to your life). A clear personal purpose, say these two, is the foundation for ethical behavior. A clear organizational purpose would seem to enhance organizational ethics as well.

Behave in ways that you are personally proud of. Self esteem is a powerful tool for behaving ethically -- and they stipulate that self esteem is personal pride mixed with a fair amount of humility, and this balance creates the confidence to "hang tough" when dealing with ethical dilemmas.

Behave with patience and with faith in your decisions and yourself. Patience, say Blanchard and Peale, helps us to behave in ways that will be the best in the long run, and to avoid the trap of having to have things happen immediately.

Behave with persistence. This means behaving ethically all of the time -- not just when it is convenient to do so. An ethical leader, according to Blanchard and Peale, has persistence to stick to her or his purpose and to achieve what she or he envisions.

Behave in ways that are consistent with what is really important. This means keeping perspective. Perspective allows us to reflect and to see things more clearly so that we can see what is really important to guide our behavior.

### **Leadership and the New Science**

Margaret Wheatley, widely sought management consultant for school systems and Fortune 500 companies, describes a new vision of dynamic, organizational change based upon revolutionary discoveries in science.

As a former professor of management, administrator for low-income community programs and co-founder of three management consulting groups, Wheatley draws

upon a wellspring of real-world experience. At the *Berkana Institute*, a charitable research foundation that she co-founded in 1990, Wheatley and her colleagues, apply 20th century scientific theory to create 21st Century designs for organizational change.

In her 1992 bestseller, *Leadership and the New Science*, Wheatley argues that across scientific disciplines, our systematic, rational quest for order, control, stability, and predictability are giving way to a deeper appreciation for chaos, complexity, uncertainty, and change. Her view is that organizations are not so much machines that can be regulated via planning, procedures, power, or control as living organisms that when given plenty of trust and freedom and inspiring leadership can creatively adapt to changing times. The basic catalyst for intelligent change is information flowing freely throughout the system; its eddies and energies when fed back on themselves multiply into new structures and solutions. The more open a system to new information from within and without, the more creative its adaptations...and the more its participants find meaning in bringing their whole selves to work.

"Change begins with a small fluctuation that varies from the norm"; personal uniqueness impacts the entire system, eventually kicking it into a higher level of performance.

Here are some quotes from her book:

*I no longer believe that organizations can be changed by imposing a model developed elsewhere. So little transfers to, or even inspires, those trying to work at change in their own organizations.*

*All this time, we have created trouble for ourselves in organizations by confusing control with order...If organizations are machines, control makes sense. If organizations are process structures, then seeking to impose control through permanent structures is suicide.*

*What leaders are called upon to do in a chaotic world is to shape their organizations through concepts, not through elaborate rules or structures.*

## I. VISTA Cycle of Service

Supervisors will be able to ...

- Identify reasons why a member might terminate his/her year of service early.
  - Describe key aspects of a VISTA's cycle of service.
- Describe at least 2 things that supervisors can do to support their VISTAs throughout the different periods of the cycle.

## Retention Challenges for AmeriCorps\*VISTAs

Areas:	Individual:	Organizational and community:
<p><b>VISION/ MISSION, ROLE CLARITY</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little or no understanding and commitment to vision/mission</li> <li>• Service and role description unclear</li> <li>• Unclear how activities link to mission and vision</li> <li>• Little satisfaction with direction of service project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little effort to clarify and sustain commitment to mission and vision</li> <li>• Lack of broad base of support for mission and vision</li> <li>• Misrepresents vision and mission</li> <li>• Little effort to communicate progress towards vision</li> </ul>
<p><b>PEOPLE/ RELATION- SHIPS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homesickness and trouble finding new support system</li> <li>• Fall in love and must follow partner</li> <li>• Crisis time for loved one</li> <li>• Involvement in a major conflict</li> <li>• Little accountability and respect for sponsor or community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mismatch in supervisory relationship</li> <li>• Incompatibility with team or supervisor</li> <li>• Organization and community struggle to accept and/or embrace VISTA</li> <li>• Lack of effort to welcome, respect, and include VISTA in local networks</li> </ul>
<p><b>MATERIALS, RESOURCES &amp; MACHINES</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stipend subsistence too challenging, overwhelming financial hardship</li> <li>• Inadequate housing, no affordable housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inability to deliver on resources to get job done (work space, computers, vehicles, advisory committee, etc.)</li> <li>• Major budget changes effect whole effort</li> </ul>
<p><b>HEALTH &amp; WELL BEING</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accident</li> <li>• Serious illness, poor health</li> <li>• Close death</li> <li>• Pregnancy</li> <li>• Burn-out, work or weather too challenging</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bankruptcy, corruption</li> <li>• Gross disorganization</li> <li>• Power struggles and chaos</li> </ul>
<p><b>POLICIES, PROCEDURES &amp; PRIORITIES</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clash with policies</li> <li>• Trouble with law</li> <li>• Harassment, discrimination</li> <li>• Inability to align personal priorities with that of service project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of clear communication or fair enforcement of policies</li> <li>• Out-dated, impractical or discriminatory policies and practices</li> </ul>
<p><b>PROGRAM, ACTIVITIES, SERVICES</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not about sustainability</li> <li>• Lack interest, skills and experience to carry out assignment successfully</li> <li>• Unrealistic goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service assignment is different than what was described</li> <li>• Major amounts of time are on direct services and not sustainability</li> <li>• Poorly planned and conceived activities</li> </ul>
<p><b>WORK &amp; COMMUNITY ETHIC &amp; CULTURE</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unclear about organization's climate/ ethic / culture</li> <li>• Prejudice and culturally insensitive</li> <li>• Incompatibility with work ethic of sponsor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prejudice and lack of cultural sensitivity to VISTA</li> <li>• Bad fit with organizational culture and local work ethic</li> </ul>

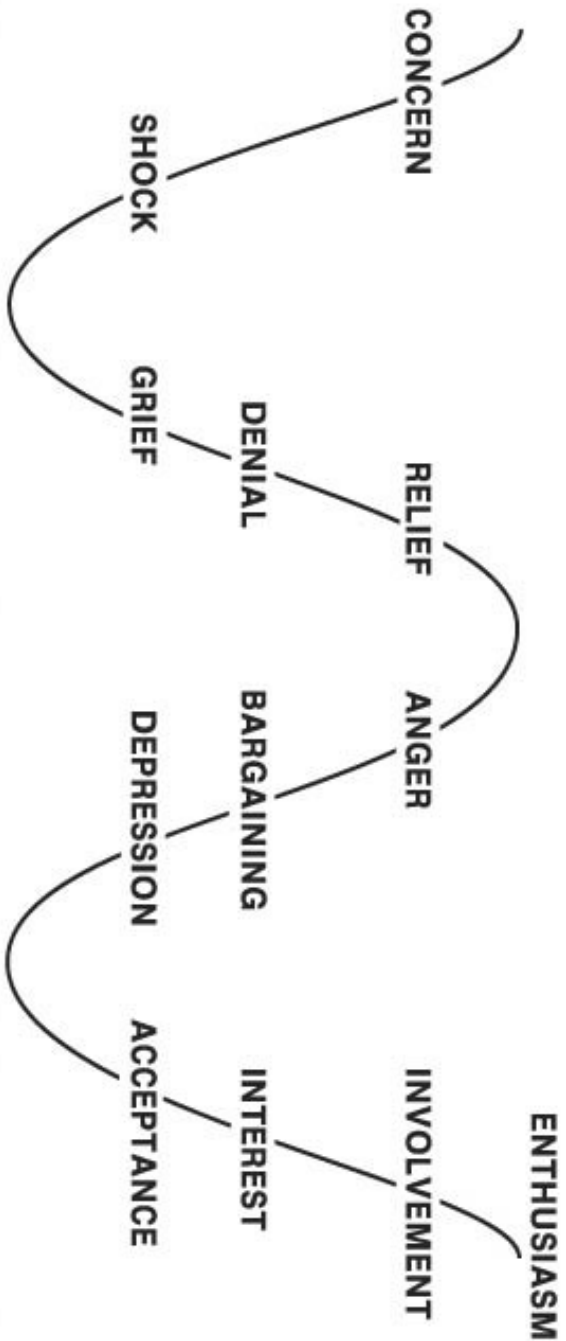
## Cycle of Service

Anticipating Trends, Challenges and Needs of VISTAs Throughout Service Cycle Worksheet							
Timeline →	Getting Started	Early On	Mid-Year	2/3 of the Way	Winding Down	Closing Out	Life After VISTA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trends Changes, Challenges, and Needs</li> <li>Physical</li> </ul>	M-1 M-2	M-3 M-4	M-5 M-6	M-7 M-8	M-9 M-10	M-11 M-12	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mental and Service Project Related</li> </ul>							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social, Cultural</li> </ul>							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spiritual/ Emotional</li> </ul>							

## Emotional Rollercoaster

# EMOTIONAL ROLLER COASTER

The emotional roller coaster is a natural result of being in transition, or experiencing an ending, the loss of routine, and/or living in the unknown.



## J. PSO Briefing

Supervisors will be able to ...

- Describe accurately the VISTA training continuum – PSO-OSOT-IST.
  - Identify and review all that is covered at Pre Service Orientation.





## PSO Objectives

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The purpose of PSO is to prepare VISTAs for a successful year of service. PSO is a time to learn more about VISTA and confirm the decision to become an AmeriCorps\*VISTA member. PSO is not a training event to build skills specific to a particular project. Instead, during PSO, we will:

- ◆ Review the history, mission and structure of AmeriCorps\*VISTA and CNCS.
- ◆ Introduce CNCS and its support staff, which administers the AmeriCorps\*VISTA program.
- ◆ Explore the role of successful AmeriCorps\*VISTA members in the community development process.
- ◆ Examine the planning and project development processes and the relationship among the AmeriCorps\*VISTA member, supervisor, sponsoring organization, and the CNCS program office.
- ◆ Define the benefits, regulations, policies, terms, conditions and benefits of service.
- ◆ Accomplish the necessary administrative processing for enrollment and allowances.
- ◆ Develop a sense of identity with other AmeriCorps\*VISTA and national service members.
- ◆ Be sworn in as an AmeriCorps\*VISTA!

AmeriCorps\*VISTA PSO is meant to be intensive, informative and enjoyable. Once PSO is successfully completed, trainees will officially become AmeriCorps\*VISTA members!

After the PSO, the VISTA will report to the project site. There, the VISTA's supervisor will take him/her through an On-Site Orientation and Training (OSOT). The OSOT will strengthen the VISTA's capacity to carry out the specific assignment description.

### What is Covered In AmeriCorps\*VISTA Pre-Service Orientation and Training

- CNCS and AmeriCorps\*VISTA History and Legacy
- Terms, Conditions and Benefits of A\*VISTA Service
- The VISTA Ethic of Service
- AmeriCorps\*VISTA's Anti-Poverty Mission and Sustainable Solutions Approach
- Working with Organizations
- Community Entry and Cross-Cultural Collaboration
- Role Clarification: the VISTA's role in building sustainable solutions.
- Building relationships/networking, developing resources, and community collaboration
- Relationship with CNCS State Offices
- Civil and Equal Opportunity Rights/Responsibilities
- Getting Started, Anticipating the Challenges, Overcoming Obstacles.
- A Problem Solving Approach
- Swearing-In



## Sample PSO Agenda

Time	Activity	Facilitator
<b>Arrival Day</b>		
4:00– 6:00 pm	PSO Check-in and Registration	CNCS Staff
5:30– 6:30 pm	Dinner	
<b>Day 1</b>		
7:00– 8:00 am	Breakfast	
8:30 am	Building the learning community: Introductions, getting to know each other, building community and preparations for the large group introduction	Training facilitator
9:45 am	Move to large group	
9:55 am	AmeriCorps*VISTA History and Legacy CNCS Large Group Welcome, Team Introductions-Kick Off Activity! Logistics Review	CNCS Staff (State Director, others)  CNCS Training Specialist
10:45 am	Break	
11:00 am	Terms, Conditions and Benefits of AmeriCorps*VISTA Service	CNCS Staff/Training Specialist
12:00 pm	Lunch	
1:00 pm – 3:15 pm	Agenda Review/PSO expectations Working Agreements. . . Norms VISTA Ethic of Service Work Plan Organizational Overview: Working with Organizations/Who and What do I need to know – Sponsor organization, Supervisor, State Office, and Community.	Training facilitator Training facilitator Training facilitator
3:15 pm – 3:30 pm	Break	
3:30 pm	Beginning with End in Mind: VISTA’s Anti-Poverty mission and facts and perceptions about poverty in the US.	Training facilitator
4:45 pm	Closing Ceremony Assignment	Training facilitator
5:15 pm	Adjourn	
5:30– 6:30 pm	Dinner	

Day 2		
7:00– 8:00 am	Breakfast	
8:30 am – 11:00 am	Poverty in America: Understand how the VISTA issue areas work to fight poverty, examine how economic policies that increase assets and ownership support anti-poverty outcomes and learn how to find assets and resources within a community. Break (9:50 am – 10:05 am)	Training facilitator
11:00 am – 12:00 pm	Community Entry: Cultural Awareness	Training facilitator
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm	Lunch	
1:00 pm – 2:00pm	Opportunity Thinking and Problem Solving	Training facilitator
2:00 pm – 3:45 pm	Charting the Course: Building relationships and networks, developing resources, and collaborating with the community to build sustainable projects.	
3:45 pm – 4:00 pm	Break	
4:00 pm – 5:00 pm	CNCS Staff Sessions	CNCS Program Staff
5:00 pm	Adjourn	
5:30– 6:30 pm	Dinner	

Day 3		
7:00 am – 8:30 am	Check out and Breakfast	
8:30 am – 9:30 am	Your Rights and Responsibilities with Equal Opportunity and Civil Rights.	CNCS Training Specialist/other staff or Training facilitator
9:30 am – 9:45 am		Training facilitator
9:45 am - 11:00 am	Break Volunteer Generation	Training facilitator
11:15 am – 12:30 pm	Resource Mobilization Lunch	CNCS State Director/Training Specialist, Support by Training facilitators
12:30 pm – 1:30 pm	Member Induction Ceremony – Oath, Closing Remarks	
1:30 pm – 2:00 pm		

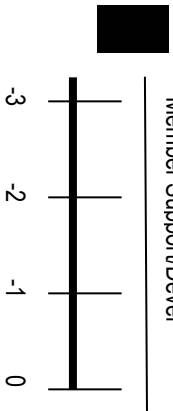
# AmeriCorps\*VISTA Training Timeline

## AmeriCorps\*VISTA Training Timeline

### Supervisor Training

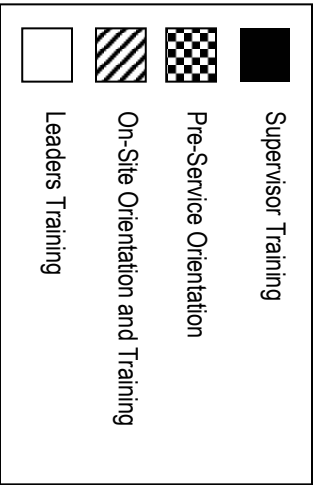
**Impact, Recruitment, Retention**  
 CNCS 101 and Project Mgt.  
 Recruitment

On-Site Training  
 Member Support/Devel

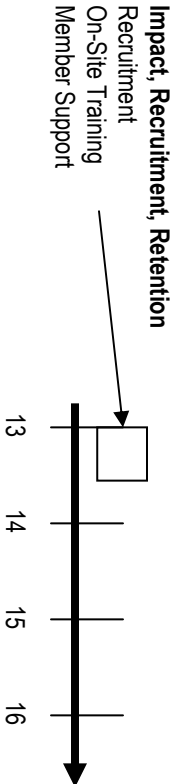


**Impact Retention**  
 Basic Needs  
 Getting Started  
 Orientation to Assignment and Community  
 Skill Training

In-Service Training (ISTs) Provided by Sponsoring Organization



### A\*VISTA Leaders Training



## K. Designing and Implementing On-Site Orientation and Training

### **On-Site Orientation and Training Guidelines for Project Supervisors**

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*Supervisors will be able to ...*

- *Understand importance of On-Site Orientation and Training (OSOT) for Member satisfaction, retention and impact.*
  - *Begin thinking about how to plan additional Member skill development.*
  - *Understand Supervisor's role in life plan and end of service preparations.*
    - *Produce a draft On-Site Orientation and Training (OSOT).*

## **PURPOSE**

On-site orientation and training (OSOT) is the second step in the AmeriCorps\*VISTA member's training continuum. Its primary purpose to build on concepts and knowledge introduced and developed at the Pre-Service Orientation. OSOT introduces the member to the sponsor, the community, and the goals and operation of the AmeriCorps\*VISTA project, and provides the member the basic knowledge and skills he or she needs to get started on the project.

The scheduling of OSOT should be timely enough to provide the member with the immediate information and skills needed to begin the job, yet flexible enough to allow members to satisfy personal and adjustment needs.

## **SPONSOR'S RESPONSIBILITY**

- Develop an OSOT plan which is consistent with project goals and which meets minimum desired outcomes (see below).
- Submit OSOT plan to the Corporation for National Service (a.k.a, Corporation) State Program Office 30 days prior to the Pre-Service Orientation (PSO).
- Involve the member in an ongoing evaluation of activities of OSOT and adjust plans, as necessary, to meet individual member's needs.
- Evaluate OSOT and have written member and supervisory evaluations submitted to the Corporation State Program Office within five days of the completion of OSOT.
- Begin process of defining in-service training needs based on OSOT outcomes and evaluation.

## **SCOPE OF THIS PLANNING GUIDE**

This OSOT Planning Guide is intended to help you prepare a quality OSOT plan for submission to the Corporation State Office and subsequent implementation with your new member(s). The Guide details the minimum outcomes and components required by the AmeriCorps\*VISTA program. It provides suggestions for planning and implementing your OSOT, as well as a sample list of low cost resources that should be considered in preparing and carrying out your OSOT. Finally, the Guide includes a sample OSOT plan that can be used as a reference.

Be sure to provide your new member an orientation on the basics – of your organization, the community, the project – prior to launching into skill training. The extent to which your member needs orientation and training on

the basics is relative to his or her particular background. But when you consider the normally complex scope of AmeriCorps\*VISTA work plans and the importance of measuring up to the community's needs, you cannot afford to take the basics for granted. You have to be confident that you have a reasonably knowledgeable member representing the sponsor and the Corporation for National Service in the community of assignment.

Information is power. The more information the AmeriCorps\*VISTA member has, the more likely the member is able to perform the activities necessary to reach project goals and address community problems. At the same time, you do not want to overwhelm the member with facts and details, just what he or she will need to build upon.

**Implementation Plan:** Enlist help in planning and implementing your OSOT. Talk to, or assemble persons - other staff, neighborhood leaders, and members - for a "preliminary design" session, to brainstorm your probable On-Site Orientation and Training needs and resources. This group could decide what might be the minimum background information your member should understand to get started. You probably have identified persons who could tell your new AmeriCorps\*VISTA member, in a classroom style or in a kitchen table session, what is what in the community. If your organization or community group doesn't have this information right now, you will need to determine who can do the necessary research. Or you may determine that this "homework" – an experiential fact-finding mission - is exactly what you lay on your new recruits.

You may still have to enlist help to ask the right questions. These questions may include:

- Who runs the community?
- How do decisions get made?
- Are there political clubs or "in" groups?
- What has worked and not worked in this project or projects like it?
- How do ordinary citizens/neighbors influence decisions?
- How do we get and use key statistics to illustrate poverty-related issues such as truancy, crime, income, taxes, derelict house ownership, unemployment, and family violence?

You will certainly need to enlist help - from such individuals as your friendly local librarian, a news reporter, or an involved clergyman - to guide your

members (and you) to the answers that are complete enough to be useful.

At Pre-Service Orientation, AmeriCorps\*VISTA emphasizes to attendees the importance of being able to be flexible and to deal with ambiguity, but remember that too much ambiguity is insidious. Lack of clarity depletes a member's energy and morale and can stall a project. OSOT is the time to settle false expectations that the AmeriCorps\*VISTA member may bring to their assignment. It is also the time to describe to the member your supervisory style and share your expectations of him/her.

Besides outlining tasks and time tables, you want to establish and communicate your own team "code of the member." To do this, you must first be clear yourself on the principles, policies and requirements of AmeriCorps\*VISTA by carefully reviewing your Memorandum of Agreement with the Corporation and the AmeriCorps\*VISTA Member Handbook. In addition to laying out rules and regulations of VISTA service, the Member Handbook describes AmeriCorps\*VISTA's approach to leadership and problem-solving in low-income, disadvantaged communities, that you as supervisor will need to apply to your situation and to promote with your member.

With this as your starting point, you should carefully review with your member his or her project description and negotiate a clear understanding of any unwritten expectations. These may include what professional behavior and appearance is expected, whether special skills or interests they may bring can contribute to or distract from the work plan, what the working hours will be, and what kinds of commitments occur after standard working hours and on weekends.

