



Welcome to

Launching Your VISTA Service

For audio please dial: 888.483.1644

Passcode: 2971921

The webinar will begin soon. While you wait, please share in the chat box: Why did you choose to become a VISTA member?

Corporation for
NATIONAL &
COMMUNITY
SERVICE 



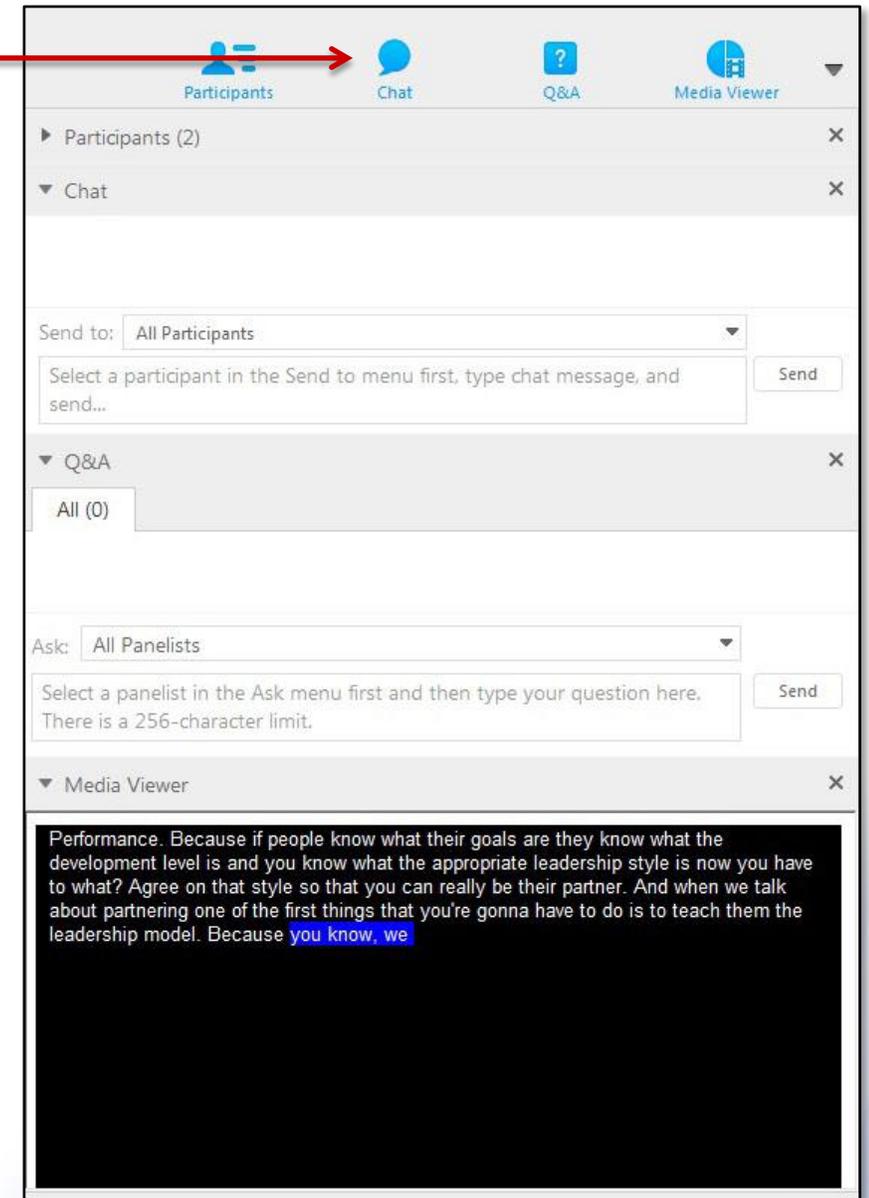
Dial:

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Tips for Participating

- Share comments and ideas in the Chat panel. (send to “All Participants”)
- Ask questions in the Q&A panel. (send to “All Panelists”)
- View Closed Captions in the Media Viewer panel
- Links and recording will be available after the session

