

# Corporation for National and Community Service

## Report on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

*December 2010*

Through national service and volunteering, Americans from all walks of life contribute to their communities and the nation. The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) empowers and supports Americans to tackle persistent challenges. With additional funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, CNCS was able to use our leadership, resources, coordination, focus and scale to place thousands more Americans in service positions to help the most vulnerable citizens, improve their neighborhoods, and transform their own lives.

National, state and local leaders are calling upon service to solve our most pressing challenges. In times of fiscal restraint, leveraging and investing in the national service network is a smart strategy that taps the energy and ingenuity of our greatest resource – the American people. Nonprofit organizations that serve our communities and most vulnerable citizens are struggling to keep up with an increasing demand for services during a time of declining public and private giving. To mitigate this trend, CNCS-supported service participants play a key role in leveraging community volunteers and other resources to support organizations and communities in addressing critical problems.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act) provided \$200 million in funding to CNCS to deploy an additional 10,316 AmeriCorps State & National and 4,430 AmeriCorps VISTA members, provide match relief to grantees running these programs, and to improve the agency’s Information Technology infrastructure. These funds were available for obligation by CNCS from March 2009 through September 30, 2010.

<b>Status of Recovery Act Funding<sup>1</sup></b>					
<i>(as of December 31, 2010)</i>					
<b>Account</b>	<b>Appropriated</b>	<b>Obligated</b>	<b>Outlayed</b>	<b>% Obligated</b>	<b>% Outlayed</b>
AmeriCorps State & National	\$ 89,000,000	\$ 87,261,517	\$ 76,982,280	98.05%	86.50%
AmeriCorps VISTA	65,000,000	64,233,705	61,455,151	98.82%	94.55%
National Service Trust	40,000,000	34,784,918	13,657,034	86.96%	34.14%
Salaries & Expenses	6,000,000	5,981,288	5,919,087	99.69%	98.65%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$200,000,000</b>	<b>\$192,261,427</b>	<b>\$158,013,553</b>	<b>96.13%</b>	<b>79.01%</b>

CNCS acted swiftly to get engaged and committed individuals working in their communities to address social and economic challenges. The first AmeriCorps VISTA members were sworn in on April 24, 2009, and AmeriCorps State & National grants were awarded on May 14, 2009. CNCS’ unique value is a triple “bottom line” return on investment in terms of benefits to service recipients, service participants and the community in general. These new Recovery Act AmeriCorps members

<sup>1</sup> CNCS’ Office of Inspector General (OIG) also received \$1 million in Recovery Act funding to carry out oversight activities that is not included in this table; OIG reports independently on its Recovery Act funding. Of the \$40 million appropriated for the National Service Trust, \$3.5 million is held in reserve and can not be obligated unless needed to account for changes in the factors used to discount amounts obligated for education awards. After adjusting for the reserve, 95% of Trust funds and 98% of all Recovery Act funds available for obligation were obligated. Outlays of AmeriCorps State & National program funds will continue to be reported through the end of fiscal 2011. Outlays from the Trust are expected to occur through 2021.

provided vital services to people facing unemployment, poverty, and other challenges by offering job counseling and placement services, providing foreclosure prevention and financial counseling, weatherizing homes, strengthening food banks, supporting health care and independent living services, and more. In addition, the AmeriCorps members themselves learned new skills, acquired qualities of leadership, and gained a sense of satisfaction from taking on responsibilities that directly affect peoples' lives.



Since the enrollment of the first Recovery Act AmeriCorps members, data reported by grantees and sponsors shows these members achieved strong results, including:

- leveraging more than 1,091,000 volunteers to serve more than 8.75 million clients;
- generating more than \$124.48 million in cash and in-kind resources for nonprofits;
- providing employment and skills training and counseling to 181,821 clients;
- helping to place 15,238 people in jobs; and
- providing foreclosure and housing assistance services to 113,541 people.

CNCS estimates that for every \$1 obligated for its Recovery Act programs the return on investment exceeded \$3 (more than 300 percent).<sup>2</sup>

Enrollments in Recovery Act positions totaled 14,746 members, about 13 percent higher than the 13,000 originally planned. The increase in total members was possible because CNCS was able to quickly scale up existing programs, leveraging implementation activities already underway. As these programs assessed the needs in their local communities, programs brought on a higher proportion of reduced part time members than CNCS had planned,<sup>3</sup> allowing for a higher enrollment rate. In addition, efficiencies achieved implementing AmeriCorps VISTA Recovery Act funding allowed the program to add 861 Summer Associate members<sup>4</sup> in fiscal 2010 that were not a part of the original plan. The following table summarizes the enrollment activity in the Recovery Act programs as of December 31, 2010:<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> See page 19 for calculation of return on investment.

<sup>3</sup> CNCS' initial Recovery Act plan projected 13,000 positions with 50% full-time and 50% part-time positions. Actual enrollment resulted in a portfolio with 58% full-time, 11% part-time, and 31% reduced part-time positions.

<sup>4</sup> AmeriCorps VISTA Summer Associates serve for 8-10 weeks in the summer on existing VISTA projects to enhance project goals. Unlike their full-time counterparts, Summer Associates can provide direct service.

<sup>5</sup> All Recovery Act enrollment periods have ended; therefore slots previously shown as "Awarded Not Enrolled," "Certified Not Awarded," and "Planned Not Certified" are no longer reported.

<b>American Recovery and Reinvestment Act AmeriCorps Member Positions</b> <i>(as of December 31, 2010)</i>	
AmeriCorps Program	Total Enrolled
AmeriCorps State & National	10,304
AmeriCorps VISTA	3,552
<b>Total National Service Trust Positions</b>	<b>13,856</b>
AmeriCorps State & National Members Serving in a 3 <sup>rd</sup> Term <sup>6</sup>	12
AmeriCorps VISTA Members Electing a Stipend <sup>7</sup>	878
<b>Total Recovery Act Positions</b>	<b>14,746</b>

In addition to providing direct services to individuals and communities affected by the economic downturn, Recovery Act AmeriCorps members provided a critical boost to more than 600 nonprofits across the country by mobilizing volunteers, raising funds, creating programs, and expanding service delivery at a time of great need. Profiles of AmeriCorps Recovery Act programs in action and other success stories are included below. Additional Recovery Act profiles can be found at: <http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/recovery/action.asp>.



