



AmeriCorps and Senior Corps Quantifying the Impact

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Executive Summary

About National Service

Nationwide, more than 275,000 Americans are serving their communities through two civilian national service programs, AmeriCorps and Senior Corps. These national service members are meeting pressing needs by mentoring students, helping communities respond to and recover from natural disasters, fighting the opioid epidemic, connecting veterans to job and education resources, supporting independent living for seniors and Americans with disabilities, helping families achieve economic self-sufficiency, and more. Through their service, AmeriCorps and Senior Corps members gain skills and experiences that help them develop as professionals, make connections to further employment and educational opportunities, earn money for college, and enhance their health and well-being.

AmeriCorps and Senior Corps are programs operated and supported by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), a federal agency established in 1993 to create opportunities for Americans to serve their communities. CNCS is the largest grant maker for service and volunteering in the nation and provides support to many national and local nonprofits, such as Habitat for Humanity, City Year, Teach For America, and conservation service corps throughout the country. Through AmeriCorps and Senior Corps, CNCS connects full and part-time service members with opportunities to address critical community needs through intensive and sustained service.

About this Study

AmeriCorps and Senior Corps provide benefits to the people and communities they serve. They also benefit the members who serve, the government, and society, increasing social well-being across the nation. This cost-benefit analysis, commissioned by Voices for National Service¹ with funding from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, explores and quantifies the economic and fiscal benefits that CNCS's AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs have on their members, society, and the government, specifically the benefit-cost ratio and return on investment (ROI) of CNCS funding.

This study calculates three metrics:

- **Benefit-Cost Ratio:** A comparison of the summation of all society, member, and government benefits to the combined budgeted federal and match spending.
- **Federal ROI:** The return on investment of AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs to the federal government alone. This metric compares only fiscal benefits to fiscal costs to determine if the federal government is receiving a positive return for tax dollars spent on CNCS.
- **Federal Benefit-Cost Ratio:** The federal benefit-cost ratio uses components from the overall benefit-cost ratio and the federal ROI. Specifically, this metric includes all society, member, and government benefits derived from national service programs (like the benefit-cost ratio) and includes only the cost of federal CNCS funding (like the federal ROI).

¹ Voices for National Service is housed and operated by City Year, Inc.

Results

Benefit-Cost Ratio: For every \$1 of federal and match funding invested in AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs, the return to society, program members, and the government is \$11.80.

The total of all these benefits for the most recent program year is just over \$17.5 billion, while the cost is just under \$1.5 billion for FY2017. Thus, the overall benefit-cost ratio for national service programs at the national level is 11.8.

Federal ROI: For every \$1 of federal funds invested in national service programs, the federal government alone receives \$3.50 in return from tax revenue gains and savings.

The federal fiscal benefits from national service programs amount to almost \$4 billion during the most recent program year, while the budgeted federal cost is just over \$1 billion to taxpayers. The federal ROI is 3.5.

Federal Benefit-Cost Ratio: For every \$1 in federal taxes spent on supporting AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs, the return to society, program members, and the government is \$17.30.

As noted above, the total benefits to society, program members, and government for the most recent program year is just over \$17.5 billion, while the cost to the federal government is just over \$1 billion, resulting in a benefit-cost ratio of 17.3.

Exhibits of Results

Exhibit ES1: Breakdown of Different Calculations by Benefits and Costs Included

	Benefits (numerator)	Costs (denominator)
Benefit-Cost Ratio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All society, member, and government benefits derived from national service programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budgeted federal CNCS funding Budgeted match funding
Federal ROI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal tax gains and federal cost savings derived from national service programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budgeted federal CNCS funding
Federal Benefit-Cost Ratio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All society, member, and government benefits derived from national service programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budgeted federal CNCS funding

Exhibit ES2: Summary of Resulting Benefit-Cost Ratios and ROI Metrics

	Benefit-Cost Ratio	Federal ROI	Federal Benefit-Cost Ratio
Total Monetized Benefits	\$17,687,616,867	\$3,631,382,609	\$17,687,616,867
Total Costs	\$1,495,341,930	\$1,025,358,000 ²	\$1,025,358,000
Result	11.8	3.5	17.3

² Corporation for National and Community Service. (n.d.). Fiscal Year 2017. Retrieved from <https://www.nationalservice.gov/about/budget-and-performance/budget/fiscal-year-2017>. In FY2017, total federal funding for CNCS was \$1,030,358,000. The funds appropriated for *Innovation and Demonstration* were excluded because this is funding for non-AmeriCorps and non-Senior Corps programming. When removed, the total federal funding amounts to \$1,025,358,000.

Conclusion

This study illustrates that there is a significant return on investment for national service programs that play a critical role in leveraging the skills and talent of citizens to address unmet community needs across the nation. Based on the results of these analyses, we conclude that AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs result in significant monetary benefits to the federal government, to all program funders, to communities, and to those who serve.

Flint Case Study

In addition to calculating these metrics at the national level, a case study of national service in Flint, Michigan, was completed, measuring the benefit-cost ratio and ROI of CNCS programs that actively serve the Flint community. Flint was chosen for this case study because the city serves as a model for how intentionally prioritizing and fostering a robust culture of national service affects a community and its residents. Moreover, there has been increased federal and local investment in national service programs in the city over the last few years to address pressing community needs.

The results for Flint are higher than those at the national level. The primary reason for the difference is the Flint National Service Accelerator, housed by the United Way of Genesee County. In 2011, community leaders in Flint began organizing around the idea of national service being a key community revitalization strategy, committing to increasing the number of service members in Flint-area organizations, engaging them more effectively, and collaborating with other organizations that host members to offer better experiences and realize greater gains from service programs. The Accelerator was established to support the national service organizations and their members, provide coordination for recruitment, and help offset the costs of hosting AmeriCorps and Senior Corps members. Data for almost every AmeriCorps and Senior Corps program that operates in Flint was available through the Accelerator, and their monetized benefits were incorporated into an analytical framework.

Flint Results

Flint Benefit-Cost Ratio: For every \$1 of federal and match funding invested in AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs in Flint, the return to society, program members, and the government is \$27.40.

Flint Federal ROI: For every \$1 of federal taxes invested in national service programs in Flint, the federal government alone receives \$8.40 in return from tax revenue gains and savings.

Flint Federal Benefit-Cost Ratio: For every \$1 in federal taxes spent on supporting AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs in Flint, the return to society, program members, and the government is \$35.90.

Exhibit ES3: Summary of Benefit-Cost Ratios and ROI Metrics for Flint

	Benefit-Cost Ratio	Federal ROI	Federal Benefit-Cost Ratio
Total Monetized Benefits	\$80,479,733	\$18,899,689	\$80,479,733
Total Costs	\$2,934,964	\$2,241,226	\$2,241,226
Result	27.4	8.4	35.9

About Voices for National Service

Voices for National Service is a coalition of organizations that believe citizens are central to solving the problems facing their communities. Voices for National Service has built strong bipartisan support for national service among our nation's leaders and helped to elevate national service as a powerful strategy for harnessing the energy of citizens to tackle unmet needs, prepare young people for work, unite the country, and develop civic character. Voices for National Service commissioned ICF to explore and quantify the economic and fiscal benefits that the Corporation for National and Community Service's AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs have on their members, society, and the government, specifically the benefit-cost ratio and return on investment of CNCS funding.

1. Introduction

Nationwide, more than 275,000 Americans are serving their communities through two civilian national service programs, AmeriCorps and Senior Corps. These national service members are meeting pressing needs by mentoring students, helping communities respond to and recover from natural disasters, fighting the opioid epidemic, connecting veterans to job and education resources, supporting independent living for seniors and Americans with disabilities, helping families achieve economic self-sufficiency, and more. Through their service, AmeriCorps and Senior Corps members gain skills and experiences that help them develop as professionals, make connections to further employment and educational opportunities, earn money for college, and enhance their health and well-being.



AmeriCorps and Senior Corps are programs operated and supported by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), a federal agency established in 1993 to create opportunities for Americans to serve their communities. CNCS is the largest grant maker for service and volunteering in the nation and provides support to many national and local nonprofits, such as Habitat for Humanity, City Year, Teach for America, and conservation service corps throughout the country. Through AmeriCorps and Senior Corps, CNCS connects full- and part-time service members with opportunities to address critical community needs through intensive and sustained service.

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This report begins with a description of CNCS and its two largest programs, AmeriCorps and Senior Corps. It then describes the approach and methodology used to measure program outcomes and quantify their impacts in monetary terms. The results of the cost-benefit analysis and ROI are then presented using three different metrics to determine the monetary returns to society, program members, and the federal government. The report also includes a case study of national service in Flint, Michigan, where the benefit-cost ratio and ROI of CNCS funding are measured for programs that actively serve the Flint community. The study's results are summarized in the conclusion.

2. Corporation for National and Community Service

CNCS is the federal agency that leads service, volunteering, and grant-making efforts in the United States. The underlying objectives of CNCS and its programs are to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement and citizenship through national and community service. CNCS works with nonprofit and public partners to tap the ingenuity and can-do spirit of the American people to tackle their most pervasive community challenges.

CNCS helps millions of Americans improve their lives and the lives of their fellow citizens through service. The agency operates a variety of programs that aim to improve the education, economic opportunity, and well-being of the country's most vulnerable and under-resourced populations.

Many public and nonprofit organizations depend on this supply of human capital to achieve their goals. Through their service, members help increase the efficiency and scale of organizations' efforts to deliver sustainable solutions to communities. In some organizations, members are deployed to help recruit and retain a diverse volunteer base—in addition to the national service members—to support organizational objectives and expand service delivery at a lower cost. In 2017 alone, AmeriCorps members mobilized, trained, and supervised over 1.9 million additional community volunteers for the organizations they served, making the service connections generated by CNCS crucial to business success.³



These programs also benefit the national service members who serve. Specifically, CNCS seeks to empower its national service members to foster community improvement and meet local needs while they develop their own skills and experiences. National service alumni receive education, employment, and civic benefits because of their service, and national service develops a pipeline of future leaders for all sectors. Alumni go on to have further impact in their communities, pursuing careers in nonprofits, business, and government.

CNCS evaluates the performance and effectiveness of their programs and activities and uses the evidence to inform policy and practice. Program effectiveness evidence is used to make grant-making decisions and inform the deployment of national service members. CNCS funds rigorous evaluations, conducts member surveys, examines the impact of programming by state, and commissions research related to the following topics: community factors that influence volunteering, volunteer retention, nonprofits and community organizations, profile and tendencies of volunteers, and the benefits of volunteering and civic participation.⁴

2.1 AmeriCorps



AmeriCorps is a grant-making program that connects Americans to nonprofit, faith-based, or public organizations delivering services in six focus areas: Disaster Services, Economic Opportunity, Education, Environmental Stewardship, Healthy Futures, and Veterans and Military Families. Over 1 million individuals have served 1.4 billion hours through AmeriCorps since the program's inception, and each year, the program leverages an additional \$1 billion in resources from other sources to match the federal investment. In 2018 alone, 75,000 members served in 50,000 unique sites across the United States.⁵ AmeriCorps members create effective and sustainable change in the communities they serve while also gaining professional and transferable skills, earning money to support their educational endeavors, and discovering career fields that they can pursue. Some of the most well-known AmeriCorps programs that demonstrate the diversity of programming are operated by Habitat for

³ Corporation for National and Community Service (2018). CNCS Fact Sheet 2018 AmeriCorps. Retrieved from https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/CNCS-Fact-Sheet-2018-AmeriCorps_May.pdf

⁴ Corporation for the National and Community Service. (n.d.). Research. Retrieved from <https://www.nationalservice.gov/vcla/research>

⁵ Corporation for National and Community Service. (n.d.). Share Our Impact. Retrieved from <https://www.nationalservice.gov/impact-our-nation/share-our-impact>

Humanity, City Year, American Red Cross, Catholic Charities, YMCA, and the United Way. These programs, among hundreds of others, serve diverse populations and leverage AmeriCorps members' talent and skills to make a lasting impact.

AmeriCorps comprises three programs: AmeriCorps State and National, AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC), and AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America), all of which seek to improve communities through a sustained term of service.⁶

AmeriCorps State and National programs place members in either part-time or full-time positions in nonprofit and public organizations, where they provide needed services in nonprofit development, legal assistance, health and nutrition, environmental stewardship, and education.⁷ Grants are made by CNCS directly and through governor-appointed state service commissions to place AmeriCorps members in nonprofit and public organizations to address critical, unmet needs at the state and local level. Each state service commission develops a comprehensive statewide national service plan that guides funding and programmatic priorities for the funds it distributes. State service commissions incorporate AmeriCorps members into their statewide service infrastructure and administer and oversee grant funding to AmeriCorps programs that meet state and local service needs. National nonprofit organizations that receive grants directly from CNCS operate programs in multiple states.



In AmeriCorps NCCC and AmeriCorps VISTA, both of which are operated by CNCS, members serve full-time. NCCC members work in teams and are deployed regionally and nationally to serve on a variety of short-term projects and engage in various forms of direct service, such as natural resource conservation, building homes, disaster relief, or helping disaster survivors apply for assistance. AmeriCorps NCCC also operates FEMA Corps, which focuses specifically on disaster preparedness, response, and recovery in partnership with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).⁸ AmeriCorps VISTA members address poverty, inequity, homelessness, and unemployment and their service focuses on helping to build, maximize, and strengthen the capacity of local community organizations, nonprofits, and agencies by developing outreach campaigns, fundraising, and assisting with program management and volunteer recruitment.⁹ Exhibit 1 shows the AmeriCorps program structure and breakdown.



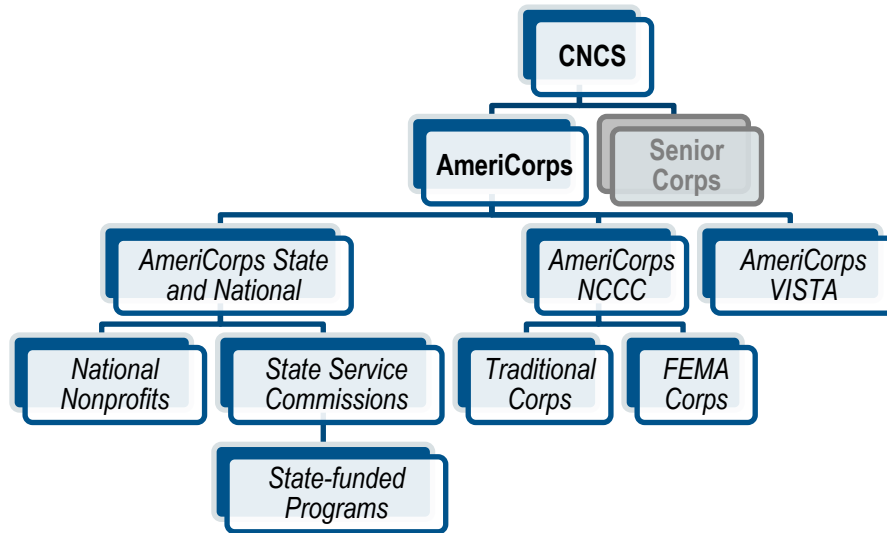
⁶ Corporation for National and Community Service. (n.d.). AmeriCorps. Retrieved from <https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/ameri-corps>

⁷ Corporation for National and Community Service. (n.d.). AmeriCorps State and National. Retrieved from <https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/ameri-corps/ameri-corps-programs/ameri-corps-state-national>

⁸ Corporation for National and Community Service. (n.d.). AmeriCorps NCCC. Retrieved from <https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/ameri-corps/ameri-corps-programs/ameri-corps-nccc>

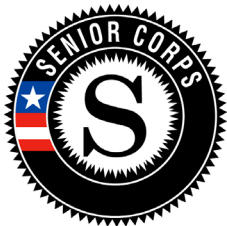
⁹ Corporation for National and Community Service. (n.d.). AmeriCorps VISTA. Retrieved from <https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/ameri-corps/ameri-corps-programs/ameri-corps-vista>

Exhibit 1: AmeriCorps Program Structure



Beyond the direct service AmeriCorps members provide to communities, they also develop their own professional skills and experience. In a survey of AmeriCorps alumni, 90% reported that the program helped them improve problem-solving skills, 80% reported that AmeriCorps service benefited their career path, and 79% reported that they are or plan to be actively involved in their community, compared with 47% who reported that inclination prior to their AmeriCorps service.¹⁰

2.2 Senior Corps



Senior Corps harnesses the skills, work experience, and expertise of Americans over the age of 55. Senior Corps operates three main programs: Foster Grandparents, RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Program), and Senior Companions.¹¹ The Foster Grandparent program connects at-risk youth and children with exceptional needs with senior volunteers who serve as role models, mentors, and tutors.¹² The RSVP program, one of the nation's largest volunteer networks for older adults, supports volunteering across a variety of projects similar to AmeriCorps, allowing members to participate in community-based work across CNCS's six focus areas.¹³ The Senior Companions program connects elders in the community to a senior volunteer who can befriend them and assist with daily responsibilities that may be difficult to do alone, such as completing chores or paying bills. It also provides respite to family caregivers. This set of services helps the elderly and those with disabilities remain independent in their own

¹⁰ Corporation for National and Community Service. (2019) CNCS Fact Sheet 2019. Retrieved from https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/CNCSFactSheet-Jan2019_508.pdf

¹¹ Corporation for National and Community Service. (n.d.). Senior Corps. Retrieved from <https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/senior-corps>

¹² Corporation for National and Community Service. (n.d.). Foster Grandparents. Retrieved from <https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/senior-corps/senior-corps-programs/fostergrandparents>

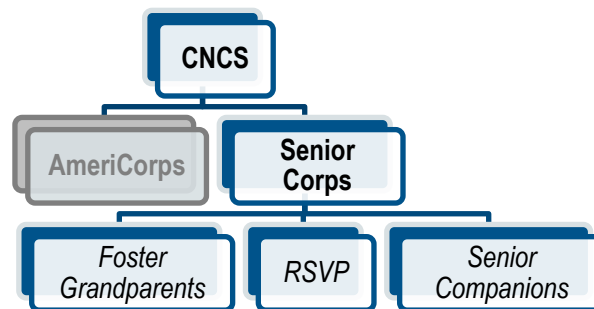
¹³ Corporation for National and Community Service. (n.d.). RSVP. Retrieved from <https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/senior-corps/senior-corps-programs/rsvp>

homes rather than being forced to move into costly care institutions.¹⁴ Exhibit 2 shows the structure of CNCS's Senior Corps program in detail.

Each year, 220,000 older adults serve 54 million hours through Senior Corps. Through the Senior Companion Program, 840,000 elderly citizens receive independent living services and assistance and 267,000 children receive tutoring or mentorship through the Foster Grandparents program.¹⁵

Senior Corps also delivers benefits to those who serve. A recent study found that after two years of service, 84% of Senior Corps members reported stable or better health, 88% reported a decrease in isolation, and 78% of those who reported depressive symptoms felt less depressed.¹⁶ These findings convey the positive mental and physical health benefits of activity and volunteerism among older adults.¹⁷

Exhibit 2: Senior Corps Program Structure



3. National Service Programs

Each year, AmeriCorps and Senior Corps members serve with thousands of nonprofit, faith-based, and community organizations, helping them expand their reach and better meet their mission. CNCS provides grants to these organizations, which includes an allotment of AmeriCorps and Senior Corps member positions and partial funding to support their projects and programs.

Thirty-one program evaluations and studies were used (representing 22 programs) to capture the outcomes and monetize the societal benefits and associated government benefits of AmeriCorps and Senior Corps. A general description of some of these programs is provided below.

Child Abuse Prevention Center

The Child Abuse Prevention Center (CAP Center) is a statewide nonprofit organization that provides direct services to children and families, trains professionals, builds capacity in organizations, and advocates for family and community strengthening. The CAP Center is composed of multiple agencies including: Prevent

¹⁴ Corporation for National and Community Service. (n.d.). Senior Companions. Retrieved from <https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/senior-corps/senior-corps-programs/senior-companions>

¹⁵ Corporation for National and Community Service. (n.d.). Share Our Impact. Retrieved from <https://www.nationalservice.gov/impact-our-nation/share-our-impact>

¹⁶ Corporation for National and Community Service. (2019) CNCS Fact Sheet 2019. Retrieved from https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/CNCSFactSheet-Jan2019_508.pdf

¹⁷ Ibid.

Child Abuse California, Strategies 2.0, the California Family Resource Association, the Child Abuse Prevention Council, and the Child Abuse Prevention Center PAC. For 25 years, national service has been the cornerstone of the CAP Center's work through six successful programs. For example, an evaluation of the Birth & Beyond program found that families served by AmeriCorps home visitors were 173 times less likely to enter child welfare than a comparison group; this cost \$1,000 per parent compared to \$268,000 per open child welfare case. As a result of these kinds of evaluations, the CAP Center, in cooperation with California Volunteers, has launched a statewide foster youth initiative to support the transition of young people as they age out of foster care.

City Year

City Year helps students and schools succeed. City Year recruits and trains diverse teams of young adults to serve as AmeriCorps members in schools all day, every day—student success coaches who work as tutors, mentors and role models, preparing students with the skills and mindsets to thrive in school and in life. In partnership with school districts, principals and teachers, City Year AmeriCorps members provide individualized academic and social-emotional supports to students who need them most, serve as essential resources in the classroom, and contribute to a positive school culture, climate, and community. According to research, schools partnering with City Year were two-to-three times more likely to improve in math and English than similar schools without City Year. Nine out of 10 teachers agree that City Year AmeriCorps members help to foster a positive learning environment for their students. And City Year helped two-thirds of students identified as needing support to move on-track in key social-emotional skills linked to college and career readiness. In 2019-2020, 3,000 City Year AmeriCorps members are serving in 350 public schools across 29 U.S. cities. Through their work in schools and communities, City Year AmeriCorps members not only make a difference in the lives of students they serve, they also acquire valuable skills that prepare them to become the next generation of professionals, mentors and civic leaders.

College Possible

College Possible is a national nonprofit organization making college admission and success possible for students from low-income backgrounds through an intensive curriculum of coaching and support. The key to College Possible's success is near-peer coaching—leveraging the power of young, idealistic and dedicated recent college graduates serving as AmeriCorps members to offer advice, mentoring, and support to students as they navigate the complex world of college preparation and persistence. A Harvard study found that, on average, participation in the program more than doubles a student's chance of enrolling in a four-year college, and 97% of students served by College Possible AmeriCorps coaches are accepted to college. College Possible students are also three times more likely to graduate from college than their low-income peers.

Conservation Legacy

Conservation Legacy is a national conservation corps that supports locally based programming dedicated to meeting the needs of diverse individuals, communities, and partners across the country through national service. Over 2,000 young Americans, including over 60 military veterans, serve nationwide on public and tribal lands and waters each year. AmeriCorps members annually improve over 1,000 miles of trails and 30,000 acres of habitat, protect communities from wildfires, and restore or repair other natural and cultural resources. Through service on public lands, Conservation Legacy programs help develop a generation of skilled workers, educated and active citizens, future leaders, and stewards of natural and cultural resources.

Habitat for Humanity

Habitat for Humanity is a global nonprofit housing organization working in local communities across all 50 states in the U.S. and in approximately 70 other countries. Habitat's vision is of a world where everyone has a decent place to live. Habitat works toward this vision by building strength, stability, and self-reliance in partnership with families in need of decent and affordable housing. Habitat homeowners help build their own homes alongside volunteers and pay an affordable mortgage.

The Habitat for Humanity AmeriCorps program is designed to increase capacity to deliver more services to more families. In partnership with local Habitat organizations, AmeriCorps members serve in a variety of roles to increase Habitat's ability to build homes, expand services, engage the community and partner with people.

Since 1994, Habitat AmeriCorps has engaged more than 11,256 members, who have supported the mission by:

- Serving 122,758 individuals
- Engaging 4.2 million volunteers
- Completing 18 million hours of service

Habitat AmeriCorps is an investment in growth, in communities, in families and in the next generation of leadership for the affordable housing movement.

Jumpstart

For more than 25 years, Jumpstart has been fueled by the core belief that providing high-quality educational opportunities for all young children contributes to breaking the cycle of poverty. Since its founding, Jumpstart has served more than 124,500 children in classrooms across the country and engaged 55,000 national service members and community volunteers. Positioned at the intersection of early education and higher education, Jumpstart partners with 70 university and community partners to recruit and train college student volunteers to support the development of key language, literacy, and social-emotional skills in preschool children in underserved communities across the country. Each year, Jumpstart's 3,500 AmeriCorps members and community volunteers serve over 10,400 children in 600 classrooms across 15 states and Washington, D.C. In addition to its direct service work, Jumpstart seeks to strengthen the early-education workforce by encouraging and supporting its AmeriCorps members and college student volunteers who want to enter the teaching profession after graduation and by creating high-quality programs that directly support current early-education practitioners' work in the classroom. Through every aspect of its work and program, Jumpstart strives to make its vision a reality: the day when every child in America enters kindergarten prepared to succeed.

Local Initiatives Support Corporation

Together with residents and partners, Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) forges resilient and inclusive communities of opportunity across America—great places to live, work, visit, do business, and raise families. The strategies that LISC pursues empowers people, transforms places, supports local economies, fosters leadership, and promotes innovation. Since 1979, LISC has invested over \$20 billion, leading to more than \$60.4 billion in total development of businesses, affordable housing, health, educational mobility, community and recreational facilities, public safety, employment, and other projects that help to revitalize and stabilize communities. Since 1994, LISC has placed over 3,300 AmeriCorps

members in more than 84 cities across the country. The AmeriCorps members have mobilized over 164,000 residents to volunteer nearly 800,000 hours in community revitalization activities; provided almost 22,000 clients with employment training services; delivered affordable housing counseling services to nearly 50,000 clients; and worked on the development of almost 12,000 safe, decent affordable housing units. LISC AmeriCorps recruits its members from the communities served and is viewed by many as a bridge to a career opportunity. With local nonprofit organizations, LISC invests in members' leadership and occupational skill-set development while simultaneously providing a career experience. A recent study showed that one year post-service, 92% of LISC AmeriCorps members were employed or enrolled in school.

Police-Assisted Addiction & Recovery Initiative

In response to the nationwide opioid crisis, the Police-Assisted Addiction and Recovery Initiative (PAARI) provides training, strategic guidance, and support to police departments developing and implementing nonarrest referral programs. By creating nonarrest pathways to treatment and recovery, PAARI-affiliated police departments are saving lives, reducing crime, saving time and resources, and increasing community trust and well-being. PAARI partners with nearly 500 police departments nationwide. In fall 2018, PAARI received an AmeriCorps Excellence Award for a first-of-its-kind program that embeds national service members in police departments as recovery coaches and program coordinators to address the opioid epidemic. PAARI AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps VISTA members are working with law enforcement agencies to help build, strengthen, and sustain their police-led programs to reduce and prevent overdose deaths and help more people with opioid-use disorders get into treatment and recovery.

Teach For America

Teach For America recruits and develops a diverse corps of outstanding leaders—many of whom are also AmeriCorps members—to make an initial two-year commitment to teach in high-need schools and become lifelong leaders in the effort to end educational inequity. With more than 60,000 alumni, Teach For America's network includes approximately 14,000 teachers, 3,700 school principals and assistant principals, 300 school system leaders, 500 policy and advocacy leaders, nearly 200 elected leaders, and almost 200 social entrepreneurs. Teach For America's partnership with AmeriCorps, which allows teachers to pay for their educational expenses with Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards, has been critical in supporting efforts to recruit a diverse group of leaders for whom teaching might not otherwise be a financially feasible option.

Washington Department of Veterans Affairs Vet Corps

The Washington Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) Vet Corps taps the knowledge, skills and abilities of veterans by engaging them as AmeriCorps members. Through AmeriCorps service, the veterans can make a positive difference in their community and improve their quality of life as civilians. Vet Corps helps veterans and their family members navigate Washington's higher education and training programs as veterans adjust from military to college life. Vet Corps AmeriCorps members are stationed at colleges throughout the state where they help their fellow veterans achieve their higher education goals by providing training and support to college faculty, staff, and administration to increase awareness of student veterans' needs; providing a peer connection for veterans new to higher education; helping the college meet the needs of student veterans; and providing veterans with connections to federal, state or local veteran's benefits.

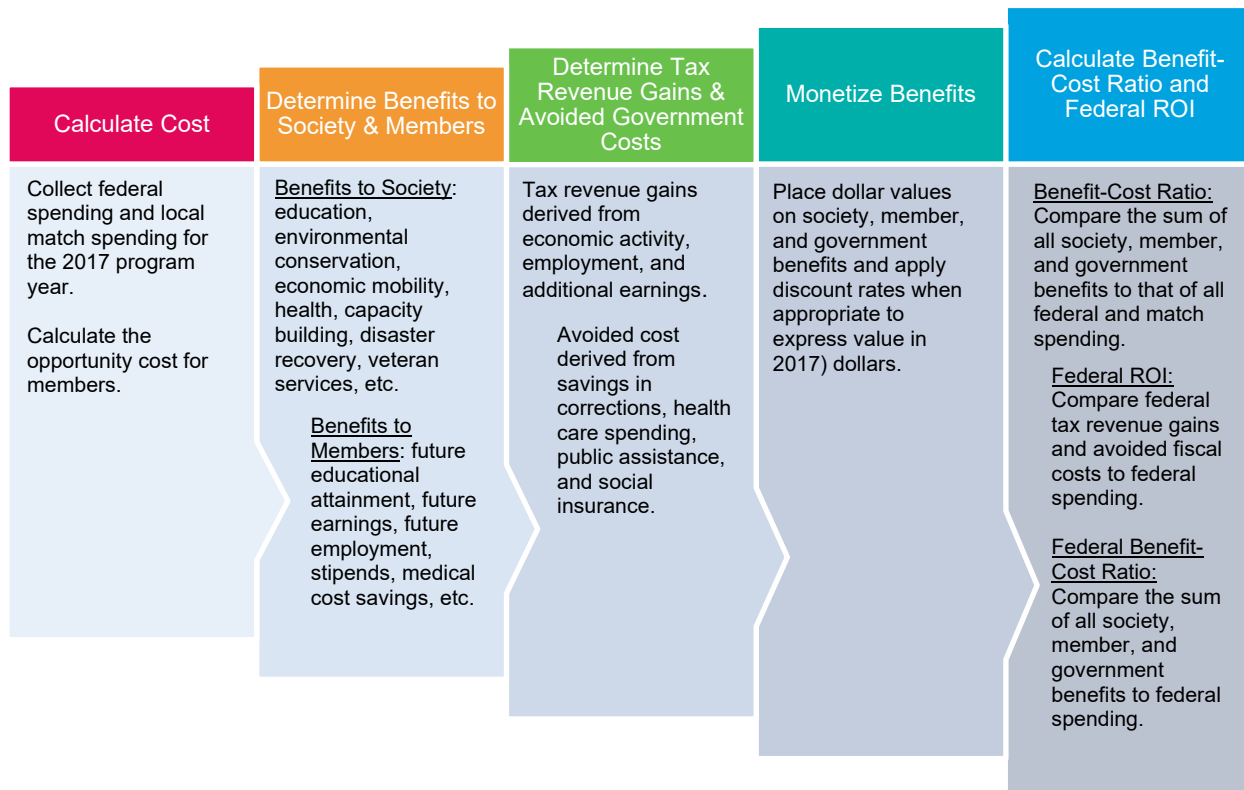
YouthBuild

YouthBuild offers nearly 2,700 opportunity youth AmeriCorps members in 65 urban and rural communities the opportunity to learn workforce skills by building affordable housing for homeless and low-income people in their own neighborhoods while also spending half their time earning a high school diploma or equivalent, honing leadership skills, and inspiring neighbors and community members. YouthBuild AmeriCorps members spend on average of 9-10 months in the program. A recent multi-year randomized controlled trial study found that YouthBuild graduates were 31% more likely to enroll in college, 51% more likely to enroll in vocational school, and 78% more likely to attain a GED, compared to a comparable cohort receiving alternative community services. YouthBuild graduates were shown to earn nearly 20% more than the comparable cohort. YouthBuild AmeriCorps member earn an education award, helping to break the cycle of poverty and achieve life goals. There are more than 250 local YouthBuild programs in 46 states. Since federal funding for YouthBuild began in 1993, more than 180,000 young people have built or refurbished over 35,000 units of affordable housing and performed 50 million hours of community service.

4. Approach and Methodology

A cost-benefit analysis is an important tool that can establish whether a program is a cost-effective investment by measuring the burden of funding balanced with its positive impacts to various stakeholders. The approach to the cost-benefit analysis for this study consists of five components, as illustrated in Exhibit 3. First, the costs of AmeriCorps and Senior Corps are calculated by researching and collecting the federal and local match spending for these programs for the most recent fiscal year. Then the benefits to society, members, and the different levels of government are determined. Lastly, these benefits are monetized to quantify the impact of national service programs. The cost-benefit analysis in this study results in three indicators: the benefit-cost ratio, the federal return on investment (ROI), and the federal benefit-cost ratio of these programs at the national level. The following sections further explain the approach, methodology, and inputs used for each of these indicators.

Exhibit 3: Cost-Benefit Analysis Process



4.1 Cost Methods

Direct costs for the benefit-cost ratio consist of the summation of two components: (1) direct CNCS operating and program funding costs and (2) match funding costs. This represents the total estimated direct cost needed to fund AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs nationwide. Regarding the former, fiscal expenditures associated with CNCS’s direct federal costs consist of member support, administrative and program management staff, and other operational expenses.¹⁸ Member support includes stipends, living allowances, education awards, and training received by AmeriCorps and Senior Corps members. Staff costs include salaries, fringe benefits, and any overhead costs associated with CNCS staff, while operational costs include expenses on items such as travel, equipment, and supplies. Other forms of direct CNCS costs include research initiatives, state commissions, grant management and program monitoring, and compliance and oversight. AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs are public-private partnerships where the federal investment is matched with support from private, philanthropic, and local partners. Match funds are required for grantees receiving the direct funding from CNCS and sources can include state and local governments, foundations, and private sector businesses that have a stake in community programs. CNCS sets a minimum amount of match funding for each program; however, match funds above the

¹⁸ Corporation for National and Community Service. (n.d.). Fiscal Year 2017. Retrieved from <https://www.nationalservice.gov/about/budget-and-performance/budget/fiscal-year-2017>. In FY2017, total federal funding for CNCS was \$1,030,358,000. The funds appropriated for *Innovation and Demonstration* were excluded because this is funding for non-AmeriCorps and non-Senior Corps programming. Thus, the total federal funding amount used in this analysis was \$1,025,358,000.

minimum amount are common for many programs. For this analysis, CNCS provided the total budgeted federal costs and total match funding for all AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs for FY2017.¹⁹

The national level ROI is calculated for the federal government only. In this measure, program benefits are only weighed against federal CNCS spending because budgeted match spending is not a direct federal investment and is provided by nonfederal entities.

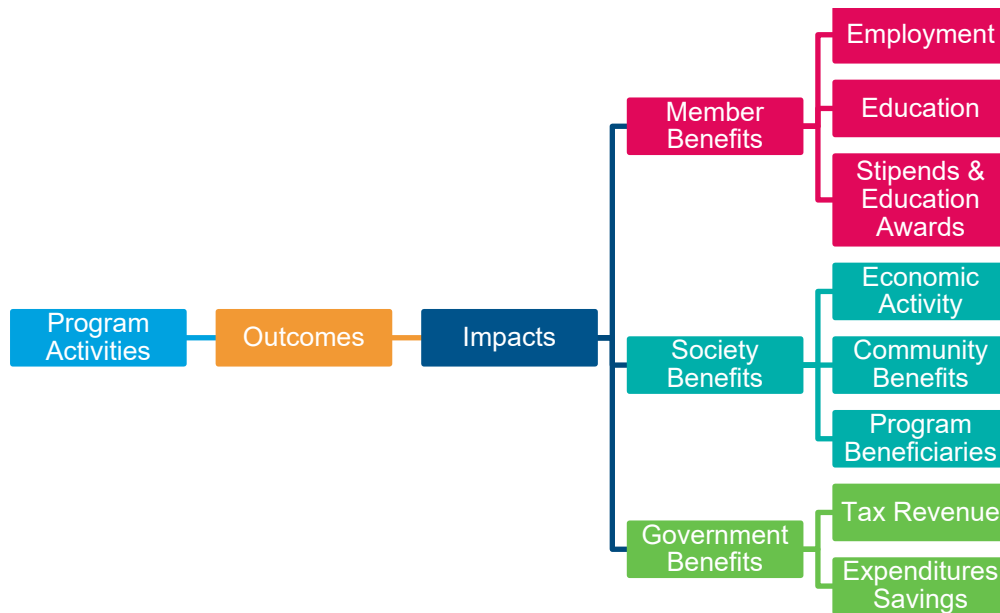
In addition to the direct costs above, the opportunity cost of members serving in AmeriCorps for a service term instead of working is also incorporated into the analysis. Specifically, the forgone earnings that AmeriCorps members would have earned (and the taxes on those earnings they would have paid) are calculated using information on the demographics of members and employment and wage data from the American Community Survey and the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). These forgone earnings, and associated tax revenue, are considered a cost to national service programming.

4.2 Benefit Methods

The goal of the benefits analysis is to capture all outcomes that are determined to result from AmeriCorps and Senior Corps across all six CNCS focus areas that can be supported by available data and to ascribe a monetary value to as many of these outcomes as possible. To accomplish this, an analytical framework was developed to estimate the benefits of CNCS's programs. The analytical framework is based on an extensive literature review that collected information on the various outcomes associated with AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs. The primary focus was to synthesize past program evaluations and CNCS studies that provided evidence based on rigorous analytical methods, including quasi-experimental design studies and randomized controlled trials, and identify outcomes that could be reasonably monetized. Specific studies provided by CNCS as well as those available on CNCS's Evidence Exchange were used as part of this process. Studies were grouped into one of the six CNCS focus areas and some of the activities they captured include providing academic or employment preparation assistance to underserved populations, building or repairing infrastructure, adding capacity to existing programs and organizations, and offering nutrition education to youth. Specific outcomes were then identified based on the contents and associated impacts of the studies reviewed. Only the outcomes that could be monetized and likely would not have occurred without the AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs were included. Monetizable outcomes were then further segmented into whether their associated impacts were realized by society, members, or the government. Exhibit 4 shows an example of this process flow.

