

Idaho AmeriCorps Alum

Life After AmeriCorps

Resource Guide



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AmeriCorps
Idaho



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INTRODUCTION

Serve Idaho, the Governor’s Commission on Service and Volunteerism developed the Life After AmeriCorps Resource Guide to support Idaho AmeriCorps members with planning a successful transition strategy after their service term. The advice, suggestions, and recommendations included in this guide speak to a variety of post-service pathways and were compiled from a range of resources. Serve Idaho appreciates all the contributions that helped shape this guide and hopes that it provides AmeriCorps members with strategies to carry their commitment to service beyond AmeriCorps.

This guide is not a comprehensive guide to all “Life After AmeriCorps” resources and should be used as a companion to the [AmeriCorps website](#).

The guide is not meant to be an endorsement by Serve Idaho. Serve Idaho is not liable for any action taken based on content of the guide. The guide includes websites where language, resources, and content are referenced from other sources and additional information can be found.

Serve Idaho, the Governor’s Commission on Service and Volunteerism is dedicated to inspiring and recognizing volunteers and empowering communities through service and AmeriCorps to address Idaho’s unmet needs.

Serve Idaho promotes collaborative efforts among private and nonprofit organizations, schools, and state and local government agencies to advance national service programs and volunteerism throughout the state. For additional information please see: www.serve.idaho.gov.

LIFE AFTER AMERICORPS PRE-TEST

As you set out on “Life After AmeriCorps” and your career development how ready are you? Complete the Pre-Test below to determine the areas you should focus on and the steps you can take using SMART Goal development.

	YES	STARTED	NEED TO DEVELOP
I am aware of my strengths.			
I know my weaknesses and have developed methods for improvement.			
I understand how my personality influences my career satisfaction.			
I can identify 5 things I need in a career for it to be satisfying.			
I am clear about my most important work-related values.			
I can describe the type of work environment in which I would feel happiest and most productive.			
I know how to explore career options.			
I have developed a list of career options to explore and research.			
I can clearly and confidently state my career goals.			
I have identified steps to take in the next six to twelve months to achieve my goals.			
I have an updated, accomplishment-based resume.			
I have developed a list of professional references.			
For my past job-related experiences, I can list: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 work activities • 5 skills used • 5 accomplishments 			
I understand how to network effectively.			
I have developed and can effectively deliver my 30-second introduction.			
I know how to use social media in my job search.			
I’m aware of other ways to look for a job besides online job boards.			
I have practiced my interviewing techniques and am prepared to answer the most commonly asked interview questions.			
I actively seek feedback and mentoring from others.			
I maintain a network of contacts for learning and sharing ideas.			
I know how to project a professional image both in-person and online.			
I keep current about issues related to my career interests.			
I attend events, conferences, or trainings to learn more about my current field or fields I might explore.			
I have joined and become active in a professional association related to my interests.			
I have taken ownership of my career development.			

CREATE A SMART GOAL

At this point, you may have decided on a very specific career path (e.g. I want to be a high school counselor in a rural community in Idaho) or you may have narrowed your options down to a specific sector, industry, or type of work (e.g. I want to work in the public sector on projects that create more livable urban communities). If you have a very specific path that's wonderful! If you've become clearer about your path forward but you don't have a specific job title in mind that's wonderful too!

Once you've chosen a path to pursue, whether it is very specific or a bit more general, you'll need to create a plan of action to help you get from where you are today to where you want to be. Your Career Action Plan states your career goal and breaks down this big goal into small, doable steps or mini-goals. An effective plan will be in writing and have specific steps and deadlines. **Multiple studies have shown that when we write down our goals, we are much more likely to achieve them.**

The most helpful goals are S.M.A.R.T (Specific, Measurable, Action-Oriented, Realistic, and Time-Bound) goals. Use the guidelines below to ensure your goals are S.M.A.R.T.

Set "S.M.A.R.T" Goals

Specific: What exactly do you want to accomplish?



Measurable: How will you measure your progress?

Action-Oriented: How will you make it happen?

Realistic: Is your goal attainable?

Time-Bound: In what timeframe will you reach the goal?

NOT-SMART AND SMART GOAL EXAMPLES

 Not SMART	 SMART
Not SMART - Learn how to write grants.	SMART - Register for the "Going After Grants" workshop on May 3, 2019" at the Idaho Nonprofit Center, report what was learned to my team by June 1, 2019 and apply the relevant concepts while helping my supervisor complete the Irvine Foundation grant application.
Not SMART - "Be less defensive when people give me feedback."	SMART - "At my monthly progress meetings, ask my supervisor for feedback on what I am doing well and what suggestions they have for how I could improve. At the end of each meeting write this information in a notebook and try out the suggestions. Each week record what worked and what didn't in my notebook. Seek additional input at my next monthly progress meeting.

PERSONALITY ASSESSMENTS

Kiersey Temperament Sorter: understand who you are, why you do what you do, and how to build effective relationships: <https://profile.keirsey.com/#/b2c/assessment/start>

NERIS Type Explorer – Personality Test:
<https://www.16personalities.com/free-personality-test>
<https://www.16personalities.com/>

The Big Five Personality Test – Accurately measure your key personality traits:
<https://www.truity.com/test/big-five-personality-test>

The Enneagram Personality Test – Explore the 9 types and discover who you truly are:
<https://www.truity.com/test/enneagram-personality-test>

The Typefinder Personality Test – Beyond Briggs Myers’ 16 Types, Find your true strengths:
<https://www.truity.com/test/type-finder-personality-test-new>

DISC Personality Assessment –Shows your team personality and work style:
<https://www.truity.com/test/disc-personality-test>

Career Personality Profiler – Find the best career for your interests and aptitude:
<https://www.truity.com/test/career-personality-profiler-test>

Emotional Intelligence Test – Measure your EQ and see how you relate to others:
<https://www.truity.com/test/emotional-intelligence-test>

Elevated Communicator – Discover your communication style:
<https://conscious-company.com/the-elevated-communicator>

Gallup Strength Based Assessment – Access your top 5 strengths report (Assessment and training provided by Serve Idaho):
<https://www.gallup.com/access/>

Document your strengths, personality, skills, etc. from your assessments.

