

# WELCOME TO THE 2021-2022 STATEWIDE FOOD EDUCATOR/RESPONSE CORPS TEAM

We're looking forward to learning with and from you! Please read through this document carefully. August is a long time away *and yet right around the corner*. We'd like to make sure to get you and your member started off on the right foot!

## WHO YOU CAN EXPECT TO HEAR FROM AT COMMON THREADS

Here's a "[who's who](#)" of our leadership staff (Laura, Margo, Jenna, Erika, Jessica.) You may hear from different ones of us at different times, but expect that for the enrollment process you will be working largely with Laura and Margo, that you'll hear from Erika and Jenna (currently on maternity leave) about training, and you'll hear from Jessica about data collection and evaluation. If you're not sure where to direct a question, direct it to [Laura@commonthreadsfarm.org](mailto:Laura@commonthreadsfarm.org), 360-927-1590 and she'll make sure it gets to the right person.

## HOST SITE FEES AND MEMBER BENEFITS

**Host site fees** vary from site to site based largely on whether your member is serving as a Food Educator or as a Response Corps member. [Click here](#) to learn more about the differences in these two positions. We realize this distinction is potentially confusing and we're very open to feedback on how to make it more clear!

- Whether your organization is BIPOC led
- Whether your organization serves a majority BIPOC community
- Whether your service is focused on communities in the moderate to high levels on the [social vulnerability index](#)
- The extent to which the proposed service is meeting COVID related food access issues
- Whether your organization is new to hosting AmeriCorps service members
- The size of your organizational budget
- The living wage standard in the county in which you are located
- Whether you have expressed a commitment to recruiting a member between the ages of 17-25.

**Member Stipends** also vary from site to site and depending on whether your member is part of the COVID Response Corps. Stipends will be 65% of your county's living wage for standard AmeriCorps positions and 80% of your county's living wage (up to \$30,200 - the maximum award amount for AmeriCorps) for Response Corps members. Please refer to your award letter for the specifics for your site. Additional benefits (consistent across all AmeriCorps service positions) include:

- [Segal AmeriCorps Education Award](#) from the National Service Trust in the amount of \$6,345 for full-time members upon successful completion of service (pro-rated if members is less than full-time)

- Health care coverage including dental and vision (full-time members only - this includes members serving fewer hours in a more condensed time period)
- [Subsidized childcare](#) for qualified members
- [Basic Food Benefits](#) eligibility

**Please note that Response Corps members must be between the ages of 17-25. This restriction does not apply to AmeriCorps Food Educators.**

## What's next?

### RECRUITMENT

***Please start with recruitment right away!*** While Common Threads is glad to help and advise, you are ultimately responsible for recruiting your own member(s), ideally *no later than the end of July*. Here are the steps to getting a member recruited:

- Draft a position posting** based on [this template](#), and submit to [laura@commonthreadsfarm.org](mailto:laura@commonthreadsfarm.org) for approval.
- Once approved, please **begin recruitment immediately**, with the goal of having a member selected no later than the end of July.
- Common Threads will update our website and our AmeriCorps listing to indicate that your site has a position(s) open, but our experience with state partner sites is that you will be the expert in your own local recruitment
- The one essential component of a **complete application** is [this application form](#). Common threads staff will review responses to this form weekly and forward the applications of anyone who has expressed interest in serving at your site to you. *Please note that members may apply to multiple sites within the statewide team, this has happened multiple times in the past. In these instances, please consider that it is each sites' option whether or not to offer a member a position, and each prospective member's option to choose which offer they accept.*
- We encourage (but do not require) that you also **invite members to submit cover letters and resumes directly to you**.
- Select candidates for interview. While you're welcome to use whatever process works best for your organization, you're welcome to borrow from this [application rubric](#) and these [interview & reference questions](#)
- When you have selected a member, please check two references. If the references check out, please let Laura ([laura@commonthreadsfarm.org](mailto:laura@commonthreadsfarm.org)) and Margo ([margo@commonthreadsfarm.org](mailto:margo@commonthreadsfarm.org)) know that you'd like to move forward with enrollment. At this time, please also share **either two written references or notes from two phone references to Laura and Margo**.
- From here, Margo will guide your member (and you) through the enrollment process!

## SITE VISIT:

While Common Threads won't necessarily visit every site, we'd like to have a sense of what the service environment will be like for members, particularly for host sites that are brand new to the statewide team collaboration. Please expect to hear from Laura on scheduling a site visit sometime in July.

## ENROLLMENT

- Your members will need to have **background checks** run, which can take a couple weeks to process. **Members will need internet access as well as access to city services for in-person fingerprinting** to complete their portion of their checks. Therefore, if your member is going to take a vacation before their service starts please get this done before they leave. Expect that Margo will give you and your member instructions every step of the way.
- Please create a **Position Description specific to your service site** (Margo will provide you with a template when it's time to take this step)

## GETTING GROUNDED IN AMERICORPS

This [Site Supervisor handbook](#) is currently being updated (thanks for your patience) All of the sections through "monitoring" will help you get a lay of the land.

## MORE TO COME

It may be that you can relate to a year with too many balls in the air! Please expect further updates but hopefully this information will be enough to get you started on recruitment!

Questions? Call, text, or email! [laura@commothreadsfarm.org](mailto:laura@commothreadsfarm.org), 360-927-1590

## A FINAL REMINDER FOR RESPONSE CORPS HOST SITES ONLY

The Response Corps is a specific initiative within AmeriCorps targeted at COVID relief. **Only people between the ages of 17-25 are eligible to serve as Response Corps members.** If you have been awarded Response Corps members (Walla Walla Valley Farm to School, Farmer Frog, Modest Family Solutions), please be aware that there are additional expectations of these positions as follows:

- Attending live monthly development trainings (via webinar) with other Response Corps members. The monthly sessions will equip the Response Corps members with additional skills and tools for professional and personal growth and development (including leadership, collaboration, communication, etc.) and for the completion of their capstone project.
- Participating in asynchronous monthly online professional development courses. The monthly online courses will equip Response Corps members with additional skills and

tools for professional and personal growth and development (including leadership, collaboration, communication, etc.) and for the completion of their capstone project.

- Developing and completing a capstone project by the end of their Response Corps experience. The capstone may address topics including, but not limited to: raising youth awareness of community/national issues, the impact of national service on members and the communities they serve, creating awareness about innovative programs and solutions to address community needs in communities with moderate to high levels of vulnerability.
- Attending virtual working group meetings or virtual conferences as needed to successfully develop and complete the capstone project.
- Presenting the capstone project to targeted audiences through online posting of completed capstone projects on various online platforms and/or virtual live presentations. Targeted audiences may include, but are not limited to: youth, AmeriCorps members, and state, nonprofit, and philanthropic leaders.
- Participating in communications and program awareness activities, including amplification on social channels and story sharing opportunities (e.g. video/photography, interviews) as needed.