



The Corps Network

Strengthening America through
service and conservation

FY17 ANNUAL REPORT





The Corps Network

Strengthening America through
service and conservation

OUR MISSION

The Corps Network advances programs that transform young people's lives and communities through career development, conservation, and civic engagement.

OUR VISION

A high-quality Corps serving every community in America.

PHOTO:
Southwest Conservation Corps,
by Sarah Hamilton

Dear Friends,

I am proud to report 2017 was a productive year for The Corps Network and America's Corps. We started the year by updating our strategic plan. Through a thoughtful process, that included The Corps Network's Board of Directors, Corps Council, and staff, we developed a new organizational mission, vision statement, and ambitious goals around growth and improvement.

This has been a time of transition. With a new Administration comes new leadership and priorities at the federal agencies and departments with which Corps partner. Through The Corps Network's outreach and advocacy efforts, Corps are a known entity among new personnel and are considered an important tool in addressing some of America's most pressing concerns, from deteriorating park infrastructure and food insecurity, to community resiliency and wildfire suppression. Unfortunately, 2017 saw devastating wildfires and hurricanes. Corps were quick to respond, however, supporting fire prevention and suppression efforts in the West, and assisting storm recovery efforts in Texas, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

This past year was also a time of continued relationship-building with longstanding partners and supporters. We were fortunate to work with Corps champions in the U.S. House and Senate towards the June 2017 introduction of a new bipartisan 21st Century Conservation Service Corps (21CSC) Act. This bill would help create opportunities for more young adults and veterans to serve our country and gain in-demand skills through Corps. In 2018, we look forward to working with Congressional offices, on both sides of the aisle, to see the 21CSC Act signed into law.

I'm also happy to report that new partnerships and funding in 2017 allowed The Corps Network to expand our work on important issues. With support from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, we launched the Moving Forward Initiative: an effort to foster a conversation on race among our Corps and increase employment in conservation for young adults of color. On the ground, new grants created opportunities for Corps to increase work in restoring the economically important, yet fragile ecosystems along the Gulf Coast.

I could go on, but I will let our FY17 Annual Report offer more details on the exciting recent work of The Corps Network and our Member Corps. We look forward to working with our Membership, partners and supporters in 2018 to "*strengthen America through service and conservation.*"

Mary Ellen Sprenkel

Mary Ellen Sprenkel
President & CEO, The Corps Network

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About The Corps Network

Established in 1985, The Corps Network is the national association of service and conservation Corps. Our 129 Corps are locally-based organizations that engage young adults and returning veterans in service projects that address recreation, conservation, disaster response and community needs.

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

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

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Corps in Numbers FY17

CORPSMEMBERS

25,233 TOTAL NUMBER OF CORPSMEMBERS

58% IDENTIFY MALE

41% IDENTIFY FEMALE

MEMBERSHIP

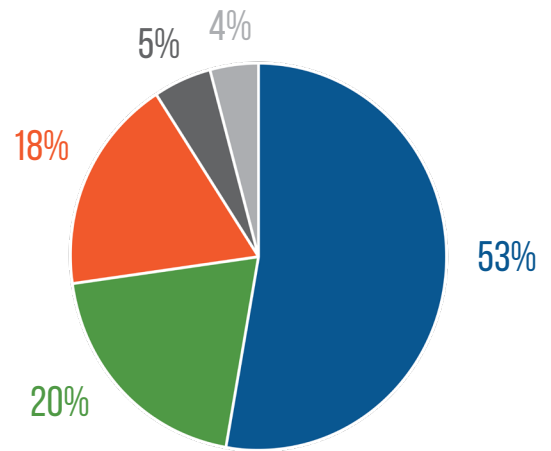
647 TOTAL MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

129 SERVICE & CONSERVATION CORPS

65 AFFILIATE MEMBERS

453 AMERICORPS BASIC MEMBERS

Montgomery County Conservation Corps,
solar panel installation.



CORPSMEMBER RACE/ETHNICITY

- WHITE
- BLACK / AFRICAN AMERICAN
- OTHER
- AMERICAN INDIAN, ALASKAN NATIVE, PACIFIC ISLANDER
- ASIAN

* 18% IDENTIFIED AS HISPANIC OR LATINO



>13,900

Number of industry-recognized certifications earned by Corpsmembers



>3,000

Number of Corpsmembers enrolled in a Corps-related high school diploma or GED program (across 30 Corps offering such programs)



>5,000

Corpsmembers insured through The Corps Network Health Insurance Plan

CONSERVATION, RECREATION, ENVIRONMENTAL OUTCOMES



311,378
acres of habitat restored



150,300
acres of invasive species &
hazardous fire fuels treated



2,551
miles of waterways restored



42,804
acres of erosion
and flood control



13,284
miles of multi-use trails
constructed/improved



31,440,000
pounds of waste collected
and recycled



1,663,143
trees planted



14,230
low-income homes audited
and/or retrofitted to improve
resource efficiency

COMMUNITY OUTCOMES



7,598
community spaces/public
facilities improved or
constructed



566
disasters responded to,
including fires, floods
& storms



150
historic structures restored



923,484
community members who
benefited from educational
programs provided by Corps



1,393,082
square feet of
graffiti removed



513,707
volunteer hours generated
through Corps-organized
service opportunities



W.K.
KELLOGG
FOUNDATION®

Moving Forward Initiative

Launched by The Corps Network in the spring of 2017 with support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the goal of The Moving Forward Initiative is to expand career exposure and increase employment in conservation for young adults of color. The Corps Network is exploring unconscious bias and structural racism within our own organization, our member Corps, and America's land management agencies.

