

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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2022 ANNUAL REPORT



Volunteer Maine
Maine Commission for Community Service



Message From the Chair

Greetings!

As Chair and on behalf of the Commissioners, I am pleased to submit the 2022 Annual Report for Volunteer Maine, the Maine Commission for Community Service. We continue to move this critical work forward through action, empowerment, engagement, and support of the people who are creating a stronger Maine through volunteer service.

Our focus is on community needs in the areas of public safety, health and human services, environmental stewardship, education, and economic opportunity. The mission is to build capacity and sustainability in Maine's volunteer sector by funding programs, developing managers of volunteers, raising awareness of issues impacting the community volunteer sector and promoting service as a strategy to tackle local challenges

Maine recently ranked 4th in the country for the rate of volunteering during pandemic. An incredible achievement but one that comes with a caution. The rank indicates Maine lost fewer volunteers between 2019 and 2021 than other states: down 8% or about 33,000 volunteers. Our Commission was already attuned to this decline through our survey of public and nonprofit agencies showing widespread volunteer resignations and elimination of staff who coordinate volunteer activities.

The volunteer research indicated community volunteers who stayed active during the pandemic, gave more time so essential programs could stay open. Yet, we know concentrating more work onto fewer people is not sustainable. Local programs need to re-develop leadership and replenish their volunteer workforce.

So the Commission expanded supports for volunteer program leaders. The volunteer managers' network meets monthly on zoom with over 100 members. The online course on volunteer program management is being augmented by a micro-credential for the volunteer leader who has no human resource training. Some of our work is to "prime the pump" for future volunteer leaders by helping youth serve.

We know Maine cannot wait so we constantly adapt. The Commission focused the Maine Climate Corps on energy conservation and efficiency then organized the pilot class of Maine Service Fellows. We move forward on this work conscientiously, responsibly, and whole heartedly because thriving communities rely on residents' involvement as volunteers.

As the Commission moves into post-pandemic realities, we are exploring solutions to the volunteer service barriers. The board adopted a policy that directs Maine AmeriCorps programs to offer a minimum stipend that is 23% higher than the federal agency requires. Planning Grants have been reinstated so local groups can thoughtfully design volunteer programs with input from all community voices. And, the Commission is in the midst of examining its procedures for engaging community as we seek to ensure that all who live in Maine and the land of the Wabanaki, can access our programs and support.

Volunteer Maine continues to be the only state entity whose mission is to build the capacity and sustainability of volunteer service in Maine's public and non-profit sectors. It is challenging work and we recognize the honor of being entrusted with it. Thank you for your trust and support that allows us to serve our state and our fellow Mainers.

