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AmeriCorps National Service

CORPORATION
FOR NATIONAL
SERVICE

August 24, 1994

Joel Berg, Director of National Service
United States Department of Agriculture
Room 538-A, 14th and Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250-1300

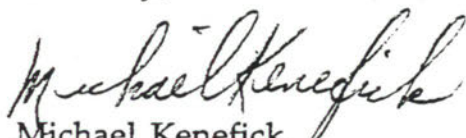
Dear Mr. Berg:

The Corporation for National and Community Service anticipates entering into a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The Corporation will award up to \$2,600,000 to fund the USDA's National Service Program. The final agreement will be issued within one week. The award will be based on your application dated April 29, 1994 and revised budget to be submitted to the Corporation.

Due to an extremely compressed timeline for launching the AmeriCorps program, the USDA is authorized to begin incurring costs as of July 1, 1994. These costs are allowable to the same extent that they would be allowable under the agreement.

The grant number that has been assigned to the U.S. Department of Agriculture is: 94ADFDC010.

Sincerely,


Michael Kenefick,
Grants Officer

1100 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20525
Telephone 202-606-5000
Fax 202-606-4906

Getting Things Done.
AmeriCorps, National Service
Learn and Serve America

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CORPORATION FOR
NATIONAL
AND
COMMUNITY
SERVICE

MEMORANDUM

To: AmeriCorps National Direct Semi-Finalists

From: Catherine Milton, Vice President, National and Community Service Programs

Date: May 19, 1994

Your application has been selected as a semi-finalist for an AmeriCorps National Service National Direct award. Your application was selected as a semi-finalist from among a large number of excellent proposals and the competition for final awards is extremely keen. To facilitate our grant review process, we are asking representatives from all semi-finalist applicants to come to Washington, DC next week to meet with staff of the Corporation for National Service. As noted in the AmeriCorps National Direct Application, these discussions are an important part of the application review process.

The purpose of these discussions is to assess each semi-finalist's capacity to conduct a successful AmeriCorps program and to respond to concerns raised by the Corporation's peer reviewers and staff. These discussions are not intended to be negotiations of grant awards and, in fact, only a portion of semi-finalist applicants ultimately will be awarded grants.

We are asking to meet with one of your senior staff members and with either the proposed Project Director or with a representative from a local organization that would be directly involved in the proposed AmeriCorps collaboration. We are interested in meeting with the individuals who would be most directly involved in conducting the proposed AmeriCorps program. The Corporation for National Service will pay travel and per diem costs for two individuals from each semi-finalist applicant. You may invite another representative of your program to participate in these discussions but the Corporation cannot fund his or her trip.

Some of the issues likely to be raised in panel discussions include the following areas of concern to AmeriCorps:

- Program cost effectiveness and specific grantee matches
- Clarification of the intended mix of participants, including the extent to which college students will be recruited as participants

- Methods of promoting the national identity of participants
- Methods of promoting team-building among participants
- The extent to which the proposal can be adjusted to focus on specific issue areas and sites, geographically concentrating participants
- The extent to which the proposal can be adjusted to increase the number of participants at each site
- Start-date flexibility -- we hope the majority of participants will start in September
- Organizational management and staff capacity
- Direct and demonstrable goals and objectives
- Specific participant service activities, including the extent to which participants will be engaged in direct service as opposed to coordinating volunteers
- Participant recruitment, training, supervision, support and development
- Strength of the proposed collaboration
- Extent of community involvement in program design and implementation
- Sustainability of the project after the close of Corporation funding

In addition, please be prepared to address the set of program-specific issues delineated on a form which will be faxed to you as soon as possible. We will also be providing you with materials related to objectives and CNS evaluation standards. While next week's discussions will be critical to our final selection process, we want to emphasize that budget limitations make it impossible for us to make grant awards to all semi-finalists.

You will soon receive further information regarding travel arrangements and your panel discussion. Should you need assistance or have any questions, please contact Kate Hubbard at (202) 606-5000, ext. 134. We recognize that we are asking you to travel within a very short time frame, and it is our hope that this will work in the best interest of all parties. We look forward to meeting with you and we thank you for your cooperation.

AmeriCorps National Direct Negotiation Form

 4250-02 15
 Serial Number

 Legal
 Applicant

US DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE - PUBLIC LANDS

Proposal Title AmeriCorps/Team USDA

 Contact Name Mr. Joel Berg
 Washington DC

Applicant Type Federal Agency

Grant Type Operating

Start Date 9/5/94

Service Activity

Start Date

Issue Area

- ☐ Educational
☐ Human Needs
☒ Environment
☐ Public Safety

National Priorities

- ☐ School Readiness
☐ School Success
☐ Independent Living
☐ Community Revitalization
☐ Neighborhood Environment
☐ Natural Environment
☐ Violence Prevention
☐ Crime Control

