

# Iowa AmeriCorps State of Promise Program



- \* *Caring Adults*
- \* *Safe Places*
- \* *A Healthy Start*
- \* *Marketable Skills*
- \* *Opportunities to Serve*

## Member Handbook

2008-2009 Edition

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/4h/AmeriCorps/>

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## SECTION I: WELCOME

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### *History of Iowa's Promise*

The Iowa AmeriCorps State of Promise Program is a unique partnership between AmeriCorps and Iowa's Promise: **ensuring the success of our children and youth**. Iowa's Promise is a state level initiative of America's Promise. America's Promise was founded after the Presidents' Summit for America's Future in 1997 where Presidents George H.W. Bush, Carter, Clinton, and Ford, with Nancy Reagan representing President Reagan, challenged the country to make children and youth a national priority. The mission of America's Promise is to mobilize people from every sector of American life to build the character and competence of youth and ensure that all young people have access to the five fundamental resources they need to succeed. Those Promises are:

- ❖ **Caring Adults:** Every youth ought to be connected to an ongoing relationship with a caring adult;
- ❖ **Safe Places:** Youth need safe places with structured activities during non-school hours;
- ❖ **A Healthy Start:** Youth must be empowered with a healthy start in life and continually empowered to make wise choices for a healthy future;
- ❖ **Marketable Skills:** Young people should be given marketable skills through effective education;
- ❖ **Opportunities to Serve:** Every youth needs opportunities to give back through community service.

On December 13, 2004, Iowa's then Governor Thomas Vilsack accepted recognition from America's Promise designating Iowa as a State of Promise for children and youth. Iowa received this designation based on an action plan designed by representatives from the Iowa Collaboration for Youth Development and Community Empowerment. This plan outlined Iowa's strategy to fulfill identified objectives of Iowa's Promise. One of those strategies was developing a governor-initiated AmeriCorps program to assist communities in forming or enhancing youth and early childhood collaborations in support of the 5 Promises.

The strategy of Iowa's Promise is to mobilize all members and sectors of our state to build the character and competence of children and youth by fulfilling the Five Promises of America's Promise. The Iowa State of Promise AmeriCorps members play a valuable role in their communities by communicating a powerful message to all Iowans about the importance and value of providing children and youth with the services, opportunities, and supports they need to become successful and contributing adults.

### *Iowa AmeriCorps State of Promise Program*

Consequently, starting in 2005, in collaboration with Iowa's Promise and the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service, Iowa State University Extension's 4-H Youth Development Program began hosting the Iowa AmeriCorps State of Promise Program. The program is part of the National Service Network administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) ([www.nationalservice.org](http://www.nationalservice.org)). Established by an act of Congress in 1993, CNCS is dedicated to engage Americans in "seasons of service" and supports a range of national and community service projects. The Corporation focuses on four objectives: getting things done with results-orientated projects, strengthening community spirit, encouraging responsibility among residents, and expanding economic opportunities. There is a congruent fit between the Corporation's programming objectives and the mission of the Iowa AmeriCorps State of Promise Program. The Iowa AmeriCorps State of Promise Program's mission is to offer support and training throughout Iowa to actively engage communities in providing youth with caring adults, safe

places, a healthy start, marketable skills, and opportunities to serve, thereby creating communities where children and youth thrive.

To achieve these results, the Iowa State University Extension 4-H Office coordinates activities of AmeriCorps members serving in a variety of urban and rural communities across the state. The AmeriCorps members lead efforts to recruit and mobilize volunteers for a variety of educational activities and programs, coordinate community youth leadership initiatives, develop new partnerships between private organizations and youth-serving programs, and design and develop long-term community service projects. The AmeriCorps members are placed in various agencies, organizations, and institutions (government, faith-based, non-profit, school, and community-based) that focus on providing at least one of the Five Promises of the America's Promise framework.

