



## Template – Op-ed (Updated June 20, 2024)

*Below is a template for an op-ed using [TOWN NAME] as a placeholder for the local community. The listed author of an op-ed should ideally be one (or two, in co-authorship) recognizable names in the community, such as the head of a community-based organization, a businessperson, or a religious leader. You may also want to consider asking a local elected official to author an op-ed – such as your mayor, a city councilor, county executive, school board member, etc. Op-eds are typically around 700 words in length, but your intended publication can confirm its expectation on word count and other requirements.*

*Check out “[Tips for Writing an Opinion Editorial](#)”. This step-by-step guide will help you write, publish and amplify your op-ed.*

*If you have questions or need during any step in the process, contact Shanelle Oliver, our Director of Outreach and Advocacy, at [soliver2@cityyear.org](mailto:soliver2@cityyear.org).*

Sample Headline: Without AmeriCorps, [TOWN NAME] Will Suffer

1. *Because of AmeriCorps...* The writer should open with one to three paragraphs that emphasize the tangible impact of AmeriCorps in the region; this should include any or all of the following:
  - **Anecdotes:** One to three anecdotes that detail one or more people whose life was made better because of an AmeriCorps program in this locality.
  - **Personal stories:** Ideally the piece should include the full names of these individuals, quotes from them and other third-party validators. For example: If discussing the impact of an after-school program on a student, quoted individuals could include the parent, the student’s teacher and the AmeriCorps member whose service resulted in the positive change.
  - **Data:** Wherever possible, cite specific impact data that backs up the anecdotal evidence. For example: a school may be able to affirm improved attendance records, test scores, etc.
2. Next, connect these stories to the broader narrative from the region/program and, wherever possible, connect back to [national data](#) on AmeriCorps' impact on the same issues. *If you need help finding national data, contact Shanelle Oliver at [soliver2@cityyear.org](mailto:soliver2@cityyear.org).*
  - Connect to your state: You may want to cite other AmeriCorps programs across the state that are fulfilling similar local needs. Click [this link](#) to find data on National Service in Your State, this report includes detail on the full scope of AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps Seniors presence in your state from January 20, 2023 and January 19, 2024.

- Connect nationally: Use national statistics that relate to the op-ed topic. For example, if you are writing an op-ed related to education, note that “Nearly 36,000 AmeriCorps members serve annually at more than 9,500 K-12 schools. Additionally, AmeriCorps Seniors tutor and mentor over 90,000 children each year.”
3. The concluding paragraph should re-emphasize the call to action and work in AmeriCorps’ messages.
- For example, "Without AmeriCorps, the children in our town will be hungrier and our environment will be more polluted. Congress is facing challenging budgetary decisions, but Congressman Smith and all other members of Congress invest in AmeriCorps to ensure that our community doesn’t lose necessary resources and supports. AmeriCorps is one of the best decisions Congress can make to increase local impact on critical challenges; every \$1 Congress invests in AmeriCorps returns more than \$17 in benefits to local communities. AmeriCorps programs, which touch every community in America, require a robust strategic investment, that was called for by a sizable bipartisan group of Senators and Representatives earlier this year. Our congressional delegation can help ensure that investment comes to [TOWN NAME] by fully funding AmeriCorps."