

Serving *Communities* Changing *Lives*

2008 Report



Washington Commission for
National and Community Service

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. Local community-based organizations, school districts, and state agencies apply for AmeriCorps grants through their state commissions.

The Washington Commission for National and Community Service (WCNCS) 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. Over the past 14 years, the Commission has administered approximately \$143.7 million in federal grants from the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS).

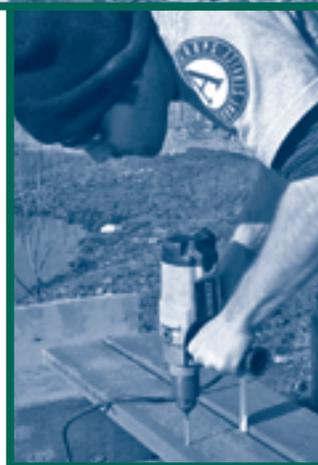


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Our Programs

In 2008, 1,160 AmeriCorps*State members served in education, environmental, public safety, human needs, and emergency preparedness/response programs funded by the WCNCS. In addition, 1,053 AmeriCorps*State members and 230 AmeriCorps*VISTA members served in programs funded directly by the CNCS.

2007-08 AmeriCorps State Programs

- Clallam AmeriCorps
- Community Youth Services
- Cowlitz AmeriCorps Network
- JustServe AmeriCorps
- Kitsap Community Resources AmeriCorps
- Regional Service Corps
- Retention Project – Washington Campus Compact
- Snohomish County AmeriCorps Program
- Spokane Service Team
- Washington Conservation Corps
- Washington Reading Corps
- Washington Service Corps

Investing in Communities and Lives



As you read this summary of national service activities, you will notice the overwhelming willingness of individuals, serving in communities throughout our state, to take action and address a critical need. Our national service members addressed these needs while inspiring others to serve and volunteer. Our members served in schools as part of our Washington Reading Corps to help raise the reading abilities of struggling readers, offered support and assistance to victims of domestic violence, cleaned out streams so salmon can spawn again, and responded to emergencies and disasters in Washington as well as throughout the nation. In the Washington Reading Corps alone, AmeriCorps and VISTA volunteers helped recruit an additional 7,155 reading tutors throughout the state.

We are blessed to have individuals who continuously place the public interest above personal interest, which speaks volumes about the quality of their commitment to our state and nation. A prominent moment of selfless service was demonstrated over the July 4, 2008 weekend. While many celebrated the national holiday, 12 AmeriCorps members from the Washington Conservation Corps, with the Department of Ecology, spent their holiday driving to Oakville, Iowa. They were requested by the Federal Emergency Management Agency to respond to catastrophic flooding that left this small town underwater. These members made a difference in assisting people who had lost everything they owned.

At times, it is easy to become cynical with life and the challenges we are faced with each day. We salute all of our members from Washington and other states for devoting their time and talent that not only addressed critical needs, but also inspired others to follow their lead and serve.

After you have been inspired by these service experiences, step forward or encourage others to volunteer. To find out about volunteer opportunities, go to www.volunteerWashington.org or www.serve.gov. To serve fulltime in AmeriCorps in Washington State, visit www.ofm.wa.gov/servewa. We value your volunteer contributions that are so essential to communities throughout our state.

Bill Basl
Executive Director,
Washington Commission
for National and
Community Service

Christine O. Gregoire
Governor
State of Washington

Adam Cornell
U.S. Attorney's Office-Western
District of Washington
Chair, Washington Commission for
National and Community Service

AmeriCorps

AmeriCorps members in Washington State serve at a variety of non-profit and faith-based organizations, and state and local government agencies. Members serve in five national service priority areas: education, environmental, human needs, public safety, and emergency preparedness/response. Following are some of the statewide accomplishments of AmeriCorps members in the 2007-08 program year.