### ***Program Partners***

The following stakeholders play an important role in supporting a high quality AmeriCorps program as funding streams, visionaries, and resource providers:

- **The Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service (ICVS)** promotes volunteerism and community service throughout the state of Iowa. ICVS is the state level partner of Iowa AmeriCorps programs.
- **The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS)** allocates funding to each state volunteer commission to operate AmeriCorps programs in that state. CNCS is the federal level partner of Iowa AmeriCorps programs. In conjunction with oversight from CNCS, each state commission administers their own AmeriCorps programs. ICVS administers the AmeriCorps\*State programs operating in Iowa. Since 1994, more than 2,700 Iowans have qualified for AmeriCorps education awards totaling more than \$9,500,000.
- **The Iowa Collaboration for Youth Development (ICYD)**, the state level backbone of **Iowa's Promise**, has adopted the America's Promise framework to communicate a consistent and powerful message to Iowans regarding the importance and value of providing children and youth with the services, opportunities, and supports young people need to succeed in life.
- **Iowa's Promise**, designation accepted by then Governor, Thomas Vilsack in December, 2004, adopting the strategy to mobilize all members and sectors of our state to build the character and competence of children and youth by fulfilling the Five Promises of America's Promise.

During the 2008-2009 AmeriCorps program year, 20 full-time and 18 half-time AmeriCorps members will serve in 19 statewide urban and rural community-based sites including school districts, community foundations, volunteer centers, Department of Corrections satellite programs, faith-based organizations, and non-profit youth serving organizations, to assist with the development of programming and services applicable to the AmeriCorps program's goals and objectives (caring adults, safe places, healthy start/future, marketable skills, and opportunities to serve). Specifically, AmeriCorps members will be hosted by the following community host sites:

Centerville Community Schools  
Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque  
Davenport Community Schools  
Adair County Extension Office/Nodaway Valley  
Community Schools  
Horizon After School Program (Marble Rock)  
Monroe County Extension District  
Youth & Shelter Services (Ames)  
The Ottumwa Teen Center  
Mahaska Community Recreation Foundation

Lutheran Services in Iowa (Waverly)  
Pottawattamie Alliance for Youth  
United Action for Youth (Iowa City)  
Rockford Visions After-School Program  
Maquoketa Community School District  
CCIA: Youth Leadership Program (Cedar  
Rapids)  
Iowa Council of Foundations (Des Moines)  
Wayne Community School District  
Iowa State 4-H E-SET

## **SECTION II: TERM OF SERVICE**

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### ***A Member's Term of Service***

A member's term of service can begin on September 1, 2008 and run through August 31, 2009. A full-time member agrees to serve a minimum of 1,700 hours within one full year. This will take an average of 40 hours/week over a 42.5 week period. A half-time member agrees to serve a minimum of 900 hours within one full year. This will take an average of 20 hours/week over a 45 week period. It is the member's responsibility to communicate and work with the site supervisor and Program Director to complete this commitment within one year. This term of service may be extended, in writing, by the member and the program for the following reasons:

1. The member's service has been suspended due to compelling personal circumstances as described in Section III.
2. The member's service has been terminated, but a grievance procedure has resulted in reinstatement.
3. The member has not received one year to complete the contracted hours; the member began their term of service after September 1, 2008 but before November 30, 2008.

Regardless of changes in dates, members must complete their contracted service hours - not including vacation, holiday, or sick days - to qualify for an education award. **A maximum of 20% of the hours served may be spent on training, education, or other similar approved activities.**

The member is responsible for scheduling days off with the site supervisor and should provide a minimum of two weeks notice before asking for any personal days. The member will not be required to serve on observed holidays at the host site. Members may be excused for illness but are still required to notify the site supervisor as soon as possible before scheduled hours.

### ***Rewarding Service Opportunities***

In agreeing to place an Iowa State of Promise AmeriCorps Program member, a host site organization agrees to provide an opportunity for direct and meaningful service for the member. Members should be able to learn about themselves and the work of the organization. The activities of the member should allow for personal growth and learning about the community.

Organizations must provide adequate supervision of the member in order to facilitate the learning and growth described above. An environment should be established that challenges the member to fulfill the four-part mission of AmeriCorps as outlined in Section I of this handbook. The site supervisor will provide information, orientation, guidance, and support necessary to contribute to the organization's programs and for the member to experience personal and professional growth.