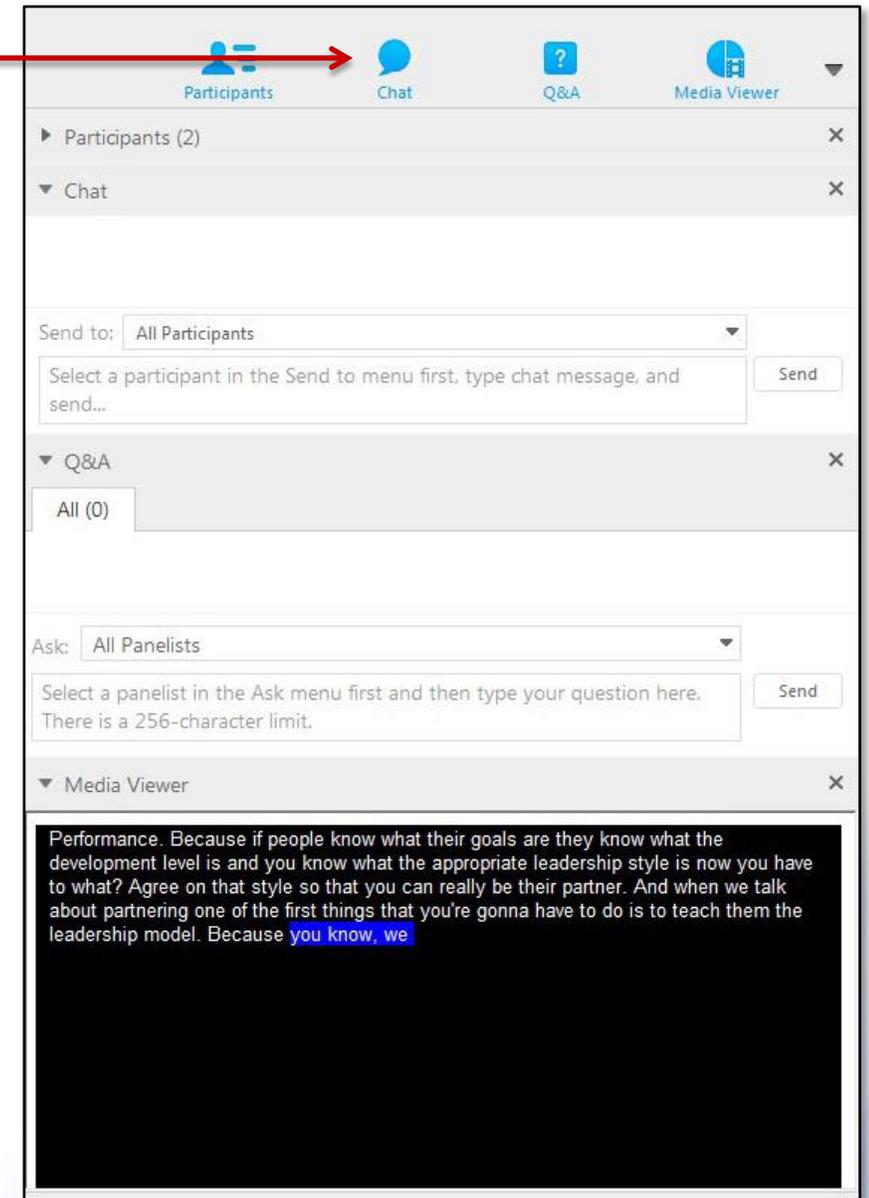
Click this button if you don't see the chat panel.



Attendance

- If you are viewing this session with other VISTAs using one log-in, submit the names of all the VISTAs who are watching
- Enter them in the Chat panel and send to “All Panelists”

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



Participants Chat Q&A Media Viewer

Participants (2) x

Chat x

Send to: All Participants

Select a participant in the Send to menu first, type chat message, and send... Send

Q&A x

All (0)

Ask: All Panelists

Select a panelist in the Ask menu first and then type your question here. There is a 256-character limit. Send

Media Viewer x

Performance. Because if people know what their goals are they know what the development level is and you know what the appropriate leadership style is now you have to what? Agree on that style so that you can really be their partner. And when we talk about partnering one of the first things that you're gonna have to do is to teach them the leadership model. Because you know, we

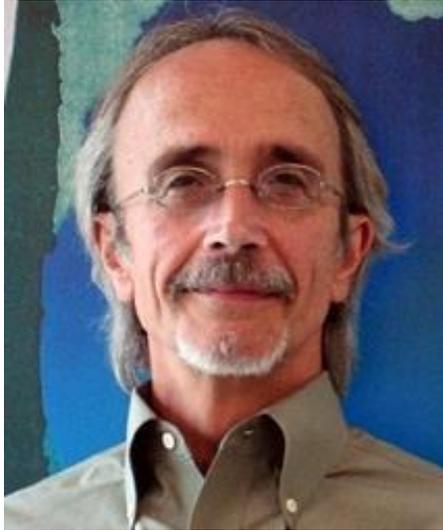


Welcome to

Launching Your VISTA Service



Lead Presenters



Patrick Triano
Director of Training
AmeriCorps VISTA



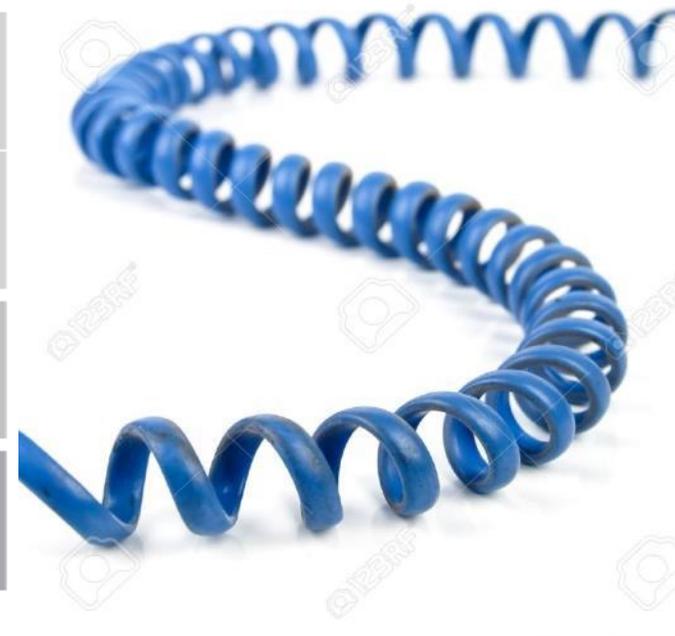
Calvin Landrum
Training Coordinator
AmeriCorps VISTA