Proposed FTEs _____

Proposed Budget _____

Issues for Discussion

- We believe that the AmeriCorps program will work best if participants in a program are not spread over a large geographic area but rather are concentrated so that they can participate frequently in group activities. Is it possible to consolidate participants in your proposal? If so, how would you do this?
- Please discuss the lead contact and/or program director's workload(s) and his or her ability to handle and oversee this grant.
- What is the capacity for the department to manage and supervise such an extensive program? We would like to discuss how you would deploy fewer people instead of the number requested.
- Can the Public Lands corps focus more participants into fewer sites? Which sites are the most developed from the department's perspective? Which one's fit internal department priorities?
- How will national identity be shared among the participants at all the sites? Will participants ever come together? Regionally?
- What is the training curriculum and how will it both ensure uniformity of quality in participant development (areas of diversity and conflict resolution) and provide the tangible skills needed for each sight?
- What pool is USDA planning to draw on to recruit over 70 team leaders? What are the qualifications and what training will be provided to make sure that they can manage a team and their host organization/agency?
- How were the partnerships with the Youth Corps identified? What will be the fiscal and programmatic arrangements? Are you confident that your youth corps partners will get the job done? What is there track record in producing measurable results?
- How can the program ensure a mix of participants at the local level?
- Please let us know the exact training and service start dates for the participants.

Proposed Sites

Rural	KS
Rural	OK
Galveston	TX
Atlanta	GA
Boston	MA
East St. Louis	IL
statewide	NJ
Washington	DC
Chicago	IL
Portland	OR
Southern	CA
Northern	CA
statewide	WA
statewide	OR
statewide	AZ
statewide	MS
statewide	NH
statewide	VT

AmeriCorps National Direct Negotiation Form

4250-01 15
Serial Number

Legal Applicant **US DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE -
HUNGER CORPS**

Proposal Title **AmeriCorps/USDA Anti-Hunger, Nutrition, and Empowerment Team**

Contact Name **Mr. Joel Berg**
Washington DC

Applicant Type **Federal Agency**

Grant Type **Operating**

Start Date **9/5/94**

Service Activity

Start Date

Issue Area

- ☐ Educational
- ☒ Human Needs
- ☐ Environment
- ☐ Public Safety

National Priorities

- ☐ School Readiness
- ☐ School Success
- ☐ Independent Living
- ☐ Community Revitalization
- ☐ Neighborhood Environment
- ☐ Natural Environment
- ☐ Violence Prevention
- ☐ Crime Control

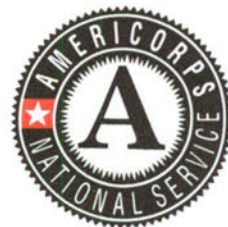
Proposed FTEs _____

Proposed Budget _____

Issues for Discussion

- What is the capacity for the department to manage and supervise such an extensive program? Please discuss the lead contact and/or program director's workload(s) and his or her ability to handle and oversee this grant.
- How will national identity be shared among the participants at all 18 sites? Will participants ever come together? Regionally?
- What is the training curriculum and how will it both ensure uniformity of quality in participant development (areas of diversity and conflict resolution) and provide the tangible skills needed for each sight?
- What pools is USDA planning to draw on to recruit over 30 team leaders? What are the qualifications and what training will be provided to make sure that they can manage a team and their host organization/agency?
- How were the partnerships with the Youth Corps identified? What will be the fiscal and programmatic arrangements? How will you insure a diversity of participants?
- Can the Hunger corps focus the same number of participants into fewer sites? Which sites are the most developed from the department's perspective? Which one's fit internal department priorities? Would it be more cost effective to concentrate the number of sites?
- How were the partnerships with the Youth Corps identified? What will be the fiscal and programmatic arrangements? Are you confident that your youth corps partners will get the job done? What is there track record in producing measurable results?
- Please let us know the exact training and program start dates.

Proposed Sites



August 31, 1995

AmeriCorps National Service

CORPORATION
FOR NATIONAL
SERVICE

Grant #: 94ADFDC047

Mr. Joel Berg
Department of Agriculture
14th & Independence Ave., S.W.
AG Box 1301
Washington, DC 20250-1300

Dear Mr. Berg:

We are pleased to inform you that your application to renew your AmeriCorps program has been selected for negotiation of an award in an amount up to \$2,712,837.00. A final grant award is contingent upon successful completion of grant negotiations.

Please note that grant funds will not be available until September 1, 1995. To be of assistance, we are hereby authorizing expenditure of funds beginning August 1, 1995, for programs that need to begin efforts, pending successful completion of negotiations and availability of funds. Cost incurred will be allowable to the extent they would be allowable under the grant provisions.

Please note that programs should have cash match for member stipends and benefits as they are paid. Programs may not use Corporation funding to advance the program's cash match.

We anticipate that awards will begin in September and progress as negotiations are completed. If you have any questions regarding pre-award costs, please contact your cognizant grants officer at (202) 606-5000.

Sincerely,

Michael Kenefick
Director of Grants and Contracts

Diana Algra
Director of AmeriCorps

1201 New York Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20525
Telephone 202-606-5000

Getting Things Done.
AmeriCorps, National Service
Learn and Serve America
National Senior Service Corps



July 3, 1995

Mr. Joel Berg
Director of National Service
USDA
14th and Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250-1300

AmeriCorps National Service

CORPORATION
FOR NATIONAL
SERVICE

Dear Joel:

Recently, you were notified that your AmeriCorps Direct Grant Application has been approved for negotiation of an award. The Corporation recognizes that it is in the best interest of all programs to move quickly through the grant application renewal process. This letter outlines issues that will help us prepare for the next phase.