Through this initiative, The Corps Network will provide tools and education to Corps directors, staff, members and partners to make all parties more aware and better prepared to address bias and structural racism. The vision of the Moving Forward Initiative is a space where young people of color are more aware of career opportunities in conservation and resource management; they are ensured equal access to these careers; and the organizations and agencies that manage our public lands are more culturally competent and aware of the history that has shaped the conservation workforce.

MFI 2017 HIGHLIGHTS

TRAINING WITH THE PEOPLE'S INSTITUTE FOR SURVIVAL AND BEYOND

The Corps Network invited directors, staff and members from several diverse Corps, as well as staff from partner resource management agencies, to join our staff for a two-and-half-day training with The People's Institute for Survival and Beyond (PISAB). The "Undoing Racism" training explored historical events and such concepts as privilege and gate-keeping. The purpose was to "understand what racism is, where it comes from, how it functions, why it persists and how it can be undone." Going forward, the goal is to provide learning opportunities like this to more Corps across the country.

BLOG AND GUEST COMMENTARY SERIES

In the summer of 2017, The Corps Network launched the Moving Forward Initiative Blog and Guest Commentary series to engage our Member Corps and partners in learning about the issues MFI seeks to address. Produced through research and interviews with experts, these blogs are intended to examine racism by introducing lesser-known history, academic concepts and informed opinions.

Programs & Projects

Learn about some of The Corps Network's exciting work made possible through grants and partnerships.

PHOTO: Northern Bedrock Historic Preservation Corps, part of The Corps Network EAP



READY TO RESPOND

EAP Corpsmembers responded to **211 DISASTERS** during the past program year, including fires and floods. In 2017, EAP members served in Texas, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands in response to Hurricanes Harvey, Maria and Irma.

PHOTO: Conservation Corps Minnesota & Iowa (CCMI) in Texas.

Education Awards Program (EAP)

Since 2000, The Corps Network has operated an AmeriCorps Education Awards Program (EAP) through a National Direct Grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service. This is the largest AmeriCorps program The Corps Network administers and one of the largest AmeriCorps Education Award programs in the country, having supported over **47,000** AmeriCorps positions since its inception. The amount of work accomplished by Corps involved in EAP, on federal lands and in local communities, is far greater with AmeriCorps support.



EAP Corpsmembers focus on environmental, public lands improvement and disaster response service projects. Upon successful completion of their AmeriCorps term, EAP Corpsmembers are eligible to receive an education award (scholarship) that can be used to support future educational endeavors or to repay student loans. Corpsmembers serving during the 2016 – 2017 program year received up to **\$5,775** based on the length of their term. They have seven years to use this award.

FY17 ENGAGEMENT NUMBERS

38	number of Corps involved, serving across 30 states and Puerto Rico
2,784	number of Corpsmembers enrolled
\$6.92 M	total amount of EAP money Corpsmembers had the potential to earn for the '16 – '17 term

FY17 TRAINING SNAPSHOT

748	trained in emergency response
569	trained/certified in CPR
222	trained in carpentry
190	certified in chainsaw operation

FY17 PROJECT SNAPSHOT

202,406	trees planted
63,737	acres of invasive species removed
3,112	miles of trails and waterways improved
773	number of members who responded to at least one disaster
301	low-income homes weatherized

EAP SPOTLIGHT: NORTHWEST YOUTH CORPS

In the summer of 2017, NYC Partnered with Mount Rainier National Park to employ a crew of five young adults who were Deaf or Hard of Hearing. NPS staff learned basic ASL and worked closely with the crew. One project the crew accomplished was building a 50-foot turnpike in a popular trail, thus making a riparian zone safer and more sustainable.



OYSI SPOTLIGHT: CIVIC WORKS

Corpsmembers are primarily recruited from Baltimore City neighborhoods. The young adults gain a sense of agency as they serve their community as active citizens. Community Lot Team members transform trash-filled vacant lots into green spaces. Baltimore Energy Challenge members visit low-income homes to install money and resource-saving retrofits. Through service, these Corpsmembers make real change and a lasting impact.

Opportunity Youth Service Initiative (OYSI)

Young people ages 16 – 24 who are out of school and not working are referred to as “Opportunity Youth,” reflecting their enormous potential if offered the support to get back on track. Launched in 2013 through an AmeriCorps grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service, The Corps Network’s Opportunity Youth Service Initiative (OYSI) is designed to engage youth from disadvantaged backgrounds (e.g. economically disadvantaged, unemployed, past court involvement, physical or learning disability) in education and conservation service. During their term of service, Corpsmembers develop job skills, earn certifications, complete their high school requirements, and receive assistance in transitioning to postsecondary education or the workforce.



OYSI SPOTLIGHT: LIMITLESS VISTAS, INC.

Nyjha joined in May 2017 and served in a coveted internship with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Southeast Louisiana Refuge Complex. The internship provides Corpsmembers housing, direct contact with USFWS professionals, and a wide range of experiences. Nyjha cleaned waterways, searched for nesting grounds, maintained trails, assisted in planting 2,000 marsh plants, conducted outreach, and collected telemetry data for an ongoing Garfish study.