#### **Suggested Orientation and Training Methods:**

The methods you use for your orientation and training may include:

- Brainstorming, discussion and negotiation between you and your member or with a larger team (e.g., with other project staff).
- Interviews/discussions with key community leaders or even a random sample of residents/beneficiaries.
- Homework: Having a member review the overall written proposal which the sponsor submitted to the Corporation, the Memorandum of Agreement between the Corporation and the Sponsor, and other pertinent organization position papers.
- Field trips with strategically assigned tasks the member needs to complete.
- Having your member shadow others doing the kind of work the member will be doing.
- Attendance at staff, advisory board, and community meetings.
- Asking other staff, colleagues with other organizations and other experts to share some time reviewing their "tricks of the trade" or providing specific skill training.
- Secure free or low cost skill training from various community resources such as:
  - Community Colleges
  - Libraries
  - Community Resource and Technology Centers
  - Trade Associations
  - Community Adult Education Programs

#### **Outcomes for the VISTA member from On-Site Orientation and Training:**

**By the end of On-Site Orientation and Training, your AmeriCorps\*VISTA Member should have gained:**

- **Understanding of common expectations and agreements for working relationship between VISTA and supervisor:**
  - Supervisor's other roles and responsibilities
  - Supervisor's management style
  - Meetings/Interactions between VISTA and supervisor
  - Clear understanding of the lines of communication between VISTA and supervisor
  - Clear understanding of the support provided to the member
  - Clear on the terms and conditions of VISTA service
  - Clear on the chain of command
- **Understanding of the culture and mission of the sponsoring organization:**
  - History of organization
  - Organizational mission
  - How it functions as a non-profit, municipality, state, county or federal entity
  - Its role in the community
  - Introductions to staff
- **Knowledge of the bigger picture related to the VISTA project and the community:**
  - The VISTA project and its history
  - How and where does the VISTA fit into it all
  - Introduction to the community

- The socio-economic and political structure
- Potential resources that can be applied to achieve project goals
- History and present status of community self-determination and problem-solving efforts
- **Understanding of the organization's VISTA Policy:**
  - Roles and responsibilities
  - Time and attendance, duty hours
  - Annual leave
  - Sick leave
  - Mileage reimbursement policy and procedure
  - Working with the media
  - Fund raising activities
  - Evaluation of individual VISTA and of the project
  - Reporting requirements for the VISTA project
- **Developing a personal work plan with the supervisor that:**
  - Specifies tasks and activities for a specific period of time to accomplish the goals and objectives in the project work plan.
  - Specifies training needed for the assignment that builds upon Pre-Service Orientation, On-Site Orientation and Training and Close of Service activities and the personal and professional development of the VISTA member.
- **Building skills and knowledge needed to implement the member work plan:**
  - Depending on the project, you may deem it necessary for the member to receive training in such areas as computer skills, public speaking, group facilitation, conflict resolution, needs assessment and asset mapping, proposal writing, negotiation and interviewing skills, etc.
  - A member may need issue area-specific training as well on such topics as domestic violence hotlines, early childhood literacy, laws regarding foster care, credit management, micro-enterprise development, etc.
  - These are just some examples of skills and training your member might need. His/her actual needs depend on the requirements of your project and the experience, skills and educational background your members already possess.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Why do OSOT?

The main beneficiary of a strong OSOT plan is the AmeriCorps\*VISTA member. With the OSOT plan as a

reference, the member will have an indication of what he/she can expect to be doing and what you expect to be accomplished during the orientation. You of course will establish a strong supervisory role from the outset, and can involve the member in preparing subsequent, spelled-out project work plan objectives for weekly or monthly review.

### How long should OSOT last?

Your On-Site Orientation and Training may last one week or it may last two, three or four, depending on the needs of the project and community on the one hand, and the needs of your member on the other. The length and content may be determined, for example, by whether you are recruiting a member from the local community or a member from another town, city or state. The length of the orientation and training may be influenced by whether you are recruiting someone with previous experience on this or similar projects. Your project may be one that requires extensive skill training and/or experiential learning (e.g., requiring your new member to spend significant time shadowing others involved in the project or conducting field interviews). A nationally recruited member may need more time finding and setting up a housing situation and getting to know the community prior to beginning skill training. All of these factors and others should be taken into consideration when you design your OSOT plan and determine how long your OSOT should last.

### What's the timeframe for submitting an OSOT Plan?

Your OSOT plan should be in the Corporation State Office 30 days before the start of the PSO. The State Office will review your plan for consistency with project goals, for technical quality and for its potential for meeting desired OSOT outcomes. State Office staff will discuss your plan with you prior to PSO.

### Does a particular format have to be followed?

This OSOT Planning Guide is offered as technical assistance. You may send to the State Office whatever format you are accustomed to use. A sample plan is attached for your reference; you may choose to use this format for your plan.

### What else should be done prior to OSOT?

For additional ideas about advance preparation for your member's arrival, read the "Preparing for A Member's Arrival" section of the AmeriCorps\*VISTA Supervisors Manual. This covers such topics as "Locating Housing for an AmeriCorps\*VISTA Member," "Welcoming the AmeriCorps\*VISTA Member to the Community," "Identifying Medical Practitioners," and other topics.



### **What about specific issues for locally recruited members?**

It is important that all projects receiving a member prepare and conduct an On-Site Orientation and Training, even if the member is from the community they will be serving. It has been the experience of Corporation for National Service staff based on the monitoring of such projects that even though your agency has recruited and interviewed a prospective member locally, there is still a great need for initial orientation and training.

For instance, you will need to thoroughly discuss the specifics of their AmeriCorps\*VISTA role, your agency functions, and your member's new relationship with the community. The member often will need to look at the community from an entirely new perspective and may need help on redefining his/her role in the community. These individuals may not be familiar with the politics of the community with which they may now have to engage. Finally, often locally recruited members have unique skill training needs to effectively carry out their project.

### **What about specific issues for those recruited from outside the community being served?**

The On-Site Orientation and Training for Members who are recruited from other cities and states and who need to relocate to their community of service may need very different kinds of orientation and training than locally recruited members. Keep in mind those members who are moving to significantly different environments from which they were raised and educated often experience a period of "culture shock" and stressful transition and adaptation. You can help them through this transition by following these guidelines:

- Help ensure that these members' basic needs are met before doing anything else. Helping them find housing, learn the local transportation system, and locate basic services (medical centers, dentists, supermarkets, laundromats, etc.) will provide incalculable dividends.
- Introduce them to key community groups and individuals who can support them in their transition to their new home and life.
- Give them ideas and invitations for social activities that can help them feel more "at home." You might want to host a reception and invite community leaders, board members, and program participants to meet the new addition to your organization. Or plan a day of community service activities, inviting board members and community leaders, and

introduce the new member at that time. You might also submit a press release to the local media about the arrival of your new AmeriCorps\*VISTA members with some human interest information about their assignments.

- Give the new members a thorough orientation to the "culture" of the community they will be working in. The transition for the member who moves from a middle class suburb in one part of the United States to a low-income inner city neighborhood in another part of the country, or for others going from a thriving metropolis to a remote poor rural community, can be like moving to a foreign country. "Culture shock" can often be debilitating, often overwhelming.

### **In this area, enlist as much support from the community as possible to help the member understand the local culture, including:**

- What's the "language" of the community? How do people speak to one another both personally and professionally? How do people handle bi- and multi-lingual situations? How does one most effectively use translators, if that is needed?
- What role do social events play in the community?
- What is appropriate dress in different social situations and in professional situations?
- What are the predominate religious practices and beliefs and how might they affect the community's perceptions of the member and the project?
- How are meetings conducted?
- What are peoples' perceptions and practices about time and timeliness?
- What are peoples' perceptions and practices around sexual roles, cohabitation and relationships?
- What must a member do to ensure his or her safety?
- How do things really get done? Who are the real movers and shakers and how are they accessed and involved?

### **A Sample Community Organization AmeriCorps\*VISTA**

#### **On-Site Orientation & Training Plan**

**Note:** This is just one example of an On-Site Orientation and Training Plan. Significant detail is provided to give you an idea of the content that might be included and how activities might be carried out. The plans you submit to your Corporation State Office need not go into this much detail. Also, some plans

might cover the first three weeks of a member's service – like this one – others might just be one or two weeks long. How detailed and involved your plan is will depend on the particular characteristics of your organization, project, and AmeriCorps\*VISTA member.

## **WEEK ONE**

### **Day 1: Welcome to the Community Organization; Getting Started**

#### Morning:

- Welcome new AmeriCorps\*VISTA member
- Introduce new member to the head of the organization (president/CEO/director): The head of the organization briefly discusses history/purpose of the organization, the project, and how the member fits in.
- Introduce new member to co-workers during tour of facility.
- Show new member his/her work area
- Show location of rest rooms, lunch and break rooms/space
- Member attends regular staff meeting. Take time at staff meeting to remind everyone what the member's role will be. Help the member feel welcome and part of the team.

Lunch: Have lunch with the member to make him or her feel at home.

#### Afternoon:

- Discuss basic terms of work, policies, procedures:
- Explain hours of work and overtime policies, holidays and leave days
- Explain organization rules about absenteeism, tardiness, process for reporting absence or illness
- Discuss timesheets, leave usage
- Explain the VISTA compensation process
- Explain break policy and lunch hour (tell about restaurants in area)
- Explain use of telephone, mail services, copier (security code), fax machine
- Provide phone list(s)
- Explain standards of conduct, including rules of dress, personal grooming, smoking policy, housekeeping rules, etc.
- Explain parking practices and provide (or arrange for) office keys to building
- Explain safety procedures
- Explain how to order supplies
- Colleague shows the new member how to use essential equipment (telephone, computer, fax, copier).

- If the member has moved from another part of the country, spend time asking about how the transition is going and how you might help: discuss housing situation, local shopping and services, banks, medical facilities, etc. If there is time at the end of the day, give member time to take care of some of these needs – everything related to housing, bank account, phone service, post office, etc.

### **Day 2: AM: Taking Care of Basic Needs; PM: Organizational Purpose and Mission and the VISTA Project**

#### Morning:

- Allow the member to take the morning to take care of any additional basic needs – e.g., related to housing, bank account, phone service, post office, etc. If a staff member is available to help the VISTA member, have him/her accompany the VISTA member for assistance.

Lunch with group of office colleagues.

#### Afternoon:

- Discuss in more detail the mission, background, and purpose of the sponsoring organization
- Explain history and purpose of the Organization
- Review organization mission, goals and objectives
- Review organization structure
- Provide copy of organization chart and review staff duties
- Explain departmental and divisional functions, goals, teams and team structure, major projects
- Purpose of the VISTA project
- Explain the purpose of the VISTA project and role of the members
- Explain goals and objectives of project
- Review past work of project if in year 2 or 3
- Give the member time to read any materials presented to him/her.
- At the end of the day, do a ½ hour check in to answer any questions the member may have come up with about the organization or project. Tell member that tomorrow you will be going over the workplan in more detail.

### Day 3: The Member Assignment, Supervisory Relationship, and Community Investigation.

#### Morning:

- Clarification of individual work plan(s), how goals will be achieved, and how the VISTA member's progress in achieving work plan objectives will be assessed
- Review the individual workplan/job description, explain specific responsibilities
- **Important: Make it clear what the outcomes of the project are: what permanent infrastructure will the member help create and how will that help individuals or communities move out of poverty.**
- Explain performance reviews (date for first review, frequency thereafter)
- Provide copy of performance standards
- Discuss performance expectations and standards and reporting requirements
- Discuss specific performance objectives which will be reviewed during the initial period.
- Supervisory and support structure; communications; reporting; accountability
- Discuss the working relationship between the member and direct supervisor, mutual expectations, communications style, work style, support needs, etc.
- Discuss and clarify communication procedures and practices
- Review staff meeting and team meeting schedules
- Present copy of Employee Manual and have each member sign a form to acknowledge receipt of the handbook and intention to become familiar with its contents
- Explain steps in discipline procedure (verbal warning, written warning, etc.) and specify actions that would result in disciplinary action.
- End on a positive affirming note about how excited you are to have the member working on this project.
- Have the member interview other staff about work styles, communications, etc.

#### Afternoon:

- **Independent Community Investigation:** The member spends afternoon exploring community and making a mental inventory of assets, needs and cultural practices. Brief the member before he/she heads out into the community about where to go, what to look for, and how to ensure his or her safety. Explain that the member will be reviewing

his or her observations with an expert on the community the following morning.

### Day 4: Deepening the Understanding the Community and the Project.

#### Morning:

- The member spends the morning with someone who is very knowledgeable about the community and discusses his or her observations from the previous day.
- This community "expert" provides a background on the community during a more guided tour than the member's previous day's meanderings.
- The community "expert" explains the nature of the low-income population served by the VISTA project.
- The community "expert" introduces the member to community leaders, especially those involved in the VISTA project
- Discuss cultural norms, do's and don'ts, social outlets to enjoy and those to stay away from, etc.

#### Afternoon:

- Have the member spend the afternoon with one or more partner organizations or other members and AmeriCorps State/National members involved in this project or related projects.
- Have the member gather as much information as possible to help him/her understand the community and the project.

### Day 5: Reflection; Team Building; Celebration of the First Week.

#### Morning:

- Discuss impressions and findings from Day 4 with supervisor. Discuss implications these have for the project and the member's workplan.
- Discuss potential resources that can be applied to help achieve project goals:
- Review use of volunteers on the VISTA project
- Meet with recruitment representatives from Volunteer Center, RSVP
- Review barriers and successes to volunteer use of resources discussed.
- How member can best help volunteers and others involved in the project
- Discuss support/recognition; helping volunteers to feel valued; ways to recognize

#### Afternoon:

- Team Building activity with staff, other members, project collaborators, other AmeriCorps Members, etc.

Evening:

- Potluck dinner with office staff, other members, AmeriCorps members, Senior Corps members and VISTA alumni.

Celebration of the first week of the member's assignment!

**WEEK TWO**

**Day 1: Skill Development: Shadowing Staff of sponsor organization**

Morning and Afternoon:

- The member accompanies staff member for the whole day out of the office – conducting community interviews, recruiting volunteer participation in project, managing volunteers on project, etc.

**Day 2: Skill Development: Shadowing Staff of another organization involved in similar work.**

Morning and Afternoon:

- The member accompanies staff member of another organization involved in similar or complementary efforts for the whole day – conducting community interviews, recruiting volunteer participation in project, managing volunteers on project etc.

**Day 3: Reflection and Collaboration/Informational Interviews**

Morning:

- The member meets with supervisor to discuss previous days' shadow activities and to reflect on community interviews, recruiting volunteer participation in project, managing volunteers on project etc.
- Discussion of additional training the member needs to carry out assignment.
- The member begins contacting community/organizational leaders with whom the member will be collaborating on the project to set up informational interviews, beginning this afternoon.

Afternoon:

- Informational/collaboration interview 1: Discussion with Father O'Brien from the Ecumenical Outreach Program.

**Day 4: Informational/Collaboration Interviews (Continued)**

Morning:

- Informational/collaboration interview 2: Discussion with Tanika Roberts from the Community Employment Training and Services Agency.

- Informational/collaboration interview 3: Discussion with Sam Parker from the Gotham City East End Community Center.

Afternoon:

- Discussion with supervisor and other sponsor organization staff about conclusions from informational/collaboration interviews. What implications can be drawn related to the project? What recommendations and cautions do the supervisor and other staff have about those conclusions?
- The member spends the rest of the day drafting a one-month, detailed workplan – with clear and detailed activities defined.
- The member drafts a month-long plan and review with the supervisor at the end of the day.

**Day 5: Skill Development: Computer Skills**

Morning and Afternoon

- The member spends day with local Teaming for Tech computer specialist learning or refining computer skills the member will need (e.g., Microsoft Word, Excel, Publisher, Access) for producing flyers, pamphlets and posters; writing grant proposals; building or using contact databases; etc.

**WEEK THREE**

The VISTA member begins independent implementation of project with frequent check-in sessions with supervisor and other key organization staff to see how the work is going. Supervisor makes it clear to the member that this third week is still a period of learning, practice, testing, and adapting. He or she should not worry about making mistakes, asking lots of questions, and experimenting.

Additional skill training is set up for the member as needed: For example, the member could participate in a public speaking class offered by the community continuing education program; learn from an experienced staff member the key components of a quality grant proposal; or spend an afternoon with someone from the credit union to learn about the management of low-income loan programs, interest rates and starting a small business.

## Selected OSOT Resource List

**Don't know where to start? Here is a list of possible resources to get you thinking...**

A. General information about the community and resources:

- Internet
- Libraries
- Town Welfare Offices
- Chambers of Commerce
- Newspapers
- Churches
- Trade Associations
- Medical Centers and Dentists
- Supermarkets
- Laundromats
- United Way Agencies
- Area Agencies on Aging
- Community Action Agencies
- Career Centers
- Local Businesses
- Social Workers
- Local Radio and TV stations
- Foundations
- State and Federal Government Agencies
- Other AmeriCorps projects
- Other Corporation for National Service projects:
  - National Senior Service Corps
  - AmeriCorps\*State and National
  - AmeriCorps\*National Civilian Community Corps

B. Training and research:

- Community Colleges/Universities
- Community Resource and Technology Centers
- Community Adult Education Programs
- High Schools
- Human Resource Departments of Non-Profits and/or Businesses

C. Selected web sites and printed materials:

- Corporation for National Service Website: [www.nationalservice.org](http://www.nationalservice.org)
- National Service Resource Center Website: [www.etr.org/nsrc](http://www.etr.org/nsrc)
- State Service Commission Web Sites
- State and County Web Sites
- Advocacy Group Web Sites

- Community Development Society website: <http://comm-dev.org/>
- The Learning institute for Nonprofit Organizations website: [www.uwex.edu/li/](http://www.uwex.edu/li/)

D. Selected Bibliography:

- *Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing A Community's Assets* by John P. Kretzmann and John L. McKnight
- *A Guide to Capacity Inventories: Mobilizing the Community Skills of Local Residents* by Asset-Based Community Development Institute (ABCD)
- *Collaboration Handbook: Creating, Sustaining and Enjoying the Journey* by Michael Winder and Karen Ray
- *Planning, Conducting and Evaluating Workshops*, Larry Nolan Davis and Earl McCallon

E. Some Inspiration for Working With Adults in Groups (excerpted from Planning, Conducting and Evaluating Workshops.)

- *Adults are people who have a good deal of first hand experience.* Some have reflected on their experience and learned from it. Some have not. Most have learned that their powers are limited. No longer do they expect the sand fort to hold back the sea. Effective groups tap participants' experience as a major resource. Effective groups provide new experiences. Effective groups convert experience into knowledge and wisdom.
- *Adults are people who have relatively large bodies subject to the stress of gravitation.* When they were younger, many adults slept comfortably on hardwood floors. When they are older, the floor is not so comfortable. Most experience discomfort when they sit too long in hard chairs. Chairs that are too short or too narrow are even worse. Some adults fall asleep in chairs that are just right. Effective groups have effective chairs or a good many coffee breaks.
- *Adults are people who have set habits and strong tastes.* Many adults need coffee in the morning. Some need it in the afternoon. Others hate coffee and get their caffeine from cokes or tea. Some would never touch caffeine, preferring health drinks instead. Some need to smoke. Some are offended by profanity, off-color jokes, and sexual innuendo. All find learning difficult when their habits and

tastes are violated. Effective groups are sensitive to adult habits and tastes and accommodate as many as possible.

- *Adults are people who have some amount of pride.* Adults like to think of themselves as independent at least some of the time. Groups can be used to subvert independence and create people who obey. Effective groups develop greater abilities in self-direction and responsibility.
- *Adults are people with very tangible things to lose.* Effective groups are concerned with building self-esteem, not tearing it down.
- *Adults are people who have developed a reflex toward authority.* Some buck it. Some bow to it. Some relate to it as a resource. And some just let it pass. Effective groups assist adults in becoming more competent. Effective groups provide a high degree of safety, mutual commitment and choice.
- *Adults are people who have developed selective stimuli filters.* People have five sensing systems. Environments contain countless stimuli. People respond to stimuli by 'filtering' those which are distressing, unpleasant, repetitious, etc. In short, most adults hear what they want to hear. Effective groups exert some control over stimuli. Effective groups focus on more than one sensing system. Effective groups penetrate the filters.
- *Adults are people who respond to reinforcements.* Most respond favorably to positive reinforcement most of the time. Some require it more often than others. Some reinforcements are insulting. Most reinforcement loses effect if frequently repeated. Effective groups are provided appropriate reinforcement.
- *Adults are people who need a vacation.* All good facilitators know this, and effective groups accommodate it.
- *Adults are people who are supposed to appear in control and who therefore display restricted emotional response.* Many have long lost children locked up inside them. The children may be delightful or they may be horrid. Groups are often environments in which the doors come unlocked. Effective groups do not add to the bars, neither do they pry open the doors. Effective groups are prepared for emotional release if it occurs.
- *Adults are people who have strong feelings about groups.* Everybody comes from somewhere. That somewhere was either a good experience or a bad one. In it they either succeeded or failed. As a result, most people have strong tendencies toward competition, cooperation, or withdrawal. Most can develop good feelings about bad situations. Effective groups are filled with success experiences.
- *Modern adults are people who are secretly afraid of falling behind and being replaced.* Effective groups allow them to keep pace and grow with confidence.
- *Adults are people who can skip certain basics.* If they are about to build a footbridge, adults may learn only the mathematical principles required to build it. You can't force feed them something they don't want to learn or they think is irrelevant. Effective groups are not bound to basics. Effective groups get on with helping adults deal with present problems. Effective groups are concerned with finding successful solutions.
- *Adults are people who more than once found the foundations of their lives stripped away.* Leisurely afternoons are evaporated with the arrival of a newborn baby. Jobs are lost. Parents die. Ideals are tarnished. Divorces occur. Bodies don't perform as they once did. Children leave home. The stock market crashes. Responsibilities are taken away. Retirement becomes mandatory. Mates die and leave them alone. Effective groups go beyond helping adults cope; they help them learn to live again.
- *Adults are people who can learn and change.* This is the prime assumption for effective group facilitation.

