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**1**

April 19, 1995

To: Steve Selby, Meg Maguire

From: Joel Berg

JB

3 pages, including this cover

I propose to send the attached memo --- including really great news --- to GAO. But before I do, please vet this through all interested parties at CNCS.

I want to be sure my strategy is in line with all of yours.

Thanks.

DRAFT

April 19, 1995

To: Carol Patey, GAO

From: Joel Berg, USDA

Subject: Cost/Benefit Analyses of Some USDA AmeriCorps Programs

We now have some limited cost/benefit analyses for USDA AmeriCorps programs that I hope you will consider including in your report.

The USDA Forest Service has just calculated that its 236 AmeriCorps Members serving on Public Lands Teams perform at least \$1.51 worth of service for each \$1.00 that the American taxpayer spends to support such service. Although it is difficult to blend cost benefits from different Forest Service regions around the country, the cost-benefit figures are based on an average of the combined cost savings of all recreation projects completed. These costs included all Federal spending, including the Member stipends and educational awards. The Forest Service AmeriCorps Public Lands crews completed recreation projects for 51% less than similar projects completed by force account (if completed by Federal employees), and 68% less than similar services completed by contracted services. For example, in one area it cost AmeriCorps \$64,185 to complete 53 miles of heavy trail maintenance. The same projects would have cost \$126,000 by force account, and \$212,000 if the services were contracted.

The Clinch-Powell Resource Conservation & Development Council in Tennessee calculated that, in the first four months of the program, the four USDA AmeriCorps Rural Development Team Members, who are managed by the Council, performed approximately \$2.73 worth of service for each \$1.00 that the American taxpayer spent to support such service. As you can see from the attached chart the council prepared for a report to Congressman Van Hilleary, they calculated that, if purchased on the "Open market," one service project performed by one Member would have cost an estimated \$23,975 while another service project performed by three Members would have cost an estimated, \$50,400, bringing the total value of the service performed to \$74,375. The cost of the AmeriCorps Members, pro-rated to the four months period in which they performed the projects, was \$27,272.

I understand that your primary mandate is to report on the total costs of AmeriCorps, and not necessarily the benefits. However, it is clear that such cost/benefit information puts the costs to the Federal government in the proper context. If you have any questions about this information, please contact me at (202) 720-6350.





UNITED  
STATES  
DEPARTMENT  
OF AGRICULTURE

August 9, 1995

MEMORANDUM FOR RICK ALLEN

FROM: JOEL BERG

JB

SUBJECT: Review of Draft GAO Draft Report "GAO/HEHS-95-222"

The draft GAO report "GAO/HEHS-95-222" discusses USDA AmeriCorps programs in two sections, Appendix IV which is a general discussion total program resources and Appendix V which discusses two specific programs, The Vermont Anti-Hunger, Nutrition and Empowerment Corps, the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps.

We have no major factual disagreements with the material contained in Appendix V except that as you have pointed out several times, it is fundamentally unfair to include private support in these calculations.

With respect to Appendix IV, while we have no basic disagreement with the information concerning the Vermont Anti-Hunger, Nutrition and Empowerment Corps, the estimates of "program resources" given for the Vermont Youth Corps (VYC) project highlight the peril in confusing estimates with actual expenditures. On page 68, a figure of \$450,000 is given for the line item "Other Federal Cash" for the VYC project. This was the original estimate when the project was first proposed almost a year ago. Based on figures from June of 1995, it appears that the actual number will be approximately \$410,000. The decrease reduces the "Total Resources" available in the table on page 69 as follows:

| CATEGORY                                   | GAO FIGURE<br>(using estimates) | CORRECTED<br>FIGURES<br>(using actual) |
|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Total Resources per participant            | \$42,758                        | \$40,405                               |
| Total resources per service hour           | \$25.15                         | \$23.76                                |
| Total resources<br>per direct service hour | \$31.44                         | \$29.70                                |

It is recommended that GAO include the corrections listed above in their final report. If you want to discuss this matter further, please contact me at (202) 720-6350.



Graduation (certificates)

Diana Sanchez  
Vista

Changes:

one Policy per Year

Sites operating  
~~Form~~ # of members  
People Not supervised

# release



AmeriCorps National Service

CORPORATION

FOR NATIONAL

★ SERVICE

Release: 8/4/95 7 pm  
Contact: J. TOSCANO  
202-606-5000 ext 277

## G.A.O. ON AMERICORPS: MEETING GOALS, RIGHT ON THE MONEY

### DRAFT REPORT CONFIRMS AMERICORPS FIGURES, ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Today, the General Accounting Office (G.A.O.) issued a draft report on AmeriCorps, the new national service initiative launched last fall. The report confirms that the program is meeting or beating its budget targets, and catalogues significant accomplishments of AmeriCorps Members.

Eli J. Segal, C.E.O. of the Corporation for National Service, said, "I am gratified that the G.A.O. verifies the figures we have testified to Congress and notes substantial accomplishments of AmeriCorps Members in strengthening communities, encouraging responsibility, expanding opportunities -- getting things done. The federal investment in these 20,000 AmeriCorps Members is returning benefits far outweighing the costs. That's why private companies, foundations, charitable groups, schools, local police and fire departments, are joining with thousands of other ordinary Americans in supporting this public-private-independent partnership."

Here are the facts:

#### ■ **G.A.O. confirms AmeriCorps' budget figures are right on the money**

The Corporation for National Service (CNS), which oversees AmeriCorps, has estimated its current spending per AmeriCorps Member at \$18,800 -- G.A.O. pegs the number at \$17,629. The Corporation has said federal spending from all sources should come in at around \$20,000 per Member -- G.A.O. anticipates federal cash support will run to \$19,876 per Member. And that includes start-up costs in this first operational year.

| AMERICORPS FUNDING<br>PER AMERICORPS MEMBER |          | TOTAL FEDERAL FUNDING<br>PER AMERICORPS MEMBER |                |
|---------------------------------------------|----------|------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| CNS predicted:                              | \$18,800 | CNS predicted:                                 | about \$20,000 |
| G.A.O. says:                                | \$17,629 | G.A.O. says:                                   | \$19,876       |

#### ■ **...and not a penny more than Congress appropriated**

CNS is well within the budget authorized and appropriated by Congress. The FY1994 budget level (funding 20,000 Members in the field now) is \$376 million. The FY1995 budget will support 25,000 AmeriCorps Members beginning service in October, 1995. Do the math -- this program is on budget, and getting a substantial return on investment.

-- more --

Getting Things Done.  
AmeriCorps, National Service  
Learn and Serve America  
National Senior Service Corps



■ **What about that larger figure? That reflects an attempt by G.A.O. to estimate total potential "resources available" -- not taxpayer cost**

AmeriCorps is a partnership among the public, private and independent sectors. That federal dollars are leveraging private support is a sign of the program's effectiveness.

G.A.O. tried to estimate current and potential "available resources" -- looking at all resources (not just cash and not just from the government) potentially available to this public-private-independent partnership -- including estimations of the value of use of a school gym on weekends, expected donations from local businesses, and use of Forest Service gear to fight fires.

When a local police department lets an AmeriCorps Member use a computer after hours to track crime statistics, is that a cost or a benefit? G.A.O. would count it as an "available resource."

■ **G.A.O. did not aim to tell Congress whether AmeriCorps Members are a good investment...**

But others have shown what AmeriCorps Members are worth: From the streets of New York City, where AmeriCorps' Members back up the NYPD, to the front lines of forest fires in the West and flood ravaged neighborhoods from Texas to California to Minnesota, from hundreds of the nation's toughest classrooms to hundreds of our most polluted rivers and streams, AmeriCorps Members have made a major impact in just 10 months. That's been shown by an independent study done by President Ford's Commissioner of Education (*Aguirre Report*, 3/95; available upon request).

And the only cost/benefit analysis done to date, commissioned by the IBM, Dana, and Irvine foundations and conducted by an independent team of noted conservative economists, predicts that for every dollar AmeriCorps invests, the public will realize a return of \$1.60 to \$2.60 or more in direct, *measurable* benefits (*Benefits and Costs of National Service*, 6/95; available upon request).

■ **...but they do list examples of AmeriCorps accomplishments**

In addition to the substantial direct benefits to the communities they serve, AmeriCorps Members are meeting the goals set when they began their year of service. G.A.O. listed a few accomplishments of the programs they surveyed:

**GETTING THINGS DONE.** Rehabilitating housing in run-down areas, tutoring in elementary schools; reclaiming forests and replacing trees; analyzing neighborhood crime statistics and developing prevention measures; cleaning trails and cataloguing artifacts in National Forests; developing year-round children's meal programs.

**STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES.** Connecting troubled youth and nursing home residents; building community produce markets and renovating a municipal stadium; rehabilitating run-down communities; working together, despite mixed ages, education levels, economic levels and ethnic backgrounds.

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**EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES.** Educational grants will be used by most to pay off past (student loan) debt or to attend school; participants obtain job experience, technical skills, and sometimes college credit; all dropouts encouraged to work toward their GED, some have obtained their GED.



release

Release: 9/7/95  
Contact: J. TOSCANO  
202-606-5000 ext 277

## SECOND G.A.O. REVIEW CONFIRMS BENEFITS OF AMERICORPS

\* FEDERAL DOLLAR INVESTED RETURNS \$1.60 TO \$2.60 IN BENEFITS  
\* G.A.O. DEEMS AMERICORPS PROGRAMS STUDIED "WORTHWHILE INVESTMENTS"

The U.S. General Accounting Office (G.A.O.), watchdog of the federal till, today released its analysis of a first-of-its-kind econometric study done recently by four noted economists that predicted that AmeriCorps national service programs studied will provide an impressive return on investment for federal taxpayers. The G.A.O. report agreed, stating that "as the authors concluded, the three programs analyzed would appear to be worthwhile investments."

In the initial report, The Benefits and Costs of National Service, the "Chicago school" economists predicted that, in the three representative programs analyzed, the return on every federal dollar the Corporation for National Service invests will range from \$1.60 to \$2.60 in direct, measurable benefits, noting that "these measurable benefits underestimate the total benefits." G.A.O. concurred, stating that "during site visits we conducted as part of an earlier study, we observed benefits that may also apply to the three programs the study analyzed, including strengthening communities and fostering civic responsibility. Inclusion of an estimate for the value of these benefits would raise reported benefit-cost ratios."

The new G.A.O. analysis follows an August G.A.O. report that confirms that the program is meeting or beating its budget targets, and catalogues significant accomplishments of AmeriCorps Members.

The initial Benefits study was commissioned by the IBM Foundation, the Dana Foundation, and the Irvine Foundation -- three AmeriCorps partners, and Youth Service California.

Eli J. Segal, CEO of the Corporation for National Service, said, "I am gratified that yet another independent look at AmeriCorps yields the same conclusion: AmeriCorps is a great investment. The two G.A.O. reviews, the Benefits study, and the survey of programs' results by the firm of President Ford's

PHOTOCOPY  
PRESERVATION



Commissioner of Education (Aguirre International) help us cut through the fog of rhetoric generated by a few beltway critics. In over a thousand communities across America, AmeriCorps Members are getting things done in a cost-effective way."

"IBM expects a return on an investment, and bases its funding decisions on demonstrable results," said IBM executive Stan Litow. "We (with two other AmeriCorps partners and YSC) commissioned a team of leading economists to provide a conservative assessment of rock-hard, tangible benefits of the programs we invest in (AmeriCorps\*Project First). The returns are in and the 'return' is considerable. This program works."

The Benefits and Costs of National Service is available from Kormendi/Gardner at 202-822-0900.

