

Volunteer Iowa, IEDA Launch Iowa Nonprofit Recovery Fund

Financial Assistance Now Available to Eligible Nonprofits Impacted by COVID-19

Volunteer Iowa and the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) announced this week the launch of the Iowa Nonprofit Recovery Fund, an extension of the Iowa Small Business Relief Grant Program.

The program will provide short-term relief to nonprofit organizations that have seen reduced revenue and/or increased costs as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Eligible nonprofits may be awarded a grant of up to \$25,000, based on income, expenses, outstanding obligations and other state and federal assistance received. The program has \$10 million available, which was allocated through federal CARES Act funds.

Initially eligible nonprofits must be a 501(c)(3), 501(c)(6) or 501(c)(19), be based in Iowa and have:

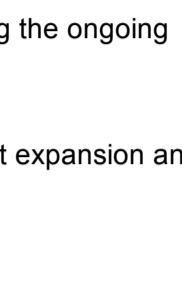
- Experienced a documented, involuntary loss of revenue and/or increase in expenses that occurred after March 1, 2020 due to the COVID-19 public health emergency
- An annual operating budget of more than \$25,000
- Twenty-five or fewer full-time equivalent employees
- A primary mission to serve the program's priority service populations

For more information on eligibility and assistance or to apply, click [HERE](#).

Nonprofits not initially eligible are still encouraged to complete the beginning section of the application, to be contacted in the event that funds remain and eligibility is expanded. Applications will be reviewed in the order received and awarded on a first come, first ready to process basis. Applications will be accepted until August 14 at 5:00 p.m. or until funds have been exhausted.

Questions regarding the Iowa Nonprofit Recovery Fund can be addressed by calling 515.348.8897 (toll free: 855.854.2440).

AmeriCorps Iowa and AmeriCorps VISTA Continue to Respond during COVID-19 Recovery

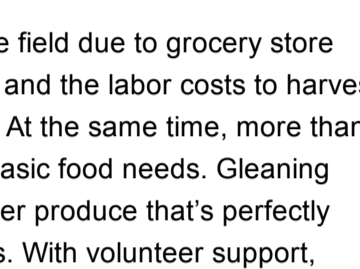


AmeriCorps Iowa and AmeriCorps VISTA have expanded their services this summer to aid communities and organizations through the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery. The Iowa COVID-19 Recovery AmeriCorps Program, the Iowa Gleaning Network and the expansion of VISTA throughout Iowa will help ensure that Iowans continue to have their needs met as well as access to food during the ongoing crisis.

To learn more about the AmeriCorps Iowa and AmeriCorps VISTA project expansion and to view a list of current openings, click [HERE](#).



Iowa Gleaning Network



A new Iowa gleaning initiative led by the Feeding Iowans Task Force working group will provide fresh produce to Iowans in need. With an increased number of Iowans suffering the economic effects of COVID-19, access to free, nutritious food is more important than ever. The Iowa Gleaning Network is looking for volunteers, farmers and AmeriCorps members.

As much as 10 percent of food grown in the U.S. is left in the field due to grocery store visual standards. This leaves the produce without a market, and the labor costs to harvest and distribute these crops may be insufficient for the return. At the same time, more than 300,000 Iowans do not have enough money to cover their basic food needs. Gleaning programs offer a creative solution. Volunteers harvest leftover produce that's perfectly good to eat and donate it to local hunger relief organizations. With volunteer support, farmers don't incur labor costs and can receive a tax credit for donating crops that would otherwise go to waste.

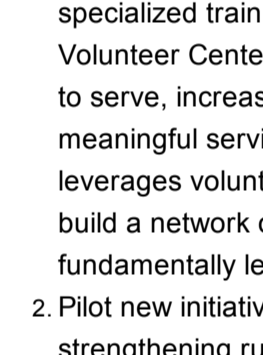
Farm gleaning partnerships expand access to fresh, nutritious produce for Iowans who are food insecure. The Iowa Gleaning Network was established during the COVID-19 crisis to assist with program staffing and volunteer recruitment, help Iowa's hunger relief organizations fill gaps in existing gleaning programs, and launch new gleaning initiatives across the state. With the support of ISU Extension, Volunteer Iowa, and other members of the Feeding Iowans Task Force, this new network will offer eight AmeriCorps volunteers to support multiple statewide gleaning initiatives operated locally by hunger relief organizations.

Individuals looking for a service opportunity can apply for short term or 12-month positions as an AmeriCorps local gleaning coordinator across the state. Click [HERE](#) to apply today.

