

State Commission

SerVermont, the Vermont Commission on National and Community Service, manages a portfolio of six AmeriCorps State programs with 200 AmeriCorps members, serving all 14 counties in Vermont. AmeriCorps members are addressing critical needs in the areas of education, cultural competency, health, environment, economic opportunity, disaster and capacity building. In the 2014-2015 program year, AmeriCorps members provided housing placement services to 1,327 economically disadvantaged Vermonters and served 105 veterans, 21 active duty military members, and 347 military family members. In addition, SerVermont manages an AmeriCorps VISTA Umbrella Project of 27 members, supports two AmeriCorps planning grantees, awards the Governor's Awards for Outstanding Community Service, and manages spontaneous volunteers during disasters.

AmeriCorps State

The Vermont Housing & Conservation Board AmeriCorps program has 36 AmeriCorps members who serve in a statewide network of organizations to increase safe, affordable housing options and preserve Vermont's natural landscape. In the past year, AmeriCorps members have supported the major goals of Vermont's Plan to End Homelessness by filling service gaps, expanding affordable housing options, and increasing the economic security of low-income households. They gave housing placement services to 1,327 economically disadvantaged people, which helped 407 Vermonters move into safe, affordable homes. Members reached more than 20,000 people as they taught environmental programs to get people out into their community and the natural environment. In support of Vermont's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan to conserve and restore environmental assets, members provided forest and water management services covering 18,972 acres of at-risk ecosystems. They magnified their efforts by mobilizing 1,270 volunteers who gave 11,891 hours of service.

The Vermont Youth Development Corps AmeriCorps program has 36 AmeriCorps members serving at innovative, youth-focused organizations to address critical community issues and help youth thrive. In the past year, the members served across the state in both cities and rural communities. They developed cost-effective programs to support Vermonters' education and healthy futures, with a primary focus on rural, low-income, and New American youth. Last year, 3,980 youth benefited from the program's initiatives. A nutrition education program to promote healthy eating and community gardens reached 1,232 youth; and 96 percent of them increased their knowledge, 90 percent adopted healthy behaviors, and 942 had better access to healthy meals and snacks. Physical activity programs such as soccer, hiking, and yoga, had 1,058 participants, 87 percent of whom increased their knowledge and adopted healthy behaviors. The program supports more than 381 military and veterans' family members. The AmeriCorps members recruited and managed 680 community volunteers who gave 7,567 hours of service, at a value of \$165,793.

AmeriCorps VISTA

The Vermont Youth Tomorrow AmeriCorps VISTA project, sponsored by the Washington County Youth Service Bureau/Boys and Girls Club, is a statewide national service program that places members at service agencies, municipalities, schools, and nonprofits across Vermont that provide services that help low-income youth and families escape the cycle of poverty. During the last full program year (August 2014 - August 2015), 27 AmeriCorps VISTA members strengthened the capacity of community-based organizations by raising more than \$149,421 in cash donations which were used to enhance member-supported programs and initiatives. Members also wrote or significantly contributed to 38 grant proposal resulting in \$99,231 in grants, procured more than \$35,920 worth of in-kind donations, and recruited or managed 1,824 volunteers who served more than 24,621 hours.

SerVermont, the State Service Commission, operates a statewide AmeriCorps VISTA project that fights poverty by increasing education and job-training opportunities, creating more food-secure communities, increasing housing, and serving veterans and military families. During the last full program year (April 2014 - April 2015), 25 AmeriCorps VISTA members recruited 644 community volunteers who served 1,680 hours and generated \$491,332 in cash, including one member serving through the Town of Waterbury who raised \$445,000 through writing several grants including a Downtown Transportation Grant, a Stiller Family Foundation Grants, and a HMGP Planning Grant. Members also leveraged \$56,400 worth of in-kind resources including supplies, space, goods and services, produce and other food items, gift donations for clients, household supplies for clients, and equipment.

AmeriCorps NCCC

An AmeriCorps NCCC team partnered with the Franklin Watershed Committee to improve water quality at Lake Carmi and other bodies of water in the Franklin Watershed. The main goal of the Committee is to reduce the amount of nutrients and sediment that make it into Lake Carmi through runoff, as these substances contain phosphorus, which is responsible for the algae and cyanobacteria blooms that decrease water quality in Lake Carmi each summer. The primary service activity the team provided was lining drainage areas with stones to help slow the flow of runoff containing phosphorus, sediment, and various pollutants. More than 120 tons of stone was placed around the entries and exits of culverts and in the ditches that led to the lake. Members also planted grasses and shrubs in key areas to hold the soil and prevent erosion. By reducing the flow of runoff, nutrients are able to filter down into the soil and stay out of the lake, thus helping reduce these problems and improve the lake for everyone.

In service with the City of Barre, an AmeriCorps NCCC team assisted with flash flooding related muck outs and carry outs. In July 2015, the City of Barre suffered from severe flash flooding. This resulted in more than 30 homes in the region affected by excess moisture, mud, and debris. Due to heavy rains, the Gunner Brook jumped its banks, causing damage to approximately 20 houses in Barre City. The team was tasked with mucking out 15 of those homes. AmeriCorps NCCC members focused on assisting households where residents had been displaced and low-income and elderly households. The work that the team completed would have taken homeowners months to complete on their own or would have cost them thousands of dollars.

Senior Corps Foster Grandparent Program

During the last full program year (July 2014 - July 2015), the Rutland Community Programs' Foster Grandparent Program engaged 64 volunteers serving an average of 15 hours a week providing one-to-one intervention to 356 at-risk children in Rutland, Addison and Bennington counties. Among other results, 82 percent of all children served by the Foster Grandparents during demonstrated gains in social and/or emotional development; and 90 percent of the students served by Foster Grandparents in mentoring or tutoring programs showed improvement in academics. The Foster Grandparents provided 65,589 hours of one-to-one service to at-risk children in Rutland, Addison and Bennington counties.

Senior Corps RSVP

Chittenden County RSVP focuses on the areas of education, income (economic opportunities) and health, supporting the growing needs of the nonprofit sector. Last year, 234 RSVP volunteers provided valuable services including working with young children to promote pre-literacy skills in early childhood classrooms; tutoring in elementary, middle, and high school settings; delivering meals to homebound seniors, and providing emergency food assistance to individuals and families. The program reports that 93 percent of the 83 children served by the RSVP "Read to Me" demonstrated gains in literacy skills; and 99 percent of the 169 children served by the RSVP "School Buddies" showed improved academic performance in literacy or math. In addition, 71 percent of the 132 individuals served by Meals on Wheels RSVP volunteers felt this support helped them to remain living in their own home. RSVP volunteers also helped 235 individuals receive emergency food assistance from the food shelf over the reporting year.

Senior Corps Senior Companion Program

Central Vermont Council on Aging sponsors the statewide Vermont Senior Companion Program. During the last full program year (July 2014 - July 2015), the program engaged 68 volunteers serving an average of 15 hours a week providing services to assist other seniors to allow them to continue living independently. The program reported that 100 percent of the individuals served by a Senior Companion indicated they experienced increased social support; 59,845 total hours of independently living services were provided to 312 individuals, including 56 veterans and military family members. The program currently has two former Senior Companions now receiving the services of a Senior Companion themselves. This cyclical relationship illustrates the way service can be paid forward and allows the former volunteer to accept assistance knowing that they had served previously.

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. Champlain Housing Trust is working in the area of increasing economic opportunities through affordable housing for residents. The Social Innovation Fund is investing \$100,000 in expanding the impact of one nonprofit in Vermont.