



2017

MAINE AMERICORPS MEMBERS



A Profile Of The People And Their Experience

Issued February 2018 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.
- ❖ 176 AmeriCorps members serving in 2017 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



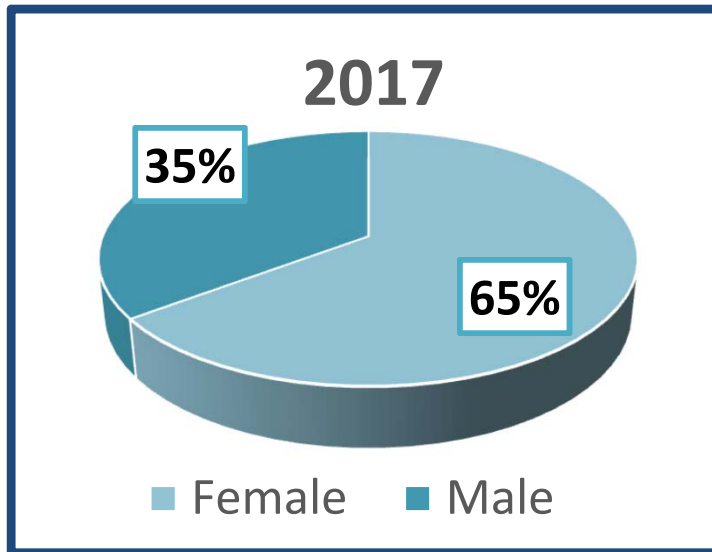
Demographic Profile: Who Serves?

"My most significant accomplishment was being a role model for the students I mentored in my special education class. I encouraged the children to believe in themselves and I supported their goals. I believe all people should realize they have strength instead of feeling hopeless when faced with a struggle or obstacle."

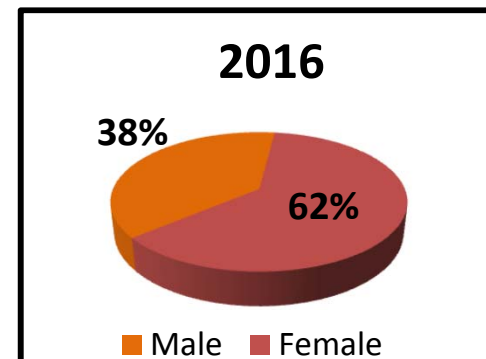
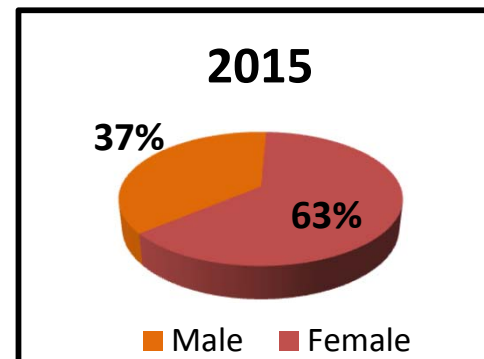
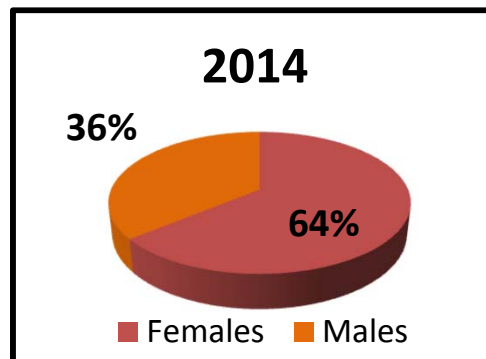
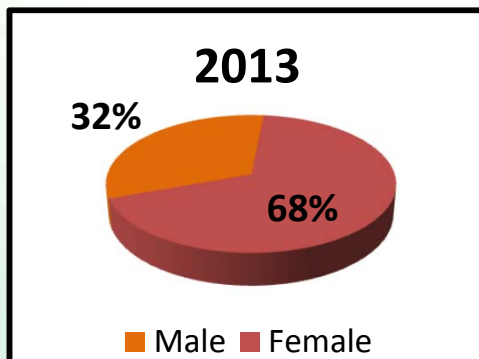




Demographic Profile: Gender



The majority of members continue to be **women**, yet 2017 saw a **decrease in the percentage of male members** for the first time in 5 years. This brought the figure to pre-2014 levels.



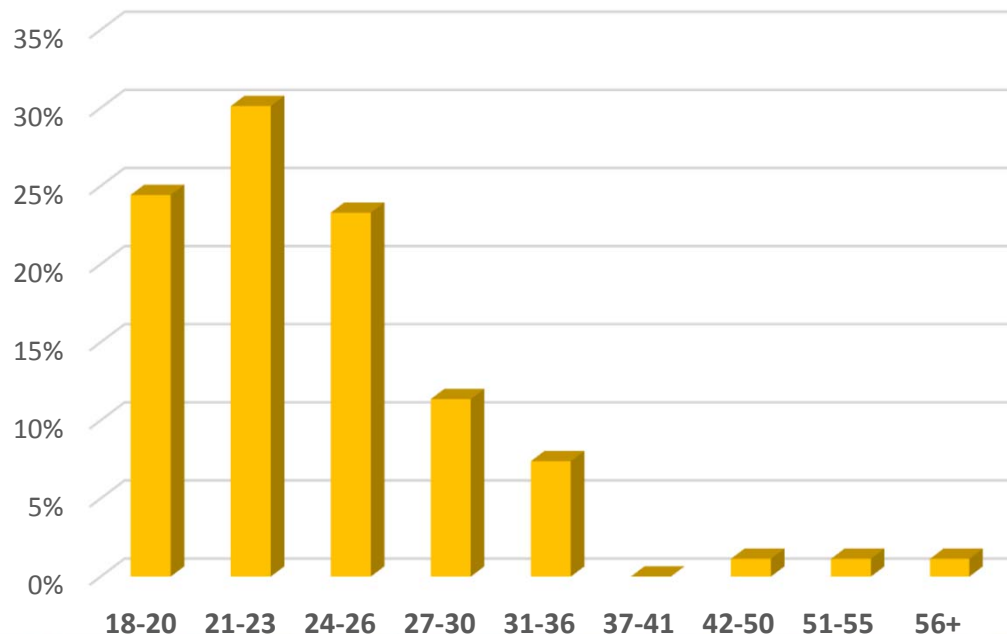


Demographic Profile:

Age

- ❖ An overwhelming majority (89%) of members were between 18 and 30. This is 5 percentage points higher than 2016, mainly due to an increase in the number of 18-20 year-olds.
- ❖ Just 11% of the members in 2017 were 31 or older. This is lower than previous years (16% in 2016, 18% in 2015, and 15% in 2014).

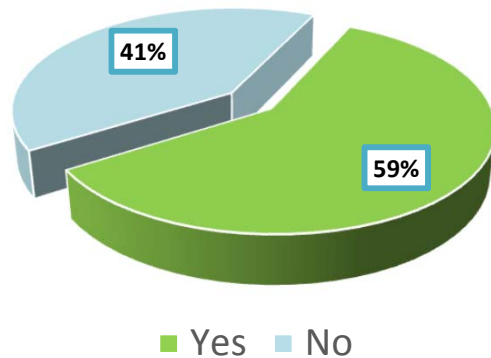
2017





Demographic Profile: Attracting Individuals from Outside Maine

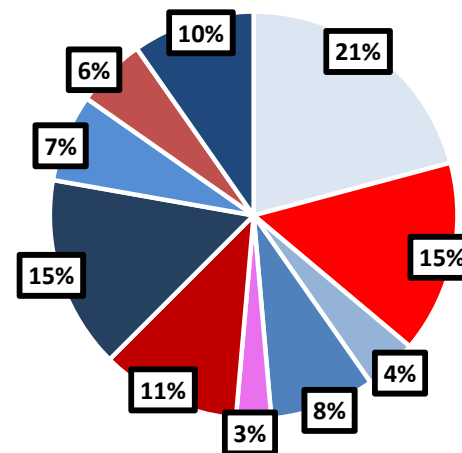
Resident of Maine at the time you applied to serve?



- ❖ Similar to earlier years, many AmeriCorps members serving in Maine in 2017 came from outside of the state (41%), but this statistic is significantly higher than last year (35%)
- ❖ 32% of the members who came from outside of the State are remaining here to pursue either another AmeriCorps term, further education, or employment

- ❖ 2 respondents replied “other”: 1 of which plans to “be a leader with MCC” and the other, “I have one year of school left in Maine and I would like to continue to work in Maine once I graduate”, **bumping the total percent of non-Mainers planning to stay in the state to 35%**