FIND A WORKSHEET IN [APPENDIX 1: PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER](#).

RESUME, COVER LETTER AND INTERVIEW RESOURCES

[Designing Your Dream Career](#) email course will help you identify the skills you have and the skills you can build, outline a plan to take your career to the next level, and create a personal brand to help design your resume and cover letter.

The Idaho Department of Labor is a resource that offers job search workshops, resume assistance, career guidance, and more. Find other resources, schedule an appointment to review your resume or to get assistance with a job search at <https://www.labor.idaho.gov/dnn>

Resume Tips:

To prepare an effective resume, you need to present your experience, skills, qualifications, and achievements and relate them to the job you are applying for.

- Have a master resume that you can customize for each position.
- Use a readable font and size-
 - Use Times New Roman, Ariel or Calibri fonts
 - Body of resume: 11pt font
 - Section headers: 12pt font
 - Name: 14pt font
- Typically, a resume will present your past ten to fifteen years of experience unless there is something further back that is particularly relevant to the position.
- Include keywords relevant to the position and industry.
- Do not use abbreviations or acronyms unless you are certain the reader knows what the abbreviations mean.
- Be selective and strategic with your use of color, fonts, and graphics.
- Do not use personal pronouns such as “my” or “I”.
- Keep your verb tense consistent. Use present tense for your current work and past tense for previous positions.
- Electronic version of your resume should be in PDF format.
- Be truthful and don’t exaggerate.

Resume Tips (Spanish): Para preparar un currículum efectivo, debe presentar su experiencia, habilidades, calificaciones, logros y relacionarlos con el empleo que está solicitando.

SAMPLE RESUMES CAN BE FOUND IN [APPENDIX 2](#) & [APPENDIX 3](#)

Job Application Tips: Your job application is the first impression you give an employer.

- Avoid using resume templates.
- Set your margins to .75 at the top and sides, .5 at the bottom.
- Type your contact information at the top: It is becoming more common to not list your street address but just your city, state, phone, email, and LinkedIn URL.
- Decide which format - chronological or functional - best fits your situation.

Chronological Resume: Start with your most recent position and list organization, location (city and state only), job title, and start and end dates in months and years. Under each job list bullet points that are accomplishment based to show what you did in each position.

Functional Resume: Select the 3-4 skill categories you want to use and write 4-5 Accomplishment Statements for each category. Then add a Work History section where you can list your job titles, employer, location, and start and end dates in months and years.

- Education, Certifications, Licenses, and Training:
 - List formal education first, including name of institution, location, degree earned, major, minor, educational honors/awards, or study abroad.
 - GPA only if you graduated within the past two years and it was 3.0 or higher.
 - In some instances, listing relevant course work completed may be appropriate.
 - Add any relevant certifications, licenses, or training.
- Other components might include:
 - Honors and Awards
 - Volunteer Service
 - Languages (implies you are fluent)
 - Publications
 - Professional Affiliations
 - Activities
 - Interests and Hobbies (but only if they are relevant to the position!)
- Do not include References on your resume. You don't even need to say "References Available Upon Request."

[Job Application Tips \(Spanish\)](#): Su solicitud de empleo es la primera impresión que da a un empleador.

Cover Letters:

While a resume presents the facts, a cover letter is a chance for you to show your personality, not to mention your written communication skills. Create a strong cover letter that is tailored to each position. To write a great cover letter follow these guidelines:

- Your cover letter should be one page.
- Use the same header information, font, and margins for your cover letter that you use on your resume.
- Use a standard business letter format with date and address of employer.
- The ideal situation is to have the name of a specific person that you can address the cover letter to. However, if, after conducting some research, you are not sure who to address the letter to, you can address it to "Dear Human Resources", "Dear Hiring Committee", or "Dear Recruiter". Do not use "To Whom It May Concern" or Dear Sir or Madam". These are outdated terms.

A three-paragraph format is a good formula to follow for the text of the letter:

Paragraph 1: State the position you are applying for, what interests you in the position and/or organization, and the name of anyone who referred you to the position or who you've had previous contact with at the organization.

Paragraph 2: The information in this paragraph should explain why you are a good fit for the specific position you are applying for and why the organization should hire you. Try focusing on three core parts of the job and telling brief stories (1-2 sentences) that highlight your experience, skills, and personal attributes that are relevant to the job requirements. Show how you can contribute to the organization's success.

Paragraph 3: Keep this to two or three sentences that express your enthusiasm for the position, address next steps such as an interview, and thank the reader for their time and consideration of your application. Also, indicate how you can be contacted.

Have an appropriate closing signature such as "Sincerely" or "Best Regards" and be sure to sign the letter.

Proofread carefully as correct spelling and grammar are critical!

SAMPLE COVER LETTERS ARE FOUND IN [APPENDIX 4](#) & [APPENDIX 5](#).

