

Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs and Serve Washington Media Release



Director Lourdes E. Alvarado-Ramos



Serve Washington
Changing Communities. Changing Lives.

Executive Director Debbie Schuffenhauer

For Immediate Release

Date: June 22, 2017
Contact: Heidi Audette
Phone: 360-725-2154
Email: heidia@dva.wa.gov

WDVA Awarded \$921,250 in AmeriCorps Funding: *Funding will support 50 AmeriCorps members to serve veterans and military families in Washington*

Olympia, WA – The Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs announced today that it has received \$921,250 in AmeriCorps funding from the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), the federal agency for volunteering and service programs, and Serve Washington, the state’s commission on service and volunteerism.

Of the \$921,250 federal investment, \$630,500 will support 50 AmeriCorps members serving in the Washington Vet Corps program. Most of the 50 AmeriCorps members are veterans themselves and will act as peer mentors or navigators to veterans and military families at colleges and with community partner sites across Washington. During the program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for outreach to 9,000 veterans and or family members on and off campus, connecting 400 individuals to services and benefits, as well as training for 1,500 faculty, staff, administrators and community stakeholder on veterans' cultural competency to increase success in veterans' transition from military service. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage an additional 2,000 volunteers that will be engaged in service to support and raise awareness of veterans' issues.

“We are excited to receive funding for the 2017-18 service year to support our Vet Corps program,” said Lourdes “Alfie” Alvarado-Ramos director of the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs. “Vet Corps members serve a vital role on higher education campuses and communities across our state helping to ensure veterans and their families are successful in their higher education pursuits. We also rely on our Vet Corps to help connect veterans and families to their earned benefits and refer them to local resources such as health and mental health care.”

“The unique model of the Washington Vet Corps program enables AmeriCorps members, most of whom are veterans, to serve our country again through national service,” said Serve Washington Executive Director Debbie Schuffenhauer. “While serving their fellow veterans, AmeriCorps members’ also improve their own employment prospects, educational opportunities, and personal wellness.”

The remaining funds will provide up to \$290,750 in education scholarships for the AmeriCorps members funded by this grant to help pay for college, vocational training, or pay back student loans.

The Washington Vet Corps is currently recruiting for AmeriCorps members to begin service this fall. AmeriCorps members typically receive a modest living stipend and a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award, or scholarship, upon completion of their service. Those interested in serving can learn more by visiting www.my.americorps.gov, then search for Vet Corps.

Beginning this fall, AmeriCorps members serving through the Washington Vet Corps will join the more than 80,000 AmeriCorps members serving across the country in 21,600 locations. These members help communities tackle pressing problems while mobilizing millions of volunteers for the organizations they serve.

Since the program’s inception in 1994, more than 1 million men and women have served in AmeriCorps, providing more than 1.4 billion hours of service and have earned more than \$3.3 billion in education scholarships to pay for college or pay back student loans, more than \$1 billion of which has been used to pay back student loans debt.

###

The Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs serves those who served by helping connect veterans and their family members to the benefits and services they earned through their military service. For more information, visit <http://www.dva.wa.gov/>.

Serve Washington advances national service, volunteerism and civic engagement to improve lives; expands opportunity to meet the local critical needs of residents of Washington; and strengthens community capacity while creating healthy and resilient communities. For more information, visit www.servewa.wa.gov.

AmeriCorps is administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service, a federal agency that engages millions of Americans in service through AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and the Volunteer Generation Fund, and leads volunteer initiatives for the nation. For more information, visit www.NationalService.gov .

###