

# Ambassadors of Change and Action



# The Washington Commission for National and Community Service



*State commissions administer national service programs to promote civic engagement and foster the ethic of service while meeting real community needs. Public or private non-profit organizations, including faith-based and community organizations, and government entities may apply for AmeriCorps grants through their state commissions.*

The Washington Commission for National and Community Service (WCNCS or the Commission) was created in 1994 to implement national service initiatives, provide training and technical assistance, evaluate programs, and leverage federal dollars with local, state, and private-sector resources. For the past 18 years, the Commission has administered \$196.2 million in federal grants from the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS).



*Luiz Yanez plants native plants with Puget Sound Corps and Washington Conservation Corps members at the Gog-le-hi-wetlands site in Tacoma. (Reprinted with permission of The Olympian)*

## Our Programs

In 2012, 1,586 AmeriCorps State members served in areas of education, environmental stewardship, healthy futures, economic opportunity, veterans and military families, and disaster response programs funded by the WCNCS. In addition, more than 1,069 AmeriCorps National members and 196 AmeriCorps VISTA members served in Washington State or programs funded directly by the CNCS.



## 2012 AmeriCorps State Programs

- Clallam County Family YMCA – North Olympic AmeriCorps
- College Success Foundation – College and Career Advising Corps
- Community Youth Services – AmeriCorps: Youth In Service
- Department of Ecology – Washington Conservation Corps
- EarthCorps – EarthCorps AmeriCorps
- Employment Security Department – Washington Reading Corps
- Employment Security Department – Washington Service Corps
- Girl Scouts of Western Washington – Leaders in Service
- Kitsap Community Resources – KCR/AmeriCorps
- Life Works – Cowlitz AmeriCorps Network
- Pasco School District No. 1 – Regional Service Corps
- Solid Ground – JustServe AmeriCorps
- Northeast Washington Educational Service District 101 – Spokane Service Team
- Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs – Vet Corps



## Table of Contents

Foreword .....	1
Statewide Accomplishments.....	2
Special Initiatives and Events .....	4
Serving Communities, Changing Lives ....	6
Funding.....	12
The Commission.....	13

## Ambassadors of Change and Action



*Former WCNCS Executive Director Bill Basl, former Governor Christine Gregoire, and Nicole Trimble, WCNCS Chair*

Each generation of Americans embraces the belief that no problem is too big for a determined group of people to conquer. This challenge is central to national service, which gives thousands of Americans a chance to improve the lives of citizens burdened by circumstance or calamity.

In Washington State, we're compassionate, generous, and share the belief that one person can make a difference. Last year, more than 1.83 million Washingtonians gave 223.8 million hours of their time and talent to improve communities throughout the state. Because of this generosity, Washington ranked ninth among states with an annual volunteer rate of 34.4 percent, according to the *Volunteering and Civic Life in America* report.

Over the past year, the Washington Commission for National and Community Service funded 14 AmeriCorps programs that supported 1,586 AmeriCorps members – ambassadors of change and action. Service initiatives like AmeriCorps not only move communities forward, they serve their members by creating jobs and providing pathways to opportunity for entering the workforce. AmeriCorps members learn valuable work skills, earn money for education, and develop an appreciation for citizenship. AmeriCorps is a program that's right for the times in which we live and demonstrates what happens when our nation invests in getting things done.



In July, we bid farewell to Bill Basl who had served as the Commission's Executive Director since its inception in 1994. Bill inspired Washingtonians for nearly two decades with his passion and commitment to service and volunteerism. In his new role as national Director of AmeriCorps, Bill continues to be a tireless advocate for national service as an effective strategy for improving lives and strengthening communities. We dedicate this report to him and thank him for his service to the citizens of Washington State.

You can help us build on our strong foundation for success by sharing your passion for volunteerism with others. Together, our impact will significantly contribute to supporting vibrant communities throughout our state.

In service,

Debbie Schuffenhauer  
Executive Director,  
Washington Commission for National and Community Service



## AmeriCorps

*AmeriCorps members in Washington State serve at a variety of nonprofit and faith-based organizations, and state and local government agencies. In 2012, they performed more than 2.5 million hours of service, improving the lives of thousands of residents across the state.*

### Strengthening Families

- Provided services to more than 96,772 disadvantaged children and youth
- Assisted with independent living services, including respite care, to help 3,310 clients live independently in their homes in community-based settings
- Engaged 9,141 “baby boomers” in AmeriCorps-sponsored service

### Building Prosperity

- Generated 73,893 volunteers
- Mentored 41,173 individuals, including children of incarcerated parents
- Engaged 3,038 disadvantaged children and youth in meaningful service opportunities

### Educating for the Future

- Tutored 9,685 K-6 students through the Washington Reading Corps
- Engaged 2,274 peer and cross-age tutors who donated 21,368 hours of service to make connections across grade levels
- Conducted family literacy events with 47,564 participants to improve family awareness and involvement in children’s reading efforts

### Protecting the Environment

- Planted more than 856,000 native trees and shrubs to improve natural habitat
- Constructed or improved 312 miles of trails and boardwalks
- Treated or improved 1,020 acres of public land to benefit citizens across Washington State

### Protecting Health and Safety

- Prepared 876 AmeriCorps members for deployment in support of local, state, or other disasters
- Responded to floods, severe winter storms, and seven major wildfires
- Collected 70 pickup loads of marine debris along 57 miles of coastal beaches in Southwest Washington

## AmeriCorps Education Awards

Over the past 18 years, the Commission has administered \$196.2 million in federal grants from the Corporation for National and Community Service.

