

# LINKS



## A Northwest Service Academy Program

2500 NE 65<sup>th</sup> Ave ▪ Vancouver, WA 98661 ▪ 360) 750 7500 x 114 ▪ [www.esd112.org/links](http://www.esd112.org/links)

Recruitment 2008-2009

Dear Project Sponsor,

Welcome! Now that your proposal has been accepted it is time to recruit a qualified member or members for your position(s). As you may know, you, as the LINKS sponsor are responsible for recruiting your own member(s).

We recognize that this can be a challenging task, so we have put together this resource packet to help you out. We hope you find it useful.

Sincerely,

Erika Johnson  
LINKS Coordinator

## Recruitment & Outreach

### Your Role:

1. Take a moment to visit our website ([www.esd112.org/links](http://www.esd112.org/links)) and review your position description, making sure that all information is accurate.
2. Email any changes to [links.recruitment@esd112.org](mailto:links.recruitment@esd112.org).
3. If it's correct, please use it to publicize your position. (see *Ways To Publicize Your AmeriCorps Placement pages 3-4*)

### Our Role:

1. Unless requested not to, we typically post new positions on our website ([www.esd112.org/links](http://www.esd112.org/links)) and the AmeriCorps recruitment site within a week their receipt.
2. We may be able to provide additional outreach support upon request. If you are having a difficult time recruiting for your position, please feel free to contact us. We may be able to help!

## The Application, Interview & Placement Process and You

1. Your position description instructs interested applicants to email their resume to you and [links.recruitment@esd112.org](mailto:links.recruitment@esd112.org). As a result, you can expect that applicants will contact you about the position(s) and you should be available to speak with and interview them throughout the recruitment process.
2. Interview your top candidate(s). Make sure applicants understand that this is a LINKS AmeriCorps position. We have provided a Frequently Asked Questions sheet (*page 2*) to help you with this task.
3. As soon as you select a suitable applicant please either email or call us with the news.
4. Let the applicant know that s/he has moved on to the next step in the recruitment process and will need to complete the LINKS on-line AmeriCorps application (if not already completed) and set up an orientation date with us. Application instructions are listed at the bottom of each position description on our website. Applications can be submitted through AmeriCorps' national on-line application system (our preferred method) or by mail (paper copies can be downloaded from our website.).

### **Please Note**

- LINKS, its sub-grantees, and its sponsors shall comply with all applicable state and federal rules and regulations which prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, age, gender, sexual

orientation, marital status, political affiliation, or the presence of any sensory, mental or physical disability. Inquiries regarding compliance and/or grievance procedures may be directed to Educational Service District 112.

- LINKS and its sub-grantees' programs and activities must be accessible to persons with disabilities, and LINKS must provide reasonable accommodation to the known mental or physical disabilities of otherwise qualified members, service recipients, applicants, and program staff. All selections and project assignments must be made without regard to the need to provide reasonable accommodation.

## *Frequently Asked Questions*

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**What is AmeriCorps?** – AmeriCorps is a National Service movement with its roots in the Peace Corps and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). AmeriCorps provides thousands of Americans of all ages and backgrounds with an opportunity to complete a term of service. Nationwide there are over 900 AmeriCorps programs providing part-time and full-time service to communities in the areas of public safety, education, other human needs and the environment. The AmeriCorps web page ([www.americorps.org](http://www.americorps.org)) has a full listing of programs by state and focus areas.

**What is LINKS?** – LINKS is an AmeriCorps program that partners with more than 50 schools, community-based organizations and local government agencies in building their capacity to meet the needs of the communities they serve. We help sponsor organizations mobilize additional volunteers for their projects by offering the opportunity for volunteers to participate in AmeriCorps and earn an AmeriCorps Education Award (scholarship) of \$1000-\$4725. Dedicating an average of *at least* 25 hours per month, LINKS members can connect communities, create resources, learn new skills and enjoy working on causes that are important to them.

