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Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 11, 2012

No. 12-24: Corrected

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Commissioner Bell Announces AmeriCorps Grants to State Organizations

109 AmeriCorps members to meet state and local needs

(Juneau, AK) – Commissioner Susan Bell of the Alaska Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development announced today that two organizations in Alaska have received AmeriCorps grants from the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS).

The grants will support 109 AmeriCorps members across the state who will coordinate and implement community environmental improvements in village solid waste management use, recycling, and backhauling solid waste, and conduct energy efficiency and environmental education programs in remote Alaska villages; helping local wellness coalitions to plan, implement, evaluate, and reflect on service projects which build youth resiliency and prevent substance abuse and suicide in youth ages 12 to 18; service in education and employment as well as volunteer recruitment for programs that target ex-offenders, unemployed, and under-employed individuals.

Serve Alaska will distribute nearly \$1 million in funding to organizations selected in a highly competitive national process. Later this summer, Serve Alaska will announce additional AmeriCorps grants supported by \$774,000 in AmeriCorps formula funding.

"Volunteer service is an essential part of the solution to many of the social challenges facing our communities," said Commissioner Bell. "These AmeriCorps

members will meet pressing local needs and strengthen Alaska communities as they develop civic and leadership skills that will last a lifetime.”

The current year’s AmeriCorps grant cycle was highly competitive, due to the strong and growing demand by organizations seeking AmeriCorps resources. Demand is also strong from individuals wanting to serve. CNCS received a record-breaking 582,000 AmeriCorps applications in 2011, a dramatic increase from the 360,000 seen in 2009.

“AmeriCorps members are improving the lives of millions of citizens and having a positive and lasting impact on the toughest challenges facing our communities,” said Wendy Spencer, CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service. “I congratulate these organizations for their strong applications in a highly competitive year. Thanks to the dedicated service of AmeriCorps members, these organizations will increase their reach and impact on meeting local needs.”

The grants advance the priorities of the bipartisan 2009 Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, and focus AmeriCorps resources on six key service areas: disaster services, economic opportunity, education, environmental stewardship, healthy futures, and veterans and military families.

On a national level, AmeriCorps engages 80,000 Americans of all ages and backgrounds in service to meet critical needs. Members serve through more than 14,000 organizations in rural and urban communities throughout the nation. Among other accomplishments, AmeriCorps members last year mobilized 3.4 million community volunteers, and tutored, mentored, or served more than 3.5 million disadvantaged youth.

Since 1994, more than 775,000 Americans have provided more than 1 billion hours of service to their communities and country through AmeriCorps. AmeriCorps members have completed over 4 million hours of service in Alaska.

Below is a listing of 2012 AmeriCorps grants in Alaska:

- Rural Alaska Community Action Program
Students in Service
\$7,408
AmeriCorps member positions - 35
Social work and nursing students are national service members participate in community service projects focusing on human needs.
- Nine Star Enterprises, Inc.
Learn and Earn Alaska
\$481,000

AmeriCorps member positions - 39

AmeriCorps members provide wrap-around services focused in education and employment as well as volunteer recruitment for programs that target ex-offenders, the unemployed, and under-employed.

- Rural Alaska Community Action Program
Building Initiatives in Rural Community Health
\$195,000
AmeriCorps member positions - 15
AmeriCorps members will in rural communities helping local wellness coalitions to plan, implement, evaluate, and reflect on service projects which build youth resiliency and prevent substance abuse and suicide in youth ages 12 to 18. Services include connecting youth to culture and supportive adult relationships; engaging youth and community volunteers in meaningful, youth-led service activities; and building youth skills through peer education and leadership training.
- Rural Alaska Community Action Program
Rural Alaska Village Environment Network
\$313,642
AmeriCorps member positions - 20
AmeriCorps members coordinate and implement community environment improvements in village solid waste management use, recycling and backhauling solid waste, and conduct energy efficiency and environment education programs focusing on youth involvement.

Serve Alaska's mission is to foster, support, and promote the ethic of service and volunteerism for all Alaskans.

AmeriCorps is a national service program administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service, a federal agency that engages more than five million Americans in service each year, and administers President Obama's national service initiative *United We Serve*. Interested individuals can learn about available opportunities and apply online by visiting AmeriCorps.gov.

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