



## **Commonwealth of Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Kentuckians pledge to strengthen communities through AmeriCorps**

**FRANKFORT, Ky.** (October 14, 2019) - Hundreds of AmeriCorps volunteers pledged to make Kentucky “Safer, Smarter and Healthier,” during a swearing-in ceremony at Fourth Street Live! in Louisville on Monday.

AmeriCorps is a national service program administered by Serve Kentucky, an agency within the Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS), with funding provided by the federal Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) and the Kentucky General Assembly.

Approximately 845 members are committing their time and talent to one year of public service in 20 programs across Kentucky.

“AmeriCorps members make remarkable contributions to Kentucky, engaging our youth and seniors,” said Joe Bringardner, Executive Director of Serve Kentucky. “They serve

in non-profit and faith-based organizations meeting critical education, environmental, health and safety needs.”

This year marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of AmeriCorps. Since 1994, more than 1 million Americans have served their country through the program, including 13,000 Kentuckians.

Organizations are selected for grants based on their plans to engage AmeriCorps members in evidence-based or evidence-informed interventions to strengthen communities. These efforts include tutoring and drug resistance education, homelessness prevention, domestic violence awareness, financial literacy, ecological leadership, and assisting low-income elderly residents.

“The hundreds of thousands of hours our AmeriCorps volunteers give each year impact our families, our communities in ways we cannot begin to measure,” said Kristi Putnam, CHFS Deputy Secretary.

The Commonwealth of Kentucky has received more than \$7.1 million in AmeriCorps grants this year, which when combined with match funding and educational grants, will result in a \$16.2 million investment in Kentucky’s communities. This funding will continue to build workforce and community resources, while addressing critical needs.

“In addition to serving others, AmeriCorps members will expand opportunities for themselves, acquiring new skills and experiences that will prepare them for a lifetime of leadership,” Bringardner added.

As a post-service benefit, members can receive up to \$6,095 for college, postsecondary education or to pay back student loans through the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award program. CNCS will make available \$3.7 million for these awards in 2019-2020.

AmeriCorps provides service opportunities to members either on a full-time (1,700 hours of service per year) or on a less than full-time basis. Participants ranging in age from 18 to 80 can sign up for a year of service in their communities, and also receive training to

fulfill their assignments and prepare for opportunities beyond AmeriCorps. Recruitment is ongoing and part-time positions are available throughout the year.

Learn more about the current programs at <http://serve.ky.gov>.

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*The Cabinet for Health and Family Services is home to most of the state's human services and healthcare programs, including the Department for Medicaid Services, the Department for Community Based Services the Department for Public Health, the Department for Aging and Independent Living and the Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities. CHFS is one of the largest agencies in state government, with nearly 8,000 full- and part-time employees located across the Commonwealth focused on improving the lives and health of Kentuckians.*