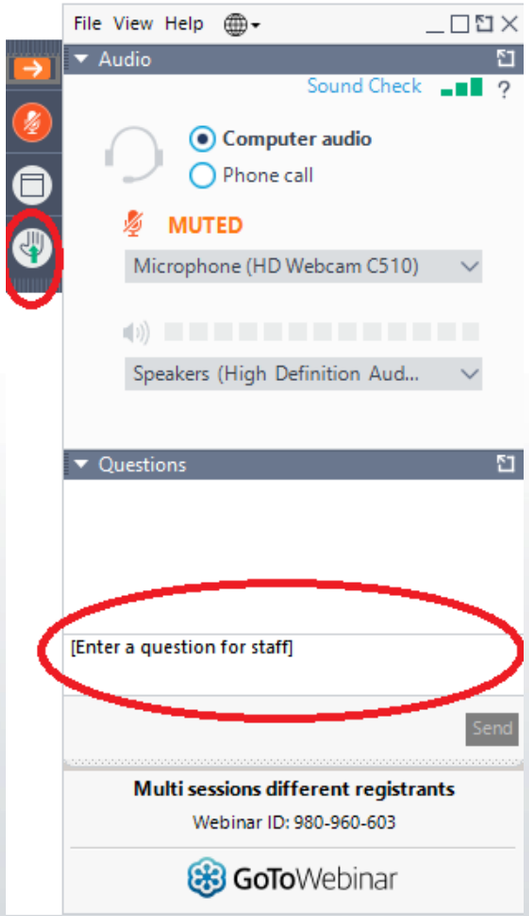
AMERICA'S SERVICE COMMISSIONS

ASC Recruitment Support Project

Overview of Available Resources

Format

- Everyone will be on mute until the end of the presentation
- Please type questions into the chat box as they come up
- Enter audio pin if using phone

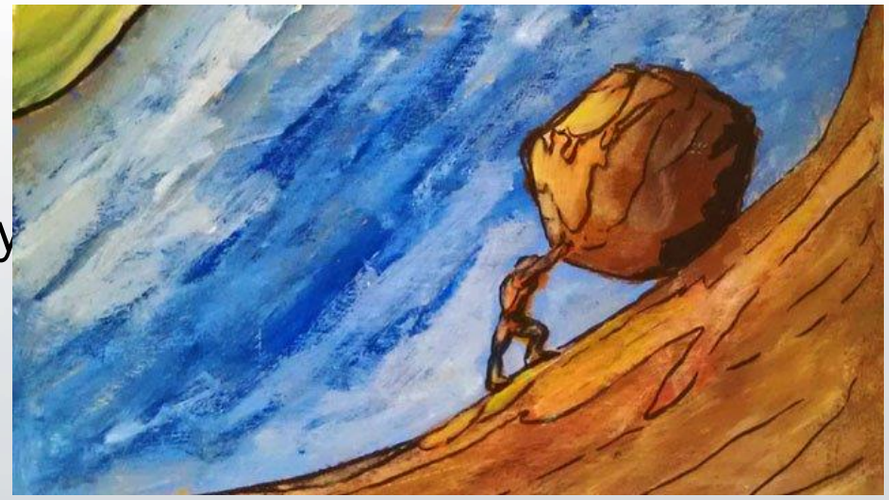


Introductions

Brent Kossick
Founder
Aligned Impact Consulting Services
brent.kossick@AlignedImpactCS.com

Challenges

- The U.S. unemployment rate is at 3.7%, which represents an 18-year low
- According to Google Trends, the online search for the term AmeriCorps is at its lowest popularity point since Google began tracking search trend data (2004)
- The President's budget for the past three fiscal years has recommended eliminating CNCS/AmeriCorps
- Since FY15 Congress has increased the AmeriCorps S/N budget by $89,580,000
- Never enough time or money for recruitment
- Lack of affordable housing/housing availability