The PSO Blend

Pre-Service Period	 My AmeriCorps Forms
	 VISTA Campus Coursework
Day 1	 Launching Your VISTA Service Live Webinar (Mon)
	 Fingerprinting
Week 1-2	 On-Site Orientation & Training
	 Fieldwork ■ - - - - - VISTA Assignment Description On-Site Orientation & Training Creating a Community Profile

The PSO Blend

Week 3	 Accomplishing Your VISTA Assignment Live Webinar (Tue)
	 Fieldwork ■----- Minute Intro
Week 4	 Fieldwork ■----- 13 Lessons About Poverty How Poverty is Measured in the US
Week 5	 Course Completion



In the Plenary Session

- Connect with your peers and the mission of VISTA
- Review the key terms and conditions of VISTA service
- Identify people and resources that will help you during your VISTA year and beyond

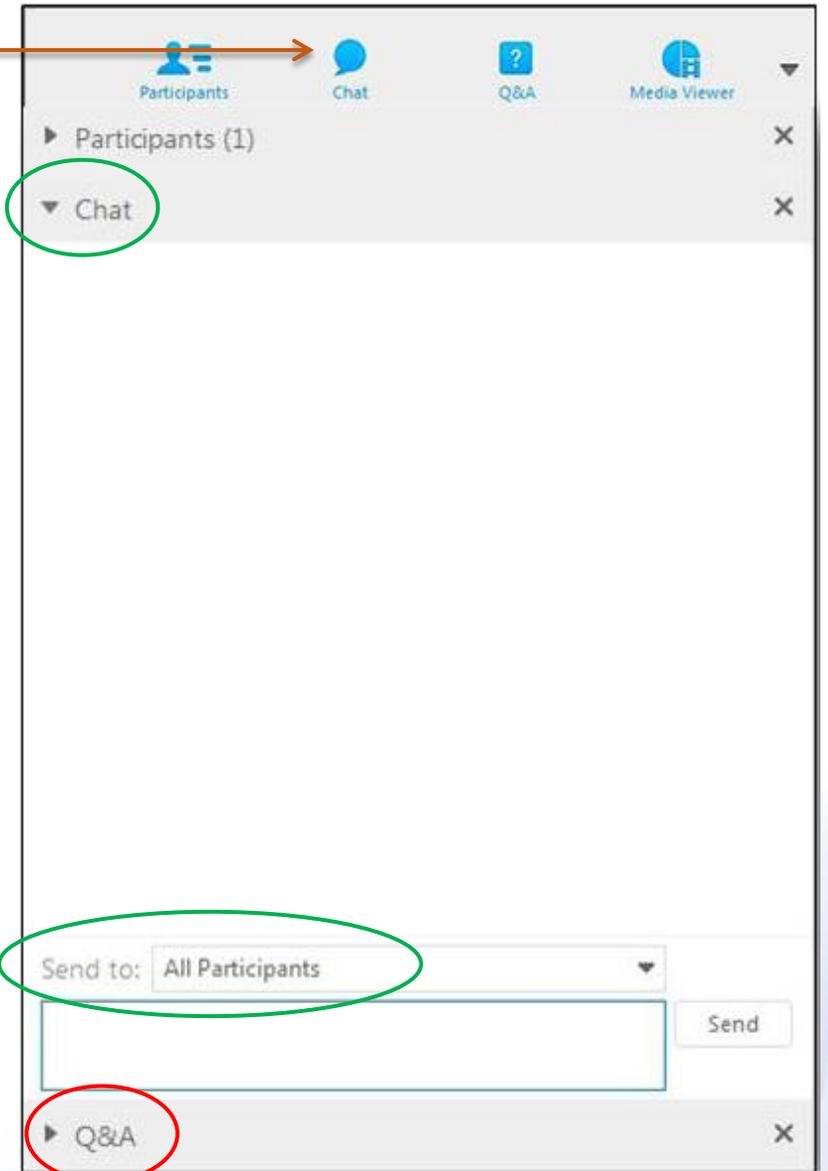
In the Breakout Sessions :

- Review key tasks and activities of your VISTA online orientation
- Affirm your commitment to VISTA and take the Oath of Service

Getting to Know You

- Where will you be serving this year?
 - City/Town?
 - State?
 - Project Sponsor?

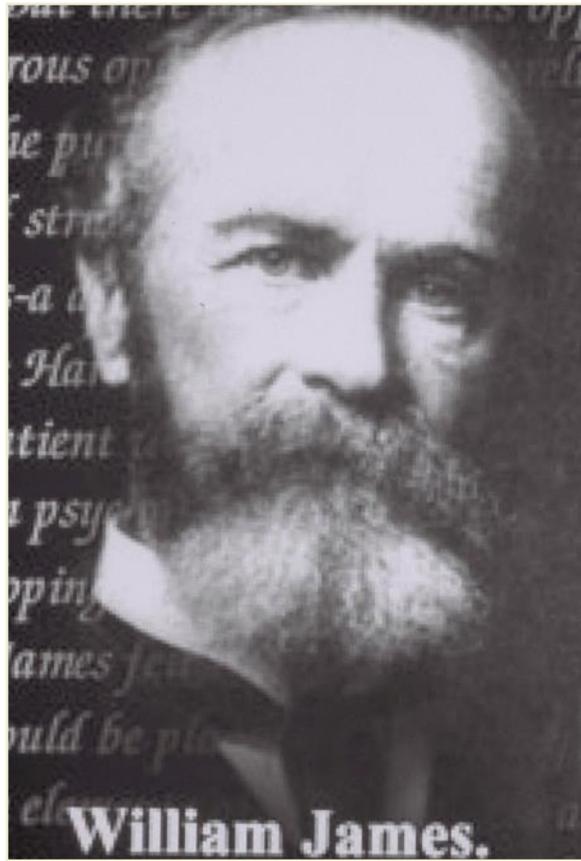
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A Legacy of Expanding Economic Opportunity



The Moral Equivalent of War



"...instead of
military
conscription..."