During the grant review process we identified several issues to be addressed during grant negotiations. Since these items are complex, we will discuss them first at our meeting on July 10, 1995 at 3 PM and then request a response in writing within 5-10 working days. Please be prepared to discuss the following items:

- We have set some guidelines for the USDA program in 1995-96 including a ceiling of 1500 Members to operate in four agencies -- Food and Consumer Service, Forest Service, Natural Resources and Conservation Service, and Rural Economic and Community Development.

We would like to see an organization chart by agency for AmeriCorps programs showing the relationship between headquarters and the field; and a plan for coordinating activities in each state where USDA AmeriCorps Members will operate. How will Member complaints be processed?

- We are concerned that, in spite of your assurances that Members will be clustered in teams of no fewer than 5, they appear in many cases to be scattered in communities throughout a state. This appears to be a particular problem in RECD where there are a large number of individual placements. In downsizing your departmental request from approximately 1900 to 1500 Members, please ensure that Members either work in teams or are in close proximity to each other so that they can meet easily and regularly for mutual sharing and reinforcement of the national service experience.

1401 New York Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20005
Telephone: 202-400-6000

Getting Things Done.
AmeriCorps National Service

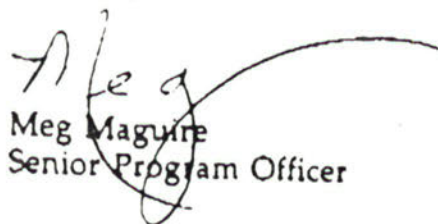
- How will the agencies coordinate training, monitoring, and evaluation across sites? What common units of measurement might you develop to more clearly help sites report and interpret their accomplishments?
- How will the USDA presence within each state be coordinated and represented to the State Commission?
- What measures will USDA take to ensure that messages to the press about AmeriCorps are consistent across programs?
- We recognize that USDA Members have done some remarkable work this past year helping poor communities plan for the economic revitalization of the future. However, because of the statute under which our program operates, many economic development activities are problematic for AmeriCorps Members -- e.g. grant writing and fund raising; assistance to for-profit businesses; and staff work focused on coordinating meetings, developing plans, producing economic development promotional materials etc. Therefore, we request that you delete new activities that incorporate these activities, and that you thoroughly assess all existing programs which you have proposed to continue in 1995, recommending site-by-site actions to address these concerns. This will particularly affect the programs proposed by Rural Economic and Community Development.

In a separate meeting you may wish to explore using some AmeriCorps VISTA Members to assist with economic development in your targeted communities.

- Food & Consumer Service - We are recommending funding this program with small expansion as requested. However, the objectives at some sites need to be amplified. In Los Angeles, the new activities of "community needs" and "hunger awareness" are not clearly defined; and Jackson needs to amplify member development objectives.
- Natural Resources and Conservation Service - We need your assurance that you have eliminated sites that did not perform well in the first year, and that you have made appropriate changes in the line responsibilities within the USDA structure to ensure a smooth operating in the second year.
- Forest Service - We request that you focus on those community projects which are predominantly environmental or which relate to sustainable farming practices in some way. The economic development programs that focus on "value added" enterprises are very interesting but may confront some of the same problems noted in the economic development discussion above.

I look forward to meeting with you and your staff on the 10th to plan the year ahead. Steve Selby from Federal Liaison and Michael Arthur from Grants will join us.

Sincerely,


Meg Maguire
Senior Program Officer

Draft

July 10, 1995

Meg Maguire
Senior Program Officer
Corporation for National and Community Service
1201 New York Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20525

Dear Meg:

Thank you for your July 3, 1995, letter outlining concerns that must be addressed by the Department of Agriculture (USDA) in developing our 1,500-member AmeriCorps program for next year. The Department takes your concerns very seriously and will work diligently to address them.

We greatly appreciate that you and your staff have taken so much time and care to thoughtfully review all the details of our very voluminous application.

We will discuss your concerns in great depth with over 150 AmeriCorps/USDA site managers from throughout the country who will be in Houston next week to attend our second annual staff training. Subsequent to this training --- by July 31, 1995 ---the Department will present CNCS with a detailed description of the revised objectives, cluster locations, and site supervisors for each AmeriCorps/USDA operating site.

In the meantime, this letter responds to each major concern outlined in your letter:

A) Management Structure

The Department intends to institutionalize a new management structure at the state level that will ensure joint management of all of AmeriCorps/USDA projects by an interagency Coordination Team composed of the state AmeriCorps/USDA project directors, who represent each of the four USDA agencies.

The basic concept of jointly managing all USDA projects has already succeeded this year in South Carolina, the Four Corners, and Louisiana, where our field staff themselves took the initiative to cooperatively coordinate AmeriCorps/USDA projects.

By empowering rank-and-file career employees at the local level, such joint management structures will institutionalize the long-term success of AmeriCorps within USDA and have many benefits for CNCS, the state commissions, the host communities, and the Members themselves.

