

AmeriCorps Week being celebrated

Job & Family

Services (J&FS) Column

AmeriCorps is a national service program that is designed to help communities tackle pressing issues such as hunger, disaster relief, and education. Each year, AmeriCorps engages 80,000 individuals to serve in over 15,000 community organizations across the United States.

AmeriCorps has three main programs under its umbrella: AmeriCorps State and National, members serve with nonprofits and community organizations; AmeriCorps VISTA, members serve full time fighting poverty; and AmeriCorps NCCC, a team based residential program for adults 18-24.

These three programs produce amazing results throughout our country annually. For example, during 2010, AmeriCorps members served 3.5 million disadvantaged youth while members mobilized 3.4 million community volunteers and raised \$480 million dollars in 2011. AmeriCorps may be a national program, but now it has a local impact.

Perry JFS became an AmeriCorps State host site in 2010 through a partnership with the Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks. Since then, Perry JFS' AmeriCorps member has helped over 200 people complete applications and file income taxes through the Ohio Benefit Bank, made over 400 referrals to needed services, collected 3,727 cans of food and 2,550 personal hygiene items through Make A Difference Day projects, and mobilized volunteers who have served almost 300 hours assisting Perry County residents. This partnership has allowed Perry JFS to serve clients outside of its traditional service role.

In an effort to continue strengthening our community one family at a time, Perry JFS will be participating in the sixth annual AmeriCorps Weeks starting March 10.

AmeriCorps week is a recruitment and recognition event to highlight AmeriCorps impact on local communities. Perry JFS' AmeriCorps member will be setting up a display outside of the teen room at the main branch of the Perry County District Library in New Lexington.

If you would like to join the effort to get things done in Perry County, please call Perry JFS' AmeriCorps member, Cassandra Argo, at 740.342.3551 ext 631 for more information. AmeriCorps information can also be found at www.americorps.gov. Together we can make a difference: one child, one adult, one family at a time.