A Letter From Our CEO

Dear Friends,

I’ve often heard people say that Corps are one of America’s best kept secrets. For all the people familiar with the tremendous impact Corps have on our young people and communities, there are many more who have never heard of these programs. However, I’m pleased to report that, every year, Corps become less of a secret and are increasingly seen as a go-to strategy for addressing community and conservation needs.

Corps had several moments on the national stage in 2016. In the spring, the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps (21CSC) Act – legislation that would facilitate partnerships between Corps and federal agencies, and improve pathways to employment for Corps alumni – was introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives (and in the Senate in 2015). I am pleased to report that, at the very end of the year, the National Park Service Centennial Act was signed into law, containing provisions that will help Corps engage more veterans, and help Corpsmembers translate skills they learn during their service into careers on public lands.

Throughout the year, Corps participated alongside elected and federal officials in events to recognize the 100th Anniversary of the National Park Service. By hosting service events, Corps helped launch the Obama Administration’s Every Kid in a Park initiative and Let’s Move Outside! Campaign in several cities across the country. A Corps alumni introduced the President at the National Christmas Tree Lighting. The 21CSC received millions of dollars in donations from private funders and companies like REI, as well as millions in project funding from the federal resource management agencies; articles and op-eds in support of Corps appeared in The Atlantic, on CNN.com, and in various outdoor publications; and a segment on Corps ran on the CBS Sunday Morning show.

Beyond these intangible gains, Corps grew by a number of metrics in 2016. Compared to the previous year, Corps enrolled more Corpsmembers, generated more community volunteer hours, restored more waterways, educated more community members about conservation and energy efficiency, doubled the acres of habitat restored, and more than doubled the miles of trail improved.

Of course, the most important outcome for Corps cannot be measured: the sense of purpose and civic responsibility Corpsmembers develop through service to our country. By participating in projects that make appreciable improvements to communities and public lands, our young people learn the value of hard work and develop in-demand job skills; our veterans learn how to leverage their skills for meaningful work here at home. That is invaluable.

I hope you enjoy reading our 2016 annual report and learning about how Corps strengthen America through Service and Conservation.

Mary Ellen Sprenkel
CEO
Established in 1985, The Corps Network is the national association of service and conservation Corps. Our 130+ member Corps provide youth and veteran Corpsmembers the opportunity to serve our country through work-based conservation, resource management, lands access, recreation, and disaster response projects on public lands and in rural and urban communities.

Through their service, Corpsmembers obtain in-demand skills and advance their education on the path to careers. Corps annually enroll over 25,000 Corpsmembers, engage an additional 100,000 local volunteers and partners, leverage private sector support, and complete thousands of projects that make America and our youth and veterans stronger.

The Corps Network supports Corps by advocating on their behalf, providing access to funding and project opportunities, and by offering expertise in Corps operations and programming.

About The Corps Network
Corps in Numbers 2016

**CORPSMEMBERS**

- **25,061** Young people served in Corps in FY16
  - **59%** Male
  - **40%** Female
  - **52%** Opportunity Youth (unemployed prior to service and/or below the poverty line/on public assistance and/or formerly incarcerated)

**MEMBERSHIP**

- **569** Total Members
  - **118** Service & Conservation Corps
  - **14** Emerging Corps
  - **62** Affiliate Members
  - **375** AmeriCorps Basic Members

**New Member Category**

In September 2016, The Corps Network created the “Individual Placement Program” full membership category. This new category expands the benefits of full membership to Corps that operate programs in which individual Corpsmembers serve in internship-like positions as part of a “cohort” of other individual placement Corpsmembers that meets regularly for training and team-based activities. This cohort model ensures that even Corpsmembers in standalone positions benefit from the shared experience of a traditional crew-based term.

The Corps Network created this new membership category in response to the growing number of Corps offering internship-like positions. The Individual Placement Program model offers a pathway for Corpsmembers to develop closer connections with future employers and gain a different kind of career experience than can be gained through crew-based service. Individual Placement Programs are not designed to replace traditional crew-based programs. Rather, these programs offer Corpsmembers additional learning opportunities and meet the needs of project partners – like the National Park Service and Bureau of Land Management – for standalone Corpsmembers to serve as research assistants, field assistants and community educators.

**CORPSMEMBER RACE/ETHNICITY**

- **53%** WHITE
- **28%** BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN
- **10%** OTHER
- **4%** ASIAN
- **4%** AMERICAN INDIAN, ALASKAN NATIVE, PACIFIC ISLANDER

* 21% identified as Hispanic

- **>5,000** Corpsmembers insured through The Corps Network Health Insurance Plan
- **14,191** number of industry-recognized certifications earned by Corpsmembers
- **4,585** number of Corpsmembers enrolled in high school diploma or GED program (across 13 Corps offering such programs)
Community Outcomes

5,036 community spaces/public facilities improved or constructed

2,328,485 square feet of graffiti removed

453,440 volunteer hours generated through Corps-organized service events

665,561 community members who benefitted from educational programming provided by Corps

445 disasters responded to, including fires, floods and storms

190 historic structures restored/preserved

Conservation, Recreation, Environmental Outcomes

1,577,252 acres of habitat restored

2,551 miles of waterway restored

1,502,078 trees planted

20,440 low-income homes audited and/or retrofitted to improve resource efficiency

