

Volunteer Maine Annual Report 2020

Message from the chair

Greetings!

On behalf of all the Commissioners, it is my pleasure to share the 2020 Annual Report on Volunteer Maine, the State Service Commission.

The Commission, much like our fellow public servants, entered the year with a renewed commitment to its mission. In our case, this refers to our continued efforts to develop, elevate, and support of Maine's service and volunteerism communities.

As the COVID-19 pandemic cast a pall across the world, glimmers of hope could be found in the brave and selfless efforts of community champions. These volunteers and National Service members did not waver, creating new and innovative ways to deliver service in spite of challenges that could only be described as overwhelming.

I speak of Mainers like Carol Christopoulos, a member of the Penquis Foster Grandparents AmeriCorps Seniors program. Grammy Carol, as she is affectionately known by her students, was determined to continue reading to students of Farwell Elementary in Lewiston, a core part of her service. As the world moved online, Grammy Carol knew she had to join along. So she connected with a Farwell Elementary teacher and learned how to use Zoom and Google Classroom. This allowed her to continue reading to the students who would typically look forward to an in-person visit from their "grammy."

Carol's story speaks to the determination of those driven to serve others, and she is not alone in her efforts. You will find included in our Annual Report several stories that also help to illustrate this steadfast commitment to service.

As the pandemic raged on, we were reminded of what is important and possible in the face of great adversity. As Robert Kennedy reminds us, "Few will have the greatness to bend history itself; but each of us can work to change a small portion of events, and in the total; of all those acts will be written the history of this generation."

The unrivaled political, socio-economic, and personal divisions that have surfaced the last year showed no immunity to a global pandemic. In response, the Commission has committed to first look inward as we seek to sew service as a unifying societal thread. We have pledged to ensure that service rebuilds communities, helps underrepresented and under-resourced populations to thrive, acts inclusively and justly, and, at all times, advances and protects the rights of those who serve and those being served.

As you will read in this report, AmeriCorps program development and grantmaking are the largest portions of our funding activity. The other half of the Commission's work is focused on the strategic opportunities before us:

- Serve as Maine's center of excellence on volunteer service.
- Cultivate young volunteer and service leaders through the continued development of the Maine Service Fellows Program.

- Leverage the impact of volunteer service to meet the State’s need to attract and retain talented young adults.
- Support the grant process:
 - new approaches to encouraging rural volunteer service;
 - volunteer-powered solutions to emergent community problems; and
 - building the capacity of grantee organizations to effectively and sustainably engage volunteers.

As the only entity, public or nonprofit, that focuses on capacity and sustainability of volunteerism in the public and nonprofit sectors, Volunteer Maine is committed to:

- increase recognition, visibility and respect for volunteer efforts;
- foster a culture of service and civic engagement; and
- promote understanding of connections between volunteering, civic engagement, economic and community success.

Thank you for your interest in the work of the Commission. We look forward to engaging you, your communities, and your partners in the work of building a stronger Maine through volunteerism.

In service,

F. Celeste Branham, Commission Chair

Values, impact, assets, who we serve

Our core values

- Civic identity and common purpose
- Personal and civic responsibility
- Community-driven and government-supported initiatives
- Service solutions for community problems

Our assets

1. Statewide focus on volunteerism
2. AmeriCorps alumni and AmeriCorps Seniors (formerly Senior Corps) volunteers
3. Volunteer management training and capacity building
4. Technical assistance capability and certified trainers
5. Skill in convening diverse stakeholders
6. Knowledge, thought leadership and innovation
7. Strong financials and operational systems

Our resources

- AmeriCorps, the federal agency (formerly the Corporation for National and Community Service)
- Maine Volunteer Foundation
- In-kind donations and services

- Private sector funding

Our impact

We work to impact Maine's Volunteer Sector through

- sustainability,
- efficiency,
- effectiveness, and
- capacity

We serve

- Managers of volunteers
- Maine National Service grantees
- Organizations seeking to engage volunteers
- Agencies seeking to develop National Service programs

