



Tennessee Programs Support #EdSuccess

As part of their continued efforts to engage the public with national service, the [Corporation for National and Community Service](#) (CNCS) has released their [2016 Public Engagement, Outreach, and Education Plan](#). As part of this plan, the agency has designated monthly themes throughout the year, centered on CNCS focus areas.

August's theme focuses on [Education](#), which represents the majority of AmeriCorps State and National investments. In recognition of this robust programming, a 2014 report published by America's Promise Alliance highlighted [The Role of National Service in Closing the Graduation Gap](#). In the report's discussion of program evidence, it notes the crucial role of national service in "creating a new pipeline of effective, diverse educators and advocates for high-need schools and the children they serve." [Volunteer Tennessee](#) is proud to support this work through five teacher corps/teacher residency AmeriCorps programs operating in three of the state's major metro areas. As we highlight these programs and their members this August, you can join the conversation on social media by using #EdSuccess.

How are AmeriCorps programs in Tennessee leveraging resources to train educators and improve educational outcomes across the state?

- **[Teach For America-Memphis](#)**: Teach For America joined the Memphis community in 2006 with a mission to dismantle the unequal opportunities in public education in Memphis by enlisting, developing, and mobilizing our nation's most promising leaders to teach in the city's highest needs schools. Ten years after joining the Memphis community, incoming AmeriCorps members are increasingly more diverse, with half of the incoming 2016 teachers coming from a low-income background and over half identifying as a person of color. The Tennessee Higher Education Commission's (THEC) report card found that TFA-Memphis is among the state's top teacher preparation programs in the state for the sixth year in a row. TFA-Memphis teachers produce consistently high results. The 2016 summer training concluded with AmeriCorps members leading their students to achieve nearly 1.5 years of reading growth and 80% of students meeting their mastery goals in five weeks. After their two-year commitment to Teach For America, alumni continue to effect change. With about 250 who continue to teach in Memphis, over 20 who serve as principals, and even more who serve as assistant principals or deans, over 90% of alumni in Memphis have chosen to continue serving students in some way.



Photo courtesy of Memphis Teacher Residency



- **Memphis Teacher Residency**: As in the medical residency model, Memphis Teacher Residency teachers-in-training (called “residents”) get practical experience in their field and learn by working alongside experienced colleagues. During their year of service, each AmeriCorps member serves as an apprentice teacher in the classroom of a mentor teacher all day long every Monday through Thursday. Over the course of the year, the resident assumes incrementally increasing classroom responsibilities. Concurrently with their classroom apprenticeship, AmeriCorps members pursue a Master of Urban Education, offered by MTR in partnership with AmeriCorps and Union University. Following the residency, MTR graduates commit to serving for at least three years as the teacher of record in a high-poverty Memphis school. Throughout their residency and graduate years, an MTR instructional coach observes each teacher regularly and provides him/her with guidance, feedback, resources, and thought partnership. Based on student achievement and teacher effectiveness data, Shelby County School evaluators have determined that “MTR is indeed making good on its promise of providing the district with effective teachers.”



Photo courtesy of Memphis Teacher Residency

- **Teach For America-Nashville**: Teach For America joined the Greater Nashville community in 2009 with a mission to build the movement for educational equity in Nashville by enlisting, developing, and mobilizing our nation’s most promising leaders to teach in the city’s highest needs schools. Through the development and support provided by Teach For America, the program’s AmeriCorps members have been found by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) to be among the top performing teachers in the state for the last six years. Additionally, in 2016, Teach For America-Nashville, in partnership with the Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, hosted the 3rd Nashville Summer Academies, providing high-quality summer learning experiences to over 400 students while serving as a training institute for new teaching corps members. TFA-Greater Nashville alumni



continue to work in partnership with the Nashville community to lead the system-level change needed to maximize Nashville students' educational opportunities. Over 90% of Teach For America-Greater Nashville alumni continue to work with low-income communities and over 70% continue serving in education with over 300 alumni teaching in classrooms across Nashville, 19 school principals, and over 60 in-school leadership positions.

- **Relay Graduate School of Education**: Launching their AmeriCorps State program in the 2016-2017 program year, the Relay Graduate School of Education will support 55 AmeriCorps members who will participate in the innovative teacher preparation program, the Relay New Teacher Pathway (RNTP), in [Nashville](#) and [Memphis](#). At the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps members will be prepared and certified to serve as full-time teachers of record, and the approximately 1,650 economically disadvantaged K-12 students they teach will demonstrate improved academic performance, better attitudes about school, and improved behavior and classroom engagement.
- **Project Inspire**: Located in Chattanooga, the Project Inspire teacher residency is preparing new math and science teachers specifically for Hamilton County Schools with a vision to provide every urban student with passionate, effective, and caring teachers. Responding to a long-term shortage of math and science teachers, Project Inspire recruits talented individuals to serve as AmeriCorps members who want to make a career shift to teaching and impact urban students in Chattanooga. The program prepares talented candidates to teach through a 14-month residency experience that integrates a full-year classroom apprenticeship with graduate coursework, leading to a Master's degree and certification. Through a key partnership with Hamilton County Schools, the Public Education Foundation, and Tennessee Tech University, Project Inspire has trained over fifty new math and science teachers for Hamilton County Schools over the past five years. Project Inspire also recognizes that after a graduate enters their own classrooms, the real work of support begins. Therefore, Project Inspire staff and coaches provide four years of mentoring, co-teaching, and targeted support to the graduates. This targeted support is working. Early data from a matched comparison study show that Project Inspire graduates are more effective than their traditionally trained counterparts.



Photo courtesy of Memphis Teacher Residency

[Volunteer Tennessee](#) is a 25 member bipartisan board appointed by the Governor to encourage volunteerism and community service. Volunteer Tennessee pursues its mission through administration of AmeriCorps grants, training and collaborations and coalitions with public and private organizations interested in volunteerism and service. Connect with us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

AmeriCorps is a program of the [Corporation for National and Community Service](#), a federal agency that engages more than 5 million Americans in service through its AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, Social Innovation Fund, and Volunteer Generation Fund programs, and leads the President's national call to service initiative, United We Serve.