Interviewing Tips: The job interview is a strategic conversation with a purpose. Your goal is to convince the employer that you have the skills, background and ability to do the job and that you will fit into the organization.

Screening:

Often conducted by someone from the organization's human resources department, these interviews are intended to determine if a candidate meets the minimum job requirements. These are usually short interviews used to screen for specific experience, skills and/or education.

Phone:

Phone interviews are often conducted as part of the initial screening process to check for basic qualifications. However, phone interviews may also be done if you are applying for positions outside of your current location or if the human resources department or company headquarters is located far away. A phone interview can happen unexpectedly or be planned- another reason to screen your calls during a job search. It is also acceptable to ask if you can call back at a more convenient time but make it within a couple of hours if at all possible. To put your best foot forward in a phone interview, follow these tips:

- Have your resume, the job description, and notes to remind you of key points you want to make right in front of you during the call.
- If you are using a cell phone, make sure the connection is clear and that the interviewer can hear you.
- Some find that dressing for the interview, even though no one can see you, helps them feel more professional and confident.

- Be patient with silence as interviewers may be writing notes or determining what to ask next.
- Speak clearly and with professionalism.

Video:

Increasingly common, video interviews are often done via Microsoft Teams, Zoom or some other video conferencing platform even if you live in the same community as the interviewer. Most of the tips for a successful phone interview also apply to video interviews but there are also some specific recommendations for video interviews:

- In advance of the interview, register for whatever platform the interview will be conducted on (use an appropriately professional username) and be familiar with how it works.
- Be aware of what will be in view for the interviewers. Have a clean, simple backdrop for your interview.
- Check the lighting to be sure you are easily visible and that there aren't any shadows covering your face.
- Adjust the height of your webcam and/or chair so that you are looking directly into the camera and that your head and shoulders are visible. Consider doing a practice run with a friend.
- Look into the camera not at the screen in order to make proper eye contact.
- Close all other programs so you don't have alerts popping up during your interview and so that you are making the most of your computer's capabilities to run the interview program.
- Get completely dressed. Tempting as it might be to only dress professionally on the visible top half, if for any reason you have to stand up, you'll be embarrassed!
- Keep pets far away and have a babysitter for any children. Both tend to show up at the most unexpected and inopportune times!
- While it is fine to have a glass of water nearby should you need it, do not eat or drink anything else during the interview.
- Have a pad of paper and pen handy should you need to take any notes.
- Be prepared to handle brief delays in transmission and if your screen does freeze up, call right back.

[Interviewing Tips \(Spanish\)](#): La entrevista de trabajo es una conversación estratégica con un objetivo. Su objetivo es convencer al empleador de que usted cuenta con las habilidades, la experiencia y la capacidad de realizar el trabajo y que usted se adaptará a la organización.

References:

The purpose of references is to provide a potential employer with a list of people who can verify and elaborate on your professional experience and personal character. Employers will rarely ask for actual letters of recommendation but if you have one AND it is current and relevant to the position, you might consider providing it to the employer.

- Like the cover letter, the reference page should match the resume header and font.
- Have 3-5 work-related references who can address your skills and experience in a work setting. References should not be close friends or family.
- While your references can be current or previous supervisors, you also might want to include a co-worker, a colleague from another organization that you interacted with, a customer or a client, or even a teacher.
- Place references on a separate sheet of paper from your resume and only distribute when asked.
- ALWAYS contact someone to ask if they are willing to serve as a positive reference before listing them as a reference!
- Share your resume with your references and provide them with information on the types of jobs to which you are applying. If an employer notifies you that they will be checking your references, let your references know to expect a call and share with them why you are interested in the position and why you think you are well qualified.

Your Online Brand:

No longer just a fad, the use of social media in hiring is now standard practice. Employers use social media to communicate their brand to prospective employees and they encourage their employees to post job openings on their social media sites so that positions are well advertised and attract quality candidates. At the same time, job seekers use social media to showcase their accomplishments and network with other professionals. Developing a professional online presence can help you “brand” yourself and provide you access to a wide variety of networking and career opportunities.

Let’s focus on the three primary social media sites that will impact your job search:

LinkedIn, which has always been a professional platform, and **Facebook** and **Twitter** which employers use to promote their workplace and job seekers use to brand themselves and stay connected to people and organizations that interest them.

LinkedIn:

LinkedIn is the world’s largest professional networking site, with over 500M users worldwide. It has become a must-have in the life of any professional and certainly for all job seekers. According to a Jobvite 2016 Recruiter Nation survey, 87% of recruiters use LinkedIn. Your profile serves as an online resume and the site is a powerful database to help you connect with like-minded professionals, search for job openings, and conduct research on people and organizations as you prepare for informational and job interviews. With a strong profile and a strategic approach to making connections, you will have a competitive advantage.

LinkedIn provides easy to follow instructions on how to create an account, develop your profile, and begin connecting to friends and colleagues.

Before building your own profile, read other’s profiles to get an idea of how to create your own.

- Turn off the “notify my network of updates” while you are creating your profile or making a large number of changes.

