



First Look

Attendees stand for the Pledge of Allegiance during the Annual Awards Celebration.



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↑ The 2016-2017 Application workshop materials will soon be available on the website.

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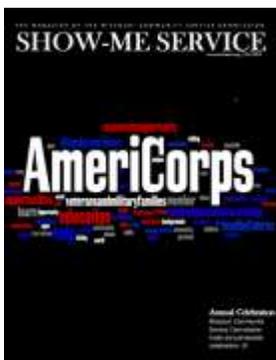
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PHOTO BY
SARAH EHRHARD REID

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PHOTOS FROM: DON STAMPER

School

Amanda Greeno

American Red Cross

When I finally got ready to take my test I froze and forgot everything I learned. The week before I took my test I pulled all my notes and old school work out and studied everything staying up late at night and every free moment I had. I took my test and learned **some things on the test I hadn't studied but put** what I knew in and hoped I got it right. I found the next day I passed. I feel like I should have done this sooner, but am glad I finally got it done now I can continue to move forward and better myself.

Now that I have my GED I plan on going the next step and go to college. AmeriCorps offers a school grant to help pay for college which I hope to use to get me in for my first year.

I have always wanted to write books as a profession so now I have the chance to go to school for it I am going to take it.

I would really like to thank everyone who has helped get me on the right track by offering their support. 

Farming with Computer Skills

Charlie McIntosh

International Institute

Over the past few weeks the farmers have begun selling produce again for the 2015 season. To help the farmers track sales; how much is being sold each week, what is selling the best, etc. I created a few documents for them to use. One is a produce ordering form and it allows the farmers to input exactly what quantities of produce are available each week by highlighting the common name and filling in the amount in pounds or bunches (in the

case of items like kale, collards, etc.). The farmers can then send the ordering form to their buyers and the buyer can fill in exactly what they would like to buy that week. The form automatically calculates the price per item and the total price for that week's order.

Now in order to make this produce order form useful to the farmers, many of whom are refugees with limited experience using computers, I organized one-on-one training sessions to show them how to use the form. I wasn't sure what to expect from the sessions. Would they like the form? Would learning Microsoft EXCEL be overly complicated? Would it actually make their lives easier? A number of these questions were running through my head when I held the first session.

Our one-on-one session started out by me simply demonstrating how to use the produce order form and how to manipulate the cells on an EXCEL spreadsheet. At first we ran into a few challenges, as is to be expected, but as we continued to work together it became clear how we were both learning. At one point the farmer pulled out his new iphone, a big surprise to me, and asked me if he could use the form from his phone. I don't claim to be an expert in apple technology, and this farmer had only gotten the phone in the past week with the idea that it could help him be more efficient. I could see how hopeful he was that this phone might help him manage aspects of his small farming business and I knew I was going to do everything in my power to help him succeed. We toiled through EXCEL files, email accounts, Google Docs/Sheets, iphone apps, and a labyrinth of technical hoops before we got it to start working. The moment he realized that it was working was when he sent me a test email including the produce order form and an example of what he had ready on the farm. The email came through and the order form worked seamlessly. It was a great success! I saw his eyes light up and a genuine "wow" of awe escaped his mouth.

I had never even used an iphone before and here we were making it work together. Across language

barriers and over technical hurdles, we found common ground. We both learned a great deal that day, but more importantly for me at least was to **feel what it's like to say yes to the challenge, to put myself out of my comfort zone and build a bridge for this farmer to begin tackling computer proficiency and so much more.** He was so excited about the produce order form that he asked about more training to learn about how to make his own spreadsheets that will calculate useful information for his farm, avoiding a lot of hand calculation errors that can happen from time to time. 🇺🇸

Service

Candice Ozbun

Purdy R-II School District

AmeriCorps was just another organization to me a year ago. I was not committed to it or involved in it and I really did not know to what extent the Members served the community. However, after becoming an AmeriCorps Member, my eyes were opened to the help and assistance they provide for so many communities. I had planned to serve my time and do some "good things" in the area but I did not realize my time spent as AmeriCorps Member this year would literally become life-altering for me.