How we serve

- Promote service as a strategy
- Provide training and technical assistance to volunteer programs and staff
- Make, administer, and evaluate volunteer program grants
- Foster high quality volunteer management practices

We are Volunteer Maine

Commissioners

A list of active Commissioners as of Dec. 31, 2020

- F. Celeste Branham, Chair
- Jenifer Tilton-Flood, Chair-elect
- Jonathan Barczyk, Vice Chair
- John Portela, Immediate Past Chair
- Ryan Almy
- Susan Asselin Hawthorne
- Edward Barrett
- Susan Cheesman
- Mathison Deering
- Peter Doak
- Julia Fiori
- Stacie Haines
- Matthew L'Italien
- Zachary Maher
- Robert Meinders
- Jessica Nixon
- Lisa Phelps

- Pamela Proulx-Curry
- Dale Rowley
- Nathaniel Rudy
- Luke Shorty

Commissioners completing service

- David Burns
- Jamie Logan
- Anita Stewart McCafferty
- Maria Staples

Supporters

- Maine Masonic Charitable Foundation
- Bangor Daily News
- Jennifer Trowbridge
- Madeline Hennessey
- Crystal Bridge
- Cynthia Adamsky
- Joanna Martel
- Bethany Tatro
- Michael Moran
- Nate Hinchey
- Steve Barney
- Michael Wisecup
- Natalye Paquin
- Yellow Light Breen
- Leilia DeAndrade
- Ian Yaffee
- Melissa Hewey
- Jennifer Lobley
- Rev. Jane Field
- Marge Kilkelly

Office team

- Maryalice Crofton, Executive Director
- Michael Ashmore, Training and Program Development Officer
- Jamie McFaul, Grants Officer
- Bryan Roche, Communications Officer
- Zachary Harder (1989-2020), Administrative Assistant
- Beverly Ludden, Administrative Assistant
- Streeter Elliott, Development Associate
- Anthony Inhorn, Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center Summer Intern
- Nathan McIvor, Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center Summer Intern

Commission fundamentals and finances

2020 revenues

- \$3,059,326: Total revenues
- \$1,817,264: Federal funds from AmeriCorps (formerly the Corporation for National and Community Service)
- \$770,116: Local cash (registration fees for training, private sponsorships of activities, grants, etc.)
- \$91,171: State of Maine General Fund
- \$380,775: In-kind donations of services, space, supplies (valued according to Government Accounting Standards)

2020 expenses

- \$2,942,215: Total expenses
- \$312,438: Personnel
- \$2,527,447: Grants and contracts*
- \$102,330: All other (includes communications, supplies, occupancy, indirect, etc.)

*Grants included AmeriCorps State, Commission Program Development & Investment Fund, and Commission Support. This data is for informational purposes only and is not an official financial statement.

We are Maine Ready

MaineReady.Org was launched in March of 2020 and has attracted 31 agencies and over 700 volunteers. Volunteer Maine staff was able to have the site up and running within 72 hours in response to COVID-19 pandemic needs.

This site provides state, county and other emergency response and management organizations a virtual way to coordinate offers of help with on-the-ground needs for assistance. Agencies are able to post volunteer opportunities, recruit volunteers, communicate with users, track volunteer hours and schedule volunteer shifts for disaster response. Maine Ready allows potential volunteers to create a profile with information about their interest and special skills and connects them to volunteer opportunities that match that profile. Volunteers also have the opportunity to search by location or follow specific agencies to be notified of needs. Maine Ready is a joint effort of the Maine Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and Volunteer Maine, the State Service Commission.

Answering the call

by Nathan McIvor, 2020 Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center Government Intern

A story collection featuring a few of the people and programs leading COVID-19 response efforts within Maine's service and volunteerism communities.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, Aroostook RSVP is going strong

COVID-19 has made food access challenging in Aroostook County.

In February 88% of Aroostook County residents said that they did not have enough money to buy food and 84% could not afford nutritious food, according to Aroostook RSVP, an AmeriCorps Seniors service project in Presque Isle. In response to the pandemic, Aroostook RSVP marshals project members to combat food insecurity throughout the county.

