



Welcome to

Accomplishing Your VISTA Assignment

To join the audio portion by phone, please dial: **888.483.1644**

Passcode: **1929573**

We'll begin soon. While you're waiting, please share your answer in the chat box:

What will you be doing as a VISTA member?

Corporation for
NATIONAL &
COMMUNITY
SERVICE 



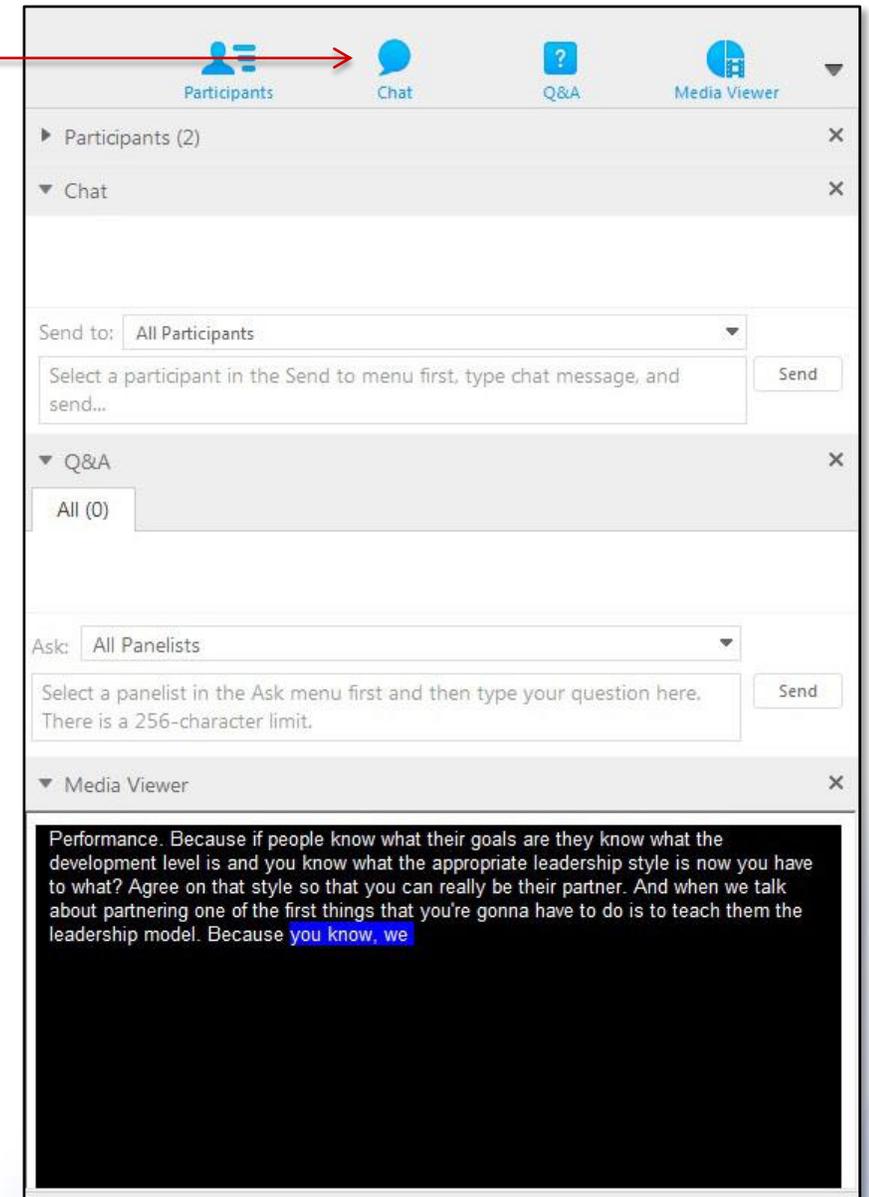
Dial: **888.483.1644**

Passcode: **1929573**

Tips for Participating

- Phones are muted
- Closed Captions can be viewed in the Media Viewer panel
- To share comments and ideas, use the Chat panel. Send to “All Participants”
- To ask questions, use the Q&A panel Send to “All Panelists”
- Links and recording will be available after the session

Click this button if you don't see the chat panel.