Educating for the Future

- Tutored more than 13,000 K-6 students through the Washington Reading Corps
- Recruited 3,400 peer and cross-age tutors to make connections across grade levels
- Conducted more than 300 family literacy events bringing 30,000 parents and caregivers into their children's schools and early learning centers

Building Prosperity

- Generated 56,400 community volunteers
- Mentored more than 14,600 individuals, including more than 80 children of incarcerated parents
- Engaged 1,747 disadvantaged children and youth in meaningful service opportunities

Strengthening Families

- Provided services to more than 40,000 disadvantaged children and youth
- Assisted with independent living services, including respite care, to help 130 clients live independently in their homes
- Engaged 7,566 "Baby Boomers" in AmeriCorps-sponsored service

Protecting the Environment

- Restored and enhanced 1,697 habitat structures
- Constructed and maintained 1,034 campsites
- Involved 12,490 students in environmental education projects

Protecting Health and Safety

- Prepared 351 AmeriCorps members for deployment in support of a local, state, or other disaster response efforts
- Responded to 33 local disasters, assisting thousands of individuals and families
- Collected and disposed of 2,645 gallons of hazardous materials and 7,940 pounds of solid waste in an area ravaged by flooding



New Volunteer Center in Clallam County

Clallam AmeriCorps spearheaded the creation of the Volunteer Center of Clallam County to mobilize more volunteers, especially among the retirees who relocate to this rural community. It began as a service project in January of 2008 and by the end of August they had contracted with 45 non-profit organizations to help promote volunteer opportunities. In the year ahead, the center will recruit a minimum of 300 volunteers and provide technical assistance to volunteer coordinators in the area of effective volunteer management and recognition.

Engaging Students in Communities

Six programs – Community Youth Services, Just Serve, Kitsap Community Resources, Regional Service Corps, Retention Project, and the Spokane Service Team – engaged 1,416 college students as community volunteers.

AmeriCorps Education Awards

Over the past 14 years, the Commission has administered \$143,745,551 million in federal grants from the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS).

Since 1994, more than 14,000 people have served in AmeriCorps programs in Washington. Education awards valued in excess of \$49 million* were used to help cover educational costs during this same time period (as of May 2008).

* National Service Trust

A c c o m p l i s h m e n t s

Citizen Corps

In January 2003, the WCNCS was designated by the Governor to be the Citizen Corps Council and administer program initiatives throughout the state. The WCNCS, with additional appointments from selected first responder, emergency management, and related entities, serves as the state council and supports increased statewide preparedness by encouraging local communities to participate in programs under Citizen Corps. Citizen Corps Council also promotes the use of service and volunteerism to respond to all types of emergencies and disasters.

In 2007-08, Citizen Corps Councils and programs increased across the state. More citizens have received Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training, are supporting safety and preparedness through safety fairs and National Night Out activities, and are a resource to the first responder and emergency management agencies of Washington. Many citizens assisted during flood response and recovery.

The State Council supports these activities through grant management and program assistance. Information is now available to interested individuals and program managers through www.citizencorps.wa.gov. Attendees of the Washington State Emergency Management Association were provided information on Citizen Corps opportunities and liability coverage for volunteers. In addition, CERT trained volunteers had the opportunity to practice and expand on their skills while meeting others from across the state in a statewide annual exercise held at the State Fire Training Academy.

AmeriCorps Supports "Project Homeless Connect"

On October 10, 2007, 50 AmeriCorps members participated in "Project Homeless Connect" at the Tacoma Dome Exhibition Center, an event that provided a wide range of free services to homeless people living in the Tacoma/Pierce County area. In addition to receiving health information, qualifying participants were able to choose from medical, dental, or vision services provided by certified professionals who donated their time. By the day's end, hundreds of people received flu vaccinations, eyeglass repairs, dental screenings, eye exams, haircuts, and legal and Social Security advice and counseling.

In addition to the professional services, participants received free personal hygiene products, shoes, clothing, hats, and food coupons. As participants exited, they expressed thanks and many displayed strong emotions. When asked what they thought was the most important service of the day, many answered, "everything!"

Involving Families Through the Washington Reading Corps

During the 2007-08 program year, AmeriCorps members in the Washington Reading Corps provided nearly 30,000 parents and caregivers with information about the reading curriculum at their children's schools. Family literacy events taught caregivers tips and techniques they could use to further develop their child's reading skills at home. Children went home with a book to begin building their personal library.

Parents made the following comments about the family literacy events and the AmeriCorps members' involvement with their children:

"This was fabulous. I love getting many more ideas to use with my children. Thank you for all your hard work."