*AmeriCorps members served as tutors to low income, rural youth in the Keystone SMILES AmeriCorps program in Knox, Pennsylvania, a subgrantee of PennServe: The Governor's Office of Citizen Service.*

<sup>6</sup> AmeriCorps State & National Recovery Act members serving in a 3<sup>rd</sup> term are not eligible to receive a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award and therefore are not enrolled in the National Service Trust.

<sup>7</sup> Full time AmeriCorps VISTA members can elect to receive a cash stipend of up to \$1,500 in lieu of a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award from the National Service Trust (the value of a stipend is \$125 per month of service). Summer Associates can elect to receive a cash stipend of up to \$250. Members electing a stipend are not enrolled in the National Service Trust.

## *AmeriCorps State & National*

AmeriCorps State & National received \$89 million in Recovery Act funding to put an additional 10,000 members in programs and to provide relief from matching fund requirements. In May 2009 CNCS awarded grants and cooperative agreements totaling \$87 million to 130 State Commissions, National Direct grantees, and technical assistance providers. AmeriCorps State & National programs enrolled 10,316 members in Recovery Act positions.<sup>8</sup>

The State & National Recovery Act members served their communities while meeting critical community needs resulting from, or made worse by, the economic crisis. Unemployed individuals gained work experience and valuable skills, and nonprofit organizations and communities negatively affected by the economic crisis gained critical human resources. Some of the activities performed under the grants include:

- ◇ Employment and Skills Training ◇ Tutoring and Literacy
  - ◇ Financial Literacy ◇ Services Related to Home Foreclosures and Housing Assistance
    - ◇ Housing Rehabilitation and Access ◇ Healthcare Access
      - ◇ Non-profit Capacity Building ◇ Volunteer Generation and Management

Recovery Act funding was awarded as grants to current national, regional, and local AmeriCorps grantees with a proven track record. Awardees demonstrated the capacity to efficiently and effectively draw upon this new resource to assist communities in need. The grants included support for additional service members, match waivers, and/or match replacement funding. The stories of their successes, some of which are described below, serve to remind all of us of the powerful role civically engaged Americans fill in helping communities solve the problems most significant to them and to the nation.

### *AmeriCorps State & National Recovery Performance Data*

The following table aggregates the performance data reported by AmeriCorps State and National Recovery Act grantees on standardized performance measures. While these measures do not represent all of the activities that AmeriCorps members were engaged in, they highlight key accomplishments in the area of economic recovery, which was the primary focus of the Recovery Act grants. Recovery Act grantees exceeded CNCS' performance goals on every measure.

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<sup>8</sup> The number of member positions has been adjusted to reflect all enrollments recorded through December 31, 2010 and includes 12 members who served in a third term and thus were not eligible to be enrolled in the Trust. While no new enrollments are allowed for Recovery Act slots, these numbers may change slightly to reflect corrections by grantees.

**AmeriCorps State & National  
Recovery Act Program Performance Measures**  
*(data through September 30, 2010)*

Performance Measure <sup>a</sup>	Goal <sup>b</sup>	Results <sup>c</sup>	% of Goal
Clients receiving employment skills, training, and counseling	28,718	46,664	162%
Clients placed in jobs	2,166	2,862	132%
Hours of tutoring and literacy services provided to clients	523,138	705,633	135%
Clients receiving tutoring and literacy services	38,852	121,896	314%
Clients with improved academic success	13,849	28,377	205%
Clients receiving services related to financial literacy	15,462	34,203	221%
Clients receiving services related to home foreclosures and housing assistance programs	18,716	27,077	145%
Clients served who are able to remain in their housing	2,111	2,600	123%
Clients receiving housing rehabilitation, weatherization and efficient-energy services	20,484	36,309	177%
Existing homes and structures rehabilitated, weatherized or made more energy-efficient	8,824	13,518	153%
Homes and structures made accessible for disabled persons	39	45	115%
Homeless individuals transitioned into affordable housing	338	492	146%
Clients receiving information on health insurance, care access and health benefits programs	103,671	172,147	166%
Clients enrolled in health insurance and health benefits programs	10,240	15,966	156%
Increase in the number of clients served from prior year	607,340	1,340,896	220%
Increase in the number of services offered to clients from the prior year	25,938	39,953	154%
Community volunteers recruited to address needs in their communities	121,439	238,445	196%
Clients served by community volunteers	899,829	3,417,582	380%

**NOTES:**

<sup>a</sup> While data definitions are uniform within a given metric, performance data cannot be compared across metrics due to differences in grantee program operations and data collection. For example, the metric for "Hours of tutoring and literacy services provided to clients" does not directly correspond to the metric "Clients receiving tutoring and literacy services." Goals for individual grantees may have been adjusted (upward or downward) from the initial target as the measures were clarified and errors corrected.

<sup>b</sup> Performance metrics and goals as established in the negotiated Recovery Act grant awards.

