

# Volunteer Iowa Update - January 2025

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## Iowa Volunteer Hall of Fame Nominations Now Open

Nominations for the 2025 Iowa Volunteer Hall of Fame Awards are now being accepted! **Nominations must be submitted online or postmarked by January 21, 2025**; honorees will be recognized during a special ceremony at the Capitol in April. Details and nomination materials can be found on the [Volunteer Iowa website](#).

Induction into the Iowa Volunteer Hall of Fame is the highest state-level honor volunteers can receive; the people selected have changed the community, the state, the nation, or the world through the gifts of their time and talent. Inductees are recognized both during a special ceremony held in the State Capitol Building and by having their names engraved on the Volunteer Hall of Fame plaque on permanent display in the State Historical Museum. Since the award's inception in 1989, over 175 Iowans have been honored.

Any Iowa individual, national service member (current or alum), family, group, organization, nonprofit, business, or corporation, who has made a long-lasting positive and meaningful difference in the lives of people through their volunteer service activities, may be nominated for the Iowa Volunteer Hall of Fame.

Anyone with questions or needing assistance with the nomination form can contact [Rebecca Gernes](#).

## January Is National Mentoring Month

Welcome to National Mentoring Month! Iowa MENTOR is celebrating this annual campaign aimed at expanding quality mentoring opportunities to connect more of our community's young people with caring adults.

Research shows that mentors play a powerful role in providing young people with the tools to make positive choices, attend and engage in school, and reduce or avoid negative behaviors. In turn, these young people are:

- 92% more likely to volunteer regularly in their communities
- 75% more likely to have held a leadership position in a club or sports team
- 22% more likely to have experienced a strong sense of belonging while growing up

Yet, the same research shows that more than one in three young people in our country will grow up without a mentor outside of their family.

National Mentoring Month is the time of year when engagement from community members interested in becoming a mentor is highest. This year, with the support of the mentoring community, we are encouraging the public to go beyond just digital engagement and become involved in real life. Mentoring relationships are at their best when connections are made between a caring adult and a young person who knows that someone is there to help guide them through life choices.



**MENTOR**  
Iowa HHS

To become a mentor, take the first step via the [Mentoring Connector](#). To learn more about the role mentoring plays in our community, visit the [Iowa MENTOR website](#).

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## Celebrate 30 Years of MLK National Day of Service

This year, the nation celebrates the 30th anniversary of [Martin Luther King, Jr., Day of Service](#), where Americans volunteer to honor Dr. King's legacy. Through service and volunteerism, we have the power to bring people together, help others, and create the Beloved Community of Dr. King's dreams.

For 30 years, the MLK Day of Service has grown, and its impact has increased as more Americans embrace the idea that citizenship involves taking an active role in improving the communities where we live, work, and play. Every year, we show the nation that joining together in service can transform the lives of those who serve and the lives of others. Service to others gives communities across the nation a way to come together and reveal our common humanity.

Join us this MLK Day to build a Beloved Community through unity, service, and transformation. Volunteer to create lasting change that will benefit our communities for years.

This MLK Day of Service, join us in service to strengthen ties to our communities and one another while addressing critical issues. Learn more and volunteer at [AmeriCorps.gov/MLKDay](#).

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## Funding Opportunity Available for Cities

Applications are open for the City Volunteer Initiative Training + Implementation Funding program to empower change through volunteer engagement, culminating in a 9/11 Day of Service. Up to ten cities will be selected for each opportunity.

Specially tailored for cities and municipalities, this cohort-based program provides training and \$4,000 to support city staff to develop, implement, and enhance volunteer engagement strategies that align with their unique needs and objectives. Each program includes comprehensive training and capacity building, implementation funding, and individualized coaching. Participants will implement what they learn and host a 9/11 Day of Service in their community. [City Volunteer Engagement Initiative](#) application deadline is January 30, 2025.

Contact [info@volunteeriowa.org](mailto:info@volunteeriowa.org) with questions.

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## Volunteer Iowa Day at the Capitol

Volunteer Iowa (the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service) and Iowa MENTOR host Volunteer Iowa Day at the Capitol each year to share with legislators the latest information on the tremendous contributions volunteers and mentors make and their impact in Iowa's communities. It is also an opportunity to educate lawmakers about the impacts their policy decisions have on Volunteer Iowa programs and services. This year, Volunteer Iowa Day at the Capitol will be on Wednesday, February 5.



