Bonding across generations, volunteers with the Lynn Community Association participated in the 2017 MLK Day of Service by creating cards for seniors as part of an MSA-supported project.

... and it’s fun!
Dear Friends of MSA,

Every morning in Massachusetts, over 1,400 AmeriCorps and Commonwealth Corps members wake up, put on their gear, and head out to make a difference in our communities. Staff members of nonprofits arrive at their offices and greet volunteers who are donating their time, to improve the lives of those around them. And every day at the Massachusetts Service Alliance we are working to make sure those corps members and volunteers and nonprofit organizations have the tools and resources they need to address the most pressing needs in our communities.

Even though the economy in Massachusetts is strong and unemployment is low, not everyone benefits equally. We are proud that our resources are deployed to serve the needs of some of the most vulnerable residents in our state. This year over 5,500 immigrants and refugees new to this country were assisted with English language learning, citizenship training, and career services by AmeriCorps and Commonwealth Corps and over the past three years 150 unaccompanied minors were assisted with navigating the legal system. Over 8,400 pre-kindergarten through 12th grade students demonstrated gains in academic performance, school readiness and/or school engagement because AmeriCorps members worked with them one-on-one to make sure they can have the best opportunity for success in school. And, over 4,000 low income residents received services so they could live in safe, affordable housing.

It is with great pleasure that we share with you the Massachusetts Service Alliance 2017 Annual Report. Through these pages you will get a glimpse of the amazing organizations we are proud to support and their corps members and volunteers who step up every day to serve our Commonwealth. Please join us in celebrating their efforts.

Emily Haber
CEO

Barbara Moffat
Board Chair
EXPANDING MSA’S NATIONAL FOOTPRINT

Responding to the Opioid Epidemic
Through a new partnership with PAARI (Police Assisted Addiction and Recovery Initiative), MSA launched a ground-breaking program that places AmeriCorps members as recovery coaches at police departments throughout Massachusetts to provide much needed capacity around the opioid epidemic. This program model reflects what AmeriCorps was set out to do when established 23 years ago — to train, empower, and set forth individuals who want to solve problems and make our communities healthier and stronger.

Expanding Partnerships
As a Steering Committee member of Voices for National Service, board member of America’s Service Commissions (ASC), and member of the newly formed ASC’s States for Service Coalition, MSA was proud to partner with our colleagues across the country this year to advocate for the support and growth of National Service. We know we are all stronger if we work together to amplify the collective power of National Service to address critical needs facing our Nation.

#Stand4Service
A poll conducted by TargetPoint Consulting showed overwhelming support in maintaining or increasing the current level of federal investment in national service on both sides of the political aisle. We are proud to have a Congressional delegation in Massachusetts that strongly supports and is willing to fight for National Service. MSA makes it a priority to educate and thank our Congressional members at various points throughout the year, including #Stand4Service Hill Day visits.

“The Massachusetts Service Alliance continues to set an example for how to volunteer and make a difference in our communities. Lt. Governor Karyn Polito and I are thankful for the leadership and hard work demonstrated by AmeriCorps and Commonwealth Corps members and volunteers, as we all work together to give back to our 351 cities and towns and meet the needs of residents across Massachusetts.”

—Governor Charlie Baker
During 2016–2017, over 1,400 AmeriCorps State members answered the nation’s call to service by addressing critical needs in the Commonwealth. Full and part-time members spent one year performing intensive service in the areas of academic enrichment, disaster preparedness and response, land conservation, mentoring, citizenship assistance, legal services, and housing. Members served in every region of the state, from the Berkshires to the Cape, Springfield to Worcester, and Greenfield to Boston.

TerraCorps (formerly MassLIFT) is an AmeriCorps program that was initiated in 2008 by Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust. Our main goal as an organization is to prepare and mobilize emerging leaders to help communities gain access to and conserve land for people and nature. We do this by supporting 36 AmeriCorps members who serve with community-based land trusts and urban agriculture nonprofits across the state, tackling issues around human health and environmental sustainability.

Through our continued funding from MSA, our program has grown from a 4 member Commonwealth Corps funded pilot program in 2008 to a 36 member statewide AmeriCorps program in 2017. Through the service of our members, we seek to build equity in land conservation across the urban-rural landscape. We have seen a more inclusive engagement of local people in land access and conservation issues as well as the creation and revival of community farms, school gardens, town forests, accessible trails, and public parks.

During the 2016–2017 program year alone, our AmeriCorps members helped to build capacity for over 100 Massachusetts nonprofit organizations. Through their service, they supported: schools, youth programs, community-based health systems, senior centers, shelters and food pantries, conservation and open space committees, agricultural commissions, trail associations, community gardens, and more! Through these collaborations, they educated and trained 2,530 people of all ages and backgrounds on topics including land conservation, land access, and environmental/social health and justice. Members also treated 1,724.5 acres of land, of which 1,537.5 acres were certified as improved. It is through the service of our members that we see the conversation around conservation shifting to be more inclusive, and therefore more resilient and successful.
MSA had another successful year of managing the Service Enterprise Initiative, a nationally-recognized certification program which includes 20+ hours of training and individualized coaching to nonprofits.