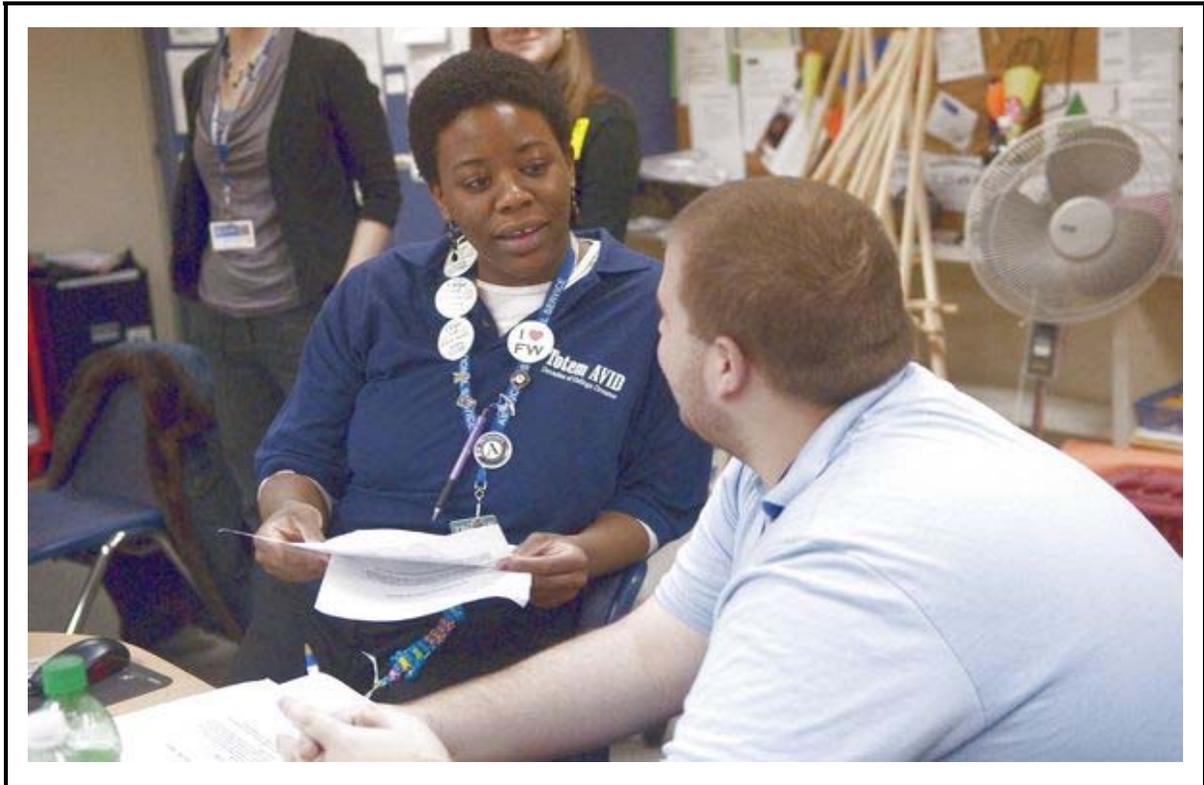
<sup>c</sup> Data covers the period from project inception through September 30, 2010, as reported by national organizations and State Service Commissions. Project performance periods for Recovery Act grant programs can extend to August 2011.

***Atlanta, Georgia: AmeriCorps Members Assist Veterans***

One of Equal Justice Works' AmeriCorps members served with Atlanta Legal Aid and worked with 'Mr. M.' Mr. M. bought his home in April 1996 through a Veterans Affairs loan. While awaiting his VA disability benefits to take effect after a work injury, Mr. M. was no longer able to work and fell behind on his mortgage payments. The AmeriCorps member contacted Mr. M.'s lender to see if he could be considered for loss mitigation options, specifically the VA's Making Home Affordable program. Mr. M. was initially denied a modification but through the AmeriCorps member's continued efforts, Mr. M.'s lender finally agreed to modify his loan. Mr. M. can now afford his mortgage and has been able to stay in his home.

***Austin, Texas: AmeriCorps Members Help Strengthen Goodwill Families***

Goodwill Industries of Central Texas in Austin has a diverse group of AmeriCorps members. One member provided services to two clients, meeting with them once a week to practice their computer skills and provide assistance with their job search. The clients' dedication was impressive and the AmeriCorps member fully expected their dedication to pay off. The training helped both clients secure jobs.



*AmeriCorps members served as academic coaches in Totem Middle School through the Washington State Service Corps' AmeriCorps program in Federal Way, Washington. The Washington State Service Corps is a subgrantee of the Washington Commission for National & Community Service.*

***Boise, Idaho: AmeriCorps Member Tutors Work to Reduce Recidivism***

The Lewis-Clark Service Corps placed a Recovery Act AmeriCorps member as a tutor in a Probation and Parole program. The program reported that it "greatly benefited from our AmeriCorps

member's service . . . The classes she brought to our District were not available until she came [here]" The AmeriCorps member's service included facilitating a basic financial literacy class, co-facilitating a job search workshop with the state's Department of Labor staff, and helping numerous students prepare for their GED. The officers of Probation & Parole commented that the feedback they received from the students and those who attended classes was all positive. "We truly appreciate the contributions she brought to our site. Many students earned their GEDs, learned the basics of financial planning, gained knowledge during job search workshops, and most importantly, learned to overcome many adversities with the assistance of our AmeriCorps member. We are grateful for the dedication and compassion she brought in tutoring, mentoring and helping many lives."

***Paterson, New Jersey: AmeriCorps Members Help Mitigate the Impact of Economic Downturn***

Under St. Paul's Community Development Corporation's (CDC) Recovery Act grant, a group of 15 AmeriCorps members gave a year (or summer) in service to those adversely affected by the economic downturn in Paterson, New Jersey. They provided food to 2,095 individuals and families who otherwise might not have been served, helped 163 individuals fight off home foreclosure or homelessness, and assisted 125 people with completing their income taxes. According to staff, "the great story of this AmeriCorps Year of Recovery at St. Paul's CDC is the collective spirit and will of the men and women who provided 16,200 hours of service in support of their fellow man."

***Dearborn, Michigan: AmeriCorps Members Assist the Unemployed***

AmeriCorps members served at the Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services (ACCESS) Recovery Act program in Dearborn, Michigan. They worked in the Resource room which serves clients from all over the state seeking assistance in preparing a resume and looking for employment. At the Resource room clients complete their resumes online and post them on the talent bank. One such client, a 50 year old gentleman, was recently unemployed. He had bills to pay and four children under the age of 12 to feed. His unemployment benefits were not enough, and he was desperately looking for work. The AmeriCorps member helped him complete his resume, post it on the talent bank, and to go online to search for a job suitable to his skills. In less than a week, the AmeriCorps member learned he had been offered a job.



*During an Annual Day of Service organized by the Purdy Reading Coaches AmeriCorps program, AmeriCorps Members assembled 150 Christmas food baskets for families in need at Crosslines. Crosslines is a food pantry and resource center in Monett, Missouri. The Purdy Reading Coaches AmeriCorps program is a subgrantee of the Missouri Community Service Commission.*

A list of all grantees who received State & National Recovery Act funding can be found at: [http://www.nationalservice.gov/pdf/dataset\\_arra\\_ac\\_sn\\_recipients.xls](http://www.nationalservice.gov/pdf/dataset_arra_ac_sn_recipients.xls). This web page also provides information on the project period, the amounts awarded, and number of members enrolled<sup>9</sup> in each AmeriCorps State & National Recovery Act grant.



