



GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON SERVICE AND VOLUNTEERISM

MAY 7, 2025 | 2:00 PM

FIRST FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM

1700 W. WASHINGTON ST, PHOENIX, AZ 85007

A general meeting of the Governor's Commission on Service and Volunteerism convened on May 7, 2025, notice duly given.

MEMBERS PRESENT (8)	MEMBERS ABSENT (5)
Donna Davis, Chair	Alex Gabaldon
Robert Ashcraft	Thomas Winkel
Ariel Ackerman	Luis Vivaldi (Ex-Officio)
Tyler Butler	Helain Lewis
Felipe Garcia	Chris Gibbs
Yvonne Pastor (proxy for Michael Hammett)	
Bianca Lopez (proxy for Donna Martin)	
Kylie Chamblee (proxy for Kimberly Rice-Gentry)	
STAFF AND GUESTS PRESENT (6)	
Emily Litchfield, GOYFF	Nate Kelly, Presenter
Jessica Deery, GOYFF	Maria Cristina Fuentes, Presenter
Julian Cashman, GOYFF	Alana-Jasmene Little, GOYFF

CALL TO ORDER

- **Donna Davis, Chair**, called the Governor's Commission on Service and Volunteerism Council meeting to order at **2:15 PM**. **Eight** members were present, **three** were absent, and **six** staff/guests were present.

WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS

- Donna Davis, Chair, announced that a quorum had been reached before welcoming attendees, asking commissioners and staff from the [Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family \(GOYFF\)](#) to introduce themselves and participate in an icebreaker.
- Everyone shared their plans or activities recognizing National Volunteer Month in April.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- **Donna Davis, Chair**, requested a review of the **March 12, 2025**, meeting minutes before requesting a motion to approve them as drafted.
 - **Robert Ashcraft** moved to approve the meeting minutes as drafted
 - **Tyler Butler** seconded the motion.
- **Donna Davis, Chair**, asked for a discussion of the minutes, and no members requested amendments.
- **Donna Davis, Chair**, called a vote, and at **2:28 PM**, the motion to approve the meeting minutes as drafted passed with no dissenting votes.

BUSINESS

- **Donna Davis, Chair**, welcomed and introduced **Nate Kelly**, the [Arizona Media Foundation](#) Vice President of Development, and Consultant **Maria Cristina Fuentes**, to share information about the [Public Education Program \(PEP\)](#), which supports outreach and educational campaigns for the State of Arizona.
 - **Nate Kelly** explained how PEP operates under the [Arizona Media Association](#) to help government and nonprofit organizations share their messages across more than 250 participating media outlets statewide, in both English and Spanish. The Arizona Media Association supports local media through advocacy and compliance resources. Recently, the [Arizona Local News Foundation](#) funded 15 journalists to focus on educational solutions in Arizona. PEP offers high-volume advertising at a 75% discount compared to market rates, includes free ad production, and guarantees a return on investment (ROI) of 4:1. Organizations retain full ownership of their creative content. In 2023, AmeriCorps invested \$122,000 in PEP, resulting in over 18,000 broadcast spots and an estimated media value of \$1.6 million, achieving a 15:1 ROI. A similar investment in 2024 generated more than \$1.3 million in airtime value. PEP is designed to be a turnkey solution and provides detailed monthly performance reports, ensuring transparency and complete visibility into ad placements and their impact.
 - **Maria Cristina Fuentes** emphasized that the Arizona Local News Foundation plays a crucial role in supporting and protecting local news media across Arizona, recognizing its importance in informing communities. She noted a significant initiative by the Arizona Media Association: an annual media study that provides data on how Arizonians consume and perceive media. A recent finding revealed that 86% of Arizonians trust their local press, underscoring local journalism's ongoing relevance and importance, especially in light of declining trust in national media outlets. The foundation's mission is to ensure the health and effectiveness of local media, serving all Arizonians by helping to disseminate accurate and accessible information.
 - The GOYFF invested \$100,000 with PEP in 2023. The Public Service Announcements (PSAs) launched on May 1, 2025, and will run through the end of August 2025.
 - To view the presentation, [click here](#).
- **Donna Davis, Chair**, thanked **Nate Kelly** and **Maria Cristina Fuentes** for the excellent presentation and introduced **Emily Litchfield**, the GOYFF AmeriCorps Director, who will provide an update about AmeriCorps State Formula Continuation applications.
 - **Emily Litchfield** stated that a vote will not be held to approve the submission of an application to the federal agency, creating uncertainty about how to proceed with the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 grants. The federal agency has not provided information on the available funds. Next week, she will meet with the office's procurement team to discuss options and the possibility of developing multiple plans. The federal agency has set two deadlines—June 13 and July 11, 2025—and she stressed the importance of meeting the June deadline. She will collaborate with the commissioners to schedule a special session for the week of June 2 to finalize the vote.