## ON-SITE ORIENTATION AND TRAINING Planning Worksheet

Using the first 3 weeks to START OUT STRONG

### Your plans to have your VISTA FEELING –

objective	activity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WELCOME</li> <li>• COMFORTABLE in New Surroundings</li> <li>• EMOTIONALLY GROUNDED</li> <li>• RECOGNIZED AND UNDERSTOOD</li> <li>• READY TO START ON YOUR INITIATIVE</li> <li>• CONNECTED TO YOUR MISSION &amp; VISION</li> </ul>	

### Your plans to have your VISTA SEEING –

objective	activity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• THE LAYOUT OF THE COMMUNITY</li> <li>• THE LOCAL NETWORK</li> <li>• THE WORK SPACE</li> <li>• COMMUNITY LIFE</li> <li>• MAJOR INITIATIVES</li> <li>• HOW THINGS GET DONE</li> <li>• KEY DOCUMENTS &amp; PRINT RESOURCES</li> <li>• THE ORGANIZATION CHART</li> </ul>	

**Your plans to have your VISTA KNOWING –**

objective	activity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WHERE TO GO TO GET BASIC NEEDS MET</li> <li>• ORGANIZATIONAL CHAIN OF COMMAND</li> <li>• WHAT REFINEMENTS THERE ARE TO THE WORK PLAN</li> <li>• WHO TO ASK FOR HELP</li> <li>• WHAT TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES THERE ARE TO STRENGTHEN NEEDED SKILLS OR KNOWLEDGE</li> </ul>	

**Your plans to have your VISTA HEARING –**

objective	activity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HISTORY OF THE COMMUNITY</li> <li>• INFORMATION ABOUT THE DIFFERENT CULTURES AND ORGANIZATIONS IN THE COMMUNITY</li> <li>• HISTORY OF THE ORGANIZATION</li> <li>• EXPECTATIONS IN TERMS OF THE MEMBER-SUPERVISOR RELATIONSHIP</li> <li>• SUPERVISOR EXPECTATIONS FOR THE FIRST MONTH</li> </ul>	

**Your plans to have your VISTA DOING the following–**

objective	activity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PARTICIPATING IN SOME MEETINGS</li> <li>• MEETING SOME KEY COLLABORATORS AND PARTNERS</li> <li>• BEING INTRODUCED TO THE COMMUNITY</li> <li>• BEING HOSTED FOR SEVERAL WALKING TOURS OF THE COMMUNITY</li> <li>• COMPLETING AT LEAST ONE TASK THAT IS RELATED TO ONE'S WORK PLAN</li> <li>• SHARING HIS OR HER SHORT AND LONG RANGE GOALS</li> </ul>	



### VISTA Supervisor Planning Sheet

VISTA Supervisor Responsibility	Months 1-2	Months 3-4	Months 5-6	Months 7-8	Months 9-10	Months 11-12
Recruitment and Selection						
On-Site Orientation and Training						
Supervisor/VISTA Relationship						

## 7 Levels of Change Thinking Cue Sheet: Strategies for Creativity, Innovation and Continuous Improvement

### Level 1: EFFECTIVENESS -Doing the Right Things

- Set Priorities
- Do What Important First
- Focus and Become More Effective

### Level 2: EFFICIENCY - Doing Things Right

- Follow Procedures
- Clean Up Your Mess
- Understand Standards
- Become More Efficient

### Level 3: IMPROVING - Doing Things Better

- Think About What You're Doing
- Listen To Suggestions
- Find Ways To Improve Things
- Help, Coach, and Mentor Others

### Level 4: CUTTING -Doing Away With Things

- Ask "Why?"
- Stop Doing What Doesn't Count
- Use the 80:20 Rule –Simplify

### Level 5: COPYING -Doing Things Other People Are

- Doing
- Notice and Observe More
- Think before You Think

### Level 6: DIFFERENT – Doing Things That Haven't Been Done

- Think About Thinking
- Combine New Technologies
- Ask "Why Not?"
- Focus on Different, Not Similar, Non-linear

### Level 7: DO THINGS THAT CAN'T BE DONE

- High Level Creativity and Innovation

## Mind Mapping Visual Planning

A Mind Map is a simple easy way to represent your thought using key words, colors and imagery. Its non-linear format encourages you to begin generating ideas immediately and allows you to put a tremendous amount of significant information on one piece of paper. Mapping integrates your logical and imaginative thinking to increase your productivity.

Mind Mapping was developed in the early 1970s by British author and brain researcher Tony Buzan as a whole brain alternative to outlining and capturing ideas.

Mind Mapping is a powerful tool for improving your effectiveness in planning, remembering and communicating. Mind Mapping trains you to be a more resourceful and flexible thinker. It also can make thinking, working and problem solving more fun.

### Guidelines for Mind Mapping

Choose a topic and use the following instructions to guide you.

Begin with a sheet of blank paper. The bigger the better and ideally, several colored pens and a highlighter might be handy. One pen and a small sheet of paper will work in a pinch.

Having identified the topic, use a word or simple image in the middle of the paper. Have fun and don't worry about the accuracy of your drawing.

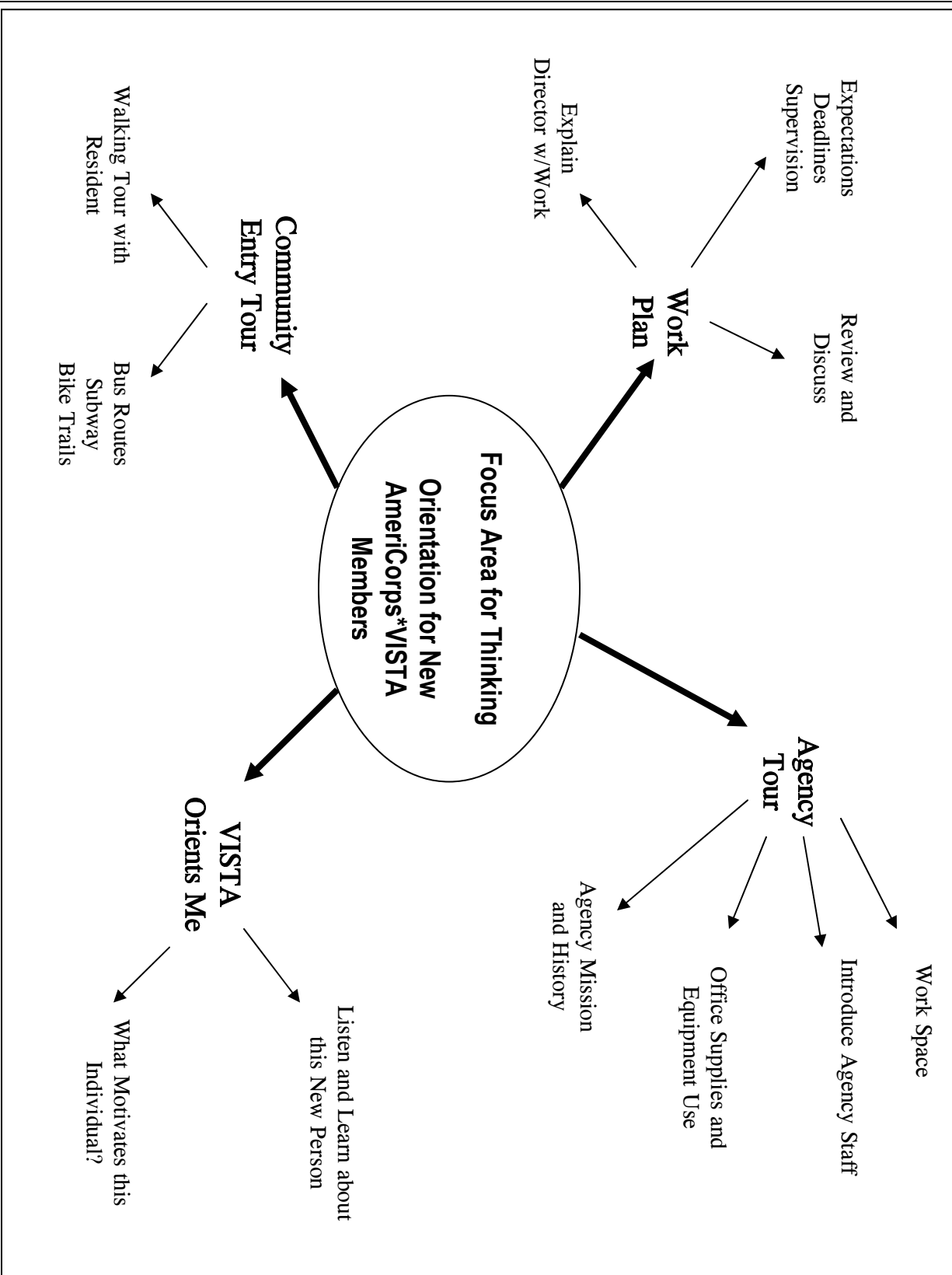
Now, look at your sketch or word and start printing key words on lines radiating out from your central image. One key word per line, and keep the lines connected. Use images, words, and color whenever possible.

Generating ideas in key words form is easy. See the AmeriCorps\*VISTA Orientation Plan example attached. Key Words include: work plan, agency tour, etc. Use the key words to generate other associations. In the example these associations are connected to the key words with arrows. If you are stuck, choose any key word on your map and immediately print your first association with that word---even if it seems ridiculous or irrelevant. Keep associations flowing, and don't worry about making sure that every word is "right."

When you feel you have generated enough material through free association, take a look at the result: all your ideas spread across one page. As you look at your map you will begin to see relationships that will help you organize and integrate your ideas. Look for words that appear repeatedly throughout your MIND MAP. They often suggest major themes.

Connect related parts of your map with arrows, more lines, codes and colors---whatever works best for you. Eliminate elements that seem extraneous. Pare your map down to just the ideas you need for your purpose. Then put them in sequence, if necessary.

# Mind Map Simple Version






## **L. Fostering Respect**

**Supervisors will be able to ...**

- **Understand major CNCS policy, procedures, and practices relevant to VISTA service.**
- **Locate all the major documents that address equal opportunity, diversity and civil rights.**

# Equal Opportunity/Civil Rights Presentation



**Your Civil And Equal Opportunity Rights and Responsibilities As An AmeriCorps\*VISTA Member**

**AmeriCorps\* VISTA Member Rights**

You have an absolute right not to be subjected to discrimination or harassment by the Corporation or any Sponsor Organization

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**AmeriCorps\* VISTA Member Obligations**

You also have an absolute obligation to make sure your actions do not subject anyone else to discrimination or harassment

This obligation extends to:

- clients you serve
- colleagues, whether they are other AmeriCorps participants or employees
- other beneficiaries of the program

You are not federal employees (except for some limited purposes)

You are not employees of your program, project, or site (for any purpose)

VISTAs are beneficiaries of federal financial assistance for civil rights purposes, and this gives you these non-discrimination protections and obligations

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**You are protected from discrimination or harassment based on —**

Age	Political Affiliation
Race	Marital/Parental Status
Color	Military Service
Religion	Sexual Orientation
Disability	Religious, Community or Social Affiliations
Sex	
Reprisal	
National Origin	

**Illegal Discrimination**

- ◆ Different treatment, coupled with only a difference in race or sex or national origin, is NOT illegal discrimination
- ◆ Illegal discrimination must be treatment that is different because of a difference in race or sex or national origin, etc.

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**How to Determine Discrimination?**

- ▶ Direct evidence
- ▶ Different treatment before/after
- ▶ Different treatment towards “similarly situated” persons, i.e., persons you would expect to be treated the same under the circumstances

**How to Determine Discrimination?**  
- continued -

- ▶ Inference based on violating policies and procedures
- ▶ Applying rules & standards differently without a legitimate reason
- ▶ Inference based on credibility
- ▶ No witnesses ≠ Nothing happened. Look at other evidence to determine the more credible person

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**Some Absolutes**

- ▶ English-only rules not allowed
- ▶ Denying time off for religious observances seldom allowed
- ▶ Filing a discrimination complaint does not preclude taking disciplinary action

**Special Categories of Discrimination: Disabilities & Reasonable Accommodation**

A disabled person is one who:

- ▶ has a physical or mental impairment
- ▶ that substantially limits
- ▶ one or more major life activities

(or who has a record of such an impairment or is regarded as having such an impairment)

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- ▶ **Substance Abuse**
  - is a disease and may legally be considered a disability
  - a person currently using illegal drugs, by definition, is not a person with a disability and does not have any civil rights protection
- ▶ **Infectious Diseases**
  - persons with diseases such as TB, HIV or AIDS, may be qualified individuals with disabilities
  - disease must not pose a direct threat to the safety of self or others

**Reasonable Accommodations**

- making facilities accessible
- job restructuring
- modified work schedules
- acquisition or modification of equipment or devices
- providing readers, interpreters, or auxiliary aids

To receive accommodation, an AmeriCorps\*VISTA must notify the Supervisor that:

- ▶ he/she has a disability; and
- ▶ a reasonable accommodation is needed

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### SEXUAL HARASSMENT

- **Unwelcome** sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

### Types of Sexual Harassment

- **Tangible action:** A supervisor changes your service status or requirements as a result of accepting or rejecting an unwanted sexual advance.
- **Hostile environment:** A supervisor, co-worker, or other person, through conduct that is severe and pervasive, subjects you to an intimidating, hostile, or offensive service environment
- **“Third party”** – sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature directed towards someone else but that adversely affects your service status, requirements, or environment

### Associated Behaviors

- ▶ **Verbal** -- jokes with sexual connotations, sexually degrading language
- ▶ **Nonverbal** -- leering, sexually oriented gestures, sexually oriented pictures, cartoons, letters
- ▶ **Physical** -- touching, kissing, grabbing
- ▶ **Criminal** -- sexual assault/battery, rape - don't contact EO, contact the police!

### Your Responsibilities

- ◆ **Communicate** to the person or management that the behavior is unwelcome.  
Management includes your site supervisor, the Corporation for Nat'l Service State Office, and the Corporation for Nat'l Service EO Office
- ◆ Only if the conduct is severe, or continues after you put the person on notice, does it rise to the level of sexual harassment
- ◆ **Document** actions, your response, and witnesses
- ◆ If behavior continues, **notify management in writing**
- ◆ Notify your supervisor if you think others are being subjected to sexual harassment or a hostile environment

### Harassment on any protected basis is unlawful

The same standards that apply to sexual harassment apply to harassment based on race, national origin, religion, disability, etc.

### Contact Us:

You have **45 calendar days** from the date of the alleged discriminatory event to contact the EO Office @

**EQUAL OPPORTUNITY OFFICE**  
Corporation for National & Community Service  
**1201 NEW YORK AVE, NW**  
**WASHINGTON, DC 20525**

**(202) 606- 5000, ext. 312 (voice)**  
**(202) 565- 2799 (TDD)**  
**(202) 565- 2816 (FAX)**  
**eo@cns.gov (e- mail)**

*EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IS  
EVERYONE'S  
RESPONSIBILITY!*





## **Policies on Civil Rights, Equal Opportunity and Harassment**

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### **Corporation for National and Community Service Civil Rights Statement Regarding Volunteers, Service Participants and Other Beneficiaries**

*We continue to maintain the policy stated in our June 6, 1994 Civil Rights Statement:*

*Recognizing that the fabric of our society is strengthened by the diversity of its citizens, the policy of the Corporation for National and Community Service is to ensure a mutual respect for all differences among us. Participation in the Corporation and its programs and projects will be based on merit and equal opportunity for all, without regard to factors such as race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, political affiliation, marital or parental status, military service, or religious, community, or social affiliations.*

*By adhering to this policy, the Corporation will be able to foster civic responsibility, strengthen the ties that bind us together as a people, and provide educational opportunity for those who make a substantial commitment to service.*

This policy applies to programs and projects we conduct, as well as those receiving federal financial assistance from us. For civil rights purposes, all programs and projects funded or receiving volunteers or service participants under the National and Community Service Act, as amended, or the Domestic Volunteer Service Act, as amended, are programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance. Any grantee found to have unlawfully discriminated against a volunteer, service participant, client, employee or beneficiary of such a program or project will be subject to a finding of noncompliance and administrative procedures which may result in termination of federal financial assistance from the Corporation and all other federal agencies.

Any volunteer, service participant, client, employee or beneficiary of a program or project who believes he or she has been subjected to discrimination in violation of nondiscrimination provisions of applicable laws, regulations or this policy may raise his or her concerns with the Corporation's Equal Opportunity Office. However, discrimination claims not brought to the

attention of our Equal Opportunity Office within 45 days of their occurrence may not be accepted in a formal complaint of discrimination. Our Equal Opportunity Office may be reached at (202) 606-5000, extension 312 (voice), (202) 565-2799 (TDD), [eo@cns.gov](mailto:eo@cns.gov), or through [www.nationalservice.org](http://www.nationalservice.org).

The Corporation's Equal Opportunity Office attempts to resolve concerns about discrimination promptly and when possible uses an informal conciliation process to do so. We encourage, but do not require, volunteers, service participants, and other beneficiaries to first bring concerns about discrimination to the director or appropriate personnel of the program or project. We likewise encourage directors of programs and projects to facilitate prompt resolution of these concerns.

Directors of all programs and projects are requested to provide a copy of this policy to all volunteers or service participants.

### **CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL SERVICE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND WORKFORCE DIVERSITY POLICY FOR EMPLOYEES AND APPLICANTS FOR EMPLOYMENT**

It is our policy to provide equal employment opportunity for all applicants for employment and employees of the Corporation. We do not discriminate in any aspect of employment because of race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, mental or physical disability (including AIDS), sexual orientation, or any other improper criterion. We strive to provide a work environment free of sexual, racial, national origin, religious or other unlawful harassment.

Equal opportunity for all employees is an integral part of accomplishing the mission of the Corporation. As Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation, I am strongly committed to fostering a workplace that is free of discrimination in any form. I believe that we should be committed to practicing inclusiveness, fairness, and participation of all employees in every facet of the Corporation.

Beyond the basic policies of equal employment and non-discrimination described above, we aspire to provide an environment that is hospitable for all employees. We value diversity among our employees, and I am committed to promoting a climate of mutual respect and appreciation for the strengths that a diverse workforce brings to bear on our important work

In addition to making certain that our employees are treated with respect and according to the principles of equal opportunity in the workplace, we must make every effort to ensure that our employees, as they carry out their duties, do not discriminate on unlawful grounds against persons or organizations, volunteers or service participants, including subjecting them to any form of unlawful harassment.

I expect every Corporation manager, supervisor, and employee to actively carry out our equal opportunity policy. Implicit in each employee's "successful" performance level is his or her full and complete implementation of this policy. I call upon all managers and supervisors to ensure that all decisions affecting our workforce, service environments, grantees and programs are consistent with the principles of equal opportunity and this policy. Any person who violates this equal opportunity policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Any Corporation employee or applicant for employment who believes he or she has been discriminated against in violation of equal opportunity laws, regulations, or this policy, or in retaliation for having participated in an activity protected under these nondiscrimination provisions may raise his or her concerns with our Equal Opportunity Office. However, discrimination claims not brought to the attention of our Equal Opportunity Office within 45 days of their occurrence may not be accepted in a formal complaint of discrimination. Our Equal Opportunity Office may be reached at (202) 606-5000, extension 312 (voice), (202) 565-2799 (TDD), or [eo@cns.gov](mailto:eo@cns.gov), or through [www.nationalservice.org](http://www.nationalservice.org).

### **Corporation For National Service Policy Against Sexual, Racial, National Origin, Or Religious Harassment**

Our policy is to provide work and service environments free from sexual, racial, national origin, or religious harassment. Whether in Corporation or grantee offices, in other work- or service-related settings such as service sites, training sessions, or site visits, or at work- or service-related social events, such harassment is unacceptable.

Sexual harassment involves unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or any verbal, physical or graphic conduct of a sexual nature when:

- (1) submission is explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or service;
- (2) submission or rejection is a basis for work or service decisions; or
- (3) such conduct has the purpose or the effect of interfering with work or service performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or service environment.

Slurs and other verbal or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, national origin or religion also constitute harassment when that conduct's purpose or effect is to interfere with work or service performance or create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or service environment.

We expect Corporation and grantee supervisory and management personnel to immediately take appropriate action to prevent or stop any harassment of employees, service participants, or clients of which they become aware, whether the harassing conduct is by employees, service participants, or outside individuals such as service site or contractor personnel. Also, we will not retaliate or tolerate any attempt at retaliation against a person who raises harassment concerns in good faith. Any Corporation employee who violates our policy against harassment, or asserts a false claim of harassment with a malicious intent, will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Any grantee that permits harassment in violation of this policy will be subject to a finding of noncompliance and administrative procedures that may result in termination of federal financial assistance from the Corporation and all other federal agencies.

Persons who believe they have been subjected to harassment in violation of non-harassment provisions of applicable laws, regulations or this policy may raise their concerns with our Equal Opportunity Office. However, claims of unlawful harassment not brought to the attention of our Equal Opportunity Office within 45 days of their occurrence may not be accepted in a formal complaint of discrimination. Our Equal Opportunity Office may be reached at (202) 606-5000, extension 312 (voice), (202) 565-2799 (TDD), [eo@cns.gov](mailto:eo@cns.gov), or through [www.nationalservice.org](http://www.nationalservice.org).

We encourage, but do not require, volunteers, service participants, and other beneficiaries to first bring concerns about harassment to the director or appropriate supervisory personnel of the program or project. We likewise encourage programs and projects to facilitate prompt resolution of these concerns.

Directors of all programs and projects are requested to provide a copy of this policy to all volunteers or service participants.

- \*Disability
- \*Sexual Orientation
- \*Parental Status
- \*Religious, Community or Social Affiliations
- \*Political Affiliation
- \*Marital/Parental Status
- \*Military Service

## Your Civil and Equal Opportunity Rights and Responsibilities as an AmeriCorps\*VISTA Supervisor

---

As a project director, you have these same rights too!

### EO and Civil Rights

#### Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

#### AmeriCorps\*VISTA Members Are Very Special People

“No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”

- They are caring people who are dedicated to improving the lives of others and/or improving your community
- They are not federal employees (except for some limited purposes)
- They are not employees of your program, project, or site (for any purpose)

#### Discriminatory Activities Include:

- denial of services
- differences in quality, quantity, or manner of services
- different standards for participation
- discrimination in facility built with federal funds
- discriminatory employment practices if employment practice causes discrimination against beneficiaries

#### Service Member Rights

- Absolute right not to be subjected to discrimination or harassment by the Corporation or any Sponsor Organization

#### National & Community Service Act and Domestic Volunteer Service Act

“An individual with responsibility for the operation of a project/program that receives assistance under this subchapter/Act shall not discriminate against a participant in, or a member of the staff of, such project . . . on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or political affiliation of such participant or member, or on the basis of disability, if the participant or member is a qualified individual with a disability . . . .”