FY17 ENGAGEMENT NUMBERS

14	number of Corps that participated in OYSI, engaging young adults across 15 states (AZ, CO, FL, IL, LA, MD, MI, NC, NY, OR, SC, TX, VT, WA, WI)
755	number of Corpsmembers enrolled
>646,900 HRS	amount of time OYSI members served

FY17 PROJECT SNAPSHOT

2,251	acres of native plants installed
2,120	households informed about energy efficiency and environmentally-conscious practices
1,766	low-income homes weatherized/retrofitted
250	trees planted
243	acres of invasive species removed
5	homes repaired, 2 homes constructed



SOAP participants with Montana Conservation Corps serving in the Great Bear Wilderness.

Summer Opportunity AmeriCorps Program (SOAP) *AmeriCorps Affiliate Program*

Summer is a critical time for teens and young adults to gain résumé-building skills and experience outside the classroom. Unfortunately, opportunities for summer enrichment are scarce for young adults in underserved communities. To address this issue, the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) partnered with The Corps Network in 2015 on the Summer Opportunity AmeriCorps Program: a pilot in which select OYSI Corps engaged teenagers in 3-month-long AmeriCorps terms of service doing conservation and community improvement projects. This pilot demonstrated that even relatively short terms of service can have a positive influence on participants. SOAP – or the AmeriCorps Affiliate Program, as it is officially known – was funded for the summers of 2016 and 2017.

This program is different from other AmeriCorps programs in that Corps can enroll participants as young as 14 and offer a short, 100-hour term of service that does not count towards an individual’s 4-term AmeriCorps limit. By engaging in meaningful service projects on public lands and in their communities, the majority of Corpsmembers who served during the summer of 2017 reported feeling more valued by their community, more civically engaged and more aware of local needs.



SOAP members with Texas Conservation Corps (TxCC) at American YouthWorks excavated four caves on Watershed Quality Protection Land to improve the aquifer recharge rate.

FY17 ENGAGEMENT & PROJECT SNAPSHOT

9	number of Corps involved across 15 states
436	number of Corpsmembers engaged
\$222,369	total amount of education award money Corpsmembers had the potential to earn
1,445	acres of public land improved
213	miles of trails and waterways improved
270	trees planted
7	historic structures rehabilitated



Citizens Conservation Corps members serving on a HOPE Crew project at Fredericksburg & Spotsylvania National Military Park in VA.

HOPE Crew

2017 marked the fourth successful year of the Hands On Preservation Experience (HOPE) Crew program. Developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP) and The Corps Network, HOPE Crew is designed to train the next generation of preservation craftspeople. Each HOPE Crew project is a partnership through which a project sponsor (such as the National Park Service) engages a Corps to help restore a historic property. Experts from the NTHP’s network of craftspeople train Corpsmembers in preservation techniques. Depending on project needs, Corpsmembers may learn skills in carpentry, masonry, roofing, painting or a variety of other specialties.

Project sites included:

White Grass Dude Ranch, Grand Teton National Park (WY); Chatham Manor, Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park (VA); Channel Islands National Park (CA); Fort Wadsworth, Gateway National Park (NY); Prince William Forest National Park (VA); San Antonio Missions National Historical Park (TX).

FY17 HOPE CREW NUMBERS

- 15 projects, involving 8 different Corps
- 75 individual intern placements
- >10,000 hours served on projects (over 350 work days)

CELEBRATING THE 100TH PROJECT

In June 2017, members of the Student Conservation Association (SCA) broke ground on the 100th HOPE Crew project at Fort Monroe National Monument in Hampton, VA. During the summer, Corpsmembers rehabilitated the site’s historic living quarters, dating from the 1830s. Also known as “Freedom’s Fortress,” Fort Monroe was a safe place for runaway African American slaves during the Civil War. On June 19, The Corps Network, NTHP and the National Park Service (NPS) hosted an event to commemorate this milestone and honor the Juneteenth holiday that celebrates the ending of slavery in the United States. Since its inception, HOPE Crew has trained **600+** young people and veterans in preservation trades, completing **\$14.3 MILLION-WORTH** of service.



100th project celebration. Fort Monroe Superintendent Terry Brown and Dorell Boyd, a 2017 Corpsmember of the Year from Citizens Conservation Corps and current NPS employee at Prince William Forest Park. - Photo by Bryan Struble.

Gulf Coast Program

The Corps Network partnered with the Walton Family Foundation in 2013 to launch the Gulf Coast Restoration Initiative to build Conservation Corps capacity in the five states bordering the Gulf of Mexico. The goal was to train young adults in job skills for the growing restoration economy while also addressing ecological damage caused by natural disasters and the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill. Through these efforts, Corps are increasingly seen as a solution to the Gulf's environmental and economic concerns.



Conservation Corps of the Forgotten Coast

GULFCORPS

Made possible by a \$7 million RESTORE Act grant administered by the National Atmospheric and Oceanic Administration (NOAA), GulfCorps officially launched in August 2017. Over three years, funds will be distributed evenly to the five Gulf Coast states to support existing local Corps in hiring young adults to conduct restoration and conservation activities. The Corps Network, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and the Student Conservation Association (SCA) will facilitate recruitment, training, and identification of projects. GulfCorps is expected to provide jobs to 300 young adults over the coming years. The five Corps participating in year-one are SCA (AL); Conservation Corps of the Forgotten Coast (FL); Limitless Vistas, Inc. (LA); Climb CDC (MS); and Texas Conservation Corps (TX). Programming began January 2018.

