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Make a Difference through National Health Corps Chicago's Public Health Leadership Corps

The NHC Public Health Leadership Corps is pleased to announce openings for new members in Chicago!

CHICAGO, IL - According to the [NYU School of Medicine](#), Chicago has one of the largest life expectancy gaps in the U.S. The City Health Dashboard shows that not all residents have access to equitable and preventative health services and education, resulting in challenges such as finding quality care for substance use prevention, obesity/physical inactivity, violence, student absenteeism, lack of walkability, and a diminished quality of life for older adults.

National Health Corps (NHC)'s Public Health Leadership Corps is an AmeriCorps National Service program that recruits, trains, and places 117 members in resource-limited organizations called "host sites." NHC Chicago members join unique public health teams by serving at federally qualified health centers, in hospital systems, at community-based clinics, and with other important organizations. NHC Chicago members are vital community champions who elevate community members' voices and implement action with and for residents and organizations striving for health equity. A key priority for the NHC program is to reduce health disparities and the underlying structural oppression that perpetuates them. During each year of service, members are provided professional development and skill-based training to help them ensure that Chicago communities receive the continuum of quality preventative care and health services they deserve.

From August 2020 through June 2023, NHC Chicago members provided information and services to more than 3,290 new clients increasing physical activity and/or improving nutrition; patient navigation, care coordination services, and digital health navigation resources to address social determinants of health for 825+ new clients; and COVID-19 vaccine information and prevention resources for more than 200 new clients.

A year of service offers National Health Corps members countless opportunities to make a difference in people's lives. NHC Chicago member Jennifer Kirksey, whose pronouns are she/her, serves as a health educator with Advocate Trinity Hospital. As part of their Diabetes Prevention Program, she leads a fitness class. "Often, I'm helping individuals who are coming back after a major surgery, those who are trying to start their fitness routine, and also those who are trying to get back into it," she says. "After class, a couple people always stay around and tell me about their updates and how, you know, they're able to move a lot easier or just do things around the house without as much pain. It's nice to know that I'm making an impact in their everyday life through fitness."

NHC members need to meet certain AmeriCorps eligibility criteria. These include:

- Members must be at least 18 years of age by the start of service.
- Members must be U.S. Citizens, U.S. nationals, or lawful permanent residents.
- Members must have achieved a high school diploma or GED by the start of service.
- Members must not have previously served four AmeriCorps State or National terms.

Allie Kovatch is about to complete her term of NHC Chicago service as a Health Educator with Tapestry 360 Health at Albany Park and Sullivan High School. When asked what she might say to someone considering a year of service with NHC Chicago, Allie replied, "Choose a program that aligns with your goals, values, and interests. Surround yourself with people that you feel that you'll learn from. And ask questions."

For more information about becoming a member, visit www.nationalhealthcorps.org.

National Health Corps Chicago, a program of NHC, is administered by Health Federation of Philadelphia (HFP) and implemented by Public Health Institute of Metropolitan Chicago (PHIMC).

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