#### VISTA Member Sponsor Obligations

- Absolute obligation to make sure their actions do not subject anyone else to discrimination or harassment
- This obligation extends to:
  - clients they serve
  - co-workers, whether they are service members or employees
  - other beneficiaries of the program, project or site
- VISTA Members are “beneficiaries” of a federally-assisted and/or federally conducted programs
- Other beneficiaries include:
  - the clients served by our service members
  - members of the public entitled to receive the benefits of your programs, projects, or sites

“. . . an individual with responsibility for the operation of a project . . . shall not discriminate on the basis of religion against a participant . . . or a member of the staff . . . who is paid with funds received under this subchapter.”

#### What gives a “beneficiary” civil rights?

- 5th Amendment, US Constitution
- Government-wide statutes: Title VI of Civil Rights Act; Title IX of Education Amendments; Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act; Age Discrimination Act
- Corporation statutes and policies

#### POLICY STATEMENT of the Corporation for National and Community Service

- ▶ Participation in the Corporation and its programs and projects will be based on merit and equal opportunity for all, without regard to factors such as race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, political affiliation, marital or parental status, military service, or religious, community, or social affiliations.

#### Service members are protected against discrimination or harassment because of their--

- \*Race
- \*Sex
- \*Color
- \*National Origin
- \*Religion
- \*Age



## Enforcement of EO Compliance, Damages, and Process

### Damages for Discrimination

- If discrimination is found, the recipient (and/or sub recipient) pays damages)
  - may be prorated with Corporation if Corporation is partly responsible
- A Sponsor organization manager or supervisor may have to pay personally, if liable.

### Enforcement of Compliance

- Terminating federal funding/VISTA assistance
- Refusing to grant federal funding/VISTA assistance
- Refusing to continue financial assistance/VISTA assistance
- Any other means authorized by law

### Enforcement Steps

- Advise grantee or sponsor organization of failure to comply
- Determine voluntary compliance cannot be achieved
- Finding of noncompliance, after grantee has opportunity for hearing
- File written report with Congress and wait until 30 days after filing this report

### AmeriCorps\*VISTA Discrimination Complaint Process

1. EO Counseling
2. Formal Complaint Investigation and Adjudication
3. Remedial Action, if Necessary

### Federal Court Suit May Be Authorized

- The statutes give the Sponsor organization or complainant right to file suit in federal district court.
- If fund/VISTA assistance termination occurred, any aggrieved person may request judicial review.

### Resolution

- Settling allegations does not mean a supervisor did something wrong
- Settlements are usually negotiated between a program, project and/or site and a complainant
- Negotiation means each side gives up a little so both can live with the resolution

## THE CONCEPTS

### Discrimination vs. Prejudice

- Prejudice is based on stereotypes
- Discrimination is the acting out of prejudice

### Illegal Discrimination

- Different treatment, coupled with a difference in race or sex or national origin, is NOT illegal discrimination
- Illegal discrimination must treatment that is different because of a difference in race or sex or national origin

One key thing to remember: There are two sides to every story - always!

### Methods to Determine Discrimination

- Direct evidence of discrimination
- Inference based on “before/after” behavior
- Inference based on rebuttable presumptions
  - The only comparisons that count are those between “similarly situated” persons, i.e., persons you would expect to be treated the same
  - Don’t mix performance and conduct issues when determining “similarly situated”
- Inference based on violating policies and procedures
- Discrimination ≠ Not Following Procedures
- Discrimination = Applying Rules & Standards Differently
- Inference based on credibility
- *No witnesses does not mean Nothing happened*
- *Look at other evidence to determine the more credible person*

### Some Absolutes

- English-only rules not allowed
- Denying time off for religious observances seldom allowed
- Filing a discrimination complaint does not preclude taking disciplinary action

### Disabilities and Reasonable Accommodation

#### Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

No otherwise qualified disabled individual in the United States . . . shall, solely by reason of his [or her] disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance

#### Americans with Disabilities Act

#### ADA Title III: Public Accommodations & Commercial Facilities

- for barrier removal, “readily achievable” standard, i.e., easily accomplishable and able to be carried out without much difficulty or expense
- new construction for architectural accessibility if after January 26, 1992

- “elevator exemption” if building less than 3 stories or less than 3000 sq. ft. per story
- religious organizations/ entities controlled by religious organizations are exempt
- enforced by DOJ or private law suits & civil monetary penalties for noncompliance may be assessed

### Defining Disability (physical & mental)

Disabled person is one who:

- has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities;
- has a record of such an impairment; or
- is regarded as having such an impairment

### Terminology

- Substantially Limits a “Major Life Activity”
  - walking
  - talking
  - breathing
  - seeing
  - hearing
  - working
- Qualified Individual with a Disability
  - Individual with a disability who can, with or without reasonable accommodation, perform the essential functions of the position

### Specific Situations

- Substance Abuse
  - is a disease and may legally be considered a disability
  - however, a person currently using illegal drugs, by definition, is not a person with a disability and does not have any civil rights protection
- Infectious Diseases
  - persons with diseases such as TB, HIV or AIDS, may be qualified individuals with disabilities
  - disease may not pose a direct threat to the safety of self or others

### Ways to Establish Disability Discrimination

- Direct evidence of discrimination (comments, slurs, stereotypes, presumptions)
- Circumstantial evidence (same analysis as race- or sex-based claims) -- disparate treatment or disparate impact analyses
- Failure to provide reasonable accommodation, including site and/or program accessibility

### Most Important Rules: #1

Do not treat persons differently because of their disability or because you think they need/require/are entitled to special treatment

### Most Important Rules: #2

Do not presume someone has a disability based on how he/she looks, acts, or what he/she says

- To be entitled to reasonable accommodation and other protections, he/she must self-identify
- Only then do you provide what is necessary for him/her to do the job/service

### Most Important Rules: #3

Do not stereotype or lump all persons with a particular type of disability together

- persons with the same diagnosis may evidence the condition in very different ways and have very different needs
- consider every situation on case-by-case basis

### Interview Questions

- “Pre-Offer Stage” -- No questions on existence, nature or severity of a disability allowed!!!!
- “After Job Offer Made” -- Only questions asked of all entering the job category may be asked & information must be kept confidential

### Not Disability-Related Questions

(These are okay to ask at interviews)

- Can you perform the functions of the job, with or without reasonable accommodation?
- Describe/demonstrate how you would perform the job functions.
- Do you have a cold? How did you break you leg?
- Can you meet the attendance requirements?
- Do you illegally use drugs?

### Disability-Related Questions (DO NOT ask at interviews)

- Do you have AIDS? Asthma?
- Do you have a disability which would interfere with your performing the job?
- How many days were you sick last year?
- Ever filed for worker’s compensation?
- Ever treated for alcohol problems?
- Ever treated for mental health problems?
- What prescription drugs do you take?

### Interview Advice

- Ask all interviewees the same questions
- Ask only job-related questions
- Avoid questions on marital status or dependents

**Reasonable Accommodations**

- making facilities accessible
- job restructuring
- part-time or modified work schedules
- acquisition or modification of equipment or devices
- providing readers, interpreters, or auxiliary aids

**Reasonable Accommodations**

- A\*VISTA must notify supervisor that he/she have a disability; and
- A reasonable accommodation is needed

**Architectural Accessibility**

If buildings built before May 30, 1979:

- “when viewed in its entirety” standard applies
- programmatic accessibility may substitute for architectural accessibility

If buildings built after May 30, 1979:

- “when viewed in its entirety” standard does not apply
- programmatic accessibility may not substitute for architectural accessibility
- must comply with UFAS or ADAAG

**Undue Financial or Administrative Burden**

- Unduly costly, extensive, substantial or disruptive -- results in significant difficulty or expense -- HIGH STANDARD
- Factors to be considered include:
  - overall size of the program in numbers of service members, facilities and budget
  - type of operation, including composition and structure of service member force
  - nature and cost of removal or accommodation

**Questions & Technical Assistance About Disabilities:**

- Corporation’s Equal Opportunity Office at (202) 606-5000, ext. 312 (voice); (202) 565-2799 (TDD); or [eo@cns.gov](mailto:eo@cns.gov)
- Paula Sotnik, Project Director, the Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI), which has a cooperative agreement with the Corporation for National Service to assist Corporation State Offices and Sponsor Organizations with issues of inclusion, disabilities and reasonable accommodation. Contact information: 617-355-4788 (v); 617-355-6956 (TTY); paula.sotnik@tch.harvard.edu
- Access AmeriCorps at (202) 776-0404 (voice); (202) 776-0414 (FAX); or [accessamericorps@ucpa.org](mailto:accessamericorps@ucpa.org)
- Job Accommodation Network (1-800-JAN-7234; 1-800-526-7234); [janweb.icdi.wvu.edu](http://janweb.icdi.wvu.edu)

- Access Board at [www.access-board.gov](http://www.access-board.gov)
- President’s Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities at [pcepd.gov/state](http://pcepd.gov/state)
- State vocational rehabilitation agencies at [www.ssa.gov/work/statevra](http://www.ssa.gov/work/statevra)
- Centers for Independent Living at [ilru.org](http://ilru.org) or (713) 520-0232

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Definition: Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

**Types of Sexual Harassment**

Quid Pro Quo: Submission is a term or condition of an individual’s service

- Hostile Environment: Conduct has the purpose or intent of interfering with work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive service environment

**Associated Behaviors**

- Verbal -- jokes with sexual connotations, sexual degrading language, barking
- Nonverbal -- leering, sexually oriented pictures, cartoons, letters, licking lips
- Physical -- touching, kissing, grabbing
- Criminal -- sexual assault/battery, rape

**“Hostile Environment Sexual Harassment”**

Requirement #1:

- Conduct must be unwelcome
- Person must be put on notice of unwelcomeness
- Person must continue conduct despite notice

Requirement #2:

- Conduct must interfere with job performance or
- Conduct must be sufficiently severe or
- Conduct must be sufficiently pervasive

**Most Common Causes of Discrimination****Allegations:**

- Miscommunication
- Publicly Embarrassing Someone
- Not Providing Feedback or Assistance to Improve

**AmeriCorps\*VISTA Fraternization Policy**

Relationships between AmeriCorps\*VISTA members and the staff members (including volunteer and contracted personnel) of the Corporation, Sponsoring Organization, and Project Site that are exploitive or that have the appearance of partiality, preferential treatment, or the improper use of position for personal gain, are

prejudicial to the morale of AmeriCorps\*VISTA members and will not be tolerated.

Relationships between members and the aforementioned staff members are forbidden if the relationship compromises or appears to compromise supervisory authority or could result in preferential treatment. Relationships are prohibited if they appear to involve the improper use of rank or position for personal gain.

All AmeriCorps\*VISTA members must avoid nonprofessional relationships with other members or staff members that create real or perceived conflicts of interest, discord or distractions that interfere with other members' productivity, or potentially could result in charges of sexual harassment. These problems are serious in situations in which one person has authority over another.

Inappropriate relations include, but are not limited to:

- A Corporation State Office staff member and an AmeriCorps\*VISTA supervisor within that state;
  - A Corporation State Office staff member and an AmeriCorps\*VISTA member or Leader;
  - An AmeriCorps\*VISTA supervisor and an AmeriCorps\*VISTA member; and
  - An AmeriCorps\*VISTA Leader and an AmeriCorps\*VISTA member under his/her coordination.
- Such relationships are strictly forbidden and will not be tolerated. Violators may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including removal.

Nonprofessional relationships between members and the aforementioned staff includes, but is not limited to:

- Intimate/sexual relationships.
- Borrowing or lending money, automobiles, or other personal property.
- Engaging in financial or business dealings, or acting as an agent or sponsor with any commercial services.
- Allowing services to be performed (compensated or uncompensated) that have no reasonable connection with AmeriCorps\*VISTA activities.
- Gambling for goods, services, or money.
- Any activity and/or relationship that, in the judgment of the Corporation State Program Director, may reasonably be perceived to undermine discipline, good order, and/or morale.

- Socializing that might lead to the perception of a relationship or overtures to activities listed above.

**CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL SERVICE  
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY OFFICE**  
1201 NEW YORK AVE, WASHINGTON, DC 20525  
(202) 606-5000, ext. 312 (voice) (202) 565-2799 (TDD)  
(202) 565-2816 (FAX), eo@cns.gov (e-mail)

*EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IS EVERYONE'S  
RESPONSIBILITY*

## **Civil Rights, Equal Opportunity and Harassment Questions**

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1. What are discrimination and discriminatory activities?
2. Who is protected under U.S. Law and Corporation Policy?
3. What are examples of appropriate and inappropriate questions to ask about disabilities during an interview?
4. What is sexual harassment? What are some examples of sexual harassment?
5. How should you respond if you become aware of or receive a complaint of discrimination?
6. How should you respond if you become aware of or receive a complaint of sexual harassment?
7. What is the Corporation's policy on fraternization and who is covered by the policy?
8. How do you contact the Corporation's EO Office?

## Equal Opportunity Scenarios

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### Scenario 1

The VISTA sponsor has decided that a VISTA, who is deaf, will not be allowed to drive the organization's vehicles. The supervisor states that the decision is based on safety concerns about the driver being able to hear other vehicles, warnings from passengers, and emergency vehicles.

1. Is this discrimination? Why? Why Not?

2. How could the VISTA respond?



**Scenario 2**

**A staff member at one of the sponsor's site constantly makes jokes about sex, makes negative comments about gender, and has cartoons on the office wall that are either sexual in nature or demean individuals based on their gender. Several VISTAs feel uncomfortable around this staff person and avoid being in the office alone with this staff person?**

- 1. Could this be sexual harassment?**
  
- 2. If so, what type of sexual harassment?**
  
- 3. What would need to be established for that type of sexual harassment to be found?**
  
- 4. How should the VISTA respond?**

**Scenario 3**

**At a statewide service event, a VISTA from one program meets a supervisor of another VISTA. They spend time socializing during the conference events and feel mutually attracted to each other. The VISTA asks the supervisor for a date after the conference.**

- 1. Is this sexual harassment?**
  
- 2. Does this violate the VISTA policy? How?**
  
- 3. How should the VISTA supervisor respond?**

**Scenario 4**

**A VISTA, who uses a wheel chair, requests that the sponsoring organization provides a desk that automatically adjusts to accommodate the wheel chair. The cost of the desk is over a thousand dollars. The sponsoring organization decides to use concrete blocks to raise the desk to the appropriate level.**

- 1. Was a reasonable accommodation provider?**
  
- 2. Why was this or wasn't this a reasonable accommodation?**

### Scenario 5

**A staff member at one of the sponsor's informs VISTA members that some of the community leaders have communicated that they are uncomfortable with the way some of the VISTAs dress. The community leaders say that hair and beard length, clothing and head coverings create fear in the community. The supervisor asks VISTAs to be more conscious of their appearance.**

1. How should the supervisor respond?
  
2. How could the VISTA respond?

**Scenario 6**

**The VISTAs on a project notice that only female VISTAs are involved with a site that works with teenage parents and only male VISTAs are involved with a site that is supporting a male mentoring/rites of passage.**

- 1. Is this discrimination or harassment? Why? Why not?**
- 2. How could the VISTA respond?**

**Scenario 7**

**A VISTA notices that there seems to be a difference in the way that VISTAs are held accountable and disciplined based on race/ethnicity. Some VISTAs are threatened, given “punishment” tasks, and refused opportunities for advanced training for the same problems that other VISTAs are given “counseling sessions.”**

- 1. Is this discrimination? Why?**
- 2. How could the VISTA respond?**

## Sources of Information

From the *VISTA Member Handbook*

1. Civil Rights Laws (Chapter 10, page 83)
2. Discrimination Complaint Procedures (Chapter 10, page 84) and Volunteer Discrimination Complaint Procedure (Appendix B)
3. Sexual Harassment (Chapter 10, page 84)
4. AmeriCorps\*VISTA Fraternization (Chapter 10, page 89)
5. Non-Discrimination of the Basis of Handicap... (Appendix B)
6. Corporation for National Service Civil Rights Statement Regarding Volunteers, Service Participants and Other Beneficiaries (December 6, 1999) (Appendix C)
7. Corporation for National Service Equal Opportunity and Workforce Diversity Policy (December 6, 1999) (Appendix C)

If available, these sections may be supplemented by sections of the EO Trainer's Workbook and EO Office pamphlets.





## DAY THREE

### M. Effective Recruitment

Supervisors will be able to ...

- Access and make use of the CNCS web-based recruitment system.

## VISTA Alumni Information

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### *“Opportunities to Help”*

"I've been asking myself 'What can I do for future AmeriCorps\*VISTA members?' . . . The answer I'd like to offer is to [provide low-cost housing](#) for the next member who is placed in my hometown. I hereby challenge former VISTA members to ante-up in some way to help current members succeed."

**Lisa Van Gilder, VISTA Alumna**

During the 35th Anniversary Conference, 97% of the VISTA Alumni who attended signed up to support AmeriCorps\*VISTA in the following ways:

- [House](#) AmeriCorps\*VISTA members who come to their communities or help them find housing,
- [Recruit](#) new members to participate in the program,
- [Mentor](#) current AmeriCorps\*VISTA members,
- [Re-join](#) and serve in AmeriCorps\*VISTA again, and
- [Participate](#) in member training events.

If you are interested in helping AmeriCorps\*VISTA house a member, develop new initiatives, help recruit, or mentor members please contact us at [vista@americorps.org](mailto:vista@americorps.org) or call (202) 606-5000, extension 316.

#### **Recruit new members**

Institutions of higher education have long proven it is effective and efficient for alumni to recruit and interview prospective candidates. People respond better to recruiters who have experienced the position being promoted and have used that experience towards their continued success. E-mail [vista@americorps.org](mailto:vista@americorps.org) for more information.

#### **House current members**

*"When someone suggested I provide housing for a new member, it just seemed like the right thing to do. I'm excited for someone to move in. I'll be able to help her adjust to her new surroundings so she can start getting things done right away. It's just another way for me to give to my community."*

Gina Cross, AmeriCorps\*VISTA Alumna who put her extra furniture and empty basement to use -- she is housing an AmeriCorps\*VISTA member.  
Washington, DC

If you have low-cost or complimentary housing available that you would like to provide a current member or project in your area, e-mail [vista@americorps.org](mailto:vista@americorps.org) with the location and specifications. Individuals and organizations not otherwise affiliated with an AmeriCorps\*VISTA project sponsor can provide lodging for AmeriCorps\*VISTA members.

#### **Mentor current members**

AmeriCorps\*VISTA members serving today can tap into the knowledge of VISTA Alumni. Your experience can guide these members through the obstacles and rewards of implementing national service programs. Help them expand what you started and email [vista@americorps.org](mailto:vista@americorps.org) if you are interested in mentoring a member in your community.

#### **Re-enroll in AmeriCorps\*VISTA**

We want you! Bring your experience back to AmeriCorps\*VISTA and serve another term as a Leader or member and expand what you helped start. Visit <http://recruit.cns.gov> if you would like to become an AmeriCorps\*VISTA.

#### **Increase Local Awareness**

We want you to share your experience with your community members and local media. If you are interested, please email [vista@americorps.org](mailto:vista@americorps.org).

#### **Participate in Member Training events**

You may attend training events in your area and share your experience. Members often comment that hearing the experiences of alumni makes them feel part of a legacy program and provides them with tools they never thought about before. If you are interest, please email [vista@americorps.org](mailto:vista@americorps.org)

**[www.americorps.org/vista/alumni/](http://www.americorps.org/vista/alumni/)**



## N. Effective Interviewing and Screening

Supervisors will be able to:

- Describe the essential qualities of an effective AmeriCorps\*VISTA and how to assess a candidate to ensure the success of the VISTA and the success of the project.
- Experience an opportunity to share best practices regarding interviewing and selecting candidates.
  - Build their awareness of the AmeriCorps\*VISTA selection and enrollment process.

## AmeriCorps\*VISTA Nomination Process

- Receive applications from both nationally recruited VISTAs and locally recruited VISTAs.
- Review applications and references for basic qualifications.
- Call candidate screen preliminarily and schedule interview.
  - Provide overview of sponsoring agency
  - Describe VISTA project
  - Confirm candidate's interest
  - Schedule interview and explain timeline
  - Connect candidate with a current or former VISTA for the "real story"
- Design interview questions. Select interview panel. (Optional)
- Conduct the interviews.
- Select your preferred candidate and rank other candidates in case your first choice goes elsewhere.
- Discuss nomination with candidate – secure his or her commitment.
- Complete the "Sponsor Evaluation of VISTA Candidate" form.
- Submit the "Sponsor Evaluation" with full application packet to the CNS State Office.
- Maintain contact with candidate and confirm the have received PSO invitation materials from CNS.
- Send candidate a copy of the work plan and information on the agency where he or she will be serving.
- Arrange transportation and temporary housing for the candidate if he or she is a national recruit.
- Arrange a welcome event and an On-Site-Orientation.

## AmeriCorps\*VISTA Sample Interview Questions

\* Commitment \* Goals \* Initiative \* Skills

1. Why are you interested in National Service at this point in your life?
2. Why VISTA?
3. How will serving as a VISTA in this particular project contribute to your professional and/or personal goals?
4. Please explain your interest or experience in working on this particular issue?
5. Please talk about your experience working in a culturally diverse environment.
6. Please talk about your experience with working with low-income people and/or poverty related issues?
7. What type of experience do you have working in the non-profit (educational, public health, etc.) environment?
8. Please tell me about a specific situation in which you were responsible for motivating others to complete a goal. Describe your motivational techniques. What were the results of your efforts?
9. VISTAs are responsible for designing, coordinating, and managing complex community based projects. Please describe your experience initiating, coordinating, and maintaining projects with others.
10. Can you describe a time you initiated something and saw it through to completion?
11. What types of supervisors have you had the best working relationships with in the past?
12. What does professionalism mean to you?
13. Public speaking is a large part of this VISTA position. What training and experience have you had that prepares you for this aspect of the position?
14. On a scale of one to ten, how would you rate your written communication skills? Why? Oral communication skills? Why?
15. As you know, VISTAs make a twelve-month, full-time commitment to National Service at their projects. VISTAs only receive approximately \$750 each month to live on. VISTAs are not allowed to have another job or be enrolled in school so they can serve to the best of their abilities. How have you prepared for the financial hardship you will likely face?
16. Are you interviewing at other VISTA placements?
17. Are you considering any other options besides VISTA?
18. Can you foresee any reason why you would be unable to complete 12 months of service?
19. Do you have any other questions?