GULF CONSERVATION CORPS RESTORATION PROGRAM

Funded by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) with match from a private donor, this \$400,000 grant was awarded to The Corps Network and The Nature Conservancy (TNC) in March 2016 to provide capacity-building support to two new Conservation Corps and create a Veterans Conservation Corps. With this support, The Corps Network and TNC have worked collaboratively to establish a strong local organizational framework, recruit and train supervisors, and identify restoration projects and techniques. Updates from the past year include:

- **Climb CDC:** Completed 15 projects (nearly **3,600 HOURS** of service) and provided 18 Corpsmembers over 2,000 hours of training in a range of restoration techniques and water safety skills.
- **Conservation Corps of the Forgotten Coast:** Completed 12 projects (over **5,600 HOURS** of service) and provided over 3,200 hours of training to 14 Corpsmembers.
- **Veterans Conservation Corps:** This crew will work on coastal lands, but will be operated by Southeast Conservation Corps of Tennessee. Recruitment began fall of 2017. Veterans who graduate will receive federally-recognized credentials for wildland fire fighting and chainsaw operation.

TURKEY CREEK RESTORATION

In December 2017, NFWF and the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) awarded The Corps Network a grant to manage a two-year project that will engage up to 20 members of Climb CDC (MS) in extensive habitat restoration along a coastal tidal area known as Turkey Creek. Activities will involve habitat monitoring, invasive species removal, and deployment of native seedlings.

GULF CORPS ALLIANCE (GCA)

Established with assistance from The Corps Network, the GCA is a partnership of national and regional organizations (including Corps, environmentally-focused nonprofits and workforce development organizations) that have a presence throughout the South. The purpose of this body is to share best practices and collaborate on the promotion of Corps in the Gulf.

Updates from the Northeast Region

Corps have a mutually-beneficial relationship with the National Park Service (NPS). A cost analysis by Booz Allen Hamilton demonstrated NPS can save more than **50 percent** on project costs by partnering with Corps, thus allowing the agency to do more with less money. Corpsmembers benefit from the opportunity to learn from NPS employees and gain hands-on work experience in some of America's most iconic and historic locations.



To facilitate relationships between Corps and parks in the agency's Northeast Region (which includes properties from Maine to Virginia), The Corps Network and NPS partnered to support a Youth Program Assistant position based out of the Park Service's Northeast Region office in Philadelphia.

2017 PARTNERSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

THE CORPS NETWORK...

- Reviewed all NPS Northeast Region FY17 projects to determine which could involve youth, then facilitated relationships between parks and local Corps.
- Conducted site visits with parks and Corps to monitor and track program successes and note areas for partnership expansion and improved efficiency.
- Hosted regular calls with Youth Program Assistant staff in other NPS regions to share best practices and create consistency.
- Participated in Maintenance Advisory Group Calls to strengthen partnership with NPS Facilities staff.
- Developed new information sheets about each Corps in the region to facilitate partnerships with parks.

NUMBERS

Member Corps of The Corps Network engaged **396** young adults in service at Northeast Region parks, accounting for **24 PERCENT** of all youth employed in the NPS Northeast Region for the year.

CONVENING

- NPS Youth Program Coordinators from all regions, as well as representatives from the Washington, D.C. office, hosted a panel discussion at The Corps Network 2017 National Conference.

Accreditation

The Corps Network's Accreditation program is administered by the Corps Center of Excellence: an advisory committee of former Conservation Corps leaders, former federal land management agency staff, and other experts in workforce development programs. Accreditation is granted to Corps that demonstrate a high level of accountability to funders and donors, as well as the capacity to provide meaningful programming to Corpsmembers and quality results to project partners.



To become Accredited, a Corps must undergo an in-depth review of its operations and programming. The process involves a site visit as well as an assessment of the Corps' administrative documents and policies. Accreditation lasts for five years with the requirement that Corps provide an annual update to the advisory committee.

OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZED IN 2017

American Conservation Experience (National)
California Conservation Corps (CA)
Greater Valley Conservation Corps (CA)
Rocky Mountain Youth Corps (NM)

SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED ACCREDITATION PROCESS IN 2017

Climb CDC Conservation Corps (MS)
Green City Force (NY)
San José Conservation Corps and Charter School (CA)



Utah Conservation Corps serving at Blacksmith Fork Canyon.
- Photo by Liz Sodja

Service Year Alliance Partnership

Scaling Social Impact Council

Service Year Alliance focuses on increasing the engagement of young adults in service by expanding access to quality service opportunities and supporting the sustainable growth of organizations like Corps. They envision a future where a year of service would be a common expectation among young Americans. As part of their strategy to achieve this vision, Service Year Alliance launched the Scaling Social Impact Council: a body of several large national service organizations, including The Corps Network, to work as thought partners and help lead the service field in promoting and developing best practices. As part of the Scaling Social Impact Council, The Corps Network received a grant from Service Year Alliance to explore ways to increase the number of service opportunities and increase the value proposition for those serving.