Some of the expected benefits of this new approach:

- 1) Providing CNCS and USDA with one point of contact per state -- instead of dozens -- with whom to interact on pressing matters such as problem solving, long-term project planning, Member complaints, site visits, Congressional inquiries, joint service days, etc.
- 2) Ensuring that USDA rapidly responds to all challenges and can continuously improve all projects throughout the service year in a manner that is consistent with the vision of AmeriCorps, the agency's internal culture and resources at the local level.
- 3) Providing CNCS and USDA with one set of aggregated quarterly reports by state, instead of handfuls of separate, site-specific quarterly reports for each state.
- 4) Ensuring an accurate and timely distribution and collection of all required CNCS and USDA forms for Members and sites, resulting in compatible CNCS and USDA databases that are maintained throughout the service year.
- 5) Reducing the confusion to CNCS and to the state commissions as to which USDA agency or employee is ultimately responsible for the proper functioning of each site.
- 6) Increasing the number and quality of the interactions among AmeriCorps/USDA Members and between AmeriCorps/USDA Members and Members of other AmeriCorps programs.
- 7) Ensuring that all AmeriCorps/USDA Members --- no matter how rural their placement --- are continually educated on the full context of the program through regular trainings, frequent joint service activities, consistent distribution of the weekly AmeriCorps/USDA newsletter, and full use of modern telecommunications technologies.
- 8) Providing a "fail-safe" method for USDA agencies to "pick up the slack" if one agency either loses its AmeriCorps site managers or otherwise fails to provide the resources to effectively manage the program in the state.

- 9) Expanding the pool of rank-and-file career employees who are experienced in, and dedicated to, the Department's AmeriCorps program. These employees will thus be able to continue to effectively manage Americorps/USDA projects, regardless of potential future changes in political leadership in the Department.
- 10) Providing a model of realistic methods to reinvent government for other Federal agencies.
- 11) Reducing the roles of top-heavy Washington-based or regionally-based bureaucracies that inhibit the free flow of information between CNCS, USDA, and local project managers.
- 12) Avoiding both the duplication of effort and the waste of taxpayer dollars that occur when different agencies simultaneously perform overlapping duties in the states.
- 13) Utilizing the AmeriCorps experience of state and regional facilitators by more fully integrating the agencies into funding and managing AmeriCorps/USDA on an equal basis.
- 14) Bolstering the overall "Team USDA" reorganization efforts, which already combines USDA support functions in field offices throughout the country.
- 15) Expanding and improving media coverage for each project in a way that is consistent with the overall message of both USDA and AmeriCorps.
- 16) Better coordinating interactions with state commissions, Congressional offices, state and local governments, and interest groups.

Here's how the new structure will work:

* Each agency operating the program in any given state will assign one USDA employee to be the "State AmeriCorps Project Director." These Project Directors will either directly supervise that agency's AmeriCorps/USDA Members throughout the state or supervise the work of all operating site managers in the state who will directly supervise AmeriCorps/USDA Members.

* Each agency's State AmeriCorps Project Director will participate in an "AmeriCorps/USDA State Management Team" which will meet at least once a month, either in person or by conference call. Each of these meetings will have a formal agenda prepared by one of the Team members. Staff representing Anti-Hunger projects and Public Lands and Environment projects will participate equally in this Team.

* Any agency that fails to provide a participant for these meetings for two consecutive months will be notified that it may lose AmeriCorps/USDA authorization the following year. If the situation is not resolved by the third monthly meeting, the agency in the state will be automatically eliminated for consideration for AmeriCorps/USDA projects the future year. While this measure may seem harsh, it is designed to guarantee that all agencies in a state that desire to benefit from the participation of AmeriCorps/USDA Members are willing to devote the staff resources necessary to manage those Members. Any agency may designate a representative of a sub-grantee or another governmental or non-profit agency to represent that agency on the AmeriCorps/USDA State Management Team, provided that the representative is qualified and able to fulfill all the duties of Team Membership.

* All major decisions in a state that affect more than one agency AmeriCorps/USDA program --- such as decisions involving recruitment, joint service projects, launch activities, training activities, etc --- will be determined by a consensus of the AmeriCorps/USDA State Management Team.

* As long as decisions are permissible based on law, regulations of CNCS, and budgetary restrictions, the USDA Director of National Service will work with the Office of the Secretary, Under and Assistant Secretaries, Agency Administrators and Chiefs, and regional and state agency leadership to ensure that the decisions of the AmeriCorps/USDA State Management Team are supported by every level of the Department.

* While each participant in an AmeriCorps/USDA State Management Team will individually answer to their individual supervisors in the state or region, the Team as a whole will report to the national AmeriCorps/USDA working group, comprised of the USDA Director of National Service, his staff, and the national AmeriCorps coordinators for each agency funding projects. Anytime a State Management Team fails to reach a consensus on an important issue, the Team can request that the issue be resolved by the national AmeriCorps/USDA working group.

* Each AmeriCorps/USDA State Management Team will self-select Team participants to serve in each of the four following functions:

Project Management Liaison - This person will serve as the prime contact with CNCS, state commissions, the USDA Director of National Service, and agency national AmeriCorps/USDA coordinators. A finalized list of Project Management Liaisons will be provided to CNCS in advance of the launch of next year's program; all complaints or questions about individual AmeriCorps/USDA projects should be made directly to the Liaison in each

5

state. The Liaison will have broad knowledge of all AmeriCorps/USDA projects in the state and will coordinate overall project planning, problem solving, and continuous improvement activities.