The screenshot shows a meeting interface with a top navigation bar containing icons for Participants, Chat, Q&A, and Media Viewer. Below the navigation bar are several panels: 'Participants (2)', 'Chat', 'Q&A', and 'Media Viewer'. The 'Chat' panel is currently active, showing a 'Send to:' dropdown set to 'All Participants' and a text input field with a 'Send' button. The 'Q&A' panel is also visible, showing an 'Ask:' dropdown set to 'All Panelists' and a text input field with a 'Send' button. The 'Media Viewer' panel is at the bottom, displaying a video feed with closed captions. A red arrow points from the text above to the 'Chat' icon in the navigation bar.

Today's Hosts



Calvin Landrum
Training Coordinator
AmeriCorps VISTA

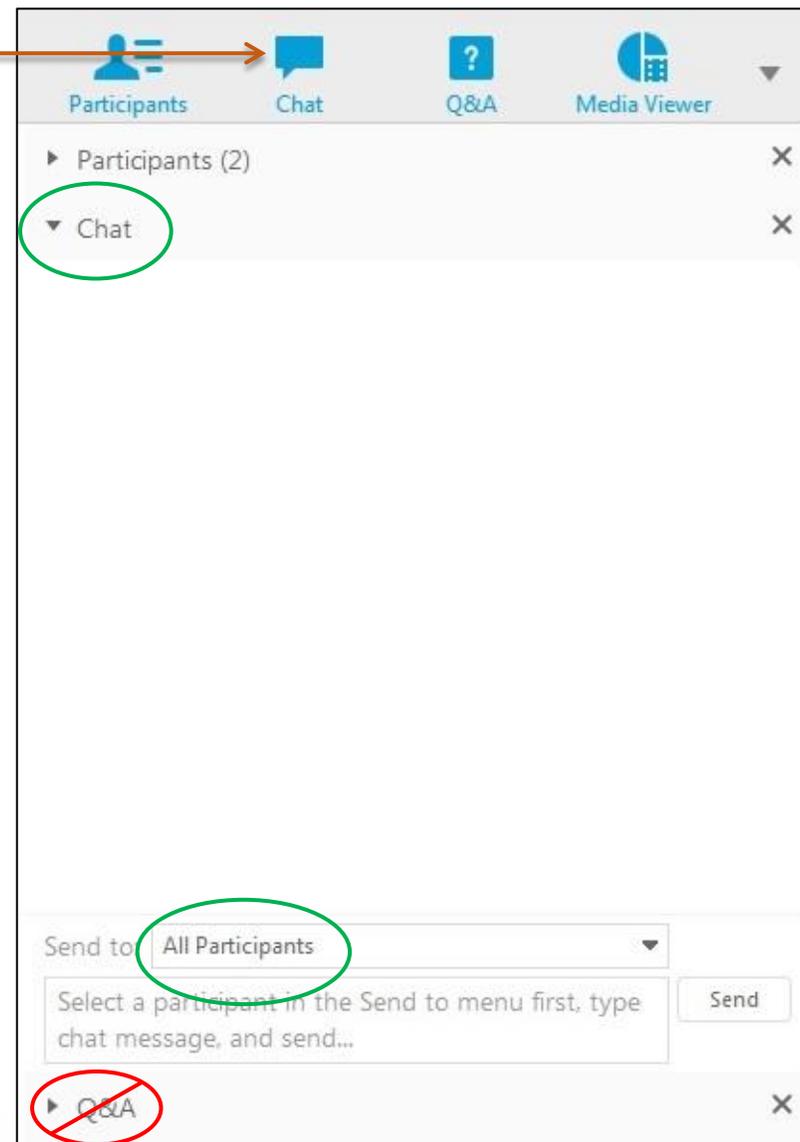


Ericc Powell
Training Coordinator
AmeriCorps VISTA

Share Your Thoughts

What questions do you have about your VISTA benefits?

