

The AmeriCorps
Exit Binder:
A Handbook for
AmeriCorps Alums



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Introduction



Welcome to the wonderful world of the AmeriCorps Education Award!

Each member is entitled to receive an Education Award after successfully completing his or her service.

Here are some basic things to know:

The amount of the award is based on the number of service hours completed.

Term of Service Award	Minimum Number of Service Hours	AmeriCorps Education
Reduced Half-Time	675	\$2,038.00
Quarter-Time	450	\$1,415.00
Minimum-Time	300	\$1,132.00

- A member may serve up to four terms of service in AmeriCorps State and National regardless of the type of term. However, a member may only receive the value of two full-time education awards.
- You have seven years from the date you complete service to use your award: You can divide up the award and use portions at different times, as long as it's for authorized expenditures within the specified time period.
- The award is subject to income tax in the year in which it's received.

Education awards come from a special account in the U. S. Treasury called the National Service Trust. The Trust was established by Congress and is the office within the Corporation that manages all the various functions related to the Education Award.

Using the award to help finance a college education

You can use your education award to help pay for college, but it's good to keep in mind that the buying power of your award will vary depending on how you use it. For example, an education award of \$4,725 will nearly cover the tuition for two full years (six quarters) at Mt. Hood Community College in Gresham, Oregon. By the same token, the Ed award will pay for less than a month at a private college like Sarah Lawrence where tuition alone can exceed \$30,000 a year.

Another item you may want to consider is the effect of inflation on college costs. Inflation may vary from year to year and state to state, but if it goes up by 5 percent a year, one dollar today will buy 25 percent less in five years. So, if you wait five years to use your Ed award, you'll lose a quarter of your buying power—and possibly more, if college tuition increases at more than the rate of inflation. This isn't to suggest that you rush into college and use your education award right away (unless that's what you were already planning to do), but you should look at multiple factors when deciding how and when to use your Ed award.

Here are some other factors worth considering:

1. When applying for financial aid, Worksheet C is your best friend.

If you are planning to go to college and want to tap into financial aid, one of your first steps will be filling out the FAFSA. FAFSA is an acronym for the Free Application for Federal Student Assistance. It's a form you need to fill out if you would like to receive financial aid and/or student loans at a Title IV school—that's basically any schools that accepts U.S. financial aid, including many schools located overseas. Usually, you fill out the FAFSA early in the calendar year if you are planning to attend school during the upcoming school year. You should always check with the school's financial aid office for their priority deadline. Filling out the FAFSA before the deadline could help you get the best possible aid package.

When you reach the end of the FAFSA, you will find Worksheet C. This is an income exclusion worksheet. In other words, the dollars you fill out on Worksheet C are subtracted from the adjusted gross income that you reported earlier on the FAFSA. Make sure you fill it out! Worksheet C can help you get a better financial aid package than if you just leave it blank. You don't get the satisfaction of doing the math yourself, but when you submit your FAFSA to a financial aid office, they will subtract the amounts listed on Worksheet C—giving you a lower adjusted gross income.

The reason this matters to AmeriCorps members is that Worksheet C asks you to fill in from the previous tax year any AmeriCorps living allowance income you received, any portion of your education award you used, or any interest payments made by the National Service Trust on a qualified student loan. In other words, if your only source of income in the previous calendar year is from AmeriCorps and you made \$9,000, then for financial aid purposes your income is \$0, and you potentially could receive a better financial aid package than a student who earned \$9,000 at a job other than national service. (Be aware that other factors may apply here—for example, if your parents still claim you as a dependent or if you have other assets.)

The potential benefits from Worksheet C can stretch into two school years. Here's how that works: The FAFSA you fill out for the 2011–12 school year is based on your 2010 taxes. Likewise, down the road, the FAFSA you fill out for the 2007–08 school year will be based on your 2006 taxes. If your term of service runs from 2006–07, you can potentially receive benefits from Worksheet C over the next two school years. Even if you take the next year off from school and service, you might still be able to benefit from Worksheet C.

2. Know what you're doing and work with a financial aid officer.

The suggestions here have less to do with national service than common sense. If you pay attention to the financial aid process, you can save thousands of dollars. Each year the Department of Education puts out *The Student Guide to Financial Aid*. From this guide, and other resources such as *finaid.org*, you can learn valuable advice about making decisions that will help you pay for college.

When you interact with financial aid officers, think of it as a job interview: be professional and ask informed questions, based on your research. Financial aid officers make decisions that can help or hurt you, so it's in your best interest to come across as smart and businesslike.

Sample letter to a college financial aid officer

This is a typical explanatory letter that an AmeriCorps program might send to a school's financial aid office:

Dear Financial Aid Counselor:

We are providing this information to assist you in understanding the relationship between AmeriCorps and FAFSA. An AmeriCorps member receives three types of benefits that are relevant to completing the FAFSA:

Living Allowance. AmeriCorps members may receive a living allowance to cover living expenses during their term of service.

Education Award. AmeriCorps members who enroll between October 1, 2011-September 30, 2011 are eligible for an education award of up to \$5,550 per year of AmeriCorps service, which can be used for qualified student loans; current educational expenses at a Title IV institution; and current educational expenses while participating in an approved school-to-work program.

Payment of interest on loans. The Corporation for National and Community Service pays interest on postponed qualified student loans for AmeriCorps members who successfully complete their term of service.

The member may also be earning Federal Work-Study wages for serving in an AmeriCorps project. All of these benefits should be included on the "income exclusion worksheet" of the FAFSA.

With respect to the education award and interest payment, the IRS has determined that these payments are subject to income taxes in the calendar year in which they are paid. That taxable amount is reported on a 1099 form. When the student files a FAFSA for the following year, the amount of the AmeriCorps education award paid in the base year (i.e., 2010 calendar year for the 2011-12 FAFSA) and included in that year's AGI, is to be excluded from the need analysis calculation. In most cases, the entire education award amount that was paid is taxable, so the entire amount that was paid is included in the AGI. Thus the filer is to report the entire award that was paid, not just the amount in excess of tuition, fees, books, and supplies.

Additional information about the award is available at www.americorps.gov/members/edaward.html.

Thank you.

3. Get familiar with some of the nuts and bolts financial aid terms that apply significantly to your national service experience and your education award.

Cost of Attendance (COA)—The amount it costs to attend a college or university. Included in the COA are tuition/fees, room and board, books, supplies, transportation and the one-time purchase of a computer. You can use your education award for any cost that can be determined as Cost of Attendance.

Expected Family Contribution (EFC)—The amount you and your family (if your parents claim you on their taxes) are expected to contribute toward the cost of your education. This is based on income and assets from the previous tax year.

Need—The difference between the COA and the EFC is the student's financial need.

When putting together a financial aid package, a school will first take your **cost of attendance**, and then subtract the **expected family contribution**. The resulting number is your **need**. Then based on the information you provided in your FAFSA, the office will create an offer of grants, aid, and loans that match your need.

4. Avoid losing aid dollars.

The danger in using your education award to go to school is it can place you in over-award status—meaning, you might have more funds available than you actually need. Because the school cannot give you money above your need, they will reduce your financial aid offer. Under this scenario, you could lose thousands of dollars in financial aid when you use your education award.

Remember that you don't have to use your education award until you choose to use it. In certain cases, you will save money by accepting subsidized student loans (loans where you don't have to pay the interest while you are in school) rather than using your education award. Also, when working with a financial aid counselor, let them know that you have an education award, but you would only like to use it if it's not going to cost you desirable financial aid.

The Official Word on the Education Award

Here's the official language that CNCS uses on its Web site in regards to using your national service experience and education award to pay for school. If your financial aid officers have questions about AmeriCorps, show them the below material (which is also found at www.americorps.org/members/resource/education/benefits.html).

“Current educational expenses,” as authorized under 42 U.S.C. § 12604(c), include:

- * The “Cost of Attendance” for a degree- or certificate-granting program of study at a qualified school; and
- * Educational expenses for non-degree courses offered by qualified schools, such as continuing education courses.

Your school is qualified if it is a Title IV institution of higher education, as defined in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C. 1001). This includes most colleges and universities.

Here are some frequently asked questions:

Can I use the Ed award to purchase a computer?

The answer to this is maybe, but the question is definitely worth asking your school's financial aid office. While many schools allow students to do this, it is at the discretion of the financial aid office. You can use your Ed award to pay for expenses contained within the school's predetermined Cost of Attendance. Some schools will allow you to increase your Cost of Attendance in a given year to help pay for supplies and equipment, such as a computer. Your best bet: simply ask what their policy is.

What if I am going to grad school?

Statistics show that a high percentage of graduate students take out loans to pay for school, and in this area, your service experience and Worksheet C can still help you.

How do I select a favorable student loan?

The financial aid office may make you an “offer” that includes a variety of loans. When it comes to Stafford Loans, an important difference exists between “subsidized” and “unsubsidized” loans. A subsidized loan accrues interest while you are in school while an unsubsidized loan does not. In other words, a \$1,000 subsidized Stafford loan taken your first year of school will still total \$1,000 after you finish school. An unsubsidized Stafford loan will total \$1,000 plus all the interest that accrued while you were in school. By filling out Worksheet C correctly, the school might offer you a higher subsidized loan amount than if you had not performed national service.

Award Transfers

Can I give my education award to someone else?

The Serve America Act now allows for the transfer of AmeriCorps State and National and Silver Service education awards under certain conditions. Basically, the person who earned the award has to have been at least 55 years old when they began the term of service and the person to whom the award is transferred has to be the transferring individual's child, grandchild, or foster child.



How can I transfer all or part of my Segal Education Award?

In order for you to transfer your education award you must:

- have earned the award in an AmeriCorps State or National or Silver Scholar Program;
- have been aged 55 or older at the time you enrolled in the term of service with that program; and
- have begun your service on or after October 1, 2009.
- transfer the award before the expiration date;
- designate all or a portion of the unused award for the transfer; and
- complete the required paperwork authorizing the transfer, which includes providing information and certifying eligibility to make the transfer.

You may transfer an award only once, unless the transfer was declined or you revoked the full amount of the transfer for 'good cause'. 'Good cause' here means that the recipient was unavoidably prevented from using the award; for example, if the recipient died before using the award. 'Good cause' will be determined by the Corporation, which may require documentation to substantiate the cause cited. You must request a waiver to transfer a revoked transferred award a second time.

The recipient of your award may return all or a part of it to you at any time before it expires. If a part of the transferred award is declined only you may use it; if all of the transferred award is declined you may transfer it to another qualified person if you choose.

The award transfer offer will expire after 30 days if not accepted or declined and may be "re-sent" for additional 30 day periods; however, you may wish to confirm that the recipient actually received your award transfer offer or if some other circumstance prevented him or her from responding. While the award transfer offer is pending the amount on offer is NOT available for your use.

You may cancel the award transfer offer before it is accepted or revoke any unused portion of the transferred award at any time prior for any reason.

If the transfer recipient is not already enrolled in the National Service Trust you will forward an email link or a paper version of the transfer application Accept/Decline Form. If the person you nominate accepts we will create an award account in the Trust for him or her. The recipient must register online to make best use of the transferred award.

The recipient of your award:

- must be your child, foster child, or grandchild;
- must be US citizen, national, or lawful permanent resident alien;
- must use the transferred award within 10 years of the date you completed the term of service upon which the award is based (an extension of the period of use will not be granted solely because the recipient was not old enough to enroll in an institution of higher education or to incur qualified student loans within that 10-year period);
- is bound by all of the legal provisions and CNCS policies respecting the use of a Segal Education Award, for example use at a ‘qualified’ institution of higher education or to pay a ‘qualified’ student loan (see definitions of ‘qualified’ in other Help sections); and
- may not receive more than the aggregate value of two full time awards, including the transferred award amount.

The award transfer recipient might decline an award transfer if the value of the transferred award, when combined with the value of educational awards already received, would prevent him/her from enrolling in a term of service.

How can I revoke the transfer of my award?