Even though times are tough, this service project does not balk at hard work. Aroostook County RSVP has 140 volunteers serving in 14 different food pantries in Aroostook County. As of July, food pantries supported by the service project served 2,724 individuals through food pantries and has no plans to stop.

One Presque Isle resident named Larry sees three different Aroostook RSVP volunteers on a regular basis.

“I don’t know how I could ever get along without them,” he said. “They are like angels.”

RSVP is an AmeriCorps Seniors program that engages people in a diverse range of volunteer activities not limited to the following: tutoring children, renovating homes, teaching English to immigrants, assisting victims of natural disasters, providing independent living services, and recruiting and managing other volunteers.

It’s time to get outside

Everyone deserves to enjoy time outdoors. Skowhegan AmeriCorps Outdoor Recreation Program (Skowhegan Outdoors) keeps folks out and about, and there’s something for everyone. They’ve adapted their programming so that that neither your health nor your enjoyment is at risk during the pandemic.

This AmeriCorps service project lets Skowhegan residents take outdoor yoga classes, go on trail hikes, join an outdoor book club, and if they dare, morning standup paddle boarding. All these activities are physically distanced.

Skowhegan Outdoors also responded to the pandemic by launching DIY video lessons that anyone can do from home. These lessons include knot-tying training videos, Animal Pen Pals, and Meditation Monday programs. All of these offerings are led by Main Street Skowhegan staff and their AmeriCorps service members. Whether you join them outside or access from home, it’s all free.

“I’ve been blown away by the amount of people going outside recently,” said Kristina Cannon, Executive Director, Main Street Skowhegan. “It really shows that our service is more important than ever.”

The nonprofit has been on top of the pandemic since April, so that they ensure everyone has equitable access to the outdoors and the opportunity to experience the natural world on their own. Recently, their AmeriCorps members guided a grandmother and her granddaughter on a hiking trail, taking extra steps to make sure that the granddaughter’s first hike was a great experience. After all, the COVID-19 pandemic gives us more, not less, time to spend outside with our friends and family.

Compassion wins the day

There’s no overstating the importance of Seeds of Hope Neighborhood Center. Every day, this Biddeford nonprofit welcomes individuals in need of food, clothing, medical care, warmth and shelter. Their

Neighborhood Center never closed at any point during the pandemic, making them one of two providers in the city that have not missed a single day of service. Flanked by AmeriCorps members, Seeds of Hope gives every ounce of care it can to those in need.

As of the the summer, Seeds of Hope served 3,331 breakfast and lunch brown bags. As part of its COVID-19 response efforts, it also provides personal care items not covered by SNAP benefits such as tents and sleeping bags; a partnership with a local church ensures that laundry vouchers, detergent; and daily “check-ins” on mental and physical health.

“I’m always moved by the looks on our neighbor’s faces, said Michael Oliver, Seeds of Hope assistant director. “We’re so lucky to be able to keep our doors open.”

Seeds of Hope’s three AmeriCorps members lend in a hand in every aspect of the neighborhood center. These members liaison with local landlords to create affordable housing, coordinate daily meal orders, and provide employment resources. AmeriCorps members also recruit community volunteers in addition to digital outreach initiatives in education and for people seeking employment but who cannot come to the neighborhood center in person.

Given that many individuals may not be safe leaving their homes or attending public events, these digital outreach initiatives fill in the gaps and open some of Seeds of Hope’s resources to those in quarantine or who have travel difficulties.

Regardless of our statewide and national crisis, Seeds of Hope continues to find meaningful solutions to poverty, isolation and despair. It’s what they do best.

Environmental justice matters more than ever

Laura Heinlein had quite the task ahead of her. Not only did her community garden project in Portland, ME need quite a few participants, but COVID-19 unexpectedly upended her and everyone else’ life and participants were out of the question.

Heinlein, an AmeriCorps service member with Maine Conservation Corps (MCC), knew she had to get creative. Her MCC service project, which collaborates with Cumberland County Soil and Water Conservation District’s Soil lead awareness initiative, needed a way to provide free soil tests to Portland residents. The community’s wellbeing was at stake.