2017 ACTIVITIES

CAREER PATHWAY ANALYSIS

The Corps Network is developing a matrix of credentials Corps offer their participants to find similarities and develop best practices around credentialing. We are also identifying Corps with exemplary post-Corps follow-up and employer connections.

DIGITAL BADGING

Digital badges are online credentials that can be attached to a résumé and verify that an individual has completed courses or developed certain competencies. The Corps Network is working with Civic Works (Baltimore) on piloting badging around the Robert F. Kennedy Center for Human Rights “Speak Truth to Power” curriculum, and also working with Montgomery County Conservation Corps (MD) to pilot badging around their River Corps program.

BEST PRACTICES AND RESOURCES

Based off documents collected from Corps through the Accreditation process, The Corps Network is in the process of developing toolkits around such topics as fundraising, succession planning, and community partnerships.

SERVICE YEAR EXCHANGE (SYX)

SYx is an online platform where service organizations can post open positions and connect with interested candidates. The Corps Network is working to increase the number of Corps engaged on SYx.

DATA COLLECTION

The Corps Network is working to develop and implement a survey to track post-Corps education and employment of service alumni.



Events

The Corps Network's two main annual events are our National Conference and the Great Outdoors Day of Service.

PHOTO: Kalef Jones speaks at The Corps Network '17 National Conference. Kalef is an AmeriCorps alumnus and 2017 Corpsmember of the Year from PowerCorpsPHL.

2017 National Conference

Moving Forward Together

The Corps Network 2017 National Conference took place February 12 – 15 in Washington, DC. The theme of the Conference, "Moving Forward Together," encouraged us to examine the disparities in our society and consider how Corps, through service and the empowerment of young people, can play a role in addressing racial, environmental, and community inequity.

Speakers included Arne Duncan, Former Secretary of Education; Stanley McChrystal, Retired Four-Star U.S. Army General; Judy Woodruff, Co-Anchor and Managing Editor of the PBS NewsHour; and Blair Taylor, then CEO of My Brother's Keeper Alliance.

On the final day of the Conference, numerous members of Congress attended The Corps Network's annual Capitol Hill award ceremony, during which we recognize recipients of our three main awards, as well as lawmakers and partners who have been influential to the Corps movement. The annual Corps Hill Day followed; Conference attendees participated in over 70 meetings with Members of Congress to raise awareness about priority issues for Corps.

2017 AWARDEES

CORPSMEMBER OF THE YEAR

- Dorell Boyd*, *Citizens Conservation Corps (WV)*
*21CSC Corpsmember of the Year
- Michael Hendricks, *Green Corps Chicago (IL)*
- Kalef Jones, *PowerCorpsPHL (PA)*
- Amanda Mathias, *Mile High Youth Corps (CO)*
- Leticia Rocha, *SEEDS (MI)*
- Shanique "Shay" Wilson,
Virginia Service and Conservation Corps (VA)

LEGACY ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

- Thomas Hark, *Vermont Youth Conservation Corps*
- Carolyn Wallace, *International Youth Organization (IYO),
New Jersey Youth Corps of Newark and Essex County*

PROJECT OF THE YEAR

- Farms at NYCHA
Green City Force (NY)
- IUCN World Conservation Congress, Youth Engagement
Kupu (HI)
- ASL Inclusion Young Adult Crew
Northwest Youth Corps (OR/WA)
- Job Corps Wildland Fire Program
Job Corps Civilian Conservation Centers (Nationwide)

Learn more about the 2017 Conference at
www.corpsnetwork.org/national-conference/2017-national-conference



4th Annual Great Outdoors Day of Service & Service in the Great Outdoors Week

More than 150 volunteers participated in The Corps Network's 4th Annual Great Outdoors Day of Service in Washington, DC on Friday, June 16. Attendees included Corpsmembers and staff from 14 Corps, representing more than a dozen states. Held in recognition of Great Outdoors Month – a celebration of America's public lands and waters – The Corps Network's Day of Service is designed to inspire people to participate in protecting natural spaces, and to raise awareness about the important role of Corps and volunteers in maintaining public lands.

The 2017 Day of Service began with an invigorating warm-up on the National Mall led by YMCA of Washington, DC. Service projects followed, involving painting at the FDR Memorial, invasive species removal at Rock Creek Park, and invasive species removal and riverfront cleanup at Teddy Roosevelt Island and Daingerfield Island. The Day of Service helped make a dent in the \$1.2-billion worth of deferred maintenance on District of Columbia National Park sites.

In the days leading-up to the Day of Service, The Corps Network ran a social media campaign to promote the importance of Corps and service in protecting and enhancing public lands and waters. This campaign generated over 60,000 impressions on Twitter alone.

CAPITOL HILL BRIEFING - CELEBRATION OF SERVICE IN THE GREAT OUTDOORS

On Thursday, June 15, The Corps Network hosted a breakfast on Capitol Hill to celebrate the first ever "Corpsmember Appreciation Day." Corpsmembers in town for the Day of Service then visited over 30 offices to educate members of Congress about Corps. That afternoon, as a co-chair of the Partnership for the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps (21CSC), The Corps Network held a briefing to demonstrate to Congressional staff how the 21CSC offers solutions to public lands infrastructure and workforce needs. With a new Administration and Congress, it is important to provide information about the 21CSC and how Corps can help them with their priorities.