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PHOTOCOPY  
PRESERVATION



**The Corporation  
for National &  
Community Service**

1201 New York Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20525  
Phone (202) 606-5000

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**Date:** 8/8/95

**Time:** 6:49 PM

**To:** **Ms. Denise Bennett**  
US Dept. of Agriculture

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**From:** Harrison, Rosa

**Pages:** 4

**Reference:** 44109.25038

**Subject:** Untitled1

**Fax No:** 9-720-4614

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GAO Draft Report

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From: Toscano, J on Fri, Aug 4, 1995 9:07 PM  
Subject: GAO REPORT news release  
To: \_CNCSALLEMPLOYEES

release

Release: 8/4/95 7:00 p.m.  
Contact: J. TOSCANO  
202-606-5000 ext 277

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|-----------------------|----------|---------------------|
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release

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UNITED  
STATES  
DEPARTMENT  
OF AGRICULTURE

August 9, 1995

MEMORANDUM FOR RICK ALLEN

FROM: JOEL BERG *JB*

SUBJECT: Review of Draft GAO Draft Report "GAO/HEHS-95-222"

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It is recommended that GAO include the corrections listed above in their final report. If you want to discuss this matter further, please contact me at (202) 720-6350.

*Fewer  
members*



UNITED  
STATES  
DEPARTMENT  
OF AGRICULTURE

August 14, 1995

To: Greg Frazier, Martha Phipps, Charlie Rawls, Stephen Dewhurst  
From: Joel Berg *JB*  
Subject: Draft G.A.O. Report on AmeriCorps Spending

Attached are the pages of a draft G.A.O. report on AmeriCorps spending that relate to the USDA program. This draft is more accurate and more favorable to USDA than preliminary figures that were leaked to the media recently by Senator Grassley.

The report indicates that, by obtaining \$740,000 in matching funds from private and non-profit sector sources, USDA was the Federal agency most successful in matching Federal and state AmeriCorps funds with totally non-governmental funds.

Unfortunately, the G.A.O. report still characterizes state and local government contributions, as well as private and non-profit sector contributions, as part of "resources available." Critics of AmeriCorps will undoubtedly attempt to confuse "resources available per Member" with "costs per Member." Thus, G.A.O.'s characterization may very well have the net effect of penalizing USDA for our success in obtaining non-Federal funding.

Yet even under G.A.O.'s definition, USDA's AmeriCorps program costs less per Member than all but five of the 15 Federally-run AmeriCorps programs.

It is comforting to note that these outside reviewers have verified our previous claims that USDA is running extremely cost-effective AmeriCorps projects.

You may also be interested to see the attached information from the Corporation for National Service about the overall draft G.A.O. report, indicating that the entire program is meeting its goals cost-effectively.



DRAFT

APPENDIX IV

APPENDIX IV

Table IV.1: Resources Available for AmeriCorps\*USA Programs Sponsored by Federal Agencies

| Federal agency grantee:<br>AmeriCorps*USA program                                                                | Corporation<br>award (adjusted) | Other resources  |                 |              | Number of<br>FTEs | Resources<br>available<br>per<br>participant | Resources<br>available<br>per<br>service<br>hour | Resources<br>per<br>direct<br>service<br>hour |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------|-------------------|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                  |                                 | Other<br>federal | State/<br>local | Private cash |                   |                                              |                                                  |                                               |
| Agriculture: AmeriCorps/USDA                                                                                     | \$2,467,281                     | \$21,156,957     | \$979,355       | \$740,250    | 1131.5            | \$29,186                                     | \$17.17                                          | \$21.46                                       |
| Defense/Navy: Seaborne<br>Conservation Corps                                                                     | 650,226                         | 2,166,338        | 0               | 0            | 47.0              | 66,715                                       | 39.24                                            | 49.06                                         |
| Energy: Salmon Corps                                                                                             | 792,718                         | 1,375,325        | 0               | 105,410      | 72.0              | 38,363                                       | 22.57                                            | 28.21                                         |
| Environmental Protection<br>Agency: Improving<br>Disadvantaged Neighborhoods                                     | 1,427,335                       | 1,083,947        | 351,425         | 106,705      | 92.0              | 39,064                                       | 22.98                                            | 28.72                                         |
| Health and Human<br>Services/Agency for Children<br>and Families: FamilyServe                                    | 506,667                         | 393,482          | 82,958          | 50           | 50.0              | 26,451                                       | 15.56                                            | 19.45                                         |
| Health and Human Services/<br>Administration on<br>Developmental Disabilities:<br>ADD Corps                      | 669,300                         | 242,868          | 232,508         | 191,536      | 34.5              | 45,519                                       | 26.78                                            | 33.47                                         |
| Health and Human<br>Services/Health Resources and<br>Services Administration: HRSA<br>Model Health Service Corps | 777,833                         | 346,047          | 157,315         | 67,191       | 58.5              | 29,837                                       | 17.55                                            | 21.94                                         |
| Interior: Interior<br>AmeriCorps*USA Program                                                                     | 1,149,467                       | 1,776,914        | 67,315          | 720,000      | 155.0             | 30,747                                       | 18.09                                            | 22.61                                         |
| Justice: JustServe                                                                                               | 1,277,183                       | 1,670,000        | 1,227,236       | 0            | 172.5             | 30,987                                       | 18.23                                            | 22.78                                         |
| Labor: AmeriCorps/Youth Fair<br>Chance                                                                           | 542,623                         | 299,320          | 0               | 0            | 50.5              | 23,459                                       | 13.80                                            | 17.25                                         |
| National Endowment for the<br>Arts: Writers Corps                                                                | 379,198                         | 194,984          | 10,000          | 155,000      | 35.5              | 27,610                                       | 16.24                                            | 20.30                                         |

DRAFT

DRAFT

## APPENDIX IV

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| Federal agency grantee:<br>AmeriCorps*USA program                          | Corporation<br>award (adjusted) | Other resources  |                 |              | Number of<br>FTEs | Resources<br>available<br>per<br>participant | Resources<br>available<br>per<br>service<br>hour | Resources<br>per<br>direct<br>service<br>hour |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------|-------------------|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
|                                                                            |                                 | Other<br>federal | State/<br>local | Private cash |                   |                                              |                                                  |                                               |
| National Institute for<br>Literacy: Literacy*<br>AmeriCorps                | 737,847                         | 29,600           | 34,700          | 160,913      | 62.5              | 22,196                                       | 13.06                                            | 16.32                                         |
| Neighborhood Reinvestment<br>Corporation: NeighborWorks<br>Community Corps | \$0                             | \$566,000        | \$144,500       | \$30,000     | 28.0              | \$33,234                                     | \$19.55                                          | \$24.44                                       |
| Transportation: National<br>Service Initiative                             | 270,250                         | 420,099          | 182,696         | 56,397       | 42.0              | 28,917                                       | 17.01                                            | 21.26                                         |
| Veterans Affairs:<br>Collaboration for Homeless<br>Veterans                | 423,077                         | 159,450          | 0               | 0            | 22.0              | 33,266                                       | 19.57                                            | 24.46                                         |
| Total                                                                      | \$12,071,004                    | \$31,981,332     | \$3,470,008     | \$2,333,452  | 2053.5            | \$31,017*                                    | \$18.25*                                         | \$22.81*                                      |

\*This figure is the sum of (1) Corporation award (adjusted), other federal contributions, state and local government contributions, and private cash, for all federal agencies together, divided by number of FTEs for all federal agencies, plus (2) an education stipend of \$4,725 per FTE, plus (3) Corporation overhead of \$2,062 per FTE. It is not an average of the individual agency figures.

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## OVERVIEW OF FEDERAL AGENCY PROGRAMS

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#### APPENDIX IV

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AmeriCorps\*USA programs sponsored by federal agencies varied in size from 22 full- and part-time AmeriCorps\*USA participants for the Department of Veterans Affairs' program to about 1,200 for the Department of Agriculture's program. The number of operating sites per program varied as well. For example, the Navy's program has one site in Galveston, Texas, while Agriculture's program operated at 326 sites across the country.

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The 15 agency programs varied widely in their scope and missions. All information presented here, including descriptions of the agency mission fulfilled by the AmeriCorps\*USA program, participant tasks and funding streams, were provided by agency officials.

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The Department of Agriculture (USDA) had the largest of the federal agency AmeriCorps\*USA programs. The program operated at 326 sites in 38 states, with some sites hosting only one AmeriCorps\*USA participant. These sites, located nationwide, emphasized one of three areas: fighting hunger, protecting the

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202-606-5000 ext 277

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Here are the facts:

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Hand carried  
to Rick Allen  
by Joel 8/9/95

August 9, 1995

MEMORANDUM FOR RICK ALLEN

FROM: JOEL BERG

SUBJECT: Review of Draft GAO Draft Report "GAO/HEHS-95-222"

The draft GAO report "GAO/HEHS-95-222" discusses USDA AmeriCorps programs in two sections, Appendix IV which is a general discussion total program resources and Appendix V which discusses two specific programs, The Vermont Anti-Hunger, Nutrition and Empowerment Corps, the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps.

We have no major factual disagreements with the material contained in Appendix V except that as you have pointed out several times, it is fundamentally unfair to include private support in these calculations.

With respect to Appendix IV, while we have no basic disagreement with the information concerning the Vermont Anti-Hunger, Nutrition and Empowerment Corps, the estimates of "program resources" given for the Vermont Youth Corps (VYC) project highlight the peril in confusing estimates with actual expenditures. On page 68, a figure of \$450,000 is given for the line item "Other Federal Cash" for the VYC project. This was the original estimate when the project was first proposed almost a year ago. Based on figures from June of 1995, it appears that the actual number will be approximately \$410,000. The decrease reduces the "Total Resources" available in the table on page 69 as follows:

| CATEGORY                                   | GAO FIGURE<br>(using estimates) | CORRECTED<br>FIGURES<br>(using actual) |
|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Total Resources per participant            | \$42,758                        | \$40,405                               |
| Total resources per service hour           | \$25.15                         | \$23.76                                |
| Total resources<br>per direct service hour | \$31.44                         | \$29.70                                |

It is recommended that GAO include the corrections listed above in their final report. If you want to discuss this matter further, please contact me at (202) 720-6350.



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## APPENDIX IV

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Table IV.1: Resources Available for AmeriCorps\*USA Programs Sponsored by Federal Agencies

| Federal agency grantees:<br>AmeriCorps*USA program                                                               | Corporation<br>award (adjusted) | Other resources  |                 |              | Number of<br>FTEs | Resources<br>available<br>per<br>participant | Resources<br>available<br>per<br>service<br>hour | Resources<br>per<br>direct<br>service<br>hour |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------|-------------------|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                  |                                 | Other<br>federal | State/<br>local | Private cash |                   |                                              |                                                  |                                               |
| Agriculture: AmeriCorps/USDA                                                                                     | \$2,467,281                     | \$21,156,957     | \$979,355       | \$740,250    | 1131.5            | \$29,186                                     | \$17.17                                          | \$21.46                                       |
| Defense/Navy: Seaborne<br>Conservation Corps                                                                     | 650,226                         | 2,166,338        | 0               | 0            | 47.0              | 66,715                                       | 39.24                                            | 49.06                                         |
| Energy: Salmon Corps                                                                                             | 792,718                         | 1,375,325        | 0               | 105,410      | 72.0              | 38,363                                       | 22.57                                            | 28.21                                         |
| Environmental Protection<br>Agency: Improving<br>Disadvantaged Neighborhoods                                     | 1,427,335                       | 1,083,947        | 351,425         | 106,705      | 92.0              | 39,064                                       | 22.98                                            | 28.72                                         |
| Health and Human<br>Services/Agency for Children<br>and Families: FamilyServe                                    | 506,667                         | 393,482          | 82,958          | 50           | 50.0              | 26,451                                       | 15.56                                            | 19.45                                         |
| Health and Human Services/<br>Administration on<br>Developmental Disabilities:<br>ADD Corps                      | 669,300                         | 242,868          | 232,508         | 191,536      | 34.5              | 45,519                                       | 26.78                                            | 33.47                                         |
| Health and Human<br>Services/Health Resources and<br>Services Administration: HRSA<br>Model Health Service Corps | 777,833                         | 346,047          | 157,315         | 67,191       | 58.5              | 29,837                                       | 17.55                                            | 21.94                                         |
| Interior: Interior<br>AmeriCorps*USA Program                                                                     | 1,149,467                       | 1,776,914        | 67,315          | 720,000      | 155.0             | 30,747                                       | 18.09                                            | 22.61                                         |
| Justice: JustServe                                                                                               | 1,277,183                       | 1,670,000        | 1,227,236       | 0            | 172.5             | 30,987                                       | 18.23                                            | 22.78                                         |
| Labor: AmeriCorps/Youth Fair<br>Chance                                                                           | 542,623                         | 299,320          | 0               | 0            | 50.5              | 23,459                                       | 13.80                                            | 17.25                                         |
| National Endowment for the<br>Arts: Writers Corps                                                                | 379,198                         | 194,984          | 10,000          | 155,000      | 35.5              | 27,610                                       | 16.24                                            | 20.30                                         |

