A Consensual Qualitative Research Study of the Transformation from High School Dropout to
Graduate: Corpsmember Outcomes and Influencing Factors

Executive Summary Report

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Summary of Key Findings

These findings are based on the experiences of 15 corpsmembers who graduated from Urban Corps of San Diego County between October 2009 and October 2010. They represent 32.6% of those eligible to participate in this study.

Decreased or Resolved Barriers During & After the Program
1. Incarceration *was not reported* while corpsmembers were in the program.
2. Issues with family, gangs, education, money, personal, education and specific academic organizations *were reported at a decreased frequency* while corpsmembers were in the program.
3. Issues with gangs *were not reported* by any participants after the program.
4. *None of the participants* who experienced incarceration or other court-involvement before the program reported these same issues post program.

Program Factors Impacting Positive Corpsmember Change and Outcomes
1. 100% attributed their growth in part to *The Program Structure* (i.e., work-learn combination).
2. 93.33% noted that the *Program Staff, Teachers, and Environment* were positive, supportive, and caring.
3. 73.33% said *Access to Services During and After the Program* (i.e., Corps to Career, Counseling, and Drivers Training) helped them change.
4. 66.67% stated that *Corpsmember Diversity* impacted their growth (i.e., different races and cultures from the U.S. and other countries).

Job and Life Skills Learned in the Program and Used Post Program
1. Academic & Professional Skills (i.e., study skills, landscaping tools) (100% learned in the program; 93.33% used post program)
2. Personal Skills (i.e., more serious, not afraid to try to new things) (93.33%; 86.67%)
3. Work Ethic (i.e., branding oneself, work endurance, leadership) (93.33%; 80.00%)
4. Interpersonal Skills (i.e., talk with all people) (66.67%; 60%)
5. Independent Living Skills (i.e., financial management, repair home) (53.33%; 33.33%)

Change in View of Self Across Time
1. 100% *experienced a change in their view of self across time* in terms of behavioral, attitudinal, and/or intrapersonal ways of being.
2. 93.33% reported *positive behavioral changes* across time.
3. 93.33% reported *positive attitudinal changes* across time.
4. 66.67% reported *a desire to give back* to others, the community, and the environment after the program.
5. 60% of participants reported *taking action to give back* to others, the community, and the environment after the program.
6. 40% of participants reported *positive intrapersonal changes* across time.

Outcomes Related to Future Goals & Plans
1. 80% reported *being employed* in at least temporary part time jobs.
2. 53.33% reported *stable employment* in full time permanent jobs.
3. 40% reported *a desire to achieve the American Dream* after graduation.
4. 13.33% reported *enrollment in school* after graduation.

Additional Factors Influencing Participant Change and Outcomes
1. 93.33% reported experiencing *a motivating event or interaction* outside of the program.
2. 66.67% reported *positive influence from peers and/or family.*

A Consensual Qualitative Research Study of the Transformation from High School Dropout to Graduate: Corpsmember Outcomes and Influencing Factors

   Risk factors that influence high school students' disengagement with school are well documented (see Smith, 2013). These risk factors include issues within individual students, (i.e., low academic self-efficacy), families (i.e., family trauma), schools (i.e., prohibitive policies), communities (i.e., gangs), and systems (i.e., judicial system). To a lesser degree protective factors have also been researched (see Smith, 2013). Similarly, protective factors have been found at individual (i.e., resiliency), family (i.e., high connection to school), and school (i.e., individual attention and support) levels. The identification of risk and protective factors may help educators and policymakers design and implement strategies to increase student engagement in school. However, too many students continue to dropout out of high school.

   Several alternative options are available to high school dropouts who want to re-engage in school. Urban Corps of San Diego County (UCO) is a work-learn program that teaches corpsmembers environmental job skills, offers an opportunity to earn a high school diploma, and provides paid work experience. Corpsmembers are former high school dropouts seeking a second chance or international refugees seeking entry into the U.S. education system. The UCO program model aims to increase protective factors and decrease risk factors so that corpsmembers may successfully graduate from high school, experience stable employment post graduation, and continue furthering their education.

   Currently, there are three quantitative studies and one qualitative study focused on corpsmembers' outcomes and experiences in Youth Corps or other Conservation Corps. The findings from these studies are inconsistent in terms of employment, education, community service, and behavioral outcomes (see Duerden, Edwards, & Lizzo, 2011; Jastrzab, Blomquist, Maser, & Orr, 1997; Price, Williams, Simpson, Jastrzab, & Markovitz, 2011). This inconsistency may indicate the need to identify outcomes based on the corpsmember experience. Davis (2006) examined 8 male Youthbuild participants' masculine identity development, which offered insight into their (dis)engagement with school. None of the existing studies focus on the corpsmember experience from the perspective of corpsmember alumni. Corpsmember alumni successfully completed the UCO program marked by earning their high school diplomas. The purpose of this study was to better understand the corpsmember process of change and long-term outcomes from the perspective of UCO graduates. This study also aimed to identify relevant program factors, and additional risk and protective factors that impact corpsmember change and outcomes. The research questions guiding this study were:

1. How did participants experience a process of change, if any, in Urban Corps of San Diego County?
2. What changes, if any, do participants report post program?
3. What program factors, if any, impact the participants' process of change and experience post program?
    a. What additional factors, if any, impact the participants' process of change and experience post program?

Research Design & Method

   This study utilized Consensual Qualitative Research (CQR) to provide a framework to ensure trustworthiness (similar to reliability and validity in quantitative studies) (see Hill, 2012). CQR incorporates research teams, external auditors of the data analysis process, use of homogeneous samples, 4 rounds of data analysis by consensus, memos, thick descriptions of the topic under study, referential

adequacy, and seeking on-going informed consent from participants. These strategies increase trustworthiness in the following ways (see Hays & Singh, 2012):

- **Transferability**: Providing a thick description of participants, UCO context, and relevant existing literature increase the transferability of these findings to similar organizations.
- **Credibility**: Researchers' memos, using an auditor and research team for analysis by consensus, connecting findings to existing literature, and conducting negative case analysis strengthens the credibility of the findings.
- **Confirmability**: The findings are confirmed by consistently returning to the participants' transcripts to ensure that results are based on their actual experiences and not on researchers' interpretations.
- **Dependability**: The dependability of findings is increased by use of consensus during analysis among the research team, and between the research team and auditors.

The research team consisted of the primary researcher, 2 doctoral students with training in qualitative research analysis, and 1 external auditor who is a faculty member at a university outside of Old Dominion University. The research team completed a 2-day training, met over 25 times for 2 to 4 hours each, and completed individual work over eight months. The Human Subjects Review Committee in the Darden College of Education at Old Dominion University approved this research project (Appendix A).

Data collection occurred in August 2012. The author interviewed 15 participants for over 13 hours total using a semi-structured interview protocol. Participants were also asked to complete a demographic questionnaire and sign an Informed Consent (Appendix B). The interview protocol and demographic questionnaire were developed in multiple rounds (i.e., table of specifications, expert reviewers, pilot study) to increase validity of the instrument (see Smith, 2013).

Data Analysis

Data analysis included the following 4 rounds:

1. **Within Case Analysis**: 15 verbatim transcripts based on over 13 hours of interviews were divided into 1,025 "chunks" of raw interview data. Each "chunk" was assigned to one of 10 domains or themes. Of these 1,025 "chunks," 75 were irrelevant to the study (Domain 10) and 24 were assigned to 2 domains. As a result, 926 chunks were summarized into "core ideas" and used in the next round of analysis. Appendix C includes the Domain names, operational definitions, and sample quotes. Appendix D displays the data "chunks" for each participant within each Domain.
2. **Cross Case Analysis**: The core ideas from all 15 participants were merged together within 9 domains resulting in the identification of 9 main categories and 33 subcategories that illustrates themes under each domain. Each category was labeled using a Typicality Index to show the number of participants that fall under each category. Appendix E displays category tables and will be discussed in greater detail in the next section.
3. **Model of Relationships between Categories**: A model demonstrating corpsmember change from the point of dropping out of high school to up to 2 years post graduation from UCO illustrates how these domains and categories connect.
4. **Narrative Summaries**: 15 narrative summaries compared each participant to the Model developed in the third round of analysis following a review of findings by UCO staff and participants. These will not be shared in this report, but are available by contacting the author.

Participant Sample

Participant eligibility was based on the following criteria:

- Must have completed some high school in the United States prior to attending UCO.
- Must have graduated from UCO in October 2009, February 2010, June 2010, or October 2010.

These criteria increase the likelihood of a homogenous sample in terms of experience in a high school and in UCO. This time frame was selected because the author worked at UCO during that time, and participants had up to 2 years to experience careers, education, and other life situations that may be relevant to program outcomes, yet only 2 years to increase the "freshness" of memories related to the program. International refugees were not included because their barriers and situations are different and would have decreased the homogeneity of the sample.