*AmeriCorps members planted flowers at a local senior center through the Recovery Buffalo LeaderShape AmeriCorps program in Buffalo, New York. The Recovery Buffalo LeaderShape AmeriCorps program addressed a variety of needs within its community, including working with the City of Buffalo Senior Services to provide financial literacy services to seniors, and to organize clean up and beautification projects for senior centers. The Recovery Buffalo LeaderShape AmeriCorps program is a subgrantee of the New York State Commission on National & Community Service.*



*AmeriCorps members provided tutoring to preschool students through the Keystone SMILES AmeriCorps program in Sharpville, Pennsylvania. The Keystone SMILES AmeriCorps program is a subgrantee of PennServe: The Governor's Office of Citizen Service.*

<sup>9</sup> The web page previously included the number of slots awarded to the grantee, however, since all Recovery Act enrollment periods have ended awarded slots that were not filled are not reported.

## ***AmeriCorps VISTA***

The AmeriCorps VISTA program received \$65 million in Recovery Act funding to provide an additional 3,000 member service years<sup>10</sup> to programs around the country. AmeriCorps VISTA engages individuals 18 years and older in a year of full time service in our nation's poorest urban and rural areas, working to build the organizational, administrative and financial capacity of programs that help pull and keep Americans out of poverty. Members are assigned to community organizations (e.g. non-profit, faith-based) and public agencies to help the organizations build on locally-driven solutions to both the causes of poverty as well as the problems that arise in poverty-stricken communities. The specific objectives of the AmeriCorps VISTA Recovery Act funds are to:

- ◇ Strengthen local agencies and organizations to carry out their programs;
- ◇ Encourage volunteer service at the local level; and
- ◇ Generate the commitment of private sector resources.

Typically, under the VISTA model, a sponsoring organization provides supervision for the member while CNCS provides the living allowance and other member support costs. In April 2009, just two months after the passage of the Recovery Act, CNCS placed its first AmeriCorps VISTA members. As shown by the performance data these members made an impact in helping communities solve the problems most significant to them and to the nation. Some of the stories of their successes are described below as well as at: <http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/recovery/action.asp>.

### ***AmeriCorps VISTA Recovery Performance Data***

A list of all sponsoring organizations who received Recovery Act AmeriCorps VISTA members can be found at: [http://www.nationalservice.gov/pdf/dataset\\_arra\\_ac\\_vista\\_recipients.xls](http://www.nationalservice.gov/pdf/dataset_arra_ac_vista_recipients.xls). This web page also provides information on the project period for the Recovery Act program, the number of members placed with each sponsoring organization, and identifies those sponsoring organizations that received an operating grant and the dollar amount received. The following table summarizes the results achieved by AmeriCorps VISTA members serving in Recovery Act funded programs as reported by the sponsoring organizations:

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<sup>10</sup> A member service year (MSY) represents the estimated number of AmeriCorps VISTA members that can be supported for an entire fiscal year at a given funding level. Member placements are higher than MSY to account for attrition from programs during the year.

**AmeriCorps VISTA**  
**Recovery Act Program Performance Measures**  
*(data through September 30, 2010)*

Performance Measure <sup>a</sup>	Goal <sup>b</sup>	Results <sup>c</sup>	% of Goal
<b><i>Member Service Years</i></b>			
Number of Member Service Years Produced <sup>d</sup>	3,000	3,161	105%
Number of Member Placements <sup>e</sup>	3,400	4,430	130%
<b><i>Employment &amp; Skills Training Programs</i></b>			
Clients receiving employment & skills training and counseling	n/a	135,157	n/a
Clients placed in jobs as a result of training/counseling	n/a	12,376	n/a
<b><i>Financial Planning</i></b>			
Clients receiving services related to financial planning/literacy	n/a	185,306	n/a
<b><i>Home Foreclosures and Housing Assistance</i></b>			
Clients receiving services related to foreclosures & housing assistance	n/a	86,464	n/a
Clients who were able to remain in their housing	n/a	33,315	n/a
<b><i>Volunteer Generation &amp; Management</i></b>			
Community volunteers recruited who served in the program <sup>f</sup>	n/a	852,950	n/a
Hours served by community volunteers	n/a	7,531,363	n/a
Clients served by community volunteers <sup>g</sup>	n/a	5,332,688	n/a
<b><i>Non-Profit Capacity Building</i></b>			
Dollar value of cash resources developed by VISTA members	n/a	\$ 71,697,403	n/a
Dollar value of non-cash resources developed by VISTA members	n/a	<u>52,787,347</u>	n/a
Total cash and in-kind resources generated		\$124,484,749	
New clients served	n/a	1,250,203	n/a

**NOTES:**

<sup>a</sup> Performance measures were established in the Recovery Act agreements negotiated with the Sponsoring Organizations.

<sup>b</sup> Although the AmeriCorps VISTA performance measures were identified by the CNCS as required by the Recovery Act; except for the measures for "Number of Member Service Years Produced" and "Number of Member Placements," initial goals for individual project measurements were not established.

<sup>c</sup> Performance data covers the period from project inception through September 30, 2010, as reported by Sponsoring Organizations.

<sup>d</sup> A member service year (MSY) represents the estimated number of AmeriCorps VISTA members that can be supported for an entire fiscal year at a given funding level. Member placements are higher than MSY to account for attrition from programs during the year.

<sup>e</sup> Includes members not completing their term of service as well as Summer Associate members added to the plan for fiscal year 2010.

<sup>f</sup> Individuals who are recruited, coordinated or supported by AmeriCorps VISTA members. This measurement does not include AmeriCorps VISTA members themselves.

<sup>g</sup> This includes the total number of individuals served as a result of AmeriCorps VISTA contributions who were not previously served.

***Cleveland, Ohio: AmeriCorps VISTA Members Lend Structural Support***

AmeriCorps VISTA members supported Hard Hatted Women, (HHW), a Cleveland-based program that prepares women for nontraditional careers, from construction and trucking to engineering and pipefitting. Members supported a wide range of activities at HHW, from job skills training to youth development and outreach and communications.

Three VISTA members supported Tradeswomen TOOLS (training, outreach, opportunities, leadership, and support), a program that links women to opportunities in high-wage skilled careers.

Two members served as a Green Jobs Coordinator and a Youth Education Coordinator. They helped women and girls learn about a wide variety of career paths.

