2020-2021
Innovative State Service COVID-19 Response Programs
About America’s Service Commissions

America’s Service Commissions (ASC) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan association representing and promoting the 52 state service commissions across the United States and territories with the mission to lead and elevate the state service network.

State service commissions are governor-appointed public agencies or nonprofit organizations made up of more than 1,000 commissioners, private citizens leading the nation’s service movement and administering 80 percent of the federal AmeriCorps funds to address pressing community needs. Learn more at statecommissions.org.

Publication Coordinators
Lindsey Stevens, America’s Service Commissions
Emily Steinberg, America’s Service Commissions

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# Innovative State Service COVID-19 Response Programs
## America's Service Commissions

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“AmeriCorps members have a long history of service to our communities, and now more than ever, our country is relying on public servants as we continue to address the Coronavirus pandemic.”
–Vice-President Kamala Harris

“We need national service, now… There is a vast army of young people ready and yearning to serve their country.”
–David Brooks, New York Times

“Thousands of young people across the country are calling for greater opportunity and for new and meaningful engagement to address persistent inequities that have only been exacerbated by COVID-19. Now is the time to mobilize that energy to make our communities stronger and healthier for everyone.”
–Senator Chris Coons (D-DE)

“Helping our nation respond to and recover from the coronavirus outbreak will require an all-hands approach. Boosting the ranks of our service corps is a cost-efficient way to get communities the help they need.”
–Senator Roger Wicker (R-MS)

THE AMERICORPS PLEDGE

I will get things done for America - to make our people safer, smarter, and healthier.

🌟
I will bring Americans together to strengthen our communities. Faced with apathy, I will take action.

🌟
Faced with conflict, I will seek common ground. Faced with adversity, I will persevere.

🌟
I will carry this commitment with me this year and beyond. I am an AmeriCorps member, and I will get things done.
Foreword

March 11, 2021

Dear Friends,

America’s Service Commissions (ASC) is pleased to present this important and timely publication, *Innovative State Service COVID-19 Response Programs*. We believe the following pages are a testament to the hard work and perseverance that AmeriCorps programs and AmeriCorps members have shown this past year since the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic first became evident in the United States and shutdowns began, one year ago today.

The year 2020-2021 has posed countless challenges for Americans and our communities – a once unimaginable public health crisis, the resulting economic hardships, and difficult cultural reckonings around racial disparity and equity that have become even more pronounced and evident. But throughout these challenges, we have witnessed the perseverance and resilience of first responders and public servants everywhere – including national service members who have found ways to continue giving their time and talents as AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers nationwide.

We are proud to showcase them here and highlight the extraordinary efforts of AmeriCorps programs to aid those most in need in hyper-local ways. During these unprecedented times, it is even more clear that national service programs like AmeriCorps, AmeriCorps Seniors, and the Volunteer Generation Fund can play a critical role in our nation’s response and recovery efforts in times of disaster and emergency, including the COVID-19 pandemic and its devastating and multi-faceted effects.

In the years after their founding by the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, AmeriCorps programs have done outstanding work in areas such as education, disaster response, health and wellness, economic opportunity, environmental stewardship, and veteran and military family support. For this project, America’s Service Commissions (ASC) sought to identify and recognize programs in each state and territory that have been particularly resilient throughout the pandemic by effectively innovating, adapting, and responding to these ever-changing times.

The 79 exceptional AmeriCorps and state-based service programs featured in this publication are only a small glimpse into the impressive work of national service programs year-round. Across the nation, AmeriCorps programs and volunteer hubs have demonstrated inspiring innovation and creativity in how they serve their communities.
By sharing information about these innovative programs and their inspiring AmeriCorps members and volunteers, we hope to showcase the role of states as “laboratories for service” and encourage new service models and replications that can address our most pressing societal issues. The work being done in response to COVID-19 is only one demonstration of the reach and impact that service programs are capable of. Whether a program recruits mentors, preserves our environment, aids schools as they adapt to new learning environments, or provides direct assistance to older adults, AmeriCorps is putting in the work to make change in America.

Thank you for reading, and thank you to the thousands of AmeriCorps members and program staff serving as “boots on the ground,” as well as to the state service commissions who fund and support them, for continuing to make a substantial impact on others in the most challenging of times. We would also like to thank our federal partners at the AmeriCorps agency for extending key flexibilities since the onset of COVID-19 that ensured AmeriCorps members could continue their service uninterrupted during these uncharted circumstances.

We invite you to learn about and educate others about AmeriCorps’ contribution to COVID-19 community response and recovery efforts nationwide, and to be inspired by the change-making individuals and organizations featured in the following pages.

In service,

Kaira Esgate, CEO
America’s Service Commissions
Introduction

The following pages showcase 79 outstanding AmeriCorps State programs from 50 states and territories. Programs have been alphabetized by state/territory and categorized by issue area. The primary focus of this publication is programs who pivoted to tackle the many challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Each profile provides a brief description, its key innovative elements, contact information, and examples of the program’s success stories. The program overview provides a brief snapshot into the activities of the innovative programs profiled. We invite you to visit the programs’ websites and/or contact them to learn more.

Programs have been classified in the following focus areas and categories:

- Disaster Services
- Economic Opportunity
- Education
- Environmental Stewardship
- Healthy Futures
- Veteran & Military Families
- Rural Areas
- Volunteer Generation Fund (VGF) Programs
- Multi-Focus Intermediary Programs

Traditionally, “innovative” has been defined as something that has never been done or experienced before. This project utilizes a more expansive and inclusive definition of innovation. The organizations featured here were deemed innovative because they found successful ways to develop new service delivery strategies, were creative in their use of funding and resources, and/or demonstrated innovation in forming unique and valuable partnerships to get things done effectively in their respective communities and regions.

Each program featured in this publication has demonstrated one or more of the following elements:

- **Adaptations:** Making adjustments to existing program design/delivery systems to continue serving communities during COVID-19 in the same primary focus area, such as adjusting service activities, safety requirements, sites/locations, etc.

- **Innovations:** Developing new or significantly different approaches, partnerships, or program design/delivery systems to substantially change the way the program
Innovative State Service COVID-19 Response Programs
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operates to meet new or evolving community needs in the new COVID-19 pandemic environment.

• **Direct Response Efforts:** Engaging members or volunteers in responding to urgent community needs during COVID-19, including but not limited to: public health, housing, feeding/food insecurity, workforce development/support, emergency logistics, and nonprofit capacity.

We hope you will find the dedication and creativity of the state-based AmeriCorps and service programs featured in this publication are inspirational. National and community service programs such as these have played an essential role in relief and healing in our nation. We hope that those reading will come away just as uplifted and inspired as we are by these servant leaders’ meaningful impact on their communities every day. Should you wish to contact a specific organization featured, contact information has been provided.
Alabama

AmeriCorps Instructional Support Team

The Butler County Board of Education AmeriCorps members provide instructional assistance to 2,828 economically disadvantage pre-school through 12th grade students in seven school sites of the Butler County, Alabama Public School System. The program operates in the AmeriCorps focus area of Education-School Readiness and K-12 Success. For the past twenty-four years, the AmeriCorps Instructional Support Team (AIST) has successfully ensured a brighter future for Butler County’s rural under-challenged students by focusing their efforts on school readiness and improving academic performance, pre-school-12 grade. Members provide early intervention and academic assistance in all pre-schools, elementary, middle school and high schools. All public schools in Butler County are school-wide Title I programs. The impact of this project not only allows low-income students to experience additional instructional intervention, but also provides great community collaboration.

On March 16, 2020 – Butler County School Systems closed for the school year. Only essential administrative staff and AmeriCorps members were assigned to school sites to help with sanitation and assistance in meal prep, packing and delivering meals to over 2400 students within Butler County during the months of March, April and May. The City of Greenville sponsored the Summer Feeding Program which began in June 2020. AIST members still remained at their respective sites and provided assistance in checking in new textbooks and provided assistance again with preparing classes for opening of school on August 4, 2020. However, AIST members did not come on board until October 1, 2020. During the current 2020-21 school term, members have been invaluable assisting students in one-on-one and small group instruction. Prior to Thanksgiving break, 47% of the student population were using virtual at-home learning. However, students were failing, especially high school students on the virtual option, therefore administrators amended the scheduled plan so failing students were mandated to return to class. AIST members were steadfast in their attendance and continued to be flexible to various schedule changes to help returning students to “catch-up” by one-on-one and small group intervention. Members in pre-school classes were busy making “take-home” activity packets for remote learners.

Spotlight: “I was looking for a fresh start with AmeriCorps, but I received so much more. I got a chance to make a difference in a life of a child and see possibilities instead of limitations. I will remember the children forever. They have touched my life and my heart. AmeriCorps gave me the opportunity to provide encouragement and hope for the future.” - Eden Williamson, 2nd Year AmeriCorps member, McKenzie School, McKenzie, Alabama, AmeriCorps Instructional Support Team, Butler County Board of Education

Issue Areas
Education

Supporting Commission
Alabama Governor’s Office of Volunteer Services

Innovative Elements
• Prepared and distributed over 50,000 meals in March, April, and May alone.
• Provided individualized student support on both in-person and remote learning platforms.

Contact Information
211 School Highlands Road
Greenville, Alabama 36037

Carol M. McArthur
Director
Carol.McArthur@butlerco.k12.al.us
334-382-5199 ext. 1404
Alabama

Selma AmeriCorps Program

The Selma AmeriCorps Program’s AmeriCorps members provide tutoring services to students in Selma and Dallas County, Alabama. At the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for improved academic performance of four hundred (400) students. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage two hundred twenty (220) volunteers who will be engaged in episodic community service projects. This program will focus on the AmeriCorps focus areas of Education. The federal AmeriCorps investment of $331,722 will be matched with all $238,455 coming from state or local public funding. The Selma AmeriCorps Program was established in October 2000. Originally, the program was named Selma Digital Opportunity AmeriCorps Program and was focused on bridging the digital divide/technology gap between the information haves and have-nots with a mission to increase digital access in the community.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Selma AmeriCorps Program has provided more than 88,800 meals and distributed more than 152,520 pounds of food. Their members have contributed more than 27,487 hours in COVID-19 response efforts. Selma AmeriCorps Program adjusted member service activities to include practicing social distancing, wearing personal protective equipment, implementing handwashing techniques, sanitizing sites, and adjusting member hours as well as limiting the number of members serving at site locations. The Selma AmeriCorps Program formed new partnerships in addition to redefining old ones to include food share/give away programs, preparing and distributing food, and assisting students with virtual learning assignments as well as participating in virtual learning class sessions with students through tutoring breakout sessions. The Selma AmeriCorps Program has engaged its members in assisting with a county-wide COVID-19 vaccination clinic through collaborations with county health department, municipal and county government, and the medical agencies. Members also engaged in packing and distributing food through contactless food share programs in addition to preparing and distributing hot food, assisting students in the participation and completion of virtual learning class assignments at public housing sites, nonprofit organizations, and faith-based organizations aside from the Selma City and Dallas County School Systems.

Issue Areas
Education

Supporting Commission
Alabama Governor’s Office of Volunteer Services

Innovative Elements
- Partnered with Selma Housing Authority, Selma-Dallas County Public Library, Dallas County, medical agencies, and more.
- Aided in distributing over 150,000 pounds of food to community members in need.

Contact Information
222 Broad Street
Selma, AL 36701

Teresa Carter
Program Director
selmaamericorps@selma-al.gov
334-874-2410

Spotlight: “Selma AmeriCorps members are a tremendous asset to our organization. They increase our capacity to offer services to the people of our community. In addition, Selma AmeriCorps members bring with them a variety of acquired skills and expertise gained through their program training. Because of these members, and the skills they bring, we are able to increase our community outreach programs and provide better services for our clients.” – John Solomon, Resident Services Director, Selma Housing Authority
Alaska
Sitka AmeriCorps Program

The Sitka School District AmeriCorps is designed to address the negative impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE’s) prevalent in rural communities by increasing resiliency. The program was able to quickly pivot to include COVID-19 mitigation in 2020 and will support COVID recovery from learning loss in 2021. The program accomplishes this goal through the formation of developmental relationships, social emotional learning, and enrichment activities. Before COVID-19, Sitka AmeriCorps members served in public schools and area social service non-profits to provide classroom support, adult education, resiliency mentoring, mental health skills, enrichment activities and capacity building. In response to the AK Governor Dunleavy’s March 11, 2020 emergency declaration the Sitka School District and all community partner host-sites closed. Program staff quickly reassigned AmeriCorps members to begin teleservice or changed their assignments to be able to serve safely in the community.

Over the period 3/15/2020 through 5/31/2020, Sitka AmeriCorps Program was able to support the meal delivery system that provides free and reduced lunch and breakfast for students, along with Sitka Mutual Aid meal delivery service. Over that same period members served 13,254 breakfast meals and 13,254 lunch meals for a total of 26,508 meals and 20,126 pounds of food. When school was virtual, AmeriCorps members continued to deliver school lunches, fresh fruit and vegetables, academic texts, and books for the Battle of the Books. The member at Pacific High delivered food boxes to 20 food insecure student homes along with a handmade holiday bag. For students at MEHS unable to return home for the holidays, members offered safe and socially distanced recreation activities. Several members delivered both Thanksgiving and Christmas dinner to food insecure families in Sitka in partnership with Alaska Native Sisterhood. Sitka members have been serving over the program year through a hybrid model of safe, in person interventions combined with virtual support. This will continue through the foreseeable future. Sitka AmeriCorps Program was able to place an additional 12 members in the Sitka School District to mitigate COVID-19 for the 2020-2021 school year. These members perform a breadth of vital roles that support the smooth delivery of curriculum and allow educators to maximize virtual instruction hours.

Issue Areas
Multi-focus Intermediary

Supporting Commission
Serve Alaska

Innovative Elements
- Provided over 20,000 pounds of food to the community within just over three months.
- Maintained a sense of community with students through socially distanced activities, book exchanges, and virtual programming.

Contact Information
601 HPR
Sitka, AK 99835

Sarah Lawrie
lawries@sitkaschools.org
907-966-1440

Spotlight: In the words of Keet Gooshi Heen Elementary Principal Casey Demmery, “This is the best group of AmeriCorps members we have ever had… They take initiative, work well with youth and have positive attitudes. We would not be able to support out students to the standard we desire without the contributions of these members.”
Arizona

University of Arizona Wildcat Corps

This year 75 University of Arizona Wildcat Corps Members they will serve over 41,000 hours in 10 Arizona counties and 3 tribal communities in over 30 different programs. Each member adapted local programming during the pandemic to continue to provide area youth with STEM opportunities, nutrition and health education, and agriculture and environmental support services. University of Arizona Wildcat Corps AmeriCorps Members continue to be an important part of improving lives and communities.

These members have adapted to the current realities and are developing and providing online content for students. This content addresses and strengthens the capacity of youth to increase educational attainment and fosters positive youth development. Additionally, they are actively involved in civic engagement projects that tackle the critical local needs of food, blood products, and medical, physical and mental health. Soon, AmeriCorps members will be serving as Medical Scribes with the University of Arizona Vaccination Point of Distribution.

Cooperative Extension is one of the pillars of The University of Arizona's Division of Agriculture, Life & Veterinary Sciences & Cooperative Extension. Wildcat Corps members are about "Improving Lives, Communities and the Economy" by serving as a statewide network of knowledgeable faculty and staff that provides lifelong educational programs for all Arizonans. They are part of a nationwide educational network of scientists and educators who help people solve problems and put knowledge to use. Arizona Cooperative Extension provides a link between the university and the citizens of this state.

Spotlight: “Our AmeriCorps members were involved in writing, acting in, and hosting our first virtual field trip called Healthy Habits. This field trip was developed in reaction to the Covid-19 pandemic and over 2,000 students zoomed in to view this 6 hour field trip. Our new AmeriCorps members amazed us with their creativity and commitment to providing an excellent and engaging field trip. They dressed up as carrots, bunnies, and chickens; they filmed and edited every episode and added music and sound effects; and they hosted and answered questions for the kids during the field trip. The kids were visibly engaged and entertained by each episode, as could be seen by their dancing, smiling, and participation on their screens. We could not have done this field trip without our AmeriCorps members and so appreciate their hard work and dedication to providing agriculture and nutrition education in this new and unique way.” – Alex Atkins, Site Supervisor

Issue Areas
Education, Environmental Stewardship, Rural Areas

Supporting Commission
Governor’s Office of Youth, Faith, and Family Arizona

Innovative Elements
• Created fun online content to inspire and connect with area youth.
• Cooperates with The University of Arizona’s Division of Agriculture, Life & Veterinary Sciences to support educational programming for Arizonans.

Contact Information
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Tucson, AZ 85721

Christina Lipin
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520-626-9243
**Arizona**

**Earn to Learn & College Success Arizona: AdviseAZ**

AdviseAZ AmeriCorps is part of a national service movement striving to increase the number of students who enroll in and complete postsecondary education. The AdviseAZ program embeds well-trained, dedicated, near-peer college advisers in high schools and community sites that serve significant numbers of low-income and first-generation college-going students. The goal of the program is to increase the number of high school students who enter and complete postsecondary education. After an intensive training, advisers are poised to help students navigate the complex college exploration process, retake college admissions tests, apply to colleges that are a good match/fit, complete the FAFSA, secure financial aid, and matriculate to college. These game-changing advisers serve as experts, mentors, and guides to the students they serve in partnership with school counselor(s), educators and community partners.

Members have been able to reach out to students virtually, helping them continue to reach their postsecondary goals and reminding them of their support networks. Members have also expanded their services to include well-being check ins during the COVID crisis, supporting individuals holistically. They helped build and execute programs like College Depot’s Summer Bridge Program and UCCAN’s empowerment program, supporting students through an especially turbulent transition from high school. Members launched social media accounts across the state, creating encouraging posts and a new avenue for students to reach out to them. AdviseAZ Members also contributed to emergency projects in their area, creating COVID-19 relief resources, making closed-captioning for lessons to make them more accessible to students with disabilities, and mental health/mindfulness guides to help students while social distancing.

COVID-19 increased the amount of support students needed in various ways, but AdviseAZ AmeriCorps members stepped up to meet that need. Helios College Knowing & Going Student ambassadors were implemented at 15 high schools around the state of Arizona with the support of AdviseAZ AmeriCorps. The Student Ambassadors mobilizes influential high school students to inspire their peers to pursue a higher education and help with the logistic of doing so. These student leaders are trained and tasked with increasing college preparation and enrollment across their entire school.

**Issue Areas**

Education

**Supporting Commission**

Arizona Governor’s Office on Youth, Faith and Family

**Innovative Elements**

- Created a social media presence on platforms like Instagram to better connect with hundreds of area students.
- Expanded services beyond their issue area while transforming their usual program to virtual delivery methods.

**Contact Information**

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Director of Statewide Initiatives
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**Spotlight:** Members like Selena Quintanilla continue to advocate for students in the Tucson community. Selena is an amazing asset to Alta Vista High School, according to her site supervisor Yvonne Knapp. “As we are all quarantined in our houses, she is continuing to reach out to students to get their FAFSA applications done and checking in on their college application status. Selena has created some amazing handouts for our students to keep them focused on how to deal with online classes and how-to self-care.”
Arkansas

Arkansas Reads

Arkansas Reads has been an AmeriCorps program since 2001. Since the program’s inception, AmeriCorps members have tutored, trained, and recruited adult learners and volunteer tutors. Arkansas Reads is a program of Adult Learning Alliance, Inc. (ALA), Arkansas’ leading adult learning advocacy organization. ALA supports the efforts of community-based literacy councils across the state who provide a foundation for adults who read below a fifth-grade level. Together the councils work to improve quality of life through raising reading, math, digital, health, financial, and English literacy.

When in-person tutoring was no longer possible, AmeriCorps members checked in with their learners to determine 1) how they are doing, 2) what are their goals to keep moving forward, and 3) what tools do they have at home (i.e. internet access, technology). For the most part, all adult learners had cell phones. Arkansas Reads jumped to assist with immediate needs such as childcare and food distribution. Members who were not taking part in educational initiatives assisted at foodbanks, churches, schools, and shelters.

In the wake of COVID-19, Arkansas Reads AmeriCorps members were trained on how to do distance learning utilizing Zoom and incorporated free online curriculum resources into their lessons. AmeriCorps members with adult learners in areas without broadband access found opportunities to meet with clients in parking lots of local libraries, colleges, or the literacy council, and utilized public Wi-Fi to engage clients in online learning. Members serving adult learners who struggle with or were resistant to technology, found ways to keep them engaged by printing off packets of worksheets and hand delivering them to front doors, and later returning to pick them up and deliver a new package. As adult learners become more familiar and engaged with distance learning, this could be an opportunity to expand the number of adult learners by eliminating barriers such as transportation and childcare.

Issue Areas
Economic Opportunity, Education

Supporting Commission
EngageAR

Innovative Elements
• AmeriCorps members assisted in areas of most immediate need such as childcare and food distribution.
• AmeriCorps members assessed and accommodated their learners’ situations to ensure that they continued receiving assistance and support.

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Spotlight: Kearra Cromwell of Literacy Action of Central Arkansas has a student named Ms. RC who is also friends with another one of her students named Ms. P. They had just started classes at the end of March, right when the COVID pandemic forced the library, where they held tutoring sessions, to close down. Kearra was innovative in coming up with a plan to use ZOOM to continue tutoring Ms. RC and Ms. P. By turning her own bedroom into a makeshift classroom she could continue making progress with her students in spite of the COVID-19 pandemic. Kearra certainly didn’t let this pandemic stop her from helping her students meet their goals.
#CaliforniansForAll Vista Program

The #CaliforniansForAll initiative of California Volunteers, launched as response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, has an organizational focus on anti-poverty community development. Our #CaliforniansForAll VISTA Program addresses food insecurity within both the Disaster Response and Healthy Futures focus areas. For the past three months, VISTA members have been working to expand the capacity of critical partners that serve low-income and vulnerable populations to meet increasing demand for program services through sustained volunteer support. As a result of this project, Californians living in poverty have greater access to the help they need as nonprofits and government agencies across California utilize volunteers more effectively to expand and improve services.

