

## AmeriCorps State

Teach for America (TFA) places 573 AmeriCorps members in Nashville and Memphis, with the belief that all children deserve the opportunity to attain an excellent education. They recruit, train and place outstanding teacher leaders into classrooms serving low-income children. The 2014 Report Card on the Effectiveness of Teacher Training Programs in Tennessee measures the effectiveness of the state's 43 teacher preparation programs. For the fifth year in a row, Teach For America was identified as one of the state's most effective teacher preparation programs. Teach For America-Greater Nashville and Teach For America-Memphis were two of the five programs found to have teachers "that have consistently outperformed other teachers in the state" Teach For America-Greater Nashville and Teach For America-Memphis had the top two most statistically significant positive results among evaluated teacher preparation programs. Teach For America-Greater Nashville and Teach For America-Memphis teachers are more racially and ethnically diverse than the statewide average.

Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee's 40 AmeriCorps members facilitate environmental education using service-learning. Members work with partner agencies to increase the effectiveness of community programs and services. Two effective instances were a local stream clean-up event and environmental education. River Rescue used to compete with another local stream clean-up event for volunteers and dump-site locations. By applying AmeriCorps members and better volunteer strategies, the community was able to consolidate the events, increase the number of volunteers, and better apply clean-up practices. In-school environmental education has been the flagship of the CAC AmeriCorps program for well over 15 years. The recycling, composting, and outdoor classrooms are integrated into curriculum in Knox County schools and are maintained by students in science classrooms.

## AmeriCorps VISTA

In its first year, the City of Memphis AmeriCorps VISTA program has placed 16 members at 10 sites. VISTA members are developing 3 new programs – The Knowledge Quest Community Supported Agriculture program, The Ex-Offender Entrepreneurial Program and the Memphis Office of Resources and Enterprise Corporate Relations Program. They are also expanding services in an additional 14 sites, including the Leadership Memphis SUCCESS High Schools Initiative, the OrganWise nutritional and fitness literacy program, and the Women's Foundation's Empowering Families with Sustainable Employment Program. Though 88 percent of VISTAs have been in service less than five months, an additional 28 organizations have received capacity building services already and one-third report that VISTA members have helped make their organizations more effective. To date, City of Memphis VISTAs have recruited 86 volunteers, managed 101 volunteers, and contributed to the training of 110 staff and volunteers. An additional 291 disadvantaged youth have been served through educational programs and 150 disadvantaged youth have been served through Healthy Futures programs offered by City of Memphis VISTA program partners.

## AmeriCorps NCCC

An AmeriCorps NCCC team worked with the Cumberland Trail State Scenic Trail (CTSST) to assist with the construction of 0.16 miles of new trail and the installation of 75 stones which will improve the marketability of Campbell County as a hiking destination. The team installed wooden steps along the Cumberland Trail State Scenic Trail and at North Chickamauga Creek Conservancy which provide a safe access trail for visitors and bring in more foot traffic. CTSST preserves and protects, in perpetuity, unique examples of natural, cultural, and scenic areas and provides a variety of safe, quality, outdoor experiences to communities. The team also traveled to Seven Islands Wildlife Refuge where they assisted with the restoration of 1.02 miles of existing trail, the removal of 15,000 pounds of exotic vegetation and underbrush, the installation of 750 feet of fencing, the removal of 200 pounds of trash, the landscaping of 5 acres of land, and the tending to 377 trees. The NCCC team was able to make a huge impact on the community in Campbell County through their restoration of the LaFollette's Historic Wedding Chapel and Sharps Chapel Historic School House and their cleanup of the Lewis Cemetery.

For five weeks, an AmeriCorps NCCC team worked with the Vollintine Evergreen Community Association (VECA) in Memphis, Tennessee to maintain a quality residential neighborhood with new and existing volunteers from the community. VECA was founded in 1971 to increase communication within a neighborhood of more than 2,500 households that previously had no formal organization. The team worked in the neighborhood to clear vacant lots of unwanted vegetation and debris, performing multipurpose trail maintenance, and installing railroad ties to control erosion. In addition, the team worked to install 130 feet of fencing; tend to six gardens by pulling weeds, trimming plants, laying newspaper and laying 13 yards of mulch to minimize the regrowth of weeds. For houses managed by VECA, the NCCC team painted walls and created drainage ditches to prevent future damage. They also worked with a local youth group to beautify 12 road medians. In partnership with Le Bonheur Hospital, the NCCC team also worked to remove asthma triggers in the home of a patient. The NCCC team brought happiness and encouragement to the Vollintine Evergreen Community while saving thousands of dollars in improvements.

## Senior Corps Foster Grandparent Program

The Knoxville Knox County Community Action Committee Foster Grandparent Program engages 117 Foster Grandparent volunteers to mentor and tutor 356 children. Station supervisors reported that partly due to the assistance provided by Foster Grandparent volunteers, 86 percent of children served in Pre-K programs demonstrated gains in social and/or emotional development according to the teacher assessment. According to teacher evaluation, 81 percent of the children served in K-12 classrooms demonstrated improvement in academic engagement, and 93 percent of special needs children mentored and tutored transitioned to the next grade level.

## Senior Corps RSVP

The Knoxville Knox County Community Action Committee RSVP program mobilized 382 volunteers who served a total of 41,175 hours meeting a range of needs in the Knoxville community. RSVP volunteers delivered 184,277 meals to 1,161 qualifying homebound seniors, provided transportation to 198 seniors and individuals with disabilities for a total of 4,069 trips for medical appointments and other errands necessary to remain independent in their homes. They also conducted home safety checks for 250 seniors living in high crime areas of Knoxville.

## Senior Corps Senior Companion Program

The Knoxville Knox County Community Action Committee Senior Companion Program mobilized 93 volunteers to assist 328 homebound and frail seniors. Senior Companions provide companionship, shopping assistance, accompaniment to medical appointments, and light cooking and housekeeping. One-third of all clients served were over the age of 85. At the end of the program year, 95 percent of the frail adults served were able to remain in their homes and avoid premature institutionalization.

## 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 Tennessee, 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 \$88,889 in expanding the impact of one nonprofit in Tennessee.