Of the 50 participants who met the eligibility criteria, 2 were used in a pilot study and 2 were removed from the eligible pool after consulting with an advisor due to the nature of previous counseling experiences between the researcher and participants. Therefore, 15 out of 46 participants were included in this study, which is 32.6% of the possible sample. Three were female (20%) and 12 were male (80%). In terms of race and ethnicity, 3 were African American/Black (20%), 2 were Asian American (13%), 7 were Latino/a (47%), and 3 were Multiracial (20%). Eight participants (53%) had or were expecting between 1 and 4 children each. Participants spent an average of 2.83 years in high school and 1.07 years enrolled in UCO. In terms of employment at the time of the interviews, 8 participants reported full time permanent employment (53%), 4 reported full or part time temporary employment (27%), and 3 were unemployed (20%). After UCO, 2 participants were enrolled in a school or vocational program (13%), 9 reported dropping out of a school or vocational program post program (60%), and 4 never enrolled in school (27%). Appendix F includes additional participant information.

Findings & Recommendations

The findings reported here provide a closer look at the 9 main categories and 33 subcategories (Appendix E). They highlight key programmatic factors that reduced barriers to success, corpsmember outcomes, and recommendations for program improvement. The findings are based on categories that have been assigned a Typicality Index Label displayed in Table 1. Recommendations for program development are included at the end of each main category.

Table 1

Typicality Index for Categories

Label	# of participants	% of participants
General	14 to 15	93.33% - 100%
Typical	8 to 13	53.33% - 86.67%
Variant	3 to 7	20% - 46.67%
Rare	1 to 2	6.67% - 13.33%

Note. Typicality Index is based on Hill (2012). Each participant is counted up to one time per category unless otherwise noted.

Change in Corpsmember View of Self

All participants experienced a change in their view of self across time (N = 15; 100%). These changes were experienced in their behaviors, attitudes and/or intrapersonal ways of being. Furthermore, 100% noted changes in more than one area. These changes illustrate a process of transformation from

the point of dropping out high school, re-engaging in school through enrollment in the program, and in the years following their graduation from the program. Table 2 displays participant changes in view of self over time.

Table 2

Changes in View of Self Over Time with Typicality Index

Category & Subcategory	N	Typicality Index
View of Self Change Across Time	15	General
Positive Behavioral Change Across Time	14	General
Positive Attitudinal Change Across Time	14	General
Positive Intrapersonal Change Across Time	6	Variant
Negative Behavioral Change Across Time	1	Rare
Negative Attitudinal Change Across Time	1	Rare
# of Participants w/ >1 Change	15	General

Note. N = number of participants reporting change at least once, unless otherwise noted.

Positive changes in view of self. Perhaps most notable is that 14 out of 15 participants (93.33%) experienced positive behavioral and attitudinal changes over time. Participants described themselves as "rebellious knuckleheads" before the program. Words used to describe their behaviors before the program included immature, young, heathens, involved in gangs and street life, partying, ditching school, and smoking. Over the course of the program and after the program they stated that they were thinking with their heads, staying out of trouble, and caring for their families. Participant changes in terms of their attitudes were related to thoughts and beliefs about who they are. They went from reporting self-sabotaging beliefs (i.e., "I think I am a loser") to believing in their potential (i.e., "I can do anything," "I am worth something"). This increased self-awareness was often attributed to having others, such as staff, teachers, and significant others, believe in them. In terms of intrapersonal changes, 6 participants (40%) described a sense of being lost before the program. Many shared that they did not belong anywhere except with their friends who were involved with gangs, graffiti, skateboarding, and partying. During and after the program, they described having a sense of belonging, which led to a feeling of being found. They described having a sense of direction focused on the future during and after the program.

Negative changes in view of self. One participant reported a negative attitudinal shift after the program. This participant felt helpless, described symptoms related to depression, and cried a lot during the interview. This participant has been unemployed since the program despite efforts to get a job and was not able to access the scholarship awarded at graduation to continue education. Another participant reported negative behavioral changes after the program. This participant experienced several traumatic

events post program and described post-program behaviors such as procrastination in getting a job and finishing a community service requirement, and partying with friends.

        Recommendations for program development. The majority of participants experienced a positive change in their behaviors, attitudes, and intrapersonal ways of being, which Bronfenfrenner (2005) calls *developmental outcomes*. This could suggest that successful corpsmembers may be identified by screening for behaviors, beliefs, and intrapersonal ways of being that indicate a readiness for change. For instance, many participants described that they were ready and wanting to change through such statements as "I did not want to be a loser anymore." These statements could be used to develop a survey that corpsmembers complete multiple times over the course of the program to provide guidance for individualized interventions and data for program development (Hays, Wood & Smith, 2012; Twigg et al., 2009).

        Offering workshops, retreats, and other activities to enhance self-awareness, develop coping strategies, and increase confidence is also recommended. Specific recommendations include journaling, trainings related to decision-making (see Jones, 2011; 2013), and career development activities (see Lara, Pope, & Minor, 2011), such as field trips to local colleges and vocational training programs.

Change in Exposure to Barriers Before, During, and After the Program

        Nine barriers identified during data analysis included issues with 1) institutionalization, 2) finances/money, 3) family, 4) crossing the border, 5) personal, 6) education, 7) employment, 8) gangs, and 9) specific academic organizations. Frequency of participant experiences with these barriers was calculated before, during, and after their enrollment in UCO using the Typicality Index (see Table 1). Table 3 displays changes in exposure to these nine barriers.

Table 3

Perceived Barrier Subcategories Experienced Before, During and After the Program

Subcategory	n Before	n During	n After	$n >1$[1]
1. Issues with Specific Academic Organizations	15	8	8	13
2. Personal Issues	15	3	7	1
3. Family Issues	14	4	9	4
4. Education Issues	10	6	4	6
5. Gang Involvement	10	1	0	1
6. Money Issues	8	2	10	1
7. Employment Issues	7	0	10	3
8. Institutionalization	6	0	3	0
9. Issues Crossing the Border	2	2	2	2

Note. n = number of participants reporting the barrier at least once before, during, or after the program.
[1] = number of participants exposed to a barrier at more than one time period.

Before the program. 100% of participants reported barriers with specific academic organizations (e.g., incidence of bullying, conflicts with teachers and school administrators) and personal issues (e.g., fights, drug and alcohol use, making poor choices). Over 90% reported issues with family (e.g., divorce, death). Two-thirds of participants reported education issues (e.g., standardized testing, school policies) and gang-involvement. Money issues (i.e., unable to pay bills, homeless) was reported by 53.33%, employment issues was reported by 46.67%, and institutionalization (i.e., juvenile justice, criminal, and family judicial systems) was reported by 40%. Barriers related to crossing the border were consistently, but rarely, reported over time (N = 2).

During the program. Several trends indicated positive program impact in reducing or resolving barriers during enrollment in the program. *100% of participants did not report court-involvement or employment issues while they were in the program*. Family and personal issues decreased from being the general experience before the program to a variant experience during the program. Issues with money and gang-involvement decreased from being a typical to rare experience during enrollment in the program. Only one participant described issues with gangs while in the program based on when the program's facility was located in a different location, which was the first time the participant was enrolled in the program. This participant also stated that issues with gangs were not prevalent during the time in which this study is situated. Barriers with family, personal, money, and gang-involvement decreased by two levels of frequency on the Typicality Index, which means a substantial number of participants did not experience the barrier during the program. Issues with specific academic organizations and education decreased by one frequency level during the program (i.e., from general to typical and typical to variant, respectively).

After the program. In terms of post program, several trends were noted indicating prolonged impact on reducing barriers. Issues with gangs were *not reported* by any participants after the program. Corpsmembers who successfully completed the program seemed to change the nature of their relationships with friends and family involved with gangs. *None of the participants* who experienced incarceration or other court-involvement before the program reported these same issues post program. Furthermore, of those corpsmembers who reported court-involvement after the program, only two were involved in cases related to delinquent and/or criminal behavior. The other one involved child custody. The frequency of participants reporting issues with education also decreased post program to 26.67%.

An increased frequency of participants reported exposure to a number of barriers post program. Family and personal issues were reported by a higher number of participants post program (60% and 46.67%) than during the program (26.67% and 20%), but not as high as before the program (93.33% and 100%). Family issues tended to focus on their current family instead of their families of origin. Personal issues included decision-making, anger, alcohol and other drug use, depression and fighting.

Two-thirds of participants experienced issues with employment or money, which is an increase from before the program. There are a number of possible explanations for this increase after the program compared to before the program. One may be that more corpsmember alumni needed to work after the program in order to support themselves and their families. Before the program, perhaps not as many were concerned with working. Also, before the program not as many reported having children. Changes in their age/time of life and family responsibility offer reasons for the increase in money and employment issues post program. Participants employed full time also reported a need to find better jobs with higher pay rates and a need to work more than one job in order to make ends meet. Employment information from the demographic survey support the employment issues post program. At the time of the interview, 3 were unemployed and another 4 reported unstable employment. This

means almost half of the alumni (46.67%) interviewed struggled to get and keep permanent jobs. The current economic condition may also explain some of the employment barrier.

Of concern is that the majority of participants experienced issues with specific academic organizations across time. The number of participants reporting issues with their academic experience at UCO and community college or vocational training programs post program remained consistent (n=8; 53.33% during and after the program). Those issues centered on inflexible policy enforcement (e.g., punctuality policy), perceived favoritism among supervisors, and confusion about navigating specific community college and vocational training programs. Furthermore, one quarter of participants experienced issues with education systems after the program. These issues included barriers to accessing financial aid and difficulty with enrolling in relevant classes.

