



**Wisconsin National & Community Service Board Meeting
October 7, 2021, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM**

<i>Board Members Present:</i>	Christine Beatty (chair), Theresa Clark, Anthony Hallman, Latoya Holiday, Paula Horning, Benjamin Lehner, Leah Lechleiter-Luke, Margaret (Jane) Moore, Adam Riley, Yolanda Shelton-Morris, Jana Steinmetz, Yekaterina (Katia) Tovmenko
<i>Board Members Not Present:</i>	Angela Ahlgrim (vice-chair), Laura Doolin, Kate Jaeger, Ibrahim Jalloh, Amy McDowell, Leah Moore, Donald Placidi, Susan Schwartz, Patricia Takamine
<i>Staff Present:</i>	Jeanne Duffy, Ruhamah Bauman, Tracey Brent, Kyle Clower, Robin Lee, Alexis Matthews, Steven Yule, Margie Kriel, Anna Dannecker
<i>Program Staff and Guests Present:</i>	Brian Blahnik, Barb Evans

Call to Order

Christine Beatty called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

Public Comment

Brian Blahnik delivered a public comment thanking the board and Serve Wisconsin staff for supporting the AmeriCorps programs at Marshfield Clinic and him personally over the last 21 years. He informed the board he left his position as Director of AmeriCorps at Marshfield Clinic in July.

Review & Approve Minutes from the June 2, 2021, Board Meeting

ACTION ITEM – Tony Hallman made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 2, 2021 WNCSB meeting. Second by Jane Moore. The motion was unanimously approved.

Public Policy & Outreach Committee

Kyle Clower provided an update on the passage into law of the state income tax exemption for the Segal Education Award as part of the budget legislation passed by the state legislature and signed by Governor Evers this summer. The exemption will take effect for income taxes for 2021 onward. Any Segal Education Awards accessed after January 1, 2021, should now be exempt from Wisconsin state income tax.



AmeriCorps
Wisconsin

ServeWisconsin@wisconsin.gov

101 E. Wilson St., 6th Floor Madison, WI 53703

www.servewisconsin.wi.gov

Program Evaluation & Development Committee

Alexis Matthews gave an overview of Serve Wisconsin's grant-making process and the options programs have when applying for AmeriCorps funding. Subjects included member slots, funding levels, focus areas, Competitive and Formula RFPs, application fields, training, technical assistance, the application review process, PE&D Committee presentations and recommendations, WNCBSB approval, application submission process to AmeriCorps, funding notifications, and overall RFP timelines.

State Service Plan Committee

Yolanda Shelton-Morris gave an overview of the Community Survey used to develop the next State Service Plan, including its distribution, response rates, and survey results. One question on the survey asked respondents to select their top five needs in the community that they feel could be addressed by volunteerism and/or AmeriCorps members. Overall, the top five were mental health, education, substance abuse, health, and hunger and basic needs. She also explained that diversity, equity, inclusion, and racial justice, were new to the survey in 2021 and were near the top five. Yolanda then provided an update of how those survey results impacted creating the draft state service plan for 2022-2024. This included new sections at the beginning of the document on commission values and what the board works to achieve and four new goals.

Jeanne Duffy provided additional details around several of the goals, including more information on Serve Wisconsin's VISTA program and the plans to expand staff capacity to address new initiatives and provide support for AmeriCorps programs. She then provided an overview for review of the proposed plan, providing board members time to review it and the committee a chance to meet again to discuss feedback from today before getting approval of the final draft at the December board meeting.

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding

Steven Yule provided an overview of the federal AmeriCorps agency's plan for American Rescue Plan Funding across their program areas. He explained that part of this will include \$20 million for Commission Support Grants and \$19.5 million for Volunteer Generation Fund, with guidance on both forthcoming. He then gave an overview of the largest portion of the funds, which is \$607 million for program grants, and the "buckets" of funding from which programs can apply for funding. These include increasing the living allowance up to \$16,000 for AmeriCorps members, cash match replacement funds, and program expansions for new communities.

