
Tony Evers
Governor



Jeanne Duffy
Executive Director

Bipartisan Efforts Honor AmeriCorps Members' Service by Exempting the Segal Education Award from State Income Tax

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CONTACT: Jeanne Duffy, Executive Director

PHONE: 608-692-4121

EMAIL: jeanne.duffy@wisconsin.gov

With his signature, Governor Evers exempted the AmeriCorps Segal Education Award from state income tax, benefiting Wisconsin AmeriCorps members serving in communities throughout Wisconsin.

Governor Evers proposed the exemption in his 2021-2023 Executive Budget to recognize and reward AmeriCorps members' contributions to Wisconsin through their service. "Wisconsin AmeriCorps members provide critical service throughout the state in education, conservation, health care, addiction recovery, disaster response, and through supporting a huge array of other vital local efforts," said Evers. "This good work exemplifies our shared Wisconsin values of empathy, compassion, service, and taking care of our neighbors. Exempting the Segal Education Award from state income tax will remove this unique tax burden from those that have served the people of Wisconsin and help make it possible for AmeriCorps members to more fully continue their education and expand their ability to serve our communities."

"We would like to thank Governor Evers for his strong support of AmeriCorps and service in Wisconsin and for proposing the exemption for the Segal Education Award in the Executive Budget," said Jeanne Duffy, Executive Director of Serve Wisconsin. "Additionally, we would like to thank the members of the Wisconsin Assembly and Senate for the wide support they have shown for this measure, including Representative David Bowen for his work creating the initial proposal and reaching out to the Governor and Senator Dale Kooyenga for his efforts guiding the proposal through the Joint Committee on Finance and into the final budget legislation."

Having served as an AmeriCorps member with Public Allies Milwaukee, Representative Bowen has a strong understanding of both the value of AmeriCorps service for communities throughout our state and the importance the ability to access the education award has for many of those that have served. "My AmeriCorps experience with Public Allies Milwaukee at the local nonprofit organization Urban Underground played a fundamental role in directing me towards a life of service, and as both a two-time AmeriCorps alumnus and a legislator, I am thrilled to see this important policy change come to fruition," said Bowen. "AmeriCorps members serve our Wisconsin communities with great pride and to great effect, and they deserve to have that service, often for very little financial compensation, fully rewarded with this education award. I am glad that even in an era of hyper-partisanship, we can all agree that the youth who serve our communities deserve to be fully recognized for that service without running into unnecessary financial disincentives."



AmeriCorps
Wisconsin

ServeWisconsin@wisconsin.gov

101 E. Wilson St., 6th Floor Madison, WI53703

www.servewisconsin.wi.gov

Senator Kooyenga explained his support for pushing for the inclusion of the provision in the biennial budget, saying "Wisconsin has a special appreciation for those who serve our communities, and I especially salute the service of AmeriCorps participants. Under this budget provision, proceeds from the AmeriCorps education award would be exempted from the state income tax, and I was pleased to help usher this through the process."

"Eliminating the state income tax will help those that have already made a difference statewide and create an incentive to help to keep these dedicated individuals in our state following their service, and will attract new AmeriCorps members to serve in Wisconsin and use their education award at our colleges and universities," said Duffy. "While the total amount of this exemption is minimal in the context of the state budget, it will have a significant impact on those that completed their service commitment and made a difference in Wisconsin communities."

Each year, over 1,200 AmeriCorps members serve nearly 1 million hours at roughly 350 service sites throughout the state. Following service, members become eligible to access a Segal Education Award worth up to \$6,345 for those providing a full year of service. However, the current level of state income tax on these awards prevented some AmeriCorps members from even accessing their hard-earned Segal Education Award. With the passage of this exemption, Wisconsin becomes only the fourth state in the nation to provide this targeted tax relief for AmeriCorps members

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Serve Wisconsin is the state commission for national and community service. Our mission is to promote service, provide training, and allocate resources to programs that enrich lives and communities through service and volunteerism. We are currently administering funds to 29 AmeriCorps programs throughout the state. We are governed by a 21-member citizen board appointed by the Governor. For more information about Serve Wisconsin or funded AmeriCorps programs, visit www.servewisconsin.wi.gov.