As part of the #CaliforniansForAll initiative, California Volunteers conducted assessments with 27 food banks across the States, providing valuable information as to what type and numbers of volunteers food banks were utilizing pre-COVID-19 and the reasons why volunteers left. Based on the responses from the Food Bank assessments, there are a few key reasons behind the shortage of volunteers. Overall, the loss of the local volunteer base at each Food Bank ranged between 28%-100%, with the majority reporting between 95%-100% total loss. AmeriCorps members were deployed to temporarily assist these organizations in the areas it was most needed.

California Volunteers has also created a robust statewide infrastructure for the first time to effectively mobilize and deploy thousands of volunteers across the state to help assist with pressing state and local challenges during this public health crisis and beyond. #CaliforniansForAll VISTA Program is critical to bolstering this new statewide volunteer infrastructure as well as expanding the volunteer generation and management capacity of partnering organizations in order to: 1) expand the capacity of partnering organizations serving people living in poverty, including those who have been recently isolated, displaced, unemployed, and/or are underemployed due to COVID-19; and 2) ensure that Californians who have answered the Governor’s call to service are meaningfully engaged in lifting up communities.

**Issue Areas**
Disaster Services, Healthy Futures

**Supporting Commission**
California Volunteers

**Innovative Elements**
- Coordinated with local food banks to better understand and address their needs.
- Creative adaptation to online learning through seed starter kits and an emphasis on the outdoors.

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**Spotlight:** Cecilia Gomez had lost her job of 14 years due to the pandemic, but she has always volunteered in her community and didn’t want to just sit still. She signed up and began volunteering initially in Hollywood and Los Angeles. She had been volunteering for about a month and then got an email about the #CaliforniansForAll VISTA Program and applied. She has been a VISTA now for about 3 months and is leading the charge in recruiting groups of students from colleges and universities to join our volunteer efforts in Orange County. She also encouraged her daughter Belinda to apply and become a VISTA, who is now also serving.
California
Reading Partners CA

Reading Partners is a national nonprofit and AmeriCorps program based in Oakland, CA that mobilizes communities to provide students with the proven, individualized reading support they need to read at grade level by fourth grade. Research shows that students who read at grade level by fourth grade have a greater opportunity to succeed in school and beyond. Together with local schools, Reading Partners focuses on supporting students who are several months to two and a half years behind grade level in reading. They harness the power of community volunteers to provide individualized literacy instruction with measurable results to help students master the reading fundamentals they need to reach grade level. Working one-on-one with their tutors, students who were once trending behind in reading become proud, confident readers, excited about learning and ready for success.

In 2020, Reading Partners made adjustments to their programmatic offerings to create flexibility with school partners and better meet students’ needs during COVID-19 and beyond. In addition to providing in-person tutoring when possible, Reading Partners is serving students one-on-one in a safe online environment using Reading Partners’ evidence-based curriculum. Content integrates their trusted curriculum and lessons into innovative presentations to optimize student engagement and incorporate social-emotional learning (SEL) opportunities through relationship-building with tutors.

By designing a distance tutoring program and modifying an existing tele-therapy platform in 4 months, the organization has been able to continue connecting students with volunteers for twice a week tutoring sessions online. The new program model, Reading Partners Connects, enables students and tutors to connect safely online, and includes a curriculum aligned with Common Core and state literacy standards that uses innovative ways for volunteers to use detailed, interactive lesson plans and eBooks that support student learning.

Spotlight: “To make sure this disparity doesn’t worsen, Reading Partners has adapted their in-person curriculum to a virtual setting to help reinforce the reading and language arts skills these students need to succeed. And despite the format change, older volunteers are eager to continue working with the students with whom they’ve built a trusted rapport.” – Trent Stamp, EdSource
Mountain Roots Healthy Futures AmeriCorps

Mountain Roots Healthy Futures AmeriCorps program, a program of Mountain Roots Food Project, places AmeriCorps members across rural Colorado to support programs working for an equitable, healthy future for all – through nutrition and environmental education, community and school gardens, and increased access to healthy food. The program believes that for communities to thrive they need healthy people, healthy environments, and healthy economies.

When the pandemic hit, members immediately shifted to provide their communities with critical information on COVID-19 testing, symptoms, and public health measures. Members offered their skills to contact tracing, community event planning, call centers, and food banks.

The program also supported educators in their community by offering families resources to create engaging and meaningful experiences safely at home and online. They adapted lessons for online learning and created seed starter kits to foster learning from the home while continuing to connect families with the outdoors.

Mountain Roots partnered with restaurants, food banks, and farmer’s markets to tackle food insecurity, serving over 200 individuals weekly for 20 weeks. During the pandemic, Healthy Futures AmeriCorps Members became lights in their communities by responding to evolving needs.

Spotlight: AmeriCorps member Griffin Morin created hundreds of seed packets for local families. Griffin dedicated himself to several school gardens, infrastructure development, and creating meaningful relationships with individuals in his community. Griffin understood the importance of offering the community a place to learn, connect, and share.
Colorado COVID-19 Containment Response Corps

The COVID-19 Containment Response Corps is an initiative created in June 2020 through a partnership between Governor Jared Polis and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE); AmeriCorps; Serve Colorado; and Gary Community Investments. In addition, four nonprofit organizations stepped up to host members including Community Resource Center, Conservation Legacy, Cultivate, and Volunteers of America Colorado. This partnership has provided extra support to Local Public Health Authorities to respond to COVID-19 cases, allowing information on isolation and quarantine to be shared quickly.

Participating AmeriCorps members support case investigation, contact tracing, resource coordination, test result notification, isolation and quarantine monitoring, and other activities to contain the spread of COVID-19 within Colorado.

National Service partners came together in Colorado soon after COVID-19 hit to quickly explore how national service members could support the state's response to the public health crisis. Out of those conversations a unique partnership started between AmeriCorps; Gary Community Investments; Serve Colorado; Governor Jared Polis and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) creating a cross-stream approach to serving the State of Colorado through the COVID-19 Containment Response Corps. Four nonprofit organizations stepped up to host members including Community Resource Center, Conservation Legacy, Cultivate, and Volunteers of America Colorado.

As of September, COVID-19 Containment Response Corps members had served over 21,098 individuals.

Issue Areas
Disaster Services

Supporting Commission
Serve Colorado

Innovative Elements
- Created specifically for COVIDF-19 related support within the state.
- Partnerships with a variety of member host sites addressing a wide array of needs.
- Cooperation across state and national departments, such as CDPHE and AmeriCorps

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Spotlight: “The COVID-19 Containment Response Corps (CCRC) team owes a huge part of our success to our AmeriCorps members. Since the beginning of this pandemic, they have supported Coloradans by providing knowledge and wherewithal to the general public. During this unprecedented time, they have been essential to assisting the State of Colorado and the COVID response. – Sarah Tuneberg, Colorado COVID-19 Innovation Response Team Lead / Senior COVID-19 Advisor
Connecticut

ConnectiCorps

ConnectiCorps AmeriCorps members are placed in nonprofits charged with providing critical community safety net supports in the midst of COVID-19-related capacity shortages. Members are tasked with 1) assessing the unique capacity needs of their nonprofit placement sites, immersing themselves for three weeks in direct service provision to beneficiaries to orient them to the unique circumstances and challenges associated with volunteering for the program, and 2) developing and implementing a plan to increase that organization’s volunteer engagement capacity to help that nonprofit meet community needs exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

ConnectiCorps was developed in direct response to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on critical nonprofit infrastructure in the state. Since Connecticut first enacted its “Stay Home, Stay Safe” COVID-19 response emergency orders in March 2020, Connecticut nonprofits that provide essential services in the areas of food security, housing, anti-poverty assistance, and more have experienced reductions in capacity and critical resources even as the demand for their services has increased.

ConnectiCorps AmeriCorps members are providing capacity-building support around volunteer generation to a wide variety of Connecticut safety net nonprofits demonstrating diverse needs. ConnectiCorps service sites include a community health center, a food pantry, a child guidance clinic, and a disability services provider among others.

Their efforts to date have resulted in creative strategies like a unique partnership with a state college to create a student club around volunteering at a food distribution organization, addition of a volunteer-managed food security program at a child guidance clinic, expansion of a disability services organization’s delivery to a wider regional territory to reach more rural settings, and more.

Spotlight: “I’m grateful to The Alliance and the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving for their leadership and creativity in developing and launching this critical program. Nonprofits across the state are on the frontlines of the COVID emergency, providing critically needed services to vulnerable people across Connecticut. The ConnectiCorps program is a great way to provide support to those nonprofits and to offer to our young people the opportunity for public service in these times of great challenge to our communities.” –Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont
Innovative State Service COVID-19 Response Programs
America’s Service Commissions

Connecticut
HealthForward

HealthForward AmeriCorps members serve full-time at one of the centers across the state that comprise the Connecticut Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Network. HealthForward AmeriCorps members engage high school, college and health professions students from underrepresented racial and ethnic backgrounds in select service-learning programs, including the Youth Health Service Corps (YHSC), Collegiate Health Service Corps (CHSC) and health profession field placements, with the goal of reducing health disparities. Led by HealthForward AmeriCorps members, field placement participants develop and implement community service projects related to public health outcomes. These service projects benefit the community and increase participant understanding of how the context of people’s lives can impact their health care and health outcomes.

Since Connecticut’s Governor’s Office issued its COVID-19 state of emergency and the state’s schools moved to remote and hybrid remote/in-person learning models, HealthForward pivoted. All Youth Health Service Corps (YHSC), Collegiate Health Service Corps (CHSC) and health profession field placements moved to online platform delivery.

HealthForward AmeriCorps members have been providing vital alternative service activities in direct response to COVID-19 pandemic impacts. For example, HealthForward AmeriCorps members and their service corps members are serving in 20 senior center calling programs, conducting COVID-19 surveillance, educating on protective measures, and check-ins regarding social and basic needs of seniors isolated by “Stay Home, Stay Safe” orders. Supporting senior centers with phone-based senior outreach to reduce impacts of isolation has been a major result of this collaboration. The organization is also piloting the addition of a StoryCorps element that will increase socialization by encouraging isolated seniors to share and record their memories.

Spotlight: AmeriCorps member Akash Kumar serves in Waterbury, CT, and realized that one senior was in particular distress. The senior related that he had received and misplaced several refills on medication intended to treat his amnesia, and he was very concerned that he was starting to experience symptoms again. Akash connected with the senior center himself and made sure the senior received the support that he needed to continue his health journey. Akash learned how the isolation experienced by seniors due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic dramatically impacted the man’s health outcomes.

Issue Areas
Disaster Services, Capacity Building

Supporting Commission
Serve Connecticut

Innovative Elements
- New partnerships with area senior centers to support senior wellness and health in the face of isolation.
- Piloting addition of StoryCorps element to encourage socialization and engagement of seniors.

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Innovative State Service COVID-19 Response Programs
America’s Service Commissions

Delaware
National Health Corps Delaware

Announced in January of 2021, National Health Corps Delaware is a new pilot AmeriCorps program created to address the COVID-19 pandemic and health inequity throughout the state. In partnership with National Health Corps, the Health Federation of Philadelphia, and New Castle County, this program will place 15-20 AmeriCorps members at sites across Delaware.

The central focus of their service is the physical health of community members as well as the health disparities exacerbated by the COVID-19 virus. This includes the National Health Corps directives of reducing medical costs and increasing access to health care.

Within Delaware, the program is designed to support medical centers, aid in vaccine distribution, and address racial disparities and underserved communities within healthcare. This program will provide essential relief and long-lasting change for the people of Delaware in a time when it is needed most.

National Health Corps Delaware has four stated program objectives: (1) support empowerment in youth and adults to make choices about their health and lead healthier lives; (2) foster NHC Delaware members’ skills related to professional development, commitment to health-related careers, ethic of service, and reducing health disparities; (3) support organizations that aim to reduce disparities and improve health outcomes in communities; and (4) create a model for national service in crisis.

Spotlight: “We are in this together. This partnership with the National Health Corps will create job opportunities in our most vulnerable communities, keeping the pressure on to eradicate this virus from our communities.” – New Castle County Executive Matt Meyer
District of Columbia

Washington AIDS Partnership

The Washington AIDS Partnership (WAP) has been leading an effective public-private response to end the HIV epidemic in the Greater Washington region. For the past 24 years, WAP has recruited a Health Corps team of diverse young people who serve at Washington, D.C. health care and community-based service providers for a period of 11 months. The 2019-2020 Health Corps team, who served August 2019 to July 2020, were active participants in D.C. ’s COVID-19 response. For the first seven months of the program, the Health Corps team conducted 2,597 HIV and STI tests and increased access to primary care, mental health services, and emotional and social service programs. When COVID-19 shut down the city in March, the Health Corps team adjusted its approach and focused its impact on two necessities: food and health education.

The current Health Corps team continues to provide health education, and a broad range of other services, to clients in Washington, D.C. The team developed the COVID-19 Food Access Initiative, which included both fundraising and service components. As part of the initiative, the team created the COVID-19 Food Access Relief Fund (“the Fund”), and after intense fundraising, the team purchased food from eight local small businesses and donated it to four local nonprofit community organizations. The Fund financially supported multiple local small businesses, fed thousands of D.C. residents, and supported La Clinica Del Pueblo (LCDP) and Joseph’s House, two community health organizations in D.C. The team’s food access initiative also supported Food & Friends - a nonprofit organization that provides food services to D.C. residents. The organization’s operations were severely compromised by the pandemic and had to close for two weeks in March, leaving their clients without food. As part of their food access initiative, the WAP team began volunteering at Food & Friends every week from March through July 2020. The team bagged groceries and prepared thousands of meals each shift to provide ongoing food access to individuals and families who receive services through Food & Friends. The Health Corps cohort’s COVID-19 Food Access Initiative supported individuals, nonprofits, and the food service industry with a focus on vulnerable, food insecure populations throughout the pandemic.

“In retrospect, now having launched and executed a successful campaign to help those in need during a critical time, I can see just how difficult it is to continue in this work. However, now more than ever, I feel more called to the field of public health, direct response service. Hopefully there is not another crisis like we experienced in March, but if there is I know me and my team will be ready!” -Esmé Trahair, Health Corps member 2019-2020
Florida
Seniors on a Mission

Seniors on a Mission (SoaM) is a successful nonprofit that was founded by Joanne Hickox in 1999. Joanne began Seniors on a Mission to create monthly social outings for senior adults to participate in order to establish fellowships with other seniors instead of sitting at home alone. By 2005, one of the seniors suggested for the group to get out in the community to do some good, thus laying the foundation of the organization today. Volunteerism is the tool they use to have an impact in social isolation, loneliness, and depression in the senior population where they create an environment of honor, love, and encouragement to live a life with purpose. When the pandemic hit, SoaM quickly pivoted to assist seniors in the community individually.

SoaM partnered with Eldersource and Feeding Northeast Florida where three members were able to hand delivers 17,650 nutritious, restaurant prepared meals to hundreds of low-income seniors. Many of these precious seniors, living in 700 square foot HUD Housing communities in the Jacksonville area, have not been out of their tiny apartments since March 13th. This partnership allowed SoaM to reach over 250 seniors with bags of household staples and food in Clay and St. Johns county.

SoaM also delivered “Comfort Bags” to over 280 seniors. These bags include a 365-day devotional, a God’s Promises coloring book, color pencils, a plush cloth monkey, and a heart shaped stress ball. More importantly, members were able to serve as loving encouragers, sharing God’s love through “Lawn Chair” conversations with seniors in 5 different counties in Northeast Florida. Since Covid-19, there is a greater need for social responsibility in the community when it comes to seniors. This program now has a mobile unit to take SoaM into the senior’s neighborhood. Seniors on a Mission is going mobile (pictured below)!

Spotlight: Andrea Kent went above and beyond her scope of daily duties. While she delivered “Comfort Bags” to the seniors and took a moment to have a “Lawn Chair” conversation with them, she listened to their needs and concerns. She would take it upon herself to make sure that the need was met. In addition, she would call them after hours to check in. Being embraced during a time of much fear and vulnerability, Andrea considered it an honor to have had a trusting interaction with a population that is often taken advantage of. Her acts of care left a lasting impression of many seniors in the community.
Florida
Boys & Girls Club of Martin County

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Martin County (BGCMC) in Florida deploys 50 AmeriCorps members who serve in 5 middle and 5 elementary schools to improve educational outcomes for 1,275 youth in grades K-8. In the 5 Title I elementary schools, AmeriCorps members provide literacy intervention to 525 students; and in the county’s 5 middle schools, 750 students at risk of dropping out receive mentoring and social-emotional support using an evidence-based framework that is designed to improve school engagement. In 2018, BGMC received its first transformational grant from Volunteer Florida to establish an AmeriCorps program in all five of the county’s middle schools. Designed to serve 750 students at risk of dropping out – students completing the intervention demonstrated improved academic performance and behaviors. In 2019, BGCMC’s AmeriCorps program expanded to serve an additional 525 K-5 students performing below grade level in English Language Arts. When the Martin County School District transitioned 100% of their students and staff to remote learning, BGCMC’s AmeriCorps members were redeployed to provide critical, emergency support to numerous non-profit and social service agencies. Members quickly pivoted to provide Teleservice programs for students, assist in virtual learning barriers, and create interactive “Read Aloud” videos. At the beginning of the new school year, middle school-based members returned to schools to continue their mentoring work. For elementary students, BGCMC opened three after-school “No Limit Learning Centers” programming.

BGCMC’s 4 Clubs began operating as meal distribution sites for disconnected communities throughout the county. BGMC partnered with the school district and community partners to distribute breakfast, lunch, and dinner. This became a vital platform for members to conduct wellness checks, provide support, and distribute key resources and materials.

Spotlight: The AmeriCorps members were able to “give the kids that one-on-one time they need to really hone in on the skills they’re not grasping,” says Thelma Washington, Executive Director at the Gertrude Walden Child Care Center. “When you have that one-on-one time and make that connection and give examples the kids can practice, the lightbulb goes off and everyone is happy. I love them and so do the parents.”
Georgia
Communities In Schools of Georgia
AmeriCorps Foundations Tutorial Program

The Communities In Schools (CIS) of Georgia AmeriCorps Foundations Tutorial Program supports the CIS mission to help students stay in school and graduate. The CIS AmeriCorps program tutors low-achieving elementary students and improve their reading comprehension, vocabulary recognition, basic writing skills and math skills. AmeriCorps members assist local affiliates in rural communities and provide one-on-one and small group reading instruction to students in grades kindergarten through 5th grade.

During March of 2020, the world slowly shut down and this included schools within the communities where our AmeriCorps tutors serve. Members lived by the pledge, "when faced with adversity, they took action." Members shifted to virtual tutoring, porch tutoring, serving meals to students from local soup kitchens and even sewing masks for community members. They did their best to stay connected to their communities and especially the children and families that are so dependent on their support.

Many members partnered with local food banks to provide meals to the communities they served. In addition to this, many members added tutoring resources to food boxes for students. Members quickly transitioned away from their traditional in-person tutoring to abide with COVID-19 guidelines. AmeriCorps members utilized virtual, phone, and porch tutoring to continue providing students with support.

**Spotlight:** AmeriCorps member Mrs. Tip, pictured below, serves with Family Connections-Communities In Schools of Hancock County and has spent many of her days sewing masks for community members and healthcare workers.

**Issue Areas**
Education, Rural Areas

**Supporting Commission:**
Georgia Commission for Service and Volunteerism

**Innovative Elements**
- Partnerships with local food banks and soup kitchens to aid with meal distribution due to increased local need.
- AmeriCorps members utilized new tutoring techniques through virtual platforms, phones, and porch tutoring.

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**Spotlight (continued):** In addition to this effort, Mrs. Tip began to set snacks out on her porch each afternoon. These snacks attracted the attention of some of the neighborhood children. As the children would come by to get their afternoon treats, she would also read with children, chat with them and provide children with additional love and attention. This was not a scheduled or prescribed action; this was one member's way of living the AmeriCorps Pledge and "getting things done."
Guam

AmeriCorps University of Guam Volunteer Center

The AmeriCorps UOG Volunteer Center is a sub-grantee under Serve Guam Commission, (SGC) Office of the Governor. Since the island-wide shutdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic, AmeriCorps UOG has been instrumental in efforts to help the island serve the underprivileged population that has since multiplied due to loss of jobs during the shutdown. They are currently assisting with registrations, data collection and senior citizens receiving vaccines. They are additionally preparing to support eight Guam Department of Education (GDOE) Community Learning Centers (CLC). GDOE’s goal is to broaden the access to technology for all students, equipped with free computer, internet access for students as a whole in order to address learning needs at all public schools. AmeriCorps UOG will continue to work with 19 village Mayor’s with after school mentoring and homework assistance.

For program year 19-20, the AmeriCorps UOG Volunteer Center continued to build a partnership with Guam Department of Education (GDOE). In this partnership, the program assisted GDOE in bridging the gap between public school students and schools by providing mentoring and homework assistance in not only core subject areas, but also technical expertise as it pertains to the online models of learning. In addition, the program created lessons via a YouTube channel for students to have access to. On this YouTube channel, the program will not only address mentoring and homework assistance but also incorporate how to continue environmentally sustainable practices during a pandemic. The program will also continue to assist the 19 village mayors in their efforts to distribute food commodities to those underprivileged members of the community whilst addressing public and private school students learning needs. SGC and AmeriCorps UOG also participated with Public Health and Social Services and Guam Memorial Hospital Authority on COVID-19 Contact Investigation and Tracing. Members acquired an ASTHO Certificate of Completion for Serve Guam Commission and AmeriCorps Program staff in preparation for deployment. Training is provided to AmeriCorps members to gain knowledge and understanding of the pandemic and other service projects that will be required in contact tracing should numbers of positives continue to rise in the community.