With gratitude,

Jenni Tilton-Flood
Commission Chair



Volunteer Maine

Maine Commission for Community Service

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Our Core Values



Our Assets



Our Resources



Our Impact

Working to Impact Maine's Volunteer Sector



We Serve



How We Serve





Meet the Commissioners



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Chair



Luke Shorty
Chair-elect



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Vice Chair



F. Celeste Branham
Immediate Past Chair



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Executive Director



Michael Ashmore
Program Development/
Training Officer



Jamie McFaul
Grants Officer



Bryan Roche
Communications Officer



Kelsey Preecs
Program Officer, Volunteer
Sector Initiatives



Nathan McIvor
Office Administrator



Kirsten Brewer
Climate Corps
Coordinator

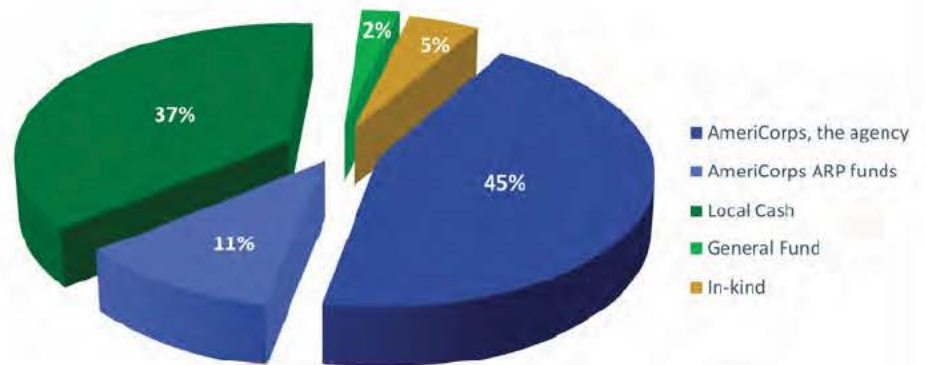


Jake Hurner
Maine Service Fellows
Coordinator



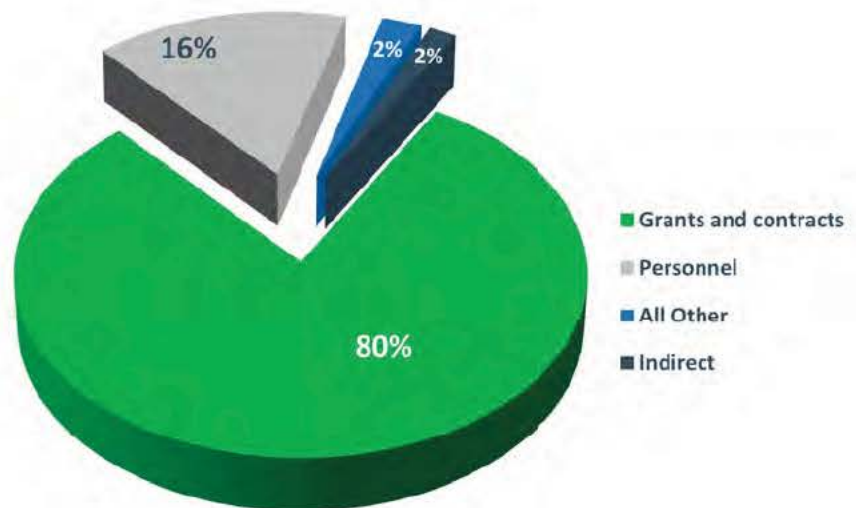
Commission Fundamentals & Finances

2022 Revenues



\$3,457,200	Total revenues
\$1,546,317	Federal funds from AmeriCorps, the federal agency
\$ 376,614	American Rescue Plan Act funding from AmeriCorps
\$1,288,257	Local cash (registration fees for training, private sponsorships of activities, grants, etc.)
\$ 85,066	State of Maine General Fund
\$ 160,946	In-kind donations of services, space, supplies (valued according to Government Accounting Standards)

2022 Expenses



\$3,397,635	Total expenses
\$ 542,389	Personnel
\$2,769,699	Grants and contracts*
\$ 59,564	Indirect costs
\$ 85,547	All other (includes communications, supplies, occupancy, etc.)

*Includes AmeriCorps State and Volunteer Generation Federal grants to communities. This data is for informational purposes only and is not an official financial statement.



Enhancing Service Delivery

Volunteer Generation Fund

Funded by AmeriCorps the federal agency, the Maine Volunteer Generation Fund supports volunteerism by providing resources that volunteer managers use to build and sustain stronger volunteer programs. Examples of resources include offering small grants, training, and networking opportunities.

What Happened?