Since 1994, more than 34,000 people have served in AmeriCorps programs in Washington. Education awards valued in excess of \$106 million\* earned by these members were used to help cover educational costs, primarily in Washington State’s post-secondary institutions during this same time period (as of January 2013).

\* National Service Trust

## Spokane Service Team Hosts the Washington Commission

On May 10, 2012, the Washington Commission for National and Community Service held its spring meeting in Spokane. The visit was unique, as the commissioners came not only to listen to presentations – they rolled up their sleeves and served alongside AmeriCorps members at two service sites. Together, they painted a garage, tiled a backsplash, and shoveled a huge pile of soil. Commissioners talked with AmeriCorps members about their personal goals, and learned about real needs of the community that the members are addressing. Nicole Trimble, Chair of the Commission, remarked, “In corporate giving, I frequently tour sites and watch people work. Today I wanted to serve.”



## Washington Conservation Corps Responds to East Coast Super Storm

Over the course of five months, 109 Washington Conservation Corps (WCC) members and 22 supervisors provided 43,704 hours of service to communities in New York and New Jersey hit hard by Hurricane Sandy. It was the largest response effort ever for the WCC, surpassing the previous largest deployment for Hurricane Katrina.

WCC efforts did not go unnoticed. Numerous letters, emails, and even a donation from the Boston Red Sox Foundation were sent to the WCC headquarters in Lacey. Following are just a few of the kudos.

“Once again your members continue to have an amazing impact on the communities they serve. I fear the residents of New Jersey may never let them leave... Your crews continue to set a high standard for all AmeriCorps members; it is a pleasure to work with you and your teams.”

– *Kelly DeGraff, Director, Disaster Service and Senior Advisor to the CEO, CNCS*

“These AmeriCorps kids are champions. I’m in awe of their hard work and dedication. What an example of youthful enthusiasm. My faith in young Americans is restored. Powerful display of teamwork and selflessness.”

– *Donald Caetano, FEMA Region II External Affairs Director*

“If we get another Nor’Easter, these people no longer have to evacuate, because of your crews they get to stay in their home, comfortable and confident that the ocean will not come and haunt them again... The structure of the WCC is something very special and I know that our recovery efforts would not be the same if it weren’t for them all being here.”

– *Courtney Chibbaro, Volunteer Coordinator, South Seaside Park, who wrote after AmeriCorps rebuilt sand dunes for her community*

“Thank you for your help and flexibility during this response. I can’t say enough how much your members and staff have impressed and endeared themselves to the communities they serve and everyone they’ve met along the way.”

– *Katrina French, Disaster Services Program Officer*

“At an event a few weekends back, people waited in line to speak to me to say thank you and to tell me how they especially loved the WCC members. One woman, with tears in her eyes said, ‘I felt abandoned by my government until I realized they sent AmeriCorps.’ I particularly want to commend the WCC staff leaders that have come out with the teams who have helped shape the response work. They have cultivated relationships, built systems and infrastructure, are skillfully navigating local politics, and – most importantly – getting work done! They are tireless joyful ambassadors in an area with minimal national service presence and we couldn’t have asked for more. Please be sure to pass along our gratitude. I’ve been feeling the need to hug anyone I meet from WA State.”

– *Erin McGrath, New Jersey State Program Director*



## Citizen Corps

Citizen Corps is the grass-roots movement that actively involves everyone in making communities across America safer, stronger, and better prepared. It helps promote Ready.gov, a public service campaign that urges people to take some basic steps to prepare for potential disasters and other emergencies by getting an emergency supply kit, making a family communication plan, and staying informed.

The Washington Commission for National and Community Service has served as the State Citizen Corps Council since 2003. The WCNCS administers the Citizen Corps Program and supports increased statewide preparedness by encouraging local communities to participate in programs under Citizen Corps, and to engage community members in disaster preparedness and response.

Citizen Corps Councils and programs are continuing to increase across the state. They support the development and growth of Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTs), Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS), and the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC). These programs help more citizens get involved in safety and preparedness through activities such as skills-specific training, safety fairs, and National Night Out. The programs are also a valuable resource to the first responder and emergency management agencies of Washington.