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## APPENDIX IV

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| Federal agency grantee:<br>AmeriCorps*USA program                          | Corporation<br>award (adjusted) | Other resources     |                    |                    | Number of<br>FTEs | Resources<br>available<br>per<br>participant | Resources<br>available<br>per<br>service<br>hour | Resources<br>per<br>direct<br>service<br>hour |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
|                                                                            |                                 | Other<br>federal    | State/<br>local    | Private cash       |                   |                                              |                                                  |                                               |
| National Institute for<br>Literacy: Literacy*<br>AmeriCorps                | 737,847                         | 29,600              | 34,700             | 160,913            | 62.5              | 22,196                                       | 13.06                                            | 16.32                                         |
| Neighborhood Reinvestment<br>Corporation: NeighborWorks<br>Community Corps | \$0                             | \$566,000           | \$144,500          | \$30,000           | 28.0              | \$33,234                                     | \$19.55                                          | \$24.44                                       |
| Transportation: National<br>Service Initiative                             | 270,250                         | 420,099             | 182,696            | 56,397             | 42.0              | 28,917                                       | 17.01                                            | 21.26                                         |
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APPENDIX IV

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FEDERAL AGENCY PROGRAM AND RESOURCE AVAILABILITY INFORMATION

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OVERVIEW OF FEDERAL AGENCY PROGRAMS

Thirteen federal agencies were awarded AmeriCorps\*USA grants in 1994 to fund 15 programs. Of the more than \$145 million awarded in Corporation operating grants, federal agencies received about \$14.6 million, or about 10 percent of the total. About 2,400 participants, or 16 percent of all participants, served in programs sponsored by federal agencies. Total resources available for federal agency-sponsored programs ranged from about \$22,200 per participant for the National Institute for Literacy's Literacy\*AmeriCorps\*USA program to \$66,700 per participant for the Department of the Navy's Seaborne Conservation Corps (see table IV.1). We did not analyze the reasons for the differences in per participant resource availability because it was beyond the scope of this study.

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■ **What about that larger figure? That reflects an attempt by G.A.O. to estimate total potential "resources available" -- not taxpayer cost**

AmeriCorps is a partnership among the public, private and independent sectors. That federal dollars are leveraging private support is a sign of the program's effectiveness.

G.A.O. tried to estimate current and potential "available resources" -- looking at all resources (not just cash and not just from the government) potentially available to this public-private-independent partnership -- including estimations of the value of use of a school gym on weekends, expected donations from local businesses, and use of Forest Service gear to fight fires.

When a local police department lets an AmeriCorps Member use a computer after hours to track crime statistics, is that a cost or a benefit? G.A.O. would count it as an "available resource."

■ **G.A.O. did not aim to tell Congress whether AmeriCorps Members are a good investment...**

But others have shown what AmeriCorps Members are worth: From the streets of New York City, where AmeriCorps' Members back up the NYPD, to the front lines of forest fires in the West and flood ravaged neighborhoods from Texas to California to Minnesota, from hundreds of the nation's toughest classrooms to hundreds of our most polluted rivers and streams, AmeriCorps Members have made a major impact in just 10 months. That's been shown by an independent study done by President Ford's Commissioner of Education (*Aguirre Report*, 3/95; available upon request).

And the only cost/benefit analysis done to date, commissioned by the IBM, Dana, and Irvine foundations and conducted by an independent team of noted conservative economists, predicts that for every dollar AmeriCorps invests, the public will realize a return of \$1.60 to \$2.60 or more in direct, *measurable* benefits (*Benefits and Costs of National Service*, 6/95; available upon request).

■ **...but they do list examples of AmeriCorps accomplishments**

In addition to the substantial direct benefits to the communities they serve, AmeriCorps Members are meeting the goals set when they began their year of service. G.A.O. listed a few accomplishments of the programs they surveyed:

GETTING THINGS DONE. Rehabilitating housing in run-down areas, tutoring in elementary schools; reclaiming forests and replacing trees; analyzing neighborhood crime statistics and developing prevention measures; cleaning trails and cataloguing artifacts in National Forests; developing year-round children's meal programs.

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES. Connecting troubled youth and nursing home residents; building community produce markets and renovating a municipal stadium; rehabilitating run-down communities; working together, despite mixed ages, education levels, economic levels and ethnic backgrounds.

ENCOURAGING RESPONSIBILITY. Developing team leadership skills; learning to organize a program; learning worker responsibility (e.g. timeliness) and carrying own load; assessing one's progress.

EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES. Educational grants will be used by most to pay off past (student loan) debt or to attend school; participants obtain job experience, technical skills, and sometimes college credit; all dropouts encouraged to work toward their GED, some have obtained their GED.

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sites. Each of these sites uses a different operating model, which provides MAGIC ME with the opportunity to test new program approaches designed to meet the needs of various communities. The sites range from inner city to agricultural, and participating youth include gang members, gifted and talented students, special education students and pregnant teens from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

Interviewed AmeriCorps Baltimore program participants stated that the program provides them with self-confidence and self-esteem experiences establishing an ability for them to think of bigger things to do with their life. All three interviewed participants planned to use their educational program awards to start or return to college.

In addition, we interviewed three Baltimore area elderly facility site representatives who spoke highly of the Americorps participants and their efforts in meeting student, elder, teacher, and care facility personnel needs. Their presence is seen as a key to the program's success.

VERMONT ANTI-HUNGER, NUTRITION AND EMPOWERMENT CORPS

The Vermont Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) began operating the Vermont Anti-Hunger, Nutrition and Empowerment Corps in December 1994. The OEO was awarded its grant in July 1994; however, because this was a new effort, it used the fall of 1994 to plan. As one of several programs funded by a national direct federal agency grant to the USDA, it operates in five sites in Vermont to improve the state's anti-hunger/nutrition infrastructure. OEO signed on as an applicant for funding from the Department of Agriculture's AmeriCorps\*USA grant to initiate a state-wide approach to hunger that would increase participation of

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low income and rural residents in federal food assistance programs and provide food/nutrition life skills education.

Table V. 4: Estimated Program Resources for Vermont Anti-Hunger, Nutrition and Empowerment Corps

| Source                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Cash             | In-kind          | Total              |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Public</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                  |                  |                    |
| Federal                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                  |                  |                    |
| Corporation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | \$660,622        |                  | \$660,622          |
| Other                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | \$50,000         |                  | \$50,000           |
| State/local                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                  | \$304,860        | \$304,860          |
| <b>Private</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | \$56,601         |                  | \$56,601           |
| <b>Total</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <b>\$767,223</b> | <b>\$304,860</b> | <b>\$1,072,083</b> |
| <b>Per participant</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                  |                  |                    |
| Total resources per participant                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                  |                  | \$39,274           |
| Total resources per service hour                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                  |                  | \$23.10            |
| Total resources per direct service hour                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                  |                  | \$28.88            |
| NOTES:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                  |                  |                    |
| Resources reflect those available in the first Corporation operating grant period which includes a planning period. Per participant figures are based on the 33 full-time equivalents of participants who were on-board at the time of our visit. |                  |                  |                    |
| We have adjusted the original Corporation grant to reflect the participant level at the time of our visit.                                                                                                                                        |                  |                  |                    |
| Private in-kind contributions estimated at \$11,587 are also available to the program.                                                                                                                                                            |                  |                  |                    |

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Participant Characteristics

Participants' ages range from 19 to 67. The majority had either attended or graduated from college. Program officials expect all participants to use their education awards.

The program was budgeted for 40 full-time slots. At the time of our visit, there were 33 full-time participants on-board. Five original participants had left; since our visit, six additional participants have left. Reasons included: financial difficulties, extreme personal needs and issues, inability to work independently without explicit instructions/directions, and the stress posed by the required residential component.

Program Structure

Participants complete a minimum of 100 hours of training in areas that include nutrition education, federal and state food assistance policy, and community service. Participants are divided into five crews of up to eight members that are stationed in one of five regional sites. Four of the five crews live together in group houses.

Participants report weekly work entries and hours to team leaders; weekly and cumulative service and training hours are recorded separately. Team leaders compile monthly team progress reports that summarize the individual entries. Participants receive a stipend of \$7,660 for the program year; those beginning the program after its start receive an adjusted amount. They receive bi-weekly checks from which 25% of the stipend is automatically deducted to pay their rent.

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Program Accomplishments

Non-USD

~~Site visits to two housing projects revealed participants working in teams under the supervision of union carpenters on the renovation of a two-family home that will become affordable housing, and on completing the renovation of a five story, abandoned building that will become a transitional dormitory for homeless youth.~~

YOUTH CORPS - NATIONAL SERVICE ACADEMY

The Vermont Youth Conservation Corps began operating the Youth Corps - National Service Academy program in January 1995. As one of several programs funded by a direct federal agency grant to the USDA, it is based at Green Mountain College in Poultney, Vermont. Its mission is to restore, maintain and manage the Vermont National Forest and community resources, while providing participants with opportunities to apply their formal training and develop leadership skills. The Vermont Youth Conservation Corps applied to the USDA for assistance to create a youth service corps that combines conservation work, community work, and education to reduce backlogged USDA-Forest Service work requests that the Service has been unable to address.

Table V.8: Estimated Program Resources for Vermont Youth Conservation Corps

| Source      | Cash      | In-kind  | Total     |
|-------------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| Public      |           |          |           |
| Federal     |           |          |           |
| Corporation | \$5,185   |          | \$5,185   |
| Other       | \$450,000 | \$82,000 | \$532,000 |

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|                                         |           |          |           |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| State/local                             |           |          | 0         |
| Private                                 | \$74,321  |          | \$74,321  |
| Total                                   | \$529,506 | \$82,000 | \$611,506 |
| Per participant                         |           |          |           |
| Total resources per participant         |           |          | \$42,758  |
| Total resources per service hour        |           |          | \$25.15   |
| Total resources per direct service hour |           |          | \$31.44   |

## NOTES:

Resources reflect those available during the first Corporation operating grant period which includes a planning period.

Per participant figures are based on the 17 full-time equivalents of participants who were on-board at the time of our visit.

We have adjusted the original Corporation grant to reflect participant level at the time of the our visit.

Private in-kind contributions estimated at \$18,000 are also available to the program.

The resources available to the program are 88% federal funds and in-kind contributions, and 12% private funds. Of its federal funds, less than 1% comes from its Corporation grant; the remainder comes from the USDA-Forest Service, of which \$405,000 is a grant to VYCC under terms of the National and Community Trust Act. The program also receives private, in-kind contributions in the form of volunteer efforts, supplies and administration from Green Mountain College.

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Participant Characteristics

Participants' ages range from 18 to about 50; three-quarters have college degrees in the environmental sciences field, and most are seeking applied/practical experience to complement their education and training. A program official projects that all participants will use the education award.

The program is budgeted for 20 full-time participants; at the time of our visit, there were 17 full-time participants. Participants are not replaced mid-cycle because of the positioning of training and team formation at the program's outset; the education and training period would be too short and too costly if placed at mid-cycle.

Program Structure

Participants complete two weeks of classroom training in wilderness characteristics and survival, Red Cross first aid, team-building techniques, the natural sciences, community policy/needs, personal responsibility and self-sufficiency, and an orientation to field work on forest projects. Participants work in two crews that are sent to the North and South halves of the state to complete field projects. Project requests are typically generated from backlogged USDA - Forest Service work requests on recreational facilities and trails; wilderness management; watershed, timber stand, and fisheries improvements; and environmental education and interpretive programs. In addition to field work, participants undertake weekly environmental literature searches; participate in a reading, writing, and discussion curriculum; and undertake environmental education projects for the community.

