



Governor's Commission on Service and Volunteerism
1700 W. Washington St, Suite 230
Wednesday, January 15, 2025, 1:30 PM

A general meeting of the Governor's Commission on Service and Volunteerism (GCSV)
 convened on **January 15, 2025**, notice duly given.

Members Present (12)	
Helain Lewis	Felipe Garcia
Robert Ashcraft	Ariel Ackerman
Kimberly Rice-Gentry	Victoria (Tori) Carlson-Foszcz
Bianca Lopez (proxy for Donna Martin)	Luis Vivaldi (Ex-Officio)
Michael Hammett	Tyler Butler
Chris Gibbs	Donna Davis
Members Absent (02)	
Alex Gabaldon	Thomas Winkel
Staff and Guests (02)	
Emily Litchfield, Staff	Alana-Jasmene Little, Staff

Call to Order

- **Ariel Ackerman**, sitting in for Donna Davis, Chair, who was running late, called the Governor's Commission on Service and Volunteerism meeting to order at **1:39 PM**. **Eleven** members and **two** staff/guests were present.

Welcome/Introductions

- **Ariel Ackerman** announced that a quorum had been reached before welcoming attendees, asking commissioners and the [Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family \(GOYFF\)](#) staff to introduce themselves, and conduct an icebreaker.
- Each person shared a goal for the new year or an accomplishment from 2024 before Commission Chair Davis arrived and led the remainder of the meeting.

Approval of Minutes

- **Donna Davis, Chair**, requested a review of the **October 2, 2024**, meeting minutes as drafted.
 - **Ariel Ackerman** moved to accept the meeting minutes as drafted.
 - **Chris Gibbs** seconded the motion.
- The motion passed with no dissenting votes, and the meeting minutes were approved as drafted at **1:55 PM**.

Updates

- **Alana Little**, the GOYFF AmeriCorps Program Administrator, provided an update on the work of the Governor's Youth Commission (GYC), beginning with Workgroup updates.
 - The Domestic Violence Workgroup hosted a donation drive from October 1 through December 4, 2024, recording over \$17,000 in products collected for local shelters. To recognize February as Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month, the Domestic Violence Workgroup secured a proclamation from Governor Hobbs and is planning an event in Tucson with [BLOOM365](#) to educate the public about healthy teen dating relationships.
 - The Conservation and Sustainability Workgroup members are organizing community events to educate and inspire their peers through park clean-ups, community gardening, and sharing information about composting and water conservation. They are seeking partners from across the state to collaborate on hosting Earth Day events in April.
 - The Education Workgroup met with Erin Hart, Governor Hobbs' Higher and Early Education Policy Advisor. Ms. Hart discussed the governor's priorities concerning completing the Free Application for Federal Student

- Aid (FAFSA®) and provided an overview of the current completion metrics. The workgroup is working to promote FAFSA® resources and is planning to host a college signing day event in the spring.
- The Substance Use Prevention and Mental Health Workgroups are co-hosting a panel discussion in March aimed at discussing these topics openly to reduce stigma and encourage help-seeking behaviors.
- The third quarter meeting of the GYC will occur on January 25, 2025. It will focus on Civic Engagement, from service and volunteerism to holding political office.
- **Emily Litchfield**, the GOYFF Director of AmeriCorps, provided an update on Arizona's AmeriCorps State and National programming.
 - Subgrantees will participate in various events across the state to celebrate Martin Luther King Jr. Day, including volunteering at Tucson Village Farm, supporting an educator recognition event hosted by the University of Arizona (UA), and participating in marches and tabling events in Phoenix and Flagstaff.
 - Subgrantees are starting preparations for AmeriCorps Week, which will occur from March 9 to 15, 2025. The AmeriCorps Team at GOYFF plans to request a proclamation from Governor Hobbs, while subgrantees will seek proclamations from mayors of the cities and towns where their members are serving. Social media spotlights will also highlight member and program stories and provide commissioners and community members opportunities to serve as "Member for a Day."
- **Luis Vivaldi**, the AmeriCorps Mountain Region Office Senior Portfolio Manager, shared updates from the AmeriCorps Federal Agency.
 - Two new AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP grantees have been awarded funds to support Arizona programming. The federal agency will make the official announcement soon.
 - There is an [open public comment period](#) on a rule change for AmeriCorps Seniors operations, which closes on February 10, 2025.
 - The [AmeriCorps Native Nations Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) is open now, with submissions due April 9, 2025.
- **Donna Davis, Chair**, asked about current Native Nations AmeriCorps Programs operating in Arizona.
 - **Luis Vivaldi** responded that the Navajo Nation has an AmeriCorps Seniors Program that will celebrate its 60th anniversary this summer. The Chinle Chapter of the Navajo Nation operates an AmeriCorps State and National Program, which was recognized by the AmeriCorps federal agency with the [Native and Indigenous Leadership in Service Award](#) in September 2024. Additionally, the [Phoenix Indian Center](#) sponsors an [AmeriCorps Seniors Demonstration grant](#).
- **Robert Ashcraft** asked about AmeriCorps Disaster Response related to the LA County, California fires.
 - **Luis Vivaldi** mentioned that the [FEMA Corps](#) has been active; however, conditions have not yet been safe enough to deploy other crews. AmeriCorps NCCC teams were sent to [North Carolina](#) and [Florida](#), with future plans to serve in California. For the most accurate information about AmeriCorps in California, consult the State Service Commission, [California Volunteers](#).
- **Chair Donna Davis** opened the floor to discuss the [Governor's Volunteer Service Awards](#) event on December 4, 2024, before stating that it was significant that Governor Hobbs presented the awards to each winner. **Ariel Ackerman** mentioned that it was her first time attending the event. Her favorite part was listening to the two Lifetime Achievement Awardees, who encouraged others to serve in their communities.

Business

- **Emily Litchfield** presented the list of applicants for the [AmeriCorps State and National Competitive Notice of Funding Opportunity \(NOFO\)](#) for FY2025. This Competitive NOFO provides an opportunity to secure additional federal funding beyond the State Formula allocation to support AmeriCorps programming in Arizona. Since the federal agency is responsible for all funding decisions, the Competitive NOFO operates independently of the state procurement process. The GOYFF manages applications for the federal competition following federal regulations. The commissioners reviewed the executive summaries for each application. There are eight [continuation applications](#) requesting a total of \$3.3 million and six [new applications](#) totaling \$2.8 million.
 - **Michael Hammett** was impressed to see such diverse applicants and focus areas proposing to serve many Arizona communities.
 - **Donna Davis, the Chair**, expressed her excitement about the Boys and Girls Club of the Colorado River's application. She noted that while AmeriCorps members serve in Mohave County, organizations outside the

county host them; the Boys and Girls Club would be the first organization funded in Mohave County in at least six years.

- **Tori Carlson** appreciates reading the synopsis of the applicants and agrees it is an impressive pool.
- **Robert Ashcraft** agreed with his colleagues. He added that the commission has discussed extending funding to rural communities for several years and is pleased to see this pool of applicants begin engaging with them in various ways.

Future Meeting Dates

- **Donna Davis, Chair**, announced that the next meeting will be on **March 12, 2025**, and noted the change in start time to 2:00 PM.

Adjourn

- **Chris Gibbs** motioned for adjournment of the meeting.
 - **Helain Lewis** seconded the motion.
- The motion passed without dissenting votes, and the meeting adjourned at **2:34 PM**.

Dated the 16th day of January 2025
Governor's Commission on Service and Volunteerism
Respectfully Submitted By:
Emily Litchfield
GOYFF AmeriCorps Director