



Arizona
Governor's
Commission
on **Service** and
Volunteerism



Arizona Governor's Commission on Service and Volunteerism

Wednesday, March 23, 2022 at 8:30 AM

Virtual Meeting:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81056399609?pwd=WjNkK1BNZ0xHcG5ib2F0MUhJaWxyZz09>

Passcode: 935720

Arizona State Capitol, Phoenix, Arizona

A general meeting of the Governor's Commission on Service and Volunteerism (GCSV) was convened on March 23, 2022, via hybrid meeting, Arizona State Capitol, 1700 W. Washington, Phoenix Arizona 85007, notice having been duly given. Present and absent were the following members of the GCSV:

Members Present (10)	
Robert Ashcraft	Tori Carlson
Donna Davis	Alex Gabaldon
Michael Hammett	Lillian James
Donna Martin	Kimberly Rice
Thomas Winkle	Jennifer Manhoff
Members Absent (4)	
Tyler Butler	Helain Day
Chris Gibbs	Donna McBride
Staff & Guests (4)	
Emily Litchfield	Kim Brooks
Ali Channa	Rachel Bruns

1. CALL TO ORDER

Commission Chair Davis called the meeting to order at 9:02 AM. Quorum present.

2. WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS

Commission Chair Davis welcomed attendees and asked the Commissioners, guests and staff to introduce themselves.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (ACTION)

Meeting minutes from December 8, 2021 were reviewed. **Commissioner Ashcraft** moved to approve the minutes. **Commissioner Gabaldon** seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

4. BUSINESS

Commissioners were asked to share what they hope to accomplish during the Commission retreat. These included understanding the history of state service commissions, the roles of commissioners and staff, and building a state service plan that is robust, creative and meets the needs of all communities. Additionally, commissioners were interested in how to leverage support from the federal agency, the Association of State Service Commissions ([ASC](#)), leadership within the Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family ([GOYFF](#)), as well as from the Governor and other elected officials to further service and volunteerism in the state.

AmeriCorps Director Litchfield introduced guest facilitator Rachel Bruns, Chief Engagement Officer with ASC. Rachel began her presentation with an overview of ASC, its history and current strategic plan (slides 6-8 of attached), as well as States for Service (slide 9) which is the privately funded policy arm of ASC. **Commissioners Ashcraft, Carlson and Gabaldon** shared that they are somewhat familiar with ASC, having attended events in the past. **Commissioner Rice** shared that she has attended the virtual Commissioner Orientation previously provided by ASC and found that information helpful.

The presentation next covered the history of national service (slides 11-15) from 1910 to present, including key legislation such as the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 which created the state service commissions ([45 CFR Part 2550](#)) and the Serve America Act of 2009 that reauthorized and expanded the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). **Commissioner Gabaldon** and **Commissioner Carlson** each shared their personal experiences of participating in the National Service Hill Day during the annual ASC Leadership Convening in 2019 and 2022 respectively. **Ms. Bruns** shared that both now and historically, AmeriCorps has garnered bipartisan support at all levels of government.

Next, **Ms. Bruns** gave an overview of the structure for AmeriCorps (slides 16-21) from an organizational perspective, including how funding and programs get into each state. This started with an explanation of the difference between AmeriCorps State Programs (programs operating in a single state; funding is administered by the state service commission) and AmeriCorps National Programs (multi-state programs; funding is administered by the federal agency) (slide 16). **Commissioners Martin and Davis** were appreciative of the discussion because they had encountered members serving in Arizona who were reporting to organizations housed in Oregon, for example. **Commissioner Hammett** shared his own experience and knowledge of AmeriCorps members in Arizona who were placed by a New York-based organization. **Commissioner Ashcraft** shared his frustration with not knowing what members were engaged in Arizona when it came to National Programs because there is opportunity to develop strong partnerships in order to better support the members and connect them to other programs for training and camaraderie. **Commissioner Manhoff**, a staff member of the federal agency, committed to investigating how the Mountain Region Office could better facilitate these connections and provide contact information for programs. **Commissioner Hammett** brought up that there is a stark difference between Peace Corps and AmeriCorps with regard to notoriety and wondered what could be done to increase community knowledge of AmeriCorps. One factor in this is there are over 75,000 AmeriCorps members serving nationally in any given year (slide 18) vs. PeaceCorps 7,000 members. **Commissioner Gabaldon** has been involved with AmeriCorps in different capacities since its inception and shared that he recalls a time early on when federal funding was not as secure as it is now (slide 18). **Commissioner Ashcraft** raised the concern that state support for service and volunteerism is equally important and **Commissioner Martin** seconded this.

The next portion of the retreat centered on the role of state service commissions (slides 22-23). **Ms. Bruns** felt it important to emphasize that the term 'state service commissions' refers to both staff and commissioners and it is up to each service commission to differentiate between staff and commissioner roles. Additionally, while commissions are established in federal statute, each commission is unique in its organizational structure and activities; there is a saying in the field that "if you've seen one service commission, you've seen one service commission".

