



2016 MAINE AMERICORPS MEMBERS



A Profile Of The People And Their Experience

Issued February 2017 by the Maine Commission for Community Service



- ❖ Since 2000, the Maine Commission for Community Service has conducted “exit interviews” of AmeriCorps members ending their service in Maine.
- ❖ The online survey tool used gives members a chance to tell about their AmeriCorps experience, plans, accomplishments and share advice about program operations. Responses are anonymous.
- ❖ The Commission uses the input to assess grantee technical assistance needs and give grantee staff aggregate feedback from the members who served in their programs.
- ❖ 223 2016 AmeriCorps members answered the survey. It is their perspective and profile that appears here.
- ❖ The Commission wishes to take this opportunity to thank them for their service to communities all across the State of Maine



Demographic Profile: Who Serves?

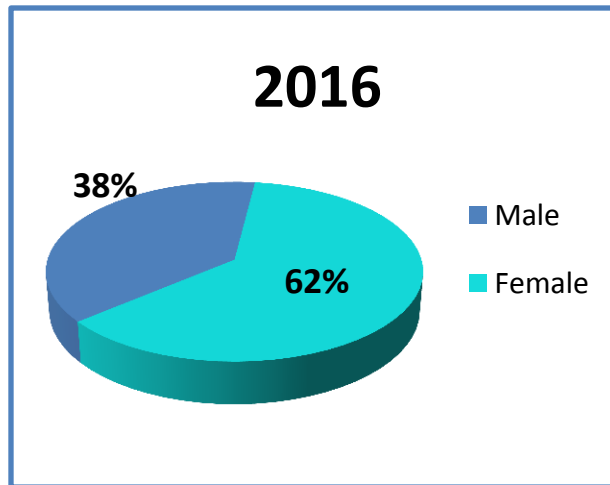
"I have loved every second with this program and can't wait to come back and continue working for the Maine community.

This has changed my life."

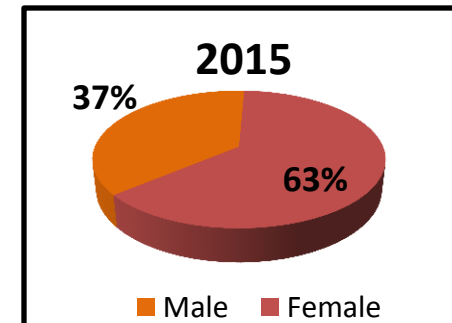
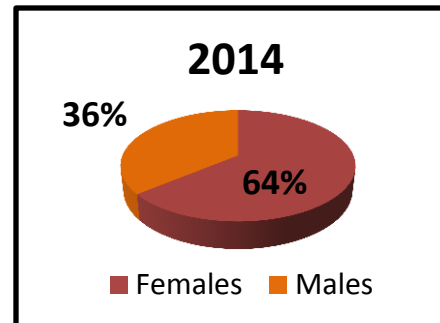
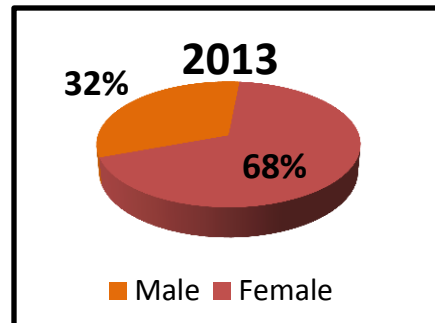
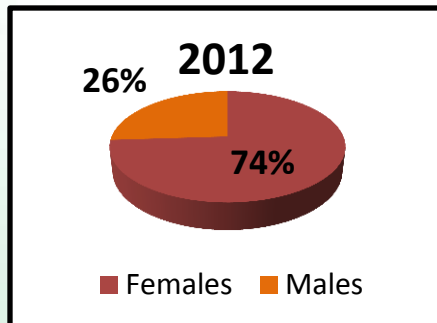




Demographic Profile: Gender



While the majority of members continue to be **women**, 2016 saw a continuation of a trend showing **increasing numbers of male members**

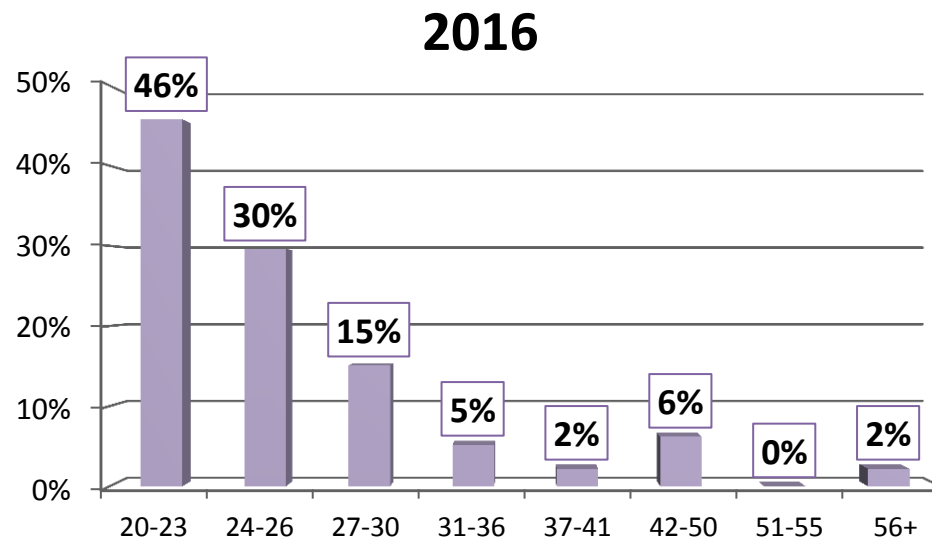




Demographic Profile:

Age

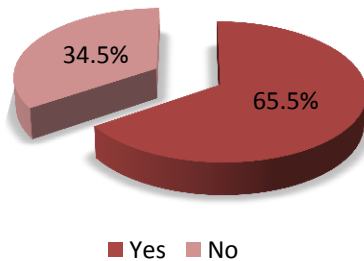
- ❖ In 2016 there were no 18 or 19 year olds who served in AmeriCorps, which is a shift from previous years.
- ❖ An overwhelming majority (91%) of members were between 20 and 30.
- ❖ This age distribution differs from the last two years, both of which saw increases in those members over 30 (18% in 2015 and 15% in 2014), but is inline with trends previous to those years





Demographic Profile: Attracting Individuals from Outside Maine

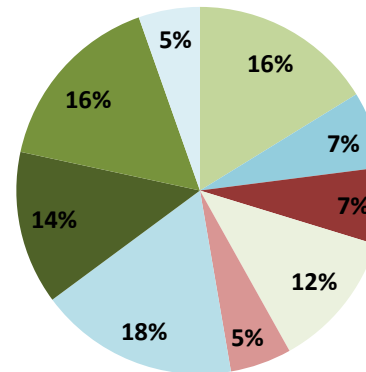
Resident of Maine at the time you applied to serve?



- ❖ Similar to earlier years, many AmeriCorps members serving in Maine in 2016 came from outside of the state (34.5%).
- ❖ 30% of the members who came from outside of the State are remaining here to pursue either another AmeriCorps term, further education, or employment

- ❖ 2 out of 4 who responded with “Other”, highlighted their plans to first go home and then return to continue their involvement with the Maine Conservation Corps, adding another 2.5% to those who will technically be staying in the state.

Of those who came from elsewhere, they plan to...

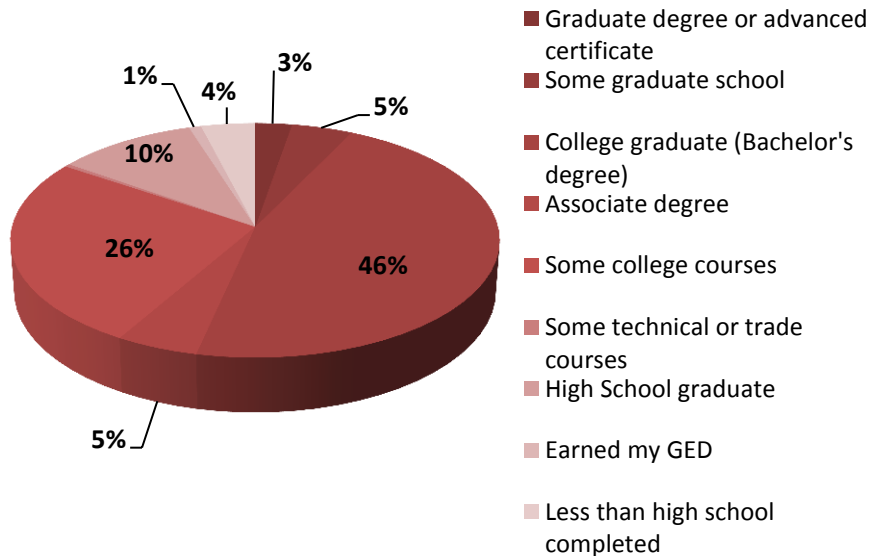


- Attend college or a vocational program in another state.
- Attend college or a vocational program in Maine.
- Don't know.
- Move to another state for work.
- Other (please specify)
- Remain in Maine and work here.
- Return to my home state for work.
- Serve another AmeriCorps term in another state.
- Serve another AmeriCorps term in Maine.



