

# National Service Impact in New York

## AmeriCorps

New York Restoration Project (NYRP) actively involves volunteers, public agencies, and community and faith-based groups working to provide community residents with the “clean, green, safe oasis of natural beauty required for physical and mental health”. From 2011 to 2012, 24 NYRP AmeriCorps members leveraged 5,969 volunteers. Together, they removed 122,685 pounds of trash and debris from 60 acres of public parkland, 52 community gardens and streetscapes in low-income communities of New York City. Members and volunteers planted 8,628 trees on 60 acres of publically accessible property as part of the Million Trees initiative. The New York Restoration Project recruited eight previously unemployed, economically disadvantaged individuals as AmeriCorps members, teaching them construction, horticulture, and forestry skills. Those members secured skills-based employment after their AmeriCorps service. NYRP also provided 2,930 economically disadvantaged youth with educational opportunities focused on healthy eating choices, the benefits of physical fitness, and the importance of good nutrition.

## AmeriCorps NCCC

Habitat for Humanity of Greater Newburgh is dedicated to providing decent, affordable housing in partnership with families in need. Habitat seeks to rebuild a sense of community with the common goal of strong neighborhoods and dignity through homeownership. Along with the Habitat for Humanity chapter, AmeriCorps NCCC members worked in six different homes within Newburgh. Work included painting, installing cabinets and vanities, constructing fencing, and removing 2,500 pounds of debris. These homes are part of a five-year goal of 50 new homes in Newburgh, and will serve to transform the community by providing permanent housing for families and stabilizing lives for future generations.

## AmeriCorps VISTA

The Service Collaborative of Western New York through their AmeriCorps VISTA project is serving the unmet needs of veterans, members of the Armed Forces who are on active duty, and family members of deployed military personnel. The VISTAs are increasing the number of veterans receiving services and assistance, including veterans with disabilities, veterans who are unemployed, older veterans, and veterans in rural communities. To date, 235 veteran and military families have received services through partner agencies. Additionally, VISTA members were able to obtain employment skills and training for 61 veterans, and 81 low-income or at-risk veterans and military personnel were assisted in pursuing educational opportunities by accessing GI Bill educational benefits.

## Senior Corps

Sixty Foster Grandparent volunteers provided a minimum of 20 hours weekly for 35 weeks serving 120 Head Start children through the WestCOP Foster Grandparent Program in Elmsford. Foster Grandparent activities included nurturing, reading and sharing books, and providing literacy and language activities to the children to ensure school readiness. Ninety-three percent of the students (112 of the 120) who worked with a Foster Grandparent showed moderate and/or high improvement in three or more identified skill areas. Eighty-nine percent of the students who worked with a Foster Grandparent were promoted and ready to enter Kindergarten because of their improvements in teacher identified skill areas with 106 students (88.3 percent) having improved their overall math skills and 96 students (80 percent) having improved their overall reading skills.

## Social Innovation Fund

The Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City and the NYC Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO) are replicating five effective anti-poverty programs originally piloted by CEO with Social Innovation Fund (SIF) support. By advancing the education, employment, and financial savings of low-income adults and families, the programs combat poverty across a diverse cross-section of America. Eight of the Mayor’s Fund’s nonprofit subgrantees are located in New York and received initial grants totaling nearly \$2.8 million, which they will match dollar-for-dollar with nonfederal funds. With these investments, they expect to serve an additional 4,200 individuals and families.

## Volunteer Generation Fund

Using their Volunteer Generation Fund grant, the New York State Commission on National and Community Service strengthened the volunteer infrastructure throughout New York State by establishing new volunteer centers and building the capacity of existing volunteer centers to match volunteers with opportunities that fit their skills and interests. The grant has led to leveraging of a substantial number of new volunteers, increased participation in the National Days of Service, the development of a statewide portal to collect service-impact data and connect volunteers with service opportunities, new strategic partnerships with public and private agencies, and the sharing of best practices and training resources among the network of regional volunteer centers. New York State’s regional volunteer center infrastructure was a leading entity coordinating volunteers and national service resources during the response to Hurricane Sandy, and it continues to connect New Yorkers with opportunities to support the state’s on-going restoration efforts.