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Representative Sargent Presents Citation to Local Winner of National Excellence in AmeriCorps Award

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: 10/22/19
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[Madison, WI] – Representative Melissa Sargent visited Mendota Elementary to make a surprise presentation of a citation of commendation to 4K teacher Alexis Dean for his service with AmeriCorps, for which he had been honored with the national Excellence in AmeriCorps Award for the Most Impactful Member Service last month. Dean had served as an AmeriCorps member with United Way of Dane County - Schools of Hope at Mendota Elementary School during the 2018-2019 school year and was one of only two individual AmeriCorps members out of the over 75,000 serving nationwide to be honored at the ceremony. He was presented the national award by Chester Spellman, Director of AmeriCorps, at the 2019 AmeriCorps State and National Symposium in Arlington, VA on September 19.

Sargent said, “it was a privilege and an honor to present this citation to Alexis Dean. His exceptional service and dedication as an AmeriCorps member, 4K teacher, camp counselor, and community leader—amongst his other numerous, valuable roles—does not go unnoticed and should be recognized with the highest esteem. It was my pleasure to present this citation to Alexis, congratulating him on his extraordinary efforts and accomplishments. Creative and dedicated minds like Alexis are essential for shaping and progressing the future of our youth, and I thank him for his outstanding contributions in the AmeriCorps and in our state.” Prior to winning his national award, Dean was honored by Governor Tony Evers with the Wisconsin 2019 AmeriCorps Member of the Year award at the Governor’s Service Awards in Madison on June 6, 2019.

Alexis brought an incredible element of creativity to his work, taking multiple approaches to his literacy tutoring to boost student engagement, including working with students to record their own raps to embrace novel approaches for improving literacy skills. Seeing the impact these methods had and wanting to support school efforts to increase student attendance at Mendota, he produced a music video called the “Attendance Rap” to encourage students to be at and on-time to school, which was then shared with the other schools in the district (<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=333576340748422>). “Alexis’s outstanding dedication and service has brought so much exuberance, joy, and creativity to our school community. He is an amazing inspiration for both staff and students at Mendota,” said McKinley.

Brooke Coy-Tchouani, PBIS Coach at Mendota Elementary, stated “Alexis doesn’t just show up though, he shows up and puts every ounce of passion and love into every child that walks into the event. Every child Alexis comes in contact with feels like they are noticed, welcomed and cared for. He has built genuine and authentic relationships with so many children. He has exposed the scholars to opportunities that would not have been possible without him. The school was instantly a better place with him involved.”

During his AmeriCorps service with Schools of Hope, Alexis served as a literacy tutor and coordinating tutoring volunteers at Mendota Elementary School. His AmeriCorps service went “well above and beyond the required duties of his position, as Alexis attended nearly all of our Community School events which occur late at night and on the weekends - hosting classes, supporting scholars and staff, and jumping in to help out in any way that was needed,” according to Maura McKinley, an Instructional Coach at Mendota Elementary School.

Although his AmeriCorps service has ended, Dean continues to have a connection with the students at Mendota Elementary School, as he is now a 4K teacher at the school. “Every day, I want to be a person that inspires, motivates, and helps my community as best I can. Whether it’s as an AmeriCorps Member, 4K teacher, camp counselor, or just a friendly face serving food at a community center, my passion is supporting others, and I always will,” said Dean.

Additional information on the 2019 Excellence in AmeriCorps Awards can be found on the [press release](#) issued by the Corporation for National and Community Service following the ceremony. Photographs of Alexis Dean from the awards ceremony and visiting Capitol Hill afterward are [available here](#).

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Serve Wisconsin works with AmeriCorps programs throughout the state of Wisconsin to address human, educational, environmental, public safety and homeland security needs. AmeriCorps members are given the opportunity to enrich the lives of the people and communities they serve and their own lives through professional and personal development. Serve Wisconsin is governed by 21-member citizen body appointed by Governor Evers. For more information visit <https://servewisconsin.wi.gov>.

AmeriCorps is administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), a federal agency that engages millions of Americans in service through AmeriCorps and Senior Corps, and leads the nation’s volunteering and service efforts. For more information, visit www.NationalService.gov.

The Governor’s Service Awards honor outstanding volunteers, national service participants, and programs that have helped to address serious social needs in their communities. The honorees have made significant contributions to Wisconsin through their service efforts. Their generous service is impacting the lives of countless Wisconsinites. Information on Alexis Dean winning this state award can be found at <https://www.servewisconsin.wi.gov/governors-service-awards>, as well as [his profile](#) and the [press release](#) for the 2019 ceremony.