Demographic Profile: Educational Attainment at Start of Service

Completed Education at Time of Application



- ❖ Most Maine AmeriCorps programs set qualifications for serving in their projects and recruit people who have attended college.
- ❖ Therefore, AmeriCorps members in Maine tend to be well-educated.



Demographic Profile: Educational Attainment at Start of Service

- ❖ One positive outcome of the education requirements of Maine's AmeriCorps programs is that they attract skilled and knowledgeable members to the State from other places in the country
 - ❖ In 2016, of the 77 individuals that came to Maine 52% had a Bachelor's Degree,
 - ❖ 7% had either a graduate/advanced degree or had completed some graduate coursework

- ❖ Of the 22 individuals who are planning on staying in Maine after the conclusion of their service year
 - ❖ 64% have a Bachelor's Degree
 - ❖ 4% have a Graduate Degree or Advanced Certificate





AmeriCorps Strengthens Civic Engagement

"[As an immigrant], my AmeriCorps experience has especially [shown] me that we are all able to work in our community regardless of our differences and make a difference for its development."





Volunteer Experience:

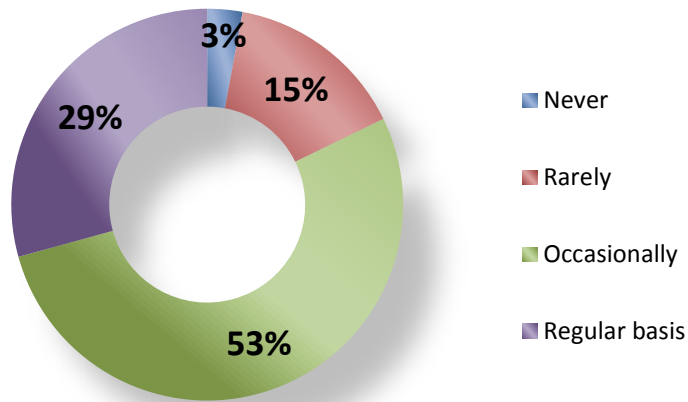
AmeriCorps Builds on Previous Volunteerism

- ❖ “This year of service was invaluable in helping me connect to my local community.”
- ❖ “This experience improved me as a community member, because it made me realize that community service is important...”
- ❖ “I am capable of doing anything I set my mind to.”
- ❖ “You can achieve a lot when you work together.”
- ❖ “I have made a lot of mistakes in my life, but the best decision I made was joining MCC. I have found self worth and learned what I'm truly capable of.”
- ❖ “I have loved every second with this program and can't wait to come back and continue working for the Maine community. This job has changed my life.”
- ❖ “Everyone can be a leader in their own way - we all have a lot to contribute.”
- ❖ “Volunteers can have a tremendous impact on the community.”



Volunteer Experience: AmeriCorps Builds on Previous Volunteerism

How Often did You Volunteer Before AmeriCorps?

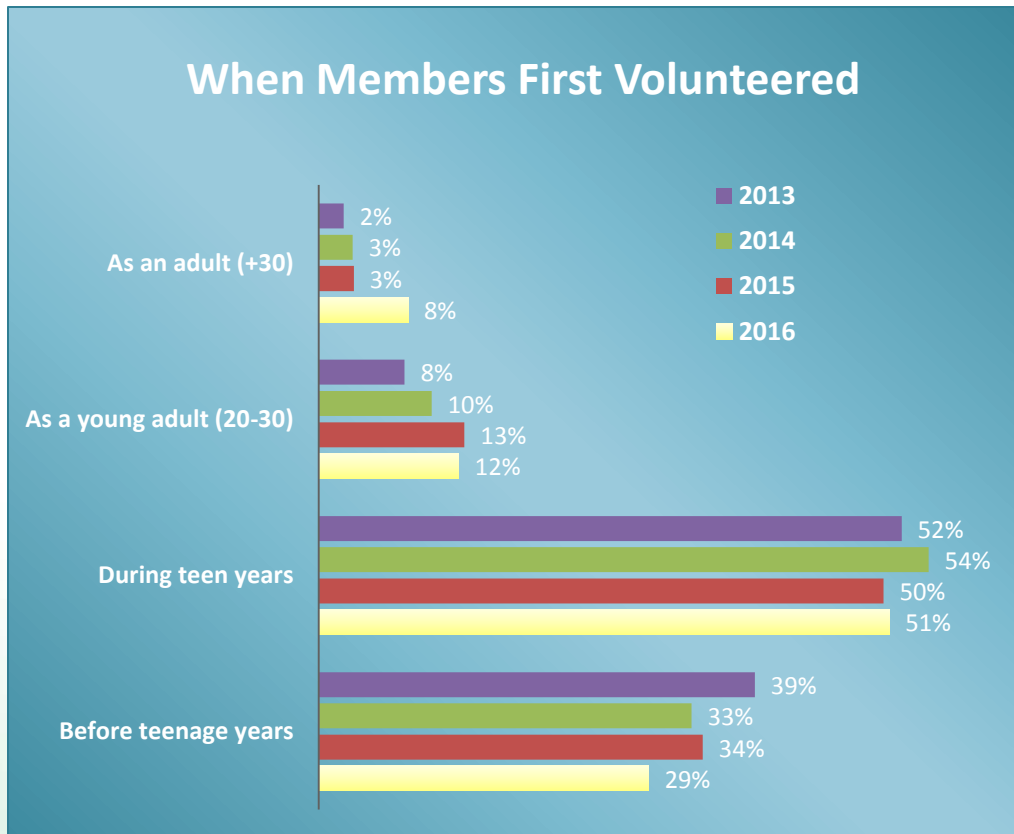


- ❖ Generally, those who commit to a service year through AmeriCorps have previously volunteered
- ❖ Only 18% of 2016 AmeriCorps members had never or rarely volunteered in the past.



Volunteer Experience:

When did AmeriCorps Members First Volunteer?



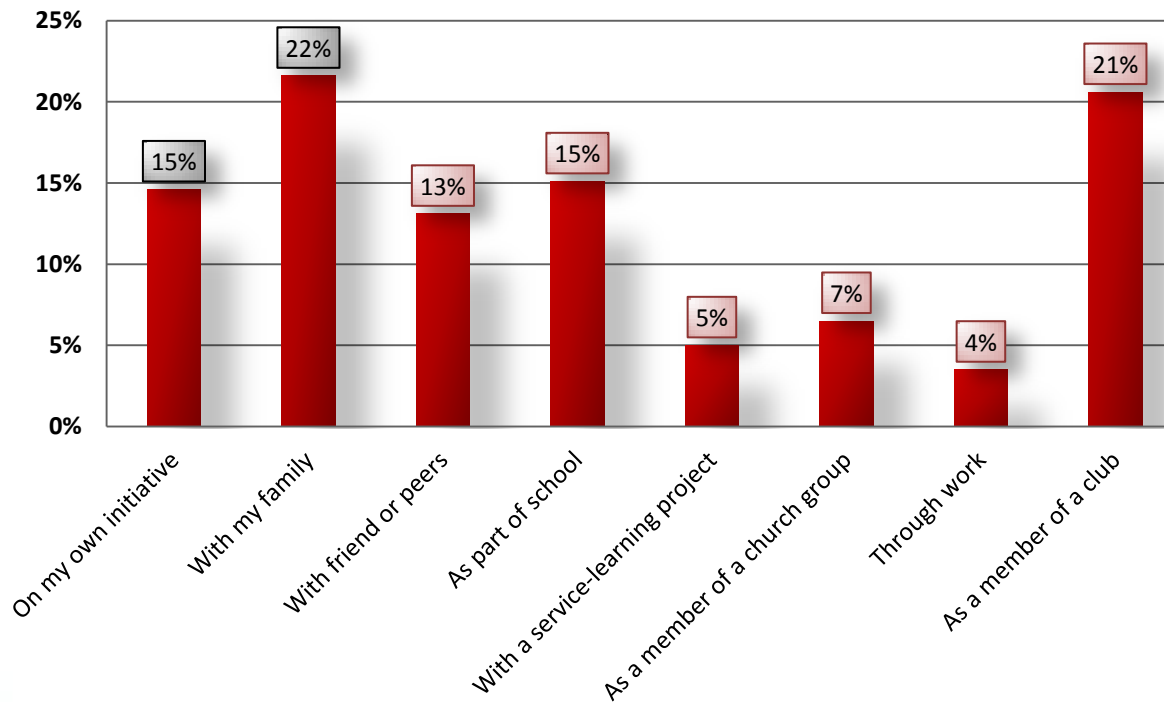
- ❖ The data from 2016 shows the majority of AmeriCorps members first volunteered as children or teenagers. This is in line with prior year data.
- ❖ However, there is a slight increase in the number of members who first volunteered as an adult and slight decrease in the number who first volunteered before being teenagers.



Volunteer Experience:

When did AmeriCorps Members First Volunteer?