Keeping physical distancing in mind, Heinlein used her creative thinking and networking skills fostered at MCC to connect with communities about the risk of lead contaminated soils.

With many confined to the home and an increase in home gardening during the pandemic, raising awareness about lead in soils is more important than ever. Through connecting with local press, getting support from neighborhood organizations, and running a social media campaign, Heinlein has worked with over 100 gardeners in Portland and collected 53 soil samples.

She continues to connect with gardeners from every community in Portland. The Soil Lead Awareness project has planted a life-long interest in environmental justice that Laura looks forward to cultivating for the remainder of her service term and beyond.

Enhancing service delivery

Maine Service Fellows

Maine Service Fellows is a proposed new program of Volunteer Maine, the State Service Commission. The program mission is threefold:

- provide human resources dedicated to helping communities respond to and recover from the local impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic;
- engage recent college graduates in full-time service to rural Maine communities to address local unmet needs through volunteer-driven solutions; and
- leverage the proven link between intense community service experiences and positive attachment to a community as a way to attract and retain talented young adults to Maine's rural areas.

In November 2020, the Commission brought together a 25-member focus group to design the final elements of the Service Fellows program. The "Think Tank" participants represented small municipal offices, nonprofits, school districts, elected officials, and businesses located in Madison, Lincolnville, Dresden, Lewiston, Skowhegan, Portland, West Bath, Rockland, Ellsworth, Oakland, New Sharon, Durham and Winthrop, among others.

While the replies varied from reopening after-school programs to connecting homeless people with services to supporting municipal projects to expand broadband and increase digital literacy, all said the priority issues are likely to change as the pandemic deepens and community capacity to respond is diminished or exhausted.

Volunteer Generation Fund grantees:

- Alford Youth and Community Center
- Catholic Charities of Maine
- Mid Coast Hunger Prevention Program
- Southern Maine Agency on Aging
- The Window Dressers

With funding from AmeriCorps the purpose of Maine Volunteer Generation Fund grants is to provide support to volunteer programs in the State that are providing service in three focus areas: Aging in place, transportation services, or food security and assistance.

255 staff and community volunteers trained

- 545 volunteers recruited and coordinated by grantees
- 4,951 hours served by those volunteers during grant years
- 23 community agencies trained, including training in Maine Ready disaster preparedness platform

Service snapshot

The past year brought plenty of changes for AmeriCorps, in Maine and across the country. The Corporation for National and Community Service began doing business as AmeriCorps in late August,

adopting the very same name of its largest direct service program. Maine programs played an essential role in COVID-19 response, however the wide-ranging effects of the pandemic all but halted successful member recruitment efforts. With that being said, please join us in celebrating the accomplishments of these dedicated service members.

158 AmeriCorps members

- Served 106,869 hours in Maine communities in 55 Maine communities
- Helped 58 local organizations increase organizational capacity
- Enlisted 2,204 community volunteers to
 - serve 26,842 additional hours with them
 - complete 10,348 additional direct service activities and/or units of service

AmeriCorps in Maine: 2020

Volunteer Maine awards and manages federal funds granted to Maine by the AmeriCorps federal agency (formerly the Corporation for National and Community Service). After grant decisions, Volunteer Maine monitors grantee performance, outcomes and compliance. It also ensures participants in AmeriCorps are eligible for program benefits. Under AmeriCorps, grant awards are three years.

Did you know? you can View expanded program descriptions on our website!
VolunteerMaine.gov/National-Service

* = funded by Volunteer Maine

Planning Grants

The grant recipients will lead community partners in a 10-month program design process. The goal is to submit a successful AmeriCorps program proposal in the 2020-2021 competition for operating awards.

Penquis Community Action *

Penquis is the lead agency in the six-member Community Investors of Knox County, a group that provides micro-financial support to residents struggling with the consequences of poverty. The funding is a “last resort” and the group has noticed a significant increase in requests for help accessing other services.

The planning process aims to develop an AmeriCorps program whose members would be Community Resource Navigators, helping low-income residents create financial and personal plans to manage the challenges related to poverty. The AmeriCorps members would also recruit and train volunteers in Knox County to serve as Community Navigators.

