Welcome and Thank you!
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Today’s Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Background on MSA and Commonwealth Corps
- Program Details
- Host Site Partnership Details
- Examples from the 2020-2021 Service Term
- Next Steps

Opportunities for questions and sharing throughout

January 7th - Technical Assistance Webinar:

- Details on this year's RFP, including performance measures and tips for your application
- More in-depth look at the host site selection process and partnership expectations
Who’s in the room?

Please introduce yourself in the chat:

- Name (pronouns)
- Organization name
- One question you’re hoping to have answered today
Please ask questions...
...keeping in mind we can also answer specific questions in an individual meeting with your organization

Open conversation that will be recorded

These are not normal times and none of us have all the answers

Please be as present and engaged as possible

Please be on mute if you’re not talking
The Massachusetts Service Alliance (MSA), established in 1991, is a private, nonprofit organization. As the state commission on volunteerism and service, we generate collaboration and public-private partnerships at the local, state and federal level to grow volunteerism and service initiatives in MA.

Our mission is to expand volunteerism and service in Massachusetts by providing individuals and organizations with funding, training, and support, which enables them to strengthen communities and make our Commonwealth a better place to live.

Learn more at Mass-Service.org
The mission of the Commonwealth Corps service internship program is to engage Massachusetts residents of all ages and backgrounds in direct service to strengthen communities, address critical needs, and increase volunteerism.

- Commonwealth Corps is a state-funded service internship program administered by the Massachusetts Service Alliance.
- Dual focus on community/organizational impact & on member growth/development
- Focus areas of Economic Opportunity, Education, Health & Nutrition, or Youth Development/Youth Violence Prevention.
Commonwealth Corps History

- Established in 2007 by Governor Patrick and his partners in the state legislature. Continued support under Governor Baker. No other state in the country has a service corps program focused solely on state residents.

- Through 2020, over **1,050** individuals have:
  - Served over **732,000** hours,
  - Benefitted over **624,000** individuals, and
  - Leveraged over **30,600** additional volunteers to contribute an additional **680,000** hours of service.

- In 2019-2020, members leveraged over **$396,000** worth of cash or in-kind support for their host site organizations.
Our Commitment to Equity and Diversity

- Through our host site selection process, member recruitment and selection, and ongoing member support, Commonwealth Corps is committed to being a program in which our service members can reflect the diversity and lived experiences of the communities we serve.

- Our mission Commonwealth Corps is to strengthen communities and address critical needs, which at its core must mean working to dismantle systems of oppression that disproportionately impact Black and Brown communities in our state. Read more on our commitment to equity here.
Who are Corps members?

- Massachusetts residents
- Must be eligible to work in US, but not required to be a US citizen
- Range in age from 18-65+
- Diverse racially, ethnically, linguistically, and many other ways
- Come to the program from various personal, professional, and educational backgrounds
- What all members have in common is a desire to put their talents and ideas to use in the service of their communities and the Commonwealth.
What do Corps members do?

- Commonwealth Corps members are placed at non-profit agencies and municipalities across MA to...
  - Provide direct service to communities/clients,
  - Build organizational capacity,
  - And recruit, organize and mobilize additional volunteers.
- Members also focus on their own growth and development through training and support provided by their host site and MSA.
Service Term Details

- 10.5 Months: August 16, 2021 – June 25, 2022
- Full-time members serve 38 – 40 hours/week (1500 hours total)
- Half-time members serve 18 - 20 hours/week (750 hours total)
- Majority of time spend with host site (in-person or remote)
- Ongoing professional development from host site and MSA
Member Benefits

- **Stipend** of $800 (full-time) or $400 (half-time) every other week while in service, up to $16,800 (full-time) or $8,400 (half-time), minus taxes and withholdings (*will be updated for 2021-2022*);

- **Health insurance** (full-time members only, no monthly premium/contribution, individual coverage only);

- **Member assistance program**, including unlimited, confidential, 24/7, phone counseling services and up to three free, “in-person” counseling sessions, plus a lot more;

- **Completion award** of up to $3,000 (full-time) or $1,500 (half-time) upon successful completion of service, minus taxes and withholdings (*will be updated for 2021-2022*);

- **Training and other professional development** opportunities, including outside training stipend up to $100;

- **Limited reimbursement for travel** to Corps-wide MSA-sponsored activities;

- **Limited travel reimbursement from their host site for certain service-related travel** away from their usual service location, according to that agency's policies;

- The opportunity for at least 10 (full-time) or 5 (half-time) days of planned absences (may include holidays);

- **Any other benefits specified by the host site**.
Both CC and AmeriCorps focus on combination of community impact and member development. Some of the larger differences include:

- CC is state-funded and only open to MA residents.
- CC members combine direct service with capacity building.
- CC is a fit for small to medium sized organizations who need more than one service member but don’t have the capacity to host a whole AC program.
- MSA plays heavy role in shared member management and simplifies some administrative aspects for host sites.
- The range of members who have served: our members represent a more diverse cohort than the average year-of-service program.
- One-term limit for members
Questions?
Host Site Expectations and Requirements

- MSA and host sites share member recruitment and management responsibilities, with technical support from MSA throughout the year – **an ongoing partnership**!