Issue Areas
Disaster Services, Environmental Stewardship, Education, Capacity Building

Supporting Commission
Serve Guam

Innovative Elements
- AmeriCorps members hand-sewed 250 masks and repaired over 17,000 damaged masks for frontline workers.
- Partnered with hospitals, mayor’s offices, the Department of Education, Public Health and Social Services and more.

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Spotlight: “As a whole, members of the AmeriCorps UOG Volunteer Center felt the impact with meal distributions on island through the Grab & Go meal distributions. Upon arrival at 8:30, all meal distribution locations already had lines that blocked the streets. These were members of the community who had families that were affected by island-wide shutdown due to COVID-19. As a result, people lost their jobs and were not able to provide basic necessities to their families because there was no income. Members felt the impact this service had on the community by the receivers’ appreciation as they drove by to pick up their meals. This appreciation was island-wide at all meal distribution sites.” - Dean Christian Diras University of Guam Mangilao
Legal Aid Society of Hawai’i

Legal Aid’s Project Kaulike (meaning "justice" or "equality") places 20 AmeriCorps members in positions that help low-income residents of Hawaii navigate the justice system and connect with the legal information and resources they need to overcome various civil legal issues they face. Members serve in Legal Aid offices throughout the state, as well as in courthouse-based self-help centers.

AmeriCorps members were instrumental in Legal Aid’s adaptations, innovations, and ability to respond to urgent community needs during COVID-19. Almost all of Legal Aid staff and AmeriCorps members adapted to remote work beginning in March 2020, while those assigned in-office work had to develop and adapt to safety protocols and new business protocols to support remote workers.

AmeriCorps members were involved at every level. They suggested new ways to provide service, and updated program materials to reflect refined operations. In addition to this, members reached out directly to community partners to help ensure seamless service delivery.

AmeriCorps members engaged with program partners at the Judiciary and Hawaii Bar Association to shift their courthouse self-help centers to remote operations thanks to innovation by a member. Members also created and updated legal self-help materials to address changing legal needs including Unemployment, Evictions, Eviction Moratoriums and more. Members were trained to provide assistance in new and emerging areas of law.

**Spotlight:** The AmeriCorps member serving in Legal Aid Society of Hawai’i’s Kona office, Mike Rogers, transformed the courthouse self-help centers across the state from brick and mortar to virtual. He researched technological options, developed an implementation plan and trained members and pro-bono volunteers. This transition has been a tremendous success and is even preferred by some volunteers.
Kupu, which means “to sprout” or “to grow” in Hawaiian, has a two-fold mission: to preserve natural resources while empowering the next generation. The organization provides hands-on service and development opportunities in conservation and sustainability, with the goal of fostering community-involved environmental and cultural stewards. Kupu’s work has been likened to the role of the kupukupu fern. The fern not only serves as a foundational species for rebuilding a healthy, native ecosystem, but it also symbolizes a place where people can grow. Kupu’s AmeriCorps program engages approximately 250 members per year in both individual and crew-based positions. Members remove invasive species, establish native vegetation, remediate streams and trails, and promote environmental education and stewardship at over 100 service sites managed by federal, state, and community-based nonprofit partner conservation agencies throughout Hawaii. In addition, the AmeriCorps members leverage about 12,000 volunteers annually who are engaged in conservation efforts alongside members.

During this unprecedented time, Kupu has prioritized the health and safety of their staff, program participants, and all people in Hawai‘i and abroad. While monitoring government restrictions and recommendations, Kupu programs have been identifying safe, alternative forms of service. Adaptations include turning crew-based programming into individual-type placements, as well as conducting virtual orientations and professional development opportunities for participants in lieu of in-person events. Some participants have taken the initiative to create online environmental educational content, which is now reaching people locally and globally. Kupu is working to strengthen what they are doing in order to better support their community. They have developed valuable new partnerships and provided service and opportunity to those in need.

**Issue Areas** Economic Opportunity, Education, Youth and Workforce Development

**Supporting Commission** Hawai‘i Commission for National and Community Service

**Innovative Elements**
- Continued service by shifting group service to individual placements.
- Created environmentally-focused educational content to promote environmental stewardship that resulted in global virtual outreach.

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**Spotlight:** “During this current pandemic, life and service has become the most challenging even in my long lifetime, but people in our State have not lost hope – instead, becoming productive as forestry & water-shed protectors and in other jobs working through Kupu in its effective partnership innovation with our State’s response to Covid-19! Hundreds of people know more about our natural & cultural resources thanks to Kupu and It’s great services!” - Robert K. Masuda, First Deputy Director, Department of Land and Natural Resources, Hawai‘i
Idaho

Palouse Clearwater Environmental Institute

Based out of Moscow, Idaho, the Palouse-Clearwater Environmental Institute (PCEI) AmeriCorps Program currently serves communities all over the state of Idaho. Through 30 partnerships with schools, community-based organizations and government agencies, PCEI addresses critical environmental and equity issues in the areas of healthy watersheds, energy and resource conservation, environmental education and outreach, as well as sustainable community development. Members help students explore and learn about gardening at sites like the Boise Urban Garden School, work with bird ambassadors to put on programs for Idahoans, teach kids about outdoor critters at sites such as the McCall Outdoor Science School, and engage community members in ecological restoration activities across the state.

During the 2019-2020 program year, PCEI and its 18 members were able to provide education and training in environmental stewardship to over 3,400 students and improve over 80 acres of public land even with site closures due to COVID-19. PCEI members have been able to think outside the box and deliver virtual lessons to keep kids learning and engaged. In addition to creating online education content, members have adapted in order to engage volunteers in safe ways. For example, two members at Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge created a way to interact with its sites' volunteers virtually by asking them to complete tasks and log their outdoor observations on iNaturalists, an online platform, so its volunteers could socially distance and remain safe.

Lastly, PCEI members have their increased outdoor restoration projects which benefit local communities. These projects can include removing invasive species, creating/enhancing riparian buffer, planting native trees/shrubs, thinning for habitat enhancement and reduced fire danger, removing debris, trail building activities, decommissioning activities, and more.

Spotlight: Megan Chandler, who served at the University of Idaho-Valley County Extension office, went above and beyond for her site, even when faced with site closures due to COVID-19, Megan’s accomplishments include creating a blog, consistently building training videos for kids on her site’s Facebook page, designing and transitioning a 7-month curriculum to an online curriculum, creating a STEAM mystery challenge with her local library, crafting lessons for the Master Gardner series, and securing speakers to present to families virtually. Megan’s efforts to provide environmental education to families truly enriched and impacted her community.

Issue Areas
Environmental Stewardship

Supporting Commission
Serve Idaho

Innovative Elements
• AmeriCorps members provided environmental education to over 3,000 students.
• Increased outdoor projects that benefit the community, such as planting native trees and removing debris.

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Illinois
City Year Chicago

Since their founding in 1994, City Year Chicago has helped students and schools succeed by delivering holistic support to students and schools. City Year Chicago is the largest among a network of City Year sites serving 29 cities internationally. In the 2020-21 school year, City Year has deployed 257 AmeriCorps members to 31 Chicago Public Schools. Diverse, trained teams of six to eight AmeriCorps members serve full time in schools as student success coaches, partnered with teachers to help students cultivate key social, emotional and academic skills that are important in school and in life.

City Year Chicago has successfully adapted all programming to provide support remotely. The three pillars of their Whole School Whole Child model – attendance, course performance, and social-emotional development – have taken on even greater significance in the remote environment. Attendance across their district dropped significantly in remote learning, with 76% of the students CYC serves in attendance on day one of school. AmeriCorps members made calls home to absent students’ families, held virtual attendance rallies, and used a variety of creative attendance incentives. Average daily attendance for that population grew to 88% by the end of CPS’ first quarter.

AmeriCorps members also adapted their typical whole-class and small group support in Math and English Language Arts. They are more actively engaged in whole class support compared to in-person learning, now that they are directly supporting students via chat. Small group support now occurs during critical “asynchronous” learning periods when students might otherwise be left to struggle independently. Corps members also provide homework help for students during online office hours and are actively involved in planning activities for class warmups and transitions, incorporating Social Environmental Learning in small groups, and leading family engagement events.

Spotlight: Recognizing the gaps in Social-Emotional Learning that her students experience in remote learning, Jameelah McCregg took the initiative to develop Wellness Wednesdays, a weekly remote program for her partner teacher’s students that cultivates social and emotional learning and emphasizes the Whole Child model. Activities prompt students to intentionally build skills that will lead them to healthy, fulfilling lives, with focus on healthy practices, relationships, goal setting and reflection. The tremendously positive response from her students and staff has led other AmeriCorps members across their network to launch similar programs at their schools.
Iowa

Iowa COVID-19 Recovery AmeriCorps Program

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Iowa COVID-19 Recovery AmeriCorps members deliver support to meet the basic needs of Iowans, lending a hand to organizations that are addressing the challenges facing Iowa communities. The Iowa Economic Development Authority serves as an intermediary organization, coordinating placement of members throughout the state at host site agencies addressing four key needs: food insecurity, volunteer management needs of community organizations, independent living needs of Iowans vulnerable to Coronavirus, and direct response. Direct response activities are the heart of the Iowa COVID-19 Recovery AmeriCorps program. Across the state, members serve with host sites to address food insecurity, volunteer recruitment/management and independent living needs, as well as other direct service activities. Examples include connecting fresh produce to residents in need, maintaining and distributing produce from community gardens, assisting food rescues, surveying client needs, and educating residents of important and relevant resources.

On August 10, 2020, a derecho moved across Iowa, devastating communities already facing increased hardship. Individuals in one of the hardest hit areas, Cedar Rapids, experienced damage to property and weeks long power outages. The COVID-19 Recovery AmeriCorps Program partnered with the EMBARC RISE AmeriCorps program to recruit individuals from the refugee and immigrant community in Cedar Rapids to serve. These members serve with the COVID-19 Recovery program but receive additional support and training from the EMBARC RISE team. Members serve the community by providing culturally and linguistically appropriate support to populations disproportionately impacted by the coronavirus and/or the derecho as well as providing other direct response activities as identified by the State Emergency Operations Center.

**Issue Areas**
Disaster Services, Rural Services, Capacity Building

**Supporting Commission**
Volunteer Iowa

**Innovative Elements**

- AmeriCorps Members specifically dedicated themselves to assisting in COVID-19 related recovery efforts such as food insecurity and vulnerable individuals.
- Partnered with EMBARC RISE to mobilize volunteers from the local refugee and immigrant community to assist in direct relief.

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**Spotlight:** “The pandemic has pressed food banks and other critical programs that are experiencing both a shortage of volunteers and a surge in demand, as more Iowa families face hunger and financial struggles. I’m proud that our Iowa COVID-19 Recovery AmeriCorps program has stepped in to fill the gap, helping our service delivery programs help Iowans who desperately need them.” –Debi Durham, Director, Iowa Economic Development Authority & Iowa Finance Authority
Kansas
Harvesters – The Community Food Network

Harvesters—The Community Food Network is a regional food bank serving a 26-county area of northwestern Missouri and northeastern Kansas. Harvesters and its network of agency partners are the community’s response to hunger. They help people in need by collecting and distributing food and educating about hunger. AmeriCorps members serving at Harvesters target barriers to nutritious food and food assistance resources and are continually building awareness of food insecurity and engaging the community in giving voice, time and food. Harvesters has proudly had AmeriCorps members serving at their organization for over 14 years.

COVID-19 elevated the need for food distribution to historic proportions and even as volunteer numbers dwindled, Harvesters rose to the challenge. They recognized that the people they served were among those hit hardest by the pandemic and responded accordingly. Harvesters and its network of agencies distributed an astonishing 40 million pounds of food throughout the service area since the COVID-19 pandemic began in March and added 60 new mobile food distributions.

Harvesters has implemented numerous health and safety measures during the pandemic, including signage, plexi-dividers, purchasing non-contact thermometers, sanitizer and personal protective supplies, and increasing sanitization.

Member’s direct service efforts include serving in the volunteer engagement center warehouse, packing senior food boxes and other meals, and serving at partner pantries. Off-site members aided in recruiting and communicating with volunteers, developing Harvester’s Hunger Education and community outreach opportunities and developing off-site volunteer engagement opportunities.

Spotlight: Kelly Leatherman was completing her second term of AmeriCorps when the pandemic hit. Cognizant of the impact her direct service could have on her family, Kelly chose to serve remotely during the pandemic. Kelly was instrumental in maintaining communication and relationships with volunteers who were no longer able to serve onsite. She spent time developing resources, training and development opportunities for her fellow and future AmeriCorps members. She was also the driving force behind the first AmeriCorps Kansas mural project. Kelly wanted to create a collaborative project that would bring multiple people together with different talents and perspectives to create a positive change in the community. Kelly worked closely with the Executive Director of the Gil Carter Initiative to create a mural that would not only improve the visual aesthetics of the neighborhood but also inspire hope and recognize the strength of partnership.
When schools closed down in the spring, Boys & Girls Club of Lawrence remained committed to the Lawrence community and its children. Within a few weeks they transitioned their programming to virtual and continued providing the academic and social emotional supports their students need. They also recognized that access to food would be a daily struggle for many of their families and handed out nearly 4,000 meals and more than 1,300 pantry bags. From March to May, Club sites hosted virtual programs that included video workouts, online field trips all over the country, playing with friends, and individual check-ins with Social Emotional Learning members. Boys & Girls Club of Lawrence had to be innovative to develop a delivery model for a virtual program that would be engaging, fun and easy for parents/guardians to access. Members used several online platforms, interactive games, and a variety of subjects to create effective programming.

Over the summer, all-day in-person programming was targeted specifically to those who need it most, such as essential employees, low-income families, single parent households, lack of access to technology, food insecurity, special education, and other circumstances. BGCLK continues to support the community with all-day in-person programming. As students begin to transition from online learning to hybrid, BGCLK has developed new partnerships within the community to ensure that programming can continue.

Beginning in April, the Club began offering “Meals To Go” thanks to their in-house chef and the culinary kitchen in the Center for Great Futures. Every Monday-Friday, AmeriCorps members would deliver dinners to community members. On Fridays, BGCLK gave out extra meals and included fresh produce in grocery bags to help families make it through the weekend. BGCLK handed out nearly 4,000 meals and more than 1,300 pantry bags.

**Issue Areas**
Education

**Supporting Commission**
Kansas Volunteer Commission

**Innovative Elements**
- AmeriCorps members swiftly created virtual programming for clients that was engaging and relevant to their needs.
- The club continued in-person programming and meal distribution using new safety and health measures in order to assist local families.

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**Spotlight:** “While safety protocols protect the physical health of the children, extending supplemental arts programming in tandem with current curriculum to BGCLK students supports mental health and “soft skills” including creativity, resilience, confidence, persistence, and general well-being. Engaging in the arts is a predictor for almost every positive outcome you can talk about: academics, civic engagement, graduation rates and more.” - Lawrence Arts Center CEO, Margaret Morris
Kentucky

Global Game Changers

Global Game Changers innovative curriculum teaches service-learning as a tool to promote deeper learning experiences that improve students social-emotional competencies, character, and leadership skills, using their Superpower Equation: MY TALENT + MY HEART = MY SUPERPOWER!® to empower students to IGNITE GOOD!® And make a difference! AmeriCorps members are involved in direct service working hands-on with elementary students in afterschool programs, partner schools, and summer programs. Reaching children early in life, during their most formative years, gives the members the opportunity to make the biggest impact. AmeriCorps members are involved in direct service, working hands-on with elementary students in afterschool programs, partner schools, and summer programs. Reaching children early in life, during their most formative years, gives the members the opportunity to make the biggest impact.

When the city of Louisville asked for help making over 7000+ masks for local homeless shelter residents and staff, GGC AmeriCorps members quickly pivoted to meet the need establishing the Make a Mask Make a Difference project. Members both promoted and challenged the community to make and donate masks while spending 350+ hours making them themselves. Members also boxed and distributed masks at local markets. Other members designed and distributed new-sew mask patterns, created social media campaigns. In total the AmeriCorps team made and collected and donated 4,018+ handmade masks to the Salvation Army, which then cleaned, sterilized, and distributed them to other local shelters across the city.

The project also brought on new community partners that GGC had not previously worked directly with such as the Salvation Army, Kroger, and Walmart. Through partnerships, this project was able to get 4000+ masks to homeless shelter staff and residents within a month and half of first starting. This project met a very specific need especially during a time where PPE was in short supply.

Spotlight: “The masks are absolutely meeting our needs and have been such a blessing for our shelters! From all of us here at The Salvation Army and Metro Government, I want to give The Global Game Changers a big “Thank You” for all you and your team have done to protect our community’s most vulnerable! You guys are truly superhero’s! We appreciate you so very much.” ~ Jeremy Warf, Salvation Army
Kentucky Ready Corps

Kentucky Ready Corps is an AmeriCorps program located on Eastern Kentucky University’s campus that engages students in supporting readiness and resilience in organizations that serve vulnerable individuals. Kentucky Ready Corps projects focus on three categories: community education and outreach, preparedness assessment and planning, and volunteer coordination and support. When the Coronavirus pandemic struck, Kentucky Ready Corps AmeriCorps members got to work assisting their community in the areas it needed it most.

Rather than working on disaster preparedness with placement sites, members worked with sites to deliver personal protective equipment. Kentucky Ready Corps also pivoted to address food insecurity by partnering with the Catholic Action Center on a garden project. Members assisted the senior population with contact-free food delivery and wellness checks by partnering with Area Development District.

Kentucky Ready Corps forged new partnerships with health departments, Area Development Districts, food pantries, and a variety of non-profit agencies, in response to COVID. Volunteer engagement is down, so the program provided members to do the work that volunteers used to do, but no longer can. One site has members actually growing fresh food and caring for chickens that will provide fresh eggs to the community. By offering these fresh food items the community can improve the health of its citizens. In response to COVID-19, this program has adapted every site to better meet the needs of the community they serve.

Issue Areas
Education

Supporting Commission
Serve Kentucky

Innovative Elements
- Shifted focus of work with placement cites to address pandemic-related projects such as contact-free food distribution.
- Partnered with a variety of organizations such as food pantries and health department in response to COVID-19.

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Spotlight: “I have discovered that I am capable, caring, and reaffirmed my belief in my ability to ‘do something’ to work towards a better tomorrow. I am so thankful to have served in AmeriCorps and cannot wait to see where my service journey takes me next.” –Tori Lawrence, Christian Appalachian Project
**Louisiana**

**Shreveport Green**

Shreveport Green is a Shreveport-based nonprofit dedicated to promoting a healthy, sustainable, and economically vital community in the third largest city in Louisiana. Shreveport Green runs an AmeriCorps program, ShreveCorps. Prior to COVID-19, ShreveCorps focused on educating local students about the benefits of healthy eating. Shreveport Green and the ShreveCorps AmeriCorps program demonstrated what it means to “Get things done” in a time of great community need. When COVID-related school and rec center closures prevented ShreveCorps members from continuing their service inside these spaces, the program pivoted to a new model for the year: instead of providing educational services, ShreveCorps was now going to provide pre-packaged meals (with food grown in Shreveport Green’s own community garden) to local families who qualify. ShreveCorps organized 6 food distribution days over the course of this program year impacting hundreds of families in the process.

"Our program focuses on expanding access to healthy fruits and vegetables in Shreveport’s food deserts. The problem here was already so severe before COVID, but the pandemic has really exacerbated the situation. Like lots of families across the country, families here are dealing with loss of employment, reduced hours or wages, unexpected medical bills and funeral expenses, the loss of breadwinners, and a whole host of other challenges on top of the challenges they were already dealing with a year ago. Food insecurity now affects over 50,000 people in Caddo Parish alone. We are striving to help as many people as possible through our community gardens and food distributions through ShreveCorps. We reached out to the administrators at each of the schools we partner with, and they helped us recruit families at their schools who needed our services. We have been harvesting 50-100 pounds of vegetables each week since November, and each month we've been able to send a week’s worth of vegetable home to almost 500 individuals – families with young children who are struggling with food security made worse by COVID-19. It’s not enough to end hunger or food insecurity on its own, but we hope it’s enough to alleviate some of the stress we know families in our community are facing about putting fresh, healthy food on the table for their kids." - Emilie Harmeyer, ShreveCorps AmeriCorps Program Director

**Issue Areas**

Healthy Futures

**Supporting Commission**

Volunteer Louisiana

**Innovative Elements**

- Shreveport Green completely shifted focuses in order to provide pre-packaged meals to local families in need.
- Members harvest up to 100 pounds of fresh produce per week since November, providing for almost 500 individuals per month.

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**Spotlight:** When preparing for the major winter storm that hit northern Louisiana the week of February 15th, ShreveCorps AmeriCorps members harvested everything they could from their community gardens, packed it up, and sent it home with 36 families! Each family received at least 3 different types of vegetables, including things like carrots, beets, radishes, turnips, turnip greens, mustard greens, collards, kale, chard, and more! It turned out to be over 100 lbs. of vegetables!
Maine
Healthy Acadia / Maine Recovery Corps

Maine Recovery Corps is an AmeriCorps program coordinated through Healthy Acadia. The Maine Recovery Corps (MRC) program is focused on expanding recovery coaching and related efforts to strengthen recovery support services in our communities, and to improve recovery success among individuals facing substance use disorders, with an emphasis on opioid use disorders. Recovery Corps Members serve as recovery coaches, an innovative and effective form of peer-to-peer recovery support, acting as mentors for people seeking recovery, and helping them remove barriers and navigate systems to meet their wellness and recovery goals.