This organization is a great asset to communities. In Purdy specifically I have been given the opportunity to serve as a Reading Coach for kindergarten through 4th grades. My eyes have been opened to the needs of the community and the need I found within myself to do what I can to help. Over the previous months we have been given the chance to help in community projects such as painting the playground equipment and worked the recycling center. We have also had the chance to become a **part of the school and these students' lives as we see and work with them on a daily basis.**

AmeriCorps is not just another volunteer project for

me anymore, because of AmeriCorps I have realized my desire to finish my teaching degree and make working with children a permanent opportunity for me to serve and educate in the school setting. I am grateful for the chance I have had to serve in such a great organization as well as all I have learned and the amazing people I have met along the way. I hope to continue on in my plan for service and look forward to the chance that I now have to become an educator thanks to the AmeriCorps organization! 🇺🇸

Volunteers

Danielle Roethler

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Missouri

The mission of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Missouri is to make the lives of children facing adversities better by initiating and monitoring 1-on-1 mentorships. Therefore, when I began my AmeriCorps service for this organization, I expected to help youth in my community and see them grow, which I have. However, before starting, I never really considered the major impact these mentorships also have on our volunteers. While youth development has been and will always be the primary focus of our organization, these relationships truly help our volunteers grow, mature, cope with their own life circumstances, and provide them with insight to the world around them.

My primary responsibility as an AmeriCorps member is to work directly with our volunteers from the point of inquiry up until they get to meet **their "littles" for the first time. Even in early stages** of the match process, I get the privilege of seeing our volunteers grow as they prepare for the responsibilities of their roles. It is amazing to see how direct service can go both ways and everyone involved in the program can truly benefit from their experience. 🇺🇸

AMERICORPS CELEBRATES SERVICE

The Missouri Community Service Commission (MCSC) recognized individuals and organizations who exemplified its mission of strengthening Missouri communities through service and volunteerism. Award recipients, who make impactful contributions to their local communities, were selected by Missouri Community Service Commissioners via a competitive review process of nominations from all across the State of Missouri.

Volunteering in America, a report released by the Corporation for National and Community Service, **proves that “volunteering is a strong component of the fabric of our nation across all generations, enriching our communities and both the lives of those who serve as well as those who are served.” It’s a win-win situation for everyone involved!**

Parallel to the Corporation for National and Community Service’s (CNCS) goal of expanding opportunities for AmeriCorps Members, the MCSC, in partnership with the Monsanto Company, recognized Missouri high school students, who

demonstrated a commitment to community service, by providing each of them with a \$1,000 scholarship for use at an institution of higher learning. The Commissioners and Staff of MCSC expressed gratitude to the Monsanto Company for continuously sponsoring the high school scholarship awards.

In addition to the scholarships, the MCSC recognized the service of dedicated individuals, organizations, and AmeriCorps State and VISTA Members. A special award was presented to the former Chair of the MCSC, Janis VanMeter, for her dedication and commitment to service. For a complete list of all nominations and awardees, see page ten.

The MCSC encourages all Missourians to help make our communities and neighbors safer, smarter, and healthier through volunteerism and service. Everyone can give time, which is undeniably one of the greatest gifts we can give each other.

All award recipients were recognized at the MCSC Annual Celebration of Volunteerism and Service on May 7, 2015 in Jefferson City, MO. 📷

↓ Rotary Club of Pulaski County - Partners ins Service Awardee and Russell Unger - Chair of the MCSC





Clockwise from top right:

- ↑ 1. Craig Cottrell - Representative for Ralph Lambert - Show-Me Service Awardee and Russell Unger - Chair of the MCSC
- ↓ 2. Janis VanMeter - Former Chair & Current Board Member of the MCSC and Russell Unger - Chair of the MCSC
- ↓ 3. Partner in Service and Education Winner, Monsanto - Cheryl Hibbeler - Board Commissioner of the MCSC, Doug Mertens - Monsanto Representative, and Don Stamper - Executive Director of the MCSC
- ← 4. Presidential Service Awardees, Kathleen Becherer - Program Director (AmeriCorps St. Louis), and Russell Unger - Chair of the MCSC
- ← 5. Film Contest Winners, PAVE AmeriCorps - Lizzy Handschy, Rachel Bittman, and Russell Unger, Chair of the MCSC
- ↑ 6. Mission: St. Louis VISTA Umbrella - MLK Day of Service Awardee and Russell Unger - Chair of the MCSC