In addition, the state-sponsored 2012 NW Citizen Corps Expo included CERT, MRC, and amateur radio volunteers working together in a realistic disaster exercise. Nearly 250 people were involved in the daylong exercise.

WCNCS supports these activities through grant management and program assistance. Information is available to interested individuals and program managers through [www.citizen corps.wa.gov](http://www.citizen corps.wa.gov).



## AmeriCorps Launch

On October 21, 2011, an enthusiastic crowd of nearly 1,000 AmeriCorps members gathered at the Seattle Center to pledge their personal commitment to “get things done for America” during their year of service in Washington State. John Gomperts, then Director of AmeriCorps, served as a keynote speaker. Joshua Proehl, an AmeriCorps alumnus of the Washington Service Corps, enamored the audience with his reflective speech, “An Opportunity to be an Ambassador of Change.”

As part of the day’s activities, more than 400 AmeriCorps members were trained to better prepare them for emergencies and in the important role of national service in disaster preparedness and response efforts. Tracy Connelly from the City of Seattle Office of Emergency Management offered an engaging and informative session on how to put together an emergency preparedness kit on a budget. After completing the training, each member received a 72-hour personal preparedness kit courtesy of WCNCS. Approximately 100 members partnered with Seattle’s EarthCorps that afternoon on a service project.



*Photo courtesy of Seattle Mariners*

## Washington Leader Corps

The Washington Leader Corps was held in Olympia on December 8-9, 2011. The training is directed at individuals who exhibit leadership traits, but have not had the opportunity to expand their skills in this area. Facilitated by Jeff Birdsall, Leader Corps is a two-day training experience that provides approximately 40 AmeriCorps and VISTA members from Washington State the opportunity to build leadership skills such as self-awareness, effective communication and listening, and conflict management.

## Volunteer Generation Fund

The Volunteer Generation Fund (VGF) grant in Washington State is strengthening volunteer centers through planning and capacity building, enabling replication of successful programs and engagement models. The WCNCS has been proud to partner with the Volunteer Centers of Washington and 501 Commons (an organization that supports nonprofits) to implement the grant over the last two years, and develop a state plan for service. The vision behind the plan is to create an effective volunteer ecosystem that enables volunteers to address the needs of communities. Through the VGF, the “U Can Serve” campaign was developed to recruit active and retired military personnel and their families to community service. The campaign’s focus is on the assets and talents that service personnel and their families have to offer the community. Another component of the VGF initiative has been the “All Can Serve” project, creating emergency preparedness plans at six low-income housing properties that are owned and operated by the Low Income Housing Institute.

## Mariners Salute to Volunteers

To celebrate National Volunteer Week, the Seattle Mariners, Bonneville Seattle Radio, and WCNCS joined on April 17, 2012, for “Salute to Volunteers Night.” Pre-game ceremonies included a special tribute to 44 distinguished volunteers who represented a cross-section of the estimated 63 million Americans who donated their time last year. The ceremonial first pitch was thrown out by 17-year-old Josh Barker, a recipient of the 2012 “Governor’s Volunteer Service Award.” In addition to the pre-game ceremony, a volunteer bazaar was located on the main concourse of the ballpark with information on how people can get involved in volunteering. Representatives from various non-profit groups were on hand to answer questions about their particular organizations and to match individuals with volunteer opportunities.

## Governor's Volunteer Service Awards

To recognize the countless acts of service performed by one of Washington's most valuable assets – its volunteers – Governor Chris Gregoire proclaimed April 15-21, 2012, as Washington Volunteer Recognition Week. Gregoire urged all citizens to join her in recognizing and supporting those who volunteer and serve. To celebrate, Governor Gregoire hosted the "Eighth Annual Governor's Volunteer Service Awards" on April 23, 2012, to recognize the contributions of 44 volunteers for their dedication and commitment to improve their communities through service. Local Volunteer Centers; Citizen Corps Councils; Senior Corps; Learn and Serve; and AmeriCorps programs nominated the honorees from across the state. For the eighth year of this event, the WCNCS presented Governor Gregoire with a scroll listing the names of the 350 honorees she had recognized during her two terms as Governor.



## Northwest Network

On March 27-29, 2012, the WCNCS and Oregon Volunteers co-sponsored the Northwest Network at Portland State University in Portland. This 18th annual cross-stream event united national service program directors and key staff from across the Northwest to actively problem-solve common program challenges and celebrate our combined successes. The year's theme was "Engage – Refine – Celebrate." Plenary speaker Dr. Erwin Tan spoke to attendees about the value of volunteerism as well as the Corporation's national performance measures. Two CNCS staff members, Kinza Ghaznavi and Doug Godesky, provided a workshop remotely on decoding the criminal history background check process. The third day of the Network was dedicated to state-specific meetings.