Members provide outreach and educational services and bolster recovery support services at their local host sites. Members connect with one another to form a strong network of support which enables them to continue to arrange to support individuals in the event that they relocate. Currently the service range of MRC includes Aroostook, Hancock, Knox, Kennebec, Piscatiquis, Penobscot, Waldo, and Washington counties.

MRC adapted from in-person, to virtual, to hybrid support mechanisms as more safety measure information became available. Staff utilized social media, calls, texts, Zoom, Duo, and Google meets while providing technical assistance for members.

Members also created a new program for Mount Desert Hospital dedicated to making social calls to community members dealing with isolation, loneliness, and seeking resources. Members documented and coordinated its creation, while training members and conducting outreach to raise awareness of the program. The Social Call program is offered to all community members to help buffer the negative effects of isolation.

**Issue Areas**
Healthy Futures

**Supporting Commission**
Volunteer Maine

**Innovative Elements**
- Tailored and created a new program, The Social Call, to assist isolated individuals in the community.
- Partnered with Mount Desert Island Hospital and supported local RSU 24 with a no-cost member to provide staff support.

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**Spotlight:** “We believe that AmeriCorps has really provided us with a service that is something that you can’t just get off the street, you can’t just hire someone in order to be able to do the things that AmeriCorps has been able to provide to us.” -Erik Lamoreau, Substance Use Disorder Peer Recovery Center Manager, Aroostook Mental Health Center (AMHC)
Maine

Maine Campus Compact / Maine Partnership for Environmental Stewardship

The Maine Partnership for Environmental Stewardship (MPES) AmeriCorps Program, a project of Maine Campus Compact at the University of Southern Maine, is dedicated to building campus/community partnerships to improve energy efficiency in homes and higher education institutions throughout Maine. Through campus/community partnerships focused on energy efficiency education and light weatherization services, MPES increases energy efficiency and cost savings for economically disadvantaged populations, community organizations, and non-profit higher education institutions through our diverse programming which includes: community energy education events, window insulating insert community builds, and green energy home assessments. MPES also addresses the need for more job opportunities and vocational training, particularly for unemployed and economically disadvantaged individuals in growth fields like green jobs.

MPES adjusted their existing program delivery systems to continue serving during COVID-19 in the same primary focus area by altering activities, safety requirements, and other factors. New programming was implemented to assist with packaging food, delivering meals, volunteering at blood banks, answering 211 calls, and coordinating food donations with gardens.

While members continued with direct relief, they launched the Conserve Maine Energy campaign in July to raise public awareness about energy and cost savings related to energy efficiency. Throughout the summer, 10,000 energy efficiency and STEM activity sheets, 3,000 meals, and 500 energy efficient lightbulbs were distributed to the community thanks to the efforts of CME.

Spotlight: Paige Dahlke, a full-time member with Maine Campus Compact in Lewiston, said that “despite the modifications imposed by the pandemic, I still have been able to engage with my community in an effective and positive way. For the first couple of months of the COVID-19 shutdown, I volunteered with Good Shepherd Food Bank to sort through and distribute food to the food pantries across Maine. I have been able to move the Green Jobs Fair for the Lewiston community to an online platform with representation from 10 businesses and organizations. My term of service is almost over, but I'm glad my team and I have been able to modify our program and meet the needs of our community during this difficult time.”

Issue Areas
Environmental Stewardship

Supporting Commission
Volunteer Maine

Innovative Elements
- Expanded services to address food insecurity and other pandemic-related relief efforts, while maintaining their focus on environmental stewardship.
- Partnered with Cornerstones of Science and the Maine Department of Education to distribute education sheets.

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Civic Works

At the start of the pandemic in early 2020, Civic Works was able to keep their programs operational and the majority of their AmeriCorps members engaged through the use of PPE and proper social distancing. However, when stay-at-home orders took effect throughout Maryland in March of 2020, the only programs that remained operational were the Food & Farm and Community Lots programs, since farming and infrastructure work were determined to be essential services. This allowed some of the AmeriCorps members to stay engaged, but management needed to pivot and find new ways to engage many of the other AmeriCorps members. Through cross-collaboration between programs, and some out of the box thinking, Civic Works was able to step up to meet a critical community need.

The Elder Services program typically sends AmeriCorps members out to complete minor home repairs, allowing elderly residents to “age in place”. They already had an infrastructure in place to triage, screen, and schedule appointments with the older adults they were servicing. Similarly, the Food & Farm program already had the infrastructure in place to produce and distribute fresh produce throughout the city. Civic Works immediately recognized that their Elder Services clients were in a high-risk demographic and might be unable to shop for essentials. With the fresh produce from the farm, and the new influx of human capital from the other programs, Civic Works began delivering food and other basics to their homebound clients. The organization was soon fielding hundreds of referrals, in-kind donations from local vendors, and a wave of community volunteers looking to make a difference. With that, the operation was able to distribute over 90,000 pounds of fresh produce and meals, serving more than 9,200 individuals. Late in the summer, local officials, recognizing the efficiency of the operation, reached out for help. Subsequently, Civic Works received a grant from the City of Baltimore to deliver fans and air conditioners to older adults in desperate need of cooling throughout the city. Using the same operational structure, Civic Works and its army of AmeriCorps members, staff, and volunteers was able to distribute 20,000 fans and 1,000 individual air conditioning units. Both of these projects were unique cross-program collaboration efforts and helped highlight the under-recognized challenge of caring for older adults.

**Issue Areas**
Education, Environmental Stewardship

**Supporting Commission**
Maryland Governor’s Office on Service and Volunteerism

**Innovative Elements**
- Members assisted in areas of most immediate need such as childcare and food distribution.
- Members assessed and accommodated their learners’ situations to ensure that they continued receiving individualized assistance and support.

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**Spotlight:** In the words of Civic Works’ AmeriCorps Program Administrator, “The greatest success of these projects is that they serve to underscore the dynamism of AmeriCorps programs. Our ability to pivot our operations at a moment’s notice and then marshal resources and know-how to address a local emergency is indicative of what every AmeriCorps program across the country is capable of.”
**Maryland**

**The Choice Program at UMBC**

The Choice Program at UMBC has provided community-based services to young people involved in the juvenile legal system and their families for nearly since 1996. The organization has transformed from a monitoring to a mentoring program. The primary goal of Choice is to reduce the number of Black and LatinX young people in the juvenile legal and detention system in Maryland. Choice serves more than 600 young people annually, offering a wide range of programming opportunities. AmeriCorps members provide everything from assistance navigating court appearances to workforce development, employment at Choice’s social enterprises to educational support. Young people and their AmeriCorps mentors also have fun with cultural, recreational, and athletic activities. Choice’s practices focus on dismantling racist structures and approaches to human service work and, instead, employ strengths-based approaches focused on positive relationships and self-agency.

COVID-19 and state-sanctioned anti-Black violence disproportionately affected the Black and LatinX communities Choice serves. Public health guidelines and high rates of community spread required Choice to suspend in person services. The inability to visit face-to-face has been a challenge, and still, Choice successfully and creatively responded: taking lead from young people’s interests, needs, abilities, and constraints. AmeriCorps members built relationships—albeit mediated through screens—to mitigate food insecurity, health inequities, and economic barriers. These efforts included meaningful virtual structured activities e.g., service plans, goal setting, job coaching, and other material and social/emotional assistance. Now, virtually, young people are able to do things like work along with researchers in the San Diego Zoo who crowdsource data collection, count animal behaviors, or work with museums online to identify symbols in paintings throughout history. This has transformed community service into a learning and skill building experience, an opportunity to explore personal interests, explore potential careers and to contribute to the common good. Stories of moments of joy and self-discovery belie the realities that many other young people remain disconnected and ensnared in legal systems, some in detention during a highly contagious disease. In its 30-year history, the Choice Program has served 25,000 youth and their families, keeping young people in their communities and diverting many from the possibility of lifetime involvement with the criminal justice system.

**Issue Areas**

**Economic Opportunity**

**Supporting Commission**

Maryland Governor’s Office on Service and Volunteerism

**Innovative Elements**

- AmeriCorps members forged relationships with clients despite being limited to virtual programming.
- Provide students with unique learning opportunities at locations like zoos and museums.

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**Spotlight:** “The Choice Program has a proven track record of supporting young people and their families,” says Sara Muempfer, program associate for the Annie E. Casey Foundation’s Baltimore Civic Site. “I have been impressed with how quickly the program reinvented its workforce development strategies, moving the learning cohorts online and, importantly, continuing to pay young people stipends for participation. What’s more, Choice knows how to make learning fun. Choice’s dedication to children, young people, and families in Baltimore City is clear.”
Massachusetts

Boston Healthcare for the Homeless AmeriCorps Program

Since 2006, Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program (BHCHP) has been welcoming the country’s most promising young leaders into the BHCHP “family.” Each year thirteen AmeriCorps Members are selected from a highly competitive pool, representing future physicians, nurses, social workers, and policy makers, to serve alongside the BHCHP staff and receive a unique education in the complex world of community and public health. BHCHP AmeriCorps Members engage in direct service in BHCHP’s outpatient and shelter-based clinics, as well as the two 24-hour medical respite facilities operated with the organization. AmeriCorps Members serve as full-time care coordinators and health educators, assisting patients navigating the complexities of the health care and social service system; increasing patients' access to care; and providing translation services and health education. AmeriCorps Members provide services to patients who may identify as: low income; immigrant; differently abled; transgender; survivors of domestic violence and/or community violence; single head of household; and illiterate/limited literacy.

BCHP shifted in early March of 2020, striving to find creative ways to protect and care for those struggling to survive the virus while living in shelters, on the streets, and in newly acquired housing. BCHP members were redeployed to assist with testing, isolating patients, and answering patient questions.

In April, the BCHP organization began to manage a 500-bed ward at Boston Hope hospital for patients experiencing homelessness. Members supported clinical services and helped keep patients occupied with activity packets. Members also printed a daily newsletter for patients with activities and COVID-19 education. Other AmeriCorps members helped with telemedicine visits, sewing masks, and developing a questionnaire to screen patients at BCHP’s main facility.

**Issue Areas**
Healthy Futures

**Supporting Commission**
Massachusetts Service Alliance

**Innovative Elements**
- Teamed up with shelter partners, medical institutions, the City of Boston, and other community organizations to establish best practices for COVID response.
- Directly supported efforts to test, educate, and treat unhoused individuals at risk from coronavirus.

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**Spotlight:** “In the spring of 2020, BHCHP led a community-wide response to COVID-19 infection among people experiencing homelessness in Boston that involved operating four new isolation facilities totaling hundreds of beds. Our amazing AmeriCorps members were central in helping the program pull this off – in many cases they stepped up to learn how to don and doff PPE and provide a number of key services in isolation field hospitals, and in other cases they helped us behind the scenes with data collection, facilities and equipment set up, and even making PPE. It would have been so much harder without this amazing, brave team.” – Jessie Gaeta, MD, BCHP
Massachusetts
Maverick Landing Community Services

Maverick Landing Community Services (MLCS) is a small nonprofit in East Boston, Massachusetts whose mission is to enhance the lives of the culturally and economically diverse residents of Maverick Landing, East Boston, and surrounding communities through 1.) motivating people to achieve economic, educational, and personal goals; 2.) linking people to support systems; 3.) creating leadership opportunities; and 4) strengthening youth, families, and community. MLCS is comprised of 6 staff members working in full time and part time capacities and engages over 70 volunteers annually to deliver programming to their clients. MLCS has been a VGF subgrantee for the last two years through MSA’s Youth Development Volunteer Initiative, which has helped secure funding for their Volunteer and Events Coordinator position and establish a robust Makerspace program for youth that engages skills-based STEAM volunteers.

When COVID-19 spread to communities across Massachusetts, East Boston and neighboring towns were some of the hardest hit areas in the state. MLCS has been an integral partner in the East Boston community by mobilizing volunteers to address food insecurity. Each week, MLCS delivers meals to over 500 families who have been impacted by COVID-19. MLCS has recently been selected as a COVID-19 Resiliency Grantee through MSA’s VGF grant. With this grant, they will continue to provide food access to families affected by COVID-19 as well as expand their food access program to neighboring hard-hit communities.

MLCS continued youth programming virtually and implemented new safety measures while assessing and addressing COVID-19 needs in the community. MLCS now provides food to over 500 families per week and has partnered with housing developments, local food rescues, and other partners to address local food insecurity.

Spotlight: “Maverick Landing Community Services has been an essential partner, providing food, PPE and other support during the COVID-19 pandemic. MLCS was able to leverage its years of service to the community, and knowledge of it, to quickly adapt and create a system that met the needs of hundreds of East Boston families at a time of critical need.” --Orlando Watkins, Vice President for Programs, The Boston Foundation
Michigan

AmeriCorps Urban Safety Program

The AmeriCorps Urban Safety (AMUS) Program strengthens community engagement and enhances citizen awareness to create sustainable, grass roots crime prevention. AMUS comprises three primary initiatives: 1) provide crime mapping, analysis and targeted policing; 2) improve levels of neighborhood guardianship; and 3) reduce victim attractiveness and susceptibility (“target hardening”). Each year AMUS engages more than 125 AmeriCorps members, 90% of whom are Detroit residents, including 50 youths, age 17-18, each summer. The program uses tools, such as the Home Safety Assessment, to identify security risks and health or safety hazards in residential homes and provides resources at no cost to reduce or eliminate these threats, which is now offered virtually by AMUS.

Since April 2020, program staff have found ways to adapt program initiatives to address the many challenges posed by the COVID-19 virus. The AMUS program not only adapted its service to the community, but the support of its members. AMUS staff adapted quickly in mid-March, implementing teleservice activities that allowed the program and members to continue serving the community. These remote activities grew to encompass the COVID-19 needs assessment survey, which identified residents’ immediate needs and connected them to organizational resources. Members safely helped deliver basic supplies such as disinfectant, food, and baby essentials.

The program has also tried to remain aware of the challenges members were facing. In April, the program purchased a membership for access to the Member Assistance Program (MAP) to provide members with necessary mental health support. They also hold weekly virtual member meetings as a way to stay connected, maintain member engagement, communicate critical information, and provide self-care resources.

**Issue Areas**

Safer Communities

**Supporting Commission**

Michigan Community Service Commission

**Innovative Elements**

- Joined with several partners such as the Detroit Health Department to conduct need's assessment surveys for residents over the phone.
- Successfully converted the Home Safety Assessment to virtual platforms while directly contributing to COVID-19 relief efforts.

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**Spotlight:** Ethelyn Carroll participated in AMUS’s COVID-19 survey project by contacting residents and providing the respondents with information to assist them with essential resources. One of the residents Carroll contacted could not read very well, lived alone, is receiving support for mental health, has a flip phone with limited minutes, limited access to food and transportation, would be evicted when the 36th District Court eviction moratorium ended, and was behind in utility payments. Carroll contacted the resident’s landlord and the 36th District Court to gather information and shared with the resident the information to help her understand her rights in eviction court. Carroll also referred the resident to several apartment complexes that would be a good fit for the resident and provided detailed information on food banks that would deliver to the resident and helped her sign up for this service. Finally, Carroll connected her to Wayne Metropolitan Community Action Agency to access a variety of other essential resources and services such as utility assistance, housing assistance, and job services.
Minnesota AmeriCorps Emergency Response Initiative

The Minnesota AmeriCorps Emergency Response Initiative was launched in April 2020 by ServeMinnesota to respond to the COVID-19 crisis by giving nonprofit organizations, government agencies and school districts the opportunity to apply quickly for AmeriCorps members to help them with an increased demand for services related to the global pandemic. Members serve in areas of food insecurity, older adults and social isolation, distance learning, help for the homeless, childcare for essential workers and more. ServeMinnesota engaged Reading & Math, Inc., and True North AmeriCorps to implement this program, who fielded site applications and awarded members to nearly 100 organizations across the state.

The Minnesota AmeriCorps Emergency Response Initiative is helping to address many of the issues that evolved rapidly due to COVID-19 – dire food insecurity, homeless persons needing safe accommodations, isolated older adults sheltering in place who need essential items delivered to them, and more. Because of their efforts, seniors could chat with loved ones via Zoom after weeks in quarantine. Community gardens flourished to feed neighbors. ERI members in shelters provided food, picked up medications, and cleaned facilities so that social workers and guests could work out long-term housing solutions. At Second Harvest Heartland, ERI members packed and distributed 269,817 meals in just the 10 weeks of their service.

Others made virtual community education possible and cared for children of essential workers. 39% served in food security, 31% served in the largest metropolitan counties working with individuals experiencing homelessness, 15% served in education and childcare, 8% in capacity building and 7% in the care and support of older adults. Members also assisted in community rebuilding efforts after the events surrounding the death of George Floyd and served with Hennepin County to offer hotels as safe place for individuals experiencing homelessness to stay.

**Issue Areas**
Disaster Services, Economic Opportunity, Healthy Futures, Rural Areas

**Supporting Commission**
Serve Minnesota

**Innovative Elements**
- Awarded members to a vast scope of placement sites to address COVID-19 relief holistically.
- Provided support and strengthened partnerships with countless organizations to place members and tackle various pandemic-exacerbated issues.

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**Spotlight:** "Our incredible AmeriCorps member has driven an initiative to provide social activities and interaction that have been greatly missed throughout the pandemic. Safety and physical health are top priorities and connecting with others provides support for mental well-being. Without the Emergency Response Initiative, this project would not have been possible." Crystal Landherr, Director of Development & Communications at Hiawatha Homes Foundation
Mississippi
TRIAD AmeriCorps Program

The University of Southern Mississippi TRIAD (Training, Resources and Information for the Advancement of Disability Services) provides health education to middle and high school students with disabilities. The program is made up of individuals with and without disabilities from high school, college, and the general community. The TRIAD AmeriCorps national service program is an inclusive service program with members with and without disabilities. To meet all members' varied learning and professional development needs, in-person and interactive training activities have been beneficial. This has helped many of the members learn and retain information, where a lecture would not be as impactful. In addition to having members with disabilities, the TRIAD program serves individuals with disabilities from the community and local special education high school classrooms.

When COVID-19 struck, all in-person events through the program were halted, so a virtual plan was developed with a focus on virtual platforms like Discord or Zoom. AmeriCorps and the USM STEP UP to Leadership Advisory Council collaborated to make this plan a reality, enabling members to engage with various communication styles like text, gifs, pictures, videos, and vocal chat rooms, as well as attend virtual events. TRIAD members take full advantage of this resource by using these channels to host social activities, including a monthly movie night with live chat, weekly trivia time, weekly discussions, and live gaming opportunities. The TRIAD AmeriCorps Program also utilized the platform Zoom to perform check-in calls with members and host meetings as well as fun leisure activities like crafting.

COVID-19 may have restricted some activities and service opportunities, but TRIAD AmeriCorps members continue to push forward in providing quality, needed, and timely “service.”

Spotlight: "AmeriCorps, in collaboration with STEP UP members, served our Summer Academy students this past summer in a vital way during the COVID-19 pandemic. AmeriCorps and STEP UP collaborated and provided many virtual extracurricular activities our Summer Academy students greatly benefited from, such as weekly health and exercise workouts, crafting, gaming, spotlight trivia, and virtual scavenger hunts socialization through the STEP UP Discord channel. Thank you, AmeriCorps members, for serving our students when they needed it most!” – Beth Robertson, Transition Specialist, Project ToTAL’s Summer Enrichment Academy
Mississippi
Grenada School District AmeriCorps Program

The Grenada School District AmeriCorps Program has 29 full-time AmeriCorps members who tutor at least 1,015 academically low-performing K-8 students, approximately 35 students per tutor, in reading and/or math with tutoring interventions of at least 25 minutes per session with a minimum of 20 sessions for each student in Grenada Lower Elementary, Upper Elementary, and Middle School. At the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps members are responsible for at least 80% (812 students) of the 1,015 K-8 students receiving AmeriCorps tutoring attaining a 15% gain in achievement in math and/or reading as measured by pre- and post-test scored on AIMSweb benchmark assessment instrument.

When schools closed due to COVID-19, the Grenada School District AmeriCorps Program quickly committed to help the District distribute school lunches at five designated sites in the county. Over 50% of Grenada’s Students rely on the school-based meal service. Members donned masks, gloves, and aprons to safely distribute Grab & Go breakfasts and lunches for students and families. In addition, AmeriCorps members bagged and distributed food to community members once a month through the Grenada Food Pantry. During the summer, members helped distribute summer educational packets through drive-by pick up at some school sites. Members are now helping with virtual learning preparation for the coming school year to follow COVID-19 guidelines.

Over 50% of Grenada’s Students rely on the school-based meal service. Members donned masks, gloves, and aprons to safely distribute Grab & Go breakfasts and lunches for students and families. In addition, AmeriCorps members bagged and distributed food to community members once a month through the Grenada Food Pantry. Members enthusiastically served in these activities and also some online Video Conferencing sessions from home to keep motivated and in touch with the students they love so much.

**Issue Areas**
Education

**Supporting Commission**
Mississippi Commission for Volunteer Service

**Innovative Elements**
- Safely distributed Grab & Go meals for students and families while abiding to safety measures and also assisting the Grenada Food Pantry.
- Partnered with many local organizations and institutions to assess community needs and recruit volunteers.

