



Ms. Talia Lomax O'dneal
Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County
Division of Grants Coordination
700 2nd Avenue South, Suite 201
Nashville, TN 37219-6300

Dear Ms. O'dneal,

From recovery efforts following the May 2010 Flood to Hands On Nashville Day in Metro Nashville Public Schools, Hands On Nashville (HON) and Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County (Metro) stand together to make our city stronger through service. We ask for Metro's continued support through this Direct Appropriations funding request for FY2020. Thank you for your consideration.

How HON Serves Davidson County

HON builds capacity for individuals and agencies to meet needs through service. Its programs connect volunteers to opportunities supporting nonprofits, schools, and other civic organizations; help these partners reimagine volunteer potential; and bring awareness to the challenges facing the people and places in our community.

Historically, HON has been best known as a hub for **Davidson County residents** to volunteer. Volunteers benefit from ongoing communication about Nashville needs and how they can use their time to serve their neighbors. The agency's online volunteer opportunity calendar and related technology make it easy for volunteers to locate, schedule, and track their involvement. HON carefully vets its partners and offers optional volunteer background check services, increasing safety for nonprofits and volunteers alike.

The needs found through HON are generated directly from **Davidson County-based agencies** referred to as HON's Community Partners, including a number of Metro divisions like Metro Nashville Public Schools, Parks, and Public Works. The vast majority of Community Partners participate in a membership program which provides technology, training, and increased visibility to their service opportunities and missions.

HON also supports disaster preparedness and response for the Mayor's Office of Emergency Management as the designated volunteer activation partner for the city's

Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan. Should we ever again experience a widescale disaster, HON is prepared to effectively engage anyone who wants to serve the city they love.

Additionally, HON serves **Davidson County businesses** via its Corporate Partner Program. HON’s Corporate Partner Program connects community-minded businesses and inbound conference groups with opportunities to give back to Nashville through managed volunteer events and customized calendars of service.

Two initiatives of note from HON’s 2018 programming - GeekCause and the HON AmeriCorps Program – seek to bring increased impact to Davidson County volunteers and community partners alike.

GeekCause matches Nashville’s most talented techies with community partners in need of their services. From tech consultation to solution implementation, GeekCause provides a low-cost platform for agencies to solve tech-based challenges through the support of skilled volunteers. The initiative was founded in 2017 by Atiba, a Nashville-based technology consulting firm, as a way for their employees to lend their skills to local nonprofits. With 130 volunteers and eight projects complete, Atiba saw an opportunity to expand the program’s reach through a partnership with HON.

The HON AmeriCorps Program engages civic-minded individuals in year-long terms of public service. AmeriCorps members are part of a 15-person cohort that receives skills training, professional development, and networking opportunities through a partnership between HON and participating AmeriCorps Program agencies. 2018-2019 agencies include: Cumberland River Compact, Harpeth Conservancy, Plant the Seed, Richland Creek Watershed Alliance, Tennessee Environmental Council.

Scope of HON’s Services to the Community

To highlight the scope and reach of Hands On Nashville’s services in the community, we present the following highlights from last year across our agency:

HON’s aim	Moments of impact
<p>Establish an active and engaged volunteer base.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ten percent year-over-year increase in new HandsOn Connect accounts created by volunteers (8,060 new accounts) • 26,013 volunteers registered for community projects through HON’s online volunteer portal
<p>Provide valuable resources for strategic volunteer programming, recruitment, and management.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 147 partner agencies received HON’s capacity-building resources • 4,891 volunteer opportunities posted, tracked, and managed through HandsOn Connect

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 AmeriCorps national service members served six organizations • 20 nonprofits proposed IT projects in the first three months of HON's new GeekCause initiative, which connects skills-based volunteers to agencies facing technology-based challenges
<p>Provide and employee volunteerism platform to businesses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 141 corporate projects completed (a 32 percent increase) • 3,913 corporate volunteers served • 7,449 hours of service given to 122 community partners
<p>Articulate the value proposition of HON across key constituencies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 57 partners attended Community Partner Conversations, bimonthly facilitated sessions focused on optimizing HON's services to manage and engage volunteers • 74,000+ reached on social media; HON's service-centric thought leadership shared with volunteers, community partners, corporate clients and neighbors

About This Request

HON requests \$34,000 to enhance both its Community Partner and AmeriCorps Programs. Through it, HON matches 17 AmeriCorps members with Nashville-based nonprofit organizations for yearlong terms of service. HON estimates that Metro's investment will be matched with \$386,000 in additional program support. This includes federal and foundation grants, along with a host-site investment of \$6,000 per member.