## Leadership Forum for National Service Executives

For the last 12 years, the WCNCS has partnered with the University of Washington's Evans School of Public Affairs to offer a unique learning opportunity designed specifically for AmeriCorps and Senior Corps program staff. For the past five years, participation has expanded beyond Washington State and now includes national service staff from across the country. This year's course, "Performance-Based Budget Management," focused students on the role that budgets and fiscal management strategies play in non-profit organizations and government agencies. The session was held in Seattle on June 25-29, 2012. This innovative curriculum is comprised of three one-week courses that take place over consecutive summers. Classes are kept small so attendees have an opportunity to dialogue with award-winning faculty on issues facing national service programs. Attendees complete masters-level coursework designed to enhance their skills building a sustainable organization; performance-based budgeting; and program assessment in an environment that values shared experiences and insights from fellow attendees and faculty. Those who complete the three-course series earn a Certificate in Nonprofit and National Service Management from the University of Washington.

## 9/11 National Day of Service and Remembrance

In 2012, WCNCS awarded a mini-grant to the Spokance Service Team, of the Northeast Washington Educational Service District 101, using special supplemental PDAT dollars dedicated to the 9/11 National Day of Service and Remembrance. Sixty AmeriCorps members participated in a host of activities that began with an inspirational address from Spokane Valley Deputy Fire Chief Andy Hail. Later, the members and guests recorded a series of video statements describing the myriad of ways the 9/11 tragedy has inspired them to give back to the community ([www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=vojxiHDeyBE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=vojxiHDeyBE)).



## Fostering Hope for the Future

College Success Foundation's AmeriCorps college and career coaches educate students on the importance of thinking about tomorrow and how their choices today steer them in the future. Members helped 2,308 students identify their personal interests with potential career paths, learn of colleges that offer programs in those career paths, understand the preparation in middle and high school necessary to be accepted and successful in college, and how to finance that dream. Members have assisted students in seventh and eighth grades to sign up for scholarships, which has led many students to believe that they can have a better life.



By including students in service projects, members also helped them better understand their role in supporting their community. In addition, members supported youth from our state's foster care system. At the College Success Foundation's "Make it Happen" college readiness/success camp for youth in care, members delivered workshops, and mentored these young adults on safe and healthy choices, and believing in one's self.

— Sue Byers, Chief Academic Officer,  
College Success Foundation

## Vet Corps Serves Vets and Communities

Over the course of the year, Vet Corps members have significantly affected the lives of several thousand veterans, active duty military, and family members by providing valuable information about an array of services that have helped stabilize the educational, social, financial, and family lives of many. Without these interventions, many veterans would have opted out of school, employment, and in some cases possibly out of life. Veterans are utilizing the "veteran's rooms" and veterans resource centers created by Vet Corps members at an increasing rate, and the community that is being built at the colleges and universities provides veterans and their families with academic and social support.

We also know that veterans, both at the colleges and soldiers at the Warrior Transition Battalion, are increasingly participating in volunteer activities. This means that veterans are getting involved in community issues that provide meaning to themselves and the community at large. Many of these events are attended by not only the veteran, but their families as well. Consequently, there is a strengthening of the family bond through service and connection to community. Vet Corps members are referring large numbers of veterans this year to post traumatic stress counselors around the state who work for the Washington Department of Veterans Affairs. As those families enter counseling, we know there are added benefits of increased communication, connection to the community, and participation in family outings. As one spouse said, "My husband (the returning soldier) hasn't been to a Little League game with our son in years. The Vet Corps counselor is making all the difference."

— Mark Fischer, Program Director,  
Vet Corps



## Engaging Students in Environmental Stewardship

EarthCorps is proud of running a program that restores habitats, builds community, and develops leadership. We are committed to having a positive impact on the communities we serve and on the members who serve with us. Mike Friedhoff, of Seattle, exemplifies this commitment. Mike took a year off from college to better define his career path. He definitely had some big personal realizations, including how much he likes leading volunteers in outdoor settings. He was impressed with the number of community volunteers that EarthCorps works with, as well as the number of tools the projects take! Every volunteer event is not only an opportunity to practice leadership; every event ends with a reflection debriefing.

— Erin Thomas, EarthCorps Operations Manager

Mike Friedhoff, EarthCorps member, debriefs with a group of college students at Cheasty Greenspace in South Seattle after a MLK Day of Service event.



## Homework Club Reaches Struggling Students

“Recently, I launched the Girls Without Limits! (GWOL!) Homework Club for girls ages 10-14. Over the course of my Youth In Service year, I have had many GWOL! participants tell me they are struggling with math and writing. Homework Club provides a safe opportunity for girls to receive academic support via one-on-one tutoring, mentoring, and support. The girls who have participated say they are benefiting from the club. A few girls have shared useful information about their study habits, methods on how they learn, and ways adults can support them. One participant shared that she is creative and likes to write and listen to music, as well as create her own song lyrics. I used that information by focusing on her strengths (creativity) and writing a story together so she can practice spelling and grammar. It was not only fun, but it allowed her to generate something she is proud of through practice and creativity.”