- ❖ Nearly two thirds (64%) of members originally volunteered with a social or educational group. Just a third (37%) started on their own initiative or with family.



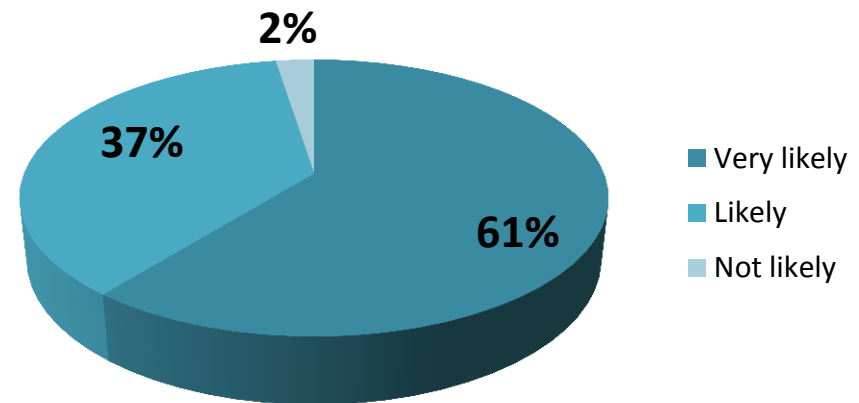


Volunteer Experience: AmeriCorps Deepens Civic Engagement

- ❖ Compared to the 18% who had either rarely or never volunteered before their involvement with AmeriCorps, 98% of the 2016 members said that it is likely and very likely that they will continue their civic engagement in the future.
- ❖ In 2016, 48% of Maine AmeriCorps members went “above and beyond” what AmeriCorps requires by volunteering with a community program that was unrelated to their service assignment.

Between 2003-2015, an average of 51.25% did this.

Intent to Volunteer in the Future





AmeriCorps Service Creates Opportunities

“My AmeriCorps experience has steered me towards nonprofit work and has provided a financial base to use for my education.”



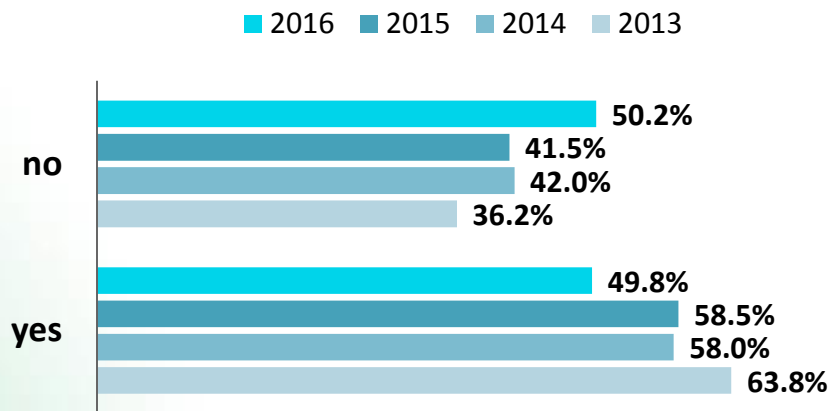


Creating Opportunities: Education

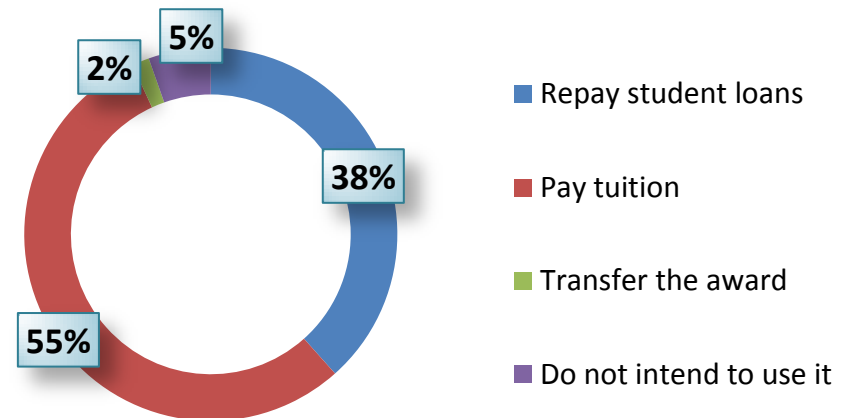
- ❖ 75% of 2016 members say it is somewhat or very likely they will continue their education
- ❖ 92% of members qualified for the Segal Education award

- ❖ 49.8%, a significantly lower number than previous years, owed money on educational loans (nearly 10% drop from 2015)

Members Who Have Student Loans



Plans for Use of Education Award





Creating Opportunities: Education

- ❖ 69% of AmeriCorps members indicated that their experience and award money influenced their future education plans.
- ❖ The responses to the open-ended question (*Q25. If your AmeriCorps experience influenced your educational plans, please tell us how.*) indicate that service experience:
 - Clarified/confirmed career/education goals and choices (48%)
 - Clarified/changed education/career plans, steered towards a different direction (27%)
 - Increased interest in further education by making it financially possible (16%)
 - Taught new or improved skills/experience, helped build confidence and/or resume (7%)



Creating Opportunities: Education

"I never really imagined myself continuing on to graduate school, but now that I know that I have an education award, I am really considering it."

"I got a much better idea about what I am good at and what I want to do."

"By paying off defaulted loans, and bringing me a few steps closer to returning to school."

"I am more interested in trying out jobs in the conservation field and gearing my classes towards my interest in the outdoors."

"My AmeriCorps experience has encouraged me to pursue graduate school, as the education award makes graduate school more accessible and I have a better idea of what I would like to study."



AmeriCorps Member Development

"[I learned that] everyone can be a leader in their own way — we all have a lot to contribute."





Member Development:

Enhancing Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

What are the top lessons you will take with you after your AmeriCorps service?

- ❖ “[How to] manage conflict and disagreements among a diverse group of people.”
- ❖ “Cultivating relationships in the community is extremely important to creating a volunteer base.”
- ❖ “I can engage those around me to make an action plan.”
- ❖ “How to successfully create mentoring relationships that are productive and consistent with students.”
- ❖ “My physical and mental endurance is much stronger than I anticipated.”
- ❖ “Flexibility in the implementation of my service was key to its success.”
- ❖ “Time management skills.”
- ❖ “All can contribute strengths when apart of a cohesive team.”
- ❖ “There's always more to give and working hard is always beneficial.”



Member Development: Enhancing Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

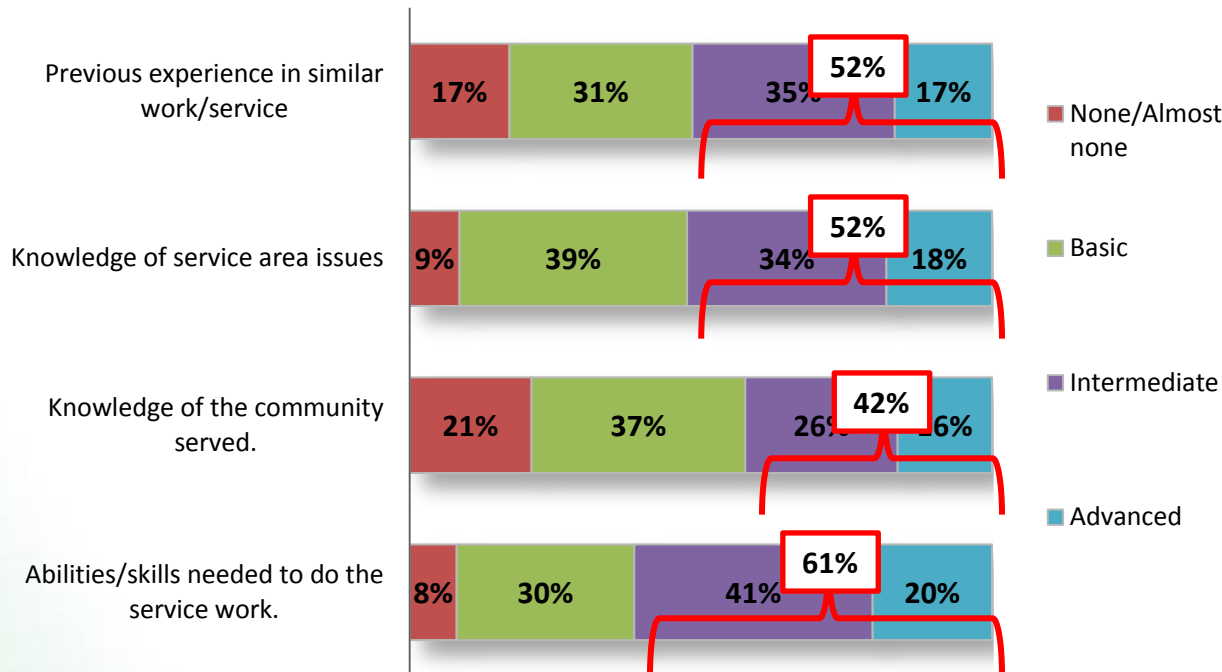
- ❖ The “Exit Survey” for Maine AmeriCorps members asks a series of questions about a set of 48 competencies (skills, knowledge, and abilities).
- ❖ Each person is asked if they had the opportunity to learn or develop a particular competency given their service assignment.
- ❖ The follow-up question for those who answer “yes” asks about the degree of growth or change they experienced in those competencies as a result of the AmeriCorps experience.
- ❖ The 48 competencies are taken from a national standards-based framework for educating adults and workforce development.
- ❖ They can be grouped into categories that describe what *effective adult citizens/community members, workers and team or family members do*.