UPDATES

- **Donna Davis, Chair**, welcomed and introduced **Julian Cashman**, the new GOYFF Service and Volunteerism Specialist, to share his background and final activities related to his role in supporting the work of the [Governor's Youth Commission](#) (GYC).
 - **Julian Cashman** discussed his background as a [Peace Corps](#) volunteer and an [AmeriCorps](#) alumnus, his experience managing an AmeriCorps program at [Arizona State University](#) (ASU), and his oversight of [USAID](#) grants for [Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College](#) at ASU.

- **Julian Cashman** continued by discussing the work of the GYC.
 - The GYC held its fourth quarter meeting on April 26, marking the final meeting for the 2024-2025 year. Members participated in a [Global Youth Service Day](#) event, where they cleaned up Tempe Town Lake in partnership with [Keep Tempe Beautiful](#). After the cleanup, the youth gathered at the Capitol to share the outcomes of their workgroup projects and celebrate their accomplishments with one another.
 - Applications to serve on the commission for the 2025-2026 year are now being accepted and are available on the website [here](#). The deadline for submissions is May 26, 2025.
 - Working to analyze historical data regarding commissioner participation and identifying areas for improvement in outreach efforts. Only one youth commissioner from the City of Mesa has served on the GYC in the past six years. The GOYFF requests assistance from the Governor's Commission on Service and Volunteerism to help promote the application process, particularly in rural counties, to ensure a more accurate representation of Arizona's communities.
- **Robert Ashcraft** presented an update regarding the [Service Enterprise Initiative](#) (SEI) through the [ASU Lodestar Center for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Innovation](#).
 - ASU held meetings with several Service Enterprise recipients to prepare for the commission report, which requires significant time and energy. This report is essential for fostering discussions with funders and stakeholders, especially in Tucson and Pima County, where there is a growing emphasis on identifying charitable nonprofit partners that reinvest in their communities. One main priority is finding a fiscal agent partner in Tucson, and conversations are ongoing with a few nonprofit organizations.
 - Exploration is currently taking place regarding the [Arizona Bowl](#) grant opportunity to connect with organizations that may be well-positioned to apply and, more importantly, are willing to support the SEI infrastructure and engagement initiatives. These developments significantly advance identifying local opportunities in Southern Arizona and refine the approach based on previous reports. The goal is to foster sustainable, high-impact investment in community-driven regional projects.
 - To view the presentation, [click here](#).
- **Emily Litchfield** provided an update on AmeriCorps State and National programs in Arizona, highlighting recent significant changes at the federal level that are impacting AmeriCorps programs nationwide.
 - On April 16, the federal government disbanded the [National Civilian Community Corps](#) (NCCC) teams, which included a team stationed in Prescott. Later that evening, the Washington Post reported that many staff members at the AmeriCorps federal agency were placed on administrative leave. Estimates indicate that these actions affected approximately 80-85% of team members. This situation has caused significant disruption to the state's planning and program delivery processes.
 - A significant development occurred on Friday, April 25, when the federal government announced the termination of several programs, including [AmeriCorps VISTA](#) and [AmeriCorps Seniors](#), and funding that supports these programs, such as the [Volunteer Generation Fund](#), [Research and Evaluation](#), and [National Days of Service](#). These decisions, made at the federal level and directly linked to specific grant numbers, resulted in \$400 million in total budget cuts nationwide, with \$372 million cut from [AmeriCorps State and National programs](#), approximately 80% of the total funding for these initiatives. Most reductions (over