### ***Second Term Eligibility***

A second term of service should not be considered a member's right or entitlement. To be eligible for a second term of service with the Iowa AmeriCorps State of Promise Program:

- Members must receive satisfactory performance reviews and demonstrate an expanded scope of responsibility at the host site;
- Members must complete the required number of service hours within 12 months from their enrollment date;
- Members may complete a letter of application stating reasons for consideration for a second term of service and list accomplishments during their first term of service;
- Funds must be secured by the Iowa AmeriCorps State of Promise Program through the Corporation for National and Community Service and the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service

**Merely meeting the above criteria, however, does not guarantee selection or placement.**

## SECTION III: MEMBER BENEFITS

### *Member Benefits: Full-Time & Half-Time*

	Full-Time Members	Half-Time Members
<b>Living Allowance</b>	For a <b>Full-time</b> member, a monthly living allowance of <b>\$950</b> (pre-tax) is issued via direct deposit on the last service/working day of the month.	For a <b>Half-time</b> member a monthly living allowance of <b>\$475</b> (pre-tax) is issued via direct deposit on the last service/working day of the month.
<b>Education Award Stipend</b>	Upon successful completion of <b>1,700 hours</b> of service, AmeriCorps members qualify for a <b>\$4,725</b> education award in the form of a voucher.  The <b>education award</b> can be used up to seven years after the completion of a member's term of service to repay qualified student loans or to pay toward the cost of attending a Title IV institution of higher education. The award is considered taxable income in the year(s) used. Members can receive a maximum of two education awards during their lifetime.	Upon successful completion of <b>900 hours</b> of service, AmeriCorps members qualify for a <b>\$2,362.50</b> education award in the form of a voucher.
<b>Student Loans</b>	Members may qualify for <b>forbearance</b> on the repayment of qualified student loans during their term of service. Members may request this benefit by opening a My AmeriCorps account on the AmeriCorps website. Additionally, if the member has received forbearance on a qualified student loan during their term of service, the National Service Trust may repay a portion or all of the interest that accrued on the loan during the member's term of service. The member may apply for Interest Accrual online through the My AmeriCorps account at the end of their term of service. Interest payments will be sent to the member's loan holders.	
<b>Health Insurance</b>	<b>Full-time</b> members who do not have adequate health care coverage at the time of enrollment or who lose coverage due to participation in the program are eligible for basic AmeriCorps healthcare insurance. The coverage is at no cost to members; dependents are not covered.	<b>Half-time</b> members who do not have health care coverage can enroll in the AmeriCorps health care program. Half-time members, however, are responsible for paying the monthly health care premium; dependents are not covered.
<b>Childcare Subsidy</b>	<b>Full-time</b> members with eligible dependents may receive financial assistance for childcare during their term of service. The specific amount of assistance is based on state income guidelines. The member's family must first be income-eligible, and the child(ren)'s caregiver must be considered a legal provider in the state.	<b>Not available for Half-time Members</b>
<b>Training</b>	Members receive AmeriCorps pre-service and on-site <b>orientations</b> in addition to the opportunity to attend the Governor's Conference on Volunteer Service, statewide AmeriCorps retreats, and local level trainings/workshops deemed useful by both the program and host site.	

## *Training Opportunities*

Supervisors must allow members time away from the host site to attend all official Iowa State of Promise AmeriCorps Program trainings and retreats. Attendance at trainings is mandatory.

Iowa State of Promise AmeriCorps Program training minimally consists of:

1. Two, 2-day trainings at the Iowa State University Extension 4-H Office held in December and April
2. Two, 2-day statewide leadership trainings sponsored by the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service held in October and May
3. Four, one-day local-level sponsored trainings

The Iowa State of Promise AmeriCorps Program covers all expenses related to attending statewide Iowa AmeriCorps State of Promise Program-sponsored trainings (transportation, lodging accommodations, meals, materials).

