

Duluth Area Family YMCA True North AmeriCorps

Program Overview 2024-2025

Program Dates: May 19 or June 6 - August 31, 2025



Partner Sites, to host a True North AmeriCorps member during the 2024-2025 program year, please review this document prior to submitting your Request for Position (RFP).

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

- Review this program overview, contact program staff with questions.
- Prepare your responses to the [RFP Questions](#) (linked), *you cannot save and return to the online form.*
- Complete the [online 24-25 True North Request for Positions](#)

Timeline

1. Site submits online Request for Positions
2. Program staff review and follow up with next steps generally within one week
3. Start advertising positions and recruiting for members within two weeks

QUESTIONS? CONTACT

True North AmeriCorps Staff:

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PLEASE NOTE Placement of True North AmeriCorps members for the 2024-2025 year is dependent on continued AmeriCorps funding and joint member recruitment efforts. Completing the RFP does not guarantee placement of a member.

KEY ROLES

- **AmeriCorps** (formerly Corporation for National and Community Service or CNCS) is the independent federal agency responsible for the coordination and granting of National Service and AmeriCorps dollars. AmeriCorps brings people together to tackle the country's most pressing challenges relating to education, poverty, environment, and equity. www.americorps.gov
- **ServeMinnesota** is the State Commission for National Service that directly oversees True North AmeriCorps. ServeMinnesota staff carry out high level program oversight, compliance, and obtain regular reports from the program www.serve-minnesota.org
- **True North AmeriCorps (TNAC or the program)** is an AmeriCorps State program hosted by the Duluth Area Family YMCA. TNAC staff are responsible for member management, on-boarding, training, and exiting/termination; site management; program reporting; and maintaining compliance with all AmeriCorps regulations.
- **Duluth Area Family YMCA (The Y)** is the organizational host for the TNAC program and responsible for all program management. The Y sets member safety and personnel policies, issues invoices and manages cash match payments, and distributes member benefits. duluthymca.org
- **Partner Site** Provides both the location and support for True North AmeriCorps members. Partner Sites provide direct supervision and coaching for the members as well as space for members to perform their service. Must hold nonprofit, school, or government status.
- **Lead Contact** Generally the School Principal or Executive Director, this is the person authorized to make financial commitments on behalf of the organization and is responsible for signing the Partner Site Agreement. The Lead Contact is the primary contact for the application, partner site agreement, cash match invoices, and other.
- **Site Supervisor** A staff of the Partner Site who provides the most direct supervision and support to the member and generally serves as the program's main point of contact during the service term. The Site Supervisor oversees and directs day-to-day activities including initial training, hosts regular member check ins, documents time spent supporting members, attends TNAC supervisor training, provides access to data, and approves member timesheets.
- **True North AmeriCorps Member (TNAC Member or Member)** An individual who commits to providing direct service to the community while hosted and supervised by the Partner Site. The Member is not an employee, intern, or volunteer of the Partner Site, but rather a participant of a National Service program serving the community through their site.

DULUTH AREA FAMILY YMCA VALUES & MISSION

At the YMCA, we strive to put the following values into practice in everything we do:

Caring: To be sensitive to the needs of others and go the extra mile.

Honesty: To tell the truth, to have integrity, and to build trust.

Respect: To value the worth of every person and treat others as they would like to be treated.

Responsibility: To do what is right and be accountable for your behavior and your obligations.

The Duluth Area Family is dedicated to putting the principles of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility into practice through programs that build healthy spirits, minds, and bodies for all. We are community centered. For nearly 150 years, we've been listening and responding to our communities. We bring people together, connecting people of all ages and backgrounds to bridge the gaps in community needs. We nurture potential, because everyone should have the opportunity to learn, to grow, and to thrive. We have local presence and global reach. We mobilize local communities to create lasting, meaningful change.

The Y and therefore True North AmeriCorps is for all - providing equal opportunities without regard to factors such as race; color; national origin; sex; sexual orientation; gender; gender identity; religion; age; disability; political affiliation; marital or parental status; military service; or religious, community, or social affiliations. The program is dedicated to recruiting and maintaining qualified individuals with disabilities and those from diverse backgrounds.

TRUE NORTH AMERICORPS

Established in 2003, **The Y's True North AmeriCorps (TNAC) program is dedicated to enhancing long term education equity outcomes by increasing K-8th grade students' social emotional learning (SEL) skills.**

TNAC members facilitate daily interventions including positive relationship building, academic enrichment, and individualized SEL skill building with identified students at their site. TNAC members are placed at youth-serving agencies including schools, afterschool programs, and government entities for terms ranging from 3-12 months.