The conditions for revoking a transferred award amount are as follows:

- You may revoke any unused portion of the award amount you transferred at any time prior to its expiration and for any reason, less any payment amount requested by the recipient but not yet processed by an institution;
- The revoked amount will be credited to your account unless the award from which the transferred amount was taken has expired;
- The amount restored to your account is subject to the same time and use constraints as your original award; and
- You must make a separate revocation for each award amount you transferred.
- Generally, you may not re-transfer this award to another qualified person after revoking the transfer. However, in some cases the Corporation may approve the re-transfer of an award in situations where you can demonstrate that the original award transfer recipient was unavoidably prevented from using the award and you revoked the transferred amount in full. You must request a waiver to transfer a revoked transferred award a second time and may have to document the reason you cited.

How do I accept or decline an education award transfer?

In order for you to accept an award transfer you must:

- be the child, foster child, or grandchild of the transferring individual;
- be a US citizen, National, or lawful permanent resident alien;
- not receive more than the aggregate value of two full time awards, including the transferred amount;
- use the transferred award within 10 years from the date the transferring individual completed the term of service upon which the award is based; and

- comply with all the legal provisions and CNCS policies respecting the use of an Education Award (see *Guidelines & Uses* and other Help screens for more details).

The transfer will be effective the date you accept it; however, CNCS must establish an account for you, if you are not already enrolled, at which point you can register online and request payments electronically to qualified schools and loan holders. If for some reason you do not have access to the web you may request a printed copy of the voucher and the interest payment form by contacting the Helpdesk at **1-800-942-2677**.

However, please note that you may not receive more than the aggregate value of two full time awards, including the transferred award amount.

You may accept the award transfer in full or in part, or decline the offer; simply select that option. You might decline an award transfer if the value of the transferred award, when combined with the value of educational awards you have previously received or expect to receive, would prevent you from enrolling in a term of service.

You may take back your acceptance of the transferred award at any time prior to using it. However, this decision is final. You might do this if you had decided that you would be unable to use the funds as intended or in the time allowed. Use the Rescind Acceptance of Award Transfer Form if you choose this option.

How can I rescind my acceptance of the Award Transfer?

You may take back your acceptance of any unused portion of a transferred award at any time and for any reason, prior to its expiration; however, this decision is final. By “unused portion” we mean any award balance that is still available for your use, not including any unprocessed payment requests. A separate form is required for each rescission.

The amount you choose to give back will be returned to the person who made the transfer to you, unless seven years or the extension date has passed from the date the award was earned.

You might rescind your acceptance of the award transfer if you determined that you would be unable to use the funds as intended or in the time allowed. The award can be used only to pay certain education loans or some education expenses at certain tertiary educational institutions.

Non-traditional uses of the Ed award

The AmeriCorps education award was designed primarily to help pay for school tuition and/or repay qualified student loans. But, it can also be used in nontraditional ways. Here are some you may not be aware of:

- 1. Other types of schools**—Generally, you can use the education award to go to any school that offers federal student aid (such as Stafford loans). These schools are known through the Department of Education as Title IV. If you would like to go to massage school, culinary school or a trade school, you can use the Ed award as long as they are listed as Title IV and offer federal student aid. Sometimes, there will be two massage schools in a town and one of them will be listed as Title IV while the other is not. It might take some research to find the school that will accept your

education award. For example, there's a school in Wyoming called the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS) that isn't listed as Title IV, but accepts the Ed award. You can learn more about it at www.nols.edu/

College or Graduate School

The schools below either match your education award or give you credit for serving in AmeriCorps.

Institution	Location
Alaska Pacific University	Anchorage, AK
University of Arkansas Clinton School of Public Service	Little Rock, AR
Arizona State University	Phoenix, AZ
Prescott College	Prescott, AZ
Antioch University Santa Barbara	Santa Barbara, CA
California Institute of Integral Studies	San Francisco, CA
Mills College	Oakland, CA
Monterey Institute of International Studies	Monterey, CA
Notre Dame de Namur University	Belmont, CA
Pacifica Graduate Institute	Carpinteria, CA
University of the Pacific	Stockton, CA
University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law	Sacramento, CA
George Washington University School of Public Policy & Public Administration	Washington, DC
Southeastern University	Washington, DC
University of Delaware	Newark, DE
Emory University-Rollins School of Public Health	Atlanta, GA
LaGrange College	LaGrange, GA
Central College	Pella, IA
Saint Ambrose University	Davenport, IA
Simpson College	Indianola, IA
Wartburg College	Waverly, IA
Illinois State University Stevenson Center for Community & Economic Development	Normal, IL
Indiana University School of Public & Environmental Affairs (SPEA)	Bloomington, IN
Indiana University, Purdue University Fort Wayne	Fort Wayne, IN
Indiana University, Purdue University Indianapolis	Indianapolis, IN
Bethel College	North Newton, KS
Union College	Barbourville, KY
Brandeis University	Waltham, MA
Clark University	Worcester, MA
Clark University Graduate School of Management	Worcester, MA
Hampshire College	Amherst, MA
The Fletcher School, Tufts University	Medford, MA
University of Massachusetts, Boston	Boston, MA
Wheelock College	Boston, MA
College of Notre Dame of Maryland Weekend College	Baltimore, MD
Frostburg State University	Frostburg, MD
Salisbury University	Salisbury, MD
Cleary University	Howell, MI
Olivet College	Olivet, MI
University of Michigan Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy	Ann Arbor, MI
Augsburg College	Minneapolis, MN
Lindenwood University	St. Charles, MO
University of Missouri, Columbia	Columbia, MO
Washington University in St. Louis George Warren Brown School of Social Work	St. Louis, MO
Bennett College for Women	Greensboro, NC
Duke University	Durham, NC
Duke University- The Fuqua School of Business	Durham, NC
Princeton University	Princeton, NJ
Bard Center for Environmental Policy	Annandale on Hudson, NY
Columbia University School of International and Public Affairs	New York, NY
Fordham University Graduate School of Education	New York, NY
Hobart and William Smith Colleges	Geneva, NY
Marymount Manhattan College	New York, NY
Milano The New School for Management and Urban Policy	New York, NY
New York University- Steinhardt School of Culture, Education & Human Development	New York, NY
New York University Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service	New York, NY
St. Bonaventure University	St. Bonaventure, NY
Syracuse University	Syracuse, NY
The Cooper Union for Advancement of Science and Art	New York, NY
Case Western Reserve University The Mandel Center for Nonprofit Organizations	Cleveland, OH

Defiance College	Defiance, OH
Carnegie Mellon University H. John Heinz III School of Public Policy and Management	Pittsburgh, PA
Delaware Valley College	Doylestown, PA
Mercyhurst College	Erie, PA
University of Pennsylvania Feis Institute of Government	Philadelphia, PA
Bryant University	Smithfield, RI
Community College of Rhode Island	Warwick, RI
Johnson and Wales University	Providence, RI
Rhode Island College	Providence, RI
Rhode Island School of Design	Providence, RI
Roger Williams University	Bristol, RI
Salve Regina University	Newport, RI
University of Rhode Island	Kingston, RI
Fisk University	Nashville, TN
College of Eastern Utah	Price, UT
Western Governors University	Salt Lake City, UT
Westminster College	Salt Lake City, UT
SIT Graduate Institute	Brattleboro, VT
Sterling College	Craftsbury Common, VT
University of Vermont	Burlington, VT
Antioch University Seattle	Seattle, WA
Bastyr University	Kenmore, WA
Central Washington University	Ellensburg, WA
Evergreen State College	Olympia, WA
Marquette University Trinity Fellows Program	Milwaukee, WI
Ohio Valley University	Vienna WV
University of Charleston	Charleston, WV

2. Going to school overseas—A number of schools in Canada, Mexico, and Europe are listed as Title IV. In other words, American students can receive U.S. financial aid to attend. At these schools, you can use your education award to pay for tuition. To find out whether an institution is Title IV, you can look up schools at www.fafsa.ed.gov/fotw0405/fslookup.htm or call the Federal Student Aid Information Center at 1-800-433-3243. If a school is NOT listed as Title IV but you would still like to attend while using your education award, you might be able to enroll in a school stateside and participate in an exchange program. That way, you are paying your tuition to a school inside the U.S. (The Evergreen State College, for example) while attending a school overseas (University of Vienna, for example). To make this option work, it will take a bit of effort on your part to find a program that will allow you to do this and to make it work.

3. Non-degree programs—You can also use your ed award to take a class here and there at a community college or public university. You can take classes like guitar, swimming, or photography. If you take one or two classes per quarter at a community college, you can make your ed award last for years and get a great deal of enrichment.

4. Matching schools—A number of colleges and universities encourage AmeriCorps alumni to attend by offering scholarships to former National Service participants.

Using the Ed Award to Pay Off Student Loans

The Ed award can be used to help pay for “qualified student loans.” National Service legislation defines “qualified student loan” as a loan backed by the federal government under Title IV of the Higher Education Act (except PLUS Loans to parents of students), or under Titles VII or VIII of the Public Health Service Act. In addition, you may use your education award to repay a student loan made by a state agency, including state institutions of higher education. Education awards cannot be used to repay any other type of loan, even if the loan was obtained for educational purposes. You can use your education award to repay defaulted student loans, as long as the loans meet the definition of “qualified student loan.”

How can I make the most of my Ed award when I apply it toward my loans?

When you use all or part of your education award to repay your student loans, it may be in your best interests to let the lender know in writing how you would like to pay. Here’s an example: If you submit your voucher to a lender like Sallie Mae without instructions, they will automatically advance your payments for you.

If your payments are \$100 a month and you submit a voucher for \$5,550, Sallie Mae will advance you 47 payments, and you won’t have to make another payment for the next four years. An arrangement like this might suit your lifestyle nicely.

However, when this happens, Sallie Mae is applying your education award payment first toward **interest** and less toward **principal**. By providing written instructions to Sallie Mae when you submit your voucher, you can ask them to apply your education award payment toward the principal. That will reduce your payments—for example, your monthly payment could go from \$100 down to \$65 a month. At the same time, you will need to start making payments right away but you’ll pay far less over the life of the loan.

Should I consolidate my loans now while rates are still low?

You may want to consider this if you can get a better interest rate by consolidating one or more “old” student loans. Here are important points to keep in mind:

- Make sure the “new” consolidated loan is a qualified student loan. Otherwise, you will not be able to use your education award to pay for it.
- If you are consolidating during your service year while your loans are in forbearance (basically, being postponed), make sure you work with the National Service Trust (**1-888-507-5962**) at every step of the process. When you have finished the terms of your service, the Trust will pay the interest that accrued on your loans during your service year. If you consolidate (pay off your old loans and create a new loan) midyear, the Trust may not be able to pay your interest for you.
- Read the fine print. When you take out a new student loan, make sure you know all the fees before you agree to the terms. If there is a \$500 loan origination fee on a \$1,000 loan, it might not make financial sense—even if the new loan has a more favorable interest rate.

The Ed Award and Taxes

The education award, unlike most other scholarships and fellowships, is subject to federal tax in the year the Trust pays the voucher. Living allowances received during your term of service and any interest the Trust paid on qualified student loans are also subject to income taxes in the years they were paid. When you redeem your education award—and how much you redeem—may have an impact on the amount of income tax you must pay.

If the Trust makes a payment on qualified student loans to your school or lender for the entire amount of a full-time education award (\$5,550) in one calendar year, you will be responsible for any income taxes owed in that calendar year on that amount. If you redeem only a portion of your education award in one calendar year, you will be responsible for any taxes owed on that portion.

The interest payments the Trust makes on postponed qualified student loans are subject to income taxes in the calendar year in which the payments are made to the lender.

The Trust DOES NOT deduct taxes from your education award or interest payments. After the calendar year in which the payments are made, you will receive a Form 1099 from the Trust that shows the total amount of your Ed award and any interest paid on your behalf. You will need this information to prepare your income tax return. For more information on the 1099, go to AmeriCorps Web site page on tax information.

Living allowance

You are responsible for any income taxes owed on any AmeriCorps living allowances you receive. The living allowance received in a calendar year is subject to income taxes for that calendar year. For example, if you receive a portion living allowance in 2010 and the rest in year 2011, the portion received in 2010 is subject to 2010 income taxes, and the portion received in 2011 is subject to 2011 income taxes.

After the calendar year in which you earned any living allowance, your AmeriCorps project will send you a W-2 form indicating the amount you earned that year. Most AmeriCorps *VISTA and AmeriCorps*NCCC members receive their W-2 forms from the Corporation.