¹⁹ Budgeted match spending does not equate to the actual match used and collected by national service program grantees. On their grant applications, programs must denote the nonfederal match they are expecting to receive for the upcoming fiscal year. Thus, this metric represents a summation of those self-reported amounts across all grantees. Given this, it is possible that the actual match was higher than the budgeted match initially reported. Also, to align with CNCS's FY2017 budget and to be consistent with excluding federal funds appropriated for Innovation and Demonstration, budgeted match funding totals for the Volunteer Generation Fund and all Call to Service Initiatives (such as MLK Day and September 11th National Day of Service) are excluded from the total budgeted match funding amount used in this analysis.

Exhibit 4: Process for Determining Benefits of National Service Programs



Each subsection below describes the outcomes and corresponding benefits used in the analytical framework for members, society, and the government. Data sources as well as the methodological process used to monetize the resulting benefit types are also briefly described. A bibliography listing all program evaluations and CNCS studies used for this analysis is provided in Appendix A, and studies used to monetize benefits are footnoted. In the analytical framework, program populations were scaled up when appropriate. If a program evaluation only looks at the impacts of several sites and it is a national program that provided the same services and activities across all sites nationally, the national number of individuals served is used to monetize its associated benefits at the national level.²⁰ However, impacts of programs that only operated at the local or state level were not scaled up to the national level.

All benefits monetized are expressed in 2017 dollars.²¹ For benefits that accrue in the future, such as earnings and tax revenue, a discount rate of 3.5% is applied. The discount rate is used to compute the present value of future benefits.²²

Thirty-eight evaluations and studies were used (representing 28 programs) to capture the outcomes used to monetize the member, societal, and government benefits of the AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs. Since all AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs have not been evaluated to a level that meets the

²⁰ This process was only followed if the study’s treatment group (the number of national service program beneficiaries included in the study’s results) was deemed to be statistically representative of the number of program participants served by the program nationally.

²¹ All monetary-based metrics are expressed in 2017 dollars because the most recent, full year of CNCS budgeted federal and match funding was only available for FY2017. Moreover, at the time these calculations were completed, data collected and used from the American Community Survey was only available through 2017.

²² A discount rate of 3.5% was used for outcomes only related to additional income earned, tax revenues generated, and medical cost savings realized due to national service programs. These benefits begin to accrue during and after members have completed their service term and extend for future years. To compute the appropriate discount rate, the [Consumer Price Index \(CPI\)](#) was used to calculate the average yearly inflation rate over the past 30 years, which amounts to 3.5%.

appropriate rigor to be included in this analysis, this study does not capture all the possible societal or government benefits, which makes the resulting benefit-cost ratio and federal ROI a conservative estimate.

AmeriCorps and Senior Corps Programs Whose Benefits were Monetized and Included in this Analysis

- Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee: SPARK Early Literacy Program
- Citizen Schools
- City Year
- College Possible
- Community Technology Empowerment Project (CTEP)
- Equal Justice Works: Elder Justice AmeriCorps
- Florida Reading Corps
- Habitat for Humanity
- Jumpstart
- Kentucky Campus Compact: Kentucky College Coaching Program
- Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)
- Minnesota Reading Corps
- Montana Conservation Corps
- Police Assisted Addiction & Recovery Initiative (PAARI)
- Public Lands Service Coalition
- Reading Partners
- San Francisco Unified School District: Healthy Choices AmeriCorps—Mentoring for Success
- SBP
- Teach For America
- The Child Abuse Prevention Center: Birth & Beyond Family Resource Center Initiative
- Up2Us Sports: Coach Across America Program
- Veterans Service and Conservation Corps programs operated by Conservation Legacy, Mt. Adams Institute, and the Student Conservation Association (SCA)
- Washington Department of Veterans Affairs Vet Corps
- Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection: AmeriCorps Farm to School Program
- Wisconsin Reading Corps
- YouthBuild USA

The Corporation for National and Community Service provided studies and data on AmeriCorps State and National, AmeriCorps VISTA, AmeriCorps NCCC, AmeriCorps Disaster Response Teams, FEMA Corps, RSVP, Foster Grandparents, and Senior Companions.

4.2.1 Member Benefits

AmeriCorps and Senior Corps members benefit from the service activities they perform in several ways. Evaluations have shown that participating in AmeriCorps leads to higher skill acquisition, increased educational attainment, and increased income from employment in jobs that would otherwise not be attainable.²³ The increase in earnings due to employment gains—resulting from human capital

²³ Friedman, E., Freeman, B., Phillips, B., Rosenthal, L., Robinson, D., Miller, H., & Porowski, A. (2016, August 22). AmeriCorps Alumni Outcomes: Final Survey Technical Report. Retrieved from https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/evidenceexchange/FR_AmeriCorpsAlumniOutcomesFinalTechReport.pdf; Markovitz, C., Schneider, G., Jastrzab, J. A., & Frumkin, P. (2008, April). Improving Lives and Communities: Perspectives on 40 Years of VISTA Service. Retrieved from https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/evidenceexchange/FR_Imprv_LivesComm_40YrsVISTASvc_2008.pdf; Spera, C., Ghertner, R., Nerino, A., & DiTommaso, A. (2013, June). Volunteering as a Pathway to Employment:

accumulation during their term of service—is the primary AmeriCorps member outcome included in the cost-benefit analysis. Other member benefits include the living allowances members earn during their service and the stipends or education awards they receive when they complete their term of service.

For Senior Corps members, studies have demonstrated that participation in national service programs improves physical and mental health and well-being and results in greater life satisfaction.²⁴ Senior Corps members benefit from program involvement in terms of reduced medical costs associated with improved health outcomes. Income-eligible Senior Corps members who participate in the Foster Grandparents or Senior Companions program also receive an hourly stipend for their service, which represents a direct benefit to Senior Corps members. Exhibit 5 summarizes these different member benefits by CNCS program and includes their associated outcomes (labeled in parentheses). Detailed methodologies describing these outcomes and how their associated impacts are monetized into members’ benefits are enumerated below.

Exhibit 5: Member Benefits Realized from National Service Programs by CNCS Program

CNCS Program	Member Benefits
AmeriCorps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AmeriCorps VISTA stipends (monetary awards) • Education awards (monetary awards) • Living allowances (monetary awards) • Additional earnings (employment and increased educational attainment)
Senior Corps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health cost savings (improved health) • Stipends (monetary awards)

For the AmeriCorps program, three outcomes were used to monetize benefits of the program: (1) receipt of monetary awards, (2) increased educational attainment, and (3) employment.

To monetize monetary awards, CNCS provided the average dollar amount of VISTA stipends, educational awards, and living allowances as well as the number of members who received these respective benefits for all AmeriCorps programs for FY2017. The sum of these awards is the direct monetary benefit to AmeriCorps members.

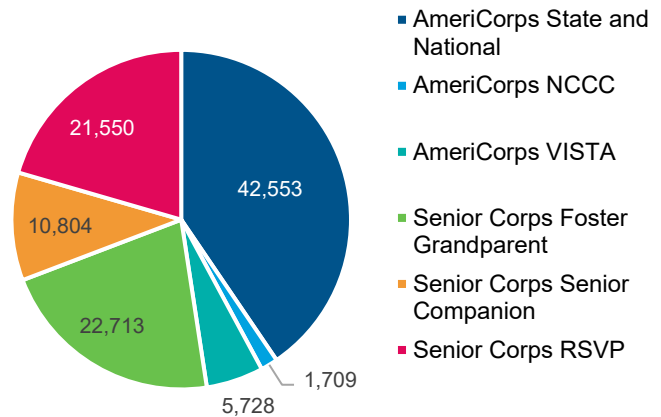
To monetize increased educational attainment and employment outcomes, additional lifetime earnings realized by AmeriCorps members as a result of these outcomes are calculated. To calculate members’ additional lifetime earnings a variety of data is examined.

Does Volunteering Increase Odds of Finding a Job for the Out of Work? Retrieved from https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/upload/employment_research_report.pdf; Zeidenberg, M., Freeman, B., Friedman, E., & Porowski, A. (2016, April 27). Results from the National Student Clearinghouse Data Match: New Methods for Assessing AmeriCorps Alumni Outcomes. Retrieved from https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/evidenceexchange/FR_NatlStudent_ClearinghouseMatch_Alumni_Outcomes_2016.pdf.

²⁴ Georges, A., Fung, W., Smith, J., Liang, J., Sum, C., & Gabbard, S. (2018, September). Longitudinal Study of Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion Programs: Service Delivery Implications and Health Benefits to the Volunteers. Retrieved from https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/evidenceexchange/Longitudinal_Study_of_Foster_Grandparent_and_Senior_Companion_Programs_FINAL_508.pdf; Tan, E. J., Georges, A., Gabbard, S. M., Pratt, D. J., Nerino, A., Roberts, A. S., ... Hyde, M. (2016). The 2013–2014 Senior Corps Study: Foster Grandparents and Senior Companions. *Public Policy & Aging Report*, 26(3), 88–95. doi: 10.1093/ppar/prw016.

First, data on the number of full-time equivalent (FTEs) members was collected from CNCS for FY2017. Full-time equivalents are used instead of a gross member count because depending on the AmeriCorps program type, service terms vary in length. AmeriCorps members can serve in full-time, part-time, or even quarter-time positions and each has a different service hour proxy. For example, a full-time position requires 1,700 hours of service within a 12-month service term, while a part-time position serves 900 hours in a year. The breakdown of FTEs by AmeriCorps and Senior Corps program type are shown in Exhibit 6.

Exhibit 6: Full-Time Equivalent Members by AmeriCorps and Senior Corps Program



Next, data on the proportion of AmeriCorps members that enroll in and complete various levels of education are collected and examined using a CNCS study that looked at AmeriCorps member educational outcomes post-service.²⁵ This study specified the portion of AmeriCorps members who enrolled in college in or after their program exit year, and it provided a segmentation of higher-educational attainment among members who enrolled in post-secondary education, including associate, bachelor’s, and graduate degree completion. To estimate the number of members who received these post-secondary degrees as a result of their participation in AmeriCorps, the educational completion rates of AmeriCorps members (provided in the study) were compared to similar completion rates for the entire population provided by the U.S. Census.

Methodology for Impact of Additional Educational Attainment

It’s important to note that the proxies used for additional income, lifetime government savings, and lifetime government revenue realized for every additional college or high school graduate take the difference between the educational level attained post-program and the level preprogram. For instance, if an AmeriCorps member or program participant obtains a bachelor’s degree as an outcome to participation in a national service program, additional income earned would be the difference between the average income of someone who has a bachelor’s degree and that of someone who only has a high school diploma. This process is also followed to calculate the additional lifetime taxes paid, which falls under government revenue. For government savings, the average per person costs in public health, criminal justice, or welfare expenditures for someone with a bachelor’s degree is subtracted from that of someone with only a high school diploma. Higher educational attainment is associated with less dependence on government assistance programs and lower incarceration rates.²⁵ When an associate degree is obtained as a result of national service, the comparison for these monetary proxies is between that of someone with an associate degree and that of someone with only a high school diploma. In the case of AmeriCorps members, if a member obtains a graduate degree as a result of national service participation, then the additional income, taxes paid, and government cost savings would be compared with someone who has a bachelor’s degree. If a high school diploma was an outcome of participation in national service, the respective comparisons would be of someone with a high school diploma and someone with less than a high school diploma. These proxies and this process are utilized whenever there are college or high school completion outcomes being monetized.

²⁵ Zeidenberg, M., Freeman, B., Friedman, E., & Porowski, A. (2016, April 27). Results from the National Student Clearinghouse Data Match: New Methods for Assessing AmeriCorps Alumni Outcomes. Retrieved from https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/evidenceexchange/FR_NatlStudent_ClearinghouseMatch_AlumniOutcomes_2016.pdf.

For example, the bachelor's degree completion rate among AmeriCorps members was compared to that of the general population to determine the number of members who graduated from a 4-year academic institution due to their involvement in AmeriCorps.

The Impact of AmeriCorps on Member Employment

A 2017 study of AmeriCorps alumni found that serving in AmeriCorps can further employment opportunities. Eight out of ten alumni said AmeriCorps benefited their career path and 42% of the alumni who were employed within six months of service reported that they found their job through a connection made in AmeriCorps.²⁹

Finally, data on the employment outcomes of AmeriCorps members was examined from a CNCS study²⁶ that reported the percentage of AmeriCorps members that were employed six months before and six months after their service term.²⁷ To calculate the sum of additional earnings, a two-step process was employed using the data described above. First, the difference in the percentage of AmeriCorps members that were employed pre- and post-service was applied to the number of

AmeriCorps full-time equivalents to determine the number of additional adults employed due to their AmeriCorps service. Second, the segmentation of highest educational attainment levels was applied to the additional number of members employed as a result of participation in AmeriCorps. For instance, the aforementioned CNCS study found that roughly 32% of AmeriCorps members had a bachelor's degree for their highest level of educational attainment after their program exit year.²⁸ This 32% was applied to the additional number of AmeriCorps members employed due to program service. Then, for this portion of the additional employed population who has a bachelor's degree as their highest education level, the difference between the average annual income of someone with a bachelor's degree versus a high school diploma was used, based on census data.²⁹ The same process was followed for an associate degree, graduate degree, and high school diploma.

The Senior Corps program, given its targeted volunteer population of adults aged 55 and older, does not have outcomes associated with educational attainment or employment. However, several studies found that volunteering is associated with improved physical and mental health outcomes, such as better self-

²⁶ Blagg, K., & Blom, E. (2018, September). Evaluating the Return on Investment in Higher Education: An Assessment of Individual- and State-Level Returns. Retrieved from https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/99078/evaluating_the_return_on_investment_in_higher_education.pdf; Harlow, C. (2003, April). Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report: Education and Correctional Populations. Retrieved from <https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/ecp.pdf>.

²⁷ Friedman, E., Freeman, B., Phillips, B., Rosenthal, L., Robinson, D., Miller, H., & Porowski, A. (2016, August 22). AmeriCorps Alumni Outcomes: Final Survey Technical Report. Retrieved from https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/evidenceexchange/FR_AmeriCorpsAlumniOutcomesFinalTechReport.pdf.

²⁸ Zeidenberg, M., Freeman, B., Friedman, E., & Porowski, A. (2016, April 27). Results from the National Student Clearinghouse Data Match: New Methods for Assessing AmeriCorps Alumni Outcomes. Retrieved from https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/evidenceexchange/FR_NatlStudent_ClearinghouseMatch_AlumniOutcomes_2016.pdf.

²⁹ Trostel, P. (2015). It's Not Just the Money: The Benefits of College Education to Individuals and to Society. Retrieved from <https://www.luminafoundation.org/files/resources/its-not-just-the-money.pdf>.

³⁰ Friedman, E., Freeman, B., Phillips, B., Rosenthal, L., Robinson, D., Miller, H., & Porowski, A. (2016, August 22). AmeriCorps Alumni Outcomes: Final Survey Technical Report. Retrieved from https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/evidenceexchange/FR_AmeriCorpsAlumniOutcomesFinalTechReport.pdf.

rated health and greater life satisfaction. A CNCS study focused on evaluating the health outcomes of Senior Companions and Foster Grandparents program members found that those in a Senior Corps program reported a significant reduction in poor health over time when compared with similar adults in the general population.³¹ To monetize this impact, proxies from the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey were used.³² Specifically, the difference between the annual mean medical costs of a senior that has a perceived poor versus excellent health status was applied to the Senior Corps members who experienced improved health due to program participation. This monetized benefit translated into both member and government savings, and the distribution was dependent on the portion of seniors who relied on public health insurance (i.e. Medicare) versus other forms of health care coverage. These federal cost savings in public health are further described in the Government Benefits section.

As mentioned previously, another outcome associated with the Senior Corps program is the hourly stipend some members receive for their service, which in FY2017 was \$2.65 per hour. Stipends are awarded to Senior Corps members who are income eligible and are serving in either the Foster Grandparents or Senior Companions program. The income eligibility gives low-income seniors the ability to serve in Senior Corps programs without incurring extra costs themselves. The stipend is tax-free and can be spent on member needs such as those related to transportation, food purchases, or medication.³³ The total stipend amount for FY2017 paid out by the federal government and match funds from nonfederal entities was provided directly by CNCS. The stipend amount is considered a direct benefit to Senior Corps members.

4.2.2 Society Benefits



There are numerous and varying types of outcomes related to CNCS's AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs that result in benefits to society. This study focuses on those that can be sensibly monetized based on existing data, such as activities that include direct economic output and those that lead to reductions in costs to society. Given the myriad outcomes and impacts that AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs have on society and the communities these programs directly serve, several methods and sources are used to

place a monetary value on those outcomes. Generally, to monetize outcomes that produce a direct economic value, earnings and the market rate costs of outputs are estimated. To monetize outcomes that do not produce a direct economic output, a dollar value is ascribed using financial proxies. Exhibit 7 summarizes the society benefits realized for each outcome used in this analysis; more detailed examples are discussed below.

³¹ Tan, E. J., Georges, A., Gabbard, S. M., Pratt, D. J., Nerino, A., Roberts, A. S., ... Hyde, M. (2016). The 2013–2014 Senior Corps Study: Foster Grandparents and Senior Companions. *Public Policy & Aging Report*, 26(3), 88–95. doi: 10.1093/ppar/prw016.

³² U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. (n.d.). Medical Expenditures Panel Survey. Retrieved from <https://www.meps.ahrq.gov/mepsweb/>.

³³ Corporation for National and Community Service. (2012). Senior Corps: Stipends Distributions–Foster Grandparents. Retrieved from https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/resource/rr11-sc-stipends-fgp-ho2_4-13-12%20%281%29.pdf; Corporation for National and Community Service. (2012). Senior Corps: Stipends Distributions–Senior Companions. Retrieved from <https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/resource/rr11-sc-stipends-scp-ho1-4-13-12.pdf>.

Exhibit 7: Society Benefits Realized from National Service Programs by Outcome

Construction

- Cost savings for building a home
- Cost savings for rehabbing a home
- Cost savings on placing families in shelters post-disaster from reduced construction time for building a home

Improved Emotional, Mental, or Physical Health

- Reduced spending on mental health services post-disaster
- Costs savings due to a decrease in childhood obesity
- Costs savings due to individuals no longer having an opioid addiction
- Cost savings due to improved health for senior caregivers
- Reduced spending on assisted living facilities

Employment

- Additional income earned due to improved employment outcomes

Higher Educational Attainment

- Additional income earned due to increased high school graduation rates
- Additional income earned due to increased college degree completion rates

Additional Capacity

- Cost savings due to hours served by national service members
- Resources gained from national service members

Some programs deploy national service members to build and improve affordable housing for families and individuals in need. Others construct or rehabilitate housing damaged by natural disasters. Studies for these programs provided data on the cost savings and reduction in construction time from having national service programs build homes for disaster survivors and on the number of homes built annually with the help of national service members. Since program data showed that national service programs build homes for less than the market rate, construction cost savings for building a house—using the average cost of building a home—represent a direct savings to society. Since these programs help speed up the time involved in building homes for disaster survivors, families spend less time in temporary or emergency shelters. This translates into cost savings to society because families require supportive services for a shorter period as a result of the work completed by AmeriCorps and Senior Corps members.

