



Governor's Volunteer Awards

Volunteer Iowa is now accepting nominations for the [2024 Governor's Volunteer Awards](#); entry deadline is April 30.

The Governor's Volunteer Awards program, celebrating its 40th year, is a simple way for organizations to honor their volunteers with a prestigious, state-level recognition award. Three award categories are available: Individual, Group, and Length of Service.

Award recipient information can be submitted using one of the following methods:

- All organizations (including state government agencies) submit information, and the handling fee (\$15 per nomination) directly through Volunteer Iowa in an [online nomination form](#). Organizations will be able to submit the handling fee online.
- State agencies should submit nominations through the same online form. Invoicing will be handled separately. (Staff of state government agencies must submit nominations through their agency's coordinator.)

Nominations are accepted from: City governments, community colleges, county governments, federal government units operating in Iowa, Iowa MENTOR certified programs, K-12 schools (public and parochial), national service programs operating in Iowa (AmeriCorps, AmeriCorps Seniors), nonprofit and charitable organizations, private colleges and universities, non-state government organizations.

To learn more, please visit volunteeriowa.org.



Give Back Iowa

The 10th Annual Give Back Iowa Challenge has begun! The Give Back Iowa Challenge is an eight-week statewide challenge, which serves as a competitive way to encourage organizations and businesses alike to participate in community volunteering. The challenge runs from April 1st through May 31st. Your business or organization can still [register to participate](#), then just track the volunteer hours of your employees, record those hours on our system, and celebrate your employees and their dedication to volunteerism!

There are many volunteer opportunities statewide and in your community, including youth mentoring, assisting food banks and food pantries with packaging and distribution, skills-based opportunities, and more. Volunteer opportunities in your area can be found in our [volunteer opportunities portal Get Connected](#).

Visit the [Give Back Iowa Challenge website](#) to learn more about this year's challenge. Please contact Betsy Shelton at betsy.shelton@volunteeriowa.org with questions.



Meet New AmeriCorps Program Officer Elizabeth Medina

Elizabeth Medina (they/them) started as an AmeriCorps Program Officer with Volunteer Iowa on February 2. An AmeriCorps Program Officer administers a portfolio of Iowa AmeriCorps programs, assisting with the AmeriCorps grant approval and selection process, doing on site monitoring and providing technical and programmatic assistance. In addition, AmeriCorps Program Officers coordinate statewide AmeriCorps member development and assist in other efforts of the commission to promote service and volunteerism in Iowa.

Originally from Muscatine, Elizabeth attended Eastern Iowa Community College for an Associate's degree, then moved to New York City to attend school for Fashion Marketing. Elizabeth returned to the Midwest to complete their degree at Western Illinois University. In 2021, Elizabeth earned their Master's degree from Drake University in Communications with an emphasis on policy and public affairs.

Elizabeth was an admissions coordinator at Muscatine Community College before shifting to work with GEAR UP Iowa. Elizabeth then served as an academic advisor at Iowa State University prior to joining Volunteer Iowa. In their free time, you can find Elizabeth spending time with family and competing in the Pride Sports League. Welcome to the team Elizabeth!

AmeriCorps Week

During AmeriCorps Week, we recognize the commitment of the more than 1.25 million Americans who have chosen to serve their country through AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps Seniors, and to encourage more Americans to follow their footsteps in service.



AmeriCorps engages 250,000 Americans each year in sustained, results-driven service through our AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps Seniors programs. Members and volunteers continue to help communities manage COVID-19 response, ensure students stay on track to graduate, combat hunger and homelessness, fight the opioid epidemic, help seniors live independently, support veterans and military families, and much more.

This [AmeriCorps Week](#) join with us as we celebrate the impact of our programs and offer our thanks to members and volunteers for making an impact and serve others.

Together, we can help the country recover and come back stronger. Together, we are insurmountable. Together, we are AmeriCorps.



Exiting VISTA Member Joins Iowa MENTOR

Becca Ites completed a year-long service term through AmeriCorps VISTA that was split between Iowa MENTOR and Grace Fitness. She enjoyed her time being a VISTA member and felt lucky to have been able to make impacts bigger than herself. As a VISTA member, Becca worked on grant writing and updating websites with fresh resources for others to use. While at Grace Fitness, Becca had what she considers one of her greatest accomplishments. For Grace Fitness, she wrote several grants applications that resulted in over

\$500,000 in grants dollars to keep the program updated with new and useful resources. Becca finished out her VISTA service term with Iowa MENTOR. She made great connections with the team and did outstanding work. We would like to thank Becca for her amazing work as a VISTA and welcome her to the Iowa MENTOR team as Engagement Coordinator.

Volunteerism in the News

- [Ray Haas lending a helping hand wherever it's needed](#)
- [Big Brothers Big Sister 'Putt-A-Round' kicks off Tuesday night](#)
- [NFV mentor's purpose in life is helping children](#)
- [Johnson County rolls out county-wide free energy audit program](#)
- [ISU student open to wherever the art takes her with AmeriCorps ArtistYear program](#)
- [Volunteer Programs Lobby Legislators](#)
- [Pen Pals program in Allamakee County unites third graders with senior citizens](#)

Current Volunteer Iowa Opportunities

- Volunteer with us! Find volunteer opportunities with Volunteer Iowa here: [Volunteer Iowa | Volunteer Iowa \(galaxydigital.com\)](#)

- Other Iowa AmeriCorps programs supported by Volunteer Iowa are also recruiting now. Find a listing of Iowa AmeriCorps programs at [Join AmeriCorps | Volunteer Iowa](#).

Important Dates

- March 2: [National Read Across America Day](#)
- March 8: [International Women's Day](#)
- March 10-16: [AmeriCorps Week](#)
- March 20: [Won't You Be My Neighbor Day](#)
- April: [Global Volunteer Month](#)
- April 1: [Give Back Iowa Challenge Begins](#)
- April 26-28: [Global Youth Service Day](#)
- April 30: [Volunteer Iowa Hall of Fame Ceremony](#)
- April 30: [Governor's Volunteer Awards nominations close](#)



Stay Connected with the Volunteer Iowa:

