



## **GREEN IOWA AMERICORPS: ENERGY & COMMUNITY**

### **TRACK DESCRIPTION:**

The Energy & Community (EC) track of the Green Iowa AmeriCorps program has been operational since 2009 to provide residential energy efficiency services, facilitate environmental education programs, and engage communities and volunteers in environmental service projects. The EC track provides residential energy efficiency services in the form of in person energy assessments and retrofit services by highly trained AmeriCorps members. Services are available to all Iowans but target our community's most underserved populations including low-income households, individuals 65 years of age or older, rural households, Veterans, and persons with varying abilities. Energy Assessments including safety testing, a blower door test and a walk through visual assessment of the home. Retrofit services involve the installation of energy efficiency measures like low-flow water aerators, LED lighting, and air sealing measures around windows, doors, attic accesses, and areas identified with high air infiltration. In 2020 the program began offering Energy Savers Kits individualized to each household to provide a safe, contactless method to get energy efficiency and air sealing measures in response to COVID19.

The program also focuses on being a resource of environmental education for all ages through workshops, presentations, afterschool programming, and collaborative efforts with other community partners. Educational topics can range from energy efficiency to recycling, local food to renewable energy and is available for all age groups. Finally, the program seeks to organize and execute community service projects to engage volunteers with service opportunities to learn more about the environment, engage in their communities, and gain hands-on skills and experiences.

### **TRACK DESIGN:**

The Energy & Community track is designed to place five AmeriCorps members with each host organization, each serving a 1,700-hour service commitment over the course of an 11-month period. This breaks down to roughly a 37-40-hour weekly commitment. Members assume one of four coordinator roles. The program has two audit coordinators, an education coordinator, outreach coordinator and a logistics coordinator. Audit Coordinators are the team leaders when executing residential energy efficiency projects while Logistics coordinators do all of the behind the scenes organization of scheduling, calendars, and team schedule. Education Coordinators are responsible for organizing and executing education events while the Outreach Coordinator is responsible for planning and executing outreach events and engaging volunteers when possible. Team members work together and all regularly participate in residential, education and outreach activities regardless of role.

### **PROJECT & COORDINATOR EXAMPLES**

- Collaborate with utility companies to plan and execute residential energy efficiency blitz projects in underserved communities.
- Work with the library to organize an environmental film series event

- Partner with an afterschool program to do an educational program on recycling
- Plan a tree planting event with local volunteers
- Partner with the local Habitat for Humanity chapter to help on build site
- Organize a weatherization workshop to teach community members how to weatherize their own homes.
- Plan a practical backyard tour to showcase how people can implement sustainable practices in their backyards.

## FAQs

- 1. Who qualifies to host an Energy & Community track?** The program typically partners with nonprofit organizations, community action agencies, and municipalities.
- 2. We are interested in hosting a team. What are my next steps?** The program has an application process for anyone interested in hosting members from any of our service tracks. Host site selections are based off of availability, application, and timing of requests. You can contact Program Director Ashley Craft at [Ashley.Coffin@uni.edu](mailto:Ashley.Coffin@uni.edu) or Energy & Community Program Manager Shawn Fluckey at [shawn.fluckey@uni.edu](mailto:shawn.fluckey@uni.edu) with your inquiries.
- 3. What requirements are involved with hosting a program?** The program requires the necessary capacity to host a team, including functional office space, a designated site supervisor, and a cash match payment to the program annually to help cover costs associated with the member's uniforms, living allowance, and general program operations. Each host executes a host site agreement with Green Iowa AmeriCorps and the University of Northern Iowa that outlines all the host and program responsibilities that goes into greater detail of the expectations of each partner.
- 4. Are members employees of our organization?**No. All Green Iowa AmeriCorps members, including members serving in Energy & Community, are contractual employees through the University of Northern Iowa (UNI). UNI is responsible for all hiring processes, paperwork, distribution of living allowance, health benefits, FICA, workers compensation, etc. A host site is where a member is placed for their service, but they are not considered the host's employee, intern, etc.
- 5. I am interested in serving as an Energy & Community member. How do I apply?** Interested applicants can take the first step in the process by applying to our available positions on our website at [www.greeniowamericorps.org](http://www.greeniowamericorps.org). Applicants can also send any questions to the [GIACrecruitment@gmail.com](mailto:GIACrecruitment@gmail.com) email address.