



college forward

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## National Director of AmeriCorps\*VISTA Visits College Forward

*AUSTIN, Texas* — AmeriCorps\*VISTA Director Jean Whaley visited College Forward on January 29, 2008, to observe one of Texas's premier AmeriCorps\*VISTA programs in action.

Whaley, who oversees over 1,000 national service programs nationwide, made time during a trip to Central Texas to spend the afternoon at College Forward's office, meeting with the program's staff and eight AmeriCorps\*VISTA members. Later, she visited Del Valle High School, one of the seven schools College Forward serves, to meet some of the 139 low-income students enrolled in the program's free college prep classes there.

College Forward has been an AmeriCorps\*VISTA program since its inception, when the organization's first VISTA member moved from Alabama to help Executive Director and co-founder Lisa Fielder get the organization started at her kitchen table. Since then, more than 50 AmeriCorps\*VISTA members have moved to Austin from every corner of the country to serve at College Forward, inspired by the opportunity to fight poverty by helping low-income students access college.

*AmeriCorps\*VISTA is part of AmeriCorps, a network of national and community service programs that each year supports the engagement of more than 70,000 Americans in intensive service to meet critical needs in education, the environment, public safety, homeland security, and other areas. AmeriCorps is administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service, which also administers Senior Corps and Learn and Serve America. Together with USA Freedom Corps, the Corporation is working to foster a culture of citizenship, service, and responsibility in America. For more information, visit <http://www.nationalservice.gov>.*

*College Forward provides college preparatory services to motivated, economically-disadvantaged students, in order to facilitate their transition to college and make the process exciting and rewarding. We accomplish this by providing: 1. orientation to the college*

◆ 100% of College Forward's students have been **accepted into colleges nationwide**

◆ College Forward students' **ACT scores increased** by an average of **22%**

◆ College Forward's high school graduates are awarded an average of over **\$16,000 each in scholarships and grants**

*experience; 2. preparation for college entrance examinations; 3. assistance with college applications; 4. assistance securing financial aid; and 5. college retention support. We believe that access to higher education is the right of every young Texan. Currently, College Forward serves 560 high school and college students.*

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Ameri\*Corps\*VISTA director Jean Whaley, sixth from left, met with College Forward staff and other VISTA supervisors during a recent visit to Texas.