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**Spotlight:** "Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of Grenada families facing hunger has increased. It surprised me to realize that my neighbors and some of my students are impacted by hunger. Serving at the Grenada Food Pantry gives me the opportunity to meet the increased demand for free nutritious meals to children and families. I am also thankful that the Grenada School District AmeriCorps Program partners with the Food Pantry to fill the meal gap left when the school year ends and children lose access to free and reduced-price meal programs they depend on… Due to COVID-19, volunteers have been limited, but the GSD AmeriCorps members are determined to continue to "Get Things Done.""
**Mississippi**

**MS Hub Network**

Volunteer Mississippi and the MS Alliance of Nonprofits and Philanthropy have partnered to create unique service hubs within regional Community Foundations and United Ways across the state. The 8 service hubs, known as the Mississippi Hub Network, are regional, one-stop resource shops where Volunteers can get involved in their communities and nonprofits can find the People, Know-How, and Resources they need to help solve serious social problems. The Network’s unique quest to act as connectors and conveners also places them in an excellent position to bolster communications between local emergency managers, nonprofits, and volunteers; helping to create disaster-resilient communities.

At the outset of the pandemic, our 8 regional Hubs collectively shifted their attentions to help alleviate the increasing number of families in need of food. Hubs coordinated food projects and recruited volunteers for food pantries and drive-up food box distributions and held Hunger Summits and Hunger Coalition meetings to mobilize more resources. Hubs supplied information about ever-changing food distribution sites and helped pantries apply for money to buy and repair refrigerators and freezers. Hubs also distributed information and held on-line learning instructing nonprofits and volunteers as to how to safely create and manage projects in the midst of a pandemic. Hub Directors personally distributed thousands of masks to nonprofits to use to keep staff, volunteers, and clients safe.

Two significant issues were elevated by the pandemic: rural access to health care and disparities mostly to income but paralleled by race because of the demographics of poverty in Mississippi; and the "digital divide", which is predominantly a rural vs. urban issue, but exacerbated by income and race, for the same reasons. Both issues have garnered the attention of the Mississippi philanthropy sector - and because the Alliance’s mission is about increasing the capacity of BOTH nonprofits and philanthropy to meet the needs of children, families and communities throughout the state, the Alliance was quickly able to convene these funders of good works and develop a strategy that included educating the Mississippi Legislature about the long-term impact of the digital divide on quality education for our children and the disparities for health outcomes tied to the availability of health services in the more rural (and poor) areas of the state.

**Issue Areas**

Volunteer Generation Fund

**Supporting Commission**

Volunteer Mississippi

**Innovative Elements**

- Expanded service to distribute around ten times more food than before the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Assessed local need by surveying nearly 1,000 nonprofit partners to provide targeted support and recruit volunteers.

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**Spotlight:** “It is my belief that the existence of an established (albeit still relatively new) network across the state made possible by the MS Hub Network and the support of Volunteer Mississippi made a marked and material difference in our ability to quickly assess and respond to the shifting needs of the nonprofit sector, and by extension to all Mississippians, in the face of COVID-19.” Nancy Perret, Consultant, MS Alliance of Nonprofits and Philanthropy
Missouri
AmeriCorps St. Louis / Partnership for Youth Inc.

AmeriCorps St. Louis/ The Partnership For Youth Inc. have 42 AmeriCorps members who provide disaster response and early recovery services to disasters impacting communities within Missouri and when requested, to other communities in need across the country. AmeriCorps members provide natural resources stewardship services in Missouri State and Federal public lands to benefit ecosystems health and to enable disasters service capabilities when needed. With the onset of COVID-19, AmeriCorps St. Louis (ACSTL) was proud to be able to respond and support the St. Louis community and state of Missouri during such unprecedented times. ACSTL partnered with multiple agencies for months to provide diverse streams of service. In partnership with the City of St. Louis Department of Human Services, Continuum of Care, and other supporting agencies, ACSTL worked toward providing outreach services – food, water, and sanitation - to the unhoused population of St. Louis. Members packed thousands of boxed meals with the St. Louis Area Foodbank to be distributed to families in need and assisted the Salvation Army with delivery and distribution of food to congregate shelters, as well as meal boxes directly to homes of the elderly and those with access and functional needs. ACSTL members also supported a mobile food drive at the Ferguson Empowerment Center for families that usually would have benefited from school lunch programs.

On the other side of Missouri, ACSTL assisted the Kansas City Metro Area with volunteer and donations management. Members assisted in staffing a donations hotline hosted by United Way 211 to accept donation offers and coordinate the logistics of service providing agencies to pick-up personal protective equipment, sanitizer, and other COVID-19 related consumables. Members also assisted the Medical Reserve Corps by initiating the volunteer intake and registration process for the staffing of medical personnel for COVID-19 testing sites. AmeriCorps St. Louis was the only National Service program in the country to receive a FEMA Mission Assignment to support COVID-19 related response efforts. ACSTL is grateful for the ability to respond to critical needs during the COVID-19 pandemic and continues to explore opportunities to support future service interventions.

**Issue Areas**
Disaster Services, Environmental Stewardship

**Supporting Commission**
Missouri Community Service Commission

**Innovative Elements**
- Ensured essential services such as food, water, and sanitation were available to a wide variety of populations in need.
- Partnered with many organizations such as Salvation Army, United Way 211, and St. Louis Area foodbank to provide multi-faceted service across the state.

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**Spotlight:** Missouri AmeriCorps programs and members are continuing their service to serve meals via community feeding programs, virtually tutoring and mentoring students, and preparing high school students for their transition to college. AmeriCorps St. Louis members have also completed contact tracing training and stand ready to support those efforts as needed.
Missouri
City Year – Kansas City

City Year is an education-focused nonprofit fueled by national service. As an organization, City Year is dedicated to helping students and schools succeed. Diverse teams of City Year AmeriCorps Members serve full time, as near-peer role-models, tutors, and mentors, in high-poverty urban schools. Focusing on the 3rd through 10th grade, City Year AmeriCorps members provide high-impact student, classroom, and school-wide support, in attendance, social-emotional learning, and course performance, to help students stay in school and on track to graduate. AmeriCorps members are collaborating with their partner teachers to get in contact with as many students as possible. These calls range from providing families with information on meal and technology distribution, to ensuring families understand school and classroom expectations, and generally checking in on students. AmeriCorps members are able to assist in quickly funneling information as necessary to school administrators to ensure students and families are properly supported.

Additionally, AmeriCorps members are making phone calls to students to support them with their virtual work. City Year AmeriCorps members use Google Voice phone numbers and pair up for these phone calls to ensure there are no unsupervised conversations with minors. AmeriCorps members participate in whole “class” spaces, where teachers are leading instruction. This can look like responding to and monitoring questions in chat, being integrated into the lesson delivery by the teacher, and being part of “office hours” that teachers have set up for students to ask questions they have about independent schoolwork. Depending on the structures teachers and the school prefer, AmeriCorps members work individually and/or as a team to offer activities for students such as leading book clubs or read-alouds, creating a math problem of the day, setting up pen pals among schools or grade levels, or leading enrichment activities. City Year Kansas City also collaborated with existing local partners, specifically Great Circle, to provide crucial mental health support for their own members during these uncertain times.

Issue Areas
Education

Supporting Commission
Missouri Community Service Commission

Innovative Elements
- Personalized service that ensured students and families had essential resources based on their needs.
- Members help keep students engaged both in and outside of the classroom with virtual programming.

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Spotlight: “City Year did not throw in the towel when distance learning became the norm. They sought ways to still connect with students and even continued virtual clubs for students.” – Principal quote, from City Year End of Year Survey
Innovative State Service COVID-19 Response Programs
America’s Service Commissions

Montana Campus Compact

Montana Campus Compact AmeriCorps launched in Fall of 2015 with support from the Montana Commission on Community Service. The program supports college access and student success across Montana by deploying over 55 AmeriCorps Leaders and part-time college student AmeriCorps members. Together, leaders and their team provide academic mentoring, coaching, and support to first generation and low-income K-12 students across the state. AmeriCorps members provide a variety of direct service activities, such as supporting local youth-focused programs, offering college application nights, supporting FAFSA completion, and norming the idea and practice of going to college. When K-12 schools, universities and while communities closed due to COVID, MTCC AmeriCorps members continued serving in innovative ways. Faced with equity gaps, they worked hard to engage with youth using online meeting platforms, virtual Facebook events, educational videos, phone calls, texts, and emails. When one member realized she had no way to access her students, she sent them letters via the USPS. Members developed Facebook live Story Times, STEM-focused educational videos, as well as distributed take-home educational materials for students. One new program in Missoula named “Lunch and Learn” engaged youth in videos that are then saved to an online database available to teachers, parents, and students. Montana Campus Compact AmeriCorps staff and members met the many emerging needs due to COVID-19 by getting trained and delivering Meals on Wheels to homebound seniors in Missoula, making compassion calls with vulnerable populations, and making masks for medical centers and nursing homes. MTCC AmeriCorps members made over 200 masks and donated them to Tribal Elders! MTCC AmeriCorps members served with the Missoula Food Bank, and in Great Falls, hosted Meal in a Bag for college students needing extra support due to COVID-19.

Montana Campus Compact AmeriCorps engaged both current and new partners in service, from postsecondary institutions to community organizations. The MTCC AmeriCorps State members engaged with VISTA and where possible Senior Corps. MTCC AmeriCorps members’ online resources, and willingness to meet rural and Tribal students’ needs are both commendable and lasting.

Issue Areas
Rural Areas, Education

Supporting Commission
Montana Commission on Community Service

Innovative Elements

- MTCC members overcame equity and technology gaps by utilizing a huge range of online and physical platforms to reach students.
- Members continued assisting students despite obstacles with technology, and expanded service to meet urgent needs by providing meals, compassion calls, and masks.

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Spotlight: Camille Gianaris of MTCC AmeriCorps has been doing compassion calls with Missoula Aging Services and building a foundation of trust with the individuals she calls. One of her calls was with a woman that was anxious about the first call and sharing with a stranger. However, the call lasted an hour and they shared stories and laughed. As they were saying goodbye, Camille asked her if she would like her to call her the following week. She stated, “No, I want you to call me twice a week from now on.” Camille is pleased to be a comfort to this person and the others she is calling.
**Nebraska**

**YWCA Adams County**

The YWCA Adams County serves the Hastings, NE community and surrounding areas and strives to address a variety of community needs, while operating within the mission of YWCA: eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all. YWCA Adams County's AmeriCorps program serves internal programs as well as multiple community partners. Members serve with an afterschool program, a nutrition services program, summer programming activities, and a Career Closet. To provide more local services, members assist community partners in youth development, independent housing, career services, restorative justice, and adult education.

The YWCA began working with local partner organizations to identify ways to adapt AmeriCorps member services to meet community needs in a safe, effective manner. For members serving at Hastings Literacy Program these adaptations included a switch to online learning and, once in-person instruction resumed, implementing socially distanced opportunities for both English as a Second Language (ESL) learners and those focused on adult basic education (ABE) and GED programs. With school closures in full effect, all after school activities at their Zone afterschool program, including free meals for youth, were halted. In place of the Cooking Club and other nutrition services, the YWCA established a curbside meal program for children and youth ages 0-18 years. These daily “dinners to-go” occurred during the previously designated Summer Food Service timeframe.

The YWCA worked with the local health department to ensure appropriate social distancing & safety measures were in place and compliant with CDC guidelines. The YWCA AmeriCorps program had ongoing partnerships with the Hastings Public School district and Nebraska Department of Education Nutrition Services. However, the curbside program was a completely new service, and a re-imagining of what nutrition services could look like during a public health emergency. The YWCA modified its existing dinner program by utilizing the USDA’s pandemic response waivers, adjusting meal ingredients due to scarcity, obtaining to-go containers, and modifying distribution methods. In a three-week period in May, this curbside meal program served 1,135 to-go meals.

**Spotlight:** “During August's Summer Food Service Program, we received overwhelming positive feedback about not only the quality of the meals but also the curbside pick-up method. Beneficiary families voiced that they felt as though we had gone above and beyond to meet their needs during a challenging and scary time. I’m sure the friendly atmosphere and personalized service (many families were "regulars" from the May Summer Food Service Program and staff and volunteers greeted them by name and knew how many meals they needed) went a long way toward creating a welcoming & efficient service site!” – Sonia Klouse. Assistant Director
Partnership 4 Kids

Partnership 4 Kids (P4K) is a youth development non-profit providing college-bound mentoring and goal-setting programs for Omaha, NE area youth. P4K helps cultivate tomorrow’s workforce through academic support, post-secondary exploration, and career readiness, with an approach based upon best practices from evidence-based strategies and industry-accepted standards. The objectives of the programming are that all P4K students access some type of post-secondary education, complete their degree/certificate programs, and connect with employment or service opportunities such as AmeriCorps. AmeriCorps members serve middle, high school and college students, improving college enrollment and graduation rates, school attendance/retention, as well as student long-term academic and career readiness.

As the pandemic became prevalent in Nebraska, in-person options for services were no longer viable. In response, P4K created options for virtual and remote services, including an internal assessment of technology needs of AmeriCorps members and external dialogues with beneficiaries to identify barriers. AmeriCorps members continued to provide academic and career support with students via phone call check-ins and virtual meetings to assess needs and provide resources. P4K’s AmeriCorps program fit the needs of the community through leading and implementing laptop lending library to meet the needs for student remote learning, hygiene supply drives (in collaboration with other youth serving agencies in Omaha - with masks, cleaning supplies and hand sanitizer), school supply drives, and home visits to drop off needed items and assist with wellness check-ins. In addition, P4K AmeriCorps members led and implemented a graduation parade with congratulatory drop-off baskets.

The members also adapted college access programming via a virtual summer bridge session to prepare 1st year students for college success. In addition, AmeriCorps members led a college basket drive and parade in place of their college send-off event. Members organized items via home drop-off events and open house pick-ups of 65 college supply baskets for newly enrolled college freshmen. P4K’s AmeriCorps program had a goal of 80 people served by AmeriCorps members during the 2019-2020 program year. This program served 313 people, or 391% of the goal.

**Issue Areas**
- Education

**Supporting Commission**
- Serve Nebraska

**Innovative Elements**
- Re-imagined annual events like graduation and college send-off to COVID restrictions, to continue to support and engage with students.
- Teamed up with local donors and schools and utilized various service delivery methods to serve nearly 4x the population size of their initial goal for the program year.

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**Spotlight:** “Thank you for all the work and support that Partnership 4 Kids provides our students at Northwest High School. I truly appreciate the impact you have made and thank you for being there for our students and families. We appreciate it!” – Thomas Lee (Northwest High Principal, Omaha, NE)
Nevada

Partners of Prevention

Partners of Prevention is a part of the NyE Communities Coalition, which dedicates itself to prevention education and community engagement throughout the region with both youth and adults. The Partners of Prevention program has shown a wonderful ability to adapt since COVID 19 became a part of our reality last year. The program worked diligently to keep members in service by implementing a comprehensive teleservice plan, making sure they were supported, and finding many new ways to support their community last year as well as this current GY.

Partners of Prevention members collaborated with VISTA members and created community partnerships with food pantries, schools, and community centers to address food security for preschool aged children all the way to senior citizens. The program prioritized COVID-19 response by addressing a variety of issues. AmeriCorps members provided support by giving blood, shopping for seniors who couldn't leave their home, and distributing supplies and donations to surrounding community centers. They adapted their nutritional education to an online platform when necessary. These same practices are being maintained into 2021 to ensure that no host sites or service sites will be compromised. Their program director consistently makes it a priority to stay connected to her members and makes sure they feel safe and empowered to serve.

"The AmeriCorps members within our program not only showed resiliency throughout their term but increased their capacity on how to serve their community's needs. By connecting individuals to necessary resources or delivering food to individuals who could not leave their homes, members stepped up every day in taking the lead to provide support and relief to the communities they serve." Sofia Allison, Program Director

Issue Areas
Healthy Futures

Supporting Commission
Nevada Volunteers

Innovative Elements

- Forged community partnerships to provide support for individuals of all ages who are facing food insecurity.
- Partners of Prevention provided a wide range of support to physically and socially vulnerable individuals with additional needs due to the pandemic.

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Spotlight: Ashley Gelsone, serving in Pahrump, Nevada had her service site removed when COVID 19 first hit the area, having been serving at a school. She was transferred to the local coalition partner and soon showed how resilient and giving she could be. She took trips to deliver needed supplies to senior centers and other clinics hours away, helped to provide food to children and seniors and took everything as it came while also helping the program adapt and maintain morale.
United Readers is a United Way of Northern Nevada and the Sierra program designed to improve foundational literacy skills. United Readers officially launched in 2020. The program leverages trained AmeriCorps members to meet with students and families one-one and in small groups, both virtually and in person. United Readers assists children in kindergarten through third grade in the Washoe County School District with literacy acquisition skills to improve reading and reading fluency. Mentors work with the school, classroom teachers, and specialists to provide literacy supports to identified children. Students are assessed before and after the program to track their progress and skill development.

As a first-year operational program, United Readers had to quickly adapt their in-school program design to serve schools virtually during the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite these challenges, United Readers AmeriCorps members have been able to successfully support students in a number of schools through virtual lessons and videos. While members are serving virtually, the United Readers program has also been able to develop a strong team and provide great support to their members as they navigate implementation of a new program under difficult circumstances. The United Readers program director has implemented a variety of tools to keep members engaged and connected throughout their service and the program has been well accepted in the schools they are serving. Working with a school district can be challenging at any time, but working with a school district during a pandemic, building partnerships and gaining access to support students when schools are not allowing outside volunteers and programs to enter schools is impressive. The United Readers program continued to build this partnership during Covid-19 and figured out how to gain access to students virtually to provide instruction (up to 3 times a week).

**Issue Areas**
Education

**Supporting Commission**
Nevada Volunteers

**Innovative Elements**
- Successfully supported students on virtual platforms at a variety of schools and education levels multiple times per week.
- Created a strong team environment to foster member support and relationships within the program during a difficult time.

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**Spotlight:** “The United Readers program could not have come at a better time. With students in distance learning, our kindergarten and first-grade student needs are targeted, and they will be receiving extra support from trained AmeriCorps members...I know this will make a huge difference in the growth of our students’ foundational skills.” - Allison Fannin, Principal at Katherine Dunn Elementary
New Hampshire

NH COVID Community Care Corps

First proposed by Rep. Matt Wilhelm of Manchester, The NH COVID Community Care Corps was created to address growing unmet needs in the wake of the global COVID-19 pandemic. CARES Act funding granted through Volunteer NH was leveraged to get the program off to a good start. 20 AmeriCorps members hit the ground running to tackle challenges around the state. NH COVID Community Care Corps members have made a huge impact in their respective communities.

NH Covid Community Care Corps members have tackled a variety of urgent needs in their communities. Members have distributed over 10,000 meals to youth and families struggling with food insecurity due to the pandemic. In addition to this, members have provided the public with health information related to COVID-19 to spread awareness. They also led summer recreation activities for kids to allow parents to get back to work. Members engaged in volunteer recruitment and retention strategies for non-profits and municipalities who have struggled with retention due to COVID-19. Members are now working to expand Medical Reserve Corps to help with COVID-19 vaccine distribution and other medical response needs.

The founding members of NHCCC dedicated their time to many organizations across Manchester and Nashua. Members can be found at the City of Manchester Parks & Recreation, Nashua City Department of Emergency Management and Public Health Department, the Queen City Mayors Office, and more.

Issue Areas
Healthy Futures

Supporting Commission
Volunteer NH

Innovative Elements
- Assisted local organizations with volunteer recruitment and retention to better prepare them for helping community members.
- Provided students with fun and engaging programming while assisting parents who need help with childcare.

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Spotlight: “National service resources have always had a strong role in responding to disasters around the United States. The COVID Community Care Corps is the next innovative example in providing a much-needed surge capacity to Granite State municipalities and non-profits responding to and recovering from this crisis.” – Justin Kates, Director of Emergency Management for the City of Nashua
Innovative State Service COVID-19 Response Programs
America’s Service Commissions

New Jersey
Zufall AmeriCorps Team

Zufall Health Center is a federally qualified health center with eight sites in six counties in northwestern and central New Jersey. Zufall provides primary medical, dental, and behavioral health services to low-income, underserved and diverse populations. Our AmeriCorps program recruits ten new members each year to become part of our Zufall family to deliver health outreach and education. The members offer assistance in different areas such as pediatrics, prenatal, Ryan White Program (HIV/AIDS), dental hygiene, breast cancer support groups, and community resources.

When the pandemic started in March, Zufall members had to shift to serving from home and innovate to keep their programs as active as possible. Members offered programs via Zoom to families interested, including virtual exercise and nutritional education for children struggling with weight in the community. In addition to the virtual exercise programs, Zufall AmeriCorps members partnered with Dover High School and Middle School to deliver 60 meals twice a week to children and families who didn’t have transportation or were at home under quarantine. Other members took a 35-hour training to become mental health advisors with a national 24/7 online crisis text line. AmeriCorps members received numerous text messages from people requesting help with resources and looking for someone to talk with while isolated due to mental health concerns that have risen with the pandemic.

Since September, Zufall’s new team has been on the front lines assisting with flu vaccination and COVID-19 testing events. These AmeriCorps members are screening for symptoms, taking temperatures, and assisting families who speak non-English languages with translations. Zufall members traded in their comfortable AmeriCorps hoodies for an N-95 mask, face shield, and gloves, and went above and beyond to meet the critical needs of their community during the pandemic.

Issue Areas
Healthy Futures

Supporting Commission
Zufall Health Center

Innovative Elements
• Offered fun and health-oriented programming for both children and families to engage in through virtual platforms such as Zoom.
• Members have pivoted to assist on the front lines for both physical and mental health concerns in their community.