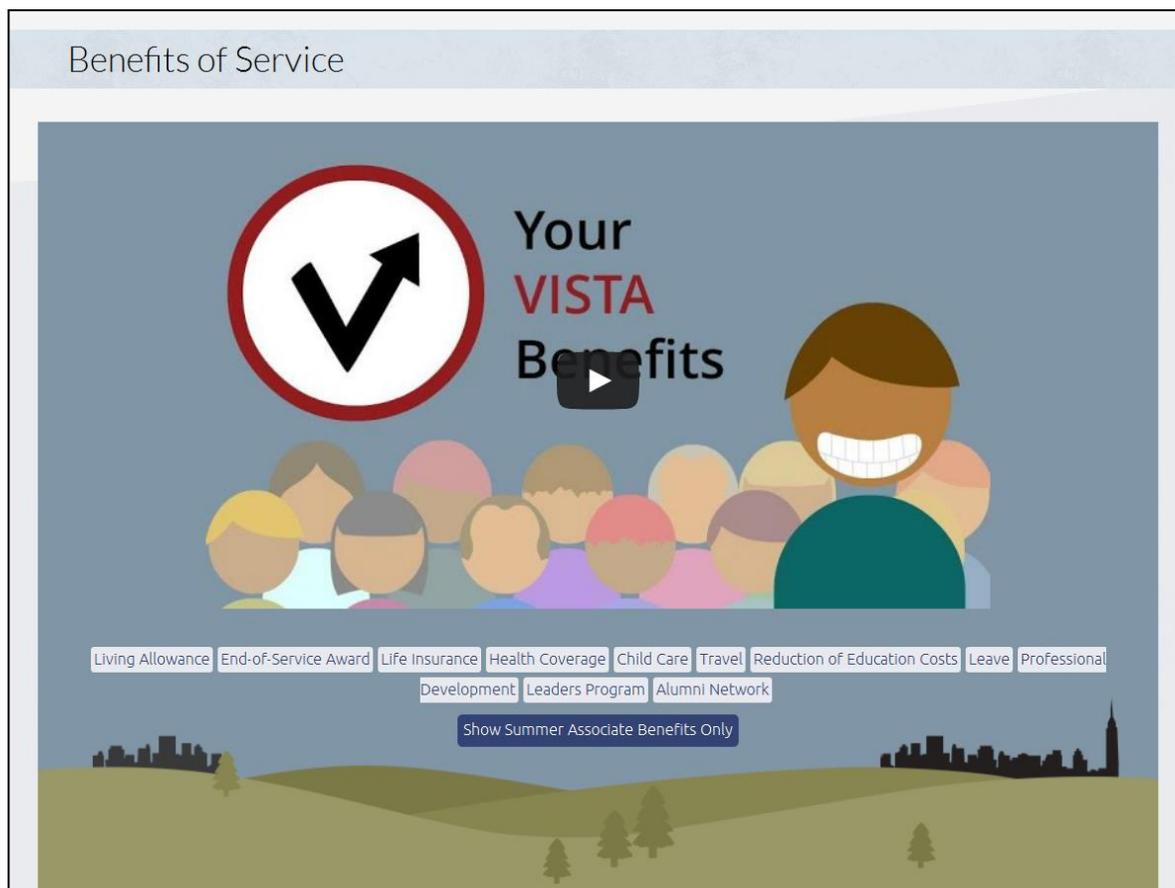
Click this button if you don't see the chat panel.



Session Goals

- Manage your VISTA service benefits
- Make a plan for engaging your community
- Learn how to connect with other VISTAs and show your VISTA Pride!
- Discover different support channels available to you throughout your service

VISTA Benefits



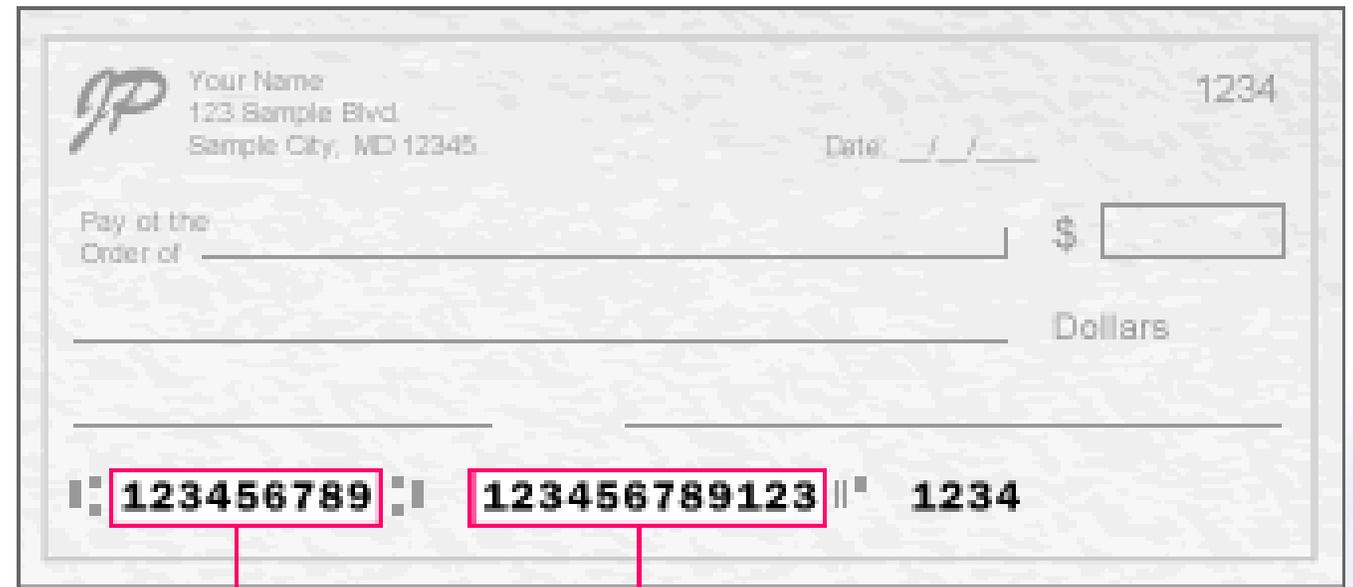
Living Allowance,
Health Care,
Public Assistance...

