



## Media Release

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**For Immediate Release**

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### **Group Receives AmeriCorps Funding to Serve at-risk Youth**

The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) has awarded a one-year AmeriCorps grant of \$176,231 to Kiwanis Activities, Inc. a non-profit organization in Little Rock, to support its Alternative Classroom Experience & Summer Incentive Programs.

The grant is a portion of \$2,423,853 awarded to AmeriCorps programs in Arkansas as part of 2014 AmeriCorps State and National grant competition. Four other programs in Arkansas were awarded funding. The funds will be distributed through the Arkansas Service Commission, part of the Arkansas Department of Human Services Division of Community Service and Non-Profit Support.

This funding to the Alternative Classroom Experience and Summer Incentive Programs will support the work of 14 AmeriCorps members. They will tutor and mentor at-risk elementary school students from the Little Rock and Pulaski County Special School districts throughout the school year at 5-week residential programs at Joseph Pfeifer Kiwanis Camp in west Little Rock. AmeriCorps members will be responsible for helping to improve academics, behavior and school attendance in at-risk 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade students. During the summer, many of these same children who show improvement when they return to their own schools will earn a scholarship to attend a 5-week summer camp held at Camp Pfeifer.

“This funding is what AmeriCorps is all about,” said Sanford Tollette, executive director of Joseph Pfeifer Kiwanis Camp which has served the Little Rock area for 80 years. “It will allow us to maintain capacity in our program and serve the children and families of Little Rock and the greater Little Rock area. Tollette said the program helps these young students go on to become productive middle school students. “This allows us to put the boots on the ground to help our kids,” he said. The program serves more 750 children and their families each year from 60 schools. Tollette said an important part of the program is working with families of at-risk children and follow up with them for years after they attend the programs. Along with the AmeriCorps members who work at Camp Pfeifer, the Kiwanis Club of downtown Little Rock, which owns and operates the 80-acre camp, uses more than 200 Kiwanis Club volunteers to maintain the facility and garden program.

In addition to the grant funding, CNCS will make available \$70,030 in Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards for the AmeriCorps members funded by this grant. After completing a full term of service,

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AmeriCorps members receive an award of \$5,645 that they can use to pay for college or to pay off student loans.

Every day in communities across America, AmeriCorps members are making a powerful impact on the most critical issues facing our nation. Whether improving schools, fighting poverty, rebuilding after disasters, providing health services, preserving the environment, or supporting veterans and military families, AmeriCorps members are getting things done. Since the program's inception, more than 830,000 men and women have taken the AmeriCorps pledge, serving more than one billion hours and improving the lives of countless Americans. These funds will support the 20th anniversary class of AmeriCorps members.