- Fully develop your profile, using as many sections as are relevant to your experience, as this will maximize your chance of showing up in a hiring manager's search.
- Create a personalized LinkedIn URL for use on your resume.
- Make sure your profile is public.
- Upload a professional looking head and shoulders profile picture in which you are looking at the camera and smiling.
- Have a clear, concise summary that communicates your brand and focuses on your experience, career goals, and interests.
- Create a professional headline that sums up your professional identity in a short phrase.
- Ensure your resume and LinkedIn profile mirror each other. You should summarize your work experience, but your profile can also include more details on your accomplishments and projects. Your LinkedIn profile can be a bit more conversational and show your personality.
- Make social impact a part of your professional identity by adding your volunteer experience, causes you care about, and check the box that you are interested in doing skill-based volunteering or serving on a nonprofit board. And remember to include your AmeriCorps experience!
- Connect with everyone you know - friends, family, current and previous co-workers, classmates, professors, AmeriCorps members and Alums - to expand your network. Always, customize the message for any connection request you send.
- Seek Endorsements and Recommendations and give them in return.
- Add and prioritize relevant skills.
- Follow companies that interest you and maximize group affiliations (industry, school, AmeriCorps) that match your experience and interests.
- Publish status updates, comment on posts, ask questions in groups, engage with your connections and the companies you follow.

Twitter:

Like your LinkedIn profile you can use Twitter to showcase your expertise, experience, and accomplishments only in a more concentrated form; like a mini resume. Follow industry leaders, organizations you are interested in, and recruiters in your field of interest. Also consider following career experts such as @themuse or @jobsearchamanda, and sending private notes to potential mentors. And of course, follow AmeriCorps related handles such as @americorps, @americorpsalums, @NationalService, and @AmeriCorpsVISTA. This will allow you to monitor what is happening in your field, learn about job opportunities, and join Twitter chats. You can also retweet news from these organizations or tweet articles about your field that you find helpful, which shows engagement and enthusiasm. Remember to fill out your Twitter bio appropriately so people can get a sense of what you are all about and it's a good idea to include a link to your LinkedIn profile.

Facebook:

As you begin your job search, you will need to decide if you are going to keep your Facebook profile purely personal - setting your privacy settings at the highest level - or leave your profile more open, understanding that anything that appears on your page is something that a potential employer might see. Some job seekers create separate personal and professional

profiles, with the highest privacy settings on their personal account and a more career focused image on their professional account.

Across all social media platforms, the goal is not to completely sanitize your personality but to put boundaries in place and manage your online presence so that potential employers see you as a professional who they want on their team.

Completing the Job Application:

- Always submit your resume, cover letter, and references in PDF format rather than a Word document.
- Fill out all areas. Use N/A if a question is not applicable to your situation.
- Emphasize experiences related to the job. Use the key words and skills the job announcement is looking for, if you possess them.
- It's acceptable to write "Open" if there is a question about your salary requirements.
- Do not falsify information!
- Ask someone to double-check your answers before submitting.

Following Up after Applying for a Position:

- Follow-up shows interest, initiative, and a sense of responsibility to a possible employer. Here are some guidelines for following up:
 - Wait a few days, but no longer than one week after applying (or after the final filing deadline if there is one) before emailing the employer to check in. If emailing doesn't get you a response, you can try leaving a phone message.
 - Identify yourself and the position for which you've applied.
 - Confirm that they have received your materials and ask if there is any other information they need.
 - Ask if they can provide you with an update on the next steps.
 - Express your continued interest in the position.
 - Thank them for their time.

IMPROVING RESUMES & INTERVIEW SKILLS USING THE STAR METHOD

Power words are positive words that share strengths, skills, personal attributes, or company standards. They should describe you and be meaningful to you. You can pair these with action words to help build power statements. These illustrate achievements and times you have utilized your strengths or skills. From these statements you can build STAR stories.

Use "S.T.A.R." stories to demonstrate you can perform each aspect of the job. Your STAR stories will be the foundation of your answers and provide the details and depth to your interview that will make you stand out as a top candidate.



THE STAR WORKSHEET CAN BE FOUND IN [APPENDIX 6](#)

JOB SEARCH SITES

Nonprofit and Service Job Search:

- Employers of National Service: <https://americorps.gov/partner/partnerships/employers-national-service>
- Idaho Nonprofit Center - <https://idahononprofits.mcjobboard.net/jobs>
- National Service Job Board - <https://www.statecommissions.org/service-job-board>
- Peace Corps Job Board - https://www.peacecorps.gov/bold/?gclid=Cj0KCQjw6cKiBhD5ARIsAKXUdyZ4aIDv3EWqIb3dxfkvQPgEfDFpvEZM1EIL2ey2VaOeexWcPC6JgtYaAjp5EALw_wcB

General Job Search:

- Idaho Department of Labor: Idaho Works - <https://idahoworks.gov/>

State Jobs Search:

- State of Idaho - <https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/idaho>

Federal Job Search:

- Federal Jobs - <https://www.usajobs.gov/>
- Federal "Recent Graduates" Pathway: <https://recentgrad.usajobs.gov/>

The Federal "Recent Graduates" Pathway is open to AmeriCorps members who have served in a full-time (1700 hour position) or consecutive terms of service totaling 1700 hours with the most recent term within two years of applying.

Conservation Job Search:

- Conservation Job Board - <https://www.conservationjobboard.com/>
- Conservation Careers - <https://www.conservation-careers.com/conservation-jobs/>

Healthcare Job Search:

- Health Career Center - <https://www.healthcareercenter.com/>
- Health eCareers - <https://www.healthcareers.com/>

Education Job Search:

- EdJoin - <https://www.edjoin.org/>
- K12JobSpot - <https://k12jobspot.com/>

Job Search Suggestions:

- University & Colleges
- City Jobs
- County Jobs
- Specific Business or Organization Websites
- Local Hospitals and Medical Centers

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Apprenticeships - An apprenticeship combines on-the-job training with job-related instruction. Apprentices learn specific skills necessary to perform the job, gain experience and will earn a nationally recognized certificate or credential.

