



North Florida Health Corps

Who are we?

By: Charisse Fox

AmeriCorps Newsletter

“One year to make a difference, one chance to make your mark, one experience that will change your life.” North Florida Health Corps members are willing to go above and beyond to service the needs of communities in the Northeast Florida area. The twenty-one AmeriCorps members for the 2009-2010 year were placed in host sites to assist in serving various target populations. The National Health Corps promotes an array of opportunities to their members to make a direct positive impact in North Florida communities.

This year is a special one. First off, we must thank the host site’s interviewers for choosing twenty-one of the most competent, intelligent, and motivated individuals to be invited as members of the North Florida Health Corps. Besides our highly renowned stature, our AmeriCorps group shows it’s exclusivity by being the first year for having not one, but three male mem-

bers dedicate their lives to the Health Corps. We are also a unique group of individuals because the majority of us have traveled a distance to become a part of this program. The NFHC has attracted recent grads from coast to coast. Did we all come to experience the beautiful beaches and intense Florida sun? That may have been an influencing factor when choosing our location, although, I’m sure the honest reason we took the giant leap away from our home nests was to be a part of something greater. No matter our various backgrounds and pasts, we share an overall commonality through our passion for helping others in need.

Diversity is still an essential asset to our group, especially since we are all ultimately striving towards the same greater purpose. We take different paths to reach our goals, but in the end, we are able to share our experiences and reconnect on a higher level.

Pre-service trainings are essential in the AmeriCorps program. One day out of the training process was dedicated to unique teambuilding exercises that taught the members the importance of working together towards a common goal. In this picture, you’ll see that the YMCA set up an activity where the entire AmeriCorps team had to climb over a 10 foot wall by using only the help of each other. The members learned to strategize, reassess, communicate, and use each other’s strengths as assets to the team.



Another big success at the team-building training was climbing the alpine tower. Climbers built trusting relationships with their belays. Words of encouragement along with amplified adrenaline motivated the climbers to continue to the top. This was a thrilling challenge that brought cohesiveness to the group.



HERAP members from left to right: Debbie Croasdaile, Robert Hsu, Heather Applewhite, Sharon Zurbey, and Jennifer Larramore.

HERAP

By: Debbie Corasdaile

Duval County’s Hospital Emergency Room Alternatives Program (HERAP) was developed to try to reduce unnecessary use of hospital ERs for those medical conditions that could be better addressed in a primary care setting. HERAP serves the community by connecting individuals with chronic medical conditions to nurse managed primary care clinics. We also educate and provide services through community outreach events and enrollment in medication assistance programs.

HERAP may be a first year site but the project benefits from five North Florida Health Corps AmeriCorps members, each with the passion and belief that our term of service will make a difference in the community. Two Recovery Act members, Debbie Croasdaile and Heather Applewhite started in August and have been busy coordinating Community Living Rooms and other outreach activities. In September, the HERAP family welcomed Robert Hsu, Jennifer Larramore and Sharon Zurbey as patient navigators. Under the direction of our site mentors, the HERAP team is ready to take on the challenges and Get Things Done!