Tax relief

While you are responsible for taxes on your education award and other AmeriCorps benefits, you may be eligible for tax relief through the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997. See the AmeriCorps Web site page on tax credits or the U.S. Department of Education's Web site page on the Hope Scholarship for more information. Issues about income taxes are very complicated. The important point to remember is that you should consider the tax consequences when making any decisions about when and how to use your education award.

2010 IRS Tax Benefits for Education

This publication explains tax benefits that may be available to you if you are saving for or paying education costs for yourself or, in many cases, another student who is a member of your immediate family. Most benefits apply only to higher education.

Two tax credits for which you may be eligible are the American opportunity credit, and the lifetime learning credit. With these benefits, you may be able to:

- Deduct student loan interest;
- Receive tax-free treatment of a canceled student loan;
- Receive tax-free student loan repayment assistance;
- Deduct tuition and fees for education;
- Establish and contribute to a Coverdell education savings account (ESA), which features tax-free earnings;
- Participate in a qualified tuition program (QTP), which features tax-free earnings;
- Take early distributions from any type of individual retirement arrangement (IRA) for education costs without paying the 10% additional tax on early distributions;
- Cash in savings bonds for education costs without having to pay tax on the interest;
- Receive tax-free educational benefits from your employer; and
- Take a business deduction for work-related education.

Note-You generally cannot claim more than one of the benefits described in the lists above for the same qualifying education expense.

When you figure your taxes, you may want to compare these tax benefits so you can choose the method(s) that gives you the lowest tax liability. If you qualify, you may find that a combination of credit(s) and deduction(s) gives you the lowest tax. After you estimate your education tax benefits for the year, you may be able to reduce the amount of your federal income tax withholding. Also, you may want to recheck your withholding during the year if your personal or financial situation changes. See Publication 919, How Do I Adjust My Tax Withholding, for more information.

The American Opportunity Credit

What is the tax benefit of the American opportunity credit?

For the tax year, you may be able to claim an American opportunity credit of up to \$2,500 for qualified education expenses paid for each eligible student.

A tax credit reduces the amount of income tax you may have to pay. Unlike a deduction, which reduces the amount of income subject to tax, a credit directly reduces the tax itself. Forty percent of the American opportunity credit may be refundable. This means that if the refundable portion of your credit is more than your tax, the excess will be refunded to you.

Your allowable American opportunity credit may be limited by the amount of your income. Also, the nonrefundable part of the credit may be limited by the amount of your tax.

Can you claim more than one education credit this year?

For each student, you can elect for any year only one of the credits. For example, if you elect to take the American opportunity credit for a child on your 2010 tax return, you cannot, for that same child, also claim the lifetime learning credit for 2010.

If you are eligible to claim the American opportunity credit and you are also eligible to claim the lifetime learning credit for the same student in the same year, you can choose to claim either credit, but not both.

If you pay qualified education expenses for more than one student in the same year, you can choose to take the American opportunity and lifetime learning credits on a per-student, per-year basis. This means that, for example, you can claim the American opportunity credit for one student and the lifetime learning credit for another student in the same year.

What are the differences between the American opportunity and lifetime learning credits?

There are several differences between these two credits. For example, you can claim the American opportunity credit based on the same student's expenses for no more than 4 tax years, which includes any tax years you claimed the Hope credit for that student. However, there is no limit on the number of years for which you can claim a lifetime learning credit based on the same student's expenses.

Table 2-1. Overview of the American Opportunity Credit

Maximum credit	Up to \$2,500 credit per eligible student
Limit on modified adjusted gross income (MAGI)	\$180,000 if married filing jointly; \$90,000 if single, head of household, or qualifying widow(er)
Refundable or nonrefundable	40% of credit may be refundable; the rest is nonrefundable
Number of years of postsecondary education	Available ONLY for the first 4 years of postsecondary education
Number of tax years credit available	Available ONLY for 4 tax years per eligible student (including any year(s) Hope credit was claimed)
Type of degree required	Student must be pursuing an undergraduate degree or other recognized education credential
Number of courses	Student must be enrolled at least half time for at least one academic period that begins during the tax year
Felony drug conviction	No felony drug convictions on student's records
Qualified expenses	Tuition and fees required for enrollment. Course-related books, supplies, and equipment do not need to be purchased from the institution in order to qualify.
Payments for academic periods	Payments made in 2010 for academic periods beginning in 2010 and in the first 3 months of 2011

Who Can Claim the Credit?

The following rules will help you determine if you are eligible to claim the American opportunity credit on your tax return.

Generally, you can claim the American opportunity credit if all three of the following requirements are met.

- You pay qualified education expenses of higher education.
- You pay the education expenses for an eligible student.
- The eligible student is either yourself, your spouse, or a dependent for whom you claim an exemption on your tax return.

Note—Qualified education expenses paid by a dependent for whom you claim an exemption, or by a third party for that dependent, are considered paid by you.

Lifetime Learning Credit

What is the tax benefit of the lifetime learning credit?

For the tax year, you may be able to claim a lifetime learning credit of up to \$2,000 for qualified education expenses paid for all eligible students. There is no limit on the number of years the lifetime learning credit can be claimed for each student.

A tax credit reduces the amount of income tax you may have to pay. Unlike a deduction, which reduces the amount of income subject to tax, a credit directly reduces the tax itself. The lifetime learning credit is a nonrefundable credit. This means that it can reduce your tax to zero, but if the credit is more than your tax the excess will not be refunded to you.

Your allowable lifetime learning credit may be limited by the amount of your income and the amount of your tax.

Can you claim more than one education credit this year?

For each student, you can elect for any year only one of the credits. For example, if you elect to take the lifetime learning credit for a child on your 2010 tax return, you cannot, for that same child, also claim the American opportunity credit for 2010.

If you are eligible to claim the lifetime learning credit and you are also eligible to claim the American opportunity credit for the same student in the same year, you can choose to claim either credit, but not both.

If you pay qualified education expenses for more than one student in the same year, you can choose to take certain credits on a per-student, per-year basis. This means that, for example, you can claim the American opportunity credit for one student and the lifetime learning credit for another student in the same year.

Table 3-1. Overview of the Lifetime Learning Credit

Maximum credit	Up to \$2,000 credit per return
Limit on modified adjusted gross income (MAGI)	\$120,000 if married filing jointly; \$60,000 if single, head of household, or qualifying widow(er)
Refundable or nonrefundable	Nonrefundable—credit limited to the amount of tax you must pay on your taxable income
Number of years of postsecondary education	Available for all years of postsecondary education and for courses to acquire or improve job skills
Number of tax years credit available	Available for an unlimited number of years
Type of degree required	Student does not need to be pursuing a degree or other recognized education credential
Number of courses	Available for one or more courses
Felony drug conviction	Felony drug convictions are permitted
Qualified expenses	Tuition and fees required for enrollment (including amounts required to be paid to the institution for course-related books, supplies, and equipment)
Payments for academic periods	Payments made in 2010 for academic periods beginning in 2010 and in the first 3 months of 2011

Who Can Claim the Credit?

The following rules will help you determine if you are eligible to claim the lifetime learning credit on your tax return.

Generally, you can claim the lifetime learning credit if all three of the following requirements are met.

- You pay qualified education expenses of higher education.
- You pay the education expenses for an eligible student.
- The eligible student is either yourself, your spouse, or a dependent for whom you claim an exemption on your tax return.

Who Cannot Claim the Credit

You cannot claim the lifetime learning credit for 2010 if any of the following apply.

- Your filing status is married filing separately.
- You are listed as a dependent in the *Exemptions* section on another person's tax return (such as your parents'). See *Who Can Claim a Dependent's Expenses*, later.
- Your modified adjusted gross income (MAGI) is \$60,000 or more (\$120,000 or more in the case of a joint return). MAGI is explained later under *Effect of the Amount of Your Income on the Amount of Your Credit*.
- You (or your spouse) were a nonresident alien for any part of 2010 and the nonresident alien did not elect to be treated as a resident alien for tax purposes. More information on nonresident aliens can be found in Publication 519, U.S. Tax Guide for Aliens.
- You claim the American opportunity credit or a tuition and fees deduction for the same student in 2010.

What Expenses Qualify

The lifetime learning credit is based on qualified education expenses you pay for yourself, your spouse, or a dependent for whom you claim an exemption on your tax return. Generally, the credit is allowed for qualified education expenses paid in 2010 for an academic period beginning in 2010 or in the first 3 months of 2011.

For example, if you paid \$1,500 in December 2010 for qualified tuition for the spring 2011 semester beginning in January 2011, you may be able to use that \$1,500 in figuring your 2010 credit.

Academic period. An academic period includes a semester, trimester, quarter, or other period of study (such as a summer school session) as reasonably determined by an educational institution. In the case of an educational institution that uses credit hours or clock hours and does not have academic terms, each payment period can be treated as an academic period.

Paid with borrowed funds. You can claim a lifetime learning credit for qualified education expenses paid with the proceeds of a loan. You use the expenses to figure the lifetime learning credit for the year in which the expenses are paid, not the year in which the loan is repaid. Treat loan payments sent directly to the educational institution as paid on the date the institution credits the student's account.

Student withdraws from class(es). You can claim a lifetime learning credit for qualified education expenses not refunded when a student withdraws.

No Double Benefit Allowed

You cannot do any of the following:

- Deduct higher education expenses on your income tax return (as, for example, a business expense) and also claim a lifetime learning credit based on those same expenses.
- Claim a lifetime learning credit in the same year that you are claiming a tuition and fees deduction for the same student.
- Claim a lifetime learning credit and an American opportunity credit based on the same qualified education expenses.
- Claim a lifetime learning credit based on the same expenses used to figure the tax-free portion of a distribution from a Coverdell education savings account (ESA) or qualified tuition program (QTP). See *Coordination With American Opportunity and Lifetime Learning Credits* in [chapter 7](#) (Coverdell ESA) and [chapter 8](#) (QTP).
- Claim a credit based on qualified education expenses paid with tax-free educational assistance, such as a scholarship, grant, or assistance provided by an employer. See *Adjustments to Qualified Education Expenses*, next.

Generally, personal interest you pay, other than certain mortgage interest, is not deductible on your tax return. However, if your modified adjusted gross income (MAGI) is less than \$75,000 (\$150,000 if filing a joint return) there is a special deduction allowed for paying interest on a student loan (also known as an education loan) used for higher education. For most taxpayers, MAGI is the adjusted gross income as figured on their federal income tax return before subtracting any deduction for student loan interest. This deduction can reduce the amount of your income subject to tax by up to \$2,500 in 2010. The student loan interest deduction is taken as an adjustment to income. This means you can claim this deduction even if you do not itemize deductions on Schedule A (Form 1040).

Student Loan Interest Deduction at a Glance

Note-Do not rely on this table alone. Refer to the text for complete details.

Feature	Description
Maximum benefit	You can reduce your income subject to tax by up to \$2,500.
Loan qualifications	Your student loan: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• must have been taken out solely to pay qualified education expenses, and• cannot be from a related person or made under a qualified employer plan.
Student qualifications	The student must be: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• you, your spouse, or your dependent, and• enrolled at least half-time in a degree program.
Time limit on deduction	You can deduct interest paid during the remaining period of your student loan.
Limit on modified adjusted gross income (MAGI)	\$150,000 if married filing a joint return; \$75,000 if single, head of household, or qualifying widow(er).

Student Loan Interest Defined

Student loan interest is interest you paid during the year on a qualified student loan. It includes both required and voluntary interest payments.

Qualified Education Expenses

For purposes of the student loan interest deduction, these expenses are the total costs of attending an eligible educational institution, including graduate school. They include amounts paid for the following items.

- Tuition and fees.
- Room and board.
- Books, supplies, and equipment.
- Other necessary expenses (such as transportation).

The cost of room and board qualifies only to the extent that it is not more than the greater of:

- The allowance for room and board, as determined by the eligible educational institution, that was included in the cost of attendance (for federal financial aid purposes) for a particular academic period and living arrangement of the student, or
- The actual amount charged if the student is residing in housing owned or operated by the eligible educational institution.

Eligible educational institution. An eligible educational institution is any college, university, vocational school, or other postsecondary educational institution eligible to participate in a student aid program administered by the U.S. Department of Education. It includes virtually all accredited public, nonprofit, and proprietary (privately owned profit-making) postsecondary institutions.

Certain educational institutions located outside the United States also participate in the U.S. Department of Education's Federal Student Aid (FSA) programs.

