

2017-2018

MASSACHUSETTS



SERVICE ALLIANCE

**COMMONWEALTH
CORPS**
INSPIRE. UNITE. ACT.

Program Overview
and Host Site
Partners

Commonwealth Corps

The mission of the **Commonwealth Corps** is to engage Massachusetts residents of all ages and backgrounds in direct service and capacity building to rebuild communities, address unmet community needs, and increase volunteerism. Corps members provide direct service, build capacity of local organizations, and recruit, organize and mobilize additional volunteers.

The Commonwealth Corps provides opportunities for skill building and leadership development and encourages a lifelong civic vocation for its members. Through the Commonwealth Corps, the Massachusetts Service Alliance (MSA) partners with nonprofit organizations, academic institutions, and public entities to **reinvigorate civic involvement to help address the Commonwealth's most urgent needs and elevate service and civic engagement throughout the Commonwealth. The program has a dual focus on both members' positive impact in their organizations and communities and on members' own growth and development.**

The Commonwealth Corps, a state-funded program administered by MSA, was established in 2007. Since its inception, over **950 Commonwealth Corps members** have served, providing over **600,000 hours** of service in areas such as community development, health services, afterschool or summer programs, and volunteer recruitment and management, and directly benefiting approximately **595,000 clients, students, and families**. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is the first state in the country to have a service corps program focused solely on state residents.

MSA invests in community-based organizations and institutions that rely upon **volunteers and people engaged in service to meet their community's needs**. Through investing, convening, advocating, and building capacity, MSA develops and supports initiatives that incorporate service and volunteerism as effective strategies to address the pressing needs in the Commonwealth.

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2017-2018 Host Site Partners

Economic Opportunity/Workforce Development Focus Area:

Boston Education, Skills & Training Corp.
(BEST Hospitality Training)

(Boston; full-time)

The mission of BEST Hospitality Training is to provide individuals with the education, skills and training to excel in the hospitality industry and in their personal lives. BEST is hosting two full-time Commonwealth Corps members who are supporting volunteer recruitment, mentoring, and management and workforce development programming. One member is recruiting 40 volunteers to support education, skills training, and career coaching and expand volunteer management systems. The other member is establishing a career navigation and resource referral program to provide the economic maximization and economic opportunity services to clients ineligible for regular programming. Outcomes include enhanced financial stability, increase access to resources through referrals, job placement, and promotions for 100 individuals seeking to build a career in the hospitality sector.

Economic Development Council of Western MA

(Springfield; full-time)

The Economic Development Council of Western MA (EDC) is committed to deliver resources that will enable companies to thrive in Western MA and improve the quality of life through the creation of quality jobs and increased investment. The EDC is hosting two full-time members in the Springfield **Works!**, **Federal Reserve Bank of Boston's Working Cities Challenge (WCC)** Initiative as Commonwealth Corps Community Outreach Support Specialists, expanding community outreach and mentor recruitment. Through their service, members are reaching a greater number of residents who are under-employed or unemployed, impacting 220 individuals. In addition, members are leveraging 20 community volunteers and fifteen core partners, all working to remove the disconnect between low-income residents who want sustainable jobs and employers who need a qualified workforce to fill available jobs.

International Institute of New England

(Boston & Lynn; full-time)

The mission of the International Institute of New England (IINE) is to help refugees and immigrants become active participants in the social, political, and economic richness of American life. IINE is hosting two full-time Commonwealth Corps members in its Economic Advancement services who are serving as Commonwealth Corps Volunteer and Career Readiness Specialists at its Boston site. Through their service, members are promoting a continuum of self-sufficiency services for refugees, asylees and immigrants, including coaching and career readiness supports that promote economic security, reaching up to 200 clients. To add capacity to this effort, members are deepening client and community engagement by leveraging 102 interns/volunteers to enhance service delivery.

More Than Words

(Boston & Waltham; full-time)

More Than Words (MTW) empowers youth who are in foster care, court-involved, homeless, or out of school, to take charge of their lives by taking charge of a business. MTW is hosting two full-time Commonwealth Corps members who are serving as a Community Engagement and Brand Ambassador Coordinator in Boston and a Community Engagement and Volunteer Coordinator in Waltham. Through their service, members are helping MTW build a streamlined community engagement experience, supporting 313 youth to achieve outcomes in education, employment and self-efficacy. In addition, they are leveraging 1,255 volunteers that are engaged in supporting different parts of the MTW model, including education coaching, mock interviewing, book collection initiatives, and operations support.