TNAC's Theory of Change is by engaging positive adults to provide interventions for youth with unmet needs, the program will improve participants' social and emotional skills, attitude towards learning, and resiliency; increasing their likelihood to graduate high school on time.

PROGRAM GOALS:

1. Increase the capacity of Partner Sites to meet the needs of their youth.
2. Increase youth participants' social and emotional learning skills through site-based enrichment programming, individualized support, and targeted skill building.
3. Increase the number of significant, caring adults in participants' lives through member placement and volunteer mobilization.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING FOCUS

True North AmeriCorps Members are trained to use the Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA) system to evaluate students' SEL competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making. Members facilitate activities, infuse SEL into daily offerings, and seek out "real life teachable moments." These strategies can be implemented within a variety of existing program models, though members will be expected to focus on youth with risk factors such as socioeconomic status or challenges with social, emotional, or behavioral regulation.

75% of caseload youth from the 22/23 service term showed significant improvement in their SEL skills

Research shows young people who participate in social emotional learning initiatives like TNAC demonstrate increased academic achievement; improved attitude toward self and others; improved positive social behaviors; and decreased conduct problems and emotional distress (Durlak et. al, 2011).

CASELOADS & DATA COLLECTION

Most TNAC members are expected to maintain and track a caseload of around **30 unduplicated K-8 students** at their site. In order to see positive outcomes, members are expected to meet with their caseload about **15 minutes per day** with 30+ intervention sessions or more over their service term.

Interventions include positive relationship building activities, social emotional learning skill building, and academic enrichment programming. In accordance with the Y's Child Abuse Prevention Policy, TNAC members may not have planned 1:1 interaction with youth in spaces not easily observed or interrupted by other site personnel.

To be eligible for a TNAC caseload the student must:

- ☐ Be in grades K-8
- ☐ Regularly attend the program (30 interventions reasonable goal)
- ☐ Have evaluation consent (through program site)
- ☐ Score within the "Need" or "Typical" range in DESSA

AND one or more of the following:

- ☐ Be identified as needing additional support socially, emotionally, academically or behaviorally by a teacher, guardian, social worker, or program staff
- ☐ Qualify for free or reduced lunch

In rare cases, due to the nature of programming at some sites, members may be unable to identify a caseload. In this case, members are still expected to fulfill the essential functions of their position, this may include the facilitation of one time or sporadic community and/or family-focused programming that engages the community at large in SEL concepts.

NOTE FOR SUMMER SITES:

Due to the nature of summer programs, most summer members won't be required to have a caseload of students since they likely won't encounter the same children each day. Instead, they will track "interventions" they have with the students related to SEL.

PROGRAM MEASURES

True North AmeriCorps members are required to provide regular reports on the following metrics. The program will train members and supervisors on systems for tracking and reporting at the start of the program year. *The Partner Site agrees to complete and/or oversee the completion of all evaluation requirements as requested by the Program.*

YOUTH SERVED	Demographics: gender, race, free/reduced lunch, birthday, grade Number of additional (non-caseload) students supported daily
INTERVENTIONS	Number of times the member meets with each youth weekly Types of interventions the member provides for each student
OTHER MEASURES	Number of volunteers mobilized and total hours served

TRUE NORTH AMERICORPS MEMBERS

True North AmeriCorps members represent a diverse corps of individuals recruited from the community including college students, career changers, retirees, and people with different abilities. While they come from all walks of life, the common thread is the desire to serve others and the dedication to making a difference.

AmeriCorps members primary role is to provide direct service to community beneficiaries (individuals, families, and/or groups) while hosted and supervised by the Site. Duties must fulfill the essential functions listed in the Member Position Description. *The Site may not displace an employee or volunteer, including partial displacement such as reduction in hours, wages, or employment benefits, as a result of the placement of an AmeriCorps Member.*

MEMBER ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

- Coordinates and delivers social emotional learning activities, lessons, and interventions in small groups or one-on-one using evidence-based resources
- Facilitates social emotional learning “teachable moments” in response to minor emotional regulation needs, relationship repairs, or other SEL challenges
- Regularly tracks caseload attendance and progress on SEL competencies
- Completes observational surveys and other data collection with fidelity, reviews results with site supervisors to develop and implement intervention plans and goals
- Follows procedures to maintain accurate and timely AmeriCorps-specific data entry
- Assists site staff with planned enrichment programming in ways that do not duplicate or displace staff or volunteer duties
- Builds positive developmentally appropriate relationships with youth at site
- Maintains safe and respectful environment for students
- Fosters an inclusive environment appreciative of differences. Meaningfully participates in and leads efforts to support the Y’s commitment to equity and diversity
- Assists in the mentorship of program volunteers (if any), documenting impact
- Develops and implements a project to engage youth in service learning and leadership, documenting impact including volunteers engaged
- Communicates regularly and effectively with True North staff, Site Supervisor, and other site personnel via phone, email, online systems, and verbal interactions
- Participates in all required True North AmeriCorps meetings and trainings
- Serves as an ambassador of the program by submitting Great Stories and participating in outreach activities