A Service Enterprise is an organization that leverages volunteers and their skills to successfully deliver the social mission of the organization. In 2016–2017, MSA partnered with Boston Cares, Cape and Islands United Way, and the United Way of Greater New Bedford to deliver intense volunteer program training to 16 diverse organizations in those three regions.

Southcoast Health, a network of three partner hospitals, was part of the New Bedford cohort, and we benefited greatly from the training. We were officially certified in Spring 2017. Working with the staff from the Massachusetts Service Alliance on the Service Enterprise Initiative gave us the opportunity to enhance our volunteer program in many ways. The training helped us think outside the box and gave us a new appreciation of our volunteer program. Since the training has ended, we have made several modifications to our existing program to ensure it is even more attractive to potential new volunteers, beneficial for the hospital staff, and rewarding for our current active volunteers. We also have learned new valuable tools to strengthen the engagement of our management team.

We are truly grateful for the experience and look forward to our continued professional relationship. The outcome has made an important difference in promoting our volunteers as a vital part of our organization’s success in the communities we serve.

In the 2016–2017 program year, the Commonwealth Corps provided 41 diverse individuals of all ages and backgrounds an opportunity to rebuild communities and address unmet community needs while developing their own skills, leadership, and passion for service. Corps members provided direct service, built organizational capacity, increased volunteerism, and positively impacted Massachusetts residents. The Home for Little Wanderers was one of 17 host site partners to benefit from the Commonwealth Corps.

Creating and implementing an in-house tutoring program had been at the top of The Home for Little Wanderers’ wish list until we came across the Commonwealth Corps program. We saw this as an opportunity to bring on two bright and creative Commonwealth Corps members to build our capacity and bring the tutoring program to fruition. It turned out better than we had imagined.

Shelly and Maria came on board for the 2016–2017 service term. They created a targeted recruitment plan, new training materials, and worked out logistics with our two schools to make space for the incoming tutors. Shelly and Maria’s hard work and dedication brought in 11 new tutors, exceeding our goal of 8, who worked one-on-one with students to support their academic growth as well as change the culture to fully embrace the tutors as part of the school community.

While we were sad to see the service term come to an end, the impact members made is long-lasting. Because of the service of the two incredible Commonwealth Corps members, the tutoring program is thriving. The students and school rely on the tutors and look forward to seeing them. Now that the initial steps are done, The Home’s Volunteer Manager can focus on continuing to support the tutors in the great work they are doing!
MASSACHUSETTS SERVICE ALLIANCE
TRANSFORMS THE COMMONWEALTH

Service Transforms
organizations
- 24 AmeriCorps programs
- 17 Commonwealth Corps host sites
- 16 Service Enterprise organizations
- 11 Service Enterprise certifications

You
- 1,399 AmeriCorps and Commonwealth Corps members served
- 1,396,289 hours of service from AmeriCorps and Commonwealth Corps members
- 15,153 volunteers engaged through National Days of Service (MLK Day of Service & National Volunteer Week)

Communities
- 19,871 youth were served through National Days of Service
- 8,945 students demonstrated gains in academic performance, school readiness and/or school engagement
- 3,106 individuals received job training/skill development services and job placement services
- Over 351 individuals received assistance in pursuing educational opportunities, or in earning professional credentials

5,519 immigrants and refugees received economic mobility services
523 individuals passed the U.S. citizenship exam and were sworn in
423 individuals benefited from professional development, training events, and the MA Conference on Service & Volunteerism

883 individuals were transitioned to safe, healthy, and affordable housing
4,054 individuals received housing services
3,000 individuals received training in environmentally conscious and energy efficient practices
423 acres of parks and other public lands were improved
93 miles of trails or waterways were improved

314 organizations reported that they are more effective as a result of members’ service

All data is from 2016–2017 program year

Service Transforms
YOU
- 1,399 AmeriCorps and Commonwealth Corps members served
- 1,396,289 hours of service from AmeriCorps and Commonwealth Corps members
- 15,153 volunteers engaged through National Days of Service (MLK Day of Service & National Volunteer Week)

519 AmeriCorps members participated in one or more professional development/training events

883 individuals were transitioned to safe, healthy, and affordable housing
4,054 individuals received housing services
3,000 individuals received training in environmentally conscious and energy efficient practices
423 acres of parks and other public lands were improved
93 miles of trails or waterways were improved

314 organizations reported that they are more effective as a result of members’ service

Over 351 individuals received assistance in pursuing educational opportunities, or in earning professional credentials
Established in Spring 2015, MSA’s Youth Development Volunteer Initiative (YDVI) supports youth-serving organizations across the Commonwealth and their efforts to recruit, retain, manage, and support increased numbers of volunteers. Girls Inc. of Holyoke was one of 8 recipients of the YDVI grant in 2016–2017.