Jessica was a member serving as the Career Explorations Coordinator. She developed a mentoring workshop series for low-income participants. She recruited HHW graduates as mentors, including a snowplow driver for the Ohio Department of Transportation and an apprentice ironworker. In a state where 40 percent of the families headed by a single woman live in poverty, the two tradeswomen readily agreed to mentor women new to HHW.

Another VISTA member supported Rosie's Girls. Thanks to her knack for partnership development, Rosie's Girls was able to reopen this past summer after a two-year hiatus caused by budget constraints. Rosie's Girls is a summer camp where girls entering 6th through 8th grades gain confidence through a hands-on introduction to carpentry, welding, auto repair, firefighting, and other skills. The camp is targeted to the formative stage of life before women succumb to peer-pressure and rule out career possibilities that can protect them against poverty. At camp, these young girls are free to explore their affinity for skilled labor and physical rigor.



*Rosie's girls represent a new generation of women with skills for the future.*

As Rosie's Girls alumnae grow up, HHW's Director expects them to be among a new generation of women equipped with the right tools for the right trades. The Director hopes they will continue the cycle of outreach, education, and leadership set in motion by the intrepid crew of AmeriCorps VISTA members who helped to reinvent HHW.

### ***Washington State: AmeriCorps VISTA Members Help Bring Fresh Produce to the Needy***

With the assistance of Recovery Act AmeriCorps VISTA members, [Rotary First Harvest](#) addressed the problems of hunger and agricultural waste in Washington State. The recent economic downturn precipitated an urgent crisis for individuals and families at-risk of hunger and food insecurity. Between November 2007 and November 2008, people in Washington State participating

in the USDA food stamp program increased 20 percent. Rotary First Harvest focused on procuring, collecting, and distributing surplus produce that might otherwise go unharvested or be sent to landfills.

At [Harvest Against Hunger](#) (HAH), a project of Rotary First Harvest, VISTA members built and supported relationships between stakeholders and volunteers, and brought fresh healthy produce within the reach of Washington's most needy. HAH is a gleaning (gathering grain or other produce left behind by reapers) and outreach program that establishes connections between small to medium-sized farmers and local food banks. It increases both the amount of fresh produce available to food banks, as well as establishing new opportunities for direct donor and volunteer participation.

HAH is a resource for growers and food banks alike. When a grower has surplus or cosmetically damaged unharvested produce, HAH has the capacity to get volunteer gleaners into the fields and arrange for that produce to be transported to the nearest local food bank. This foundational work helps establish a lasting network of new donors. Food banks benefit from additional outreach to local farmers to procure healthy fresh food for their clients, as well as a new, young volunteer base. HAH therefore increases the amount of healthy fresh produce that goes to feed hungry people.



*VISTAs at Harvest Against Hunger engaged 2,100 hard working volunteers; captured more than 1,000,000 pounds of produce; and worked with 255 new agricultural donors.*

The first year of the HAH Recovery Act AmeriCorps VISTA project was remarkably successful, serving 534,000 clients and reporting \$1.2 million in non-cash donations thanks to the talents and creativity of eight VISTA members. The Executive Director wrote: "I'm particularly proud, since the development of this project was a significant stretch for our organization's historical work. The real magic of this HAH project is that the programs developed at each participating hunger relief location are uniquely adapted to match the specific needs and resources in the community served. Given the very limited resources of hunger relief agencies and local food banks, without VISTA members this sort of work would simply not be in the realm of possibility. With the VISTA

members, we're able to not only develop these programs, but also to share program models across a broad spectrum of hunger relief agencies here in Washington and across the United States.”

### ***National Program: AmeriCorps VISTA Members Fight Back Against Foreclosure***

AmeriCorps VISTA partnered with NeighborWorks America to place 140 VISTA members throughout the country in community-based organizations serving families facing foreclosure or economic hardship. VISTA members enhanced the capacity of more than 60 sponsoring organizations to provide mortgage intervention support, financial fitness and asset-building, as well as employment training and counseling programs.

The project made a powerful impact on families faced with foreclosure or economic hardship. VISTA members funded by the Recovery Act recruited 22,874 community volunteers and secured the commitment of \$8,895,283 in cash resources and \$1,296,284 in non-cash resources, strengthening the ability of the NeighborWorks organizations to serve families now and into the future. As a result of these efforts, organizations were able to deliver financial fitness and asset-building programs for 14,339 individuals in underserved communities and mortgage intervention support to 24,295 households, assisting in saving 9,654 families' homes from foreclosure. Additionally, organizations offered employment counseling and training to 1,424 individuals and placed 131 into jobs.

Two VISTA members helped Select Milwaukee, a NeighborWorks organization in Wisconsin, expand its services and outreach. Will, Nikki and their daughter Ashlyn, are among the families that benefited. After the birth of their daughter, Will and Nikki needed a house more than ever. Select Milwaukee helped them obtain an affordable loan and found their new home in a supportive neighborhood.

### ***Augusta, Georgia: AmeriCorps VISTA Members Help Reintegrate Veterans***

The CSRA Wounded Warrior Care Project filled three AmeriCorps VISTA positions with veterans or wounded warriors to use service as a strategy to assist veterans. The [CSRA Wounded Warrior Care Project](#) in Augusta, Georgia, provides programs and services to injured soldiers, veterans, and their families. The project collaborates and cooperates with other wounded warrior programs and establishes new resources for medical care, housing, vocational training, employment, and family support. The Executive Director stated the “project is about helping our warriors become productive citizens; it’s about reintegration with community, and with family.” The VISTA members helped develop a mentor training program, a program to support homeless veterans with transition housing services (e.g. resume development, identifying potential employers and teaching computer skills), and a program to help veterans access benefits and navigate the higher education system.

