

Public-Private Partnerships

Supporting National Service Disaster Response



Corporation for
NATIONAL & COMMUNITY SERVICE

Disasters, whether large or small, require a coordinated response from the public and private sectors to ensure an effective and efficient recovery. The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) calls on national service participants in AmeriCorps and Senior Corps to help communities recover from disasters as quickly as possible and is proud to enjoy the support of the business community in these efforts.

Public-private partnerships are crucial to national service efforts following these disruptive events. For 20 years, the private sector has provided financial and material support to AmeriCorps and Senior Corps disaster service operations across the nation. This support comes in a variety of forms including direct funding, in-kind services, lodging and transportation, warehouse space for donations, and the sweat equity of volunteering employees, among others.



Regardless of the method, the business community's support strengthens national service efforts whether contributions come from corporations with a global reach or the business around the corner.

Below are just a few examples of how public-private partnerships have improved disaster response and recovery.

Moore, Oklahoma: May 2013

Following the devastating tornadoes in Moore, OK, Shell Oil provided transportation and financial assistance to expand Senior Corps RSVP and AmeriCorps VISTA service in the area, embodying good corporate citizenship. Shell contributed more than \$50,000 to support this vital disaster recovery work.

A Shell official reiterated the company's commitment on the CNCS national service blog: "At Shell we believe that there is no community issue that a group of dedicated individuals can't solve. When people employ teamwork and creativity, good things happen. That is why we support national service – a public-private partnership that engages citizens in solving problems."

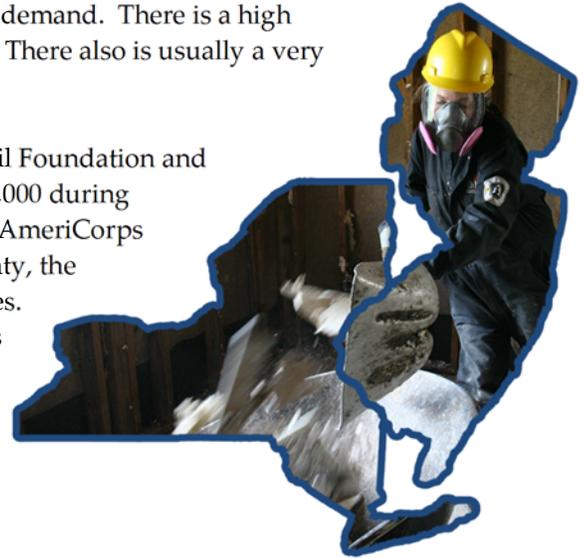


New York and New Jersey: October 2012

After late-season Hurricane Sandy struck heavily populated areas of the East Coast, CNCS responded by moving hundreds of AmeriCorps members to respond to the destruction the storm left behind. Southwest Airlines has been a longtime supporter of national service and provided 200 tickets to help the Disaster Services Unit transport AmeriCorps members from seven programs to the affected areas. The donation allowed a greater response from the Pacific and Southwest regions, helping deploy 145 AmeriCorps NCCC members from those areas.

Long-term recovery can also present severe challenges with supply and demand. There is a high demand for coordination, collaboration, management, and partnership. There also is usually a very low supply for much-needed skilled capacity building.

As New York and New Jersey faced a long road to recovery, the Shell Oil Foundation and Time Warner stepped in and provided a contribution of more than \$100,000 during Hurricane Sandy for long-term recovery support. These funds brought AmeriCorps VISTA's capacity building skills to the Volunteer Center of Bergen County, the United Way of Monmouth County NJ, Jersey Cares, and New York Cares. Those AmeriCorps VISTA members helped identify and secure partners and resources, managed volunteers, coordinated client outreach and intakes, supported small-business recovery, and worked with the long-term recovery committees.



Joplin, Missouri: May 2011

Following the Joplin tornado in 2011, the local Chamber of Commerce and area businesses contributed greatly to supporting volunteers and national service by providing warehouses, building space, food, and rebuilding materials.



