

A background photograph of two young men in a library. One man, wearing a brown baseball cap and glasses, is looking down at a book. The other man, with a beard and a grey hoodie, is leaning over him, smiling broadly. Bookshelves filled with books are visible in the background.

Service Year Campus Recruitment Guide

Campus Recruitment with Service Year Alliance

Service Year Alliance is working to make a year of service a common expectation and opportunity for all young Americans. This guide outlines best practices to consider when recruiting students on campus to serve.

Getting started on campus

When first building a relationship with a campus, you might start with cold outreach (email or phone). Career Services or the Office of Student Engagement is often a good place to begin. If you know a student or employee on campus, ask them to make an introduction. Your goal is to identify a faculty or staff member that will champion service years on campus, or at a minimum connect you to interested students. Building that personal relationship will help the university understand who you are, what you are trying to accomplish, and what's in it for their students. Once you've established a point of contact, work with them to connect with other departments, majors, and faculty on campus who will be invested in their students learning about service year opportunities.

If you're not sure which schools to start with in your area, consider reaching out to schools who have strong programs of study in your field (i.e. education, agriculture, accounting, environment, etc.), or have previously hosted or are currently hosting AmeriCorps members.

Considerations when completing outreach:

- Career Services and student engagement offices on campus often provide a strong entry point to a large numbers of students. They also provide legitimacy with other departments, faculty, staff, and the students themselves.
- Check to see if the campus uses a job posting website like Handshake or OrgSync. If they do, reach out to your point of contact directly for guidance on listing your opportunity.
- Consider smaller universities! While it's great to reach out to the larger schools in your area, smaller schools are often less inundated with outside requests and may provide a more meaningful student engagement opportunity.

Not sure where to begin? Use this email template to introduce yourself and your program:

Example Letter

Hello *[name]*,

My name is *[your name]*, *[the position name with organization linked]*, a service year program *[mission statement]*.

Service years are an issue that have always enjoyed broad public support and yield a triple bottom line: uniting Americans of all backgrounds, offering a transformative opportunity for young people who serve, and bringing unprecedented skills and willpower to partner with communities in need. Students can consider doing a service year as a gap year or after graduation. As service years continue to grow, we want to ensure that students are connected with these opportunities.

Not many students know about these opportunities or the benefits that come with them. That's why we want to work with *[campus name]* to help spread the word and be a resource for students to connect with our open opportunities.

Are you free for a brief call this week? I would love to discuss the resources we can bring to your campus and the opportunities for your students to get involved.

Please let me know if you have any questions. I look forward to hearing from you.

Very best,

[Full name]

Looking for more templates? [See Appendix A below.](#)

Connecting with Students

Once you've established a relationship with a faculty member or staff point of contact, work with them to develop a presence on campus digitally and in-person. The more engagement opportunities you have, the more likely you are to reach the students who are right for your program. Aim for at least one in-person campus event and two digital events per semester. Remember that students are exposed to a lot of "noise," so breaking through should be one of your top concerns. The more students see and hear about your program, the more likely they are to dig a little deeper and learn more.

Consider the following strategies to connect with students in-person:

- **Table on campus** - Oftentimes it is very easy to get a table on campus for free and in high traffic areas. However, tabling does not typically yield the highest return, but is a great option for name recognition and "breaking" onto the campus.

- **Information sessions** - Host an on-campus informational event so students can learn about service years, your program, and upcoming opportunities. *Pro tip: Pizza always helps with turnout.*
- **Networking socials** - Work with a student organization, academic program, or department to host a networking social where students have an opportunity to interact with service year alumni and ask questions directly. Don't have any alums of your program in the area? Service Year Alliance may be connected to alums nearby that can speak to the service year experience broadly. [Email us](#) to find out!
- **Alumni and local service year program panels** - A service year alum's story of service can be a very powerful tool. Bring your strongest alumni together on a panel to share their stories so students can see the impact a service year has on a person's life and career trajectory.
- **Fairs** - Attend or work with the university and other partners to organize a service year fair on campus. Service year fairs can be more impactful than job fairs because they connect with students who are looking for alternative pathways post-college graduation, or who are considering a gap year. Hosting or attending a service year fair creates a space for programs to highlight the impact of their work, without competing with higher paying company wages. Check out our [Service Year Fair Guide](#) for more information.