Recommendations for program development. Participant exposure to barriers changed from before to after the program in ways that suggest participants were least likely to report barriers during the program. This finding suggests that for those corpsmembers who successfully graduate, the program provides refuge from many of barriers. The program provides corpsmembers with jobs, steady paychecks, high school diplomas, mental health counseling and employment assistance. Koffman et al. (2011) suggested that program services and resources such as these reflect best practices for gang-prevention programs. These program activities seem related to decreases in personal, employment, education and money issues. The location of UCO's facility and interaction with diverse corpsmembers may play a role in reducing gang-involvement as suggested by one participant.

The increase in exposure to barriers post program could indicate that UCO alumni need additional resources and services to continue to excel. Specifically, UCO may consider providing additional support in navigating the educational system so that more alumni continue to engage in training and educational programs that enhance their careers. One suggestion is to offer scholarship awardees with information about accessing their scholarship funds, such as by having an orientation and following up with awardees post program to ensure utilization of the scholarship. Additionally, UCO may consider providing on-going employment assistance, such as by hosting alumni network events with potential employers, notifying alumni about career fairs, and offering career-related workshops and trainings for alumni. Another suggestion involves developing official certifications to document areas that corpsmembers receive additional training, such as the forklift certificate and food-handling card. These certifications may increase job marketability.

UCO is not meant to be an intervention in terms of decreasing border issues. However, UCO may consider identifying individual corpsmembers who must cross the border on a daily basis to work with individuals to reduce potential negative impacts related to this barrier.

Finally, specific survey items may be developed to screen for exposure to barriers. Similar to the section above, data from these survey items may assist in providing individualized interventions to reduce barriers and offer support for program development.

Outcomes Related to Specific Job and Life Skills Gained from and Used After the Program

Five skill areas were identified and participant frequency was calculated at two time periods: during and after the program. When participants made statements about skills they learned in the program, they were included in the "during the program" Typicality Index. When participants made statements about using skills learned in the program in some capacity after the program, they were included in the "after the program" Typicality Index. Table 4 displays the skill areas gained from and used after the program.

Table 4

Perceived Specific Job and Life Skills Gained From the Program with Typicality Index

Outcomes	*n* During	*n* After	Typicality Index
Academic & Professional Skills	15	14	General
Personal Skills	14	13	General to Typical
Work Ethic Skills	14	12	General to Typical
Interpersonal Skills	10	9	Typical
Independent Living Skills	8	5	Typical to Variant

Note. *n* = number of participants reporting each skill area at any time at least once during and after the program.

Skills reported by 80% or more across time. Three skill areas were reported by 80% or more across time, meaning they were gained in the program and applied after the program. Participants generally reported gaining Academic and Professional Skills, Personal Skills, and Work Ethic Skills while in the program. Academic and Professional Skills refers to study skills, learning to use tools (i.e., weedwacker), recycling and water conservation, and commercial painting. Skills in this area may be noted in terms of a certificate or diploma (i.e., food handlers card, forklift training certificate, high school diploma). Participants talking about certificates and diplomas often connected these to opening doors in terms of employment post program. Personal Skills included reports of learning anger management, taking life more serious, not being afraid to try new things, and making choices resulting in more positive situations (i.e., choosing not to hang with bad crowds, choosing to live at home to save money). Work Ethic skills included learning to brand oneself, understanding that wearing the uniform means they represent the organization both on and off the job, punctuality on the job, work endurance, leadership, and being able to give and receive feedback about job performance. Post program, branding oneself, work endurance, and leadership on the job were noted at both time periods suggesting that these three skills may be important to post program success.

Other skills gained from and used after the program. These skill areas were reported with less frequency, which may be due to a limitation in the interview protocol, but are nonetheless important outcomes. Typically participants reported developing Interpersonal Skills, which included learning to talk with all people, accepting diversity, and being more patient and understanding with co-workers and customers/clients. Independent Living Skills was reported less frequently during and after the program. Examples of skills in this area were financial management and remodeling or repairing homes. While a smaller number of participants learned skills in these areas, it highlights an outcome area that has yet to be included in other studies set in similar organizational contexts.

Recommendations for program development. The reported outcomes provide support for existing program activities and services, and offer insight for developing additional interventions. Recommendations made in previous sections are relevant here. For instance, develop training certificate programs for each of the skill areas, such as certificates in professional and academic skills including leadership, conflict resolution, landscaping, water quality control and recycling.

In terms of conducting a needs assessment, these outcome areas could be used to identify existing program activities that support skills and develop additional activities where needed. These skill areas may be used to inform staff development. For instance, supervisors could be trained or already have expertise in related skills, such as motivation, team-building, anger management, home repair, landscaping, and financial management, to name a few. Counselors are trained to provide staff development in these areas (Brubaker & Goodman, 2012). Finally, these skill areas could also inform the development of an outcome survey to be used in an outcomes evaluation.

Outcomes Related to Post Program Plans and Goals

Positive outcomes related to participants' future plans and goals are described here. Three categories described participants' future plans and goals: 1) Stable employment and striving to improve employment; 2) Striving for the American Dream; and, 3) Enrolled in school and planning to finish the program. Ten participants (66.67%) fell under at least one of these categories and 5 participants fell under two or more categories (33.33%). Table 5 displays participants' future plans and goals with the Typicality Index labels.

Table 5

Future Plans and Goals with Typicality Index

Category & Subcategory	N	Typicality Index
Future Plans & Goals	10	Typical
Stable Employment	8	Typical
Striving for the American Dream	6	Variant
Finish School	2	Rare
# of Participants w/ >1 Plan/Goal	5	Variant

Note. N = number of participants experiencing the subcategory at least once, unless otherwise noted.

Stable employment. Eight participants (53.33%) described being in permanent, stable employment in the following areas: construction, landscaping, security, helping professions, military, and retail sales. Of these, 3 participants reported that they were entrepreneurs, which decreased the impact of their criminal record on their employment. Many of these participants described goals related to improving their current employment by seeking higher paying jobs and implementing strategies to grow their businesses.

Striving for the American Dream. Six participants (40%) described wanting to achieve the American Dream in terms of having freedom, getting married, owning homes, and providing for their families. When asked about future plans, one participant stated

> Marriage, kids, white picket fence, I don't know a dog. I mean work is going to
> be work…I am going to work for as long as I can. I just want what every
> American has. The freedom of choice to do whatever I want. If I so choose to do
> it, and I do. I don't know where the wind blows or where it will take me or what I
> will choose to do tomorrow. But definitely happy.

Enrolled and finishing school. Two participants (13.33%) were enrolled in school. One was completing a certificate in nursing and another was taking courses related to specialized job training for electricians. Both participants had plans to continue with school to advance in their chosen careers.

Recommendations for program development. Education and employment outcomes have been frequently reported in previous research as both are goals of the Conservation Corps movement (Duerden et al., 2011; Jastrzab et al., 1997; Price et al., 2011). Findings from this study suggest that graduates may need additional support to achieve permanent full time employment, continue with school, and pursue the American Dream. Many of the services offered by Corps to Career are aimed at assisting corpsmembers with employment and education post program. Scholarships are available for corpsmembers to continue their education. Similar to previous recommendations, additional assistance in selecting college and vocational training programs, information about accessing scholarships, and increased job-readiness preparation are recommended to assist corpsmembers in these outcomes. Also, outcome survey items based on these outcomes may provide additional evidence for program development and funding.

Outcomes Related to Giving Back

Outcomes related to environmental stewardship and community service were noted in other studies involving Conservation Corps (Duerden et al., 2011; Jastrzab et al., 1997; Price et al., 2011). This is the only outcome area that increased post program. Typically, participants in this study reported shifting attitudes and taking actions related to giving back to others, their communities, and the environment over time. Table 6 displays participant actions and attitudes related to giving back.

Table 6

Perceived Attitudes and Actions Related to Giving Back

Subcategory	*n* During	*n* After	Typicality Index
Giving Back Action	6	9	Variant to Typical
Giving Back Attitude	5	10	Variant to Typical

Note. *n* = number of participants reporting subcategory at least once during and after the program.

Eight participants (53.33%) reported both actions and attitudes related to giving back. Participants noted taking specific actions and attitudinal changes as having increased after the program because of values and skills learned in the program. One participant described,

> It [the program] made me feel more of a better person because not only was I making the community look nicer by removing a lot of the ugly graffiti that was out there. In that aspect it opened my eyes to how much better San Diego can look if we take off a lot of that graffiti.

Other participants shared about developing a desire to inspire others, especially those faced with similar barriers, to make changes and to take care of the environment. For instance, during member checking one participant reiterated how he/she has different recycle tubs in his/her house and directs all visitors to appropriately use the tubs. He/she also commented on helping friends and family set up their own recycling tubs.

Recommendations for program development. This finding supports UCO's community service requirement and First Aid/CPR training. Additional recommendations focus on fostering the desire to give back by intentionally highlighting ways in which corpsmembers give back. Through journaling, corpsmembers may reflect on ways their work gives back to San Diego and draw attention to actions they are taking to help the local community. In terms of helping others, developing opportunities for formal and informal peer mentoring may be one way to encourage corpsmembers to help each other (Karcher, 2009). Similarly, having successful alumni share their experiences with current corpsmembers may foster a giving back attitude. Also, outcome survey items based on these outcomes may provide additional evidence for program development and funding.

