

AmeriCorps State

There are no military bases in Vermont, and the challenges for families are magnified because they may be experiencing the stress of military life for the first time. Their communities often do not understand the stresses of deployment and reintegration Vermont Youth Development Corps AmeriCorps members have provided assistance to more than 217 individual military and veterans' family members, including 197 youth. Through Operation Military Kids, children who experience parental deployment and reintegration partake in free vacation and summer camps for military youth. AmeriCorps members provided outreach to military families and collaborated with the Vermont National Guard and local armories to reach military families and inform them of available community services and programs. They also assisted Operation Military Kids with Yellow Ribbon Reintegration efforts. Military youth participated in community-based programs supported by AmeriCorps members including nutrition, physical activity, community gardens, and healthy meals.

Through the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board AmeriCorps program, 1,278 economically disadvantaged individuals received housing placement services. More than 1,000 of these individuals were homeless or near-homeless. Seventy-six veterans received housing placement services and 383 individuals transitioned into affordable housing. Fifty-four homes were purchased with the assistance of members and 305 housing units were developed, repaired, or otherwise made available for low-income individuals.

AmeriCorps VISTA

The Vermont Youth Tomorrow AmeriCorps VISTA program, sponsored by the Washington County Youth Service Bureau Boys & Girls Club, supports VISTAs at community-based organizations, schools, and municipalities throughout the state that help low-income youth and families escape the cycle of poverty. The VISTA members increase academic success through mentoring and tutoring programs; build job skills through training and internship initiatives; promote healthy lifestyle choices through nutrition classes, physical activity programs, and community gardens; and support veteran and military families.

In 2014, the team of 28 VISTA members:

- Raised more than \$443,124 through grants, fundraising, and in-kind donations
- Recruited and managed more than 1,761 community volunteers (including mentors and tutors) who gave more than 33,314 hours to their communities
- Developed programs that benefitted 375 military youth and families and provided housing and basic needs to 409 youth and adults
- Developed, enhanced, or implemented 153 program curricula or events that engaged 1,102 youth in structured physical activities.

SerVermont is the Service Commission in Vermont that promotes, supports, and recognizes volunteerism and community service statewide. SerVermont operates a statewide AmeriCorps VISTA project that fights poverty in Vermont by increasing education and job-training opportunities, creating more food-secure communities, increasing housing, and serving veterans and military families. During the program year that ended in April 2014, 22 VISTA members:

- Recruited 321 community volunteers who served 986 hours
- Developed \$46,919 of cash and \$9,741 of in-kind (non-cash) financial resources
- Implemented, developed, or enhanced 31 new systems as a result of capacity-building services including manuals, data tracking mechanisms, databases for volunteers, recruitment strategies for new programs, style guides for outreach materials, and social media pages.

AmeriCorps NCCC

The Vermont State parks requested an AmeriCorps NCCC team to help complete a 46 acre tree harvest at Fort Dummer State Park. The mission of the Vermont State Park system is to conserve and interpret on behalf of the people of Vermont their natural, cultural, historic and scenic heritage, and while so doing provide recreational opportunities and economic benefit. Prior to the NCCC team arrival, Vermont State Parks had cut down 4,600 acres of trees. When the NCCC team arrived, they cleared tree debris from the road, a picnic area, parking lot and raked off 61 campsites clear of leaves and pine needles. Members also put numbered posts into the ground to identify the campgrounds. The felling of trees and clearing of debris was done to create a sunny, dry, warm camping and picnic area. By cutting down the trees the campsites had a chance to let in more sun. Removing trees throughout the park also benefitted the forest by reducing the canopy and allowing understory trees to develop.

Senior Corps Foster Grandparent Program

Last year the United Way of Chittenden County's Foster Grandparent Program volunteers devoted an average of 15 hours per week providing one-to-one intervention to 334 at-risk children in the four counties of Chittenden, Franklin, Grand Isle, and Washington. Teachers identified students needing additional support to achieve reading, math, social and behavioral goals. Of children assisted by Foster Grandparent volunteers this year, 94 percent were reported to have increased enjoyment of learning, 97 percent increased interest in learning, 95 percent increased self-confidence about learning, and 98 percent increased productivity. Even more encouraging is that 83 percent of elementary school children served by a Foster Grandparent fully achieved teacher-defined goals in reading, math, or behavioral/social domains.

Senior Corps RSVP

The RSVP Program of Rutland/Addison Counties sponsored by Rutland Community Program, Inc. engages volunteers to serve in many capacities including healthy futures, education, and other community needs. In the most recent program year, 789 RSVP volunteers served a cumulative total of 139,973 hours. RSVP volunteers had especially significant impacts working with elementary school students and seniors at-risk for osteoporosis. Ninety-seven RSVP volunteers served 873 elementary school children with 100 percent of teachers and school personnel indicating that the RSVP volunteers had a significant impact towards educational goals, literacy goals, and/or general well-being needs of their students. A total of 286 RSVP volunteers served 952 participants in Bone Builder classes that met weekly in Rutland and Addison Counties. According to the results of the Functional Capacity Survey, 85 percent of the program participants reported an increase in strength, 82 percent reported an increase in flexibility, and 90 percent reported improved overall well-being.

Senior Corps Senior Companion Program

Central Vermont Council on Aging, sponsor of the statewide Vermont Senior Companion Program, successfully engages Senior Companion volunteers to assist other seniors to keep living independently. Last fiscal year, a total of 66 Senior Companion volunteers served 57,847 hours assisting 449 seniors statewide. Additionally, 84 clients received in-home respite care by a Senior Companion.

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 Vermont, 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 Vermont.