Member Development: Enhancing Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

2016 Self-Assessment Results

Level of skill/knowledge when applied to AmeriCorps

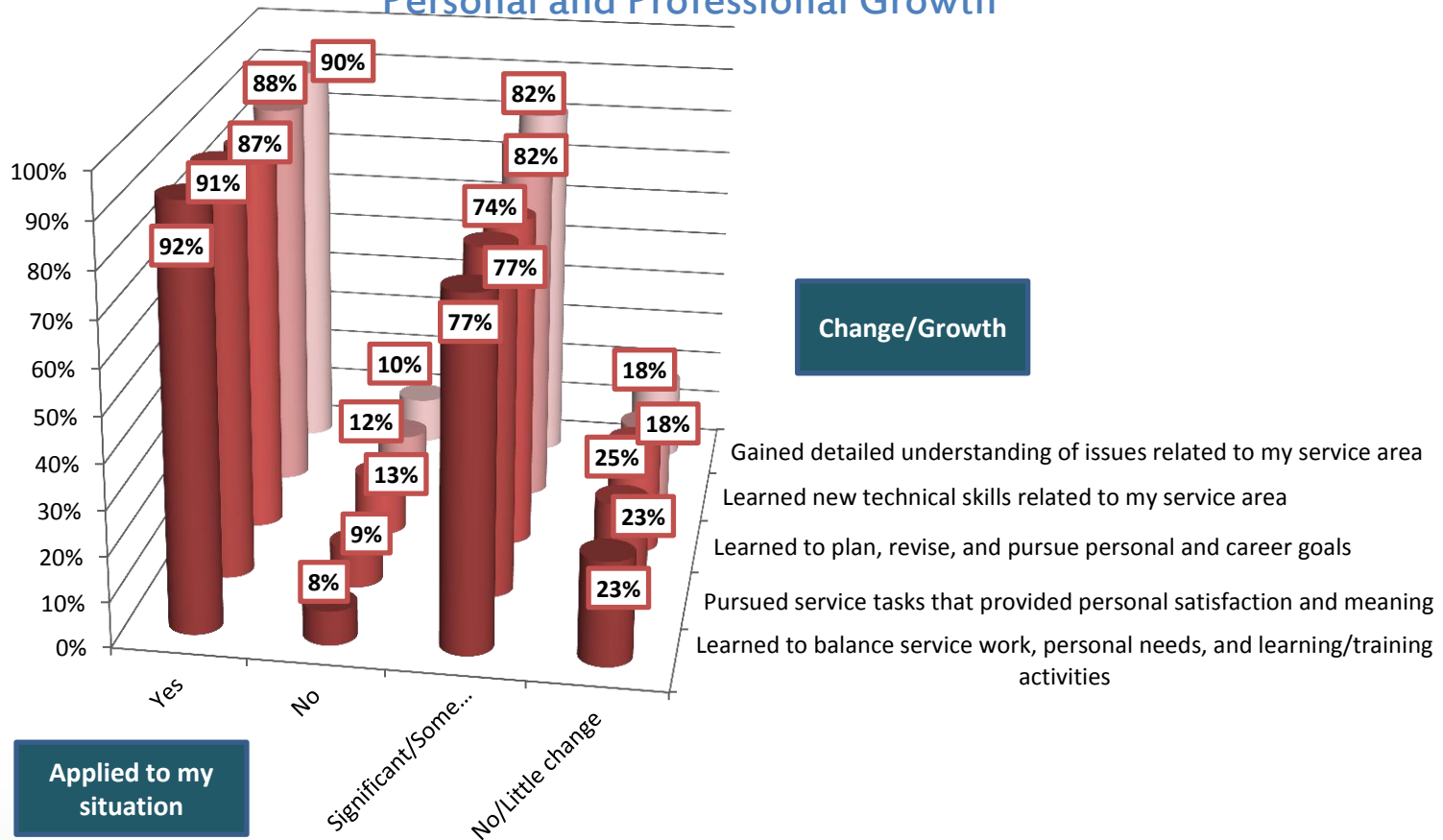


❖ A majority of Maine AmeriCorps members indicate having intermediate/advanced levels of competencies when they start service



Member Development: Enhancing Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

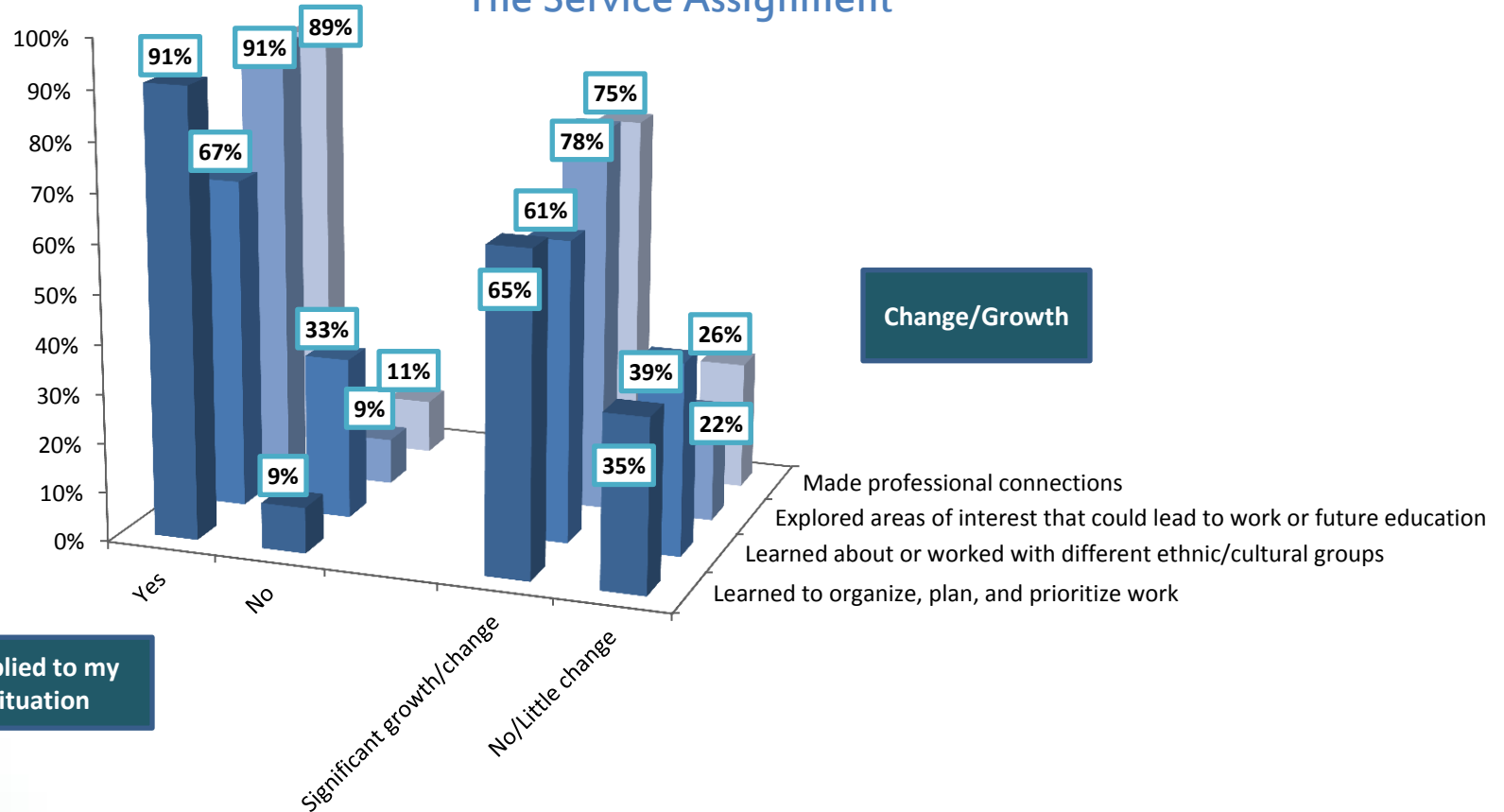
Personal and Professional Growth





Member Development: Enhancing Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