Project Overview

Recruitment Support Initiative

- An America's Service Commissions (ASC) initiative
- 21 participating Service Commissions
- Around 250 AmeriCorps State programs

Project Goals

1) Analyze Recruitment Challenges and Opportunities

APPLICANT SOURCING IMPACT LIST

Over the course of 2018, over 120 AmeriCorps programs of various sizes, program models, and geographic reach were surveyed and asked to rate the effectiveness of over 75 AmeriCorps applicant sourcing techniques. Programs that were surveyed were then given an opportunity to provide additional narrative to highlight the methods that produced the greatest return on their time and financial investment.

EFFECTIVENESS RATING

Responses were assigned a numerical value between 1-4 and averaged in order to assign an "Effectiveness Rating" to each sourcing strategy:

Very Effective = 4	Effective = 3	Somewhat Effective = 2	Ineffective = 1	Not Applicable = 0

MERITS

Additional "Merits" were then assigned to sourcing strategies based on commonalities identified throughout narrative responses, or if they were considered to be underutilized based on the level of N/A responses.

MERITS KEY			
Underutilized/Opportunity	Time Effective	Quality Members	Cost Effective

RECOMMENDATION

Sourcing strategies were then informally divided into three primary categories based on their effectiveness rating:

Strong Recommendation	Moderate Recommendation	Low Recommendation

Outreach/Partnerships with job training programs Some programs have indicated that this strategy can produce low quality members.	2.32		
Other Industry-specific job boards *(i.e. construction, social work, etc.)* Identifying local industry-specific job boards to post your program's service opportunities to will likely be the most effective strategy.	2.23		4.B
AmeriCorps/eGrants Portal listing HOW TO: https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/resource/Member-Recruitment-Presentation-National.pdf	2.19		2.C
Attendance at college/university club days or events (including fraternity and sorority events)	2.19		4.C
Coordination with other AmeriCorps or VISTA Programs • Once all positions have been filled by other programs in your area, ask that those programs direct refer applicants to your application process. • Request that your program's recruitment material be distributed to graduating Members from other programs or fields of national service. • Offer to assist with other program's Life After AmeriCorps training and use the opportunity to discuss your program's open positions. • Attending recruitment events can be time and cost restrictive. Programs with similar recruitment regions have found success by partnering together, educating one another on their program model and recruitment goals, and sharing the responsibility of representing all partnering programs at recruitment events. • Example: https://serviceyear.org/serveaustin/	2.13		
Outreach to English as a second language communities	2.12		6.A

Project Goals

2) Develop Support Materials

AmeriCorps Member Recruitment Resource Guide

- Structuring your Application and Interview Process
- Strategic Online Recruitment Marketing
- Engaging Members, Volunteers, Candidates, Alumni, and Staff
- Applicant Sourcing Strategies
- Best Practices for Engaging Additional Applicant Pools
- Strategies for Retaining Members for Multiple Terms

Project Goals

AmeriCorps Member Recruitment Mapping Exercise

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AMERICORPS MEMBER RECRUITMENT MAPPING TEMPLATE

CURRENT RECRUITMENT GOALS		
Consideration	Response	Notes / Action Items
Number of new Member positions to fill:		
Target # of current Members to retain for an additional term of service:		

ANALYZING PAST PERFORMANCE			
Consideration	Response	Notes / Action Items	Assigned To
Number of applications received during last recruitment period:			
Member Enrollment Rate:			
Member Retention Rate:			
Sourcing Strategies that produced the highest number of applications:			
Sourcing Strategies that produced the highest percentage of Member enrollments:			
Sourcing Strategies the produced the highest quality Members:			
Key challenges and strategies to address these challenges:			

Project Goals

Tiered Budget Suggestions

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AMERICORPS MEMBER RECRUITMENT BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS

When establishing a recruitment budget for your program, the most essential element that must first be considered is your program's staff capacity. Your program can have a recruitment budget of $100,000, but if your staff does not have an enough time to adequately manage, analyze, and optimize the resources, you will likely not be able to meet your enrollment goals. Since we know that relationship building and establishing a word-of-mouth network is still the most effective recruitment strategy, investing in adequate staffing for your program is the most valuable thing your program can do to meet your Member enrollment goals and best serve the community. Additionally, there are many free and extremely low-cost tactics outlined in the ASC AmeriCorps Member Recruitment Resource Guide that can substantially increase the effectiveness or your recruitment efforts if program staff have adequate time to devote to implement those tactics.

Many factors will need to be considered when developing a recruitment budget that will adequately address the needs of your unique program design, but below you will find some generalized recommendations on budget items to consider based on your program's available resources. Keep in mind that updating your recruitment strategy is also a great way to spend unutilized funds towards the end of each program year.

STARTUP Estimate Budget Range $800+	
Item/Strategy	**Budget Notes**
Quality Print Materials	The templates included in the ASC Recruitment Online Marketing Starter Pack can be used for free. -Est. $150 - $400 for printing high-quality items like flyers, rack cards, recruitment business cards, etc.
Supplies for Job Fairs and Other Events	Retractable Banner, Table Runner, Candy/Swag. -Est. $600-$800.

FIRST TIER ANNUAL EXPENSES Estimated Budget Range: $1,500 - $5,000+	
Mileage for Travel to Network with Recruitment Partners, Attend Recruitment Events, etc.	Ensure that your staff has an adequate budget to make in-person visits that will be needed in order to build a network of recruitment champions/partners. -Est. $0.50/mile.
Partnership Development Incentives	Incentivize interest by offering to take potential recruitment partners out for a cup of coffee etc. This cost should likely be included outside of the AmeriCorps program budget (non-CNCS funds). -Est. $10/meeting.

Project Goals

Sample Member Interview Templates

AMERICORPS MEMBER INTERVIEW TEMPLATE

CONFIRM
Candidate Name:
Position of Interest:
Other positions of interest:
Location(s) of Interest:
Start Date:
Driver's License: Y / N

DISCUSS AMERICORPS BASICS (Living allowance, hours requirement, hours per week, etc.)

COACHABLE / ACCOUNTABLE
Tell me about a time that you received feedback from a supervisor, coach, or teacher about how to improve your performance. What changes did you make based upon the feedback?

- *Strong: Demonstrates willingness to learn, receptive of constructive criticism, and adjusts actions.*
- *Moderate: Adjusts actions, but demonstrates a level of contempt.*
- ***Possible Red flags**: Did not adequately adjust behavior - Points out how former supervisor was wrong.*

PROBLEM SOLVING / INITIATIVE / LEADERSHIP
Tell me about a time when you were a member of a team that had to solve a problem. What approach did the team take, and how was it resolved?
-OR-
Describe a recent problem that you handled and the specific steps you took after you identified the cause. What was the outcome?

Project Goals

Supplemental Guidance for Commissions

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RECRUITMENT ADDENDUM FOR COMMISSIONS

BRAND AWARENESS

Take Advantage of Pro Bono Consulting

Commissions should consider posting their marketing needs on sites like TapRoot+ that connect nonprofit organizations with companies and volunteers who are willing to provide pro bono professional services in areas such as marketing to help as needed. Other options to consider are posting marketing/event volunteer opportunities on VolunteerMatch.org or Idealist.org. Some companies also offer severely discounted branding/design services for nonprofits such as Causality's Brand Grant program.

Website Design

Because Commission websites often serve as the online gateway to information for individuals who want to learn more about AmeriCorps opportunities in their state, Commissions should ensure not just that they have a website, but that the site provides up-to-date information about AmeriCorps programs in your state. Commission websites should also be attractive and structured to allow potential applicants to easily locate or link to service opportunities available to them (reference section 3.K in the AmeriCorps Member Recruitment Resource Guide for additional information). Serve Rhode Island's website (www.serverhodeisland.org) is a great example of an engaging website that also clearly outlines the benefits of serving as well as clearly directs potential applicants to opportunities within their state.