Data Reporting Liaison - The Data Reporting Liaison will be responsible for distributing, explaining, and collecting all forms and reports required by CNCS and USDA for both Members and operating sites. This Liaison will compile all quarterly reports in their state, and provide one comprehensive set of aggregate data.

Cluster Meeting Liaison - The Liaison will coordinate all cluster meetings for the Rural Development Team, all joint signature service projects, and Member "swaps" between programs within the state or nationally. The Liaison also coordinate all joint Member and staff training activities. Additionally, the Liaison will be responsible for preparing the monthly staff meetings of the AmeriCorps/USDA State Management Team and distributing meeting agendas.

External Affairs Liaison - This individual will coordinate all outreach to the media, local Congressional offices, state and local governments, and interest groups. The Liaison will coordinate all joint recruitment activities.

* ~~Clerical duties in each state --- such as completing time sheets and travel authorizations for Members --- will be provided jointly by the agencies based on the agencies' percentage of the overall total of AmeriCorps/USDA Members state-wide. For instance, in Nevada, if the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) were to sponsor 25 Members, the Forest Service (FS) were to sponsor 15 Members, and the Rural Economic Community Development agency (RECD) were to sponsor 10 Members, then 50% of the clerical support should be provided by NRCS, 30% should be provided by FS, and 20% should be provided by RECD.~~

In addition to creating these new AmeriCorps/USDA State Management Teams, the Headquarters AmeriCorps/USDA leadership will improve management of the program by developing new ways to communicate directly with site managers. For example, each operating site will be placed on a speed fax to obtain the weekly newsletters and important updates from CNCS and USDA.

All AmeriCorps/USDA Members will participate in either a national training conference in person or by satellite.

As for the organizational chart, the following personnel currently will be interacting with both the State Management Teams and the local site supervisors:

USDA Director of National Service -- Joel Berg
 USDA Coordinator of Administration for National Service - Ron Demunbrum
 USDA Coordinator of Communications for National Service - Katherine Gibney

Arboretum AmeriCorps Coordinator - Larry Winston
 Farmer Service Agency AmeriCorps Coordinator - Charles Simms
 FCS Anti-Hunger AmeriCorps Coordinator - Donna Hines
 Forest Service AmeriCorps Coordinator - John Seymour
 FSIS Food Safety Education Coordinator - Marjorie Davidson
 NRCS AmeriCorps Coordinator - Paula Cole Jones
 RECD Rural Housing Coordinator - Jim Coyle
 RECD Community Development Coordinator - Dave Gibson

At the local level, AmeriCorps project managers report to the following supervisors:

Farmer Service Agency - FSA State Executive Director
 FCS - National AmeriCorps Anti-Hunger Coordinator Donna Hines
 Forest Service Public Lands - Forest Supervisor
 Forest Service Rural Development - Regional AmeriCorps Coordinator

NRCS - NRCS State Conservationist
 RECD - RECD State Executive Director

B) Cluster Locations

The cluster configurations in the RECD application were difficult to discern in some cases because the USDA members will be clustered with non-USDA AmeriCorps projects that were not listed in the Department's application.

All clusters will be clearly listed in the updated objectives and site information USDA will be presenting to CNCS.

C) Joint Training Activities

All USDA AmeriCorps members nationally will participate together in a national training session, either in person or by satellite.

In addition, all AmeriCorps USDA Members in a given state will attend a comprehensive training program together.

D) Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Activities

As described in the section on "Management Structure," all the quarterly reports will be compiled and aggregated jointly by state.

In addition, all other internal and external monitoring and evaluation activities will be completed jointly by state --- or jointly across issue area. Although USDA has placed significant resources into site visits and extensive evaluation of the quarterly reports, we are in the process currently of establishing a more comprehensive protocol for the scientific evaluation of our projects nationally.

USDA is also developing common units of measurement for all agencies --- that will be calculated, sorted, and reported on one single database for the entire Department --- to measure how each sites individually and all sites in aggregate are making progress towards meeting the Department's community service objectives.

E) Coordination with State Commissions

USDA has already established highly productive partnerships with state commissions in many states, including Vermont, Kansas, and New Hampshire. Unfortunately, in some states, the Department's repeated entreaties to the state commissions have been virtually ignored.

Still, the Department intends to pay even closer attention to communication with state commissions. Once CNCS approves our final site locations and community service objectives, we will send those to each state commission. In addition, we will make a practice of sending each of our projects' quarterly reports to the relevant state commissions. We will increase our efforts to work with state commissions on recruitment activities, orientation and training, and joint service activities.

F) Coordination of Messages to the Press

The message of AmeriCorps will be a prime topic of the staff training in Houston.

As described above under Management Structure, the Department will designate one media coordinator by state, simplifying our efforts to communicate one unified message as a Department.

Furthermore, the revised AmeriCorps USDA Operations Manual mandates that all USDA press releases, brochures, and recruitment materials include a standard two paragraphs about the overall AmeriCorps program. The manual also specifically relates "dos" and "don'ts" for communicating about AmeriCorps.