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

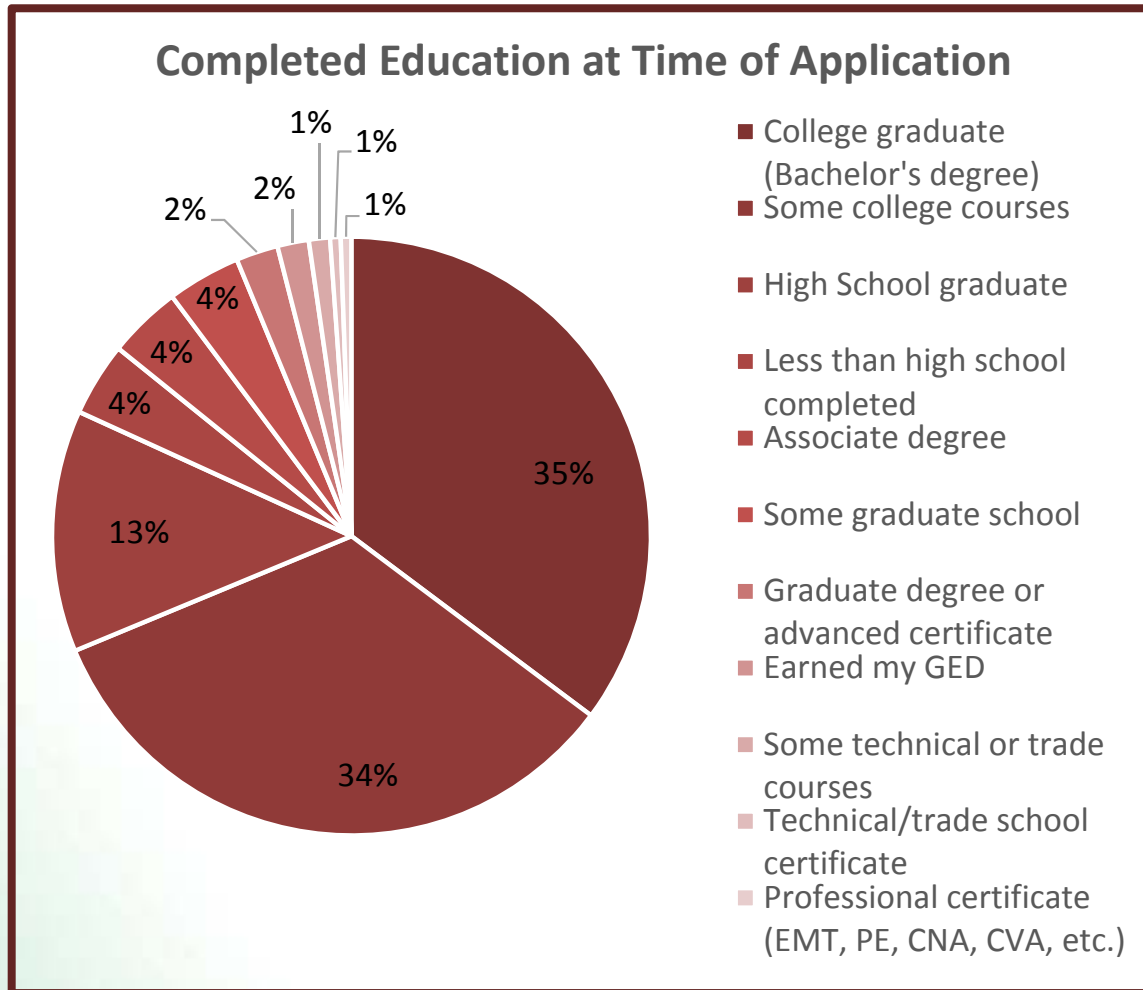


- Attend college or a vocational program in another state.
- Attend college or a vocational program in Maine.
- Don't know.
- Move to another state for work.
- Other
- Remain in Maine and work here.
- Return to my home state for work.
- Serve another AmeriCorps term in another state.
- Serve another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



Demographic Profile:

Educational Attainment at Start of Service



- ❖ 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.
- ❖ The top 3 categories are:
 - ❖ 35%: Bachelor's Degree
 - ❖ 34%: Some College Courses
 - ❖ 13% High School Graduate
- ❖ Compared to last year, 2017 saw an 11% decrease in the number of members with a college degree and an 8% jump in members who had taken some college courses.



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 2017, of the 72 individuals that came to Maine:
 - ❖ 33% had a Bachelor's Degree
 - ❖ 7% had either a graduate/advanced degree or had completed some graduate coursework

- ❖ Of the 25 individuals who are planning on staying in Maine after the conclusion of their service year
 - ❖ 48% have completed some college courses
 - ❖ 36% have a Bachelor's Degree
 - ❖ 4% have a Graduate Degree





AmeriCorps Strengthens Civic Engagement

“AmeriCorps gave me an opportunity to grow as a person and provided me with a chance to get to know my community members better and give back to many people that have always been there.”





Volunteer Experience:

AmeriCorps Builds on Previous Volunteerism

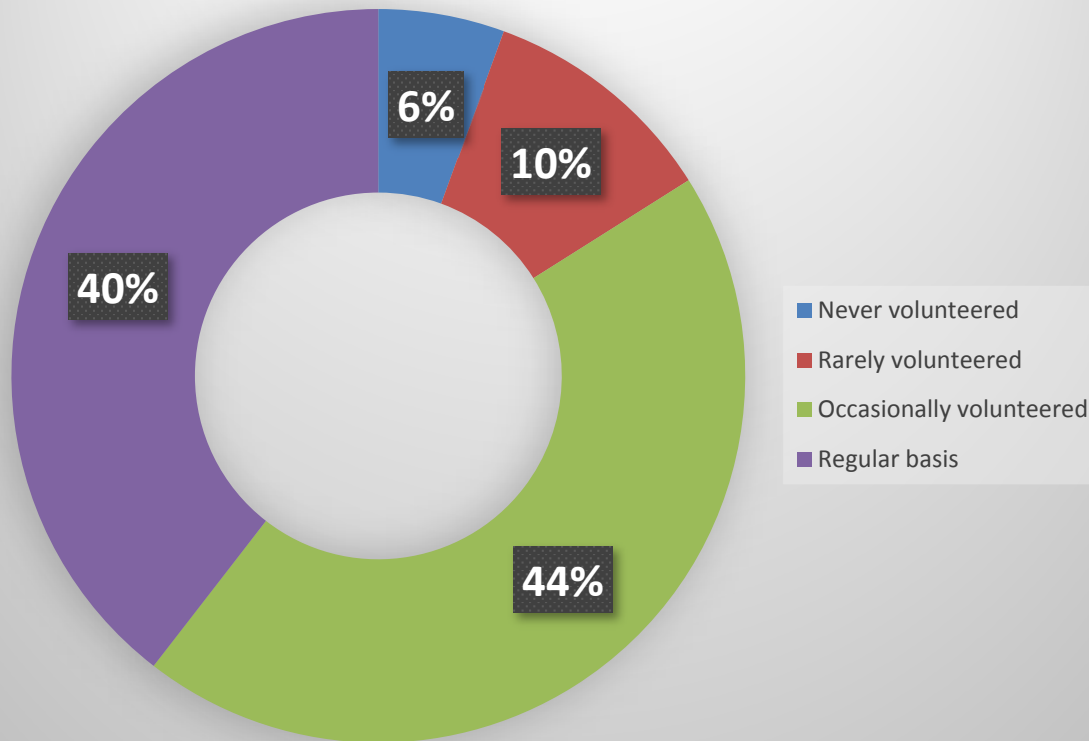
- ❖ “I can make an impact within my community as an individual and volunteering does make a difference.”
- ❖ “I have learned the intricacies and challenges of starting a social enterprise and the time, organization, and community support that it requires.”
- ❖ “My AmeriCorps service reinforced my commitment to volunteering.”
- ❖ “A good job is completed with slow, consistent, and deliberate effort.”
- ❖ “My service experience has connected me with thousands of resources that I will continue to use as a veteran councilor.”
- ❖ “You have to work closely with local community members to have success in your volunteer coordination efforts.”
- ❖ “I learned how much infrastructure goes into organizing volunteers whether it is for a natural disaster or just to help out someone in need.”



Volunteer Experience:

AmeriCorps Builds on Previous Volunteerism

How often did you volunteer prior to your AmeriCorps service?



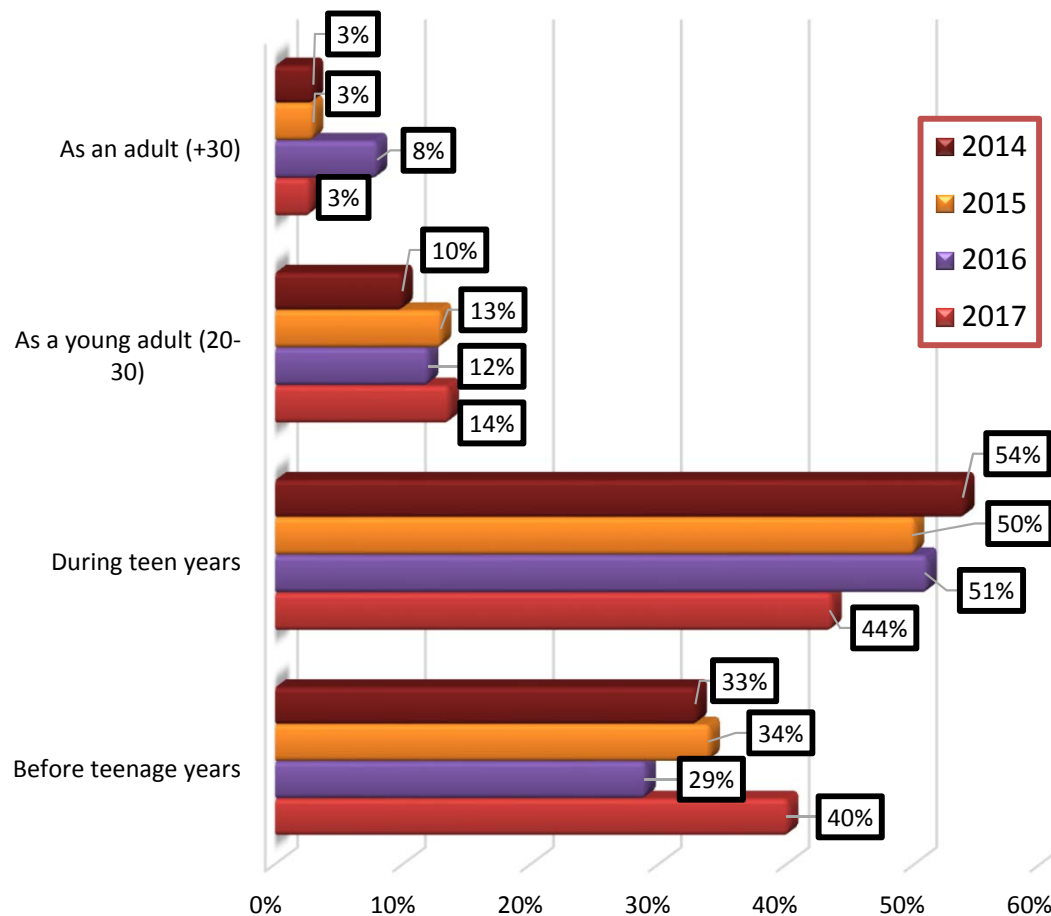
- ❖ Generally, those who commit to a service year through AmeriCorps have previously volunteered
- ❖ Only 16% of 2017 AmeriCorps members had never or rarely volunteered in the past, which is 2 percentage points less than last year.



Volunteer Experience:

When did AmeriCorps Members First Volunteer?

