



Primer: AmeriCorps is Another Woke and Weaponized Scheme

By: CRA Staff

Background

The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), also known as AmeriCorps, was established by the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993.¹ Operating as an independent federal agency, AmeriCorps is responsible for national and community service programs authorized by the National and Community Service Act (NCSA) of 1990 and the Domestic Volunteer Service Act (DVSA) of 1973.² According to the Congressional Research Service, the NCSA and the DVSA were intended “to renew an ethic of civic responsibility by encouraging citizens to participate in national service programs and foster voluntary service in communities while helping the vulnerable, the disadvantaged, the elderly, and the poor.”³ NCSA programs include AmeriCorps State and National Grants, the National Service Trust, the National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC), and Learn and Serve America. DVSA programs include VISTA and the National Senior Volunteer Corps.⁴

AmeriCorps receives public funding from federal, state, and local governments, as well as funding from private entities.⁵ The FY2024 omnibus spending bill provided \$1.3 billion in total funding.⁶ The programs it operates provide financial assistance to students, seniors, and other individuals who volunteer in their communities in education, public safety, the environment, and health care.⁷ Participants in those programs receive multiple compensation types, including living allowances, training, health coverage, and child care.⁸ Finally, upon completing their

¹ Edgerton (May 8, 2023). “The Corporation for National and Community Service: Overview of Programs and Funding,” *The Congressional Research Service*. <https://www.congress.gov/crs-product/RL33931?q=%7B%22search%22%3A%22AmeriCorps+Americorp%22%7D&s=1&r=1>

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Budget Options (December 12, 2024). “Eliminate Federal Funding for National Community Service,” *The Congressional Budget Office*. <https://www.cbo.gov/budget-options/60930#:~:text=CNCS%20programs%20provide%20financial%20and,the%20environment%2C%20and%20health%20care>.

⁶ Lynch (November 4, 2024). “Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education: FY2024 Appropriations,” *The Congressional Research Service*. <https://www.congress.gov/crs-product/R47936>

⁷ Budget Options (December 12, 2024). “Eliminate Federal Funding for National Community Service,” *The Congressional Budget Office*. <https://www.cbo.gov/budget-options/60930#:~:text=CNCS%20programs%20provide%20financial%20and,the%20environment%2C%20and%20health%20care>.

⁸ Ibid.

service, participants in specific programs can earn education awards, paid from the National Service Trust (NST), which is also managed by AmeriCorps.⁹

AmeriCorps, which might have begun with good intentions, has now morphed into a woke and weaponized entity. Its embrace of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) principles are endemic throughout its funding streams, which are used to push progressive agendas. AmeriCorps has also become fiscally dysfunctional and has failed numerous consecutive financial audits. The Trump Administration and Congress could consider eliminating AmeriCorps to ensure responsible usage of American taxpayer dollars.

Woke Ideology

AmeriCorps has explicitly adopted DEI as a guiding framework. According to the *Federalist*, training programs to enter AmeriCorps have been explicitly teaching participants diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) concepts that indoctrinate them into having an anti-Western worldview.¹⁰ AmeriCorps' partners, such as Public Allies, teach their corps members that it is insufficient to be "not racist" or "against racism"; they must become "anti-racist."¹¹ For example, a participant who signed up to serve in the Dallas Independent School District recounted a "privilege line exercise" she and other corps members had to do as part of their DEI training to determine who was more privileged based on their skin color and wealth.¹² Furthermore, AmeriCorps job listings include projects such as identifying gay-straight alliance groups and their status within area schools to curate a resource database for youth, creating DEI youth training videos for "family planning" centers, and developing a training curriculum for professionals and volunteers serving LGBT youth.¹³

Aside from required trainings and specific service projects, AmeriCorps ensures that DEI is part of every grant-making component. According to AmeriCorp's Annual Management Report for fiscal year 2022, its Equity Action Plan reinforced "its commitment to advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility and embedding it into the fabric of the agency."¹⁴ The plan continued by stating that "AmeriCorps is dedicated to creating structural and lasting changes in AmeriCorps' grant-making, workplace, and recruitment of a corps that reflects the diversity and

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Logan (March 18, 2025). "AmeriCorps Is Being Used to Indoctrinate Participants With DEI In Violation Of Trump's Executive Order," *The Federalist*.
<https://thefederalist.com/2025/03/18/ameri-corps-is-being-used-to-indoctrinate-participants-with-dei-in-violation-of-trump-executive-order/>

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Jankowski (February 22, 2023). "Well-Intentioned AmeriCorps Now Rotten to Core After Falling to Woke Left," *The Daily Signal*.
<https://www.dailysignal.com/2023/02/22/well-intentioned-ameri-corps-now-rotten-core-falling-woke-left/>

lived experience of the communities they serve.”¹⁵ Put simply, the woke agenda has been incorporated at every level. The following is a list of DEI initiatives funded by AmeriCorps:

- The CivicSpark program, an AmeriCorps initiative in California, developed a Racial Equity Action Plan that included budgeting for an environmental justice curriculum.¹⁶ This plan emphasized the importance of decolonizing fellows' understanding of the environmental movement by ensuring recognition of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) leadership and issues within the environmental and climate movement.¹⁷
- In 2020, California Volunteers introduced the AmeriCorps Racial Justice Planning Grant Funding Opportunity.¹⁸ This initiative provided planning grants ranging from \$25,000 to \$75,000 to organizations aiming to develop AmeriCorps programs focused on tackling community problems disproportionately affecting communities of color.¹⁹ The grants also included training and technical assistance to support the development of these programs.²⁰ This is a scheme to provide funding on the basis of race, which recent Court decisions have said is unconstitutional. Further, it exacerbates discrimination in the long run.
- According to the Daily Signal, The Health Federation of Philadelphia got \$1.15 million for a program in which AmeriCorps members will look into disease prevention for individuals who “live in historically marginalized communities.”²¹ This is an attempt to use federal resources to support the narrative that Western society is inherently oppressive and that federal resources should be used to benefit certain racial groups at the expense of others.
- Support for nonprofits such as Public Allies. This nonprofit, a long-standing AmeriCorps partner, touts a “Signature AmeriCorps Apprenticeship,” which recruits “a class of allies from “diverse” backgrounds and identities.²² These so-called “allies” are guided by “six core values,” which include diversity and inclusion.²³ It appears that the standard operating procedure for Public Allies is to promote racist DEI principles and ensure that