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Participants live in a dormitory residence at Green Mountain College. They received monthly stipends totalling \$7,625 for the program's duration. Funds for participants' meals are deducted from the stipend.

Work and training hours are broken down into four components--service, education, training, and other, which includes community environmental projects--and recorded daily. They are submitted to crew leaders each week and recorded for participant tracking and program cost accounting.

Program Accomplishments

Site visits to the USDA program included discussing the results of members' efforts with a Forest Service employee and meeting crew members before their deployment to work sites in Green Mountain National Forest.

Participants have the option of pursuing a curriculum worth six upper-level, environmental studies credits at Green Mountain College with a reduced tuition; half have chosen to do so.

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UNITED  
STATES  
DEPARTMENT  
OF AGRICULTURE

July 11, 1995

Rick Allen, Jay Toscano, CNCS  
Tom Amontree, USDA

From: Joel Berg, USDA *JB*

Subject: NBC News Story on GAO AmeriCorps Report

The local NBC affiliate in Burlington, Vermont just visited our Anti-Hunger Team project manager in Vermont to obtain on-camera comment about a leaked GAO report that allegedly calculates the costs of two of our AmeriCorps projects in Vermont. It is likely that the affiliate is helping out on a network story.

Attached is one page from the leaked GAO report, with the headline "Site Visit Information." The chart includes costs for our Anti-Hunger and our Forest Service projects in Vermont, but not --- significantly enough --- for our Rural Development project, which has the lowest per-Member cost of the three. While it is too late in the day to produce exact budget numbers today for the Forest Service project, can clearly state that the overall \$43,157 cost per Member and the \$38,785 Federal cost per Member are both wildly exaggerated.

For the Anti-Hunger Corps, can now state with certainty that the GAO costs are way inflated:

|                  | GAO Cost Claim | Actual Cost |
|------------------|----------------|-------------|
| Federal Spending | \$32,912       | \$25,975    |
| Overall Spending | \$43,865       | \$34,571 *  |

\* Even in our accounting of overall cost, we include state and local spending --- which probably should be included as a benefit and not a cost.

Additionally, the portion of the report leaked to us obviously ignores the attached cost-benefit analysis we previously provided to GAO.

Lastly, in any official response, you should quote the attached editorial on our Anti-Hunger program from the *Burlington Free Press*, which states that the goals of the Vermont anti-hunger program "replicate those of many Washington fiscal conservatives."



## State of Vermont

AGENCY OF HUMAN SERVICES

OFFICE OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY  
103 South Main Street  
Waterbury, Vermont 05671-1801

Telephone: (802) 241-2450  
Fax: (802) 241-2979

**MEMO TO:** Susan Donna, Boston Field Office  
General Accounting Office

**FROM:** Avram Patt, Director *[Signature]*

**DATE:** July 19, 1995

**SUBJECT:** Addendum to Site Visit Comments, Vermont Anti-Hunger Corps

We wish to add some additional comments to those we forwarded to you on July 14. These pertain generally to the methodology used in determining "cost per member."

As we indicated, in order to establish a cost per member, one must either divide the budgeted cost by the budgeted number of members, or the actual cost by the actual number of members. Obviously, using actual numbers is preferable where possible. However, using actual numbers to date when we are only part way through the grant period raises a number of issues which should be understood and addressed prior to doing calculations:

1. While we do have accurate actual to date figures, projecting where we will finish the grant year is obviously an estimate and not a hard number.
2. The number of members has changed since the GAO site visit, which would cause further budget adjustments.
3. We are currently heading towards the end of a *fifteen month* grant. This is the result of first-year start-up issues, both here at OEO and nationally. As we've noted, we had authority to accept the funding as of July 21, 1994. As with other AmeriCorps projects, Corps members were not in place until later, December in our case. From August through December, we were actively engaged in a wide variety of start-up activities, from writing staff job descriptions and recruiting and hiring them, to locating and moving into office space, first-time meetings with numerous community partners, etc.
4. During the start-up period described above, we incurred a number of one-time start-up expenses that will not be incurred for next year or on an ongoing basis. These include a contract employee brought in short-term prior to project staff, purchase of computers and office equipment, advertising to fill staff positions, and other items.

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5. We would suggest that in order to accurately describe what our cost are per member is *annually*, certain reasonable one-time and start-up costs should be excluded from the calculation. The budget figures provided to GAO are for a fifteen month period, not twelve. In support of this argument, it should be noted that the budget for the upcoming year which we submitted to USDA is for considerably less than our present grant, although it calls for 40 Corps members and the same staff level as we have now.

Thank you for your consideration of these issues.

# release

Release: 7/13/95  
 Contact: J. TOSCANO  
 202-606-5000 ext 277

## G.A.O. & AMERICORPS: JUST THE FACTS

### ***LEAKED G.A.O. INFO CONFIRMS AMERICORPS FIGURES, ACCOMPLISHMENTS***

On July 11, opponents of national service leaked preliminary results of a General Accounting Office (G.A.O.) study of AmeriCorps, the national service initiative. Unfortunately, the whole story was not shared, and the preliminary figures were misused.

Eli Segal, C.E.O. of the Corporation for National Service said, "While we continue to work with G.A.O. on this methodology, I am gratified that the preliminary G.A.O. information verifies the figures we have testified to Congress and notes substantial accomplishments of AmeriCorps Members in strengthening communities, encouraging responsibility, expanding opportunities -- getting things done. The federal investment in these 20,000 AmeriCorps Members is returning benefits far outweighing the costs. That's why private companies, foundations, charitable groups, schools and local police and fire departments are joining with hundreds of others in this public-private partnership."

Here are the facts:

- There is no G.A.O. report on AmeriCorps -- yet  
 G.A.O. hasn't finished its study, undertaken its normal internal review, analyzed or responded to all concerns about its data and methodology, or received agency comment. So, even "leaked" figures are subject to revision.
- G.A.O. confirms AmeriCorps' figures -- AmeriCorps is spending what it told Congress  
 The Corporation for National Service (CNS), which oversees AmeriCorps, has estimated its current spending per AmeriCorps Member at \$18,800 -- G.A.O. preliminary pegs the number at \$17,923. The Corporation has said federal spending from all sources should come in at around \$20,000 per Member -- G.A.O. preliminary anticipates federal cash support will run to \$20,147 per Member. And that includes start-up costs in this first operational year.

| AMERICORPS FUNDING<br>PER AMERICORPS MEMBER |          | TOTAL FEDERAL FUNDING<br>PER AMERICORPS MEMBER |                |
|---------------------------------------------|----------|------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| CNS predicted:                              | \$18,800 | CNS predicted:                                 | about \$20,000 |
| G.A.O. says:                                | \$17,723 | G.A.O. says:                                   | \$20,147       |

- ...and not a penny more than Congress appropriated  
 CNS is well within the budget authorized and appropriated by Congress. The FY1994 budget level (funding 20,000 Members in the field now) is \$376 million. Do the math.

-- more --  
 -- continued --

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- What about that \$26.948 figure? G.A.O. is not studying costs -- it's trying to determine total "resources available" to this public-private partnership.  
G.A.O. has taken the position that it can't establish costs of a program that's only mid-way through its first year. That's why G.A.O. did not collect the data, provide the guidance, undertake the analysis or check any of the figures in the way it would if it was determining "cost."

G.A.O. is trying to determine current and potential "available resources" -- looking at all resources (not just federal dollars) potentially available to this public-private partnership -- including things like estimations of the value of use of a school gym on weekends, expected donations from local businesses, and use of Forest Service gear to fight fires.

When a local police department lets an AmeriCorps Member use a computer after hours to track crime statistics, is that a cost or a benefit? G.A.O. would count it as an "available resource" and assign it a value. And questions have been raised about whether G.A.O.'s methodology and data are valid even for this analysis.

- G.A.O. is not aiming to tell Congress whether AmeriCorps Members are a good investment -- it is not studying costs or benefits

But others have shown what AmeriCorps Members are worth: From the streets of New York City, where AmeriCorps Members back up the NYPD, to the front lines of forest fires in the West and flood ravaged neighborhoods from Texas to California to Minnesota, from hundreds of the nation's toughest classrooms to hundreds of our most polluted rivers and streams, AmeriCorps Members have made a major impact in just 9 months. That's been shown by an independent study done by President Ford's Commissioner of Education (Aguirre Report, 3/95. Available upon request).

And the only cost/benefit analysis done to date, commissioned by the IBM, Dana, and Irvine foundations and conducted by an independent team of noted conservative economists, predicts that for every dollar AmeriCorps invests, the public will realize a return of \$1.60 to \$2.60 or more in direct, measurable benefits (Kormendi/Gardner Econometric Analysis, 6/95. Available upon request).

- but they do list examples of AmeriCorps accomplishments

In addition to the substantial direct benefits to the communities they serve, AmeriCorps Members are meeting the goals set when they began their year of service. G.A.O. listed a few examples:

**GETTING THINGS DONE.** Rehabilitating housing in run-down areas, tutoring in elementary schools; reclaiming forests and replacing trees; analyzing neighborhood crime statistics and developing prevention measures; cleaning trails and cataloguing artifacts in National Forests; developing year-round children's meal programs.

**STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES.** Connecting troubled youth and nursing home residents; building community produce markets and renovating a municipal stadium; rehabilitating run-down communities; working together, despite mixed ages, education levels, economic levels and ethnic backgrounds.

**ENCOURAGING RESPONSIBILITY.** Developing team leadership skills; learning to organize a program; learning worker responsibility (e.g. timeliness) and carrying own load; assessing one's progress.

**EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES.** Educational grants will be used by most to pay off past (student loan) debt or to attend school; participants obtain job experience, technical skills, and sometimes college credit; all dropouts encouraged to work toward their GED, some have obtained their GED.

###



## COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES

### USDA NATIONAL ARBORETUM

The USDA National Arboretum 94-95 AmeriCorps community objectives are designed to educate the surrounding community, improve the overall appearance of the Arboretum and make the visitors experience as pleasant as possible. Due to a lack of funds, it has become difficult for the staff to maintain the grounds, provide ample assistance to visitors and continue to conduct experiments on plant material for the nation as well as the international horticultural society. Because of this shortage, some areas have been neglected the AmeriCorps has made it possible to insure and enhance many other areas. The AmeriCorps team assists the staff in maintaining the Arboretum's grounds. This provides the community with an exceptionally pleasing environment to come and enjoy. Our staff of volunteers do a great deal of providing information, giving tours, and doing some physical labor but the AmeriCorps team knows a great deal about the full spectrum that encompasses the Arboretum and often visitors need someone of this caliber. In this sense, the AmeriCorps team educates the visitors.

#### Specific Objectives

The participants will be able to meet and complete the following objectives:

1. Physically improve the overall appearance of the grounds.
2. Possess enough knowledge about the Arboretum to be able to provide young people with an educational and enjoyable tour of the grounds. This includes being able to vary tours to address specific interests
3. Have the ability and knowledge needed to teach children the value of plants and environmental awareness about natural systems. This message will be conveyed in a manner that will be both entertaining and interesting.
4. Possess enough knowledge about the Arboretum to be able to answer the most commonly asked questions by the visitors. They will be able to refer to the visitor to other staff for more detailed information if necessary.
5. The community will have horticulturally educated, college bound, work experienced individuals that can contribute something positive to their surroundings. Working at the Arboretum gives an AmeriCorps participant a overview of the field of horticulture. This can be used in the community in a variety of ways. The experience provides them with the horticultural knowledge needed to explain the basics to interested individuals. It also provides them with the ability to work as a team to reach a common goal, work with a variety of different people and personality types as well as the ability to work with the public.

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Department of Agriculture: Team USDA

The Department of Agriculture's Team USDA program is the largest of the federal agency AmeriCorps\*USA programs. The program operates at 402 sites, with some sites hosting only one AmeriCorps member. These programs, operating all over the country, emphasize one of three areas: anti-hunger, the environment, and rural development. Team USDA anti-hunger teams reduce the number of citizens suffering from hunger and give poor citizens necessary assistance to help overcome poverty. These teams operate, among other places, in Vermont, the District of Columbia, Mississippi and California. Team USDA environmental teams help repair and upgrade community facilities, conduct environmental education seminars, and preserve and restore national forests. These teams operate, among other places, in Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Atlanta and New Jersey. Team USDA rural development teams help protect watersheds, improve housing, respond to disasters and generally promote economic development in places such as Appalachia, South Carolina, the Pacific Northwest, and certain flood states (Missouri, Iowa, Illinois, and Nebraska, for example). Team USDA members began with the program in September 1994.



