

Challenges of Multi-site Programs

- Different organizational structures, schedules, and trends for busy seasons
- Sites may not be located near each other
- Sites may have different cultures, expectations and language
- Site supervisors have many additional responsibilities
- Sites have differing levels of technology and communication capabilities
- Goals of partner organizations may differ from AmeriCorps
- Sites have different levels of commitment to AmeriCorps
- Site supervisors vary in skills in management and supervision

Give these features, how will you want to spend most of your time?

Management of problems - supporting sites when difficulties arise, utilizing members in generating solutions, and making sites aware of your willingness to assist them whenever needed

Unifying - seeking to develop a common identity with AmeriCorps and connection to your program among all sites, while adapting to the varying cultures, schedules, customs, and environments; unifying members, staff, site supervisors, and those served

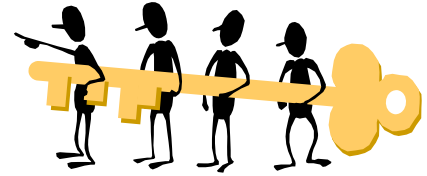
Leadership - enthusiasm demonstrated by you, a leader in your program, to set a tone of excitement about AmeriCorps and the national service movement

Training - providing skills to members and supervisors necessary for effective implementation of the program through orientation and on-going training opportunities throughout the service year

Information - good communication through a comprehensive selection and orientation of sites, clear explanation of expectations, easy reference material for sites, and continual open interaction with sites

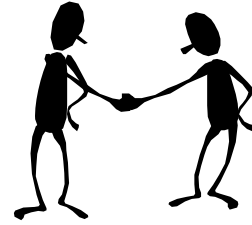
Tips for Successful Multi-site Management

Manage Problems -



- ❑ The key to problem solving is problem prevention
- ❑ Select sites carefully, through competitive application process if possible, in order to maximize "buy in" of partners and appropriateness of member placements
- ❑ Provide site agreements or contracts which clearly detail expectations of members, site supervisors, and AmeriCorps program staff; carefully review this document with members and site supervisors prior to commencement of service and have all parties sign to indicate agreement
- ❑ Host orientation for site supervisors and carefully review all requirements for participation in AmeriCorps - address questions and concerns at the outset of your partnership; make this a pleasant event with refreshments, promote positive association with AmeriCorps
- ❑ Work with Site Supervisors to insure that other staff at placement site understand AmeriCorps and the role of its members, including a review of prohibited activities
- ❑ Maintain open and regular communication with Site Supervisors, to help them feel part of the AmeriCorps network and provide an opportunity for them to bring potential problems or questions to your attention as quickly as possible
- ❑ Address any problems quickly, directly and fairly
- ❑ Keep your commitments and appointments with sites - do not disappoint them by not calling or showing up when they expect you

Unifying -



- ❑ Include Site Supervisors and staff in events such as National Service Days and other corps-wide functions
- ❑ Provide AmeriCorps signs to all service sites for visibility and awareness
- ❑ Recognize successes whenever you can - help partners feel good about their association with AmeriCorps
- ❑ Provide Certificates of Appreciation to Site Supervisors at the end of a member's term of service; acknowledge others that you feel have contributed significantly to your members' experience
- ❑ Facilitate site supervisor meetings or conference calls when possible to assist them in sharing mutual concerns and collaborating on possible solutions
- ❑ Send a letter from AmeriCorps and/or your college to the Site Supervisor's board and their supervisor, commending their contribution to your program, and be sure to share all publicity and good news they helped your program garner

Leading -



- ❑ Share the "National Service News" with Site Supervisors throughout the year, ask for nominations to be highlighted in this as motivation and inspiration for sites to succeed
- ❑ Invite Site Supervisors to serve on Advisory Committee for your AmeriCorps program - convene this group several times throughout the year to seek management insights, suggestions for improvements, ways to ease the administrative burden on sites

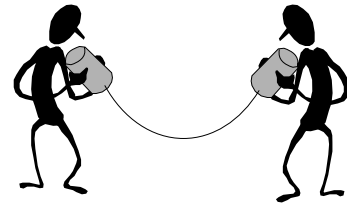
- ❑ Give copy of AmeriCorps members' pledge to all sites; invite community partners to "swearing in" ceremony at start of term of service
- ❑ Remind yourself of why you chose to be a part of AmeriCorps and share this inspiration with others in your program

T raining -



- ❑ Provide information about AmeriCorps, its philosophy, role of members and its guiding concept of "Getting Things Done" at orientation and reinforce this throughout the year
- ❑ Generate procedure for orienting new supervisors who begin after initial orientation
- ❑ Offer training to all staff who interact with member on-site (e.g. not just the principal, but the teacher who works with the member)
- ❑ Use AmeriCorps Training and Technical Assistance, for yourself, and try and generate relevant workshops that would be a benefit to site supervisors in all of the work that they do
- ❑ Trainings should cover: mission and goals of program, technical information about expectations and requirements, clear explanation of policies and procedures, information on resources in your program, description of how sites can utilize other sites and program staff for support
- ❑ Generate a training schedule before the year begins so site supervisors (and you!) make certain that all areas are covered and available at accessible and appropriate times

Information -



- ❑ Determine what information you need to collect from sites before program begins, working with Site Supervisors to insure data is manageable to collect and a meaningful representation of members' activities
- ❑ Involve members in collection of data - educate them about what you need so they can log information throughout term and assist Site Supervisors in this task
- ❑ Collect information from sites before you need it, so there is time to clarify and synthesize information before you submit to your management
- ❑ Make it as easy as possible for Site Supervisors to give your program the attention and time it needs - provide simple formats for information, clearly articulate your program's needs, streamline their responsibilities as much as possible
- ❑ Identify opportunities when site supervisors might already be meeting or communicating with each other, and piggy-back on those events (i.e. school board meetings, community meetings, etc.)
- ❑ Utilize members as liaisons for your communication with Site Supervisors
- ❑ Be aware of particular timelines and schedules of sites (i.e. do they have "busy seasons", are their offices closed over holiday periods?) and reflect this in the timing of your requests for information
- ❑ Use email; establish your own internet mailing list for regular updates and announcements, and don't forget to mail printed copies of all emails to those not on line
- ❑ Chart the communication streams between you and the site and within the site to determine who should be communicated to and which means of communication would be most effective