183,621 acres of invasive species & hazardous fire fuels treated

14,666,373 pounds of waste collected and recycled/properly disposed of

21,861 miles of multi-use trail constructed/improved

8,156 acres of erosion and flood control

5,036 community spaces/public facilities improved or constructed

2,328,485 square feet of graffiti removed

453,440 volunteer hours generated through Corps-organized service events

665,561 community members who benefitted from educational programming provided by Corps

445 disasters responded to, including fires, floods and storms

190 historic structures restored/preserved
Accreditation

Based on the earlier Excellence in Corps Operations (ECO) program, The Corps Network launched its new Corps Center of Excellence Accreditation program in 2014. Accreditation is granted to Corps that can demonstrate a high level of accountability to funders and donors, as well as the capacity to provide meaningful programming to Corpsmembers and quality results to community and project partners.

The Accreditation program is administered by an advisory committee of former Conservation Corps leaders, former federal land management agency staff, and other experts in Corps and youth programming. To become Accredited, a Corps must undergo an in-depth review of its general operations, youth programming operations, governance standards, financial management practices, and risk management guidelines. The process involves a site visit as well as a thorough assessment of the Corps’ administrative documents and policies. In addition to receiving general Accreditation, Corps can invite additional scrutiny to become Accredited with specific endorsements that recognize their experience or capacity. Accreditation lasts for five years with the requirement that Corps provide an annual update to the advisory committee.

Officially recognized in 2016:
The following Corps successfully completed the Accreditation review process in 2015 and were officially recognized as Accredited at The Corps Network National Conference in February 2016.

- Conservation Corps Minnesota & Iowa (MN)
- Citizens Conservation Corps (WV)
- Civic Works (MD)
- Community Training Works, Inc. – Young American Conservation Corps (FL)
- Montana Conservation Corps (MT)

Underwent Accreditation process in 2016:
The following four Corps successfully completed the Accreditation process in 2016 and, upon a vote by the advisory committee, will be officially recognized as Accredited at The Corps Network National Conference in February 2017.

- American Conservation Experience (AZ)
- California Conservation Corps (CA)
- Greater Valley Conservation Corps (CA)
- Rocky Mountain Youth Corps (NM)
21st Century Conservation Service Corps (21CSC)

Officially launched in 2012 as part of President Obama’s America’s Great Outdoors Initiative, the 21CSC is a bold national effort to put thousands of young people and veterans to work protecting, restoring, and enhancing America’s great outdoors. Along with Conservation Legacy, The Corps Network co-chairs the Partnership for the 21CSC (P-21CSC), an advisory group of key federal, state, local and non-profit leaders that supports the development and implementation of the 21CSC.

As a co-chair of the P-21CSC, The Corps Network helped organize numerous activities in 2016

• Conducted extensive outreach regarding the 21CSC Act (see page 16).
• Hosted the annual Partnership for the 21CSC public meeting as part of our 2016 National Conference. During this event, numerous corporate, federal and nonprofit partners of the 21CSC announced their commitments to the initiative for the coming year.
• Jointly honored four individuals with the 21CSC Champion of the Year Award, designed to recognize nonprofit and federal partners who have gone above and beyond to engage Corps in project work:
  - Leslie Weldon, U.S. Forest Service, Deputy Chief - National Forest System
  - Jeff DeQuattro, The Nature Conservancy, Director of Restoration – Gulf of Mexico Program
  - Bob Fuhrmann, National Park Service, Youth Programs Director – Yellowstone National Park
  - Zac Ribbing, U.S. Forest Service, Wilderness & Trails – Coronado National Forest
• Helped manage 21CSC.org and related social media presence, orchestrating online campaigns to raise awareness about the 21CSC.
• Helped establish new partners for the 21CSC, including the organizations BeVisible and Team Rubicon.

Service Year Alliance

Formed in 2016 through a merger of ServiceNation, the Aspen Institute’s Franklin Project and the National Conference on Citizenship, Service Year Alliance is an organization focused on promoting access to, knowledge of, and support for national service opportunities. The Corps Network is proud to support this new organization and work with them to enhance and promote the outward value of service year opportunities. Two initiatives on which The Corps Network and Service Year Alliance partnered in 2016 were:

Service Year Exchange

Launched in November 2016, the Service Year Exchange is an online platform that connects young people who want to serve with service year opportunities, like those offered by America’s 130+ Service and Conservation Corps. The Corps Network worked closely with Service Year Alliance to develop this platform. We then promoted it to our membership; local Corps were some of the first service programs to adopt Service Year Exchange as a new recruiting tool.

Digital Badges

The Corps Network is partnering with Service Year Alliance to pilot the use of “digital badges” in defining the knowledge and skills gained through a service year. Via the LRNG online platform, Corpsmembers in this pilot will – by successfully completing various activities – be able to demonstrate their mastery of certain essential workplace competencies, like the ability to manage stress or have a productive disagreement. Corpsmembers will then receive digital badges: online icons linked to information about how he or she developed a given skill. Corpsmembers can link to these badges on their résumés, providing prospective employers with insight into the expertise a service year alumnus can bring to the job.
Education Awards Program

Since the year 2000, The Corps Network has operated an AmeriCorps Education Awards Program (EAP) through a National Direct Grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service. This is the largest AmeriCorps program The Corps Network administers, having supported over 44,000 AmeriCorps positions.