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Spotlight: “We are very proud of our AmeriCorps volunteers who have stepped up during the COVID-19 pandemic to join the front lines of delivering care to the underserved. When Zufall Health needed to take on a new public health role during this emergency, our members were willing to put themselves at risk and redirect their efforts to care for our most vulnerable residents.” Eva Turbiner, President and Chief Executive Officer, Zufall Health
New Jersey

NJ Community Development Corporation’s Paterson Community School Corps

NJCDC serves a population who is most vulnerable to feeling the negative effects brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, as these individuals have fewer resources available to help them recover financially, emotionally, educationally, and physically. NJCDC’s AmeriCorps members and program staff have been vital in their agency’s pandemic response efforts during this most challenging of times. At the end of March, NJCDC distributed a short survey to neighborhood residents to determine the greatest needs within our community and determine a plan of action to help. NJCDC’s AmeriCorps program staff and members began compiling a long list of resources, services, and organizations that could help with challenges such as housing, food insecurity, unemployment, and much more. They then began calling every resident that completed the survey and helped connect them to these resources. A lot of times, the AmeriCorps members were also someone for residents to lean on during these difficult times.

There is great concern that Paterson students will return to school having fallen even further behind their peers who live in more affluent communities. While some school districts began remote learning through virtual platforms, Paterson began remote learning with printed packets because most students did not have access to proper technology. Paterson Community School Corps (PCSC) members dedicated countless hours to teaching students remotely via FaceTime, phone calls, and texts, and helped them complete their distance learning packets. Without the help of the AmeriCorps members, many students would have been left to complete their schoolwork on their own with little to no contact with their teachers.

In April, NJCDC purchased Zoom Pro accounts for their 13 youth programs and each program began hosting at least two virtual activities per day, many of which were hosted by AmeriCorps members. Thanks to relief funding, donations, and the efforts of the NJCDC Staff, members aided in the distribution of almost 400 Chromebooks and more than $20,000 in grocery store gift cards to students and families in Paterson.

Spotlight: “I am so proud of my Americorps team for showing resilience and dedication during the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the endless challenges of serving during a global pandemic, our members are determined to continue serving the students and families of the Great Falls Promise Neighborhood because they know their work is essential to helping students continue to learn and grow during a crisis that has hit Paterson hard.” - Christine Cocca, AmeriCorps Program Manager
New Mexico
AmeriCorps New Mexico

New Mexico AmeriCorps programs have been hard at work and remaining active throughout the COVID-19 pandemic through field activities, teleservice, and re-assignments with partners to better respond to community needs. The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions and the Serve New Mexico Commission have administered AmeriCorps members to placements across New Mexico in a variety of issue areas. Many New Mexico AmeriCorps members pivoted their service in order to better address the pandemic.

These adaptations include but are not limited to:

VAMOS AmeriCorps Members at Mandy’s Farm used online conferencing and teleservice to assist community members with disabilities in their transition to adult life.

EcoServants, SeedCorps, Families, Youth Incorporated and Not Forgotten Outreach AmeriCorps members are addressing food insecurity across the state.

Indigenous Educators Corps members serving in the Navajo Nation, Zia Pueblo, and Santa Clara Pueblo are making and distributing masks, providing virtual classroom support and online tutoring, finding online college tours for high school students, and posting videos on YouTube to provide activities to kids who would usually attend the after-school program.

Teach for America members continue to aid in online education in Tribal communities while also assisting with food delivery services.

RecoveryCorps members with Rio Arriba County have been providing Meals on Wheels program support to the New Mexico Department of Aging and Long Term Services and assisting Rio Arriba disaster and emergency preparedness efforts.

**Issue Areas**
Disaster Services, Economic Opportunity, Education, Healthy Futures,

**Supporting Commission**
Serve New Mexico

**Innovative Elements**
- Continued field activities and teleservice throughout the entire pandemic.
- Utilized new partnerships to re-assign members and create new placement sites to better assist the region with its most pressing needs.

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**Spotlight:** NMDWS Cabinet Secretary Bill McCamley anticipates expanded opportunities for AmeriCorps members to serve COVID-19 recovery efforts throughout the year. “As this crisis continues, we’re going to need more members focused on public health outcomes throughout our state,” said Secretary McCamley. “AmeriCorps is a flexible, highly effective resource for community response and recovery efforts, and our members receive experience and benefits that prepare them well for their post-service careers.”
New York

American Red Cross’ New York State Disaster Resiliency Corps

American Red Cross’ New York State Disaster Resiliency AmeriCorps program is focused on disaster services. Normally, American Red Cross AmeriCorps members in New York State educate communities and individuals on the importance of disaster preparedness and fire safety, helping to plan for effective disaster response for each of New York’s 10 regions. Since 2016, the program has documented 21 lives (6 of them children) saved through its in-home fire safety visits that its AmeriCorps members assisted. However, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its associated economic consequences, American Red Cross reassigned several members to facilitate blood donation, support emergency shelters, make wellness calls, and distribute food to hospitals, seniors, and food pantries.

Issue Areas
Disaster Services

Supporting Commission
New York State Commission on National and Community Service

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City of Rochester Flower City AmeriCorps Program

City of Rochester Flower City AmeriCorps program is focused on economic opportunities and provides multiple services to high-poverty communities in Rochester, New York. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Flower City AmeriCorps members adapted their service to meet specific needs related to food distribution, veteran outreach, and community policing. One Flower City AmeriCorps member who served at Rochester Refugee Sewing and Repair, which normally trains and employs refugee women to sew bags and clothing, shifted her focus to making face masks, helping to provide thousands of masks to people in need.

Issue Areas
Economic Opportunity

Supporting Commission
New York State Commission on National and Community Service

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One Flower City AmeriCorps member who served at Rochester Refugee Sewing and Repair, which normally trains and employs refugee women to sew bags and clothing, shifted her focus to making face masks, helping to provide thousands of masks to people in need.
North Carolina
MedServe

MedServe is a nonprofit organization that operates an AmeriCorps-funded service year program in primary care medicine. Its mission is to improve the health of the medically underserved communities of North Carolina while exposing tomorrow’s most promising future healthcare providers to primary care practice in a way that inspires them to be life-long champions of health equity. MedServe matches recent college graduates with an interest in healthcare and a heart for serving with primary care clinics that serve underserved populations. Its members (called Fellows) spend two years as full-time, active helpers in these clinics. Fellows divide their time between assisting in providing core primary care services, and providing community health outreach, education or other population health activities.

Compared to many AmeriCorps programs, MedServe Fellows’ service continued with relatively little disruption, as Fellows found themselves on the front lines of healthcare in the middle of a pandemic. Although service continued, Fellows were involved in significant adaptations to be able to continue that service in a new environment. These adaptations include joining the COVID response – approximately 36% of MedServe Fellows have been a part of the COVID response team at their clinics. Members are assisting with outreach and testing events, screening patients for symptoms, and even providing care coordination services in COVID-specific clinics. Through these events, they have helped provide care to over 14,000 patients since the pandemic began.

Fellows are also assisting their clinics in adapting core primary care activities to a virtual format. Fellows have helped to implement telehealth programs in the clinic, started phone-based wellness checks and needs assessments for patients that were isolated in the pandemic. In addition to this, they converted key primary care activities like education classes and support groups to virtual formats.

Issue Areas
Healthy Futures

Supporting Commission
Volunteer NC

Innovative Elements
- Directly assisted with COVID-19 response in testing events and patient care.
- Assisted in adaptations to virtual tele-health services within clinics, including phone-based wellness checks and needs assessment surveys.

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Spotlight: First-year fellow Kanajzae Brown is settling into her new role at OIC Rocky Mount. Their clinic recently received a grant to extend free COVID-19 testing to the community. Kanajzae has played an integral role in drive-thru testing and handling the large patient volume in the clinic. Every Tuesday and Thursday, she’s in the drive-thru line nasal swabbing the 150-200 patients coming through the line. In her recent check-in, she shared, “Yesterday a patient came in to get tested for COVID-19 and while waiting, he passed out from heat exhaustion. I immediately went into my EMT mode and began to try to figure out what was going on. That was pretty exciting to be able to use those emergency skills, that I haven’t been able to utilize in a while. Getting used to the new medical system has been a little tricky but I am learning new things every day.”
North Carolina
Resilience Corps NC

Resilience Corps NC is a national service program run by the Conservation Trust for North Carolina. Resilience Corps NC, an AmeriCorps Disaster Response Team, serves the people across all of North Carolina through environmental education, disaster response, and community resiliency activities aimed at developing equitable and sustainable access to better community outcomes with its local partners. In its history, the program has employed more than 150 AmeriCorps members, responded to two national disasters within the state, has educated over 100,000 young people, and generated over 8,000 volunteer opportunities from the mountains to the coast. The program is founded on principles of equity and inclusion, and the deep desire to address social, racial, and economic issues created across the state due to natural disasters, especially climate change.

In March 2020, Congress passed legislation for COVID-19 relief for citizens and companies around the country. A few weeks later, the Resilience Corps NC Program Director heard about the national shortage of food bank volunteers on a public radio broadcast. This food insecurity was the catalyst to use the new $0 match policy for service year 2020 for AmeriCorps programs in a new way. Resilience Corps NC hoped to support COVID-19 front line organizations and provide meaningful work for individuals recently unemployed or suffering a reduction of work hours. Never before has the program employed so many new members at one time, created positions solely for disaster relief, and built a service opportunity around short-term members. Within six weeks, a budget was created for 22 quarter-time members, partners were recruited through a competitive proposal process across the state, candidates applied and were hired, new member orientations occurred, and members were deployed all across North Carolina. Since May, members have been serving in local farms, food shuttles, food banks, housing security nonprofits, and various organizations responding to unique community needs. Thousands of service hours have been given to organizations that needed direct support in providing food, housing, clothing, and a glimmer of hope through the actions of the AmeriCorps members. Thousands of North Carolina citizens have been served by the actions of these front-line AmeriCorps members.

Spotlight: “Over the past 6 months, Rich Woynicz has been our AmeriCorps member and he has tremendously increased our capacity to respond to the needs of the community made more intense during the COVID19 pandemic. We have asked Rich to help us with logistics of food procurement and distribution, which he has done! Rich has helped us get pickup trucks of sweet potatoes, tractor trailers of watermelons, and fresh produce and dry goods from various vendors. He’s coordinated dry goods pickups from stores, deliveries from various vendors, the Farm to Family program and more.” – Stephanie Workman, Associate Pastor, Kirk of Kildaire Presbyterian

Issue Areas
Environmental Stewardship

Supporting Commission
Volunteer NC

Innovative Elements
• Maximized number of AmeriCorps members dispatched throughout the state by utilizing new match policy and coordinating with placement sites across the state.
• Partnered with many local food banks and other organizations dealing with COVID response efforts and local food insecurity.

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Ohio
Mercy Serves AmeriCorps Program

Mercy Serves’ 11 AmeriCorps members provide services related to the reduction and prevention of prescription drug and opioid abuse in Mercy Health emergency departments in Ohio. The AmeriCorps members are responsible for providing education on substance abuse, and linkages to healthcare and social services, including treatment. Members also provide resources to patients and caregivers in select Emergency Departments. In addition, the AmeriCorps members leverage volunteers who will be engaged in a National Day of Service community project and other service and outreach events during his or her tenure. In the 2019-2020 program year, members encountered 1,972 total patients, and over 73% (1,447 patients) changed their knowledge, thoughts, or behaviors toward substance abuse.

Members were removed from their placement in the ED in March 2020 due to COVID-19 and conducted teleservice through the end of their service term. During teleservice, members supported with the health system’s direct COVID-19 response through the Advance Care Planning Initiative (ACP), which supports patients to identify advance directives and determine end-of-life healthcare decision making. Members served 2,000 total hours supporting the ACP initiative. Only 20-26% of Americans have an Advance Directive, and the #1 reason cited for not having one is lack of awareness. The rapid onset of COVID-19 has rendered many unable to make end of life decisions and without expressed preferences or paperwork designating someone to make these important decisions on their behalf. The need for a structured ACP process across the health system emerged. Mercy Serves members were able to apply their knowledge of motivation and behavior change in order to support the health system’s approach to ACP by reviewing ACP implementation for quality assurance, developing collateral materials for both patients and internal ACP Specialists, and reviewing patient ACP documents for clarity or consistency. From June 1 to August 31, 2020: members reviewed 1,871 patient ACP document uploads, reviewed 207 patient charts for quality assurance, and created 5 collateral materials for patients and ACP Specialists.

Issue Areas
Healthy Futures

Supporting Commission
Serve Ohio

Innovative Elements

- Supported the ACP Initiative to provide Advance Directive for those who were unaware or unable to arrange it themselves.
- Made institutional changes by reevaluating ACP implementation in their health system for more effective delivery in the future.

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Spotlight: “This unique partnership between Mercy Health and AmeriCorps leverages the infrastructure and momentum of the national service movement to respond to a critical community health need.” – Gina Hemenway, Executive Director of Community Health, Mercy Health
Ohio

Community Resilience Grants

ServeOhio, in conjunction with its partners, the American Electric Power Foundation and the AmeriCorps Volunteer Generation Fund, awarded $62,000 in grants to support 36 service projects benefitting those most affected by COVID-19. Each project committed to bringing volunteers together, while still following proper social distancing protocol, to support their neighbors during this trying time. The grants ranged between $500-$2,000 to support initiatives that addressed significant needs in their community as a result of the coronavirus. Volunteer organizations used the grant money to fund a variety of projects including: organizing food drop off programs for at-risk populations, coordinating diaper drives, organizing toiletry drives to support residents unable to purchase essential items, creating cards/letters for older adults in nursing homes to brighten their spirits, and providing educational activities for children to continue learning outside of schools.

Volunteer Generation Fund dollars that were reserved to support direct volunteer service projects organized for Global Youth Service Day and ServeOhio Day were redirected to support these community resilience grants. As a state agency, ServeOhio designed this new grant opportunity to support organizations across Ohio who were meeting immediate and critical needs in their communities as a result of COVID-19. The response was overwhelming; 265 organizations applied for the funding, many of which were brand new partners to ServeOhio. They were able to fund 36 organizations with $62,000 in grant funding.

Most of the 265 applicants for the Community Resilience Grants had never applied for funding from ServeOhio in the past. The grant opportunity was promoted by many statewide partners including the Ohio Department of Education and the Governor’s Office. When this funding opportunity was released in mid-March, there were no opportunities available like this in the state. Many of the applications came from local schools and districts, city governments, churches and faith-based institutions, and grassroots nonprofit organizations. Not only did these grants help support immediate relief efforts for COVID-19, but they will allow ServeOhio to expand throughout the state and include new partners in funding and training opportunities in the years to come.

Spotlight: “Because of the ServeOhio grant and the help of all these individuals, we were able to bless a lot of home bound folks and bring baskets and donations to a number of nursing homes and care centers. This army of individuals reminded our seniors in small yet personal ways that they are not forgotten, that they matter, and that they are loved. #ServeOhio” – Ohio State Representative Kyle Koehler

### Issue Areas
Volunteer Generation Fund

### Supporting Commission
Serve Ohio

### Innovative Elements
- Reallocated funds for in-person events to provide grants to dozens of organizations across Ohio in order to aid in COVID response.
- Expanding outreach to new partners and applicants, forming funding and training opportunities for years to come.

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Oklahoma
Putnam City Schools AmeriCorps

With minimal time to shift the program, along with the inability to continue to effectively recruit members as well as enroll students, Putnam City Schools’ summer program was hindered. Despite those challenges, the program was still able to impact 247 students throughout the summer. The program produced online content for students K-5th grade by creating interactive, self-checking Google Slides. When it was announced that all the schools would be closed and that the administration was limiting the amount of people in the building, they partnered with City Center. City Center not only has an afterschool program, but they also have a food pantry and clothing closet. Due to COVID-19 and being short-staffed, they also had to change their summer program plans. They offered space to house inventory needed to make weekly supply sacks for families. In return, some PCS members provided activities once a week for the kids coming to the center.

When the school year started, students were told to continue distance learning until it was safe enough for them to come to school. Although students were not allowed in the building, teachers were told they needed to be the school building at least 2 days a week, and they were not allowed to bring their own children with them. This posed a big problem. By suggestion of Putnam City Schools, City Center opened their doors to teachers who had kids 8 or older and needed a safe place to go while their parent was at work at school. City Center ended up providing a safe place for over 200 teachers’ kids! Not only did they provide this at no cost to the teachers, but the kids coming also received a free breakfast, lunch and snack! This prevented many teachers from having to resign their position or take FMLA leave. City Center also applied for 2 AmeriCorps members and hope to get those positions filled in the new year. Putnam City now has new vision for how to better coordinate efforts in its community. It is a systematic change that has been long overdue and as a result many more families will be helped. In regard to new resources developed, the weekly, interactive Google Slides created by the members was quite progressive and cutting edge. The content that they developed ended up being available to over 4,500 elementary students in the district and will be available each summer so it can continue to help students.

Spotlight: Gabriela Pasillas is a third-year member in the Putnam City AmeriCorps program. Because she is bi-lingual, she translated information sheets. With the number of Spanish-speaking families enrolled in the program, this was extremely beneficial. With her help, at least 1/3 of program participants were kept engaged. She also appreciated putting some of her college education to use. When the Program Director approached her about translating the information sheets, she replied that she had just recently taken a course on how to translate, she enjoyed being able to put these skills to use.
Oregon
College Possible

College Possible makes college admission and success possible for low-income students through an intensive curriculum of coaching and support. Members help students achieve success in post-secondary education through academic and college preparation programming in Portland and greater Oregon. AmeriCorps members are responsible for helping students demonstrate improved academic performance in literacy and math, as well as increased preparation for higher education and careers through college admission and persistence. AmeriCorps members also leverage 200 volunteers annually, who engage in service projects that support their community. Though the year of 2019-20 threw some unexpected wrenches, the College Possible coaches never wavered in the strong sense of community they had built.

Coaches were able to lean on each other through mutual support, sharing of tech-connected coaching best practices to serve students remotely. For the first time ever, College Possible offered large-scale virtual focus groups to coaches from across the country. Coaches met from all programs and sites, giving them an opportunity to feel connected despite sheltering in place. The first few weeks of virtual programming with students, service members focused their interactions with students on identifying needs and challenges due to COVID-19. Members were able to connect students to local relief efforts, resources and support, while continuing to support students on their path to higher education. Coaches also shared their approaches and best practices with coaches who had to shift to virtual environments for the first time. A pervasive threat to the success of our students is the technology divide and inaccessibility to reliable technology and internet. Thanks to a generous donation from corporate partner, CTL, CP was able to provide Chromebooks to students throughout Oregon. As programming went 100% virtual for fall 2020, CP centered care of students’ whole selves and well-being. Coaches prioritized one-on-one coaching with options for students to engage in-group sessions.

**Issue Areas**
Education

**Supporting Commission**
Oregon Volunteers: Commission for Voluntary Action & Service

**Innovative Elements**
- Capitalized upon pre-existing coach knowledge and approaches by offering focus-groups state-wide.
- Ensured that students had access to proper technology by distributing Chromebooks across the state.

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**Spotlight:** "Ending the 19-20 year in a pandemic was not what anyone anticipated, but we made quick adjustments and are proud of the support we were able to provide students. The pandemic made the disparities in education more evident and our work all the more necessary. It brings me hope to see our team continue to serve our communities in reducing the widened disparity of access and success in higher education for students from communities impacted by poverty." Emielle Nischik, Executive Director, College Possible Oregon
Oregon
United Community Action Network

This program has three primary focus areas: education, health, and financial well-being, as well as one secondary area: environmental stewardship. The United Community Action Network places 20 full-time AmeriCorps members annually. Members serve at schools, non-profits and government agencies in five Southwestern Oregon counties. UCA members are responsible for implementing effective volunteer management practices to improve the capacity of their host sites to be better equipped to serve beneficiaries. AmeriCorps members leverage approximately 300 volunteers per year in over 1,700 hours of service toward education activities, job-skills training, health and wellness programs, and environmental restoration projects.

COVID-19 imposed many additional and unforeseen challenges for UCA programming, our members, and host sites. While members and host sites were easily able to pivot projects into new virtual and social distant formats since the program does capacity building services, many members struggled with finding personal support systems as they navigated this unknown new era. UCA was able to increase programming to provide weekly check-in calls so that members had continuous and more direct lines of communication with our office.

Quickly after COVID-19 affected our nation, United Communities pivoted the majority of AmeriCorps projects into teleservice formats. However, AmeriCorps projects that provided critical essential service, such as their AmeriCorps Nutrition Educator serving with Feeding Umpqua, the Douglas County Regional Food Bank, supported vulnerable communities identified as rural food deserts by supporting distributions in those communities on the Outpost Mobile Food Pantry. UCA AmeriCorps staff have made programming changes to address the safety and concerns around COVID by providing a virtual program model. This year, our staff provide professional development, skills training, and other comprehensive supports to members through bi-weekly webinars, conference calls, and site-visits. Through creativity and responsiveness to COVID, their staff have created systems and policies that have been shared as resources to other AmeriCorps programs across Oregon.

**Issue Areas**
Capacity Building

**Supporting Commission**
Oregon Volunteers: Commission for Voluntary Action & Service

**Innovative Elements**
- Focused on member well-being by implementing check-in calls and programming and maintaining open communication.
- Provided professional training and support to members to improve their impact on a regional scale.

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**Spotlight:** "We were so grateful to United Communities for working with us to have Lydia (our member) serve on our mobile pantry. Having her there to help feed families during not only the pandemic, but also the wildfires, has been invaluable to our team and community." - Sarah McGregor, Program Director of Feeding Umpqua
ArtistYear

ArtistYear’s mission is to address the nation’s Arts Education Gap by ensuring that every low-income student has arts education through a National Service Arts Corps. In just six years, ArtistYear has grown to include 57 AmeriCorps members. Through its partnership with PennSERVE, 30 AmeriCorps members typically deliver over 51,000 hours of arts education to 10,000 vulnerable students in 30 Title I schools across Philadelphia. Despite unprecedented challenges, ArtistYear AmeriCorps Members have persisted in providing arts education to low-income students in Philadelphia — largely thanks to a dynamic program design that quickly shifted from in-person learning at schools to online engagement with students at home.