For purposes of the student loan interest deduction, an eligible educational institution also includes an institution conducting an internship or residency program leading to a degree or certificate from an institution of higher education, a hospital, or a health care facility that offers postgraduate training.

An educational institution must meet the above criteria only during the academic period(s) for which the student loan was incurred. The deductibility of interest on the loan is not affected by the institution's subsequent loss of eligibility.

The educational institution should be able to tell you if it is an eligible educational institution.

FEDERAL STUDENT AID

Loan Forgiveness for Public Service Employees

www.FederalStudentAid.ed.gov

February 2009

What is the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program?

Through the College Cost Reduction and Access Act of 2007, Congress created the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program to encourage individuals to enter and continue to work full-time in public service jobs. Under this program, borrowers may qualify for forgiveness of the remaining balance due on their eligible federal student loans after they have made 120 payments on those loans under certain repayment plans while employed full time by certain public service employers. Since borrowers must make 120 monthly payments on their eligible federal student loans beginning after October 1, 2007 before they qualify for the loan forgiveness, the first cancellations of loan balances will not be granted until October 2017.

This fact sheet summarizes the terms and conditions of the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program.

What federal student loans are eligible for forgiveness under the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program?

Any non-defaulted loan made under the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program (Direct Loan Program) is eligible for loan forgiveness. (See below for information on how non-Direct Loans may be eligible.) The Direct Loan Program includes the following types of loans—

- Federal Direct Stafford/Ford Loans (Direct Subsidized Loans)
- Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford/Ford Loans (Direct Unsubsidized Loans)
- Federal Direct PLUS Loans (Direct PLUS Loans) – for parents and graduate or professional students
- Federal Direct Consolidation Loans (Direct Consolidation Loans)

How can other federal student loans qualify for loan forgiveness?

Although loan forgiveness under this program is available only for loans made and repaid under the Direct Loan Program, loans made under other federal student loan programs may qualify for forgiveness if they are consolidated into a Direct Consolidation Loan. However, only payments made on the Direct Consolidation Loan will count toward the required 120 monthly payments.

The following types of loans may be consolidated into the Direct Loan Program –

- Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) Program loans, which include –
 - Subsidized Stafford Loans
 - Unsubsidized Stafford Loans
 - Federal PLUS Loans – for parents and graduate or professional students
 - Federal Consolidation Loans (excluding joint spousal consolidation loans)
- Federal Perkins Loans
- Certain Health Professions and Nursing Loans

NOTE: To consolidate a Federal Perkins Loan or Health Professions/Nursing Loan into the Direct Loan Program, you must also consolidate at least one FFEL Program loan or Direct Loan. If you are unsure about what kind of loans you have, you can find information about your federal student loans in the U.S. Department of Education's National Student Loan Data System at <http://nslds.ed.gov>.

What are the borrower eligibility requirements for loan forgiveness under the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program?

- The borrower must not be in default on the loans for which forgiveness is requested.
- The borrower must be employed full time by a public service organization –
 - When making the required 120 monthly loan payments (certain repayment conditions apply – see below);
 - At the time the borrower applies for loan forgiveness; and
 - At the time the remaining balance on the borrower's eligible loans is forgiven.



What are the specific loan repayment requirements for loan forgiveness under the this program?

- The borrower must have made 120 separate monthly payments beginning after October 1, 2007 on the Direct Loan Program loans for which forgiveness is requested. Earlier payments do not count toward meeting this requirement. Each of the 120 monthly payments must be made for the full scheduled installment amount within 15 days of the due date
- The 120 required payments must be made under one or more of the following Direct Loan Program repayment plans–
 - Income Based Repayment (IBR) Plan (not available to parent Direct PLUS Loan borrowers)
 - Income Contingent Repayment Plan (not available to parent Direct PLUS Loan borrowers)
 - Standard Repayment Plan with a 10-year repayment period
 - Any other Direct Loan Program repayment plan, but only payments that are at least equal to the monthly payment amount that would have been required under the Standard Repayment Plan with a 10-year repayment period may be counted toward the required 120 payments.

For more information about the repayment plans available in the Direct Loan program, please visit: www.ed.gov/DirectLoan.

IMPORTANT NOTE: *The Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program provides for forgiveness of the remaining balance of a borrower's eligible loans after the borrower has made 120 payments on those loans. In general, only borrowers who are making reduced monthly payments through the Direct Loan Income Contingent or Income Based repayment plans will have a remaining balance after making 120 payments on a loan.*

What types of public service jobs will qualify a borrower for loan forgiveness under this program?

The borrower must be employed full time (in any position) by a public service organization, or must be serving in a full-time AmeriCorps or Peace Corps position. For purposes of the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program, the term “public service organization” means –

- A federal, state, local, or Tribal government organization, agency, or entity (includes most public schools, colleges and universities);
- A public child or family service agency;
- A non-profit organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code that is exempt from taxation under section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code (includes most not-for-profit private schools, colleges, and universities);
- A Tribal college or university; or
- A private organization that is not a for-profit business, a labor union, a partisan political organization, or an organization engaged in religious activities (unless the qualifying activities are unrelated to religious instruction, worship services, or any form of proselytizing) and that provides the following public services –
 - Emergency management;
 - Military service;
 - Public safety;
 - Law enforcement;
 - Public interest law services;
 - Early childhood education (including licensed or regulated health care, Head Start, and state-funded pre-kindergarten);
 - Public service for individuals with disabilities and the elderly;
 - Public health (including nurses, nurse practitioners, nurses in a clinical setting, and full-time professionals engaged in health care practitioner occupations and health care support occupations);
 - Public education;
 - Public library services; and
 - School library or other school-based services.

NOTE: *To qualify for forgiveness of a parent PLUS loan the parent borrower, not the student on whose behalf the loan was obtained, must be employed by a public service organization.*

Where can I find additional information?

This fact sheet provides only a summary of the basic requirements of the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program. For more detailed information, refer to the final regulations for this program (34 C.F.R. 685.219) that the U.S. Department of Education issued on October 23, 2008. You may view the final regulations by linking to <http://www.ed.gov/legislation/FedRegister/finrule/2008-4/102308a.html>.



How to Access and Process Your AmeriCorps Education Award

The AmeriCorps Online Payment System transforms the way education awards are requested and processed by removing the need to fill out and submit paper forms, resulting in easier access to your Segal AmeriCorps Education Award and faster turnaround of payments to your bank or school.



By registering for the system, you will enjoy many benefits such as:

- Never having to find, fill out, and mail paper forms again
- Tracking the status of your requests online
- Managing your account online
- Having easy access to help and information all within the system

Once you have been enrolled in an AmeriCorps program you can register through the AmeriCorps.gov website and begin using the new system. **Once you finish your required service hours, you must schedule an exit interview with AmeriCorps Program staff at Indiana State University. You will not be able to view or access your education award until after the exit interview.** Once you have successfully completed the exit interview, you will be able to access your education award. To register for the Online Payment System click on this link below to go directly to the registration page.

<https://my.americorps.gov>

How do you get your award?

When you successfully complete your term of service, the project director will notify the Trust. The Corporation then sends you a Voucher and Payment Request form and instructions for completing it. You can present the voucher to your loan holder or to the school you plan to attend. The school (or lender) will complete their portion of the voucher and send it to the Corporation for payment. Payments are made directly to the loan holder or school—not to the member. The Corporation will let you know that a payment has been made and send a new voucher showing any balance left in your Trust account.

You should receive a voucher from the Corporation within 14 days after the Trust is notified by the project that you've completed your term of service. The voucher will be sent to the address on your end-of-term paperwork. **REMEMBER** to give any change of address to the National Service Trust during the seven years you're eligible to use the award.

For additional information see www.americorps.gov or contact the National Service Trust at epayments@americorps.gov. You can call them at 1(888) 507-5962



What is My AmeriCorps?

My AmeriCorps is an online space designed to help members manage their AmeriCorps experience. It provides an easy way for individuals to get and give important information – before, during and after their service.

This site makes it easy to search and apply for AmeriCorps service opportunities in all three AmeriCorps programs. After registering and creating a profile, potential applicants can apply and allow programs to offer service opportunities to them as well.

For those who apply to a program, **My AmeriCorps** makes frequently used and requested forms available online, any time. Examples include the application, reference forms, tax forms, earnings statements, and Segal AmeriCorps Education Award requests. The site is tailored to members and alumni from all three AmeriCorps programs, showing them what they need, when they need it.

In addition, **My AmeriCorps** includes comprehensive online help, frequently asked questions and an enhanced customer service feature, “Contact My AmeriCorps,” to get you the answers you need about the programs or the system.

How is My AmeriCorps different from the AmeriCorps website?

While the AmeriCorps website provides information to the general public, **My AmeriCorps** is a space just for those who serve or have served. **My AmeriCorps** provides interactive tools and customized information for every point in the AmeriCorps experience.

How do I access My AmeriCorps for the first time?

If you are a current member or alumni, and this is your first time using the **My AmeriCorps** system, you will need to complete a simple registration process in order to be granted access. From the AmeriCorps website (www.AmeriCorps.gov), click on the “**My AmeriCorps**” link on the homepage. You can also access a link to **My AmeriCorps** by going to my.americorps.gov. Follow the instructions provided on the log-in page to create a new account. Simply enter in the required information to register and you are ready to begin.

I’m already registered for the AmeriCorps Online Payment System. Can I use my same user name and password?

Yes. The Online Payment System is now part of the **My AmeriCorps** portal. Existing users and participating institutions will log into **My AmeriCorps** and access the Online Payment System features as they did before using the same user name and password.

If I’ve elected to receive a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award, what can My AmeriCorps do for me?

By logging into **My AmeriCorps** and clicking on “My Education Award,” Members and Alumni can use **My AmeriCorps** to:

Update your contact information

Access, create, and submit forms to:

Have your student loans deferred during your term of service (Forbearance Request)

Request payment of the interest that accrued on your student loans during your term of service (Interest Accrual Benefit Request)

Request payment of qualified student loans (Education Award Payment Request)

Request payment of current Educational Expenses (Education Award Payment Request)

Extend the date of expiration of your Segal AmeriCorps Education Award (Award Extension Request)

View the status of your pending requests

Check your Segal AmeriCorps Education Award balance

View your account history



Corporation for National & Community Service (CNCS)

National Service Trust Automation Project Training Materials: Members and Alumni

The new AmeriCorps online payment system will enhance the overall AmeriCorps Education Award experience....

As an AmeriCorps Member or Alum, you have a personalized online account that is easily accessible through the AmeriCorps website. The Corporation for National and Community Service is dedicated to providing you with the resources you need to receive your Segal AmeriCorps Education Award benefits online. With the new AmeriCorps online payment system, you can now submit payment and forbearance requests, update your contact information, and check your balances and status of requests without filling out paper forms or calling the help desk.

The online system is simple and very user friendly, however any instructions that you may need can be found in this training manual.



How can the online system benefit me?

✓ ***Track the status of your requests.***

You will be able to track the status of your requests, eliminating the worry of whether your request got lost or misplaced.

✓ ***No more paper.***

The new system will eliminate the current paper forms required by the Trust, as well as enhance traceability through use of the online site.

✓ ***Receive payments in less time.***

The new online system will allow for quicker turn-around of payments. Your Education or Financial Institution will receive your money much sooner than with a paper-based process.