Upon successful completion of their term of service, EAP Corpsmembers are eligible to receive an education award (scholarship) that can be used to support future educational endeavors or to repay student loans. Corpsmembers serving during the 2015 – 2016 program year received up to $5,730 based on the length of their term. They have seven years to use this award.

**FY16 EAP NUMBERS**

- **63** Number of Corps involved in The Corps Network EAP
- **>2,900** Number of Corpsmembers enrolled in EAP
- **$6,866,975** total amount of Education Award money Corpsmembers had the potential to earn for the 2015 – 2016 season

Let’s Move! Outside

Regular outdoor play is proven to help kids stay physically and mentally healthy. To help ensure that all children have access to safe and productive outdoor activities, the Department of the Interior and the White House launched the Let’s Move! Outside initiative to inspire millions of youth to Play, Learn, Serve and Work on public lands.

With a grant from American Express, the Department of the Interior helped put this initiative into action in 2015 through a partnership with the National League of Cities and YMCA of the USA. Community Coordinators were placed at YMCA locations in over 50 cities to work with local organizations to increase opportunities for youth and families to get outside.

AmeriCorps Education Awards Program (EAP) members supported by The Corps Network were also placed at numerous YMCA locations to assist Community Coordinators. These EAP members are responsible for creating relationships with local nonprofits, municipalities and schools to help youth develop lasting connections to nature. Members help plan outdoor service projects and have created relevant and sustainable programs at the Y that increase volunteer engagement on public lands.

**Year-1 EAP members completed their service in June and September of 2016 in the following cities:**

- Albuquerque, NM
- Atlanta, GA
- Baltimore, MD
- Boston, MA
- Cleveland, OH
- Denver, CO
- Honolulu, HI
- Jacksonville, FL
- Las Vegas, NV

**Los Angeles, CA**
- New Orleans, LA
- Salt Lake City, UT
- San Antonio, TX
- St. Louis, MO
- Tucson, AZ
- Twin Cities, MN
- Washington, DC

**In May 2016, the following cities began enrolling EAP members for Year-2:**

- Austin, TX
- Birmingham, AL
- Boise, ID
- Columbus, OH
- Houston, TX
- Indianapolis, IN
- Newark, NJ
- Oklahoma City, OK
- Omaha, NE

- Phoenix, AZ
- Tampa, FL
- San Diego, CA
- Seattle, WA
Opportunity Youth Service Initiative (OYSI)

Young people ages 16 – 24 who are out of school and not working are referred to as Opportunity Youth. This term reflects their enormous potential if offered the support to get back on track.

Launched in 2013 through an AmeriCorps grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service, The Corps Network’s Opportunity Youth Service Initiative (OYSI) engages youth from disadvantaged backgrounds in conservation service and education. During their term of service, Corpsmembers develop job skills, earn certifications, complete their high school requirements, and receive assistance in transitioning to postsecondary education or the workforce.

FY16 OYSI NUMBERS

- 13 States in which 11 Corps operated OYSI programs (AZ, CO, FL, LA, MD, NC, NY, OR, SC, TX, VT, WA, WI)
- >345,000 Hours served by AmeriCorps members in OYSI
- 550 Number of Corpsmembers engaged
- 76% Percentage of Corpsmembers considered economically disadvantaged
- 13% Percentage of OYSI members with past court involvement
- 9% Percentage of OYSI members with a disability

Did you know?

AmeriCorps celebrated its one-millionth AmeriCorps member in 2016. As an AmeriCorps National Direct Grantee since 2000, The Corps Network has supported nearly 48,700 members.

Western Colorado Conservation Corps - AmeriCorps members supported by The Corps Network.

Voices from the Field

“I am so thankful for all the opportunities the Corps is giving me to reach my goals of earning my high school diploma, developing work skills and getting an apprenticeship. This will help me create a good life for my daughter.”

Isaac, FY16 OYSI Member
Summer Opportunity AmeriCorps Program

Summer is a critical time for teens and young adults to learn and grow. Experiences outside the classroom – including summer jobs and internships – are important résumé-builders and networking opportunities. Unfortunately, these beneficial activities are scarce for thousands of youth, particularly those in underserved communities where jobs and disposable income are limited.

To help address this issue, the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) partnered with The Corps Network during the summer of 2015 to pilot a program in which three of The Corps Network’s member OYSI programs engaged teenagers in 3-month-long AmeriCorps terms of service. This pilot demonstrated that even a relatively short term of service could have a positive influence on the youth enrolled. At the end of the summer, the vast majority of participants felt a greater sense of responsibility for their communities and had a clearer sense of their career and educational goals.

Building off this success, CNCS partnered with The Corps Network on a second pilot – the Summer Opportunity AmeriCorps Program (SOAP) – during the summer of 2016. The Corps Network was the main grantee for this program, which differed from other AmeriCorps programs in a number of ways, including that Corps could offer a short, 100-hour term of service and enroll Corpsmembers as young as 14.

Through service on public lands, the teens and young adults engaged in this program gained work experience and had the opportunity to positively affect their communities and the environment. AmeriCorps helped them develop an ethic of service and a sense of responsibility for public lands. Participants were able to see, firsthand, the value of their service and receive valuable feedback from the public land managers with whom Corps partnered.