Town of Van Buren *

The Town of Van Buren is a partner in the Van Buren Resiliency Project (VBRP). The group seeks to design an AmeriCorps program that address community needs in Van Buren, Caswell, Limestone, Hamlin, and Cyr Plantation. The project expects to qualify as a Maine Rural State grantee, meaning it will request between 2 and 5 members.

UMaine Center on Aging *

The University of Maine Center on Aging proposes a planning grant to ultimately have five AmeriCorps members who will support COVID-19 long-term recovery response by completing direct service and capacity building projects in select rural Maine communities. At the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for launching at least five long-term capacity building projects as identified by their host communities.

In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage 25 volunteers who will be engaged in long-term COVID-19 recovery activities, working with the local lifelong community team to address the needs of older residents who want to age in the community.

State/National Operating Programs

AmeriCorps Outdoor Adventure Program *

Grantee: Midcoast Conservancy

Four AmeriCorps members build capacity and, with volunteers, implement programs at the Community Hubs for Outdoor Adventure and Learning in Lincoln and Waldo counties.

AmeriCorps members are responsible for providing convenient and affordable access to trails and recreation gear to a minimum of 800 children ages 9-13 at six schools and four Community Hubs.

AmeriCorps members are charged with recruiting additional volunteers who will be engaged in planning and implementing Community Hub programming, getting kids to become enthusiastic about outdoor recreation in nature, and in the long term, reducing the incidence of childhood obesity.

AmeriCorps Resilience Corps *

Grantee: Greater Portland Council of Governments

The AmeriCorps Resilience Corps supports local government agencies, nonprofit agencies and regional cohorts in the Greater Portland area in their recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and planning efforts towards regional resilience. Fourteen Corps Members assist projects related to regional, community, or organizational resilience and help to accelerate civic innovation, climate action, racial equity, and digital equity for all Mainers.

The Resilience Corps adds new capacity in local governments to adapt and proactively respond to both short-term and long-term challenges to economic, social, and environmental systems throughout the region.

AYCC AmeriCorps Mentoring Program *

Grantee: Alford Youth & Community Center

Two AmeriCorps members are working to create a one-on-one mentoring program that works within the Alford Youth and Community Center After School Program (ASP). They train mentors to take an inclusive developmental approach that focuses on creating a strong bond with their mentee and getting to know them as a person.

Mentors and mentees commit to meeting at least one hour per week for one year. Consistent interactions, recruitment of patient and empathetic volunteers, in-depth training, and ongoing monitoring will create an effective mentorship program that will eventually expand to other Boys & Girls Clubs throughout the state.

Colby College Maine Rural AmeriCorps Program *

Grantee: Colby College

Colby College operates an AmeriCorps program with two AmeriCorps members. The members work within the Office of Civic Engagement and Community Partnerships at the college and support two programs that are essential to the office's mission; the Bill & Joan Alford Main Street Commons living-learning community and Colby Cares About Kids (CCAK).

Both members work closely with local community organizations in the Greater Waterville Area to increase the capacity of those organizations to engage volunteers in service.

Cooking Matters AmeriCorps

Grantee: Good Shepherd Food Bank

Three AmeriCorps members from the National Direct AmeriCorps program, Share Our Strength, serve with and support the Cooking Matters program at Good Shepherd Food Bank.

Cooking Matters provides low-income people at risk of hunger with hands-on cooking and nutrition classes led by volunteer professional chefs and nutritionists.

These 4-6 week classes are held in local community agencies and schools. Classes are free to participants and host agencies. At each class, participants receive a bag of groceries and recipes to try at home.

First4 AmeriCorps *

Grantee: Kennebec Valley Community Action Plan/Educare Central Maine

The data tells us that almost a quarter of Maine's children have experienced trauma in the form of abuse, neglect, or household dysfunction. When young children are faced with such disadvantages early in life, their ability to learn and be successful in school are severely impacted. However, with resilience, children can triumph over trauma and adversity.