**Who Are LINKS AmeriCorps Members?** – AmeriCorps members are part- or full-time volunteers who provide up to 12 months of service to communities while developing their own skills and furthering their education. LINKS members come from varying social, cultural and educational backgrounds.

**What Are the Basic Requirements to Serve with LINKS?**

- Ability to commit to the full term of service which you are applying.
- Be U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident.
- Be at least 17 years old.

**What Benefits Do Members Receive?**

- Upon completion of a term of service, members receive an education award of \$1,000-4,725, which can be used to repay qualified, existing student loans, or to further their education through an accredited institution of higher learning, vocational or trade school.
- Loan Forbearance (after successful completion of service, the Corporation for National and Community Service will pay all or a portion of the interest that accrued during the member's service year).
- Some project sponsors also opt to provide a living allowance, training opportunities, course/internship/practicum credit, travel reimbursement, a childcare allowance or basic medical insurance. Benefits for specific positions are listed on that position's description.

## *Ways to Publicize Your AmeriCorps Position(s)*

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**Advertise your position(s):**

There are many ways to get the word out about your position(s). Below are some general guidelines of what your ad should contain, and the following pages provide a little more detail on specific venues such as print, online, poster and community events.

- Think about who you would like to apply for your position. What about your position will attract them? Make that the focus of your ad.
- Make sure your ad, flyer or message includes ***A Call to Action*** (e.g. Interested in restoring the environment? Want to get your hands dirty? Enjoy working with youth? Looking for experience...?)
- Benefits: Be sure to list the Education award amount and any specific perks that your organization is offering (e.g. bus pass, housing, workshops, certifications).
- Either your contact information *or* ours (i.e. Contact us at [links.recruitment@esd112.org](mailto:links.recruitment@esd112.org) or 360-750-7500 x 394 for more information and application materials.)
- Our outreach staff may be available to assist you with creating your ad. Please feel free to contact us for assistance at 360 -750 -7500 x 114 or [links.recruitment@esd112.org](mailto:links.recruitment@esd112.org).

## Advertise in Newspapers & Magazines

There are a few things to consider before deciding to place an advertisement in a local or trade newspaper or magazine – who is this media targeted to and does this match your target audience? How much will it cost? Will this give you the “bang for the buck” you are looking for, or will it take up much of your valuable recruitment outreach budget? Other things to know and consider:

- You may consider placing an ad or ads in your local paper(s) to advertise for your placement. Print advertising tends to be particularly effective in communities outside major metropolitan communities.
- Print advertising can be as much or more expensive as on-line or other recruitment outreach methods.
- Some newspapers also offer listing ads on their website as well as print. Some kick in this feature for free, while others charge rather steeply for it.
- Other newspapers offer a package deal on ads so that your ad is listed in several papers within a region instead of just one publication. Package deals are a little more expensive, but will give your advertising campaign an opportunity to saturate a local community.
- Take advantage of who your organization is! If you are part of a large organization your human resources department likely has worked out a special rate for ads coming from them. Alternatively, if you are part of a small nonprofit you may be able to get a discount on advertising on account of how small you are and your limited resources.
- Referral ads are a way to make your advertising dollars stretch. They are a listing that refers jobseekers to see your ad in another section. That way you can pay to place your ad in one section of the classifieds, but attract potential applicants from other sections.
- Buying white space vs. paragraph ads. If you look at the average Sunday paper, you will be faced with a sea of tiny black type and very few graphics or white space. In larger publications you may find that it is worth your while to spend some extra money to include the AmeriCorps logo and some white space.
- Saturation vs one time ads – If your budget allows, you may want to consider running ads over a period of two or more weeks so you can really create a presence in the community you are trying to reach. If you can’t run your ad for consecutive weeks, at least be sure to pick the day(s) with the largest circulation. You may also want to spend a little more for that white space and referral ad, making sure that your ad absolutely stands out.