**FY16 SOAP NUMBERS**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Number of Corps involved</td>
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<tr>
<td>659</td>
<td>Number of Corpsmembers engaged</td>
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<td>&gt;132,800</td>
<td>Hours served by SOAP members</td>
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<td>Number of trees planted</td>
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<td>72</td>
<td>Public facilities constructed or improved</td>
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<td>Community gardens installed/maintained</td>
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Gulf Coast Restoration Initiative

The 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill released 210 million gallons of crude oil into the Gulf of Mexico, causing extensive damage to marine life, coastal habitats, and the region’s fishing and tourism industries. In response to this event, as well as recent natural disasters that have affected Gulf Coast communities and wildlife habitats, The Corps Network and the Walton Family Foundation partnered to launch the Gulf Coast Restoration Initiative (GCRI) in 2013. The goal of the GCRI is to build Conservation Corps capacity across the Gulf. A robust network of Corps can help restore coastal habitats and provide youth and veterans in underserved communities with paid job-training for careers in the growing restoration economy.

**2016 GCRI Updates and Accomplishments**

**The Gulf Conservation Corps Restoration Program (GCCRDP)**

Funded by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) and a private donor, this $400,000 grant awarded to The Corps Network and The Nature Conservancy (TNC) in March 2016 provides capacity-building support for two new local Conservation Corps and a Veterans Conservation Corps. The Corps Network and TNC have worked together to establish the local organizational framework to support Conservation Corps, help recruit and train supervisors and volunteers, and identify restoration project locations and techniques for achieving meaningful conservation.

This program builds the infrastructure to train and mobilize young people to address problems in the Gulf ecosystem that can be solved with small work crews. The following is a summary of some of the participating Corps’ main accomplishments in 2016:
Conservation Corps of the Forgotten Coast (CCFC) - Apalachicola, FL
- Completed > 8,500 hours of project work and training, leading to additional fee-for-service projects for the Corps, and internships and jobs with area land managers for some of the crew.
- Restored hydrological systems flowing in to St. Joseph Bay
- Cleared 25 acres of invasive species at Apalachicola National Forest
- 37,500 plants native plants installed
- Franklin’s Promise Coalition, the parent organization of CCFC, leveraged GCCRP funding and utilized local partnerships to develop a new “Ed Corps” that will allow young adults the opportunity to complete their GED or High School Diploma at the FCP’s facility.

Climb CDC Youth Conservation Corps (CCYC) - Gulfport, MS
- Partnered with the Pascagoula River Audubon Center on the difficult construction of a research walkway over marsh area. Future work at the site will include monitoring sediment levels, planting marsh grass, and measuring habitat recovery.
- Completed 10 additional projects with 6 partner organizations. These projects included:
  - water quality/habitat assessments of 30 miles of waterway with TNC
  - invasive plant removal and trail fortification for Land Trust for Mississippi Coastal Plain
  - installation of 1,000 native plants on a barrier islands

Veterans Fire and Conservation Corps
Southeast Conservation Corps (based in Chattanooga, TN) was awarded a $100,000 grant in 2016 to provide a “proof of concept” demonstration for key partners in the Gulf Region. Funding will support start-up and operation of a mobile crew that will engage recently separated military in Longleaf Pine restoration and controlled burn projects across the entire Gulf. A priority outcome is to develop a program model for advanced restoration - suited to match Veterans skills - that will provide career pathways in the Gulf’s emerging restoration economy. The crew will be trained and participating in project in the Spring of 2017.

Creation of Gulf Corps Alliance
Formed in 2016 by The Corps Network and Corps operating in the Gulf region, the Gulf Corps Alliance (GCA) strives to strengthen the environmental and economic health and resilience of communities along the Gulf of Mexico by encouraging partnerships among Corps, local governments, community organizations and businesses. The GCA promotes awareness about the Gulf Coast region’s complex environmental challenges; advocates for comprehensive solutions; and networks among various stakeholders to see solutions come to fruition. Members include Corps, workforce development organizations, environmentally-focused nonprofits and others.

Corps involved in the GCA: American YouthWorks (TX), Climb CDC Conservation Corps (MS), Community Training Works (FL), Conservation Corps of the Forgotten Coast (FL), Limitless Vistas, Inc. (LA), The Student Conservation Association – SCA (Nationwide).
HOPE Crew

2016 marked the third year of the Hands On Preservation Experience (HOPE) Crew program. Developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and The Corps Network, HOPE Crew is designed to train the next generation of preservation craftspeople. Each HOPE Crew project is a partnership through which a project sponsor (such as the National Park Service) engages a Corps to help restore a historic property. Experts from the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s network of craftspeople train Corpsmembers in preservation techniques. Depending on project needs, Corpsmembers may, for example, learn skills in carpentry, window reglazing, masonry, roofing and painting.

**FY16 HOPE CREW NUMBERS**

- >20,000 Hours served on HOPE Crew projects
- 38 Number of sites at which projects took place

**Examples of HOPE Crew FY16 Project Sites:**
- Aztec Ruins National Monument (NM)
- Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site (NY)
- Grand Teton National Park (WY)
- Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site (GA)
- Sagamore Hill National Historic Site (NY)
- Shenandoah National Park (VA)

Updates from the Northeast Region

The Corps Network and the National Park Service (NPS) have a mutually beneficial relationship: cost evaluations show that NPS can save, on average, more than 50 percent on project costs by engaging Corps, thus spending less money to do more work; Corps benefit from partnering with NPS for the opportunities it provides Corpsmembers to serve in some of America’s most iconic natural spaces alongside land management professionals who serve as teachers and mentors.

