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AmeriCorps Kicks Off a New Year of Service in Hampton Roads

Members Will Celebrate Service And Prepare 1,000 Backpacks For Disadvantaged Youth

HAMPTON – On Friday, Oct. 26, 2012, Hampton Roads AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps VISTA members will kick off a new service year with a regional launch at the [Hampton Baptist Church](#), 40 Kings Way, Hampton, Va., at 10 a.m. This event will welcome more than 100 members throughout Hampton Roads for a day-long session celebrating service and participating in a community service project.

“The Hampton Roads Regional Launch is going to be a great event combining the high energy of an incredible Corps of young adults - with great workshops - and an awesome service project,” said Kathryn W. Johnson, Executive Director, Alternatives, Inc. Commenting on the upcoming event, Johnson added, “Through the joint efforts of AmeriCorps Members more than 1,000 backpacks will be prepared for distribution to economically disadvantaged children in January 2013. What a great way to “launch” our collective energy and passion – to make a difference – in the lives of the citizens of Hampton Roads.”

As part of the Launch Lunch, Greta Harrison, Chair of Hampton's Special Education Advisory Committee will present the topic *When it comes to Service...Don't Overlook People with Disabilities* and Bradley Canady of Uth ACT, will discuss *Literacy Matters*.

Rodney Walker, an AmeriCorps member with Virginia Veterans Corp, will be presented with this year's Robert E. Wone Award for Exemplary Service. Mr. Walker directly improved the quality of life for many veterans residing on the Eastern Shore by developing and implementing a reliable transportation system for medical treatment and increasing attendance at veteran employment and benefit workshops. The award will be presented by Mark Fero, who is a veteran and a member of the Virginia Service Foundation.

The event will close with members being led in the reading of the AmeriCorps oath. To learn more about the AmeriCorps program and how to get involved, visit <http://www.americorps.gov/>.

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