AMERICORPS CELEBRATES SERVICE

Award Nominees and Winners

High School Scholarship Nominations

Jennifer Albright
Nurudeen Alli
Megan Asbury
Alison Braun
Lauren Buchele
Abigail Cross
*Charles DeYoung***
*Cole Diggins***
Stephen Dow
*Tyler Eads***
*Lukas Erickson***
Tiffany Gilford
Jessica Hahs
Erika Hampton
*Chelsey Henry***
*Trieva (Danielle) James***
Madison Johnson
Crina Krueger
Jesse Liu
Meaghan McGuire
Allison Moser
Allison Muehlfart
Ann Muehlfart
Ashley Nicholson
Braden Niswonge
Tara Pope
*Jacob Reitinger***
*Kelli Sargent***

Bryttanee Savona-Owens
Zachary Sharpe
Rebecca Tensing
Alexius Thomas
KaVan Ward

AmeriCorps VISTA Nominations

Rachel Jonassen-Bittman
*Katie Monsky***

AmeriCorps State Nominations

Katie Dempsey
Jenni Frier
David Hackett
Lizzy Handschy
Toni Hendricks
Norma Houston
Eli Katz
*Sara Levine***
*Mariah Opager***
Danny Poon
Elizabeth Richardson
Sasha Seaton

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day Nominations

*Mission: St. Louis VISTA Umbrella***
Waynesville AmeriCorps VISTA

Partners in Service and Education

*Monsanto***

Partners In Service Nominations

Bland Family Foundation
River City Robots
*Rotary Club of Pulaski County***
Shelter Partners: Emmanuel
Episcopal, Our Lady of Sorrows,
Salvation Army and Mercy
*St. Louis Venture Partners***

Show-Me Nominations

Lori & Adam Brok
*Ralph Lambert***
Sarah Parker
John Rooks

President's Service Awardees

Kelly Barber
Daniel Burch
Chelsea Catalano
Zoe Jennings
Sean Kerr
Austin Menning
Dalton Olson
Michael Rood

*Winners are denoted in italics with ***

Clockwise from top right:

1. AmeriCorps State Service Awardee-Katie Dempsey, Russell Unger - Chair of the MCSC and Don Stamper, Executive Director of the MCSC
2. Doug Mertens - Monsanto Representative, Representative Bill Reiboldt, Chelsey Henry - MCSC/ Monsanto Scholarship Recipient, Don Stamper - Executive Director of the MCSC
3. AmeriCorps VISTA Service Awardee- Katie Monsky and Russell Unger, Chair of the MCSC
4. Doug Mertens - Monsanto representative, Representative Patricia Pike, Cole Diggins - MCSC/ Monsanto Scholarship Recipient, Senator Ed Emery, and Don Stamper, Executive Director of the MCSC
5. AmeriCorps State Service Awardee- Mariah Opager, and Russell Unger - Chair of the MCSC
6. AmeriCorps State Service Awardee-Sara Levine



AmeriCorps

What's New With You?

For the 2016-2017 program year, there are several expansions of service, including three new programs, and expansion of service area for others. The MCSC interviewed the programs as a part of a new series, "What's new with you?".

Metropolitan Lutheran Ministry-Kansas City, MO

What's your name and title?

Starla Brennan, Operations Director

Who is Metro Lutheran Ministry?

Founded in 1971, Metro Lutheran Ministry (MLM) is a social service agency with a mission to affirm the right of all people to food, clothing and shelter, while promoting self-sufficiency and hope through direct services and client advocacy. MLM serves disadvantaged people of all races, nationalities and religions in the urban areas of Jackson, Clay and Platte counties in Missouri, and Wyandotte county in Kansas.

Why did Metro Lutheran Ministry apply for an AmeriCorps grant?

MLM strongly believes in the same tenets as the AmeriCorps program whereby, through service, we might help our low-income communities become stronger, safer and more resilient. We admire those Members who serve and wish to provide an exciting opportunity for them as they **fulfill their pledge to "get things done for America."**

What activities will your Members do?