## Before the Interview is Over...Have You..?

### Explained VISTA?

- VISTAs are change agents. They are the catalysts mobilizing community resources. VISTAs develop projects in way that makes them sustainable. The hope is that the project will live for many years after the VISTA has left.
- VISTA is not "volunteerism." It is National Service – a commitment to serve community and country.
- VISTAs build capacity, they do not do direct service. For example, VISTAs design the tutoring program and recruit the tutors. They are not the tutors.
- VISTA is a full-time, twelve-month commitment without regard for regular business hours.
- VISTAs cannot have outside employment.
- VISTAs cannot take classes unless the class directly relates to their service and they have prior approval.
- VISTAs receive a bi-weekly allowance, health insurance, loan deferment or forbearance, life insurance, and the choice between an education award and an end-of-service stipend.
- Travel and moving reimbursement if appropriate – Mileage, plane ticket, move-in allowance, baggage allowance.
- The timelines – interview, references, review, nomination, PSO, placement, OSO, IST.

### Explained your VISTA Project?

- The assignment description.
- The goals and objectives - you may want to mail the candidate the work plan.
- The culture and environment in which the VISTA will be serving.
- The name of the day-to-day supervisor.
- The name of the overall project manager.
- The name of the contact at the CNS State Office.

## AmeriCorps\*VISTA Selection & Placement

### EVALUATING AND SELECTING APPLICANTS

Evaluation and selection of applicants is the final stage of the recruitment process. By carefully evaluating applications and conducting thorough interviews, you will be able to select members who best match the needs of your program.

To begin the selection and evaluation process, you will want to do an interview with the applicant. It is important to begin planning by thinking about both perspectives of the interview, yours and the applicant's. Your goal should be to provide information about your program and to learn more about the candidate. An interview is not the time to try to persuade someone to become an AmeriCorps member.

The following interviewing techniques are excerpted from the Peace Corps' "Selection Interviewing Workshop," written by Dr. Keith Helprin, and is used here with permission.

### INTERVIEW

#### Preparation

- Review the application and resume, if available. Prepare questions for the interview. (See sample questions)
- Set aside enough time for an in-depth interview (between 45 minutes to 1½ hours).
- Do not keep the applicant waiting.
- If there are multiple interviewers, make sure there is a clear lead interviewer and that an outline of each person's role in the interview is made so as not to intimidate or confuse the interviewee.
- Avoid interruptions.
- Be friendly and make the applicant feel comfortable.
- If conducting a phone interview:
  1. make sure to set up a time with the applicant that reflects any time zone differences;
  2. make sure the applicant is aware of who will be listening during the interview; and,
  3. consider arranging a conference call if more than one staff member is interviewing the applicant.

### **Structure of the Interview**

- Find out about the candidate's background.
- Take notes yourself, and invite the candidate to do the same since you'll be giving them information about AmeriCorps.
- Provide details on AmeriCorps, its benefits, and other key information.
- Provide information about the position and your organization.
- Provide a brief description of the geographic area they would be working in.
- Invite the candidate to ask questions.
- Explain procedures leading to the final decision.

### **Information Gathering**

- Ask comprehensive, open-ended questions.
- Begin with broad questions in each area and then move on to more specific ones.
- Use comprehensive questions and non-verbal skills such as head nods to encourage complete answers.
- Use silence or extended pauses to draw out reticent applicants.
- Try not to frown, show surprise, or otherwise communicate in a way that would discourage the candidate from giving potentially negative information.
- Summarize and restate what you hear to make sure you understand the candidate correctly.
- If conducting a phone interview, allow for pauses so as not to interrupt an applicant's answer and your next question. Try to provide verbal feedback during the applicant's response to indicate your attention.

### **Providing Key Information**

Review the *AmeriCorps Program Director's Handbook* and *AmeriCorps\*VISTA Supervisor's Manual* to go over the specific points outlined below:

- Stress the philosophy of AmeriCorps and the commitment involved. If you are an AmeriCorps\*VISTA sponsor, mention the need for a full-time commitment (at least 40 hours per week with no school or outside employment).
- Discuss the specific hours of employment and whether weekend work is expected.
- Explain on-the-assignment training requirements as well as the need for orientations. (For AmeriCorps\*VISTA sponsors, explain the pre-service orientation—the three-day, out-of-town training prior to service).

- Discuss travel reimbursement (if applicable).
- Provide the exact amount of the subsistence allowance and discuss the candidate's ability to manage on that amount (paying rent and all other expenses and any outstanding loans, etc.).
- Discuss cost and availability of suitable housing (especially important for out-of-town and nationally referred applicants).
- Point out that the living allowance is taxable. (AmeriCorps\*VISTA sponsors should mention that living allowances do not reduce Social Security or welfare benefits.)
- Mention possible deferment of qualified student loans. Full-time AmeriCorps members may also have the interest that accrues on their loans paid for after successfully completing their term of service.
- Explain the education award. Mention that it is partially taxable and not transferable to anyone else. (AmeriCorps\*VISTA sponsors should explain the choice between the education award and end-of-service cash stipend.)
- Explain that limited medical insurance is provided to full-time members, but only covers the AmeriCorps member.
- Go over the child care benefit, if applicable.
- Mention other benefits of service specific to your project. (For AmeriCorps\*VISTA sponsors, this could include "non-competitive eligibility" for federal jobs.)

### **Closing the Interview**

- Be honest, realistic, and as specific as possible in describing the job and work environment. Your best sales tool is a good background interview.
- If you have doubts or concerns about a candidate, spell out your concerns and let the person respond.
- If you are clearly *not* interested in a candidate, explain calmly why you cannot accept the person at this time and give specific examples of how he or she does not meet the criteria.
- Inform the applicant what will happen next in the process and the tentative timeline for that process.

### **Clues to Look For**

- Is the candidate a self-starter?
- How much and what type of volunteer work has she or he done?
- Consider the candidate's previous commitments.

- What was a difficult and challenging commitment the candidate made and met?
- Is the candidate flexible and adaptable?
- Look for enthusiasm, readiness for challenge, and ability to deal with adversity.
- Has he or she thought out reasons for applying to become an AmeriCorps member?
- Is the applicant looking for a job or looking for a service opportunity?
- Has he or she given evidence of tolerance and the ability to work with a wide variety of people?
- Consider the types of questions the candidate asks during the interview. (For example, do most questions deal with the project or AmeriCorps benefits?)
- If you conducted a phone interview, was the applicant attentive or watching television or folding laundry while speaking to you?

### CHECKING REFERENCES

AmeriCorps usually requires two written references. You may require applicants to submit their references to you directly or you may check references the m personally via the phone or you may send the AmeriCorps reference form to the individual providing the reference. The AmeriCorps Reference form can be found at [www.americorps.org/resources](http://www.americorps.org/resources). It is a downloadable .PDF file. The main goal when checking references is to confirm the information given by the applicant. If information from references starts to differ from the information obtained in the application and interview, increase the number of references that you contact. When checking references:

- Identify yourself, your organization, and the reason for your call.
- Describe the position that the candidate has applied for.
- Ask questions related to the candidate's appropriateness for that position.
- Verify the nature of the relationship between the applicant and the reference.

### SELECTING MEMBERS

Applicants should fall into one of three categories: individuals that you plan to accept, individuals that you want to put on a waiting list, individuals you do not plan to accept.

Do not make the mistake of considering unacceptable candidates because you do not have enough qualified applicants. It will pay off in the long run to spend more time and energy doing more recruitment than to select members who will not complement your project.

### CREATING A WAITING LIST

A waiting list will be invaluable in case one of your members resigns or is dismissed. The waiting list should be composed of those applicants wishing to remain under consideration for a position with your project. To determine if an applicant would like to be placed on your waiting list, send a letter notifying applicants that you would like to place them on your waiting list. Encourage them to respond by a certain date and tell them that they will be contacted if a position becomes available.

Maintain contact with the individuals on the waiting list and make them feel part of your program. Invite them to special events and send them your newsletters, announcements, and reports. If you do not have enough acceptable applicants to build a waiting list in the beginning of your program, develop one throughout the year by highlighting the program for potential members. If you find that you will not be able to invite the people on your waiting list to be members in your program, consider passing the names along to another appropriate AmeriCorps program in your area.

### SELECTION CHECKLIST

- Evaluate and rank applicants.
- Send non-acceptance letters to those who will not be interviewed.
- Arrange interviews.
- Interview candidates.
- Contact references by phone.
- Divide interviewed applicants into three groups: accepted, wait listed, and non-accepted.
- Send non-acceptance letters.
- Send acceptance letters.
- Confirm acceptance by applicants.
- Send wait list letters.
- Confirm the interest of the people on your wait list.

**Note:** For AmeriCorps\*VISTA members, the CNS State Office must have final approval of all applicants.







## O. Everyone's a Consultant

Supervisors will be able to ...

- **Strengthen the supervisors' network through sharing resources together.**
- **Gather from fellow supervisors recommendations for useful resources and strategies.**

## Resource Share Worksheet

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*Everyone will have an opportunity to share for approximately 5 minutes something you know that you think others would benefit from knowing about. The following is a list of suggestions. Choose one or two of them as the focus of your sharing.*

- **A resource every supervisor should know about ...**

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- **A tool or strategy I find very useful ...**

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- **Thoughts, words, or wisdom I'd like to share ...**

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- **Here's something that makes it easier to ...**

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- **This is something that has enriched my ability to supervise ...**

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## **P. Supervisor's Closing Circle**

**Supervisors will be able to ...**

- **Reflect on the legacy they hope to pass on to their VISTA members.**
  - **Acknowledge and appreciate the learning community.**

## Supervisor's Reflection

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*My Supervisory Legacy to our VISTA . . .*

## **Q. VISTA Member Induction Ceremony**

**Supervisors will be able to:**

- **Help bring meaning to the swearing in of this class of VISTA members.**
  - **Acknowledge and appreciate the learning community.**

## Oath of Service



# VISTA Member Registration Form

### 1. NAME

\_\_\_\_\_

Last

\_\_\_\_\_

First

\_\_\_\_\_

Middle

### 2. SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER

### 3. CNCS STATE OFFICE

### 4. DATE ENTERED ON DUTY

### 5. NEXT OF KIN OR EMERGENCY CONTACT

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

### 6. OATH OF SERVICE\*

The following oath or affirmation of service is required by the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973, as amended, and must be administered by an authorized staff member of the Corporation for National Service:

**I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter. So help me God.**

AmeriCorps\*VISTA Member's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\*NOTE: The words "So help me God" in the oath and the word "swear" wherever it appears above, should be stricken out when the Member elects to affirm rather than swear to the Oath of Service; only these words may be stricken and only when the Member elects to affirm the Oath of Service.

Subscribed and sworn to (affirmed) before me this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

## R. References

## Journaling

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"Service participants can use journals to explore the value of their contribution through service, to learn from their own mistakes and those of others, to reinforce positive feelings such as pride and caring, and to explore and find productive channels for negative feelings such as frustration. They can give themselves a record to the experience to read again and again - often resulting in fresh ideas and insight."

Susanne Goldsmith, author of *A City Year. On the Streets and in the Neighborhoods with Twelve Young Community Service Volunteers*

Why keep a journal?

Reflection is a necessary part of understanding something thoroughly. Reflection helps us understand what we don't know, what we're uncomfortable with, what stays with us.

- The reflective process of writing deepens and enriches an understanding of your service.
- "Journaling" results in service being done more thoughtfully and thoroughly.
- Those who regularly reflect on their service, and who are regularly asking themselves "What difference did we make" are more likely to care about the overall successes of a project.
- Those who journal are more likely to perceive community need, and more likely to come up with new possibilities for action and with creative solutions to stumbling blocks.
- "Journaling" can instigate thoughts of your issue area in "the big picture" - what is happening in your area nationally and how your service is a part of that and connects with a larger impact on the country.
- Going back and reading in your journal shows improvements you have accomplished that you may not have seen otherwise.
- At the end of your service year, your journal can be a base for guidelines on how others can replicate your work, including potential pitfalls and suggestions for avoiding them.
- Your journal can serve as an inspiration for volunteer work you become involved in after your service is complete.

*Findings of Anne Wysocki through interviews with Senior Corps members*

## AmeriCorps\*VISTA Web Resources

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AmeriCorps\*VISTA Home:

[www.americorps.org/vista/main.html](http://www.americorps.org/vista/main.html)

AmeriCorps\*VISTA Member Site:

[www.americorps.org/vista/member.html](http://www.americorps.org/vista/member.html)

AmeriCorps\*VISTA Supervisor Site:

[www.americorps.org/vista/supervisor.html](http://www.americorps.org/vista/supervisor.html)

AmeriCorps\*VISTA Alumni site:

[www.americorps.org/vista/alumni/index.html](http://www.americorps.org/vista/alumni/index.html)

Friends of VISTA: [www.friendsofvista.org](http://www.friendsofvista.org)

AmeriCorps Alums: [www.lifetimeofservice.org](http://www.lifetimeofservice.org)

AmeriCorps Merchandise:

[www.nationalservicecatalog.org](http://www.nationalservicecatalog.org)

AmeriCorps Forms:

[www.americorps.org/members/resource/manuals.html](http://www.americorps.org/members/resource/manuals.html)

An AmeriCorps\*VISTA Alumni Web Site:

[www.cpcs.umb.edu/users/bigchainring/rchome.htm](http://www.cpcs.umb.edu/users/bigchainring/rchome.htm)

Corporation for National and Community Service Web Site:

[www.nationalservice.org](http://www.nationalservice.org)

Service and Inclusion: [www.serviceandinclusion.org](http://www.serviceandinclusion.org)

National Alliance To End Homelessness:

[www.naeh.org/vista/index.htm](http://www.naeh.org/vista/index.htm)

National Service Resource Center: [www.etr.org/nsrc/](http://www.etr.org/nsrc/)

Epicenter:

[www.nationalservice.org/resources/epicenter/](http://www.nationalservice.org/resources/epicenter/)

Poverty Net: [www.worldbank.org/poverty/](http://www.worldbank.org/poverty/)

LEARNS: [www.nwrel.org/learns](http://www.nwrel.org/learns)

## Web/Listserv Resources

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ACLlist

Those without Web access can subscribe to the AmeriCorps listserv by sending an e-mail message to [join-aclist@lists.etr.org](mailto:join-aclist@lists.etr.org). The AmeriCorps listserv is a forum for AmeriCorps programs, State Commissions, T/TA providers, Staff of the Corporation for National and Community Service, and anyone else interested in AmeriCorps. Discussion focuses on training, technical assistance, and programmatic issues.

VISTAnet

To join by e-mail, send a message to [listserv@maelstrom.stjohns.edu](mailto:listserv@maelstrom.stjohns.edu) with this text in the body: subscribe vistanet your FirstName your LastName.





VISTAnet is an on-going discussion group for VISTAs, former VISTAs, AmeriCorps folks and anyone interested in national service and social issues.

#### Digital Connections

Digital Connections is a cross-stream national service discussion forum for programs addressing and narrowing the digital divide.

[lyris.etr.org/scripts/lyris.pl?enter=digitalconnections](http://lyris.etr.org/scripts/lyris.pl?enter=digitalconnections)

#### Disability List

This listserv has been created to facilitate communication among national service programs involving persons with disabilities including State Commission disability coordinators. Be sure to include contact information such as your name, your program name, e-mail address and phone number when you post.

[lyris.etr.org/scripts/lyris.pl?enter=disabilitylist](http://lyris.etr.org/scripts/lyris.pl?enter=disabilitylist)

#### Promise Fellows

This listserv is a forum for currently serving AmeriCorps Promise Fellows to share information and best practices, to ask for advice from each other and to discuss their work in delivering the five fundamental resources to children and youth and in working with communities of promise.

[lyris.etr.org/scripts/lyris.pl?enter=promisefellows](http://lyris.etr.org/scripts/lyris.pl?enter=promisefellows)

#### Learn & Serve

To join by e-mail, send a message to [listserv@tc.umn.edu](mailto:listserv@tc.umn.edu) with this text in the body: subscribe nsck-12 your FirstName your LastName. The NSCK-12 listserv is an electronic forum for the discussion of service learning among administrators, practitioners, researchers, and student.

#### Service Learning

To join by e-mail, send a message to [listproc@csf.colorado.edu](mailto:listproc@csf.colorado.edu) with this text in the body: subscribe service-learning your FirstName your LastName.

## General Resources

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United Way of America's Outcome Measurement Resource Network: [www.unitedway.org/outcomes](http://www.unitedway.org/outcomes)

National Center on Outcomes Research: [www.ncor.org/](http://www.ncor.org/)

National Youth Development Information Center: [www.nydic.org/outcome.html](http://www.nydic.org/outcome.html)

Outcomes Evaluation for Human Service Organizations: [www.the2professors.com/](http://www.the2professors.com/)

Clearing House Health Outcomes: Finding Information on Outcome Measures

[www.leeds.ac.uk/nuffield/infoservices/UKCH/find.html](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/nuffield/infoservices/UKCH/find.html)

## Volunteer Resources

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E-Volunteerism: [www.e-volunteerism.com](http://www.e-volunteerism.com)

Volunteer Match: [www.volunteermatch.org](http://www.volunteermatch.org)

Sustainability Online: [www.sustainability.com](http://www.sustainability.com)

Energize Volunteer Management: [www.energizeinc.com](http://www.energizeinc.com)

## Collaboration Issues

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Drucker Foundation:

[www.pfdf.org/publications/index.html](http://www.pfdf.org/publications/index.html)

## National Standards and Comparative Data

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Federal Interagency Forum on Aging-Related Statistics: [www.agingstats.gov/](http://www.agingstats.gov/)

Administration on Aging: Performance Outcomes Measures Project: [www.qpra.net/](http://www.qpra.net/)

David and Lucille Packard Foundation: The Future of Children: [www.futureofchildren.org/](http://www.futureofchildren.org/)

University of Colorado Outcome Reporting and Enhancement (CORE) Research Partnership: [www.oasis-obqi.org/](http://www.oasis-obqi.org/)

Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations ORYX: [www.jcaho.org/](http://www.jcaho.org/)

## Using Outcomes to Communicate Internally and Externally

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AmeriCorps Program Applicant Performance Measurement Toolkit: [www.projectstar.org](http://www.projectstar.org)

Outcomes and Performance Measurement for Tutoring Programs: [www.nwrel.org/learns/resources/measurement/](http://www.nwrel.org/learns/resources/measurement/)



## **Glossary for Supervisors Training**

### **AmeriCorps**

The national service initiative organized by the Corporation for National and Community Service in which full-time and part-time members serve in more than a thousand service programs. The programs in which AmeriCorps members serve have four common goals: 1) Getting Things Done through direct and demonstrable service that meets communities' education, public safety, environmental, and other human needs. 2) Strengthening Communities by bringing together Americans of all ages and backgrounds in the common effort to improve our communities. 3) Encouraging Responsibility by encouraging members to explore and exercise their responsibilities toward their communities, their families and themselves. 4) Expanding Opportunity by enhancing members' educational opportunities, job experience, and life skills. In return for full- or part-time service, AmeriCorps members may receive post-service education awards.

### **AmeriCorps\*National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC)**

AmeriCorps\*NCCC is a ten-month, full-time residential service and leadership program for men and women age 18 to 24. Members meet education, public safety, and other community needs, with a special focus on the environment. AmeriCorps\*NCCC combines civilian service with the ethic of military service, including leadership and teambuilding. AmeriCorps\*NCCC campuses are located in San Diego, CA; Denver, CO; Charleston, SC; Perryville, MD, and Washington, D.C.

### **AmeriCorps\*State/National**

AmeriCorps members are sponsored by national, state, and local nonprofit organizations. In order to meet the specific needs of the communities they serve, local AmeriCorps sponsors recruit and train AmeriCorps members themselves. The Corporation for National and Community Service oversees AmeriCorps. State/National AmeriCorps members should be at least 17 years of age, may serve full-time or part-time, and may engage in direct service.

### **AmeriCorps State Commissions**

State Commissions are responsible for performing outreach to potential applicants in their state, administering grant competition and selecting AmeriCorps\*State programs. There are 15 – 25 State

Commissions that are appointed by the Governor in each state to administer the AmeriCorps\*State programs. These offices are politically bipartisan and are staffed by a minimum of an Executive Director.

### **AmeriCorps\*VISTA**

VISTAs have served economically challenged communities for more than 35 years. The program is dedicated to increasing the capability of people to improve the conditions of their own lives. Members of AmeriCorps\*VISTA serve full-time and live in the communities they serve, creating programs that can continue after they complete their service ('building permanent sustainable infrastructure').

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

Created in 1993, the Corporation for National and Community Service is a public-private partnership that engages Americans of all ages in service through three national service organizations—AmeriCorps, which includes more than 400 local and national programs, AmeriCorps\*VISTA, and AmeriCorps\*NCCC; the National Senior Service Corps, which includes Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions, and the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program; and Learn and Serve America, which provides models and resources for teachers integrating service into classrooms from kindergarten to college.

### **Foster Grandparent Program (FGP)**

Through the Foster Grandparent Program, some 24,000 older Americans serve as extended family members to nearly 80,000 children and youth with exceptional needs. Usually working at least 20 hours a week, Foster Grandparents serve in schools, hospitals, correctional institutions, and Head Start and day care centers.

### **Learn and Serve America**

A program that engages students from kindergarten through college in community projects that integrate service and learning. Learn and Serve America builds on the grassroots service-learning movement by promoting service as a learning opportunity and providing models and resources to schools, universities, and community groups. Students use academic skills to solve real-world problems and learn the value of service, citizenship, and responsibility.



## National Senior Service Corps

NSSC engages a half million Americans age 55 and older in results-driven service as Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions, and volunteers in the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program. The Senior Corps taps the vast wealth of experience, skills, and talents of older citizens to meet community challenges.

## Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)

RSVP is one of the largest volunteer efforts in the nation—matching programs that need volunteers with some 450,000 older Americans serving part-time and unpaid. Volunteers organize neighborhood watch programs, tutor teenagers, renovate homes, teach English to immigrants, assist victims of natural disasters, and do whatever else their skills and interests lead them to do.

## Senior Companions Program

Senior Companions provide assistance and friendship to seniors who have difficulty with daily living tasks helping them live independently in their homes instead of moving to more costly institutionalized care.

## Supervisor Training Terms

### America's Promise

America's Promise was founded after the Presidents' Summit for America's Future in 1997. Presidents Clinton, Bush, Carter and Ford with First Lady Nancy Reagan representing her husband, challenged the nation to make youth a national priority. Their call to action included a commitment on the part of the nation to fulfill Five Promises:

1. Ongoing relationships with caring adults in their lives – parents, mentors, tutors, or coaches;
2. Safe places with structured activities during non-school hours;
3. Healthy start and future;
4. Marketable skills through effective education and;
5. Opportunities to give back through community service.

## Capacity Building/Building Permanent Infrastructure

Creating the staffing, administrative and programmatic foundations for an organization to sustain its work. In particular, it refers to securing resources and funding,

developing partnerships and absorbing a new program into an existing organization. Capacity building refers to investment in people, institutions, and practices that will, together, enable an organization or community to achieve their development objectives.

## Collaboration

When individuals, groups, organizations, communities, or systems join together to address common goals, and in so doing, develop, create, or generate something that is uniquely achieved due to the partnering.

## Community

a : unified body of individuals; b : the people with common interests living in a particular area; c : an interacting population of various kinds of individuals in a common location; d : a group of people with a common characteristic or interest living together within a larger society; e : a group linked by a common policy f : a body of persons or nations having a common history or common social, economic, and political interests; g : a body of persons of common and especially professional interests scattered through a larger society.

## Community Development

A process designed to create conditions of economic and social progress for the whole community with its active participation and the fullest possible reliance on the community's initiative. Themes emphasized in community development include democratic procedures, voluntary cooperation, self-help, development of local leadership, and education.

## Cultural Competence

1. Cultural competence is a set of congruent behaviors, practices, attitudes and policies that come to gather in a system, agency, or individuals that enable that system, agency or individual to function effectively in transcultural interactions. (Cross, T.L., Bazron, B.J., Dennis, K. workshop., et al. Towards a Culturally Competent System of Care: Child and Adolescent Service System Program. Center for Substance Abuse Prevention. 1989.)

2. Cultural competence is a set of academic and interpersonal skills that allow individuals to increase their understanding and appreciation of cultural differences and similarities within, among, and between groups. This requires a willingness and ability to draw on community based values, traditions and customs and to work with knowledgeable person

of and from the community in developing focused interventions, communications and other supports. (Orlandi, M., Weston, R., and Epstein, L.G., 1992.)

Cultural competence is the ability to communicate with a variety of cultures. It does not mean always understanding or accepting members of other cultures and interacting smoothly. It does mean having the skills to develop understanding of and to communicate with others. A culturally competent person has developed a secure self-image, strategies for non-biased perception, and the ability not to be threatened by the difference. This in turn gives a person the strength of self, flexibility, and resiliency needed to come into another culture and to interact effectively. (Nelson, Annabelle. The Learning Wheel.)

## Cultural Competency

The quantitative measurement of one's ability to perform functions, and provide services congruent with the prevailing norms and values of a culturally specific target populations. (Kunisawa, Byron.)

## Cultural Diversity

Cultural diversity pertains to difference such as race, ethnicity, age, language, gender, class, sexual orientation, nationality, or religion among various groups within a community, organization, or nation. (Facilitator Skills Development Process. Center for Substance Abuse Prevention.)

## Culture

1. Culture refers to the shared language, behavior, customs, symbols, knowledge, pattern of comprehending reality and the ability to create or determine history. (Dr. Wade Nobles, 1986.)
2. Culture is the dynamic patterns of learned behaviors, values or beliefs exhibited by a group of people who share historical and geographical proximity or the shared values, norms, traditions, customs, arts, history, folklore and institutions of a group of people or the vast structure of behaviors, ideas, attitudes, values, habits, beliefs, customs, language, rituals, ceremonies and practices peculiar to a particular group of people and which provides them with a general design for living and patterns for interpreting reality. It teaches people to recognize phenomena and to respect certain logical relations amongst phenomena. Culture gives meaning to reality. As such it has the power to compel behavior and the

capacity to reinforce ideas and beliefs about human functioning, especially family processes and community life. When viable and intact, the cultural system provides the community with the capacity to resist negative agents and or prevent the development of processes antithetical to the community's own well-being and viability (Dr. Wade Nobles. 1986)

3. Culture is the way of life of a society. The prescribed ways of behaving, beliefs, values, and skills are various aspects of culture. It is the sum total of life patterns passed on from one generation to the next within a group of people. Culture is a code that guides interpretation of behavior. (Orlandi. 1992.)
4. Culture is the shared values, norms, traditions customs, arts history, folklore, and institutions of a group of people. It is clear that culture is not static but is constantly being altered.

## Direct Service

When someone provides a service to someone else, usually to help someone with an immediate problem, supply necessities for human existence, educate or counsel someone. Tutoring and financial counseling are examples of direct service.

## Diversity

The condition of being different. An instance or a point of difference.

## Ethic of Service

A set of principles, values or beliefs that lead people to serve their community in a particular way.

## Legacy

The history and traditions of an organization or person.

## Networking

The action of meeting people and making new relationships, usually because you want to make connections that will help you with your work or personal life.

## Poverty

When someone lacks a usual or socially acceptable amount of money or material possessions. Poverty is hunger. Poverty is lack of shelter. Poverty is being sick and not being able to see a doctor. Poverty is not being able to go to school and not knowing how to read.

Poverty is not having a job, is fear for the future, living one day at a time. Poverty is losing a child to illness brought about by unclean water. Poverty is powerlessness, lack of representation and freedom. From [www.worldbank.org/poverty/mission/up1.htm](http://www.worldbank.org/poverty/mission/up1.htm)

## Service-Learning

A teaching method that combines academic instruction, meaningful service, and critical reflective thinking to enhance student learning and civic responsibility.

## Stakeholders

The important people in a project. If you are working in a community organization you could have a range of stakeholders, from the people you serve to the members of your board.

## Sustainability

There are two types of sustainability that VISTAs work to develop. 1) individual empowerment, the life-long impact on the individual who is helped by the initiative, and 2) institutionalization of new capacity, the sustainability of the new enhancement the member brings to the nonprofit faith-based or community sponsor.

## Volunteerism

There are numerous situational definitions of 'volunteerism'. In simple terms, Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary defines volunteerism: 1 : the principle or system of doing something by or relying on voluntary action or volunteers; 2 : the act or practice of doing volunteer work in community service.

However, a more useful understanding for volunteerism in the VISTA context focuses on what volunteerism implies. Volunteerism implies active, uncoerced involvement for the common good without financial motivation. Absence of financial motivation does not exclude, then, remuneration of volunteers for expenses such as mileage (so as not to exclude lower income individuals who could not otherwise 'afford' to volunteer). Incidentally, though 'volunteer' is often used to label national service participants (Volunteers in Service to America, Peace Corps Volunteers), national service is not equivalent to volunteerism.

## VISTA Service Terms

### Education Award

As a VISTA member, at the end of your service you'll receive an education award of \$4,725, which you can

use to help pay for college, graduate school, or vocational training, or to pay off student loans. Or, you may choose to receive a stipend of \$1,200 instead of the education award.

## Living Allowance

The amount of money VISTAs receive every two weeks from the Corporation. The amount of each person's living allowance is determined by the Corporation and will vary according to the local cost of living within the area in which a member is serving. (Also called subsistence allowance).

## On-Site Orientation and Training

After your Pre-Service Orientation, the second phase of your orientation and training begins. It is called your On-Site Orientation and Training, which is coordinated by your project supervisor once you begin your service at your project site. It may last several weeks or several days, depending on your previous experience on the project, the skills you bring to the assignment, your knowledge of the community and organization, and other factors.

## VISTA Leaders

VISTA Leaders support and coordinate large AmeriCorps\*VISTA projects (involving at least eight VISTAs) in their efforts to address the needs of low-income communities. They serve as role models, trainers and resource providers who strengthen the leadership capacity of AmeriCorps\*VISTAs, AmeriCorps\*VISTA projects and community members. They serve in different functions depending on the needs of the local projects; these include recruiting and coordinating AmeriCorps\*VISTAs; preparing in-service trainings; identifying new funding sources and serving as liaisons with the community and the Corporation for National and Community Service.

## Workplan

The "service contract" that describes in detail the role of VISTA members in the organization they serve in as well as the goals and objectives of the year of service. The workplan is developed by the VISTA supervisor and the community this project will serve. Most VISTAs discussed their workplan with their supervisor during their interview.

## TCB Answer Key

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Answer 1: CNCS is not responsible for any damage to a member's own vehicle. (ref: page 58)

Answer 2: Nancy should contact her sponsor and her CNCS State Office immediately. Members may be authorized up to one week of emergency leave if an immediate family member (spouse, parent, sibling, child, grandparent or guardian) becomes critically ill or dies. The CNCS State Director needs to approve any additional time off. The State Office will arrange and pay for transportation by the fastest regularly scheduled means to and from the site of the emergency. (ref: page 74)

Situation 3: A\*VISTAs are entitled to 10 workdays of personal leave/vacation – so Sarah would have 7 days left. The members must request approval in advance from the sponsor/supervisor for all personal leave. Normally no leave is granted during the first three months or last month of service. (ref: page 73)

Situation 4: There are 26 pay periods in a calendar year. Therefore Sally will receive  $\$740 \times 12 = \$8,880$  per year divided by 26 =  $\$341$  per pay period. (ref: page 34)

Situation 5: Provided he is a registered voter in the state, Pete may vote for his candidate. During his AmeriCorps\*VISTA service, Pete may not campaign for his candidate or engage in other political activities. (ref: page 86)

Situation 6: Carol needs to speak to her sponsor to see if they are interested in having her continue. CNCS State Office approval is also needed. If she gets approval from her sponsor, Carol needs to fill out the Future Plans Form (form 732) and submit it to the CNCS office 8 weeks prior to her scheduled date of termination. The member and the sponsor will be notified as to whether or not the request for continuation of service has been approved at least four weeks prior to the end of service. (ref: page 72)

Situation 7: Elaine must fill out and submit to the CNCS Trust Office the "Federal Education Loan Forbearance Form." The Trust Office will certify AmeriCorps\*VISTA service and send the certified form to the loan holder. (ref: page 47)

Situation 8: The sponsor is responsible for determining the job-related transportation needs of members. As a general rule, members are expected to use public transportation in connection with their assignment when it is available and adequate. If a privately owned vehicle is necessary to carry out the members' assigned duties, authorization for its use must be obtained from the CNCS State Office. Before members may receive on-the-job transportation reimbursement from their sponsor, they must be authorized, in writing, by the State Office to drive a car for assignment-related purposes. To request such authorization, the member must submit a completed form V-81, with a map delineating the area to be covered, to the State Office. (ref: page 58)

Situation 9: Jerry should notify the CNCS State Office immediately. The member must also report the loss in writing, indicating the pay period covered by the missing allowance, and send the signed letter to the CNCS State Office. To ensure this does not happen again, Jerry should immediately submit the required form to receive his payment by direct electronic deposit! (ref: page 37)

Situation 10: Victoria's subsistence allowance may not be counted in determining her eligibility for TANF because she was receiving TANF prior to beginning her service. She should notify her case worker that Section 404(f)(1) of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 (42 USC 5044), as amended, provides that payment received by A\*VISTA members under this Act shall not in any way reduce or eliminate the level of, or eligibility for, assistance that any A\*VISTA member was receiving under any government program prior to beginning his or her service. If her case worker still objects, Victoria should contact her CNCS State Office. (ref: page 90)



Situation 11: Since Ned was not receiving food stamps prior to becoming an A\*VISTA member, yes, his subsistence allowance may be counted as income in determining his eligibility for food stamps. Members who were receiving food stamps prior to joining will not have their food stamp level affected by their A\*VISTA allowances. (ref: page 91)

Situation 12: Mark can ask the school's financial aid office if it is a Title IV school; call the Department of Education's Federal Student Aid Information Center at the number listed on page 37 of the Handbook; or visit the Department of Education's Federal Student Aid Information website listed on the same page. (ref: page 50)

Situation 13: Julie may switch to the education award any time before her 10th month of service. One may not switch from the education award to the stipend. (ref: pages 35-36)

Situation 14: AmeriCorps\*VISTA Leaders receive an additional \$200 per month subsistence allowance. (ref: page 34)

Situation 15: Only CNCS may terminate a member. However, a sponsor may request removal of a member from their project. (ref: page 70)

Situation 16: No, Kathy may not receive a partial stipend because she is not leaving for compelling personal circumstances such as a death in the family or serious illness. (ref: page 35)

Situation 17: Brian may take one course in intermediate Spanish conversation at the local community college provided that his supervisor and CNCS State Director have given their permission and that the course is directly related to the member's assignment and/or career development plan. The hours in which the course takes place should in no way interfere with the member's assigned project duties and work plan. (ref: page 75)

Situation 18: No, AmeriCorps\*VISTA members are eligible to receive up to two awards only, regardless of the amount of the award. (ref: page 45)

## CNCS Geography Key

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### AmeriCorps\*

**Purpose: results driven, intensive and direct service program that meets real community needs.**

#### 1. \*USA State and National

- programs include national direct/national non profits, Promise Fellows, Tribes and Territories, and programs granted through state commissions
- 200,000 members have served since 1993
- members provide direct service to meet real community needs
- members tutor in schools, train volunteers, make neighborhoods safer, and build affordable homes,
- members serve full time for up to 1 year, some serve part-time

#### 2. \*VISTA

- created in 1964, is the oldest of national service programs
- members serve in economically challenged communities
- members build community capacity to empower people to improve the conditions of their own lives
- members serve full time, live in the communities they serve and create programs that are sustainable
- national demonstration projects involving eliminating poverty

#### 3. \*National Civilian Community Corps and TCCC

- members serve for full time for 10 months in a residential service program for persons aged 18-24
- members meet national critical needs in education, public safety, the environment, and human needs
- five regional campuses across the US
- four campuses that are tribal programs

### Learn and Serve America

**Purpose: Support service-learning programs. Service learning is a teaching method increases student academic achievement while meeting real community service needs.**

#### 1. K-12 Service Learning

- grants that support the development of service learning in elementary, middle and secondary schools
- programs/projects in which students are engaged in academic learning that meets real community service needs (e.g., students build a community garden for neighborhood families in need of food and learn about biology and mathematics while building!)

#### 2. Higher Education Service Learning

- grants that support the development of service learning in institutions of higher education
- students learn academically by meeting real community service needs (e.g., a statistics class helps a neighborhood track crime in their block watch)

#### 3. National Service Learning Leader Schools

- schools that demonstrate academic excellence through their service learning projects
- these schools mentor other schools and teachers to help promote service learning in all curricula across grade levels (mostly high schools and some middle schools)

#### 4. President's Student Service Challenge

- a national award given to students who promote and provide community service in their school; students must collect hours during an entire school year





### **National Senior Service Corps**

**Purpose: more than half a million volunteers ages 55 and older who serve meeting a variety of community needs**

#### **1. Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)**

- volunteers are 55 years or older, and want to make a difference in their communities
- senior members may serve from a few hours to 40 hours per week in an area that they want to serve in
- senior members receive supplemental insurance while serving, a pre service orientation and training

#### **2. Senior Companion Program**

- volunteers are 60 years or older, want to make a difference in their communities, and meet certain income eligibility guidelines
- senior members must serve 20 hours per week often 4 hours/day Mon-Fri
- senior members receive a modest tax free stipend to offset the cost of volunteering

#### **3. Foster Grandparent Program**

- volunteers are 60 years or older and meet certain income eligibility guidelines
- thrive on direct interaction with children and believe they can make a difference in the lives of children
- senior members must serve 20 hours per week often 4 hours/day Mon-Fri
- senior members receive a modest tax free stipend to offset the cost of volunteering

#### **4. National Demonstration Projects (e.g. Seniors for Schools)**

- volunteers are 55 years or older
- seniors are interested in devoting significant time to making a difference in the lives of children and want to be a part of a team of volunteers, educators and parents helping kids succeed
- receive reimbursement for transportation and supplemental insurance while serving



## Appendix

# Performance Measurements Handouts

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## Handout 1: Planning for Project Success

*You must know where you are going in order to know when you've gotten there.*

The secret of a successful VISTA project is good, comprehensive, accurate planning. In preparing to complete the AmeriCorps\*VISTA Project Application, applicants may wish to reference the following project planning checklist:

### **Situational Analysis**

- What are the problems facing the individuals, families, and communities that you serve?
- What are the factors or issues that contribute to these problems?
- Are there community assets that are currently being underutilized?
- What are the barriers to fully utilizing these community assets?
- Which of these factors or barriers can we most effectively address?

### **Goal Setting**

- Based on your situational analysis, what can your organization do to impact this area?
- How can AmeriCorps\*VISTA build your organization's capacity to achieve such goals?

### **Identifying Strategies**

- What resources, human and financial, are necessary to achieve your goals?
- What activities will be involved in implementing your strategies?
- What research, theory, or past experience supports your choice of strategies?
- What kind of skills and qualifications will AmeriCorps\*VISTA members need to implement these activities?

### **How Will You Know You Are Succeeding?**

- What are your intended results?
- What is the long-term impact or change you hope to institute within the community you serve?
- Are your intended results SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-sensitive?)
- How will you assess your work along the way to ensure you are achieving what you set out to do?

## Handout 2: Measuring Capacity-Building Efforts

AmeriCorps\*VISTA projects and members focus on capacity-building strategies to increase a sponsoring organization's overall resources and effectiveness towards achieving its mission. As such, when AmeriCorps\*VISTA applicants or existing projects determine the intended results of a project, they should be able to tie the outputs and intermediate outcomes specifically to the scope of the AmeriCorps\*VISTA project and members' activities. The intended end outcomes, however, may be articulated in relation to the sponsoring organization's overall end outcomes for the populations it serves as long as a logical relationship can be demonstrated between the capacity-building efforts of the project and the end outcomes.

For example, a VISTA project may have the intended goal of increasing homeownership among the population it serves. Toward this goal, the associated VISTAs may focus on building specific infrastructure such as volunteer management systems or fundraising campaigns. Project *outputs* such as "number of volunteers recruited" or "donations collected" and *intermediate outcomes* such as "increasing volunteer retention" or "developing a fundraising database" contribute directly to the organization's overall ability to achieve *end outcomes* such as "increasing homeownership among its clients" or "decreasing foreclosures among the population it serves."

In this scenario, other projects and people within the organization likely contributed to the *end outcomes*. AmeriCorps\*VISTA projects may share credit for the combined efforts of the sponsoring organization when discussing end outcomes, but in doing so must provide a written explanation for how the results of the project contributed to the overall results of the organization.

### Handout 3: Completing the Project Application Work Plan

The performance measurement requirements should be addressed in your AmeriCorps\*VISTA Project Application Work Plan. The AmeriCorps\*VISTA work plan consists of two columns: Column A: Goals, Activities, and Results; and Column B: Dates. A sample work plan can be found in Appendix A. The following instructions can assist you in completing your work plan.

Design the work plan to cover a multi-year period—the estimated length of time required to complete the proposed project. In the work plan, clearly demonstrate:

- A realistic effort to help bring individuals and families out of poverty permanently; not simply to make poverty more tolerable;
- Responsibilities and duties of AmeriCorps\*VISTA members that are geared towards building a permanent infrastructure within the applicant organization; and
- Proposed project results that are measurable and convey the actual impact the project has on the individuals, families, and communities being served.

#### **Work Plan Components**

The work plan should state in measurable and quantifiable terms:

- The goals the project will achieve each year;
- The activities;
- The results (**outputs and outcomes**) leading to the achievement of the goals; and
- The dates by which you expect to achieve your goals, activities, and results.

#### **Column A: Goals, Activities, and Results**

This column consists of three sections: Goals, Activities, and Results.

Column A <b>Goals, Activities, and Results</b>	Column B <b>Date(s)</b>
Identify <b>Goal(s)</b> to which members' activities are directed.	
<b>Activities:</b> What are the action steps needed to accomplish this goal?	
Identify any <b>Results (outputs, intermediate outcomes, or end outcomes)</b> related to this goal. If the result is to be measured, write " <b>performance measure</b> " in parentheses beside the result. For each result, identify the indicator, the targets you expect to meet, the instrument(s) you will use to measure this result, and how you will collect the data. If you have data for this objective from prior years, report it here.	

Consider the following descriptions when completing each of the sections:

**1. Clearly state the project goal(s).**

The project goal(s) should address what you expect the members to achieve in relation to the problem(s) identified in your project narrative. Each goal is a statement of intent to meet an identified community need through building upon community assets.

**2. Describe your activities.**

For each goal, list the activities (action steps) your project and AmeriCorps\*VISTA members will undertake to achieve the desired outputs and outcomes. The text here can include information about who does what, when, where, how, and with whom and for how long.

**3. Identify and define your results.**

For each goal, you will need to identify the intended results, labeling them as outputs, intermediate outcomes, or end outcomes.

**4. Identify results to measure performance.**

Once you have selected the goal that you plan to measure performance around, choose three to five results you plan to conduct a performance measurement. In choosing your goal, remember that it should be the goal most central to the mission and vision of the project. When choosing your measures, you should include at least one output, one intermediate outcome, and one end outcome. For each of the results that you will measure the performance, identify the result by writing the words in parenthesis: “(performance measure)”. For example, when measuring an output, identify it in this manner: *Output (PERFORMANCE MEASURE)*.

**Column B: Dates**

In this column, indicate the periods of time that the AmeriCorps\*VISTA member will work on and achieve the stated goals, activities, and results. Performance measures for each type of result (outputs, intermediate outcomes, and end outcomes) should be measured at least annually. Make sure that the dates reflect this.