UCO Program Factors Impacting Positive Corpsmember Change & Outcomes

Four program factors were identified by participants as having had a positive impact on their process of change and long-term outcomes. These included 1) Program Structure, 2) Program Staff, Teachers and the Environment, 3) Corpsmember Diversity, and 4) Access to Services During and After the Program. During the program refers to descriptions of specific program factors during enrollment in the program. After the program was assigned when participants attributed something in life after the program to a program factor. Table 7 displays specific data related to program factors during and after the program.

Table 7

Perceived Program Factors Influencing Corpsmembers' Process of Change and Outcomes During and After the Program

Subcategory	n During	n After	Typicality Index
Program Structure	15	11	General to Typical
Program Staff, Teachers, Environment	14	5	General to Variant
Access to Services	11	4	Typical to Variant

Corpsmember Diversity	10	10	Typical

Note. *n* = number of participants reporting factor at least once during and after the program.

Program structure. The Program Structure was described by 100% of the participants as offering corpsmembers an opportunity to learn how to work and go to school while earning a paycheck. Several policies were highlighted as being particularly impactful (i.e., uniform, grooming, and punctuality). One participant reflected on how the program structure helps young people.

> If kids can get a chance like Urban Corps does, like even the same kind of
> rules, same kind of things, maybe not as much work because of child labor laws, but still these kinds of programs, they [potential corpsmembers] can get in and get motivated and believe that there is a future, because most kids don't think about the future. They only think about right now, fitting in, and being cool.

This participant does not refer to specific policies, but comments on the rules and work required by the program that connects with participants change in view of self. In this case, the change in view of self shifted from being focused on the immediate and fitting in to getting motivated and focusing on the future. Furthermore, 73.33% of participants reflected on how the program structure influenced their lives post program. For instance, some participants connected this factor to Job and Life Skills, such as work ethic, academic and professional skills, and independent living.

Program Staff, Teachers, and the Environment. In general, 93.33% of participants reported that staff, teachers, and the environment were positive, supportive, offered individual attention, appropriately challenged, cared, and believed in them. One participant stated, "I realized that they are, the teachers are there because they really care. If they didn't care, they wouldn't be there. You know, they were there to help you. But they are also there to give you that constructive criticism too, you know." Many participants compared their experiences in previous high schools with their experiences in UCO. UCO was always more favorable. Specific teachers, supervisors, counselors and directors were often mentioned in connection with changing views of self and exposure to barriers, and helping with career development.

Access to services. The experience of 73.33% of participants in the program included access to additional support services other than school and job training, although only 26.67% noted utilization of these services post program. These support services included free mental health counseling, case management, employment assistance, financial education and drivers training. Many of these factors connect to employment and education outcomes, personal and interpersonal skill development and corpsmembers' process of change. During the program, participants often commented on the significance of having onsite counseling.   One participant stated,

> I felt better about myself with counseling and everything that Urban Corps provides helped out a lot because there is a lot of stuff that is in my brain and I can't explain it. It feels good when you talk about it.

This participant later described learning through counseling that it is o.k. to cry and now sees crying as a way to release tension instead of fighting. The majority of participants who commented on post

program access to services referred to assistance with employment. One stated, "I didn't know what to do after Urban Corps. I thought I'd apply for a city job, doing any labor. But then one of the [Corps to Career staff], she found me a job as an electrician at a company called XXX." This participant attributed Corps to Career with gaining a job with a union after being laid off and subsequently making enough money to help support his/her grandparents and save money for school.

Corpsmember diversity. Two thirds of participants noted that they are more open-minded and accepting of others after interacting with corpsmembers from different cultures and races. For instance, one participant who was previously involved in gangs reflected on interactions with corpsmembers from Iraq. This corpsmember stated

> I got to meet other people. I started hanging around with Iraqis. Before that I used to see an Iraqi and be like "oh man, does he have a bomb" or something like that. I got to realize that that was a stupid mentality that I had. It kind of opened my mentality to hang around other people and have an open mind and just say something different. Before that it was just Mexicans.

Some of these participants also noted that interaction with diverse corpsmembers helped them situate themselves in terms of their relationship to their neighborhoods, the law, and their future. One participant demonstrated the impact of corpsmember diversity on their understanding of self:

> There is a big diversity of why people are at the Corps. You have the people who are at the Corps from third world countries and value it. Then you see the United States corpsmembers that really don't care much for it or are just there just to be there. I'm not saying you can't fake it to make it, or you can assimilate, or you can some way through osmosis take in what you need to take in, but I just seen this like dichotomy of different types of people there for different types of reasons and it really let me assess what I am there for.

Recommendations for program development. These factors connect to many of the outcomes and changes reported earlier in this report. The Program Structure when participants attended UCO included 4 days of work with after school/work requirements and 1 day of school. This structure gave them steady paychecks and offered consistency to help develop routines and discipline. This structure also allowed them to work in two main groups of corpsmembers- one at work and the other in school. If possible, it is recommended to diversify these groups so that corpsmembers from around the world have opportunities to build relationships with each other. Additional staff development in facilitating team building, cross-cultural dialogues and self-awareness activities may help corpsmembers to become more open-minded (Ratts, Anthony & Santos, 2010). This structure, including many of the policies, such as grooming and punctuality, helped corpsmembers develop routines needed for life post program. Additionally, this structure allowed corpsmembers access to services and staff before and after school/work each day and during intersessions. Instead of attending classes, corpsmembers attended counseling workshops and field trips geared toward building life and job skills, reducing barriers, and increasing self-awareness. Maintaining a structure similar to this structure is recommended. Also, outreach to program alumni may increase access to employment and counseling services post program.

For program development, survey items may be written based on these factors to help identify which services are being utilized and provide formative feedback to improve services.

Additional Factors Influencing Corpsmembers' Change and Outcomes

    People and events outside of the program also influenced participants' positive change. While these may not be directly related to the program, these findings may assist program staff in better understanding corpsmembers.

    Peers and family influenced positive change. Family and peers played an important role in participants' lives, especially before the program. The research team identified two factors describing peers and family impact on positive change, successful completion of the program, and outcomes related to giving back before, during, and after the program. The two factors were: (a) Family, peers, significant others, and children (born and expecting) give support, encouragement, and believe in corpsmember; and (b) Family, peer, and significant other overcame similar hardships. Participants also reported families and peers as presenting challenges to their success, which were described in the barriers section. Table 8 displays the factors related to peers and/or family.

Table 8

Perceived Factors Related to Peers and/or Family

Subcategory	*n* Before	*n* During	*n* After	Typicality Index
Gave Advice, Support, etc.	11	4	4	Typical to Variant
Relatable	2	5	2	Rare to Variant to Rare

Note. *n* = number of participants reporting family and peer factors before, during, and after the program at least once.

Three participants (20%) experienced both factors, but only one experienced both factors at the same time. Before the program, 73.33% of participants reported that family and peers gave them support, encouragement, advice, and believed in them. During and after the program, only 26.67% reported receiving the same type of support from family and peers. This decrease could be because of a limitation in the interview protocol. Regardless, this factor ranged from verbal encouragement to providing transportation to and from UCO. Fewer participants noted that family and peers helped them by being relatable. Those participants reported that hearing and seeing family and peers who overcame similar hardships helped them. During the program one third reported that family and peers who overcame similar hardships helped them change.

    Specific motivating events and interactions. Participants described specific events and/or interactions with others that marked positive turning points in their lives. The research team identified these events and/or interactions when participants described the situation or encounter in detail including that it only happened one time. Three categories described the factors related to motivating events and/or interactions: (a) Specific interaction with a family member, significant other, child(ren), or other people; (b) Experience with an institutional barrier; and (c) Experience with a beneficial institutional policy. Table 9 displays these factors before, during, and after the program.

Table 9

Perceived Factors Related to Motivating Events and/or Interactions Before, During and After the Program

Subcategory	*n* Before	*n* During	*n* After	Typicality Index
Interaction w/ family, SO, kids, other	10	2	8	Typical to rare to Typical
Experience with barrier	6	1	1	Variant to Rare
Experience with beneficial policy	4	1	0	Variant to Rare to Not Reported

Note. *n* = number of participants reporting that factor at least once before, during and after the program. SO = significant other.

Fourteen participants (93.33%) experienced 3 types of specific motivating events and interactions, and 6 participants (40%) experienced the same type at more than one time period. Two thirds of participants stated that an interaction or specific event with family, significant others, and their own children (either born or expecting) motivated them to make positive changes before the program. Post program, 53.33% of participants reported the same type of motivating event or interaction. The majority of these motivating factors involved pregnancy. Six participants (40%) experienced a specific event or interaction related to a barrier, such as incarceration, that motivated positive change. For instance, participants who were released from prison or aged out of foster care were motivated to make a change in their lives. Finally, 4 participants (26.67%) were motivated by a beneficial policy while experiencing institutionalization, such as being able to earn a GED while in prison.

   Recommendations for program development. Motivation from these specific events and interactions were turning points when they decided to apply to the program or to make changes in employment post program. It is recommended that these factors be included in a screening survey to provide better understanding of corpsmembers family and peer support and note any specific events or interactions that may have motivated corpsmembers to apply to the program. UCO counselors could utilize this information in counseling.