United South End Settlements

(Boston; full-time)

The mission of United South End Settlements (USES) is to build a strong community by improving the education, health, safety and economic security of low-income individuals and families in Boston's historic South End/Lower Roxbury and to serve as a national model of successful neighborhood engagement. USES is hosting two full-time Commonwealth Corps members who are serving as Commonwealth Corps Education & Career Coaches, providing individualized coaching, goal setting & follow-up, benefits screening, referrals, and more to low-income families in Boston, impacting 66 individuals. Through their service, members are helping to pilot USES's **coaching model, serving families enrolled in workforce training and/or youth programs**. In addition, they are leveraging 15 volunteers who are providing coaching to help connect participants to public benefits and additional services.

Education Focus Area:

826 Boston

(Boston; full-time)

826 Boston empowers traditionally underserved students ages 6-18 to find their voices, tell their stories, and gain communication skills to succeed in school and in life. 826 Boston is hosting three full-time Commonwealth Corps Members who are serving as the Commonwealth Corps Out-of-School Time Program Associate and Commonwealth Corps Writers Room Associates in the Boston neighborhoods of Jamaica Plain, Roxbury, and Dorchester in the city of Boston. Through their service, members are coordinating in-school volunteer tutoring services, creative writing workshops, after-school clubs, and student publications. In addition, they are leveraging **600 dedicated volunteers who are engaged in delivering 826 Boston's in-school and out-of-school tutoring programs** to serve 2,500 students over the course of 19,800 hours of programming.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Massachusetts Bay

(Boston; full-time)

The mission of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Massachusetts Bay (BBBSMB) is to help children in under-resourced families thrive by providing transformational, one-to-one professionally-supported relationships with caring adult mentors. BBBSMB is hosting two full-time Commonwealth Corps Members in our Mentor2.0 program; they are serving as Commonwealth Corps Education Ambassadors dedicated to creating and strengthening mentoring relationships between high-school students at Boston Green Academy and caring, qualified adult volunteers in Boston. Through Mentor2.0, every student will have support to help them achieve high school graduation and college success. Through their service, members are growing program capacity and make a significant impact on the life trajectories of over 130 students. Ambassadors are leveraging over 130 volunteers who are engaged in long-term educational mentoring.

Buzzards Bay Coalition

(New Bedford & South Coast Region; full-time)

The Buzzards Bay Coalition is a member-supported, non-profit organization dedicated to the restoration, protection, and sustainable use and enjoyment of Buzzards Bay and its watershed. The Coalition is hosting two full-time Commonwealth Corps members in our Community Engagement department. Serving as Commonwealth Corps Environmental Educators, the members are delivering programs and developing resources that encourage outdoor exploration and help improve academic achievement in 17 South-eastern Massachusetts communities. Through their service, members are directly engaging 2,250 unique youth and 75 families in 170 outdoor exploration programs leading to youth demonstrating excitement about outdoor and classroom learning and exploration. In addition, they are leveraging 18 volunteers to engage the community in outdoor exploration, education, and stewardship.

CitySprouts

(Boston & Cambridge; full-time)

CitySprouts mission is to develop, implement & maintain beautiful, resource-rich school gardens in collaboration with public school communities. Our program inspires teachers, students & families with a deep, hands-on connection to the food system, sustainable agriculture & the ecosystem. CitySprouts is hosting two full-time Commonwealth Corps members who are serving as Commonwealth Corps Middle School Coordinators, leading Out-of-School Time (OST) programs for youth ages 11-14 in Cambridge & Boston. Through their service, members are leading educators broadening programming at 6 schools with a focus on deepening youth voice and engagement, while further expanding family engagement plans with partner schools. In addition, they are leveraging the service of 250 volunteers throughout our network of 23 partner schools in order to engage in garden education and building projects, impacting 150 students.

Homework House

(Holyoke; half-time)

The mission of Homework House is to strengthen the Holyoke community by providing academic & social supports to low income children. Homework House is hosting three half-time Commonwealth Corps members who are serving as a Commonwealth Corps Teen Volunteer Coordinator to recruit and train teens as volunteers, a Commonwealth Corps Family/School Liaison to boost parent engagement through volunteering, and a Commonwealth Corps TechEd Specialist to improve our use of technology. Through their service, members are expanding our academic support programs, improving school engagement, and increasing parent engagement in student learning, in total impacting 225 children and parents/guardians. In addition, they are leveraging the resources of 150 volunteers, including the recruitment of an additional 35 teens and parents, who are acting as volunteer tutors, activity leaders, and positive role models.

