This workshop was held at the 2018 Equal Justice Conference in San Diego, California.

Title:
Using State/National Americorps Members To Close The Justice Gap

Presenters:
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Angela Lovitt, Legal Aid Society of Hawaii, Honolulu, HI
Alison Paul, Montana Legal Services Association, Helena, MT
Mēghan F. Scott, Montana Legal Services Association, Helena, MT

Learn how legal aid programs in Montana and Hawaii use AmeriCorps resources supported by strong community partnerships to work towards closing the justice gap in their states. You might not be able to travel to Montana or Hawaii, but you can attend this session. It will be almost like, vacation!
Using State/National AmeriCorps Members to close the Justice Gap

Moderator: Alison Paul, Executive Director, Montana Legal Services Association
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Panelists: Angela Lovitt, AmeriCorps Program Director, Legal Aid Society of Hawai’i
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Amy Copperman, Esq., Program Director, AmeriCorps Legal Advocates of Massachusetts
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Brief Description:
Learn how legal aid programs in Montana, Hawaii, and Massachusetts use AmeriCorps resources supported by strong community partnerships to work towards closing the justice gap in their states. You might not be able to travel to our states, but you can attend this session. It will be almost like, vacation!

Program Goals (what you will learn):

1. Have a clear understanding of whether a State/National AmeriCorps program is right for your organizations.

2. Use AmeriCorps members to grow your organization’s day to day processes and expand outreach.

3. Learn how to support your intake and outreach efforts through community partnerships.

I. Introductions – Alison Paul

II. AmeriCorps 101 - Angela Lovitt
III. AmeriCorps State/National Program Examples in Legal Aid
   A. AmeriCorps Legal Advocates of Massachusetts - Amy Copperman, Esq.
   B. Justice for Montanans - Mēghan Scott
   C. AmeriCorps Program at Legal Aid Society of Hawai‘I - Angela Lovitt

IV. Experience with AmeriCorps – Panel Discussion
    Moderated by Alison Paul

V. Questions from attendees/Wrap-Up

Bibliography & Website Links:

1. Learn more about the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) -
   https://www.nationalservice.gov/


4. Legal Advocates of Massachusetts - http://www.ala-mass.org/
Using State/National AmeriCorps Members to Close the Justice Gap
AmeriCorps State & National 101

www.nationalservice.gov

If it looks like a duck.
walks like a duck.
and quacks like a duck.

it is a duck...

SharifahNor

Or is it?

Quaak.
Rules and Regulations

- National and Community Service Act of 1990 as amended by the Serve America Act
- AmeriCorps Regulations
- AmeriCorps Terms and Condition
- AmeriCorps State and National Policy FAQ’s
Structure

- Corporation for National and Community Service “CNCS”
- State Service Commissions
- Grantees (us)
- Service Locations (May be Partner Sites)
National Service Family

- AmeriCorps Network - State & National - Direct Services
- AmeriCorps VISTA – Capacity Building
- AmeriCorps NCCC
- FEMA Corps
- Senior Corps
- Other
Focus Areas

- Disaster Services
- Economic Opportunity
- Education
- Environmental Stewardship
- Health Futures
- Veterans and Military Families
AmeriCorps State & National Funding

- Competitive
  - 3 years with renewal application each year
  - Nationally Competitive (with State Commission Approval)
  - Importance of Priority Areas
  - January Application Deadline (but check with State Commission)

- Formula
  - 1 Year
  - Local/State Competitive
  - Application Deadline Varies
  - Generally (but not always) smaller grant amounts
AmeriCorps State & National Funding/Budget Types

- Fixed Amount
- Cost Reimbursement
Matching Requirements
(Specific Percentages only apply to Cost Reimbursement Grants)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding Year</th>
<th>1-3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grantee Match Requirement</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>50%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Member Benefits

- Living Allowance – Walks like a duck. Quacks like a duck. Taxed like a duck. Not a duck!

- Education Award – Contingent of successfully completing hours and term of service. Taxed like a duck.

- Health Care – FT only ACA Compliant

- Child Care – FT only with income qualification requirements

- Workers Comp and Unemployment – state dependent

- Living Allowance exempt income for SNAP eligibility
AmeriCorps Participant Members vs. Employees (Remember it’s NOT a Duck!)

