NATIONAL SERVICE OVERVIEW

The Corporation for National and Community Service is a federal agency that engages more than 4 million Americans in service through Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and the Social Innovation Fund, and leads President Obama's national call to service initiative, United We Serve. CNCS was created to connect all Americans with opportunities to serve their communities and their nation. The mission of CNCS is "to improve lives, strengthen communities and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering."

Begun in 1994, the AmeriCorps programs provide opportunities for Americans to make an intensive commitment to service. The AmeriCorps network of local, state, and national service programs engages more than 80,000 Americans in intensive service each year.

AmeriCorps is divided into three main programs: AmeriCorps*State and *National Direct; AmeriCorps* VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America); and *NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps). AmeriCorps is not a job; it is a service opportunity. In large and small communities, AmeriCorps members are taking responsibility, learning valuable skills and fulfilling their pledge to serve their communities and their nation.

AMERICORPS*VISTA

AmeriCorps*VISTA is the national service program designed specifically to fight poverty. Founded as Volunteers in Service to America in 1965 and incorporated into the AmeriCorps network of programs in 1993, VISTA has been on the front lines in the fight against poverty in America for more than 45 years. The VISTA role in addressing the problems of poverty in a particular community is to mobilize community resources and increase the capacity of the low-income community. *It is critical for the low income community to be involved in both the planning and execution of the VISTA project.*

All VISTA projects incorporate the following components:

- **Anti-Poverty Focus:** Long term solutions to help communities out of poverty
- **Community Empowerment:** Engagement of the community to help plan, develop and implement programming and service activities to address local needs
- **Sustainable Solutions:** Sustainable outcomes developed to ensure the impact of the VISTA efforts will continue beyond their term of service
- **Capacity Building:** Building of the capacity of community organizations through development or expansion of programs and services, engaging new community partners, development of systems and processes to support new efforts, development of resources to support efforts, and engagement of volunteers and volunteer leaders.

AmeriCorps VISTA members must be engaged in poverty alleviation projects which have a focused project goal and lead to long term community and organization capacity building and impact. *VISTA's should NOT simply implement existing systems and programs, but rather should develop **new** programs, systems and processes, partnerships and resources* – including financial, volunteer, educational, and benefit related.

Corps 18 (formerly HandsOn Schools) Mission

The Corps 18 Program will implement quality evidence based out-of-school time programming designed to: improve attendance rates and improve attitudes toward school through the successful connection of community members and parents to the school.

Program Overview

Statistics show that students with more than 20 absences per year have less than a 1-in-5 chance of graduating. By ninth grade, school attendance is a better predictor of graduation than eighth-grade test scores, according to a 2007 study by the University of Chicago. Yet thousands of children are still absent from school each day. An astounding 7.5 million students miss at least a month of school each year. Education Programs at the Points of Light will engage VISTA members in the national expansion of the CORPS 18 program to address not only the issue of absenteeism, but also to build a platform for programming that helps to address many of the other issues that keep students from school in low to moderate communities. Corps 18 VISTA members will focus thoughtful and deliberate out-of-school time programming in 4 main areas: Cultural and Academic Literacy (CAL), Health & Wellness, STEM and P.L.A.Y. These efforts will ultimately have a positive impact on overall student success by using levels of engagement and student attendance as key indicators. This relationship development will achieve a new level of personalization between students and their families while deconstructing perceived and real barriers in the process.

About the Program

1. Cultural and Academic Literacy (CAL) programs that engage parents and community volunteers in offering academic support (math, reading or homework tutoring), and introductions to early financial and digital literacy. The goal for our literacy based initiatives will be to help students recover school work after missed days due to chronic absence preventing students from falling behind academically.
2. Health & Wellness programs will promote healthy living choices, healthy and stimulating learning environments and engage volunteers in creating safer paths to and from schools.
3. STEM programs that introduce and deepen the awareness of students, their families and communities of the incredible opportunities for exploration in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.
4. P.L.A.Y. programs that engage students in initiatives that help youth gain leadership and teambuilding training through active play and exercise while helping youth understand the positive benefits of exercise.

Corps 18 Returning Host Sites

The 2014-2015 Corps 18 Education program will focus on engaging adult volunteers and parents to establish stronger connections with the school and its students through the creation of thoughtful and deliberate out-of-school time programming. These efforts will ultimately have a positive impact on overall student success by using levels of engagement and student attendance as key indicators.

