The mission of the Commonwealth Corps service internship program is to engage Massachusetts residents of all ages and backgrounds in direct service to strengthen communities, address critical 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 Commonwealth Corps, a state-funded program administered by MSA, was established in 2007. Since its inception, over 1,050 Commonwealth Corps members have served, providing nearly 732,000 hours of service in areas such as community development, health services, after-school or summer programs, and volunteer recruitment and management, and directly benefiting over 624,000 individuals. Massachusetts is the first and only state in the country to have an active 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.

COMMONWEALTH CORPS CONTACTS

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2020-2021 OVERVIEW

MSA is partnering with 16 agencies to host 40 Corps members and impact 64 cities and towns across the Commonwealth. Members will serve in full-time (1,500 hours) and half-time (750 hours) capacities in teams of 2-4.

Commonwealth Corps members represent a more diverse cohort than the average year-of-service program. Over the course of the program, members have ranged in age from 18-65+, and have come to the program from various personal, professional, and educational backgrounds, including current students, recent graduates, sector switchers, career re-enterers, and retirees.

FOCUS AREAS
- Economic Opportunity/Workforce Development
- Education
- Health and Nutrition
- Youth Development

GEOGRAPHIC AREAS
- Greater Boston
- Northeastern Mass
- Central Mass
- South Coast
- Western Mass

HOST SITE PARTNERS
- Boston Cares
- Central Berkshire Habitat for Humanity
- Coalition for a Better Acre
- Family Health Center of Worcester
- Friends of the Hernández
- International Institute of New England
- More Than Words
- One Family
- Open Sky Community Services
- Open Table
- South Coast Youth Services
- Peer Health Exchange
- Regional Environmental Council
- Matahari Women Workers Center
- Westport River Watershed Alliance
- WriteBoston

CONNECT WITH US
- Facebook and Instagram: @commonwealthcorps
- Twitter: @MSACommCorps
HOST SITE PARTNERS

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY/WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

BOSTON CARES
(Boston; Full-time)

Boston Cares recruits, trains, and deploys individual and corporate volunteers who strengthen communities and improve the lives of people in need. Boston Cares will host two full-time members as part of our Allies for Immigrants program in partnership with English for New Bostonians. Members will serve as Commonwealth Corps Program Coordinators supporting the growth and development of the Allies program by recruiting, training, and supporting volunteer ESOL tutors, and developing systems and tools to facilitate stronger engagement, including a peer leadership program to build sustainable capacity. In addition, they will recruit and train 40 new volunteer tutors and provide support to retain the existing 70 active tutors, serving over 350 ESOL students in Dorchester, East Boston, Roslindale, Allston, Chinatown, South End, and Quincy.

CENTRAL BERKSHIRE HABITAT FOR HUMANITY
(Pittsfield; Full-time)

Central Berkshire Habitat for Humanity (CBHFH) brings people together to build homes, communities and hope by building strength, stability and self-reliance through shelter. CBHFH will host two full-time members who will serve as Commonwealth Corps Community Outreach Coordinators (COC) to add to our collective capacity to strategically engage community residents in discussions about obstacles to economic opportunity and connect residents to job search and workforce development programs in the Westside and Morningside neighborhoods of Pittsfield. Through their service, members will connect 1,100 residents to resources that contribute to improved employability. In addition, they will leverage six resident volunteers that will be engaged in supporting and connecting neighborhood residents to resources.
INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF NEW ENGLAND
(Boston; Full-time)

The mission of the International Institute of New England (IIINE) is to create opportunities for refugees and immigrants to succeed through resettlement, education, career advancement and pathways to citizenship. IIINE will host two full-time members who will serve as Commonwealth Corps Career Readiness Specialists to ensure immigrants and refugees facing under- and unemployment can access education, resources, and customized service plans to achieve financial self-sufficiency in Boston. Through their service, members will provide 1-on-1 coaching to 155 clients for career readiness, enrollment into a Skills Training program, and English language learning. Members will also plan and execute an on-site IIINE Career Fair to help facilitate successful job placement. In addition, they will recruit and leverage 40 volunteers to engage in job interview workshops and the Career Fair.