Living Allowance

- You are paid every two weeks (bi-weekly)
- First living allowance pay date is July 1st
- Federal taxes are withheld, state taxes are not
- Go to your My.AmeriCorps.gov account to:
 - Check your living allowance statements
 - Under “My Living Allowance” tab

Direct Deposit

- Incorrect bank info will result in a 2-week delay in getting paid
- Get routing and account number from your checks or online account
- Call your bank to confirm



Routing Number

Account Number

Health Care

If you're **insured**, VISTA reimburses up to **\$6,850 for out-of-pocket expenses**

If you're **legally exempt**, VISTA provides a **health plan**

Both the allowance and the plan are administered by
International Medical Group (IMG)

americorpsvista.imglobal.com

Loan Forbearance

With an **Education Award**:

- Request **National Service Forbearance** through My AmeriCorps
- No payments during service year;
- Accrued interest paid by Trust after you complete service



Loan Deferment

With the **cash stipend** or **private loans**:

- request **deferment** from your lenders



Loan and Education Resources

Education Award Website

- nationalservice.gov/resources/edaward
 - Eligible Loans
 - Taxes
 - Uses of the Education Award
 - Matching Institutions

VISTA Member Handbook

- Chapter 6: Education Benefits
- Chapter 11: End-of-Service

Upcoming Webinars

- Using the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award
 - Thursday, July 7th
 - 2:00-3:30pm ET

On-Demand Webinars

- Using the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award
- Managing Student Loans

Public Assistance Protection

- The VISTA living allowance is **not factored** in for most public assistance—whether receiving them prior to service or not
- **SNAP** – If you apply after accepting VISTA position, your living allowance will factor in

**When applying for assistance, print service letters from
my.americorps.gov**

My AmeriCorps



Applicant Home

My Living Allowance

My Tax Statements

My In-Service Benefits

My Service Letter

My Travel Request Profile

View/Print My Current VAD

Q&A



- To ask a question verbally, press *1
- To ask a question electronically, use the Q&A feature located in the bottom right corner of the screen. Please ask “All Panelists”

Participants (2) x

Chat x

Q&A x

All (0)

Ask: All Panelists

Send

VISTAs in the Community



Poll Question

What's your experience with the community you'll be serving as a VISTA?

- a. I am (or have been) a member of the community
- b. I have a lot of experience
- c. I have some experience
- d. I have little to no experience