To facilitate the relationship between Corps and parks in NPS’ Northeast Region (which includes properties from Maine to Virginia), The Corps Network and the Park Service partnered in 2015 to create a Youth Program Assistant position based out of NPS’ Northeast Regional Office in Philadelphia, PA.

**In 2016, this partnership resulted in the following accomplishments:**

- Webinar series facilitated to help staff at NPS Northeast Region sites learn how to engage youth in projects
- Webinar series facilitated to inform NPS Northeast and Southeast Region parks about Corps partnerships
- Webinar on Corps partnerships presented to National Park Service Maintenance Advisory Group
- Hosted monthly conference calls with NPS Northeast Region Corps, providing updates and improving communication among Corps in the Region
- Review conducted of all NPS Northeast Region FY16 projects to determine which could involve youth. Over 260 potential Corps projects identified. Relationships facilitated between parks and local Corps to engage youth in many projects – particularly historic preservation projects – that otherwise would not have had youth involvement.
- Site visits conducted of various parks and Corps throughout the Northeast Region. Reports prepared to record successes and note areas for partnership expansion and improved efficiency
- Relationship initiated between The Corps Network and National Trust for Historic Preservation’s Hands On Preservation Experience (HOPE) Crew program (see above) and the National Park Service’s Historic Architecture, Conservation, and Preservation (HACE) Program. Historic preservation pilot projects developed for 2016 and 2017.
The Corps Network 2016 National Conference took place February 7th – 11th in Washington, DC. The theme of the Conference - “The Legacy Continues” – was a celebration of the long history of Corps, dating back to the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) of the 1930s. During the Great Depression, the CCC put millions of young men to work restoring and improving America’s public lands. Corpsmembers today continue the CCC’s legacy of stewardship and service while also establishing a new legacy. Corps have adapted over time to more effectively address America’s challenges, from restoring parks and natural spaces, to making homes more energy efficient. “The Legacy Continues” was an especially fitting theme for 2016 as this year marked the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service. Since the time of the CCC, Corps have worked with NPS to maintain and enhance parks across the country.

Among others, speakers throughout the Conference included Robert Bonnie, U.S. Department of Agriculture Undersecretary for Natural Resources and the Environment; Jeremy Jacobs, Chairman of Delaware North; Josh Kraushaar, Political Editor for National Journal; and Will Shafroth, President & CEO of the National Park Foundation.

2016 Award Winners

Corpsmember of the Year
Jasmin Angeles, LA Conservation Corps
Timothy Gunn, The Sustainability Institute
Keoni Kikala, Kupa – Hawaii Youth Conservation Corps
Katheryne Lewis, Montana Conservation Corps
Angela Noah, Northwest Youth Corps

Legacy Achievement Award
Len Price
Conservation Corps Minnesota & Iowa
Dwight Washabaugh
Sacramento Regional Conservation Corps

2016 National Conference

Project of the Year
Tiny House Mobile Energy Education Center
Civic Works
Corpsmembers constructed a “tiny house,” featuring resource-efficient design and technologies, to teach the public about sustainable living and energy-saving practices.

Faces of Tomorrow
Conservation Corps Minnesota & Iowa
CCMI created a program to combat the underrepresentation of women and minorities in the natural resource workforce by providing minority and female Corpsmembers intensive training and hands-on job experience w/ the US Forest Service.

HOPE Crew - Gateway Nat’l Recreation Area
New Jersey Youth Corps of Phillipsburg
NJYC of Phillipsburg worked with the National Park Service to restore an important historic building that had been closed to the public due to damage from Hurricane Sandy.

UCC Bike Crew
Utah Conservation Corps
To reduce their carbon footprint, UCC created a program through which Corpsmembers used nothing but bicycles to travel between project sites and carry all of their equipment.
Hearing on the 21CSC & PLSC Acts

On June 23rd, CEO of The Corps Network Mary Ellen Sprenkel testified on behalf of the 21st Century Conservation Corps (21CSC) Act (H.R. 5114) and the Public Lands Service Corps (PLSC) Act (H.R. 2167) before the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Federal Lands. Testimony in support of both pieces of legislation was also provided by Kevin Heiner, a Veterans Conservation Corps staff member from Southwest Conservation Corps, and Michael Reynolds, Associate Director of Workforce and Inclusion for the National Park Service. Representatives Seth Moulton (D-MA) and Martha McSally (R-AZ) both testified on behalf of the 21CSC Act, which they co-introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives on April 28, 2016. This hearing, which provided key members of Congress the opportunity to ask questions, was an important step towards passage of legislation.

Hill Briefing on the 21CSC

In conjunction with the 3rd Annual Great Outdoors Day of Service, The Corps Network and Conservation Legacy – the two co-chairs of the Partnership for the 21CSC – hosted a briefing on Capitol Hill on June 16th to educate legislative staff about the 21CSC Act. Over 100 people attended.