The Spirit of National Service



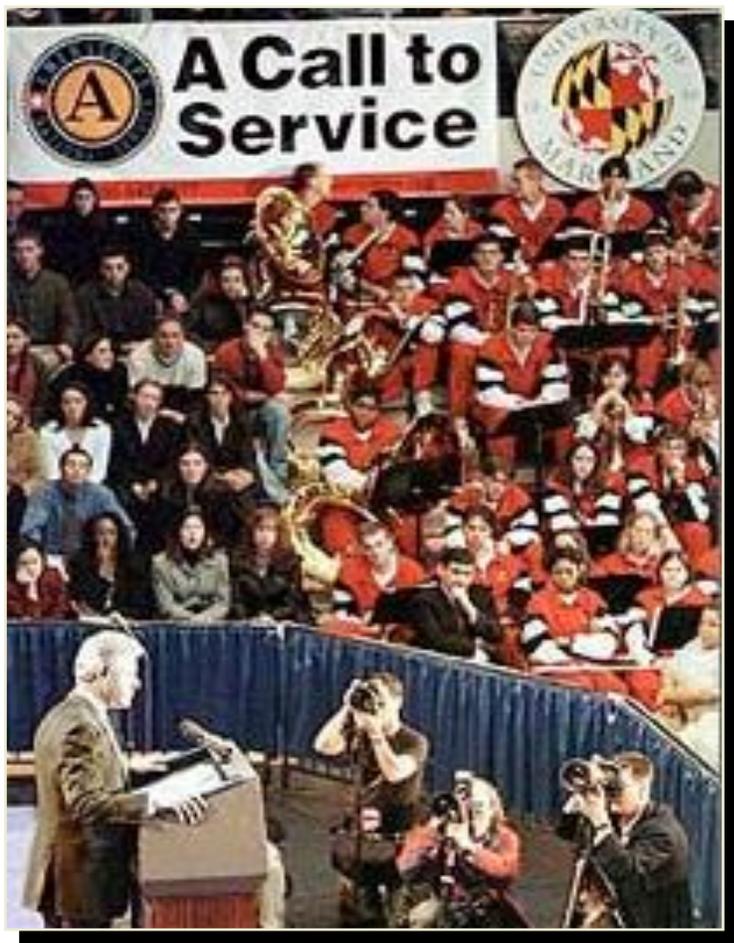
Serving the
Needs of the
Nation

Civilian Conservation Corps



“...opportunities for Americans of all ages and backgrounds to engage in service...”

The Call to Serve



AmeriCorps

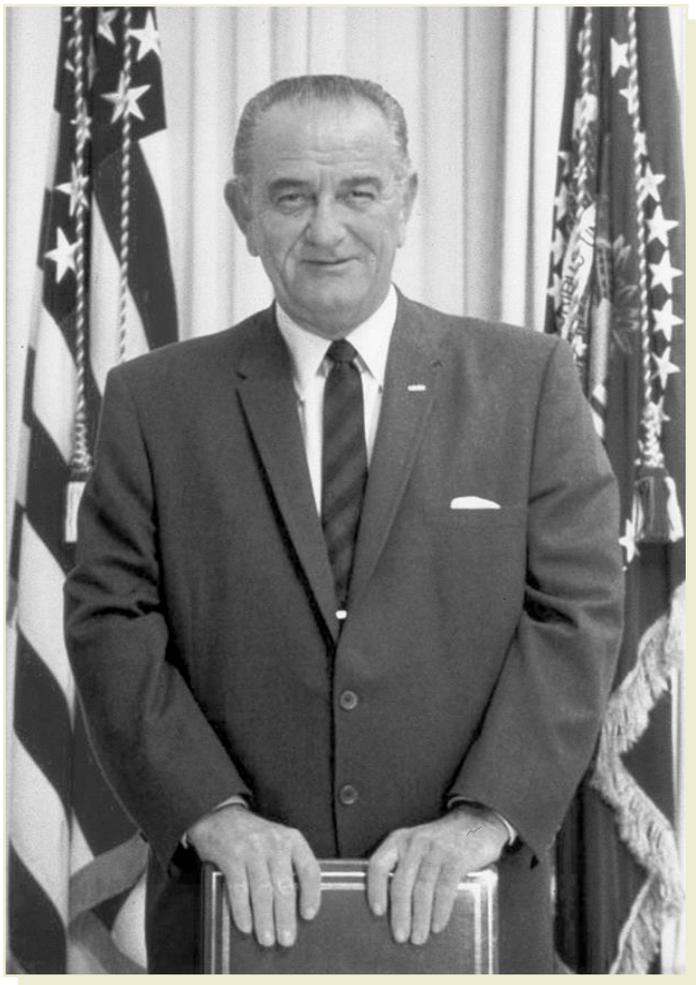
“...to rebuild America from the people point of view.”