When Members First Volunteered



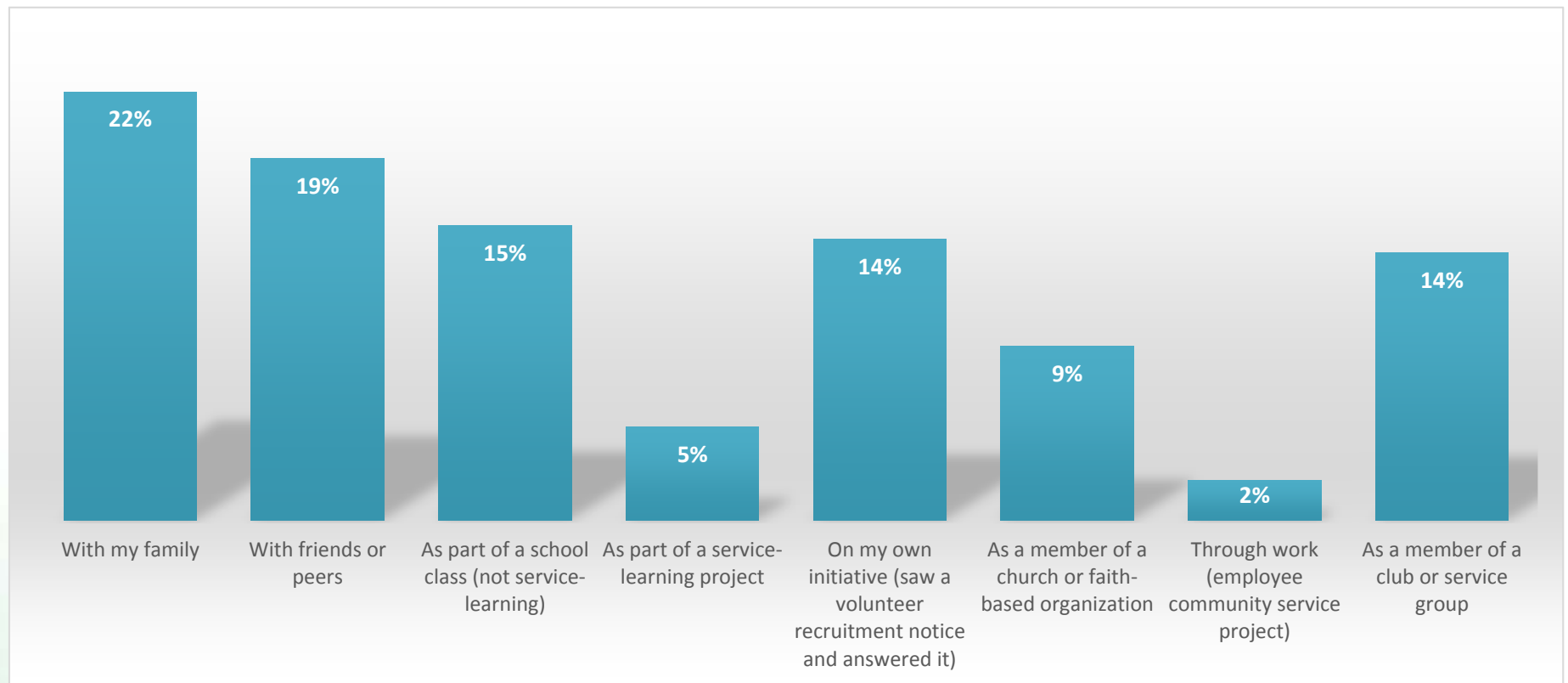
- ❖ The data from 2017 shows the majority of AmeriCorps members first volunteered as children or teenagers. This is in-line with prior years' data.
- ❖ Yet, compared to these earlier years, there is a jump in members who first volunteered as children and a drop in those who first volunteered as teenagers.



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 (36%) started on their own initiative or with family.

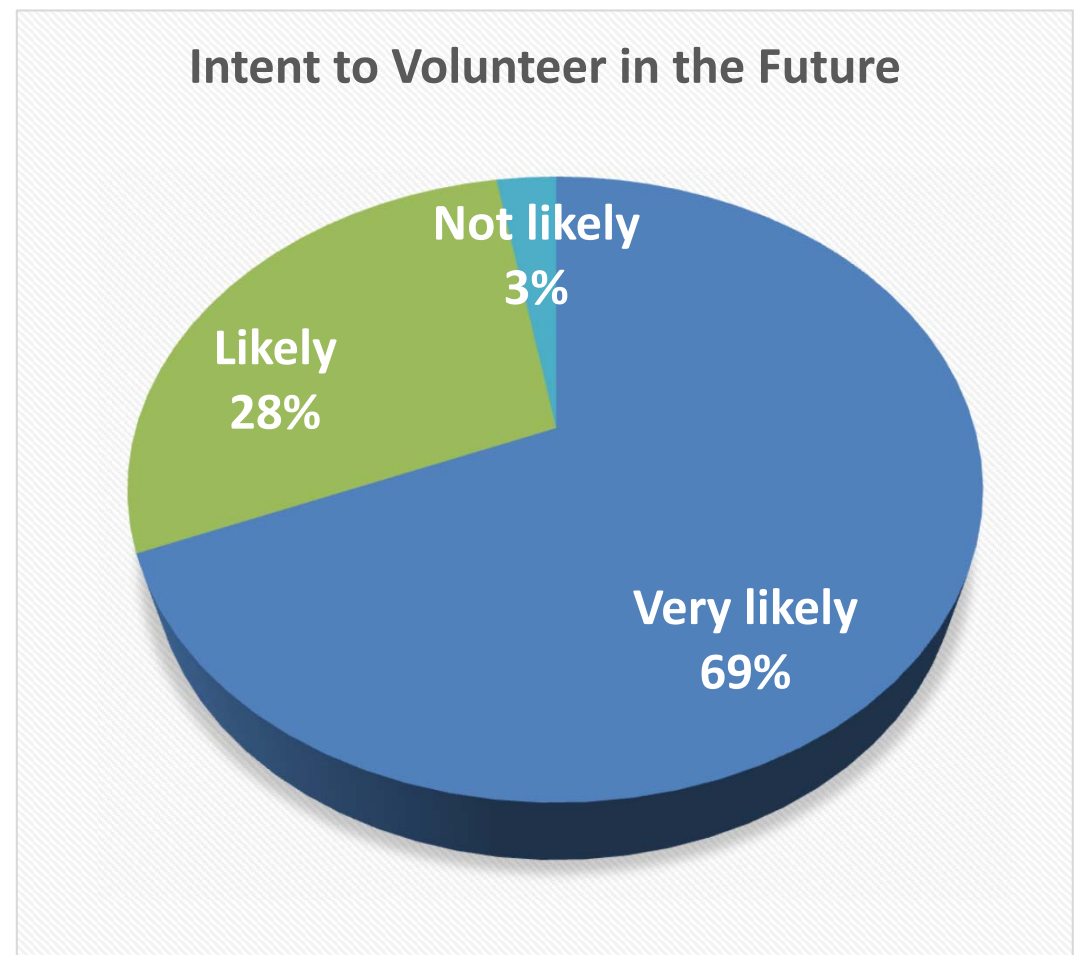




Volunteer Experience: AmeriCorps Deepens Civic Engagement

- ❖ Compared to the 16% who had either rarely or never volunteered before their involvement with AmeriCorps, 97% of the 2017 members said that it is likely and very likely that they will continue their civic engagement in the future.
- ❖ In 2017, 43% 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 2003-2016, an average of 51% did this.





AmeriCorps Service Creates Opportunities

"It influenced my experience because I am going to continue the pathway of my career and working with youths and multilingual people."





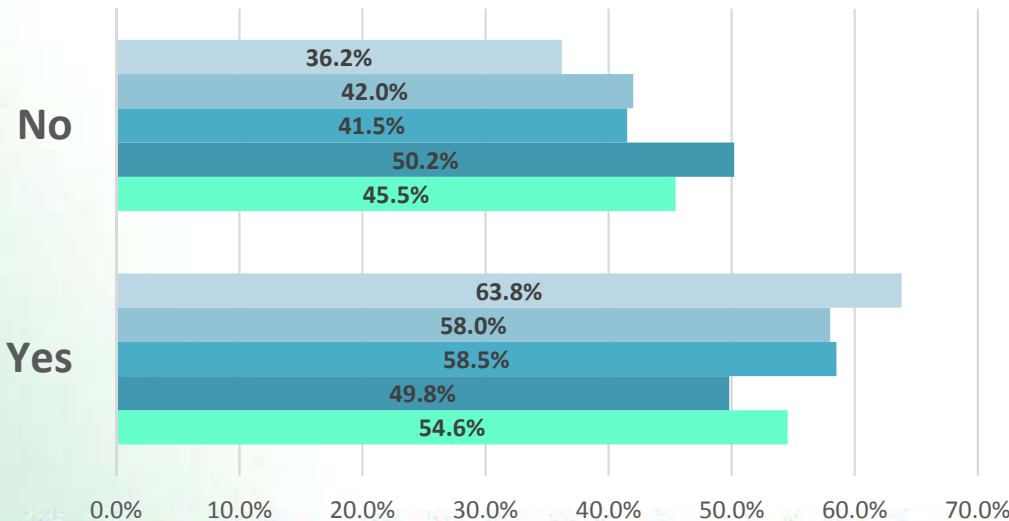
Creating Opportunities: Education

- ❖ 79% of 2017 members say they are “somewhat” or “very likely” to continue their education
- ❖ 90% of members qualified for the Segal Education award

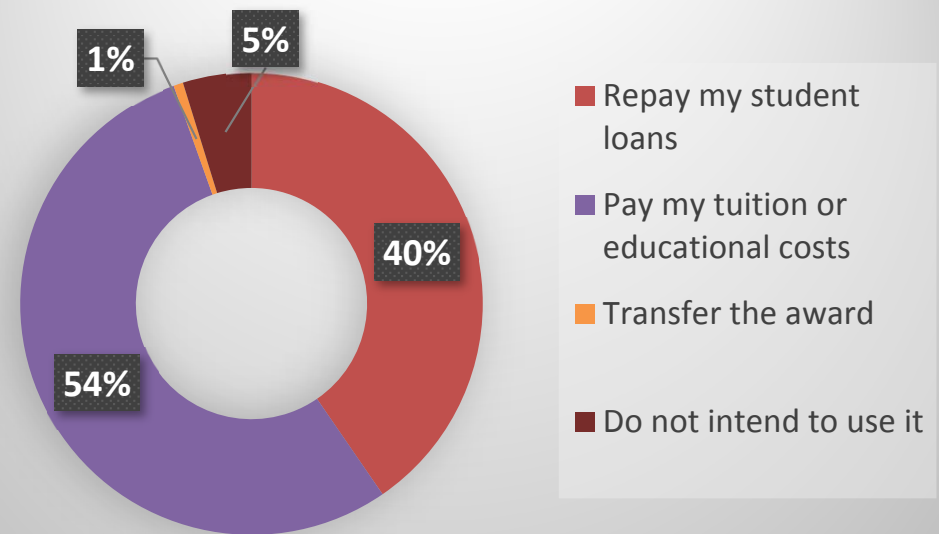
- ❖ 54.6% of members owed money on educational loans, a higher number than 2016, but still lower than previous years

Members Who Have Student Loans

■ 2013 ■ 2014 ■ 2015 ■ 2016 ■ 2017



Plans for Educational Award





Creating Opportunities: Education

- ❖ 58% 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/changed education/career plans, steered towards a different direction (40%)
 - Clarified/confirmed career/education goals and choices (34%)
 - Increased interest in further education by making it financially possible (15%)
 - Taught new or improved skills/experience, helped build confidence and/or resume (13%)



Creating Opportunities: Education

"My AmeriCorps experience gives me new insight into what I might study when I continue my education and the types of opportunities that exist in my field. Additionally, my education award makes continuing my education more feasible."