The goal of the program is to support the social emotional development of the children in our Head Start and Early Head Start classrooms as a means to reduce overall toxic stress, to boost resilience, and to improve school-readiness because we know that approximately 80% of brain development happens in the first four years of life.

Food Corps

Grantee: UMaine Cooperative Extension

FoodCorps seeks to change in how schools educate our children about food, so as to nurture a nation of healthy children and address the causes of childhood obesity.

In Maine, seven full-time FoodCorps AmeriCorps members will each complete 1,700 hours over 11.5 months. Members will serve in limited-resource schools implementing interventions across three evidence based program areas that get kids eating healthy: hands-on learning, healthy school meals, and schoolwide culture of health.

Game Loft AmeriCorps Program *

Grantee: Maine Youth Alliance

The Game Loft is a Maine Rural State program hosting two AmeriCorps members providing mentoring to RSU #3 students, age 12-15, in Waldo County, using the I Know ME curriculum.

Each year the two AmeriCorps members are responsible for preparing 36 at risk students for success in the classroom, within their peer groups and beyond the school walls. Additionally, the AmeriCorps members engage local volunteers in developing new mentoring relationships with the students and develop the host agency's capacity to better manage volunteers.

LearningWorks Aim High AmeriCorps *

Grantee: LearningWorks

The LearningWorks Aim High AmeriCorps program places teams of dedicated AmeriCorps members in elementary schools in Portland and Westbrook, Maine to support student academic achievement and social and emotional learning through tutoring, mentoring and extended learning interventions, both in and outside of the classroom.

The goal of the AmeriCorps members is to increase the academic achievement of each schools' lowest performing students by the end of the year. They will also recruit an additional 120 community volunteers who will provide in targeted instructional support activities for students.

Maine Conservation Corps *

Grantee: Maine Dept. of Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry

MCC has two AmeriCorps service options: Environmental Stewards and Field Teams.

Environmental Stewards serve individually with non-profits and state and federal agencies to increase organizational volunteer capacity and aid in the development and implementation of host sites' land management plans. They plan conservation projects and recruit, train and lead volunteers in creating and improving recreational trails.

Field Team members construct and rehabilitate trails on public lands like Baxter State Park, the Appalachian Trail, and land owned by local communities and land trusts.

Members are taught employment skills and create individualized plans for employment. Collaborative partnerships with workforce development organizations help create positive economic opportunity outcomes for members.

Maine Energy AmeriCorps Program *

Grantee: Maine Campus Compact

Maine Energy AmeriCorps Program (MEAP) is dedicated to building campus/community partnerships to improve energy efficiency in homes and higher education institutions throughout the state of Maine.

The goal of the program is to spark behavioral and technical interventions to increase local and regional energy efficiency, particularly for economically disadvantaged individuals and households.

Main Street Fellows AmeriCorps Program *

Grantee: Maine Development Foundation

Five AmeriCorps members support 12 low-income communities recover from the pandemic's impact and develop the capacity to be resilient in the face of future challenges. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will recruit 10-20 volunteers who will be engaged in local research, planning, education and technology projects.

Multilingual Leadership Corps

Grantee: Goodwill Industries of Northern New England

The Multilingual Leadership Corps places AmeriCorps members in Maine and New Hampshire schools, housing communities, and educational non-profits in Greater Portland and in Lewiston/Auburn.

Members serve K-12 English Language Learners (ELL) through the Check & Connect mentoring program (a research-based intervention for academically disengaged students). Members increase academic engagement among ELL students through in-school and afterschool support for academic skills, aspirations, enrichment, and community engagement.

Public Allies AmeriCorps

Grantee: Office of Aging and Disability Services Dept. of Health and Human Services

AmeriCorps members support leadership committees working to develop an Age-friendly State Plan as part of the implementation of Maine's Age-friendly State Initiative.

Seeds of Hope AmeriCorps *

Grantee: Seeds of Hope Neighborhood Center

Seeds of Hope supports two AmeriCorps members who manage the drop-in center, recruit and train Center volunteers, and staff the Career Resource Center. Members also work in actively addressing the needs of the homeless in Biddeford, Saco, Old Orchard Beach and surrounding communities in York County.