Member Survey Results

Alexis Matthews provided an overview of the AmeriCorps member survey sent out twice a year in the late spring and at the end of the summer to gain feedback from AmeriCorps members. She described the response rate for the 2021 surveys and then highlighted elements where AmeriCorps members reported the highest satisfaction and dissatisfaction rates. She then provided information about some additional open-ended survey questions, including about most effective recruitment techniques, the best part of their service, and changes they would recommend.

Volunteer Generation Funds & VISTA Update

Ruhamah Bauman first updated the VISTA initiative, explaining that 20 sites are on board, with seven currently having VISTA members serving and two more VISTA members starting on October 25.

Ruhamah then gave an overview of the Volunteer Generation Fund grant, explaining that we will continue with the same six regional coordinating organizations as this past year, with the coordinators helping develop co VOADs and COADs across the state. Ruhamah then described how these regional coordination partners have worked with Team Rubicon to help provide needed items for the Afghan guests currently staying at Fort McCoy.



AmeriCorps (federal) Update

Katia Tovmenko provided the board with some general AmeriCorps agency updates, beginning with the nomination of Michael D. Smith as the new CEO for AmeriCorps. Katia then discussed a renewed focus on diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility at the agency, including the reestablishment of the Native American Affairs Committee and an initiative around the Child Tax Care Credit. She also stated that the regional office is now fully staffed with two associate portfolio managers they hope to bring on board in the coming months.

Katia then provided the board with updates on several different funding opportunities. She gave an overview of the Public Health Corps initiative launched with the CDC, including weekly calls with interested applicants. She described funding opportunities for AmeriCorps Seniors programs through the American Rescue Plan (ARP), including current programs having the chance to expand their programming and increase the income eligibility for stipend programs. She continued that there will be a NOFA coming out in November for new applicants to apply through ARP for their programs through one of the three traditional formats or something completely new. She concluded by highlighting that the American State National Tribal NOFO, and VISTA concept paper process for quarter are now open.

AmeriCorps Seniors Program Association Update

Barb Evans provided an update from the AmeriCorps Seniors Program Association, starting with a thank you to the board for the Governor's Service Awards this year, especially the inclusion of a new recognition for AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers that had served for at least 20 years.

She then explained how the programs are returning to service in varying ways. She indicated that the Foster Grandparent Programs have returned to a much greater level of service. Some school districts welcomed them back and some communities are not allowing volunteers yet. Some programs are looking into assisting with Child Tax Care Credit registrations to keep volunteers engaged. The RSVP programs are up and rolling, with a substantial focus on meals and volunteer driver programs, although there can be some hesitancy for people due to the required close contact.

She then gave some updates on the AmeriCorps Seniors Program Association, describing how all of the programs in Wisconsin are participating again this year. She provided an overview of the educational sessions they held on different topics to support program staff. She explained how AmeriCorps has opened up a mentorship opportunity for AmeriCorps Seniors program staff throughout the North Central region, which Wisconsin programs have found very rewarding.

Staff Updates

Alexis Matthews gave an update on the Public Health AmeriCorps funding opportunity, indicating that Serve Wisconsin has spoken with all of its health-based programs about the opportunity, with multiple considering applying for those funds. She then explained that if a program gets funded through Public Health AmeriCorps and they are only operating in Wisconsin, Serve Wisconsin will still be managing them if they receive funding.

Kyle Clower gave an update on the 2021 Opening Ceremony, informing the board that it would take place virtually on Zoom on October 15. He also provided follow-up on the new recognition at the Governor's Service Awards for AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers that served over 20 years. Regional ceremonies have been held in Kenosha and La Crosse to recognize volunteers unable to attend the August ceremony in-person, with plans also to hold a ceremony in Stevens Point.

Adjournment

ACTION ITEM – Tony Hallman made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Second by Adam Riley. The motion was unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 11:57 a.m.