Corpsmembers' Program Recommendations
   Nine participants (60%) offered recommendations for program improvement. Recommendations included offering transportation vouchers, childcare services, and marketing exposure to international corpsmembers. For instance one participant made the following suggestion when asked if there was anything else to share at the end of the interview:
   They [UCO] should actually put that in their pamphlet. About the people at
   Urban Corps. Because they should probably put it "diversity, meeting a diverse
   group, meeting people from all around the world. Urban Corps is meeting,
   getting to know somebody's story of how they got here, why they got there, and
   what they did to get there from Iraq, Africa, Thailand, Mexico, America." I mean

they can fix it, I am just trying to think of something.

Model of Corpsmembers' Process of Change, Influencing Factors and Outcomes

Figure 1 shows the relationship between the domains that assist in understanding corpsmembers' process of change, influencing factors, and long-term outcomes described by the categories. A corpsmember is at the center of the model to emphasize that these findings are based on their perspectives of their experiences before, during, and after the program. The words "before," "during," and "after" are embedded in a road to show that corpsmembers' development is unfolding overtime. *Change in Exposure to Barriers* and *Change in View of Self* illustrate ways in which participants experienced a process of change. *Influencing Program Factors* are at the heart of the person because this study was focused around their time in UCO. *Influencing Peers and/or Family* and *Influencing Events and Interactions* illustrate the occurrence of these factors across time. *Future Goals and Plans Outcomes*, *Giving Back Outcomes,* and *Job and Life Skill Outcomes* are in arrows from during to after the program illustrating the time periods in which these occurred. Corpsmember Program Recommendations (Category 9) was not included in the model because, while important, they do not directly relate to the change process, factors and outcomes.

Figure 1. Model of the Relationships between Corpsmembers' Process of Change, Influencing Factors, and long-term outcomes
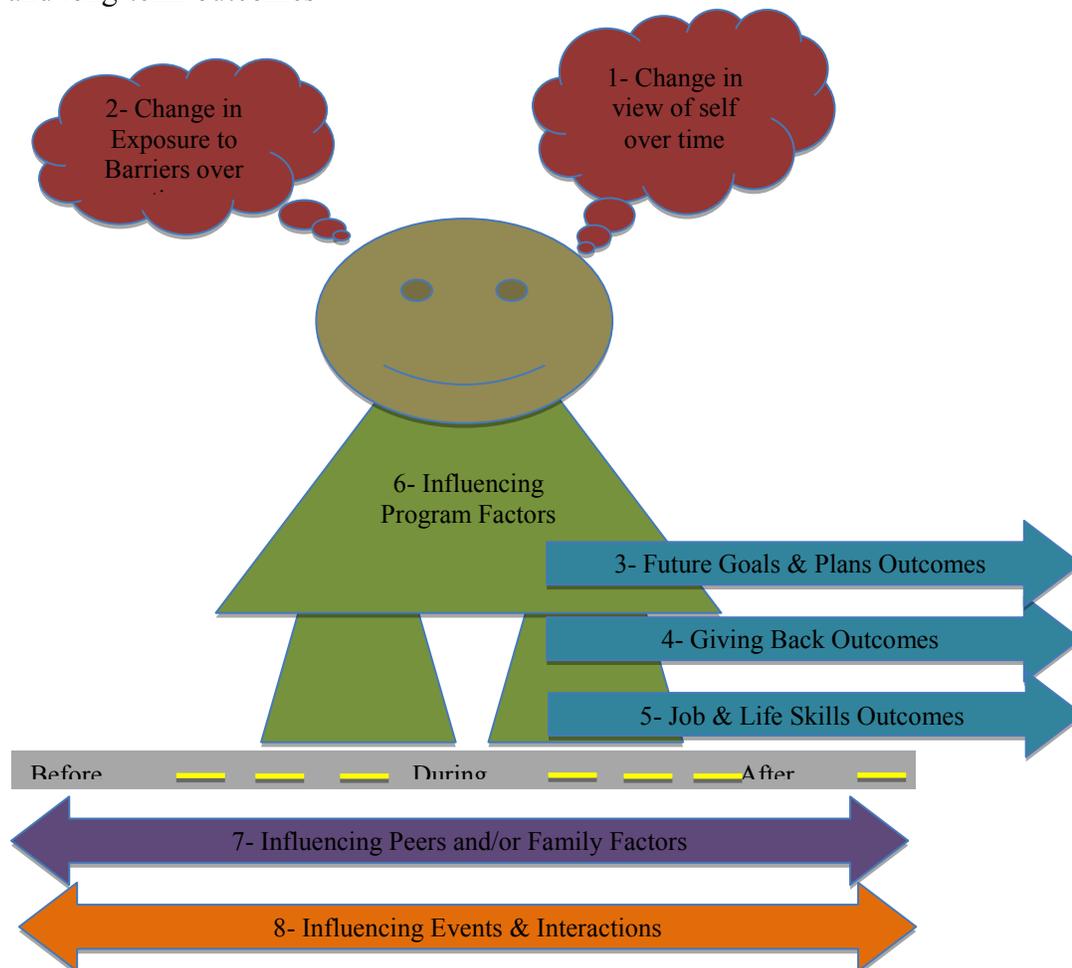
Implications for Program Development and Future Research

Recommendations for use of these findings were made after each main category. A summary of the recommendations and additional suggestions are included here. Many start with "continue" because UCO already offers many of the activities and services that benefit UCO corpsmembers and alumni. Finally, this is not an exhaustive list of recommendations. UCO staff, corpsmembers and alumni most likely have insights and experiences to confirm and expand upon these recommendations.

- Design and utilize screening tools and outcome surveys based on these findings to be used in outcome evaluations. For instance, screening tools may include questions related to incoming corpsmembers' experiences with barriers, peer and family influences, instances of motivating events and interactions, and identify baselines related to job and life skills. Outcome surveys could follow up on the same and new skills improved or learned while in the program. These assessments may assist program staff in providing interventions specific to individual corpsmember needs during and after the program, and assist in increasing program funding.
- Continue to outreach to corpsmember alumni to increase access to employment assistance and education, offer additional trainings for a nominal fee, provide opportunities for peer mentorship and conduct research on their experiences post program.
- Continue making graduation special, requiring corpsmember attendance to graduation, and recognizing Corpsmember of the Month.
- Continue doing journals that focus on topics such as connecting their work to future jobs, increasing self awareness, relating classroom learning to work, overcoming barriers, and other topics related to these findings.
- During non-work and school time, encourage participation in staff-facilitated group conversation focused on topics related to the findings (i.e., family, motivating events, culture, future goals).
- Consistently reinforce the connection between policies and the "real world" such as:
    - Punctuality: Why is it important for employees to be punctual?
    - Grooming: What do first impressions do for you?
- Continue to develop class assignments that connect to their work and help increase self-awareness (i.e., autobiographies, environmental science). Give opportunities for presentations and to regularly submit assignments through email.
- While corpsmembers are in the program, develop curriculum to increase corpsmembers' understanding of the educational system. This could include helping corpsmembers explore and apply to vocational and academic programs, and access financial support for continuing education.
- In terms of gang prevention, continue providing corpsmembers with opportunities to learn from each other (e.g., through facilitated cross-cultural dialogues) and staff who overcame similar situations.
- Certifications seemed to assist corpsmembers in applying for jobs. Perhaps the program might develop additional certifications related to the job and life skills identified in this study.
- Offer staff development in motivation, team building, giving constructive feedback, and facilitating cross-cultural dialogues. Counselors are trained to provide psychoeducational workshops in these areas and counseling interns are required to complete hours in group work.
- Encourage staff to spend individual time with corpsmembers and establish positive environments.
- Conduct similar studies with other corpsmember groups, such as females, international corpsmembers and those who did not complete UCO.
    - The small number of female participants presented challenges in reporting findings based on gender, although 2 out of 3 females seemed to be doing poorly in terms of employment and

education. Expanding the participant sample to include additional females would allow researchers and program staff to better understand female corpsmember experiences.

o   International corpsmembers seem to have different outlooks on the program than corpsmembers from the United States, which was noted by several participants in this study. They also play a pivotal role in the change process experienced by the participants of this study. Conducting research with this population may allow researchers and program staff to understand international corpsmember experiences and may also highlight additional support services needed to overcome challenges, such as language barriers.

o   Corpsmembers who do not successfully graduate from UCO may offer an additional perspective by which to compare those who successfully graduate. Understanding the experiences of those who are not as successful may also assist in program development to provide targeted support to those individuals to increase program completion.

Limitations

The findings from this study are limited in that the sample only includes 15 participants or 32.67% of those participants eligible to participate in this study.   The findings are transferable to corpsmembers similar to this population in similar Conservation Corps settings. The findings are not generalizable to the entire corpsmember population. The findings are based on participant perceptions and require additional testing to determine reliability and validity using advanced statistical methods.

Qualitative research is subjective. While several strategies were incorporated to reduce subjectivity (i.e., use of CQR, research teams, auditors, an audit trail, analysis through consensus, member checking, peer debriefing), researcher bias may have impacted data collection and analysis.

The interview protocol was developed with expert reviewers, a pilot study, and through use of a table of specifications based on an existing theory of development (sees Bronfenbrenner, 1979; 2005). However, the questions may have introduced bias during data collection. Furthermore, the results are based on participant self-report and the interviewer knew most of the participants during the program. Prolonged engagement between researchers and participants is a strategy to increase trustworthiness. But, due to previous relationships, participants may have reported in a socially desirable way and this could also impact the findings.