Members enable expansion of both the services offered by the Center. In addition, the AmeriCorps members leverage volunteers, who are engaged in preparing meals, sorting donated items, making referrals, and being supports to neighbors who access Center services. Other leveraged volunteers serve within the Career Center and offer mentorship and modeling for those seeking employment.

Skowhegan AmeriCorps Outdoor Recreation Program *

Grantee: Main Street Skowhegan

Skowhegan AmeriCorps is a Maine Rural State program with three AmeriCorps members who coordinate and lead weekly free outdoor recreation activities and trainings. The program is designed to increase physical activity, health, and engagement with nature for local community members of all ages.

Each year the AmeriCorps members are responsible for involving 350 new community members in outdoor recreation programming. They also train community volunteers to lead the programs, and they are tasked with establishing a gear library so residents can borrow outdoor recreation equipment at no cost.

Student Conservation Association AmeriCorps Program

Grantee: Student Conservation Association

SCA provides college and high school-aged members with hands-on conservation service opportunities in every field imaginable, from tracking grizzlies through the Tetons to restoring desert ecosystems and teaching environmental education at Washington, D.C.'s Urban Tree House. We are building the next generation of conservation leaders.

Trekkers AmeriCorps Aspirations *

Grantee: Trekkers

Since 1994, Trekkers has been dedicated to helping young people thrive. Our mission is to cultivate the inherent strengths of young people through the power of long-term mentoring relationships. Trekkers is a unique six-year experiential learning program for students, starting in 7th grade and lasting through 12th grade. Throughout the school year, teams of up to 20 students meet to plan their annual expedition and participate in activities, like exploring the outdoors, volunteering, learning about new cultures, and more. Student voice and choice is essential, so every program looks a little different.

AmeriCorps VISTA

Goodwill VISTA Partnership

Grantee: Goodwill Industries of Northern New England

The Goodwill VISTA Partnership is an intermediary model VISTA Project focused on poverty reduction throughout Maine. Forty AmeriCorps VISTA members and leaders are placed in 12 counties serving at nonprofits. Goodwill VISTA Partnership has been at the forefront of providing national service resources

to organizations working on New Americans and Refugee Resettlement services. AmeriCorps VISTAs are also focusing on building the capacity related to success in school, access to healthy food, senior services, and housing development.

Maine Campus Compact AmeriCorps VISTA Project

Grantee: Maine Campus Compact

This AmeriCorps VISTA program is part of the Northern New England Campus Compact AmeriCorps VISTA collaboration among the Campus Compact state affiliates in Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont.

Eight Maine Campus Compact VISTAs spend a year of service on college campuses in Maine. They serve in a wide variety of communities on campuses of all types — small and large, public and private — in all corners of the state.

VISTA members collaborate with college students, faculty, staff, and community partners to develop programming that improves college aspirations, increases the belief that college is an option, and increases access to higher education for low-income K-12 youth.

United Way Worldwide VISTA

Grantee: United Way of Eastern Maine

AmeriCorps VISTA will help build and enhance United Way's efforts to increase the number of economically disadvantaged individuals with improved financial knowledge and placed in jobs. As a member of United Way Worldwide's Volunteer Engagement team, the VISTA will focus their efforts to build the volunteer engagement capacity of local United Ways and their partners to support programs that provide tax preparation services, financial education and training, increase job readiness and improve financial management skills for individuals and families living in poverty.

YouthBuild VISTA Initiative

Grantee: LearningWorks/YouthBuild

In YouthBuild programs, low-income people ages 16 to 24 spend a year building affordable housing for homeless and low-income people, work toward their own high school diploma or GED, learn leadership skills, and develop an ethic of service. This AmeriCorps VISTA project works to increase the number of YouthBuild students entering college or gaining employment while evaluating and enhancing the YouthBuild program through partnerships with local business, and development funding.

Thank you for reading!

Volunteer Maine, the Maine Commission for Community Service

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A Stronger Maine Through Volunteerism

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