**Please note that training and professional development opportunities cannot exceed 20% of a member's total yearly contracted service hours.**

## SECTION IV: ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

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### *Site Supervisor Roles and Responsibilities*

Site supervisors will play a variety of roles as members complete their term as with AmeriCorps. The site supervisor will:

- be the primary/daily point of contact for you during the member's term of service;
- assist in training and orienting the member to the host site and community;
- provide ongoing advising and mentoring during the member's term of service;
- provide professional development opportunities for the member

One of the Iowa AmeriCorps State of Promise Program objectives is to provide members a variety of opportunities for professional and personal development. The member, in turn, provides opportunities for the host organization to build capacity in order to offer increased services and programming for children and youth. Quality supervision and mentorship is critical in helping to maximize the benefits of service for members and their host organization. The supervisor should:

- ❖ Provide ongoing supervision through regularly scheduled meetings with the member (meet a minimum of 1x/week);
- ❖ Review member's service position descriptions to address the program's performance measurement objectives;
- ❖ Maintain open communication;
- ❖ Identify and document member training needs and opportunities for professional development;
- ❖ Involve the member in appropriate staff meetings, retreats, and training events;
- ❖ Provide direct and honest feedback on all aspects of a member's performance on a regular basis - positive aspects as well as areas in need of strengthening.

### *Reviewing Member Service Position Descriptions*

Outlining and reviewing specific service expectations with the site supervisor upon arrival, and revisiting at regular intervals, ensures that both member and site supervisor have a clear understanding of what the member should accomplish over the course of his/her 12-month term of service. The goal is for the member to have, and feel a sense of ownership in his/her service plan for the year. In order to facilitate this:

- review specific AmeriCorps roles and responsibilities for the service year as outlined in the member's service position description;
- establish goals and objectives for program success;
- plan projects, tasks, and assignments throughout the year allowing the member to develop and exercise leadership;
- communicate/meet on a regular and consistent basis with the supervisor regarding projects and the attainment of goals and objectives;
- revisit roles and responsibilities periodically and revise if necessary (please inform Program Director of any changes)

**Please note that members' service hours may NOT include clerical work, research, or fundraising unless such activities are directly related to an AmeriCorps project/event and one of the program's performance measurement objectives; fundraising cannot exceed 10% of a member's total yearly contracted service hours. In addition, AmeriCorps members' service hours may not include hours that fulfill the needs of another employee that is out on leave.**

## ***Feedback on Member Performance***

Site supervisors play a crucial role in fostering a member's professional and personal development. As a manager and mentor, supervisors have the ability to observe performance and provide feedback regarding what the member does well, what skills are needed to develop further, and what future career/educational paths the member might want to explore. Given this critical role, the program has the following expectation regarding appraisal of a member's performance:

- The member should be evaluated after six months (or mid-term) of service and at the end of the service year. Supervisors must use the Iowa AmeriCorps State of Promise Program's Member Performance Appraisal form. A member's six-month and final performance appraisal and the Member Evaluation Acknowledgement, with original signatures, must be sent to the Program Director. The member should maintain a copy for their file.
- The evaluation should provide a summary of the feedback given to the member over time. It should not contain any surprises.

## ***Rules of Conduct for Members***

The member is expected, while acting in an official capacity as an AmeriCorps member, to at all times:

1. Demonstrate mutual respect toward others;
2. Follow supervisor directions and work on assignments in a reliable and conscientious manner;
3. Follow all policies and procedures of the host site organization;
4. Keep accurate weekly time records that are checked and signed by the site supervisor and forwarded to the Iowa AmeriCorps State of Promise Program Director by the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month for the previous month of service

At no time may the member:

1. Engage in any activity that involves proselytizing or assisting religious activities, including influencing legislation or an election, aiding a partisan political organization, helping or hindering union activity, or aiding a for-profit business;
2. Engage in verbal or physical conduct which harasses, disrupts, or interferes with another's performance or which creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile environment;
3. Engage in conduct which sexually harasses others;
4. Engage in any activity that is illegal under local, state, or federal law;
5. Engage in activities that pose a significant safety risk to others.

## ***Violation of Behavioral Expectations and Corresponding Discipline Actions***

Well-established service position descriptions, ongoing supervision, and performance appraisals should lead to a sound relationship between AmeriCorps members and supervisors. There may be times, however, when more direct and documented feedback is required regarding member conduct or performance. If things seem irresolvable, the Program Director, site supervisor, and member must work collectively to determine solutions to address the challenges.

Minimally, when a site supervisor experiences an issue of conflict with an AmeriCorps member, the supervisor should follow the progressive discipline steps detailed below:

- **Step 1:** Speak to the member about the issue and call the AmeriCorps Program Director to inform of the situation. The Program Director may be able to help resolve the issue. Create a note with a description of what was said and done for the member's file and share the written description with the Program Director.