— Marielle Cramer, Community Youth Services, AmeriCorps: Youth In Service member

## Members Organize Events to Promote Literacy

RSC-AmeriCorps members partnered with six local organizations to support dozens of educational or safety activities for 9,630 people. All partners reported that working with RSC enhanced their capacity to conduct events designed to promote a safe and/or literate community. Our efforts to promote literacy through our annual “Warm Up with Cool Books,” “Go Wild for Reading” project, and the “I Love to Read” poster contest, in partnership with area libraries, brought 1,745 students and parents together to continue reading through the winter and spring break.

— Stephaen Harrell, Program Director, Regional Service Corps

Charles Hanes (above), the third member of his family to serve in RSC-AmeriCorps (following in the footsteps of his father and brother), admires the artwork of participants in the “I Love to Read” poster contest.



## Service with a Purpose

“It’s as true now as it ever will be: the kids and people I work with have made my AmeriCorps experience what it is, and I wouldn’t change it for anything. There have been hard times and good, and as I’m halfway through my second term of service, I can’t help but notice how much the students I work with have grown. Sometimes I have to take a step back when I’m in a difficult situation with a student and remember how far they’ve come since last year, take a deep breath, and remember where they’re coming from. Sometimes all it takes to make me remember why I’m here is a smile from a student. I know that these kids are the reason I stayed to do a second year, and I can’t bear to think of leaving them. I know that a lot of them need as much consistency in their lives as possible, and I just have to remind myself that next year’s AmeriCorps will be here for them. I know they’ll be ok.”

— Emily Kreidler,  
member of North Olympic AmeriCorps



## Preventing Violence, Providing Service

JustServe’s Pathway to Career Corps Member Kenny McCraney supervises volunteers at Habitat for Humanity, helping provide low-income families a way out of poverty through home ownership. Kenny is a major part of helping make that happen for many families. Kenny has worked his way up from being an AmeriCorps volunteer to supervising community volunteers, who are also passionate about providing everyone access to affordable housing. Kenny understands firsthand what it means to be homeless and through his service at Habitat for Humanity, he has been able to touch many lives.

With JustServe’s focus on preventing violence and providing service to those affected by violence, one of our Anti-Violence Corps members is placed at the King County Protection Order Office. Her recollection of supporting another national service member follows.

— Tera Oglesby, Program Supervisor,  
JustServe AmeriCorps at Solid Ground



“The doorbell rang and I stepped out to assist the person who had just entered our Protection Order Program Office. Upon seeing her, I realized she was also roughly my age and my height. It was strange helping someone that reminded me so much of myself. I guided this woman through the mountain of paperwork required to get a protection order, including helping this petitioner detail the severe abuse and alarming stalking behavior she was experiencing. We talked about safety planning and programs for children who witness abuse. She exuded strength and determination, and asked poignant questions about the protection order process. Near the end of our session, she said, ‘I didn’t know this was an AmeriCorps service site. Are you an AmeriCorps member?’ I replied that I was. She then revealed to me that she was currently serving in AmeriCorps, as well.”

— Marta Haftek,  
JustServe member

## Reaching Out to Veterans With Disabilities

On September 11, 2012, AmeriCorps members of Girl Scouts of Western Washington served at the American Lake Veterans Medical Center in Tacoma. At the request of veterans with disabilities and voluntary service assistants, members cleaned and washed wheelchairs of disabled veterans. Veterans conveyed to the members that their service was important because they did not have the ability to do this cleaning on their own. Enjoying the interactions during the project, members cleaned 43 wheelchairs and walkers.

— Genell Hennings, Program Manager,  
Girl Scouts of Western Washington



## WCC Responds to One of the Worst Wildfire Seasons in Recent History

Throughout the year, the Washington Conservation Corps (WCC) responded to floods, severe winter storms, wildfires, and tsunami marine debris removal. The 85 AmeriCorps members that were deployed on these efforts is a large contingent of the WCC program.

In July 2012, the WCC was called upon by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to assist with wildfire response efforts throughout Central Washington. A six-person WCC crew was deployed to the Navarre Coulee fire near Entiat on July 7. The crew spent five days serving meals, coordinating camp logistics, and supplying equipment to the fire line.

This crew so impressed the incident command team that when another wildfire started near the town of Cle Elum, DNR asked WCC to deploy again. The Taylor Bridge fire near Cle Elum, which was sparked by a welding project and destroyed over 60 homes and burned nearly 24,000 acres, was a lengthy response effort due to high winds, dry weather conditions, and diseased timber. On August 13, WCC deployed eight AmeriCorps members and two crew supervisors to assist with efforts to contain the fire. AmeriCorps members from Bellevue, Ellensburg, Seattle, Wenatchee and Yakima established a base camp by setting up yurts, telephone lines, and supply trailers. The team also coordinated donations, served meals, and supplied equipment to the fire line.