"Easing the financial stress of education encourages me to continue a university education."

"It helped me decide which subject I wanted to continue my studies in."

"I have narrowed my plans for the future because of this experience. I knew I wanted to be a teacher, but I now want to pursue further education/certification in ESL because of work with one student this year."

"The AmeriCorps education award will help me to be financially able to pay off education debts."



AmeriCorps Member Development

"I facilitated a youth garden program in a low-income neighborhood. This programming was definitely one of the biggest challenges of my job, but I also think it was the most impactful because it gave kids a space to feel ownership for something."





Member Development:

Enhancing Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

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

- ❖ “[The top 3 lessons I’m taking away are] 1) advocate for yourself; 2) serve others and give back to your community; and 3) explore opportunities that scare you.”
- ❖ “[AmeriCorps has taught me] to think as a community.”
- ❖ “[I’ve learned to] communicate opinions and ideas to those with or without similar viewpoints.”
- ❖ “Community events are important to attend for networking and learning.”
- ❖ “I learned that unorganized volunteers can harm more than they help.”
- ❖ “Prioritize and focus, but have back up plans.”
- ❖ “Records, notes, standard operating procedures, and metadata are essential.”
- ❖ “Communicating your ideas and opinions clearly and listening to others’ ideas and opinions fully is the key to working and living successfully as a team.”



Member Development: Enhancing Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

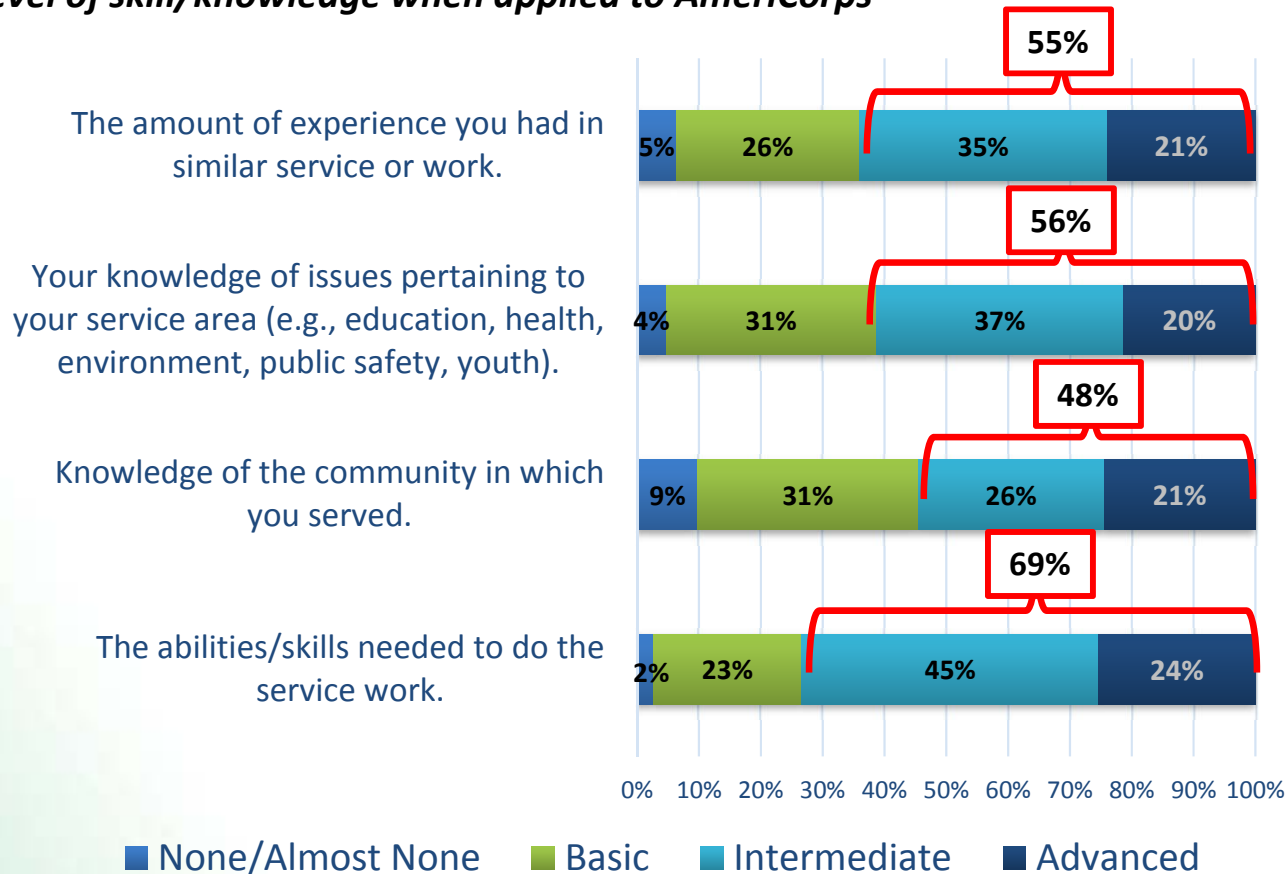
- ❖ The “Exit Survey” for Maine AmeriCorps members asks a series of questions about a set of 48 competencies (skills, knowledge, and abilities).
- ❖ Each person is asked if they had the opportunity to learn or develop a particular competency given their service assignment.
- ❖ The follow-up question 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

2017 Self-Assessment Results

Level of skill/knowledge when applied to AmeriCorps

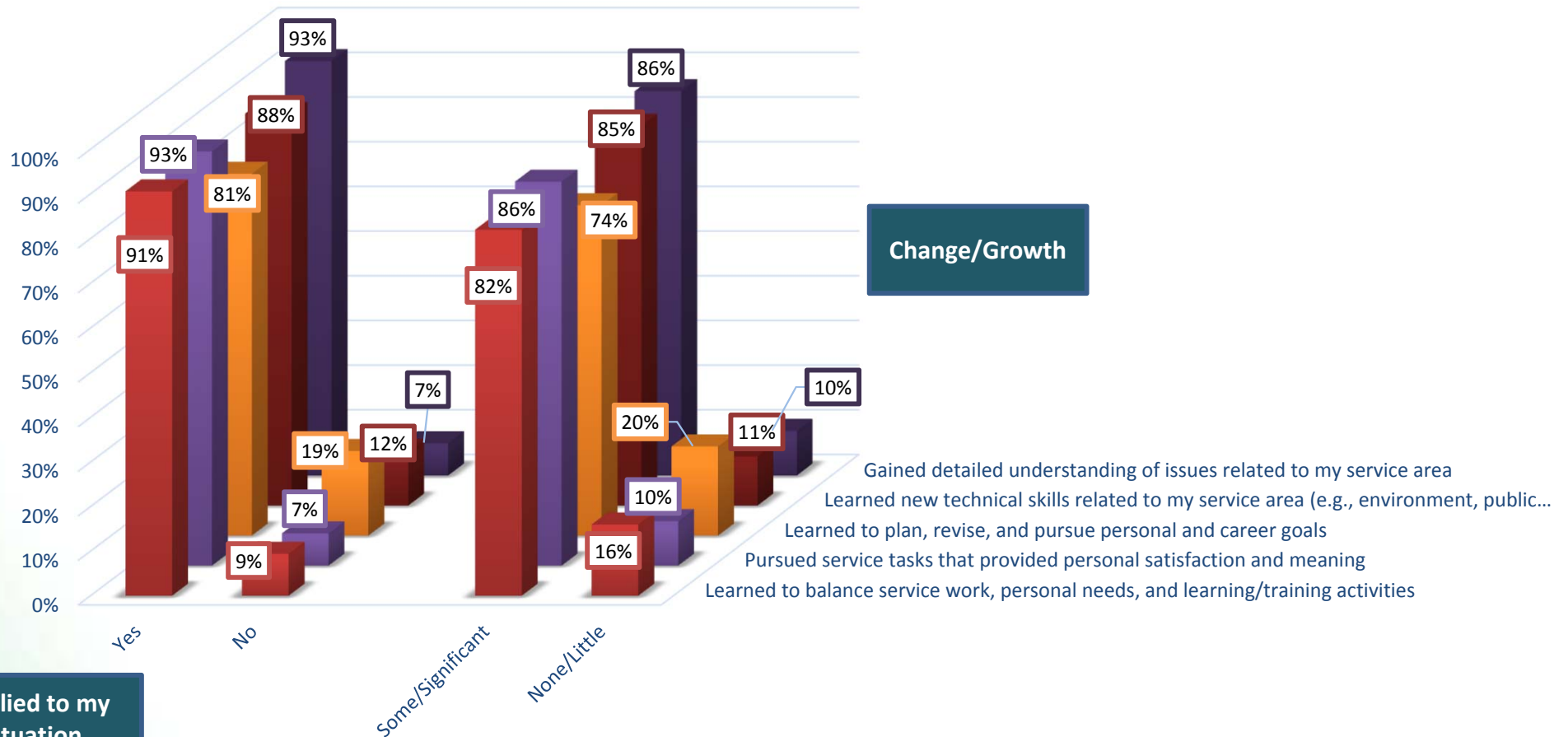


❖ A majority of Maine AmeriCorps members indicate having intermediate/advanced levels of competencies when they start service



Member Development: Enhancing Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