With YDVI funding, MSA has helped us increase the volunteer capacity for Eureka!. In partnership with UMass Amherst, Eureka! is a highly effective 5-year program to provide increased STEM education to at-risk girls in grades 8–12. Eureka! relies on volunteers, and the goal is to utilize engaging hands-on science and technology projects and intensive academic and personal support to build the confidence girls need for long-term academic and career success. Eureka! has grown each year — this past summer, 120 girls participated with over 176 volunteers.

Volunteer STEM experts lead hands-on, engaging workshops. Last summer, girls worked daily with volunteer faculty, graduate and undergraduate instructors on an amazing array of classes and workshops on the UMass campus. MSA funding supported the systems and training for STEM volunteers to create and implement workshops for teen girls.

Volunteers from local businesses also serve as extern supervisors. The 27 girls in their third year of Eureka! developed STEM and career skills in externship placements. MSA funding supports improved training for the extern volunteer supervisors. Each step of the way, MSA has been a key partner for building and sustaining our capacity to effectively engage volunteers in Eureka!
The New American Integration Program (2011–present) and justice AmeriCorps (2014–2017) together promote the vision of the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA) — to empower all immigrants and refugees to fully participate in their communities' social, economic, and civic lives.

This year, 26 NAIP AmeriCorps members utilized expert training in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), citizenship application, and job readiness instruction to assist 5,519 refugee and immigrant clients from over 100 different countries in obtaining greater economic opportunity. For some of these clients, the impact is immeasurable. Now recognized as Employee of the Month at his new hotel job, for example, one resilient client served by NAIP describes a key improvement: “Now, when I work hard, I feel like everything is worth it.”

Five justice AmeriCorps attorneys also continued to provide ongoing and much needed legal representation to unaccompanied children who would not otherwise be guaranteed any representation in their deportation proceedings. These children, often as young as five years old, have crossed the U.S. border without a parent or guardian after fleeing extreme violence and poverty in their home countries. Without the legal assistance provided by justice AmeriCorps to over 150 of these children over the last three years, the likelihood that they would be sent back to horrific conditions is high.
Before joining the Commonwealth Corps, I had always hoped to someday find a way to be a part of something bigger than myself and give back to my community. Serving as a Commonwealth Corps member gave me that unique ability.

For 10.5 months I served as the Commonwealth Corps Community Outreach & Marketing Coordinator for More Than Words (MTW), a nonprofit social enterprise that empowers young adults who are in foster care, court involved, homeless, or out of school to take charge of their lives by taking charge of a business.

While serving at my host site I was able to preside over the More Than Words volunteer department, and also help guide overall strategy, direction, and daily posting on all their social media platforms. Throughout my year of service, I was able to integrate over a thousand volunteers across their robust program that engages both individual and group volunteers.

After finishing up my year of service, I accepted a full time position within the Development department at More Than Words. The skills I learned serving have helped shape me into a more polished professional with a deeper understanding of the importance of service and giving back to one’s community!
I had the incredible privilege of serving as an AmeriCorps member in Massachusetts for four years. A few months into my term with City Year Boston in 2012, I knew that I wanted to serve another year in the classroom before going to graduate school to become a teacher.

During that year, Dudley Promise Corps (part of the Boston Promise Corps program) was birthed, and I had the honor of joining cohort 1 and then later helping to lead cohort 2. As a Dudley Promise Corps member, I served in a classroom as a tutor and mentor, led reading groups, facilitated recess, facilitated after-school programming and social-emotional play classes for students, and partnered with other community organizations serving the Dudley community.

The students taught me about the power of connection. The power of connection is so much greater than perfection, and when students feel that connection they will move mountains. After Dudley Promise Corps, I served in the Boston Teacher Residency, also part of the Boston Promise Corps program, and I earned my master’s degree in elementary education as I continued to serve in a second grade classroom.

I am now a kindergarten teacher at the Holmes Innovation School in Dorchester. We are a full inclusion school that strives to be transformative for students, with a strong emphasis on social justice and service-learning projects embedded within the community. I tell my students every day that we are all teachers in the room. We all have something to learn from each other. A personal mission of mine is for kids to truly feel seen, heard, valued, and be able to experience joy. I want kids to feel like they matter, their ideas matter, and that they can make change in the world even at five years old.

Operating Revenues:
Grants and contracts:
  Federal       11,169,654
  State         1,430,615
Conference fees and other 119,007
Contributions 3,110
Total operating revenues $12,722,386

Operating Expenses:
Program services:
  AmeriCorps 11,565,509
  Commonwealth Corps 689,619
  Volunteer Generation Fund 186,830
  General and administrative 301,799
Total operating expenses $12,743,757

Changes in unrestricted net assets from operations (21,371)
Net Investment Income 120,179
Changes in unrestricted net assets 98,808
Unrestricted Net Assets (Beginning of year) 1,690,291
Unrestricted Net Assets (End of year) $1,789,099

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July Afable
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Roger Dunn
Program Officer
Emily Haber
Chief Executive Officer
Lisl Hacker
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Rachel Irvine
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Suzana Kantardzic
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Katie Koski
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Elisabeth Lohmueller
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