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Equity Action Plan (July 2021). “Civics Park Racial Equity Action Plan Narrative,” *CivicSpark*. <https://civicspark.lgc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/CivicSpark-Racial-Equity-Action-Plan-Narrative-1.pdf>

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ (June 30, 2020). “AmeriCorps Racial Justice Planning Grant Funding Opportunity,” *californiavolunteers.ca.gov*. <https://www.californiavolunteers.ca.gov/grants/ameri-corps/racial-justice-planning-grant/>

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Jankowski (February 22, 2023). “Well-Intentioned AmeriCorps Now Rotten to Core After Falling to Woke Left,” *The Daily Signal*.

<https://www.dailysignal.com/2023/02/22/well-intentioned-ameri-corps-now-rotten-core-falling-woke-left/>

²² Our Impact (March 26, 2025). “Signature AmeriCorps Apprenticeship,” *Public Allies*. <https://publicallies.org/chicago/our-impact/>

²³ (March 27, 2025). “Core Values,” *Public Allies*. <https://publicallies.org/core-values/>

its members are thoroughly indoctrinated with them. The organization’s mission statement is “to create a just and equitable society and the diverse leadership to sustain it.”²⁴ This language clearly indicates that Public Allies is committed to constructing woke paradigms with every project it undertakes.

American Climate Corps

On September 20, 2023, the Biden Administration announced the launch of a new American Climate Corps (ACC) initiative.²⁵ The ACC is described as a “workforce training and service initiative” to provide individuals with the necessary training to enter careers in the clean energy, conservation, and climate resilience economy.²⁶ This was a scheme to entrench climate radicalism within the U.S. government further, and AmeriCorps was responsible for setting up a new American Climate Corps Hub to coordinate the efforts of involved federal agencies.²⁷ Also, when the Biden Administration released its FY2025 budget, it requested \$15 million to assist in the staffing and creation of the ACC Hub and \$23 million for grantmaking to support over 1,700 additional ACC members.²⁸ While the Trump Administration terminated²⁹ the ACC initiative upon taking office, to date, AmeriCorps was playing a central role in spreading climate radicalism.

Financial Mismanagement

In November 2024, AmeriCorps failed its eighth consecutive financial audit, which exposed the persistent dysfunctional use of taxpayer dollars.³⁰ The audit, which was conducted by the public accounting firm RMA Associates, resulted in a “disclaimer of opinion,” which indicates that the agency’s financial records are unreliable.³¹ Furthermore, the audit uncovered 11 material weaknesses and two significant deficiencies in AmeriCorps’ financial management.³² In 2023, the House Education Workforce Committee highlighted a “Management Challenges” report issued by the AmeriCorps Office of Inspector General.³³ According to the report, the agency failed to “demonstrate adequate knowledge and understanding of Federal accounting standards,

²⁴ <https://publicallies.org/>

²⁵ Edgerton (March 19, 2024). “The American Climate Corps,” *The Congressional Research Service*. <https://www.congress.gov/crs-product/IN12334?q=%7B%22search%22%3A%22American+Climate+Corps+Corp%22%7D&s=1&r=1>

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Catenacci (February 13, 2025). “Trump Shuts Down Biden’s Climate Corps Work Program,” *The Washington Free Beacon*. <https://freebeacon.com/trump-administration/trump-shuts-down-bidens-climate-corps-work-program/>

³⁰ Bowling (January 17, 2025). “AmeriCorps Fails Eighth Audit, Highlighting Waste,” *National Taxpayers Union*. <https://www.ntu.org/foundation/detail/mericorps-fails-eighth-audit-highlighting-waste>

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ E&W Blog (November 29, 2023). “AmeriCorps’ Legacy: Waste, Fraud, and Abuse,” *Committee on Education and Workforce*. <https://edworkforce.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=409787>

financial reporting requirements, and effective financial management practices.”³⁴ The report also outlines a lack of oversight in the agency’s grant programs, which has lost hundreds of thousands of dollars due to schemes orchestrated by recipients.³⁵ For example, the University of North Carolina and East Carolina University AmeriCorps programs falsely certified member timesheets that included hours claimed to be served on holidays and weekends.³⁶ In short, AmeriCorps has proven itself quite susceptible to fraud and incapable of reform. Such waste American taxpayers can ill afford.

Conclusion

Extreme progressive ideologies have taken over AmeriCorps and corrupted its original purpose. Instead of promoting the true spirit of volunteerism, which happens every day all across America without federal intervention, AmeriCorps now serves as a slush fund for radical left-wing institutions and their agendas. Congress could take steps to defund and dismantle this agency, which will help the Trump administration in its effort to purge the federal bureaucracy of left-wing radicalism.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Office of Inspector General (November 15, 2023). “Management Challenges,” *AmeriCorps*. <https://www.oversight.gov/sites/default/files/documents/reports/2023-11/20231115-AmeriCorps-Management-Challenges.pdf>