Defining Community

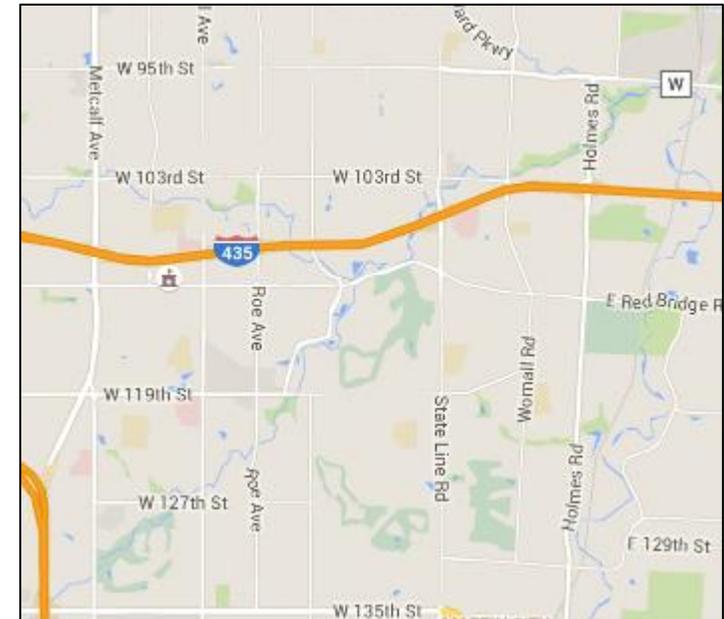
Communities typically define themselves

- Location
- Identities or affinities
- Shared experiences



Getting to know the community

- On-Site Orientation and Training
- Research
- Tours and site visits
- Community meetings
- Participatory Appraisal Methods



On-Site Orientation and Training

- Community make up
- Issues facing the community
- Community assets
- Community leaders
- Communities within the community



Research

- Community needs assessments
- Community asset maps
- Partner organizations
- Local media



Tours and site visits

- Community meetings
- Neighborhood gatherings and events
- Walking or driving tours
- Site visits



Participatory Appraisal Methods

- Participatory Analysis for Community Action - Peace Corps
- Rapid Rural Appraisal – United Nations
- Appreciative Inquiry
- Community Asset Mapping



Cultural Norms of your Community

Norms are informal understandings that govern individuals' behavior in society.

Examples of norms

- Time
- Relationship to Authority

Cultural Norms of your Community Cont'd

Communication Style

- Direct vs. Indirect
- Saving Face:
Important vs. Really Important
- Focus: Task v. Person



**“I suppose I’ll be the one
to mention the elephant in the room.”**

Community Guides

- On-Site Orientation and Training
 - Supervisor
 - Fieldwork
 - Observation & Journaling
-
- Next Week: Community Profile



Engaging the Community

VISTA's approach to seeking community input is based on the following values:

- Inclusion
- Strengths-based approaches
- Meaningful involvement of stakeholders
- Trust

Creating a VISTA Community

- Online classroom
- VISTA Campus forums
- VISTA Campus map
- Meet-Ups

Where Are You Serving?



Show Your VISTA Pride

- Add the VISTA logo to your business cards and signature
- Decorate your space with VISTA gear
- Share your VISTA photos and stories on social media
- Get in touch with local alumni
- Attend or arrange a VISTA MeetUp
- Wear your VISTA Polo when out in your community



Order Your VISTA Polo!

VISTA polo and lapel pin

- Watch for email with ordering instructions
- Items need to be sent to your project site
 - No P.O. Boxes
- Polos are men's cut
 - Polos tend to run a little big
 - Please take this into account when ordering



Where to Get Support

vistacampus.gov
and
my.americorps.gov



VISTA Member Support Unit (VMSU) –
[1-800-942-2677](tel:1-800-942-2677) or
questions.nationalservice.gov

State Office –
List of contacts at cns.gov

Supervisor or VISTA leader
(if you have one)

Do this, it's Good for You

- Log in to your online classroom
- Explore your health benefit options
 - Make sure you have health coverage
 - Enroll in a VISTA health benefit option
- Get fingerprinted
 - And submit criminal history questionnaire (if applicable)

What's next

- Sunday, June 19 – Minute Intro, How Poverty Is Measured, and VAD Worksheet due
- Wednesday, June 22, 3pm ET – Virtual Meet-Up 1
- Sunday, June 26 – OSOT Inventory due

Evaluation

- Please take a few moments to share your feedback through the quick poll on the right side of the screen.
- How can we improve these sessions? What topics should we include in future webinars?

Q&A



- To ask a question verbally, press *1
- To ask a question electronically, use the Q&A feature located in the bottom right corner of the screen. Please ask “All Panelists”

Participants (2) x

Chat x

Q&A x

All (0)

Ask: All Panelists

Send

“Your pay will be low; the conditions of your labor will often be difficult. But you will have the satisfaction of leading a great national effort, and you will have the ultimate reward which comes to those who serve their nation and who serve their fellow man.”

-Lyndon Johnson, December 12, 1964