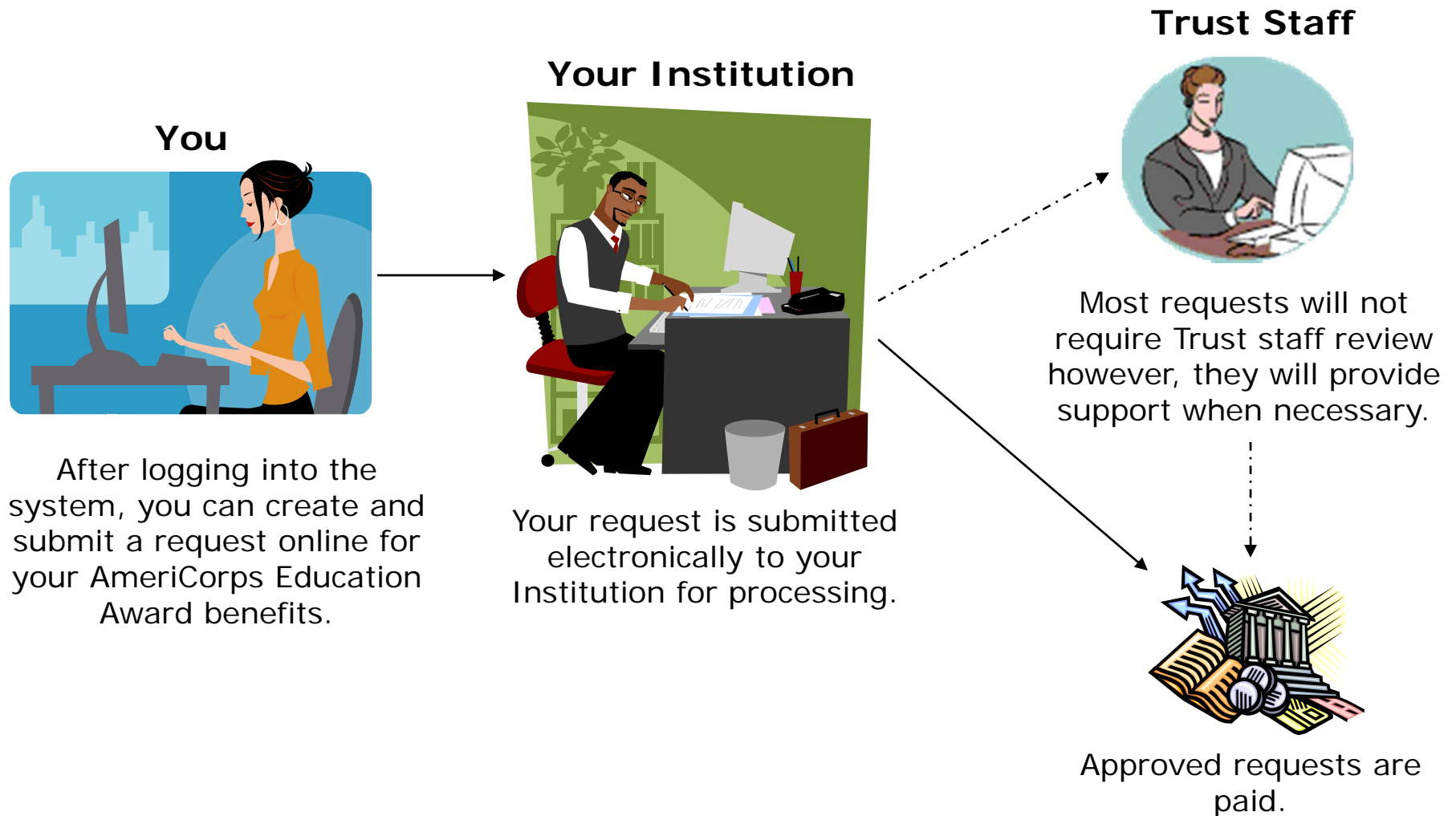
✓ ***Easy access to help and information.***

The system reduces the need to call the Trust because most questions can be answered by visiting the online site. FAQ's and online help will be available from anywhere in the system.

✓ ***Manage your account online***

You can view up to date account balance and information from your homepage. You will also have the capability to update your contact information.

The new system is very user-friendly, much like an online banking system. Here is how it works.....



And the best part is.....

No More Messy Paper Forms



The system can be accessed through the AmeriCorps website

You can access the login and registration area through multiple points on the AmeriCorps homepage (www.AmeriCorps.gov)

1. Login Box on left navigation area
2. Link under For Individuals

The screenshot shows the AmeriCorps website homepage. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the AmeriCorps logo, the text "AmeriCorps A Program of the Corporation for National and Community Service", and links for "Contact Us", "Site Map", and "Site Index". A search bar is also present.

The main content area features a large image of a man in a cap and jacket. To the right of the image is a blue box with the text: "Members – Did you know you can now submit your ED Award forms online? Click *here* to learn more". Below this is a banner for the "NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON VOLUNTEERING AND SERVICE" in Seattle, WA, June 18-20, 2006, with logos for "Climbing Mountains" and "Lifting Lives".

The navigation menu is divided into four columns:

- About AmeriCorps**: What Is AmeriCorps?, The AmeriCorps Pledge, Impact of AmeriCorps, AmeriCorps Programs, Newsroom, Media Kit Materials, National Service Calendar, Make a Donation, Search, Contact Us, National Service Catalog, Office of Inspector General, [More About AmeriCorps](#)
- For Organizations**: How Can AmeriCorps Help Our Organization?, New Funding Opportunities, How to Apply / Eligibility, Manage Current Grants and Projects, Recruit AmeriCorps Members / The Online Recruitment System, Tools, Training, and Information, The Resource Center, For Faith-Based and Other Community Organizations, Frequently Asked Questions, AmeriCorps Online Payment System, [More For Organizations](#)
- For Individuals**: Why Get Involved?, I'm Ready to Serve, Benefits of AmeriCorps Service, Frequently Asked Questions, Current Members, **AmeriCorps Online Payment System** (circled in red), Spread the Word, [More For Individuals](#), [Join How](#)
- Our Programs**: AmeriCorps*State, AmeriCorps*National, AmeriCorps*VISTA, AmeriCorps*NCCC, AmeriCorps - Helping to Rebuild Communities in the Gulf Coast, [More About Our Programs](#)

At the bottom left, there is a "Login Box on left navigation area" with a dropdown menu for "Other National Service Websites" (highlighted in red) and a "Login Box" for the "AmeriCorps Online Payment System". The login box includes fields for "Username:" and "Password:" and buttons for "Login" and "Need Help?".

At the bottom right, there is a "Program Spotlight" for "Vermont's VCSP AmeriCorps" with a photo of a group of people and a "Read More" link. Next to it is a "Stories of Service" section with a circular AmeriCorps logo and a story about a young man who sued AmeriCorps, with a "Read More" link and a "Stories of Service Archive" link.

User Instructions: How do I start?

Login

Please enter your username and password. By clicking on "login" you are agreeing to the terms and conditions outlined below:

Please complete all required fields. An asterisk (*) denotes a required field.

Username*:

Password*:

[Forgot your Username?](#) | [Forgot your Password?](#) | [Login Help](#)

[Register to create a new Member/Alum account](#)

[Register to create a new Institution account](#)

You will have access to the online system once you are enrolled in AmeriCorps

1. Go to www.AmeriCorps.gov
2. Click on "AmeriCorps Online Payment System" under the *For Individuals* heading
3. Click on "Register to create a new Member/Alum account"

Registration Steps

4. Enter your last name, date of birth, social security number and a current e-mail address
5. Click "submit"

Member/Alum Registration

Member/Alum Information

^ Last Name:

^ Date of Birth: (mm/dd/yyyy)

^ SSN: eg. 123456789

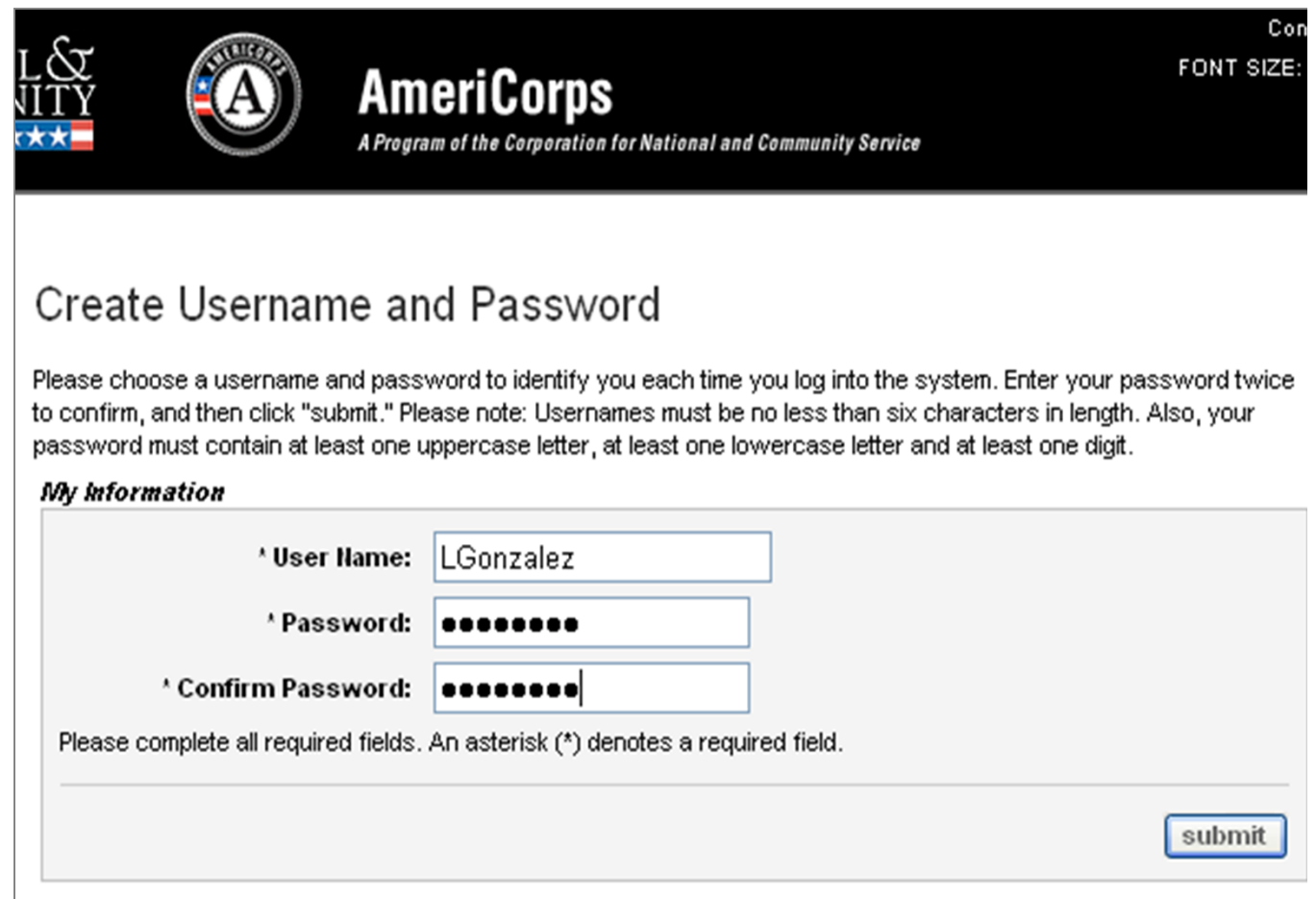
^ E-mail:

Please complete all required fields. An asterisk (*) denotes a required field.

[Registration Help](#)

User Instructions: Once I am registered, how do I login to the system for the first time?

1. Access your email and click on the link to the login page
2. Create a username and password
3. Re-enter your password
4. Click "submit"
5. The system will bring up your personalized homepage, where you can choose your desired option



The screenshot shows the AmeriCorps registration page. At the top, there are logos for 'L&NITY' and 'AmeriCorps' with the tagline 'A Program of the Corporation for National and Community Service'. A 'FONT SIZE:' link is visible in the top right. The main heading is 'Create Username and Password'. Below this, instructions state: 'Please choose a username and password to identify you each time you log into the system. Enter your password twice to confirm, and then click "submit." Please note: Usernames must be no less than six characters in length. Also, your password must contain at least one uppercase letter, at least one lowercase letter and at least one digit.' The form section is titled 'My Information' and contains three required fields: '^ User Name:' with the value 'LGonzalez', '^ Password:' with masked characters, and '^ Confirm Password:' with masked characters. A note below the fields says 'Please complete all required fields. An asterisk (*) denotes a required field.' A 'submit' button is located at the bottom right of the form area.

Note: The regular login page looks very similar, but you will not need to confirm your password.

User Instructions: What can I do from my homepage?

My AmeriCorps

- Edit My Profile
- Forbearance Request
- Interest Accrual Benefit Request
- Segal AmeriCorps Education Award Payment Request
- Award Extension Request

Home Page

Welcome to the AmeriCorps Online Payment System. From this site, you can update your contact information, view your award balances, and submit and track payment requests.