<https://www.labor.idaho.gov/dnn/Job-Seekers/On-the-Job-Training/Apprenticeships>

Idaho Launch - Discover employer needs, see regional employment snapshots, research training opportunities, and apply for training funds.

<https://idaholaunch.com/>

Idaho Nonprofit Center – Regional and statewide conferences for nonprofit professionals and monthly professional development webinars.

<https://www.idahononprofits.org/>

Idaho Out-of-School Network Learning Academy - Quality professional development programs target many specific outcomes, including increased staff knowledge about youth development, use of effective strategies for activity programming, and implementation of methods for promoting positive relationships with youth.

https://idahoooutofschool.org/learning_academy-2/

LinkedIn Learning - access to Linked-In-Learning's thousands of online courses.

<https://www.equusidaho.com/linkedinlearning>

Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) - Provides funding to support training and employment services for adults, dislocated workers and low-income, out-of-school youth.

<https://www.labor.idaho.gov/dnn/WIOA>

NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES

Association for Financial Professionals: www.afponline.org

As the certifying body in treasury and finance, the Association for Financial Professionals (AFP) established and administers the Certified Treasury Professional (CTP) and Certified Corporate Financial Planning and Analysis Professional (FPAC) credentials, setting the standard of excellence in the profession globally. AFP's mission is to drive the future of finance and treasury and develop the leaders of tomorrow through certification, training, and the premier event for corporate treasury and finance.

Chamber of Commerce Young Professionals Networks: <http://www.ynpn.org>

The Young Nonprofit Professionals Network (YNPN) activates emerging leaders by connecting them with resources, people, and ideas.

Idaho Nonprofit Center: <https://www.idahononprofits.org/>

The Idaho Nonprofit Center represents the interests of our state's 9,000+ registered nonprofit organizations. We are an association of forward-looking nonprofit leaders who come together to share knowledge, solve problems, pursue common interests, and serve the public good.

Idaho Public Health Associate: <https://ipha.wildapricot.org/>

IPHA has organized diverse stakeholders to advocate for important health policies related to air quality, seatbelt use, child care regulations and school nutrition and physical activity.

Kiwanis: <https://www.kiwanis.org/>

Kiwanis International is a global community of clubs, members and partners dedicated to improving the lives of children one community at a time.

Lions Club: <https://www.lionsclubs.org/en>

Lions lead by example, build relationships and improve the world through kindness. For decades, LCIF has helped fund Lion's important humanitarian efforts around the globe.

Rotary: <https://www.rotary.org/en>

Rotary International is one of the largest service organizations in the world. Its mission is to "provide service to others, promote integrity, and advance world understanding, goodwill, and peace through fellowship of business, professional, and community leaders.

Southwest Idaho Directors of Volunteer Services (SWIDOVs): www.swidovs.org

SWIDOVs is a nonprofit organization where volunteer management professionals in Southwest Idaho work together to become great leaders and effective employees.

LIFE AFTER AMERICORPS

Idaho AmeriCorps Alum Chapter:

- Idaho AmeriCorps Alum LinkedIn page: <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/14134098/>
- Idaho Alums on Facebook: **@idahoamericorpsalums**
- National Alums Association on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter: **@americorpalums**

SEGAL EDUCATION AWARD

Education Award Resources:

- Access ed award, service letter, tax statement: my.americorps.gov
- AmeriCorps Agency Segal Education Award Information: <https://www.americorps.gov/members-volunteers/segal-americorps-education-award>
- Education Award FAQs: <https://americorps.gov/members-volunteers/faqs>

Student Loan Resources:

- Income Driven Repayment: <https://studentaid.gov/idr>
- Public Service Loan Forgiveness: <https://studentaid.gov/manage-loans/forgiveness-cancellation/public-service>

Using Your Education Award:

- Road Scholars senior travel and education: www.roadscholar.org
- Find a list of Title IV schools: <https://finaid.org/fafsa/tiv/>
- Schools of National Service: <https://www.americorps.gov/partner/partnerships/schools-national-service>
- HQ Travel Group: travel abroad service program – [https://www.internhq.com/AmeriCorps Alumni Abroad Toolkit](https://www.internhq.com/AmeriCorps-Alumni-Abroad-Toolkit)

Award Use:

The award can be used in one of, or a combination of, the following ways:

- To repay *qualified student loans*.
- To pay all or part of the *current educational expenses* to attend a *qualified institution* of higher education (including certain vocational schools) and educational programs approved under the Montgomery G.I. Bill and the Post 9/11 G.I. Bill.

Award Transfers:

The Serve America Act allows for the transfer of the Segal Service education awards under certain conditions. The person who earned the award has to have been at least 55 years old when they began the term of service and the person to whom the award is transferred has up to 10 years to use it. The award may only be transferred the member's child, step-child, grandchild, step-grandchild, or foster child.

Important note: VISTA members may not transfer their education award since they currently have the option of receiving an additional end-of-service stipend instead of an education award.

To transfer an award, an individual must:

- Have been at least 55 years of age before beginning the term of service for the subject award;
- Have begun this term of service on or after October 1, 2009;
- Transfer the award before the original expiration date;
- Designate all or a portion of the unused award for the transfer;
- Complete the forms authorizing the transfer, which includes providing information and certifying eligibility.

Award Taxes:

The IRS has determined that payments made from an education award are considered to be included in a member's taxable income in the year the payment is made to the school or loan holder. Interest payments are also considered taxable. This increase in your income could affect your tax liability for that year.