Another outcome extracted from several national service program evaluations is the improved emotional, mental, and physical health of program beneficiaries after they receive post-disaster services. For programs that provide these services, studies indicate that those who were served experienced an increase in emotional wellness compared to those who received assistance from entities not supported by AmeriCorps or Senior Corps members. This results in health care cost savings to individuals and the government. Improved physical health among children and youth is an outcome realized by programs that leverage AmeriCorps members to disseminate health education information and facilitate physical education activities at schools. These programs had rigorous studies completed that evaluated the healthy

food intake and physical fitness levels of children receiving these services. Medical costs associated with childhood obesity are used to determine the benefits of these programs.³⁴

Other programs supported by AmeriCorps members help law enforcement agencies create and support nonarrest pathways to drug treatment and recovery. Evaluations of these programs found improved health outcomes among the individuals served. For example, the evaluations found that many individuals referred and directly placed in treatment services through national service program initiatives ended up abstaining from substance use for several months after treatment completion, resulting in cost savings to the public health system.



Other outcomes related to improved health stem from national service programs that offer independent living services and assistance to the elderly population. Studies that evaluated the impact on beneficiaries of these programs were utilized to determine associated society benefits. Service members provide companionship and assist with daily activities, improving health outcomes and helping seniors live longer. These outcomes result in savings to the health care system, calculated using

the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey.³⁵ Other studies found that seniors who received these services were able to remain living in their homes longer, as opposed to needing assisted living facilities, saving costs to society associated with placing seniors in nursing homes or other institutional care.

A number of rigorous evaluations found improved employment outcomes among individuals participating in AmeriCorps programs, such as those that offer computer literacy skills and education classes, financial counseling services, employment placement assistance, and job training to adults. These improved employment outcomes led to more wages earned and subsequent benefits to society and government, such as savings in public assistance expenditures.

There are many national service programs that leverage AmeriCorps or Senior Corps members to improve the academic achievement of students at all grade levels and of those enrolled in college. General activities include tutoring, mentoring, and academic advising and counseling. The outcomes extracted for these types of programs include: (1) post-secondary educational enrollment, (2) college completion, and (3) high school graduation. For all these outcomes, the additional number of students who enrolled in college or who completed college or high school due to participation in national service programs was conservatively estimated using a baseline metric either provided by the program evaluations themselves or the National Center for Education Statistics. The differences between program outcomes and the associated baseline metrics were used to determine the number of students who enrolled in college, graduated from college, or completed high school as a result of program participation.

For the post-secondary educational enrollment outcome, the college enrollment rates of students involved in AmeriCorps programs are captured in these programs' respective evaluations. Broadly, these programs

³⁴ Finkelstein, E. A., Graham, W. C. K., & Malhotra, R. (2014). Lifetime Direct Medical Costs of Childhood Obesity. Retrieved from <https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/pediatrics/133/5/854.full.pdf>.

³⁵ U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. (n.d.). Medical Expenditures Panel Survey. Retrieved from <https://www.meps.ahrq.gov/mepsweb/>.

provide various forms of coaching and support to high school students so they are prepared to enter and persist in college. Since only program-specific college enrollment rates are included in these studies, either college graduation rates provided separately by program staff or appropriately matched rates from various sources are used to estimate how many students enrolled in college and received a post-secondary degree due to participation in an AmeriCorps program. To monetize society benefits related to this outcome, a proxy that represents the additional income earned due to obtaining a college-level degree was used; this same proxy source is leveraged throughout the benefits analysis to monetize the additional income due to higher-educational attainment among program beneficiaries.³⁶

For high school graduation outcomes, society benefits are derived from program evaluations where: (1) students are in middle or high school and high school graduation rates are provided, (2) students are in elementary, middle, or high school and their on-track-to-graduate status is provided, (3) students are in kindergarten or early elementary school and they achieved reading proficiency by third grade, and (4) students are in preschool and are enrolled in a comprehensive early-education program. All these outcomes are matched to high school graduation rates and monetized based on relevant income measures. The proxy to determine the additional income earned as a result of graduating high school was used to quantify the benefit to society.³⁷

Where studies evaluated the impact of national service on early-education warning indicators—such as attendance rates, behavior, and course performance—an on-track-to-graduate high school status was determined.³⁸ These studies provided the percentage of program participants deemed to be on track to graduate high school based on their performance in the early-warning indicators. Then, a proxy that represents the graduation rates of students who are considered to be on track was applied to calculate the number of additional program participants who will graduate high school due to these national service programs.³⁹ Relevant income measures were then applied as a societal benefit.



Other evaluations of education-based national service programs focus on the benefits of early-education interventions designed to increase students' literacy and reading proficiency. To monetize the benefits of these programs, the number of additional students who reached their elementary grade's respective reading or literacy benchmark as a result of the national service interventions was determined. Then a proxy that represents the graduation rate of students who are able

³⁶ Trostel, P. (2015). It's Not Just the Money: The Benefits of College Education to Individuals and to Society. Retrieved from <https://www.luminafoundation.org/files/resources/its-not-just-the-money.pdf>.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Bruce, M., Bridgeland, J. M., Fox, J. H., & Balfanz, R. (2011). On Track for Success: The Use of Early Warning Indicator and Intervention Systems to Build a Grad Nation. Retrieved from http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/on_track_for_success.pdf.

³⁹ Network for College Success & University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration. (2017). The Network for College Success Freshman On-Track Toolkit. Retrieved from https://ncs.uchicago.edu/sites/ncs.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/NCS_OTToolkit_2ndEd_August_2017.pdf.

to read at a proficient level in third grade was applied.⁴⁰ The proxy connects these elementary school-based impacts to a high school graduation rate and quantifies the number of additional students who would eventually graduate from high school based on their ability to achieve third grade literacy standards as a result of the interventions provided by national service members. Relevant income measures were then applied as a societal benefit.

Evaluations that measured the outcomes of national service programs that provided kindergarten preparedness programming to preschoolers are also incorporated in this analysis. Again, high school graduation rates, and subsequent income measures, are used to monetize benefits to society. A proxy from a longitudinal study was leveraged to measure the impact of a comprehensive preschool program and relate that to a high school graduation rate several years later.⁴¹ The high school completion rate from this proxy was applied to the population served through these AmeriCorps programs to estimate the number of additional students who would graduate high school due to program participation.

The final outcome included in this study that benefits society is the added capacity provided by members to organizations they serve. This outcome spans across CNCS's six focus areas as members' service helps augment (but does not displace) labor needed to accomplish these entities' objectives and missions. Some of the activities where this outcome is applicable include providing legal assistance and support services to victims of abuse and exploitation, helping students improve their academic outcomes through tutoring or classroom instruction, and generally providing extra support to local and national organizations. To monetize the impact of members providing legal support services through national service programs, the number of clients whose legal issues were resolved due to the assistance of AmeriCorps members was identified, and an appropriately matched hourly wage from BLS was applied to the product of the average hours served per case and the number of resolved cases for the most recent program year. This monetary value represents direct savings to society.

Also, studies show that the additional capacity provided by national service members results in improved educational test scores, an impact that is equivalent to extra months of learning for students. Cost savings to society are determined from the hours saved and spent because of members providing academic support and instruction to students. Specifically, hourly wages from BLS are applied to the hour totals based on matching the responsibilities and tasks of these different member roles with that of similar occupations.

Finally, some national service members support the operations of a specific organization, such as AmeriCorps VISTA or Senior Corps RSVP members. Because the nature of the activities they perform during their service term varies widely, the federal minimum wage was applied to the total hours served to monetize the society benefit. National service members who serve in these contexts also provide capacity building to their respective organizations and carry out activities such as recruiting community volunteers, collecting in-kind resources, and writing grants to support and scale impact.

⁴⁰ Hernandez, D. (2012). Double Jeopardy: How Third-Grade Reading Skills and Poverty Influence High School Graduation. Retrieved from <https://gradelevelreading.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/Double-Jeopardy-Report-030812-for-web1.pdf>.

⁴¹ Reynolds, A. J., Ou, S. R., & Temple, J. A. (2018). A Multicomponent, Preschool to Third Grade Preventive Intervention and Educational Attainment at 35 Years of Age. *JAMA Pediatrics*, 172(3), 247. doi: 10.1001/jamapediatrics.2017.4673.

See Appendix A for a list of evaluations and other studies that were used to determine program outcomes for the various societal benefits described above.

4.2.3 Government Benefits

Government benefits consist of additional tax revenue collected and savings in government expenditures resulting from program impacts on society and members, as described in earlier sections. The additional tax revenue collection captured includes federal and state income taxes from greater earnings, Social Security taxes from greater earnings, and state and local sales taxes from additional consumer spending. This includes government revenue that is generated from lifetime taxes paid by members and program beneficiaries who experience increased earnings, resulting from greater educational attainment and improved employment outcomes as a result of CNCS programs. Additionally, the service performed by AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs can supplement government assistance with local, volunteer-based, community services and ultimately reduce reliance on government programs. The savings in government expenditures captured in this cost-benefit analysis include reductions in public assistance (such as TANF, SNAP, and housing assistance), health care spending (such as Medicaid and Medicare), costs related to building organizational capacity, child welfare costs, and criminal justice spending.

For the benefit-cost ratio, benefits from all levels of government are included. For instance, fiscal benefits such as savings to state and federal corrections as well as additional federal and state income taxes generated are included. However, for the federal ROI, only fiscal gains to the federal government are included; benefits realized by state or local governments are excluded. The benefits specific to the federal government include tax revenue generation from additional federal income and Social Security taxes resulting from AmeriCorps and Senior Corps program outcomes. The gains in federal tax revenue along with the savings in federal expenditures represent the total realized benefits to the federal government alone. Exhibit 8 summarizes the fiscal benefits—both cost savings and revenue gains for members and society—for all levels of government used in this cost-benefit analysis. The exhibit also shows these benefits' associated outcomes (labeled in the exhibit with parentheses). Detailed explanations of the program outcomes used, their associated benefits, and how they are monetized based on the data provided by program evaluations are described below.

Exhibit 8: Government Benefits Realized from National Service Programs

	Government Benefits	
	Savings	Revenue
Program Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lifetime cost savings in public assistance, social insurance, and corrections costs (post-secondary enrollment and completion) • Health care cost savings (improved health) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local, state, and federal tax gains on stipends, education awards, and living allowances for AmeriCorps (monetary awards) • Lifetime local, state, and federal tax gains on additional earnings and consumer spending (employment)
Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lifetime cost savings in public assistance, public health, social insurance, and criminal justice (increased educational attainment) • Reduced spending on mental health services post-disaster (improved health) • Costs savings due to a decrease in childhood obesity (improved health) • Costs savings due to opioid addiction treatment (improved health) • Cost savings due to improved health for senior caregivers (improved health) • Lifetime cost savings regarding child maltreatment (child welfare) • Additional capacity (disaster response and environmental stewardship) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lifetime local, state, and federal tax gains on additional income (employment and additional educational attainment) • Taxes from economic activity (construction)

The post-secondary educational enrollment and completion data for AmeriCorps members (described in the Member Benefits section) is used to calculate lifetime government savings using a proxy that represents the reduction in public assistance, social insurance, and criminal justice spending for every additional college graduate.⁴² These monetary values are applied to the number of additional college graduates as a result of participation in AmeriCorps programs. However, in this scenario, the additional fiscal benefits are calculated by the different educational attainment levels achieved by members. To monetize these savings, the difference in per-person lifetime government savings between the educational level attained pre- versus post-service is used to conservatively calculate benefits. As noted earlier, higher-educational attainment is associated with less dependence on government assistance programs and a lower incarceration rate.⁴³ Applying these lifetime government savings to the additional number of members who received these different post-secondary degrees results in fiscal benefits to the government. This same methodology, related to government savings that stem from education gains, is also applied to all national service program beneficiaries who obtain a college-level degree as a result of program participation. Lifetime government savings are realized for members and program participants due to AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs.

⁴² Trostel, P. (2015). It’s Not Just the Money: The Benefits of College Education to Individuals and to Society. Retrieved from <https://www.luminafoundation.org/files/resources/its-not-just-the-money.pdf>.

⁴³ Blagg, K., & Blom, E. (2018, September). Evaluating the Return on Investment in Higher Education: An Assessment of Individual- and State-Level Returns. Retrieved from https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/99078/evaluating_the_return_on_investment_in_higher_education.pdf; Harlow, C. (2003, April). Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report: Education and Correctional Populations. Retrieved from <https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/ecp.pdf>.

For member benefits, government revenue is realized on the monetary awards AmeriCorps members receive during and after their service term because these amounts are tax-deductible. The hourly stipends received by income eligible Senior Corps members are tax-free and thus only result in a society benefit, which is described in the Member Benefits section. For the stipends and living allowances AmeriCorps members receive, federal and state income, Social Security, and state and local sales taxes are applied. For the state and local sales tax rates, the ratio of taxable expenditures for the 2017 U.S. median household income is determined based on data from the BLS Consumer Expenditure Survey. This percentage, as well as the average state and local combined sales tax rate, is applied to the additional taxable spending, based on income earned. For the federal income tax rate, the average federal income tax rate of the three lowest brackets for 2017 are taken; for state incomes taxes, national averages are calculated and applied.

To calculate the government revenue associated with increased employment and additional income, federal and state income, Social Security, and state and local sales tax rates are applied. Local, state, and federal governments receive an increase in taxes paid based on the additional income earned by program beneficiaries and members who become employed as a result of participation in national service. Some program evaluations provided the increase in average annual earnings as a result of programming, and the additional income earned is also taxed using these rates.

For outcomes where new homes are built, such as in the wake of a natural disaster or to provide affordable housing for low-income populations, real estate taxes are estimated and applied to determine government revenue at the local level. Since real estate taxes are collected at the local government level, this benefit is not factored into the federal ROI. For programs that specifically build homes in response to natural disasters, the government would only collect additional property taxes for the shorter construction time it takes national service programs to complete these homes versus other contracting services.

Program beneficiaries or members who experienced improved emotional, mental, or physical health and well-being due to participation in AmeriCorps or Senior Corps programs realize savings from reduced medical costs. As mentioned in the Member and Society Benefits sections, these cost savings are divided between the government and society and members. Specifically, society and member savings are based on the portion of the affected population (which could be children, adults, or seniors depending on the program whose benefits are being monetized) who do not have public health care coverage. However, the savings associated with the percentage of the affected population currently using Medicare or Medicaid were assigned to the government. The proxies used in this monetization process for these different member and program participant populations are outlined in the respective Member and Society Benefit sections. This methodology is used to calculate fiscal savings for when children receive healthy habit interventions in schools; seniors and their caregivers receive assistance with independent living; adults receive drug treatment referral services; individuals receive counseling services post-disaster; and seniors serve in Senior Corps programs.

Programs that train AmeriCorps members to provide weekly home visits and parenting lessons to families with an open case with child protective services also result in cost savings to the government. Based on program evaluations, families who participated in these programs and had a substantiated child protective services referral pre-program were significantly less likely to still have a substantiated referral after program completion. To monetize this impact, a proxy was used that represents the lifetime cost of a child who is a victim of abuse or neglect. This cost includes health care, child welfare, special education, and criminal

justice costs accumulated over time.⁴⁴ Applying this proxy to the number of children positively impacted through this program—based on the decrease in substantiated referrals—translates into local and state government cost savings.

In instances where program evaluations included both education and employment outcomes for the same group of program beneficiaries, additional income earned is only monetized for the employment outcome, a benefit realized by society. However, for post-secondary education gains due to AmeriCorps or Senior Corps programming, lifetime government costs saved and lifetime taxes paid are included. The process to calculate and apply lifetime government savings per college graduate (in terms of reduced public assistance, social insurance, and corrections spending) is described in the Member Benefits section, above. To account for additional tax revenue due to these education gains, a proxy that represents the lifetime taxes paid for every additional college graduate is used.⁴⁵ These monetary values are then applied to the number of additional college graduates as a result of programming. Similarly, for national service programs whose participants graduated high school as a result of program participation, government savings and revenues are realized and the same proxies are applied.⁴⁶ To account for government savings associated with increased high school graduation rates, lifetime savings in criminal justice, welfare, and public health expenditures for each additional high school graduate are applied to the number of program participants who received their high school diploma as a result of the program. Government tax revenue, including income and Social Security taxes, are calculated in the same way. This metric is then applied to the population of additional high school graduates as a result of participation in national service programs. These reduced costs in government expenditures and associated tax gains are totaled. This process is largely leveraged in education program interventions that target children and youth enrolled in elementary, middle, or high school as specified in the Society Benefits section.

Some AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs are helping government agencies meet their objectives, which can translate into government cost savings. For example, AmeriCorps programs that engage youth and veterans in service on public lands are partnering with resource management agencies and other units of local, state, and federal government to protect historic sites, maintain visitor centers, address deferred maintenance on public lands, and prepare for and mitigate the impact of natural disasters. By engaging AmeriCorps members, the government units can complete mission-critical work at a cost savings, while the members develop in-demand skills in conservation, preservation, or disaster management. The government units that are partnering with AmeriCorps and Senior Corps are not displacing labor but are adding capacity to develop and implement programs and projects and address unmet needs. Evaluations for these programs provided the number of hours members served carrying out these respective activities for a given year. To monetize the fiscal savings, the annual hours served for these programs are multiplied by an hourly wage provided by BLS. The hourly wages used are based on matching the activities and tasks of these members with similar occupations. The reason these benefits are realized by governmental entities instead of by society is that for these specific programs, national service members are supporting the efforts and initiatives of local, state, and federal government agencies.

⁴⁴ Fang, X., Brown, D. S., Florence, C. S., & Mercy, J. A. (2012). The economic burden of child maltreatment in the United States and implications for prevention. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 36(2), 156–165. doi: 10.1016/j.chiabu.2011.10.006.

⁴⁵ Trostel, P. (2015). It's Not Just the Money: The Benefits of College Education to Individuals and to Society. Retrieved from <https://www.luminafoundation.org/files/resources/its-not-just-the-money.pdf>.

⁴⁶ Levin, H. M., Belfield, C., Muennig, P. A., & Rouse, C. (2007). The costs and benefits of an excellent education for all of America's children. Retrieved from <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/af57/1f8380a94ed03875dc7adc5b907e8b47707c.pdf>.

4.3 Economic Measures

Three indicators were calculated to quantify the impact of AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs at the national level, each providing a slightly different interpretation to measuring these programs' economic performance. These include an overall benefit-cost ratio, a federal ROI, and a federal benefit-cost ratio. While the first metric is a traditional benefit-cost ratio, the third uses the same benefits but only includes federal CNCS funding as the cost component. The rationale of including this third measure for AmeriCorps and Senior Corps is that it represents the overall benefit realized across all stakeholders when just considering the taxpayers' federal contributions. Exhibit 9 enumerates the differences between these calculations and the table's shading denotes the use of the same inputs across the different indicators.

