



The Health Disparities Service-Learning Collaborative
*An Initiative of Community-Campus Partnerships for Health Funded by the
Learn and Serve America Program of the Corporation for National and Community Service*

AmeriCorps

HDSLCL Teleconference Call # 10 November 18, 2008

Minutes

Charndrea Leonard is Program Officer for AmeriCorps State and National at the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). Her presentation highlights are below. For more details, see “*AmeriCorps: An Overview*” on the secured HDSLCL webpage (www.depts.washington.edu/ccph/disparities.html, password: servteam) or contact:

1-202-606-7508 (AmeriCorps Question Line)
americorpsnational@cns.gov

The following *AmeriCorps National Grant Programs* may be of particular interest to grantees:

- National Planning Grants (up to \$50K) – a year planning grant that provides funds and technical assistance to an entity planning to become an AmeriCorps program. Only 3-4 awards annually.
- National Direct – provides funds for administrative and AmeriCorps volunteer (AKA member) expenses. This is a 24% match program for Years 1-3, with matches incrementally increasing up to ~50% by Year 10. The program is available to AmeriCorps members at time commitments ranging from full time 1700 hour appointments (provides \$12, 600 living allowance, health insurance funds, education award) to minimum appointments of 300 hours (optional prorated living allowance, education award). Currently, 49 organizations nationwide operate under the Direct Grant Program.
- Professional Corps – provides administrative costs of \$2500/member for professionals (e.g., teachers, health professionals) to work in shortage areas. The 24% match is required.
- Education Award Program - provides administrative costs of \$600/member for recruitment activities (no matching required, no living allowance)

AmeriCorps also offers programs specifically for tribes (see presentation for more details)

Grantees can become involved with AmeriCorps in two ways: as a parent organization with primary fiscal and management responsibilities (10 organizations selected 2008) or as a subgrantee working with an already established parent organization. AmeriCorps programs tend to be administratively intensive so this should be taken into account when considering these programs.

Another program under the AmeriCorps umbrella is **VISTA**, which requires fulltime service (though a summer only appointment is available). This program is less administratively cumbersome (e.g., CNCS handles VISTA health insurance). VISTA focuses more on capacity building (e.g., workforce needs assessment) whereas AmeriCorp is service focused. Contact your Corporation state office (www.americorps.gov) for more information.

Jason Patnosh is National Director of National Association of Community Health Centers, Inc (NACHC) Community HealthCorps program. NARCH covers 1200 community health centers (CHC) nationwide, serving ~8 million people (20% of US low income uninsured, 70% in poverty). Currently the largest healthcare-based AmeriCorps program in the nation, the Community involves CHCs in 17 states, Washington DC and Puerto Rico and is.

HealthCorps volunteers are full time AmeriCorps members and draw from two population bases; local (community members served by the CHC) and national (college students). Members help CHC clients navigate the health care system, establish a medical home, engage in health promotion, and enroll in public health insurance. Community HealthCorps serves as a vital pipeline for HealthCorps volunteers to receive valuable training for future employment in a CHC or other healthcare setting, or to pursue health professional training.

Jason cautioned that AmeriCorps is not designed to duplicate or substitute organizational staff. Also grant administration can be complex and demanding, particularly when running a grant involving both federal and state rules as the parent organization (vrs subcontractee). If only needing a few volunteer, Jason suggested either subcontracting through a parent AmeriCorps organization or using VISTA. Finally, Area Health Educations Centers (AHECs) might be a good place to link public health students and Americorps. For more information about the Community HealthCorps program, Jason has generously offered to be available at Jpatnosh@NACHC.COM

****For a list of other health oriented AmeriCorps programs, please see “*AmeriCorps: An Overview*” at (www.depts.washington.edu/ccph/disparities.html, password: servteam)****