MEMORANDUM

FROM: JOEL BERG JB

TO: GREG FRAZIER  
STEPHEN DEWHURST

SUBJECT: Response to GAO Request for Confirmation of Vermont USDA AmeriCorps Anti-Hunger Project Site Visit Information.

The General Accounting Office has requested that our Vermont AmeriCorps sub-grantee confirm the information contained in the GAO site visit report. Attached is the response prepared by the Vermont site. I think it adequately highlights the errors made by GAO that resulted in their incorrectly arriving at a per member cost of \$43,000 for the Vermont project. The actual cost is projected to be approximately \$22,000 per member.

This GAO request is a continuation of their audit of the Corporation for National Service. Per our previous agreement with the USDA Inspector General as to how to respond to GAO inquiries to this audit, the attached information has been provided to the Corporation for National Service and the requesting GAO office.





## State of Vermont

AGENCY OF HUMAN SERVICES

## OFFICE OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

103 South Main Street  
Waterbury, Vermont 05671-1801

Telephone: (802) 241-2450

Fax: (802) 241-2979

**DRAFT**

MEMO TO: Susan Donna, Boston Field Office

FROM: Avram Patt, Director

DATE: July 14, 1995

SUBJECT: Response to Site Visit Summary

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to your draft site visit report, a courtesy which we appreciate and would have expected under any circumstances. Our corrections and comments are included in the handwritten notes on your draft, as well as in the separate comments and attachments.

I must note however, that on July 11, literally five minutes after I received a call from a staff member of the Boston Office asking for a fax copy of a document so he could "finish up" the site visit report, I was contacted by a reporter who had received a fax, from NBC News, of a copy of numbers contained in your draft report. On July 12, while this office was kept busy contacting Vermont press and media, our Governor's office and Congressional delegation to respond to these erroneous draft numbers, I received another call from you late in the afternoon of July 13, asking for our response to this draft site visit report that you were about to fax.

We regret that we were forced to respond publicly prior to this more formal response, but our response is essentially the same. Not knowing who is responsible for this information having been released at the draft stage, we also apologize to any staff members in the Boston Field Office, who may have made honest, albeit serious mistakes concerning our program, and were legitimately giving us the chance to respond and correct errors. The controversy was not of our making.

attachments

cc: USDA, National Service  
Senator James Jeffords  
Senator Patrick Leahy  
Governor Howard Dean  
Bari Gladstone, VAHC Project Director

**DRAFT**



# VERMONT ANTI HUNGER, NUTRITION AND EMPOWERMENT CORPS

The Vermont Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) began operating the Vermont Anti-Hunger Corps in December 1994. As one of several programs funded by a national direct federal agency grant to the USDA, it operates in five sites in Vermont to improve the state's anti-hunger/nutrition infrastructure. Its mission is to fight hunger state-wide through nutrition education/outreach and expansion of federal food program participation. OEO applied to the Department of Agriculture for AmeriCorps funding to initiate a state-wide, anti-hunger approach to the underutilization of federal food assistance programs by poor, rural residents.

Program Funding Stream, Per Budget, not actuals

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Cash             | In-Kind | Total            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|---------|------------------|
| <b>Public Sources:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                  |         |                  |
| <b>Federal:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                  |         |                  |
| CNS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | \$800,754        |         | \$800,754        |
| Other                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | \$50,000         |         | \$50,000         |
| State/Local                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                  |         |                  |
| <b>Private Sources</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | \$56,601         |         | \$56,601         |
| <b>Total Program</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>\$907,355</b> |         | <b>\$907,355</b> |
| <b>Per Participant:</b> (40)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                  |         |                  |
| Program Funding                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                  |         | \$22,684         |
| CNS Overhead                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                  |         | \$2,407          |
| Education Award                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                  |         | \$4,725          |
| <b>Total Funding</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                  |         | <b>\$29,816</b>  |
| <b>NOTES:</b><br>The CNS grant reflects the full amount awarded at the program's outset; the grant amount may be adjusted to reflect participant attrition. <del>and</del> The figure does not represent actual expenditure.<br>Per participant figures are based on full-time equivalents of participants. <del>The</del> 40 participants were anticipated in this budget.<br>Private in-kind funds estimated at \$11,587 are also available to the program. |                  |         |                  |

The funding available to the program is 70% federal funds, 25% state <sup>local and non-profit</sup> in-kind contributions, and 5% private funds. Of its federal funds, 94% comes from its CNS grant; the remaining 6% comes from the USDA Food and Nutrition Service.

See comment attached

See comment

See comment attached



### Participant Characteristics

Participants' ages range from 19 to 67; 48% are between 21 and 25. The majority have had some college or are college graduates. The program expects that all participants will use the education award.

The program budgeted for <sup>40</sup> full-time slots; however, ~~due to application process delays, only 40 slots were available when the program began in December 1991.~~ At the time of the GAO visit, there were 33 full-time participants. Two of the 40 recruited never began the program. Five of the original participants had left for health, personal and family reasons. Since that time, six additional participants have left for reasons including financial difficulties, extreme personal needs, inability to work in an ~~unstructured~~ <sup>structured</sup> environment, and the ~~stress involved with eight people living and working together.~~

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Participants complete a minimum of 100 hours of training in areas that include nutrition education, federal food policy and community service. Participants are divided into five crews of up to eight members that are stationed in one of five regional sites. Four of the five crews live together in group houses.

Participants report weekly work entries and hours to team leaders; weekly and cumulative service and training hours are recorded separately. Team leaders compile monthly team progress reports that summarize the individual entries.

### Program Accomplishments

Site visits to a community food shelf and a garden tenant program revealed participants providing special foods and instruction for clients with special dietary needs, conducting outreach efforts to establish a summer food program for the elderly and children as an extension of the school year program, and teaching low-income and rural residents to plant/buy food to get more and better food for their resources.

One member attends basic education classes and is individually tutored by team members. She recently passed the preliminary GED test, ~~after numerous failures, and after some extra preparation will take the GED.~~

see comments and attachments



**DRAFT**

Comments re: introductory paragraph

Although Corps members did not begin working with the project until December 1994, it should be noted that OEO was awarded the grant in July, 1994 and received approval from the Joint Fiscal Committee of the Vermont Legislature to accept the funds at that time. There was a gearing up and implementation phase during the fall of 1994, as this was a new undertaking for OEO.

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**DRAFT**



**DRAFT**

government and non-profit programs.

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**DRAFT**





# State of Vermont

*\* Steve, Faxed out of order*

AGENCY OF HUMAN SERVICES

|                                       |                      |               |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------|
| Post: brand fax transmittal memo 7671 |                      | # of pages: 8 |
| To: <i>Hel Berg</i>                   | From: <i>A. Patt</i> |               |
| Co:                                   | Co: <i>OEO</i>       |               |
| Dept: <i>USDA</i>                     | Phone #              |               |
| Fax # <i>202/220-4614</i>             | Fax #                |               |

OFFICE OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

103 South Main Street  
Waterbury, Vermont 05671-1801

*Total: 5 Pages*

Telephone: (802) 241-2450  
Fax: (802) 241-2979

July 12, 1995

For immediate release:

Contact: Avram Patt, OEO Director  
802/241-2462

## GAO, NBC NEWS MAKE HUGE MATH ERRORS IN MISLEADING REPORT CONCERNING VERMONT ANTI-HUNGER CORPS

*Not a Page Number KG*

An NBC TV News report about AmeriCorps which aired July 11 contains enormous math and factual errors about the Vermont Anti-Hunger Corps, according to the Vermont Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), which administers the program. NBC carried a story about a report soon to be issued by the General Accounting Office, which cites the Vermont Anti-Hunger Corps, among others, as having very high costs in relation to the number of AmeriCorps members working on the project. According to OEO, the erroneous GAO report paints a very negative picture of the program, when in fact the opposite is true:

"The math errors are so obvious, and so huge," said OEO Director Avram Patt. "It's almost funny. But this GAO report is being used for political purposes to attack a truly wonderful program, so we have to take this seriously and set the record straight."

The GAO report cited by NBC claims that the Vermont Anti-Hunger Corps is spending over \$43,000 for each AmeriCorps member working in the program. According to OEO's figures, the program actually costs about half that amount. According to Patt, the report used the wrong number of Corps members in the calculation, used year-old budget estimates for the program rather than actual expenditures, and claimed that substantial "in-kind" service contributions by Vermonters to the program were expenses.

"The General Accounting Office put large numbers on the wrong side of the ledger," Patt said.



"Then they added the wrong numbers together, and then they divided the wrong total by the wrong number of people. This series of blunders results in a compounded error of around \$15-20,000 per person. It's amazing, but true. They can't add, and they can't divide!"

According to OEO, the GAO report used a combined total of the original program budget from the USDA/AmeriCorps grant written over a year ago, which was for \$850,000, plus an additional \$189,000 for future education tuition awards not available to members until they have completed their year of service. These year-old budget estimates were based on the assumption that there would be 40 Corps members. However, because the project started part way into the program year, there were only 33 Corps members at the time the GAO reviewed the program (there are now 30). Nevertheless, the GAO used the original budget figure, but then divided by only 33 members.

"That's the most obvious mistake right there," OEO Director Patt noted. "We aren't going to spend the \$850,000, because there's about 25 per cent less members than we budgeted for, so we're not paying out their annual living expenses of \$7660 per person plus other costs, nor will there be 40 educational awards of \$4725 per person. We're running well under budget, but the GAO didn't ask us that. They took our original budget, not our actual expenditures, and divided by the wrong number of people. That results in a miscalculation of about \$5,000 per Corps member, just for starters."

Next, the GAO shows the "in-kind match" in the year-old Anti-Hunger Corps budget estimate (\$285,125) as a program expense, when it is actually service contributions from numerous local community organizations, schools, businesses, volunteers and state agencies are who are partners in the project. "In-kind" contributions include donated time, space, goods and services, which are carefully documented by OEO.



"These are not expenses," Patt argued. "No additional money is being spent, none at all, zero. The organizations we are working with across Vermont are glad the Corps members are there, and are happy to contribute some staff time or space, in exchange for getting things done that couldn't happen otherwise. To consider these non-monetary contributions as part of the cost per member is just plain dishonest. It's disheartening that an 'accounting' office would resort to methods like this." On top of that, the GAO report again used the year-old budget estimate rather than the actuals, and again divided by the wrong number of Corps members.

"Do the math yourself," Patt urged. "We're still only half way through the year, but any way you cut it, the cost per member will be in the 20's, not \$43,000."

"It's very distressing to see this kind of shoddy work, both by the GAO, and by a major national news organization. Vermont communities are seeing and appreciating the hands-on, 'get things done' work of the Vermont Anti-Hunger Corps," Patt concluded. "The way to evaluate any program is to look at results, not slipshod, politically motivated attacks masquerading as accounting. We invite anyone to take a real good look at what we're doing here."

###



Period covering :December 1, 1994-March 31, 1995

## Objective One

To increase food assistance program awareness and qualified utilization.