A presentation by The Pew Charitable Trusts' Restore America's Parks Initiative, as well as commentary provided by a Veterans Conservation Corps alumnus and representatives from leading sporting and conservation organizations, offered information on critical issues affecting public lands infrastructure, wildfire control, and outdoor recreation.



21ST CENTURY CONSERVATION SERVICE CORPS

21st Century Conservation Service Corps (21CSC)

The 21st Century Conservation Service Corps (21CSC) is a bold national effort to put thousands of young adults and veterans to work protecting, restoring and enhancing America's public lands and waters. Along with Conservation Legacy, The Corps Network co-chairs the Partnership for the 21CSC (P21CSC), an advisory group of federal, state, local and nonprofit leaders that supports the growth and implementation of the 21CSC.

RE-INTRODUCTION OF THE 21CSC ACT

The 21CSC Act is bipartisan legislation that would help advance the goals of the 21CSC by, among other provisions, making it easier for federal agencies to partner with Corps to meet their missions in a cost-effective manner. In 2017, The Corps Network successfully negotiated a merger of the 21CSC Act with the Public Lands Service Corps Act (related legislation), and helped bring all sponsors of the PLSC Act onboard with the new 21CSC Act, which was introduced in both the House and Senate in June.

The bill was introduced in the Senate by Sens. John McCain (R-AZ), Michael Bennet (D-CO), [Lamar Alexander \(R-TN\)](#), and [Tom Udall \(D-NM\)](#) and in the House by Reps. Martha McSally (R-AZ), Seth Moulton (D-MA), [Scott Tipton \(R-CO\)](#), and [Raúl Grijalva \(D-AZ\)](#). [Those highlighted in blue were new sponsors, not on the original bill]. Since introduction, The Corps Network has helped add more Republican and Democrat cosponsors in both the Senate and House.

DEVELOPMENT OF A STRATEGIC PLAN

The Corps Network led the development of a new strategic plan for the Partnership for the 21CSC. This comprehensive plan includes direction for how to move forward with messaging and branding of the 21CSC, in addition to plans for fundraising and education and outreach with Congress and Federal Agencies.

Outreach & Advocacy

The Corps Network is a
voice for Corps in our
Nation's Capital

PHOTO: A member of the USDA
Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center
Wildland Fire Program. This program
won a 2017 Project of the Year Award
from The Corps Network.



Southwest Conservation Corps,
Veterans Fire Corps.

21CSC-RELATED CONGRESSIONAL TESTIMONY AND HEARINGS

JULY 19: Shortly after introduction, the 21CSC Act was considered by the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks. The National Park Service (NPS) provided favorable testimony, and the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Subcommittee spoke highly of Corps in their opening statements and asked engaging questions of the NPS witness.

SEPTEMBER 22: The Corps Network arranged for Kevin Heiner of Southwest Conservation Corps' veterans program to testify before the House Natural Resources Committee on the 21CSC Act and expanding veteran engagement in Corps and outdoor recreation.

SEPTEMBER 29: The Corps Network helped arrange for John Leong, CEO of member Corps Kupu (HI), to testify before the Senate Natural Resources Committee during a hearing on engaging the next generation in national parks and public lands.

Capitol Hill Briefings

NATIONAL SERVICE AND NATURAL DISASTERS

The Corps Network, along with partners Voices for National Service and Service Year Alliance, organized a briefing on the national service response to the wildfires and hurricanes of 2017. The Corps Network brought staff from Washington Conservation Corps and SBP to present. Several Congressional meetings were held in conjunction to advocate for supplemental AmeriCorps funding in a disaster recovery package.

DISASTER RECOVERY: SUPPLEMENTAL NEEDS FOR NATURAL RESOURCES & RESILIENCY

The Corps Network organized a briefing to examine the disaster recovery needs of public lands, as well as the impact of disasters to tourism and local economies. The Student Conservation Association (SCA) discussed their past resiliency and recovery efforts and the need for AmeriCorps supplemental funding and passage of Wildfire funding reform. Other presenters included National Parks Conservation Association, National Wildlife Refuge Association, National Parks Hospitality Association and American Forests.

EVERY CHILD HEALTHY OUTDOORS

The Corps Network joined the Outdoors Alliance for Kids (OAK) to organize a briefing on increasing the engagement of youth in outdoor recreation and stewardship. Greater Appalachian Valley Conservation Corps sent a staff person to speak on the importance of Corps, the 21CSC, and developing the recreation and public lands infrastructure that is important for getting outdoors.

21CSC - CELEBRATION OF SERVICE IN THE GREAT OUTDOORS BRIEFING

See page 14



California Conservation Corps.

Administration Engagement

With a new Administration comes new Cabinet Secretaries and political appointees. In the past year, The Corps Network made great progress in building relationships with important partners in Washington.

