

AmeriCorps State

The Springfield College School Turnaround Initiative places 48 AmeriCorps members in nine designated “turnaround schools” in Springfield. AmeriCorps Members serve as Academic Coaches, Academic Support Specialists, and School Counselors, supporting school turnaround plans to address academic and non-academic risk factors that affect student achievement, dropout, and graduation rates. Members will serve more than 500 at-risk students during the 2014-15 school year, using student data to implement targeted interventions to improve attendance, academic achievement and engagement, and behavioral/social-emotional health. AmeriCorps members provide students with regular feedback and support; teach problem-solving and coping skills; provide one-on-one/small-group instruction or counseling; collaborate with teachers and counselors; and build strong, trusting relationships with students. In 2013-14, 55 percent of student participants showed increased academic engagement and 67 percent of students decreased the number of disciplinary incidents. In addition, 49 percent increased their attendance rate, with 62% percent of chronically absent students improving attendance by an average of 12 percent, equivalent to 21 more days in school.

Barnstable County AmeriCorps Cape Cod is a regional residential service program that responds to the critical environmental, disaster, and community needs within the 15 towns of Cape Cod. In 2014-2015, 32 AmeriCorps members will serve critical needs in the focus areas of environmental stewardship and disaster services. During 2013-2014, AmeriCorps members completed 366 water and land natural resource management and wildfire mitigation projects, improving 707 acres of parks and public lands and improving and creating 64 miles of trails and waterways. Additionally, members delivered 74 disaster education presentations, educating 1,320 citizens to be better prepared when disaster strikes. Members also recruited 620 volunteers leveraging 2,728 hours of community service. The 55,821 service hours logged by both AmeriCorps members and community volunteers in FY2014 brings the total of volunteer hours served since the program's inception in 1999 to 667,913. That translates into an estimated value of over \$18,000,000 contributed to the Cape Cod community in the past fifteen years.

AmeriCorps National

Citizen Schools is a nonprofit organization that partners with middle schools to expand the learning day for children in low-income communities. Citizen Schools mobilizes a team of AmeriCorps educators and volunteers to lead real-world learning projects and provide academic support, helping all students discover and achieve their dreams. In their two years of service, AmeriCorps members serve as “Teaching Fellows,” providing students with months of extra learning through academic mentoring and skill-building apprenticeships that translates into college readiness and career opportunities. Citizen Schools has been recognized as a leader in engaging volunteers, generating student impact, and balancing direct service with systemic change efforts. A longitudinal study found that former Citizen Schools participants graduated from high school within four years at a rate of 71 percent, compared to 59 percent among matched peers, and internal analyses have found that 61 percent of Citizen Schools’ alumni enroll in college.

For every uninsured person, more than \$900 of unpaid medical bills per year is shifted to higher premiums for the insured. Furthermore, a recent study showed that 50 percent of emergency room visits are non-urgent in Massachusetts, which heavily contributes to the nationwide \$38 billion of wasteful emergency department spending. In Massachusetts, Community HealthCorps places 44 AmeriCorps members in community health centers directly serving 14 of the state's most medically underserved communities. In 2013-2014, Community HealthCorps members serving in Massachusetts helped more than 1,000 individuals, including the homeless and veterans, through financial education and case management sessions on the benefits of utilizing primary care instead of the emergency room, the effects of financial decisions on social determinants of health, and strategies to avoid medical debt. As a direct result of these engagements, 71 percent of patients surveyed increased their knowledge related to these topics. Community HealthCorps AmeriCorps members in Massachusetts also helped patients reduce medical spending resulting from obesity by providing physical and nutritional education to more than 350 children and families.

AmeriCorps VISTA

Whether in the classroom, in the barn, and out in the fields, AmeriCorps VISTAs Marie Boyd and Tori Buerschaper have become an integral part of the healthy solution to hunger at Community Harvest Project, a nonprofit farm operation that brings volunteers together to grow fruits and vegetables for hunger relief. Through their efforts, both VISTAs have greatly enhanced the Community Harvest Project's capacity to involve thousands of community members as part of the solution. Boyd creates and implements fundraising and awareness campaigns for the organization. She organized the Harvest Home Festival and 5K, securing more than \$30,000 in corporate sponsorships and \$1,000 worth of raffle prizes. Buerschaper engages youth through nutrition education programs, which provide hands-on learning opportunities for children from pre-school through sixth grade. She coordinated the Sprouting Minds program, a series of hands-on nutrition education activities, for 1,200 students, and the Summer on the Farm program for 50 students, who spent a week learning about harvesting and other farm skills, nutrition, and basic cooking.

AmeriCorps VISTA Cont'd

The Rebuilding Lives Project at Emmaus, Inc. taps the skills of three AmeriCorps VISTAs to help lift families experiencing homelessness out of poverty. In the past year, the VISTA assisting with development secured nearly \$24,000 in grant funding and identified new grant sources for Emmaus' next permanent affordable housing project. The VISTA focused on health and wellness successfully surveyed 25 homeless individuals and developed programs based on their health needs, including a mobile dental clinic and exercise classes. The VISTA that coordinates the volunteer program handled more than \$75,000 worth of in-kind donations and expanded the capacity of Emmaus' food bank to serve more than 100 households. Together, the VISTAs secured and executed three Massachusetts Service Alliance grants for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, National Volunteer Week, and the 9/11 Day of Remembrance. At these events, 218 volunteers, including 129 new volunteers, served 521 hours.

