



# VOICES *for* NATIONAL SERVICE

## Fact Sheet: Corporation for National and Community Service

**The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) is an independent federal agency, and its largest programs are AmeriCorps and Senior Corps.** CNCS acts much like a foundation and is the nation's largest grantmaker investing in locally driven service and volunteering efforts focused on several high-priority areas including education, disaster relief, veterans and military families, housing, and more. CNCS funds more than 3,000 organizations including Habitat for Humanity, Teach For America, United Ways, Boys and Girls Clubs, City Year, the American Red Cross, Conservation Corps, and Catholic Charities, expanding their reach and impact. The result of this investment: more engaged citizens, greater economic opportunity, less dependence on government, safer neighborhoods, stronger communities, and a more unified nation.

Congress created CNCS to be a public-private partnership designed to lessen the dependency on government, particularly in rural and urban areas where the social safety net is strained. CNCS strengthens civil society by deploying national and community service members through its nonprofit affiliates. For every ten dollars invested in CNCS by the federal government, another fifteen dollars is raised from private sources to fund the agency's important programs that address community challenges. Investments from companies like Walmart, Home Depot, Target, Cisco, CSX and Citigroup increase the return on taxpayer dollars. CNCS is a well-managed agency with a strong culture of accountability and a comprehensive system of monitoring and oversight to prevent and detect issues and enforce rules.

### National service has results. AmeriCorps and Senior Corps get things done.

- Through participation in AmeriCorps and Senior Corps, 325,000 national service members are preparing today's students for tomorrow's jobs, reducing crime and reviving cities, connecting returning veterans to jobs, fighting the opioid epidemic, making college more accessible and affordable, support independent living for seniors and Americans with disabilities, and helping Americans rebuild their lives following a disaster.
- More than 23,000 veterans continue to serve their nation after their military career ends through participation in AmeriCorps and Senior Corps.
- Over 750,000 veterans and military family members receive employment services, benefits counseling, transportation and housing support from AmeriCorps and Senior Corps members.
- The Corporation for National and Community Service has mobilized 16,000 AmeriCorps and Senior Corps members in response to more than 200 declared disasters over the past 5 years. This includes devastating floods in Central/Southern Louisiana, Kentucky, West Virginia, Missouri, South Carolina and Texas; the water emergency in Flint, Michigan; and long-term recovery for disaster-stricken communities such as Joplin, Missouri. CNCS has also responded to the East Tennessee Wildfires,

Oso (WA) Mudslide, Alaska Ice Flow Jam Flooding, Tornadoes in Moore (OK) and Tuscaloosa, the West (TX) Fertilizer Plant Explosion, and Hurricanes Matthew, Sandy, Irene, Rita, and Katrina.

- AmeriCorps and Senior Corps provide critical support to students in nearly 12,000 schools across the country, including 1 in 10 public schools and 1 in 4 persistently low achieving schools.
- At-risk students in 720 charter schools are tutored and mentored by thousands of AmeriCorps and Senior Corps members.
- In 2015, Senior Corps and AmeriCorps members provided free tax preparation assistance to over 280,000 low-income families and individuals across the country.
- On average, Habitat for Humanity affiliates, that use AmeriCorps members to organize and lead home builds, construct 9 more homes per year and engage nearly 70% more volunteers.
- Senior Companions providing independent living services to 840,000 frail elderly each year, avoiding costly institutional care.
- AmeriCorps members are connecting coal miners to new jobs in Eastern Kentucky and West Virginia.
- In 2016, AmeriCorps member served nearly 250,000 healthy meals to West Virginia families.
- Crime is down 26 percent in the Detroit neighborhoods where AmeriCorps members serve, saving the city an estimated \$302 million in law enforcement costs. For every \$1 in AmeriCorps funding invested in the Detroit Urban Safety Corps delivers \$148 in reduced crime costs.