## Internet & On-Line

There are many ways to publicize your placement on-line. Some of them are free, while others have a cost. Below are some that we have found to be particularly effective:

1. **Your organization’s website, email distribution lists and newsletter(s)** are great ways to publicize your position(s)! Make sure they are easily accessible from your homepage. Post in job, internship or volunteer opportunities section. If you have affiliate offices or programs with their own website, make sure that the positions have some presence on those pages too, if applicable.
2. **Encourage your community partners to link to your organization’s website** – Doing this will help your site to be more prominent in the various search engines which will help give your organization more exposure to potential applicants.
3. **Craigslist** (<http://www.craigslist.org/>) is an on-line bulletin board and is well-known nationally. Craigslist sites are typically located near larger towns or cities. Portland’s Craigslist now charges for posting.

4. **Idealist** (<http://www.idealist.org/>) is another site that is fairly well known nationally. You can list an organization description and volunteer positions for free. Job listings have a cost. \*\*\*Idealist also hosts several very visible nonprofit job fairs around the country and table registration is typically around \$50.
5. **Postings on local organizations websites.** Check with your nonprofit and human resources contacts in your area to find out if there are any local organizations that host volunteer or job boards. Sometimes these are not well publicized, but can be heavily accessed by local job seekers. For example, in the Pacific Northwest EcoTrust's Salmon Nation is a well known environmental organization that has a free job directory that is accessed by seasoned professionals and interns alike (<http://iis.salmonnation.com/about/jobbase.cfm>).
6. **If you or your organization belongs to professional associations,** you may have access to websites with job, internship or volunteer boards where you could post your position(s). In addition, organizations may send out newsletters or have a distribution list where you could post position announcements.
7. **Regional and National Associations:** Many associations have job boards that are accessible to association members for free. Check to see if your organization is a member of any associations and whether they have a job board. Some, not all, job boards have a very active applicant pool. Depending on the job board, you may find that joining the association is money well spent toward your recruitment efforts. (e.g. **Association for Experiential Education** ([www.aee.org/](http://www.aee.org/)) is a popular site for those seeking experiential education positions.)
8. **Yahoo Groups and other community list serves:** A list serve is a mailing list that automatically distributes a message to everyone in the list at the same time. Many organizations utilize list serves that they have set up on their own or through free services such as Yahoo Groups to distribute job information to job seekers. Start by searching Yahoo Groups and branch out from there.
9. **EcoEmploy.com** (<http://www.ecoemploy.com/>) and **Environmental Career Opportunities** (<http://www.ecojobs.com/>) are popular sites for those seeking environmentally-focused jobs. Rates start at \$1.50 per 1,200 words per day with a \$20.00 minimum and \$89 per week respectively.
10. **Coolworks** (<http://www.coolworks.com/>) is geared toward jobseekers who are seeking "jobs in great places." Postings start at \$109 per week. If part of your sell is the location of your position(s) this site may be for you.
11. **Local Colleges or Universities and Experience.com:** Check out your local college and university websites. Most provide an opportunity to post positions for free through a career center. If you know of other colleges or universities that have degree programs that closely match your position's focus be sure to check out those websites, too. Many schools (3800 nationally at last count) are now opting to utilize Experience.com to publicize job opportunities to their student body. To utilize Experience.com you must create a log on and then receive permission from a college or university career center. Internship postings are free.
12. **Orion Grassroots Network** (<http://www.oriononline.org/pages/ogn/ics.cfm>) A monthly email update sent to over 1,800 contacts at career centers at 400 schools and individual job-seekers. This list serve is geared toward environmental and social change work, and unlimited free postings come with membership of \$40.
13. **Volunteer Websites:** Volunteermatch.org, justvolunteer.org, servenet.org are three volunteer boards that are fairly well known. Typically in any given area there are one or more volunteer-based websites.
14. Increasingly **Alumni groups** are hosting job boards or list serves that are geared toward helping their alums find employment or service positions. Examples include PeaceCorps, AmeriCorps, City Year AmeriCorps, National Outdoor Leadership School and Student Conservation Association.