Despite these potential limitations, the results of this study could inform program development and provide direction for additional research relevant to the corpsmember experience.

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Appendix A
ODU Human Subjects Committee Approval

OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY

DARDEN COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
Office of the Dean
Norfolk, Virginia 23529-0156
Phone: (757) 683-3938
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May 23, 2012   Proposal Number **201102087**

Dr. Danica Hays (Smith),

Your proposal submission titled **A Consensual Qualitative Research Study of the Transformation from High School Dropout to High School Graduate: Implications for Social Justice Counseling** is deemed EXEMPT from IRB review by the Human Subjects Review Committee of the Darden College of Education, and you may begin collecting data. If any significant changes occur, especially methodological changes, notify the Chair of the DCOE HSRC, and supply any required addenda requested. You may begin your research.

The designation of EXEMPT is granted indefinitely, provided no modifications occur. If this research is funded externally for this project in the future, you will likely have to submit an application and documentation to the University IRB for their approval as well.

If you have not done so, PRIOR TO THE START OF YOUR STUDY, you must send a signed and dated PDF file of your exemption application submission to nbrown@odu.edu.

Very sincerely yours,

Nina H. Brown

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Old Dominion University is an equal opportunity, affirmative action institution.

Appendix B
Interview Protocol, Demographic Sheet, & Informed Consent

Introduction: Hello, today we are going to talk about your life from the time you were in mainstream high school to now and looking to your future. I will ask you questions about yourself, your family, schools, workplaces, peers, and community. If at any time, you are unsure of a question, please ask. Also, if you are uncomfortable, you do not have to answer anything and we can stop all together at anytime.

Second Chance Program Experience
1. Please describe your experience in (second chance program).
    1. Probe: In general, what did that experience mean to you? What parts of the (second chance program) benefitted you, if any? What areas of the (second chance program) were challenging for you, if any? What did you get by attending the SCP that others missed out on?
2. Describe yourself when you entered (second chance program)?.
3. What changes did you notice in yourself over the course of the (second chance program), if any?
4. How did attending the program affect how you thought about yourself as a person?
5. How, if at all, did your experiences in the program impact your life outside of the program?
    1. Probe: When you left the (second chance program) each day, what was your life like?

Pre-Second Chance Program Experience
6. Prior to starting at (second chance program), you attended a mainstream high school. Tell me about your experience there.
    1. Probes: Interactions with teachers, counselors, staff, etc., Interactions with peers, Classroom instruction, School rules
7. What were some of the key events that led to you leaving a mainstream high school?
8. Describe yourself at that time in your life.
    1. Probe: During mainstream high school and between mainstream high school and SCP
9. What was going on in your life in between a mainstream high school and (second chance program)?
10. What went into your decision to apply to the (second chance program)?
    1. Probe: Was there anything that influenced you not to apply?

Post Second Chance Program Experience
11. What were your plans after you graduated?
12. Please tell me about your life today.
    1. Probes: What struggles have you had since you graduated from the program? What successes have you had since graduation from the program?
13. Describe the person you are today.
14. Are there any specific skills, lessons, or experiences from (second chance program) that you continue to use today? If so, please describe them.
15. One of your peers once asked me "what will I be to society after I graduate, will I still be a high school dropout?" Based on your experiences, how would you answer this question?
16. Another of your peers once asked me "why aren't there more programs like (second chance program)?" Do you think there should be more programs like this one? Why or why not?

Future & Reflection
17. Tell me about your future plans.
    1. Probe: Short-term plans? Long-term plans?
18. What advice would you give your younger self? Your future self?
19. If you were in my shoes, what would you want to ask yourself?
20. What else do you want to share that I have not yet asked you about?

Demographic Sheet

Please complete the form to the best of your ability. Please do not put your name on this form. The information on this form will be combined with other participants' information to describe the overall demographics of the research participants. No identifying information will be reported.

1. Please check your race and ethnicity.
   - ____ African American/Black
   - ____ Latino/a
   - ____ Asian American
   - ____ Caucasian/White
   - ____ Biracial
   - ____ Multiracial
   - ____ Other: _____

2. Please check your gender.
   - ____ Transgender
   - ____ Male
   - ____ Female

3. How many jobs do you currently have? _____

4. Are you currently enrolled in an education or vocational training program?
   - ____ Yes, the program focus is_____
   - ____ No

5. Please check all that apply to your current employment status.
   - ____ Employed full-time in 1 job
   - ____ Employed part-time and full-time
   - ____ Employed part-time
   - ____ Employed by a job-training program
   - ____ Other: _____

6. Please check the highest level of education that you have acquired.
   - ____ High school diploma
   - ____ Some community college
   - ____ Some vocational training above and beyond (second chance program)
   - ____ Associate's Degree
   - ____ Vocational Certificate
   - ____ Some 4-year college/university
   - ____ Bachelor's Degree
   - ____ Some graduate school
   - ____ Master's degree

7. Do you have any children?
   - ____ No ____Yes, I have _____ (number) kids

8. How many months/years did you attend a public high school?
   M: _____Y: ____

9. How many months/years were you a student at Urban Corps?
   M: _____Y: ____

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT
OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY

PROJECT TITLE: A Consensual Qualitative Research Study of the Transformation from High School Dropout to High School Graduate: Implications for Social Justice Counseling

INTRODUCTION
The purposes of this form are to give you information that may affect your decision whether to say YES or NO to participate in this research, and to record the consent of those who say YES.

RESEARCHERS
Dr. Danica G. Hays, associate professor and department chair of the Counseling and Human Services Department at Old Dominion University, is the primary investigator. Jayne E. Smith, doctoral student in the Counselor Education and Supervision program at Old Dominion University, is the primary research assistant on this project. LaShauna Dean, Tracy Jackson, and Erik Braun, doctoral students in the Counselor Education and Supervision program at Old Dominion University, are primary research team members. Dr. Anita Neuer Colburn, assistant professor at Regent University and alumni from the Counselor Education and Supervision program at Old Dominion University, is the external auditor for this research project.

DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH STUDY
This study aims to provide a model of successful transformation from the point of dropping out of mainstream public high school to up to 3 years after graduation from the second chance program. A minimum of 12 alumni from the second chance program will be invited to participate in this study. Participants will complete a 45 minute to one and a half hour interview with the primary research assistant (Smith), and a demographic questionnaire. The interview questions are focused on the experience of transforming from a high school dropout to a high school graduate, and ask participants to reflect on the second chance program where they earned their diploma. Participants will have three opportunities to review the data after the initial interview. Transcripts of the interview will be emailed to participants no later than 2 weeks after the initial interview. A narrative summary will be emailed to each participant after the initial round of data analysis. Finally, participants will be invited to a meeting after the final round of analysis to see final results. At each point, participants will be able to provide feedback to shape data analysis and on-going consent will be sought.

The primary research assistant (Smith) will conduct and transcribe the interviews, making sure to remove all identifying information to ensure participant anonymity. Data will be analyzed in four rounds using a research team of doctoral students and one professor who have experience in qualitative research. The research team (Dean, Jackson, Braun, and Colburn) and the primary investigator (Hays) will not have access to any identifying information related to the participant or organization.

EXCLUSIONARY CRITERIA
You should have completed some high school in a mainstream public high school in the U.S., and graduated from the second chance program in October 2009, February 2010, June 2010, or October 2010.   To the best of your knowledge, you should meet these two criteria. If you do not, that would keep you from participating in this study.

RISKS AND BENEFITS
RISKS: If you decide to participate in this study, then you may face a risk of reflecting on memories that may cause discomfort, and possibly result in needing to seek mental health counseling. The researcher tried to reduce these risks by providing the interview questions and demographic sheet prior to the interview so that you may determine if and what you want to share. And, as with any research, there is some possibility that you may be subject to risks that have not yet been identified.

BENEFITS: There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this study. The indirect benefits to you for participating in this study include providing insight into your experience of change that may provide an opportunity to inform second chance program development, and possibly impact funding for the development of additional programs such as this one.

COSTS AND PAYMENTS
The researchers want your decision to participate in this study to be absolutely voluntary. Yet they recognize that your participation may lead to some additional costs. In order to minimize any inconveniences you may experience through participation in this study, you will receive $10 for your participation.

NEW INFORMATION
If the researchers find new information during this study that would reasonably change your decision about participating, then they will give it to you.

CONFIDENTIALITY
All information obtained about you in this study is strictly confidential unless disclosure is required by law. The results of this study may be used in reports, presentations and publications, but the researchers will not identify you. Additionally, the primary research assistant will remove all identifying information from your interview transcript and destroy all recorded data after transcription is complete.

WITHDRAWAL PRIVILEGE
It is OK for you to say NO. Even if you say YES now, you are free to say NO later, and walk away or withdraw from the study -- at any time. Your decision will not affect your relationship with Old Dominion University, the primary research assistant, or otherwise cause a loss of benefits to which you might otherwise be entitled. The researchers reserve the right to withdraw your participation in this study, at any time, if they observe potential problems with your continued participation.

