



2020 Conventions: National Service Talking Points

- Our nation is at a crossroads. We are grappling with public health, economic, social, and educational crises as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Communities across the country are confronted by significant challenges as they seek to treat and contain the virus, start the school year responsibly, and address the economic consequences of the pandemic. Millions of young people are out of work, their talents untapped while the college affordability crisis has left too many of them with debt that they're struggling to repay. Americans are more profoundly polarized than any moment in recent history. And, we are experiencing a national reckoning around the systemic racism of our institutions and society.
- We must come together as a country to address these challenges and be audacious in our call to action by making national service a national priority. Imagine a future in which young people earn college tuition by addressing our communities' greatest challenges — where they are empowered to shape their own destinies and those of their communities, regardless of zip code. Imagine a future in which empathy trumps apathy and participation and problem-solving outmatch indifference. Imagine a shared experience far stronger than anything that may seek to divide us.
- This future is entirely achievable. As in previous moments of crisis, we can mobilize young people in service and make national service a key part of growing up in America.
- National service can transform lives, strengthen our communities, and fuel civic renewal — and it can help tackle the crises our country currently faces.
- National service corps members are on the ground supporting the public health community's response, delivering groceries, adding capacity at food banks, and helping schools as they reopen by providing extra tutoring and mentoring support for students and teachers.
- National service allows young Americans to invest in themselves and in their communities.
- It gives young people a path to employment, allowing them to develop professional and leadership skills and making them more valuable employees in an increasingly challenging job market. With 25% of young Americans unemployed, national service is a critical investment for putting Americans back to work.
- Finally, national service has the power to bring Americans together. Serving together in common purpose builds bonds between people from different backgrounds and can strengthen our civic fabric.
- Best of all, the infrastructure for national service is already in place. Young people are stepping up all over the country and it's time we invest in them and expand national service so that all young Americans have the opportunity to serve while transforming their lives and communities.

With questions or for additional information, please contact Moran Banai at mbanai@serviceyear.org.