**Know of another great job board, listserve or other outreach resource? Let us know about it!**

## Community Events, Meetings & Career Fairs

**Community events, meetings and career fairs** can be a great way to get your program's name out there, and, depending on the event, may also be a great recruitment resource. Since nonprofits typically have very limited time and resources to dedicate to volunteer recruitment you will want to make sure that the events you commit to are worth it. Things to consider before signing up for an event include:

- Who is your recruitment target audience and will they be in attending this event? If yes, how many? Is this the best way to connect with your target audience?
- Will your attendance at the event outweigh the value of whatever other recruitment tasks you would be doing with that time?

- How much does it cost? Many booth fees are waived or reduced for nonprofits – just ask!
- Utilize community meetings that you most likely would be attending anyway to let your peers know about your position(s). They may be willing to help with outreach - perhaps they know a perfect match, would be willing to post some flyers or email info out to colleagues.
- Career fairs can be a great way to get the word out about your positions. It can also be a way for you to have “face time” with potential applicants who have seen your advertisements and other recruitment efforts and are considering applying – sometimes just meeting you will seal the deal!
  - Most colleges have career & service fairs in the spring or fall, or both. If the career fair is on a college campus, help generate interest for your position(s) by contacting professors that teach subjects related to your position’s focus, send flyers to the career center and, if the college has a job board on its website, post your positions there too.
  - If you are located in an urban area, groups like Idealist.org may also host career fairs. Use the internet to search for career fairs that happen in your area.

## **Posters and Flyers**

**Create a flyer that advertises your specific position** and distribute copies within your organization and to local shops, libraries, clubs, etc. Flyers can be a relatively inexpensive way to get a presence in your local community. And, you don’t have to be a design guru to have an effective flyer. In fact, it is amazing what can be created in non-design programs such as Microsoft Word. Here are a few tips:

- **Stay simple.** Too many times the effectiveness of flyers is compromised because they have too much information or things going on in them. What are the bare necessities that you need to communicate to a potential applicant? What will get them to take the next step and find out more about your program and position(s)?
- **Target your flyer to a specific audience.** Figure out who you are trying to recruit - a recent college grad, a retiree with a lifetime of experience, someone with some hands on experience who is seeking a degree in a related area, etc. Once you know this piece of information you can design the content with them in mind.
  - **Create a “Call to action.”** Each flyer should have a headline or “call to action” that will motivate your audience to take the next step and check out your website or contact you. The headline should be short in length, e.g. Interested in teaching?, followed by smaller headlines – need classroom experience? Want to make professional contacts? Interested in literacy issues? OR, Interested in environmental jobs, but need more experience to get one? Spend a year with us and you will...<<insert catchy phrases>>.
  - **Sell what you do.** What about your industry is interesting and important to the applicant? Use that to sell the positions you are offering. Typically this can be done in short bullet points or in a brief paragraph description. For example – work with the pros, get field experience, community partners, trainings or certifications offered. Remember, be concise.
  - **Benefits.** Be sure to be brief in this section and not to use AmeriCorps speak. For example: \$940/mo, health insur., \$4725 scholarship, professional development opps., childcare, loan forbearance. Equal Opportunity Employer.
- **Important Dates.** Include start dates on the poster. Before including your application deadline, consider whether you might have to extend your deadline.

## **Logos**

Please be sure to include the AmeriCorps logo in the outreach materials you create to publicize your AmeriCorps placement. Download logos in several formats from [http://www.americorps.org/about/media\\_kit/logos.asp](http://www.americorps.org/about/media_kit/logos.asp). The general rule of thumb is that the jpeg format should suit your needs (print and web) unless you are having an outreach piece printed by a printing press, in which case you should use the eps version.