When additional resources were requested midway through the response effort, the WCC sent 13 more AmeriCorps members directed by two WCC crew supervisors. The team stood down on August 25 when the Taylor Bridge fire was downgraded. The team spent their final day helping nearly 800 responders demobilize and inventorying supplies – including re-coiling and packaging more than 17 miles of fire hose for future responses.

## Working Hard for Parks

Over the course of the 2011-2012 program year, members of Kitsap Community Resources/AmeriCorps served with the county's various parks on numerous occasions, performing 731 service hours during their monthly service projects. The commitment of the members and success of the projects impressed the staff of the Bremerton Parks and Recreation Department and other community partners.

A thank you note from the Howe Farm Park Stewardship read, "I wanted to express my gratitude for all your efforts at Howe Farm last week.

You all did a tremendous job! I've told everyone how very impressed I was with your organization and the stellar attitude of all participants. I've never seen a group work so hard, be so polite, clean, and respectful. It was a true pleasure to work with you and I hope we can do so again in the future."

– Jennifer Allik, Program Director,  
Kitsap Community Resources/AmeriCorps



In September, WCC's AmeriCorps members and crew supervisors responded to five more wildfires throughout Central and Eastern Washington for a total of seven wildfire responses completed this service year. The duties varied by response, but ultimately, members were able to utilize several of their certifications gained in the WCC program – including Wildland Firefighting, Wilderness First Responder, and Wildland Pumps and Saws.

– Bridget Mason,  
Washington Conservation Corps Coordinator

## Partnership with 4-H Club Creates Opportunities

One of our members at the Cowlitz County Youth Services/Juvenile Justice School created a partnership with the local Washington State University 4-H program and became a club leader. Her vision was to create a club at the school that would involve some of the students she works with to create and maintain a school garden. She then introduced chickens into the program. The program purchased eggs and an incubator. The students then learned about chicken embryology, what types of chickens there are, chicken nutrition, and how to show their chickens at the fair.

— *Jennie Bergman, Program Director,  
Cowlitz AmeriCorps Network*

“The 4-H program has been a great success. The kids involved love it, and the ones who are not involved are constantly asking how they can be a part of it. Unfortunately, these are kids who need a large staff-to-student ratio so my group is small. The kids in the program stay after school to participate and get really upset if the day has to change. They really look forward to seeing their chicks and working in the garden. The garden is a natural environment for hands-on learning. The kids ask questions about what the plants are, what they are used for, how to grow them, and so on. Their sampling of the produce has led to them enjoying foods they otherwise would not have tried, leading to healthier eating habits and the ability to provide for themselves wherever they go.”

“We are getting ready to enter our educational display in the fair. We have four chicks and some plants and produce that will be entered. The kids are really excited about showing off all their hard work!”

— *Tiahna Hillier, member,  
Cowlitz County Youth Services/Juvenile Justice*



Photo reprinted with permission of Arla Shephard, *The Kitsap Sun*

## Brighter Futures for Children Through Reading

The Washington Reading Corps helps young children develop early language and literacy skills, and helps improve the reading abilities of K-6 students across Washington State. Two hundred sixty AmeriCorps members are placed in high-needs schools and early learning centers where the average free/reduced lunch is 60 percent or higher. In the 2011-2012 program year, 9,685 struggling readers were tutored by the Reading Corps members. The members also recruited 5,095 community volunteers, who donated more than 51,000 hours of tutoring service. Peer and cross-age tutors – 2,274 in all – were also part of the solution to help young children succeed in school.

“As a member of the Washington Reading Corps, I was tasked with assisting students who were considered ‘at-risk.’ Typically, these students had deficiencies in the areas of fluency and comprehension. In some cases, the situation was complicated by a tumultuous, unstable home life. While working with students on reading, often times a positive relationship would develop, and I was proud to serve as a role model.”

— *Jesus Vasquez,  
WRC member at Prospect Point Elementary*

“I try to reach the community through my contributions toward family literacy nights. These evenings give students a chance to spend some quality time with their families, while also involving their families in their learning. This sort of impact has the potential to reach out further into the community. During our recent event, ‘An Evening of Storytelling,’ community members and local college students participated by telling engaging stories to our students. We were able to engage some of our students who are not always enthusiastic about the learning they do in school. Each child went home with a book, donated by local bookstores. Personally, my service has effected how I see the importance of education and family involvement in the life of a human being. My service has helped me expand my understanding of the world, my skills in teaching and working with children, and opened me to the possibility of pursuing a career in education.”

— *Rebecca Marcus,  
WRC member at Sharpstein Elementary School*

## AmeriCorps Members for Equal Opportunity on MLK Day

Spokane Service Team AmeriCorps members and staff, along with more than 3,000 supporters, marched in Spokane on January 16, 2012, to support the vision of Martin Luther King Jr., and continue his fight for equal opportunity. AmeriCorps members served on the community planning committee and helped plan the weekend celebration.