Mount Wachusett Community College - United Way Youth Venture Program

(Fitchburg, Gardner, Leominster & other Central MA cities/towns; full-time)

The mission of Mount Wachusett Community College (MWCC) is to provide high quality learning opportunities and services that respond to diverse student and community needs, foster success, and stimulate civic, work-force, and economic vitality. MWCC is hosting two full-time Commonwealth Corps Members in the United Way Youth Venture (UWYV) program, serving as a Commonwealth Corps Venture Retention & Engagement Innovator and a Transformational Leadership Design Innovator to design, implement, and evaluate capacity-building pilot initiatives serving K-12 youth, and deliver UWYV in the North Central Massachusetts region. Through their service, Members are impacting 975 students and increasing UWYV sustainability through district cultural change, reengaged alumni, and volunteer impact measurement. They are leveraging 86 volunteers that are creating Ventures and informing program improvements.

Northfield Mount Hermon Upward Bound

(Springfield, Holyoke, Greenfield & Turners Falls; full-time)

The mission of the Northfield Mount Hermon Upward Bound Program (NMH UB) is to generate skills and motivation to succeed in high school and college for first generation/low-income youth. NMH UB is hosting two full-time Commonwealth Corps Members who are serving as Commonwealth Corps Assistant Advisors to students attending schools with educational needs (low college-going rates, low GPAs, poor test scores, and low college readiness) in Greenfield, Holyoke, Springfield, and Turners Falls, providing tutoring, test preparation, college awareness, and cultural and academic trips. Through their service, members are mentoring 117 students enrolled in Upward Bound and increasing the capacity of Upward Bound by serving an additional 40 students collectively through their capacity building projects. Overall, Corps Members are impacting 157 unique individuals, increasing the number of students demonstrating improved school engagement, and expanding the capacity of the program by four projects. In addition, they are leveraging 40 volunteers for tutoring, workshops, and fundraising.

Reader To Reader

(Springfield, Holyoke, Greenfield & other Western MA cities/towns ; full-time)

The mission of Reader to Reader is to expand literacy and learning opportunities for the nation's most chronically underserved and vulnerable communities, from inner-city schools to poor rural towns. Reader to Reader is hosting two full-time Commonwealth Corps members in our Read, Think, Share program – an online mentoring program that pairs struggling readers in Massachusetts public schools in grades 5-11 with college students trained to be outstanding literacy mentors. Corps members are serving as **Commonwealth Corps Mentor Support Coordinators** to increase the program's capacity to support more Massachusetts public schools, recruit more college mentors, and manage day-to-day program logistics. Together they are leveraging 200+ college volunteer mentors engaged in daily academic discussion with at-risk students, impacting 700 students.

Westport River Watershed Alliance

(Fall River, Taunton & Westport; full-time)

The mission of the Westport River Watershed Alliance (WRWA) is to restore, protect, celebrate, and sustain the natural resources of the Westport River and its watershed. WRWA is hosting two full-time Commonwealth Corps members serving as Commonwealth Corps Environmental Educators. Through their service, members are expanding our delivery of and teach the Watershed Education Program (WEP) topics to over 2,000 students in grades Pre-K through 12, in Fall River, Westport and Taunton. They are also hosting 10 weekend learning labs enhancing student and family engagement in experiential science education, reaching over 500 people, impacting a total of 2,500 individuals. In addition, members are engaging 50 high school youth as volunteer docents to assist with this expansion of programming. Corps members are striving to increase student science standards content gain, appreciation, enthusiasm, awareness, and stewardship of the watersheds natural world.

Health & Nutrition Focus Area:

Boys and Girls Club of Greater Lowell

(Lowell: full-time)

Boys & Girls Club of Greater Lowell seeks to “inspire and enable young people, especially those who need us most, to realize their full potential as **productive, responsible and caring citizens.**” Boys & Girls Club of Greater Lowell is hosting two full-time Commonwealth Corps members who are serving as a Commonwealth Corps Nutrition Education Coordinator and a Commonwealth Corps Health and Fitness Coordinator, increasing the breadth and depth of programs to improve the physical and mental health of youths in Lowell. Through their service, members are engaging 50 girls in new girls-only fitness activities, 76 youth in nutrition education, 68 youth in substance abuse resistance training, and 36 youth in training on developing healthy relationships, 60 kids with Planet Fitness Workshops, and 12 kids gardening, and 50 in non-traditional sports, impacting 208 unduplicated youth overall. In addition, they are leveraging 30 volunteers that are be engaged in youth healthy lifestyles programs at the Club.



Youth Development & Violence Prevention Focus Area:

Mystic Learning Center, Inc.