Personal and Professional Growth

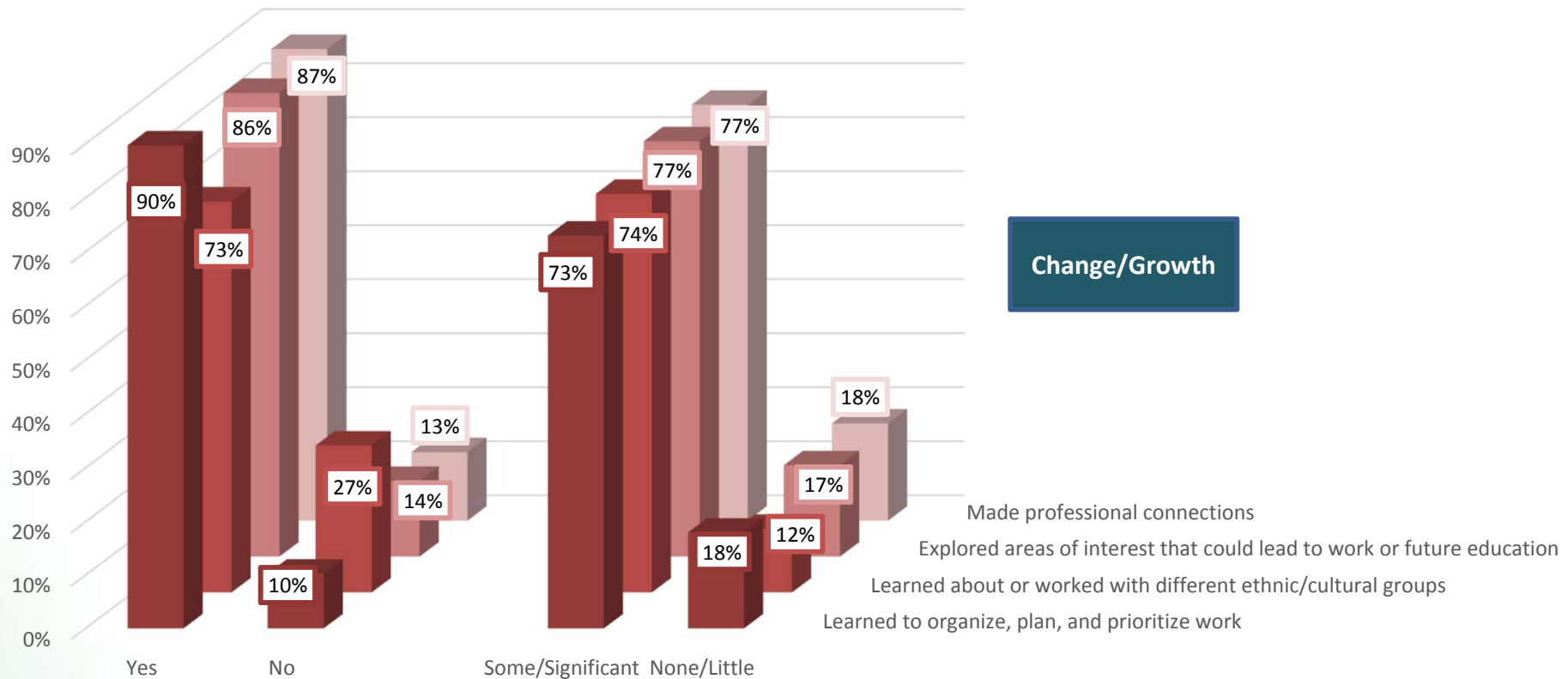


Applied to my
situation



Member Development: Enhancing Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

The Service Assignment

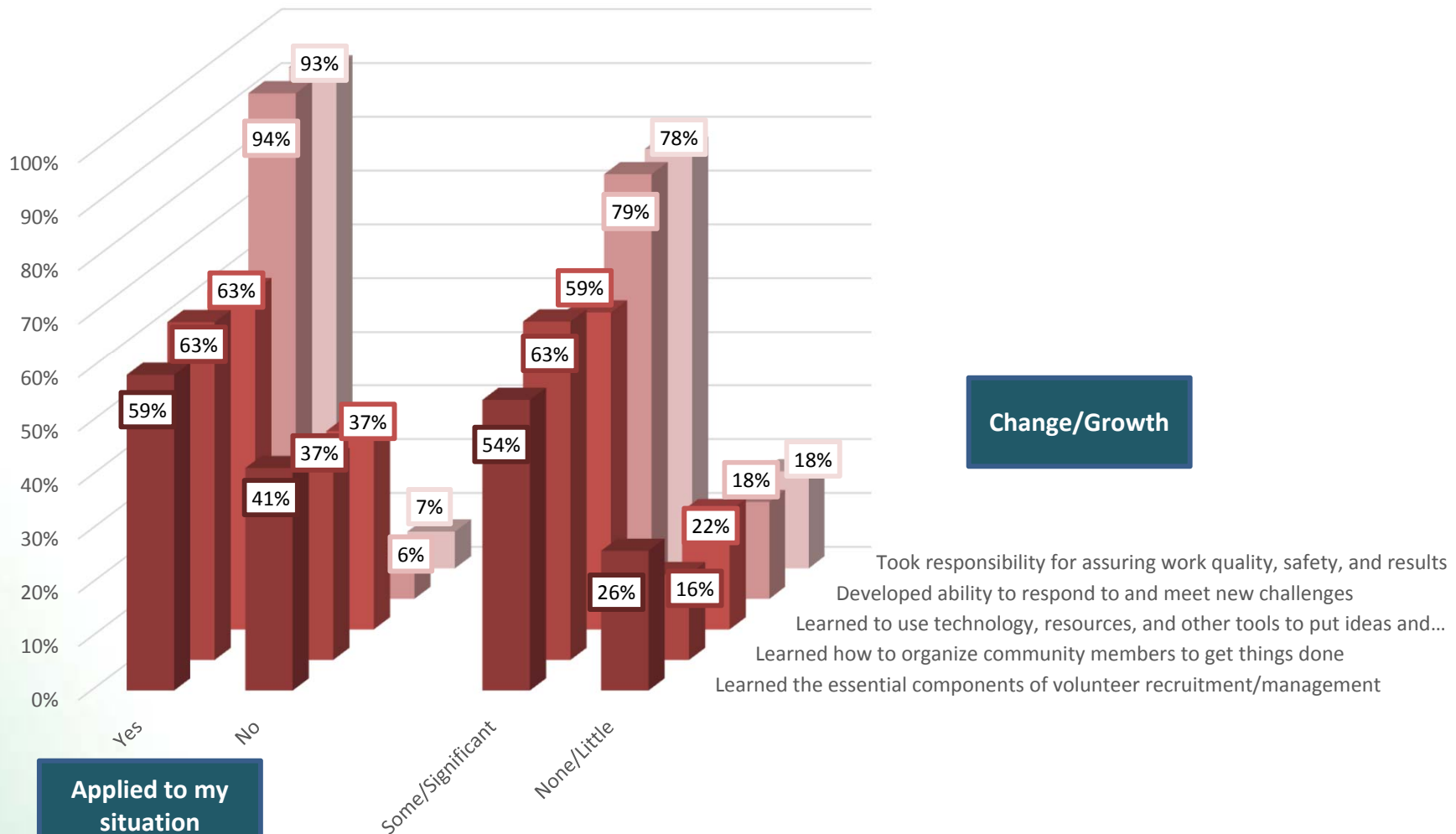


Applied to my
situation



Member Development: Enhancing Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

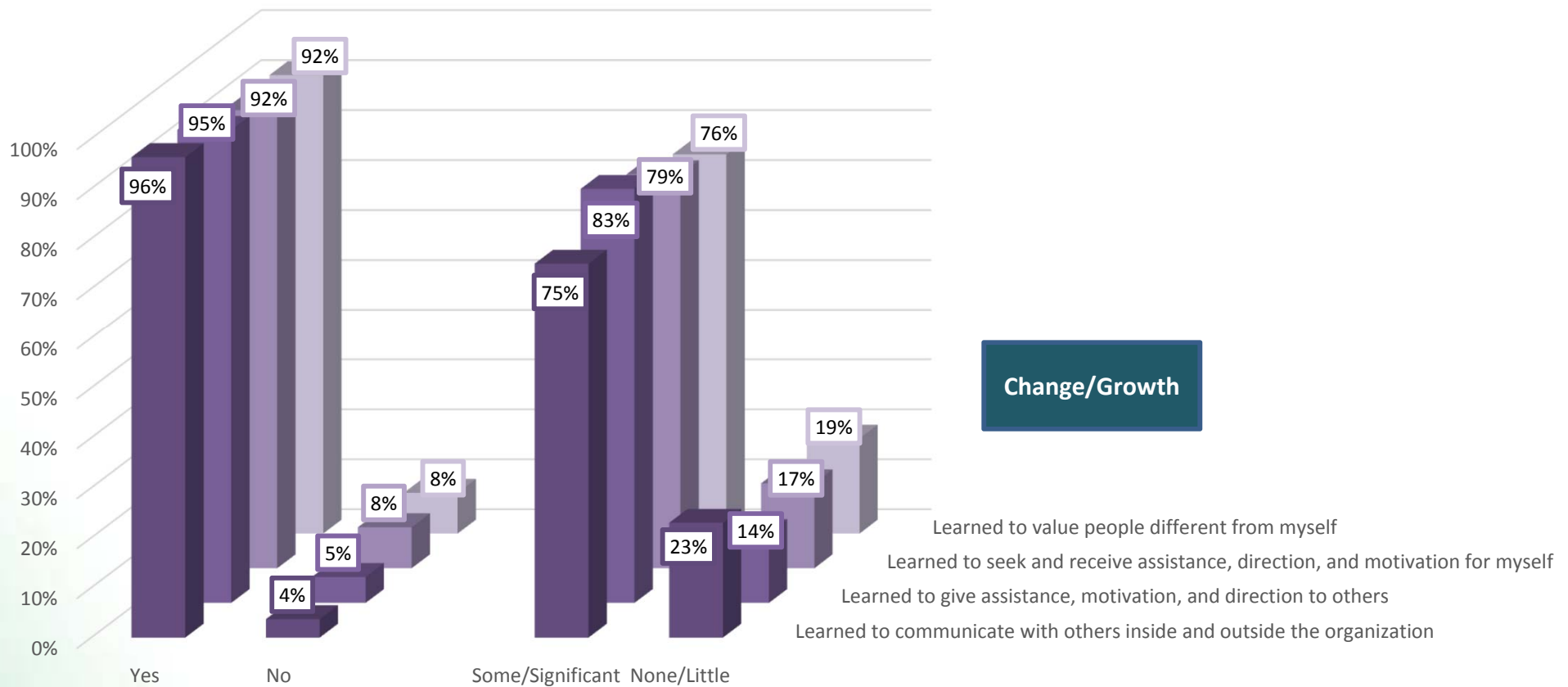
The Service Assignment





Member Development: Enhancing Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

