



Hands On Gulf Coast AmeriCorps 2008 Host Site Overview

Hands On Gulf Coast

Hands On Gulf Coast is a program of the Points of Light & Hands On Network. Formed in response to Hurricane Katrina, HOGC took over a partners' operation in February 2006 and has hosted over 5,000 deployed volunteers from across the country since. Over the past 2 years, HOGC has adapted its service model to fit the needs of the community and a growing organization. Moving into 2008, HOGC will be working towards organizational independence and becoming a local 501c3 organization that will continue to address the ongoing post-Katrina needs while also offering volunteer programming for local residents to participate in.

Points of Light & Hands On Network

In August 2007, the Points of Light foundation merged with Hands On Network (original parent organization of Hands On Gulf Coast) and formed a new organization that is temporarily being called Points of Light & Hands On Network. This new organization serves as the national convening organization for over 370 affiliated organizations that focus on engaging volunteers in meeting community needs, both in the United States and in twelve countries abroad. Their mission is to inspire and mobilize people to become engaged, take action and solve community problems. As a program of this new entity, HOGC embraces this mission as we are moving forward with our own goals.

AmeriCorps and National Service

AmeriCorps is a federally sponsored program overseen by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) – a government agency formed in 1993 that serves as the nation's largest grant-maker supporting service and volunteering. CNCS manages three main programs: SeniorCorps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve. The AmeriCorps program has several components to it – AmeriCorps NCCC, AmeriCorps State and National and AmeriCorps VISTA - which provide opportunities for Americans to make an ongoing, intensive commitment to service.

The HOGC AmeriCorps Grant

The HOGC AmeriCorps program is part of the AmeriCorps State and National program, which is the CNCS program that offers grants to support a broad range of local service programs that engage thousands of Americans in intensive service to meet critical community needs. For the HOGC program, CNCS funds were distributed to the Mississippi Commission for Volunteer Service (MCVS), which were then distributed to several organizations to create programming to address community needs in Mississippi. The HOGC AmeriCorps program is funded for 2 years – December 2006 to November 2008 – and provides for over 70 AmeriCorps members each year. As the grantee, HOGC (and our parent organization, Points of Light & Hands On Network) is responsible for meeting the grant goals and managing all programmatic and fiscal requirements of the federal grant.

The HOGC AmeriCorps program budget is approximately \$850,000 per year, about 2/3 of which is provided by the funding received from MCVS. The remaining funds are HOGC's responsibility to make up through match funding from other grant and income sources. This budget provides stipends and benefits for AmeriCorps members, some salary for HOGC staff management of the program, and other essential program components such as trainings and uniforms for members.

In January 2008, HOGC will be entering the second and final year of this grant, and hopes to receive

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another grant to continue our programming in 2009.

During the first year of our grant, we accomplished the following:

- Engaged 79 AmeriCorps Members in nearly 75,000 hours of service to the Gulf Coast
- Provided home repairs to over 100 homeowners affected by Hurricane Katrina
- Provided tutoring and extra-curricular programming to over 1000 youth
- Provided case management, community outreach and issue area education to over 900 residents
- Rehabbed 15 green spaces – both public spaces and for residential homes
- Engaged over 2,000 volunteers in service projects

For year two, we will work toward:

- Engaging 750 out-of-state volunteers
- Engaging 750 local volunteers
- Rebuilding 70 homes damaged by Hurricane Katrina
- Creating or restoring 5 community green spaces and 3 community gardens
- Working with 2-4 afterschool clubs or programs
- Engaging 250 people in community issue meetings
- Training 150 people as volunteer leaders

AmeriCorps Member Placement and Partnerships

Hands On Gulf Coast will meet program goals by placing AmeriCorps members in roles that contribute to grant goals while improving the community. These roles include the following working directly with HOGC:

- Youth Development
- Green Spaces
- Disaster Preparedness and Response
- Community Outreach
- Case Management
- Construction
- Volunteer Engagement
- Mold Remediation

Additionally, HOGC will support other local nonprofits by partnering to provide AmeriCorps members to support organizational work. These members will be expected to contribute to the HOGC AmeriCorps goals through the service they provide to the Host Site Partner. For 2008, our Host Site Partners are:

- Gulf Coast Community Design Studio
- Habitat for Humanity of Northern Virginia
- Hancock County Housing Resource Center
- North Gulfport Community Land Trust
- Ohr-O'Keefe Museum of Art
- The Village
- Visions of Hope

By partnering with HOGC on the AmeriCorps program, Host Sites are able to utilize the services of AmeriCorps members without having to acquire their own grants. Host Sites are asked to contribute match funds to help HOGC meet the cost of supporting the AmeriCorps members. For this minimal cost, Host Sites are able to have the support of an AmeriCorps member for 11 months, serving in a role similar to a full-time employee.