*"Es una ayuda importante para mi como padre de familia."
(It is important help for me as the father of a family.)*

"The shared experience and new information are very valuable and help me improve the support I give to my kids."



Statewide Evaluation

In January 2008, the WCNCs released results of a study conducted in conjunction with Bea Boccalandro of VeraWorks, Inc. The study, *AmeriCorps Service as a Personal and Professional Boost*, surveyed Washington State AmeriCorps members serving during the 2006-07 program year. Among the findings for these members:

- Increased Skills – Respondents reported higher levels of workplace skills due to AmeriCorps.
- Increased Confidence – AmeriCorps members became increasingly certain they had the abilities, resources, and skills to achieve success in school and work.
- Focused Direction – Respondents expressed that the AmeriCorps experience gave them a greater sense of clarity about their future.
- Service-Orientation – Survey data indicated that the year of AmeriCorps service strengthened members' commitment to serving others.

The findings from this largely qualitative survey were consistent with quantitative studies completed in the previous three years. Each of the reports is available on the WCNCs website at www.ofm.wa.gov/servewa under resources, reports, and publications.

"I am now seeing my future in a whole new light and I am proud of myself."

Northwest Leader Corps

The Northwest Leader Corps is a training program for national service participants from Washington and Oregon. Each year, 30 participants with leadership potential benefit from the multi-day, intensive personal development workshop in facilitation, planning, coaching, diversity, and teamwork. Training sessions took place November 4-7, 2007, and February 4-6, 2008. Leader Corps members apply the newly required skills back at their service sites, share elements of the training with their teams, and address unmet needs in their communities.

Governor's Volunteer Service Awards

On April 28, 2008, Governor Chris Gregoire hosted the fourth annual "Governor's Volunteer Service Awards" in conjunction with National Volunteer Week. Organizations from across the state nominated community volunteers who represent the best qualities of the many individuals who serve their communities. First Gentleman Mike Gregoire honored the contributions of 39 volunteers and one local fire department for their dedication and commitment to improve their communities through service.

AmeriCorps Launch

On October 26, 2007, about 800 AmeriCorps members and program staff gathered at the Seattle Center Fisher Pavilion to kick off the 2007-08 program year. During the ceremony, Seattle Police Chief Gil Kerlikowske accepted the Sustained Leadership Award on behalf of the police department for its ongoing support of AmeriCorps through partnership with Solid Ground's JustServe program. President Obama appointed Kerlikowske Director of the Office of Drug Control Policy in 2009. Seattle Police Officer Megan Bruneau, a former member of JustServe, addressed the class of incoming members to share how her AmeriCorps experience led to her career in law enforcement.



Washington Celebrates National AmeriCorps Week

“We are grateful for the AmeriCorps members who are getting things done in our state,” said Governor Chris Gregoire as she proclaimed May 11-18, 2008, AmeriCorps Week in Washington State. “AmeriCorps members have made a significant impact on our ability to address unmet needs, and AmeriCorps Week is a perfect opportunity to recognize their contributions.”

As part of the weeklong celebration, First Gentleman Mike Gregoire helped kick off the second nationwide celebration of AmeriCorps Week by serving alongside AmeriCorps members sponsored by the Washington Service Corps’ Blue Mountain Action Council in Walla Walla. Among the many festivities were visits to a fifth grade classroom of Corey Hobbs, a former AmeriCorps member, serving at a local food bank to sort food collected by postal workers, and the presentation of a partnership appreciation award to the Blue Mountain Action Council for its long-term support of AmeriCorps.

Northwest Service Symposium

On May 12-13, 2008, about 300 national service members attended the 13th annual Northwest Service Symposium held at Portland State University in Portland. Each year, members from across Oregon and Washington transform their service experiences into writing, art, and performances. Genres include service stories (short creative nonfiction pieces inspired by service); poetry and fiction; visual arts (painting, sculpture, and photography); and performing arts (dance, video, and music).

