

# AmeriCorps recruits for day

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Published: Monday, April 26, 2004

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AmeriCorps information booths were available to the public Thursday at the St. Cloud Council Chambers. Twenty people wandered through the exhibition that resembled a miniature Mainstreet.

Jennifer Rausch, St. Cloud AmeriCorps program director, said she was pleased with the turn out.

"Individuals were able to come out and have a chance to speak with the host sites as well as with current members," Rausch said.

Recruiting for the first time in this open house fashion, AmeriCorps personnel hoped to fill 20 positions for their second year in the St. Cloud area.

Positions are available at seven different sites. They are filling positions at the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, Catholic Charities of the Diocese of St. Cloud, Stearns County Emergency Management, St. Cloud State University, Big Brothers and Big Sisters, United Way and Boys and Girls Club of Central Minnesota.

Sometimes called the "domestic Peace Corps," AmeriCorps personnel help to meet the community needs by mentoring at-risk youth, increasing volunteerism and engaging in disaster preparedness.

"AmeriCorps makes you want to be more involved," SCSU art education major Erica Ness said. "It's a time commitment, but it's definitely worth it."

Ness became an AmeriCorps member in October and works with the children at the Roosevelt Boys and Girls Club.

"It's been a great ground-breaking program," Ness said. "It's been fun trying to lay the tracks for what's going to happen."

Natalie Nygren graduated from SCSU in 2002. She says AmeriCorps has given her more opportunities. She works at the Catholic Charities site full-time by day and bartends by night.

"I spent so many hours looking for a job and couldn't do it," Nygren said. "I went out and did this and got the position. You get experience, training, and the opportunity to meet tons of people from your community,"

Full-time commitments require 1,700 hours of work that pays a \$10,300 annual living allowance. Part-time positions include 900 hours of work that pays \$5,453. After members complete their commitment, they receive an education award of \$4,725 (full-time) or \$2,362.50 (part-time). The education award may be used to pay for student loans and current or future schooling. Continued...