

July 25, 2024

The U.S. House of Representatives is proposing to eliminate AmeriCorps, the 30-year program that provides the people power that local nonprofit, faith-based, and community organizations train and deploy to respond to our country's most immediate and critical needs.

Last year, Arizona boasted 512 service locations with 4,175 AmeriCorps Seniors and AmeriCorps members. The total investment in these sites was almost 19.5 million dollars, underscoring that AmeriCorps is one of the federal government's best investments – these public-private partnerships yield more than \$17 in benefits for every \$1 invested by Congress.

Outside of direct financial benefit to fund Arizona community development – AmeriCorps provides a critical pathway to post-secondary education. Since 1994, more than 25,000 Arizona residents have served approximately 28 million hours and earned education awards totaling more than 71.4 million dollars. AmeriCorps volunteers are diverse and represent the spectrum of learners we need to achieve our development goals in Arizona. They range in age from 18 to 26 and are building homes and responding to crises. They are older adults tutoring and mentoring youth and supporting veterans and their families. And, they are individuals working in nonprofits, schools, public agencies, tribal communities, and community and faith-based groups, learning and developing critical capacity for Arizona.

Arizona higher education institutions have benefitted from these vital community development programs – AmeriCorps reports that 48 million dollars in education award payments have gone to Arizona higher education and other institutions since 1994.

In Watts College, our Survivor Link + Healthy Futures program is an excellent example of what can be accomplished not only when higher education institutions are receiving the benefits of corps members engaging in post-secondary education, but also when we are active partners, disseminating cutting-edge evidence-based research through educational programming in our communities. AmeriCorps Healthy Futures provides resources for ASU students to build healthy futures in their communities by providing healthy relationship education and resources for domestic violence survivors. Since 2015, Survivor Link + Healthy Futures have engaged over 700 students, who have completed more than 290,000 hours of service and have used close to 1 million dollars to supplement the experiential learning that is critical to preparing our state's future social workers.

This year Survivor Link + Healthy Futures, like many others, received word that their funding would not be continued. This House FY25, HHS Education and Related Agencies bill includes devastating reductions to national service funding that would eliminate AmeriCorps State and National, the National Civilian Corps (NCCC), State Service Commissions, and the National Service Trust, which funds education awards to AmeriCorps alumni to use for higher education or career training. If this bill becomes law, it would eliminate the AmeriCorps program and dismantle a national service infrastructure built over three decades, reducing our community of resources, people power, and the services that we rely on.

**Office of the Dean**

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We are deeply concerned about the negative impact of these reductions for higher education, and the communities we serve. At a time when democracy is under attack, an elimination of national service would only serve to increase the instability experienced across this nation.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cynthia Lietz".

**Cynthia Lietz, PhD, LCSW**  
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