Engaging Americans

“The wisdom of this idea is that someday we'll bring it home...”



Continuing the Legacy



The War on Poverty

Volunteers in Service to America



“...you will have the satisfaction of leading a great national effort...”

The Legacy of Expanding Opportunity



“...new vistas
of hope for the
poor,
achievement
for yourself...”

VISTAs Get Things Done!



\$222 million

Cash & in-kind resources raised



2.4 million

Disadvantaged children served



3,000

Sites across the country



1.2 million

Community volunteers mobilized



222,000

Veterans & Family Members served

...in 2015

What Impact Will YOU Make as a VISTA?



Create a sustainable volunteer program

Establish partnerships so community groups work together more effectively

Generate funding to sustain the organization

Engage community residents in creating services

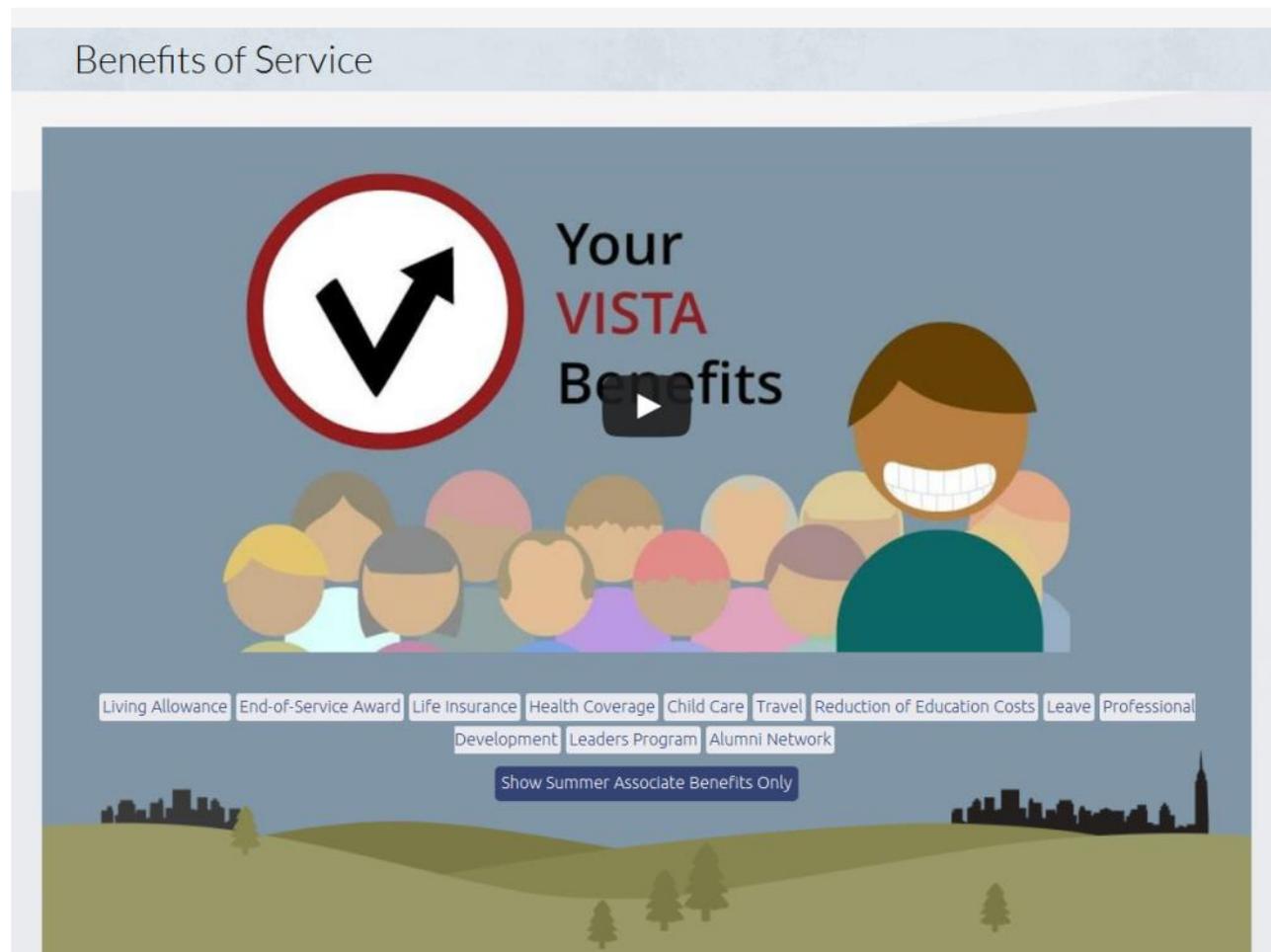
Develop innovative programming

POLL: What Support Will You Need?

What are the top two [2] kinds of support you think you'll need this year?