Northwest Network

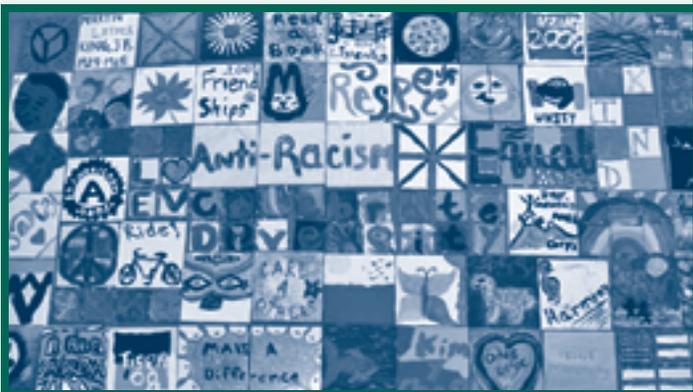
The WCNCS co-sponsored the Northwest Network on March 17-18, 2008, at Portland State University in Portland. This cross-stream event is designed to meet the training and professional development needs of national service program directors and staff. The two-day event featured cross-stream sessions focusing on the use of social networking tools to promote volunteering and national service.

Leadership Forum for National Service Executives

For the last eight years, the WCNCS has partnered with the University of Washington Evans School of Public Affairs to offer a unique learning opportunity designed specifically for AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and Learn and Serve program staff. Students complete a three-course sequence leading to a certificate in non-profit management.

Participants gain skills in program design, budgeting, assessment, and leadership that are directly applicable to on-the-job challenges. They also share field experiences with, and gain important insights from, faculty and fellow students. This year’s session was held on June 23-27, 2008, and focused on Performance-Based Budget Management. Using selected tools, students completed intensive work using fiscal tools to measure program progress and recommend program improvements. Twenty-five students enrolled, including nine students from out of state. Forty-four percent (11 of 25) of the students are former AmeriCorps or VISTA members – supporting the longitudinal study findings that demonstrate that AmeriCorps is a pathway to careers in the public service sector.

“I am sure of where I am going now in life and where I want to end up. I know how to get there so I will be motivated and doing my best.”



Improving an Economically Challenged Neighborhood

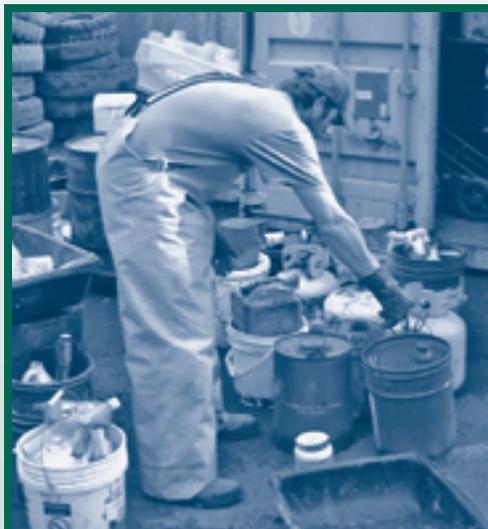
AmeriCorps members serving at Federal Way Public Schools collaborated with Habitat for Humanity, State Farm Insurance, Architects Without Borders, Boy Scouts of America, the Federal Way Diversity Commission, and many local schools and universities. Their mission was to help build a sense of pride and connection for the Westway community.

Westway, an economically challenged residential area, had a historically poor reputation for dealing with criminal and social issues. As in many decaying communities, the appearance of the community was negatively affecting the resident's quality of life, including a sense of pride and safety.

AmeriCorps members worked with volunteers to paint homes, fences, cover up graffiti; pick up trash and debris; plant trees; and move one family into a temporary housing unit so that improvements could be made to their home. AmeriCorps members provided ways for children to be involved in meaningful ways. Their service extended to the neighborhood community center, making improvements and assembling resource bags that were distributed to residents.

Gateway for Incarcerated Youth

A member from the Retention Project, sponsored by Washington Campus Compact, reflected: "I met a 16-year-old a few weeks ago who couldn't read or write past the second grade level. He was a migrant farm worker before he was incarcerated, so the opportunities for him to go to school were limited. He wanted to get help learning how to read and write in both English and Spanish. I found him a mentor who speaks fluent Mexican Spanish and works with migrant families. The look of determination on his face and the appreciation in his eyes was truly the most satisfying moment of my service so far. These interactions aren't just life changing for the youth we work with, but for every person involved in the process."