AmeriCorps does not withhold taxes from the award. By the end of January each year, AmeriCorps sends a 1099 Form to all AmeriCorps members who have made payments from their education awards and for whom interest payments have been made totaling more than \$600.00 during the previous year. The 1099 Form does not need to be submitted to the IRS with a member's tax return, but it reflects the amount that AmeriCorps reports as taxable miscellaneous income to the IRS.

W-2s are used to report to the IRS that portion of the living allowance or stipend that is taxable. It is not used for reporting on the amount of the education award used. AmeriCorps State and National members receive their W-2s from the program where they served. AmeriCorps VISTA and AmeriCorps NCCC members receive their W-2s from AmeriCorps.

Reference: <https://americorps.gov/members-volunteers/segal-americorps-education-award>

How to request your Segal Education Award Payment:

- Verify that all the pre-populated areas on your request form are correct.
- Fill in the amount you authorize the National Service Trust to pay the institution out of your available balance.
- Choose whether your payment will be used to pay a loan or to pay for current education expenses.
- If you chose to pay for current education expenses, enter the semester or term for which you are authorizing payment.
- Search for and select your institution.
- Check the terms of agreement boxes if you agree with the following statements:

- You have not been convicted, since the completion of your AmeriCorps service, of the possession or sale of a controlled substance.
- You have received a high school diploma or its equivalent (such as GED).
- You understand that knowing and willing false statements on this form can be punished by a fine or imprisonment or both under Section 1001 of Title 18, USC.
- Click the “Submit” button. Your payment request will be sent to your institution, which will complete the request and forward it to the Trust for payment.

Transferring your education award:

- To transfer your award, you must be at least 55 years old at the start of service and the award must go to your child, stepchild, grandchild, step-grandchild, or foster child.
- If eligible, go online and register or log in to your my.americorps.gov account.
- On the home page there is an option to create an award transfer (upper left-hand corner).
- You will be directed to another page where you will enter required personal information, the transfer amount and the recipient’s information.
- After the information has been entered, certify that the data entered is correct, then click “Submit.”
- If you have entered the recipient’s email address, the system will generate an email to the recipient instructing them to create or log in to a my.americorps.gov account.
- Once the recipient has logged on or created an account, they can choose to:
 - Accept the full amount of the award.
 - Accept a partial amount.
 - Decline the full award.
- If the recipient decides to accept a portion of the transferred award, they CANNOT request the remaining balance to be re-transferred back to their account at a later date.
- If you revoke the award, you CANNOT re-transfer the award to another recipient, except in case of death of the recipient.
- You cannot transfer the award to multiple recipients – one recipient per transferred award.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1: PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER: ASSESSMENTS

Review the information you've gathered from all the self-assessments you've completed. Record the information that is most important to you on this page.

Top 10 Values

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Personality Preferences
Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)

The letters mean:

Interests

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Motivated Skills

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

Top Five Strengths (If you completed the Strengths Assessment)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Passions

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Other Considerations

- 1.
- 2.

APPENDIX 2: RESUME EXAMPLE

Hire A. Freshman

(208) 885-6121 • fres0000@vandals.uidaho.edu • 71011 Elmer Street, Moscow, ID 83843

Objective:

To obtain a position as a/an *(Job Title)* with *(Organization/Company)*

Education:

Bachelor of Science in General Studies
University of Idaho (UI) – Moscow, ID
Expected May 20xx

High School Diploma
Caldwell High School (CHS) – Caldwell, ID
June 20xx, GPA: 3.60

Projects:

- “Looking Toward Our Future” Senior Project | CHS – Caldwell, ID Spring 20xx
- Developed and implemented a web-based survey to collect educational and post-graduation goals of 250 graduating seniors
 - Analyzed data, created graphs with Excel, and prepared a final report
 - Presented findings at the Hispanic Youth Summit

Experience:

- Crew Member | Arby's – Caldwell, ID Summer 20xx
- Multitasked to provide friendly service to customers while handling orders and transactions
 - Prepared equipment and inventory to ensure efficient daily operation
 - Managed and recorded intake of freight deliveries

- Secretary | Caldwell High School Student Body (CHSB) – Caldwell, ID Spring 20xx – Fall 20xx
- Recorded minutes at weekly meetings and published them on school Facebook page, maintaining a professional communication outlet with student body and parents
 - Collaborated with fellow CHSB officers to organize multiple Fall events, with Homecoming drawing over 700 participants

- Busser | Heavenly Breakfast – Meridian, ID Spring – Summer 20xx
- Maintained a friendly, welcoming, and sanitary dining area for guests
 - Communicated with patrons, hosts, servers, and managers in a fast-paced environment to ensure smooth overall restaurant operations

Computer Skills & Certifications:

Computer: Proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel, & PowerPoint

Certification: Idaho Food Handler's Permit Expires 20xx

Service & Activities:

- Hall Representative | Housing & Residence Life, UI Fall 20xx – Present
- Team Member | Basketball & Ultimate Frisbee, Intramural Sports, UI Fall 20xx – Present
- Team Member | Varsity Basketball, Caldwell High School Fall 20xx – Spring 20xx
- Volunteer | Natural Helpers, Caldwell High School Spring 20xx – Fall 20xx

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Career Services

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APPENDIX 3: RESUME EXAMPLE

Fish N. Stream

111-222-3333

swimmingupstream@vandals.uidaho.edu

987 River Road, Moscow, ID 83843

Education

Bachelor of Science in Fishery Resources, May 20xx

University of Idaho, Moscow, ID

GPA: 3.43

Course Highlights:

Fish Health Management

Fisheries Management

Concepts in Aquaculture

Principles of Population Dynamics

Limnology

Fish Ecology

Projects:

"Mapping the Impact of Local Hatcheries on Fish Count in the Snake River", Fall – Spring 20xx

Senior Thesis Project, University of Idaho

- Investigated how the American Falls Fish Hatchery impacts the surrounding area of the Snake River below the American Falls Reservoir
- Performed extensive field work on the river to collect water samples, observe fishing patterns, and track fish
- Analyzed samples and correlated data to determine relationships between the number of fish released and changes in the river
- Illustrated a map of the changes downstream from the hatchery
- Discovered a positive effect on the river ecology and fish count due to proper stewardship and care by the hatchery
- Presented the findings to a group of peers and faculty at the University of Idaho

Experience

Fisheries Technician Intern, Summer 20xx

Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Lewiston, ID

- Gathered tissue and scale samples from migrating adult Steelhead and Chinook salmon at the Lower Granite Dam adult fish trap
- Implanted PIT tags on adult salmon
- Handled tissue and scale samples from adult salmon
- Assisted in data entry and validation
- Surveyed Chinook spawning grounds on the South Fork Clearwater River

Hatchery Laborer, Summers 20xx – 20xx

American Falls Fish Hatchery, American Falls, ID

- Led guided tours of the hatchery on a daily basis
- Educated the tourists about the different areas and purposes of the hatchery
- Assisted in the rearing and caring of rainbow and brown trout by monitoring water temperatures and timed feedings
- Maintained the self-guided nature tour trail and Snake River public access trail by cleaning, trimming, shoveling, and raking

Computer Skills

Proficient in: GIS, Microsoft Excel, PowerPoint, Word

Community Service

Volunteer, 20xx – 20xx

American Falls Fish Hatchery, American Falls, ID

- Cleaned and maintained trails and pathways
- Organized pamphlets and informational brochures
- Learned to manage time in order to complete multiple projects on time

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APPENDIX 4: COVER LETTER EXAMPLE

COVER LETTER OUTLINE

YOUR NAME

Your contact information goes here. We recommend copying and pasting your resume header.

Month Day, Year

Potential Employer, Title

Company

Mailing Address

City, State Zip Code

Dear Dr./Mr./Ms. (employer's last name): (Or RE: title of job and/or job number)

Introduction: State why you are writing

Name the specific position to which you are applying. Let the employer know how you heard about the opening or company. This is also the place to mention the name of a contact you have within the company (or outside the company like a professor) if they helped refer you to the job. You should add a sentence about why you are particularly interested in them, or tell them about a specific relevant experience you have that will draw them in to read the rest of the cover letter.

Body: How do you fill their needs? Show your potential through your experiences and examples

Mention a few of your strongest qualifications (e.g., education, experiences) you believe to be of greatest interest to the employer based upon the job description and/or your knowledge of the company. Keep the focus on them and how you fill their needs, and not so much about how you will benefit. Make strong connections between your experiences and interest in the company and their needs, culture, and/or mission statement.

Discuss and demonstrate some personal qualities (organization skills, communication, initiative, etc.) that the employer specifically asks for in the job description. Use examples to tie these skills to tangible experiences (e.g., employment, class projects, volunteer experiences, coursework, etc.). This is your chance to discuss abilities, skills, or characteristics that may not be elaborated upon in your resume. Show the company how you will add value to the organization. Create a strong sense of fit between you and the company by demonstrating how you match with their job description, company culture, and mission.

Closing: Be confident, pro-active, and say thank you

Briefly restate your interest in the position and reiterate your preferred contact information. Offer to provide more information (beyond your resume and other application materials). Be confident, but not overly aggressive. You can add a proactive statement about what you will do, such as follow-up with a phone call in a couple of days. Thank them for their time and consideration in reading your application materials. Avoid passive language like "believe", "hope", or "think". Instead use confident words like "know" or "will".

Sincerely,

(Sign here if it is a paper copy, or add a scanned electronic signature)

Your Name, Typed

Enclosure: Resume (Optional, this draws attention to your resume and/or other application materials)

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www.uidaho.edu/careerservices (208) 885-6121 Idaho Commons 334

APPENDIX 5: COVER LETTER EXAMPLE

Mary Jones

myemail@email.com

(208) 123-4567

8910 Main St., Moscow, ID 12345

March 15, 20xx

Patricia Johnson, Director
XYZ Nonprofit Organization
1234 West 56th Street
Moscow, ID 12345

Dear Ms. Johnson:

I am excited to be applying for the position of Grant Writer for XYZ Nonprofit Organization. Dr. Jones, a professor at the University of Idaho and one of your volunteers, suggested I apply. XYZ has impressed me with its mission and dedication to providing help for those in need in our community. Community service has been an important part of my life since my first experiences volunteering at a soup kitchen as a teenager in my home town of Moscow, Idaho, and I would love to continue to give back to the community through XYZ.

My Bachelor of Arts in English, with a professional writing emphasis, and my training in grant proposal writing make me particularly qualified for this position. Recently, I wrote successful grant proposals for two local nonprofits, including a \$10,000 grant to fund wheelchair ramps for the Retired Senior Volunteer Program and a continuation grant for the Boys and Girls Club of Kootenai County. Last year, I assisted in finding seed money for several local small business start-ups through the Small Business Development Association. My studies included college business courses and training from the Grant Writing Institute which focused on 501(c) (3) organizations. This solid knowledge base and my hands-on grant writing experience will be assets to your organization.