- Keeping up on my student loans
- Caring for my children
- Keeping my public assistance (SNAP, SSDI, etc.)
- Health care coverage
- Paying my utility bills
- Gaining skills to carry out my VISTA assignment
- Finding other VISTAs where I serve
- Making ends meet on the VISTA allowance

VISTA Benefits



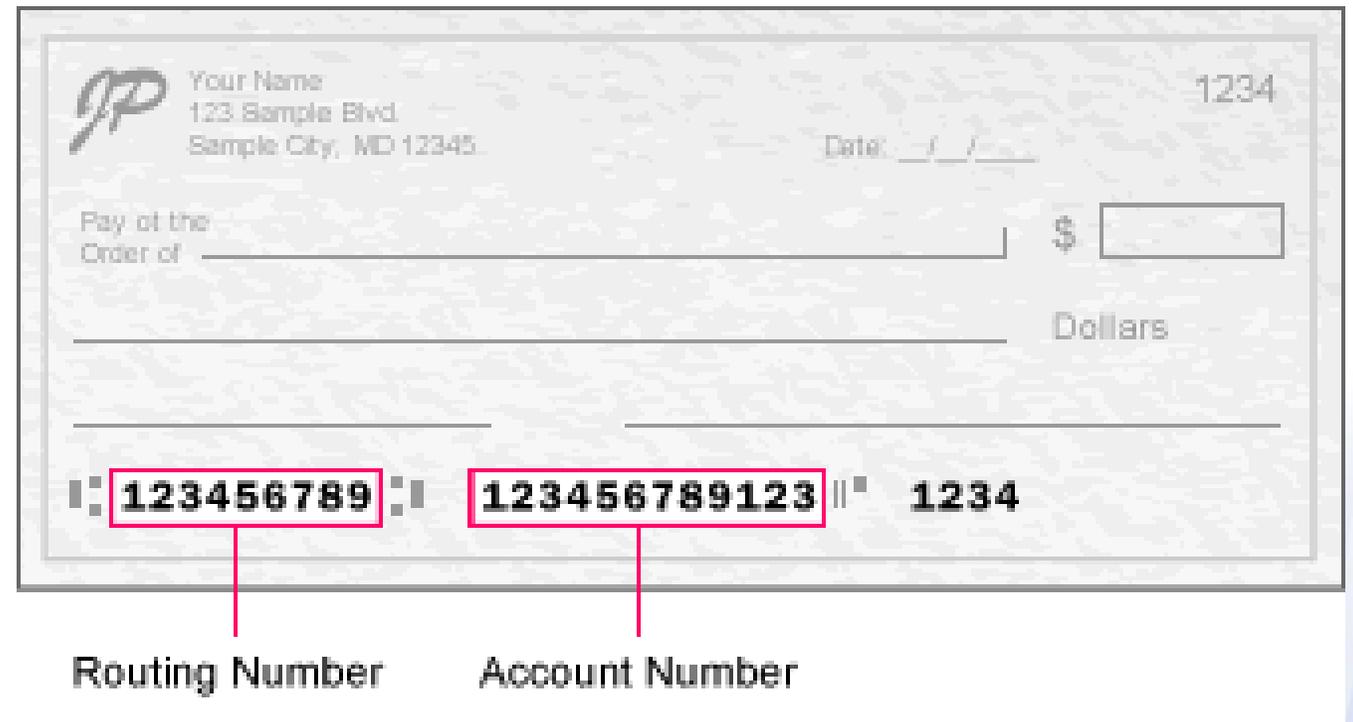
Living Allowance,
Health Care,
Public Assistance...

Living Allowance

- You are paid every two weeks (bi-weekly)
- Go to My AmeriCorps portal to:
 - Provide your bank account information for direct deposit
 - Check your living allowance statements

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



Living Allowance

- Federal—but not state—income taxes are withheld
- Allowance does not qualify you for unemployment
- More information and tips on the VISTA Campus

Health Care

- Under ACA, you must have health insurance unless you are exempt
- You are expected to purchase insurance if you are not exempt



Health Care

- If you're already **insured**, VISTA provides a healthcare allowance up to **\$6,850** to cover out-of-pocket expenses
- If you're **exempt**, VISTA provides a health plan benefit that **covers basic health care** needs
- Both the allowance and the plan are administered by **International Medical Group**

Public Assistance Protection

- For public assistance in place **prior** to VISTA enrollment, benefits remain the same
- For **new** benefits, VISTA living allowance is not factored in for most public assistance—but it **is** factored in for SNAP benefits
- When applying for assistance, print service letters from My AmeriCorps

(The Portal)

- ⊕ Applicant Home
- ⊕ My Living Allowance
- ⊕ My Tax Statements
- ⊕ My In-Service Benefits
- ⊕ My Service Letter
- ⊕ My Trainee Registration Profile
- ⊕ End of Service Benefit Selection
- ⊕ Events
- ⊕ Search Events
- ⊕ My Resources
- ⊕ Contact My AmeriCorps

End-of-Service Benefit

- Upon completing your service term, you can earn:
 - Segal AmeriCorps **Education Award** (\$5,775), **OR**
 - **Cash stipend** (\$1,500)
- If you chose the Education Award, you can switch to the stipend up until the end of your 10th month of service
- Both are taxable

Loan Forbearance and Deferment

With an **Education Award**:

- request **National Service Forbearance** through My AmeriCorps
- no payments during service year; interest paid by Trust



Loan Forbearance and Deferment

With the **cash stipend**:

- request **deferment** from your lenders
- Either way, consider **Income-Based Repayment** and **Public Service Loan Forgiveness**



nationalservice.gov/resources/edaward

On the VISTA Campus



Chapter 1: Background & Purpose

VISTA Member Handbook

- Introduction
- Chapter 1: Background & Purpose
 - Overview of Roles
- Chapter 2: Overview of Your Year in AmeriCorps VISTA
- Chapter 3: Working at Your Project
- Chapter 4: Training & Technical Assistance

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Authorized originally in 1964 by the Economic Opportunity Act, the Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) program provides full-time volunteers to support the efforts of nonprofit organizations and public agencies working to fight poverty in low-income communities. Through the years, more than 180,000 individuals have served in VISTA on thousands of local projects, committing at least one year of full-time service to poor communities in every state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.

