



Dear Counselor or Advisor,

Sometime today, someone will ask you, "What should I do with my life?"

What are you going to tell them?

Why not connect them to AmeriCorps? All across the country, AmeriCorps members are tackling tough problems such as illiteracy, hunger, and homelessness. These men and women, age 17 and older, dedicate a year to serving their communities and country – tutoring children, building homes, responding to disasters, and restoring national parks. In return they receive many benefits, including:

- A modest living allowance
- Health insurance and child care benefits for those who qualify
- Valuable skills for the future, including leadership, teamwork, and project management
- An education award for college, graduate school or vocational school, or to pay off qualified student loans (upon successful completion of service)

With just a few clicks on the website, you can open a world of opportunities for these individuals, showing them tens of thousands of ways to serve in communities all across the country, including throughout Michigan. They can even apply for programs in which they are interested online (see below for step by step information).

President Barack Obama has challenged all Americans to serve their communities and the nation through programs like AmeriCorps. Will you please join us in helping every American answer his call to service?

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*Please share the following information with your students:*

### **HOW TO BECOME AN AMERICORPS MEMBER:**

Do you want to become a part of a national corps of citizens who get things done? Joining an AmeriCorps program is very easy - just follow three simple steps:

#### **Step One - Ensure you are eligible.**

AmeriCorps members must be at least **17 years of age**, must be a **U.S. citizen**, must have a **high school diploma** (or be willing to work toward one), and be able to commit to **up to one year of service**. If you are accepted, you will need to provide a birth certificate or other information documenting your age and citizenship. AmeriCorps members serving vulnerable populations such as youth or seniors must be able to pass local, state, and national background checks.

#### **Step Two - Find a program and make contact.**

To join AmeriCorps, you must apply directly to your program of interest. AmeriCorps members serve in full-time (1700 hours), half-time (900 hours), reduced half-time (450 hours), or minimum time (300 hours) capacity. The kind of slot available will vary from program to program. You can view the current Michigan's AmeriCorps programs at [www.michigan.gov/mcsc](http://www.michigan.gov/mcsc) or you can visit [www.americorps.gov](http://www.americorps.gov) to get contact information for other AmeriCorps programs in Michigan and throughout the country.

Once you contact the program, they will be able to explain their application process and timelines. Also, some programs may have additional requirements, so be sure to ask about their individual qualifications for AmeriCorps members.

#### **Step Three - Still need more information?**

The Michigan Community Service Commission is happy to assist you if you need additional information. Please contact Michelle Mackie at (517) 241-3606.