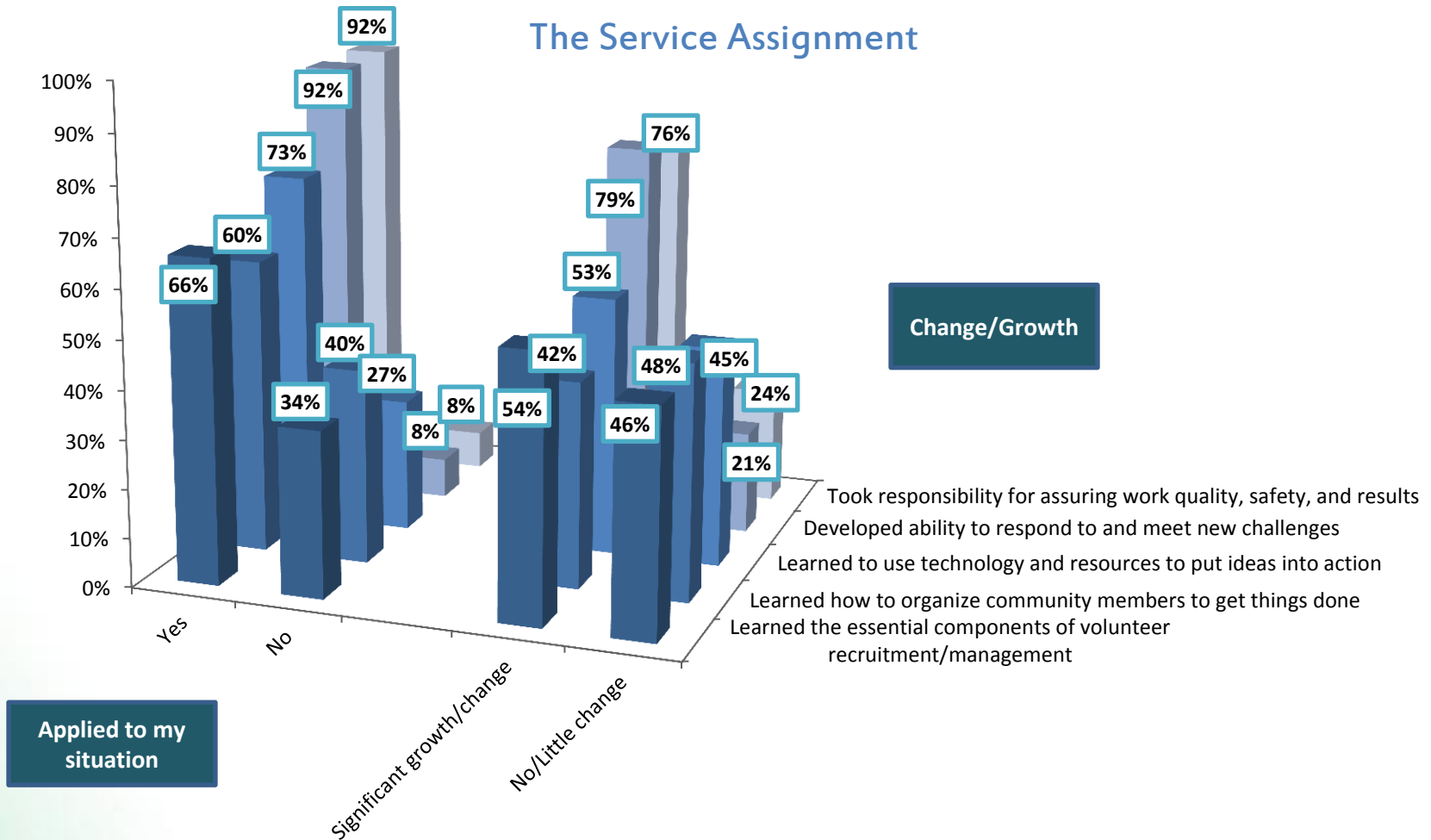
The Service Assignment





Member Development: Enhancing Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

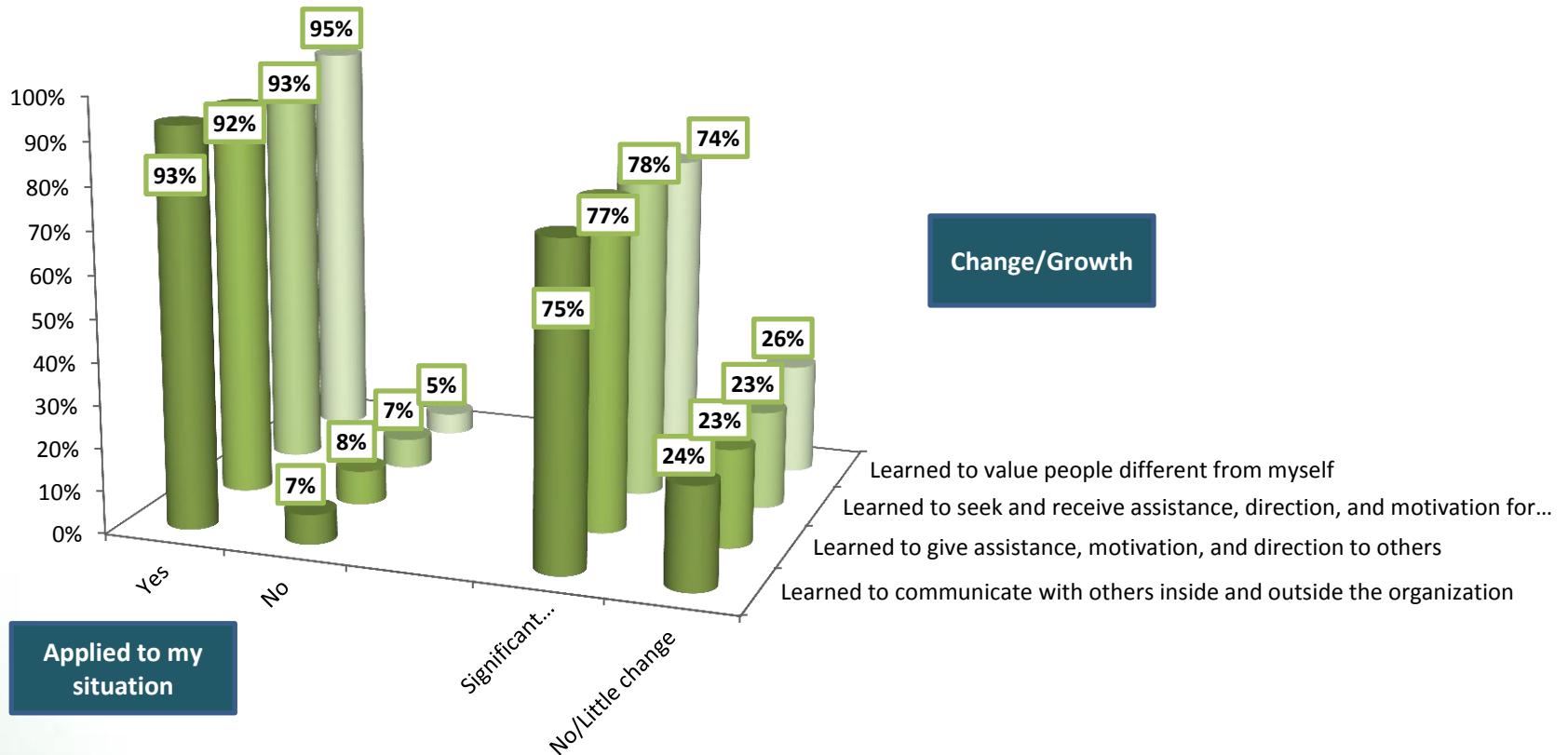
The Service Assignment





Member Development: Enhancing Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

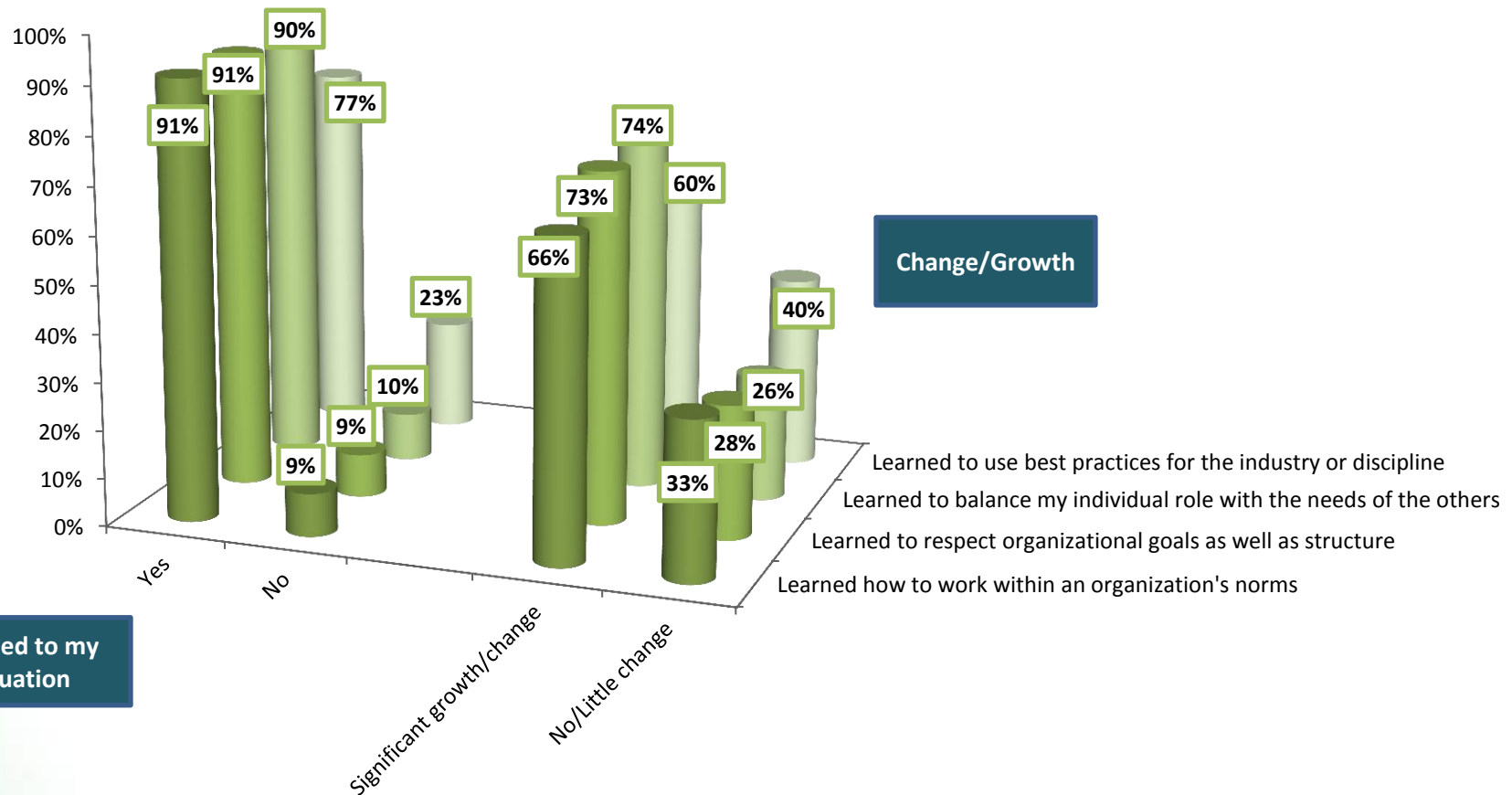
Working with Others Within the Big Picture of Program