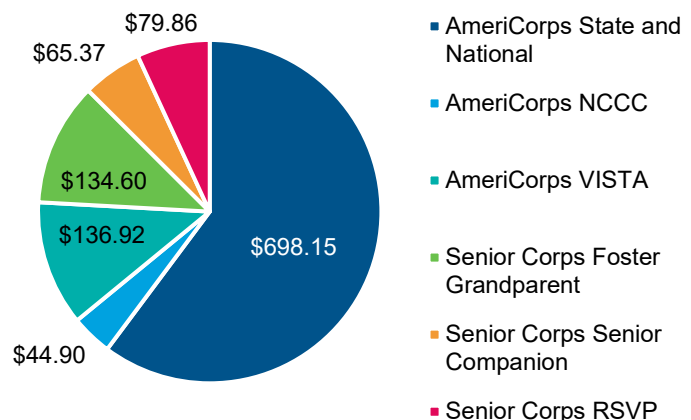
Exhibit 9: Breakdown of Economic Measures by Benefits and Costs Included

	Benefits (numerator)	Costs (denominator)
Benefit-Cost Ratio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All society, member, and government benefits derived from national service programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budgeted federal CNCS funding Budgeted match funding
Federal ROI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal tax gains and federal cost savings derived from national service programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budgeted federal CNCS funding
Federal Benefit-Cost Ratio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All society, member, and government benefits derived from national service programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budgeted federal CNCS funding

5. Results

The results and respective interpretation of the overall benefit-cost ratio, the federal ROI, and the federal benefit-cost ratio for AmeriCorps and Senior Corps are described in detail below. As noted above, Exhibit 9 differentiates how these three indicators are calculated. Exhibit 10 segments out the amount of budgeted federal and match funding allocated to each AmeriCorps and Senior Corps program for FY2017. Federal funding amounts used in these calculations were derived from CNCS's FY2017 budget while the budgeted match costs were provided directly by CNCS. As shown in Exhibit 10, almost two-thirds of budgeted federal and match funding was allocated to the program grantees and members of the AmeriCorps State and National Program in FY2017; moreover, funding for AmeriCorps programs makes up 76% of CNCS program spending for this fiscal year.

Exhibit 10: Total Budgeted Fiscal and Match Costs by CNCS Program (in millions)



5.1 Overall Benefit-Cost Ratio

The benefit-cost ratio compares the summation of all society, member, and government benefits to the combined budgeted federal and match spending. The total of all these benefits for the most recent program

year amounts to just over \$17.5 billion. As explained earlier in the Approach and Methodology section, this total is a combination of the monetized output from program beneficiaries who were served by AmeriCorps and Senior Corps members nationwide, the additional income gains and improved health benefits of members who served in AmeriCorps or Senior Corps, and the taxes generated and government savings realized as a result of the other society and member benefits derived from national service programs. The costs used for this indicator include all budgeted federal CNCS funding and match funds, totaling just under \$1.5 billion for FY2017.

The overall benefit-cost ratio for AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs at the national level is 11.8. This means that for every \$1 of combined budgeted federal and match funding invested in AmeriCorps and Senior Corps, the return to society, program members, and the government is \$11.80.

In short, the combined benefit across all stakeholders is almost 12-times higher than the investment in AmeriCorps and Senior Corps.

5.2 Federal ROI

The federal ROI represents the return on investment of national service programs to the federal government alone. In other words, this metric compares only federal fiscal benefits to federal fiscal costs to determine if the federal government is receiving a positive return for every tax dollar spent on AmeriCorps and Senior Corps. Again, fiscal benefits only include additional taxes generated or reductions in costs realized by the federal government. Any revenue gains or cost savings experienced by local or state governments are not included. As specified in the Approach and Methodology section, some examples of federal benefits include additional federal income tax revenue and Social Security taxes paid due to increases in members' or program participants' income. Benefits also include cost savings to the federal government because spending on social assistance, public health, federal corrections, and welfare is reduced. The fiscal benefits totaled \$3.6 billion dollars during the program year. The amount is one-fifth of the sum of all society, member, and government benefits used in the benefit-cost ratio, indicating the majority of benefits are realized by nonfederal government entities. The costs used in the federal ROI are budgeted CNCS funds, which were just over \$1 billion in FY2017; budgeted match funds provided by nonfederal entities are omitted because they do not come from the federal government.

The federal ROI for AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs at the national level is 3.5. This means for every \$1 of federal revenue invested in AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs, the federal government alone receives \$3.50 in return from tax revenue gains and savings.

5.3 Federal Benefit-Cost Ratio

The federal benefit-cost ratio uses components from the overall benefit-cost ratio and the federal ROI. Specifically, this indicator includes all society, member, and government benefits derived from AmeriCorps and Senior Corps (such as in the benefit-cost ratio). The cost only includes budgeted federal CNCS funding (such as in the federal ROI). Budgeted match funding provided by nonfederal entities is excluded. The federal benefit-cost ratio calculates the benefits across all stakeholders compared to the funding Congress appropriates to AmeriCorps and Senior Corps annually. In other words, this metric quantifies all benefits that are realized by society, the government, and program members due to federal tax dollars being

invested in AmeriCorps and Senior Corps. The benefits and costs used in this ratio—as listed earlier—were about \$17.5 billion and \$1 billion, respectively.

The federal benefit-cost ratio is 17.3. This means for every \$1 in federal taxes spent on AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs, the return to society, program members, and the government is \$17.30.

Of note, this metric is higher than the federal ROI because all benefits, not just those to the federal government, are included.

Exhibit 11 illustrates the economic return to society, members, and the government broken out for each of the three indicators while Exhibit 12 breaks down the benefits by stakeholder group: society, member, and the government. The monetary benefits to AmeriCorps and Senior Corps members in a program year—which is almost \$10 billion—is substantial and corroborates the considerable existing literature on the positive impacts for those who participate in these national service programs. These benefits include income gains due to members' education and employment gains post-service, medical cost savings due to improved health, and the receipt of monetary awards like stipends, living allowances, and education awards. Moreover, participation in AmeriCorps is associated with increased employability and educational attainment post-service, which translate into higher earning potential.

Exhibit 11: Net Benefits and Economic Value of National Service

	Economic Value (in millions)
Total Society, Member, and Government Benefit	+ \$17,688
Total Society, Member, and Government Cost	- \$1,495
Net Society, Member, and Government Benefits	\$16,192
Benefit-Cost Ratio	11.8
Total Federal Government Benefit	+ \$3,631
Total Federal Government Cost	- \$1,025
Net Federal Government Benefit	\$2,606
Federal ROI	3.5
Total Society, Member, and Government Benefit	+ \$17,688
Total Federal Government Cost	- \$1,025
Net Benefit	\$16,662
Federal Benefit-Cost Ratio	17.3

Note: Calculations above may not total exactly due to rounding.

Exhibit 12: Value of Benefits for Society, Members, and Government

	Economic Value (in millions)
Society Benefit	+\$2,475
Member Benefit	+ \$9,714
<i>AmeriCorps Members</i>	+ \$9,181
<i>Senior Corps Members</i>	+ 533
Government Benefit	+ 5,499
Total Society, Member, and Government Benefit	\$17,688

6. Conclusion

This cost-benefit analysis utilizes a comprehensive approach and methodology to monetize the impact of AmeriCorps and Senior Corps. Based upon the results, it is evident that investment in these national service programs results in favorable impacts across a variety of stakeholder groups. Specifically, impacts are realized by society at large (in terms of directly benefiting program beneficiaries), members themselves (in terms of fostering their professional and skills development, preparing them for future employment or educational pursuits, or improving their health and well-being), and the government (in terms of generating tax revenue and reducing public assistance spending).

National results for the program year evaluated indicate that AmeriCorps and Senior Corps results in sizable monetary benefits for all stakeholder groups. AmeriCorps members gain challenging and enriching experiences, a strong and diverse professional network, and a commitment to civic leadership. Senior Corps members experience improved health, a decrease in isolation, and other positive mental and physical health benefits associated with being active in their communities. AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs make a tangible impact in the communities they serve by leveraging national service members to help organizations fulfill their missions, improve the welfare of community residents, and engage community volunteers in meaningful service. Scaling national service programs would result in benefits being realized by a larger portion of the national population.

Overall, AmeriCorps and Senior Corp result in positive monetary benefits to the federal government and to all investors collectively.

Flint, Michigan Case Study

A case study of national service in Flint, Michigan, measured the benefit-cost ratio and ROI of CNCS programs that actively serve the Flint community. Flint was chosen for this case study because the city serves as a model for how intentionally prioritizing and fostering a robust culture of national service affects the community and its residents. Moreover, there has been increased federal and local investment in national service programs in the city over the last few years to address pressing community needs. The city of Flint, which was once dominated by a booming auto industry, has declined over the last several decades, experiencing disinvestment, poverty, unemployment, deindustrialization, urban decay, and depopulation. The economic decline was in large part driven by the departure of one of its largest employers—General Motors. GM’s decision to close its manufacturing plants in Flint triggered a major exodus of people in search of stable employment to the surrounding suburban areas and prompted an increase in urban blight, a process in which buildings are abandoned and fall to disrepair.⁴⁷ In addition, the water contamination crisis, during which the population was exposed to lead, induced by a neglected water infrastructure and which resulted in a state of emergency for the city, was discovered in 2014 and the fallout continues to affect Flint today.⁴⁸ The water crisis has had long-term repercussions on residents’ health and has ignited a widespread distrust of the city’s water source and government.⁴⁹

Downtown Flint, MI



Source: July 2019 ICF site visit



United Way
of Genesee County
Serving Genesee & Shiawassee Counties

These persistent challenges and hardships have revealed a great need in the community and exposed several gaps in terms of education, workforce development, and social services. In 2011, leaders from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the Community Foundation of Greater Flint and the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Flint began organizing around the idea of national service being a key community revitalization strategy. As a result, the Flint National Service Accelerator was established and is housed within the United Way of Genesee County. The United Way provides resources and services related to basic needs, health, education, and financial stability to residents in Genesee and Shiawassee counties. The Accelerator is a place-based approach to scale national service and provide wraparound support to the local nonprofits and national service members so they can more effectively meet the community-identified needs outlined in the city’s Master Plan.⁵⁰ The Mott Foundation has been a primary funder of the Accelerator since its inception, and the initiative has received strong support from several other private sector funders.

⁴⁷ Lazovic, B. (2017, August 27). The Rise And Fall Of Flint, Michigan, Beginning In The 1800s. Retrieved from <https://www.theodysseyonline.com/rise-fall-flint-michigan-beginning-1800s>

⁴⁸ Denchak, M. (2019, May 22). Flint Water Crisis: Everything You Need to Know. Retrieved from <https://www.nrdc.org/stories/flint-water-crisis-everything-you-need-know>

⁴⁹ Terry, N. (2018, August 03). Panelists: Flint water crisis impact will last decades. Retrieved from <https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/michigan/flint-water-crisis/2018/08/02/panel-conference-says-flint-water-crisis-impact-last-decades/892569002/>

⁵⁰ Flint National Service Accelerator. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://serviceyear.org/flintnationalservice/>

Flint's Master Plan—called “Imagine Flint”—was developed in 2013 to guide Flint for the next 20 years in spearheading initiatives, directing investment, and implementing policies that would foster the city's growth and development.⁵¹ Imagine Flint was the product of an 18-month community-driven process, which began in June 2012, and over 5,000 individuals participated in nearly 300 events throughout the master planning process. The plan contains land use designations, zoning ordinances, and other goals created in collaboration with residents and community groups that are designed to help transform Flint into a vibrant and sustainable community. The plan's framework comprises comprehensive sub-plans focused on addressing areas such as affordable housing and neighborhood development, transportation and mobility, residents' health and welfare, arts and culture, public safety, economic development and education, environmental sustainability, and infrastructure enhancement.⁵² Implementation of the plan requires robust partnerships between agencies, organizations, individuals, and other stakeholder groups.

The Flint National Service Accelerator is powered by national service and positioned to play a key role in meeting the objectives of the city's Master Plan. The initiative started with 25 AmeriCorps members in 2014 and has grown to include over 200 AmeriCorps and over 200 Senior Corps members serving the greater Flint community.⁵³ Between September 2016 and September 2017, 444 national service participants served the community's neighborhoods, schools, and organizations.⁵⁴ The national service members provide in-school and after-school support, work to reduce local crime and eliminate urban blight, provide programming in response to the water crisis (food security, developmental health, and early education), and help implement and fulfill the objectives of the city's Master Plan. For the latter, the City of Flint Master Plan Implementation AmeriCorps VISTA program is specifically designated to help support the strategies outlined in the city's Master Plan by directing community engagement and facilitating relevant projects. Some of Flint's other national service programs that address the city's needs include the Flint Community School Corps, Flint Urban Safety Corps, Flint Recovery Corps, the Boys and Girls Club AmeriCorps VISTA Program, and Senior Corps RSVP.⁵⁵



The Accelerator is helping to support the local national service programs serving Flint by coordinating member recruitment and helping to offset the costs of hosting the national service members. The Accelerator also prioritizes investing time and resources into the professional and talent development of national service members to offer them a better experience and help realize greater gains from the service programs. As their year of service ends, many members are encouraged to stay in Flint—often securing a job through the initiative's network.

⁵¹ Houseal Lavigne Associates. (2013, October 28). Imagine Flint Master Plan for a Sustainable Flint: Summary of Goals & Objectives. Retrieved from [https://www.cityofflint.com/wp-content/uploads/Flint Master Plan Summary.pdf](https://www.cityofflint.com/wp-content/uploads/Flint_Master_Plan_Summary.pdf).

⁵² Adaption Clearinghouse. (2013, October 28). Imagine Flint: Master Plan for a Sustainable Flint, Michigan. Retrieved from <https://www.adaptationclearinghouse.org/resources/imagine-flint-master-plan-for-a-sustainable-flint-michigan.html>.

⁵³ Carah, J. (2018, April 2). Impact of AmeriCorps program in Flint draws national attention. Retrieved from <https://www.flintside.com/inthenews/impact-of-ameri-corps-program-in-flint-draws-national-attention.aspx>

⁵⁴ Berman, D., Lewis-Charp, H., Schindler, Z. (2018). Community Wellness: Service Members in a Healthy Flint. Social Policy Research Associates.

⁵⁵ United Way: National Service Programs. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.unitedwaygeneseec.org/national-service-programs>

AmeriCorps and Senior Corps—combined with financial and organizational support provided by community-based players, including the United Way—are contributing to the economic transformation of Flint. The increased number of AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs and members, and the additional federal and local investment, is helping to drive Flint's improving condition and progress toward revitalization. This is underscored by the resulting benefit-cost ratio and ROI of national service programs in Flint, the city's recent labor market and socioeconomic trends, and the testimony provided by current and former national service members serving in Flint. The next sections describe the approach and results of these different analyses that highlight the central role national service has played in the Flint community.

Benefit-Cost Ratio and ROI

To quantify the impact of national service programs operating in Flint, Michigan, a benefit-cost ratio and federal ROI were completed.

Approach and Methodology

Flint's benefit-cost ratio represents the summation of all society, member, and governmental benefits derived from one year of AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programming in Flint divided by the total federal and match funding spent on these programs for that same year. To calculate costs for the benefit-cost ratio, all federal funding and match funds associated with the operation of Flint's AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs are summed. For the ROI to the federal government, only direct CNCS funding is included; other match funds from foundations and private entities are not included in this metric. Data sources for annual federal costs include the latest CNCS *Year in Review Report* for the state of Michigan,⁵⁶ and match funds were collected directly from contacts at the United Way of Genesee County.

The benefit-cost ratio includes benefits to society, members, and the government (local, state, and federal) that stem from the outcomes of AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs operating in Flint. A list of Flint-specific society and government benefits by CNCS focus area and a list of member benefits by CNCS program are in Exhibits 13 and 14, respectively. All these benefits are included in the benefit-cost ratio. Government benefits include both costs savings and additional revenue earned. These exhibits also show the benefits' associated outcomes (labeled in the exhibits with parentheses). As with the national analysis, the various benefits from these outcomes are assigned a monetary value calculated using proxies and third-party data to fully capture the monetary gains in Flint. Data sources for these benefits stem from annual progress reports for individual Flint programs collected by the United Way of Genesee County and other CNCS studies and program evaluations. To calculate the fiscal benefits (return) to the federal government from Flint's AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs, the same method is used as in the national ROI where only the tax revenue collection and savings to the federal government are estimated and included. Federal tax revenue includes increases in federal income and Social Security taxes generated from members' stipends, education awards, and living allowances as well as additional taxes collected from AmeriCorps members who obtain employment as a result of their national service. Federal government savings are related to criminal justice, welfare, social insurance, and public health expenditures. As with the national level analysis, the monetary value of benefits is expressed in 2017 dollars and a 3.5% discount rate is used when applicable.

⁵⁶ Corporation for National and Community Service. (n.d.). National Service in Michigan: Year in Review. Retrieved from https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/upload/state_profiles/pdf_2019/MI_Combined.pdf.

Exhibit 13: Societal Benefits and Associated Government Benefits from Flint National Service Programs by Focus Area

Focus Area	Society Benefits	Government Benefits	
		Savings	Revenue
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional capacity (tutoring) Additional income (increased educational attainment) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lifetime cost savings in public assistance, public health, and criminal justice (increased educational attainment) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lifetime taxes collected (increased educational attainment)
Environmental Stewardship		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional capacity (site restoration and urban and rural development) 	
Healthy Futures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crime victim and career cost savings (crime and safety)⁵⁷ Reduced child obesity cost savings (health and nutrition education) Additional capacity (health nutrition education and independent living services) Assisted living cost savings (independent living services) Caregiver health cost savings (independent living services) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Criminal justice system cost savings (crime and safety) Additional capacity (crime and safety) Reduced child obesity cost savings (health and nutrition education) Additional capacity (independent living services) Caregiver health cost savings (independent living services) 	

Exhibit 14: Member Benefits and Associated Government Benefits from Flint National Service Programs by CNCS Program

Program	Member Benefits	Government Benefits	
		Savings	Revenue
AmeriCorps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stipends, education awards, and living allowance (monetary awards) Additional earnings (employment) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lifetime cost savings in public assistance, social insurance, and criminal justice (post-secondary enrollment and completion) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local, state, and federal tax gains on additional earnings (employment) Local, state, and federal tax gains on stipends, education awards, and living allowances (monetary awards)
Senior Corps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health cost savings (improved health) Stipends (monetary awards) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health cost savings (improved health) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local, state, and federal tax gains on stipends (monetary awards)

⁵⁷ To monetize benefits related to reductions in crime, proxies from this study are used: McCollister, K. E., French, M. T., & Fang, H. (2010). The cost of crime to society: New crime-specific estimates for policy and program evaluation. *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, 108(1-2), 98–109. doi: 10.1016/j.drugalcdep.2009.12.002

For this case study, three distinct metrics were calculated to evaluate the monetary impact of national service programming specifically in Flint, Michigan. These include an overall benefit-cost ratio, a federal ROI, and a federal benefit-cost ratio. The latter metric includes the same benefits as the overall benefit-cost ratio but only includes federal CNCS funding as the cost in its calculation. The purpose of including this measure is that it represents the overall benefit that is realized from only federal taxpayer contributions. Exhibit 9 earlier in this report delineates the differences between these three calculations.