### ***Billings, Montana: AmeriCorps VISTA Members Provide Creative Arts for Underserved Youth***

A VISTA serving with Salvation Army under the [Billings, Montana Metro VISTA Project](#), established a Creative Arts Program for economically disadvantaged youth. The Creative Arts Program provides training from qualified instructors in piano, guitar, brass, woodwinds, and voice, as well as training and instruction in drawing, painting, ceramics and photography. The program began in January 2010, with 61 participants, aged six to 18 years. At the end of first session, students presented a recital and exhibition that included 19 musical performances and more than 300 square feet of art work. An additional 77 students enrolled in the first summer session. The VISTA member recruited volunteers from St. Vincent Healthcare Foster Grandparent Program and Yellowstone County RSVP to work one-on-one with students, serve lunch and snacks, and help with event

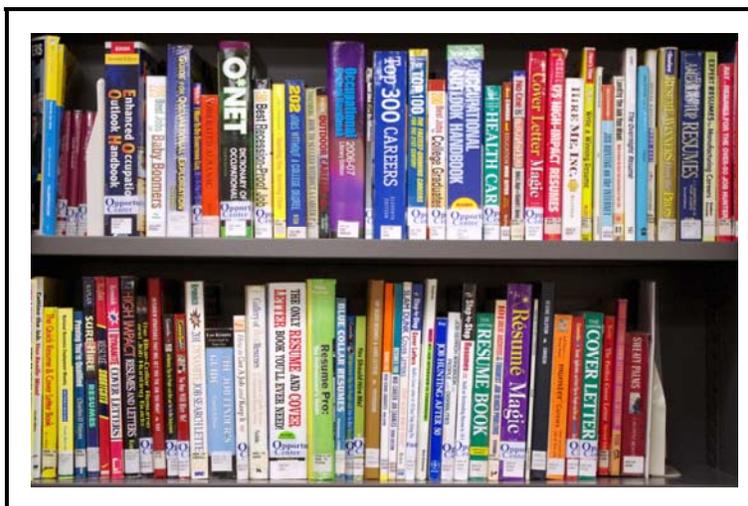
preparation. He also helped develop nutrition and financial classes for parents of the youth in the Creative Arts Program. In addition, he helped raise cash and noncash resources totaling \$88,525 to acquire musical instruments and art materials and to hire part-time paid fine arts staff. The Salvation Army director of Social and Family services stated “We are thrilled to see this program come to fruition, and lives of youth in generational poverty impacted for a lifetime.”

### ***Wisconsin: AmeriCorps VISTA Members Address Unemployment and Economic Recovery***

A little more than a year ago two trends were on the rise nationwide: unemployment and library patronage. In Wisconsin, Recovery Act AmeriCorps VISTA members were placed in six libraries across the state. They helped establish job training centers, connected libraries and patrons with community resources, and developed financial literacy programs. They also collaborated with library staff and community members to eliminate barriers to employment, including transportation, and access to computers and the Internet.

At 8.8 percent, Fond du Lac is among the top five cities with the highest unemployment rates in Wisconsin. With assistance from the [Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction VISTA Recovery Project](#), the Fond du Lac Library created the Opportunity Center, where computers are available for extended use by people seeking jobs. VISTA members developed a volunteer recruitment and management system for the Opportunity Center. Volunteers assisted clients one-on-one in using computers. They provided support in Internet job searching, writing resumes and cover letters. The VISTA members started a series of free topical workshops and classes called Job Smart U, which connected current and former human resources executives and other experts with job seekers.

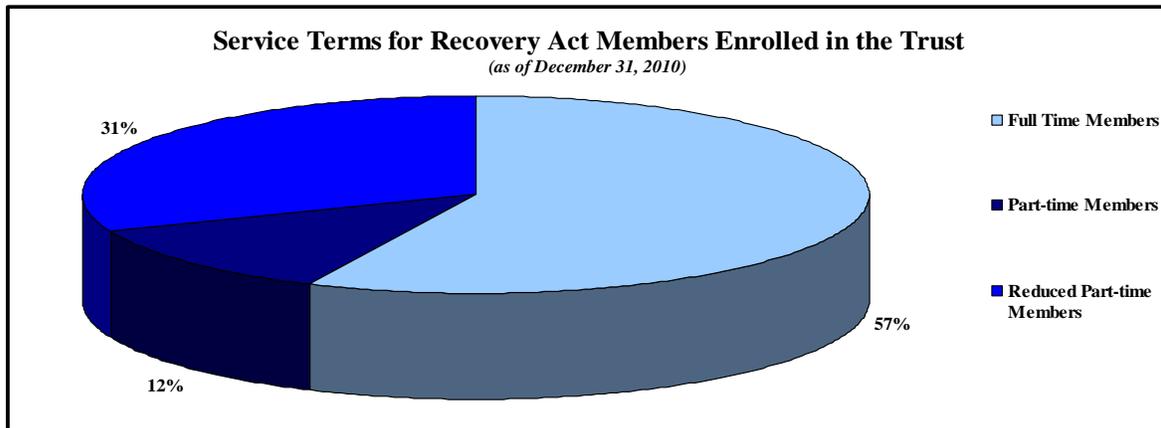
Since the Opportunity Center’s inception last year, more than 2,000 visitors have used the center’s job resources. Job Smart U has helped more than 350 individuals gain important job skills. In addition to managing the Opportunity Center, the VISTA members secured a Library Services and Technology Act grant that funded a mobile computer lab, which brought library services and employment training to surrounding county libraries.



*Resources on display in the Opportunity Center at Fond du Lac Public Library.*

## ***National Service Trust Fund***

The National Service Trust Fund received \$40 million to fund Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards and interest forbearance payments for members serving in Recovery Act positions. The value of an education award depends on the term of service performed by an AmeriCorps member. Completion of a full-time term of service, currently requiring a minimum of 1,700 hours of service, entitles an AmeriCorps member serving in a Recovery Act funded position to an education award of \$4,725. Completion of a part-time term, requiring a minimum of 900 hours of service, entitles an AmeriCorps member to an education award of \$2,362.50. Reduced part-time terms, which provide awards of \$1,000 to \$1,800, are also offered.



The amounts obligated in the Trust are based on the estimated value of the education benefit, discounted for the estimated enrollment, earning and usage rate and the time value of money. For Recovery Act funded awards, these factors are the full value of the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award, a 100 percent enrollment rate (allowing for refills), an average earning rate of 82 percent, and an average usage rate of 84 percent. As interest is earned in the Trust the funds are obligated to bring the value of the education award up to its present value. A portion of the funds in the Trust are held in reserve and are for use only in the event that the estimates used to calculate obligations differ from actual results. The reserve for Recovery Act funded positions is \$3.5 million. Reserve funds are reported as unobligated in the CNCS' annual financial statements and in its budgetary reports to the Office of Management and Budget. To date, no reserve funds have been used.