In July 1971, the VISTA program was transferred from the Office of Economic Opportunity to ACTION, a newly created federal volunteer agency. Other volunteer programs administered by ACTION included the Foster Grandparent Program, RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Program), and the Senior Companion Program. With the enactment of the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, the



Member Handbook

Review of VISTA Terms & Conditions

VISTA Terms and Conditions

Welcome to VISTA Terms and Conditions

As a VISTA member, you'll gain experience, a wide range of benefits, such as a living allowance, health care, financial help with school or student loans, and a lot more. You'll also have to adhere to a few terms and conditions while you serve.

This course will help you make sense of the requirements. Once you've completed it, you can print a copy of *the Terms and Conditions Acceptance Form* to bring to Pre-Service Orientation (PSO).

Please note that you must be logged in to the Campus for your completion of this required course to be recorded.



Q: VISTAs and Political Activities

- True or False:

1. I can voice my political opinion using social media where I am identified as an AmeriCorps VISTA member.
2. I can demonstrate in a political rally.
3. I can ask people to donate money to a partisan political candidate, as long as it's on my own time and I'm not identified as a VISTA.

A: VISTAs and Political Activities

- You CAN:
 - **Voice your opinion on social media**, but not while serving at your site or using any equipment at your site. You cannot represent yourself as a spokesperson for AmeriCorps, VISTA, CNCS, or your Sponsor.
 - **Demonstrate at a political rally**, as long as you are not identified as a VISTA or perceived to be a VISTA.
 - **Raise funds in support of an issue** on your own time, and when not identified as a VISTA.
- You CAN NOT:
 - **Raise money for a partisan political candidate** at any time during your VISTA service.

Q: VISTAs and Religious Activities

- True or False:

I can join my colleagues in prayer at my service site.



A: VISTAs and Religious Activities

- You CAN:
 - **Practice your religion.**
 - **Participate in religious activities** at your service site.
- You can NOT:
 - **Ask people to pray with you.**
 - **Proselytize.**

Q: VISTAs and Outside Employment

- True or False:
I can have outside employment or earn additional income while serving as a VISTA member.



A: VISTAs and Outside Employment

You CAN have outside employment or earn additional income so long as:

- **It does not conflict** with your VISTA service;
- You are **not employed by your Sponsor**; and
- Your **supervisor approves**.

VISTAs and Criminal History

- Criminal history may or may not affect VISTA eligibility
- Two automatic disqualifying factors:
 - Violence against a minor
 - Sexual offense
- Checks are conducted to protect the community members with whom we work as well as VISTA members and the VISTA program

Where to Get Support While Serving

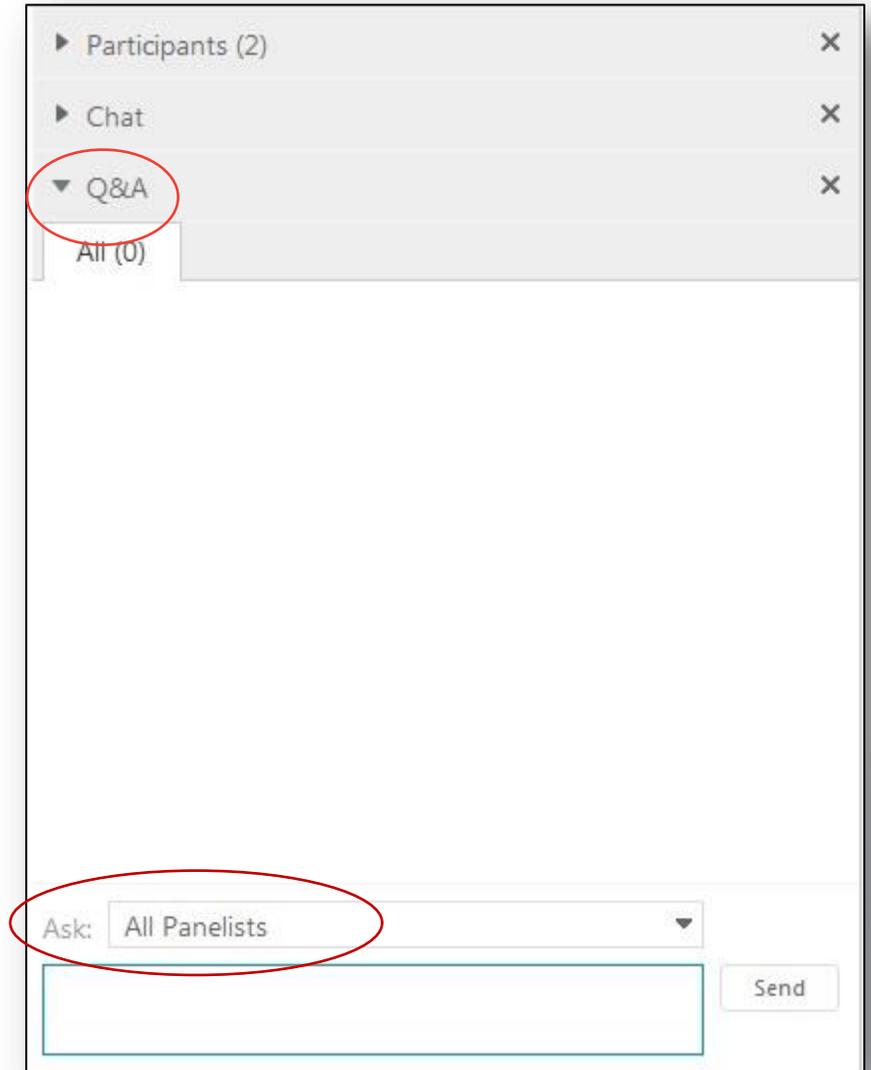
- Supervisor (or VISTA leader, if you have one)
- State Office
 - List of contacts at cns.gov
- VISTA Member Support Unit
 - 1-800-942-2677 or questions.nationalservice.gov
- Online Support
 - vistacampus.gov
 - my.americorps.gov