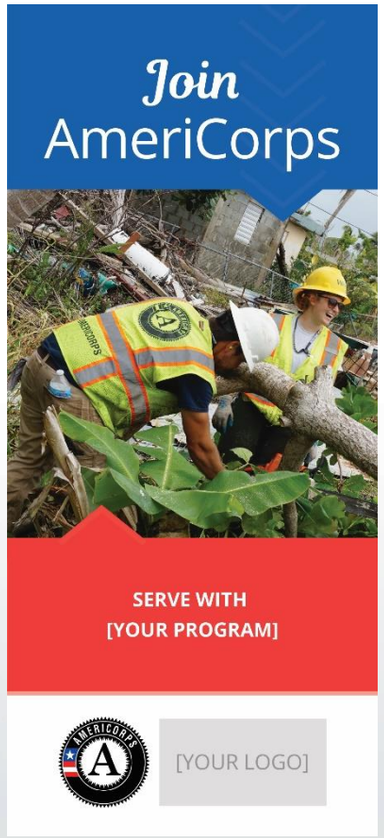
Social Media

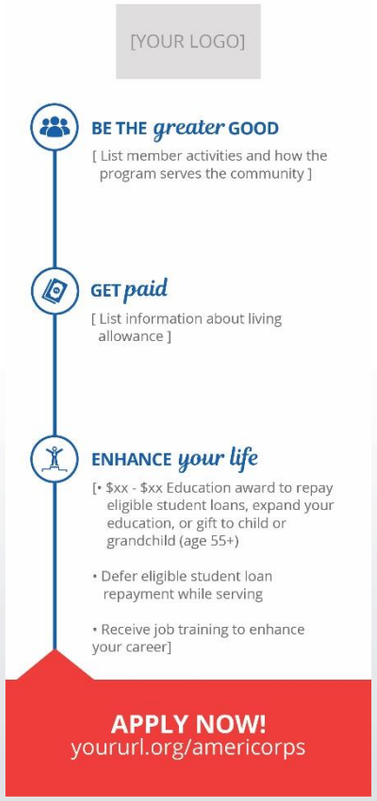
It goes without saying that State Service Commissions should be actively sharing their programs' service opportunities through their social media accounts as well as consistently producing engaging content to help build the AmeriCorps brand in their state (reference section 3 in the AmeriCorps Member Recruitment Resource Guide for additional information). One additional way that Commissions may want to consider utilizing social media to increase recruitment and brand awareness in their state is through engaging social media influencers.

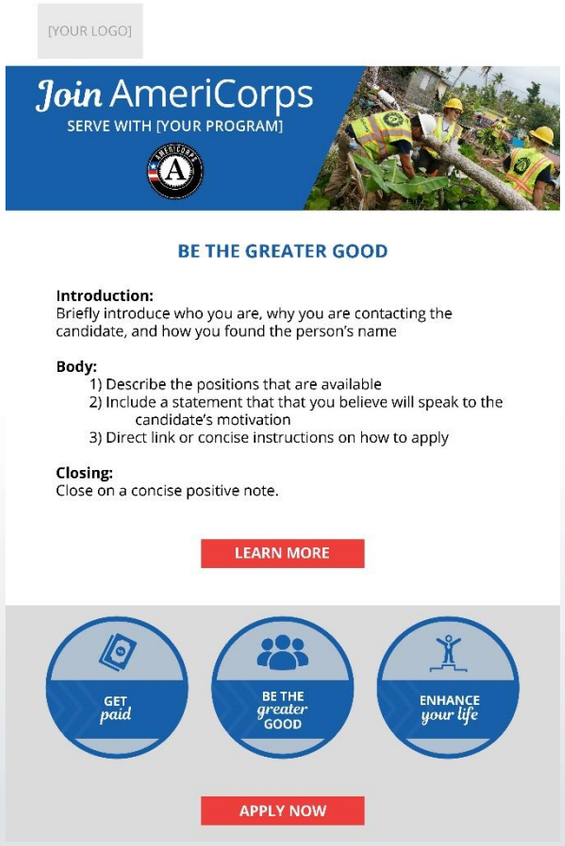
A social media influencer is an individual with a large number of followers who uses a social media platform to express their opinions on specific brands or products, consequently influencing their captive audience. The advance search feature of websites like