Decisions will be based on the following criteria:

Year one and/or year two results (to date and measured by outputs & outcomes)

- Evidence based models are required – submission and evaluation of the program model questionnaire for all requests (attached)

- Site compliance

- Project alignment with Corps 18 program model

- Goal alignment with Corps 18 expansion program goals

- Demonstrated member support

- Current neighboring grantee (added benefit, not mandatory)

Although it's not an eliminating factor, we will also determine the site's potential for model replication. If the host site program model is found to be replicable, the expectation would be for the host site to provide 1-2 training calls within the first quarter of the year and share project respective tools with other host sites and Corps 18 program staff.

Under our new programmatic guidelines for year 2014-2015, we are mandating that sites assume a **minimum of 2 VISTA members**. The VISTA roles will be classified under two titles; Student Success and Parental & Community Engagement. See below for details.

- If a host site chooses to accept the returning site invitation, the host site:

  - That hosted only 1 VISTA for year one, may continue in year two with 1 VISTA.

  - That hosted more than 2 VISTA members in year one can scale back to a minimum of 2 VISTA members for year two if needed, with one focused on Student Success and the other on Parent/Community Engagement.

  - Must maintain the same project as outlined in year one and shift VISTA VAD focus to promote project sustainability.

Host sites from program year 2013-2014 that choose to discontinue their current project are eligible to apply under the new Corps 18 Education Program Model.

VISTA Member Roles:

Parent and Community Engagement VISTA Member

VISTA members will work to create volunteer opportunities to eliminate barriers, whether actual or perceived, that have traditionally precluded parents and community members from becoming advocates for their local schools and students. VISTA members will work to enhance relationships between parent/community members and schools by empowering parents to become proactive agents in their child's educational experience and by engaging community members as active stakeholders by helping to improve the capacity by which schools support each child's family.

Member activities will include:

- Community asset mapping to identify local resources to support the efforts
- Outreach to local community organizations, including local houses of worship, immigrant support centers, nonprofit partners, etc., to drive programming.
- In partnership with student success VISTA, develop a Local Advisory Council following the Neighboring principles
- Fund development to support programmatic activities

- Develop a school to home communication strategy, utilizing adult volunteers to make contact with truant students and students considered as chronic absentees to successfully reengage into the school community
- At least 2 programs that provide measurable benefits for local community members will be established or expanded to occur at the placement site.
- Engagement of community members and parents as volunteers and volunteer leaders.
- Creation and/or submission of lessons, curriculum, best practices to POL national online resource library

Student Success VISTA Member

Members will work with school administration to successfully identify students who are already considered, and those at risk of becoming, chronically absent and develop a communication strategy to reach these children and their families to promote re-engagement to school and enrollment into out-of-school time programs. Members will then work to analyze which out-of-school time based programs already exist within the school and assess their evidence base, capacity, and efficiency. Members will identify and/or develop out-of-school time, evidence-based programs that directly impact student attendance and attitudes toward school.

Member activities will Include:

- Analysis of existing programs to determine design of future programs.
- Creation or expansion of a minimum of two programs to increase

- Monitoring and evaluation of both volunteer efficacy and student progress
- Program improvement planning for continuous quality improvement

attendance and student academic engagement- Programs must be evidence based • In partnership with parent/community engagement VISTA, develop a Local Advisory Council following the Neighboring principles • Development of volunteer manuals	• Engagement of local community members and teachers on an advisory council • In partnership with parent/community engagement VISTA, recruitment and training of volunteers and volunteer leaders, including residents • Creation and/or submission of lessons, curriculum, best practices to POL national online resource library

2014-2015 Per VISTA Member Cost: $4,500- To be paid on a quarterly (program year) basis.

Corps 18 Education Program Requirements/Resources

The Corps 18 Education Program *empowers individuals to develop high quality out-of-school time programs and strengthen connections between local schools, parents and students in an effort to change the educational landscape in America.* As part of participation in the Points of Light Education program, host sites must agree to the following parameters:

I. **Pre VISTA Member Service Site Supervisor Requirements**

Participation in the Summer 2014 Host Site Onboarding Process which includes:

- Member Recruitment Training – May 2014

- Finalization of the VISTA Assignment Description – April 2014

- Return Signed MOU- June/July 2014

- Development of a member training plan, including orientation and ongoing training – July 2014

- Participation in the Corps 18 Supervisor Training – July/August 2014

II. **Host Site Compliance**

- Comply with all applicable regulations, provisions and handbooks for the VISTA Program

  VISTA Manual –

  http://www.americorps.gov/help/vistahandbook/chapter1.html

  Supervisor Manual-
  https://docs.google.com/a/pointsoflight.org/file/d/0BxYkPNytspgpWml0RzJZTjRxbWM/edit?pli=1

- Maintain accurate and current VISTA member files

III.   Recruitment

Recruitment of AmeriCorps VISTA members by the provided recruitment deadline – May 23, 2014 for August 4th-7th, 2014 PSO. Please note that all AmeriCorps candidates must be approved by the Points of Light national service office and CNCS prior to enrollment.