Rebuilding Hope House Together

The Spokane Service Team partnered with Rebuilding Together Spokane to improve the living conditions at Hope House. Hope House was founded in 1997 in response to serial murders of homeless women in Spokane, but the facility was literally falling apart. AmeriCorps members were joined by 44 community volunteers who contributed 274 hours of service in one day to address the health and safety issues of the facility. Hope House Program Director Rusty Barnett wrote, "that night, when the women entered the emergency shelter, they all commented on the changes that had taken place that day. Words cannot express the heartfelt thanks and sincere gratitude that the women felt about your work at Hope House. We will continue to 'pay it forward'."

Responding to National Disasters

From the day that the Washington Conservation Corps (WCC) arrived in flooded Oakville, Iowa, on July 6, 2008, they earned the reputation for being the hardest working, most dedicated volunteers in town. Members mucked and gutted homes. They waded through muddy and moldy rooms, carried out what was left of furniture and belongings, ripped out carpet, and removed drywall and paneling. Subsequent volunteers crews power washed and sanitized homes to kill remaining mold and allow for construction crews to enter and rebuild.

On September 25, 2008, 54 WCC members and supervisors returned to Washington State after nearly a month of hurricane relief efforts in Louisiana. Crews worked long days assessing damage, putting tarps on roofs, delivering supplies, mucking out damaged homes, and assisting in shelters. Much of their efforts centered in Chauvin, Louisiana, a small town severely damaged by wind and flooding.



Local AmeriCorps Disaster Response and Recovery

Following the floods of December 2007, Commission grantees deployed AmeriCorps members to support their neighbors in need. Local county responses were remarkable.

Grays Harbor County: In Grays Harbor, members of the Washington Service Corps (WSC) and the WCC filled and stacked thousands of sandbags, delivered vital supplies, engaged in door-to-door damage assessments, and cleared tons of wood debris.

King County: King County's high population density dictates extensive preparation for potential disasters. A member assigned to King County Emergency Management was deployed to the Emergency Operations Center to help answer calls and direct the state's residents to available resources.

Kitsap County: Six members from the Kitsap Community Resources AmeriCorps program managed two shelters. In addition, members and the community volunteers they recruited worked with county road crews to remove debris from storm drains to help alleviate further damage.

Lewis County: In partnership with the Thurston County Medical Reserve Corps, 20 members sponsored by Community Youth Services were deployed to Lewis County to assist the United Way in their efforts to assist flood victims with food, clothing, and hygiene supplies.

The Cowlitz AmeriCorps Network (Longview) and the WSC's Cispus Learning Center (Randle) programs deployed 15 members to Adna to deliver food and water to residents; clean a local church and grange to be used as relief centers, and organize donations at a donation relief center of the United Way of Lewis County.

A member of the Spokane Service Team, assigned to the American Red Cross, recruited and deployed the Inland NW chapter's volunteers to various locations throughout Western Washington impacted by flooding. As a result, eight volunteers as well as the Emergency Communications Response Vehicle (one of only 14 in the nation) and Red Cross Emergency Response Vehicle (a mobile feeding unit) were mobilized.

The WSC deployed three crews to Lewis County through the month of January to assist residents of Boisfort and Doty with debris removal and building temporary pens for lost animals. Additionally, the WCC deployed 100 members to help staff emergency shelters and distribute Red Cross supplies.

Thurston County: Two crews from the WCC cut, split, and distributed firewood to families who rely on wood as their only source of heat. Three WSC members serving with the American Red Cross Mt. Rainier Chapter assisted with setting up and managing a shelter in Rochester.

Spanish-Speaking Member Bridges a Language Barrier

A father, concerned for his daughter's safety at school because of harassment, felt he was not getting adequate help from the high school administrators because of a language barrier. A bilingual AmeriCorps member from Cowlitz AmeriCorps Network helped bridge the language barrier. The member's interpreting among the student, her father, the high school principal, and the victim's advocate allowed concerns to be expressed and understood. A safety plan that the father understood and approved was put in place to ensure his daughter's safety. The principal shared how impressed he was with the members' ability to translate and help reach resolution.