ArtistYear AmeriCorps members — with support of program staff and their partners at the School District of Philadelphia — continued to engage students through a series of online courses in music production, photography, ballet, and other art forms. ArtistYear AmeriCorps members focused on producing engaging content that doesn’t require students to have expensive computer software or fancy art supplies at home. For example, members created educational content that included 11 arts learning programs. Students were able to watch episodes of the various programs on YouTube and PSTV, the school district’s educational TV channel. The programs have been featured on #CampYouTube with over 75,000 views and 1,100 hours of watch time. One of the arts programs, "Theater of Circumstance," walks students through the process of creating an original piece of theater virtually; “Choose Your Own Sketch Venture” program is a do-it-yourself-series that teaches bookmaking using basic materials; "The CHA Show: Connecting Human Aesthetics to Creative Health Awareness," takes high-school students through the basics of health and wellness through dance. With the shift to virtual learning, protocols have been put in place to ensure compliance and safety across the program, and students have even had the option share their own content, thanks to an organized parental permission process. Community partnerships were important in shifting swiftly to produce online content and engage students virtually. The collaboration with school district’s educational TV channel allowed member content to be distributed on various platforms, reaching 100,000 students across the region.

**Spotlight:** "ArtistYear AmeriCorps Fellows are coming together stronger than ever around a common purpose – to push boundaries and democratize access to arts learning for all youth, no matter their zip code,” Margo Drakos, co-founder and CEO of ArtistYear, said in the press release.
Innovative State Service COVID-19 Response Programs
America’s Service Commissions

Pennsylvania
KEYS Service Corps AmeriCorps

KEYS Service Corps annually hosts around 135 AmeriCorps members who mentor, provide academic engagement, and implement service projects throughout Pittsburgh and Allegheny County. KEYS is housed within the Allegheny County Department of Human Services. The relationship between KEYS and the county agency provides KEYS with the statistical data and up-to-date community-based information about the neediest populations and geographic areas of the county. Even 2019 - something like, "even during this challenging year, KEYS Service Corps AmeriCorps members served more than 2,200 children and youth.

With the onset of the pandemic, many AmeriCorps members continued to engage with students in online settings whenever possible. Members jumped in to support meal distribution at shuttered schools. KEYS leaned into its ties with the Allegheny County Area Agency on Aging. Recognizing those living in long-term care facilities faced greater risks to their mental health, AmeriCorps members launched a campaign to send encouraging letters and make phone calls to groups of older adults. Besides that, AmeriCorps members also wrote to the medical personnel caring for them.

In the fall, officials coordinated for two AmeriCorps members to serve at the county Agency on Aging. Those members anchor coordination of larger service projects that involve fellow AmeriCorps members and local youth. Members provided trainings on using computer and smart phone apps, coordinated safe outdoor visits, created exercise videos, arranged matches with pets and older adults, and held community door decorating activities. Another initiative, just getting off the ground in fall 2020, will see members collaborating with Pittsburgh Community Television to address social isolation and the technological divide. Members also strive to draw older residents themselves into volunteerism, through projects. Plans call for them to coordinate remote readings of older residents to children served by the county's Office of Children, Youth and Families. That keeps with the program's long tradition of cultivating the value of lifelong service.

Issue Areas
Education

Supporting Commission
PennSERVE

Innovative Elements
- Launched a campaign to provide emotional and medical support to seniors in local care facilities.
- Members encourage elderly individuals to participate in volunteerism projects and provided them with technology training and assistance.

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Spotlight: “Whether it is assisting local senior centers with prepping content for broadcasting on the local public access channel, to coordinating holiday cards and letters for older adults who either do not have a family, or cannot see their family this holiday season, to creating technology how-to guides for some of the new apps that people are using to communicate and stay connected, our AmeriCorps members are implementing programs to help alleviate social isolation and loneliness for seniors served by Allegheny County DHS Area Agency on Aging,” – Kurt Emmerling, Allegheny County
Innovative State Service COVID-19 Response Programs
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Rhode Island
Family Service of Rhode Island Attendance Improvement Matters (AIM) AmeriCorps Program

Through the Family Service of Rhode Island Attendance Improvement Matters (AIM) AmeriCorps Program, AmeriCorps members deliver the Walking School Bus and Check and Connect attendance interventions at Mary E Fogarty Elementary School and Harry Kizirian Elementary School in Providence, RI. Additionally, AmeriCorps members conduct family engagement and community outreach activities, such as the COVID-19 Be Safe Campaign. Family Service of Rhode Island is a comprehensive non-profit social service organization founded in 1892 that manages, through thoughtful coordination and a shared vision, programs across Rhode Island, providing essential resources for underserved individuals, families and communities.

Family Service of Rhode Island quickly responded to the closures of Rhode Island schools in March 2020 by adapting its attendance mentoring program to distance-learning family check-ins. After assessing the needs of families, the AmeriCorps program re-purposed the service hours of AmeriCorps Members to implement the new Be Safe program. The Be Safe program began as a state-wide home delivery system of much needed COVID supplies, such as soap, masks, hand sanitizer, toilet paper, and other cleaning supplies.

The program then began working with the Rhode Island Food Bank to deliver food with COVID-19 supplies. The AmeriCorps program began contacting everyone who requested Be Safe assistance to ascertain what was needed and schedule delivery dates/windows, explain safe, contact-free delivery protocols, and follow up with recipients to ensure the kits were received and that each individual’s or family’s needs were being met. When the COVID-19 pandemic forced initial closings of traditional food pantries it became necessary to re-think an emergency food and delivery system. The result has been a significantly increased awareness that the system is not accessible to people who are not mobile. In addition to addressing the exacerbated food insecurity of our community, Be Safe helped prevent the spread of COVID-19 by coordinating with numerous Partners, including the RI Foundation, Tufts, Citizens Bank, National Grid, Steer Forward, CharterCare Foundation, and United Way.

Issu Areas
Education

Supporting Commission
ServeRI

Innovative Elements
- Assessed family needs and expanded service to deliver much-needed COVID supplies through the Be Safe program.
- Coordinated with community members and local partners to ensure safe and timely delivery of supplies and food to families in need of support.

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Spotlight: “What made this campaign particularly successful was that Family Service of Rhode Island AmeriCorps Project Manager actively partnered with Woonsocket City officials to first identify where our most vulnerable seniors were, and then coordinate with the City to ensure that every senior who wanted one of these sought-after kits, received one at no charge. Family Service of Rhode Island’s ground-breaking “Be Safe” campaign not only brightened the lives of our shut-in seniors, but it also helped protect them from COVID-19 transmission.” – Woonsocket Mayor Lisa Baldelli-Hunt
South Carolina
Black River United Way

The Black River United Way (BRUW) creates a better quality of life for people in Georgetown and Williamsburg counties by leveraging resources; to lead Early Grade Learning programs for children, build Family Self-Sufficiency, and ensure Disaster Resiliency through preparation and mitigation; with the goal of producing the greatest community impact. At Black River United Way, our focus is: To efficiently manage volunteers in times of active disaster, to establish resiliency goals for counties and more vulnerable communities, to provide access and resources for disaster preparedness education to the community, and to connect families and community to mitigation assistance so that they are more resilient to disasters.

After social-distancing guidelines were implemented in South Carolina, SC Disaster Corps made their training virtual by providing a recorded webinar for the volunteers to watch and provide them with step-by-step instructions. As a direct disaster response, BRUW engaged volunteers in FEMA certified training on disaster preparedness. They recognized that we needed to spread more awareness about being prepared. Being amid a pandemic and hurricane season, BRUW needed to get resources directly to the community. Their volunteers distributed 280 disaster kits.

Black River United Way partnerships included Williamsburg County Emergency Management Department EMD, Optimism Preventative Services, and United Way of Anderson County SC Disaster Corps. These partnerships improved their virtual volunteer training capabilities as well as their outreach to distant rural communities.

Tiara Davis is an SC Disaster Corps Member serving with Black River United Way. She recruited 30 volunteers to participate in the training that affected 280 families.

Spotlight: “Being from Williamsburg County, it was special for me to do a project of this magnitude. For our initial project for COVID-19, we implemented disaster training and distributed kits to community members in Georgetown and Williamsburg County. Our intentions and motives were to serve, educate, bring awareness, and involve ourselves in the community… and I am proud to say that I was a part of that. It brought an empathetic feeling to my heart, and being a public health major, it was a great opportunity for my future endeavor. It was an honor to experience that opportunity in the pre-stages of becoming a Registered Nurse. Knowing that the community was grateful to have received those kits makes me smile.” – Tiara Davis
South Carolina
Greenville County Behavioral Health
AmeriCorps State Service Program

The GCBH AmeriCorps State Service Program is sponsored by Mental Health America of Greenville County (MHAGC). MHAGC is a nonprofit organization that positively impacts mental health through advocacy, awareness, and service in Upstate SC. MHAGC provides consumer support services for individuals living with chronic mental illness and operates a 24/7 CRISISline and TEENline phone/online chat/texting service to provide nonjudgmental listening and community resources information. MHAGC’s AmeriCorps Program exists to more directly support consumers of its services and to decrease the number of CRISISline and TEENline’s missed service requests.

AmeriCorps members serve in various roles, including directly working with support service consumers, volunteer recruitment and coordination, and serving as a CRISISline/TEENline phone worker.

Like many others, this program had to come up with new procedures quite quickly and be able to provide our callers with information at the drop of the hat. While calls typically involve personal matters such as relationships, a crisis does not have a singular structure. Many callers had fears about their safety and futures and had questions regarding resources available to them. GCBH AmeriCorps members have continued to provide compassionate, active listening to all of their callers while providing the most up to date resources for their area. During this pandemic, GCBH has tried to find ways to make remote service an option for volunteers and staff in the future. GCBH AmeriCorps members have assisted by testing remote work options as the in-person contacts for remote service. GCBH will continue offering these remote opportunities largely due to their assistance.

Issue Areas
Healthy Futures

Supporting Commission
South Carolina Service Commission

Innovative Elements

- GCBH members used their communication skills to support the many individuals who require resources or emotional counsel.
- Ensured that provided resources were both relevant and up to date to offer the best support possible.

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Spotlight: “The program has greatly helped to increase our capacity. During this time, our lifeline answer rate was able to be increased from 19% to 79%. We now answer for the entire of South Carolina, and AmeriCorps was an integral part of that.” – Jennifer Piver, MHAGC Director
Tennessee
Clinch-Powell RC&D Council, Inc. – Appalachia CARES

The Appalachia CARES program is a school and community-based service-learning program which promotes COMMUNITY, ACTION, RESPONSIBILITY, EDUCATION, and SERVICE as program cornerstones. Appalachia CARES engages its members in direct service with youth and community volunteers in primarily rural areas in middle and east Tennessee counties in partnership with community-based organizations and local schools. The overall goal of the program is to impact participants through service-learning. Through the implementation of service-learning, their members focus on energy efficiency & conservation, community housing services and expanding community organizations.

The Appalachia CARES program has sought out additional ways to stay connected and leveraged new virtual resources during the pandemic. The program started utilizing the Basecamp online community to stay connected with AmeriCorps members throughout their term of service, as well as to connect them with (at least virtually) the other members serving. Even after using for just a couple of months they had already seen good engagement on this platform. They also implemented video site visits and member meetings, expanded their online Orientation to be more comprehensive. They have plans to continue to engage more regularly via virtual platforms for the remainder of the pandemic and beyond.

They have also expanded their programs and partnerships to help connect others in the community. In November of 2020, Clinch-Powell implemented a program in partnership with Fahe, to provide elderly and disabled individuals access to tablets to connect with family, community and doctors. As part of her service at Clinch Powell’s main office, Appalachia CARES AmeriCorps member Samantha Peach has assisted staff with outreach efforts to identify eligible recipients for this program.

**Issue Areas**
Economic Opportunity, Environmental Stewardship

**Supporting Commission**
Volunteer Tennessee

**Innovative Elements**
- Used Basecamp to cultivate community, engagement, and cooperation amongst members in the network.
- Partnered with Fahe to provide tablets to elderly individuals to assist them in connecting with loved ones.

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**Spotlight:** “When COVID-19 turned our world upside down, we had to abruptly shift our process to one that was more labor intensive, more stressful, and all together frustrating. During that time, we had three Appalachia CARES AmeriCorps members serving at Central Services, and each one brought unique strengths to the process. Each of them served courageously, without skipping a beat, and had an open-mind and caring heart through their time serving during the pandemic. I can honestly say, we could never do what we are doing each day without AmeriCorps.” -- Ashley Hux, Appalachia CARES AmeriCorps Alum and Executive Director of Morristown-Hamblen Central Services in Morristown, TN.
Innovative State Service COVID-19 Response Programs
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Tennessee

Knoxville – Knox County Community Action Committee CAC AmeriCorps

The Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee (CAC) AmeriCorps Program is committed to changing people’s lives, embodying the spirit of hope, improving communities and making America a better, more sustainable, place to live. In operation since 1994, CAC AmeriCorps is the longest running environmental service corps in the State of Tennessee. CAC AmeriCorps leverages the skills, passions and ideals of the youth of our great nation in addressing pressing local environmental issues and social needs in the Knoxville area. This is accomplished through empowering our members to use their hands, hearts and minds to build capacity in our partner organizations and uplift the community both through traditional conservation practice as well as professional technical application.

During this unusual time, CAC AmeriCorps made a number of unique adaptions related to COVID-19, from shifting in-person activities to remote to being intentional about when to bring AmeriCorps members together. On September 11th National Day of Service and Remembrance and Make A Difference Day, CAC AmeriCorps members served a variety of organizations with different missions. At this time, they limit their in-person gatherings, generally hold activities outdoors, and made masks a mandatory part of the uniform. In addition, they’ve worked to strengthen electronic communication opportunities and have implemented small teams, allowing members to work collaboratively to create more opportunities for creative service learning. Even early in the pandemic, AmeriCorps members were able to switch to using online classes or campaigns to continue teaching about sustainability and environmental stewardship. This year, long-time CAC partner Beardsley Farm has been working with Nourish Knoxville to create perishable food bags that are distributed to their local partners. Food donations from area farmers combined with produce from Beardsley Farm are packed and delivered by CAC AmeriCorps members addressing the food insecurity exacerbated by COVID-19. CAC AmeriCorps also hosts a 25-person AmeriCorps VISTA Program which has been responding to critical community needs, such as increasing meal distribution to the area’s seniors through the CAC Mobile Meals Program.

Issue Areas
Environmental Stewardship, Disaster Services

Supporting Commission
Volunteer Tennessee

Innovative Elements
- Continued to serve on key days such as September 11th and Make a Difference day through new guidelines and partnerships.
- Quickly shifted campaigning and educational programming to virtual platforms.

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Spotlight: Ashlee is a recent MFA graduate from the University of Tennessee whose senior exhibition, The Museum of Infinite Outcomes, has evolved into the establishment of a non-profit, of which Ashlee is the director. The space is a neighborhood-based, open-air museum with collections meandering among sun-filled gardens. Ashlee was recently featured on Keep Knoxville Beautiful’s “Individual Pathways to Sustainability” virtual summit, where she gave a virtual tour of the space and, later that day, had a chat about permaculture, creativity, and the cohabitation of people and the other life around them.
Texas

Equal Heart – Texas Service Corps

The Coronavirus pandemic imposed a devastating impact on the ability of moderate and low-income families to meet their basic needs. This resulted in a 300% increase in demand for the non-profit food pantry system in Texas. At the same time, COVID-19 caused a significant loss of the volunteer work force these food pantries relied on, and with limited funding streams, most of these organizations did not have the staff to respond. Within days of shelter-in-place orders going into effect, Equal Heart’s Texas Service Corps stepped in to fill this void on March 18, 2020 by creating a new COVID Disaster Response Team that placed teams of AmeriCorps members in the community to support food pantries throughout the state. From late March through early July, Equal Heart’s Texas Service Corps placed 270 AmeriCorps members with 28 organizations. These members helped provide over 20 million pounds of food to 900,000 Texans.

Equal Heart, winner of the 2020 National Excellence in AmeriCorps Award, utilized a virtual framework to recruit new partner sites who were then vetted immediately, and if a good match, site staff were provided training on being an AmeriCorps site. For over half of the 28 organizations that served as placement sites for members, this was their first experience with AmeriCorps members serving with them. The program has a virtual training platform that provides engaging and thorough pre-service training for all participants. The virtual framework, coupled with working closely with site staff on at placement sites, allowed Texas Service Corps to rapidly launch this new program model and place its first AmeriCorps members start service on March 30. With service sites from Abilene to El Paso to Port Arthur, Texas Service Corps truly stepped up with the unparalleled strength of national service to address the most pressing needs of Texans throughout the state. Their agile program model deployed hundreds of members to tackle food insecurity and also found a way to bring these resources to rural areas with otherwise little infrastructure. The impact of Equal Heart AmeriCorps is felt on so many levels – meeting the most essential needs of Texans, strengthening communities with fewer resources, and developing opportunities of service for individuals that felt the call to action when the state and country needed them most.

Issue Areas
Healthy Futures, Economic Opportunity

Supporting Commission
OneStar Foundation

Innovative Elements
• Utilized a virtual framework that trained and recruited AmeriCorps members and partner sites.
• Deployed hundreds of AmeriCorps members throughout the region to both urban and rural areas in order to tackle COVID-19 related problems.

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Spotlight: “The coronavirus pandemic has been one of the biggest challenges our community has ever faced,” said Congressman Colin Allred (TX-32). “Crises like this challenge us to come up with solutions to help our neighbors. Equal Heart Texas Service Corps has stepped up to this challenge and worked diligently and creatively to make sure the thousands of Texans in need have food and support to get through this difficult time. Equal Heart represents the best of North Texas, and I am so proud of the work they’ve done. Their impact is felt around our great state and this award is well deserved. I can’t wait to see what they do next to help our community.”
Utah

AmeriCorps Utah STEM Initiative

In response to the pandemic, the AmeriCorps Utah STEM Initiative (AUSI) transitioned all of their programming online to facilitate e-learning through the summer. In addition, they initiated a child nutrition program, delivering 324,000 meals. Members provided childcare services to healthcare workers and assisted the state of Utah a PPE donation site, collecting and organizing over 20,000 PPE items. Finally, AmeriCorps members assembled 1,000 STEM kits to lend to students. AUSI partnered with UServeUtah and the state of Utah’s emergency operations center to oversee and coordinate the efforts at the PPE donation center in Utah County. This center, like the other donation centers, was a critical piece in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

AmeriCorps Utah STEM Initiative also forged new partnerships to better assist in COVID-19 response. AUSI partnered with UServeUtah and the state of Utah’s emergency operations center to oversee and coordinate the efforts at the PPE donation center in Utah County. This center, like the other donation centers, was a critical piece in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. This aided their efforts in distributing the thousands of PPE items they had collected and donated.

Issue Areas
Healthy Futures, Economic Opportunity

Supporting Commission
Utah Commission on Service and Volunteerism

Innovative Elements
- Gathered and distributed over 20,000 items of personal protective equipment.
- Created new partnerships with UServeUtah and Utah’s Emergency Operations Center to distribute PPE.

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Vermont

Vermont Youth Conservation Corps Food & Farm AmeriCorps Program

Sharing food with those in need and involving young people in solving chronic problems have never been more important. VYCC Corps Members are safely meeting this challenge head on with compassion, energy, and determination. VYCC’s Health Care Share provides fresh produce and poultry, July through December, to roughly one thousand individuals across five Vermont counties. In 2018, VYCC’s Health Care Share received The Corps Network’s Project of the Year Award, selected from 130 youth corps organizations across the nation. Their 17 partnering health care providers identify patients facing food insecurity and/or diet-related illness. Youth and young adults work and learn on the Farm at VYCC to grow, harvest, and deliver certified organic food, accompanied by nutrition education, to participants at their doctor’s office weekly.

The organization and its AmeriCorps members adapted to the world around them by developing strong systems and protocols to reduce the spread of the coronavirus. VYCC also established a small Covid-19 working group and maintained flexible hours to abide to safety guidelines. The Food & Farm Program at VYCC typically engages hundreds of youth and community members each season. This year, there were fewer people on the farm, changes in production practices, robust safety protocols, and changes in delivery and pickup logistics, all while still increasing the number of households served. VYCC partnered with the Vermont Land trust and local medical centers to provide fresh local vegetables and poultry products to community members. VYCC also entered into a partnership with a local restaurant for a new effort called ShiftMeals. The effort provides work and volunteer opportunities for food service professionals who are out of work. They grow food and share it with the community. ShiftMeals came up to the Newport parcel to grow a community garden on part of the Land Trust plot. The other space was used to grow and harvest indigenous crops for Abenaki citizens. VYCC and its partners created employment and volunteer opportunities for Vermonters who had lost their jobs. While the program already worked to address Healthy Futures by way of its Health Care Share (HCS) program, Corps members engaged in activities considered to be “essential,” most notably growing food for Vermonters.

Spotlight: “Vermont Land Trust was so excited to be able to quickly innovate and pivot our plans in collaboration with VYCC, to ensure we continued to produce food on our Bluffsides Farm property, albeit with a different COVID-safe model. The end result was that we deepened our connections in the community and helped to address food insecurity during the pandemic.” – Tracy Zschau, Vice President of Conservation, Vermont Land Trust, Newport Vermont
Vermont Youth Development Corps

The Vermont Youth Development Corps AmeriCorps Program (VYDC) fosters community support for prevention and intervention programs providing opportunities for youth to build developmental assets and the resilience to thrive, avoid opioid and other substance misuse, gain skills and knowledge, and ultimately become healthy, engaged citizens. VYDC members promote hope, justice, and wellbeing for all Vermont youth. When Vermont’s Governor issued a Stay Home Stay Safe order in March 2020 as a response to COVID-19, the Vermont Youth Development Corps quickly adapted its service model as member service sites ceased in-person programming. VYDC staff pivoted its oversight to focus on ensuring members felt connected, supported, and aware of changing circumstances, tailoring services for youth to minimize disruption, and helping communities meet vital needs.