AMERICORPS ELIGIBILITY

- 18 years or older at start of service term
- High school graduate with diploma or GED
- U.S. citizen, U.S. National, or Lawful Permanent Resident Alien of the United States
- Complete and successfully pass the National Criminal History Check
- Served no more than 3 AmeriCorps terms previously
- Commit to serving the entire term of service

QUALIFICATIONS

Required

- Interest and experience volunteering or working with youth
- Able to present oneself in a professional manner in a variety of settings

- Computer skills including effective use of email, word processing skills, information entry into spreadsheets, and the ability to learn new technology systems
- Strong written and oral communication skills effective with people from different backgrounds, cultures, and walks of life
- Commitment to supporting principles of equal opportunity to achieve a diverse service environment.
- Able to effectively manage a variety of tasks, priorities, and people
- Basic CPR/AED and First Aid for adults, children, and infants. Training will be provided and paid for by the program upon start. Must be obtained within 30 days

Preferred

- Training or education in education, social work, human services, recreation, mental health, trauma-informed care, healing-centered care, social emotional learning
- Demonstrates strong self-awareness and acceptance of cultural differences

BENEFITS

Members will receive the following benefits from the program during their term of service:

- Monthly Living Allowance up to \$2,200.00 *dependent on position size*
- Education Award up to \$1,956.35 at end of service term *dependent on position size*
- Student Loan Forbearance and Interest Repayment
- Free Family YMCA Membership
- Free Health, Dental, and Vision Insurance (full time only)
- Child Care Assistance (qualifying full time only)
- Ongoing Professional Career Development

MEMBER REQUIREMENTS

To successfully complete their term of service and be eligible for the education award, members must:

- ☐ Complete all contracted hours within service term
- ☐ Attend 100% of TNAC trainings and retreats (make-up trainings required)
- ☐ Document intervention sessions and progress with caseload students
- ☐ Submit mid- and end-of-term evaluations (member & supervisor)
- ☐ Submit other reports as requested
- ☐ Document volunteers mobilized (if any)

SERVICE TERMS

A member's service term ranges from one year to three months depending on the start date and preferences of the Partner Site. Sites may select "Full Year," "School Year Only," or "Summer Only" for their service term depending on their program offerings.

The member's Start Date listed below is the orientation with TNAC. sites should expect members to start on site at minimum one day after the start date listed in the table.

START DATE	ACCEPT BY	END DATE
May 19, 2025	May 5	August 31, 2025
June 6, 2025	May 26	August 31, 2025

PARTNER SITE ELIGIBILITY & REQUIREMENTS

Partner Sites agree to take on a variety of responsibilities when they are selected to host a True North AmeriCorps member. It is essential the Partner Site is willing and able to dedicate staff time and resources to the program. TNAC staff support each Partner Site in meeting the expectations and goals of the program.

Sites wishing to host and those awarded a True North AmeriCorps member must meet all of the following criteria, requirements, and expectations and any additional items listed within the Partner Site Agreement and Site Supervisor Handbook.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- Hold a nonprofit 501(c)3, school, or government program status
- Operate within Greater MN
- Provide opportunities for members to work directly with K-8 youth
- Be able to pay the associated Cash Match for each member placed
- Submit a signed Partner Site Agreement prior to member placement
- Designate a site supervisor to provide ongoing support

DOCUMENTATION

The Partner Site will maintain records, make reports, and submit all relevant documents required by the Program concerning matters involving the Member. This includes, but is not limited to, email, postal, and phone correspondence that may aid in the investigation of the Member's service and completion or termination. **Member-related and in kind records will be maintained for a minimum seven years after the member has been exited.**

ON-SITE TRAINING AND SUPPORT

The Site Supervisor is responsible for providing site-specific support to the True North AmeriCorps Member including but not limited to the following:

- Provide daily supervision and support to the Member including at minimum 30 minute weekly check in meetings. The Site Supervisor must spend some time observing the member's interactions with youth in order to provide meaningful feedback.
- Maintain an environment in which the Member may reasonably feel valued.
- Provide the Member with an orientation to the Partner Site including structure, expectations, space, staff, resources for support, personnel policies, and procedures.
- Provide the Member with on-site training and involve the Member in all appropriate staff meetings, retreats, and training events.
- Allow Member time and space during the "work week" for AmeriCorps related reporting and evaluative activities, research, off-site training, and development meetings as scheduled by the Program, and other relevant meetings or activities.

