

City finds funds to save 8 AmeriCorps members: ‘Thankful for a second chance’

Davenport said community organizations banded together to fund some AmeriCorps positions that were cut.

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DAVENPORT, Iowa (KWQC) - Within days of learning Davenport would [lose](#) the federal grant for AmeriCorps staff, the Quad Cities community pitched in to help.

The city announced that they have enough funding now to help five year-round and three seasonal AmeriCorps members to complete their service commitments this summer. At the time of the cuts, they had 22 members working for the city. Most helped organize camps for kids.

The summer camps were going to continue anyway, but the city said it was able to keep some AmeriCorps staff to work the summer camps.

All told, between grants and matching city funding, AmeriCorps accounted for \$920,000 in city programs.

The Regional Developments Authority led the effort to find local organizations to help:

- Quad City Bank and Trust
- Quad Cities Community Foundation
- Hubbell-Waterman Foundation
- IH Mississippi Valley Credit Union.

It “felt like the thing to do,” said the Regional Development Authority CEO Matt Mendenhall.

He said he was asked by an RDA board member to research how RDA could help. He began researching how AmeriCorps helps the community.

“It’s pretty impressive about how many kids it reaches and how many different programs that it supports, especially over the summer when kids probably need more to do,” he said.

He said all of the funders they talked to wanted to protect this opportunity for young people.

“They saw that impact is really important as well,” he said.

“Honestly, I am just thrilled that we were able to bring back some of our members at the very minimum,” said Becca Niles, AmeriCorps director for Davenport. “For how sad it was to start that week with the news to end the week with so much love and support from our community.

“It just shows you how much Davenport, when it comes together. We come together big and we come to bed together strong.”

The three seasonal members will complete their service at Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Mississippi Valley, Common chord, Davenport Parks and Recreation and Putnam Museum and Science Center.

Members and organizations thankful for the reprieve.

“I’m thankful for a second chance,” said Dyashia Colvin, who works with Big Brothers Big Sisters.

“We are overwhelmed and so incredibly thankful to those organizations who stepped up so quickly,” said Brian Ritter, the executive director of Nahant Marsh.

Ritter said they can continue to offer “fun and affordable” education programs for the community.

The city will also retain program staff to support AmeriCorps members.

The city said it is planning for the next steps after the summer as it plans for the future of the program.