

Planning a Yearlong Training Program

The sample training schedule below maps out twice-monthly, all-day trainings from September–June. Notre Dame AmeriCorps program director Laura Firtel says she tries to remain flexible, to take advantage of any training opportunities that might crop up.

Some other suggestions are:

- Try to schedule trainings early on to provide needed skills that link to the service project
- Help people see how the training is useful, even if it doesn't directly apply to what they're currently doing
- Use meetings as an opportunity to re-energize members, especially as the service year draws to a close
- Remember to have fun

TRAINING SCHEDULE

- **September 5-8 – Orientation**
- **Meeting 1: 9/15 – *Creating a teachable environment, strategies for teaching language*** (This teaches members that the way you set up a room gives clues to what kind of teaching environment you value; for example, arranging desks in a circle gives a more collaborative feel to the room.)
- **Meeting 2: 9-29: *Attend Florida Immigrant Coalition Conference in Tampa***
- **Meeting 3: 10/13 – *Julie Tindall, Harbor House – Domestic Violence; Commence base groups – Mary C; Planning a project – Make a Difference Day*** (This helps members who work in schools recognize possible signs of domestic violence in the children they work with.)
- **Meeting 4: 10/27 – *Ice breakers and group dynamics – Ingrid*** (This gives members a bag of tricks they can use in the classroom and also helps them learn things about themselves.)
- **Meeting 5: 11/10 – *Glenn Richardson – CPR and 1st Aid***
- **Meeting 6: 11/17 – *Thanksgiving; How to plan a group project: Planning Apopka Parade Float*** (Each year the program designs a float for the town's Christmas parade. It's a chance for members to get involved in a creative project that requires a lot of planning and for second-year

members to take the lead. Members who march alongside the float hand out candy canes attached to a slip of paper with the program's contact information and the message "serve your community." Since it's a highly visible event, the float also serves as a marketing/recruitment vehicle.)

- **Meeting 7: 12/1 - Attended Florida AmeriCorps and National Service Conference.**
- **Meeting 8: 12/15 – Holiday traditions** (Since this is a very diverse program, members share many different ways to celebrate with music, food, and cultural artifacts.)
- **Meeting 9: 1/5 – Walking the Labyrinth** (Members reflect on this meditational activity before and after the event.)
- **Meeting 10: 1/13 (Saturday) – Service Project - Gleaning in Clermont**
- **Meeting 11: 1/15 – MLK Jr. Day – Service Project – planting trees at Clear Lake Park** (Members may do one project together or break into groups that organize several different service activities.)
- **Meeting 12: 1/26 – Capturing our stories; Planning for midyear presentation** (All members attend the national midyear conference held by Notre Dame Mission Volunteers in Washington, DC, and do a demonstration there, which might take the form of a skit, photo exhibit, or spoken word performance.)
- **Meeting 13: 2/2 – Continue capturing our stories; Planning for mid-year presentation**
- **Meeting 14: 2/9 – Final rehearsal for midyear presentation**
- **Midyear Retreat – Feb 16-20**
- **Meeting 15: 3/2: Shared learnings from midyear retreat**
- **Meeting 16: 3/23 – Children's Home Society re: Mentoring Children of Prisoners**
- **Meeting 17: 4/6 – Environmental issues about the Wekiva River; River clean-up in canoes**
- **Meeting 18: 4/20 – Mindfulness and finding inner joy – Elizabeth Cohen** (This training is geared toward self-care: helping members get their second wind and take care of themselves emotionally.)

- **Meeting 19: 5/4 – *Ruth Edwards – Understanding racism, cultural diversity*; Film: A Seat at the Table**
- **Meeting 20: 5/18 – *Team coordination of summer plans***
- **Meeting 21: 6/1 – *Resume writing and interview techniques***