



Template – Op-ed

(Updated February 6, 2025)

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 750 words in length, but your intended publication can confirm its expectation on word count and other requirements.

For step-by-step instructions on writing, placing, and amplifying your op-ed, check out [“Tips for Writing an Opinion Editorial”](#).

If you have questions or need during any step in the process, contact Shanelle Oliver, Director of Outreach and Advocacy, at soliver2@cityyear.org.

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

1. The writer should open with one to three paragraphs that emphasize the tangible impact of AmeriCorps in the region; this could include:
 - **Anecdotes** about one or two people whose lives were made better because of your local AmeriCorps program.
 - 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.*
 - 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, including details on the full scope of AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps Seniors presence in your state from January 20, 2023 to 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, you could 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 must 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. Our congressional delegation can help ensure that investment comes to [TOWN NAME] by fully funding AmeriCorps."