- NE Established new meal site and day for St. Johnsbury Community Lunch
- NE Collected 40 containers of spice for Community Lunch
- NE Designed and posted 500 flyers to advertise Community Lunch
- NE Recruited middle school students and teacher to cook Lunch at community lunch program every other week for 6 weeks
- NE Cooked meal for 14 Bosnian refugees
- NE Involved local prisoners in constructing 2 sandwich board signs to publicize community lunch program
- NE Delivered 75 Meals on Wheels in St. Johnsbury and Danville to shut in elderly and people with disabilities.
- SW Worked to help serve 2340 meals at Rutland Open Door Mission
- SW Planted 700 tomato plants to distribute to low income families
- SW Commodities distribution at 2 sites, drop offs at 4 sites
- C Delivered 23 Meals on Wheels in Lamoille County
- C Fed 120 people at Marshfield Community Supper
- C Delivered donation of 40lbs of food to Worcester Community Kitchen
- C Commodities distribution=22 team hours
- C Instituted the SHARE program (cooperative food purchasing at 120 Highgate low income subsidized housing complex working with tenant organization
- C Performed 100 hours of service at The Galley ( Senior Meal Site)
- C Delivered 300 Meals on Wheels in Washington County
- C Surveyed 30 Food Shelf recipients about interest in gardening workshops
- C Compiled 50 agriculture/education organizational packets for resource library
- SE Developed volunteer recruitment materials for Black River Valley Senior Center
- SE Worked with Westminster School Healthy Snack Program
- SE Developing a statewide handbook, with successful community food shelf volunteers for communities on "How to Start a Food Shelf"
- SE Solicited 4 restaurant donations for Southeastern Vermont Community Action food shelves fundraiser
- SE Commodities distribution at 6 distribution sites, drop offs at 6 other sites
- SE Helped serve 750 meals in Bellows Falls community kitchen.
- SE Delivered 135 Meals on Wheels in Ludlow
- SE Worked 50 hours at Brattleboro Food Shelf
- SE Worked 50 hours at Springfield Family Food Shelf



- NW Salvaged 970 loaves of bread for Burlington Food Shelf
- NW Served 130 meals at Burlington Salvation Army site
- NW Commodities distribution at 12 sites, drop offs at 19 sites
- NW Performed 906 intakes at commodities distribution sites
- NW Performed 200 intakes at Burlington Food Shelf
- NW Moved 20 tons of food to relocate Burlington Food Shelf
- NW Performed 24 hours of childcare for La Leche League Meetings
- NW Delivered 313 Meals on Wheels in Burlington
- NW Posted 150 posters with tear-off information on Food Stamps in Franklin County
- NW Completed 48 Meals on Wheels home visits carrying out a nutrition survey, made 20 agency referrals, travelled 490 miles
- NW Completed 3 Meals on Wheels nutrition survey phone interviews

### Objective Two

**Increase the number of summer food service sites, and enrollment in existing sites.**

- NE Starting summer feeding sites at schools in Newport and Coventry
- NE Starting summer feeding sites at schools in Jay, Lowell and Westfield
- NE Starting summer feeding site at a school in Hardwick
- SW Starting summer feeding programs at 3 or 4 sites in Bennington
- SW Starting summer feeding programs at a 3rd site in low-income housing in Rutland
- C Starting 3 new summer food sites at schools in Lamoille County
- C Starting 2 new summer food sites at schools in Orange County
- SE Starting summer food programs in Springfield and Windsor
- SE Inventoried all summer food sites, and are planning to support and increase participation in existing sites in region
- NW 7 summer feeding program sites in development in Chittenden, Franklin, Addison and Grand Isle counties

### Objective Three

**To increase availability of and enrollment in school breakfast program sites.**

- SW Community and School Breakfast promotion activities reached 1681 students, and their parents
- C Planning for increased participation at 6 breakfast and 13 lunch sites in Lamoille, Orange and Washington County
- SE Community and School Breakfast promotion reached 90 students, and parents at Jamaica Elementary School



## Objective Four

To increase community opportunities for sustainable agricultural projects and markets.

- NE Community garden planning for Newport and Lyndonville
- NE Greenhouse started at NE Correctional Facility in collaboration with inmates
- SW Identified 7 communities with interest in community gardens
- SW Greenhouses found and started in Rutland, Bennington and North Bennington
- C Developed replicable composting curriculum for science program (at Larraway School)
- C Started community garden with adolescent students at Larraway School, the harvest will be given to the town food shelf (students are in special residential program for kids with behavioral and emotional difficulties)
- C Distributed 500 packets of seeds with instructions to 120 families living at Highgate low income housing complex who were interested in establishing their own garden
- C Community garden planning with Brookhaven School staff and students
- SE Facilitated start-up of 50' x 100' community garden plot at Springfield High School Technical Center with Springfield Family Center and Meals on Wheels staff, volunteers, and customers
- SE Community garden planning with community group in Bellows Falls
- SE Planning to increase participation in Westminster School Community Garden
- NW Conducted surveys of 35 businesses in vicinities of Farmer's Markets to assess support
- NW Filled 2200 packets of seed for sale to low-income community action clients
- NW Sold 55 packets of seed at minimal cost to low income families with community action program
- NW Identified 2 garden sites for use by 5 agencies in low income areas of Chittenden (urban area) County
- NW Identified 2 greenhouses to donate space for NW Correctional Center garden project

## Objective Five

To increase nutrition and food safety education.

- NE Designed and posted 100 flyers for community Nutrition Fair
- NE Enlisted 23 college students to do face painting and design 40 posters for Nutrition Fair
- NE Increased participation at annual Nutrition Fair by 300 people
- NE Planned 'Mother's Day Foodle' community activity to promote healthy nutrition through fun family food activities
- NE Taught cooking class to 8 mothers receiving WIC in Barton
- C Distributed 22 nutrition information packets at Washington County Family Center
- C Increased participation in food/nutrition program at Family Center by 5 families
- C Designed community newsletter for Food Works Community Roots program



## (nutrition education and food safety cont'd)

- C Instituted nutrition education curriculum at Larraway School for 21 students
- C Surveyed 300 K-6th grade students to determine barriers to accessing school lunch and breakfast programs. Will publish as Community Action Report.
- C Surveyed 120 families in low-income housing on hunger and needs
- NW Taught 11 hours of life skills/nutrition education to youthful offenders at Department of Corrections in Burlington
- NW Layed out 10 menu backs with nutrition education and training for area school food personnel to promote nutrition education

**Special Empowerment Project:**

Earned Income Tax Credit information and assistance:

- SW EIC Tax assistance program with Bennington-Rutland Opportunity Council, identified \$61,599 in refunds
- C Distributed 301 EIC flyers and 17 posters in Barre

**National Identity**

- NE Spoke at 4 schools about community service and AmeriCorps
- NE Conducted community needs assessment of 36 communities
- NE Three members became Notary Publics to assist in registering voters should they not be able to register
- SW Conducted community needs assessment of 41 communities
- SW Presentation to 330 community members on hunger/volunteerism
- SW Presentation to 5 Proctor High students and 3 Proctor selectmen about VAHC and planning for high school students service to community program
- SW Presentation at Putney School to 300 students about national and community service and AmeriCorps
- C Press releases to 12 media sources about VAHC/community service activities
- C Conducted community needs assessment of 30 communities
- C One member became a Notary Public to assist in voter registration
- SE Surveyed 72 people in Windsor to assess community needs
- SE Conducted community needs assessment of 6 major communities in 2 counties
- SE Conducted community needs assessment of 28 communities
- NW Conducted community needs assessment of 10 communities in 4 counties
- NW One member attended 11 hours of GED class to prepare for the test



**Donations for projects and other organizations facilitated in partnership with VAHC members.**

- NE \$100 cash from VFW for Community Lunch
- NE \$125 in lumber for shelves at Newport Community Kitchen
- NE \$100 in seeds for Northeast Kingdom community action
  
- SW \$50 in flats and seeds
  
- C \$300 in seeds, containers, tools and soil amendments for community garden
- C \$300 in plowing services for garden
- C \$215 in food for community supper in Marshfield
- C \$200 in pallets for compost piles
  
- SE \$50 in seeds for Southeastern Vermont community action community garden
  
- NW 30 seed flats for community garden

# YOUTH CORPS

Vermont Youth Conservation Corps

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**JULY 12, 1995**

## **Vermont Youth Conservation Corps' AmeriCorps Program Responds to GAO Report**

(Waterbury, VT) In response to the Congressional General Accounting Office report comparing the costs of AmeriCorps programs nationwide, the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps, which manages the Public Lands and Environment AmeriCorps program in Poultney, Vermont, today announced the dollar for dollar value in the program.

"We are running a residential program to train leaders in conservation work, consensus building and most importantly, to leave the program as qualified leaders themselves," reported Thomas Hark, Executive Director of the Youth Corps, "these people will go back to their hometowns with an ethic of community service and volunteerism that will strengthen any community."

"Is the program expensive? Of course it is, but when you factor in basic living expenses, one time start-up costs, tools and necessary equipment for the priority work they are doing and the salaries of their leaders and trainers, you will see that corners are cut wherever possible and the budget is very bare bones," continued Hark, "I welcome anyone to come and see how the program runs and how it is paid for."

The Youth Corps received a \$405,000 grant from the USDA. This grant has enrolled 20 Corps Members, for a cost of \$20,250 each. The Youth Corps believes that it will underspend it's allotted amount for 1995.

"This first year of the program is far and away the most expensive as we are incurring costs that we won't confront in the following years," Hark concluded, "The 1996 program will be significantly less than this year."

**Contact: Thomas Hark 241-3699**





# State of Vermont

AGENCY OF HUMAN SERVICES

## OFFICE OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

103 South Main Street  
Waterbury, Vermont 05671-1801

Telephone: (802) 241-2450

Fax: (802) 241-2979

**MEMO TO:** Susan Donna, Boston Field Office  
General Accounting Office

**FROM:** Avram Patt, Director 

**DATE:** July 14, 1995

**SUBJECT:** Response to Site Visit Summary

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to your draft site visit report, a courtesy which we appreciate and would have expected under any circumstances. Our corrections and comments are included in the handwritten notes on your draft, as well as in the separate comments and attachments.

I must note however, that on July 11, literally five minutes after I received a call from a staff member of the Boston Office asking for a fax copy of a document so he could "finish up" the site visit report, I was contacted by a reporter who had received a fax, from NBC News, of a copy of numbers contained in your draft report. On July 12, while this office was kept busy contacting Vermont press and media, our Governor's office and Congressional delegation to respond to these erroneous draft numbers, I received another call from you late in the afternoon asking for our response to this draft site visit report that you were about to fax.

We regret that we were forced to respond publicly prior to this more formal response, but our response is essentially the same. Not knowing who is responsible for this information having been released at the draft stage, we also apologize to any staff members in the Boston Field Office, who may have made honest, albeit serious mistakes concerning our program, and were legitimately giving us the chance to respond and correct errors. The controversy was not of our making.

attachments

cc: USDA, National Service  
Senator James Jeffords  
Senator Patrick Leahy  
Governor Howard Dean  
Bari Gladstone, VAHC Project Director

PHOTOCOPY  
PRESERVATION



**OEO response to GAO draft site visit report, VT Anti-Hunger Corps**

page 2

Comments re: introductory paragraph

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**OEO response to GAO draft site visit report, VT Anti-Hunger Corps**

page 3

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PHOTOCOPY  
PRESERVATIONPHOTOCOPY  
PRESERVATION



VERMONT ANTI HUNGER, NUTRITION AND EMPOWERMENT CORPS

*see comments attached*

The Vermont Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) began operating the Vermont Anti-Hunger Corps in December 1994. As one of several programs funded by a national direct federal agency grant to the USDA, it operates in five sites in Vermont to improve the state's anti-hunger/nutrition infrastructure. Its mission is to fight hunger state-wide through nutrition education/outreach and expansion of federal food program participation. OEO applied to the Department of Agriculture for AmeriCorps funding to initiate a state-wide, anti-hunger approach to the underutilization of federal food assistance programs by poor, rural residents.

Program Funding Stream, Per Budget, not actuals

|                              | Cash             | In-Kind | Total              |
|------------------------------|------------------|---------|--------------------|
| <b>Public Sources:</b>       |                  |         |                    |
| <b>Federal:</b>              |                  |         |                    |
| CNS                          | \$800,754 *      |         | \$800,754 *        |
| Other                        | \$50,000 *       |         | \$50,000 *         |
| State/Local                  |                  |         |                    |
| <b>Private Sources</b>       | \$56,601 *       |         | \$56,601 *         |
| <b>Total Program</b>         | <b>\$907,355</b> |         | <b>\$907,355 *</b> |
| <b>Per Participant: (40)</b> |                  |         |                    |
| <b>Program Funding</b>       |                  |         | <b>\$22,684</b>    |
| CNS Overhead                 |                  |         | \$2,407            |
| Education Award              |                  |         | \$4,725            |
| <b>Total Funding</b>         |                  |         | <b>\$27,411</b>    |

**NOTES:**

The CNS grant reflects the full amount awarded at the program's outset; the grant amount may be adjusted to reflect participant attrition, *and the figure does not represent actual expenditures.*

Per participant figures are based on full-time equivalents of participants. *40 participants were anticipated in this budget.*

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Participants' ages range from 19 to 67; 48% are between 21 and 25. The majority have had some college or are college graduates. The program expects that all participants will use the education award.