Mapping the Future

Recognizing that many youth are looking for opportunities to improve their communities, the Washington Service Corps and Washington Reading Corps helped engage youth (ages 11-13) in meaningful service experiences through the "Roadmap to Civic Engagement." Created in collaboration with Service-Learning Northwest, the seven-unit curriculum uses service learning as a vehicle for participants to develop a personal understanding of the behaviors, attitudes, and actions that help define civic engagement. In 2008, a total of 973 youth participated in the program. Eighty-three percent indicated an increased understanding of the broader concept of civic engagement. As a result of this positive service-learning experience, some of these youth may very well be inspired to join AmeriCorps in the future.



Washington State Parks Commissioner Fred Olson and First Gentleman Mike Gregoire kick off a large community service project at Rainbow Falls State Park on the Martin Luther King Day of Service. WCC and other AmeriCorps members led cleanup and reconstruction efforts at the park in Lewis County following December 2007 flooding.

WCNCS 2008 Funding

The wide range of financial contributions necessary to meet the critical needs of the state and to coordinate thousands of AmeriCorps members and volunteers aids the success of national service in Washington. Local cities and counties have made commitments to identify needs in their communities and address them. For service programs to provide solutions to serious needs in the community, 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, as well as 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.

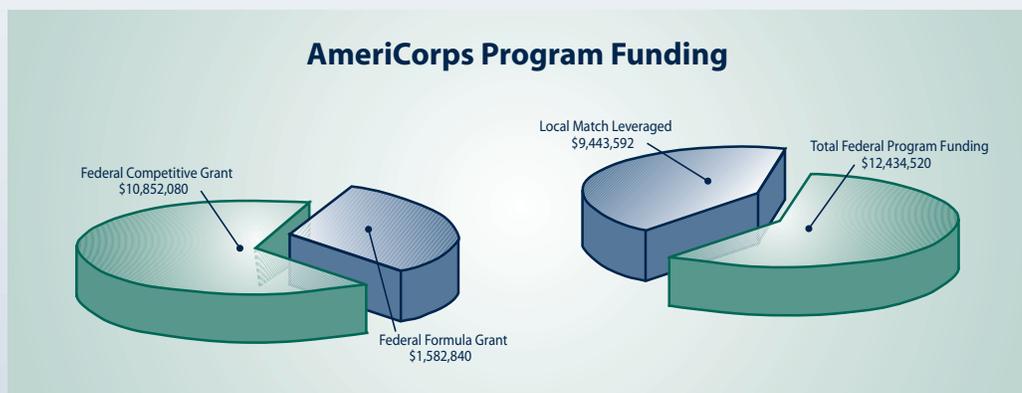
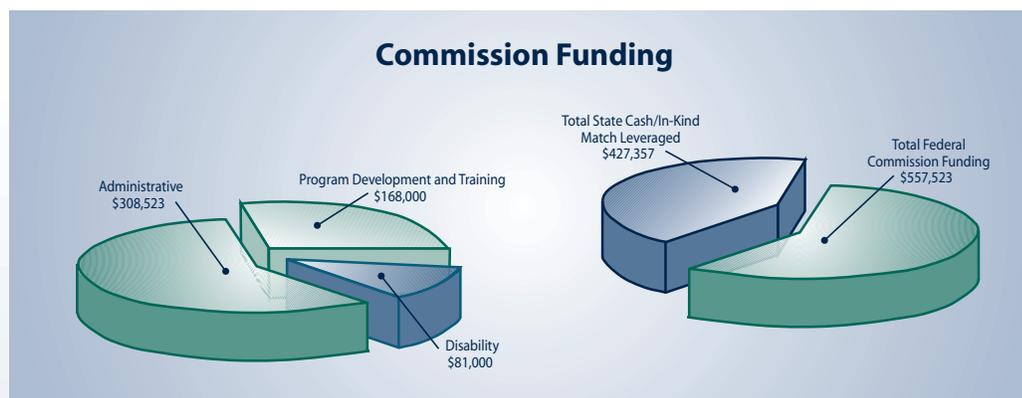
During the federal fiscal year ending September 30, 2008 (FY 08), the Washington Commission for National and Community Service received \$12,434,920 in federal funding to provide support for AmeriCorps*State programs across Washington. These programs included six State Competitive and six State Formula programs.