Member Development: Enhancing Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

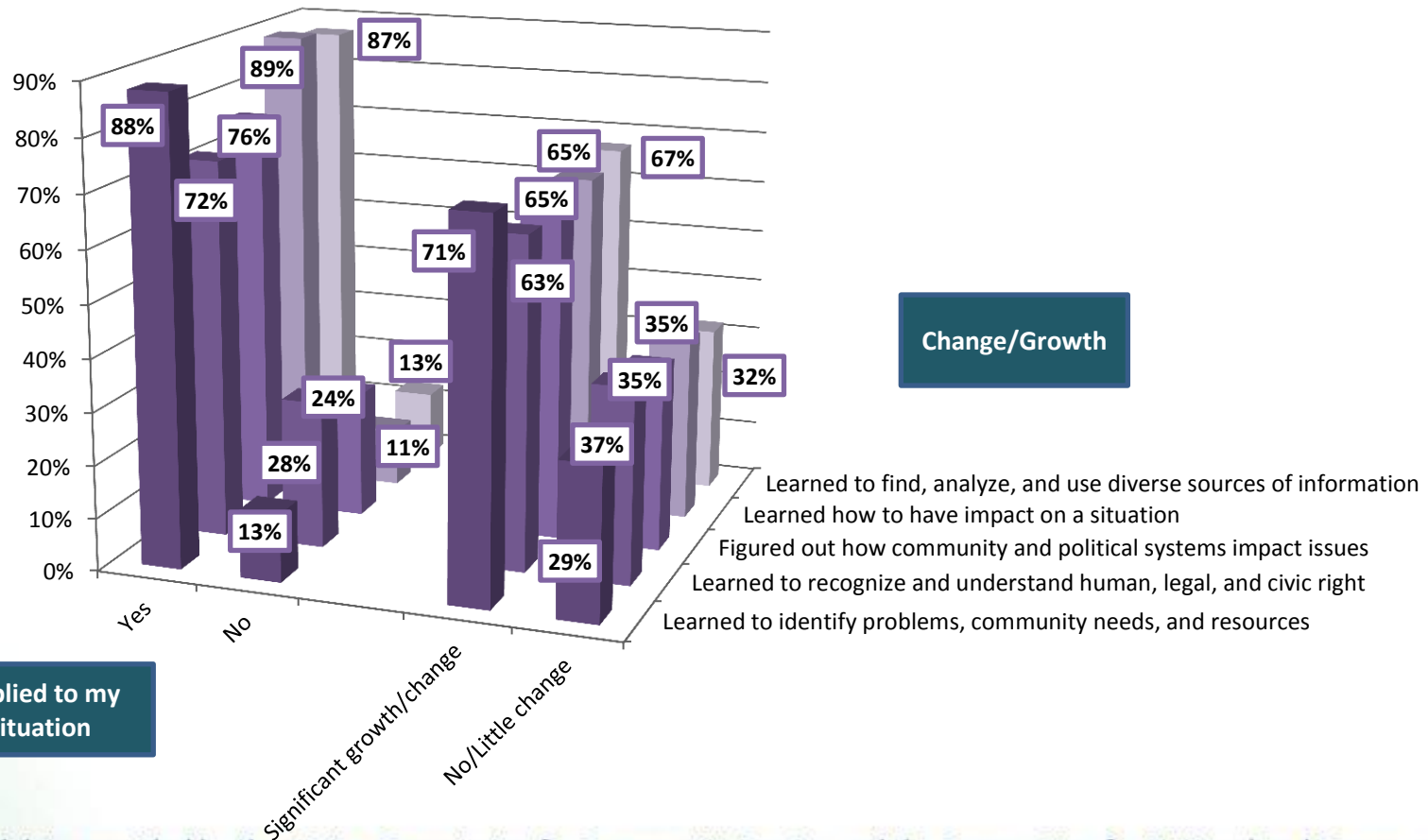
Working with Others Within the Big Picture of Program





Member Development: Enhancing Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

Becoming an Informed Community Member



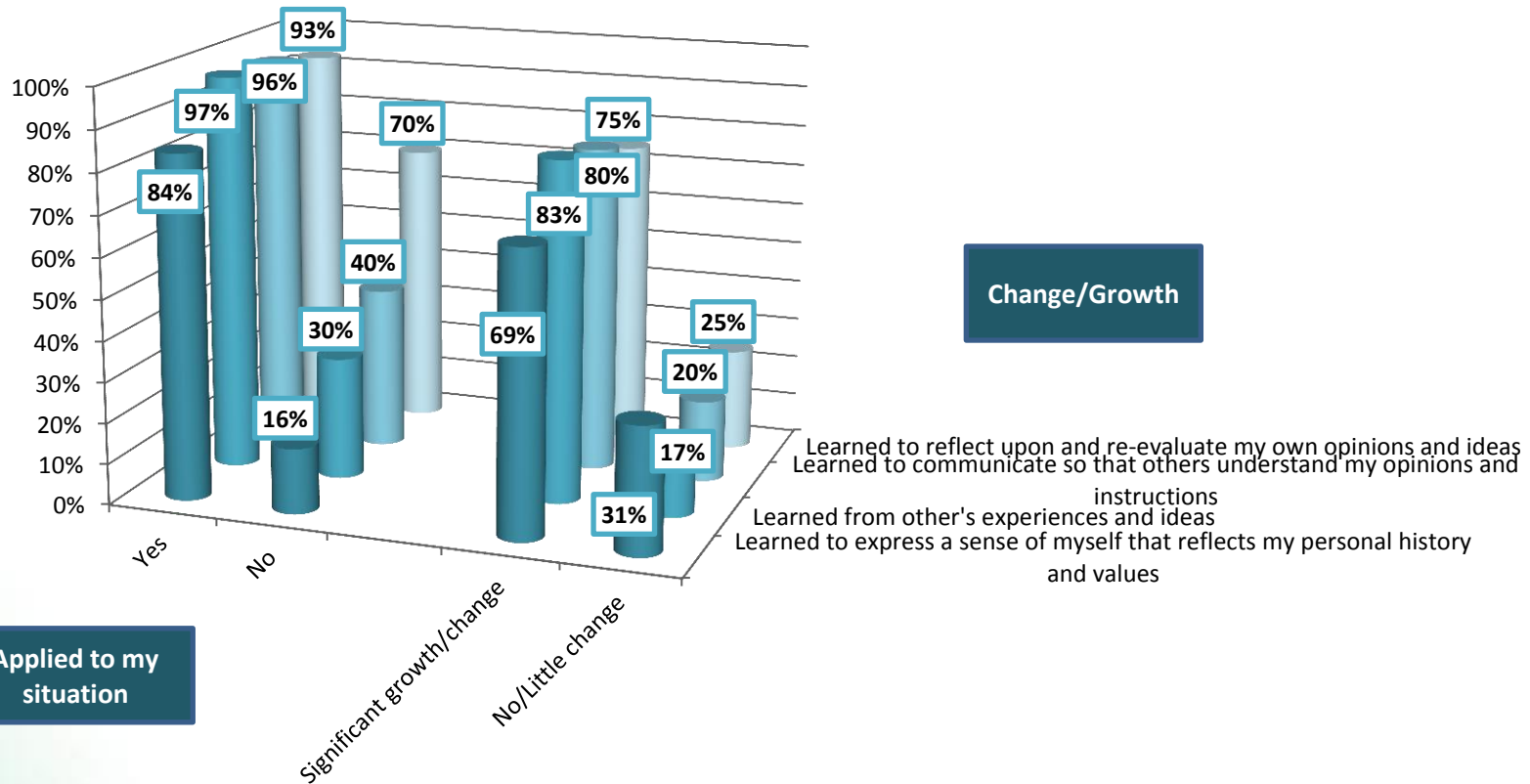
Change/Growth

Applied to my situation



Member Development: Enhancing Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