Lastly, the Department will provide each local site manager with sample press releases on a wide variety of topics such as recruitment, the release of quarterly reports, the launch, and the National Day of Service.

G) Rural Economic and Community Development

No USDA AmeriCorps Member ---- even those being renewed--- will spend the bulk of next year grant writing or fundraising, assisting for-profit businesses, coordinating meetings, developing plans, and or/prdocuing economic development promotional materials. In fact, the Department made it clear to RECD **this** year that such activities were unacceptable for the bulk of a service year. In only a few cases did some project slip through the cracks and nevertheless focus on such activities; next year, none will do so.

While the Department's quarterly reports clearly demonstrate how Rural Development Team Members are perform direct community service, many of our objectives in the application do not communicate this as clearly. We will clarify and or totally re-vamp such objectives. All RECD-sponsored Members will engage in direct service that achieves concrete, measurable results in communities addressing human, environmental, educational, and/or public safety needs.

In the case of projects that may indirectly benefit for-profit business, we will ask the CNCS Office of General Counsel to approve the project's community service objectives before the Department approves the project.

H) Food and Consumer Service

The community service objectives for Los Angeles and the Member Development Objectives for Jackson will be clarified in the updated objectives and site listings document.

I) Natural Resources Conservation Service

In the case of problematic NRCS projects in Atlanta, Boston, Grants Pass, Oregon, New Jersey, South Dakota, and Wisconsin, the projects are either being eliminated or entirely revamped. The updated objectives and site listings document will clarify these issues.

Both the Deputy Under Secretary for Natural Resources and the Environment and the Chief of NRCS has pledged to clarify the AmeriCorps line management structures of NRCS to ensure that both CNCS and USDA are satisfied that all potential problems encountered with NRCS projects are immediately and substantively addressed.

J) Forrest Service

The updated objectives and site listings document will clarify how all Forrest Service projects will relate to either the environment, sustainable agriculture, or other direct service meeting human or educational needs.

Sincerely,

Joel Berg
Director of National Service



July 3, 1995

Mr. Joel Berg
Director of National Service
USDA
14th and Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250-1300

AmeriCorps National Service

CORPORATION
FOR NATIONAL
 SERVICE

Dear Joel:

Recently, you were notified that your AmeriCorps Direct Grant Application has been approved for negotiation of an award. The Corporation recognizes that it is in the best interest of all programs to move quickly through the grant application renewal process. This letter outlines issues that will help us prepare for the next phase.

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1201 New York Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20525
Telephone 202-606-5000

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Learn and Serve America
National Senior Service Corps

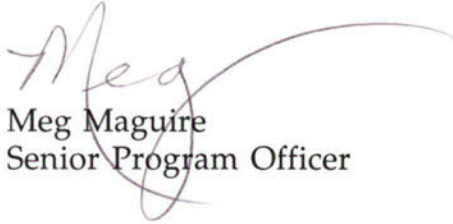
- How will the agencies coordinate training, monitoring, and evaluation across sites? What common units of measurement might you develop to more clearly help sites report and interpret their accomplishments?
- How will the USDA presence within each state be coordinated and represented to the State Commission?
- What measures will USDA take to ensure that messages to the press about AmeriCorps are consistent across programs?
- We recognize that USDA Members have done some remarkable work this past year helping poor communities plan for the economic revitalization of the future. However, because of the statute under which our program operates, many economic development activities are problematic for AmeriCorps Members -- e.g. grant writing and fund raising; assistance to for-profit businesses; and staff work focused on coordinating meetings, developing plans, producing economic development promotional materials etc. Therefore, we request that you delete new activities that incorporate these activities, and that you thoroughly assess all existing programs which you have proposed to continue in 1995, recommending site-by-site actions to address these concerns. This will particularly affect the programs proposed by Rural Economic and Community Development.

In a separate meeting you may wish to explore using some AmeriCorps VISTA Members to assist with economic development in your targeted communities.

- Food & Consumer Service - We are recommending funding this program with small expansion as requested. However, the objectives at some sites need to be amplified. In Los Angeles, the new activities of "community needs" and "hunger awareness" are not clearly defined; and Jackson needs to amplify member development objectives.
- Natural Resources and Conservation Service - We need your assurance that you have eliminated sites that did not perform well in the first year, and that you have made appropriate changes in the line responsibilities within the USDA structure to ensure a smooth operating in the second year.
- Forest Service - We request that you focus on those community projects which are predominantly environmental or which relate to sustainable farming practices in some way. The economic development programs that focus on "value added" enterprises are very interesting but may confront some of the same problems noted in the economic development discussion above.

I look forward to meeting with you and your staff on the 10th to plan the year ahead. Steve Selby from Federal Liaison and Michael Arthur from Grants will join us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read "Meg", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Meg Maguire
Senior Program Officer



June 23, 1995

AmeriCorps National Service

CORPORATION
FOR NATIONAL
 SERVICE

Mr. Jim Coyle
US Dept. of Agriculture
14th & Independence Ave., SW
Room 561-A
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Mr. Coyle:

The Corporation for National Service has selected your AmeriCorps Direct grant renewal application for further consideration of an award. Any final grant award is contingent upon the successful completion of grant negotiations and the availability of appropriated funds for this program.