The 21CSC is a national initiative to increase the engagement of youth and recent veterans in comprehensive service that improves and maintains America’s public lands. Introduced in the U.S. Senate in August 2015 (S. 1993) and in the U.S. House (H.R. 5114) in April 2016, the bipartisan 21CSC Act would facilitate efficient and money-saving partnerships between Corps and federal agencies, and create pathways to employment for Corps alumni (see page 6 for more information on The Corps Network’s 2016 involvement with the 21CSC).

The June 16th briefing included testimony in support of the 21CSC provided by Derrick Crandall, President and CEO of the American Recreation Coalition; Kirsten Blackburn, Marketing Manager for KEEN Footwear; and two Corps alumni, respectively from Utah Conservation Corps and Greening Youth Foundation’s Historically Black Colleges and Universities internship program with the National Park Service. Support for the legislation was also provided by staff from the offices of Representatives Seth Moulton (D-MA) and Martha McSally (R-AZ), who co-introduced the 21CSC Act in the House.
3rd Annual Great Outdoors Day of Service

Over 100 volunteers participated in The Corps Networks 3rd Annual Great Outdoors Day of Service in Washington, DC on June 17th. Held in recognition of Great Outdoors Month – a celebration of America’s public lands – The Corps Network’s Day of Service is designed to both inspire people to get outside and participate in the protection of our natural spaces, and raise awareness about the important role of Corps and volunteers in maintaining accessible public lands. In 2016, President Barack Obama issued a proclamation that officially declared June as Great Outdoors Month and encouraged increased funding for the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps (21CSC). The proclamation cited the 21CSC as a way to “give more Americans hands-on opportunities to restore, enhance, and give back to the outdoor spaces that have given us so much.”

As part of the Let’s Move! Outside initiative (see page 7), the Day of Service started on the National Mall with an invigorating warm-up led by YMCA of Washington, DC. Service projects followed, involving painting, invasive species removal and shoreline cleanups at Rock Creek Park, the National Mall and along the Potomac River. Volunteers included representatives from 13 Corps, as well as friends and partners of The Corps Network.

The 2016 Day of Service was generously supported by American Recreation Coalition, Delaware North, Guest Services, the National Park Service, Rock Creek Conservancy, Sheraton – Reston, The Westin – Reston Heights, and the YMCA.

IUCN World Conservation Congress

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) is recognized as the oldest and largest environmental organization. The IUCN World Conservation Congress is held every four years, bringing together conservation professionals from across the globe. The 2016 IUCN World Conservation Congress – themed “Planet at the Crossroads” – was the first ever to be hosted in the United States. Over the course of the 10-day event (September 1st – 10th), over 9,000 delegates from 192 countries came to Hawaii to discuss the threat of climate change.

As leader of Hawaii’s Host Committee K-12 Working Group, Kupu – a member of The Corps Network – played a significant role in planning and implementing the Congress. Thanks to Kupu’s efforts, the 2016 Congress was the first to include programming specifically for youth. Additionally, The Corps Network attended the Congress, partnering with the National Park Service to host an exhibit on how Corps introduce new populations to conservation and engage young people in preserving green spaces within their own communities. Attendees from around the world left the Congress with a better understanding of Corps and how to implement such programs in their own countries.

Opportunity Youth United

In 2012, The Corps Network joined YouthBuild USA and nine other national organizations serving Opportunity Youth to launch the National Council of Young Leaders: a diverse body of young adults from across the United States who advise policy makers and funders on issues affecting low-income youth. The Council has since expanded to become Opportunity Youth United – a larger movement of young adults who have experienced poverty and are dedicated to creating a society with opportunity for all. The Corps Network supports two members of the National Council: Philan Tree, a 2012 Corpsmember of the Year and alumna of what is now Arizona Conservation Corps, and Timothy Gunn, a 2016 Corpsmember of the Year and an alumnus of The Sustainability Institute in Charleston, SC.

In fall of 2016, The Corps Network helped facilitate the Opportunity Youth United and National Council of Young Leaders Civic Engagement Summit in Philadelphia. TCN hosted a workshop to inform participants about national service on a federal level and about how, on a local level, Corps help young adults make a difference in their communities and advance towards personal and professional goals.
Outreach

As the voice of America’s Service and Conservation Corps, The Corps Network works to advance the legislation and strategic partnerships that support national service programs and youth and veteran engagement in the outdoors. In FY16, our outreach efforts focused around the following initiatives, issues and legislation.

**Funding & Support for the Corporation for National & Community Service (CNCS)**

CNCS is the federal agency responsible for administering AmeriCorps. Its budget is voted upon by Congress. As a strong supporter of national service, The Corps Network advocated for secure funding for CNCS and helped support various CNCS initiatives.

