

State Commission

Serve Idaho, the Governor's Commission on Service and Volunteerism, manages a portfolio of five AmeriCorps State programs with 136 AmeriCorps members serving in 13 counties addressing critical needs in the areas of education, health, environment, and veterans and military families. In the 2014-2015 program year, 207 veterans were placed in jobs as a result of AmeriCorps program efforts. In addition, AmeriCorps members improved 123 miles of trail and rivers in the Salmon-Challis National Forest. Additional programs include the Idaho's Brightest Star Awards and the annual Serve Idaho Conference.

AmeriCorps State

Idaho Healthcare for Children and Families AmeriCorps Program (IHCF) is housed in the Institute of Rural Health on the Idaho State University Campus in Pocatello, Idaho. Idaho ranks low in the nation for health access. IHCF's AmeriCorps program helps address this need in Idaho through 42 AmeriCorps members who are placed in six different counties who provide health screenings and health education to low-income and rural Idaho children and their families. During the 2014-2015 program year, 1,177 Idahoans reported improved health knowledge because of their participation in the health related services provided by the IHCF AmeriCorps program.

The SCA Idaho AmeriCorps program, has 20 AmeriCorps members serving at the Moyer Compound in the Salmon Challis wilderness in Idaho. AmeriCorps members help meet public land management needs in the state through various service activities including: wild land fire mitigation; trail, timber bridge and stone staircase construction; trail clearance; invasive species removal; planting trees; and conducting wildlife fisheries studies. During the 2014-2015 program year, SCA Idaho AmeriCorps members improved 2,960 acres of public land and 123 miles of trail and river in the state of Idaho.

AmeriCorps National

In the past year, two Jesuit Volunteer Corps Northwest AmeriCorps members teamed up to serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault at Women's and Children's Alliance in Boise. As Outreach Coordinator, Madeline hosted community outreach events and created social media policies so that the Alliance could better reach clients who might need its services. With her supervisor, Madeline designed and implemented a capacity building project called the Women's and Children's Alliance Student Champion Program. The program helps students understand about dating abuse and teaches them the skills they need to maintain healthy boundaries and relationships. The students who are trained to be Student Champions act as advocates of change by talking their classmates and peers about dating abuse and healthy relationships and encouraging them to be the change-makers in their own lives. To help the program meet its goal of being sustainably student-run and student-led, Madeline created a collection of lesson plans, workshops, and presentations that instructors and students can use.

AmeriCorps VISTA

The AmeriCorps VISTA members at Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Treasure Valley were instrumental in planning and executing an inaugural fundraising event, the Mentoring Matters Breakfast. The event resulted in over \$65,650 in pledges to support student and mentor matches that help at-risk students stay engaged in school and achieve academic success. The pledges nearly double what was budgeted for in 2015 and represents a successful kickoff to what is now one of the key pieces in the agency's long term fund development strategy.

The Cultivate Community Food Security in Idaho VISTA project at Idaho Hunger Relief Task Force seeks to engage and empower low-income individuals and families, service providers, and rural communities in identifying food system challenges, strengths and solutions appropriate to their family, constituents, and communities. Six AmeriCorps VISTA members contributed to the goals of the project by performing activities such as rural community and food system assessments and benefits training and education. VISTA member Rebecca Maguire successfully launched the 'Screen and Intervene' pilot project at the Family Medicine Residency of Idaho, a low-income health provider. The food insecurity screen has been incorporated into the patient intake process and the "Food is Medicine" prescription form has been placed in the Electronic Medical Records system. There have been 42 patient referrals to care navigators who followed up to provide focused individual food resource assistance. "I have been surprised by how many patients are screening positive for food insecurity. I am so glad we have some resources to provide follow-up to these families," says Dr. Gendler.