The review process for renewal applications was very thorough. Corporation staff from several divisions reviewed each grant application. As part of a rigorous review process, they evaluated applications based on the established criteria in the application and extensive review of quarterly reports, site visit assessments, and other grant monitoring information.

Based on this review, your application was determined to fall into the category that merits further consideration for funding. Applications in this category will require modifications and improvements in the program's design.

In the near future, Corporation program and grants officers will contact you to discuss specific issues regarding your renewal application and proposed budget. They also will provide you with additional information regarding the grant review process. Based on the results of that meeting and the subsequent review of any additional information you may be asked to provide, the Corporation will make a final determination regarding your renewal award.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Eli J. Segal".

Eli J. Segal
Chief Executive Officer

1201 New York Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20525
Telephone 202-606-5000

Getting Things Done.
AmeriCorps, National Service
Learn and Serve America
National Senior Service Corps



June 23, 1995

AmeriCorps National Service

CORPORATION
FOR NATIONAL
SERVICE

Ms. Paula Jones
US Dept. of Agriculture
14th & Independence Ave., SW
Room 5234-S
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Ms. Jones:

The Corporation for National Service has selected your AmeriCorps Direct grant renewal application for further consideration of an award. Any final grant award is contingent upon the successful completion of grant negotiations and the availability of appropriated funds for this program.

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Eli J. Segal".

Eli J. Segal
Chief Executive Officer

1201 New York Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20525
Telephone 202-606-5000

Getting Things Done.
AmeriCorps, National Service
Learn and Serve America
National Senior Service Corps



June 23, 1995

AmeriCorps National Service

CORPORATION
FOR NATIONAL
SERVICE

Mr. Lou Woltering
US Dept. of Agriculture
14th & Independence Ave., SW
Auditors Building, Second Floor, NW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Mr. Woltering:

The Corporation for National Service has selected your AmeriCorps Direct grant renewal application for further consideration of an award. Any final grant award is contingent upon the successful completion of grant negotiations and the availability of appropriated funds for this program.

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Eli J. Segal".

Eli J. Segal
Chief Executive Officer

1201 New York Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20525
Telephone 202-606-5000

Getting Things Done.
AmeriCorps, National Service
Learn and Serve America
National Senior Service Corps



June 23, 1995

AmeriCorps National Service

CORPORATION
FOR NATIONAL
SERVICE

Ms. Denise Bennett
US Dept. of Agriculture
14th & Independence Ave., SW
Room 541-A
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Ms. Bennett:

The Corporation for National Service has selected your AmeriCorps Direct grant renewal application for further consideration of an award. Any final grant award is contingent upon the successful completion of grant negotiations and the availability of appropriated funds for this program.

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Sincerely,

Eli J. Segal
Chief Executive Officer

1201 New York Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20525
Telephone 202-606-5000

Getting Things Done.
AmeriCorps, National Service
Learn and Serve America
National Senior Service Corps



U.S.
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

TEAM USDA
NATIONAL SERVICE
PROGRAM
URGENT!!
FAX TRANSMISSION

PHONE: (202) 720-6350 (Joel) FAX: (202) 720-4614
(202) 720-4369 (Kathryn)
(202) 690-3894 (Ron)

TO: JOEL BERG C/O JEANNE BAILY X2767
FROM: RON DE MUNBRUN 202 690 3894
DATE: 5/24 NO. OF PAGES: 6
(With Cover)

FAX NUMBER: _____

COMMENTS: Please deliver to Jeanne Baily
ASAP. Mr. Berg will pick this
up today.

TO: JOEL BERG
FROM: RON DE MUNBRUN

The Corporation has sent us the attached FAX. They want to meet with us in a panel discussion format to discuss our proposals. Our Negotiations are scheduled for Tuesday MAY 31, 1994. We know for certain that Public Lands and Anti-Hunger have been designated as semi-finalists projects.

9:00 - 11:00 Hunger Corps

12:30 - 2:30 Public Lands

I am checking to see if Rural Development did not make the cut, Chuck Shean does not think that Rural Development made it.

Questions:

1. The Corporation will pay for two people from each Anti-hunger, and Public lands to come and be at our panel discussion. If you want two project people, who would you want to come? I need to know soon to make arrangements.

2. Randy Scurry from San Bernardino will be here at 7:00 am Tuesday 5/31/94 so you can talk to him before the 12:30 meeting.

P.S. FROM KATHERINE

(incidentally, the corporation wanted to meet this week and i called kate and asked if we could wait until tuesday, she wasn't thrilled but they agreed to it.)

here is text of message i faxed to carol powell: "I spoke with Joel and he is in agreement with the 19/19/12 compromise as long as the 12 positions are used to provide needed diversity. Also, expanded number of sites is fine. No need to call him, he said to continue to update me and I will address any issues, concerns, etc."

Major issue to discuss on telephone on 5/24: what do we do about rural development portion of brochure. ron and i both felt we should hold up on the printing until a decision is made. i have a call into chuck sheehan to discuss whether corporation will provide some education vouchers in an rd program.

