

Oregon Campus Compact AmeriCorps Program

E-News Submission Form

The objective of ORCC AmeriCorps E-News is to share our service members’ stories and celebrate their personal and professional success! Writing this article gives you an opportunity to practice professional writing skills, reflect on your experience, and contribute to the voice of national service. The newsletter is shared with all ORCC AmeriCorps Members, Oregon's other AmeriCorps programs, the CNCS State Office, site supervisors, and ORCC's greater partnership The article can be about anything, though ideally more than just a general outline of your service.

**Here are some topic ideas:**

* A story about your service—for example if you are running a mentoring program it could be the story of recruiting one of your mentors and seeing the impact they have on another student
* A description of an event you were involved in- did you plan it? What happened on the day of? Did anything go wrong? What was the impact of the event afterwards?
* A narrative about something specific your experience as a VISTA has taught you, or a way it has changed your perspective
* A day-in-the-life at your VISTA site
* A retelling of your journey to becoming a VISTA
* Anything else you can dream up, just run it by a VISTA Leader first!

The article will…

* Be 250-400 words.
* Be written in the first person.
* Maintain a positive, professional voice while honestly representing your service experience.
* Be descriptive, and capture the feeling and flavor of the events or characters in the story.
* Have a beginning, middle, and an end.
* Be reviewed by someone else before it is submitted (if you would like to submit your article **early**, Claire would be more than happy to workshop it with you).
* Include at least one accompanying photo related to your article. Include a brief description of the photo and attach the file in one of these formats; .jpg, .gif, .png, .tif, .gps

**Instructions:**

1. **Complete the fields below and save as a word document**
2. **Email as an attachment to your VISTA Leader Claire (claire@oregoncampuscompact.org)**
3. **Claire will contact you to discuss edits to the article prior to its publication**

EXAMPLE ARTICLE

**NAME: Claire Johnson**

**SITE: ORCC**

**POSITION TITLE: VISTA Leader**

**ARTICLE TITLE: Showing Up**

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| **BODY OF ARTICLE** |
| **The dead of winter in Southeast Washington, D.C. is not, by outward appearances, the best time or place for community organizing.** **The part of our nation’s Capitol across the Anacostia River, tucked into the corner of Maryland, is a mostly-Black neighborhood known for high crime rates and low graduation rates. As a VISTA at a local education nonprofit, Turning the Page, I spent a year working on leadership development with parents of children in Southeast’s schools.** **I quickly learned that in Southeast, service providers and educators are sometimes difficult to pin down. It wasn’t that they didn’t believe in the work we were doing—they understood well the need for greater family involvement both in children’s education and in the school as a whole—but they had so many other things going on and were so underfunded that at times we had to reschedule meetings two or three times. One afternoon in February, when the 20 degree air was seeping straight through my parka and I had just driven over for the second unattended teacher meeting that week, I trudged down to the cafeteria for our weekly PTA meeting with a heavy heart, wondering if me being there was making any difference at all. One by one, the parents trickled in. As our small group began to express our frustrations with dead ends and how hard it was get new members at the PTA, one parent, Mr. Brown, turned to me and said, “that’s what I like about Turning the Page. No matter what, y’all always show up. Even if it’s snowing, even if there’s only two of us parents here. I know we’ll have a good conversation, I know you’ll be here.”****I almost said *Of course we do, Mr. Brown.* But then it occurred to me that ‘showing up” was not a given. I had experienced it myself—despite the best of intentions, teachers, social workers, and service providers often didn’t show up. They didn’t live in Southeast, and they were free to come and go as they pleased. But the parents, they were always here because this was their home. They couldn’t just stay away and decide not to face the issues in their community for a day. Whether they did anything about it or not, those “issues” were their reality. The space I had built here was unique, something the parents could count on.** **I had a new spring in my step on those cold winter days after that. Change can happen anytime, anywhere, as long as you show up.**  |

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