Staff members and participants from Volunteer Iowa programs including AmeriCorps, AmeriCorps Seniors, RSVP, Volunteer Centers and Mentoring Programs, will share with lawmakers the impact their programs have across the state and will inform them about the tremendous program support and resources provided to them by Volunteer Iowa and Iowa MENTOR. Commissioners and programs of Volunteer Iowa are invited to take part in this annual event to help us:

- Highlight the importance of service and volunteering in Iowa

- Build legislators' awareness of policy issues important for expanding our sector
- Provide a venue for volunteer and national service programs to connect with their local legislators

TRAINING WEBINAR: The training webinar will prepare attendees with information about the day and Volunteer Iowa's current policy priorities. [Join the training webinar](#) at 12:00 noon on January 22. A recording will be made available after the webinar.

The Volunteer Iowa staff create a handbook each year that can help attendees navigate through the process to prep for the day, reach out to legislators, and help with social media the day of the event. For more information, contact [info@volunteeriowa.org](mailto:info@volunteeriowa.org) or 800.308.5987. [Register today](#) to join us for Volunteer Iowa Day at the Capitol!

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## Certificate in Volunteer Engagement Training Program

Join the Volunteer Centers of Iowa, in partnership with Volunteer Iowa, for an exciting six-session virtual training program beginning January 28! This dynamic series will provide you with an in-depth understanding of the core aspects of nonprofit volunteer engagement, equipping you with valuable strategies to recruit, retain, and recognize volunteers effectively.

This highly interactive training will offer practical tools and insights to create inclusive and impactful volunteer experiences, with each session designed to support your growth as a leader in volunteer engagement. Plus, upon completion, you'll earn a Certificate in Volunteer Engagement, boosting your credentials and enhancing your professional toolkit!

Throughout the program, you'll explore key topics such as:

- Establishing the Framework for Success
- Planning for Effective Volunteer Engagement
- Outreach Strategies and Creating Opportunities
- Streamlined Intake and Onboarding Processes
- Supportive Supervision Techniques
- Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

Whether you are brand new to volunteer management or looking to deepen your expertise, this program will provide you with the skills and confidence to make a lasting impact. Don't miss this opportunity to advance your knowledge and earn a Certificate in Volunteer Engagement!

Dates: January 28, February 4, February 11, February 18, February 25, and March 4. All sessions run 10 a.m. – noon. Cost to participate is \$125. [Click here to register](#).



**MENTOR**  
Iowa HHS

## Adopting a Mentoring Mindset

Introduction to the "Becoming a Better Mentor" Series  
Virtual Training for Mentors

Tuesday, February 25, 2025, 4:30-6:00pm

[Register to attend the training](#)

Iowa MENTOR will host a virtual training session on the mentoring mindset in February. This training is for any individual who is interested in becoming a mentor or is serving as a mentor in a mentoring program. A perfect "first step training" where we will explore some critical attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors that serve as the foundation of being an effective mentor. Participants will receive a certificate of completion and should come prepared to learn and interact with others.

The mentoring mindset training is meant to engage mentors in the journey of self-awareness and supportive engagement. Questions? Contact [Toni Lampley](#).

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## Volunteerism in the News

- [Iowa volunteering rebounds after COVID-era slump](#)
  - [Youth Service Board Reports Successful Food Drive](#)
  - [Supervisors learn about work RSVP volunteers are doing in Hancock County](#)
  - [Local fraud fighters urge residents to 'learn, prevent and protect'](#)
  - [Eastern Iowa man celebrates 50 years of donating blood](#)
  - [When kindness becomes a habit, it improves our health](#)
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## Current Volunteer Iowa Opportunities

Volunteer with us! Find volunteer opportunities with Volunteer Iowa here: [Volunteer Iowa | Volunteer Iowa \(galaxydigital.com\)](#)

Other Iowa AmeriCorps programs supported by Volunteer Iowa are also recruiting now. Find a listing of Iowa AmeriCorps programs at [Join AmeriCorps | Volunteer Iowa](#).

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## Important Dates

- January: [National Mentoring Month](#)
  - January 1: New Year's Day (Volunteer Iowa office closed)
  - January 7: [I Am A Mentor Day](#)
  - January 8: [War on Poverty Day](#)
  - January 14: [Thank Your Mentor Day](#)
  - January 20: [MLK Day of Service](#) (Volunteer Iowa office closed)
  - January 17: [International Mentoring Day](#)
  - January 21: [Iowa Volunteer Hall of Fame nominations due](#)
  - January 23: [Youth Voice Day](#)
  - January 27: [Thank Your Mentee Day](#)
  - February: [Black History Month](#)
  - February 5: [Volunteer Iowa Day at the Capitol](#)
  - February 17: [Random Acts of Kindness Day](#)
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*Looking for a way to give back? Visit [Get Connected](#) today to find volunteer opportunities. Organizations can [post volunteer opportunities](#) on Get Connected as well at no cost.*

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