- 90%) affected programs supported by state commissions. Arizona faced a 52% reduction in the financing, while 12 other states lost all funding entirely.
- On April 29, Arizona, 23 other states, and the District of Columbia filed a lawsuit challenging the federal termination of specific programs. Arizona Attorney General Kris Mayes issued a [press release about this action](#). This lawsuit follows an earlier [complaint](#) filed on April 28 in California by labor unions, member organizations, and local governments. That complaint aimed to contest reductions in force (RIFs) at several agencies and requested a temporary restraining order (TRO).
 - Arizona has actively communicated with subgrantees to find ways to continue supporting AmeriCorps members. The state is exploring options such as program transfers and alternative solutions, with decisions guided by specific program factors and new guidelines. Currently, there has been no clarity regarding the agency's decision-making process.
 - **Robert Ashcraft** emphasized the importance of maintaining a long-term perspective during disruption. He highlighted a deep commitment to volunteerism that goes beyond just AmeriCorps. Even in the most challenging situations, there remains a strong case for civic engagement and the vital role of civic groups. The key question is how to enhance the value of investments in volunteerism and civic participation. Future scenarios depend on the strength of civic involvement, particularly through national service and volunteer efforts. He reminded the commission that civic engagement has deep roots in Arizona and continues to hold significant power and purpose, both in action and principle. He pointed out the dual nature of service: addressing immediate needs while contributing to a more resilient future.
 - **Emily Lichfield** provided an update regarding federal membership cuts, revealing that 374 Arizona members were eliminated, with a national estimate of around 27,000 cuts. The decision-making process behind which programs to retain and cut lacks clarity and consistency. While the fiscal year has only three months, many programs coincide with the school year, meaning some members are close to completing their commitments. Additionally, those who qualify for a compelling personal circumstance (CPC) may still receive their Segal Education Award.
 - **Donna Davis, Chair**, opened the floor for members to share upcoming events or relevant information around the service and volunteerism sector.
 - **Kylie Chamblee** stated the [Arizona Department of Education](#) is looking to partner with student organizations. Anyone interested in getting involved can reach out in the fall for opportunities. If you have any information related to volunteerism, please email Kylie using the contact information provided in the distribution list.
 - **Felipe Garcia** provided updates on the March [Arizona Model United Nations](#) (AZMUN) conference, which saw participation from 600 students, including a notable 356 from Sonora, Mexico. The event had support from 50 supported by 50 University of Arizona students/staff and featured a speech by Adrian Fontes, the Arizona Secretary of State. Additionally, high school students actively participated in the conference, contributing to its success.
 - **Ariel Ackerman** announced that [AZCEND](#) is seeking to fill several seasonal temporary positions. These roles are ideal for AmeriCorps members who want to earn income while contemplating their next steps. The primary focus of these positions is to ensure staff are present in the building to help manage visitors and maintain a safe environment during summer operations.
 - **Tyler Butler** mentioned that two organizations, [one-n-ten](#) (Prescott location) and the [Girls Rule Foundation](#) in Sedona, are seeking assistance with their summer camps. Both organizations need volunteer support and funding resources to operate their summer programs.

- **Yvonne Pastor (proxy)** announced the recent launch of a corporate initiative to engage large companies that wish to contribute by offering paid volunteer time for their employees. A form is now available on the City of Phoenix website [here](#), and interest in the initiative has steadily increased.
- **Julian Casman** announced that the GOYFF has received a \$10,000 grant from [Youth Service America](#) (YSA). This funding will support 10 sub-grants of \$1,000 each for volunteer service projects commemorating 9/11. The application process was swift, resulting in approval within a few days. The office is now seeking partner organizations, and commissioners are encouraged to refer groups that have previously conducted impactful 9/11 Days of Service to him or Emily.
- **Emily Litchfield** provided an update in **Thomas Winkel**'s absence, highlighting the [2025 Statewide Symposium](#) hosted by the [Arizona Coalition for Military Families](#). The event was meaningful and impactful, bringing people together to discuss how to better support service members and their families during times of need and after losing a loved one. The opening session focused on leadership and the importance of connecting with service members while utilizing a broader network of resources. It was refreshing to see leaders acknowledge the limits of their capabilities while still stepping up to serve and support others. **Chris Gibbs** also attended the event.

FUTURE MEETING DATES

- **Donna Davis, Chair**, announced that Emily Litchfield will collaborate with the commission to schedule a meeting during the week of June 2, 2025. This meeting will be brief and solely focused on approving the AmeriCorps State Formula application.
- **Donna Davis, Chair**, stated that the next general meeting date of the Governor's Commission on Service and Volunteerism will be **August 13, 2025**.

ADJOURN

- **Donna Davis, Chair**, asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.
 - **Tyler Butler** moved to adjourn.
 - **Ariel Ackerman** seconded the motion.
- **Donna Davis, Chair**, asked if further discussion was needed, and no members expressed the need for it.
- **Donna Davis, Chair**, called for a vote. At **3:38 PM**, the motion to adjourn the meeting passed with no dissenting votes.

Dated May 8, 2025
Governor's Commission on Service & Volunteerism
Respectfully Submitted By:
Alana-Jasmene Little
AmeriCorps Program Administrator, GOYFF