Members will help case managers and their clientele create budgets, acquire traditional banking tools, become educated about their credit, and manage cash flow. They will help unemployed and underemployed clients successfully undertake their job search and provide assistance with resumes, job applications,

computer basics, prospecting for job leads and setting employment goals. They will help our elderly home owners remain in their homes by coordinating minor home repairs related to safety and security. They will help our families stretch their dollar by teaching cooking practices and gardening skills that promote health and frugality.

What is one thing you want people to know about your program?

Programs at MLM are designed to help families and individuals stabilize their situation and develop a plan to help them prosper in the future. We do this by offering help with job placements, financial literacy and other tools that affect a households bottom line. Low and moderate income families face a number of difficult challenges such as finding affordable transportation and housing, lowering utilities, and keeping their kids in school. The families that we serve are searching for a path that can lead them to greater stability and prosperity and we coach them about their choices along that journey.

Why do you think people should care about national service?

As John Donne observed:

**"No man is an island,
Entire of itself,
Every man is a piece of the continent,
A part of the main."**

National Service fosters a recognition of that sentiment. By recognizing that everyone is part of a whole, National Service allows for people to become invested in their communities and country. Furthermore, National Service allows

more people to be served more efficiently and with less money in times of need. For these reasons, **National Service helps one's community and country** to grow stronger and better. 

The Literacy Lab-Kansas City, MO

What's your name and title?

Sarah Reape, Program Manager

Who is Literacy Lab?

The Literacy Lab is a non-profit organization providing low-income children individualized reading instruction in order to improve their literacy, leading to greater success in school and increased opportunities in life.

Why did Literacy Lab apply for an AmeriCorps grant?

Sparked by a former tutor who moved to Kansas City, The Literacy Lab, based in DC, saw great need and opportunity in Missouri. The majority of Missouri children in high-needs schools are at risk for failing to achieve basic reading proficiency by grade 3. Throughout the past year, The Literacy Lab was connected with several education agencies and public school systems, who demonstrated a strong will and commitment to bring our services to children in Kansas City. With collaborations already in place, MCSC funding provided the final and critical boost needed to launch our program in Missouri.

What activities will your Members do?

Our Corps Members receive rigorous training to implement the Missouri Reading Corps program, a replication of the nationally-recognized Minnesota Reading Corps. Members serve full time in preschool and elementary schools and provide data-driven literacy interventions to children from age 3 to grade 3.

What is one thing you want people to know about your program?

Missouri Reading Corps Members have a wide variety of experience, with backgrounds in education, arts, theatre, languages, law, science, military, and previous AmeriCorps service.

Why should people care about national service? National service connects people who desire to initiate change in their communities with the opportunities and support to do so. AmeriCorps is a transformative experience for both those serving and those served. 

Missouri River Communities Network-Statewide

What's your name and title?

The title of our program is: The Missouri Healthy Food AmeriCorps Program

Who is Missouri River Communities Network?

The Missouri River Communities Network is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that was created in 1994. The MRCN Mission is to support community building by identifying resources, organizing, and providing technical assistance with a focus on food security and sustainable development in and around the Missouri River Valley.

Why did your program decide to expand?

Our program decided to expand because during the first year with five AmeriCorps Members (2014-2015) programming around healthy food activities with outdoor classroom garden nutrition education, we had several organizations that contacted us indicating that they wanted to know how they could become a sponsor for AmeriCorps Members to serve with their organization. So we worked with three additional organizations to sponsor five additional AmeriCorps Members.

What activities do your Members do?

Our AmeriCorps Members are all performing service related to educating primarily younger students

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MCSC Continues Partnership with Missouri Broadcasters Association

The Missouri Community Service Commission (MCSC) has been working with the Missouri Broadcasters Association (MBA) for over ten years.

The MCSC participates in the Missouri Public Education Program (MO-PEP), allowing the Commission to promote national service through TV and radio. The MBA guarantees a 4-to-1 return on investment; meaning, for every dollar invested, the MBA ensures the MCSC receives at least four dollars of advertising time.

