To host a GRCorps member for service in 2021/22, action is needed by November 10, 2020.

What is the GRCorps?
The GRCorps is a team of talented emerging sustainability professionals that was created with the support of a grant from AmeriCorps (though the Serve Illinois program). AmeriCorps supports voluntary service to communities to address a wide variety of community needs. The Mayors Caucus designed this program specifically to help communities address the common sustainability goals of the Greenest Region Compact (GRC).

Our third GRCorps is made up of 12 dynamic college graduates serving GRC communities. They began work alongside municipal staff and civic leaders in October 2020. Our first two classes of the GRCorps have done a remarkable amount of quality work for diverse municipalities and partners that serve municipalities. Read about some of their work here. GRCorps members are beginning their careers in sustainability and receive ongoing training and support through the USEPA and the Mayors Caucus.

What work do GRCorps members do?
Any meaningful work related to the GRC that is important to your community can potentially be done by a GRCorps member. Most of the GRCorps members are serving their host communities by coordinating sustainability tasks, developing sustainability plans and tracking accomplishments. Some GRCorps members are conducting outreach to residents, managing communication about sustainability, conducting research, and organizing events. One GRCorps Member is currently working with the Caucus’ Age Friendly Communities Collaborative.

The AmeriCorps program requires full-time GRCorps members to complete 1720 of service, including modest requirements for training and additional community service, like on Veteran’s Day. This equals about 11 months of full-time work. They will be available for full-time service from October 2021 through about September 2022, depending on their pace towards completion of required hours.

The Caucus will work with Host communities to recruit qualified candidates for all GRCorps host communities and match candidates to the needs of your position. The GRCorps is attracting highly-qualified college graduates and career-changers. Host communities will make final selection of candidates and provide direct supervision for the full term of service.

What is the cost?
Municipalities are required to share the cost of the GRCorps members’ living allowance, health insurance, travel and other fringe costs. This cost is expected to be $20,000 for the 11 months of service. The AmeriCorps grant to the Mayors Caucus will cover the remainder of the cost to support the GRCorps member and administer the program. A municipality may ‘share’ the cost of a full-time
GRCorps member with another municipality or host organization and pay $10,000 for 5 1/2 months of service, if a suitable partner can be found.

The Caucus will manage recruitment, training, administration, benefits and payroll. GRCorps members will receive a living allowance of $18,000, health insurance, training, and a travel allowance for professional development opportunities. The AmeriCorps program will directly pay the GRCorps members an additional award of about $6,000 upon successful completion of their full-time term of service. GRCorps members may use that Segal AmeriCorps Educational Award for educational expenses.

How do I request a GRCorps member?
The Caucus will submit a grant request in November of 2020 to Serve Illinois/AmeriCorps requesting funding for each municipal and partner organization that expresses interest in hosting a GRCorps member, for the 2021/22 cycle. Please make a simple request with a very brief description of the nature of the work to be done is needed for the application using this Expression of Interest form. If the Caucus secures funding and if the host organization secures local approval, parties will enter into a formal agreement in August 2021. Hosts must pay the $20,000 cost share at that time.

What commitment is required?
Once the Caucus secures grant funding Serve Illinois/AmeriCorps in July/August of 2021, the Caucus will enter into a formal agreement with Host communities to support and manage a GRCorps member for the term of the service year (October – September).

Host communities must participate in candidate selection and a half-day of interviews at a downtown location, or remotely. After initial training in early October, host communities will be responsible for providing supervision and meaningful work on a day-to-day basis. Office supplies, a computer and any local travel within the community is the responsibility of the Host community.

GRCorps members will be needed for regional projects and periodic training up to 80 hours. These hours will count towards the 1720 hour total but will be assigned at the discretion of the Mayors Caucus.

One GRCorps Member from the cohort must be selected to serve in Illinois’ Disaster Corps. That volunteer will be required for 3 days of mandatory training in Chicago. This training may be helpful to the host community, but service hours will be reduced by the training hours (about 24 hours). Further, any hours of deployment by the Disaster Corps member will not be available to the host community.

For more information visit the GRCorps page or contact emakra@mayorscaucus.org 630-327-4193. To reserve a spot for a GRCorps Member, please fill out this Expression of Interest Form.

The Greenest Region Corps can demonstrate our collaborative strength to “get things done” – underscoring both the motto of the Serve Illinois AmeriCorps program and the attitude of GRC communities working collaboratively to address the goals of the GRC.