- **Step 2:** Give a verbal warning to the member, clearly describing the problem and steps necessary for improvement. Document the conversation by creating a note for the member’s file. Please share a written description with the Program Director.
- **Step 3:** If the problem persists, give a written warning describing the behavior. In this written warning, describe the steps the member must make that are necessary for improvement. The supervisor should also describe procedures taken if behavior does not improve. This could include a suspension from service after consulting with the Program Director. Please share a written description with the Program Director.
- **Step 4:** If there is still no improvement in the member’s behavior, the member may be released from his/her service term for cause after the Program Director has been notified. The Program Director and site supervisor both must concur that release for cause is appropriate.

### ***Release from Service & Grievance Procedure***

If challenges with an AmeriCorps member’s performance are still unresolved after completing appropriate conflict resolution strategies as detailed above in the Violation of Behavioral Expectations and Corresponding Discipline Actions section, please contact the Program Director immediately to further discuss the situation. Host sites cannot independently terminate AmeriCorps members - this procedure must be facilitated through the Program Director.

Members may be released for two reasons - for “cause” or for “compelling personal circumstances.”

- **“Cause”** is defined as violating the rules of conduct, dropping out of the program without obtaining a release, being charged with a felony or the sale or distribution of a controlled substance, or any other serious breach that in the judgment of the Program Director, undermines the effectiveness of the program.
- **“Compelling personal circumstances”** include, but are not limited to, events such as the member acquiring a serious illness or injury that makes completing his/her term of service impossible, illness or death of an immediate family member, or being drafted by the Armed Services.

**Relocation, acceptance to a college or university, or the acceptance of an employment offer (other than a “welfare to work” offer) DO NOT constitute a compelling personal circumstance.**

The member

ceases to receive benefits under the program when discontinuing his/her term of service due to compelling personal circumstances. If, however, the member has completed at least 15% of their required service hours, the member may receive a prorated portion of the education award, loan forbearance, and interest accrual payments.

In the event an AmeriCorps member is released for cause, the member may contest the program’s decision by filing a grievance. If informal efforts to resolve disputes are unsuccessful, members can seek resolution through a grievance procedure including an opportunity for a hearing and binding arbitration. This process may include an alternative dispute resolution process such as mediation. Please refer to the Iowa AmeriCorps State of Promise Program’s Grievance Policy for detailed information.

## SECTION V: MAINTAINING MEMBER TIME

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Members are responsible for completing weekly timesheets and submitting them to their site supervisor. The supervisor is responsible for verifying the accuracy of and signing a member's weekly timesheets. The Iowa State of Promise AmeriCorps Program's timesheet is important for the following reasons.

1. Timesheets help monitor a member's service hours and ensures the member is on track to complete the required number of service hours necessary to receive an educational award.
2. Timesheets provide an accurate record of service when the Corporation for National Service makes an appeal to Congress for refunding.
3. Timesheets provide an accurate record of service in the event of a federal or state audit.

### *FAQs on Timesheets*

#### Do all member need to complete timesheets?

Yes, all members are required to complete the Iowa State of Promise AmeriCorps Program's weekly timesheets and submit the timesheets to the Program Director on a monthly basis. Timesheets must be returned to the Program Director by the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month for the previous month of service.

#### Who completes the timesheets?

Members are responsible for completing timesheets and submitting them to the site supervisor for approval.

#### Who signs the timesheets?

Site supervisors are responsible for verifying the accuracy of and signing and dating a member's timesheets. Members must also sign and date their timesheets.

#### How often are timesheets required?

Timesheets are required once a month. Each timesheet covers one week of service, beginning on Monday and ending on Sunday. When the monthly service period has ended, members must **mail** the **original** signed timesheets to the Program Director and keep a copy for reference. There must be no scratch-outs, white-outs, or other errors on the timesheets. Please ensure the accuracy of the timesheets.

