

Instructions for Preparing for Careers

Part Seven
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It's a common challenge for young people: You can't get a job because you have no experience, and you have not experience because you can't get a job. But take heart. There is a solution. The answer is volunteering.

Volunteering helps you gain that all-important work experience, which may be the final push you need to ascend the job-hunting mountain. And volunteering offers much more than just work experience.

Volunteering gives students the ability to explore fields where they believe they might have an interest, talent or strength without the commitment of registering in formal education or seeking employment in a field in which they might not be trained.

Volunteering is a great way for young people to learn about what they're interested in, where their passions lie, and what their strengths are. Volunteering also increases your network of contacts. This can offer both personal and professional rewards.

Volunteering can be an effective stepping-stone to the career you desire, but it's not just a matter of signing up. Many elements need to be considered. If you do your research and plan carefully, not only will you have the opportunity

to serve your community—you'll also be taking a step toward achieving your career goals.

Volunteering gives young people the opportunity to give a line of work a trial run. Getting a glimpse into the inner workings of an organization or field may help the volunteer to determine if that line of work is truly appealing. A job description often doesn't give a clear picture of the day-to-day operations of a line of work. But volunteering can give young people a better sense of the complete picture.

A Checklist of Procedures:

- Evaluate: determine your interests and skills and what experience you hope to gain
- Prepare: get organized and ready to acquire and perform a volunteer assignment
- Research: discover the volunteer opportunities available to you
- Participate: perform your assigned duties and connect with colleagues, superiors, and those who benefit from your work
- Transition: end your volunteer commitment and begin working for money

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AmeriCorps Member of the Month



to have her in this program. Sarah is going to be an asset in any organization after her service term."

Since becoming a member of the GSDAP, Conley has been involved in the Jubilee Festival, Food Pantry, Health Fair, Band Festival, MLK Day of Service, and the After Glow Films Fest and much more.

"I must say that my second year of service has really touched my life even more. I was chosen to be the team leader of K-1 and chosen to write an AmeriCorps Profile Story for Volunteer Mississippi in Jackson, Mississippi, and once again, chosen to be member of the month. It is not about me shining. I appreciate all the "thank you", "you did a great job", and so on, but it is God to whom I give all the Glory. I believe that everyone has a purpose on this earth, and my purpose is to love unconditionally and to make a positive difference in lives. Being a member of the AmeriCorps program, has not only given me the opportunities to make differences in lives. but my life has been impacted by AmeriCorps peers, teachers, students, parents, principals, and administrators. These people encourage me with smiles, hugs, trust, and saying, 'thank you', and 'Ms. Conley, how can I help you?' I am so thankful for Mrs. Gwendolyn Woodson as the AmeriCorps Director. Throughout my first year, and this year, I have been highly motivated by her encouraging words to love yourself, never put a limit to what you can do, believe in yourself, and when you talk to someone, look at him or her in the eyes. With words of encouraging and love overall, I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me, Phillipians 4:13."

"Wow! This is my second year to serve as an AmeriCorps member, and yes, I am loving it every day," said Sarah Conley. Serving at the Grenada Elementary School, Sarah is committed to helping her students achieve academic excellence.

The Grenada School District has hosted AmeriCorps members for the last eight years in the role of tutors. The GSDAP member is principally responsible for tutoring over 20 students. There are 1,015 students involved in the tutoring program.

Conley lives in Grenada, Mississippi, and she is a caring mother and wife. She loves helping others in need. Conley's prior experience of serving in her church and in youth organizations prepared her for becoming an AmeriCorps member.

"My first year as a member enlightened me on how AmeriCorps members make a difference in our students' lives. I have been a part of the positive impact of our students reaching their goals in reading and math. Also, I am thankful for the experience of meeting and helping people in our community.

"When I think of commitment and dedication, Sarah is the person that comes to mind," said Gwen Woodson Program Director. "I have watched her grow tremendously in this program during her terms of service. She was selected as team leader for the GES K-1 site, and she takes that role seriously. I am so blessed

In exchange for a year of service, AmeriCorps members earn an education award of \$5,730 that can be used to pay for college or to pay back qualified student loans. Conley plans to move forward with her education to become a certified teacher and repay her student loans.

For more information about the Grenada School District AmeriCorps Program, contact Program Director Gwen Woodson at gwoodson@grenadak12.com. For more information about AmeriCorps, visit www.americorps.gov.

GHS Boys Basketball

Photo right (front l to r) Jay Dorsey, Coach Tarrus Metcalf, Kelvin Collins, Jr, (back l to r) Josh Everett, Trey Spencer, Gevante Nason, Demetrius Kirkwood, Tahj Sledge, Josiah Lewis, Kevarius Brown, Christian Cain, Tyrus Black, and Coach Blake Powell



Photo by Yearbook Staff