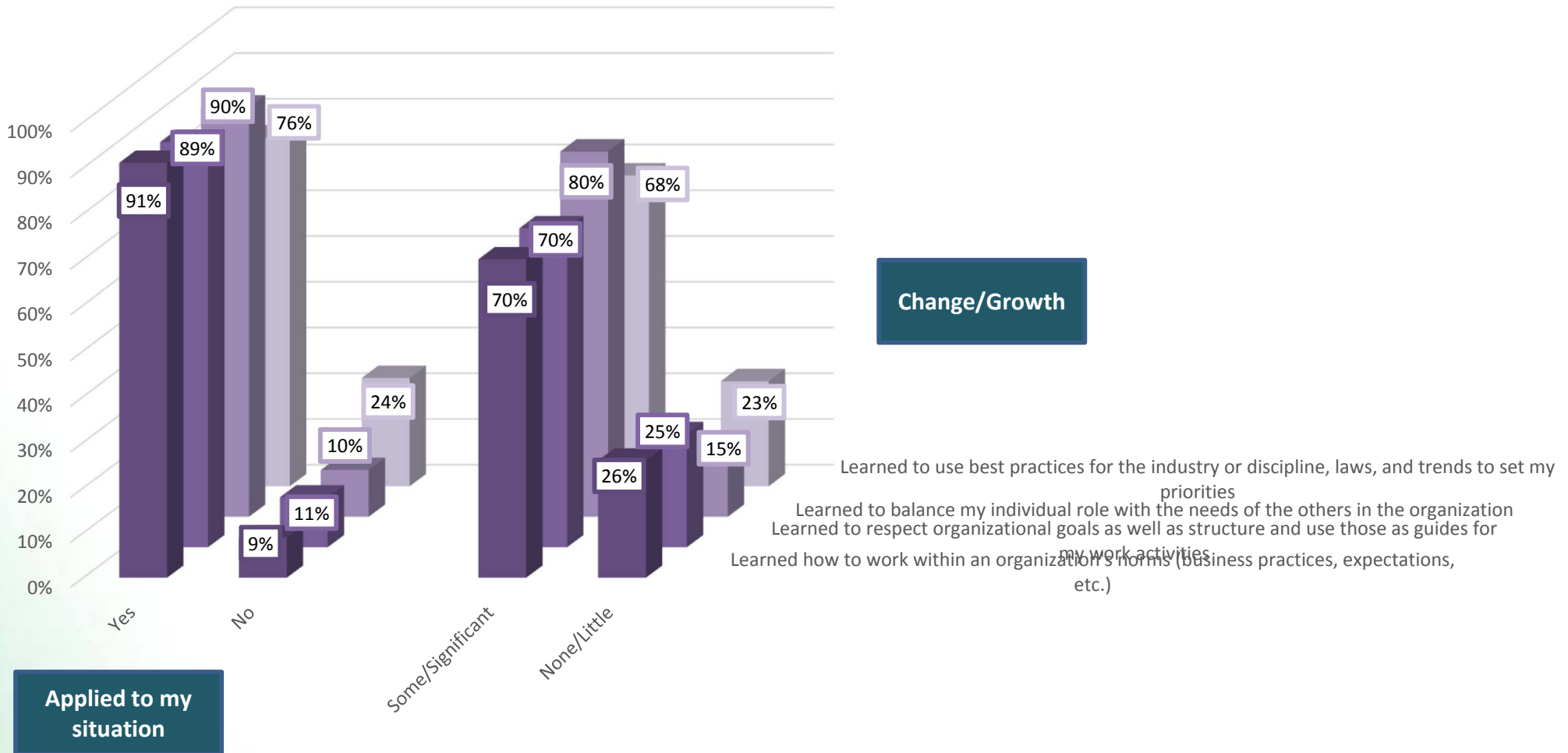
Working with Others Within the Big Picture of Program





Member Development: Enhancing Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

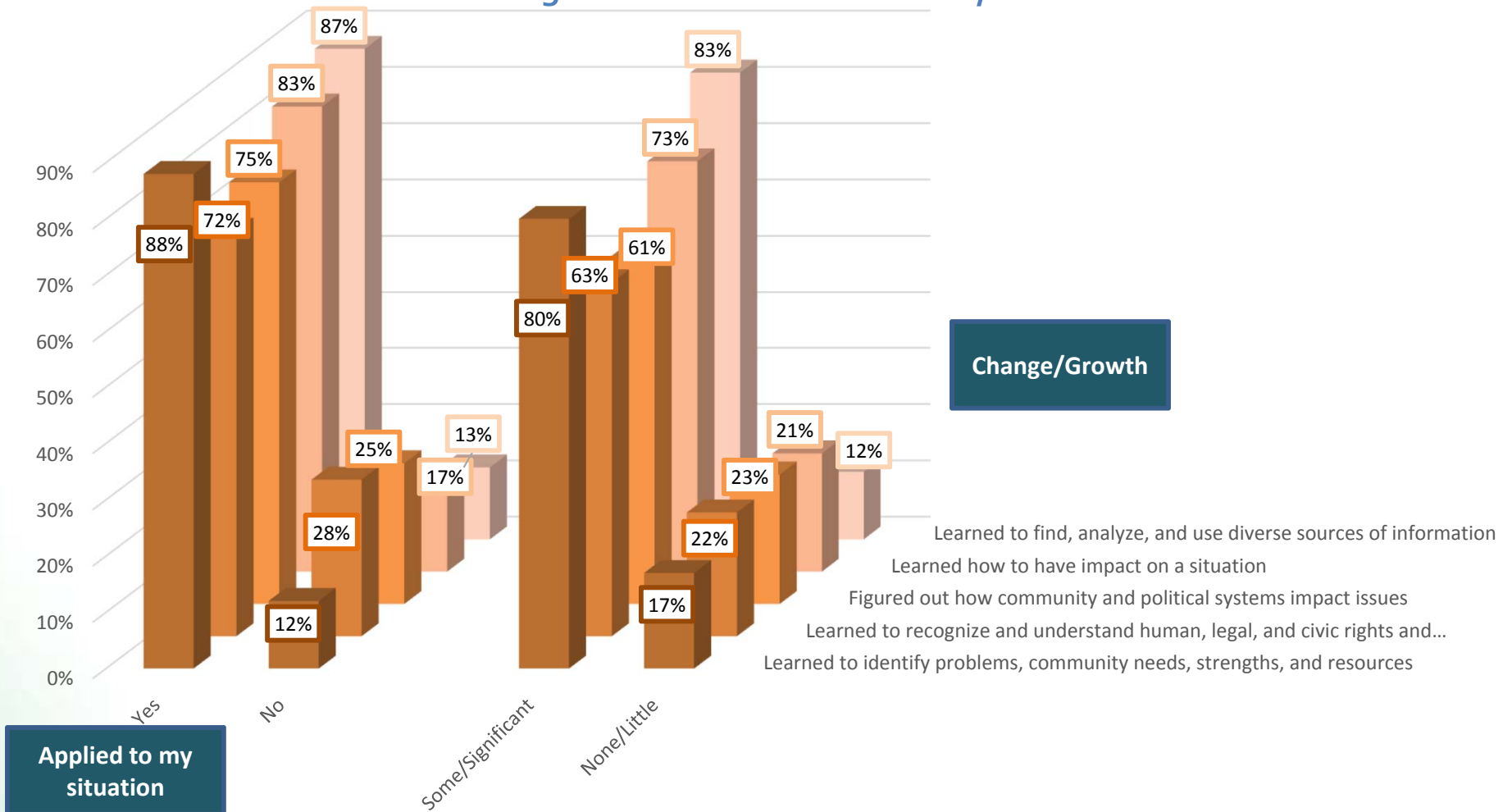
Working with Others Within the Big Picture a Program





Member Development: Enhancing Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

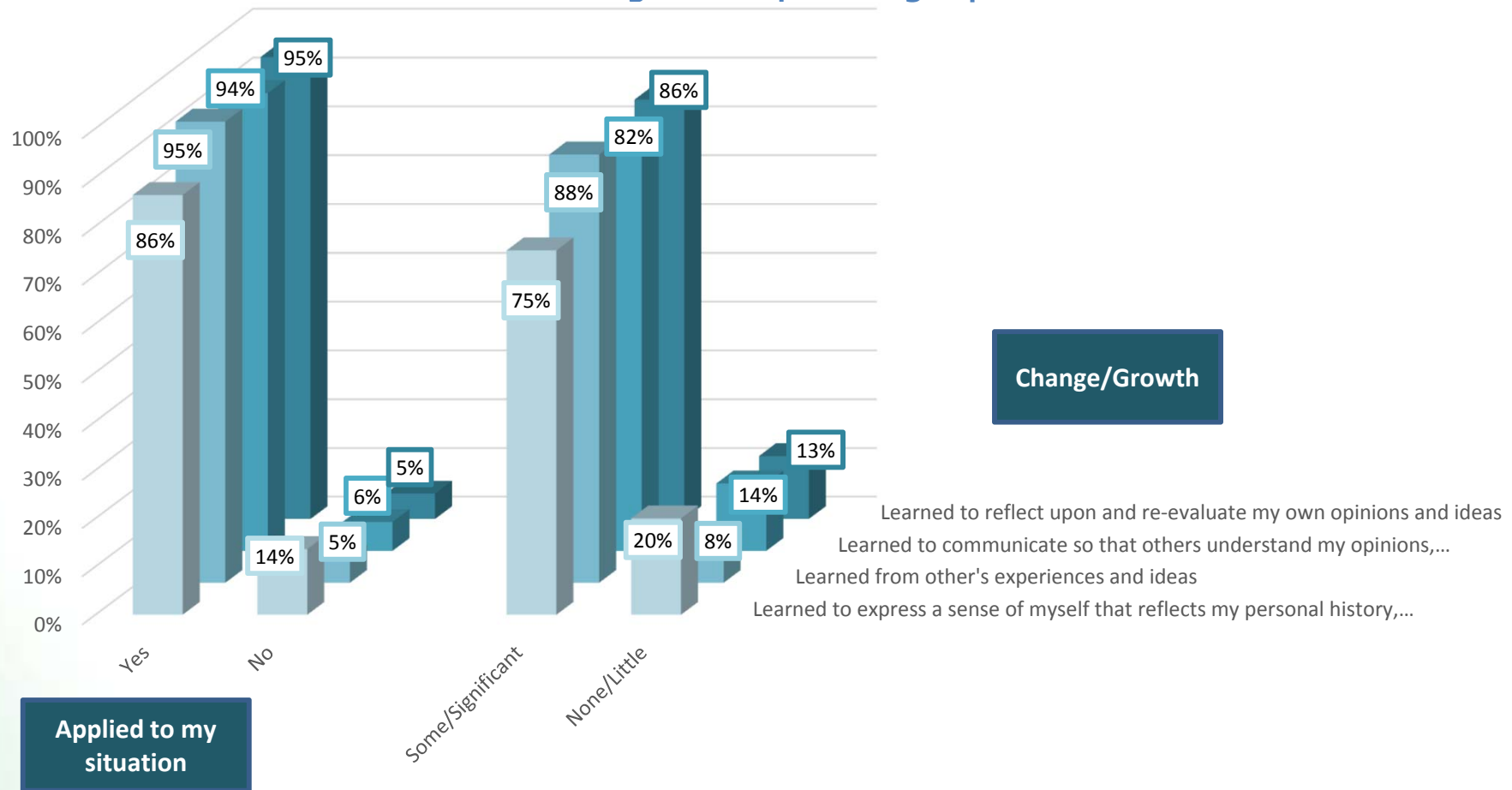
Becoming an Informed Community Member





Member Development: Enhancing Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