#### What constitutes a COMPLETED timesheet?

A timesheet is considered complete when it has all of the following components:

- Indicates clearly the days being reported - must type in the exact dates each week;
- Includes as "Direct Service" only those hours members spend in service and NOT lunch, training, vacation, holidays, sick days or other time off;
- Has all "Training" hours listed separately but included in the total hours of service;
- Has all "Fundraising" hours listed separately but included in the total hours of service;
- Uses the "Comments" column to briefly explain service hours and absence from their service due to vacation, holidays, emergency leave, and sick leave;
- Sums the numbers of columns and verifies accuracy within the rows;
- Signed and dated by both member and supervisor **in ink**;
- Any scratch-outs or errors must be initialed and dated by both member and supervisor;

#### What happens if a member doesn't submit a timesheet or it is incorrect?

If a member submits timesheets with errors, the Program Director will contact the member and indicate corrections needed. If timesheets are not corrected or are more than one month in arrears, the member's monthly stipend/living allowance check may be held until the documents are received. The member will receive notification via snail mail, e-mail, or telephone before this occurs.

## SECTION VI: REPORTING ON PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

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### *Quarterly Reporting on Program Performance Measurement Objectives*

One critical responsibility of members is to collect and keep record of qualitative and quantitative impact data ***on a daily basis*** corresponding to the program's performance measurement objectives. The data records will:

- help organize information for writing quarterly impact reports; multiple stakeholders are interested in, and benefit from knowing about the impact of the members' services and accomplishments;
- assist in identifying programmatic challenges members are facing;
- enable site supervisors to address members' professional development training needs;
- help members reflect on their year of service and translate their accomplishments and impact for career/professional development advancement purposes

At the end of each program quarter, each Host Site is required to send a written quarterly report to the Program Director of the Iowa AmeriCorps State of Promise Program with qualitative and quantitative impact made toward meeting the program's performance measurement objectives. The AmeriCorps State of Promise Program Director will provide members and site supervisors a quarterly report template to follow when writing and submitting quarterly reports. Members and site supervisors are asked to contact the Program Director if they have any questions regarding the completion of quarterly reports.

### *Performance Measurement Objectives and Measurement Instruments*

The performance measurement objectives, with corresponding measurement instruments, indicated below will assist AmeriCorps members in directing and organizing their service hours toward addressing the program's impact objectives. The measurement instruments will assist members in collecting and managing impact data required to write quarterly reports. Ideally, AmeriCorps members will complete their Time Logs electronically and will maintain copies in a file.

**Please note that quarterly reports are due December 10, 2008; March 10, 2009; June 10, 2009; and September 10, 2009.**

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR ALL HOST SITES

### **Member Development: Citizenship and Professional Development Training**

28 AmeriCorps members from the program's eighteen host site communities who receive state and local level professional development training increase their knowledge and skills post-training in content areas such as AmeriCorps history, citizenship, conflict resolution, America's 5 Promises, service learning, volunteer management, youth development principles and practices, and implementing quality after-school programming. At the completion of the term of service, 80% of AmeriCorps members will self-report an average increase of two-points in knowledge/skills on the civic engagement survey.

*Corresponding performance measurement instruments:*

Member Civic Engagement Survey

### **Strengthening Communities: Volunteer Recruitment**

28 AmeriCorps members at seventeen host site communities will recruit youth and adult community and faith-based volunteers to deliver the 5 Promises to young people residing in their community. Each programming

quarter, 28 AmeriCorps members will recruit 5 community and faith-based volunteers who will each provide five volunteer hours, for a minimum total of 700 hours each programming quarter.

*Corresponding performance measurement instrument:*

Volunteer Recruitment Log

### **Independent Accomplishment (Strengthening Communities): Community Awareness & Partnership Development**

The development and maintenance of a variety of community partnerships with local citizens, citizen associations, and institutions will assist AmeriCorps members and volunteers in supporting and strengthening the delivery of the 5 Promises to young people residing in the host site communities. Each programming quarter, 80% of the program's eighteen host site communities will develop partnerships with a minimum of 4 community and faith-based entities. Community partnerships will enhance and strengthen the host sites' operations and programming by providing program funding, program space, donation of consumable supplies, program materials and curriculum, facilitation of educational workshops, representation on advisory boards, and/or volunteer hours in support of the delivery of the 5 Promises.