WHITE HOUSE ENGAGEMENT

"STRENGTHENING AMERICA TOGETHER: SERVICE & CONSERVATION CORPS"

The Corps Network developed a guide for the new Administration to show how Corps offer solutions to some of America's most pressing challenges. The guide presented a picture of how Corps across the country strengthen America by enhancing public lands infrastructure; reducing unemployment through a hand-up, not a hand-out; helping Opportunity Youth get back on track; and making communities more sustainable and resilient to disasters. It also featured examples of high-performing Corps around the country, and provided policy recommendations to: Create a 21st Century Corps Leadership Council; Encourage land management agencies to allocate more of their existing budgets to partner with Corps; Promote increased engagement of Corps in addressing urban challenges; leverage disaster-related funding to increase Corps work in resiliency/disaster response; and Expand service year opportunities.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR (DOI) ENGAGEMENT

The Corps Network and two member Corps (American Conservation Experience and Montana Conservation Corps) met with Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke. Secretary Zinke promised a doubling of Corps work with DOI, promoted a focus on veteran engagement, and designated a point person on his leadership team for Corps issues. He spoke about how Corps have an important role in DOI's work on backlog maintenance, recreation, priority trails, forestry projects, and wildfire remediation. Out in the field, the Secretary has met with several Corps, including American Conservation Experience, SCA, and Conservation Corps Minnesota & Iowa. Based on the Secretary's commitment to engage more veterans at DOI, The Corps Network developed a comprehensive Veteran's Corps expansion proposal. We are finalizing a report to the Secretary on how we can achieve a doubling of work.

U.S. FOREST SERVICE (USFS) ENGAGEMENT

The Corps Network continues to build relationships with longstanding partners at the Forest Service and with the new Chief, Tony Tooke. Acting Deputy Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment Dan Jiron spoke at the mid-year Partnership for the 21CSC convening, and committed to continuing U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and USFS support for 21CSC. In June 2017, USDA and partners announced \$20 million in partner agreements to provide 4,000 work opportunities for youth, young adults and veterans through the 21CSC.



Farms at NYCHA, a program of Green City Force, engages AmeriCorps members (supported by The Corps Network's OYSI grant) in growing fresh produce on New York City Housing Authority properties.

CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL & COMMUNITY SERVICE (CNCS)

CNCS has historically been one of The Corps Network's strongest partners. As new leadership comes on board, we continue to develop relationships at CNCS and promote Corps' disaster response, veteran engagement, and conservation work. The new Director of AmeriCorps visited several Corps over the past year.

Budget & Appropriations

The President's FY18 Budget was a shock to Corps and the national service community. It proposed to completely eliminate the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) and significantly reduce funding for youth and conservation programs at land management agencies. Despite proposed cuts, Corps work was featured prominently in the budgets of the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), National Park Service (NPS), and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

The Corps Network led Network-wide advocacy efforts - including convening working groups, submitting testimony and participating in Hill visits - to support the continued full funding of CNCS (which includes AmeriCorps), as well as the federal land management agency accounts. These advocacy efforts not only helped save AmeriCorps and CNCS from elimination, but helped achieve level-funding for AmeriCorps in both the House and Senate appropriations bills.



Northwest Youth Corps' ASL Inclusion Young Adult Program was one of The Corps Network's 2017 Projects of the Year for their work to engage Deaf & Hard of Hearing young people in conservation.

Farm Bill Pilot Development

In partnership with Conservation Corps Minnesota & Iowa (CCMI) and Montana Conservation Corps (MCC), The Corps Network developed a legislative draft of a pilot program to place Corpsmembers with Conservation Districts to support conservation practices, engage with the agriculture community, and plan projects for future Corps crews to accomplish. It is our intention to get the pilot program included in the Farm Bill, which will be taken up by Congress in 2018.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) & Corps Partnership Guide

Many Corps increasingly partner with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to accomplish priority projects at our nation's wildlife refuges. From urban to rural refuges, Corps help the agency engage communities, sportsmen and women, and the next generation of outdoor stewards. The Corps Network developed a partnership guide for USFWS staff, as well as Corps that don't have partnerships in place, to learn about the benefits of partnering.

Veterans Corps Report

In recognition of National Veterans and Military Families Month, The Corps Network released a new resource related to veterans and conservation: *Veterans Service and Conservation Corps: Career Pathways through Continued Service*. This document provides an overview of America's Veterans Corps and offers a blueprint for increased engagement of veterans on public lands – a priority for Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke, himself a former Navy SEAL.

Infrastructure Package Proposal

The President announced his intention to pursue a massive infrastructure package in his first two years in office. Corps have a long history of partnering with local transportation authorities on trails and other multi-modal transportation projects, and of supporting water and natural resource-related infrastructure. Corps are well-positioned to play a role in addressing priority infrastructure needs and backlog maintenance on public lands. The Corps Network developed an infrastructure proposal and met with the members of the Natural Resource and Transportation Committees to discuss including Corps in a package and to encourage Congress to consider natural resource, water, and disaster resiliency infrastructure needs.

Disaster Response & Recovery Proposal

By some estimates, 2017 was the most expensive year for disasters in our nation's history. Three massive hurricanes hit the Gulf Coast, and wildfires raged throughout the West. The Corps Network has been convening a Disaster Response and Resiliency Working Group to support Corps that deploy members through FEMA Mission Assignments as part of the AmeriCorps Disaster Response Team (A-DRT) structure. In addition, we developed and mounted an education campaign to let House and Senate Members of the Appropriations Committee know about the outstanding work Corps perform in immediate disaster response. As part of this effort, we also developed proposals for the federal land management agencies. The Corps Network is advocating for inclusion of Corps in a disaster funding package; additional supplemental AmeriCorps funds for disaster response projects; and funding for natural resource resiliency.