AmeriCorps programs also leveraged a total of \$9,443,592 in state, local, private, and in-kind match support – a total of 43 percent of the total program costs. Federal support is utilized primarily toward member living support and operational costs needed in maintaining 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 have program development and training opportunities and resources.

Of the total federal funding received for Commission costs, 55 percent was available for administrative support, 15 percent was earmarked for disability outreach and reasonable accommodation of grantees, and 30 percent was utilized for program development and training. Total federal funding for Commission-related functions is only 4 percent of the total federal funding that the state receives for both the AmeriCorps program and all Commission costs combined. The Commission also leverages \$427,357 in state cash and in-kind support for primarily administrative costs.

Citizen Corps efforts have been coordinated by the Washington Commission for National and Community Service since 2003 in helping promote personal responsibility in 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 \$295,668 for 2008.



The Washington State Commission

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 (WCNCS). 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 2008

Adam Cornell	Chair, U.S. Attorney's Office-Western District of Washington
Eleanor Andersen	Vice Chair, Junior Achievement of the Inland Northwest (retired)
Terri Barbee	Washington State Employment Security Department
Alison Carl White	Seattle Works
Grace Chien	Girl Scouts of Western Washington
Federico Diaz	Blue Mountain Action Council
Peter Heinaru	Corporation for National and Community Service-Washington State Office
Brian Heinrich	Washington Campus Compact, Western Washington University
Peter Jackson	Henry M. Jackson Foundation
Beth Kelly	Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
Denise Nichols	Selah City Council and City of Yakima Parks and Recreation Department
John/Juan Ramirez, Ph.D.	Washington State University
Rob Spath	Washington Conservation Corps
Chris Sullivan	Volunteer Center/RSVP of Lewis, Mason, and Thurston Counties
The Honorable Axel Swanson	Cowlitz County Commissioner
Patrick M. Towner	Washington State Labor Council
Krystal Wood	Youth Representative

Citizen Corps Commission Members

Terri Jones	Northshore Fire Department/King County Fire Department #16
Tami Kihl	Vancouver Fire Department
Tony Mace	Paine Field Fire Department
Mary Mapes	Inland Northwest Chapter American Red Cross
Scott Smith	Tulalip Tribal Police Department

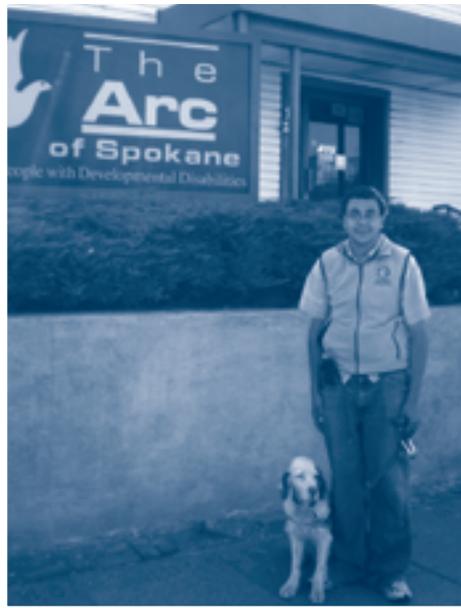
WCNCS Staff

Bill Basl	Executive Director
Denise Berns	Administrative Assistant
Bruce Lehman	OFM/Governor's Office Accounting Unit
Brian Lock	Assistant Director
Denise Mack	Citizen Corps Program Coordinator
Debbie Schuffenhauer	Associate Director
Mary Van Verst	Program Development and Evaluation Coordinator

Congressman Brian Baird visits with members of the Cispus AmeriCorps team (a Washington Service Corps project) in Randle, Washington. L to R: Marissa Hopkins, Congressman Baird, April Pritchford, and Cispus Supervisor Richard Cromwell.



Congressman Adam Smith (at left, with his son) joined members of the King County Housing Authority (a Washington Service Corps project) at Saltwater State Park to plant trees on Earth Day.



Washington Commission for National and Community Service

For additional information, call 360.902.0656 or visit our website at www.ofm.wa.gov/servewa.

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To obtain this publication in alternative format, contact the Washington Commission for National and Community Service at 360.902.0657.