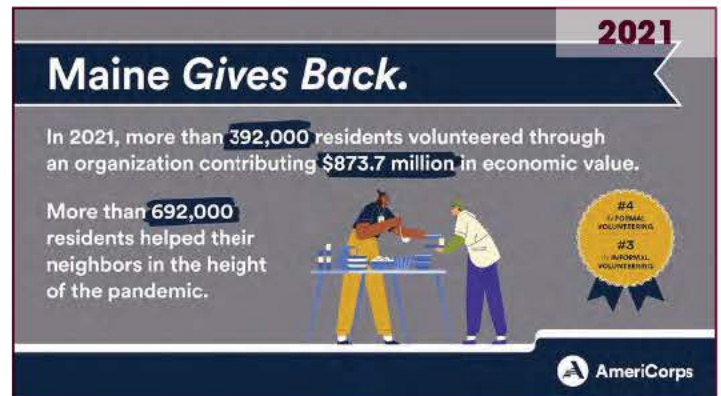
- ❖ **Maine Volunteer Managers Network:** Each month, it brings together people who lead volunteer programs for peer-to-peer learning. The network is a community of practiced that launched in November 2021 and quickly grew to 115 members.
- ❖ **Certificate in Management of Volunteers 101:** 24 people earned the certificate in 2022. This 30-hour course provides novice level skills to develop and run volunteer programs.
- ❖ **Service Enterprise:** A program that trains and coaches organizations to better integrate volunteers into their daily missions. Three organizations completed 17.5 hours of training each and then worked to earn a certification as a Service Enterprise.
- ❖ **The Maine Volunteer Leadership Conference (MVLN)** is Maine's only statewide educational event focused on engaging citizens in volunteer service. This year it returned to an in-person event and more than 100 people, representing 44 organizations, participated.
- ❖ **Service Learning:** Four organizations participated in Service Learning training. Service Learning is a high-quality service engagement tool that allows youth to learn about issues and make decisions about how they would tackle those issues in their community.
- ❖ **Micro Credentialing Grant:** Volunteer Maine secured \$10,000 to create a Micro-Credential through the University of Maine for volunteer management. Users will be able to explore volunteer management competencies and build upon areas of interest.



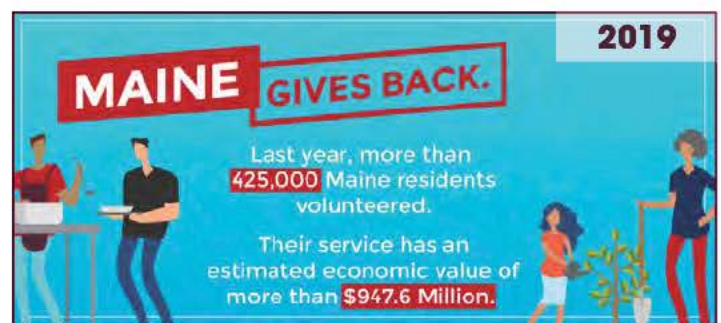
Volunteer Maine Executive Director Maryalice Crafton welcomes attendees to the 2022 Maine Volunteer Leadership Conference in Nov. 2022. The conference this year returned to an in-person event, the first since 2019 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- ❖ **Governor's Awards for Service and Volunteerism:** Volunteer Maine honored 113 adult volunteers who gave 500 or more hours, and 26 youth who gave 50 or more hours during the pandemic.

Why This Work Matters?



Volunteerism in Maine did decrease in 2021 compared to the 2019 report. However, ongoing efforts resulted in Maine placing fourth in volunteerism in 2021, in spite of a loss of 33,000 volunteers. (Source: Volunteerism and Civic Life in America Rankings)



Maine Ready

Prepare. Respond. Recover.



Volunteer Maine
Maine Commission for Community Service



Maine Emergency Management Agency
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, VETERANS and EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

This year, Volunteer Maine provided increased outreach and training opportunities for MaineReady.Org, an emergency response volunteering platform. In 2022, 798 users across the State utilized the platform while 15 organizations participated in training activities.

Maine Ready provides state, county and other emergency response and management organizations a virtual way to coordinate offers of help with on-the-ground needs for assistance. Agencies are able to post volunteer opportunities, recruit volunteers, communicate with users, track volunteer hours and schedule volunteer shifts. Maine Ready allows potential volunteers to create a profile with information about their interest and special skills and connects them to volunteer opportunities that match that profile. Volunteers also have the opportunity to search by location or follow specific agencies to be notified of needs. Maine Ready is a joint effort of the Maine Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and Volunteer Maine.



Maine Service Fellows: an Update

In Fall of 2022, Volunteer Maine formally launched Maine Service Fellows. Having previously secured both State and private funding for 2 positions, Maine Service Fellows requests opened to interested communities in October.

Communities were asked to demonstrate local buy-in and outline a specific project for a Fellow to address within a one-year time frame. The program received three applicants. Two communities were selected in November and completed work plans. Recruitment is underway with the goal of placing the first Service Fellows in April 2023.