MORE THAN WORDS
(Boston & Waltham; Full-time)

The mission of More Than Words (MTW) is to empower system-involved youth to take charge of their lives by taking charge of a business. MTW will host two full-time members who will serve as Commonwealth Corps Employment and Partnership Coordinators in Boston and Waltham. Through their service, members will provide direct support to Graduates and members of our youth team, develop relationships with key employment partners, complete projects to increase the efficiency of the department to support larger staff caseloads, evaluate the effectiveness of new programming, and document and institutionalize processes created by their predecessors. In addition, they will leverage 10 volunteers that will be engaged in 1:1 support of our youth through individualized coaching and mock interviewing.
**ONE FAMILY**  
*(Regional; Full-time)*

One Family aims to prevent homelessness and break the cycle of family poverty in Massachusetts by promoting pathways to economic independence through advocacy, education, and innovation. One Family will host two full-time members who will serve as Commonwealth Corps members in our Boston office, supporting families across Massachusetts. Through their service, members will support the expansion of our Credential to Career Coaching program (C2C) to more communities in need. This will involve providing education and career coaching to low-income parents, and conducting a landscape analysis for each new region, leading to improved partnerships and client recruitment. In addition, members will leverage 25+ volunteers, who will provide career support to our clients through activities such as editing their resumes.

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**MATAHARI WOMEN WORKERS CENTER**  
*(Boston; Half-time)*

Matahari Women Workers Center seeks to end gender-based violence and exploitation by developing leadership of immigrant women workers of color. Matahari will host three half-time members who will serve as Commonwealth Corps Community Fellows in the Our Work Our Worth program. They will conduct outreach to women workers, manage know your rights education workshops and intakes, and coordinate trainings in Greater Boston. Through their service, members will directly impact 550 individuals, including 375 first-time beneficiaries of Matahari services. In addition, they will leverage 45 volunteers who will provide additional service, including multilingual outreach to community members and event support for job trainings.
PAST CC MEMBERS' EXPERIENCES

“Throughout this pilot year, I led school administrators, teachers, students, and college staff through a series of professional development sessions aimed at identifying collaborative ways for our community to foster leadership, teamwork, problem-solving, and empathy in students.”

Bryan Nolan, Education

“Because of the Commonwealth Corps, I have been able to regroup both personally and professionally. I honed existing and developed valuable new skills, met and served alongside phenomenal people, and made important contacts that have led to my next job.”

Cheryl Holmes, Economic Opportunity

“Through the Commonwealth Corps, I’ve been able to successfully launch a series of SAT and college counseling workshops at a local high school, organize events for high-profile guest speakers in the education field to connect with our college mentors, and expand our organization’s capacity through on-site mentor sessions.”

Jennifer Kim, Education
EDUCATION

COALITION FOR A BETTER ACRE
(Lowell; Full-time)

Coalition for a Better Acre (CBA) is dedicated to resident empowerment and sustainable community revitalization for current and future residents of Lowell. We promote healthy, vibrant neighborhoods by developing resident leaders, affordable housing and economic opportunities, and by responding to community needs through collective action. CBA will host three full-time members in the Youth Development programs for youth living in CBA properties in the Acre neighborhood of Lowell, MA. Through their service, two Commonwealth Corps Youth Engagement Coordinators will provide academic enrichment and support to youth and teens, while one Commonwealth Corps Youth Outreach Coordinator will build relationships with families and cultural and educational partners to support our programs. All three members will support CBA in building relationships with youth and their families, as well as manage 15 volunteers who in turn will provide academic and enrichment support to youth.