Results

The results and interpretation of the overall benefit-cost ratio, the federal ROI, and the federal benefit-cost ratio for Flint-specific national service programs are described below.

Overall Benefit-Cost Ratio

For one full year of AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs operating in Flint, the total of all monetized society, member, and government benefits was about \$80 million. This amount includes higher-educational attainment, better employment outcomes, and cost savings due to crime reduction, improved health, and decreases in government spending on social assistance, among other things. Costs for this metric included all the AmeriCorps and Senior Corps funding awarded to Flint and associated match funds used to finance one program year in Flint, roughly \$3 million.

The overall benefit-cost ratio for Flint is 27.4. This means that for every \$1 of combined federal and match funding invested in AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs operating in Flint, the return to society, program members, and the federal government is \$27.40. This combined benefit is over 27-times higher than the initial investment.

Federal ROI

The federal ROI focuses on quantifying the direct return the federal government receives because taxpayer dollars were invested in AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs in Flint. To reiterate, benefits for this metric only include federal government cost savings and additional revenue collected; savings and revenue to local or state governments are excluded. These federal-specific benefits totaled almost \$19 million for one program year. The costs in this calculation only included federal CNCS funding that these Flint-based programs received, which amounts to \$2.2 million for the most recent program year.

The federal ROI is 8.4. This means for every \$1 of taxpayer contributions invested in Flint's AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs, the federal government alone receives \$8.40, over eight times the initial amount spent.

Federal Benefit-Cost Ratio

The federal benefit-cost ratio leverages inputs from both the overall benefit-cost ratio and the federal ROI to measure the impact of national service programs in Flint. This metric measures the total return compared to the federal government's investment. Again, this metric includes all society, member, and government benefits, which totaled about \$80 million, and the CNCS cost of \$2.2 million.

The federal benefit-cost ratio is 35.9. This means that for every \$1 in federal taxes allocated to Flint's AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs, society, program members, and government receives a return of \$35.90.

Exhibit 15 shows the estimated monetized benefits and costs used in these different calculations as well as the resulting metrics.

Exhibit 15: Summary of Benefit-Cost Ratios and ROI Metrics for Flint

	Benefit-Cost Ratio	Federal ROI	Federal Benefit-Cost Ratio
Total Monetized Benefits	\$80,479,733	\$18,899,689	\$80,479,733
Total Costs	\$2,934,964	\$2,241,226	\$2,241,226
Result	27.4	8.4	35.9

Socioeconomic and Labor Market Analyses

A socioeconomic and labor market analysis for Flint was also completed to contextualize the historical and current state of the city and its residents. Specifically, for these components of this case study, demographic, socioeconomic, and labor market data for Flint, Michigan were analyzed. The primary intent of this analysis is to underscore Flint's past economic condition and recent improvement and how local AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs operating in Flint are addressing the needs of the community. Demographic and socioeconomic data is collected from the U.S. Census. Labor market information was collected from BLS. Demographic and socioeconomic data consists of measures of population size, income and earnings levels, race and ethnic composition, educational attainment, poverty, and others. Labor market information consists of measures of employment, labor force participation, employment levels by industry and occupation, and wages.

Socioeconomic and Demographic Trends

The city's historical and current demographic and economic trends were analyzed to understand how Flint's condition has changed in terms of its populations' socioeconomic characteristics. Several AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs currently operating in Flint are highlighted to demonstrate how national service is focused on supporting the city's revitalization efforts.

Historical Trends

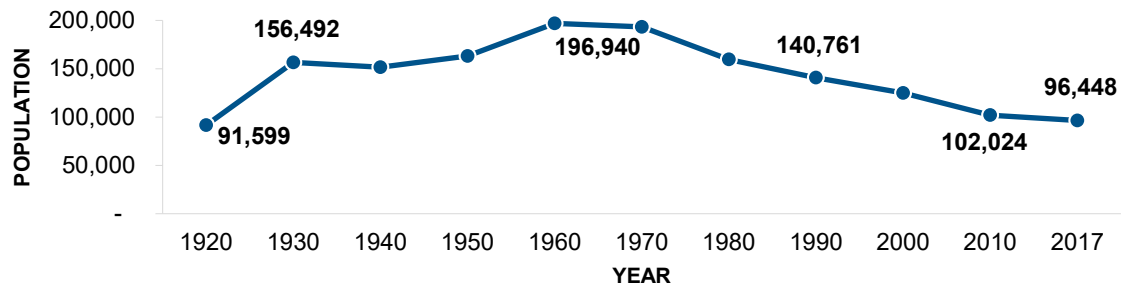
Flint has experienced major swings in its population over the last century due to concentrated economic growth followed by rapid economic decline. As shown in Exhibit 16, Flint's population grew by 71% from 1920 to 1930. This was mostly due to the booming automotive industry at that time, as employment at local car manufacturing plants rose from 49,000 to 85,000 workers in about a decade. Flint's population peaked in the 1970s at almost 200,000, driven in part by the continued expansion of automotive factories. Another contributing factor was the development of the city's infrastructure and creation of local institutions such as the University of Michigan-Flint, Mott Community College, and the Flint Cultural Center.⁵⁸ Beginning in the early 1980s, however, GM—the largest employer in Flint—greatly scaled back its local production, closing the majority of its plants in the immediate area.⁵⁹ This drove a population decline of more than 50% since the 1970s as Flint residents left the area in search of employment opportunities. By 2017, the population in Flint dropped to just over 96,000 and the population density in Flint decreased from roughly 5,800 people per square mile in 1960 to 2,870 in 2017. This decline resulted in the destabilization of many once thriving

⁵⁸ Lazovic, B. (2017, August 27). The Rise And Fall Of Flint, Michigan, Beginning In The 1800s. Retrieved from <https://www.theodysseyonline.com/rise-fall-flint-michigan-beginning-1800s>

⁵⁹ Ruble, K. (2016, January 26). The Unraveling of Flint: How 'Vehicle City' Stalled Long Before the Water Crisis. Retrieved from https://news.vice.com/en_us/article/mbn5b4/the-unraveling-of-flint-how-vehicle-city-stalled-long-before-the-water-crisis

city neighborhoods. Since 2010, Flint’s population has begun to stabilize, declining by only 5% (roughly 5,500 people) by 2017. This suggests that Flint may be on the brink of experiencing population growth for the first time in several decades as the city continues to become a more attractive source for employment due to economic recovery efforts.

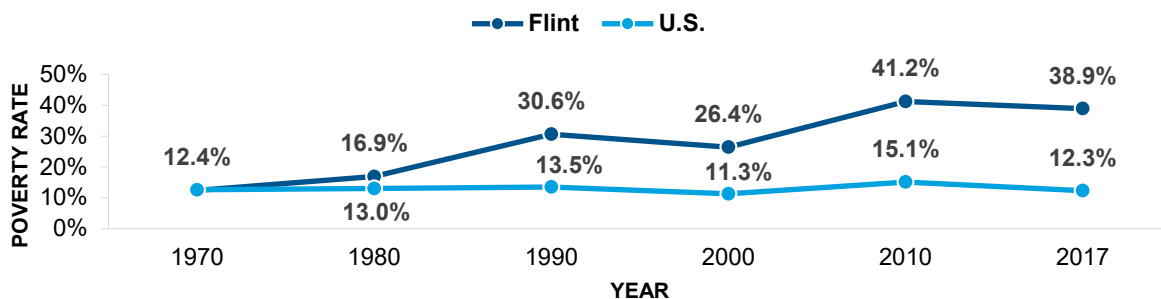
Exhibit 16: Population—Flint, Michigan 1920-2017



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Exhibit 17 below shows Flint’s poverty rate over the last several decades benchmarked against that for the entire U.S. In 1970, Flint’s poverty rate was equal to that of the U.S. at roughly 12%. However, since 1970, Flint’s poverty rate has increased substantially while that of the U.S. has stayed relatively constant. There was a particularly large spike in Flint’s poverty rate during two periods: the 1980s and 2000s. The former spike coincides with the wave of auto plant closures in the area, which may have displaced a large portion of the local workforce and forced families to leave Flint in search of employment. This disruption could have also caused a significant amount of factory workers to fall below the poverty threshold when they lost their jobs. Another large uptick in the poverty rate began in 2001 and peaked in 2010. This can be attributed to the major recession in 2008, which affected a wide variety of industries. Since 2010, Flint’s poverty rate has decreased by 2.3%, following a nationwide trend; however, it is still about 27-percentage points higher than that of the U.S. To combat this high poverty rate, some national service programs in Flint are designed to help community members establish economic self-sufficiency and improve their chances of securing employment or achieving higher-educational attainment. For the Michigan Nonprofit Association’s Pathways to Employment program, AmeriCorps VISTA members strive to eliminate poverty by preparing the local workforce and promoting college access. AmeriCorps members provide services such as helping older job seekers overcome barriers to employment, supporting the higher-educational pursuits of Girl Scouts, connecting disconnected youth with resources to become self-sufficient and secure jobs, and improving adult literacy.

Exhibit 17: Poverty Rate—Flint, Michigan and U.S. 1970-2017



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Another indicator of socioeconomic conditions in Flint is the housing market. Exhibit 18 shows the number of housing units in Flint from 1970 to 2010. Consistent with the decline in Flint’s population is the drop in the number of housing units, almost 13,000 units (or 20%) between 1970 and 2010. At the peak of the automotive industry in the city in the 1970s, there were just over 64,000 housing units in Flint. By 2010—after GM plant closings—just over 51,000 housing units existed. Additionally, the national trend toward suburbanization in the 1970s and 1980s—families leaving central cities for new housing available in the suburbs—contributed to an increase in the number of vacant housing units in Flint as families relocated outside the city. Because these houses were abandoned, they could easily offer refuge to illegal activity such as squatting and drug use. Moreover, if these vacant properties were not promptly sold or redeveloped, they would fall to disrepair and contribute to a neighborhood’s decay. As more houses are blighted, this temporarily adds to the city’s housing stock until banks or local governments demolish these foreclosed structures, which reduces the number of housing units in the city.

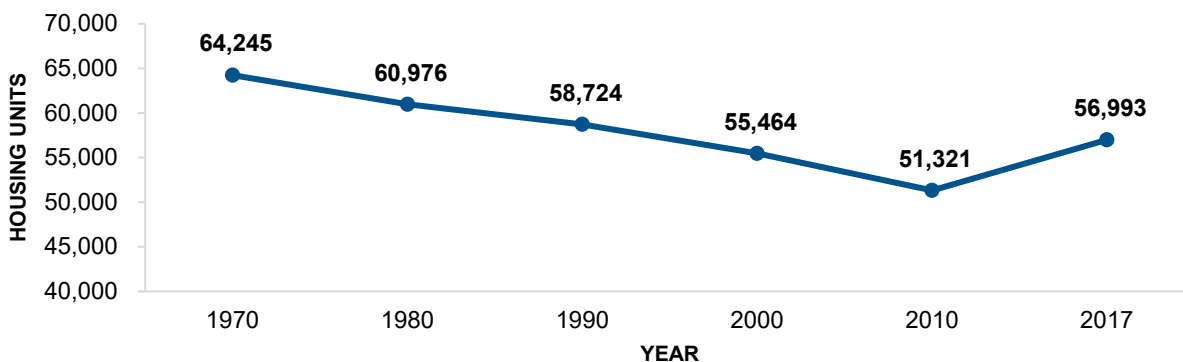
Housing Construction in Downtown Flint, Michigan



Source: Mike Naddeo from Flintsides

To combat increasing urban blight and crime, the city of Flint developed initiatives to demolish and clear out abandoned housing. This work has been supported by the Flint Urban Safety Corps and AmeriCorps NCCC, where AmeriCorps members board up the doors and windows of vacant homes, clean up properties to create safer communities and prepare for future development, and engage neighborhood volunteers to support these efforts. Flint has been experiencing an upward trend in housing development between 2010 and 2017, with the number of housing units increasing by 11% (about 6,000 units). From 2016 to 2017, the number of housing units increased by about 4,000. This suggests that residential construction is on the rise and many empty lots are being redeveloped with new housing. Several objectives of Flint’s Master Plan—supported by AmeriCorps members in the City of Flint Master Plan Implementation VISTA program—focus on diversifying the city’s housing stock, transforming vacant land into opportunities for economic development, and investing in infrastructure that meets residents’ needs. For the latter, the plan includes objectives to develop an extensive network of well-kept community parks, neighborhood centers, green infrastructure along the Flint River, recreation facilities, and other designated open spaces throughout the city.

Exhibit 18: Number of Housing Units – Flint, Michigan



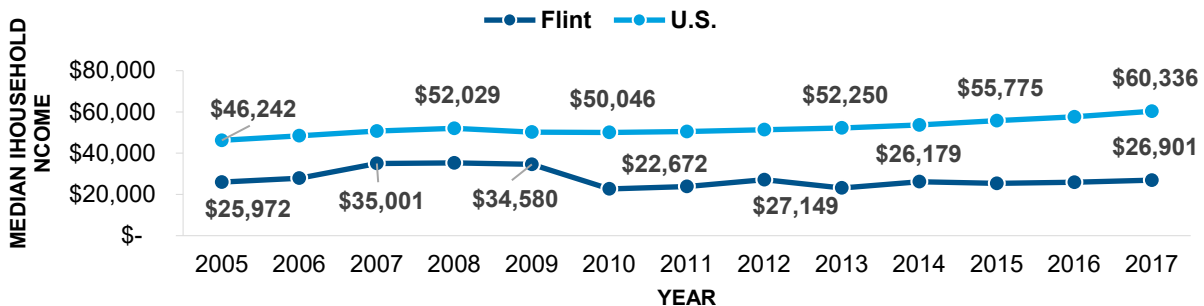
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Local Program Highlight: AmeriCorps NCCC

Living with blight is an everyday reality for Flint, and residents have repeatedly identified it as top concern. A 2015 blight elimination plan found 19,842 properties in the city needed blight elimination; of those, 14,382 were vacant lots and 5,460 were properties with structures in poor or substandard condition.⁵⁹ An AmeriCorps NCCC team of nine from the North Central Region campus of Vinton, Iowa, served with Flint’s Blight Elimination Division to support efforts to decrease the city’s urban blight and increase community safety.⁶⁰ During their short-term service, members boarded up the windows and doors of vacant structures, removed debris and garbage from abandoned housing, and mowed the lawns of these properties. Blight elimination has been one of the core activities of NCCC teams deployed to Flint over the past several years. For example, according to Flint program data, in a 26-week period from 2018 to 2019, four NCCC teams boarded up 935 abandoned homes. The Blight Elimination Division, a division of Planning and Development that oversees the work of the NCCC teams, carries out activities that directly address the blight challenges faced by Flint and its neighborhoods. Specifically, it is tasked to meet the objectives outlined in Flint’s Master Plan in terms of promoting neighborhood stabilization, targeting blight, and supporting other revitalization efforts to help Flint become a sustainable community.

As shown in Exhibit 19, the median household income in Flint has declined by 23% over the past decade, from \$35,001 in 2007 to \$26,901 in 2017, 55% lower than the median in the U.S. of roughly \$60,000. Flint’s median household income has also experienced a general downward trend since the 2008 national recession and has only marginally recovered. Between 2005 and 2017, Flint’s median household income grew by only 3.6% while that for the U.S. had a growth rate of 30.5%. However, between 2016 and 2017, Flint experienced 4% growth, which is almost the same rate as in the U.S. (4.7%). This is consistent with other data showing the recent strengthening of the city’s economy over the past few years.

Exhibit 19: Median Household Income—Flint, Michigan and U.S. 2005-2017



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Current Profile

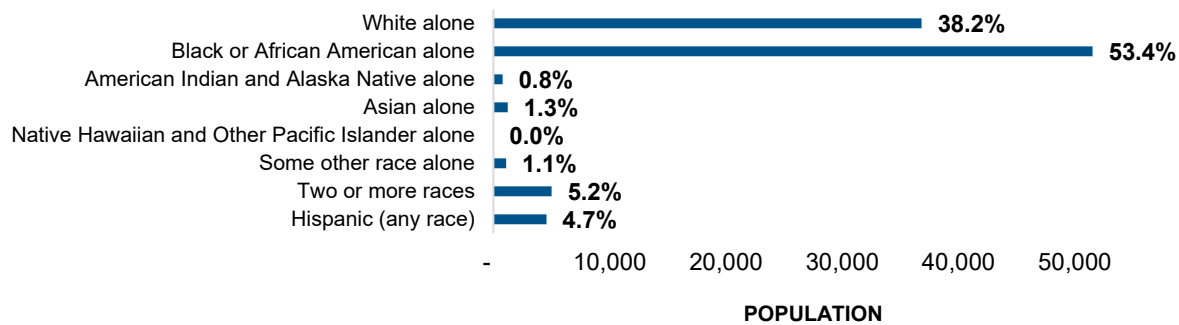
In this section, we examine the current (2017) composition, educational attainment, and socioeconomic characteristics of Flint’s population. Specifically, Exhibit 20 shows 53% of the population identified as Black or African American, 38% identified as White, and 5% identified as Hispanic. To compare, 12.7% of the U.S. population identified as Black or African American and 72.3% identified as White. In terms of educational attainment, employment, and poverty, research and data continue to show that large gaps

⁶⁰ Keefer, W., & Davis, E. (2019, September 23). It’s a never-ending race against blight in Flint, officials say. Retrieved from <https://www.mlive.com/news/2019/09/its-a-never-ending-race-against-blight-in-flint-officials-say.html>.

⁶¹ Moore, K. (n.d.). AmeriCorps NCCC Team doing Blight Elimination in Flint. Retrieved from <https://www.cityofflint.com/2017/06/09/ameri-corps-nccc-team-doing-blight-elimination-in-flint/>.

remain between minority groups and white Americans.⁶² Moreover, this sub-group was disproportionately affected by the Flint water crisis in terms of having an increased exposure to high lead levels in water.⁶³ Given this, national service programs are currently providing tailored resources and services related to health, education, and skill development to support the local population. Specifically, the Flint Recovery Corps helps these residents obtain wraparound services related to food security, nutrition, medical management, and early education - strategies that can help remediate the impact of exposure to lead.