*Corresponding performance measurement instrument:*

Community Awareness and Partnership Development Log

### **Strengthening Communities: Fulfilling the 5 Promises to Children and Youth**

*The Iowa AmeriCorps State of Promise Program realizes host sites may deliver programming within all 5 Promise activity areas, but AmeriCorps members are only responsible for providing service hours and collecting data for the Promises previously selected by the host sites' site supervisors. When applicable, members are encouraged, however, to collect and report data falling within more than one Promise activity area.*

The 5 Promise areas to be addressed by the program's AmeriCorps members are as follows:

- ❖ Develop new or expand existing mentoring programs in an effort to establish and support new mentor/mentee matches. **(Caring Adults)**
- ❖ Develop and lead out-of-school/after-school enrichment activities for young people (arts-n-crafts, life skills, nature conservation, etc.). Members will publicize the availability of high-quality out-of-school programming in their communities and will recruit youth (particularly those with high-risk factors) to participate. In communities where needs exist, members will partner with community agencies to create additional out-of-school programming. **(Safe Places)**
- ❖ Coordinate and lead educational and outreach efforts (i.e., newsletters, websites, seminars, summits, workshops, dances) to inform and educate young people on a variety of healthy lifestyles issues and topics (i.e., health care, nutrition, violence and substance abuse prevention, recreation). **(Healthy Start/Future)**
- ❖ Help start and expand job training programs, youth entrepreneurial projects, internships, and apprenticeships. Collaborating with local colleges and high schools, members will also assist with educating youth about and preparing them for postsecondary options by hosting college fairs, arranging college application/scholarship workshops, and holding parent financial aid meetings. **(Marketable Skills)**
- ❖ Actively recruit, train, and engage youth in community service opportunities. Members will also work closely with and support emerging youth leaders as they develop and implement a variety of activities, programs, and projects to benefit communities. **(Opportunities to Serve)**

28 AmeriCorps members at the program's nineteen host site communities will work with community partners and volunteers to support and strengthen the delivery of the 5 Promises to young people residing in the host site communities. By the end of the program year, 100 youth will be matched with adult mentors, 500 youth will participate in out-of-school time/after-school enrichment activities, 100 youth will

participate in healthy lifestyle educational activities, 100 youth will participate in job training or apprenticeship programs, and 500 youth will participate in community-based service learning events.

*Corresponding performance measurement instruments:*

Mentor-Mentee Contact Log (Caring Adults)

5 Promises Log

**Success Stories** (monthly)

*Corresponding performance measurement instrument:*

Success Story/Great Story Template

## **SPECIFIC PERFORMANCE MEASURE FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME/AFTER-SCHOOL HOST SITES**

**Needs and Service Activities: Academic Assistance**

110 elementary and middle school students in grades 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> who receive academic assistance from 15 AmeriCorps members and recruited community and faith-based volunteers at eight host site communities will complete their homework assignments and graduate to the next grade level by the end of the academic year.

*Corresponding performance measurement instruments:*

Academic Assistance Log

Student Graduation Log

## **SECTION VII: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

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### ***Member Contract***

At the beginning of the service period, each member signs a contract that sets out the terms of participation for AmeriCorps. Many items are covered in this contract, such as the minimum number of service hours to be served, start and end dates of service period, acceptable conduct, prohibited activities, and other terms of service. Refer to the Member Contract for specific information.

### ***Service Position Description***

Host sites must provide a service position description outlining a member's major activities, tasks, and time commitments during his/her term of service. As mentioned previously, activities should provide the member with meaningful service and opportunity for personal growth. These position descriptions will be important references in evaluating the performance of the member.

### ***Drug Free Workplace***

All AmeriCorps host sites must comply with the Drug Free Workplace Act. Site supervisors must notify AmeriCorps members about the Act and its requirements. Also, if a member is arrested or convicted of a drug offense, the site supervisor and member must notify the Program Director within five days and Iowa State University Extension will take appropriate action.

### ***AmeriCorps Signs***

All host sites are required to post an AmeriCorps sign within the vicinity of the AmeriCorps member's office space/place of service. One sign will be provided by the Program Director for each host site. AmeriCorps signs help staff and community partners identify the member's participation in AmeriCorps. Members and their site supervisors are often extremely proud of this affiliation and appreciate increased visibility. Publicizing participation in AmeriCorps makes a strong positive statement about the member's and the site's commitment to service.

### ***National Service Days***

Throughout the year, the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service organizes several national days of service for AmeriCorps members. The Program Director will notify members and sites of these days.