The Mission

- ✦ Provide rural, underserved communities with a resource to address critical needs;
- ✦ Increase the opportunities for recent college graduates to devote a year of service to communities and use their skills to make a difference;
- ✦ Attract and retain people with a passion for public service, especially in rural areas; and
- ✦ Strengthen civic engagement and community resilience by involving community residents as well as Service Fellows in volunteer-based solutions.

Service Fellows devote between one and two years to helping a community address a challenge. They are recent college graduates who opt to apply their skills and knowledge to a service assignment. During service, they receive a stipend, health insurance, training, and other supports that help them focus on the community work plan.

Community Participation

Communities that apply to host a Service Fellow may be county or municipal government, school districts, local nonprofits, faith-based organizations, or regional organizations authorized by the community to lead the project. A single organization submits the application for the community and, if accepted, agrees to provide the required supports. Those



supports include technical supervision, assignment of a community liaison for the Fellow, work space with appropriate equipment (computer, phone, etc.), and a modest financial contribution to the program.

The program is open to communities located in parts of the state defined as very rural under the USDA Rural-Urban Continuum Codes. Specifically, that means communities in Aroostook, Washington, Hancock, Piscataquis, Franklin, Somerset, Oxford, Lincoln, Knox, or Waldo counties as well as towns in Penobscot County with populations of 5,000 or fewer residents.

Community project work plans for Service Fellows need to focus on one of the areas listed below:

General areas of need

- ✦ COVID 19 recovery
- ✦ Housing including eviction prevention
- ✦ Workforce development
- ✦ Substance use prevention and recovery
- ✦ Public health including mental health

Service Fellows must devote 20% of their annual work plan to developing regional networks of volunteer programs and leaders. The resulting connections will add to community resilience and support engagement of all residents in civic life.

Applications from potential community partners are opened on a regular schedule.



Maine Climate Corps

The Commission has made progress on several recommendations of the Maine Climate Corps Report, published in 2022.

- ✦ The Maine Climate Corps Network has been established by the Commission and will recruit programs to participate in 2023.
- ✦ Authorizing legislation was passed directing the Climate Corps to operate in eight climate-related areas.
- ✦ The Maine Climate Corps was formally created in statute.
- ✦ A Climate Corps Coordinator was hired, using American Rescue Plan Act funding, on a three-year appointment to launch the new program.
- ✦ The Legislature provided funding for a pilot Climate Corps project and for 1 climate-related Service Fellow position.
- ✦ A grant competition awarded the pilot funds.

Several of these goals were achieved through LD 1974, , An Act To Establish and Fund the Maine Climate Corps Program, signed by the Governor on May 3, 2022.

The Maine Climate Corps Network, (MCCN), is a set of programs coordinated by the Commission. Programs may be funded by a variety of sources including the Commission's Climate Corps pilot grant program, AmeriCorps, or private funds. The Commission will provide technical assistance and training to MCCN programs.

Climate Corps Programs Will:

- ✦ Address at least one of the following: energy, housing, coastal zone, public health, land and fresh water preservation, community resilience, or education.
- ✦ Conduct evidence-based direct service projects; programs will "get things done" and contribute to the goals of Maine Won't Wait, the State's Climate Action Plan.



- ✦ Provide individuals in service positions with training, credentials, and on-the-job experience that prepares them for careers in climate action.
- ✦ Contribute to community resilience with volunteer and engagement opportunities for community members.
- ✦ Be developed through community collaboration, including collaboration with indigenous communities, that address principles of equity, justice, and accessibility.
- ✦ Prioritize assistance to disproportionately affected communities and ensure that individuals in service positions represent the diversity of communities.

The Commission awarded \$201,310 to Downeast Community Partners through the Maine Climate Corps pilot grant program.

The funds support four Climate Corps members serving for seven-month terms and two supervisors.

The Downeast Community Partners Climate Corps will focus on energy efficiency. Members will conduct energy audits of Weatherization Assistance Program clients' homes, educate the public about energy efficiency, and analyze energy data collected before and after weatherization services are delivered. Members will also receive extensive training and credentials in weatherization that will serve as on-ramps to careers in the energy sector.

The program will operate in 2023.



