



# AmeriCorps\*VISTA

*AmeriCorps\*VISTA is part of AmeriCorps, a network of national service programs that engage more than 50,000 Americans each year in intensive service to meet critical needs in education, public safety, health, and the environment. For more than 35 years, AmeriCorps\*VISTA members have been helping bring individuals and communities out of poverty. Members serve full time for a year in nonprofit organizations and public agencies throughout the country, working to fight illiteracy, improve health services, reduce unemployment, create businesses, increase housing opportunities, or bridge the digital divide. In fiscal year 2001, approximately 6,000 AmeriCorps\*VISTA members served in 1,200 local programs.*

## **Fighting Poverty**

AmeriCorps\*VISTA members serve with faith-based and community organizations to develop lasting solutions to the problems of poverty. They build the capacity of nonprofits working in the areas of housing, health care, literacy, community development, technology, crime prevention, and hunger. Living in the communities they serve, members raise funds, recruit volunteers, develop programs, and manage projects to increase the self-sufficiency of the nation's poor. More than half of the organizations that members serve in have 10 or fewer employees. In 2002, the program launched Entrepreneur Corps, which brings members with business skills to nonprofits that are helping low-income people build financial assets.

## **Structure**

Most funds are distributed through the Corporation for National and Community Service state offices, which place members in local groups. The Corporation provides payroll, insurance, relocation, and training for members and supervisors.

## **Budget**

The program's budget for fiscal year 2002 is \$85 million. Last year, 200 local sponsors provided \$5.5 million in cash to support members. Sponsors also make in-kind donations of supplies, computers, housing, and training.

## **Eligibility and Benefits**

AmeriCorps\*VISTA is open to U.S. citizens, nationals, or lawful permanent residents age 18 or older. Members receive either an education award of \$4,725 to pay for college, graduate school, or to pay back student loans, or a \$1,200 stipend. Members also receive an annual living allowance based on the poverty level, health care, childcare, and liability insurance.

## **AmeriCorps Network**

AmeriCorps also includes AmeriCorps\* State and National, a network of 900 nonprofit groups meeting a variety of community needs, and AmeriCorps\*NCCC, a team-based residential program for 18- to 24-year-olds focused on disaster relief and conservation. AmeriCorps is administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service, which also oversees Senior Corps and Learn and Serve America. Together, these programs engage more than 2 million Americans of all ages and backgrounds in service to their communities each year.

## **More Information**

To learn more about AmeriCorps, go to [www.americorps.org](http://www.americorps.org) or call 800-942-2677 or TTY 800-833-3722.

May 2002

FACT SHEET