Project Goals

MARKETING STARTER PACK







Project Goals

MARKETING STARTER PACK

Project Goals

3) Provide Direct Training

Project Goals

Learning Modules

Module 1: Overview of Available Resources (8m)

Module 1 provides a general overview of the ASC Recruitment Support Project, and the resources that are available to participating Service Commissions and their AmeriCorps Programs. Resources that are discussed include:

- Recruitment Marketing Startup Pack and Marketing Templates
- AmeriCorps Applicant Sourcing Impact List
- Recruitment Mapping Exercise
- Recruitment Budget Recommendation Table
- Sample Member Interview Templates

Module 2: Tutorial for Customizing ASC Recruitment Marketing Templates (18m30s)

Module 2 provides step-by-step guidance on how to use the free digital design software Canva to incorporate program-specific logos, pictures, and information into the ASC Recruitment Support Marketing Templates.

Module 3: Structuring Your Application and Interview Process (30m)

Module 3 is an ideal resource for programs that are interested in adding efficiencies to their application and interview process that can lead to greater applicant enrollment results. The module also provides an overview of best practices for preventing applicant "ghosting" and engaging Member placement site partners in the recruitment process.

Project Goals

Learning Modules

Module 4: Strategic Online Recruitment Marketing Part I (20m)
Module 4 provides guidance on how to develop an online recruitment strategy that is optimized to engage a program's target audience. The module also delivers guidance on how to develop effective online content and recruitment marketing campaigns.

Module 5: Strategic Online Recruitment Marketing Part II (20m)
Module 5 delivers recommendations on how to optimize the use of popular social media sites to best support AmeriCorps Member recruitment. The module also covers entry-level approaches that AmeriCorps programs can implement in order to use email marketing and search engine optimization to further support their online recruitment efforts.

Module 6: Your Most Powerful Recruitment Resource (10m)
Module 6 reviews specific practices that all AmeriCorps programs should implement in order to ensure that they are effectively engaging current Members, program alumni, organizational staff, program beneficiaries, and AmeriCorps applicants in helping to support Member enrollment goals.

Project Goals

Learning Modules

Module 7: Applicant Sourcing Strategies (15)
Module 7 discusses best practices associated with key AmeriCorps applicant sourcing strategies that were identified as part of the analysis of the nationwide Recruitment Support Survey. Additionally, the module also provide instructions on methods that AmeriCorps programs can use to help expand their applicant pool through engaging passive candidates.

Module 8: Best Practices for Engaging Additional Applicant Pools (20m)
Module 8 speaks to the importance of establishing diversity recruitment goals to ensure that a program is able to continue to grow and strengthen the services it provides. This module also reviews additional best practices for conducting outreach to individuals age 55+, rural communities, military veterans, and college students.

Module 9: Strategies for Retaining Members for Multiple Terms (15m)
Module 9 discusses how retaining Members for multiple terms of service can be an important component of a strong recruitment strategy, and provides an overview of program design elements that can be incorporated to help encourage high-performing participants to re-enroll. Additionally, the module also discusses the importance of retaining program staff, and provides a number of tools that can be helpful in supporting professional growth.

Project Goals

4) Market AmeriCorps at Regional and National Conference Events

What We Will Cover

Questions/Discussion