As Vermont’s COVID-19 response allowed for slowly reopening, VYDC oversaw members returning safely to in-person service with thorough and flexible guidelines to uphold best practices. VYDC service focuses on building resilience in youth through positive youth development. VYDC members at mentoring programs developed online drop-in spaces and community forums, and they used various platforms to maintain relationships with youth virtually. As the COVID-19 impacts began to partially subside, some VYDC members were able to provide in-person summer and fall programming. Sites made sure that health protocols were followed, such as mask wearing, physical distancing, capping the number of participants, and handwashing. Individual members provided childcare for essential workers, sewed cloth masks (PPE), and prepared and distributed food to families and individuals struggling financially in the wake of COVID-19. As the pandemic progressed, members continued to create and implement programming that directly addressed the impacts across several key areas. For the 2019-2020 program year, VYDC members supported programs that provided nutritious meals for 349 individual youth, created opportunities for 210 youth to participate in physical activities, and facilitated 38 sessions of academic support programs for 284 youth.

**Issue Areas**
Healthy Futures, Rural Areas, Multi-Focus Intermediary

**Supporting Commission**
SerVermont

**Innovative Elements**
- Offered physically distanced mentoring, pen pal partners, art and cooking activities, museum tours, and other online classes.
- Transitioned to safe programming such as outdoor teen drop-ins, and COVID-compliant photography classes and summer camps.

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**Spotlight:** Steven Maluenda, serving at the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Vergennes, was an integral part to the Club’s ability to adapt their existing services and provide additional forms of community relief during the COVID-19 crisis. Steven developed and led programming for the club’s first ever summer virtual camp, designed the club’s new website, and conducted volunteer coordination for the Club’s programs in response to COVID-19. Steven’s major accomplishment was his role in the creation of the Meals For All program, a meal delivery service for community members whose food security was impacted by COVID-19. Steven applied for and received the $20,000 grant that funded the program and recruited more than thirty volunteers who collectively served over 2,300 hours in the Vergennes community, delivering 22,273 meals in total.
Innovative State Service COVID-19 Response Programs
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Virginia

Virginia College Advising Corps

The Virginia College Advising Corps (VCAC) is a public service program to address the widening gap in college access for low income, first generation, and under-represented students. Their mission is to increase the number of these students entering and completing higher education. The program became the model for the national College Advising Corps, now present in 17 states and over 800 high schools. VCAC places recent college graduates in both rural and urban high schools and these near-peer college advisers assist high school students and their families with college searches, essay writing, SAT/ACT prep, college applications, FAFSA completion, scholarship searches, college visits, and successfully transitioning to post-secondary education.

When COVID-19 hit Virginia, VCAC AmeriCorps members quickly adjusted and remained undeterred in their drive to fulfill the program’s mission. They used their grasp of technology and expertise in social media to meet students in the realms most likely to garner interest and engagement. College advisors texted and emailed students and created YouTube channels and videos for students to watch on relevant topics such as deciphering financial aid award letters. They spent many hours calling households to check in and see what questions students and families had about the application process, financial aid awards, delayed commitment deadline and online orientation. They organized small groups of students to speak with college admission representatives, never giving up on the importance of students’ educational pathway after high school, even in the most unusual of circumstances. The knowledge and support of AmeriCorps members became critical, working with students to play out various scenarios in the shifting landscape to prepare for all of them. One major event typically done in person, Decision Day, was transferred to online environments by college advisers. They posted senior shout-outs on social media pages or newly created websites, creatively displaying postsecondary plans of students. These AmeriCorps members showed ingenuity and dedication to respond effectively and continue service to their communities. As the pandemic continues into the current school year, VCAC AmeriCorps members have become even more effective with virtual advising and other safe means of fulfilling their service mission.

Spotlight: “Because of COVID face-to-face interaction with students was nonexistent. However, that hasn’t stopped Leah from keeping the lines of communication open. FaceTime calls, Zoom, and Google Meets kept business going as usual. Leah’s efforts to help our students during this difficult time has been greatly appreciated by me and the Administration. She is constantly thinking of new ideas on how to keep students interested and informed. I’m excited to see what more Leah has in store for our students!” – Tiana Noble, School Counselor and Site Supervisor, Dan River High School, on member Leah Brooks

Issue Areas
Economic Opportunity, Education

Supporting Commission
Virginia Service Commission

Innovative Elements

- Used virtual platforms as well as phone check-ins to educate families on essential information for post-secondary education.
- Reimagined critical programs such as decision day to continue in a virtual environment.

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Boys and Girls Club of Greater Lynchburg

The Boys and Girls Club of Greater Lynchburg’s AmeriCorps program, called Academic Success Programming, covers a wide variety of areas in which youth need help and improvement. At the core of Academic Success Programming is Project Learn. Project Learn creates a culture that promotes continual learning, making learning fun for youth, and recognizing their efforts and helping them see the relevance of what they are learning to real-life and their future. AmeriCorps Members expand the Club’s capacity and serve as a vital point in the program’s system. Members act as coordinators between youth, parents, schools, teachers, and community partners to provide a full academic and mentoring program to youth. This is an even more massive and critical challenge during a pandemic. Members shifted gears and did not hesitate to continue serving.

In immediate response to the pandemic, several members began serving at a local food kitchen and pantry in addition to serving at the Boys and Girls Club. Other members created virtual youth programming for the Club. In one month alone, members provided access to 44 virtual academic sessions, called more than 100 parents, and performed outreach to all teachers to provide correct content to the youth they were serving. Initially, members were responsible for mentoring 12 youth, but with COVID-19, needs changed for the youth served. Overall, members began serving 18 youth in their age group, which was broken into nine youth at a time. AmeriCorps members have helped turned the club into a virtual hub for school. Members helped 72 students navigate the challenge of virtual schooling this year and communicated with parents and teachers to make sure no youth falls behind. The members who helped implement new procedures during COVID-19 greatly impacted youth served. The model they helped run is how things will run moving forward, creating long-lasting change. In addition to this, they brought in a great number of resources by going above and beyond in the program. MyFutures, a digital literacy program headed by one of the AmeriCorps members (Kim Perez) and assisted by other members, enrolled 72 youth at the Boys and Girls Club location to compete nationally monthly. During this time, youth have won multiple awards for their work plus the club has seen an increase in technology resources. During the summer alone, Kim’s service with MyFutures has brought in new gym items and a brand-new mobile computer lab.

**Issue Areas**
Rural Areas, Education

**Supporting Commission**
Virginia Service Commission

**Innovative Elements**
- Members improved upon and implemented Club procedures that will be utilized for years to come.
- Members went above and beyond service expectations by mentoring additional clients and assisting with food distribution outside of the Club.

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**Spotlight:** "The Boys and Girls Club states that we will do 'whatever it takes to build great futures.'" Our AmeriCorps members have stood in the gap for our club participants since March of 2020. What impresses me the most is that they all signed up for another year of service. We have an outstanding dedicated, 'do whatever it takes' AmeriCorps member team and I'm proud to serve with them! " – Mark Sheehan, Executive Director
The Schultz Family Foundation and Serve Washington, a state commission that coordinates service efforts, have partnered to build and oversee the Washington COVID Response Corps. The partnership combines AmeriCorps’ existing funding and programmatic infrastructure with philanthropic investment that underwrites a portion of the match contributions for AmeriCorps members at organizations that have both financial difficulty and a willingness to join a coordinated one-year COVID relief program. This Corps will address food insecurity in communities across the state, allowing them and their partners to share the value of collective impact. SFF will also offer training and development for members serving in AmeriCorps and a learning community for the organizations supporting them.

COVID-19 has caused disruptions that have led to unprecedented levels of food insecurity across Washington State. At the same time, the economic downturn and interruptions to postsecondary education and the workforce have left many young people in need of meaningful opportunities. From now until June, 125 AmeriCorps members aged 25 and under will be deployed to assist non-profits focused on alleviating food insecurity in Washington State. By supporting food packing and distribution at food banks, managing and serving in meal distribution sites at schools, providing food access to vulnerable populations, and growing fresh fruits and vegetables in community gardens for foodbanks, Response Corps members help keep their most vulnerable neighbors fed and healthy. Equally important is the role the Response Corps has had in supporting nonprofit infrastructure and AmeriCorps members. Serve Washington designed this effort to support all AmeriCorps State and National programs, both within the ServeWA portfolio and those directly funded by AmeriCorps but serving in Washington. This partnership with the Schultz Family Foundation funded nonprofit host-site fees at a time when nonprofit resources were significantly constrained. In Washington match augmentation, additional support was necessary for programs to be able to place members. Without this support, some AmeriCorps placements may not have been realized. With this effort the Schultz Family Foundation is rolling out an emergency assistance fund for AmeriCorps members who are part of the COVID Response Corps.

Spotlight: “The Washington COVID Response Corps is a first-of-its-kind program that creates service opportunities for young people from diverse racial, ethnic and financial backgrounds to address community needs resulting from the pandemic. We are proud to have developed an innovative model that combines federal and state government resources with private philanthropy to help people who are struggling in these difficult times.” – Tyra Mariani, President, Schultz Family Foundation
West Virginia

High Rocks

High Rocks is a nonprofit and national service intermediary program in Hillsboro, WV that leads an average of 30 AmeriCorps members to serve the community in the areas of education, food security and mentorship. Seventy percent of the students served are low-income, and more than half will be first-generation college students. One hundred percent of High Rocks participants graduate from high school and go on to college or a career path. High Rocks works with young people, generally from the beginning of middle school through high school, college, and beyond. The program works with young women and men emerging as leaders in schools and communities, and offers resources, services and opportunities to any young person from or invested in the Appalachian region. High Rocks partners with area schools, community groups, government agencies, and libraries.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, members engaged in 9,886 total disaster service hours, served 154,541 hot meals and collected 129,607 pounds of fresh food. Members also sewed and donated 175 fabric masks, 50 snack bags and 300 greeting cards for seniors. High Rocks AmeriCorps Program Staff built a volunteer network that met weekly to keep all partners educated on current needs and recent progress. High Rocks AmeriCorps Program Staff also created brand new curriculum for the summer camps that allowed campers to experience camp at home and developed a virtual 5k for Autism.

High Rocks developed and continues to maintain relationships with many partners across West Virginia. One notable connection was with The Greenbrier’s head chef who donated truckloads of fresh produce to High Rocks for distribution to feeding sites in the county. This allowed High Rocks to give fresh produce to the Greenbrier county school system which replaced the usual shelf stable snack items that were served to children via out of school pandemic assistance. High Rocks was also able to connect with Sam’s Club who provided to go containers and utensils for a feeding site in Fayette County who was on the brink of shutting down due to lack of supplies.

Spotlight: United States Senator Joe Manchin of West Virginia recently highlighted High Rocks in his WV Strong publication: “I truly appreciate Janet Lee Swift of the High Rocks Educational Center for recommending today’s Better Angels - the AmeriCorps members in Greenbrier County. During this pandemic, High Rocks and one of their programs, The Hub, have shifted from their usual after-school programming to the enormous task of helping to feed children. The Hub, located in Lewisburg, WV, has always offered a free, nutritious snack and dinner to all of its after-school participants. Now, with the help of volunteers and AmeriCorps members, they are feeding about 50 dinners a day, Monday-Friday, as part of an effort to enhance the school-based feeding programs that are in place in Greenbrier County.”
West Virginia

LifeBridge AmeriCorps

LifeBridge AmeriCorps has a legacy of service in West Virginia. Since 1994, LifeBridge AmeriCorps members have created positive change for thousands of individuals across the State of West Virginia. Through the annual service of 60 AmeriCorps members and a yearly average of 1,400 leveraged volunteers, LifeBridge AmeriCorps provides immediate and long-term benefits by expanding individual opportunity, building family stability, and creating more sustainable communities in a state plagued with socioeconomic problems. Throughout the pandemic LifeBridge members have confronted many challenges and adapted accordingly. This constant flexibility has taken place in all areas of this multi-focus intermediary program.

For instance, LifeBridge AmeriCorps members developed weekly neighborhood meetings and performed wellness checks for elderly residents. To continue serving in the local high school credit recovery programs AmeriCorps members switched to virtual assistance through video conferencing and regular communication via phone calls and social media. Members also delivered food to families in need and recruited volunteers to run the local food banks. Overall, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, LifeBridge AmeriCorps members engaged in 4,050 total disaster service hours, served 351,556 meals and collected 425,764 pounds of fresh food. Members also collected and donated 30,482 bags of food, personal care items and masks.

LifeBridge’s main partner during this pandemic is West Virginia 211, which is an online database and phone referral service where residents can be connected to health and human services. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic LifeBridge partnered with 211 by sending AmeriCorps members to serve in the disaster services referral unit. This was a huge asset for WV 211 as operators witnessed an increase of over 400% from the start of the pandemic. Throughout this service AmeriCorps members partnered with food banks, churches and schools to obtain accurate and timely information for individuals who called into the hotline for COVID-19 assistance.

Spotlight: “Throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic, you haven’t had to look far to find a LifeBridge AmeriCorps member. They’ve been on the front lines of every aspect of our statewide response, including our 211 information and referral helpline, food pantries and distributions, PPE distribution, educational programming, homeless prevention, and so much more. The LifeBridge program is a true lifeline for nonprofits across our state. The members that serve through LifeBridge are true community servants and we are so proud to be part of this transformative program.” – Brett J. White, Executive Director, United Way of Marion and Taylor Counties
WisCorps’ mission is to develop leadership, self-confidence, and a strong work ethic in youth and young adults through the active stewardship of Wisconsin’s communities and natural resources. As part of this mission, the AmeriCorps members with WisCorps complete conservation projects across the state of Wisconsin and the Upper Midwest and engage individuals in environmental education programs. AmeriCorps members are responsible for improving public land by constructing or rehabilitating trails, planting trees, establishing firebreaks, prairie restoration, and other localized conservation efforts. WisCorps deploys crews of AmeriCorps members to complete disaster recovery projects in areas impacted by storm damage, high winds, or flooding. WisCorps also provides environmental and nature education for children and adults in the La Crosse area.

With the cancellation of their educational programming and their spring conservation projects due to COVID-19, WisCorps reached out to several organizations to see how they could help out in their local community. They quickly discovered that many local nonprofit organizations lost virtually all their regular volunteers due to safety concerns. Their disaster Response Crew assisted various organizations including the City of La Crosse Parks Department, Onalaska Regional Food Basket, Coulee Region RSVP, Salvation Army, and Hunger Task Force. As a result, 385 meals and over 600 pounds of groceries were delivered to elderly and high-risk individuals, numerous home repairs and maintenance projects for seniors and others in need, community gardens were planted and maintained, and multiple additional relief projects were completed, as well as the removal of over 270 pounds of flood debris as part of the original mission of the crew. WisCorps then moved forward by putting six roving conservation crews in the field this summer and two conservation crews and a flood damage recovery crew this fall. These were launched with the expanded health and safety procedures they developed over the spring, including daily health checks, masks, and frequent sanitization. WisCorps also adapted its nature themed summer and fall day camps for children of all abilities ages 3 - 8, with AmeriCorps members leading small groups of children with new safety modifications.

**Spotlight:** Having served as an AmeriCorps member focused on environmental education with the Myrick Park Center in La Crosse prior to COVID-19, Amber Bydynkowski transformed her service with WisCorps to address pandemic concerns, particularly the lack of volunteers necessary to carry out vital services at nonprofit organizations. Amber became a team leader for the WisCorps COVID-19 Disaster Response Crew, coordinating WisCorps members deployed at various locations in the La Crosse area and determining ways to make their service more efficient so they could deliver numerous meals and groceries to vulnerable households, complete projects for seniors at their homes, maintain community gardens to feed local residents, and clean up flood damage in Monroe and Vernon Counties.
Action Resources Wyoming: AmeriCorps Rural Intermediary Program

Action Resources International (ARI) is a statewide AmeriCorps Rural Intermediary program in Wyoming, providing national service opportunities to community-based organizations as a means of increasing sustainable food security and overall community health and wellness across the state. ARI AmeriCorps works with small rural organizations that are primarily volunteer-run and in need of support to increase their capacity to serve. Organizations that partner with ARI AmeriCorps as project sites become part of a network that utilizes national service members as a means of access to ARI’s infrastructure resources and support, adding a vital, innovative, direct service component to their work in the areas of food security and community engagement activities serving the mission of fighting poverty, decreasing health disparities, and increasing community-based voice and leadership for safety, health, and wellness throughout Wyoming.

In the first 10 months of this year, ARI AmeriCorps doubled in size to 14 AmeriCorps sites. As the pandemic began to close down much of the country, ARI AmeriCorps members voluntarily stepped up as frontline essential workers at their Wyoming AmeriCorps sites. Each site’s members worked to overcome the obstacles that came with COVID-19. Members were able to increase their sites’ capacity to serve by initiating new methods for program operations including drive-through, pick-up, drop-off, and deliveries options; implementing new technology for remote service needs by establishing teleservice systems, developing websites, hosting virtual classrooms, and more; creatively engaging new volunteers to provide extended assistance and establish new systems for safely processing expanded community need; creating COVID-19 educational materials, guidance, and outreach tools; and forging new partnerships and safe events through which to share resources, make and distribute PPE, host socially distanced exercise meet-ups; and much more. Since the pandemic began, the ability of ARI AmeriCorps program sites and members to immediately pivot, has helped serve over 4,500 individuals and families, provided more than 3,400+ individuals with COVID-19 related assistance, and ensured the distribution of 120,000+ pounds of food in multiple counties. ARI AmeriCorps members also recruited and managed over 665 volunteers, totaling 2,200+ hours of expanded volunteer service.

Spotlight: “At Feeding Laramie Valley our AmeriCorps members have been a great help in the time they have served with us. Thanks to help from our members we have been able start working more towards growing indoors year-round, and we have been able to really boost our seedling starts at the beginning of the year. With the indoor growing systems our AmeriCorps member worked to design and build we were able to use mostly starts that we had grown this planting season, instead of having to purchase starts for the season. Thanks to the help of our AmeriCorps member, we were able to continue our Shares program and keep providing healthy food to folks in Albany County.” – Reece Owens, Food Production Coordinator for Feeding Laramie Valley
Wyoming

Casper College/VGF Professional Volunteer Network/Service Learning Initiative

Casper College has a long-standing exemplary legacy in Wyoming as the first junior college established in 1945. The addition of the Professional Volunteer Network/Service Learning Initiative has created a new level of professional development, learning, and commitment to the community for the students and professionals involved. Student Service Learners (who are Casper College degree seeking students) are paired with a mentor from the Professional Volunteer Network (a select group of highly skilled volunteer professionals) to work as a team on short-term, specific projects at a local nonprofit who has been awarded a Service Grant through ServeWyoming. These projects focus on improving volunteer management at the organization, while building capacity and improving sustainability of the organization to help them better serve the community as a whole.

With the onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic, several adjustments were made to ensure the continuation of the VGF/Professional Volunteer Network/Service Learning Initiative at Casper College. Enhanced safety protocols were put into place to ensure proper social distancing, mask wearing, and teleservice options were approved to allow for the continuation of current projects. New projects were transferred to a remote/virtual setting so the tasks could be completed in a safe, responsible manner while still providing quality service and learning opportunities. Casper College partnered with the Volunteer Wyoming program to support the COVID-19 Initiative. Students provided outreach to nonprofits across the state to determine COVID-19 specific volunteer and donation needs and added these to the online resource available across the state to quickly pair individuals with the organizations in need of services. Students were assigned a Wyoming county and provided with contact lists for local nonprofits in that area. Students were responsible for communicating with these nonprofits and served as ambassadors by checking in with the organizations to see how their staff, volunteers, and patrons were surviving in the pandemic. This work created connections to fill increased volunteer and donation needs due to COVID. Even if an agency did not have any current needs, they expressed gratitude in having contact with Student Service Learners and appreciated knowing they had support in these difficult times.

**Issue Areas**
Volunteer Generation Fund

**Supporting Commission**
Serve Wyoming

**Innovative Elements**

- Partnered with Volunteer Wyoming to support the state-wide COVID-19 initiative and provide outreach to determine COVID-related non-profit needs.
- Shifted all programming to virtual and teleservice platforms to continue quality educational and service opportunities.

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**Spotlight:** “I am impressed at how quickly ServeWyoming and our Student Service Learners were able to adapt to the challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. It would’ve been easier to just press ‘pause’ but instead, in the true spirit of service, we were all able to pivot and come up with a creative way for our students to stay engaged and give back in a meaningful way, in a very real-world setting, and have a lasting impact on so many nonprofits in our state.” – Rachel Chadderdon, Training & Grants Compliance Coordinator, Casper College
OUR WORK ISN'T OVER

Vaccination Distribution:
The possibilities are endless.

AmeriCorps members have been hard at work since the pandemic began in March of 2020, and they are not giving up now. As this pandemic progresses, vaccine distribution is increasingly essential to our nation's recovery. Here are just some of the ways AmeriCorps members can help:

- Distribution site volunteer management
- Phone bank scheduling for patient appointments
- Assisting individuals with appointment reminders and transportation
- Navigation and traffic support at distribution sites
- Designing mobile vaccination options for seniors and disabled communities.

To name a few, programs such as Ingham County Health Department, Equal Heart, and National Health Corps Delaware already have members assisting with vaccine education, coordination, and outreach, as well as vaccine distribution.