COMPENSATION FOR ILLNESS AND INJURY
If you say YES, then your consent in this document does not waive any of your legal rights. However, in the event of harm, injury, or illness arising from this study, neither Old Dominion University nor the researchers are able to give you any money, insurance coverage, free medical care, or any other compensation for such injury. In the event that you suffer injury as a result of participation in any research project, you may contact the responsible principal investigator or Dr. Nina Brown the current Darden College of Education, Human Subjects Review Board chair at 757-683-3245 at Old Dominion University, who will be glad to review the matter with you.

VOLUNTARY CONSENT
By signing this form, you are saying several things. You are saying that you have read this form or have had it read to you, that you are satisfied that you understand this form, the research study, and its risks and benefits. The researchers should have answered any questions you may have had about the research. If you have any questions later on, then the researchers should be able to answer them:

Dr. Danica G. Hays, (757) 683-6692
Jayne E. Smith, (619) 818-7838

If at any time you feel pressured to participate, or if you have any questions about your rights or this form, then you should call Dr. Nina Brown the current Darden College of Education, Human Subjects Review Board chair at 757-683-3245, or the Old Dominion University Office of Research, at 757-683-3460.

And importantly, by signing below, you are telling the researcher YES, that you agree to participate in this study. The researcher should give you a copy of this form for your records.

Subject's Printed Name & Signature	**Date**

INVESTIGATOR'S STATEMENT

I certify that I have explained to this subject the nature and purpose of this research, including benefits, risks, costs, and any experimental procedures. I have described the rights and protections afforded to human subjects and have done nothing to pressure, coerce, or falsely entice this subject into participating. I am aware of my obligations under state and federal laws, and promise compliance. I have answered the subject's questions and have encouraged him/her to ask additional questions at any time during the course of this study. I have witnessed the above signature(s) on this consent form.

Investigator's Printed Name & Signature	**Date**

Appendix C
Domain Names, Operational Definitions, Sample Data Chunks and Core Ideas

Domain	Domain Name	Operational Definition	Raw Data Chunk[1]	Core Idea[2]
1	Barriers before, during, and after the program	Obstacles rooted in systems (i.e., judicial, educational, employment, political, family), environments/cultures (i.e., streets, poverty, partying), specific settings (i.e., high school, college), and internal (i.e., participants' attitudes, behaviors). Obstacles may occur across time or be limited to specific periods in participants' lives.	10: The only problem is I need to be living in [U.S. CITY]. I am trying to get a real good job, or kind of good job, to have enough to come back over here [from another country].	He needs to be living in the U.S. to get a job with the Border Patrol, so he is trying to get a good job so he can have enough money to come back over here.
2	Positive influence of peers and/or family at any time	Ways in which participants were positively impacted by peers and family. Peers are defined as friends, class/workmates, and other people who are like them in terms of age, level of employment, or who are in similar social settings (i.e., school or work). Family refers to individuals who are part of participants' family of origin, current family members, and significant others.	16: A good friend's brother, he graduated from UC valedictorian and I saw him do good afterward. They used to tell stories about how bad he used to be. He sounded just like me, but worse. I was like "wow look how good he turned out. He's working. He's helping out his friend and parents. He might not have much, but look what he is doing. He's always looking for work, he's hard working, changed his mind set about doing all the bad things in life."	His good friend's brother turned his life around and graduated from the program. He saw himself in his good friend's brother.

3	Program factors that influence change	Factors related to the program structure, environment, staff/teachers, or corpsmembers that impact participants.	7: And that is what people at Urban Corps does. They are small classes, they get to help you. There are so many staff. All the grandmas. A lot of help. That big schools, high schools, don't have. On top of that they give you money. You have a job.	The teachers and volunteer grandmas in the program helped him. The classes were small, too. The program also gave him money for the work he did.
4	Future plans and goals; Actual future happenings	Long and short term goals, plans or dreams developed while participants were enrolled in the program for after graduation or developed after graduation for participants' future; participants' actual career and academic experiences after the program including unplanned happenings.	I: How much longer in your school? 17: December 20th I graduate. I: Then on to RN? Do you know where or anything yet? 17: I haven't gotten into the school I want to get into yet. I'm still planning ahead right now because I'm trying to focus on getting CNA out of the way. So focus on what is happening now.	She will graduate from the CNA program in December. She hasn't looked into RN programs, yet.
5	Giving back during and after the program	Attitudes or activities demonstrating a sense of service to others, desire to inspire others, making a difference in the community, and environmental stewardship. This does not include helping others out of obligation.	9: Not only are we helping out, you know, I don't want to say unfortunate, but we are helping out people that want help, but we are also helping out the community and nature.	He and the program are helping people that want to help and the community and nature.

6^3	Specific job and life skills gained from program and/or used in life after the program	Set of skills, sometimes distinguished with certificates or high school diploma that participants attribute directly to the program. Participants' job/life skills from the program are clearly applied in their life after the program.	3: That's what I was telling you, all the stuff I learned from UCO I put that into effect with this guy and then I learned from this guy and we had contracts with management companies. I: When you say management companies you mean 3: Like property management companies. Like the ones that manage this building.	He learned stuff from the program and the landscaping guy and they had contracts with management companies.
7^3	View of self before, during, and after the program	Participants' descriptions of their attitudes, behaviors, and intrapersonal characteristics that demonstrate their self-concept. These descriptions may be reflections on changes over time (i.e., "I went from being a nobody to being a somebody") or may describe participants' way of being/self concept before, during, or after the program (i.e., "I became more open-minded," "I have always been a people person," "I was just so angry."). Participants may refer to ways they would like to change if they could go back in time.	I: What advice would you give your younger self? 5: Gosh. Don't be hasty it will come. Don't be hasty it will come. Like um, opportunity, everything comes with time and patience. Like don't be in such a rush, don't be in a rush. It boogles me when I think about how many opportunities closed for me because I was in a rush to get somewhere. So I mean, just patience. Because I am so impatient. I: What about advice for your future self? 5: Keep growing and keep learning. That's it.	He was hasty and in a rush when he was younger. He was inpatient and had many opportunities close. He wants to keep growing and learning.

8^3	Motivating events/ interactions at any time	Specific occurrences, such as interactions with another person or situations that mark positive or negative turning points in participants lives.	11: I found out I had to be on a good track when I found out I was having a baby. That is what it took me to a right track. But I guess if I wouldn't have had my son, I would have just, I don't know. I guess I would have been a different person.	Having her son got her on the right track. Without her son, she would be a different person.
9^3	Other: Program Evaluation	Data chunks that are relevant, important and don't fit in another domain.	I: So another one of your fellow corpsmembers asked me why there aren't more programs like Urban Corps. Do you think there should be more programs like this? Why or Why not? 14: yeah, I guess. There should be more. But not exactly the same because if it is just all the same it might get all boring. But I mean if there are different people out there, I mean, I 'm sorry, if there are more people out there that are willing to help you and to push you forward, then why not go to it.	There should be more programs like UCO with people that are willing to push and help people move forward.
10^3	Irrelevant	Data that does not pertain to the study	I: Anytime you have any questions, need me to clarify, or want to pass, just say so. 12: O.K.	N/A

Note.[1] = Raw data chunks are verbatim quotes from the transcripts (Hill, 2012). Each raw data chunk was identified and assigned a domain through research team consensus. [2]= Core ideas are summaries of the raw data chunk using similar but more concise language (Hill, 2012). [3]= Domain Lists 1, 2, 3 and 4 consisted of 11 domains. In Domain List 5, domain 6 and domain 7 from previous lists were collapsed. This resulted in domain 8, 9, 10, and 11 from previous lists becoming domain 7,8, 9, and 10 in Domain List 5. In previous lists, domain 7 was "program lessons applied to life after the program," and similar data was chunked in domain 6. The only difference was the time period being reflected on.

Appendix D
Domain-Participant Frequency

Participant	1-Barriers	2-Peer/family	3-Program influence	4-goals/plans	5-giving back	6-job/life skills during/after	7-view of self	8-motivating events	9-other	10-non-codable	Double coded	Total Chunks	Total Core Ideas
P003	9	4	3	4	1	7	11	5	2	7	1	54	46
P004	13	6	7	5	0	3	11	0	3	2	1	51	48
P005	14	7	12	5	0	2	13	1	2	3	3	62	56
P006	9	8	9	5	3	7	20	2	3	5	4	75	66
P007	24	21	18	15	3	7	27	2	4	17	4	142	121
P008	13	9	9	5	9	6	20	1	2	6	1	81	74
P009	3	8	5	6	3	4	13	4	1	1	1	49	47
P010	15	12	9	7	0	4	14	3	0	1	2	67	64
P011	16	11	5	10	0	6	12	1	3	12	4	80	64
P012	11	7	14	6	1	7	25	4	1	7	0	83	76
P013	4	4	11	4	0	2	17	2	3	2	0	49	47
P014	8	3	3	7	0	9	18	1	2	4	0	55	51
P015	17	16	8	4	0	2	20	0	1	3	2	73	68
P016	3	12	8	3	4	5	25	1	1	1	1	64	62
P017	3	2	7	3	1	2	16	1	1	4	0	40	36
Total	162	130	128	89	25	73	262	28	29	75	24	1025	926

Notes. The numbers reported here are based on the number of "chunks" of data under each domain by participant.

