

Non-Competitive Hiring of AmeriCorps and VISTAs



A member of the DOI/VISTA Team discusses his project at the Caribbean Islands National Wildlife Refuge with Mary Pletcher, DOI Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Capital and Diversity; John Kelly, Deputy Chief of Staff for the Corporation for National and Community Service, and April Elkins, Director of Operations, Conservation Legacy's BRIDGE Network.

Our Teams

The Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE) and Department of Interior (DOI) Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) Teams and the OSMRE/AmeriCorps Team are part of an initiative to address poverty, building capacity, and provide assistance to sponsoring organizations in addressing economic and environmental issues facing communities across America. As an ongoing effort to bring dedicated youth into federal service, these programs are a resource to DOI Bureaus and other federal agencies to non-competitively hire qualified individuals after their term of service.

What is Non-Competitive Eligibility?

Non-competitive eligibility (NCE), as a generic term, is a mechanism through which eligible individuals can be appointed to federal positions non-competitively. To hire a member with NCE requires that the agency has a classified position, an available opening, and that the candidate meets the minimum qualifications of the position. An NCE is applicable only to Federal government positions.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

- 1. Can a VISTA's non-competitive eligibility be used more than once during their year of eligibility?** Yes. A VISTA can use their non-competitive eligibility status as many times as they wish while it is active.
- 2. Can a VISTA's non-competitive eligibility be used for a temporary position?** No. An agency can only appoint non-competitively for other than temporary employment.
- 3. Do positions filled by individuals with a non-competitive eligibility have to be advertised?** Requirements for advertisement are dependent on the non-competitive eligibility. However, all positions must clear the Career Transition Assistance Plan (CTAP) and Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan (ICTAP) prior to hiring.
- 4. Can a VISTA's non-competitive eligibility be extended?** An agency may extend a VISTA's non-competitive eligibility for two additional years if the person qualifies under one of the following situations:
 - A) In the military service
 - B) Studying at a recognized institution of higher learning
 - C) In another activity which, in the agency's view, warrants extension
- 5. If a VISTA serves for 2 or more years, do they get 2 or more years of non-competitive eligibility ?** No. A VISTA's one-year NCE will begin after their complete term or terms of service.
- 6. Do I have to finish my term to receive my non-competitive eligibility?** Yes.
- 7. What do VISTAs need to confirm their non-competitive eligibility status?** VISTAs will be able to print their VISTA certification letter from Corporation of National Community Service 2-3 weeks following their last day of service. This letter will confirm a VISTAs service and eligibility.
- 8. What do AmeriCorps members need to confirm their non-competitive eligibility status?** AmeriCorps members will receive a Certificate of Non-Competitive Hiring Eligibility from the Program Coordinator certifying their service as it applies towards their non-competitive eligibility.
- 9. Does my service count towards work experience when qualifying for federal positions?** Yes.

Hiring Authorities Summary

Participants of the OSMRE/VISTA, DOI/VISTA, and OSMRE/AmeriCorps Teams have successfully entered into full-time Federal service based on three different hiring authorities.

| | VISTA | OSMRE/AMERICORPS | |
|---|--|---|--|
| | Non-Competitive Appointment of former ACTION Volunteers (VISTA) | Direct Hire Authority for Resource Internships | Public Land Corps Act of 1993 |
| Minimum Time Served (Term) | 1 year | 11 weeks (full time) | 640 hours |
| Age Limit | None | None | 16-25, inclusive |
| Length of Time Eligibility Lasts | 1 year | 2 years from the date of degree completion | 120 days |
| Applicable To | All Federal Agencies | DOI Bureaus and Offices | DOI Bureaus and Offices |
| Appointment Types | Career; Career-conditional | Career; Career-conditional | Temporary; TERM; Career; Career-conditional |
| Note | See FAQ #4 for information regarding deferment of NCE | Can be used within 2 years of <i>any</i> degree, not just undergraduate | A minimum 120 hours must be conducted on Federal or Indian lands |
| Herein Referred To As | NCA | DHA | PLC |
| Legislation | 5 CFR § 315.605 | Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2012; Pub. L. 112-74 | Public Land Corps Act of 1993; Pub. L. 109-154 |