HON's AmeriCorps Program responds to its partners' requests for long-term, skilled volunteers. Moreover, it recognizes that the organizations charged with responding to immense community challenges could be more effective if they had greater capacity to serve, communicate, and coordinate their efforts.

In 2019-2020, members will serve both at HON and at six local Davidson County-based environmental organizations. The 13 members hosted by environmental nonprofits will increase the ability of these organizations to improve waterways and natural environments in Middle Tennessee, including the Metro Nashville area. The four HON AmeriCorps members will build capacity for HON's Community Partner and Corporate Partner programs, increasing the ability of the agency to engage Nashvillians in service.

HON's AmeriCorps Program seeks not only to strengthen the local community, but also to develop future nonprofit leaders. Beyond the practical experience earned during an AmeriCorps term, members also receive professional development, team building, and job-related training opportunities. Members participate in a curriculum that supports their professional growth and instills a wide range of skills to benefit

their host organizations. Program outcome measures focus on the organizational impact and increased capacity resulting from AmeriCorps members' service, as well as member growth opportunities.

HON estimates that these AmeriCorps members will inspire 2,000 Nashvillians to engage in service in support of our local environment, as well as HON's nonprofit and school partners.

Additional Community Benefits

In addition to engaging thousands of local residents in service, this grant will enhance Metro Nashville's environmental sustainability and natural beauty.

Nashville's rapid development, and its impacts on local waterways, habitats, and natural environments, is an ongoing, significant challenge. With this in mind, the 13 members hosted by environmentally-focused nonprofits will increase the capacity of these organizations to improve waterways and other natural habitats in Middle Tennessee. For example, members will develop and implement an urban forestry program, expand and install rain gardens, increase riparian plantings, and engage stewards in stream cleanups.

Members will also teach MNPS students how food is grown, educate the public about best practices for composting and recycling, clean trash and debris from miles of riverbanks, monitor water quality, and plant trees throughout the city. As Nashville continues to grow, they will ensure that its natural charm continues to attract visitors, businesses, and new residents.

A More Equitable Nashville

HON strengthens the Middle Tennessee community through meaningful volunteer engagement. To this end, HON promotes access, equity, and inclusiveness.

With 130+ community partners located throughout the city, HON offers every Nashvillian the chance to serve in their own neighborhood or on behalf of a cause that is meaningful to them. HON makes volunteering convenient, with a calendar that includes family-friendly service options, as well as programming that enables busy professionals to give back at work.

HON also assists with Nashville's restorative justice efforts by offering a curated list of opportunities that satisfy court-ordered community service requirements. This collection details the activities and expectations from the participating agencies with the goal of providing a means for individuals to successfully complete their obligations.

In 2018, Public Works and HON expanded their partnership through the NOTICE program. Through NOTICE, HON makes Nashville a more equitable city by empowering neighbors to help one other address Codes violations, many of which impact low-income and/or elderly homeowners. HON provides volunteer leader

training and a toolkit that helps participants recognize and remedy these violations before court costs and fines begin to mount.

The AmeriCorps program values inclusion, as well. In accordance with national standards, HON strives to build a diverse cohort of members from different backgrounds who bring unique perspectives. HON also works closely with its host sites to provide support and appropriate accommodations for members with disabilities. Additionally, each member receives training in Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, ensuring that they understand their own responsibility to provide equitable services.

Summary

HON and Metro share a rich, varied history of making the city a healthy, thriving community for its residents. The Direct Appropriations grant provides an avenue to continue this collaboration and further cultivate Nashville's spirit of service. HON appreciates this opportunity and your thoughtful consideration.

With Regards,

Lori Shinton
President and CEO