**2016 Activities:**

- Provided testimony for CNCS appropriations in the House and Senate.
- Met with and advocated for additional CNCS funding with all House and Senate Labor, Health, and Human Services and Education Appropriations Subcommittee members.
- Conducted outreach to members of Congress whose districts were affected by disasters to let them know about the importance of AmeriCorps members providing disaster response and recovery support.
- Provided testimony before the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee about reforming FEMA and other disaster response programs to include more opportunities for Corps to help respond, rebuild, and mitigate future disasters.
- Provided testimony before the House Ways and Means Committee about ways to reform the unemployment system to promote Corps during times of high unemployment. Service opportunities provide out-of-work individuals the chance to learn new skills, give back to the community, and maintain a fresh résumé and professional network.
**21CSC Act**

The 21CSC Act was introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives in April 2016 by Rep. Seth Moulton (D-MA) and Rep. Martha McSally (R-AZ). It was introduced in the U.S. Senate (S. 1993) in August 2015 by Sen. John McCain (R-AZ) and Sen. Michael Bennet (D-CO). If signed into law, the 21CSC Act would allow federal land and water management agencies to meet their missions in a cost-efficient manner through formal, more effective partnerships with 21CSC member organizations.

Specifically, the 21CSC Act would: expand the number of federal agencies that can work with 21CSC programs; encourage federal agencies to collaborate, and require that they use only existing resources to work with 21CSC programs; prioritize the engagement of recent veterans and disadvantaged youth in 21CSC programs; establish standards for data collection and measuring the effectiveness of 21CSC programs; provide two years of non-competitive hiring eligibility with federal agencies for 21CSC alumni.

**2016 Activities:**

- Worked closely with the offices of Rep. Seth Moulton (D-MA) and Martha McSally (R-AZ) to promote introduction of the legislation in the House.
- Created a “Dear Colleague” letter to gain co-sponsors for the 21CSC Act in the House.
- Conducted extensive outreach to House and Senate offices, meeting with nearly all Republican members of the House and Senate Natural Resource Committees who have Corps in their districts.
- Provided testimony for hearing on the 21CSC Act, held by Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee.
- Provided testimony for hearing on the 21CSC Act, held by House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Federal Lands.
- Held a briefing on the 21CSC Act for Congressional staff (see page 13).
- Drafted/circulated support letter for 21CSC Act, signed by over 80 different corporations and organizations.
- Helped draft a CNN.com joint op-ed in support of the 21CSC Act, written by Sen. Michael Bennet (D-CO) and John Bridgeland, co-chairman of the Franklin Project at The Aspen Institute and former director of the White House Domestic Policy Council under President George W. Bush.
Water Resources Development Act (WRDA)

Signed into law under the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act in December 2016, this legislation includes language that specifically requires the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to enter into cooperative agreements with Corps where possible to ensure maximum participation and opportunities for youth. The Corps Network worked with the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and Rep. Brian Babin (R-TX) and Rep. John Garamendi (D-CA), along with the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee and Sen. Ben Cardin (D-DE) to ensure WRDA included language promoting partnerships between Corps and the Army Corps of Engineers.

Public Lands Service Corps (PLSC) Act

The Public Lands Service Corps Act of 2015, introduced in the Senate by Sen. Tom Udall (D-NM) [S. 1160] and in the House by Ranking Member Grijalva (D-AZ) [H.R. 2167], would amend the Public Lands Corps Act of 1993 to make a variety of improvements for Corps, create a new Indian Youth Service Corps, and also make improvements to the Corps hiring authority. In 2016, The Corps Network testified during a joint hearing on the PLSC Act and 21CSC Act held by the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Federal Lands (see page 13). In part due to The Corps Network’s advocacy, key provisions of the PLSC Act were included in the NPS Centennial Act (see above) and in Sen. Ron Wyden’s (D-OR) Recreation Not Red-Tape Act, which aims to reform outdoor recreation policy and make it easier to recreate and manage public lands while better engaging with Corps.

National Park Service Centennial Act

Passed into law in December 2016, the National Park Service Centennial Act creates funding streams and initiatives designed to improve NPS properties and enhance recreational and volunteer opportunities at parks.

The legislation contains two amendments to the Public Lands Corps Act of 1993: first, there is a provision that raises the maximum allowable age of Public Lands Corps participants from 25 to 30, giving Corps the opportunity to engage more veterans in public lands service; second, there is a provision that extends the noncompetitive hiring authority for Corps alumni from 120 days to two years, creating a pathway to employment with federal natural resource management agencies. The Corps Network conducted extensive outreach on behalf of this legislation, speaking and meeting with many U.S. House and Senate offices to raise awareness and support.

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Outdoors Alliance for Kids (OAK)
The Corps Network serves on the Steering Committee for the Outdoors Alliance for Kids (OAK), a partnership of organizations from diverse sectors united in connecting youth and families with nature. In 2016, The Corps Network helped OAK plan and facilitate advocacy days on Capitol Hill to lobby on behalf of OAK priorities, which include the 21CSC and PLSC Acts, and land management appropriations for recreation and youth engagement.

Every Kid in a Park (EKIP)
In 2016, The Corps Network became an official partner of the Every Kid in a Park (EKIP) campaign, designed to inspire the next generation of cultural and environmental stewards and make it easy for parents, teachers, and organizations to plan trips to America’s public lands and waters. The campaign was launched in support of President Obama’s Every Kid in a Park initiative, through which, beginning in 2015, all fourth-grade students and their families are eligible to receive a year-long free pass to all federally managed lands, waters and historic sites.

Housing and Urban Development Reform
The Corps Network and Green City Force – a member organization of The Corps Network based in Brooklyn, NY – developed a policy proposal for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to develop a national cooperative agreement and pilot a project through which Corps would work with local housing authorities to install energy-saving retrofits in units and provide other community upgrades.