Service Snapshot

AmeriCorps Members serve in community organizations, helping them achieve their mission through direct service and expanding community volunteer support. In Maine, members protect the environment, provide support in classroom, improve and increase access to the outdoors, serve as mentors, assist Maine's aging population, and improve community resilience. The data demonstrates the impact made by AmeriCorps members during 2022.

AmeriCorps Members

- ★ served 110,743 hours
- ★ served 60,131 individuals
- ★ served 982 children and youth, of whom 40% benefited from mentoring
- ★ served 2,873 adults receiving independent living support (such as digital literacy or physical activity)
- ★ recruited 2,051 volunteers to serve an additional 12,309 hours (an average of 16 volunteers recruited per member)
- ★ provided capacity building services to 118 community organizations

The Impact:

- ★ 86% of students in programs with school readiness as a goal showed improved academic engagement or social-emotional skills and 95% of students who participated in a program with a goal to improve engagement.
- ★ 70 housing units or public structures weatherized or retrofitted
- ★ 80 people received training or education in energy conservation or efficiency
- ★ 254 miles of trails or rivers improved
- ★ 667 people improved personal health by participating in physical activity programs



AmeriCorps Maine

Demonstrating the Impact of Service: AmeriCorps CEO Michael D. Smith, along with AmeriCorps leadership team members, visited Maine Sept. 26 and 27 to experience how AmeriCorps is making an impact in Maine. The trip included visits to AmeriCorps programs, dinner with AmeriCorps alumni, as well as Mr. Smith presiding over the annual Maine AmeriCorps Commitment Ceremony.



Volunteer Maine awards and manages federal funds granted to Maine by the AmeriCorps federal agency. After grant decisions, Volunteer Maine monitors grantee performance, outcomes and compliance. It also ensures participants in AmeriCorps are eligible for program benefits. Under AmeriCorps, grant awards are three years.

❖ = funded by Volunteer Maine

State/National Operating Programs

AmeriCorps Five to Ninety Five ❖

Grantee: Town of Van Buren

The mission of the program is to build a trauma-informed community that supports its program motto, "Be the adult you needed when you were a kid." The program strives to empower children and older adults to be their healthiest and happiest selves through positive relationships, support, and mentorships that benefit everyone involved.

Members served as Youth and Elder Development Specialists. They facilitated a mentorship program between elders and middle school students in an out-of-school time (OST) program. They helped organize an elder program that easily and personably connects participants to much-needed resources.

AmeriCorps Resilience Corps ❖

Grantee: Greater Portland Council of Governments

The AmeriCorps Resilience Corps supports local government agencies, nonprofit agencies and regional cohorts in the Greater Portland area in their recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and planning efforts towards regional resilience. Fourteen Corps Members assist projects related to regional,

community, or organizational resilience and help to accelerate civic innovation, climate action, racial equity, and digital equity for all Mainers.

Corps members serve local government entities or support regional projects. They develop skills in data collection, analysis, and visualizations and they participate in AmeriCorps National Days of Service.



COVID Care Corps

Grantee: Goodwill Industries of Northern New England

TCOVID Care Corps members serve in indirect service roles at local municipalities, community nonprofits, and health coalitions, where they help to develop programs, mobilize volunteers, and strengthen infrastructure both locally and statewide.

Epilepsy Foundation New England AmeriCorps Program

Grantee: Epilepsy Foundation of Northern New England

The Epilepsy Foundation New England AmeriCorps program gives individuals the opportunity to help

those living with epilepsy in New England. Currently, AmeriCorps members are serving in Resource Rooms located in the epilepsy centers across Massachusetts and New Hampshire.

Members build the capacity of our mentoring program for youth with epilepsy, Transition Together, to operate under community volunteer leadership

First4 AmeriCorps ❖

Grantee: Kennebec Valley Community Action Plan/Educare Central Maine

The goal of the program is to support the social emotional development of the children in Head Start and Early Head Start classrooms as a means to reduce overall toxic stress, to boost resilience, and to improve school-readiness because it is known that approximately 80% of brain development happens in the first four years of life.

Members provide direct support to children in KVCAP's Head Start and Early Head Start classrooms; build strong relationships and secure attachments with the children; receive training to better understand trauma-informed teaching and social-emotional development; and collaborate with a team of like-minded people eager to impact children's futures.