Education awards earned by AmeriCorps members are generally available to be used for seven years from the completion of their term of service.<sup>11</sup> Typically, these funds are not used by the member and outlayed from the Trust until two to three years after the education award is earned (e.g., three years after the member has completed his/her term of service). The following table summarizes the number of members enrolled in the National Service Trust Fund for each Recovery Act program and the amount of education awards earned and used to date:

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<sup>11</sup> The period of availability may be extended beyond seven years under certain circumstances (45 CFR §2526.40).

<b>National Service Trust Enrollment Activity for Recovery Act Programs</b> <i>(as of December 31, 2010)</i>						
Term Type	Member Status <sup>a</sup>				Amount Earned	Amount Used
	Members Enrolled	Still Serving	Earned an Award	Did Not Earn		
<b><i>AmeriCorps State &amp; National</i></b>						
Full Time	5,012	128	4,270	617	\$19,974,787.45	\$6,179,226.97
Part-time	1,662	62	1,189	411	\$2,743,340.27	\$810,485.23
Reduced Part-time	3,630	34	2,924	672	\$3,428,263.97	\$1,364,990.95
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>10,304</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>8,383</b>	<b>1,700</b>	<b>\$26,146,391.69</b>	<b>\$8,354,703.15</b>
<b><i>AmeriCorps VISTA</i></b>						
Full Time	2,890	0	2,261	626	\$10,459,234.06	\$3,696,346.32
Part-time	0	0	0	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Reduced Part-time	662	0	640	22	\$723,425.82	\$291,228.27
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>3,552</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,901</b>	<b>648</b>	<b>\$11,182,659.88</b>	<b>\$3,987,574.59</b>
<b><i>Recovery Act Total</i></b>						
Full Time	7,902	128	6,531	1,243	\$30,434,021.51	\$9,875,573.29
Part-time	1,662	62	1,189	411	\$2,743,340.27	\$810,485.23
Reduced Part-time	4,292	34	3,564	694	\$4,151,689.79	\$1,656,219.22
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,856</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>11,284</b>	<b>2,348</b>	<b>\$37,329,051.57</b>	<b>\$12,342,277.74</b>
<b>NOTES:</b>						
<sup>a</sup> Trust member enrollment data does not include 878 AmeriCorps VISTA members who elected to receive a cash stipend in lieu of an education award from the National Service Trust and 12 AmeriCorps State & National serving in a third term and thus not eligible for an education award from the Trust.						

Education award payments are made directly to educational institutions and loan holders as directed by the members and by the institutions. Trust funds are not used to pay member stipends or other grant costs. A list of the institutions where members have used their Recovery Act education awards and the amount used can be found at: [http://www.nationalservice.gov/pdf/dataset\\_arra\\_ac\\_trust\\_payments.xls](http://www.nationalservice.gov/pdf/dataset_arra_ac_trust_payments.xls). This web page also contains information on where interest forbearance payments have been made for Recovery Act funded members. Interest forbearance payments totaled \$1,314,756 through December 31, 2010, bringing total outlays from the Trust for education awards and interest forbearance to \$13,657,034, to date.

## *Salaries and Expenses*

CNCS received \$6 million for Information Technology upgrades in its Salaries and Expenses account, of which \$800 thousand was available to administer the program funds appropriated under the Recovery Act. In the agency's implementation plan, these funds were designated to improve IT infrastructure stability by moving computer and network operations centers out of the Washington, DC, headquarters facility. Funding was also used to begin system upgrades to increase the capacity of the system to handle higher volumes of members, applicants and grantees.

On August 4, 2009, CNCS awarded a contract to SRA to host its computer and network operations at its Managed Data Service Center in Sterling, Virginia. SRA immediately began the transition process and agency's main systems went live at the new facility on November 15, 2009. The contract with SRA enables CNCS to obtain a complete network refresh of all routers, servers and storage. It removed several single points of failure that CNCS had experienced over the past several years, such as power grid failures by the local utility, internet connectivity disruptions caused by both hardware and phone company failures, and server capacity issues. The solution that was implemented provides our grantees and members with a system that is now available 24/7 and operating in a redundant configuration.

CNCS computer systems now operate in a high availability mode that has increased the reliability of the systems. All remote office communications were increased to as much as ten times their speed and alternative communication paths were engineered where appropriate.

CNCS also contracted with EnGenius Consulting to assist in stabilizing the *My AmeriCorps* portal. EnGenius performed the operations and maintenance for the *My AmeriCorps* portal and produced 105 change requests and enhancements to the system. These system changes improved the overall performance of the system and enabled AmeriCorps members to access their education awards and apply for service opportunities.

Through ARRA funding, CNCS hired 16 temporary workers to assist with the processing of the increase in AmeriCorps VISTA members. Several of the temporary employees were on board through September 2010.

<b>Status of Recovery Act Salaries and Expenses Funding</b>					
<small>(as of December 31, 2010)</small>					
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Appropriated</b>	<b>Obligated</b>	<b>Outlayed</b>	<b>% Obligated</b>	<b>% Outlayed</b>
Information Technology	\$5,660,482	\$5,660,482	\$5,599,454	100.00%	98.92%
Administration	\$339,518	\$320,806	\$319,633	94.49%	94.14%
<b>Total Salaries &amp; Expenses</b>	<b>\$6,000,000</b>	<b>\$5,981,288</b>	<b>\$5,919,087</b>	<b>99.69%</b>	<b>98.65%</b>

## ***Monitoring***

CNCS monitors both the financial and programmatic activities of our Recovery Act funded grantees. Recovery Act grantees submit quarterly Federal Financial Reports to CNCS which were reviewed to ensure they were on track with their expenditures and were meeting the matching requirements on their grants. CNCS staff also compared expenditures reported on the Federal Financial Reports to amounts grantees report to the Recovery Act Transparency Board as required by Section 1512 of the Recovery Act. All AmeriCorps grantees received feedback letters about their reports which either indicated the data was accurate or provided information on where there were discrepancies that needed to be resolved.

Recovery Act grantees also submitted quarterly progress reports that CNCS reviewed to confirm grantees met their performance measures, both in the number of AmeriCorps members enrolled and the specific service activities authorized. For each grant, staff compared progress on meeting performance measures to the measures approved in the grant application and provided written feedback to grantees. Staff also confirmed that the number of AmeriCorps members enrolled in the agency's member management system reconciles to the number reported on board in the Section 1512 report. For the latest report cycle, all grantees submitted their reports by the deadline. No significant issues were identified with these submissions.