[Click here for help.](#)

Member Functions | Alumni Functions | 6 Years After Service Term

Path from Forbearance to Award Extension

Forbearance → Interest Accrual → Education Award → Award Extension

Update my contact information | Update my contact information | Update my contact information

My Information show

Name: Lora R Gonzalez	Date of Birth: 12/20/0178
IISPID: 115411	SSN: *****6666
E-mail: lgonzalez@cns.gov	
Mailing Address: 100 Paso Drive Somewhere TX 79000	Permanent Address: 10 Main St Elsewhere TX 79100
Home Phone Number: 987-654-3210	Home Phone Number: 789-456-1230
Work Phone Number: 987-555-6547	Work Phone Number:

[Change Password](#) | [Edit Profile](#)

My Requests show

Account Statement show

Service Date show

From your account homepage, you will be able to do the following:

- Update your contact information
- Access, create, and submit forms request Forbearance, Interest Accrual Benefits, Education Award Payments, and Award Extensions.
- View the status of your pending requests
- Check your AmeriCorps Education Award balance
- View your Account History

User Instructions: How do I update my personal information?

1. Log in to the system
2. Select “Edit My Profile” from left-hand navigation bar or from your homepage
3. Make any desired changes or updates
4. Click “submit”

Note: In order to change your name, date of birth, or social security #, you will need to contact the Trust for assistance

Edit My Profile

Please update your personal information using the Edit Profile option. Upon completing your updates, click the "submit" button to update your profile.

[Click here for help.](#)

My Information

Please complete all required fields. An asterisk (*) denotes a required field.

Name: Lora R Gonzalez

Date of Birth: 12/20/0178

HSPID: 115411

SSN: *****6666

*** E-mail:**

*** Mailing Address:**

-

Home Phone Number:

Work Phone Number:

*** Permanent Address:**

-

Home Phone Number:

Work Phone Number:

Receive E-mail Notifications: 

User Instructions: How do I request forbearance for my education loans?

Forbearance Request



To complete your Forbearance request, please verify that your personal information is correct, select the term of service for which you are requesting Forbearance (if more than one), and select the Institution from which you are requesting Forbearance. Upon completing the form, click the "submit" button to forward your request.

[Click here for help.](#)

My Information

Name: Lora R Gonzalez
Date of Birth: 12/20/0178
HSPID: 115411
SSN: *****6666
E-mail: lgonzalez@cns.gov

Permanent Address: 10 Main St
Elsewhere TX 79100
Home Phone Number: 789-456-1230
Work Phone Number:

Mailing Address: 100 Paso Drive
Somewhere TX 79000
Home Phone Number: 987-654-3210
Work Phone Number: 987-555-6547

*** Term of service:** 05/27/1998 to 08/21/1998

Institution Information [\(Search for Institutions\)](#)

Please select an institution to send this request to by clicking the "Search Institutions" link above.

Certify and Submit

I certify that all of the information I have provided is true and correct. I understand that a knowing and willful false statement on this form can be punished by a fine or imprisonment or both pursuant to Section 1001 of Title 18, USC.

If you are unable to make these certifications, please contact the help desk at 1-888-507-5962.

1. Log in to the system
2. From homepage, select "Forbearance Request"
3. Verify your information
4. Search and select Financial Institution (* see troubleshooting section for more directions)
5. Click "submit"

How do I request my Interest Accrual Benefit?

Interest Accrual Benefit Request



To complete your Interest Accrual request, please verify that your personal information is correct, select the term of service for which you are requesting your Interest Accrual benefit, and select your lending Institution. Upon completing the form, click the "submit" button to forward your request.

[Click here for help.](#)

My Information

Name: Lora R Gonzalez
Date of Birth: 12/20/0178
IISPID: 115411
SSII: *****6666
E-mail: lgonzalez@cns.gov

Permanent Address: 10 Main St
Elsewhere TX 79100
Home Phone Number: 789-456-1230
Work Phone Number:

Mailing Address: 100 Paso Drive
Somewhere TX 79000
Home Phone Number: 987-654-3210
Work Phone Number: 987-555-6547

Term of service: 05/27/1998 to 08/21/1998

Institution Information [\(Search for Institutions\) ?](#)

Please select an institution to send this request to by clicking the "Search Institutions" link above.

Certify and Submit

I authorize the release of any loan information to the National Service Trust.

I certify that all of the information I have provided is true and correct. I understand that a knowing and willful false statement on this form can be punished by a fine or imprisonment or both pursuant to Section 1001 of Title 18, USC.

If you are unable to make these certifications, please contact the help desk at 1-888-507-5962.

1. Log in to the system
2. From homepage, select "Interest Accrual Benefit Request"
3. Verify your information
4. Search and select your Financial Institution
5. Click "submit"

User Instructions: How do I request my Segal AmeriCorps Education Award payment?

[Click here for help.](#)

My Information

Name: Lora R Gonzalez
Date of Birth: 12/20/0178
HSPID: 115411
SSN: ****6666
E-mail: lgonzalez@cns.gov

Permanent Address: 10 Main St
Elsewhere TX 79100
Home Phone Number: 789-456-1230
Work Phone Number:

Mailing Address: 100 Paso Drive
Somewhere TX 79000
Home Phone Number: 987-654-3210
Work Phone Number: 987-555-6547

AmeriCorps Service Date: 05/29/2000
Award Balance: \$1,181.25

Payment Type: ?

Amount Authorized: ?

Institution Information (Search for Institutions) ?

Please select an institution to send this request to by clicking the "Search Institutions" link above.

Certify and Submit ?

I authorize the amount indicated above to be paid to the loan holder or educational institution named above.

I certify that I have not been convicted, since the completion of my AmeriCorps service, of the possession or sale of a controlled substance.

I further certify that I have received a high school diploma or its equivalent.

I certify that all of the information I have provided is true and correct. I understand that a knowing and willful false statement on this form can be punished by a fine or imprisonment or both pursuant to Section 1001 of Title 18, USC.

If you are unable to make these certifications, please contact the help desk at 1-888-507-5962 and we will inform you of what you must do to be eligible to use the award.

1. Log in to the system
2. From homepage, select "Education Award Payment Request"
3. Verify your information
4. Choose whether your payment will be used to *pay a loan* or *pay for current educational expenses* (If the later, enter the semester or term for which you are authorizing payment)
5. Enter the amount authorized
6. Search and select your Institution
7. Check certification boxes
8. Click "submit"

User Instructions: How do I request an Award Extension?

Name: Lora R Gonzalez
Date of Birth: 12/20/0178
HSPID: 115411
SSN: *****6666
E-mail: lgonzalez@cns.gov

Permanent Address: 10 Main St
Elsewhere TX 79100
Home Phone Number: 789-456-1230
Work Phone Number:

Mailing Address: 100 Paso Drive
Somewhere TX 79000
Home Phone Number: 987-654-3210
Work Phone Number: 987-555-6547

Request Information

Term of service: 05/27/1998 to 08/21/1998

Reason for Request: Performed another term of service in a Peace Corps position

Documentation file: C:\Documents and Setting

I served in the Peace Corps in Paraguay from 1999-2001.

Comments:
(max 4000 Characters)

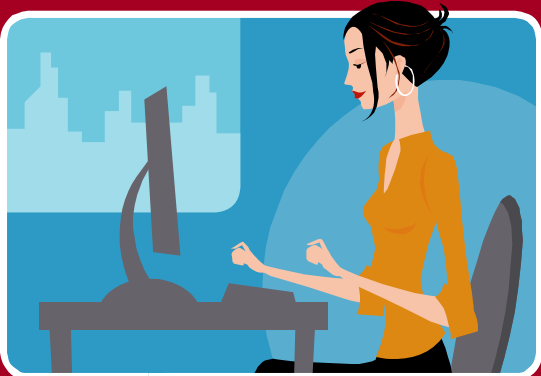
Certify and Submit

I certify that all of the information I have provided is true and correct. I understand that a knowing and willful false statement on this form can be punished by a fine or imprisonment or both pursuant to Section 1001 of Title 18, USC.

If you are unable to make these certifications, please contact the help desk at 1-888-507-5962.

1. Login to the system
2. From homepage, select "Award Extension Request"
3. Verify your information
4. Select the term of service for which you are requesting the extension
5. Select reason for extension request, attach required documentation, and write a brief explanation of your situation
6. Click "submit"

Troubleshooting



- What should I do if my name is not recognized during the registration process?
- How do I search for my Financial or Education Institution?
- What do I do if my Financial or Education Institution is not listed?
- What should I do if I cannot attach my Award Extension documentation?

Troubleshooting: What should I do if my name is not recognized during the registration process?

1. Verify that all information you entered is correct and try again
2. If still not recognized, contact the Trust at 1-888-507-5962
3. Follow instructions given by the Trust staff

Note: You must first be enrolled in a qualified AmeriCorps program to be granted access.



The header of the AmeriCorps website features the AmeriCorps logo on the left, which includes a circular emblem with an 'A' and the text 'AMERICORPS'. To the right of the logo is the text 'AmeriCorps' in a large, bold font, followed by the tagline 'A Program of the Corporation for National and Community Service'. On the far right, there are links for 'Contact Us | Site Map | Site Index', a search bar with the placeholder text 'Enter a Search Term' and a 'Search' button, and additional links for 'Forms | Advanced Search' and 'FONT SIZE: Default | Large'.

Member Registration

Please note:

- We were unable to find a profile matching the information that you entered. Please try again. If you continue to have issues, please contact the Trust help desk.

Member Information

Last Name:	<input type="text" value="Public"/>
Date of Birth:	<input type="text" value="6/23/1980"/>
SSN:	<input type="text" value="123121234"/>
E-mail:	<input type="text" value="jpublic@americorps.gov"/>

An asterisk (*) denotes a required field.



Troubleshooting: How do I search for my Financial or Education Institution?


The screenshot shows the AmeriCorps website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the AmeriCorps logo and the text 'A Program of the Corporation for National and Community Service'. To the right of the logo, there are links for 'Contact Us | Site Map | Site Index' and a search bar with the placeholder text 'Enter a Search Term' and a 'Search' button. Below the navigation bar, there is a red sidebar on the left with a 'HOME' link and a 'Inst. Search' link. The main content area is titled 'Search Institutions' and contains the following text: 'To search for an institution use any or all of the fields below and click the search button.' Below this text are four input fields: 'Name' (a long text box), 'City' (a text box), 'State' (a dropdown menu), and 'Zip' (a text box). A 'search' button is located below the input fields.

1. Search for your Institution by a combination of its
 - Name
 - City
 - State
 - Zip
2. Select your institution

Troubleshooting: What should I do if my Financial or Education Institution is not listed?

1. Select “Not Found”
2. Enter in the Institution name and correspondence address
3. Enter in any other available information such as a phone number, contact name and e-mail address
4. Click “submit”

The Trust will then contact your Institution within 5 business days to get them registered for the system.

Institution Information *(Search for Institutions)* 

Please enter as much information about the institution as possible.
For foreign institutions leave state and zip code blank.

^ Institution Name:

^ Department/Office:

^ Address:

^ City:

^ State:

^ Zipcode: -

Contact Name:

Contact Phone:

Contact Email:

Certify and Submit

I authorize the release of any loan information to the National Service Trust.

I certify that all of the information I have provided is true and correct. I understand that a knowing and willful false statement on this form can be punished by a fine or imprisonment or both pursuant to Section 1001 of Title 18, USC.

If you are unable to make these certifications, please contact the help desk at 1-888-507-5962.

Troubleshooting: How do I submit paper documentation for my Award Extension Request?

1. If you cannot electronically attach the required documentation, print out Award Extension Request form
2. Make sure that form is complete and accurate
3. Print the completed form
4. You can fax the form (and all documentation) to 202-606-3484

Or mail it to:
CNCS
AFMS- Trust Office, 8th fl
1201 New York Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20525

Award Extension Request

To request an Award Extension, please verify that your personal information is correct, select the appropriate reason for your request from the dropdown box and provide a brief explanation in the space provided. If required, attach the required documentation needed to substantiate your request and submit the request.

My Information

Name John Q. Public
Date of Birth 11/05/1981
HSPID 245575
SSN 321112121
Email jpublic@americorps.gov
Permanent Address: 1111 11th St SE
Washington DC 20003
Mailing Address: 1111 11th St SE
Washington DC 20003
Home Phone Number 202-555-1212
Work Phone Number 202-555-1212

Request Information

Term of service: 07/02/2001 to 01/10/2006 ?
Reason for Request: Served Two Terms ?
Substantiation file: Browse... ?
Comments: (max 4000 Characters)

Certify and Submit

I certify that all of the information I have provided is true and correct. I understand that a knowing and willful false statement on this form can be punished by a fine or imprisonment or both pursuant to Section 1001 of Title 18, USC.