Food Corps

Grantee: Food Corps, Inc.



FoodCorps seeks to change in how schools educate our children about food, so as to nurture a nation of healthy children and address the causes of childhood obesity. In Maine, seven full-time FoodCorps AmeriCorps members will each complete 1,700 hours over 11.5 months. Members will serve in limited-resource schools implementing interventions across three evidence based program areas that get kids eating healthy: hands-on learning, healthy school meals, and schoolwide culture of health.

I Know ME AmeriCorps Program ❖

Grantee: Maine Youth Alliance

The Game Loft hosts two AmeriCorps members to provide mentoring to RSU #3 students, age 12-15, in Waldo County, using the “I Know ME” curriculum.

Each year the two AmeriCorps members are responsible for preparing 36 at risk students for success in the classroom, within their peer groups and beyond the school walls. Additionally, the AmeriCorps members engage local volunteers in developing new mentoring relationships with the students and develop the host agency’s capacity to better manage volunteers.

Lifelong Maine AmeriCorps Program ❖

Grantee: University of Maine Center on Aging

The mission of the Lifelong Maine AmeriCorps Program is to serve alongside local grassroots organizations on age-friendly, lifelong community development projects that will contribute to a more resilient, healthier, safer, and more engaged community.

AmeriCorps members help to address challenges such as access to technology, food security, home repair, transportation, and social isolation. Members build local capacity by networking with partners, recruiting volunteers, and serving with the core team to develop sustainable and inclusive leadership.

While the focus is on older residents, Lifelong Communities work for a time when residents of all ages, abilities, economic backgrounds, and lifestyles will have the opportunity to live safe, healthy, and rewarding lives.



Maine Conservation Corps ❖

Grantee: Maine Dept. of Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry

MCC has two AmeriCorps service options: Environmental Stewards and Field Teams.

Environmental Stewards serve individually with non-profits and state and federal agencies to increase organizational volunteer capacity and aid in the development and implementation of host sites’ land management plans. They plan

conservation projects and recruit, train and lead volunteers in creating and improving recreational trails.

Field Team members construct and rehabilitate trails on public lands like Baxter State Park, the Appalachian Trail, and land owned by local communities and land trusts.

Members are taught employment skills and create individualized plans for employment. Collaborative partnerships with workforce development organizations help create positive economic opportunity outcomes for members.



Main Street Fellows AmeriCorps Program ❖

Grantee: Maine Development Foundation

Five AmeriCorps members support 12 low-income communities recover from the pandemic’s impact and develop the capacity to be resilient in the face of future challenges. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will recruit 10-20 volunteers who will be engaged in local research, planning, education and technology projects.

Multilingual Leadership Corps

Grantee: Goodwill Industries of Northern New England

The Multilingual Leadership Corps places AmeriCorps members in Maine and New Hampshire schools, housing communities, and educational non-profits in Greater Portland and in Lewiston/Auburn.

Members serve K-12 English Language Learners (ELL) through the Check & Connect mentoring program (a research-based intervention for academically disengaged students). Members increase academic engagement among ELL students through in-school and afterschool support for academic skills, aspirations, enrichment, and community engagement.



Skowhegan Outdoors AmeriCorps Program ❖

Grantee: Main Street Skowhegan

Skowhegan Outdoors AmeriCorps Program offers connection to outdoor recreation for those in the Skowhegan community, including free outdoor programming, the implementation of a community gear library, the development of Run of River, and the expansion of the local trail network. Skowhegan Outdoors will connect people together through shared experiences, promotes use of common outdoor spaces and facilities, and catalyzes a shift toward a more active lifestyle for Skowhegan residents --a lifestyle that is accessible to everyone.

AmeriCorps members organize and execute outdoor recreation programming. They also train additional volunteers to lead the programs, promote the programs in virtual and real spaces, create online content, and are tasked

with establishing a gear library so residents can borrow outdoor recreation equipment free of charge.