AmeriCorps NCCC

The FARM Institute was founded in 2000 with the mission of educating and engaging children and adults in sustainable agriculture through the diverse operations of a 162-acre working farm. During the service at the FARM Institute, AmeriCorps NCCC members completed many tasks: building a bathhouse with composting toilets, constructing a solar greenhouse, rebuilding animal pens, preparing planting beds, and creating education signage. The work the team did will allow the farm to continue to provide organic meats, vegetables, and produce to local residents. In addition to their service at the FARM Institute, the team had the opportunity to work at two other local organizations, Thimble Farms and Camp Jabberwocky. At Thimble Farms the team had a unique opportunity to work at a hydroponic greenhouse. They assisted in constructing the tables and gutters for the system, harvesting and planting crops, and cleaning and preparing pots for the system. At Camp Jabberwocky, a non-profit summer camp for people with disabilities, the team performed groundwork and maintenance duties to help prepare for their summer camp.

The mission of the Phoenix Charter Academy Network is to operate alternative schools that challenge disconnected students with rigorous academics and relentless support so that they recast themselves as resilient, self-sufficient adults in order to succeed in high school, college, and beyond. AmeriCorps NCCC members prepared three schools to be ready for the school year in terms of facilities and operations – all classrooms and offices will be arranged, meeting spaces set up according to their purpose (cafeteria ready for student meals, library shelves stocked with books, etc.), rooms and hallways painted, and buildings decorated for the first day of school. The NCCC members served a critical role in readying the schools for the start of the school year which will allow the leaders, teachers, and staff of the schools to focus on the tasks of recruiting, retaining, and delivering an excellent education to out-of-school youth in Chelsea, Lawrence, and Springfield. In addition to learning about the alternative schools and the goal of keeping students engaged in school, the members will develop or enhance skills in packing, moving, organization, and furniture/item placement.

Senior Corps Foster Grandparent Program

The Coastline Elderly Service's Foster Grandparent Program provides education and behavioral support services for at-risk children. In the fall of 2013, student assessments showed 47 percent of P.A.C.E. Head Start students meeting "Widely Held Expectations" for three and four year old children in the learning domains of Math, Social/Emotional Development and Pre-Literacy Skills. In the Spring of 2014, assessments on those same students showed 62 percent meeting or exceeding "Widely Held Expectations". Significant gains were made for students on Individual Education Plans, and for Dual Language Learners who were afforded the opportunity to work in a one-on-one setting with Foster Grandparents. These students benefited from individualized activity plans designed by their teachers and implemented by the Foster Grandparents. The addition of a Foster Grandparent volunteer enhances the learning environment by providing additional attention to the needs of our most vulnerable children.

Senior Corps RSVP

Norfolk County Massachusetts is home to over 39,000 veterans. In 2013 the Norfolk County Commissioners charged RSVP with identifying ways that volunteers could support the needs of veterans in 28 towns. With input from each town's veterans agent, RSVP developed a free neighbor-to-neighbor rides program bringing veterans to necessary appointments and services. Currently 33 volunteer drivers are able to meet most requests. Because affordable wheelchair-accessible transportation remains difficult to find, RSVP volunteers also provide board and administrative support to Paralyzed Veterans of America's transportation program in New England, which uses trained staff drivers to bring veterans of any ability to medical appointments. A veteran who used RSVP Rides for Vets recently said: "The driver was here early this morning. He's a hell of a nice guy. It's been a weird day for me. The doctor told me I need surgery... This ride saved me a lot of money [the alternative was to call a taxi]. When I picked up my meds today, I was able to pick up some food. It was coming down to that, getting to my medical appointment or getting food, and now I can do both. I really appreciate the ride."

Senior Corps Senior Companion Program

Over the past year, the City of Boston Senior Companion Program provided companionship to 398 older adults and individuals with disabilities to alleviate their isolation and help them live with independence and dignity. The program engages a diverse volunteer force and serves a diverse set of older adults and individuals with disabilities. Data from the 2010 Census show that one-quarter of Boston seniors are Black or African American, while 9 percent are Asian, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. Additionally, Boston has 29,632 residents foreign born over age 60, 32.7 percent speak a language other than English and 25% speak English less than "very well". The Boston Senior Companion program has a mix of 31 bilingual or non-English speaking volunteers that serve as companions to 246 non-English speaking clients.

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 Massachusetts, 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 \$2,295,942 in expanding the impact of six nonprofits in Massachusetts, selected and supported by four intermediaries.

Volunteer Generation Fund

During the first four years of the Volunteer Generation Fund, the Massachusetts Service Alliance (MSA) has sub-granted more than \$400,000 to 104 local nonprofit agencies to expand meaningful service opportunities during National Days of Service. These organizations engaged more than 31,700 volunteers in Massachusetts who served nearly 104,000 hours in their local community. The Massachusetts Service Alliance has used the Volunteer Generation Fund grant to train, support, and build the capacity of Volunteer Connector Organizations across the state. MSA has invested more than \$70,000 in these organizations by establishing a new center on Cape Cod and allowing three centers to expand to new or underserved regions within their catchment area resulting in an additional 2,252 volunteers. MSA also launched and sustained a statewide volunteer awareness campaign, YOU Generate. In year four, MSA focused its efforts on piloting the national Service Enterprise Certification and Training program with five participating agencies in North Central Massachusetts. Continuing into the fifth year, MSA will work with volunteer connector partners to bring the Service Enterprise curriculum into two new regions of Massachusetts – Greater New Bedford and Cape Cod.