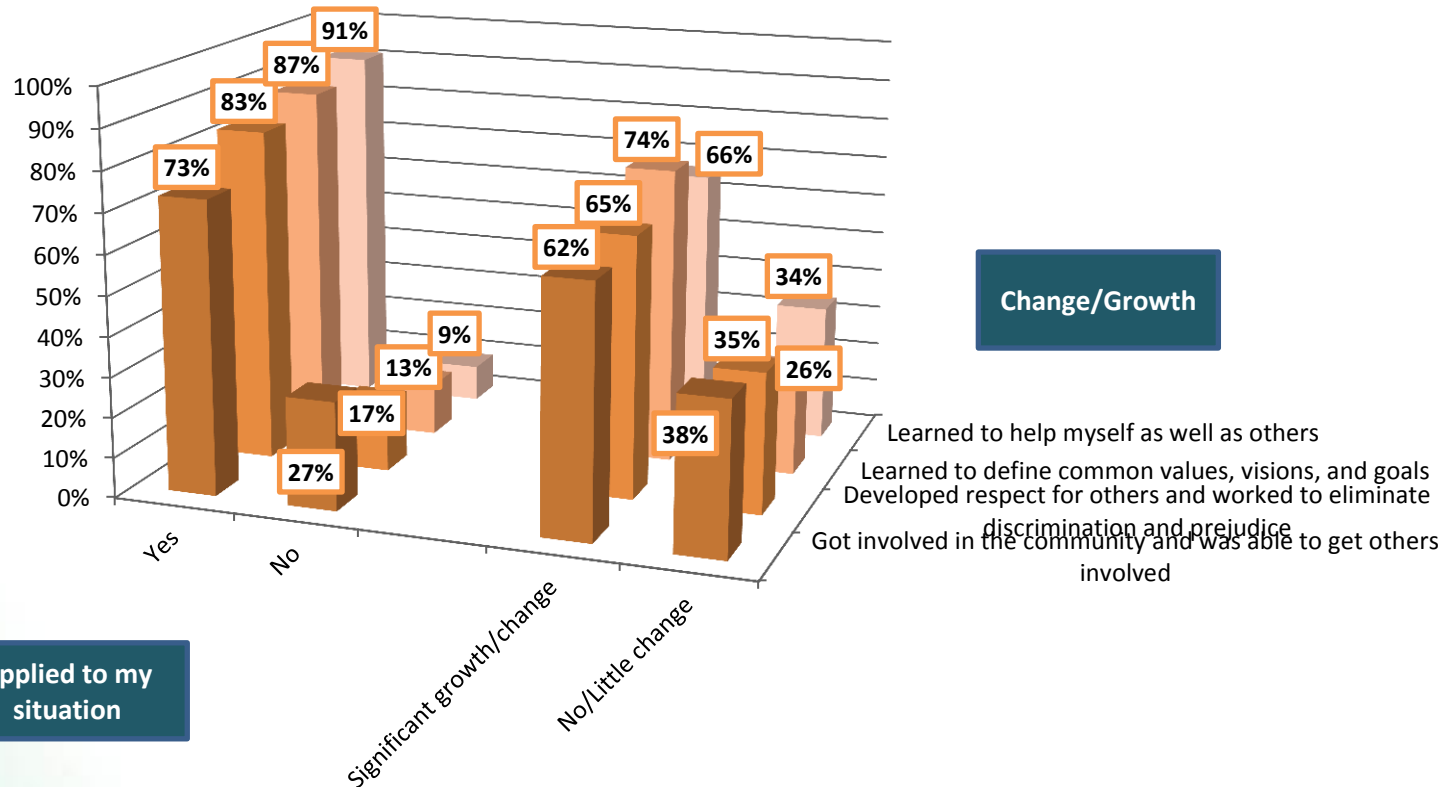
Forming and Expressing Opinions





Member Development: Enhancing Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

Learning to Work with Others to Strengthen Community



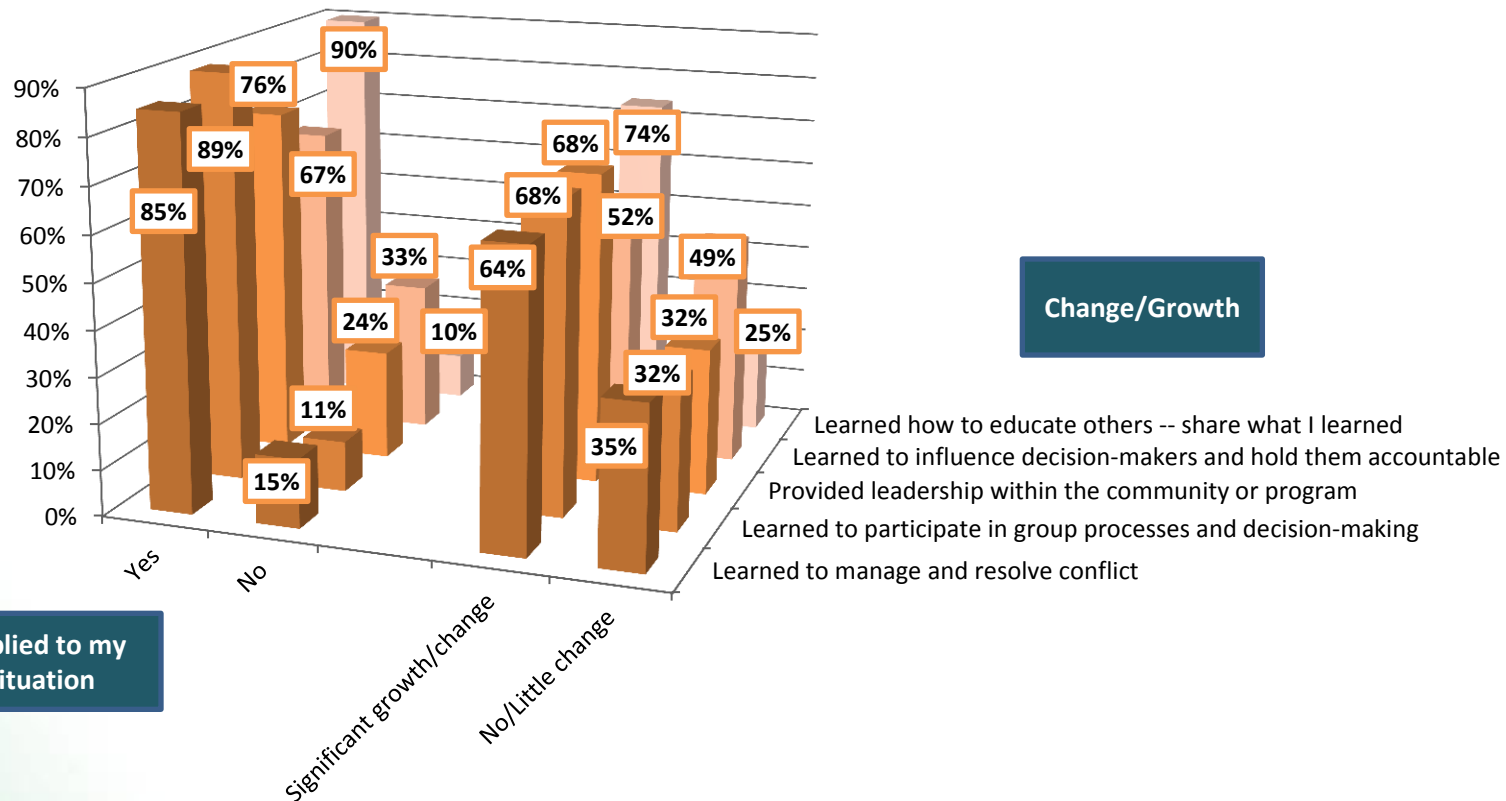
Change/Growth

Applied to my situation



Member Development: Enhancing Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