- Fixed Term Contracts – Not “at will” employees
- No “Leave” & Holiday Hours
- Can’t Displace, Duplicate or Replace Employees
- Can’t Replace Member after 15% of hours completed
- Prohibited Activities – LSC Regs. on steroids
- Citizen, National or LPR
- Background Checks: Sex Offender, FBI, & State Repository
- AmeriCorps Branding
- Term Limits
- Paperwork, Paperwork, Paperwork
AmeriCorps Legal Advocates of Massachusetts

- ALA-MA places college and law school graduates in legal services organizations throughout Massachusetts
- A project of South Coastal Counties Legal Services
- In operation since 2005
- Currently receives $494,280 in CNCS formula funding
- Total budget is $1,302,083
16 partner organizations, with 22 office sites in 13 cities.

Partners include LSC programs, other legal aid organizations, faith-based agencies, and non-profits focused on a single practice area.

Partners apply each year to host AmeriCorps projects, and commit to provide supervision for each member.

Partners invest $17,000 in cash and $5,000 in-kind for each member.

“I learned more in the first month of my service than I did in all of law school.”
ALA-MA Advocates in 2017-2018

- 37 AmeriCorps members
- 22 college graduates
- 15 law school graduates; 13 licensed in MA
- 9 serving their second year with the program
ALA-MA Focus Areas

- Funded under the CNCS Economic Opportunity Priority
- Performance measures include intakes, brief service, full representation, and volunteer engagement
- Also assists “economically-disadvantaged individuals” transition into or maintain safe, healthy, affordable housing
- Training and supervision is tracked
2016-2017 Results

- Served 53,517 hours
- Screened 6,183 potential clients for assistance
- Provided brief services to 4,250 clients
- Engaged in full representation for 1,421 clients
- Provided housing assistance to 4,054 individuals
- Ensured 883 individuals were transitioned into or maintained in safe, healthy, affordable housing
- Engaged 1,421 non-AmeriCorps volunteers.

ALA-MA has shaped my values, my professional goals, my emotional and empathic capacity, and my understanding of the world.
ALA-MA Practice Areas:

- Housing, 40%
- Immigration, 23%
- Family, 13%
- Benefits, 5%
- Education, 1%
- Health, 3%
- Disability, 1%
- CORI, 9%
- Employment, 5%
- Other, 0%
ALA-MA Housing Assistance:

- Eviction Defense, 50%
- Emergency Shelter, 9%
- Foreclosure, 3%
- Legal barriers to housing, 5%
- Enforcement of lease/occupancy rights, 2%
- Lockouts, 0%
- Housing discrimination, 3%
- Conditions/Repairs, 6%
- Other, 5%
- Subsidy Termination, 2%
- Housing Search/Referral, 2%
- Security Deposits, 1%
- Access to public/subsidized housing, 7%
- Income maintenance/expansion, 0%
- Rents, 2%
- Denial of public/subsidized housing, 1%
- Another legal matter which affected housing, 2%
Justice for Montanans AmeriCorps Program

- **Finances**
  - CNCS investment - $268,500
  - Partner investment - $383,083 (cash & in-kind)

- **CNCS Focus Area and Objectives**
  - Economic Opportunity (Intake & Outreach, Surveys, Direct Service, and Awareness campaigns)
Partners

- Montana Legal Services Association
- Self-Help Law Centers
- DOJ’s Office of Consumer Protection and Victim Services
- State Bar of Montana
- Disability Rights Montana
- Alexander Blewett III School of Law at the University of Montana
JFM Member Position Description

All Members will uphold the goals of the Justice for Montanans Program by participating in the following activities:

- Intake
- Outreach
- Referrals
- Legal Self-Help
- Volunteer Recruitment
Members
Q3 Did the organization you contacted help you understand your legal rights and what you could do?
Q4 Do you feel more prepared to handle your legal situation?
JFM members in 2016-17 met outcomes

- Total Served - 38,297
- Recruited 295 volunteers who gave 10,373 hours to 1,944 clients.
- Served 4,971 55+
- Served 6,125 Veterans and their family members
- Served 2,513 Tribal members
- Outreach Events - 94
AmeriCorps Project Kaulike

18 Members Serving in Legal Aid (No Partners)

- 9 Full-Time AmeriCorps members in 7 Legal Aid offices on 4 islands.
- 7 Quarter-Time members serve in 5 courthouse based self-help centers on 4 islands.
- 2 Minimum-Time summer members.
CNCS Focus Area: Economic Opportunity

CNCS Secondary Focus Area: Veterans and Military Families

Funding: $144,597 in CNCS Competitive funding. $483,386 project budget.