The Corporation for National and Community Service and the Iowa Commission of Volunteer Service, has placed an emphasis on two events. It is expected that each AmeriCorps Program and therefore its sites, will develop or have a meaningful role in celebrating Martin Luther King Day. It is also anticipated that an AmeriCorps Inclusion Day will be held in the spring of 2009. Inclusion Day activities will offer opportunities and engage persons with disabilities in those opportunities.

### ***Voting***

All Iowa AmeriCorps State of Promise Program members are encouraged to register to vote during their term of service, and host-sites must allow time to register to vote during their service hours. However, sites cannot require members to register or to vote. Host sites cannot attempt to influence how a member votes.

## ***Jury Duty***

Serving on a jury is an important citizenship responsibility. Members should be encouraged and must not be penalized for serving jury duty. During the time AmeriCorps members serve as jurors, they should continue to receive credit for their normal service hours. Also, they may keep any reimbursements for incidental expenses received from the court.

## ***Discrimination & Reasonable Accommodation***

The Iowa AmeriCorps State of Promise Program Director is responsible for ensuring compliance with AmeriCorps policies pertaining to discrimination and reasonable accommodations for members with disabilities.

AmeriCorps programs may not discriminate against any member, program staff, or service recipient on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, political affiliation or disability. Programs must also comply with applicable state nondiscrimination laws.

A program must also provide reasonable accommodations to an otherwise qualified member with known mental or physical disabilities. Accommodations must be based on the member's individual needs. All member candidate selections and service assignments must be made without regard to the need to provide reasonable accommodation.

AmeriCorps programs are not required to provide accommodations that would impose an undue burden on the program or local host sites. The Iowa State of Promise AmeriCorps Program Director will work with the Corporation for National and Community Service to determine whether or not specific accommodations are reasonable. Assistance may also be available through the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service to help address reasonable accommodation issues.

## SECTION VII: AMERICORPS TERMINOLOGY

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Iowa AmeriCorps State of Promise Program terminology has been highlighted below to accurately represent AmeriCorps-related programming activities. Consistent use of these terms will help reinforce the AmeriCorps program's objectives and will assist in clarifying AmeriCorps for the general public. Some frequently used terms related to AmeriCorps are:

Iowa's Promise: ensuring the success of our children and youth: Iowa's Promise was established in Iowa in December, 2004. Iowa's Promise works to ensure that the state's children and youth have access to all Five Promises by mobilizing organizations and individuals from the private, public, and non-profit sectors (both state and locally) to make a commitment to deliver the Five Promises to Iowa's children and youth.

AmeriCorps Members: Individuals who participate in AmeriCorps are referred to as **"members"** rather than volunteers, staff, workers, participants or employees.

Five Promises: The Five Promises identified by Iowa's Promise that are necessary to build and strengthen the character and competence of our nation's children and young people are as follows:

- Ongoing relationships with caring adults - parents, mentors, tutors, and coaches
- Safe places with structured activities during non-school hours
- Healthy start and future
- Marketable skills through effective educations
- Opportunities to give back through community service

Living Allowance: AmeriCorps members earn living allowances, not salaries or wages.

National Service: This term refers to any of the programs affiliated with the Corporation for National and Community Service. In addition to AmeriCorps, national service programs include Learn & Serve America, AmeriCorps VISTA, the National Senior Service Corps, and the USA Freedom Corps.

Serve/Service: When possible, *serve* and *service* should be used rather than the term *work* when referring to AmeriCorps members' time and effort spent addressing the Iowa AmeriCorps State of Promise Program's performance measurement objectives.

Service Learning: Service learning is an educational method that engages young people in service to their communities as a means of enriching academic learning, promoting personal growth and reflection, and developing necessary skills for productive citizenship.

Iowa AmeriCorps State of Promise Program Director: The Program Director is one of the member's most valuable resources. The director helps to develop a strong partnership among the program and the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service (state level partner) and the Corporation for National and Community Service (federal level partner). The director oversees implementation of the grant-funded program and is responsible for insuring compliance with all state and federal policies and procedures. Throughout an AmeriCorps program year members are encouraged to consult with the Program Director to discuss and address questions, problems, or concerns.

## SECTION IX: CONTACT INFORMATION

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