



City Year University and Career Partnerships network

Best practices for AmeriCorps member engagement

Last updated: 5/12/2023

*The following examples of partner engagement opportunities represent the most successful, well-received opportunities to connect with our corps. Please consider this list when **planning** your virtual or in-person visits and promotions.*

Context for corps experience: City Year AmeriCorps members typically serve full-time in schools (depending on the week four or five days, from 7:00/7:30am-5:30pm). Sites organize ongoing professional development trainings and workshops each month (days and timing vary by site). Some of these professional development days and workshops are focused on career development and post-service planning – these days can be optimal for partner participation. Additionally, some sites schedule after-hours opportunities for AmeriCorps members to explore career and education pathways and may invite partners to host info sessions. Please access the [partner exchange](#) to download the list of the site contacts and connect with the appropriate staff member who can share opportunities to connect with the corps throughout the year.

Note about conflicting schedules: Some sites have a very limited number of days when the whole corps is all together, in which case it may be hard to integrate partners into programming in ways that work for all schedules. It's always encouraged to reach out to the local City Year site staff point to understand what opportunities exist for partners to plug into. In instances where there is limited opportunity, partners can also inquire about communication channels through site newsletters where recruiting and hiring information can be included.

Examples of virtual or in-person engagement

Professional development/info session: Your program likely has best practices or skills that could benefit our corps in their service or after; consider leading a training or workshop on that skill and tie in information about your program. ***This is one of the most effective options*** to connect with the entire corps (or subset of the corps) and share relevant information to their current service and individual development.

- City Year's career development program emphasizes career and education readiness through preparing AmeriCorps members for their next step by helping them highlight and talk about their service experience in résumés, cover letters, college essays, graduate school personal statements, interviewing and networking. We welcome the opportunity to explore how schools and organizations can help build these career management skills with our AmeriCorps members.
- Colleges and graduate schools that can offer general workshops on the ins and outs of deciding on a major/graduate program, writing a compelling essay or personal statement and navigating financial aid are appreciated by our sites.

If you'd like to understand particular local context and site needs around professional development, please connect with the local site point who can share more information about types of sessions of greatest need and interest to their corps.

Learning lunch: Present program information to an opt-in group of AmeriCorps members during their lunch hour; providing food is a plus and will definitely draw a larger audience.

After-hours information session: Some sites schedule monthly programming with partners around particular career/education paths and/or may offer this option for connecting with interested corps members. We recommend including an extra incentive to attend (special benefit, food, etc.) because after a long day of service, it could be tricky to get a large group in the room.

18-Minute Networking: One of City Year's annual events occurring at nearly every site between November and April, 18-Minute Networking provides AmeriCorps members the opportunity to engage with leaders and organizations to learn more about different career and education pathways. It's a fantastic opportunity to have small group discussions with AmeriCorps members interested in that pathway.

Site panels/discussions: If you are in close proximity to a site (or willing to join virtually wherever you are), ask your site rep to keep you in mind when planning for external speakers or discussion facilitators. You may be a great resource for a learning session they're planning!

Host your local City Year site at your campus/organization: Most City Year sites have needs for physical spaces (donated or at discounted price) to host AmeriCorps members for trainings throughout the year. If one of our 29 City Year sites is geographically close to your school or organization, reach out to the City Year site contact to inquire if hosting the corps for a Professional Development Day or training is of interest. It could be an opportunity to both offer space for training and do some type of recruitment programming for AmeriCorps members interested in programs at your school/organization.

Web-based promotion

Review all the broad visibility opportunities available to partners on the [partner exchange](#).

Recorded webinar: Record a five–15-minute webinar sharing information about your program; this can be posted on our partnerships page and shared through monthly newsletters to our site point people to share with their AmeriCorps members.

Testimonial video: Create a “Day In the Life” or testimonial video of your participants/students, extra plus if it includes a City Year alum! It's very beneficial to learn about a program from the mouths of those experiencing it, especially if they have a shared service background.

Questions? Contact Alison Turner, director of alumni career partnerships, at alison.turner@cityyear.org.