What else might I want to know?

What if I forget my password?

If you cannot remember your password click on “Forgot your Password?” on the login page. You will be prompted to enter your username and the e-mail address you used to register, and an e-mail will be sent to you with a temporary password. Once you login, you will be able to change your password again. If the e-mail address you used to register is no longer valid, please contact the Trust to have your record updated with a valid e-mail address.

Once I am a registered user are there other ways to access the online system?

From the AmeriCorps.gov website, there are a number of different ways you can access the system. The easiest way is to enter your username and password in the login box on the homepage. There is also a link to the online payment system in the “For Individuals” section.

How will I know what happened to my request once I have submitted it?

You will be able to view the status of your requests from your homepage. You will also be able to view your payment history on your homepage.

How will I know when a payment has been made?

You have the choice either to receive notification e-mails or simply to log in to your account to view the status of pending requests. The system’s default option is set to send you e-mail notifications of any change to your account, but you can always change that in your profile.

For questions about the new AmeriCorps online payment system, send an email to :

epayments@americorps.gov

**Or call the Trust Customer
Service hotline:
1-888-507-5962**

**Hours of Operation:
Mon-Fri 8:00-6:00EST**

And to read more FAQ's and other information about the new online system, check out our website at www.AmeriCorps.gov

Loan Postponements and Interest Payments

AmeriCorps members who are currently repaying on their qualified student loans are uniquely eligible for one type of postponement called forbearance. During this forbearance based on national service, interest continues to accrue. If you successfully complete your term of service and earn an educational award, the Trust will pay all or a portion of the interest that has accrued on your qualified student loans during this period. ***This accrued interest paid by the Trust, like the education award itself, is subject to income taxes.***

Eligibility

-Most qualified student loans provide for forbearance or deferment during a term of AmeriCorps service. All AmeriCorps members enrolled in an AmeriCorps project are eligible for forbearance as well as having the Trust make payments on interest accrued on your qualified student loans while you are serving.

-To have repayment of your qualified student loans postponed, you must first officially enroll in an AmeriCorps project, which electronically sends enrollment information to the Trust. Then ***you must request “forbearance” from your loan holder, by completing the Forbearance Request for National Service form, and any additional information or forms that your loan holder may require.***

Complete one form for each of your loan holders. Since there are several types of forbearances and deferments, tell your loan holders that you are requesting loan forbearance based on your AmeriCorps service.

-Submit your Forbearance Request for National Service form and any other information required by your loan holders to the National Service Trust, which we will process and return to your loan holders. We can certify your AmeriCorps status, but only the loan holders can determine your eligibility for forbearance. Contact your loan holders if you have not heard from them within four weeks of submitting your information to the Trust.

Note: Students who are enrolled in an institution are not eligible for loan forbearance or interest accrual.

Interest Accrual Payments

To have the Trust pay all or a portion of the interest accrued on your qualified student loans, the Trust must receive verification from your project that you have completed your service and are eligible for an award. You and your loan holders also must complete the Interest Accrued During National Service form, which indicates the amount of interest accrued during your service period. Your loan holder sends this completed form to the Trust for payment.

The Trust **WILL NOT** pay interest on qualified student loans if you fail to complete your term of service. Exceptions will be made only if you fail to complete your term of service for compelling personal circumstances. It is up to your individual program to determine compelling personal circumstances. Examples that might be considered are a serious

illness or injury, death of your immediate family member, or early closing of your project.

The Trust will only pay interest on qualified student loans, as described earlier. Ask your loan holder if your student loan qualifies for other kinds of forbearance.

Defaulted Loans

Most student loans that are in default are not eligible for forbearance. If you have loans that have gone into default before you begin your AmeriCorps service, you can attempt to negotiate an arrangement with the loan holder (or collection agency) to bring the loan out of default so forbearance can be granted and interest paid.

To get these benefits, your AmeriCorps project must official enroll you in an AmeriCorps program at the beginning of your term of service, and officially exit you once you have completed your term of service.

You must correctly complete and submit to the Trust (1) *the Forbearance Request for National Service form* at the start of your service term; and submit to your lender (2) *the Interest Accrued during National Service form* at the end of your service term. You can download the Interest Accrual form and the Forbearance Request form. Your AmeriCorps program director may also make these available to you.

Matching the Education Award

A growing number of institutions of higher education are offering to match the education award, or are making other financial aid benefits available to AmeriCorps alumni, such as scholarships, tuition waivers, and in-state tuition. Attending one of these institutions can increase the value of your education award. For information on these additional benefits, contact National AmeriCorps Association.

How to Correctly Complete Loan Forbearance and Interest Accrual Forms

LOAN FORBEARANCE

Refer to the Loan Forbearance Form

The following shall be adhered to relate to loan forbearance.

1. The Program must make Members aware of the loan forbearance benefit at the time when the Member first enrolls in the program, including but not limited to, Member Orientation.
2. The Program must make available the loan forbearance form if requested by a Member.
3. The Member must complete the Member section of a loan forbearance form for each service period. After completing the Member Section, the Member should provide the form to the AmeriCorps Program Director.
4. The AmeriCorps Program Director should forward the form to the National Service Trust through the following methods.

-MAIL

The National Service Trust/CNCS

1201 New York Ave NW

Washington DC 20525

-FAX

(202) 565-2742 or (202) 565-2781

A representative of the National Service Trust will verify the Member's participation in AmeriCorps and will sign the form as the Authorized Corporation Official. The representative will forward the completed form to the loan holder listed on the form.

INTEREST ACCRUAL

Refer to the Interest Accrual Form

The following shall be adhered to relate to interest accrual.

1. The Program must make Members aware of the benefit of payment of interest accrued by the National Service Trust for a successful completion of a national service term at the time when the Member first enrolls in the program, including but not limited to, Member Orientation.
2. The Program must make available the interest accrual form if requested by a Member.
3. The Member must complete the Member Section of the interest accrual form, no sooner than 30 days prior to the completion of service. The Member must send a form to each loan holder.

4. Loan Holders should complete the Loan Holder Section and return the completed form to the National Service Trust through the following methods.

-MAIL

The National Service Trust/CNCS

1201 New York Ave NW

Washington DC 20525

-FAX

(202) 565-5742 or (202) 565-2781

A representative of the National Service Trust will verify the successful completion of the Member's participation in AmeriCorps and will complete the payment of interest process.

Extend the 7-Year Deadline

By law, AmeriCorps members have seven years within which to use their education awards. The period begins the date you complete your term of service in AmeriCorps. This time limit may be extended if certain circumstances have prevented the award from being used during this time period.

These circumstances can include:

- Performing another term of service in AmeriCorps or the Peace Corps during the seven year period; or
- Being unavoidably prevented from using the award during the seven-year period. Examples of unavoidable situations which may warrant extensions include serious illness or disability, military service, death of a family member, or important service records being destroyed or inaccessible by the program. Any period of incarceration as a result of a conviction of a criminal offense will not be considered an unavoidable situation.

Members must request the extension in writing before the end of the seven-year period. The request can be either by mail or can be made electronically. A notice will be mailed to all members prior to the end of their seven-year period reminding them of the expiration of their awards.

For further information on how to request this extension, contact the National Service Trust toll-free at (888) 507-5962.

CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE FORBEARANCE REQUEST FOR NATIONAL SERVICE FORM

Under the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, borrowers serving in approved national service positions in AmeriCorps qualify for mandatory forbearance during service (which, for FFELP loans, may be granted in increments of up to 12 months at a time). This forbearance allows borrowers to delay payments temporarily. Members may reapply if they continue service. THIS FORM IS TO BE USED TO REQUEST THIS TYPE OF FORBEARANCE. Forbearance is granted by the lender.

Mandatory forbearance for approved national service positions is available for the following educational loans: Federal Family Education Loans (Subsidized and Unsubsidized Stafford Loans, Supplemental Loans to Students (SLS), Consolidation Loans), William D. Ford Federal Direct Loans (Direct Subsidized and Unsubsidized Stafford/Ford Loans, and Direct Consolidation Loans), Federally Insured Student Loans (FISL), Health Education Assistance Loans (HEAL), Health Professions Student Loans (HPSL), Loans for Disadvantaged Students (LDS), Nursing Student Loans (NSL), and Primary Care Loans (PCL). Other deferments/forbearance may be available for Federal Perkins Loans and loans **made directly to the member** by a state agency.

During the service period interest continues to accrue. Upon successful completion of the term of service the National Service Trust will pay all or a portion of the interest that has accrued. If a member leaves service early for other than compelling personal circumstances he or she will be responsible for payment of interest. If the interest is not paid it may be capitalized. Capitalization is a process whereby unpaid interest is added to the principal amount of the loan. This increases the outstanding principal balance, and therefore increases interest charges over the life of the loan. If a member is past due on payments not covered by the forbearance period, the loan holder may grant an administrative forbearance to resolve the delinquency at the time this request is processed and may capitalize all unpaid interest.

INSTRUCTIONS

FOR THE AMERICORPS MEMBER: Complete one of these forms for each of your service periods. After completing the *Member* section, you should give the form to your program director or site supervisor who will forward all requests to the National Service Trust in Washington.

FOR THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR OR SITE SUPERVISOR: Mail forms to **The National Service Trust/CNCS; 1201 New York Ave., NW; Washington, DC 20525**. The Trust will verify the member's participation and will forward this form to the loan holder or loan servicer listed below.

MEMBER SECTION (Must be completed in full and signed in ink by the AmeriCorps member - please print)

Name of AmeriCorps Member:

	MI	
--	----	--

Last MI First

SSN:

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Current Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Signature of AmeriCorps Member: _____ Date: _____

I am requesting forbearance on my loan(s) and am serving in AmeriCorps.

Period of National Service from

--	--

--	--

--	--	--	--

 through

--	--

--	--

--	--	--	--

dates are mandatory

(Mo Day Year) (Estimated Completion Date)

Please use one form for each loan holder you want to receive a forbearance request. Provide the name and address of the loan holder.

Name of Lending Institution/Loan Holder _____ Address: _____ _____ City/State/Zip _____ Phone _____

FOR COMPLETION BY THE NATIONAL SERVICE TRUST

I certify that this borrower is serving in a qualified national service position for the period indicated above:

Signature of authorized corporation official _____ date _____
 National Service Trust/CNCS; 1201 New York Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20525 Telephone No. (202) 606-5000 x347 or (888) 507-5962

Privacy Act Statement: In compliance with the Privacy Act of 1974, the following information is provided. The collection of this information is authorized by the provisions of the National and Community Service Act, as amended by the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993. The primary purpose of the information is to enable an AmeriCorps member to receive forbearance on qualified student loans during a period of service. Information is for official use only, and will be provided only to identified lending institutions in order that forbearance may be granted. Your Social Security Account Number (SSN) is solicited under the authority of the Internal Revenue Code (26 U.S.C. 6011(b) and 6109), for use as a taxpayer identification number. Disclosure is MANDATORY because the Internal Revenue Service has determined that the education award is taxable income in the year it is paid and because the holder of a student loan maintains the information by the borrower's SSN. Furnishing all other information on this form is voluntary, but failure to do so may result in a denial of a payment being made from your account or it may delay a payment from your account or delay the granting of a forbearance request.

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 10 minutes per response, including reviewing instructions, gathering and providing the information needed to complete the form. Send comments regarding this burden or content of this instrument to: Corporation for National and Community Service, National Service Trust, 1201 New York Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20525. The Corporation informs the potential person(s) who are to respond to this collection of information that such persons are not required to respond to the collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number on this page of the form. (See 5 C.F.R. 1320.5(b)(2)(I)).

CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

INTEREST ACCRUAL FORM

Upon successfully completing a term of service and earning an education award, the National Service Trust will pay, on behalf of the borrower, all or a portion of the interest that accrued on a qualified student loan* during the member's term of national service. The loan must have been in forbearance, deferment or a grace period during this period. This form requests the loan holder to provide the interest amount and send the form to the Trust for payment. Payment will be made only to the loan holder. This payment, like payments from a member's education award, is considered taxable income in the year the payment is made.

