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Grant to help state communities tackle digital divide

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NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Volunteer Action Services, (406) 243-5159.

GRANT TO HELP STATE COMMUNITIES TACKLE DIGITAL DIVIDE

MISSOULA —

Volunteer Action Services at The University of Montana recently received a \$244,000 grant from the Corporation for National Service to develop a new AmeriCorps program designed to help close the digital divide in several Montana communities.

Twenty AmeriCorps members will serve at community organizations and schools throughout Montana to develop and implement computer training programs for youth and parents. The members will be part of a new Montana Technology Corps.

The program will help families that have limited access to technology with opportunities to learn both during and after school. They will study computer basics, spreadsheets, e-mail, Internet navigation, and Web-page design and maintenance.

UM's Information Technology Resource Center will provide training and technical assistance for the program, and the Montana Technology Corps will begin work this winter. Targeted communities include **Missoula, Darby, Ronan, Miles City** and **Stevensville**.

Volunteer Action Services Director Andrea Vernon said she is excited about the grant because it builds on existing partnerships between campus and community agencies.

"This program will provide a valuable resource for youth and parents who currently have limited access to computers and technology training," she said.

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AmeriCorps is a national service program that allows people of all ages and backgrounds to earn help paying for education in exchange for a year of public service.

AmeriCorps is a program of the Corporation for National Service.

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