Currently in year 3 of a 3 year competitive grant.
Position Descriptions

- Members serve as navigators of the civil justice system, helping low-income and other vulnerable individual and families to understand their legal rights, to access and to navigate the civil justice system.
- Direct Client Services
- Outreach and Community Legal Education
- Creation of Self-Help Materials, Brochures & Videos.
Position Descriptions Cont.

Full-Time members:

- Intake and counsel & advice on statewide intake hotline;
- Brief services, extensive services, legal clinics under the supervision of Staff Attorneys;
- Subject matter includes housing, consumer protection, family law, public assistance benefits.
Quarter-time members:
- Intake and legal information at courthouse based self-help centers
- Housing, debt collection, & family
- Recruit and schedule pro-bono attorneys
- Prepare monthly reports for Legal Aid, the Judiciary, & Bar Association
Our Members

Our 18 members in 2017-2018 include:

- 10 recent college graduates
- 2 retired professionals
- 15 of 16 current members are from Hawaii or lived in Hawaii prior to joining the program.
- In each of the past 7 years, at least one program alumna has been admitted to the University of Hawaii, William S. Richardson School of Law.
- 12 current Legal Aid staff members, including 4 Managing Attorneys, are alumna of our AmeriCorps program.
Results

2016-2017 Performance Measure Results:

- Over 19,000 Hours of Service
- 3547 disadvantaged individuals provided services
- 238 veterans or veteran households provided services
- 158 volunteers engaged
- 228 outreach or education events reaching approximately 2278 individuals
- 100% Retention Rate
- 100% Enrollment Rate
End of Term Celebration!
Contact Us

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Resources</th>
<th>Core Project Components</th>
<th>Evidence of Project Implementation</th>
<th>Evidence of Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INPUTS</td>
<td>ACTIVITIES</td>
<td>OUTPUTS</td>
<td>OUTCOMES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What we invest</td>
<td>What we do</td>
<td>Direct products from program activities</td>
<td>Short-Term Medium Long-Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALA-MA advocates will be placed at 16 legal services sites across Massachusetts.</td>
<td>ALA-MA advocates will assist the host site partners to provide legal assistance to poor clients with civil legal issues, including housing, access to benefits, and immigration status. Assistance includes direct client representation and community outreach and education.</td>
<td>Applicant Determined PM: 4,000 potential clients will be screened. CNCS Priority Output #05: 3,600 economically-disadvantaged individuals, including homeless individuals, will receive housing services. Members will support 300 non-AmeriCorps volunteers. Members will receive 3,600 hours of training and 3,600 hours of supervision.</td>
<td>Clients served will see an analysis of their legal problem, a resolution to their legal problem if a resolution is feasible, and a better understanding of their legal rights. Members will receive training on the legal needs of low-income families and how to address those needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 supervisors will invest time to oversee and train members.</td>
<td>In-kind support from host site partner sites. Leveraged capacity as members engage non-AmeriCorps volunteers.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Justice for Montanans Project
#### 2017 AmeriCorps State Grant Application
#### Logic Model Chart