While each service commission is very unique, ASC completes a landscape survey annually for a pulse on what's happening nationally (slides 25-29). **Commissioner Davis** stated that what stands out to her most is the state investment in this work; 85% of state service commissions receive state funding. **AmeriCorps Director Litchfield** shared in response that some support is provided in the form of in-kind contributions such as staff time and indirect costs. The larger challenge is that the CNCS requires a dollar for dollar match on administrative funds and the in-kind contributions from the state cover roughly half of the match needed. **Commissioner Hammett** questioned how to leverage state or philanthropy dollars to support expansion and that AmeriCorps has great data available to support a healthy return on investment. **Commissioner Davis** stated that it is important to work with our legislative bodies to ensure that they understand the importance of volunteerism and its impact on communities; in doing so they might be inclined to invest in this work. **Commissioner Winkel** shared personal experience of outreaching to a variety of stakeholders to gain support for veterans and thinks that similar strategies could be used for service, in addition to leveraging the network of state service commissions for template letters or other materials that could be tailored for Arizona. **Commissioner Martin** noted that as the Commission moves forward with the state service plan, it's important to be a model for nonprofits, government agencies and others that engage volunteers on how to build capacity and efficiency.

Commissioner Gabaldon shared that what stood out to him in the state to state comparisons (slides 28-29) is the staff capacity; comparison states receiving equivalent federal investments have between 5 and 10 full-time staff. **Commissioner Martin** pointed out that "states who volunteer have state investments", referring to the [Volunteering in America report issued by CNCS](#). Utah is consistently #1 when it comes to the percentage of the population that volunteers (51%) and they have a state investment of \$450,000. **Commissioner Hammett** felt that this was a 'chicken and egg' argument - does the state invest because people volunteer or do people volunteer because of the investment? Both **Commissioner Winkel** and **Commissioner Ashcraft** pointed out that the amount of funds needed to cover the additional match in order to spend down the entire federal allocation seemed relatively small - about \$150,000.

The Commission took a recess from 11:56 am to 1:06 pm.

The meeting reconvened with a discussion on Commissioner roles (slides 30-42) with a reminder that roles will vary from state to state and activities listed on the slide are not requirements for commissioners in all states. **Commissioner Ashcraft** opened the floor by referencing a book 'Forces for Good' in which the author talked about the importance of having 'evangelists' or people who could tell the story of the impact of your work. **Commissioners Winkel, Martin and Davis** shared this sentiment. **Commissioner Winkel** interjected that the ability to do this well stems from developing a clear communication plan. **Commissioner Davis** discussed how this intersects with her passion for advocacy; it's essential to educate elected officials. **Commissioner Rice and Hammett** felt it important to have clear data that demonstrated impact, communities served and potential gaps. **Commission Chair Davis** felt it was important to engage GOYFF Leadership in the commission meetings at least on an annual basis to discuss priorities and how GOYFF, beyond the AmeriCorps team, could engage in supporting those. **Commissioner Ashcraft** wondered about the commissioners' ability to do fundraising or seek monetary support for things like the annual summit, other events or projects. **AmeriCorps Director Litchfield** stated that she would work with GOYFF Leadership to better define this.

The last agenda item of the day was to begin discussion regarding the development of a State Service Plan for state fiscal years 2024 - 2027. Ms. Bruns began with an overview of the requirements per [statute](#) (slides 43-46). During this overview there was a question regarding the requirement of being consistent with "the AmeriCorps agency's broad goals" and **Commissioner Manhoff** was able to list the broad goals of education, economic opportunity, environmental stewardship, healthy futures, disaster services and veterans and military families. Within those broad focus areas, state service commissions may draw a more narrow focus to governor priorities and community-identified needs. **Commissioner Martin** noted that she would like to feel that commissioner input is valued in the

consideration of programs funded. In the past it has felt like “we’re told who we will be funding”. **AmeriCorps Director Litchfield** noted the importance of commissioner participation in the grant review process for making funding decisions. **Commissioner Hammett** noted, and was seconded by **Commissioner Martin**, that AmeriCorps recruitment has been a challenge this year and noted opportunities to engage more retirees, older adults and workforce development partners in understanding AmeriCorps and the opportunities it provides. **Commissioner James** shared that she often offers AmeriCorps as an opportunity for her clients who are on limited incomes. **Commissioner Rice** noted that perhaps these opportunities could be promoted through the Arizona State Retirement System.

Much of this discussion circled to the overarching need to create a communications and outreach plan for the commission at large. Commissioners agreed that this needed to start with mapping where assets are currently expended, both from a geographic and demographic perspective. Additionally, commissioners committed to thinking about their own personal and professional networks to a) identify service and volunteerism champions, and b) identify additional resources that could be leveraged to further the work, for example a videographer who might donate time to create social media or web content.

A second theme emerged of ‘Recruitment and Recognition’, i.e. how does the Commission recruit additional AmeriCorps members and community volunteers to support local organizations and how to recognize those that are already serving. **Commissioner Manhoff** suggested a ‘volunteer of the week’ on social media or the website. **Commissioner Hammett** suggested revisiting the way people think about AmeriCorps and referenced a spin on the ‘not your dad’s Oldsmobile’ campaign to show AmeriCorps is really for everyone. **AmeriCorps Director Litchfield** captured the ideas in a draft service plan that is attached to the minutes.

5. NEXT COMMISSION MEETING

The next convening of the Commission is on Wednesday, May 18, 2022 at 1:30 pm. Proposed agenda items include follow-up on the progress of mapping the assets and resources of the commission and a review of the draft 2024 - 2027 State Service Plan to ensure discussion points from the retreat were accurately captured.

6. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made for adjournment by **Commissioner Carlson**. The motion was seconded by **Commissioner James**. The meeting was adjourned at 3:40 PM.

Dated the 25th day of March, 2022
Governor’s Commission on Service and Volunteerism
Respectfully Submitted By:
Emily Litchfield
AmeriCorps Director