**National service has a strong, bipartisan history.**

- National service is a historically bipartisan, politically popular, and cost-effective strategy for engaging citizens, strengthening communities, creating jobs, and uniting the nation.
- Over the past eight decades, presidents from both political parties have proposed, and created with Congress, programs that have enabled Americans to serve local communities for a significant period of time.
- Local elected officials consider CNCS a key partner. On April 7, 2017, more than 4,500 mayors, county officials, and tribal leaders representing more than 178 million Americans—more than half the US population, held special ceremonies to recognize the work of AmeriCorps and Senior Corps in their communities.
- The week of March 13, 2017 was AmeriCorps Week and eight governors issued proclamations recognizing the impact of AmeriCorps in their state including: Kentucky Governor Bevin, Kansas Governor Brownback, Arkansas Governor Hutchinson, Illinois Governor Rauner and Michigan Governor Snyder.
- Thirty U.S. Senators cosponsored an AmeriCorps Week Resolution led by Senator Roger Wicker (R-MS) and three senior members of the Appropriations Committee, Chairman Thad Cochran (R-MS), Senator Chris Coons (D-DE) and Senator Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH). Other Republican cosponsors of the resolution included Senator Blunt (R-MO), Senator Boozman (R-AR), Senator McCain (R-AZ) and Senator Moran (R-KS).
- Voters overwhelmingly support national service. A poll conducted by TargetPoint Consulting found that 83 percent of voters across nine presidential battleground states want Congress to maintain or increase the federal investment in national service. This includes 78 percent of Republicans, 84 percent of Independents, and 90 percent of Democrats surveyed.

- Voters overwhelmingly agree that national service helps prepare young people for the workforce; helps build stronger neighborhoods and communities; helps restore important values of patriotism and civic duty to our young people; helps replace “government handouts” with local, volunteer-based, community work; and empowers people to be more self-sufficient and less dependent on the government.

**National service is a model for decentralized control and community problem-solving.**

- Two-thirds of AmeriCorps funding is directly controlled by governor-appointed state service commissions that determine which organizations receive investment based on the needs of their communities. Funding is distributed to nonprofit and faith-based organizations on a competitive basis.

**National service is a model for public private partnerships.**

- In 2015, CNCS generated \$1.26 billion in outside resources from private businesses, foundations, and other sources — an amount exceeding the federal appropriation.
- Every federal dollar invested in AmeriCorps is matched by more than two dollars from donations and in-kind support from non-CNCS sources, including business and philanthropy.
- For every one dollar the federal government invests in national service, there is a nearly four dollar return on investment.
- Federal agencies can utilize national service members to perform duties that align with agency missions at a low cost, like FEMA Corps, which is estimated to save \$60 million annually.

**National service leads to careers.**

- Participation in national service programs helps unemployed Americans find jobs. A study by CNCS shows that unemployed individuals who volunteer are 27 percent more likely to secure employment than those who do not volunteer. This relationship is even more significant for unemployed individuals without high school diplomas and those who live in rural communities.
- National service helps put opportunity youth — the nearly 5 million young people who are neither in school nor working — on a path toward education or a career. Some national service programs enable opportunity youth to earn their diploma or GED while serving simultaneously, and others act as workforce development tool for opportunity youth by giving them valuable on-the-job training in skills that are connected with career pathways.
- National service helps young people better define their career pathways and assists them in moving to the next step. Forty-three percent of AmeriCorps alumni state that their service was aligned with their career path, and 79 percent say that their service was a defining professional experience.
- National service helps young people develop into leaders, problem solvers, and more active citizens. Nine out of ten AmeriCorps alumni reported that their service experience improved their ability to solve problems. Additionally, eight of out ten alums say that if they were confronted with a community issue, they could confidently develop a plan to address it and get others to care.

- National service is a powerful workforce development tool that has the power to lead to careers by providing young people with tangible skills — especially career-specific skills for self-management and interacting with others.
- National service is backed by over 450 “Employers of National Service” who highly value the skills individuals gain during their service and bring to the workplace.
- On average, nine out of ten AmeriCorps alumni agreed or strongly agreed that they could solve difficult problems, persist when opposed, accomplish goals, handle unexpected events and unforeseen situations, remain calm, cope with difficulties, and identify multiple solutions. Alumni rated their current skills as higher than at pre-service, with the greatest gains being in their abilities to deal with unexpected events and unforeseen situations. A recent LinkedIn survey of hiring managers revealed that 59 percent believe that these highly valued soft skills are difficult to find.

**National service has a positive impact on higher education and civic engagement.**

- AmeriCorps helps pay for higher education by providing access to education awards that can be used to pay for college tuition or to pay down student loan debt. To date, AmeriCorps alums have earned more than \$3.3 billion to help with college costs. More than \$1 billion of scholarship funds have gone to repay students loans. The award is currently \$5,815 and matched by over 180 institutions of higher education.
- Individuals who served in AmeriCorps reported high levels of civic engagement and civic self-efficacy, and indicated that their AmeriCorps experience influenced their civic engagement.