



## Become a Volunteer Maryland VISTA Member!



AmeriCorps★VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) is a full-time, national service program for individuals interested in developing lasting solutions to the problems of poverty in America. AmeriCorps★VISTA members serve in community and faith-based nonprofit organizations and with other agencies and local governments to develop and expand services and programs that help bring low-income people out of poverty.

The AmeriCorps★VISTA program has been addressing the needs of impoverished communities since 1965. In total, more than 146,000 individuals have joined forces with 13,000 local organizations to address poverty across the nation.

Volunteer Maryland serves as an intermediary agency for nonprofit organizations that address the root causes of poverty and work to bring Maryland citizens or communities out of poverty. These organizations, called Sponsors, apply through Volunteer Maryland to host AmeriCorps★VISTA members for one-year full-time terms of national service.

### ***What do VISTA Members do?***

The role of the AmeriCorps★VISTA member is primarily to build the capacity and sustainability of the project and community. Below are some examples of the natural progression in the types of service performed by an AmeriCorps★VISTA member. AmeriCorps★VISTA members do not perform direct service (e.g. tutoring children, building houses, or delivering meals to homebound seniors), instead focusing on organizational development, outreach and community organizing, fund raising, and other capacity building activities at the Sponsor agency.

### ***Example VISTA activities include:***

<b>VISTA SERVICE</b>	<b>CAPACITY BUILDING</b>	<b>SUSTAINABILITY STEPS</b>
Train direct service providers (e.g. literacy instructor or financial counselor)	Write training curriculum or manual; deliver train the trainers course	Develop training manual and train the trainer curriculum
Coordinate community service project	Develop procedures and systems	Develop project management system and procedural guide
Public speaking	Develop speakers' bureau	Develop community partnerships
Write press releases	Develop press kits, media database	Secure media partners
Organize fund raising events	Grant writing; database development	Secure project staffing and diverse revenue streams
Organize task forces/coalitions	Develop leadership structure of task force/coalition	Create infrastructure for communication and sustainability

To learn about current Volunteer Maryland VISTA opportunities, call 410-767-6219.



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## **VISTA Benefits At-A-Glance**

### **Living Stipend**

A living stipend of approximately \$384 – \$438 is paid to VISTA members bi-weekly. (The amount depends on locality.) Taxes are deducted from each check. Members are prohibited from full-time or part-time employment outside of the VISTA assignment.

### **Post-Service Benefit**

At the successful completion of a service year, members become eligible to receive a \$4,725 Segal AmeriCorps Education Award or \$1,200 cash stipend. The education award can be used to pay school loans and/or education expenses up to seven years in the future. The post-service benefit is for the VISTA member only; s/he cannot transfer it to another person. The post-service benefit is subject to taxes for the year(s) in which it is used.

### **Health Insurance**

Health insurance is provided through AmeriCorps. It is a basic policy with a \$100 deductible, and it includes prescription coverage, a \$10,000 accidental death benefit, and dental coverage.

### **Child Care**

Child care assistance is available to VISTA members who qualify by income and do not already receive child care assistance from another source.

### **Student Loan Forbearance**

If VISTA members have qualified student loans in good standing, they may apply for both deferment and forbearance. Deferment means that they do not have to make payments while in service. Forbearance means that if they successfully complete their year of service, the Corporation for National and Community Service will pay the interest that accrued on their loan during the year. The interest paid by the Corporation is subject to taxes for the year in which payment is made.

### **Noncompetitive Status**

Upon completion of the VISTA term of service, members receive one year of noncompetitive status for a federal government job.

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