The Corps Network also developed draft legislation that would update our Urban Youth Corps Authorization to provide more opportunities for Opportunity Youth and veterans to serve in Corps and make meaningful improvements to America’s urban green spaces, public works, housing and transportation infrastructure.

Funding and Support for Public Lands and Waters
The Corps Network supports the missions of America’s federal land and water management agencies. Corps partner with these agencies to complete maintenance and improvement projects in a cost-effective manner. The Corps Network advocates for robust funding for resource management agencies.

2016 Activities:
• Provided testimony for the Department of the Interior (DOI) appropriations to the House and Senate Interior Appropriations Committees
• Met with and advocated for DOI and U.S. Forest Service funding with nearly all Interior Appropriations Committee Members in the House and Senate
• Provided testimony urging passage of Wildfire Disaster Funding Act, (H.R. 167 and S. 235) to reform the wildfire funding system to 1) increase use of Corps in wildfire response, and 2) ensure that resources aren’t taken from other Forest Service Accounts to fund wildfire response.
• Provided testimony before the House Natural Resources Committee on the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Modernization Act of 2015, urging that Pass Fee Revenue be maintained, which is used by land management agency national offices and local units to engage Corps. Also urged inclusion of language to encourage more partnerships with entities like Corps.

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AmeriCorps members supported by The Corps Network at (Left to Right): Maine Conservation Corps (ME), Green City Force (NY): Youth Conservation Corps (IL)
Member of Washington Conservation Corps responds to flooding in Louisiana as part of an AmeriCorps Disaster Response Team effort.

Winners of the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps (21CSC) Champion of the Year Award - 2016

Volunteers at The Corps Network’s 3rd Annual Great Outdoors Day of Service pose for a picture.

Corpsmembers with Great Lakes Community Conservation Corps in WI install permeable pavement, a green infrastructure improvement

Winners of the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps (21CSC) Champion of the Year Award - 2016

CEO Mary Ellen Sprenkel and Board Member Tony Anikeef recognize employee Leslie Wilkoff for over 30 years at The Corps Network.

GCRI Corpsmembers install native plants.
Sen. Ron Wyden (D-OR) helps present the 2016 Corpsmember of the Year Award to Angela Noah of Northwest Youth Corps.

Onondaga Earth Corps works on a HOPE Crew project at Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site - Credit: Bill Urbin (NPS)

OYSI Members with Conservation Legacy serving at Aztec Ruins National Monument

California Conservation Corps deployed thousands of Corpsmembers in 2016 to assist the US Forest Service and Cal Fire in wildfire response. Photo depicts Camarillo Crew at Sherpa Fire. - Credit: Jeremy Day (CCC)

OYSI members with American YouthWorks in Texas help build “tiny houses” for the homeless.

Texas Conservation Corps and 21CSC alumnus Dylan Carrejo introduces the President at the 2016 National Christmas Tree Lighting.

#### Assets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Assets</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash and Cash Equivalents</td>
<td>$886,679</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cash Held for Others</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accounts Receivable</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grants and Contracts Receivable</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prepaid Expenses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Other Current Assets</td>
<td>1,947,529</td>
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<tr>
<td>Security Deposit</td>
<td>49,854</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### Long-Term Assets

| Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment       | 63,140       |
| Lease Improvement                       | 10,074       |
| Accumulated Depreciation                | (33,071)     |
| Total Long-Term Assets                  | 40,143       |

#### Total Assets

|                      | $1,987,671 |

#### Liabilities and Net Assets

#### Liabilities

**Current Liabilities**

| Accounts Payable & Accrued Liabilities | 1,140,158 |
| Amounts Held on Behalf of Others       | 14,926    |
| Deferred Revenue                       | 18,136    |
| Total Current Liabilities              | 1,173,220 |

**Noncurrent Liabilities**

| Deferred Lease Incentives               | 190,871    |
| Total Liabilities                       | 1,364,091  |

#### Net Assets

| Unrestricted                            | 654,961    |
| Board Designated                        | 35,027     |
| Change in Net Assets                    | (66,408)   |
| Total Net Assets                        | 623,581    |

#### Total Liabilities and Net Assets

|                      | $1,987,671 |
### Operating Revenue

**Core Revenue - HQ**
- Grants Revenue: $1,343,910
- Membership Dues: 353,483
- Health Insurance Commissions: 122,363
- National Conference Revenue: 115,735
- Contract Revenue: 79,483
- Membership Dues - PLSC: 55,530
- Donations: 17,882
- Accreditation Fee Revenue: 10,015
- Reimbursed Expenses: 6,921
- Advertisement Revenue: 2,595
- Miscellaneous Income: 144

**Total Core Revenue - HQ**: 2,108,062

**Grant Revenue - Passthrough**: 3,991,351

**Total Operating Revenue**: $6,099,413

### Expenditures

**Expenditures Without Indirect Costs**
- Personnel Expenses: 1,145,046
- Contracted Services: 417,485
- Rent Expense: 219,097
- Meeting Expenses: 126,752
- Office Expenses: 129,431
- Travel Expenses: 136,658

**Total Core Expenses - HQ**: 2,174,470

**Subgrantee Expenses - Passthrough**: 3,991,351

**Total Expenses**: 6,165,821

**Change in Net Assets**: ($66,408)