

# AMERICORPS PROGRAMS

AmeriCorps brings people together to **serve communities**. The AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) program is dedicated to **ending poverty** by building the capacity of nonprofit organizations and public agencies. In exchange for service, AmeriCorps members receive training and professional development, a modest living allowance, Education Award and other benefits.

Literacy Minnesota offers two types of full-time AmeriCorps VISTA opportunities: 12 months with **Literacy Leadership** working behind the scenes to design and carry out literacy initiatives for people of all ages who are experiencing poverty, and 8 weeks in **Summer Reads** working directly with program participants.



## LITERACY LEADERSHIP

The Literacy Leadership program engages AmeriCorps members for one year to design and carry out literacy initiatives. Literacy Leaders serve on two tracks: **Literacy for All** or **Digital Literacy**. They design program content, engage volunteers, generate resources, and lay the groundwork for programming that strengthens communities, allowing people to gain skills to share their stories, achieve their goals and succeed in school and the workforce.

## SUMMER READS

The Summer Reads program runs for eight weeks each summer. **Summer Reads Mentors** serve children in grades K-5 who are experiencing poverty and bring literacy to life with group story time, tutoring, games, and more. **Summer Reads Coaches** work alongside fellow adults in Adult Basic Education settings to provide direct support as they pursue their literacy goals.



# BY THE NUMBERS (2020-21)

67

## MEMBERS

20 Literacy Leaders and 47 Summer Reads members served in 54 nonprofits, schools and public agencies across Minnesota.

\$5,109,606

## GENERATED

AmeriCorps members generated \$5,079,106 cash and \$30,500 in-kind resources toward strengthening literacy programs for Minnesota children, youth, adults and families

7,185

## BOOKS DONATED

Families experiencing poverty are less likely to have access to books and other print materials at home—a critical factor in literacy skills gaps. Members distributed nearly 7,200 free books to children and families.

9,830

## INDIVIDUALS SERVED

AmeriCorps members provided literacy services and helped break the cycle of poverty for thousands of people—4,094 children and youth, and 5,736 adults.

387

## VOLUNTEERS ENGAGED

AmeriCorps members engaged 387 volunteers who contributed 5,262 hours of their time and skills to improve literacy access and success for Minnesotans.

100%

## GROWTH

National Service creates a valuable pipeline to careers in education, nonprofits and public service. All of Literacy Minnesota's Summer Reads Mentors indicated that service helped them grow professionally and all Literacy Leadership host sites reported AmeriCorps VISTA helped their organization provide more services to more individuals.

## MEET A LITERACY LEADER

Meet Hiba, a third-year AmeriCorps VISTA member. She served one year with Literacy Minnesota's Open Door Learning Center at Arlington Hills and a second year as a VISTA Leader with Literacy Minnesota.

In her third project, Hiba employs grassroots community engagement and outreach strategies in six Open Door Learning Center locations to establish an organizational culture that centers adult learners' voices and decision making.

Hiba has a degree in mechanical engineering and moved from Iraq to the United States a few years ago, and today she's embracing her passion for education and connecting people to resources. In her spare time, she volunteers and is on the board of the Iraqi and American Reconciliation Project to help coordinate cultural exchange trips between sister cities of Minneapolis and Najaf.