1 Teresa Skiba

DOI/VISTA

Position Hired: Education Specialist—Valle De Oro National Wildlife Refuge

Service Summary: DOI/VISTA Teresa Skiba served with Valle De Oro National Wildlife Refuge in New Mexico, working extensively with school aged youth on environmental education. She created programs such as Birds of a Feather, which focuses on conservation, bird adaptations, and healthy habits. She also worked on creating after school programs that center on conservation and field trips to the Refuge. Outside of environmental education, Teresa works with local partners and school volunteers

Hiring Agency: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



Contact: Teresa_skiba@fws.gov

2 Brittany Webb

DOI/VISTA

Position Hired: Park Guide—Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site

Service Summary: Brittany Webb served as a DOI/VISTA with the Friends of Booker T. Washington National Monument and worked for emphasizing the benefits of healthy lifestyle and environmental stewardship. She was able to promote these goals through the community gardens and outreach to local partners to fund trips and educational experiences of the gardens for the community. Brittany created the Booker Character Camp for Junior Rangers which focused on teaching youth the importance of stewardship.

Hiring Agency: National Park Service



Contact: Brittany_webb@nps.gov

3 Corey Barbour

OSMRE/VISTA

Position Hired: Physical Scientist

Service Summary: Corey Barbour served as an OSMRE/VISTA at Campbell County Tourism in Tennessee, where he worked to improve the county's trail system as the Trails Development Coordinator. He secured grants, built relationships with community organizations, and built up a volunteer base in order to sustain these efforts beyond his tenure. Corey's work helped to spur growth and improve recreation and tourism opportunities within Campbell County.

Hiring Agency: Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement



Contact: cbarbour@osmre.gov

4 Doug Chapman

DOI/VISTA

Position Hired: Apprentice Land Appraiser

Service Summary: OSMRE/VISTA Doug Chapman served the Land Trust of the Upper Arkansas in Colorado and worked on creating agricultural opportunities, protecting natural resources, and strengthening the local economy. Doug accomplished these goals through volunteer recruitment and working with local partners to create events for the communities that are a part of the Upper Arkansas watershed.

Hiring Agency: U.S. Forest Service



Contact: douglaschapman@fs.fed.us

5 Tiffany Hoang

DOI (TCU)/VISTA

Position Hired: Loan Specialist

Service Summary: DOI/VISTA Tiffany Hoang served the South-west Indian Polytechnic Institute in New Mexico, building community knowledge and employment opportunities for New Mexico tribes through conservation and agriculture. She developed a Restoration Area to develop an outdoor classroom which also gave volunteers an opportunity to help clean the area. Tiffany also created a Food and Gardening monthly series, to bring in local partners and teach communities about the benefits of gardening and healthy food.

Hiring Agency: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Development



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6 Rob Webber

OSMRE AmeriCorps

Position Hired: Geographer

Service Summary: Rob Webber served as an OSMRE/AmeriCorps Member with the OSMRE Western Region in Denver, Colorado. Working with a fellow AmeriCorps Member, Rob worked on the first stage of the Alluvial Valley Floors project by digitizing a total of 9,000 features from 23 large maps of a study conducted by OSMRE in the 1980's.

Hiring Agency: Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement



Contact: rwebber@osmre.gov

7 Ariel Norris

OSMRE AmeriCorps

Position Hired: Reclamation Specialist

Service Summary: OSMRE/AmeriCorps Member Ariel Norris with the OSMRE Knoxville Field Office, where she worked on multiple databases and reports for the Acid Mine Drainage Project. During her service she has also collaboratively worked with the US Fish and Wildlife Service on a habitat monitoring project and built a database that can be used to help agencies in evaluating impacts of coal mining on endangered species.



Hiring Agency: Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement

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Since February 2015 there have been:

15 Successful Appointments **across** **4** DOI Bureaus **and** **2** Federal Agencies



For More Information Visit

www.doivista.org www.osmrevista.org



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