**Column C: Project Reporting**

The expectation of AmeriCorps\*VISTA projects will be to report the progress toward your performance measurement in your Project Progress Reports. Once applicants are approved as AmeriCorps\*VISTA projects, they should create a Column C within the work plan template to report their progress and submit it as part of the Project Progress Reports.



## **Handout 4: Sample Project Narrative, Logic Model, Work Plan, and Data Instruments**

### **Individual Development Account (IDA) Project Lakeport Community Development Corporation**

#### ***What is the problem or need in the community that we want to address?***

The City of Lakeport contains a high concentration of low-income individuals and families. According to data from the 2000 United States Census, eighteen percent of families in Lakeport County had incomes below the official poverty line. Income maintenance policies help meet basic needs, but do little to help these citizens escape from poverty.

Asset ownership is one important step towards economic self-sufficiency for many low-income individuals and families. Currently, no other IDA programs exist in the Lakeport area. To help low-income individuals and families acquire assets to escape from poverty, the Lakeport CDC was awarded a three-year Individual Development Account (IDA) grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Working with program staff, AmeriCorps\*VISTA members will play roles in helping to set up, promote, administer and operate this new IDA project.

#### ***What are some factors contributing to this problem that are within our means to address?***

Many low-income individuals and families lack key resources to escape from poverty.

- Individuals and families that perpetually rent are unable to experience the long-term financial benefits of home ownership, including building equity.
- Individuals who lack a reliable means of transportation face serious limitations in the types of jobs available to them.
- Individuals who lack education and marketable skills are unable to attain higher paying jobs.
- Families and communities that do not own businesses face serious limitations in their ability to accumulate wealth.

#### ***What are some factors contributing to this problem that are beyond our means to address?***

There are many factors beyond our control that affect the economic fortunes of individuals and families in our community.

- Scarcity of affordable housing can limit the ability of individuals and families to purchase a home.
- Fluctuations in the job market can limit opportunities, even for people with the necessary education and skills.
- Fluctuations in the local economy can change the fortunes of small business owners who rely heavily on local customers.

Taking into account the factors that are within our capacity to address, the IDA project can help low-income individuals and families acquire development assets that are essential for economic self-sufficiency. It is appropriate to measure the success of the IDA project by its ability to help participants acquire key assets. Ultimately, we hope that IDA participants will gain economic self-sufficiency and escape from poverty. Acquiring key assets is one step toward this ultimate goal.





***Who are the public and private sector partners?***

- Social service agencies (refer residents to IDA program)
- Credit union (provides IDA account services)
- Car dealerships (provide IDA participants with low-cost auto repairs and list of affordable used cars available for purchase)
- Housing authority (assists IDA participants with home ownership goals)
- Mortgage company (assists IDA participants with home ownership goals)
- Lakeport Community College (assist IDA participants with educational and training goals)
- University-based small business development center (assists IDA participants with small business goals)

***What are the project activities?***

**Year One:**

- Develop IDA project curriculum [0.5 VISTA].
- Formalize partnerships with public and private sector organizations [0.5 VISTA].
- Community outreach [1.0 VISTA]
  - o Write copy for quarterly newsletter and local newspapers
  - o Contact local newspapers to run IDA stories
  - o Print and distribute IDA brochures
  - o Host community meetings to recruit IDA participants
  - o Make announcements on local TV and radio stations about IDA program
- Program startup midway through year: recruit and enroll IDA participants (target = 150 participants; 25 per month) [1.0 VISTA].
- Program staff and VISTA members co-facilitate IDA workshops [1.0 VISTA, 1.0 program staff]
- Staff from partner agencies provides one-on-one financial counseling to assist each participant to set goals and to develop a savings plan.

**Year Two:**

- Program running at full capacity: recruit and enroll IDA participants (target = 300 participants; 25 per month) [1.0 VISTA].
- Program staff and VISTA members co-facilitate IDA workshops [2.0 VISTA, 1.0 program staff]
- Staff from partner agencies provides one-on-one financial counseling to assist each participant to set goals and to develop a savings plan.
- VISTA members and program staff conduct fundraising activities to sustain the program [1.0 VISTA, 1.0 program staff]

**Year Three:**

- Program running at full capacity: recruit and enroll IDA participants (target = 300 participants; 25 per month) [1.0 VISTA].
- Program staff and VISTA members co-facilitate IDA workshops [2.0 VISTA, 1.0 program staff]
- Staff from partner agencies provides one-on-one financial counseling to assist each participant to set goals and to develop a savings plan.
- VISTA members and program staff conduct fundraising activities to sustain the program [1.0 VISTA, 1.0 program staff]

***What are some possible results and indicators for program success?*****Outputs**

- Result: Low-income individuals (heads of households) enroll and participate in IDA program.  
 Indicator(s): Number of low-income individuals (heads of households) who enroll in IDA program.  
 Number of IDA participants who:
- Sign a Savings Plan Agreement
  - Complete training, "Household Budgeting and Money Management"
  - Attend workshop on How to Buy a Car
  - Attend workshop on How to Buy a House
  - Attend workshop on Small Business Startup
  - Attend special workshops (Investing For Retirement, Purchasing Insurance, Obtaining and Financing a Mortgage, etc.)

**Intermediate Outcomes**

- Result: IDA participants increase personal financial knowledge.  
 Indicator(s): Number and types of personal finance terms and concepts understood and used correctly by IDA participants  
 Percent of IDA participants who can fill out check book registry correctly  
 Percent of IDA participants who can calculate compound interest

- Result: IDA participants increase savings.  
 Indicator(s): Number of participants who contribute to IDA account for at least [#] months  
 Dollars deposited in IDA savings accounts by IDA participants  
 Monthly match dollars deposited in IDA savings accounts  
 Number of IDA participants who fulfill the conditions of their Savings Plan Agreement

**End Outcomes**

- Result: IDA participants acquire assets (marketable skills).  
 Indicator(s): Dollars disbursed from IDA savings accounts to pay for education  
 Number of IDA participants who complete post-secondary education, vocational training, or recertification

Result:	IDA participants acquire assets (home ownership).
Indicator(s):	Dollars disbursed from IDA savings accounts to pay for home purchases Number of IDA participants who make a down payment on a home.
Result:	IDA participants acquire assets (car ownership).
Indicator(s):	Dollars disbursed from IDA savings accounts to pay for car purchase or repair Number of IDA participants who purchase a car Number of IDA participants who complete repairs to their car.
Result:	IDA participants acquire assets (business ownership).
Indicator(s):	Dollars disbursed from IDA savings accounts to pay for small business startup Number of IDA participants who start a small business Dollars disbursed from IDA savings accounts to pay for small business expansion Number of IDA participants who expand a small business
Result:	IDA participants develop ethic of personal savings.
Indicator(s):	Percent of IDA participants who continue to save regularly after acquiring assets.

### LOGIC MODEL: Individual Development Account (IDA) Project, Lakeport Community Development Coalition

Community Need: The City of Lakeport contains a high concentration of low-income individuals and families. According to data from the 2000 United States Census, eighteen percent of families in Lakeport County had incomes below the official poverty line. Income maintenance policies help meet basic needs, but do little to help these citizens escape from poverty.

Asset ownership is one important step towards economic self-sufficiency for many low-income individuals and families. Currently, no other IDA programs exist in the Lakeport area. To help low-income individuals and families acquire assets to escape from poverty, the Lakeport CDC was awarded a three-year Individual Development Account (IDA) grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Working with program staff and public and private sector organizations, AmeriCorps\*VISTA members will play key roles in helping to set up, promote, administer and operate this new IDA program.

COMMUNITY NEED →	GOALS →	INPUTS →	SERVICE ACTIVITIES →	OUTPUTS →	INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES →	END OUTCOMES
Low-income individuals and families lack key assets needed to attain economic self-sufficiency.	Lakeport CDC will develop an IDA program to help increase the assets of low-income families in order to promote long-term self-sufficiency through further education, home ownership, and small business development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IDA program curriculum (draft)</li> <li>• Partnerships with public and private sector organizations</li> <li>• Program staff</li> <li>• VISTA members</li> <li>• Orientation and training for VISTA members</li> <li>• Materials and supplies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In cooperation with program staff and private and public sector partners, four VISTA members:</li> <li>• Develop and refine IDA program curriculum</li> <li>• Conduct community outreach</li> <li>• Recruit and enroll IDA participants</li> <li>• Raise funds</li> <li>• Co-facilitate IDA workshops</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IDA program curriculum is developed and refined.</li> <li>• Public and private sector partnerships are formalized.</li> <li>• Community outreach is completed.</li> <li>• <b>IDA participants are recruited and enrolled.</b></li> <li>• Savings Plan Agreements are signed.</li> <li>• Funds are raised.</li> <li>• IDA workshops are conducted.</li> <li>• IDA participants receive 1-on-1 financial counseling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>IDA participants increase savings.</b></li> <li>• IDA participants increase personal financial knowledge.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>IDA participants acquire assets:</b></li> <li>- Repair or buy a home</li> <li>- Repair or buy a car</li> <li>- Start or expand a small business</li> <li>- Complete post-secondary education, vocational training or certification</li> </ul> <p>IDA participants develop ethic of personal savings.</p>

Note: Boldface indicates performance measures.



**AmeriCorps\*VISTA Project Work Plan Example: Individual Development Accounts**

<b>Column A</b> <i>Goals, Activities, and Results</i>	<b>Column B</b> <i>Date(s)</i>
<p align="center">Identify <b>Goal(s)</b> to which members' activities are directed.</p> <p><b>Goal 1.</b> The City of Lakeport contains a high concentration of low-income individuals and families. Income maintenance policies help meet basic needs, but do little to help these citizens escape from poverty. Currently, no other IDA programs exist in the Lakeport area. Working with program staff and public and private sector organizations, AmeriCorps*VISTA members will play key roles in helping to set up and promote a new IDA program.</p>	<p align="center">Year 1, Months 1-4</p>
<p align="center"><b>Activities:</b> What are the action steps needed to accomplish this goal?</p> <p>Four AmeriCorps*VISTA members will work in cooperation with program staff and private and public sector partners to develop and refine IDA program curriculum and conduct community outreach.</p>	<p align="center"><b>Year 1,</b> <b>Months 1-4</b></p>
<p>Identify any <b>Results (outputs, intermediate outcomes, or end outcomes)</b> related to this goal. If the result is to be measured, write "performance measure" in parentheses beside the result. For each performance measure, identify the <b>indicator</b>, the <b>targets</b> you expect to meet, the <b>instrument(s)</b> you will use to measure this result, and <b>how you will collect</b> the data. If you have data for this result from prior years, report it here</p>	
<p><b>Output:</b> IDA program curriculum is developed and refined.  <b>Output:</b> Public and private sector partnerships are formalized.  <b>Output:</b> Community outreach is completed.  <b>Output:</b> Funds are raised.</p>	<p align="center">Year 1, Months 1-4</p>
<p>Identify <b>Goal(s)</b> to which members' activities are directed.</p> <p><b>Goal 2.</b> Working with program staff and public and private sector organizations, AmeriCorps*VISTA members will play key roles in helping to administer and operate a new IDA program.</p>	<p align="center">Year 1-3, ongoing (begins in Month 4 of</p>
<p><b>Activities:</b> What are the action steps needed to accomplish this goal?</p>	
<p>Four AmeriCorps*VISTA members will work in cooperation with program staff and private and public sector partners to recruit and enroll IDA participants, and co-facilitate IDA workshops.</p>	<p align="center"><b>Year 1,</b> <b>Months 1-4</b></p>

**AmeriCorp\*VISTA Project Work Plan Example: Individual Development Accounts**

<p><b>Column A</b> Goals, Activities, and Results</p>	<p><b>Column B</b> Date(s)</p>
<p>Identify any <b>Results (outputs, intermediate outcomes, or end outcomes)</b> related to this goal. If the result is to be measured, write “<b>performance measure</b>” in parentheses beside the result. For each performance measure, identify the <b>indicator</b>, the <b>targets</b> you expect to meet, the <b>instrument(s)</b> you will use to measure this result, and <b>how you will collect</b> the data. If you have data for this result from prior years, report it here.</p>	
<p><b>Output (PERFORMANCE MEASURE):</b> IDA participants are recruited and enrolled.</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> Number of IDA participants recruited and enrolled</p> <p><b>Targets</b>      <b>Year One:</b> 150 IDA participants recruited and enrolled.                      <b>Year Two:</b> 300 IDA participants recruited and enrolled.                      <b>Year Three:</b> 300 IDA participants recruited and enrolled.</p> <p><b>Instrument:</b> “IDA Enrollment and Tracking Form I: Output Data”; AmeriCorp*VISTA members enter data from this form into the IDA database at least once per month.</p> <p><b>Output:</b> Savings Plan Agreements are signed.</p> <p><b>Output:</b> IDA workshops are conducted.</p> <p><b>Output:</b> IDA participants receive one-on-one financial counseling.</p> <p><b>Intermediate Outcome (PERFORMANCE MEASURE):</b> IDA participants increase personal financial knowledge.</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> Number of participants who contribute to IDA account on schedule for at least [#] months.</p> <p><b>Targets</b>      <b>Year One:</b> At least 130 participants contribute to IDA account on schedule for at least six months.                      <b>Year Two:</b> At least 250 participants contribute to IDA account on schedule for at least twelve months.                      <b>Year Three:</b> At least 275 participants contribute to IDA account on schedule for at least twelve months.</p> <p><b>Instrument:</b> “IDA Tracking Form II: Intermediate Outcome Data”; AmeriCorp*VISTA members enter data from this form into the IDA database at least once per month.</p> <p><b>End Outcome (PERFORMANCE MEASURE):</b> IDA participants acquire assets.</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> Number of IDA participants who repair or buy a home, repair or buy a car, start or expand a small business, or complete post-secondary education, vocational training or recertification</p> <p><b>Targets</b>      <b>Year One:</b> 25 participants acquire an asset.                      <b>Year Two:</b> 150 IDA participants acquire an asset.                      <b>Year Three:</b> 225 IDA participants acquire an asset.</p> <p><b>Instrument:</b> “IDA Tracking Form III: End Outcome Data”; AmeriCorp*VISTA members enter data from this form into the IDA database at least once per month.</p> <p><b>End Outcome:</b> IDA participants develop ethic of personal savings.</p>	<p>Years 1-3, ongoing (begins in Month 4 of Year 1)</p> <p>Years 1-3, ongoing</p> <p>Years 1-3, ongoing</p> <p>Years 1-3, ongoing (begins in final quarter of year 1)</p>



IDA Enrollment and Tracking Form I: Output Data  
Lakeport Anti-Poverty Coalition AmeriCorps\*VISTA Project

**Instructions: Complete one copy of this form for each new IDA participant. Transfer information from this form to the electronic database at least once per month. Check each box as information is added to the electronic database.**

- Participant Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Address: \_\_\_\_\_
- Enrollment Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Savings Plan Agreement**

- Date Agreement Signed: \_\_\_\_\_
- Goal of Savings Plan: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Training and Counseling**

- Training Topic #1: \_\_\_\_\_  
Hours: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Completed: \_\_\_\_\_
- Training Topic #2: \_\_\_\_\_  
Hours: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Completed: \_\_\_\_\_
- Training Topic #3: \_\_\_\_\_  
Hours: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Completed: \_\_\_\_\_
- Training Topic #4: \_\_\_\_\_  
Hours: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Completed: \_\_\_\_\_
- Name of participant's financial counselor: \_\_\_\_\_
- Goals of financial counseling: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

IDA Tracking Form II: Intermediate Outcome Data  
Lakeport Anti-Poverty Coalition AmeriCorps\*VISTA Project

**Instructions: Complete one copy of this form for each new IDA participant. Transfer information from this form to the electronic database at least once per month. Check each box as information is added to the electronic database.**

- Participant Name: \_\_\_\_\_



Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Enrollment Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Savings Record**

Savings Account Number: \_\_\_\_\_  Savings Goal Per Month: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Record of Actual Savings Deposits**

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Participant Amount</b>	<b>Match Contribution</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	\$	\$	
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	\$	\$	
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	\$	\$	
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	\$	\$	
<input type="checkbox"/>	5	\$	\$	
<input type="checkbox"/>	6	\$	\$	
<input type="checkbox"/>	7	\$	\$	
<input type="checkbox"/>	8	\$	\$	
<input type="checkbox"/>	9	\$	\$	
<input type="checkbox"/>	10	\$	\$	
<input type="checkbox"/>	11	\$	\$	
<input type="checkbox"/>	12	\$	\$	

Attempted Contacts (when participant misses deposit dates):

Contact Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Result: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Result: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Result: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Result: \_\_\_\_\_



IDA Tracking Form III: End Outcome Data  
Lakeport Anti-Poverty Coalition AmeriCorps\*VISTA Project

**Instructions: Complete one copy of this form for each new IDA participant. Transfer information from this form to the electronic database at least once per month. Check each box as information is added to the electronic database.**

- Participant Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Address: \_\_\_\_\_
- Enrollment Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Saving Plan—Intended Use of Savings:**

**Note: A savings goal left empty indicates this not part of the participant's savings plan.**

- Repair a car Savings Goal: \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Buy a car Savings Goal: \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Repair a home Savings Goal: \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Make down payment on home Savings Goal: \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Tuition/fees for education or training Savings Goal: \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_ Savings Goal: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Saving Plan—Actual Purchases:**

- Repair a car Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- Buy a car Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- Repair a home Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- Description of home repairs: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- Make down payment on home Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- Tuition/fees for education or training Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- Tuition/fee Payments: \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- List of courses/credits completed: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



**Exercise 1: Identifying Types of Results**

**Directions:** For each exercise, mark the results as output, intermediate outcome, or end outcome.

<b>Community Volunteer Recruitment &amp; Retention</b>	<b>Output</b>	<b>Intermed Outcome</b>	<b>End Outcome</b>
Volunteers participate in service projects.			
Volunteers return to work on additional service projects.			
Volunteers indicate satisfaction with their participation in service projects.			
<b>Individual Development Account (IDA) Program</b>			
IDA program participants use IDA savings to buy an automobile or make down payment on a home.			
People sign up to participate in the Individual Development Account program.			
Workshops conducted to promote IDA program.			
<b>Networking and Collaboration</b>			
Agencies implement coordination plan developed by interagency working group.			
Convene interagency working group to discuss ways to coordinate services to the homeless.			
Agencies report improved coordination in providing services to the homeless.			
<b>Youth Mentoring</b>			
Increase in parent-child connectedness.			
Decrease in juvenile delinquency in the community.			
Recruit youth participants.			
<b>Literacy Program</b>			
Community volunteers recruited and trained to provide in-school literacy tutoring.			
Tutored students improve reading and writing skills.			
Struggling students receive 1-on-1 literacy tutoring.			
<b>Homeland Security—Disaster Preparedness</b>			
Seniors complete personal disaster preparedness plans.			
Community volunteers trained to provide in-home sessions on disaster preparedness to seniors.			
Community volunteers conduct in-home disaster preparedness sessions with seniors.			

## Handout 5: Additional Resources



Below is a list of resources recommended by the Corporation for National and Community Service for developing performance measurements. To access each of the online resources, type the underlined address into the address field of your web browser.

### Web Sites

Center for Accountability and Performance

<http://www.aspanet.org/cap/index.html>

Evaluation Toolkit: A User's Guide to Evaluation for National Service Programs

<http://www.projectstar.org/star/Library/toolkit.html>

Harvard Family Research Project—After School Resources and Publications

<http://www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/afterschool/resources.html>

McAuley Institute

<http://www.mcauley.org>

Measuring Volunteering: A Practical Toolkit

[http://www.independentsector.org/members/media/iyv\\_pr.html](http://www.independentsector.org/members/media/iyv_pr.html)

Online Evaluation Resource Library

<http://oerl.sri.com/>

Project Star

<http://www.projectstar.org>

The Results & Performance Accountability Implementation Guide

<http://www.raguide.org/>

United Way of America, Outcome Measurement Resource Network—Resource Library

<http://national.unitedway.org/outcomes/library/pgmomres.cfm>

Urban Institute Report on the Corporation's performance measurement

<http://www.nationalservice.org/research/outcome.pdf>

W.K. Kellogg Foundation Evaluation Handbook

<http://www.wkkf.org/Pubs/Tools/Evaluation/Pub770.pdf>

W.K. Kellogg Foundation Logic Model Development Guide

<http://www.wkkf.org/Pubs/Tools/Evaluation/Pub3669.pdf>

### Books

Hatry, Harry P. 1999. Performance Measurement: Getting Results. Urban Institute Press: Washington, D.C.

United Way of America. 1996. Measuring Program Outcomes: A Practical Approach. United Way of America:

Alexandria, VA. (To order, call 1-800-772-0008.)

The Corporation also encourages projects, when needed, to seek the help of local or regional professionals to perform and oversee performance measurement activities. This includes the development of a plan that encompasses the collection of and reporting on outcome data that will be used to improve project quality.

**Exercise 2: Logic Model Practice**  
*Directions: Identify one of your project's current goals and practice using a logic model to think through your activities and intended results.*

COMMUNITY NEED →	GOALS →	INPUTS →	SERVICE ACTIVITIES →	OUTPUTS →	INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES →	END OUTCOMES

### Sample: Work Plan Practice

**Directions:** *Using your logic model, fill in the work plan form below. Remember to label your results as “outputs, intermediate outcomes, or end outcomes.”*

<b>Column A</b> <i>Goals, Activities, and Results</i>	<b>Column B</b> <i>Date(s)</i>
Identify <b>Goal(s)</b> to which members' activities are directed.	
<b>Activities:</b> What are the action steps needed to accomplish this goal?	
Identify any <b>Results (outputs, intermediate outcomes, or end outcomes)</b> related to this goal. If the result is to be measured, write “ <b>performance measure</b> ” in parentheses beside the result. For each performance measure, identify the <b>indicator</b> , the <b>targets</b> you expect to meet, the <b>instrument(s)</b> you will use to measure this result, and <b>how you will collect</b> the data. If you have data for this result from prior years, report it here.	