(Somerville; full-time)

The mission of MLC is to improve the lives of low-income families who live at the Mystic Public Housing Development in Somerville. MLC is hosting two full-time Corps members in its Empowering Competent Youth and Leaders in Training Programs who are serving as Commonwealth Corps Youth Employment Trailblazers. Through their service, members are addressing workforce and youth development for 20 at-risk youth by expanding programming to include mentoring relationships and building bridges to connect marginalized youth to new businesses and employers. They are also improving programming for 80 children in afterschool, who are better supported by the teen staff leaders. Members are building the capacity of MLC by setting in motion strategic and succession planning for the teen leadership programming. In addition, they are leveraging 20 volunteers that will be engaged in mentoring the youth and providing direction on educational and career opportunities after their time at MLC.

Waltham Partnership for Youth

(Waltham; half-time)

The mission of the Waltham Partnership for Youth (WPY) is to identify the needs of Waltham youth and leverage resources to meet those needs. WPY is hosting 3 half-time Commonwealth Corps Members in its brand new teen weekend programming, which provides a safe place for teens on weekend nights. Members are serving as Commonwealth Corps Teen Weekend Programming Innovators, helping pilot the program, recruiting youth and volunteers, and developing and delivering programming with significant input from youth. Through their service, members are recruiting 150 new teens to this programming, providing safe and structured weekend activities rooted in the principles of Positive Youth Development for 250 teens overall. In addition, they are leveraging 25-30 community volunteers, who will assist in weekly program delivery and facilitate one-time events or workshops.

Main Commonwealth Corps Contacts by Site

Organization	Address	Phone	Staff Contact	Email
Economic Opportunity/Workforce Development Focus Area Host Sites				
Best Education, Skills & Training Corp. (BEST Hospitality Training)	33 Harrison Avenue Third Floor Boston, MA 02111	617-542-1177 x203	Joan Abbot	jabbot@BESThtc.org
Economic Development Council of Western, MA	1441 Main Street Springfield, MA 01103	413-755-1365	Anne Kandilis	a.kandilis@westernmassedc.com
International Institute of New England	One Milk Street Boston, MA 02109	617-695-9990	Michele Ross	MRoss@iine.org
More Than Words	376 Moody Street Waltham, MA 02453	781-314-9329	Naomi Parker	nparker@mtwyouth.org
United South End Settlements	566 Columbus Avenue Boston, MA 02118	617-375-8144	Melody Valdez	mvaldes@uses.org
Education Focus Area Host Sites				
826 Boston	3035 Washington Street Roxbury, MA 02119	617-442-5400	April Wang	april@826boston.org
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Massachusetts Bay	75 Federal St, 8th Floor Boston, MA 02110	617-956-0287	Nora Leary	nleary@bbbsmb.org
Buzzards Bay Coalition	114 Front Street New Bedford, MA 02740	508-999-6363 x224	Cassie Lawson	lawson@savebuzzardsbay.org
CitySprouts	678 Massachusetts Avenue Cambridge, MA 02139	617-876-2436	Robyn Burns	rburns@citysprouts.org
Homework House	54 North Summer Street Holyoke, MA 01040	413-887-7406	Virginia Dillon	vdillon@homeworkhouseholyoke.org
Mount Wachusett Community College (United Way Youth Venture Program)	444 Green Street Gardener, MA 01440	978-630-9201	Lauren Mountain	lmountain@mwcc.mass.edu
Northfield Mount Hermon Upward Bound	1 Lamplighter Way Mount Hermon, MA 01354	413 498-3523	Sharon Gralnick	Sgralnick-ub@nmhschool.org
Reader to Reader Inc.	Cadigan Center, 38 Woodside Avenue Amherst, MA 01002	413-695-3884	Dennis Quinn	dquinn@readertoreader.org
Westport River Watershed Alliance	1151 Main Road, Westport, MA 02790	508-636-3016	Shelli Costa	wep@wrwa.com
Health & Nutrition Focus Area Host Sites				
Boys & Girls Club of Greater Lowell	657 Middlesex Street Lowell, MA 01851	978-458-4526	JuanCarlos Rivera	jcrivera@lbgc.org
Youth Development & Violence Prevention Focus Area Host Sites				
Mystic Learning Center, Inc.	530 Mystic Avenue Room 103 Somerville, MA 02145	617-623-0110	Florence Bergmann	mlcenter@verizon.net
Waltham Partnership for Youth	510 Moody Street Waltham, MA 02453	781-314-3367	Kaytie Dowcett	kdowcett@city.waltham.ma.us