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Expectations

HOGC expects that all of our Host Site Partners will work with us throughout the year to make the AmeriCorps program a positive experience for the members, a beneficial partnership for HOGC and the Host Sites, and an effective tool for addressing community needs. To do this, we expect full cooperation and communication on all things involving the members and their work. This primarily means:

- Effective supervision of members on site
- Recognition and support of member service to the organization
- Understanding that although members may serve in an employee-like fashion, their role as participants in a joint program requires a more unique approach to management, and requires collaboration between the Host Site and HOGC
- Timely completion of all paper work, including member time logs and service reports
- Clear and timely communication with HOGC staff, particularly designated Program Coordinators
- Compliance with AmeriCorps regulations
- Cooperation with HOGC in ensuring that members attend all required meetings and trainings
- Regular reporting of successes and challenges with members, as well as any disciplinary action taken
- Acknowledgement of HOGC partnership and oversight of AmeriCorps program in public relations

Role of HOGC

As the grantee for the AmeriCorps program, HOGC is ultimately responsible for the success of this program. As such, HOGC will manage the overall program, including service with Host Site Partners. While HOGC expects the Host Site supervisors to manage the daily work of AmeriCorps members, HOGC Program Coordinators will work with the Host Site throughout the year to ensure that goals are being met and member service is both effective and appropriate.

- HOGC will manage the overarching AmeriCorps program by:
 - Hosting regular meeting with members as a group
 - Providing regular trainings and development sessions for members
 - Selecting and monitoring Host Sites
 - Approving the selection of AmeriCorps members for Host Sites
 - Working with Host Sites to ensure effective management of AmeriCorps members and attainment of goals
- HOGC will manage the overall member experience, including:
 - Regular check-ins with all members regarding work progress and satisfaction
 - Processing of any disciplinary actions taken, and management of proper disciplinary escalation if necessary
 - Evaluations of members, in conjunction with Host Site supervisors
- HOGC will manage all communication with MCVS, CNCS, and the Points of Light & Hands On Network. This includes:
 - Management of all member paper work (time logs, enrollment forms, exit forms, disciplinary action forms)
 - Reporting of all service activities
 - Management of all grant funds – including stipend checks, health insurance, and any approved training costs

Role of the Host Site

HOGC expects each Host Site to serve as a partner in the execution of the AmeriCorps program at their site by filling the following roles:

- Training: Host Sites are expected to provide their members with a comprehensive orientation to their organization and role. Additional training should be provided throughout the year as needed.
- Supervision: Host Sites should designate a staff member to manage the day to day activities of members. This supervisor should:
 - Ensure that members are not participating in any prohibited activities
 - Monitor member service to ensure they are effectively completing tasks
 - Provide appropriate tasks to the member, and supervision for completion
 - Meet with member regularly to track progress and satisfaction
 - Notify HOGC of any necessary disciplinary actions needed
 - Ensure that the members' work schedule allows them to attend all required meetings and trainings provided by HOGC
 - Address any concerns or questions brought up by members and bring them to HOGC staff as necessary
- Member Service Hours: Host Sites are expected to monitor and report member service hours through the member Time Logs.
 - Members will complete their own Time Logs, but supervisors should work with members to ensure they are filled out properly and on time
 - Supervisors should sign complete and correct time logs to be turned into HOGC
 - Host Sites should track member service hours and work with members to ensure service will be completed by their service end date.
 - Members who do not complete hours by their end date will not be eligible for the Education Award. Exceptions and extensions will not be made.
- Reporting: Host Sites are expected to ensure that HOGC receives all necessary reports in a timely manner.
 - HOGC is required to report on the progress of the program, including service completed by Host Sites
 - Host Sites will meet with HOGC Program Coordinators on a regular basis and provide quantitative and qualitative data as requested
- Communication: HOGC expects Host Sites to communicate with HOGC staff on a regular basis in order to stay updated to any changes or issues.
 - Any member disciplinary issues should be immediately reported to Program Coordinators, including unexcused absences and tardies
 - Any changes to member service projects must be approved by Program Coordinators to ensure projects fit within the scope and regulations of the program
 - Any concerns regarding member behavior should be immediately reported to Program Coordinators
 - Any organizational changes in staffing or policy that could affect the members should be communicated to Program Coordinators as soon as possible
 - Any press recognition of AmeriCorps members or service projects should include HOGC. HOGC staff should be notified prior to publication

The above expectations and roles are also outlined in the Host Site MOU, along with additional information Host Sites should be familiar with.

Contacting HOGC

Hands On Gulf Coast currently has a staff of 10, outlined below. All communication from Host Sites should first go through the designated Program Coordinators. Other staff members can be reached at the main HOGC office at 228-257-6094.

Director – Chris de Veer

Associate Director – Sara Hamilton

AmeriCorps Program Coordinator, Community Programs – Caitlin Brooking

→ Primary Contact For: *Ohr-O'Keefe Museum, The Village, Visions of Hope*

Phone: 228-257-6094 (office)

228-385-1348 (fax)

617-513-7389 (cell)

Email: cbrooking@handsongulfcoast.org

AmeriCorps Program Coordinator, Building Programs – Sheli McNeill

→ Primary Contact For: *Gulf Coast Community Design Studio, Hancock County Housing Resource Center, North Gulfport Community Land Trust, Northern Virginia Habitat for Humanity*

Phone: 228-257-6094 (office)

228-385-1348 (fax)

228-239-2286 (cell)

Email: smcneill@handsongulfcoast.org

Construction Manager – Eddie Sherman

Construction Supervisor, Level 2 – Brian Deubert

Construction Supervisor, Level 1 – John Wildeman

Building Program Coordinator, AmeriCorps VISTA – Will Chrysanthos

Operations Assistant – Sue Cole

Mold Educator – Erica Winslow

Volunteer Coordinator, AmeriCorps VISTA – Alison Griffin