My time management and organization skills are demonstrated by my excellent grades as a student while volunteering 10+ hours a week for community and campus service projects. Through my education and volunteer experiences, I developed proficiency in Microsoft Office programs, including Access and Excel, which will help me maintain efficiency while managing multiple projects at your organization.

I have a strong desire and commitment to work in the non-profit sector and am excited by the great things XYZ is doing in the community. I have witnessed how even a small amount of assistance and compassion can make a huge impact in someone's life. For example, a wheelchair ramp can allow a person with a disability to go out and enjoy their yard, leading to a better quality of life. I am excited to apply my skill in grant writing to help your organization continue to help others.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to further discussing how my skills and experience can benefit your organization and help XYZ continue to make a difference in Moscow. I will contact you in a couple of days to see if you have all the information you need for my application and to discuss the possibility of setting up an interview. I can be reached at (208) 123-4567 or myemail@email.com.

Sincerely,



Mary Jones

Enclosure: Application and Resume

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Career Services

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APPENDIX 6: STAR METHOD

POWER WORDS AND POWER STATEMENTS

Your resume should be employer and job specific. This exercise can be tailored to the position you are applying for and should reflect some of the language in the position listing to be most effective.

POWER WORDS

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.

ACTION WORDS

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

POWER STATEMENTS

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

ME IN 30 SECONDS

This summary statement is your personal pitch. State why you should be selected for this role, with a clear match of your skills to the role applied for.

ACTION WORDS

Accelerated	Counseled	Engineered	Led	Pioneered
Achieved	Critiqued	Executed	Maintained	Publicized
Advocated	Cultivated	Expedited	Managed	Remodeled
Amplified	Delivered	Facilitated	Mentored	Spearheaded
Assisted	Designated	Forecasted	Mobilized	Strengthened
Attained	Designed	Formalized	Negotiated	Supported
Authored	Developed	Fostered	Optimized	Transformed
Centralized	Devised	Generated	Orchestrated	Undertook
Charted	Dispatched	Incorporated	Outpaced	United
Collaborated	Educated	Initiated	Outperformed	Utilized
Coordinated	Enabled	Investigated	Oversaw	Won

POWER WORDS

Accomplished Attentive Compassionate Deep Energetic Generous Instrumental Novel
Productive Sympathetic Visionary Accountable Authentic Competent Dependable Enterprising
Intelligent Open-minded Proficient Self-taught Systematic Wise Accurate Balanced
Competitive Detailed Enthusiastic Goal-driven Intuitive Optimistic Progressive Sensible Vivid
Tactful Active Bold Comprehensive Determined Entrepreneurial Good listener Inventive
Orderly Prompt Sensitive Team-minded Adaptable Bright Concerted Devoted Exact
Groundbreaking Joyful Original Purposeful Sincere Tenacious Timely Adept Broad-minded
Confident Dexterous Excel Happy Keen Outgoing Quick-thinking Skillful Thorough Zealous
Advanced Calm Conscientious Diligent Exhaustive Harmonious Kind Painstaking Receptive
Smooth Thoughtful Adventurous Candid Considerate Diplomatic Experienced Heedful
Knowledgeable Passionate Relentless Sociable Affectionate Capable Constructive Direct
Extensive Helpful Leader Patient Reliable Respectful Socially-conscious Tireless Unique Agile
Controlled Disciplined Extroverted Honest Logical People-person Resourceful Sophisticated
Tolerant Supportive Ambitious Charismatic Cooperative Diverse Exuberant Humble Loving
Perceptive Spirited Tough Genuine Amiable Cheerful Cordial Driven Fast-learning Humorous
Loyal Persistent Responsible Step-by-step Trustworthy Amicable Courageous Dynamic
Fearless Ideal Mature Personable Responsive Storyteller Understanding Unprecedented
Appreciative Clear Courteous Earnest First-class Imaginative Methodical Persuasive
Results-oriented Straightforward Approachable Clever Creative Easygoing Flexible
Independent Meticulous Pleasant Revolutionary Strong Upbeat Ardent Coherent
Creative-thinker Easy-going Focused Industrious Mindful Warmhearted Positive Risk-taker
Strong-willed Articulate Cohesive Curious Eclectic Forgiving Influential Modest Practical
Robust Structured Versatile Artistic Collaborative Cutting-edge Eloquent Friendly Ingenious
Motivated Precise Vigorous Rousing Successful Assertive Committed Decisive Emotional Fun
Innovative Multifaceted Proactive Self-confident Superior Vibrant Self-reliant
Attention to detail Communicative Caring Dedicated Encouraging Funny Inspiring Multilingual
Problem-solver Self-motivated

RESOURCE PAGE:

AmeriCorps: Next Steps Life After AmeriCorps Resource -

<https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/view/8991018/next-steps-life-after-ameri-corps-national-service-knowledge->

AmeriCorps the Agency - <https://americorps.gov/>

California Volunteers AmeriCorps Advantage: Career Resource Guide -

<https://www.californiavolunteers.ca.gov/advantage-career-resource-guide/>

Idaho Department of Labor - <https://www.labor.idaho.gov/dnn/Businesses/Layoff-Assistance/Employment-Transition-Services>

Serve DC Life After AmeriCorps Resource Guide -

https://dmv.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/serve/publication/attachments/Life%20After%20AmeriCorps%20Resource%20Guide_v.140211.pdf

Service Year Alliance - <https://www.serviceyearalliance.org/>

University of Idaho Careers Page - <https://www.uidaho.edu/current-students/career-services/students-and-alumni/resumes-cover-letters-cvs/resumes-and-cvs>