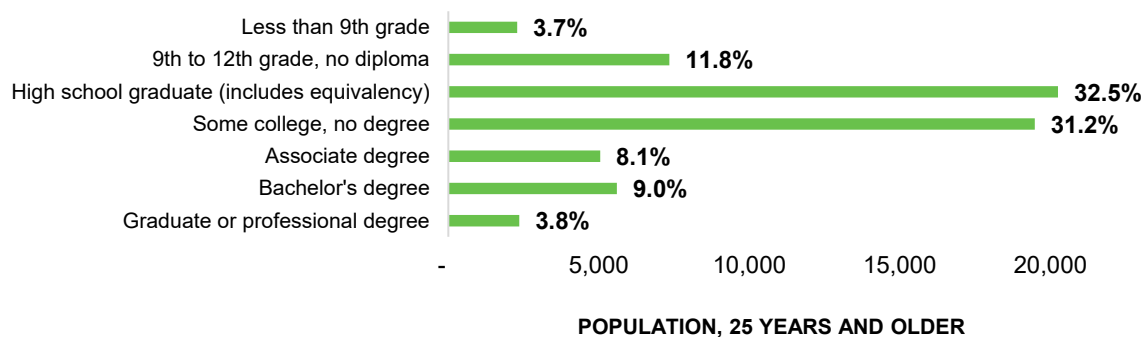
Exhibit 20: Race and Ethnicity—Flint, Michigan, 2017



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Exhibit 21 shows the educational attainment levels of Flint residents 25 years old and older. Compared to the U.S. as a whole, educational attainment levels in Flint are low. In 2017, 48% of Flint residents 25 and older had only a high school diploma or less, compared to 39% at the national level. Only 13% of the adult population in Flint had a bachelor’s degree or higher compared to 32% for the U.S. To help increase college completion, the College Advising Corps in Flint leverages AmeriCorps members to provide college preparation services and support to low-income students at Flint Southwestern Academy, striving to ensure that every graduating senior has the resources to enroll in higher education and obtain a post-secondary degree.⁶⁴

Exhibit 21: Educational Attainment—Flint, Michigan, 2017



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

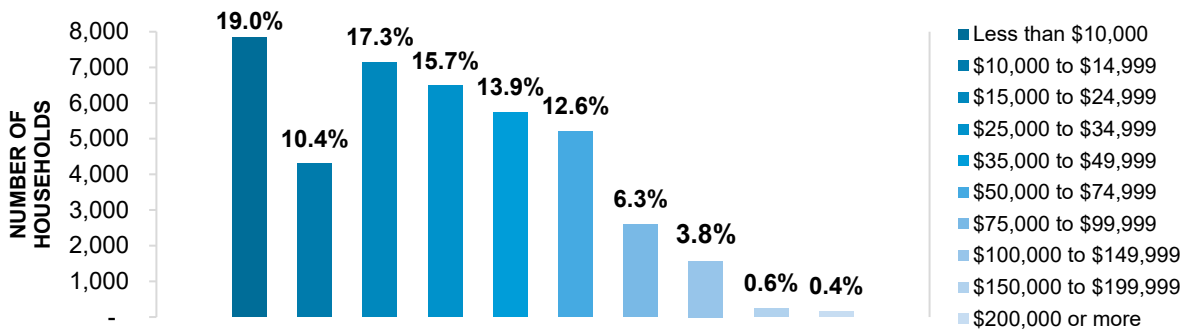
⁶² American Psychological Association. (n.d.). Ethnic and Racial Minorities & Socioeconomic Status. Retrieved from <https://www.apa.org/pi/ses/resources/publications/minorities>

⁶³ Hanna-Attisha, M., Lachance, J., Sadler, R. C., & Schnepf, A. C. (2016). Elevated Blood Lead Levels in Children Associated With the Flint Drinking Water Crisis: A Spatial Analysis of Risk and Public Health Response. *American Journal of Public Health, 106*(2), 283–290. doi: 10.2105/ajph.2015.303003.

⁶⁴ University of Michigan. (n.d.). University of Michigan. Retrieved from <https://advisingcorps.org/program/university-of-michigan/>

Exhibit 22 shows the distribution of household income across Flint’s population in 2017. Consistent with its high poverty levels, the city has a disproportionate number of households in the lower income brackets. In 2017, 62% of Flint households had an income of less than \$35,000. More than 80% of Flint households had an income less than the national median (\$60,336) and only 11% had an income of \$75,000 or more compared to 40% in the U.S. The small number of Flint households in high-income brackets could indicate a lack of higher-paying jobs in the area or that those who do earn high incomes choose to live outside the city. This speaks to other emerging needs in Flint as studies indicate that a higher household income is associated with improved health and longevity.⁶⁵

Exhibit 22: Household Income—Flint, Michigan, 2017



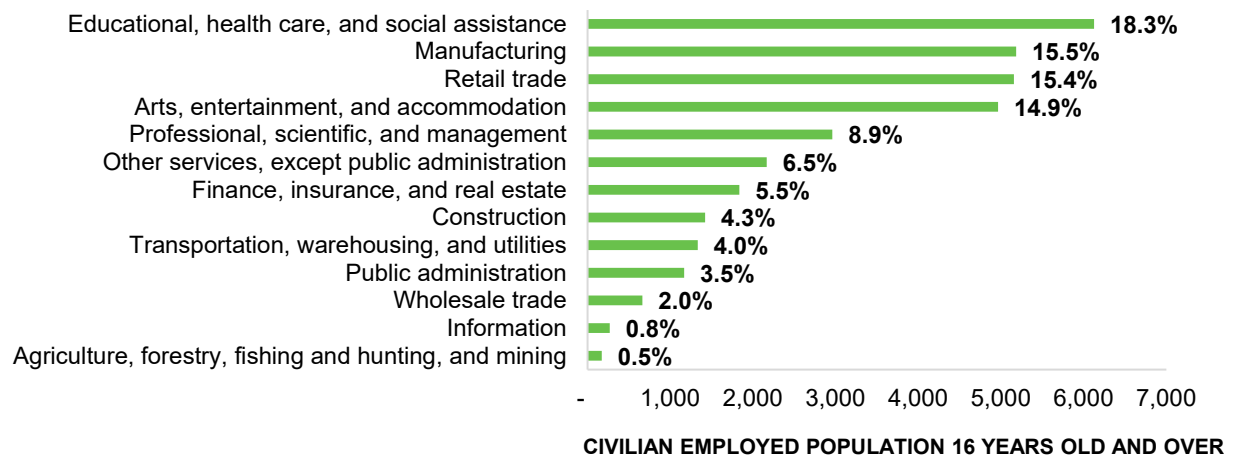
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Exhibit 23 shows the distribution of employed Flint residents—aged 16 years and older—across various industry sectors in 2017. These results only represent which industries Flint residents are employed in and do not represent the distribution of jobs provided by Flint employers. Of the 33,000 residents in this segment, 6,125 were employed in the “educational, health care, and social assistance” sector while 5,184 and 5,157 were employed in the “manufacturing” and “retail trade” sectors, respectively. In contrast, 62% of Flint residents were employed in service-based industries (such as in health care or finance services).⁶⁶ This conveys a shift in the population’s industry makeup as residents who were previously employed largely in manufacturing are now predominantly employed in the services industry.

⁶⁵ Woolf, S. H., Aron, L. Y., Dubay, L., Simon, S. M., Zimmerman, E., & Luk, K. (2015, April 13). How Are Income and Wealth Linked to Health and Longevity? Retrieved from <https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/49116/2000178-How-are-Income-and-Wealth-Linked-to-Health-and-Longevity.pdf>

⁶⁶ U.S. Census. (n.d.). U.S. Census Bureau's Services guide to sources. Retrieved from <https://www.census.gov/econ/services.html>

Exhibit 23: Number of Employed Residents by Industry Sector – Flint, Michigan, 2017



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Local Program Highlight: Keeping Independent Seniors Safe (KISS)

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2017, more than 20% of Flint’s population was over the age of 60. An initiative implemented in Flint that directly serves this specific group by using RSVP Senior Corps members is the Keeping Independent Seniors Safe (KISS) program. This program is sponsored by the Valley Area Agency on Aging (VAAA) in Flint and it recruits members to make weekly telephone reassurance and safety calls to older adult residents and couples who live in their homes independently. Local seniors who are at risk for injury and isolation are identified by VAAA and then referred to the KISS program, especially if they are alone for long periods of time during the week. These well-being and socialization calls are made Monday through Friday to help eliminate some of the fears and dangers that living independently entail and to provide some comfort to family members who no longer reside close to their aging relatives. RSVP members who do this work follow individualized protocols if senior participants do not answer calls, and they often collaborate with neighbors and law enforcement agencies to ensure that these residents are safe and healthy. According to the 2018 RSVP Annual Report for Flint, during the 2017-2018 program year, six RSVP members served 252 seniors and 98% of these seniors reported that the daily interaction made them feel less isolated, allowing them to be independent in their own homes for a longer period. Because of its low cost and innovative model, the KISS program won the Aging Innovations and Achievement Award in 2017, awarded by the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging, for successfully helping older adults continue living in their homes.

“I [called] a lady one time and she had just missed the chair and she just went right onto the floor...her husband had just left the house...and I called the lady’s daughter...She got there and helped the lady up. They didn’t have to call an ambulance or anything as she was fine. So, it’s just those little things that make a difference. I call one lady where we remind her of her medications because it’s easy to forget those, so my call is just that little, quick reminder. One lady I talk to, she starts off a little glum and I just say a couple of things and all of a sudden she just starts laughing. She has the most beautiful laugh and it’s just nice to hear that...you really learn their voice. You know and can tell whether or not they are feeling well that day...keeping that little bit of connection makes them feel like somebody cares.”

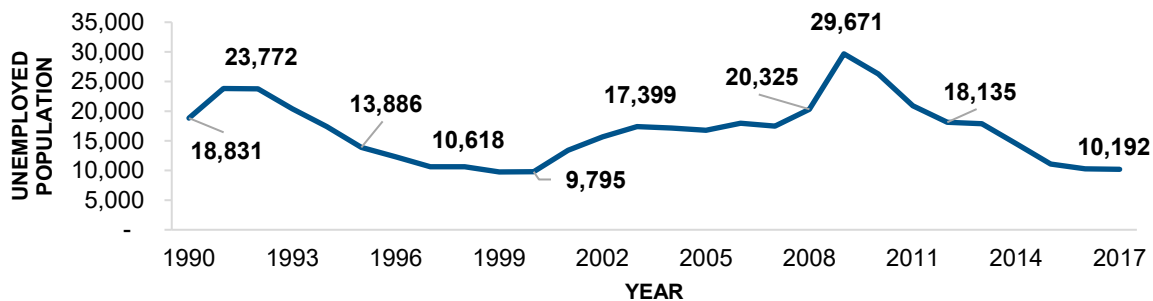
- KISS RSVP Senior Corps member

Labor Market Trends

In this section, Flint’s historical labor market trends are analyzed. Exhibit 24 shows the number of people in Flint’s labor force that are unemployed between 1990-2017. Flint was once a thriving city with low unemployment, but the lagging effects of the GM plant closures in the 1980s caused an increase in the number of unemployed in Flint, peaking in 1992 at 24,000 people. However, from 1992 to 2000, the

number unemployed declined by 59%. This could indicate improving economic conditions locally or it could be caused by a decline in the number of individuals in the labor force. During this period, the number in Flint's labor force, consisting of those employed and those unemployed but actively seeking employment, dropped by 8,000. This is a result of individuals leaving the city for employment opportunities in other areas and people dropping out of the labor force due to a lack of local opportunities. There was another peak in unemployment following the 2008 national recession, which hit Flint's economy particularly hard. Since 2009, there has been a 66% decrease in the number of individuals unemployed. Although this decline is partially due to a decrease in the number of individuals in the labor force, Flint's recent economic improvements have also played an influential role.

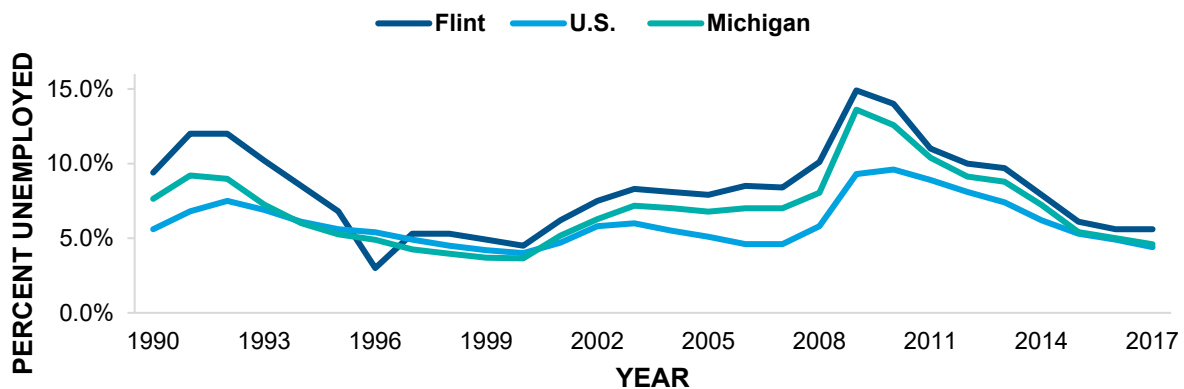
Exhibit 24: Flint Number Unemployed in Labor Force—1990-2017



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Exhibit 25 shows the unemployment rate for Flint, the state of Michigan, and the U.S. for the years 1990 to 2017. For all years represented, except 1996, Flint had an unemployment rate above Michigan's and the U.S.'s. The average unemployment rate for these three geographical areas during this period was 8.3%, 7.0%, and 6.0%, respectively. This substantiates that Flint's economic condition has historically been significantly worse than that of Michigan and the U.S. In 2009, a peak year for unemployment, the unemployment rates for Flint, Michigan, and the U.S. were 14.9%, 13.6%, and 9.3%, respectively. Despite continued volatility, Flint's unemployment is decreasing. In 2017, the unemployment rate of Flint, Michigan, and the U.S. were 5.6%, 4.6%, and 4.4%, respectively, which further indicates a strengthening of Flint's economy.

Exhibit 25: Flint, Michigan, and U.S. Unemployment Rate—1990-2017

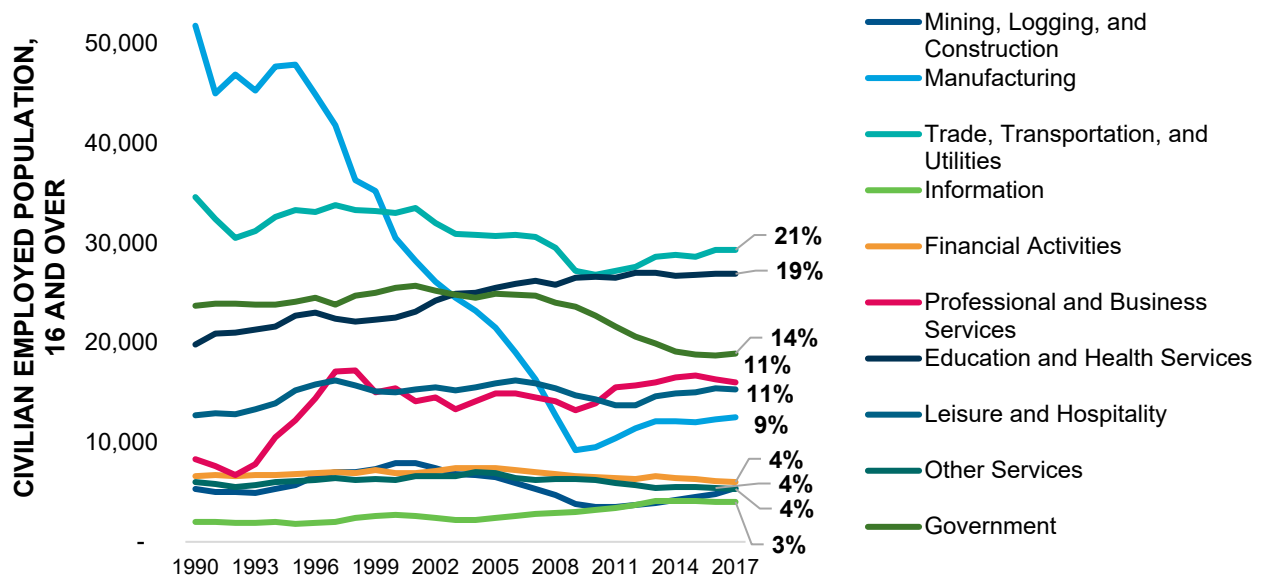


Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Although broad trends in Flint show recent declines in unemployment, individual industries have been differentially affected, as shown in Exhibit 26. It is important to distinguish that the information below denotes individuals who are employed in the Flint Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) and includes some who reside outside this MSA. Based on the results, from 1990 to 2009, Flint’s “manufacturing” sector experienced an 82% decline in employment. As noted earlier, this is largely due to the auto industry scaling back its presence in the area. Since 2010, the number of manufacturing jobs in Flint has stabilized, hovering around 12,000 individuals employed annually. Employment in most other major industry sectors in Flint has been relatively stable over the last 20 years. As of 2017, the “trade, transportation, and utilities” sector employs the greatest number of workers in Flint at over 29,000, followed by the “education and health services” sector at almost 27,000 and the “government” sector at about 19,000. This largely resembles the composition of industry sectors nationally. The “professional and business services” sector in Flint, which contains many high-paying jobs in areas such as engineering, has experienced the greatest rate of growth at 93% over the past 17 years. This data indicates that Flint has been competitive in many industry sectors and more recent trends show that Flint may be beginning to finally recover from the decline in the auto industry and that its restructured economy is poised for economic growth.

The most recent employment data by industry sector shows that Flint may be beginning to finally recover from the decline in the auto industry and that its restructured economy is poised for growth.

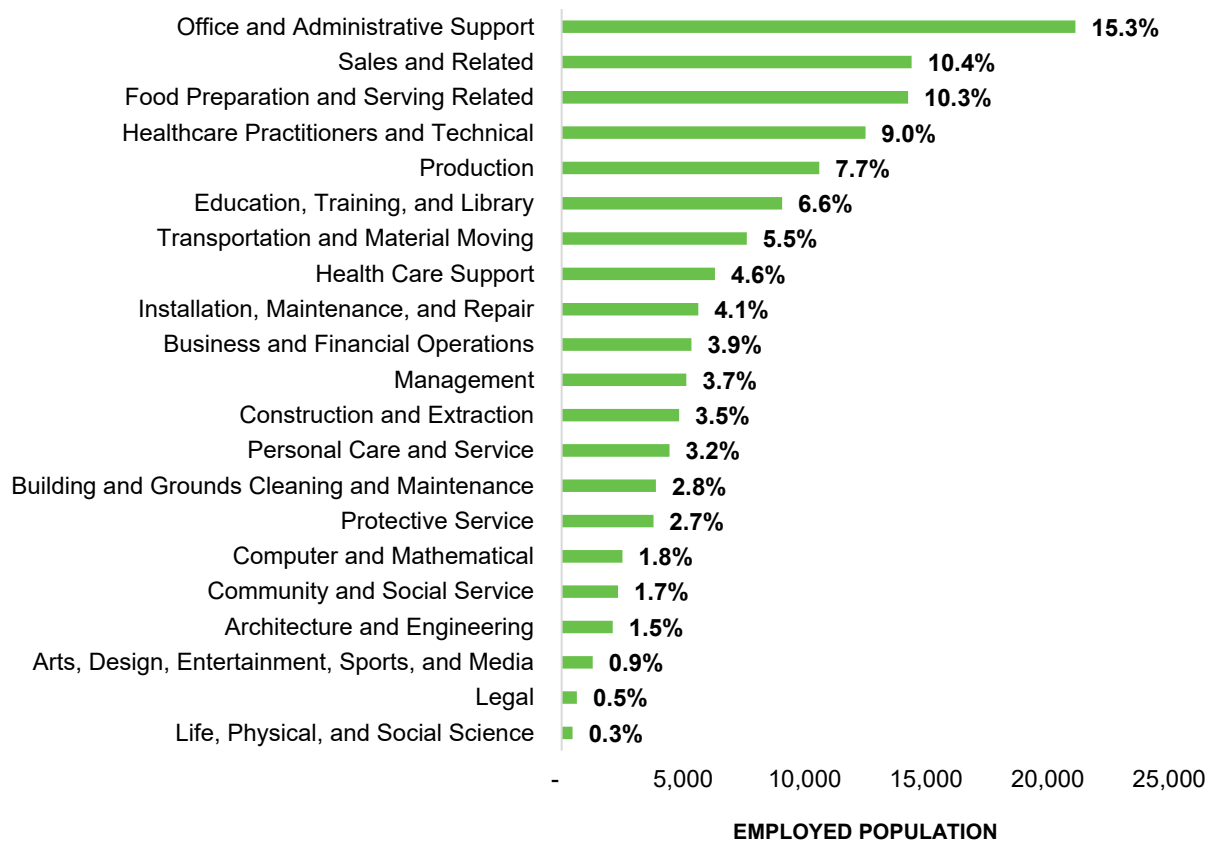
Exhibit 26: Jobs by Major Industry Sector—Flint, Michigan, 1990-2017



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Exhibit 27 shows the occupational distribution of jobs for Flint in 2017. Again, this data represents jobs in the Flint MSA, which includes workers employed in this region regardless of where they live. Flint’s labor market has become increasingly diversified and no longer is dependent on employment in any one industry. Flint’s more diverse economy can help create a sustainable cycle of economic activity and enable the area to better withstand the impact of future recessions. In 2017, the greatest number of jobs in Flint were in the “office and administrative support,” “sales and related,” and “food preparation and serving related” groups, representing 35% of total jobs. This further indicates the city’s transition to a more service-based economy and one less dependent on manufacturing.