Digital Outreach

Consider the following strategies to connect with students digitally:

- **Webinars** - Host a webinar to introduce students to your service year program. You can cast a wide net or target specific demographics like graduating students or specific majors, depending on your needs.
- **Email blasts/newsletters** - Work with your campus point of contact to send out an email/newsletter to target members of the student body. We've found emails to graduating seniors to be particularly effective. See sample emails in [Appendix B](#).
- **Social media accounts** - Ask the campus to highlight upcoming events on campus and in the community on their social media accounts. See sample posts in [Appendix C](#).
- **Job boards** - Posting your service year opportunity to job boards is an easy way to highlight your organization while connecting with students directly. These boards are almost always free, easy to register and post! Check to see if the campus uses one of these two popular platforms: [Handshake](#), [OrgSync](#)
- **Website** - School websites are a great way to have a consistent presence with your university/college partner. Ask your campus point of contact if your program can be featured on a main

landing page or alongside other service-focused organizations on the campus website. Check out [University of Iowa's](#) landing page to see how Service Year Alliance, and other programs, have been featured.

Pro tip: URL tracking

All links to your website, whether through email, posted on social media, displayed on a website or students registered should be trackable. Without knowing where your highest amount of traffic comes from, it is impossible to learn about the strategy that works best for your organization and the types of potential service year corps members you would like to recruit. Consider using utm tracking codes in conjunction with google analytics. It is free, reliable, and very well documented online.

For resources on how to build these links, please reference the Appendix.

ServiceYear.org: Connecting Young People to Service Year Opportunities

Sometimes understanding what a service year is, let alone how to find one, can be a confusing and daunting task. A simple internet search can lead to fake programs, ones you pay for, or collecting a long list of opportunities with no real way to really compare them.

ServiceYear.org is addressing this challenge by connecting young people eager to serve with tens of thousands of service year opportunities across the country. ServiceYear.org matches candidates to service years based on their preferences and qualifications, and also allows them to search all listed service year opportunities to find the right match. Since serviceyear.Org is a two-way marketplace, you can also recommend your listings to individuals you think might be a good fit to apply. Members of Service Year Alliance can take advantage of our full recruitment toolkit to utilize best practices on discovering and marketing to new service year corps members.

[Sign up today on ServiceYear.org](#) to discover the full resources and support you can receive as a member of Service Year Alliance.

Barriers

Service year programs, such as AmeriCorps and Peace Corps, have been active programs within the United States since the Kennedy administration, yet, there are still many young people who are unaware they exist. Unfortunately, it's a common occurrence to work with universities and students who fall into this awareness gap.

Oftentimes, the first step towards building your relationship is through education of service years' existence. Here are some helpful talking points:

What is a service year?

- A service year is a paid opportunity to develop real-world skills through hands-on service.

Why should a potential service year corps member do a service year?

- A service year is a great way to figure out what's next after college, search for an opportunity to find a new path, gain skills and experience for a job, or make a career change.
- It's a chance to step outside your comfort zone, while still working with purpose and towards a goal.
- Service years help build bridges and unite us as Americans, from all backgrounds.
- It's an opportunity to do good, to go on an adventure, and to make a difference in your own backyard.

What are the benefits?

- A service year provides real-world experience needed to connect educational goals to career goals.
- A service year empowers you to become a better leader early on, making you more competitive in your academic or career path.
- Service years build workplace ready skills that employers value.
- You get paid, and in many cases earn an education award to help pay for college or pay off student loans.

The background of the slide is a photograph of three people walking towards the camera on a paved path. On the left is a woman with dark hair, wearing a dark jacket over a light blue shirt and a lanyard with a badge. In the center is a man with dark hair, wearing a light blue t-shirt and dark trousers. On the right is a woman with dark hair, wearing a dark jacket over a light blue shirt and a lanyard with a badge. They are all smiling and appear to be in a casual setting. The background is a red brick wall with a white door and a white downspout.

Additional Resources

[Google Custom Campaigns](#)

[Campaign URL Builder](#)

[Blog: UTM Tracking Tips](#)

[Recruitment Toolkit](#)

[CNCS Service Year Alumni Analysis](#)

Appendix A

First Outreach

Hello [NAME],

My name is [YOUR NAME], the [POSITION NAME] with [ORGANIZATION LINKED], a service year program [MISSION STATEMENT].

Service, an issue that's always enjoyed broad public support, yields a triple bottom line: uniting American's of all backgrounds, offering a transformative opportunity for young people who serve, and bringing unprecedented skills and willpower to partner with communities in need. Students can consider doing one as a gap year or after graduation. As service years continue to grow, we want to ensure that students are connected with these opportunities.

We know not many students know about these opportunities or the benefits that come with them. That's why we want to work with [CAMPUS NAME] to help spread the word and be a resource to students to connect with our open opportunities.