Trekkers AmeriCorps Aspirations ❖

Grantee: Trekkers

Since 1994, Trekkers has been dedicated to helping young people thrive. Our mission is to cultivate the inherent strengths of young people through the power of long-term mentoring relationships. Trekkers is a unique six-year experiential learning program for students, starting in 7th grade and lasting through 12th grade. Throughout the school year, teams of up to 20 students meet to plan their annual expedition and participate in activities, like exploring the outdoors, volunteering, learning about new cultures, and more. Student voice and choice is essential, so every program looks a little different.



AmeriCorps VISTA

Campus Compact AmeriCorps VISTA Project

Grantee: New England Campus Compact

This AmeriCorps VISTA program is part of the Northern New England Campus Compact AmeriCorps VISTA collaboration among the Campus Compact state affiliates in Maine,

New Hampshire, and Vermont.

Eight Maine Campus Compact VISTAs spend a year of service on college campuses in Maine. They serve in a wide variety of communities on campuses of all types — small and large, public and private — in all corners of the state.

VISTA members collaborate with college students, faculty, staff, and community partners to develop programming that improves college aspirations, increases the belief that college is an option, and increases access to higher education for low-income K-12 youth.



Conservation Legacy Stewards VISTA Program

Grantee: Conservation Legacy

Stewards supports non-profit organizations and state and federal agencies build capacity within communities across the country. From community revitalization to public lands education, to community gardening programs, Stewards VISTAs can make a huge impact, and gain a great deal in return.

Ending Hunger in Maine VISTA

Grantee: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

The VISTA Project will seek to support the development of Maine's roadmap for ending hunger, and

build the capacity of public and private entities implementing that plan. Two VISTA leaders and 23 VISTA members will contribute to the goals of the project by performing activities such as developing the State's anti-hunger metrics and supporting planning to meet them; developing educational, health, and housing programs that foster economic stability; and helping harmonize Maine's anti-hunger efforts.

The VISTA Project is part of the Hunger Free Maine initiative, which is housed within the Commissioner's Office of Maine's Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry (DACF). It is guided by a broad-based Advisory Group of public and private agencies that are working to ensure all Maine people have consistent access to healthy food today and to eliminate the root causes of food insecurity for the future.



Goodwill VISTA Partnership

Grantee: Goodwill Industries of Northern New England

The Goodwill VISTA Partnership is an intermediary model VISTA Project focused on poverty reduction throughout Maine. Forty AmeriCorps VISTA members and leaders are placed in 12 counties serving at nonprofits. Goodwill VISTA Partnership has been at the forefront of providing national service resources to organizations

working on New Americans and Refugee Resettlement services. AmeriCorps VISTAs are also focusing on building the capacity related to success in school, access to healthy food, senior services, and housing development.



Hunger Free America Anti-Hunger Corps

Grantee: Goodwill Industries of Northern New England/Healthy Acadia

The America Anti-hunger VISTA program aims to address hunger, poverty, and build the capacity of the agencies that address these issues. Members assist unemployed and under-employed people obtain job training, job placement, and financial literacy services; improve access to food from government and nonprofit sources for targeted populations in particular and food insecure people in general; enable residents of food deserts to access healthier foods through farmers markets and community gardens; more low-income children to obtain free school breakfasts and summer meals; effective nonprofit groups fighting hunger and poverty to raise more money and recruit and manage more volunteers, particularly high-impact and skilled volunteers.

PAARI VISTA Recovery Corps

Grantee: Police Assisted Addiction and Recovery Initiative

Members of the Police Assisted

Addiction and Recovery Initiative (PAARI) National Recovery Corps strengthen the ability of partnering law enforcement agencies to increase access to care and address addiction and poverty through non-arrest approaches. This program places VISTAs in police departments to help build, strengthen, and sustain police-led programs to reduce and prevent overdose deaths and help more people with opioid use disorder get into treatment and recovery

Service Through Sports

Grantee: Up2Us, Inc.

The program provides capacity-building service members to sports-based youth development programs within the Up2Us, Inc. membership network, as well as internally. In the summer of 2020, with AmeriCorps' focus on helping programs through the COVID-19 pandemic, Up2Us Sports began supporting a VISTA Summer program.



