

Resource Assistance for Rural Environments (RARE) AmeriCorps Program



A RARE opportunity for community impact & professional growth through service learning

WHO ARE WE

Serving rural Oregon since 1994, the University of Oregon's Resource Assistance for Rural Environments (RARE) AmeriCorps Program matches change-makers with communities across the state to take on meaningful and impactful placed-based projects, chosen by the communities themselves.

We offer a unique opportunity to connect the personal and professional development aspirations of future leaders with the community and economic development needs of rural Oregon.

Using a proven model for engagement, we provide an unparalleled service-learning experience while delivering resources, expertise, and critical capacity to rural Oregon. Our goal is to ensure a win-win scenario for our RARE AmeriCorps members and the communities we serve, making it a mutually beneficial experience.



THE RARE EXPERIENCE

RARE members live in rural communities for 11 months and serve cities, counties, non-governmental organizations, or state agencies to improve economic and environmental conditions in rural Oregon. Now in its 32nd year, the RARE AmeriCorps Program has placed more than 650 volunteers and served every Oregon County. Placement focus areas include: Community & Economic Development, Environmental & Sustainability Planning, and Food Systems

Member Benefits:

- Opportunity to Build Community and Make a Tangible Impact in Rural Oregon
- \$26,675 Living Stipend for 11 months
- \$300 Personal Professional Development Fund
- \$7,395 Segal Educational Award & Federal Student Loan Forbearance*
- Medical Insurance, Child Care & SNAP Benefits**
- Professional training in Community Development, Grant Writing, Communication, Land Use, Economic Development, Facilitation, Leadership, Etc. (valued at ~\$5000)
- Earn In-State Tuition Eligibility and Graduate Credit Waiver from the University of Oregon's Master of Community & Regional Planning, Master of Public Administration, or Master of Nonprofit Management program (up to 9 credits waived)***
- University of Oregon Graduate School Application Fee Waiver

*Segal Educational Award amount subject to change

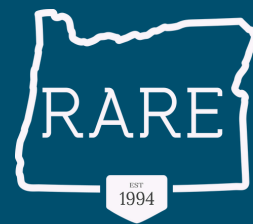
**Dependent on individual circumstances

***Other university programs may or may not waive credits earned while serving with the RARE AmeriCorps Program



"This program, and what you will get out of it, is inextricably linked to what you put into it. Although many placements vary in the rigidity of work structure, the role you fill will be as big or small as you make it. Be open and adaptable, resilient, and reliant. Work for your organization as hard as you work for yourself, and you will find that the efforts you put into your service will begin to show themselves in much more than a resume building experience." -RARE Alumni Johnathan Van Roekel, Years 27 & 28 (2020-22)

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COMMUNITY IMPACT

Our members truly become a part of their communities during their term of service. Last year's 31 members who served from 2023-24 collectively...

- Leveraged \$2,596,284 in grant funding
- Recruited 431 volunteers
- Developed and/or implemented 310 planning documents
- Created 494 pieces of social media content
- Provided 544 educational/training opportunities to small businesses, entrepreneurs, and residents

These are just some of the numbers we were able to quantify. RARE members are also found facilitating meetings, creating marketing materials, tabling events, painting murals, educating the community, building relationships, and so much more!



"[Through the RARE Program] I have learned it truly takes a village (community) to achieve anything. I have a better perspective on what it means to live and serve rural and I can carry with me these new perspectives for the rest of my life. I am a new and better person because of the RARE Program." -RARE Alumni Taylor Evans, Year 25 (2018-2019)



TIMELINE

April 27th: Member Applications due

Mid May-Early June: RARE Interviews

June 6th: Invitation to Participate in the RARE Program

June 23rd-27th: Interviews with Potential Host Organizations

Early July: Final Placement Decisions

September 10th-12th: Member RARE AmeriCorps Orientation

September 15th: First Day of Service in Community

July 31, 2025: Last day of service

EXAMPLES FROM THE FIELD



Ruby Barrera

As the Community Engagement Specialist at Maxville Heritage Interpretive Center, Ruby is expanding educational curriculum, leading partnership development, and is designing a sustainable, long-term volunteer management program.



Emily Embleton

Placed with the Rogue Food Unites as their Outreach Specialist is working on a toolkit to replicate a barrier-free, no-cost mobile farmers market program. Emily is also working community outreach and disaster preparedness.



David Nieto Wenzell

As Water Quality Specialist for the City of Coburg & Tangent, David is developing a bioswale management program, working on riparian restoration projects, and performing outreach & engagement activities with the community and landowners.