Members held the AmeriCorps banner up high with pride as everyone marched to the beautiful beat of Native American drummers and a high school band. As AmeriCorps marched past police officers a kind of “thank you” was said to each officer in gratitude for their service and dedication to protecting all the participants.

After the march, Washington Reading Corps led a well-organized children’s fair with the help of the Spokane Service Team. All the children were welcome to make fun arts and crafts, such as friendship bracelets and lamb costumes out of paper bags. The AmeriCorps teams gave away over 500 books, thanks to the donations of local nonprofits and individuals in the community.

AmeriCorps continues to dedicate its work every day to “Getting Things Done.” People in the Spokane community recognize the dedication and positive impact AmeriCorps volunteers have on the community. Spokane Mayor David Condon captured the essence of the AmeriCorps mission when he said, “Though we celebrate Martin Luther King Jr. Day just one day a year, we are working to live out the principles he taught us every day.”

— Whitney McKelvey, AmeriCorps member with Rebuilding Together Spokane, Spokane Service Team, NE Washington Educational Service District 101



## One-on-One Support and Help from a Trusted Friend

Jaimee Robinson serves at Birch Creek, a King County Housing Authority apartment complex located on Kent’s East Hill and a Washington Service Corps site. Kent is a diverse community that hosts families from many different cultures and backgrounds. There is a six-year-old boy, Nisaiah, who comes to the Birch Creek Youth Center every day. When Jaimee started to get to know him, she remarked, “What surprised me were his struggles with reading and his very ‘can’t do’ attitude towards homework. His favorite excuse, ‘I can’t do that; I am only six!’ I recognized his challenge and accepted it.”

After hearing that excuse, Jaimee worked very closely with Nisaiah to help him read and understand his homework. He often cried over the difficulty and stress, but she kept pushing him to try. Now he waits for her car to pull into the parking lot and comes running up to greet her with, “Hi Miss Jaimee, I have A LOT of homework today!”

Jaimee says, “It’s amazing how much a little one-on-one support and help from a trusted friend can improve the confidence of a first grader; how sharing an apple can make all the difference in the world to someone who lacks some positive attention. I love seeing how excited Nisaiah gets when he sees me and when he tells me about the good grades he gets now.”

— Pat Porter, AmeriCorps Director, King County Housing Authority, a program of the Washington Service Corps



## Promoting Healthy Futures

Washington Service Corps sites in the focus area of Healthy Futures promote nutrition, healthy eating, and fight to combat childhood obesity. Sites such as AppleCorps bring nutrition education into the schools and supports exercise programs for children. Member Liz Beck serves with the Clark County Food Bank, where she teaches weekly cooking classes for clients from Martha’s Pantry, a local food bank that serves individuals with an HIV/AIDS diagnosis, and families at a housing shelter.

Participants in the classes come away with skills, knowledge, and take-home ingredients to cook nutritious recipes.

The classes also bolster self-esteem and bring the community together, remarked Liz. “People who visit food pantries have suffered hardship and misfortune. With the cooking and nutrition classes, not only do they learn, they get to teach others what they know, as well. Everyone pitches in to help with the cooking. Suddenly they feel important and competent. Food is a universal language that transcends all backgrounds and brings individuals together.”

— Debbie Aoki, Director, Washington Service Corps

*A wide range of financial contributions are necessary to meet the critical needs of the state, coordinate thousands of AmeriCorps members and volunteers, and promote national service in Washington. Local cities, counties, and school districts have made commitments to identify needs in their communities and address them. For service programs to provide solutions to serious needs in communities there must be ongoing support from local and state organizations, which will ensure national service is part of a long-term strategy to address those needs.*

Local communities have been very supportive in providing funding and training. In addition, communities provide books for students; building materials and technical support for low-income housing construction; safety equipment for environmental restoration and disaster response activities; and space for after-school youth activities.

During the federal fiscal year ending September 30, 2012 (FFY 12), the Washington Commission for National and Community Service received \$15,633,926 in federal funding to provide support for AmeriCorps State programs across Washington. These programs included six Competitive and eight Formula.

AmeriCorps programs also leveraged a total of \$12,812,000 in state, local, private, and in-kind match support – a total of 45 percent of the total program costs. Federal support is used primarily for member living support and operational costs needed to maintain an AmeriCorps program. The inputs are relatively small compared to the positive outcomes seen in communities.

