

Julie Sande
Commissioner

www.Commerce.Alaska.Gov



Department of Commerce,
Community, and
Economic Development

Anchorage, Alaska

STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

23-001

Serve Alaska & AmeriCorps Alaska: Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. National Day of Service

Friday, January 13, 2023 (Anchorage, AK)— The Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service is a defining moment each year when Americans across the country volunteer to make local communities more equitable, expand civic opportunities, foster respect for individual differences, and take action to ensure our communities live up to Dr. King’s dream. Observed each year on the third Monday in January, MLK Day is the only federal holiday designated as a National Day of Service to encourage all Americans to volunteer to improve their communities.

AmeriCorps has been charged with leading this effort across the nation for the past quarter-century in conjunction with the King Center. Join AmeriCorps members and Alaska residents as we step up to serve our communities across the State of Alaska and join thousands of Americans across the country in volunteer service on **Monday, January 16, 2023**. “Service has the power to bring communities together, help others stand together against hate, build bridges, and heal divides. Service unites people regardless of race, religion, or zip code,” said **Katie Abbott, Executive Director of the Serve Alaska State Commission**. “We invite our community members to act on Dr. King’s legacy of social justice and equity and recommit by volunteering with us today and throughout the year.”

Day of Service Projects—AmeriCorps members in Alaska in partnership with local organizations and tribal groups will commemorate MLK Day with the following projects:

- **Alaska Public Defender Agency Social Advocate AmeriCorps Members Ensuring Justice (SAME)**—
 - **Fairbanks members** will organize a warm clothing drive to benefit those community members in need. Some of the donated items will be added to the Fairbanks PDA clothing closet for their clients in need and the rest will be given to the individuals in need at the Bread Line. In addition, AmeriCorps members will help serve breakfast from 8:30a.m. to 10:30a.m. at the Bread Line and are inviting community members to come volunteer – volunteers please contact Tommy Sigman at (907) 458-6786.
 - **Anchorage members** will be serving at Anchorage's Downtown Soup Kitchen Hope Center on January 16th, from 9:00a.m. to 1:00p.m. Join and participate in meal

prep and service for those in need and some light cleaning around the facility. Up to **5 volunteers are needed**.

- **Palmer members** will be conducting a winter gear drive to benefit children served by My Grandma's House (MGH), a nonprofit organization in Alaska whose mission is to reduce child abuse/neglect in an effort to address our state's suicide epidemic. They will be collecting winter hats and neck gators for kids from 1/9/23 to 1/13/23. **Volunteers will be needed** in Palmer to help collect donated items, sort, package, and prep for shipping. Possible volunteer needed in Fairbanks as well to coordinate transfer of collected items to a My Grandma's House representative in Fairbanks.
- Media is **not** welcome to cover the SAME day of service events due to confidentiality of the community members being served.
- **United Way of Southeast Alaska Juneau AmeriCorps Program**—AmeriCorps members in Juneau will prepare and serve lunch at the Glory Hall Emergency Shelter in collaboration with the Southeast Alaska Foodbank for approximately 70 people. Members will also distribute donated toiletry items received from the drive. Media is welcome to cover this service project.
- **Sitka School District AmeriCorps Program**— Sitka AmeriCorps members will be hosting a volunteer appreciation event for those generous souls who volunteer with Brave Heart, a non-profit, community-based organization offering end of life care and support, and so much more. Media is welcome to cover this service project.
- **RurAL CAP Resilient Alaska Youth (RAY)**—RAY members serve in many different communities, and on January 16th they will take action on a variety of service projects that each member is designing to meet a specific need in their community. Some of the planned activities include community art project in Haines, preparing and delivering food for elders in Mentasta, collecting trash from homes that don't have transportation in Nanwalek, distribute clothing and food donations in the community in Stebbins, and organizing a community celebration in Pilot Station. Members will partner with their host organizations such as local tribes, schools, or city governments.
- **Residential Youth Care INC. Ketchikan Afterschool Program**—Members will organize the community clean-up of a beach front area on Saturday, January 21st, at 2417 Tongass Ave along the waterfront from 10:00a.m. to 2:00p.m. Members will have an opportunity to share their experience and learn more about the Ketchikan community. Media is welcome to cover this event.

The MLK Day of Service shines a spotlight on service as a powerful force to bridge economic and social divides – today and throughout the year. For more information, visit AmeriCorps.gov/MLKDay

Serve Alaska promotes and supports volunteerism across the state and brings AmeriCorps programs to Alaska. Serve Alaska is housed within the Division for Community and Regional Affairs and the Department of Commerce,

Community, and Economic Development at the State of Alaska. It is overseen by no fewer than 15 and no more than 25 voting Commission members appointed by the Governor. The Serve Alaska sub-grantees operate in almost every region of the state, bringing much needed support and training to rural and urban Alaska. To learn more about Serve Alaska, visit <https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/dcra/ServeAlaska>.

###

Media Contact: Mirna Estrada, (907) 269-4561, mirna.estrada@alaska.gov