INSTRUCTIONS

FOR THE AMERICORPS MEMBER: A computer generated form is included in your award packet. However, if you use this blank form, fill out the *Member Section*, send the completed and signed form to each loan holder. **Do not use** the blank form before receiving your award. Your service period runs from the date you began your service (including any training period) to the date you completed it. Contact your project director if you do not know these dates. Incorrect service dates may delay processing payment.

FOR THE LOAN HOLDER: Complete the *Loan Holder Section* and return the form to: National Service Trust/CNCS, 1201 New York Ave NW, Washington DC 20525

A. MEMBER SECTION (Must be completed in full and signed by the AmeriCorps member upon completion of service - please print)

Member's name:	Social Security Number: _____
Street:	Phone: _____
City, State & zip:	
Period of National Service (dates): Beginning _____ through _____ payment cannot be made without dates <small>Mo Day Year Mo Day Year</small>	
I certify that the information above is true and correct. I authorize the release of any loan information to the National Service Trust.	
Borrower's signature: _____ Date: _____	

Please forward this form to your loan holder

B. LOAN HOLDER'S SECTION - Complete all boxes, indicating either total \$ amount OR daily amount of interest

<p>Loan name or type (If a Federal Consolidation Loan, please state the full loan name or type): _____</p> <p>Cite loan numbers, if interest is for more than one loan: _____</p> <p>Payoff amount: \$ _____</p> <p>If state agency made loan, name of agency: _____</p>	<p>Total amount of interest accrued on member's qualified loan(s) during service period: \$ _____</p> <p>DO NOT include interest which has been or will be paid by the US Dept of Education. DO include all other accrued interest for which the borrower is responsible.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">***** OR *****</p> <p>Daily interest accrual amount: \$ _____</p> <p><i>Indicate any period of time within the service period during which interest has been or will be paid by the US Dept of Education. Cite a period only if it is one during which the borrower is NOT responsible for interest, such as a grace period for a subsidized loan:</i> _____</p>
<p>Loan Holder/Service information (where payment should be sent). Address must be complete and legible:</p> <p>Name: _____ Phone: _____</p> <p>Address: _____ Fax: _____</p> <p>Federal Taxpayer ID: _____</p> <p>Customer Service eMail: _____</p>	
<p>I certify that the amount designated is for <u>eligible</u> interest that accrued on the qualified student loan(s)* during the service period indicated, and that any loan cited was in forbearance, deferment, or a grace period during the service period.</p>	
_____ Signature of Representative of Loan Holder/Service	_____ Printed Name of Representative
_____ Date	

* A QUALIFIED STUDENT LOAN is 1) any loan made, insured, or guaranteed pursuant to Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, other than a loan to a parent of a student pursuant to § 428B of such Act; 2) any loan made pursuant to Titles VII or VIII of the Public Health Service Act; and 3) any loan determined by an institution of higher education to be necessary to cover a student's cost of attendance at such an institution and **made directly to a student** by a state agency. Examples of these loans include Federal Family Education Loans (Subsidized & Unsubsidized Stafford Loans, Supplemental Loans to Students (SLS), Consolidation Loans), Federally Insured Student Loans (FISL), Federal Direct Loan Program Loans (FDLP), Perkins Loans, Health Education Assistance Loans (HEAL), Health Professions Student Loans (HPSL), Loans for Disadvantaged Students (LDS), Nursing Student Loans (NSL), Primary Care Loans (PCL), and loans **made directly to members** by a state's Higher Education Authority and a state institution of higher education. (The 'maker' of every loan should be cited on the loan's Promissory Note.)

Privacy Act Statement: In compliance with the privacy Act of 1974, the following information is provided: The collection of this information is authorized by the provisions of the National and Community Service Act, as amended by the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993. The primary purpose of the information is to enable an AmeriCorps member to have a payment made for all or a portion of the interest that accrued while the member was serving in an AmeriCorps project. The form asks the member's loan holder to inform the Trust of the amount of interest that accrued in order for a payment to be made. Information is for official use only. Your Social Security Number (SSN) is solicited under the authority of the Internal Revenue Code (26 U.S.C. 6011(b) and 6109), for use as a taxpayer identification number; disclosure is MANDATORY because the Internal Revenue Service has determined that the education award is taxable income in the year it is paid. Furnishing all other information on this form is voluntary, but failure to do so may result in a denial of your interest being paid or it may delay the payment.

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 10 minutes per response, including reviewing instructions, gathering and providing the information needed to complete the form. Send comments regarding this burden or content of this instrument to: Corporation for National and Community Service, National Service Trust, 1201 New York Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20525. The Corporation informs the potential person(s) who are to respond to this collection of information that such persons are not required to respond to the collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number on this page of the form. (See 5 C.F.R. 1320.5(b)(2)(i)).

Take your AmeriCorps Experience to Work in Your Next Job

Potential employers recognize the value of AmeriCorps service. Though your service is not considered employment, the experience you develop through service shows your ability to handle tough tasks, your commitment to seeing things through, and your dedication to working on challenging issues.

You can put your AmeriCorps experience to good use in your career—and your service may give you direct help in being considered for some federal positions.

Build Your Resume

How you include your AmeriCorps experience on your resume and in interviews is important. You should describe briefly but clearly the AmeriCorps program where you served and what you did. Many AmeriCorps assignments include civic engagement, nonprofit and project development, and fundraising. Do not forget to list these skills on your resume.

Ask your project supervisors or co-workers if you can list them as references so potential employers can hear about your successes and accomplishments.

Network with AmeriCorps Alumni

Researching and networking to find jobs is essential when transitioning from one career to another. AmeriCorps alumni can be an excellent resource. Often it is personal connections that help you can get your foot in the door. Network with fellow alums by joining [AmeriCorps Alums](#), the official organization for AmeriCorps alumni created by alums, for alums.

In addition, you may be able to network with alumni through your program.

Applying for Federal Positions

If you served as an AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteer In Service to America), your experience can help you get hired by the federal government. Available for one year after you satisfactorily complete a full year of VISTA service, you earn non-competitive eligibility for federal jobs.

After you satisfactorily complete a full year of service, you earn non-competitive eligibility for federal jobs for one year. This one year of non-competitive eligibility begins the first day after you complete your full year of service. Non-Competitive eligibility does not mean that you are guaranteed a federal civil service job. You must locate an agency with a vacancy and interest that agency in hiring you. *This benefit does not apply for other AmeriCorps programs.*

**To establish your non-competitive status, you'll need proof of eligibility.* Once you've completed service, log onto the My AmeriCorps Portal to print off a letter of VISTA certification. Visit my.americorps.gov to register. Visit the Service Letters link to create and print your letter. If your letter is incorrect or the Portal cannot locate your record, please visit <http://www.nationalservice.gov/questions/app/ask>.

Work for the Corporation for National and Community Service

If you're interested in working for the Corporation for National and Community Service, the independent federal agency that oversees AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and Learn and Serve America, please see the Corporation's list of [employment opportunities](#).

It's the end of my AmeriCorps term of service...what should I do now??

There are several options for AmeriCorps Alumni. You can continue your work in the non-profit world, go to college or graduate school, join the Peace Corps or even serve a second year in AmeriCorps! Below are a few resources to help in your future plans.

Non-profit Jobs

www.idealists.org

www.lifetimeofservice.org

www.servenet.org

www.nonprofit-jobs.org

www.volunteermatch.org

www.nonprofitcareer.com

www.peacecorps.org

www.rileyguide.com/prepare.html

www.sustainablebusiness.com/jobs

www.accessjobs.org

www.jobsinnonprofit.com

www.cns.gov/jobs/index.html

www.opportunitynoes.org

Network with other AmeriCorps members or Alumni

www.servicelearning.org National Service Learning Clearinghouse

join-aclist@lists.etr.org Send an email to join the AmeriCorps Listserv

<http://www.americorpsalums.org/> AmeriCorps Alumni website

Join the Peace Corps!

<http://www.peacecorps.gov/>

Serve another year as an AmeriCorps State, National or VISTA member!

Where can I do service??

ACTION WITHOUT BORDERS

www.idealists.org

VOLUNTEER MATCH

www.volunteermatch.org

AMERICORPS

www.americorps.org

AMERICAN RED CROSS

www.redcross.org

CATHOLICS NETWORK OF
VOLUNTEER SERVICE

www.cnvs.org

LEARN AND SERVE (Service-Learning)

www.learnandserve.org

NETWORK FOR GOOD

www.networkforgood.org

SENIOR CORPS

www.seniorcorps.org

UNITED WAY OF AMERICA

www.unitedway.org

VOLUNTEER AMERICA

www.volunteeamerica.net

International Service Resources

Books to help you explore volunteer and service opportunities across the globe. All of these can be found at www.amazon.com.

- ***How to Live Your Dream of Volunteering Overseas*** by Joseph Collins, Stefano Dezerega, Zahara Heckscher, Anna Lappe

- ***Alternatives to the Peace Corps*** by Joan Powell (Editor)

- ***The Back Door Guide to Short Term Job Adventures: Internships, Extraordinary Experiences, Seasonal Jobs, Volunteering, Work Abroad*** by Michael Landes (Paperback)

- ***The International Directory of Voluntary Work (6th Ed)*** by Victoria Pybus (Editor) (Paperback)

- ***Volunteer Vacations: Short-Term Adventures That Will Benefit You and Others*** by Bill McMillon, Edward Asner (Paperback)

- ***So You Want to Join the Peace Corps: What to Know Before You Go*** by Dillon Banerjee (Paperback)

- ***Work Your Way Around the World*** by Susan Griffith (Paperback)

- ***Alternatives to the Peace Corps*** by Joan Powell (Editor)

- ***The Back Door Guide to Short-Term Job Adventures*** by Michael Landes

- ***Vacation Work's International Directory of Voluntary Work (International Directory of Voluntary Work, 7th Ed)*** by Louise Whetter, Victoria Pybus

- ***Volunteer Vacations*** by Bill McMillon, et al

- ***The Global Citizen*** by Elizabeth Kruempelmann

- ***Making A Living While Making A Difference*** by Melissa Everett

- **Teaching English Overseas - A Job Guide For Americans And Canadians** by Jeff Mohamed
- **21st Century Complete Guide to the Peace Corps** by U. S. Government
- **International Job Finder** by Daniel Lauber
- **The Peace Corps and More** by Medea Benjamin, Miya Rodolfo-Sioson

Additional Resources

***National Service Trust**

Members can call a toll-free number to receive assistance from the National Service Trust: 1.888.507.5962. The help line is staffed from 8 a.m.–6 p.m. (EST). For duplicate vouchers and to report a change of address, members should e-mail edawardvoucher@cns.gov.

These online resources provide additional valuable information:

***Official AmeriCorps Education Award Web site**

www.americorps.org/members/edaward.html

This Corporation-based Web site includes vital information on issues like loan forbearance, the effect of the education award on taxes, and how the award applies to financial aid. The information is dense but extremely useful, and your members can benefit from browsing the site and finding the information that applies to their individual situations.

***AmeriCorps Alums/National AmeriCorps Association Education Center**

www.lifetimeofservice.org/Content.cfm?content_id=60

The Web site of the National AmeriCorps Association (formerly AmeriCorps Alums) contains information on maximizing the use of the Ed award, financial aid, taxes, and a comprehensive list of colleges and universities that augment the ed award.

***The Effective Education Award, National Service Fellow Project**

www.etr.org/NSRC/pdfs/fellows/rogers.pdf

This paper contains survey results, data, recommendation, and case studies based on Brandon Rogers's research about the Ed award.

***To find a Title IV School:**

www.studentaid.ed.gov

Select the Choosing tab, click on Participation.

To call and receive assistance from a live operator, to change your address, and request duplicate vouchers, contact the National Service Trust

1.888.507.6962 (8:00-6:00 EST)

***Download the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)**

www.FAFSA.gov

To use the education award to study abroad, find out if the institution qualifies (participates in the Foreign Family Education Loan Program):

1-202-708-8820

*Tax Information

www.irs.gov

***IRS information in education credits and student loan interest deduction:**

IRS Telefax 1.800.829.4477, Topics #605 and #456

1.800.TAX.FORM (1.800.829.3676)

***To Order free IRS publication and forms (Guide to Free Tax and Services, etc.):**

1.800.829.1040