The program budgeted for <sup>40</sup> full-time slots; however, due to application process delays, ~~only 10 slots were available when the program began in December 1994.~~ At the time of the GAO visit, there were 33 full-time participants. Two of the 40 recruited never began the program. Five of the original participants had left for health, personal and family reasons. Since that time, six additional participants have left for reasons including financial difficulties, extreme personal needs, inability to work in an ~~unstructured~~ <sup>structured</sup> environment, and the stress involved with eight people living and working together.

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Participants complete a minimum of 100 hours of training in areas that include nutrition education, federal food policy and community service. Participants are divided into five crews of up to eight members that are stationed in one of five regional sites. Four of the five crews live together in group houses.

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Program Accomplishments

Site visits to a community food shelf and a garden tenant program revealed participants providing special foods and instruction for clients with special dietary needs, conducting outreach efforts to establish a summer food program for the elderly and children as an extension of the school year program, and teaching low-income and rural residents to plant/buy food to get more and better food for their resources.

One member attends basic education classes and is individually tutored by team members. She recently passed the preliminary GED test ~~after numerous failures, and after some extraordinary preparation will take the GED.~~

see  
comment  
and  
attachments





UNITED  
STATES  
DEPARTMENT  
OF AGRICULTURE

June 7, 1995

To: Carol Patey, GAO

From: Joel Berg, USDA *JB*

Subject: Cost/Benefit Analyses of Some USDA AmeriCorps Programs

We now have some limited cost/benefit analyses for USDA AmeriCorps programs that I hope you will consider including in your report.

The USDA Forest Service has just calculated that its 236 AmeriCorps Members serving on Public Lands Teams performed at least \$1.51 worth of service for each \$1.00 that the American taxpayer spent to support such service. Although it is difficult to blend cost benefits from different Forest Service regions around the country, the cost-benefit figures are based on an average of the combined cost savings of all recreation projects completed. These costs included all Federal spending, including the Member stipends and educational awards. The Forest Service AmeriCorps Public Lands crews completed recreation projects for 51% less than similar projects completed by force account (if completed by Federal employees), and 68% less than similar services completed by contracted services. For example, in one area it cost AmeriCorps \$64,185 to complete 53 miles of heavy trail maintenance. The same projects would have cost \$126,000 by force account, and \$212,000 if the services were contracted.

The Clinch-Powell Resource Conservation & Development Council in Tennessee calculated that, in the first half year of the program, USDA AmeriCorps Members managed by the Council performed \$2.82 worth of service for each \$1.00 that the American taxpayer spent to support such service. In the first quarter of the program, the four USDA AmeriCorps Rural Development Team Members, who are managed by the Council, performed approximately \$2.73 worth of service for each \$1.00 that the American taxpayer spent to support such service. As you can see from the attached chart the council prepared, if purchased on the "Open market," one service project performed by one Member would have cost an estimated \$23,975 while another service project performed by three Members would have cost an estimated, \$50,400, bringing the total value of the service performed to \$74,375. The cost of the AmeriCorps Members, pro-rated to the four months period in which they performed the projects, was \$27,272. According to the council's second quarter report, two Members, costing the Federal government \$11,579, performed \$26,629 worth of service.



Of course, these numbers do not add in the social and economic benefits of accrued by our society when AmeriCorps enables its Members to continue their educations, serve as role models, improve the economies of their local areas, leave welfare for work, volunteer in their communities after the end of their service year, and/or help decrease crime. As you may know, such additional benefits were recently outlined a report released by the Corporation for National Service.

I understand that your primary mandate is to report on the total costs of AmeriCorps, and not necessarily the benefits. However, it is clear that such cost/benefit information puts the costs to the Federal government in the proper context. If you have any questions about this information, please contact me at (202) 720-6350.



## Saving funding, food

**R**espectful, open-minded, community based, worthy. No, this is not the new creed of the Boy Scouts. These are some of the values embodied by the Vermont Anti-Hunger Corps, a program to feed disadvantaged Vermonters that is worth watching.

The year-old effort is part of President Clinton's AmeriCorps services program, his domestic version of the Peace Corps. In exchange for a small wage and later money for college, volunteers work in community service projects. In this case, the winners are hungry Vermonters.

Though the program is now a target for Washington's budget cutters, including the \$850,000 that goes to Vermont's effort, its attributes are precisely what government should be doing for disadvantaged people.

■ **Respectful.** The corps does not just give food away. Respecting the people it serves, the anti-hunger effort joins with city recreation in St. Albans, for example, and then provides lunch for the kids who come to swim.

■ **Open-minded.** The corps has tapped into whatever resources will feed whoever needs to be fed. The inmates' garden at the Northwest State Correctional Center in St. Albans — already a provider of 30,000 pounds of food to hungry Vermonters each year — has been a focus for one corps volunteer.

■ **Community based.** Far from using a federal know-it-all approach, the corps devises local solutions to local problems. Many of the workers are volunteers, and the food is often grown at community gardens.

The merit of this strategy is that the program's beneficiaries — often the rural poor — learn skills and develop systems that they can sustain themselves, without outside help. It also means the corps' work fits the community's needs.

■ **Worthy.** Some of the program's local ideas may be duplicated statewide, for example teaching proper nutrition to furloughed prison inmates. The anti-hunger effort has also won Vermont recognition and a chance to serve as a national model — "not by giving more handouts but by building opportunity and responsibility among the people they are working with," said Joel Berg, Agriculture Department director of national service.

These goals replicate those of many of Washington's fiscal conservatives, yet they do not place the corps above budget cuts. The federal government's debt is more than \$4.5 trillion, and growing. AmeriCorps' status as a pet Clinton initiative makes it particularly vulnerable.

So are the people it serves. The program's values are so Boy Scout-laudable, it deserves better. Its return on federal investment is high, too, for the hungry and for the participants.

The state's Congressional delegation should help it survive. Meanwhile Vermonters should continue to expand the program's volunteer supporters. Good ideas should survive no matter who is paying for them.

# Opinion



## JULY 11th UPDATE

## G A O + N B C = CONFUSION

On July 11, NBC Nightly News rushed out a story based on preliminary materials from the General Accounting Office -- leaked by opponents of AmeriCorps and misunderstood by the network. Here are NBC's three biggest misstatements, and the real facts:

-----NBC: "[AmeriCorps is] running way over budget."

FACT: The Corporation for National Service, which oversees AmeriCorps, received \$376 million to support approximately 20,000 Members in its first year. It has done so -- and hasn't spent a nickel more than its budget. What has gone up is the support of AmeriCorps by private citizens, corporations, school districts, state legislatures and others. That's not busting the budget -- it's proof that the people who know AmeriCorps best are giving it cash and other support. All of these individuals and entities made the decision to support the local programs that are part of the AmeriCorps Network for the same reason -- AmeriCorps works.

-----NBC: "Last year AmeriCorps estimated the program would cost taxpayers \$6.43 per hour of service ... but preliminary GAO findings say overhead and other costs have driven the price tag way up, to \$15.65 per hour of service."

FACT: Neither of these numbers reflect AmeriCorps' hourly cost, a computation which is nearly meaningless. The \$6.43 figure was pulled out of context from a projection stated to be preliminary, that was clearly marked as calculating only a portion of anticipated costs (omitting the education award for example).

Any calculation of "service hours" must include the service of the unpaid volunteers that AmeriCorps Members recruit, train and serve with -- it's their combined product that American communities are receiving. For example, 24 AmeriCorps\*Habitat for Humanity Members in Miami have drawn in, trained and worked alongside over 5,000 uncompensated volunteers -- Habitat says AmeriCorps made it all possible, but GAO says the volunteers' service hours don't count.

Further, GAO's larger figure isn't "costs" at all. It is "available funding" -- a novel concept that encompasses estimated, anticipated money and in-kind resources available to a local program from any source -- including cash donations from individuals. A useful number can be derived only when AmeriCorps' first year is over, all costs are calculated and all service hours are totaled.

PHOTOCOPY  
PRESERVATION



The Corporation for National Service is spending exactly what Congress gave it for AmeriCorps, to do exactly what Congress instructed it to do: provide opportunities for up to 20,000 Americans to serve our communities. From the streets of New York City, where AmeriCorps' Members back-up the NYPD, to the front lines of forest fires in the West and flood ravaged neighborhoods from Texas to California to Minnesota, from hundreds of the nation's toughest classrooms to hundreds of our most polluted rivers and streams, AmeriCorps Members have made a major impact in just 9 months. That's been shown by an independent study done by President Ford's Commissioner of Education. And the only cost/benefit analysis done to date, commissioned by three national foundations and conducted by an independent team of noted economists, predicts that for every dollar AmeriCorps invests, the public will realize a return of \$1.60 to \$2.60 or more.

-----NBC: "AmeriCorps had estimated costs at \$17,000 to \$18,000 per participant, but GAO found it was almost \$27,000 per participant."

FACT: Nonsense. GAO says AmeriCorps is investing \$17,923 per Member; we had estimated \$18,800. In fact, GAO says all federal cash support is \$20,147 -- AmeriCorps generally uses \$20,000 per Member. When individuals and organizations pitch in to leverage that investment, that's beneficial. So when GAO says "available funding" (not costs) is \$26,948, that includes donations from individuals and corporations, temporary use of a Park Service ranger's station, even a local charity's estimate of the "value" of access to an elementary school's gym on weekends -- none of them very relevant to the public debate.

###



Pat

Sub - 415-941-5433  
Jury

908-279-4893

Allen McAntosh  
Merrimack Valley, MA  
508-374-0519

Karen, Ext 169

Cindy White  
816-774-

816-650-530-

JOHN Stencil - 690-2807

Kevin Klein, Ext. 342



$P_{00} + W P Y$



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# Site Visit Information

| Funding Available Per AmeriCorps Participant - Program Year 1992-1993 |                     |                   |               |                     |                     |                      |          |                  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------|----------|------------------|
| Program                                                               | Mont. County Police | YouthBuild Boston | VL YCC (USDA) | VL Anti-Hung (USDA) | Wash. Service Corps | Wash. Conserv. Corps | Maple Me | BU/Public Health |
| Number of FTEs                                                        | 25                  | 81                | 17            | 33                  | 176                 | 81                   | 25       | 22               |
| CNS Grant                                                             | \$14,125            | \$13,410          | \$369         | \$24,265            | \$18,030            | \$0                  | \$18,728 | \$24,114         |
| CNS Overhead                                                          | \$2,407             | \$2,407           | \$2,407       | \$2,407             | \$2,407             | \$2,407              | \$2,407  | \$2,407          |
| Educ. Grant                                                           | \$4,725             | \$4,725           | \$4,725       | \$4,725             | \$4,725             | \$4,725              | \$4,725  | \$4,725          |
| Other Federal                                                         | \$0                 | \$13,122          | \$31,294      | \$1,518             | \$0                 | \$3,918              | \$1,934  | \$9,091          |
| Total Federal                                                         | \$21,257            | \$33,664          | \$38,795      | \$32,912            | \$23,162            | \$18,048             | \$27,189 | \$40,337         |
| State/Local                                                           | \$12,892            | \$432             | \$0           | \$9,238             | \$3,845             | \$12,383             | \$2,650  | \$1,136          |
| Total Private                                                         | \$34,257            | \$34,096          | \$38,795      | \$42,150            | \$26,707            | \$28,441             | \$29,839 | \$41,473         |
| Private (excl. In-kind)                                               | \$0                 | \$3,723           | \$4,372       | \$1,715             | \$0                 | \$454                | \$8,505  | FBD              |
| TOTAL                                                                 | \$34,257            | \$37,819          | \$43,167      | \$43,865            | \$26,707            | \$28,895             | \$36,434 |                  |

NOTES:  
 Figures represent cash and in-kind contributions except private, which includes only cash.  
 CNS grant includes the full amount awarded at the program's outset, although in some cases some funds will be turned back because staff levels have not been attained.  
 FTEs are full-time equivalents of participants on board at time of visit.