CNCS staff also completed 14 on-site monitoring visits to AmeriCorps State and National Recovery Act grantees and 86 desk reviews of their Recovery Act policies and accounting procedures. The monitoring visits were performed as part of a consolidated review of CNCS grants to the organizations. For AmeriCorps VISTA Recovery Act grants, CNCS staff completed 39 on-site visits or desk reviews for Sponsoring Organizations receiving grants of \$25,000 or more. No significant issues were identified during the reviews.

In addition, CNCS' Office of Inspector General (OIG) staff performed reviews and audits of Recovery Act grantees and conducted more than 40 grantee training and out-reach sessions throughout the United States, providing more than 1,680 hours of training to more than 930 individuals. A recent OIG audit of formula grants to American Samoa identified significant deficiencies in the Territorial Service Commission's oversight and monitoring and questioned a significant proportion of its Recovery Act grant funds. CNCS staff are following up on the audit. Information on OIG's Recovery Act work can be found at: <http://www.cncsig.gov/recovery.html>.

## ***Return on Investment Calculation***

For the purposes of this report CNCS calculated the return on investment of Recovery Act funding based on the following factors:

- *The number of hours of service provided by AmeriCorps members who completed their term of service by December 31, 2010, and earned an education award or a stipend. The hours served by members still serving as of December 31, 2010, and the hours of those who served but did not earn an education award or stipend were not included in the calculation.*
- *The number of hours served by volunteers recruited by AmeriCorps members. Because AmeriCorps State & National programs only reported data on the number of volunteers recruited and not on the number of hours served, the calculation assumes that each volunteer only provided 1 hour of service.*

AmeriCorps VISTA sponsoring organizations reported on both the number of volunteers recruited and the actual hours served by the volunteers. The actual hours served were used in the calculation. On average, each volunteer recruited by AmeriCorps VISTA members served 9 hours.

- *The dollar value of cash and in-kind donations generated by AmeriCorps VISTA members. AmeriCorps VISTA sponsoring organizations reported actual cash and in-kind donations generated by the Recovery Act members. Actual dollars reported were used in the calculation.*

The calculation undercounts the actual return on investment because it does not attempt to ascribe any additional value to services provided to the AmeriCorps members and volunteers (i.e., the calculation does not include the value of the housing rehabilitation and weatherizing services beyond the value of the hours of service provided). The following table provides details on the calculation.

## Recovery Act Return on Investment

	Number	Minimum Hours Served	Total Hours of Service	Dollar Value <sup>a</sup>
<b><i>AmeriCorps Member Service Hours</i></b>				
Number of full-time AmeriCorps members who earned an education award	6,531	1,700	11,102,700	\$231,491,295
Number of part-time AmeriCorps members who earned an education award	1,189	900	1,070,100	\$22,311,585
Number of reduced part-time AmeriCorps who earned an education award	3,564	300	1,069,200	\$22,292,820
Number of full-time AmeriCorps VISTA members who received a stipend	507	1,700	861,900	\$17,970,615
Number of AmeriCorps VISTA Summer Associates who received a stipend	190	300	57,000	\$1,188,450
<b>Total AmeriCorps Member Service Hours</b>				<b>\$295,254,765</b>
<b><i>Volunteer Service Hours Generated</i></b>				
Number of Volunteers recruited by State & National members	238,445	1	238,445	\$4,971,578
Number of Volunteers recruited by VISTA members	852,950	7,531,363	7,531,363	\$157,028,919
<b>Total Volunteer Service Hours Generated</b>				<b>\$162,000,497</b>
<b><i>Cash and In-Kind Donations Generated</i></b>				
<b>Total Cash and In-Kind Donations</b>				<b>\$124,484,750</b>
<b>Total Return</b>				<b>\$581,740,012</b>
<b>Total Obligations as of December 31, 2010</b>				<b>\$192,261,427</b>
<b>Return on Investment – Percent</b>				<b>302.58%</b>
<b>Return on Investment – Dollars</b>				<b>\$3.03</b>
<b>NOTES:</b>				
<sup>a</sup> This calculation is based on the 2009 Independent Sector valuation of \$20.85 per hour; available at <a href="http://www.independentsector.org/Volunteer_Time">www.independentsector.org/Volunteer_Time</a> . Dollar value is computed by multiplying Total Hours of Service by \$20.85.				

## Key Milestones

The following table provides CNCS' key milestones in implementing and carrying out Recovery Act funded programming:

Task	Planned Completion	Actual Completion
<b>AmeriCorps State and National</b>		
Planning completed	3/9/2009	3/9/2009
Disseminate grant application guide	3/9/2009	3/13/2009
Applications due	4/3/2009	4/3/2009
Formula grants awarded	4/17/2009	5/21/2009
Competitive grants awarded	5/8/2009	7/7/2009
Planning for supplemental awards	5/14/2010	6/30/2010
Secondary grants awarded	7/30/2010	7/30/2010
Monitoring grant programs and reporting	6/30/2011	*
All Recovery Act grant performance periods completed	5/31/2011	*
Progress reporting	Quarterly	Quarterly
<b>AmeriCorps VISTA</b>		
Planning Completed	3/9/2009	3/9/2009
Identify and develop projects	6/30/2009	6/30/2009
Recruit, select and approve members	10/31/2009	7/30/2009
Train and place all full-time Recovery Act VISTAs	12/31/2009	9/30/2009
Planning for Summer Associate program	4/30/2010	4/30/2010
Place all Recovery Act Summer Associates	6/30/2010	6/30/2010
Monitoring program activities and reporting	12/31/2010	12/31/2010
All Recovery Act AmeriCorps VISTA member terms completed	9/30/2010	9/30/2010
Progress reporting	Quarterly	Quarterly
<b>National Service Trust Fund</b>		
Obligate funds as positions are awarded	7/30/2010	9/30/2010
Obligate funds to bring Education Awards to net present value	4/30/2021	*
Outlay funds as awards are utilized	5/31/2021	*
<b>Salaries and Expenses</b>		
Competitively procure information technology contracts	9/30/2009	12/30/2009
Hire temporary administrative staff	9/30/2009	6/21/2009
Reallocate administrative funds balance to information technology	6/30/2010	6/30/2010
* This is an ongoing activity or the completion date is in the future.		