Are you free for a brief call this week? I would love to discuss the resources we can bring to your campus and the opportunities for your students to get involved.

Please let me know if you have any questions. I look forward to hearing from you.

Very best,

[FULL NAME]

Second Outreach

Hi again [NAME],

We are working diligently in [UNIVERSITY CITY NAME]'s surrounding area to bring service year opportunities to the community and young adults. I had sent an email earlier this month with details about the work we at [ORGANIZATION NAME LINKED] is trying to accomplish, and I'd love to jump on the phone or meet for a coffee to see how we can work together on your campus.

Myself, and [PROGRAM NAME], want college students to feel empowered to serve. Especially at a time where there is great divide, service years can not only bridge large economic, social, and infrastructural gaps but also provide benefits those serving from getting money for college, certifications, travel, and jobs!

What is your availability this week for a meeting? I am happy to meet you on campus or in the area.

If you want to learn a little more about our work, check out our [LINK SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS]!

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Best,

[NAME]

Third (Final) Outreach

Hello again [NAME],

Here's a little update since my last email:

[Provide update about the work your corps members are doing in the field. This should be exciting and positive news! 2-3 sentences max]

[Blurb about your programs local/national impact. Example:

Movements have been the greatest drivers of political and social change since the American Revolution. Service Year Alliance is building a national movement to increase political support for expanding service year opportunities and inspire the next generation to serve – this starts with students at Keene State University.]

Making national service an opportunity for all young adults is no easy task. It takes a community to get this necessary work done. I would love to talk with you more about this vital issue to see how we can work together to build upon your students strengths and start the service year movement on your campus. Are you free for call this week?

I look forward to hearing from you soon!

Thanks,

[NAME]

[SOCIAL LINKS]

Appendix B

Templates: Examples

Email

Dear [First Name],

Graduation is just around the corner and there's no doubt you'll hear this same question over and over again from friends and family: "What are you doing after graduation?"

Well, we may have an answer you haven't considered...a paid [service year](#).

There are countless reasons to visit [ServiceYear.org](#) to search for paid service year opportunities that match your interests and timeline. Here are our five favorites:

1. You'll stand out to future employers
2. You'll get paid to make a difference
3. You'll earn an education award to pay off student loans or use towards grad school
4. You can do a service year here in [STATE] or explore [other parts of the country](#).
5. You'll work with diverse people and make lifelong friendships

From fighting poverty to responding to natural disasters and mentoring at-risk youth, there are thousands of service year opportunities available and organizations eager to hire. Sign up and start searching for your perfect service year opportunity today at [ServiceYear.org](#)

Your once-in-a-lifetime adventure is waiting – go get it!

Newsletter/Newspaper Blurb:

As your post-graduation plans start to creep up, friends and family will be asking: "What are you doing after graduation?"

We might have the answer where you can get paid to make a difference...a [service year](#). From fighting poverty to responding to natural disasters and mentoring at-risk youth, there are thousands of service year opportunities available and organizations eager to hire.

Over [500 Employers for National Service](#) actively recruit service year alums in recognition of the unique skills, qualifications, and mission-oriented individuals that service year programs tend to attract.

Sign up and start searching for your perfect service year opportunity today at [ServiceYear.org](#).

Appendix C

Social Media Post

Facebook:

Tired of hearing, “What are you doing after graduation?” @ServiceYear may have an answer you haven’t considered: a service year. A service year is a paid opportunity to develop real-world skills through hands-on service – plus you’ll stand out to future employers and make a difference in a community! Sign up and start searching for your perfect service year opportunity today at ServiceYear.org.

Twitter:

Tired of hearing, “What are you doing after graduation?” @ServiceYear has an answer you might not have considered: a paid #serviceyear. Learn more at ServiceYear.org.

Instagram:

Tired of hearing, “What are you doing after graduation?” @serviceyear has an answer you might not have considered: a paid #serviceyear. Sign up and start searching for your perfect service year opportunity today at ServiceYear.org.

There’s a lot to consider when thinking about a service year. But one thing is for certain – the benefits are awesome! Learn more at ServiceYear.org. Link in bio.

When you do a #serviceyear you:

- Get paid
- Stand out to employers
- Often earn money to pay for school or student loans
- Gain real-world skills
- Make a difference in a community
- Meet new people

#UNIVERSITYNAME#MyServiceYear #AmeriCorps #AmeriCorpsWorks #1of1million #GapYear
#ServiceYear #CommunityService #whyiserve #serveayear #LetUsServe #friendship #beinspired
#jobs #jobsearch #resume #getmoney #getpaid #makeadifference #service #serveayear