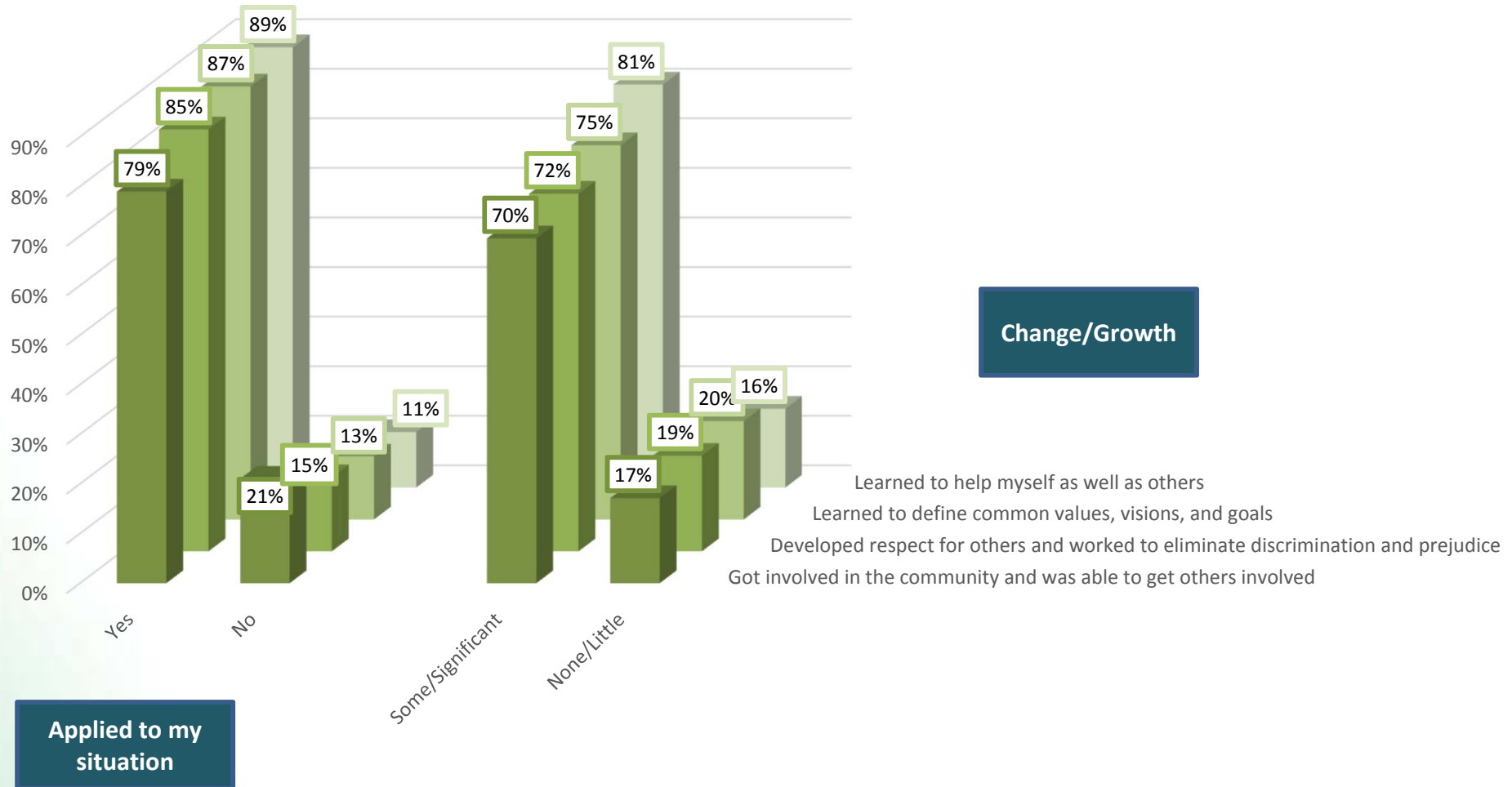
Forming and Expressing Opinions





Member Development: Enhancing Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

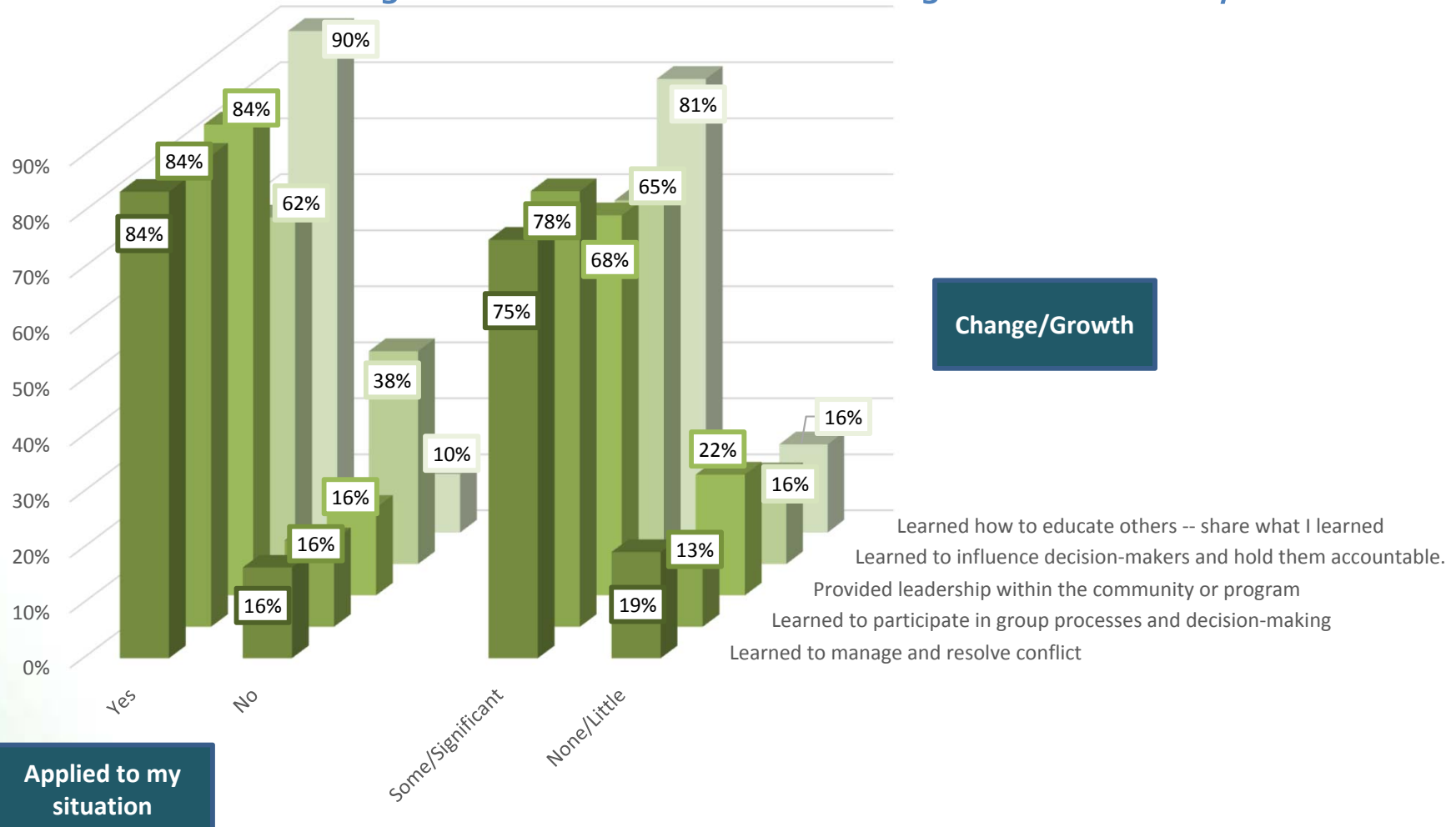
Learning to Work with Others to Strengthen Community





Member Development: Enhancing Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