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?

Questions ?

- 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”



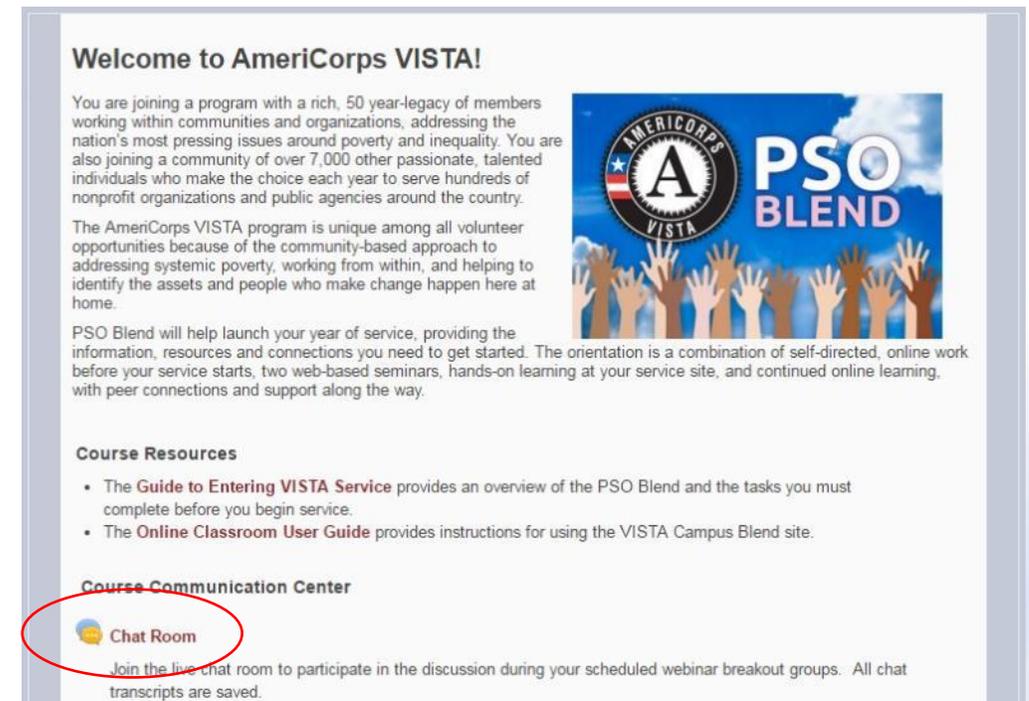
Breakout Sessions

1. Call in to your breakout room conference call.

Group	Breakout room conference call number
Breakout D	888-483-1644 Participant code: 3036415
Breakout E	888-483-1644 Participant code: 4725020
Breakout F	888-483-1644 Participant code: 7148349
Breakout G	888-483-1644 Participant code: 3171450
Breakout H	888-483-1644 Participant code: 7910557
Breakout I	888-483-1644 Participant code: 4695328

2. Log in to your online classroom and go to the chat room.

- <http://vistablend.educationnorthwest.org>
- Click the link to your class, and enter the chat room located in the “Course Communications” section at the top of the page.



Welcome to AmeriCorps VISTA!

You are joining a program with a rich, 50 year-legacy of members working within communities and organizations, addressing the nation's most pressing issues around poverty and inequality. You are also joining a community of over 7,000 other passionate, talented individuals who make the choice each year to serve hundreds of nonprofit organizations and public agencies around the country.

The AmeriCorps VISTA program is unique among all volunteer opportunities because of the community-based approach to addressing systemic poverty, working from within, and helping to identify the assets and people who make change happen here at home.

PSO Blend will help launch your year of service, providing the information, resources and connections you need to get started. The orientation is a combination of self-directed, online work before your service starts, two web-based seminars, hands-on learning at your service site, and continued online learning, with peer connections and support along the way.

Course Resources

- The **Guide to Entering VISTA Service** provides an overview of the PSO Blend and the tasks you must complete before you begin service.
- The **Online Classroom User Guide** provides instructions for using the VISTA Campus Blend site.

Course Communication Center

 **Chat Room**

Join the live chat room to participate in the discussion during your scheduled webinar breakout groups. All chat transcripts are saved.

The Oath of Service

I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter. So help me God.