AmeriCorps NCCC

In service with Backyard Harvest in Moscow, an AmeriCorps NCCC team assisted the organization with gardening, trail work and invasive species removal. Backyard Harvest's mission is to provide better access to fresh, locally grown foods to low-income families and older adults in northern Idaho and eastern Washington. While Serving with Backyard Harvest, members started ten new gardens, installed and repaired drip irrigation, planted 2,000 seeds and starts, harvested strawberries, mixed greens, cherries, and removed unwanted vegetation. In addition to serving with Backyard Harvest, the team also served with the Palouse Clearwater Environmental Institute. Members restored creek beds, installed, repaired and decommissioned trails, protected trees by installing cages to prevent Beaver Damage, coordinated volunteers, and cleared land of unwanted brush and weeds. The creation of ten new gardens will increase production which will be donated directly to food banks in Moscow, Pullman, Trinity and Albion. By restoring parts of Paradise Creek and decommissioning some trails, members restored habitats, and ensured cleaner drinking water.

An AmeriCorps NCCC team partnered with the Girl Scouts Eastern Washington & Northern Idaho to assist with camp opening and improvements, trail maintenance, and invasive species removal. Girl Scouts is a girl-focused organization committed to providing a safe environment where girls age 5–17 can grow in courage, confidence, and character. Members renovated the Girl Scout's Camp Four Echoes in Worley in preparation for the camp's summer season. Tasks included cleaning, checking structural stability, and creating a firebreak around 30 cabins in five campsites. Members installed energy efficient light bulbs, cleared and maintained hiking trails around the camp, and removed underbrush and unwanted vegetation around cabins. Members also restored picnic pavilions, repaired fencing, and installed informative signs around the camp. Lastly, the team led 35 volunteers from Liberty Mutual Insurance in cleaning cabins and removing debris from the camp. As a result of the team's efforts, Camp Four Echoes is a safe place for girls to spend their summer and make friends while gaining skills that they will carry with them for years to come.

Senior Corps Foster Grandparent Program

Foster Grandparents are meeting the needs of children in Southeast Idaho. According to results for the 2014-15 school year, nearly 100 percent of children served in Head Start programs reported moderate or substantial gains in school readiness, 86 percent of youth tutored at the Juvenile Corrections Center and State Hospital South reported moderate to substantial improvement in school engagement, and 98 percent of children tutored in elementary schools showed moderate to substantial gains in literacy or math.

Senior Corps RSVP

Thirty-five RSVP volunteers at the Washington-Idaho Volunteer Center serve in the Idaho Senior Health Insurance Benefits Advising program. This free insurance counseling service is located in the Senior Center in Lewiston. Seniors in the region know they can come to the Senior Center, not only for an affordable meal, but for insurance help. Last year 1,264 economically disadvantaged individuals received services for a collective savings of \$94,800. Due to the direct intervention of one RSVP volunteer adviser, one elderly gentleman is now saving over \$2,600 in prescription costs per year. This is money he now uses for food and housing.

Senior Corps Senior Companion Program

Depression filled Lee Hendrickson's life after a stroke eight years ago. She needed a purpose, a way to care for others and not dwell on her own health. That's when she found the Senior Companion Program, run by the Panhandle Health District. Now Lee doesn't have time for depression. She's too busy visiting homebound seniors who need a friend. Her visits allow caretakers, often spouses or other family members, to have a break whether it's to run errands, have lunch with a friend or go to a doctor's appointment. Since 1987, the Senior Companion Program at Panhandle Health District has served approximately 200 clients each year with 55 active volunteers in Idaho's five northern counties. The volunteers range in age from 55 to 93 years old, providing care and supporting community members who are close to their own age.

Social Innovation Fund

The Social Innovation Fund (SIF) transforms lives by using evidence to find what works and make it work for more people. The SIF Classic and SIF Pay for Success programs harness the expertise of grant-making intermediaries to identify, evaluate and expand effective nonprofits serving low-income communities across America. University of Utah Policy Innovation Lab is exploring ways public and private investments can measurably improve lives of at-risk individuals and families in communities around the country, specifically in the Intermountain West region of the United States. These projects aim to address gaps in early childhood education, homelessness, and prison recidivism in their respected communities. The Social Innovation Fund is investing \$147,000 in expanding the impact of three nonprofits in Idaho.