According to the MBA website, “Members of the

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about growing health food, and harvesting, preparing and eating food that they have grown themselves. Five of our members are coordinating activities with students in outdoor garden classrooms that are located on local public school properties (Southern Boone Learning Garden, Green Thumb in Kirksville, Healthy Dent County in Salem, and Kansas City Community Gardens). Two of our sponsoring organizations are located on “**urban farm education sites**” where they are performing outdoor garden education with students who travel to the urban farm location to learn about growing food, (Columbia Center for Urban Agriculture in Columbia and EarthDance in Ferguson). AmeriCorps Members are also making educational presentations to groups of students.

What is one thing you want people to know about your program?

We are working with local school districts to teach young students where food comes from, how they can grow food, understand that fresh food tastes good and that they can enjoy healthy food for the rest of their lives.

Missouri Broadcasters Association support the association by participating in the Missouri Public Education Program (MO-PEP). MO-PEP participants donate air time, which the association sells as a non-commercial sustaining announcement.”

The MBAS is a Membership organization that “since 1948 the has worked to ensure that the best interests of broadcasters are well represented before the appropriate state and federal legal, legislative, and regulatory bodies.” 

Why do you think people should care about national service?

National service is a good deal for everyone who participates. For the sponsoring non-profit National Service is able to help small organizations source inexpensive human resources to address very difficult issues in local communities. For the communities where AmeriCorps Members are located, National Service provides human resources to address community issues at a very reasonable price. To the AmeriCorps Member themselves, National Service provides them with the opportunity to gain valuable experience that they can use in their professional career. And it also is a great way for young people to pay off some of their students loans, which in this day is a huge advantage. 

→ From Left to Right, Eric Liu, CNCS Board Member; Lori Brok, Director of Operations, AmeriCorps St. Louis; Sara Levine, Former AmeriCorps Member.

→ From Left to Right, Brittany Packnett, Executive Director, Teach for America St. Louis (TFA-STL); Eric Liu, CNCS Board Member; Colleen Smith, Director of Development, TFA-STL; and Don Stamper, Executive Director, Missouri Community Service Commission

CNCS Board Member Visits St. Louis

Eric Liu, Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) Board Member, visited the St. Louis and Ferguson areas to **obtain a better sense of national service's** impact within these cities and the role of national service in regards to communities in crisis.

During his visit, he met with Don Stamper, Executive Director of the Missouri Community Service Commission (MCSC). Together they spoke with MCSC sub-grantee, Teach for America (TFA) about the specific impact TFA has had on St. Louis City and County. He also toured Ferguson to see areas effected and get a feel for the Ferguson community culture. His visit concluded with a trip to AmeriCorps St Louis Headquarters where he learned about the activities and impact of AmeriCorps St. Louis.

According to the CNCS website, **“Eric Liu is the founder and CEO of Citizen University, and Director of the Aspen Institute Citizenship and American Identity Program. He previously was Vice President of Corporate Communications at RealNetworks from 2000 to 2002. From 1999 to 2000, he served as Deputy Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy at the White House. Mr. Liu served as Speechwriter and Director of Legislative Affairs for the National Security Council at the White House from 1993 to 1994. Mr. Liu received a B.A. from Yale University and a J.D. from Harvard Law School.”**

Mr. Liu was nominated for the CNCS board on Jan. 8, 2015; and his term expires Dec. 27, 2017. 



SHOW-ME SERVICE

Missouri Community Service Commission
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UPCOMING DATES

October 16, 2015
National Swearing In Day

October
Program Director Webinar
Details to Follow

November 4, 2015
Notice of Intent to Apply for New Applicants

November 19-20, 2015
Mandatory Grant Application Workshop
Details to Follow

For additional details regarding funding opportunities for 2016-2017 , please visit www.movolunteers.org.

MCSC VISION: To strengthen Missouri communities through volunteerism and service.

AmeriCorps engages more than 80,000 Americans in intensive service each year at nonprofits, schools, public agencies, and community and faith-based groups across the country. Since the program's founding in 1994, more than 800,000 AmeriCorps Members have contributed more than 1 billion hours in service across America while tackling pressing problems and mobilizing millions of volunteers for the organizations they serve.

The Missouri Community Service Commission (MCSC) is located within the Missouri Department of Economic Development. Its mission is to connect Missourians of all ages and backgrounds in an effort to improve unmet community needs through direct and tangible service. The MCSC serves as the administrator for AmeriCorps State funding in Missouri by awarding monetary grants and providing technical assistance and support to its sub-grantees.

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