JAN Canyon Country Youth Corps (UT)



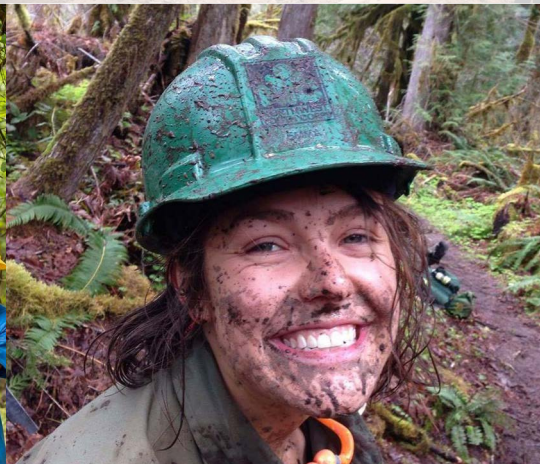
FEB American Conservation Experience (ACE) - (Nationwide)



MAR Knox Parks (CT)



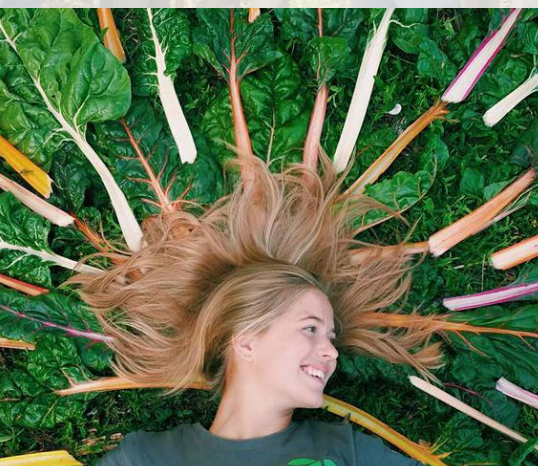
APR Student Conservation Association (Nationwide)



MAY Northwest Youth Corps (OR/WA)



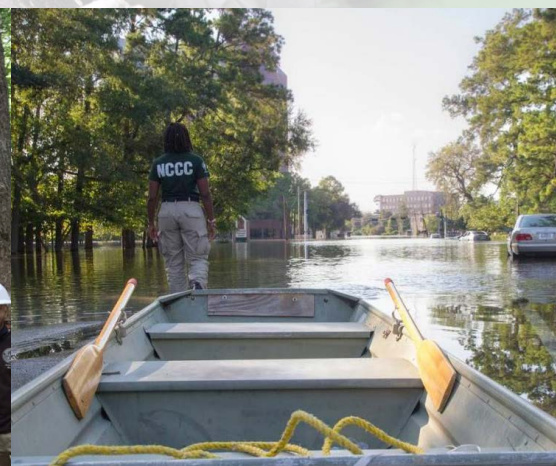
JUNE Civicorps (CA)



JULY SEEDS (MI)



AUG Secretary of the Interior Zinke with ACE



SEP AmeriCorps NCCC (Nationwide)



OCT Conservation Corps North Bay (CA)



NOV Heart of Oregon Corps (OR)



DEC Earth Conservation Corps (DC)

Statement of Financial Position - September 30, 2017

Assets

2017

Current Assets

Cash and Cash Equivalents	468,072
Cash Held for Others	45,523
Accounts Receivable	20,154
Grants and Contracts Receivable	1,859,728
Prepaid Expenses	73,679
Total Other Current Assets	2,467,156

Security Deposit	49,854
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Long-Term Assets

Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment	63,140
Lease Improvement	10,074
Accumulated Depreciation	(40,213)
Total Long-Term Assets	33,001

Total Assets

\$2,550,011

Liabilities and Net Assets

Liabilities

Current Liabilities

Accounts Payable & Accrued Liabilities	1,570,486
Amounts Held on Behalf of Others	45,523
Deferred Revenue	132,004
Total Current Liabilities	1,748,013

Noncurrent Liabilities

Deferred Lease Incentives	193,917
Total Liabilities	1,941,930

Net Assets

Unrestricted	588,553
Board Designated	35,027
Change in Net Assets	(15,499)
Total Net Assets	608,081

Total Liabilities and Net Assets

\$2,550,011

Statement of Activities - September 30, 2017

	Period Ending 9/30/2016
	Actual
Operating Revenue	
Core Revenue - HQ	
Grants Revenue	\$1,587,684
Membership Dues	360,878
Health Insurance Commissions	118,462
National Conference Revenue	169,654
Contract Revenue	29,000
Membership Dues - PLSC	56,500
Donations	13,225
Accreditation Fee Revenue	19,450
Reimbursed Expenses	3,411
Advertisement Revenue	477
Miscellaneous Income	0
Total Core Revenue - HQ	<u>2,358,741</u>
Grant Revenue - Passthrough	4,503,3003
Total Operating Revenue	<u><u>\$6,861,744</u></u>
 Expenditures	
Expenditures Without Indirect Costs	
Personnel Expenses	1,212,362
Contracted Services	471,601
Rent Expense	220,258
Meeting Expenses	213,147
Office Expenses	124,547
Travel Expenses	132,325
Total Core Expenses - HQ	<u>2,374,240</u>
Subgrantee Expenses - Passthrough	<u>4,503,003</u>
Total Expenses	<u><u>6,877,243</u></u>
 Change in Net Assets	<u><u>(\$15,499)</u></u>

COVER PHOTO:

Charles, an AmeriCorps member with Virginia Service and Conservation Corps. Photo by Service Year Alliance.

www.ServiceYear.org

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