- Evaluation and reporting: Intake, mid-year, end-of-year progress reports, plus member support systems.

- Fiscal responsibility:
  - Cash match per member: $2000 **per** half-time (min. of 3 members) and $4000 **per** full-time (min. of 2 members)
  - Reimbursement for members for service-related travel away from their usual host site location
  - Optional but encouraged additional benefits to members
Organizational Requirements

- Eligible Host Site Applicants:
  - Non-profit organizations in existence for >1 year
  - State, municipal, and county governments
  - Academic institutions
  - Native American tribes
- Current and prior Commonwealth Corps host sites may reapply (and must complete an additional section)
- MSA will only consider ONE application per agency
- Applicants with pending request for MSA funding may apply
Member Request Guidelines

- Full-time: 2 to 4 members
- Half-time: 3 to 6 members
- Agencies that wish to apply for fewer than 2 full-time or 3 half-time members can partner with one or more agencies to apply jointly. One agency must act as a lead applicant and will serve as the main contact with MSA. In such cases, there must be common goals/measures and/or activities that build a sense of team across members.

NOTE: MSA usually receives more requests than can be supported. Please be sure full-time positions are warranted and that you are requesting only the total number of members your organization needs and has the capacity to support.
All host sites must address the capacity-building measures and the measures from **ONE** focus area:

- Economic Opportunity/Workforce Development
- Education (Early or General/K-12)
- Health & Nutrition
- Veterans’ Support
- Youth Development/Youth Violence Prevention
**Goal**: To expand the scale, reach, efficiency, or effectiveness of programs and organizations. Activities may also leverage resources for programs and/or organizations. These activities should achieve lasting positive outcomes for the beneficiary populations served by the organization.

*Projects should:*

- support or enhance the program delivery model;
- respond to the organization’s goal of increasing, expanding or enhancing services in order to address the most pressing needs identified in the community; and
- enable the organization to provide a sustained level of more or better direct services after the member’s term of service has ended.
Think about how members can have an impact **within their year** of service and build capacity and foster impact **in years to come**.

*Some Examples:*

- Creating or improving systems for new virtual programming;
- Creating presentations and outreach materials for current and future use;
- Documenting a new program’s policies/procedures/content;
- Developing a process for identifying and meaningfully connecting with new partners;
- Developing a curriculum for a course/series that can be used in future years;
- Developing a process for identifying occasional volunteers and helping transition them into and train them for larger volunteer roles/commitments;
- Transitioning a program piloted during the Commonwealth Corps year into a sustainable program with other partners/sources of support; etc.
The 2020-2021 Program

- Unique year functioning during a pandemic – many members serving entirely remotely, others serving a combination of in-person and remote.
- 40 Commonwealth Corps members at 16 host site partners
- See our [host site booklet](#) and [newsletters](#) for more details
2020-2021 Host Site Agencies

- Boston Cares (Boston; Full-time)
- Central Berkshire Habitat for Humanity (Pittsfield; Full-time)
- Coalition for a Better Acre (Lowell; Full-time)
- Family Health Center of Worcester (Worcester, Full-time)
- Friends of the Hernández (Boston; Full-time)
- International Institute of New England (Boston; Full-time)
- More Than Words (Boston & Waltham; Full-time)
- One Family (Regional, Boston Office; Full-time)
- Open Sky Community Services (Fitchburg; Half-time)
- Open Table (Middlesex County; Full-time)
- South Coast Youth Services (Fall River & New Bedford; Half-time)
- Peer Health Exchange (Lynn & Malden; Full-time)
- Regional Environmental Council (Worcester; Half-time)
- Matahari Women Workers Center (Boston; Half-time)
- Westport River Watershed Alliance (Fall River, Taunton, & Westport; Full-time)
- WriteBoston (Boston; Full-time)
Open Sky Community Services – Fitchburg

Youth Development Focus Area

- Open Sky Community Services blends best practices with the power of community, by partnering with individuals and families to see beyond and live beyond perceived limitations to pursue fulfilling lives.

- Hosting **three half-time members** who serve as Commonwealth Corps Safe Homes North Coordinators, utilizing the principles of Positive Youth Development to help launch a new LGBTQ+ youth at a drop-in center located at Fitchburg State University.

- Through their service, members will **promote the new location, recruit 30 new youth participants, develop and support peer leaders, and refer participants and their families to mental health counseling and other services.** In addition, they will recruit **three volunteers** to assist with activities at the drop-in center.
The mission of Open Table is to address hunger by providing healthy food in a welcoming environment while respecting the dignity of those served.

Hosting two full-time members in the Mobile Pantry Program who serve as Commonwealth Corps Mobile Programs and Operations Assistants in the 23 cities and towns in Middlesex county that constitute our service area.

Through their service, members will address transportation barriers to accessing food in our suburban communities through development of our Mobile Pantry Program. In addition, they will leverage 30 volunteers that will be engaged in program operations.
Recommended Next Steps

- Review [last year’s RFP](#)
- Optional [Concept Proposal](#) – Due before 12/14/20
- Option to [schedule a one-on-one consultation with us](#)
- Email or call with questions
- [RFP will be released no earlier than 12/14 and will be due late January 2021.](#)
Questions?
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