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## SERVE WISCONSIN

# Governor Evers Supports AmeriCorps Alumni in Budget

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Wisconsin AmeriCorps members provide service throughout the state in education, conservation, health care and addiction recovery, services for vulnerable populations, disaster response, and other local efforts. Additionally, they have provided over 500,000 hours of service since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, providing invaluable assistance to local communities.

Recognizing AmeriCorps members' contributions to the State of Wisconsin, Governor Evers proposes eliminating the state income tax on the AmeriCorps Education Award. Eliminating the state income tax will attract AmeriCorps members to serve in Wisconsin and use their education award at our colleges and universities.

*"I had to pay the tax on my education award at a time in my life where I was attending graduate school and did not have extra funds to pay the tax," stated Claire Prather, who served two terms with Partners for After School Success in Dane County. It is unfortunate that we are expected to pay income tax on our education awards at a time where AmeriCorps alums are continuing our education or starting in a new job, especially since we just dedicated time to serving our community. This was definitely not just an issue for me, as I know it would have made a real difference for those I served with, as well as my two sisters that also served."*

Currently, AmeriCorps members pay taxes on their modest annual education award of around \$6,300 annually. The education award is used for tuition or to pay back student loan debt. Unlike other scholarships, the education award is subject to state income taxes that increase tax bills for students or people with limited incomes. Having to pay these taxes often makes it difficult for AmeriCorps members even to access their awards.

*"I am very proud to have done a year of service during the challenges we have faced due to the coronavirus pandemic. Being able to help the food insecure as a volunteer manager for Milwaukee's inner-city food pantries was some of the most humbling work I will likely ever do," stated Joshua Kather, who served with MCHS Volunteer Wisconsin at Friedens Community Ministries. "Using my education award this fall to attend law school has been very helpful; however, given the pandemic, it has been hard to find work to pay off other loans and regular living expenses. Exempting the education award from state income taxes would go a long way to support those who continue to serve Wisconsin amidst a devastating pandemic."*

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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](http://www.servewisconsin.wi.gov).

