

# National Service Impact in Illinois

## AmeriCorps

The Greater Chicago Food Depository's AmeriCorps program addressed hunger in Cook County in 2012-2013 by educating 8,183 clients about healthy eating and cooking habits, providing 1,873 children with meals during the summer, and assisting 19,327 individuals with access to healthy food options at partner agency food pantries. In 2013-2014, the program incorporated AmeriCorps into the organization's new veteran initiative by bringing on two veterans to implement direct service goals. The members launched the first food pantry inside of a V.A. Hospital, in partnership with the Chicago V.A. Medical Center. The goals of the veterans and military families initiatives are to serve 1,000 unique veteran clients at the Jesse Brown V.A. Food Pantry.

## AmeriCorps NCCC

The Champaign County Regional Planning Commission is a community action agency that supports the well-being and quality of life for at-risk, low-income, and underserved residents of Champaign County through programs that promote self-sufficiency. The AmeriCorps NCCC team conducted countywide outreach for the Weatherization Assistance Program through distributing information on home energy conservation door-to-door, and also assembled more than 3,500 energy efficiency kits. The team gained knowledge about weatherization and the impact it has on homes, residents, and the environment through their work and presentations. More than 2,000 potentially qualified residents are now aware of programs offered by the agency.

## AmeriCorps VISTA

The Legal Access VISTA Partnership, a collaboration of seven AmeriCorps VISTA projects, was formed to increase access to legal services for low-income individuals and families, serving all 102 counties in Illinois. The partners have created a bilingual, self-help website; received a \$600,000 grant to expand foreclosure work, serving 1,136 families; recruited 557 volunteers (including pro-bono attorneys); provided 16,483 hours of volunteer service, a \$375,317 value; raised an additional \$47,500 in cash and \$723,225 of in-kind resources; served 98 veterans; and trained 15 volunteers as certified vet counselors.

## Senior Corps

RSVP of Boone and Winnebago Counties is helping to address the increase in adolescent alcohol use by providing BABES (The Beginning Alcohol and Addiction Basic Education Studies Program) to area children. Sixty-six senior volunteers provided 3,800 hours of volunteer service to 768 children and families. The workshops are valued at \$50 per hour, for a community savings of \$190,000. The workshops include the topics of peer pressure, coping skills and alcohol's impact. In post-workshop surveys, 77 percent of children and families responded they were better equipped to form appropriate attitudes and decisions when it comes to alcohol use and abuse.

## Social Innovation Fund

The Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), an intermediary grantee of the Social Innovation Fund, is growing Financial Opportunity Centers – a workforce development and asset-building model that boosts earnings, reduces expenses, and coaches low-income families on how to make better financial decisions – to reach 7,500 total participants. In Chicago, LISC has 10 nonprofit subgrantees receiving total annual grants of \$1.7 million, which they match dollar-for-dollar. A rigorous evaluation design to be conducted at Chicago Financial Opportunity Center sites, and additional analysis of other expansion sites, will provide greater evidence about the model's impact on employment, earnings and savings.