## Performance Measurement Slides

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Slide 1

**Introduction to Performance Measurement for VISTA**

2003 AmeriCorps\*VISTA Supervisors' Training

October 15, 2003

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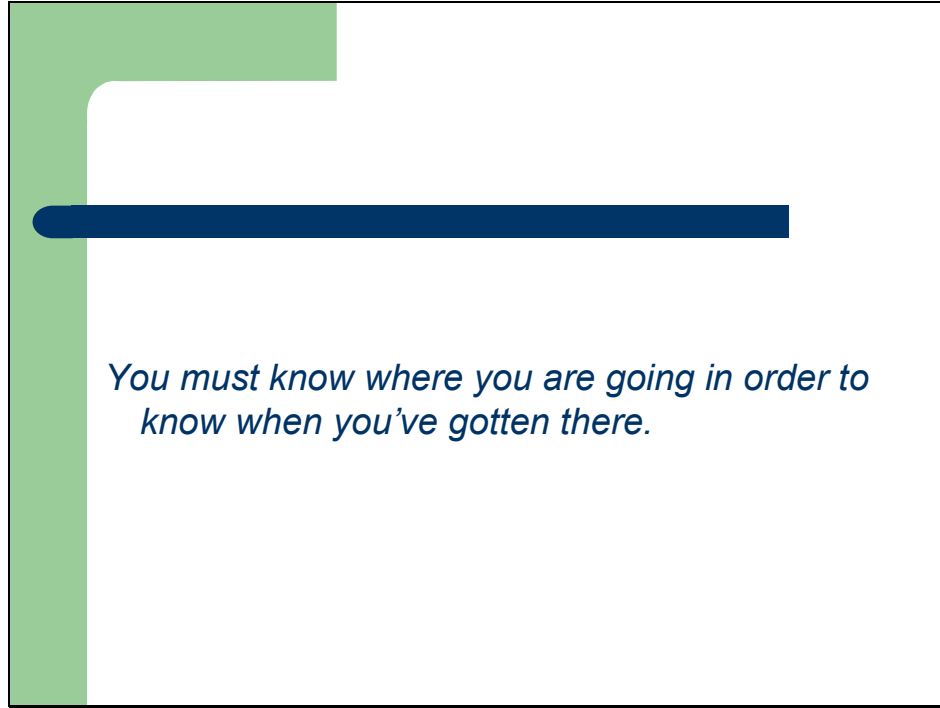
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Slide 2



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Slide 3

**Why Performance Measurement**

The performance measurement expectations were designed in order to:

- Empower organizations to determine their own priorities and how to measure their achievement.
- Increase the capacity of community-based organizations to better analyze the impact of their work and use that analysis for project improvement purposes.
- Generate new and better information to inform the policies, training, and technical assistance provided by AmeriCorps\*VISTA.
- Demonstrate the value and impact of community-based projects and national service to a broad range of stakeholders including local communities, the media, funders, and public officials.

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Slide 4

## VISTA Requirements

Implementation by calendar year 2004 with:

- New Project Applicants
- Existing Sponsors will incorporate new requirements when they begin renewal process.

Application will incorporate performance measurement requirements into Project Work Plan.

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Slide 5

## The Process: Step by Step

1. Organization will complete Project Application.
2. Within Project Work Plan, sponsor will identify: a) goals, b) related activities, c) and intended outputs, intermediate outcomes, and end outcomes.
3. Determine which goal is most critical to the mission and vision of the project and organization. This will be the goal from which the sponsor identifies its performance measures.
4. Develop Performance Measures for that chosen goal from at least:
  - One output
  - One intermediate outcome
  - One end outcome

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# Outputs

<p><b>What are Outputs?</b></p> <p><i>Measures of the <b>number or amount of</b> services delivered, beneficiaries reached, and goods produced.</i></p>	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• # community events held</li><li>• # community volunteers recruited</li><li>• # of participants</li><li>• # services delivered</li></ul>
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## Intermediate-Outcomes

<p><b><i>What are Intermediate-Outcomes?</i></b></p> <p><i>Immediate changes or benefits experienced by service recipients or communities.</i></p>	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Skills</li><li>• Knowledge</li><li>• Awareness</li><li>• Attitudes</li></ul>
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## End-Outcomes

<p><b>What are End-Outcomes?</b></p> <p><i>Significant and lasting changes or benefits experienced by service recipients or communities</i></p>	<p>Examples:</p> <p>Increases in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• employment</li><li>• earnings and assets</li><li>• literacy and graduation</li></ul>
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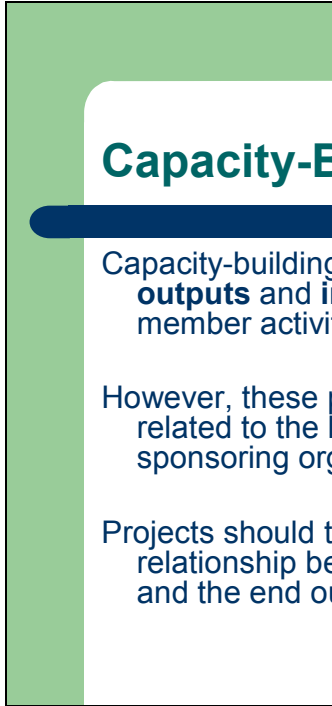
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## Capacity-Building Outcomes

Capacity-building projects should be able to tie their **outputs** and **intermediate outcomes** specifically to member activities.

However, these projects' **end outcomes** should be related to the larger community-level impacts of the sponsoring organization.

Projects should then demonstrate the logical relationship between their capacity-building efforts and the end outcomes described.

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Slide 10

## Capacity-Building Outcomes

### Example: Habitat for Humanity

#### The VISTA Project

Through their work, VISTA members may increase the number of volunteers, raise \$30,000 in donations, and design a new volunteer training program.

#### The Organization

As a result of the VISTA project's contribution, *but also those of other aspects of the organization and/or community*, Habitat increased the number of houses it built in XYZ community in one year from 3 to 6.

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## Categorizing Outcomes

**“People can legitimately disagree over outcome categories. Whether something is classified as an intermediate outcome or end outcome rarely affects the measurement process.”**

***Performance Measurement: Getting Results (1999)***

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## Logic Models

Logic models are a strongly encouraged tool when planning your VISTA project. However, they are not a required piece of the Project Application.

“Basically, a logic model is a systematic and visual way to present and share your understanding of the relationships among the resources you have to operate your program, the activities you plan to do, and the changes or results you hope to achieve.”

– *Kellogg Foundation*

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## Logic Models - Why the Hype?

Communicate with key stakeholders (members, community residents, funders) using a simple graphic representation of key “If/Then” connections.

Easy to show the logical relationships between what your program does (activities), the amount of goods produced and services delivered (outputs), and the impacts you are having (outcomes).

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## Key Components of Logic Models

Moving from left to right traces a cause and effect path through time. Key components of program planning include:

- *Community Need*: The problem or issue in the community that your project will address.
- *Goal*: The broad purpose toward which your project is directed.
- *Inputs*: Resources you will need to meet your goal.
- *Activities*: How your program will use your inputs toward your goal.
- *Outputs, Intermediate Outcomes, and End Outcomes*: as discussed previously.

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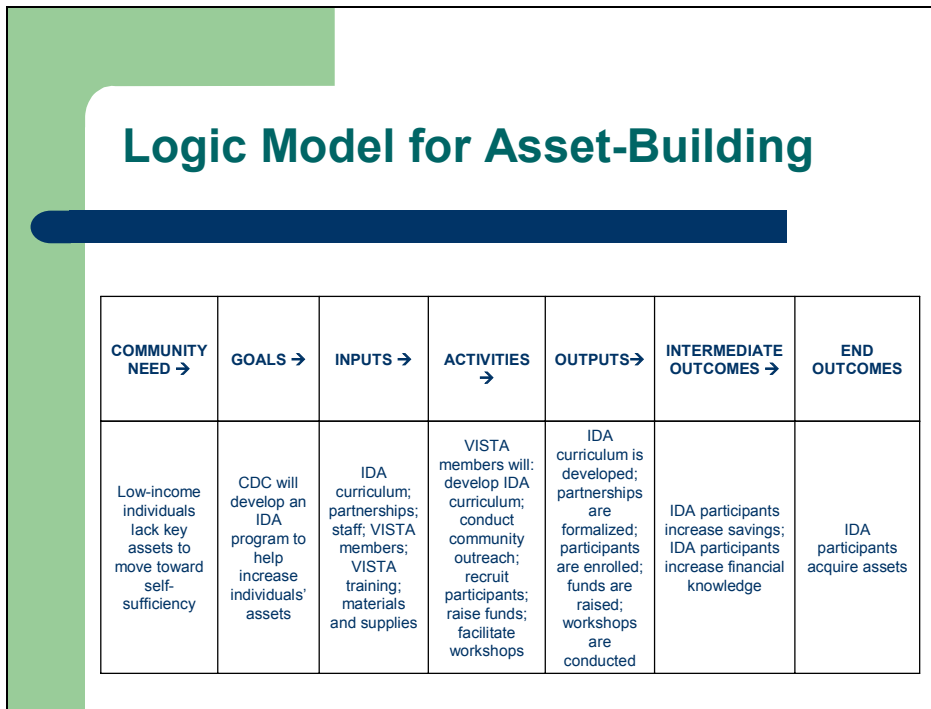
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## Choosing outcomes to report

Your program will likely have many goals. The Corporation requires you to report on performance measures for at least one of these goals.

So how should you choose?

- **You should report on a goal that is central to your mission and vision.**

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## Choosing outcomes to report (continued)

In selecting a goal to report on, you can also consider:

- Does the goal address an area of service in which your organization has significant experience or expertise?
- Does the goal address any of the Corporation's special interest areas for VISTA?

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Slide 18

**How to measure your results**

As programs plan to do performance measurement, they must consider three important issues:

- Indicators
- Instruments, and
- Targets

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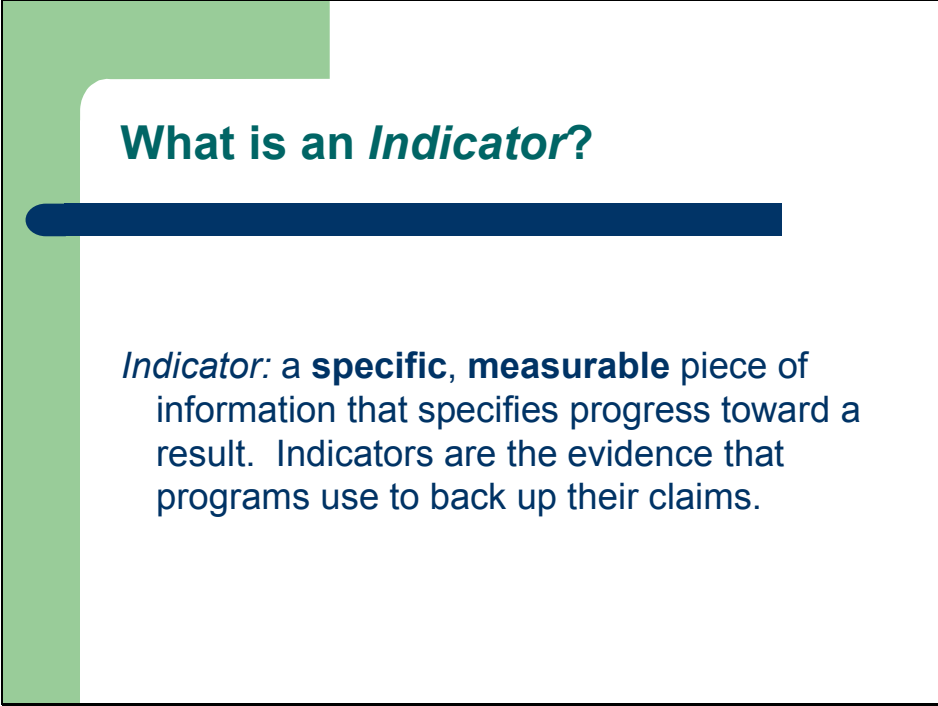
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## What is an *Indicator*?

*Indicator*: a **specific, measurable** piece of information that specifies progress toward a result. Indicators are the evidence that programs use to back up their claims.

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## Choosing an indicator

To identify possible indicators for an outcome, ask yourself:

- “How would I know that this change has occurred?”

To choose a single outcome indicator, ask yourself:

- Does it make sense? Does it seem like a sensible way to measure the outcome?
- Does it completely capture what we mean when we talk about this result?

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Slide 21

## What is an *Instrument*?

*Instrument*: a tool used to collect and measure meaningful data.

Examples:

- Attendance and Activity Log sheets
- Surveys of program participants, organizations, communities or volunteers
- Pre-Tests and Post-Tests

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## What are *Targets*?

*Target:* A specific and quantifiable level of change that you want to attain in order to say that your program was successful. Good targets generally include information on **“how many,”** as well as **“how much”** or **“how long.”**

Examples:

- “60% of participating students will decrease their in-school behavioral incidents by 50%”
- “At least 130 participants contribute to an IDA account on schedule for at least six months.”

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## Final Step

5. Report your progress. Projects will report against their measures as part of their Project Progress Reports to State Offices.

Projects will continue to report on the totality of their Project Work Plan and the achievement of their intended results. Performance measures are just one component of the story.

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## Terms, Conditions and Benefits Slides

# AmeriCorps\*VISTA

## Terms and Conditions of Service



## Financial Support

- ▶ **Subsistence Allowance (a.k.a. Living Allowance)**
- ▶ Approximately 105% of poverty level, adjusted for cost of living in your area.
- ▶ Federal taxes are taken out. State taxes and Social Security (FICA) are not deducted from your living allowance, but you are still responsible for them. Depending on your state, you have to file a state income tax return each year.
  - Paid every two weeks NOT twice a month.
  - Directly deposited into bank account (must complete and return form) or check sent to project address.
  - Not considered income for purpose of unemployment compensation...this isn't a "job."



## Financial Support

- ▶ **Relocation Allowance**
  - For those who must relocate in order to serve.
  - Amount varies by locale and need.
- ▶ **Travel to...**
  - ...pre-service orientation.
  - ...project site.
  - ...home of record at end of service, if CNS relocated you at start of service.



## Financial Support

- ▶ **Earned Income Credit**
  - EIC is an amount AC\*VISTAs may be able to subtract from their taxes. Eligibility is determined by the IRS; please see the IRS' EIC handouts in your PSO materials for more info!
  - If you expect to qualify, you can get the credit in **advance** as part of your allowance checks if you have a **qualifying child**. To get the EIC in advance, you must complete and file a form W-5!
  - **W-5 forms expire in December and must be re-filed with the State Office before December 31st.**
  - Please see page 27 of your Handbook for more detailed information on the EIC or contact your local IRS office.



“Whew! This is a lot of info so far! Are you getting it all?”

I'm T.C. Vista and I'll be popping in and out during the presentation to see how you're doing!

Watch for me!”



## End of Service Options

Ed Award (\$4725) or Stipend (\$1200)

- ▶ You can only choose only one. **You should have turned in your Member Benefits Election Form. If you did not turn this form in by Close of Business, November 5, 2003, then your only End of Service Option is the Cash Stipend.**
- ▶ No partial awards (ed award or stipend) except under very special circumstances.
- ▶ The ed award is taxable WHEN you use it. If you use it all during one tax year, your tax could be significant. Be ready for that or spread your use of the award out over the 7 years you can use it!
- ▶ If you get forbearance on loans under the ed award, interest payments made by CNS are also taxable.



## End Of Service Options

- ▶ When getting the stipend, your student loans can be deferred based on "economic hardship." Contact your lender for the specific forms.
- ▶ Stipends are taxable income.



## Medical Coverage

- ▶ Starts 1st Day of PSO
- ▶ Does not cover conditions diagnosed prior to PSO.
- ▶ Covers only you - not spouse or children.
- ▶ Most prescription drugs are covered, even for pre-existing conditions.
- ▶ Does not cover routine physicals, dental exams or cleanings, vision check-ups.
- ▶ Only dental emergencies are covered: if the condition is painful procedures needed to mitigate that pain will be covered.



## Medical Coverage

- ▶ You pay a \$5 co-pay for each medical office visit. No co-pay for lab work, pharmacy, or dental, but you pay a \$25 fee for using an emergency room without being admitted to the hospital.
- ▶ If you have other insurance, the AmeriCorps plan is primary if you are (1) covered by any other Federal plan (2) a dependent on another plan. This coverage is secondary under all other circumstances.
- ▶ More details are provided in your your health plan booklet that you will receive in the mail. A current copy of the Health Benefit Guide is available online at [www.americorps.sevencorners.com](http://www.americorps.sevencorners.com)
- ▶ Most important thing to remember: Any questions, call 866-699-4186.



## Other Benefits

- ▶ **Life Insurance**
  - ◆ Enrollment is voluntary.
  - ◆ **Premium is deducted from subsistence allowance.**
  - ◆ The current cost is \$2.07 per pay period.
  - ◆ **Can be converted to a private plan at the end of your service.**
  - ◆ Includes access to Lifeworks, an employees' assistance program, which offers information and support on a wide range of issues including work and personal relationships, emotional well-being, grieving and loss, and dealing with a crisis or disasters. Both web and phone assistance is available.



**"As promised, here I am!  
If you know the answer to these questions, raise your hand!"**

- ▶ How many paychecks do you get in one year?
- ▶ Do you have to pay state taxes on your living allowance?"



**GOOD JOB!**

**Stay on your toes!  
I'll be back!**



## Other Benefits

- Income Exclusion from public assistance calculations:** VISTA living allowances cannot be used in calculating benefits for public assistance programs if the VISTA member was eligible for and/or receiving benefits PRIOR to joining VISTA. See page 83 of your Handbook for more info!

*Food Stamps/WIC*                      *SSI*  
*TANF (replaced AFDC)*  
*Assisted Housing*                      *Veteran's*



"Income what?  
 Can anyone explain that  
 in **plain** English?!"



"What about the new  
 Welfare-to-Work rules  
 in each state?"



## Personal Responsibility & Work Opportunity Act of 1996 (Welfare Reform legislation)

- Imposes max. 5-year time limit on receiving cash assistance; some States have decreased that time limit to 2 years.**
- Requires welfare recipients to work, enroll in job training or vocational education programs**

VISTA's income exclusion does NOT stop any State from imposing time limits. Any cash assistance received while in VISTA will count against State's time limits.

Recipients must check with caseworker to make sure VISTA service meets State's requirement.

*In all cases when dealing with welfare officials, identify yourself as a "VISTA," since income disregard provisions DO NOT apply to AmeriCorps.*



"Okay, I get it now.  
 But...hey!  
 What do we do if a  
 caseworker doesn't  
 know about income  
 exclusion?"



## Treasury Offset Program

The Treasury Department has begun implementing a new program aimed at collecting delinquent debt owed to the US.

The program is called the **Treasury Offset Program** and it works by automatically reducing amounts of federal payments made to individuals or companies who are listed in a Treasury database as having delinquent federal debt. The reduced amounts are used to offset the debt.

Travel reimbursements and living allowance payments are subject to reduction if you have federal debt. Please see the flyer in your PSO materials for more information.

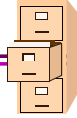


## Financial Support

- For more information... Please refer to Chapter 4 of your AmeriCorps\*VISTA Handbook!**



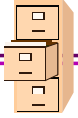
## Administrative Policies



- ▶ **Term of Service:**
  - ◆ 12 months, excluding PSO training
  - ◆ Can serve up to three terms (does NOT apply to AmeriCorps\*State or \*NCCC).
- ▶ **Personal and Medical Leave**
  - ◆ 10 work days personal and 10 work days sick per service year. Additional 5 sick days with SPD approval.
  - ◆ Leave must be approved by project supervisor.
- ▶ **Emergency Leave**
  - ◆ One week for death or critical illness in immediate family; additional time requires State Director approval.
  - ◆ Corporation will pay for round trip transportation.



## Administrative Policies



- ▶ **Educational Courses**
  - ◆ Full-time enrollment **PROHIBITED**
  - ◆ Part-time enrollment in school is **PROHIBITED** with these exceptions:
    - » course is directly related to assignment; OR
    - » course is part of career development plan; OR
    - » enrollment (6 hours or less) required for Pell Grant eligibility
  - ◆ Enrollment in school requires approval from State Director and project supervisor



“So the bottom line is we work part-time for the next 12 months, starting today?”

“Okay! Okay! Full-time, 12 months, starting the day after we swear in. I got it now!”



## Basic Laws and Policies

- ▶ AmeriCorps\*VISTAs are prohibited from providing religious instruction or proselytizing as part of their duties or from serving on projects which do so.
- ▶ AmeriCorps\*VISTAs and project sponsors are prohibited from requesting or receiving any compensation for the services of AmeriCorps\*VISTAs.



“Uh, excuse me? What’s proselytize? Why can’t I do it...whatever it is?”

“Ah. And the compensation part means I can’t accept that \$10,000 signing bonus from my sponsor? What about if they pay my rent for me?”



## Basic Laws and Policies



- ▶ AmeriCorps\*VISTAs are prohibited from participating in political campaigns or voter registration drives, providing transportation to the polls, lobbying and pro- or anti-labor organizing, or taking any action with respect to partisan or nonpartisan political activity while on duty or perceived to be on duty as an AmeriCorps member.
- ▶ Appendix 7 contains a description of these restrictions.








**“You mean I can’t vote?  
Can I even write to my  
Senators or the  
Governor?”**

**“Can anyone else give  
examples of the things  
VISTAs can’t do in terms  
of political activity?”**



**“Ya know, I think I’ve got this  
Terms & Conditions thing  
down. But I always know I  
can go back to my Handbook  
if I have questions.**

**Does anybody have any  
questions before we finish?”**



**“Well then, that’s it! Be sure to  
keep these notes handy during  
your year of service.**

**I hope you didn’t mind me popping  
in, and I hope you have a good  
PSO. And you never know, I  
might have to pop in during one  
of the other presentations.....**

**GOOD LUCK!!”**