Learning to Work with Others to Strengthen Community



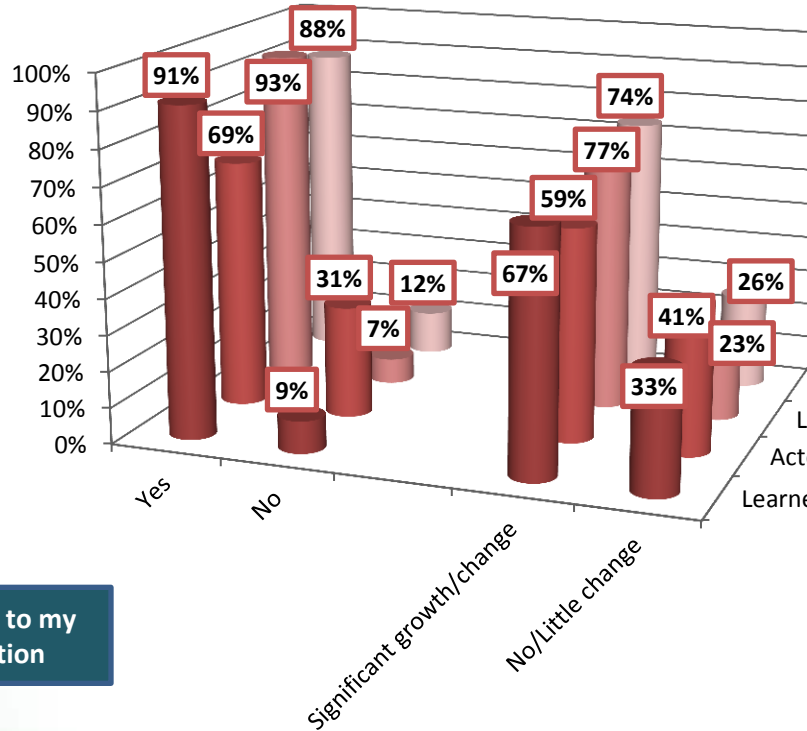
Applied to my situation

Change/Growth



Member Development: Enhancing Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

Promoting Growth and Development to Others



Change/Growth

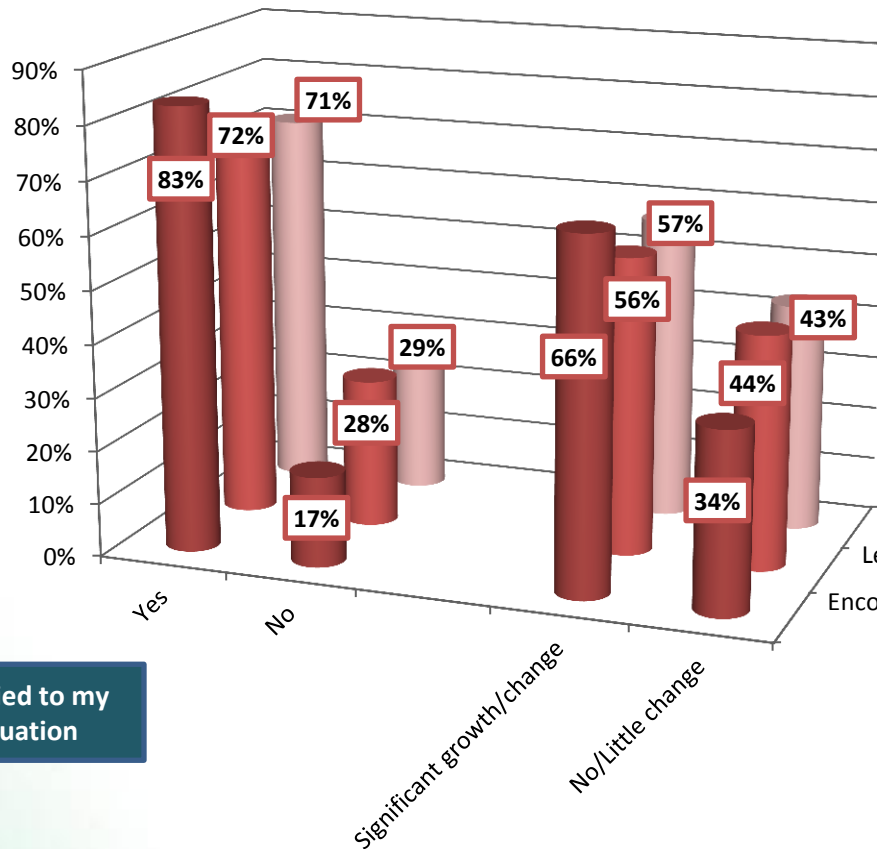
- Formed supportive relationships with the AmeriCorps...
- Learned to balance multiple needs and responsibilities
- Acted as a guide or mentor for other program members
- Learned to make and pursue plans for self-improvement

Applied to my situation



Member Development: Enhancing Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

Promoting Growth and Development to Others



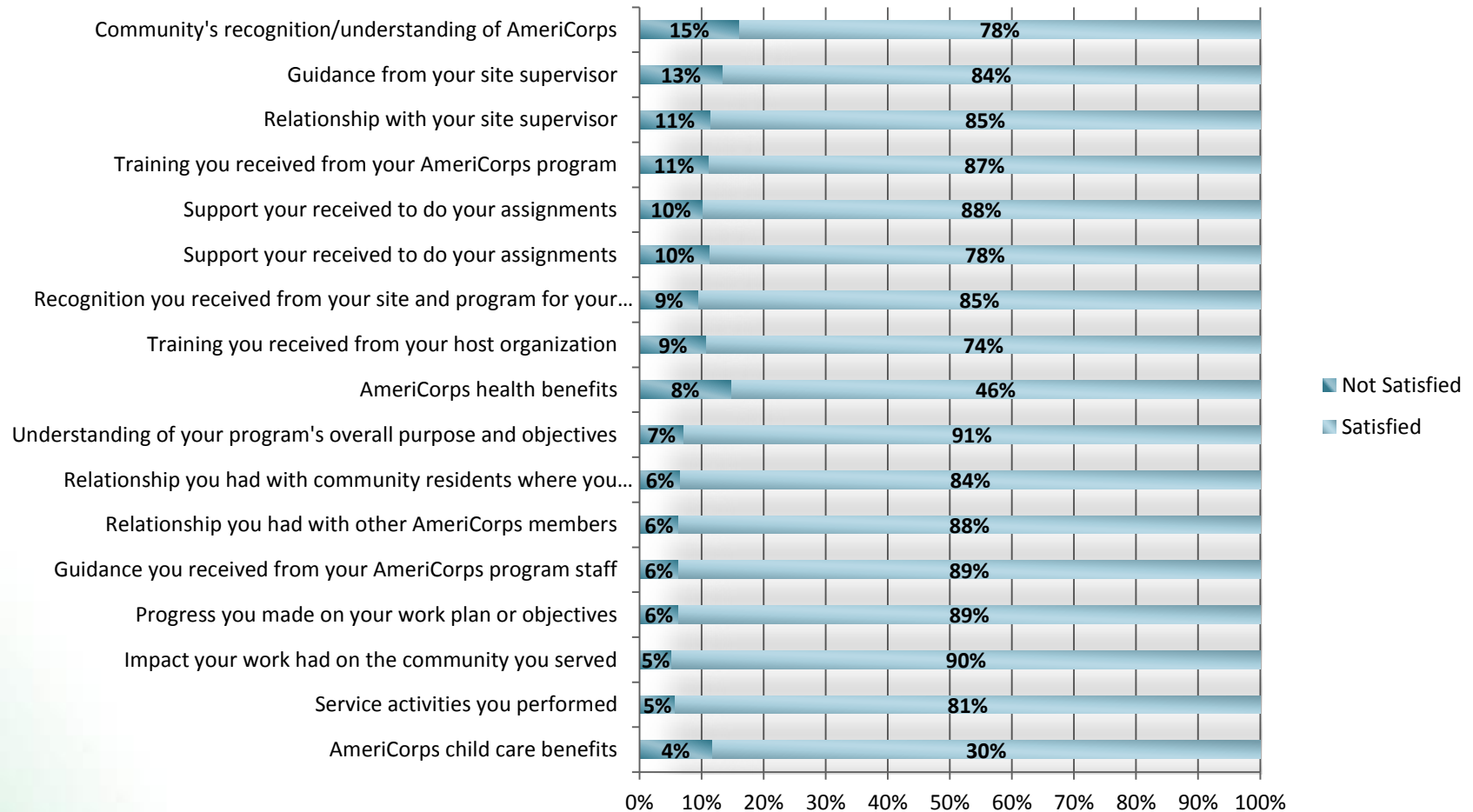
Change/Growth

Helped provide opportunities for volunteers to experience success
Learned how to create a vision for the AmeriCorps member team and work
to achieve it.
Encouraged open communication among the generations represented in my
program

Applied to my
situation



Member Development: Enhancing Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities





The Legacy of AmeriCorps Service in Maine





"Getting students who weren't going to graduate [high school] to go to college."

"Confidence.
Fostering confidence in other's
and gaining some of my own...
I really grew."

"Restoring and
maintaining habitat
for endangered species
in Maine."

"Learning to deal with
different personalities
in a stressful
environment."

"Inspiring students that
they are strong, that their
voices matter, and that they
can change the world. "



"Opening up out of my shell to a group of strangers. I usually keep to myself so this was a pretty big accomplishment."

"I encouraged more than 15 women at my organization to become involved with the gardening and product-making program that was barely existent."

"Learning a bunch of new technical skills!"

"Creating a volunteer program and cultivating relationships with local organizations."

"I think my most significant accomplishment is getting cameras into the hands of over 60 kids in the community, and hopefully that will encourage them to think about, observe, and document their life differently."



For More Information on Maine AmeriCorps Programs...

Contact:

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