Community members who want to volunteer to harvest produce can reach out to The Iowa Gleaning Network at gleaniowa@table2table.org to find a local gleaning operation.

Iowa farmers who grow produce are needed as partners to donate produce to their local hunger relief organizations by allowing volunteers to glean surplus, edible food from their fields. For more information, please contact The Iowa Gleaning Network at: gleaniowa@table2table.org or call 319-337-3400.

For more information about any of these opportunities, to become a farm partner, gleaning volunteer, or AmeriCorps member, email gleaniowa@table2table.org.



Volunteer Iowa Awarded \$332,000 to Strengthen and Expand Volunteering Across Iowa

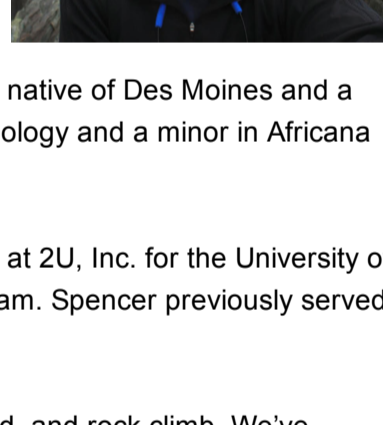
Volunteer Iowa has received a Volunteer Generation Fund (VGF) grant of \$331,976 from the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), the federal agency that oversees AmeriCorps and the nation's volunteer initiatives. This funding will allow Volunteer Iowa to better support local organizations in recruiting, managing, and retaining volunteers to address some of Iowa's most pressing challenges.

Volunteer Iowa plans to utilize the Volunteer Generation Fund grant to build on the success of previous years through two main approaches:

1. Strengthen Iowa's volunteer infrastructure, enhancing and expanding statewide and local resources for increasing volunteer engagement capacity. Through funding, specialized training, and resources, Volunteer Iowa will support continuing and new Volunteer Centers and other local institutions to: connect citizens with opportunities to serve, increase capacity of local organizations to engage volunteers in meaningful service, promote volunteering, and develop local programming that leverages volunteers to meet community needs. Additionally, Volunteer Iowa will build a network of Service Enterprise hubs to certify organizations that fundamentally leverage volunteers and their skills to achieve their social mission.
2. Pilot new initiatives to meet emerging needs around disaster response, strengthening rural cities, and empowering youth as Iowa's newest volunteer force. By developing easy to use toolkits, hosting workshops paired with ongoing learning cohorts, and providing implementation funding, Volunteer Iowa will refine strategies and resources for communities to prepare for and respond to disaster; for cities to leverage their greatest assets, their citizens, to survive and thrive during challenging times; and for schools to develop Iowa's future leaders through service learning and volunteerism.

This year's grant competition was highly competitive with a strong demand by state service commissions seeking VGF resources. CNCS awarded 22 VGF grants to state service commissions across the country, totaling more than \$6 million.

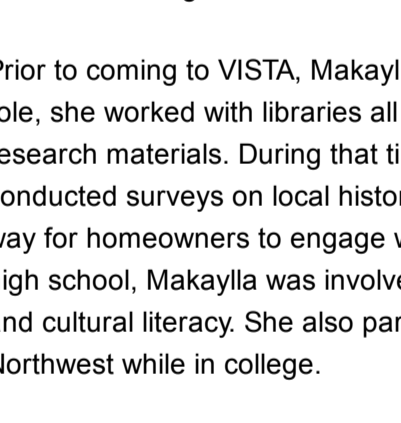
Meet Spencer Ward, AmeriCorps VISTA Summer Associate



Spencer Ward joined the Volunteer Iowa team in June, as an AmeriCorps VISTA Summer Associate. Spencer is a native of Des Moines and a graduate of Luther College with a degree in History and Biology and a minor in Africana Studies.

Prior to joining Volunteer Iowa, Spencer worked in Denver at 2U, Inc. for the University of California's Master of Information and Data Science program. Spencer previously served with the Green Iowa AmeriCorps program.

In his free time, Spencer likes to spend time outdoors, read, and rock climb. We've enjoyed having Spencer serving with us (virtually) this summer!

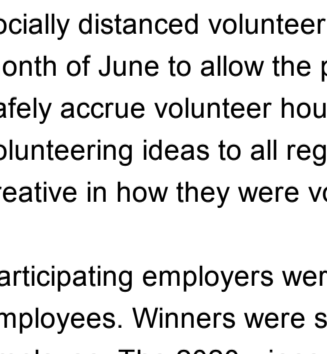


Please Welcome Makaylla Rodgers, Iowa Service Learning Coordinator VISTA

Volunteer Iowa's newest team member is Makaylla Rodgers. She will be serving as the Iowa Service Learning Coordinator VISTA with Volunteer Iowa. She comes to us from California. Makaylla grew up in Riverside, CA. She graduated from Humboldt State University with a degree in history. Throughout college, Makaylla competed with the Speech and Debate team, and was involved with the Student Legal Lounge, which provides free legal resources and services to students and community members.