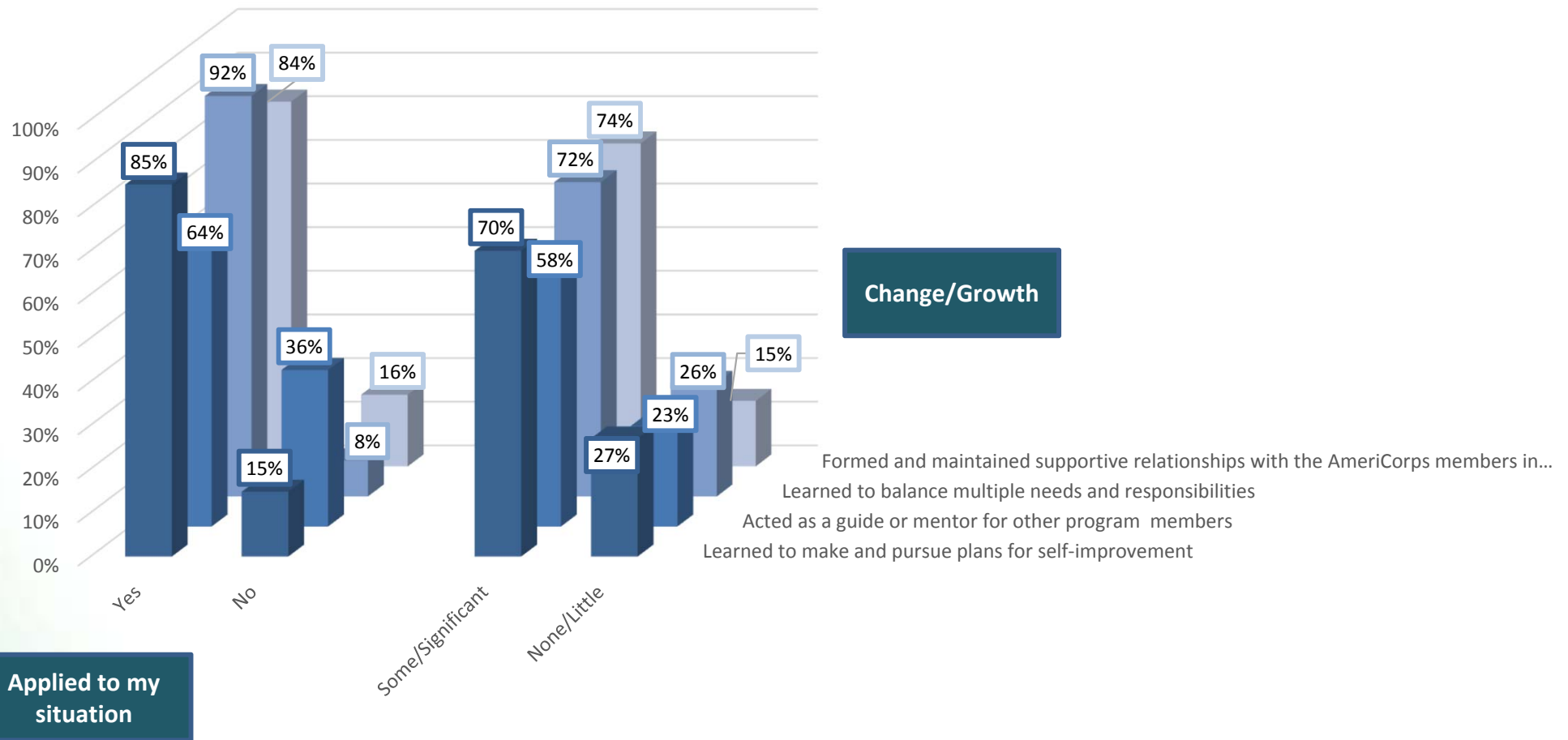
Learning to Work with Others to Strengthen Community





Member Development: Enhancing Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

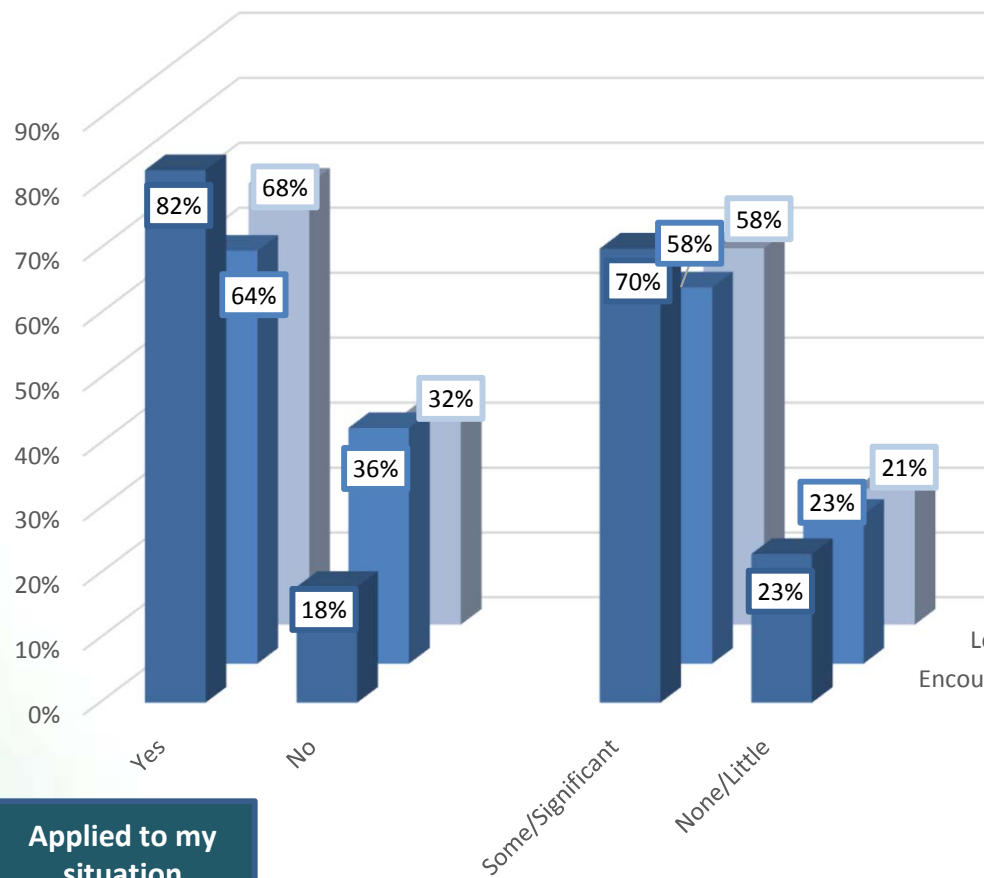
Promoting Growth and Development to Others





Member Development: Enhancing Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

Promoting Growth and Development to Others



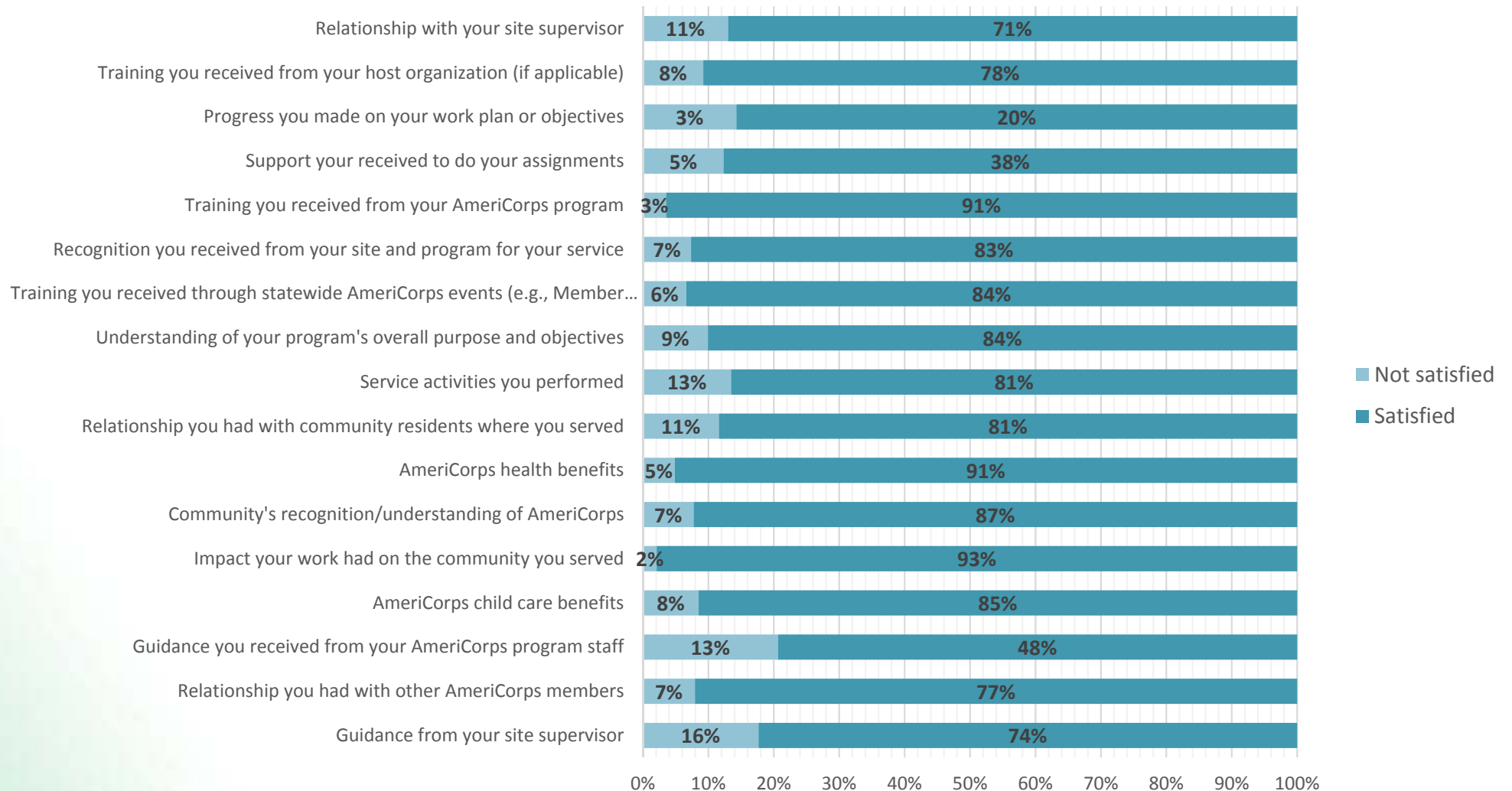
Applied to my situation

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 (AmeriCorps members, staff, host site)



Member Development: Enhancing Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities





The Legacy of AmeriCorps Service in Maine





"I've become a better me in the last six months. You get out of this what you put into it, thanks for creating an environment for growth."

"MCC has been one of the most transforming experiences of my life. Before, I was an overweight, self-defeating, and lethargic individual who was meandering throughout my dwindling young adulthood; now I stand as someone who not only was able to transform my body and personal health, but also my self-image into something built upon the works of service I was able to render in my community. Through MCC I was able to create and, thus, was able to recreate."

"This program has changed who I am as a person. I am so much more open to new things and new people. This has been the best experience of my life. Thank you!"

"This experience gave me and still gives me hope for the future."

"It has been my long held wish to contribute to my community as a volunteer and the AmeriCorps experience provided me with the type of opportunity I wished to have with the professional supports I wanted/needed to facilitate a positive experience for both the students/staff members I supported and me."



"The most significant accomplishment this year is helping to keep waters around the state of Maine clean and healthy. My service with my AmeriCorps host site is vital to continued protections of Maine's amazing natural resources."

"This has been a very personal enlightening experience, I have learned more about myself in these past 12 months of who I am, what do I want and need to do with the remainder of my life, who can I help other than myself, and life is so much more than myself! I am 53 years old and I have always been self centered and now because of AmeriCorps VISTA I have a my own quote, "It's not only about me, it's not only about you.....It's about all of us!"

"My most significant accomplishment has been helping people to understand that nothing can get done without everyone being involved."

"I will cherish the bonds between myself and my teammates throughout my life despite us all moving to different parts of the country. The trails we worked on will be there for people to enjoy for many years to come."

"The tasks I completed and the opportunities I was provided were beyond my imagination."



For More Information on Maine AmeriCorps Programs...

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