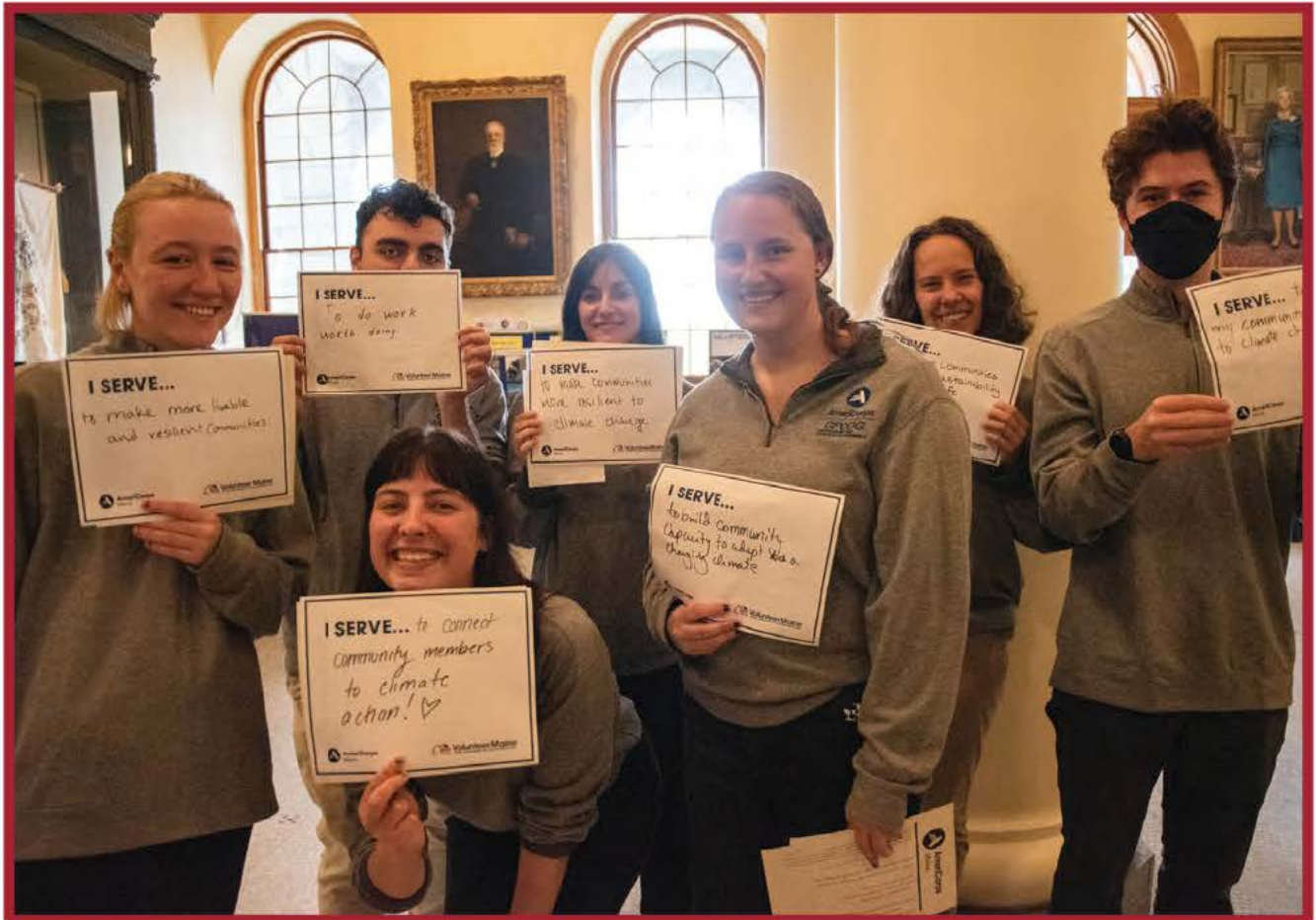
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You can View expanded program descriptions on our website!

VolunteerMaine.gov/Serve-in-Maine



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Maine**



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A Stronger Maine Through Volunteerism

Compiled and published by the Maine Commission for Community Service. Printed with funds granted to the Commission by AmeriCorps, the federal agency (19CAHME0001).