Prior to coming to VISTA, Makaylla worked as a resource sharing student assistant. In that role, she worked with libraries all over the United States to research students access to research materials. During that time, she interned at Arcata City Hall, where she conducted surveys on local historic buildings with the aim of providing a more coherent way for homeowners to engage with California regulations on historic houses. While in high school, Makaylla was involved in a program that tutored recent refugees in linguistic and cultural literacy. She also participated in beach and trail cleanups in the Pacific Northwest while in college.

In her free time, Makaylla enjoys hiking, biking, surfing (but not in Iowa!), and reading. She is very passionate about the environment and takes every chance to get outside.



6th Annual Give Back Iowa Challenge Winners Announced

Volunteer Iowa is pleased to announce the winners of the 6th Annual Give Back Iowa Challenge, a campaign in which businesses encourage their employees to volunteer and log their hours as part of a statewide competition. This year, the challenge ran from April 1 – June 30 across the state of Iowa.

From a business perspective, employer supported volunteering impacts the bottom line. Studies show it leads to improved employee engagement, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and retention. From an engagement perspective, places of employment are perfect environments to encourage and support volunteering efforts that contribute toward meeting significant community challenges.

The decision to move forward with the 2020 Give Back Iowa Challenge amid a global pandemic was made as there were urgent volunteer needs across the state. Participating employers were encouraged to have their employees participate in virtual, at home and socially distanced volunteer opportunities. The challenge was extended through the month of June to allow the participating businesses and their employees additional time to safely accrue volunteer hours. Volunteer Iowa provided multiple resources and safe volunteering ideas to all registered companies, while also encouraging employees to be creative in how they were volunteering during the COVID-19 pandemic.

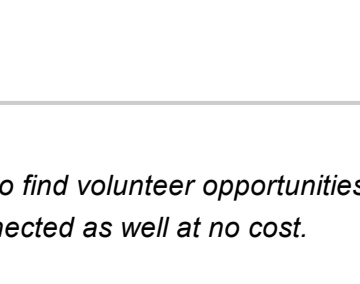
Participating employers were divided into two categories based on the number of employees. Winners were selected by the highest average number of volunteer hours per employee. The 2020 winners include:

- Small:**
- INVISON Architecture, Des Moines and Waterloo
 - Honorable Mention: POET Biorefining, Hanlontown

- Large:**
- Riverside Casino and Golf Resort, Riverside
 - Honorable Mention: Bankers Trust, Des Moines

For resources on employer-supported volunteering or to find volunteering opportunities, visit volunteeriowa.org.

Become a Future Ready Iowa Virtual Mentor!



The Future Ready Iowa Virtual Mentoring Program launched in February, with the goal of pairing recipients of Last-Dollar Scholarships with mentors in their field of study. Mentors and students will primarily interact through an e-mentoring communications platform, which overcomes any geographic barriers or scheduling conflicts. Through engagement in the program, students will establish meaningful career connections and strengthen their job readiness skills. Matches between students and mentors will be based on multiple factors, including professional goals, interests, and background.

The Future Ready Iowa Mentoring Program is actively recruiting mentors in a variety of high-demand career fields. Mentors are especially needed in the areas of nursing/healthcare and IT/network administration. The program is being administered by staff at Volunteer Iowa and the Iowa Mentoring Partnership. If you would like to connect with Program Manager Jason Wiegand, he can be reached at jason.wiegand@iowaeda.com. You can learn more about the program and sign up to serve as a virtual mentor at <https://futurereadyiowamentoring.chronus.com/>.

Service in the News

- [Volunteers Needed to Rescue Surplus Vegetables](#)
- [Governor Tours NE Iowa Foodbank, Offers Further Support](#)
- [Volunteer Iowa gets a hand with a federal grant](#)
- [Iowa Bike Club resumes some services, empowering kids through biking](#)
- [From doorstep paperwork to school translation, EMBARC adjusts to new post-COVID roles](#)

Important Dates

- August: Back to School Month
- August 12: [International Youth Day](#)
- August 21: [Senior Citizens Day](#)

Looking for a way to give back? Visit [Get Connected](#) today to find volunteer opportunities. Organizations can [post volunteer opportunities](#) on Get Connected as well at no cost.

Get Connected!

