



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Federal Termination of AmeriCorps Impacts Local Kids

Kennewick, WA – May 2, 2025 – United Way of Benton & Franklin Counties regrets to announce the federal termination of AmeriCorps grant funding in Washington state, directly impacting nearly 700 local middle school students supported by their Attendance Matters® Mentoring Program.

On April 25, nearly \$400 million in AmeriCorps grant funding nationwide was immediately terminated, shuttering more than 1,000 programs and prematurely ending the service of almost 30,000 AmeriCorps members across the country including those working with our local United Way.

Dr. LoAnn Ayers, CEO & President of United Way of Benton & Franklin Counties, expressed concern over the grant termination, saying “The sudden shutdown of AmeriCorps has an immediate impact on local at-risk kids who counted on the daily support and encouragement of their Attendance Matters® AmeriCorps mentors. We are working with school principals and volunteers to communicate with these kids to reduce the trauma of this loss.”

The United Way of Benton & Franklin Counties Attendance Matters® program has increased attendance among chronically absent students in nine local middle schools where AmeriCorps members provided one-on-one mentoring and group support to foster school engagement and help students stay on track for graduation.

“We had the unique opportunity to change children's negative perception of school to a positive one, and I can only hope we did enough to impact their lives before our program was ripped from them. When I had to tell the kids at my school that I was not coming back, they had tears in their eyes,” commented Casey Moddrell, a 2024-2025 Attendance Matters® AmeriCorps mentor at KiBe Middle School.

United Way of Benton & Franklin Counties is developing alternative solutions to continue supporting the affected students through Attendance Matters®. The organization is actively seeking new partnerships, funding opportunities, and volunteer support to reinstate and expand mentoring services in the future.

“I encourage community members to contact Representative Dan Newhouse (<https://newhouse.house.gov>) to share their input on the local impact of AmeriCorps,” said Ayers.

About United Way of Benton & Franklin Counties

Since 1958 United Way of Benton & Franklin Counties continues to support the health, safety, and success of local kids and families. Our Attendance Matters® program educates the community about regular school attendance to help kids graduate high school. We help local schools promote programs to increase attendance rates. Our mission is to enhance student success and encourage a positive path towards graduation. We envision a community where all children have an opportunity to learn and thrive.

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