FRIENDS OF THE HERNÁNDEZ
(Boston; Full-time)

The mission of Friends of the Hernández (FOH) is to support the Rafael Hernández K-8 Dual Language Immersion School and the surrounding community, especially by running a high-quality, low-cost (sliding scale) bilingual afterschool program, the only one of its kind in the area. FOH will host two full-time Commonwealth Corps members to serve as the Commonwealth Corps Community Partnership Coordinator (CPC) and the Commonwealth Corps Bilingual Literacy Initiative Coordinator (BLC). The CPC will recruit, retain, and train volunteers and build capacity through fundraising and grant-writing. The BLC will operate and expand a dual-language literacy program that is currently serving 54 students. Both members will serve as mentors for students and support the afterschool program. In addition, they will leverage close to 150 volunteers that will be engaged in supporting the Hernández community.
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 will host two full-time members who will serve as Commonwealth Corps Environmental Educators. Through their service, members will teach the Watershed Education Program (WEP) topics to over 2,500 students in grades PreK-12 in Dartmouth, Fall River, Fairhaven, Taunton, and Westport. In addition, members will recruit and leverage 75 new volunteers through a new citizen science program, to assist with monitoring different aspects of the watershed.

WRITEBOSTON
(Boston; Full-time)

WriteBoston seeks to ensure that all students develop into skillful academic writers and communicators, ready for college and career. WriteBoston will host two full-time members in the Teens in Print program who will serve as Commonwealth Corps Youth Program Associates, deepening both our journalism offerings and college readiness programming, in Boston. Through their service, members will impact approximately 300 under-resourced Boston students by providing individualized writing support and wrap-around services that support students’ writing growth and target their college readiness skills. In addition, they will leverage 40 volunteers that will support students’ writing and thinking skills through mentoring relationships centered around reading, writing, and career and college exploration.
"Because of the Commonwealth Corps, I had the power to reduce poverty on a local level, while serving intentionally and meaningfully. I had the opportunity to learn about the system, showcase the public benefit cliffs, and examine the local poverty loop, all of which made me even more inclined to pursue a masters in economics after my service."

Krizia Valentino, Economic Opportunity

"Because of the Commonwealth Corps, I have a clear idea of who I am as a professional and where I can go from here. I was able to plan and facilitate a yoga and journaling workshop for youth, lead an evening tutoring programming, and receive training that benefited me both professionally and personally."

Christina Amen, Education

"After serving with the Commonwealth Corps, I am now positive that education and facilitation will be at the root of my career. I was able to develop and lead health workshops for high schoolers, which gave me a better understanding of the value and impact of compassionately serving my community in an effort to increase health equity."

India Wood, Health and Nutrition
HEALTH AND NUTRITION

FAMILY HEALTH CENTER OF WORCESTER
(Worcester; Full-time)

The mission of Family Health Center of Worcester (FHCW) is to improve the health and well-being of all residents in the Greater Worcester area, especially culturally diverse populations, by providing access to affordable, high quality, integrated, comprehensive, and respectful primary health care and social services, regardless of patients’ ability to pay. FHCW will host two full-time members who will serve as Commonwealth Corps Coordinators of Patient Engagement/Hospitality at our Worcester Healthcare for the Homeless sites. Through their service, members will enhance patient engagement in care and provide health education through hospitality activities for individuals and families experiencing homelessness. In addition, they will leverage 6 volunteers that will be engaged in supporting seasonal hospitality activities.

OPEN TABLE
(Regional; Full-time)

The mission of Open Table is to address hunger by providing healthy food in a welcoming environment while respecting the dignity of those served. We achieve our mission by: Serving community meals open to all, offering a wide variety of healthy food choices in our market, and engaging a team of committed and passionate volunteers. Open Table will host two full-time members in the Mobile Pantry Program who will serve as Commonwealth Corps Mobile Programs and Operations Assistants in the 23 cities and towns in Middlesex county that constitute our service area. Through their service, members will address transportation barriers to accessing food in our suburban communities through development of our Mobile Pantry Program. In addition, they will leverage 30 volunteers that will be engaged in program operations.
**PEER HEALTH EXCHANGE**  
*(Lynn & Malden; Full-time)*

The mission of Peer Health Exchange is to empower young people with the knowledge, skills, and resources to make healthy decisions. Peer Health Exchange will host four full-time members who will serve as Commonwealth Corps Health Educators with our partner schools located in the communities of Lynn and Malden. Through their service, members will grow Peer Health Exchange’s capacity to partner with schools in these districts, increase the number of young people who will receive critical health education, and allow us to strengthen our core programming for students across Greater Boston and the North Shore. In addition, they will leverage more than 300 college volunteers who will be engaged in providing relatable, accurate health education to young people the greater Boston area.

**REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL, INC.**  
*(Worcester; Half-time)*

The Regional Environmental Council (REC) is a grassroots food justice organization located in Worcester, Massachusetts. Founded in 1971, REC has been dedicated to building healthy, sustainable and just communities in Worcester for more than 40 years. The REC will host three half-time members who will serve as Commonwealth Corps Volunteer Engagement Specialists embedded in our community gardens network and our youth-run urban farming program to support volunteer individuals, groups, and youth. Through their service, members will increase the sustainability of school and community gardens in Worcester as a source of healthy food, as well as increase healthy food production and community awareness at the YouthGROW Farm. In addition, they will leverage over 100 volunteers that will be engaged in hands on garden support and maintenance and inner-city food production for food insecure neighborhoods.
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT / YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION

OPEN SKY COMMUNITY SERVICES
(Fitchburg; Half-time)

Open Sky Community Services blends best practices with the power of community, by partnering with individuals and families to see beyond and live beyond perceived limitations to pursue fulfilling lives. Open Sky Community Services will host three half-time members in Safe Homes North, who will serve as Commonwealth Corps Safe Homes North Coordinators, utilizing the principles of Positive Youth Development to provide support to LGBTQ+ youth at a drop-in center located at Fitchburg State University. Through their service, members will promote the new location, recruit 30 new youth participants, develop and support peer leaders, and refer participants and their families to mental health counseling and other services. In addition, they will recruit up to three volunteers to assist with activities at the drop-in center.

SOUTH COAST YOUTH COURTS
(Fall River; Half-time)

Positive Action Against Chemical Addiction (PAACA) is the mother organization of South Coast Youth Courts (SCYC), a juvenile diversion program which seeks to serve at risk youth and prevent first time offenders from entering the juvenile system by providing positive youth development, accountability, and engagement. SCYC will host four half-time members who will serve as Commonwealth Corps Program Facilitators in the South Coast region. Through their service, members will outreach to community vendors to expand on service learning sites and curriculum and spearhead the expansion of our Drive Smart SC campaign to Fall River by helping educate young people on the dangers of texting and driving through the campaign, reaching 200 youth. In addition, they will recruit and leverage 40 volunteers that will be engaged in acting as peer lawyers and adult judges for YC hearings.
MEMBER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Commonwealth Corps service internship program has a dual focus on both members’ positive impact on their organizations and communities, and their own personal growth and professional development. Members participate in professional development activities each week and are offered comprehensive orientation and ongoing training from both MSA and their host site. MSA continuously evaluates and adapts training topics based on members’ feedback and needs each year, but some past training topics have included:

- **Explorations of Ableism in Volunteerism**
- **Remarkable Service Leadership**
- **Serving Vulnerable Populations (ex. Immigrants & LGBTQ+)**
- **Understanding Systemic Inequity and the Basics of White Supremacy Culture**
- **Sustaining Your Service and Yourself**
- **Mindfulness in Service and Leadership**
- **Leveraging Your Skills and Experiences**
## Commonwealth Corps
### Main Contacts by Host Site

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Staff Contact</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Economic Opportunity/Workforce Development Host Sites</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Boston Cares</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Boston, MA 02114</td>
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<td>Central Berkshire Habitat for Humanity</td>
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<td>Boston MA, 02116</td>
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<td>Matahari Women Workers Center</td>
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<td><strong>Education Host Sites</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Coalition for a Better Acre</td>
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<td>Peer Health Exchange</td>
<td>745 Atlantic Avenue</td>
<td>Bethany Allen</td>
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<td>Boston, MA 02111</td>
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<td>Regional Environmental Council, Inc.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Worcester, MA 01610</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Youth Development/Youth Violence Prevention Focus Area Host Sites</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Open Sky Community Services</td>
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<td>South Coast Youth Courts (PAACA)</td>
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<td>New Bedford, MA 02746</td>
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