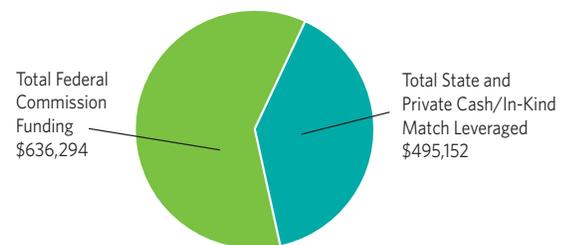
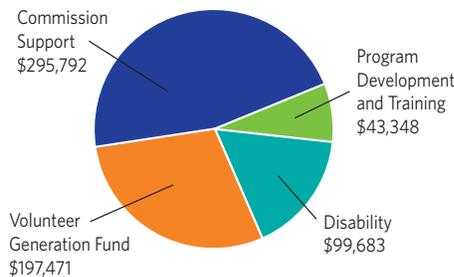
The Washington Commission for National and Community Service also receives federal support to ensure the strong administrative oversight of the many AmeriCorps grant programs that it oversees, to ensure

AmeriCorps members with disabilities have access to reasonable accommodation, and AmeriCorps program staff has program development and training opportunities and resources.

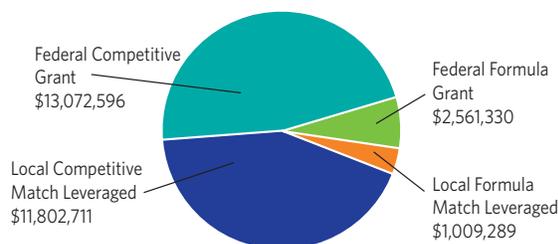
Total federal funding for Commission-related functions is 4 percent of the total federal funding that the state receives for both the AmeriCorps program and all Commission costs. The Commission also leverages approximately \$495,152 in state and private cash and in-kind support for primarily administrative costs. Of the total federal funding received for Commission costs, 46 percent was available for administrative support, 16 percent was earmarked for disability outreach and reasonable accommodation of sub-grantees, 7 percent was utilized for program development and training, and 31 percent was used for our Volunteer Generation Fund (VGF) grant.

Since 2005, the Washington Commission for National and Community Service has coordinated Citizen Corps efforts to help promote personal responsibility by developing preparedness plans, training in emergency preparedness, and working with disaster relief, law enforcement, fire, medical, public health, and community service organizations in promoting volunteer service in times of emergency. Funding obtained by the Commission through the Department of Homeland Security totaled \$263,809 for 2012.

## Commission Funding



## AmeriCorps Program Funding



# The Washington Commission for National and Community Service

## Commission Vision Statement

Our vision for Washington State is vibrant and caring neighborhoods and communities strengthened and sustained through service and volunteerism.

## Commission Mission Statement

We seek to expand the ethic of service throughout Washington State by inviting citizens of all ages and backgrounds to contribute their time and talents to strengthen and promote service and volunteerism as strategies for building healthy communities.

## About the Commission

In February 1994, Governor Mike Lowry established the independent, bipartisan Washington State Commission for National and Community Service. The WCNCS is made up of Commissioners appointed by the Governor. The Commission implements AmeriCorps programs in Washington; sets priorities for results-oriented community service programs; provides training and technical assistance; evaluates programs; and leverages federal program dollars with additional local, state and private sector resources.



## WCNCS Commissioners Serving in 2011-2012

- Nicole Trimble**, Chair, Coinstar Inc.
- Rosetta Rhodes**, Vice Chair, Whitworth University
- Eleanor Andersen**, Junior Achievement of the Inland Northwest (retired)
- Debbie Aoki**, Washington State Employment Security Department
- John Barnett**, AARP Washington State
- Thomas Bates**, U.S. Attorney's Office Western District of Washington
- Federico Diaz**, Blue Mountain Action Council
- Lynne Dodson**, Washington State Labor Council
- Carol Findley**, RSVP of Kittitas County
- Kirsten Franklin-Temple**, Corporation for National & Community Service-Washington State Office
- Timm Lovitt**, Vet Corps
- Tony Mace**, Paine Field Fire Department
- Nick Mott**, Washington State Department of Ecology
- Axel Swanson**, Board of Clark County Commissioners
- Alan Walker**, United Way of Chelan and Douglas Counties
- Susan Weiss**, Casey Family Programs
- Alison Carl White**, WithinReach
- Greg Williamson**, Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction



## WCNCS Staff

- Debbie Schuffenhauer**, Executive Director
- Denise Berns**, Program Assistant
- Robyn Harris**, Program Officer
- Bruce Lehman**, OFM/Governor's Office Accounting Unit
- Brian Lock**, Senior Program Officer
- Paula Towne**, Citizen Corps Program Coordinator
- Mary Van Verst**, Program Officer

## Former WCNCS Staff Who Transitioned in 2012

- Bill Basl**, Executive Director
- Denise Mack**, Citizen Corps Program Coordinator





Washington Commission for National and Community Service

For additional information,  
Call 360.902.0656 or visit our website at  
[www.ofm.wa.gov/servewa](http://www.ofm.wa.gov/servewa)

This report is based upon work supported by the Corporation for National and Community Service under Administrative Grant #13CAHWA001.

To obtain this publication in alternative format,  
Contact the Washington Commission for National and Community Service at 360.902.0656.