

AmeriCorps State

Florida's AmeriCorps members served 55,250 students through tutoring, mentoring, and educational services in 271 schools. Eighty percent of students tutored and tested demonstrated learning gains. In addition, AmeriCorps programs trained and engaged 7,853 additional volunteers who provided 49,917 volunteer hours addressing community needs including rebuilding after a natural disaster, job training/placement, mentoring at risk youth and environmental restoration.

AmeriCorps Goodwill Goodworks provided employment services such as barrier assessment and job skills training to 1,372 economically disadvantaged individuals. These services resulted in 796 economically disadvantaged individuals securing employment.

AmeriCorps VISTA

In April 2013, Educate Tomorrow, an organization that serves Miami-Dade County's foster care youth, partnered with Miami Dade College to enhance the college's services for transitioning foster youth to college. The program, known as Educate Tomorrow at Single Stop, promotes personal and academic success for students who have transitioned out of the foster care system, and for those who are homeless or unaccompanied. With the help of AmeriCorps VISTA members, the program served about 300 students. In less than one year, 100 students were referred to internships, awarded scholarships, and received referrals to community agencies for services. Because of the Educate Tomorrow at Single Stop program and VISTA partnership, students who were unlikely to persist and obtain a college degree are now enrolled in school. VISTAs created a support group and developed service activities for students enrolled in the program. The students earned an average GPA of 3.0 for the 2013–2014 academic year; 69 percent of the students maintained a course completion rate of 50 percent and higher and were on track to graduate this year.

AmeriCorps VISTA members at El Sol helped to create the Sunshine Organic Community Garden to help provide access to healthy food options for low-income residents of Jupiter. The garden has produced more than 1,000 lbs. in its first eight months of operation, resulting in nutritious food to hundreds of neighbors and their families. VISTA helped bring El Sol from a small grass-roots organization with three staff to a nationally recognized agency with six full-time staff, 11 part-time staff, and more than 500 volunteers serving more than 3,000 clients.

Without VISTA, this tremendous growth would not have been possible. AmeriCorps VISTA members raised more than \$300,000 in funding for El Sol; developed systems to recruit, train, and retain volunteers; established data-tracking systems so that El Sol could evaluate progress and demonstrate outcomes; and helped changed hearts and minds in the community through their proactive outreach efforts. Before El Sol, there were very little if any social services available for the neediest in Jupiter. This community transformation is in large part to the infusion of resources made possible by AmeriCorps VISTA.

AmeriCorps NCCC

An AmeriCorps NCCC team worked with the Growing Hope Initiative, a nonprofit organization that is dedicated to the restoration of the Grimal Grove in Big Pine Key, Florida and helping promote volunteerism in the Keys. During the project, the team's primary focus was on beautifying the 1.25 acres that contains the majority of the fruit trees in Grimal Grove, and the secondary focus, clearing invasive species of Brazilian Pepper from the back .75 acres. After removing the invasive species, Corps members removed trash and debris, designed walking paths in the front of the property, constructed two benches used for seating, restored five chairs and a picnic table, constructed a compost pit and a raised nursery. In addition, Corps members assisted in overseeing the two largest events the grove has hosted in months; the Grimal Grove Benefit Dinner that gave guests an exclusive look into the Grove's progress at that point in time, and the Sunflower Festival that showcased local restaurants and nonprofit organizations to the 250 guests, 22 of which were guests from the Volunteer Florida Volunteerism Conference.

An AmeriCorps NCCC team partnered with Urban Oasis Project, Inc. (UOP), a nonprofit organization whose mission is to increase access to fresh, local food in Miami-Dade County; to transform unused land into food gardens for community members that live in food deserts. Corps members were introduced to Verde Gardens, an innovative housing program for previously homeless families living with disabilities that is currently located in a food desert. Adjacent to the community is vacant land which had been donated to the Miami Dade County Homeless Trust, to be transformed into a 22 acre farm. The NCCC team helped start the farm transformation process by clearing 3.5 acres of unwanted brush or exotic vegetation. In addition to the 12,250 pounds of exotic vegetation and underbrush removed, 4,300 pounds of debris/trash was removed. In all, Corps members tended to 4 garden sites and helped execute 2 community activities. Through the work of the NCCC team, the UOP organic farm now has the free area to expand the usable farm land. Corps members also supported 30 K-12 students in an out of school program and helped assist the Miami Beach Community Church serve 91 meals to the Miami Beach homeless community.

Senior Corps Foster Grandparent Program

Last year, 317 Foster Grandparents served 327,408 hours in communities across Florida. They helped 2,263 children in 110 centers including in school readiness, being a mentor and positive role model for children in after school centers, providing support to children in medical facilities and shelters, and providing guidance in elementary school classrooms. One example is Grandpa Rivera. Grandpa Rivera is loved by his school staff. He worked with three students that were so delayed they were not expected to pass kindergarten. Grandpa Rivera worked with the children on a daily basis and they started improving. One child in particular would not speak and could not read or write; possibly due to a language barrier. By the end of the year David was not only speaking, he was also reading and writing. The teacher said the children would not have made it if it wasn't for Grandpa Rivera's dedication, patience, and persistence.

Senior Corps RSVP

RSVP at Impact Broward has been the founder and engine for the Veterans Helping Veterans Mentorship program that assists veterans charged with criminal offenses in the local court system. The Broward County Circuit Court adopted the innovative approach of a Veterans Court to work with veterans by treating their underlying issues rather than to only punish them by sending them to prison. Modeled after the Veterans Court created in Buffalo and adopted by other Florida jurisdictions, the Broward County Veterans Court began in 2012. The key to ensuring that veterans receive the treatment appropriate to their situation is recruiting and training the mentor who is also a veteran. Impact Broward's RSVP has partnered with the Veterans Court and is the only organization providing volunteer mentors for veterans facing imprisonment. Simply stated, RSVP has become the mentorship program for the Broward County Veterans Court.

Senior Corps Senior Companion Program

A total of 353,222 seniors age 60 and over live in Broward County. According to Broward County 2011 Profiles, 101,873 seniors live alone. Many are homebound, frail or disabled with no connection to the community or family living locally. Without Senior Companions, these frail elderly and disabled adults would not have access to in home support that can prevent early institutionalization. Last year, 129 Senior Companion volunteers served 91,500 hours, helping more than 430 clients live with dignity and independence.

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 Florida, 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 \$713,889 in expanding the impact of two nonprofits in Florida, supported by two intermediaries.

Volunteer Generation Fund

Between 2010-2014, Volunteer Florida's Volunteer Generation Fund Programs supported 60 organizations that engaged more than 47,000 volunteers in 300,000 hours of service valued at \$6.8 million.