Exhibit 27: Jobs by Major Occupational Group—Flint, Michigan, 2017



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Flint Interviews

In addition to the quantitative-based analyses, on-site interviews with AmeriCorps and Senior Corps members, alumni, and program staff in Flint were completed to document members’ program experiences. These in-person interviews were conducted in Flint with individuals who currently are or have recently been involved in Flint-specific national service programs. Two staff members of the Flint National Service Accelerator (including the director), one AmeriCorps program staff member, one Senior Corps program staff member, one current AmeriCorps member, one current Senior Corps member, and two AmeriCorps alumni were interviewed. The purpose of these interviews was to gather qualitative information on individual experiences as part of Flint’s AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs. A separate questionnaire was developed for Flint National Service Accelerator staff, AmeriCorps and Senior Corps program staff, current service members, and alumni. These questionnaires are included in Appendix B. Both the questionnaires and interviews were designed to determine how AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs had affected individuals personally—in terms of personal edification or career development—and how these programs made a difference in the Flint community. Their answers were analyzed to extract common themes that supported other components of this case study. More importantly, these conversations not only highlighted respondents’ distinct points of view concerning their experiences, but their testimony reinforced the role of national service programs in addressing Flint-specific community needs. Qualitative results and takeaways from these on-site interviews are in the subsequent section.

Key Insights and Takeaways from Flint Interviews

Current AmeriCorps & Senior Corps Program Members

Members currently serving in several AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs emphasized the benefits that national service had on the people they directly served in the local community and in their own lives. Knowing they were helping others in need and seeing the tangible impact of their work—specifically in the one-on-one connections and personal relationships they formed—were key themes that emerged through interviews with members of RSVP, the Flint Recovery Corps, and the Flint & Genesee Literacy Network. Interviewees wanted to give back to the community, and they discussed how AmeriCorps and Senior Corps provided them with direction and gave them the opportunity to effectively serve their community (and share that orientation toward service with family and community members), while also providing positive physical and mental effects on their well-being. They see their work as providing a viable platform for their own professional development and growth and as making a difference by improving the livelihood of Flint residents.

“People always look at numbers, but I look at faces. If you impact one person and make one person’s day better than what it was, you’ve done your job that day...then you can move onto another and you’ll impact a whole bunch of people by the time you get done.”

Current AmeriCorps & Senior Corps Program Staff

“The thing that I really enjoy about [my role] is the member development piece... [Members] are so passionate about helping their community. Most of them are Flint residents, so they really have a passion for the work.”

In conversations with program staff and administrators of AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs, it was clear that passion for community development was a driving force in their work. Interviewees from the Flint National Service Accelerator, Senior Corps, and the Urban Safety Corps conveyed they were dedicated to responding to Flint-specific needs using tailored programming to achieve the objectives outlined in Flint’s Master Plan. Staff recognized the necessity of community member involvement in solving local issues and the integral role of the members themselves. Interviewees reported that they valued members’ personal and professional development, hoped to instill in them a passion for being a champion of Flint and for serving the community, communicated constantly with members, and believed this service work is great preparation for future careers and gives members a sense of worth and purpose. Rather than seeing national service work as a “gap year,” they see it as a “launch year” for members and therefore heavily invest in their well-being and workforce development.

AmeriCorps Program Alumni

For alumni, national service provided an outlet to put their belief in civic engagement into action. Alumni of AmeriCorps VISTA spoke about how they wanted to make a direct impact in their communities and feel fulfilled in the work they were doing. Interviewees repeatedly mentioned that their service work primed them for a career in their chosen field. Both AmeriCorps alumni are working in jobs directly related to their work during their service year. Their experience also gave them broad industry exposure, provided them with the opportunity to take on versatile tasks within their role, and allowed them to refine important hard and soft skills such as interpersonal communication and conflict resolution, networking, community outreach, grant writing, and critical thinking. Lastly, alumni recognized that AmeriCorps and Senior Corps had been an invaluable asset for Flint’s development, and they found personal satisfaction from being a role model and community contributor during their year of service.

“I wouldn’t be in my role today if it wasn’t for AmeriCorps.”

National Service Programs in Flint

The city of Flint has been making a concerted effort to coordinate, develop and strengthen national service, volunteering, and civic engagement throughout the community, especially through the Flint National Service Accelerator, which is addressing objectives defined in the city's Master Plan. Some of these efforts are starting to manifest in recent socioeconomic and labor market data trends as detailed above. The United Way of Genesee County's commitment—as well as that from other involved stakeholders—to recruiting and training national service members, sponsoring and staffing local initiatives, and providing resources for community-based programs can be seen in the number of AmeriCorps and Senior programs that operate in Flint listed below.⁶⁷ In some cases, this includes programs that operate in other communities, but place at least one national service member in Flint or in Flint-based programs.

AmeriCorps Programs

- Flint Community Schools Corps
- Flint Urban Safety Corps
- Flint Recovery Corps
- Michigan Education Corps
- Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)
- FoodCorps
- Together We Prepare
- City of Flint Master Plan Implementation VISTA Program
- Opioid Abuse Prevention VISTA Program
- AdviseMI
- Boys and Girls Club of Greater Flint VISTA Program
- Up2Us
- College Advising Corps
- Pathways to Employment
- Summer Associates
- 4-H STEAM Corps

Senior Corps Programs

- Foster Grandparents
- RSVP (Retired and Senior Volunteer Program)
- Senior Companions

These programs strive to improve the quality of life and the socioeconomic well-being of Flint's residents by engaging them in programs that supply a diverse range of services, such as helping improve the academic performance of young people and providing healthy eating and nutrition education. A general description of each program is provided below, summarized from the United Way's webpage.

Flint Community School Corps

The Flint Community School Corps works to reinstate and improve quality learning opportunities and educational recreation for Flint's students. AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps VISTA members engage in several activities to foster educational success in K-12 pupils, such as providing mentorship, after-school opportunities, homework assistance, physical activity, and health education. They also teach life skills, facilitate access to social services, engage parents and community partners, and help create education-related infrastructure.

⁶⁷ United Way of Genesee County. (n.d.) National Service Programs. Retrieved from <https://www.unitedwaygenesee.org/national-service-programs>.

Flint Urban Safety Corps

The Flint Urban Safety Corps seeks to make areas of Flint safer and more open to the community. To do this, AmeriCorps members develop watch groups, maintain safe transportation routes for vehicles and pedestrians, organize board-ups and clean-ups for abandoned homes, provide safety information to the community via canvassing, and hold local events to improve the sense of community throughout the city.

Flint Recovery Corps

Flint Recovery Corps AmeriCorps members work with local nonprofits that are dedicated to fostering healthy lifestyles and ensuring access to early education across Flint, particularly in the wake of the water crisis. They support programs that aid in food security, provide nutrition education and information, focus on behavioral and developmental health, provide early education services, and manage medical services for Flint residents who may have been affected by the lead water contamination.

Michigan Education Corps

The Reading Corps portion of the Michigan Education Corps, operated by Hope Network, places AmeriCorps members in Pre-K through third grade classrooms to implement daily literacy interventions. Members work with students who are struggling academically, assisting them in overcoming their challenges and providing personalized attention that can help them get on track to read at grade level by third grade.

Local Initiatives Support Corporation

LISC operates in Flint to strengthen neighborhoods through community development. The organization recruits AmeriCorps members to remake distressed urban neighborhoods into communities that support the social and economic needs of their residents. Members develop leadership capacity, improve residents' skills, and provide services for the neighborhoods and organizations.

FoodCorps

FoodCorps works in Flint schools to foster a strong base of health and nutrition among students so they can lead healthier and more productive lives. AmeriCorps members teach children lessons on nutrition, cooking, and gardening, work with school cafeterias to get children to try new foods and make healthy choices at lunchtime, help children develop healthy habits, and promote a general schoolwide culture of health that students can absorb and share with their friends and family members.

Together We Prepare

Together We Prepare is an AmeriCorps program administered by the Red Cross that better equips communities to prepare for, react to, and rebuild after disasters. Their work in Michigan and in Flint improves the region's capacity for bearing the impact of disasters, including home fires, and teaches residents to prepare in advance. If a natural disaster occurs, these members will also directly assist those in immediate crisis.

City of Flint Master Plan Implementation

AmeriCorps VISTA members supporting the City of Flint Master Plan Implementation work to recognize, build, and fulfill the vision laid out in the Master Plan for sustainable and effective local development. The

AmeriCorps VISTA members support neighborhood and community groups, build capacity for city departments implementing the Master Plan, improve infrastructure in public spaces, manage resources across the Flint community, and otherwise engage residents in Master Plan implementation.

Opioid Abuse Prevention

The Opioid Abuse Prevention VISTA Program seeks to combat the opioid epidemic and manage the public health crisis countywide by supporting relevant stakeholders involved in the response effort. Members work to build up response capacities, engage law enforcement agencies and health care providers, and collaborate with education systems to inform the public about the crisis and collect resources for recovery.

AdviseMI

AdviseMI, operated by the Michigan College Access Network, promotes higher education for students across the state by leveraging AmeriCorps members to increase students' college readiness, participation, and completion. Working with students in the Greater Flint area who face barriers to educational attainment, AmeriCorps members help them navigate the complex steps towards college enrollment. The AmeriCorps Advisers provide students and their families with information regarding the benefits of a postsecondary education, preparing for college attendance and the admission and financial aid processes.

Boys and Girls Club of Greater Flint

AmeriCorps VISTA members serve in the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Flint, which strives to build a healthy and strong foundation for Flint's youth by providing a safe area for children to play, learn, and grow. Members help improve the social, physical, economic, and educational well-being of local children by building the capacity of the Club and promoting healthy lifestyles, academic success, and good character.

Up2Us

Up2Us is a national organization that works to transform youth and communities through athletics. They use AmeriCorps members to help children and youth become active, teach them the various aspects of a healthy lifestyle, serve as positive role models, and offer a trusting and caring relationship. In Flint, members serve at the Crim Fitness Foundation, supporting sports programs in Flint community schools.

College Advising Corps

The Michigan College Advising Corps places AmeriCorps members who are University of Michigan graduates into underserved high schools to work as full-time college advisers. To further their mission of promoting higher education and lowering barriers to college entry, advisers work with school staff and administration to help ensure that students have the support they need to pursue college.

Pathways to Employment

The Pathways to Employment AmeriCorps VISTA Program, operated by the Michigan Nonprofit Association, uses workforce opportunities and education to reduce and eliminate poverty. Members work in local nonprofit organizations and within higher education to support residents in their educational and employment pursuits. In Flint, members have served at organizations such as the University of Michigan-Flint, Girl Scouts, and Habitat for Humanity.

AmeriCorps VISTA Summer Associates

AmeriCorps VISTA operates a Summer Associate program where members serve for intensive, short terms of service lasting eight- to 10 weeks. In Flint, these members serve at the Food Bank, Crim Fitness Foundation, Catholic Charities, and the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Flint to combat summer learning loss and promote food security.

4-H STEAM Corps

The 4-H STEAM Corps is a program created by Michigan State University to promote science, technology, art, and mathematics (STEAM) education for youth across the state. Their programming offers opportunities for youth to learn about STEAM topics, conduct service projects, and collaborate with other students. In Flint, members serve at the local Michigan State University Extension office to advance the organization's mission by recruiting volunteers and developing educational programs for Flint children.

Foster Grandparents

The Senior Corps Foster Grandparents program is nationwide and connects older adults with children who need special attention. During their part-time service, Foster Grandparents participate in a child's life by providing tutoring services, providing emotional support and stability, serving as a role model, and providing a brief respite for parents. Operated locally by Family Service Agency, children benefit academically, mentally, and emotionally from a caring and supportive elder presence, and older adults report financial and quality-of-life benefits from program involvement.

RSVP

RSVP is a national network of volunteer opportunities for adults aged 55 and over, operating a multitude of service projects across all CNCS focus areas. For instance, members may engage in community development initiatives, independent living assistance, and natural disaster relief. In greater Flint, the program is operated by the Valley Area Agency of Aging, and RSVP members largely work on projects or for organizations focused on the Healthy Futures and Education focus areas.

Senior Companions

Senior Companions leverages older adult volunteers to provide basic and emotional support to seniors across a tri-county area experiencing loneliness, illness, or disability. Members and participants benefit from the companionship and material resources of the program, furthering its goal to provide meaningful retirement opportunities for older adults while raising the quality of life for adults in the community who need supportive services.

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Disclaimer

The report was commissioned by Voices for National Service⁶⁸, with support from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, to educate the public on the importance of national service programs, such as AmeriCorps and Senior Corps. It was not prepared for the purpose of influencing specific legislation or any political campaign. If you choose to share or publicize this piece, you may not accompany it with any encouragement for recipients to take action with respect to specific legislation. For example, if you post it on your website, the page on which it is posted cannot have a call to action or a link to a call to action. Likewise, if you send it to others with a cover letter or email, that correspondence cannot encourage recipients to take action. Further, you may not use this piece in any attempt to influence the 2020 presidential election or any other public election. This piece should not be interpreted as endorsing or supporting any political party or candidate for public office. Voices for National Service is a nonpartisan, charitable organization that does not support or oppose any political party or candidate for public office.

⁶⁸ Voices for National Service is housed and operated by City Year, Inc.

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Appendices

Appendix A

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Appendix B

The questionnaires below were used for the in-person interviews conducted in Flint, Michigan. A separate questionnaire was developed for Flint National Service Accelerator staff, AmeriCorps and Senior Corps program staff, current service members, and alumni.

Flint National Service Accelerator Staff Interview Questions:

1. What is the Flint National Service Accelerator Initiative, what is its overall goal, and how does this model work in the context of helping the Flint community?
2. In what ways do you feel this initiative is making an impact on the Flint Community? Program members/volunteers? Other individuals/stakeholders?
3. Have there been any prior attempts to evaluate or measure the impact of the Flint National Service Accelerator Initiative? To discern how it concurrently benefits partnering organizations and members of the local community? To determine its effectiveness in providing capacity building or technical assistance to local organizations?
4. As part of this initiative, what type of data do you collect and analyze to track performance or relevant outcomes?
5. Do you collect data regarding the volunteer count, volunteer hours, project count, etc. across the different service programs in Flint (i.e. Flint Urban Safety Corps, Food Corps, Coach Across America) that are part of this initiative?
6. If data is collected, where is it housed? Could we potentially gain access to it for the purposes of this project?

7. Do you have any data or figures related to the cost of this initiative in terms of local and federal dollars? What about costs related to training and coordinating efforts across all partnering organizations and available volunteers?

Program Manager/Staff Interview Questions:

AmeriCorps

1. How long have you worked for this program in Flint?
2. Why did you initially decide to work for this program?
3. What are your job functions or activities as a Program Manager?
4. Do you work directly with community volunteers in any capacity?
5. Do you engage with program alumni? If so, how do you think program participation impacted their life?
6. What do you think differentiates this program compared to other organizations attempting to make a difference in the Flint community?
7. In what ways do you feel the specific programs you manage are making an impact on the Flint Community? Program members/volunteers? Other individuals/stakeholders?

Senior Corps

1. How long have you worked for this program in Flint?
2. Why did you initially decide to work for this program?
3. What are your job functions or activities as a Program Manager?
4. What do you think differentiates this program compared to other organizations attempting to make a difference in the Flint community?
5. In what ways do you feel the specific programs you manage are making an impact on the Flint Community? Program volunteers? Other individuals/stakeholders?

Current Program Member Interview Questions:

AmeriCorps

1. How long have you been serving with this program in Flint?
2. Why did you initially choose to serve with this program? What factors motivated you to make this decision?
3. What program do you currently serve with and where? What do you currently do for this program in terms of activities or tasks?
4. Do you feel your AmeriCorps position matches your general skills and interests? In what ways?
5. How is program participation effecting or influencing your life generally?
6. How much of an impact do you feel your service is having on the Flint community? In what ways?
7. Do you have a personal story or experience that you can share with us anecdotally that speaks to the impact you believe you are making locally?
8. Do you think your program participation is preparing you for future education and employment opportunities? In what ways? Has it influenced your future career or education decisions in any capacity?

Senior Corps

1. How long have you been volunteering with the RSVP program in Flint?
2. Why did you initially choose to volunteer with the RSVP program? What factors motivated you to make this decision?
3. What do you currently do as an RSVP volunteer in terms of activities or tasks?
4. Do you feel your volunteer position matches your general skills and interests? In what ways?
5. How is program participation effecting or influencing your life generally?
6. How much of an impact do you feel your volunteer work is having on the Flint community? In what ways?
7. Do you have a personal story or experience that you can share with us anecdotally that speaks to the impact you believe you are making locally?
8. In what ways? Has it influenced your future career or education decisions in any capacity?

Program Alumni Interview Questions:

1. In which program did you serve? How long did you serve with this program in Flint? What kind of work or activities did you perform for that program?
2. Why did you initially choose to serve with this program? What factors motivated you to make this decision?
3. How has program participation affected or influenced your life generally?
4. Are you currently employed or attending school? If so, please share those details.
5. In what ways has program participation prepared you for future employment or education opportunities?
6. Do you think program participation positioned you to be more successful in your career or educational pursuits?
7. What skills did you learn during program participation that help you in your current job or education?