

AmeriCorps Education Award Matching In Montana

Updated Sept. 2025

Audience: Montana Financial Aid Staff and AmeriCorps Alums



Overview: For much of the thirty plus year history of AmeriCorps, colleges and universities in Montana have operated AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps VISTA service programs through the Montana Campus Network for Civic Engagement (MCNCE) and Montana Campus Compact. AmeriCorps is often called “the domestic Peace Corps” and our programs support campus-community partnerships, engage college students in volunteer service and address poverty problems and other community needs. Our AmeriCorps programs are just a small part of the overall AmeriCorps family, and in Montana we’ve also got the Montana Conservation Corps, Big Sky Watershed Corps, Justice For Montanans and many others.

In November 2014 MCNCE’s board of directors -comprising Montana college and university CEOs- adopted a resolution to honor the AmeriCorps twentieth anniversary by pledging local campus matches to AmeriCorps and VISTA alums attending a Montana affiliate institution. By summer 2015, most of the affiliate campuses of the Montana Campus Compact had begun to offer a match when alumni use their AmeriCorps Education Awards to pay costs of attendance.

FAQ

What is the Montana Campus Network for Civic Engagement?

We are a statewide higher education consortium (mtengage.org) that educates students for civic responsibility, and partners with communities to inspire, empower and promote community service and civic engagement. In Montana in 2025, eighteen institutions are active, dues-paying partners. We are hosted by the University of Montana, and work statewide to support college student service and civic engagement.



Why did you change from Montana Campus Compact?

In 2024, with the context of large national changes, many state networks, like Montana’s, voted to continue hosting a Montana-based campus network. Our CEO Council re-launched the organization as the Montana Campus Network for Civic Engagement.

[Montana Campus Network for Civic Engagement](#)

[Affiliate Campuses](#)

What is AmeriCorps?

AmeriCorps is a network of local, state, and national service programs that connects over 70,000 Americans each year in intensive service to meet community needs in education, the environment, public safety, health, and homeland security. AmeriCorps Members serve with schools, colleges, universities, nonprofits, public agencies, and community organizations. AmeriCorps Members serve in full or part-time positions over as few as 10 weeks and as much as a 12 month period. Upon successful completion of their service, AmeriCorps Members receive a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award of up to a full Pell grant in value to pay for college, graduate school, or to pay back qualified student loans. Members who serve part time will receive a partial education award. Those Members who participate in the VISTA program also have the option to select either the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award or an end-of-service stipend. Broadly speaking, AmeriCorps consists of four programs in which applicants may enroll: (1) VISTA; (2) NCCC; and (3) AmeriCorps State and National and (4) AmeriCorps Seniors.

What is an AmeriCorps Education Award?

The AmeriCorps Education Award or Segal AmeriCorps Education Award officially, is a voucher, awarded to AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps VISTA Members who successfully complete a term of service. Award amounts vary based upon service term length, and are pegged with the Pell Grant, to increase in value with inflation. It must be used within seven years of issue, and may be used to pay back qualifying student loans and costs of attendance at most higher education institutions.

How do I, an AmeriCorps Alum, use this campus match?

This benefit will cover costs of attendance, so you will need to be enrolled in a college or university that matches the Education Award in order to get a match. We recommend going to MCNCE's website [here](#). That page lists the institutions in Montana that currently match the award, the extent of the match and with whom to contact to request a match.

How do I, a Financial Aid office staff member, help make this match happen for AmeriCorps alums?

When an AmeriCorps Member contacts you asking about getting a match for their AmeriCorps Education Award, please first review the commitment your campus has made [here \(mtengage.org\)](http://mtengage.org). Review internal data about whether you've issued other matches, if the student is eligible perhaps based on other scholarships. When you have determined the student's eligibility, and availability of the match, you can add the funds -often campuses use a waiver- to the student account per your own rules. If you have questions, please call or email the MCNCE office.

I'm an AmeriCorps alum, am I guaranteed to receive this benefit?

No. Most institutions have placed an upper cap on the number of Education Awards they will match in a year, and you may not be eligible if you already have other scholarships or tuition waivers.

I'm an AmeriCorps alum, does this match happen automatically?

No. Generally you will need to first meet with a Financial Aid professional from the college or university you are attending, explain that you are an AmeriCorps or VISTA alum, and request the match from them. If you have difficulty getting folks to understand what you're talking about, please [email the MCNCE staff](#).

Do other states do this?

Many other institutions do this, if you search for "Schools of National Service" you'll get a

comprehensive national list on the AmeriCorps website. At this time, that url is:

<https://www.americorps.gov/partner/partnerships/schools-national-service>

As far as we know, Montana Campus Network for Civic Engagement was the first state that adopted the match as an entire statewide network of colleges and universities.

Who do I ask other questions about my Education Award?

The National Service Trust is part of AmeriCorps and keeps your Education Award until you request that it be dispersed. The National Service Hotline can answer many questions about AmeriCorps education benefits. The National Service Hotline has a toll-free number through which customer service representatives answer general award questions or provide detailed information about specific awards or payments. Representatives also provide assistance for using the My AmeriCorps Online Payment System. Customer service representatives are available Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. (Eastern Standard Time) during January and May through September. The hours of operation from February through April and October through December are Monday through Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.; the Hotline is closed on Friday during these months. The toll-free telephone number is **800-942-2677**. Questions may also be submitted at the National Service Hotline's [Ask a Question](#) page.



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