Recently, our Student Conservation Association (SCA) MA AmeriCorps members have been making the news. SCA is America’s largest and most effective youth conservation service organization. Each year, SCA MA recruits AmeriCorps members to serve throughout the state. Members do a blend of trail maintenance and hands-on conservation work as well as educational outreach in local schools. Check out the following article highlighting current SCA members and the letter to the editor written by an SCA MA alum.

MA Students Get Environmental Instruction from SCA Volunteers

*Greenfield Recorder*
*Tuesday, January 16, 2018*
When Christian McGrath and Aletha Spang walked to the front of Jennifer Comiskey's third-grade class one recent Wednesday morning, McGrath enthusiastically asked the students, "How much did you miss us?"

The room echoed with exclamations. "A lot!" shouted one. "Bunches!" yelled another.

McGrath, 25, and Spang, 21, are weekly visitors to the Bernardston Elementary School classrooms. As volunteers with AmeriCorps, the two teach students about various facets of the environment, including weather, topography, mapping, engineering and how animals adapt to survive winter months. After school, they also run an outdoors club.

McGrath and Spang are two of 18 AmeriCorps volunteers who reside in a bunkhouse at the Kenneth Dubuque Memorial State Forest in Hawley as part of an arrangement between AmeriCorps, the state Department of Conservation and Recreation, the Massachusetts Service Alliance and the Student Conservation Association. AmeriCorps is a volunteer public service program supported by the federal government, foundations, corporations and other donors.

Read more in the Greenfield Recorder.

Newly Proposed Federal Budget Would Eliminate Important National Service Program

By Joshua Reynolds, SCA MA AmeriCorps Alum

Dedham Times

Friday, February 16, 2018

I was very dismayed to learn on February 12 that the newly unveiled federal budget proposal calls for the complete elimination of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), the federal agency
SCA MA AmeriCorps alum Joshua Reynolds calls for the Trump administration to fully fund CNCS, the agency responsible for AmeriCorps.

Founded in 1993, AmeriCorps was conceived as a means to stimulate national service and volunteerism among young adults - addressing community needs including education, environmental conservation, disaster response and relief, public health, and infrastructure. Since the program was founded, approximately 1 million individuals have served, delivering 1.4 billion hours of service to their communities. In return for their service, AmeriCorps members receive a modest monetary award designated for paying educational expenses or student loans.

I grew up in Dedham, and after earning my BA at Hampshire College with a concentration in environmental studies, I enrolled in an AmeriCorps program based in the hill-towns of western MA. Known as "SCA Massachusetts AmeriCorps," this program is a partnership between AmeriCorps and the Student Conservation Association. As a member of this program, I spent 10 months living on Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) property with 23 other young adults and several staff members.

Read more.

MSA's Instagram is our new favorite way to bring you our AmeriCorps and Commonwealth Corps service members, partner organizations, and volunteer and funding opportunities. Follow @MassService for member spotlights, takeover campaigns, and more!

SAVE THE DATE!
THURSDAY, APRIL 19, 2018
The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) recently announced the confirmation of Barbara Stewart as its new CEO. CNCS is the federal agency that administers AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, the Volunteer Generation Fund, and other service-oriented initiatives across the country. MSA would like to send a warm welcome to Ms. Stewart!

Barbara Stewart Begins Tenure as CEO at Federal Volunteer Agency Home to AmeriCorps and Senior Corps

Corporation for National and Community Service

February 20, 2018

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Barbara Stewart set a tone of stability and optimism on her first day as CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), the federal agency responsible for service and volunteering programs. Stewart was confirmed by the U.S. Senate on February 7 after being nominated by President Donald J. Trump in November of 2017.
"It is a privilege and honor to represent national service programs and the millions of volunteers that make up the backbone of this nation as CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service," said Stewart. "After decades of volunteering and leading a small foundation, I recognize the importance and extraordinary impact of nonprofits and volunteers to make a difference in the lives of Americans. Our small but mighty agency has an important responsibility to support the success of the American people, and I am excited to be at CNCS to help strengthen service and volunteerism throughout our country."

A federal agency, the Corporation for National and Community Service administrates AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs and leads the nation's volunteering and service initiatives, such as the Martin Luther King and 9/11 Days of Service. CNCS engages millions of Americans in service each year and operates programs in 50,000 locations across the nation that are preparing today's students for tomorrow's jobs, reducing crime and reviving cities, connecting returning veterans to jobs, fighting the opioid epidemic, supporting seniors to live independently, making college more accessible and affordable, and helping Americans rebuild their lives following disasters.

Read full article on the CNCS website.
Read Barbara Stewart's complete bio.