**Problem:** The Justice for Montanans Program will address the ongoing problem in Montana of a lack of access to legal information, advice and resources for low and moderate income Montanans. This problem prevents people from achieving the safety, security and stability that they need to protect their basic needs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Resources</th>
<th>Core Project Components</th>
<th>Evidence of Project Implementation and Participation</th>
<th>Evidence of Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inputs</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Outcomes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. 20 Justice for Montanans AmeriCorps members serving at 12 sites located in Helena, Billings, Missoula, Great Falls, Bozeman, and Kalispell (see more detailed list below).</td>
<td>1. One on one legal system navigation assistance for low and moderate income Montanans. 2. Community education &amp; involvement activities. 3. Facilitate access to information, services and resources that contribute to the improved economic well-being and security of economically disadvantaged people. 4. Each member will serve 1,700 hours over a total of 11 months.</td>
<td>1. Provide legal information and referrals to 20,000 low and moderate income Montanans. 2. Conduct four community education campaigns on consumer issues targeted at 6,000 economically disadvantaged consumers. 3. Support 150 volunteers to provide civil legal assistance to low and moderate income Montanans.</td>
<td>1. Low and moderate income Montanans gain knowledge of the legal system. 2. Low and moderate income Montanans gain knowledge of their legal rights and responsibilities. 3. Low and moderate income Montanans learn what to do or not do to solve their legal problems. 1. Low and moderate income Montanans will have increased security in achieving and protecting their basic needs such as food, shelter, income, health care, personal safety, and family relationships. 2. Low and moderate income Montanans will obtain access to the justice system and the intended benefit of our laws. 3. The Justice for Montanans Project will help remove the legal barriers that keep people in poverty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Member Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Funding</td>
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Sites:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Billings</th>
<th>Bozeman</th>
<th>Great Falls</th>
<th>Helena</th>
<th>Kalispell</th>
<th>Missoula</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Montana Legal Services Association (2)</td>
<td>Court Help Program (1)</td>
<td>Court Help Program (2)</td>
<td>Montana Legal Services Association (5)</td>
<td>Court Help Program (1)</td>
<td>Montana Legal Services Association (2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Court Help Program (1)</td>
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<td>State Bar of Montana (1)</td>
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<td>Court Help Program (1)</td>
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<td>Attorney General Office of Consumer Protection (3)</td>
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<td>Court Help Program (1)</td>
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<td>Disability Rights (1)</td>
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</table>


## Logic Model Chart

<table>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Inputs</strong></td>
<td><strong>Activities</strong></td>
<td><strong>Outputs</strong></td>
<td><strong>Outcomes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What we invest (# and type of AmeriCorps members)</td>
<td>What we do</td>
<td>Direct products from program activities</td>
<td>Changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes, opinions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

18 Project Kaulike AmeriCorps members serve at 10 sites located throughout the State of Hawaii. 9 FT, 7 QT and 2 MT members will be dedicated to this project.

1. Provide intake, counsel & advice, legal information & brief legal services to contribute to the improved economic well-being and security of economically disadvantaged people.
2. Community education and outreach.
3. Recruit and manage volunteers.

1. Provide legal information and assistance to 1,545 low and moderate income individuals, including at least 145 veterans and/or veteran family members.
2. Members participate in at least 50 outreach or educational events, reaching at least 2,000 individuals.
3. Recruit and support 150 volunteers to provide civil legal information and assistance to low and moderate income individuals.

1. Low and moderate income individuals gain knowledge of the legal system.
2. Low and moderate income individuals gain knowledge of their legal rights and responsibilities.
3. Low and moderate income individuals learn what to do or not to do to solve their legal problem.
4. Volunteers gain skills and provide assistance to low and moderate income individuals.

1. Low and moderate income individuals make informed decisions.
2. Low and moderate income individuals take action to resolve their legal problems.
3. Low and moderate income individuals have increased security to achieve and protect their basic needs such as food, shelter, income, health care, personal safety and family relationships.
4. Project Kaulike helps remove legal barriers that keep people in poverty.
SITES:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Honolulu</th>
<th>Windward Oahu</th>
<th>Leeward Oahu</th>
<th>Kauai</th>
<th>Maui</th>
<th>Hilo</th>
<th>Kona</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legal Aid Society Office (4 FT, 2 MT)</td>
<td>Legal Aid Society Office (1 FT)</td>
<td>Legal Aid Society Office (1 FT)</td>
<td>Legal Aid Society Office (1 FT)</td>
<td>Courthouse Self-Help Center (1 QT)</td>
<td>Courthouse Self-Help Center (1 QT)</td>
<td>Legal Aid Society Office (1 FT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Court Self-Help Center (3 QT)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Courthouse Self-Help Center (1 QT)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Legal Aid Society Homeless Project (1FT)</td>
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