SERVICE ACTIVITIES & ENVIRONMENT

The Site Supervisor is responsible for developing and monitoring daily service activities with the Member. Activities must align with the Essential Functions of the position and follow all Program regulations and applicable laws.

- Service Activities should provide the Member with a meaningful role within their site which primarily benefits youth and allows for the development of leadership skills.
- The Member will not engage in ongoing administrative duties, including filing, photocopying, collating, mailing, unless these activities are directly related to the duties approved by the Program and supplement the Member's service activities.
- The Site may not displace an employee or volunteer, including partial displacement such as reduction in hours, wages, or employment benefits, as a result of the

placement of an AmeriCorps Member. **If a staff member would NEED to do the task, then an AmeriCorps member should not be doing the task.**

- **AmeriCorps members may not count in site's staff to student ratios**
- The Member may not engage in activities that pose a significant safety risk to themselves or others or activities the member does not feel safe performing.
- Provide materials and a reasonable work space for the member to fulfill their responsibilities including desk space, phone, computer, supplies, access to a printer
- The Partner Site is expected to display AmeriCorps signage, encourage Members to wear AmeriCorps gear, and identify as an AmeriCorps Member regularly.

DATA SHARING AND COLLECTION

Partner Sites are required to assist members with effective data collection and storage. Information and training will be provided to members and site supervisors at the beginning of the service term regarding the requirements.

The full data sharing agreement will be in the Partner Site Agreement, at minimum the Partner Site will:

- Maintain appropriate consent, authorized by the child's guardian, for every student on the member's caseload before any data collection begins.
- Ensure member is aware of and complies with organizational confidentiality policies and practices including providing the member with a safe place to store information
- Provide the member with access to participant data including demographics (race, gender, age, socioeconomic status)
- Assist with data collection, including but not limited to the administration surveys to program participants, families, or staff; the accurate recording of service hours; volunteer mobilization including number of volunteers and hours; and service projects.

ADDITIONAL COMPLIANCE

- The Site Supervisor will notify the Program immediately of any concerns or issues with the Member or their service.
- **Sites may not hire TNAC applicants or TNAC members during service.**
- Immediately report injuries the member obtains while providing AmeriCorps service at the Partner Site to the Program within 24 hours of the incident.
- If for any reason the Member withdraws or is released from the Partner Site or the Program, there exists no guarantee of the assignment of another member.
- If the Member will be driving a vehicle for the purpose of Partner Site activities, the Partner Site is required to verify the member's license, provide adequate insurance, and training regarding driving safety. The Site Supervisor may request additional driver safety training to be provided by the Program.

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

IN-KIND SUPPORT

Monthly In-Kind reporting is required as a Partner Site with a placed Member. In-kind contributions include the time, resources, and services that are supplied by a Partner Site. In other words, the *necessary and reasonable* expenses incurred as a result of hosting a True North AmeriCorps member.

Supervisors will submit in-kind reports by the 5th of each month via OnCorps (mn.uncorpsreports.com). In-Kind reports must be documented on site in calendar, receipt, or invoice form and must be made available upon request for seven years.

- **In-Kind Hours** Costs related to the direct supervision of the member: one-on-one or small group time (meetings, trainings, program planning). It is not program time.
 - When supervising two or more AmeriCorps members, you report the time collectively. Ex) a 1 hr meeting with 2 members equals 1 in-kind hour.
 - Site Supervisors who report in-kind must pass a National Service Background Check. The Program will pay for one supervisor per service term. If a supervisor changes or the supervisor misses a scheduled fingerprint appointment, it will be the sites responsibility to pay for the additional check.
 - Per federal regulations, the Site Supervisor must track and submit 100% of their working hours differentiating between "AmeriCorps" and "non-AmeriCorps time"
- **In-Kind Other** The *necessary and reasonable* costs of hosting a member such as:
 - Office Space: Partner Site must provide member with access to workspace which includes a computer, internet, and basic office supplies.
 - Supplies: necessary items purchased for the member to use with students.
 - Training: on or off site training that is provided to the member by the host site
 - *In-Kind Other not required if In-Kind Hours are reported*
- **In-Kind Notes**
 - Federal funding cannot be used to pay in-kind match unless accompanied by written authorization from the Federal Grants Officer giving authorization to use federal dollars as match for another federally funded program. Example: if a Site Supervisor's salary from federal grant funds they're not be able to report supervisory hours
 - Receipts, invoices, or other proof of in-kind expenses must be retained by the program for 7 years and made available upon request.
 - **Sites that do not submit in kind will be charged a \$1,500 fee per member and may lose their ability to host a member in the future.**

Sites with more than 2 member locations, please contact TNAC staff for alternate application*