IV.   Communication and Training

- Ongoing communication with Corps 18 Program Staff via email, phone, and online sites such as Salesforce and the Google Site.

- Participation in training calls as needed.

V.   Program Evaluation and Reporting

- VISTA members will utilize the Corps 18 Education Program Tracking tool to collect data.

- Ensure timely submission of quarterly progress (Supervisor & VISTA member) reports through Points of Light online portal.

- Reporting of outcome based measurement for all VISTA activities per provided performance measurements.

VI.   Member Supervision and Support

- Supervision of AmeriCorps*VISTA(s) including at least bi-weekly meetings

- Review, approve/reject electronic submission of member timesheets and service reports through Salesforce system

- Provision of ongoing training to members including On-Site Orientation and Position Specific Training.

- Support of members in engaging in POL and CNCS provided events, trainings and activities such as the fall Member Conference, 9/11 National Day of Service and Remembrance, MLK Day, at least one service day as determined by Points of Light and AmeriCorps Week.

- Provide necessary supplies, resources and office space to members upon arrival.

- Reimbursement of pre-approved service related mileage according to your organization's policy (not to exceed federal rate).

VII.   VISTA Member Requirements

- VISTA: Must serve full time in accordance to hours of operation of the organization), as defined by your organization, for one year service term. Hours cannot be served remotely from your organization.

- Submission of bi-weekly time logs, monthly reflections and great stories

- Submission of monthly work plans

- Submission of project related data via monthly and quarterly progress reports

- Ongoing communication with Points of Light Corps 18 Program Staff via email, phone, and online reporting mechanisms.

- Participation in Corps 18 Corps National Service Day efforts including the 9/11 National Day of Service and Remembrance, MLK Day, at least one service day as determined by Points of Light and AmeriCorps Week

- Participation in CNCS, Corps 18, and host site training opportunities.

VIII. **Program Planning Resources**

- www.vistacampus.org (requires free registration)
- www.handsonnetwork.org
- www.americorps.gov/for_organizations/manage/index.asp - AmeriCorps Regulations, Provisions and Handbooks
- VISTA Host Site applicants should review the VISTA member handbook for an overview of rules and regulations

    VISTA Manual:

    http://www.americorps.gov/help/vistahandbook/chapter1.html

    Supervisor Manual:

    https://docs.google.com/file/d/0BxYkPNytspgpWml0RzJZTjRxbWM/edit

IX. **Corps 18 Program Staff**

- Program Director: Terra Gay tgay@pointsoflight.org

Corps 18 Education Program Application Eligibility

TO BE CONSIDERED FOR THIS AWARD, THE AFFILIATE OR PARTNER ORGANIZATION MUST MEET THE CRITERIA LISTED BELOW. IN SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION, YOU ACKNOWLEDGE THAT YOUR ORGANIZATION:

- Is an independent 501(c)(3); a Fiscal agent partnership with 501(c)(3); or a program internal to another 501(c)(3) or local, county, state government or institution of higher education

- If a member, is in good standing (current on dues and other associated HON membership requirements) with the national office at the time of the application AND can remain a member is good standing for the length of this grant award

- If applicable, is current on all HOC fees payable to Points of Light

- Has reviewed and will adhere to the Program Requirements section

- Has recent audit for submission, A133 if applicable.

AmeriCorps*VISTA Applicants	
Application Released	March 24, 2014
Host Site Application Technical Assistance Call	April 1st, 2014 **Time: 12:00 pm EST** **Conference Number(s): 1-888-450-5996** **Participant Code: 426313**
Host Site Applications Final Due Date	April 25th, 2014
Host Site VAD Final Due Date	April 25th, 2014
Application Review and Clarification Period	April 25th- May 5th 2014
Selection Announcements	Week of May 5th, 2014
VISTA Member Recruitment	March 24th – May 23rd 2014
Final Candidates Due	May 23rd, 2014
Corps 18 Onboarding	June 2nd – August 8th 2014
August Member PSO	August 4th- 7th – Atlanta, GA
August VISTA Start Date	August 8th , 2014

The national office will not accept applications that are submitted via facsimile or submissions that arrive after the deadlines as outlined below.

Email Submission Instructions	
Format	*Word Document with the Application cover page including signature sent as a signed PDF*
Submitted to	tgay@pointsoflight.org
Due Date	8PM Eastern Time April 25, 2014

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact:

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