

AmeriCorps State

Impact Alabama, an AmeriCorps program, engages students and recent college graduates to address community needs, empowering a generation through collaborative efforts to promote change in the communities we serve. Through FocusFirst, more than 2,800 college students and 150 AmeriCorps members have provided high-tech vision care to more than 250,000 preschoolers in all sixty-seven counties in Alabama, with 10 percent failing the screenings and receiving free follow-up care as necessary. SaveFirst has trained 3,100 college student volunteers who have prepared free tax returns for 32,000 low-income, working families, helping them to claim \$58.3 million in refunds and save \$9.2 million in commercial tax preparation fees. CollegeFirst has provided a Pre-Advanced Placement Summer Institute for talented high-school students, with 328 college student mentors serving 811 high-school students since 2010. SpeakFirst enriches the academic experience of talented and motivated students from Birmingham area high schools through participation in an "all-star" debate team. SpeakFirst's first seven graduating classes (thirty students) have earned more than \$4.1 million in college scholarships.

AmeriCorps VISTA

AmeriCorps VISTA members at Jones Valley Teaching Farm have been instrumental in increasing the capacity of the agency. Through the service of two of the eight VISTAs on board, \$316,495 in cash resources were garnered in one year. This amount is a 40 percent contribution to the agency's operating budget. New recruitment strategies developed by VISTA members enabled the agency to serve 5,817 third through fifth grader in 78 of Birmingham's low income schools as of February 2014. Work with the agency's education team allowed VISTA members to collaborate with third through fifth grade teachers and create a new curriculum that increases youth knowledge of healthy choices and behaviors, aligns with Common Core and Next Generation Science Standards. One program reported 57 percent of the students served showed measurable gains in surveys related to healthy choices. Another program reported 27 percent of students served showed an increase between pre- and post-assessments that measured core content in math, mapping/geography, nutrition, and reading comprehension.

In collaboration with Vision Research Corporation, Impact Alabama uses high-tech photo optic scan cameras to provide free vision screenings to children, ages six months to five years, in childcare centers across Alabama. All children failing the screenings receive free follow-up care through Sight Savers America. During FY 2014, seven AmeriCorps VISTA members recruited nearly 100 community volunteers to perform 9,594 vision screenings on low-income Head Start, pre-school, and day-care children. The volunteers referred 1,003 students for follow-up care to doctors in their local communities. Each screening, valued at \$44, resulted in a savings of \$422,136 to low-income families.

AmeriCorps NCCC

An AmeriCorp NCCC team, in partnership with Habitat for Humanity helped Tuscaloosa, AL continue to recover from tornadoes that struck the city in 2011. Since being declared a Federal Disaster Area after the April 27, 2011 tornados, Habitat of Tuscaloosa has ramped up focus on those families affected by the storm. The majority of the NCCC team's work was spent on three main project sites : A Women's Build home construction site where female team members of the NCCC team took the house from siding stage of home construction to completion; a Faith Build where the NCCC team started building at the insulation phase just before installing the siding phase, and a home build for a US veteran where the NCCC team worked on framing, roofing and coordinating volunteers. Beyond the three major builds, Corps members had the opportunity to work on the home rehabilitation side of the Habitat organization when the World Changers volunteers arrived in Tuscaloosa. Over 190 volunteers paired with Habitat to complete seven house rehabilitation projects around the Tuscaloosa area. Corps members offered logistical support to the volunteers and helped supervise one of the rehabilitation work sites.

Metro Changers works with hundreds of volunteers each year to address the vast need for home repairs to be made on low- to moderate-income, owner-occupied homes in the Birmingham Metro area. An AmeriCorps NCCC team was requested to support a variety of tasks including the coordination of logistics of each project site. The team also helped to coordinate volunteers and helped to complete multiple unfinished homes. During this project, the NCCC team was able to provide direct supervision and support to 300 volunteers ranging from middle to high school age. The team was in charge of making sure the 300 volunteers used proper painting and safety techniques, as well as insured that all volunteer groups had an adequate amount of supplies to complete the home projects. Once the volunteer numbers slowed down, the NCCC team conducted an assessment of unfinished work and was able to help complete the work of 30 homes that were left incomplete. The team also completed 100 acres of landscaping, built four decks, and distributed 60 gallons of water to the volunteers. This project provided the community many benefits to include a safer and aesthetically pleasing neighborhoods.

Senior Corps Foster Grandparent Program

The Young Mothers Program at Jackson Olin High School currently provides 60 students who have had a child the opportunity to bring their child to school with them on a daily basis. Students attend class and thirty-five children are cared for during the day with the support of three Foster Grandparents assigned to Positive Maturity, Inc. Foster Grandparents serve as mentors to students and caregivers for the children. As a result of providing 3, 200 volunteer hours, twelve seniors reported through surveys that the mentoring relationships with Foster Grandparent volunteers contributed to their emotional stability and well-being, their parenting skills, the infant's physical development through feeding and nurturing, and the student's ability to remain in school and graduate.

Senior Corps RSVP

The high cost of medications has been the number one reported concern of senior citizens in Mobile, based on assessments by the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission Area Agency on Aging. The Director of the Area on Aging estimated at least 30 percent of seniors over 60 who are at or below 200 percent of the poverty level have no prescription drug coverage. Up to 50 percent do not have reliable continuous health coverage for medication. The Mobile County RSVP program partnered with Ozanam Charitable Pharmacy, a pharmacy run solely by volunteers to address this need. Thirteen RSVP volunteers, three of whom are retired pharmacists, were placed with Ozanam Charitable Pharmacy. RSVP Volunteers were able to assist 1,725 patients with 10,456 pharmacy visits and the filling of 34,039 prescriptions valued at \$913,653. The retail value of prescriptions for the Access YOUR RX program is \$419,834.

Senior Corps Senior Companion Program

Two programs offered by Area Agency on Aging are the Medicaid Waiver program, where in-home services help 395 SSI recipients remain independent at home; and the "Alabama Cares" program which provides supportive services to more than 100 caregivers of frail and elderly persons with Alzheimer's disease. According to local private sector companion services, the average hourly rate for companion services is \$11.00 per hour. Sixty Mobile County Senior Companions provided 52,359 hours of daily living services including meal preparation, self-care, and light housekeeping to 120 unduplicated clients, saving the community \$575,949. Based on Independent Living Skills Assessments, 71 percent of the clients reported the ability to manage Activities of Daily Living and maintain their independence with the assistance of their Senior Companion, and 66 percent reported the ability to stay in their home due to services provided by Senior Companions.

Social Innovation Fund

The Social Innovation Fund transforms lives and communities using limited federal investment as a catalyst to grow the impact of nonprofits with evidence of strong results. It harnesses the expertise of grantmaking intermediaries to identify, evaluate and expand effective nonprofits and engages funding partners to contribute nearly three dollars to every one federal dollar invested. As the Social Innovation Fund network grows programs that work in Alabama, more people are able to overcome their most pressing challenges in the areas of economic opportunity, health, and youth development. The Social Innovation Fund is investing \$258,632 in expanding the impact of 2 nonprofits in Alabama. Birmingham AIDS Outreach is working to increase access to and utilization of HIV healthcare. Southwest Alabama Workforce Development Council is supporting workforce partnerships that are increasing training and job opportunities and career advancement for unemployed and incumbent workers in maritime, aerospace, healthcare, and process manufacturing industries.