CORPORATION FOR
NATIONAL
AND
COMMUNITY
SERVICE

MEMORANDUM

To: AmeriCorps National Direct Semi-Finalists

From: Catherine Milton, Vice President, National and Community Service Programs

Date: May 19, 1994

Your application has been selected as a semi-finalist for an AmeriCorps National Service National Direct award. Your application was selected as a semi-finalist from among a large number of excellent proposals and the competition for final awards is extremely keen. To facilitate our grant review process, we are asking representatives from all semi-finalist applicants to come to Washington, DC next week to meet with staff of the Corporation for National Service. As noted in the AmeriCorps National Direct Application, these discussions are an important part of the application review process.

The purpose of these discussions is to assess each semi-finalist's capacity to conduct a successful AmeriCorps program and to respond to concerns raised by the Corporation's peer reviewers and staff. These discussions are not intended to be negotiations of grant awards and, in fact, only a portion of semi-finalist applicants ultimately will be awarded grants.

We are asking to meet with one of your senior staff members and with either the proposed Project Director or with a representative from a local organization that would be directly involved in the proposed AmeriCorps collaboration. We are interested in meeting with the individuals who would be most directly involved in conducting the proposed AmeriCorps program. The Corporation for National Service will pay travel and per diem costs for two individuals from each semi-finalist applicant. You may invite another representative of your program to participate in these discussions but the Corporation cannot fund his or her trip.

Some of the issues likely to be raised in panel discussions include the following areas of concern to AmeriCorps:

- Program cost effectiveness and specific grantee matches
- Clarification of the intended mix of participants, including the extent to which college students will be recruited as participants

Page 2

- Methods of promoting the national identity of participants
- Methods of promoting team-building among participants
- The extent to which the proposal can be adjusted to focus on specific issue areas and sites, geographically concentrating participants
- The extent to which the proposal can be adjusted to increase the number of participants at each site
- Start-date flexibility -- we hope the majority of participants will start in September
- Organizational management and staff capacity
- Direct and demonstrable goals and objectives
- Specific participant service activities, including the extent to which participants will be engaged in direct service as opposed to coordinating volunteers
- Participant recruitment, training, supervision, support and development
- Strength of the proposed collaboration
- Extent of community involvement in program design and implementation
- Sustainability of the project after the close of Corporation funding

In addition, please be prepared to address the set of program-specific issues delineated on a form which will be faxed to you as soon as possible. We will also be providing you with materials related to objectives and CNS evaluation standards. While next week's discussions will be critical to our final selection process, we want to emphasize that budget limitations make it impossible for us to make grant awards to all semi-finalists.

You will soon receive further information regarding travel arrangements and your panel discussion. Should you need assistance or have any questions, please contact Kate Hubbard at (202) 606-5000, ext. 134. We recognize that we are asking you to travel within a very short time frame, and it is our hope that this will work in the best interest of all parties. We look forward to meeting with you and we thank you for your cooperation.

AmeriCorps National Direct Negotiation Form

 4250-02 ☐
 Serial Number

 Legal
 Applicant

US DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE - PUBLIC LANDS

Proposal Title AmeriCorps/Team USDA

 Contact Name Mr. Jon Berg
 Washington DC

Applicant Type Federal Agency

Grant Type Operating

Start Date 9/3/94

Service Activity

Start Date

Issue Area

- ☐ Educational
☐ Human Needs
☒ Environment
☐ Public Safety

National Priorities

- ☐ School Readiness
☐ School Success
☐ Independent Living
☐ Community Revitalization
☐ Neighborhood Environment
☐ Natural Environment
☐ Violence Prevention
☐ Crime Control

Proposed FTEs _____

Proposed Budget _____

Issues for Discussion

- We believe that the AmeriCorps program will work best if participants in a program are not spread over a large geographic area but rather are concentrated so that they can participate frequently in group activities. Is it possible to consolidate participants in your proposal? If so, how would you do this?
- Please discuss the lead contact and/or program director's workload(s) and his or her ability to handle and oversee this grant.
- What is the capacity for the department to manage and supervise such an extensive program? We would like to discuss how you would deploy fewer people instead of the number requested.
- Can the Public Lands corps focus more participants into fewer sites? Which sites are the most developed from the department's perspective? Which one's fit internal department priorities?
- How will national identity be shared among the participants at all the sites? Will participants ever come together? Regionally?
- What is the training curriculum and how will it both ensure uniformity of quality in participant development (areas of diversity and conflict resolution) and provide the tangible skills needed for each site?
- What pool is USDA planning to draw on to recruit over 70 team leaders? What are the qualifications and what training will be provided to make sure that they can manage a team and their host organization/agency?
- How were the partnerships with the Youth Corps identified? What will be the fiscal and programmatic arrangements? Are you confident that your youth corps partners will get the job done? What is their track record in producing measurable results?
- How can the program ensure a mix of participants at the local level?
- Please let us know the exact training and service start dates for the participants.

Proposed Sites

Rural	KS
Rural	OK
Galveston	TX
Atlanta	GA
Boston	MA
East St. Louis	IL
statewide	NJ
Washington	DC
Chicago	IL
Portland	OR
Southern	CA
Northern	CA
statewide	WA
statewide	OR
statewide	AZ
statewide	MS
statewide	NH
statewide	VT

Blamed on
becker