

Examples of Member Reflections Submissions

For instructions please refer to the Member Reflections Instructions for Program Directors document. Member reflections are to be submitted as part of your quarterly progress reports.

Pictures

Image Title: CO3

Submitted by: Nellie Stagg, Program Officer, Serve Colorado

Caption: Servie (WI) & Servasaurus (CO); two friends working to share the power of national service in their states.



Mixed Media: Art, Info Graphics, etc.

Image Title: Dictionary Word Art

Submitted by: Cassie Sippel, Art Advocate at Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee

Caption: The Arts are often the first eliminated in the educational environment of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The financial focus tends to lean more towards academics, sports, and other extracurricular activities and thus, my position filled a critical need for the youth of the city. Because of our service, hundreds of youth at the Clubs were able to participate in workshops and activities, as they explored their artistic interests and talents. Youth of all ages were able to express themselves through dance, spoken word, painting, drawing, photography, and many other mediums.



Video/Audio/any link-able files

Video Title: Achievement Connections - Why We Serve

Submitted by: 2015-2016 AmeriCorps,

Achievement Connections, Madison Wisconsin

Caption: Meet our inspirational 2015-2016 AmeriCorps team and learn the real value of the service we perform together. Our AmeriCorps members shot this across all six of our program sites in Madison, Wisconsin. Learn more about joining us at www.unitedwaydanecounty.org/careers

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mcCh8iqIbRU&feature=youtu.be>

Written submissions:

Impact Story

Submitted by: Team Leaders of College Possible, Milwaukee, WI

College Possible is proud to work with 700+ students in the Milwaukee metro area of Wisconsin at 13 partner high schools. Their students have an average GPA of 2.8, and 95% are students of color. College Possible Milwaukee's students report an average annual family income of less than \$25,000. College Possible in Milwaukee is making college admission and success possible for low-income students through an intensive curriculum of coaching and support. The average for-profit ACT test prep programs demonstrate an ACT increase for students who receive their services of 12-14%. Students who receive College Possible's services in Milwaukee demonstrate an average ACT score increase of 19%. Seniors receiving College Possible Milwaukee's services earn admission to college at a rate of 95%. The national figure for all students who graduate in 6 years is 57%, for low-income students just 11% of students graduate from college in 6 years. Students receiving College Possible Milwaukee's services earn a college degree in 6 years at a rate of 55%. Effectively, College Possible Milwaukee has leveled the playing field for low-income students aspiring to be college graduates; for their students, income is no longer a predictor as to whether or not they will earn a college degree.

Poem/ Creative Writing

Title: The Garden Through A Child's Eyes

Submitted by: Jasmyn Schmidt, AmeriCorps Farm to School, Northland Pines School District, Eagle River, Wisconsin

He looks, but doesn't speak.
Big, green, bright. Small steps, he hesitates. Looks, this way, and that.
Down one row, and up the next.
An unfamiliar world.
He reaches out toward the squash with it's prickly, stickly stems.
One fingertip grazes the new surface, eyebrows raise.
A few steps more, to the woolly thyme, fingers outstretched, more willingly.
This time a smile, he pulls some leaves, and rubs them on his face.
Fragrance spreads through the air, warm sweet, spicy.
He is handed a tomato.
Small, red, shiny. He pops it in his mouth.
Bites, it squirts, seeds on his little chin.
Smiles again, and laughs.
A memory is made, he likes this place.

Quote

Submitted by: John Doe, Indianhead CAA-WI Fresh Start, Weyerhaeuser, WI

“Before I joined Wisconsin Fresh Start I didn’t think my life would ever get better. I got into meth and I was hanging out with the wrong crowd. I was accused of being a party to a theft, I was homeless, and had little interaction with my family. Thanks to Wisconsin Fresh Start, I have the opportunity to be now become a successful, educated, and self-sufficient member of this community. This program offers opportunities to young people that feel that they have run out of resources or have nowhere to turn. I hope that this is here to provide support to anyone that needs it.

It was a lot of work but I was given the backing that I needed to succeed. I would have never received my High School Diploma, and I honestly don’t know where I would be right now if they would have not accepted me in. I look forward to enrolling in college in the fall, I am using my 900 hours this term to learn about building and explore my options for schooling. I am not another statistic, I am going to be successful, and I did this for me.”

Reflection

Submitted by: David Presser, PASS AmeriCorps, Vera Court Neighborhood Center, Madison, WI

I wasn’t looking for a new job. I wasn’t looking for a new direction in life. I wasn’t looking for a way to help others. I was looking for a new guitar. Yep, that’s why I checked craigslist last year, to buy myself something new. What I found and where that has lead me has changed my entire purpose in life and caused a growth in me that I am incredibly grateful for. I never got that guitar, but I am a lucky man for what I got instead.

Truthfully, I didn’t know much about AmeriCorps when I stumbled across a job description on Craigslist. For whatever reason; fate, dumb luck, boredom, my finger slipped and clicked the mouse, I really don’t remember but after I read the position description I felt like PASS was something I needed to look into. After applying I interviewed at Vera Court Neighborhood Center, was offered the position a day later and promptly accepted. Logically, joining AmeriCorps made no sense. At the time I made good money polishing steel, was going to school in hopes of becoming a firefighter and had exactly zero experience working with youth. Needless to say I was breaking what had been a linear progression in my life and venturing into unknown territory... and it felt great.

Within two weeks of serving at Vera Court, I had very little interest in further pursuing firefighting. That is not to say I don’t consider firefighting a very righteous career but simply put, I fell in love with youth work. Coming to work each day doesn’t feel like a burden at all. In fact, I’m surprised they pay me to goof around and be a dork with amazing kids all day. That’s not to say I don’t take my service seriously. It’s a privilege to be in a position to help shape the lives of young people and I don’t take that responsibility lightly; however, I’ve realized I am in a unique position to make an impact not as a teacher or authority, but as a mentor who can cause change simply by showing love and empathy to youth who don’t feel that enough.

The past six months have been an overwhelmingly positive experience for me. I’m hopeful that I have helped the youth I serve grow even a fraction of how much I have grown as a person. My life has been changed forever by joining AmeriCorps and I am so grateful I killed some time surfing the web last spring. I feel a call to work with youth and I have my experience working at Vera Court through PASS to thank for that.