Eden Shapiro

**University of Texas at Austin Ranks Third in AmeriCorps Volunteers**

WASHINGTON - A statistic from an AmeriCorps report released yesterday shows that The University of Texas at Austin ranks third in 2010 for its number of contributing alumni to the network of national service programs AmeriCorps.

The University of Washington ranked first with 121 alumni joining, followed by the University of Minnesota. The University of Texas came in third with 115 volunteers followed by the Universities of North Carolina and Michigan.

The University of Texas at Austin has been contributing volunteers for the past 17 years, and has contributed 1,060 since the program’s inception in 1993. This makes UT Austin the fifth highest contributor of all time.

The director of AmeriCorps, Ron Jakubowski, recently wrote a letter to the president of UT Austin, William Powers Jr. In it he thanked the university for “helping AmeriCorps achieve its mission of improving the lives of all Americans.”

Volunteers have the opportunity to help in schools, teach computer and reading skills, clean up parks and streams, build affordable housing and much more.

“I got to help wonderful people, help our country and grow as a person,” said Joe Racke, a 2007 University of Texas alumnus.

Career counselor at the University of Texas Keisha Wellstone says the university advises students to “seriously” consider this type of program. “AmeriCorps offers an allowance, health-care benefits and options for repaying student loans or funding graduate study.”

For students who are not overly concerned with the need to get a job right out of college, joining the ranks of AmeriCorps as a volunteer can be an opportunity for both personal growth and service to others.

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