Appendix E
Main Categories and Subcategories by Research Question and Domain with Typicality Index

Research Question	Domain	Category	Subcategory	Typicality Index[1]
1 & 2	7	1- Change in view of self over time		
			1. Positive Attitudinal	General
			2. Positive Behavioral	General
			3. Positive Intrapersonal	Variant
			4. Negative Behavioral	Rare
			5. Negative Attitudinal	Rare
1 & 2	1	2- Change in exposure to barriers over time		
			6. Specific Academic Organizations	General to Typical
			7. Family	General to Variant to Typical
			8. Personal	General to Variant
			9. Money	Typical to Rare to Typical
			10. Education	Typical to Variant
			11. Gangs	Typical to Rare to 0
			12. Employment	Variant to Typical
			13. Institutionalization	Variant to 0 to Variant
			14. Border	Rare
2	4	3- Future plans/goals outcomes after the		

		program		
			15. Stable Employment	Typical
			16. American Dream	Variant
			17. Enrolled in School	Rare
2	5	4- Giving back outcomes during and after the program		
			18. Action	Variant to Typical
			19. Attitude	Variant to Typical
2	6	5- Job/Life skills outcomes during and after the program		
			20. Academic/ Professional Skills	General
			21. Personal Skills	General to Typical
			22. Work Ethic Skills	General to Typical
			23. Interpersonal Skills	Typical
			24. Independent Living Skills	Typical to Variant
3 & 3.1	3	6- Influencing Program factors during and after the program		
			25. Program structure	General to Typical
			26. Program staff, teachers, environment	General to Variant
			27. CM diversity	Typical
			28. Access to services	Typical to Variant
3 & 3.1	2	7- Influencing		

		Peers/Family factors over time		
			29. Gave advice, support	Typical to Variant Rare to Variant to
			30. Relatable	Rare
3 & 3.1	8	8 - Specific motivating events/ interactions over time		
			31. Interaction with family, SO, kids	Typical to Rare to Typical
			32. Experience with barrier	Variant to Rare
			33. Experience with beneficial policy	Variant to Rare to 0
3	9	9- Program Recommendations		

Note. The connection between research questions, domains, categories, and subcategories demonstrates coherence across rounds of data analysis. [1] = Typicality Index: General = 14-15 participants; Typical = 8-13 participants; Variant = 3-7 participants; Rare = 1-2 participants (Hill, 2012). SO = Significant Other.

Appendix F
Participant Demographics

ID	Race/Ethnicity	Gender	Current Jobs	Employment		Continuing Education		Highest level of education	Children[2]	HS[3]	UCO[3]
				Status	Description	Enrollment Status	Description				
P003	African American/ Black	Male	1	FT	Entrepreneur	No	Trade certificate	Some community college	4	12	18
P004	Latino/a	Male	0	Unemployed	Actively applying	No	General Education	Some community college	0	24	36
P005	Asian American	Male	1	FT	Entrepreneur	No	n/a	High school diploma	0	24	8
P006	African American/ Black	Male	1	FT	Entrepreneur	No	n/a	High school diploma	0	48	6
P007	Latino	Male	1	FT	Temporary	No	Trade certificate	Some vocational training above and beyond UCO	2	54	9
P008	Latino/a	Male	1	PT	Temporary	No	Trade Certificate[1]	High school diploma	0	24	18
P009	Latino/a	Male	1	FT	Permanent	No	General Education	Some community college	2	42	8
P010	Latino/a	Male	1	FT	Permanent	No	Trade certificate	High school diploma	2	24	12

P011	Latino/a	Female	0	Unemployed	Actively applying	No	General Education[1]	High school diploma	3	24	60
P012	Multiracial	Male	0	Unemployed	n/a	No	n/a	High school diploma	1	30	15
P013	Latino/a	Male	2	PT and FT	Entrepreneur and Permanent	No	General Education	Some community college	1	48	14
P014	Multiracial	Male	2	PT and FT	Staffing Agency	No	General Education	Some community college	3	60	12
P015	Multiracial Asian	Female	1	FT	Temporary	No	Trade certificate	Some community college	0	24	6
P016	African American	Male	1	FT	Permanent	No	Trade certificate	High school diploma	0	24	8
P017	African American/ Black	Female	2	PT and FT	Permanent and Internship	Yes	Trade certificate	Some community college	0	48	23

Note. FT= full time employment; PT = part time employment; HS= public high school; UCO = Urban Corps of San Diego County; [1]= indicated intent to return to community college or vocational program during interview; [2]= Number of born or expecting children; [3]= Number of months in either public high school or UCO.

Appendix G
Organization Participation Agreement

RESEARCH PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT - ORGANIZATION
OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY

PROJECT TITLE: A Consensual Qualitative Research Study of the Transformation
from High School Dropout to High School Graduate

INTRODUCTION
The purposes of this form are to give you information that may affect your decision
whether to say YES or NO to participate in this research, and to record the consent of
those who say YES. This study aims to better understand the process of change that
alumni from your program experience from the point of entry to up to three years after
graduation. A model showing the process of change may help educators, counselors,
advisors, and other staff to select interventions that meet the needs of the program
participant. Additionally, recommendations for program development may result from
this study.

RESEARCHERS
Jayne E. Smith, doctoral student in the Counselor Education and Supervision program, is
the primary research assistant on this project. Dr. Danica G. Hays, associate professor
and department chair, is the primary investigator.

DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH STUDY
This research study will take place over the course of 1 year. The primary research
assistant will conduct and transcribe 12-15 participant interviews using an interview
protocol that participants assist in developing. The criteria for selecting participants
includes 1) graduated from Urban Corps of San Diego County; and 2) attended some
mainstream high school. Participants will also be asked to complete a demographic sheet
and will be given an informed consent, which outlines their voluntary participation in the
program.

The primary research assistant (Jayne) will conduct and transcribe the interviews, making
sure to remove all identifying information to ensure participant anonymity. The
transcripts and demographic sheets will be analyzed using a research team. Research
team members are doctoral students at Old Dominion University.

Urban Corps of San Diego County will be referred to by name or "UCO" unless
organization representatives request to be anonymous in future reports, manuscripts, and
presentations.

EXCLUSIONARY CRITERIA
All participants should have completed some high school in a mainstream U.S. based
school, and graduated from the second chance program in October 2009, February 2010,
June 2010, or October 2010. To the best of the participants' knowledge, they should
meet these two criteria. If they do not, that would keep them from participating in this
study.

RISKS AND BENEFITS

RISKS: If Urban Corps of San Diego County decides to participate in this study, then there is a risk of limited confidentiality if participants disclose their participation in the project. However, the researcher will attempt to minimize that risk by including a confidentiality clause in the informed consent. And, as with any research, there is some possibility that you may be subject to risks that have not yet been identified.

BENEFITS: The main benefit to you for participating in this study is helping to better understand the participants' experiences in the program and beyond so that we may increase effectiveness in providing services. There is a possibility that results may be used in funding opportunities. I will provide an executive summary of the findings at the conclusion of the project for use by Urban Corps of San Diego County.

COSTS AND PAYMENTS

The researchers are unable to give you any payment for participating in this study.

NEW INFORMATION

If the researchers find new information during this study that would reasonably change your decision about participating, then they will give it to you.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information obtained about you in this study is strictly confidential unless disclosure is required by law. The results of this study may be used in reports, presentations and publications, but the researchers will not identify you. Additionally, the primary research assistant will remove all identifying information from the interview transcripts and destroy all recorded data after transcription is complete.

WITHDRAWAL PRIVILEGE

It is OK for you to say NO. Even if you say YES now, you are free to say NO later, and walk away or withdraw from the study -- at any time. Your decision will not affect your relationship with Old Dominion University, the primary research assistant, or otherwise cause a loss of benefits to which you might otherwise be entitled. The researchers reserve the right to withdraw your participation in this study, at any time, if they observe potential problems with your continued participation.

COMPENSATION FOR ILLNESS AND INJURY

If you say YES, then your consent in this document does not waive any of your legal rights. However, in the event of harm, injury, or illness arising from this study, neither Old Dominion University nor the researchers are able to give you any money, insurance coverage, free medical care, or any other compensation for such injury. In the event that you suffer injury as a result of participation in any research project, you may contact the responsible principal investigator or Dr. Nina Brown, the current Human Subjects Review Board chair for the Darden College of Education at 757-683-3245 at Old Dominion University, who will be glad to review the matter with you.

VOLUNTARY CONSENT

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Dr. Danica G. Hays, (757) 683-6278
Jayne E. Smith, (619) 818-7838

If at any time you feel pressured to participate, or if you have any questions about your rights or this form, then you should call Dr. Nina Brown, the current Human Subjects Review Board chair for the Darden College of Education at 757-683-3245 or the Old Dominion University Office of Research, at 757-683-3460.

And importantly, by signing below, you are telling the researcher YES, that you agree to participate in this study. The researcher should give you a copy of this form for your records.

Urban Corps of San Diego County Representative Printed Name & Signature	Date

INVESTIGATOR'S STATEMENT

I certify that I have explained to this subject the nature and purpose of this research, including benefits, risks, costs, and any experimental procedures. I have described the rights and protections afforded to human subjects and have done nothing to pressure, coerce, or falsely entice this subject into participating. I am aware of my obligations under state and federal laws, and promise compliance. I have answered the subject's questions and have encouraged him/her to ask additional questions at any time during the course of this study. I have witnessed the above signature(s) on this consent form.

Investigator's Printed Name & Signature	September 10, 2012 Date

Jayne Smith 9/12/12