AmeriCorps Disaster Response teams on the ground set up volunteer reception centers to coordinate and document volunteers. As a result, AmeriCorps was instrumental in documenting \$17.7 million in FEMA soft-match for volunteer and donations contributions, the largest amount in Missouri's history and the largest ever recorded in the FEMA region. This work saved the state from owing any funds used during the disaster response, helping to spur economic recovery. CNCS also provided additional grant funds to the St. Bernard Project, an AmeriCorps national direct program.

Total CNCS funding for Rebuild Joplin was more than \$2.8 million, including \$1.9 million in grants over a three-year period and more than \$800,000 in Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards. The federal investment generated an additional \$1 million in cash and in-kind contributions from businesses and foundations, as required by all AmeriCorps grants.

AmeriCorps St. Louis Emergency Response Team

The AmeriCorps St. Louis Emergency Response Team is a versatile, quick-response unit that has deployed to disasters in 60 Missouri counties and 31 states in the aftermath of ice storms, tornadoes, flooding, hurricanes, and terrorist attacks. Part of the fuel that keeps this AmeriCorps unit strong has been the generosity of several private partners during the last 20 years.

Purina Pet Foods has been a consistent contributor to the unit, adding funds to help purchase equipment, a new vehicle, and funding for a \$30,000 upgrade to the unit's home base. Stihl has provided thousands in equipment donations, including a variety of saws and safety gear. Lumiere Casinos and Hotels provided a variety of equipment from boots to power sprayers to respirators and generators in the wake of a Missouri River flood in 2010. Lee Matthews Pumps (a division of Cogent Company) donated water pumps in 2007 that continue to be used as the team helps disaster survivors remove water from their basements. These are just a few of the companies that keep AmeriCorps St. Louis strong.



Hurricane Katrina left behind an unprecedented level of destruction across the Gulf Coast. A partnership of the Mississippi Economic Council (MEC), State Chamber of Commerce, and Volunteer Mississippi (the state office for volunteerism) worked with local governments and organizations to rebuild stronger and safer communities.

In the first 100 days following Katrina, MEC hosted daily national calls with chambers across the country to assist with coordinating timely supplies and relief. AmeriCorps members coordinated more than 1 million volunteers who came to the region to assist with the recovery to restore homes and businesses.

Home Depot and Walmart were also valuable private partners. Home Depot donated more than \$100,000 to recovery efforts that extended the reach and services provided by AmeriCorps and Senior Corps. Walmart contributed items such as diapers, baby wipes, food, infant formula, toothbrushes, and bedding to survivors in need of basic necessities in the early days of the disaster response.

How the Private Sector Can Contribute

There are many ways that the private sector can support national service before, during, and after disasters. These are just a few of the ways to contribute:

- Provide funding to CNCS to support AmeriCorps and Senior Corps in disaster preparedness, response, and recovery.
- Provide logistical support to responding national service programs through airline tickets, transportation, support for donations management, and warehouse space.
- Provide goods or services to support communities through donated tools, personal protective equipment, lodging, and building materials.
- Work with national service to provide volunteers through your corporate volunteer program.
- Share unified messaging with your community and clientele. Often in a disaster, there are mixed messages about where to donate and what is needed. The CNCS Disaster Services Unit can provide language to improve messaging and ensure that community needs are met.



Thanks to the generosity of national and local businesses, national service programs such as AmeriCorps and Senior Corps have been able to leverage more volunteers, provide documentation to state emergency management agencies to offset federal disaster response costs, and provide disaster recovery support to nonprofits and faith-based organizations long after the stories fade from the headlines.

Public-private partnerships support the critical work that AmeriCorps has done and will continue to do for communities affected by disaster.

To learn more about how you can support national service disaster response and recovery efforts, please contact Kelly DeGraff, Senior Advisor for Disaster Services, at KDeGraff@cns.gov.