2 'Vendor' fees

### Participant Characteristics

Participants' ages range from 19 to 67; 48% are between 21 and 25. The majority have had some college or are college graduates. The program expects that all participants will use the education award.

40 33  
The program budgeted for 50 full-time slots; however, due to application process delays, only 40 slots were available when the program began in December 1994. At the time of the GAO visit, there were 33 full-time participants. Two of the 40 recruited never began the program. Five of the original participants had left for health, personal and family reasons. Since that time, six additional participants have left for reasons including financial difficulties, extreme personal needs, inability to work in an unstructured environment, and the stress involved with eight people living and working together.

### Program Structure

Participants complete a minimum of 100 hours of training in areas that include nutrition education, federal food policy and community service. Participants are divided into five crews of up to eight members that are stationed in one of five regional sites. Four of the five crews live together in group houses.

Participants report weekly work entries and hours to team leaders; weekly and cumulative service and training hours are recorded separately. Team leaders compile monthly team progress reports that summarize the individual entries.

### Program Accomplishments

Site visits to a community food shelf and a garden tenant program revealed participants providing special foods and instruction for clients with special dietary needs, conducting outreach efforts to establish a summer food program for the elderly and children as an extension of the school year program, and teaching low-income and rural residents to plant/buy food to get more and better food for their resources.

One member attends basic education classes and is individually tutored by team members. She recently passed the preliminary GED test after numerous failures, and after some extra preparation will take the GED.

in prep



PIZZA EXPRESS  
CHARLOTTE INT L AIRPORT

1208 Vaa

CHK 4143 JUL16'95 8:42PM

|                     |      |
|---------------------|------|
| 1 PIZZA - PEPPERONI | 3.50 |
| 1 ICE MOUNTAIN      | 1.95 |
| 1 CHOC CHIP COOKIE  | 1.75 |

|            |             |
|------------|-------------|
| Subtotal   | 7.20        |
| Tax        | 0.50        |
| Amt Paid   | <b>7.70</b> |
| Cash       | 20.00       |
| Change Due | 12.30       |

# First Quarter

## AMERICORPS SOLID WASTE SPECIALIST (One member sponsored by the U.S. Forest Service)

| Accomplishments (4 months)                                                                                          | Cost to Community if Service Purchased on Open Market* | Cost as Provided Through AmeriCorps | Savings to Community Through AmeriCorps |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Assist Hancock County with Convenience Center Design, Permitting and Funding Grant                                  | \$3,400                                                |                                     |                                         |
| Assist Hancock County with completion of 10 year Solid Waste Management Plan as required by state law.              | \$8,500                                                |                                     |                                         |
| Preparation of Bid Specs and package for Recycling Equipment for the City of Harrogate.                             | \$1,700                                                |                                     |                                         |
| Preparation of Bid Specs and Package for Transfer Station for Claiborne County.                                     | \$2,550                                                |                                     |                                         |
| Preparation of Bid Specs and Package for Grainger County Recycling Center                                           | \$2,125                                                |                                     |                                         |
| Design and Layout of Solid Waste Education Brochure                                                                 | \$1,400                                                |                                     |                                         |
| Preparation, development and writing of four grant proposals for outside funding of important solid waste projects. | \$4,000                                                |                                     |                                         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                                                                                        | <b>\$23,975 (estimate)</b>                             | <b>approx. \$7,272</b>              | <b>\$16,703</b>                         |

\* Estimated costs based on the known 'going price' in the RC&D region.

## SPECIALTY RECREATION AND TOURISM INITIATIVE (three members sponsored by the Natural Resources Conservation Service)

| Accomplishments (4 months)                                                                                                                                                                       | Cost to Community if Service Purchased on Open Market* | Cost as Provided Through AmeriCorps | Savings to Community Through AmeriCorps |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Inventory, Development of Regional Committee, Setup of Tourism Network, Preliminary Funding Search, Eco-Tourism Feasibility Study, Wilderness Road Draft and Design of Regional Tourism Database | \$50,400 (estimate)                                    | approx. \$20,000                    | \$30,400                                |

\* Estimated costs based on the known 'going price' in the RC&D region.

## CLOSING COMMENTS

Following are highlights of the Clinch-Powell RC&D AmeriCorps program as prepared by AmeriCorps Members and a sample of work (Eco-Tourism Study) for your review. **WE INVITE YOU TO VISIT THE CLINCH-POWELL RC&D COUNCIL TO SEE THE AMERICORPS RURAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM IN ACTION.**



From: Katherine Gibney  
To: nservice1, nservice2, rdemunbrun,jberg  
Date: 7/3/95 3:04pm  
Subject: messages

Messages for joel:

1) Steve Chad, Missouri Community Service Commission, seeking help to get through liability concerns so usda americorps members can work in flood relief project  
314 751-0382

2) ~~esra, john, business cards are ready~~

3) ~~carrie yourd, hous nr committee, 225-6068~~

4) ~~wasserman, 223-9541~~

\*5) ~~(called twice) tony deaton, nracs, wants info on money from Corporation, 720-8027~~

\*6) ~~(called twice) darlene - wants benefit info 804-853-2758~~

\*7) ~~(called twice) ezana Habte-gabr, americorps member who sent forbearance form and wants to know something about it.~~

~~319-668-9089 in williamsburg, iowa~~

8) ~~craig smith, 720-7358~~

9) ~~rebecca, white mountain national park, call at home if necessary, 603-694-3381~~

10) ~~jim meisenheimer, 913-823-4539, wants to disucss several issues with joel~~

11) ~~rava "gibbs," wants to volunteer for americorps, 209 683-9122.~~

12) ~~bert brandenburg, 616 2777, 703-525-8717~~

13) ~~pat gillespie, 908-335-9212~~

14) ~~Daniell Finn - LA AmeriCorps, wants infor on 310-458-1822~~

9

609- 792-5715

PHOTOCOPY  
PRESERVATION

9

Moan

18th ~~At~~ St,

NW, Suite 920

Murray 9:00 P.M.



| Youth Build Boston                                                                                                                                           | VL YCC (USDA) | VL Anti-Hung (USDA) | Wash. Service Corps | Wash. Conserv. Corps | Maple Me | BUV Public Health |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------|----------|-------------------|
| 01                                                                                                                                                           | 17            | 26                  | 176                 | 81                   | 25       | 22                |
| \$13,410                                                                                                                                                     | \$389         | \$24,265            | \$16,030            | \$0                  | \$18,723 | \$24,114          |
| \$2,407                                                                                                                                                      | \$2,407       | \$2,407             | \$2,407             | \$2,407              | \$2,407  | \$2,407           |
| \$4,725                                                                                                                                                      | \$4,725       | \$4,725             | \$4,725             | \$4,725              | \$4,725  | \$4,725           |
| \$13,122                                                                                                                                                     | \$31,294      | \$1,518             | \$0                 | \$8,918              | \$1,334  | \$8,891           |
| \$38,884                                                                                                                                                     | \$38,785      | \$32,912            | \$23,162            | \$16,248             | \$27,180 | \$40,337          |
| \$432                                                                                                                                                        | \$0           | \$0,238             | \$9,545             | \$12,383             | \$2,050  | \$1,136           |
| \$34,098                                                                                                                                                     | \$38,785      | \$42,150            | \$26,707            | \$28,441             | \$29,839 | \$41,473          |
| \$3,723                                                                                                                                                      | \$4,372       | \$1,715             | \$0                 | \$454                | \$6,505  | F8D               |
| \$37,819                                                                                                                                                     | \$43,157      | \$43,865            | \$26,707            | \$28,895             | \$36,434 |                   |
| sta, which includes only cash.<br>e outst, although in some cases some funds will be turned back because staff levels have not been attained.<br>e of visit. |               |                     |                     |                      |          |                   |

Sherry ~~10~~ Room 608 -

Kaima

~~Sherry Kemm~~

224-2967

Maggie

224-4242

Jiffards

~~Jeff~~

Sub-Lov



2nd Quarter

Operating Site ID # Unknown

**Corporation for National Service  
Operating Site Quarterly Report**

1. Operating site name: Clinch-Powell Resource Conservation & Development Council
2. Program name: Cherokee National Forest
3. Corporation Grantee name: USDA Forest Service
4. Mark the reporting quarter to which this form applies: Second Quarter - 1/1 - 3/31/95
5. On what date did your AmeriCorps Members begin service or training? 9/12/94
6. In the table below indicate (a) the number of full and part-time AmeriCorps Members that were enrolled as of the last day of the reporting quarter and (b) the total cumulative service hours completed by the AmeriCorps Members as of the last day of the reporting quarter.

| Number of AmeriCorps Members | Total Cumulative Hours of required Service | Full-time |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 2                            | 2187                                       | 2         |

7. Please provide estimates of the following:
  - (a) Total number of non-AmeriCorps Member volunteers who were involved in AmeriCorps service activities: 1,438 volunteers.
  - (b) Total hours of AmeriCorps service activities completed by non-AmeriCorps Member volunteers: 10,479 hours
8. Primary Accomplishments this Quarter: (In detail, describe your central activities, project milestones, and most important "things gotten done" this quarter.)

**Solid Waste Specialist Position**

| AmeriCorps Member Accomplishments During Second Quarter                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Estimated Cost to Community if Service Provided on the Open Market* | Estimated Cost as Provided Through AmeriCorps** | Estimated Cost Savings to Community Through AmeriCorps |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| 6,700 citizens in Hancock County, TN will soon have an approved collection site to take their trash as a result of AmeriCorps working through the red tape of the State to permit a convenience center collection site. Currently there is no approved collection in the county and about 50% of the waste is illegally dumped in streams, rivers and gullies. | \$3,400                                                             |                                                 |                                                        |



|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |         |  |  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|--|--|
| 111,000 residents in the counties of Claiborne, Grainger, Hancock, Hawkins and Union, TN now have a way to safely dispose of dangerous household hazardous waste like paint thinners, old paint, turpentine, used oil, antifreeze, pesticides, drain cleaners, etc. AmeriCorps Member has worked through the State and Laidlaw Environmental Services to provide five collection days where residents can bring their materials to a mobile collection unit for safe disposal. Events were publicized and promoted through 15 news clips, 500 posters, radio PSAs, notices through schools, etc.                                                                                          | \$4,000 |  |  |
| Member assistance helped convince state not to cancel a grant to a county when the county did not fulfill its obligations. Member stepped in to draft bid specifications for a recycling center and provide leadership in obtaining bids to satisfy the state. Member also stepped in to develop and draft bids for recycling equipment for the center. As a result, 18,000 citizens will soon have a place to take their recyclables (currently there is none in the county) and the county will meet a state mandate without penalty.                                                                                                                                                   | \$2,000 |  |  |
| Key technical assistance by Member was provided to a newly formed solid waste authority in researching and developing bid specifications for a possible transfer station to handle solid waste. This assistance is helping authority (composed of local citizens) to make informed decisions based on facts and research rather than guesstimates. Results will be more cost efficient and effective services for 27,000 county residents.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | \$2,550 |  |  |
| Member developed a framework for providing critical technical assistance and training to city and county officials, solid waste workers (many can't read or write) and major business and industries in the area beyond the AmeriCorps term. This assistance and training is critical to helping local governments to meet stringent state and federal mandates. It will also provide considerable cost savings to the 5 individual counties because it will be carried out on a regional basis (results will be savings to local taxpayers). Member has also developed an initial funding plan and is seeking outside sources for initial program to lessen burden to 111,000 taxpayers. | \$2,500 |  |  |



|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                 |                |                |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Member has crafted a unique and innovative program to help residents of the region off set expensive and valuable landfill space teaching them not to buy excess garbage at the stores to start with. This source reduction program will work directly with retailers and consumers in the store to change attitudes and behaviors. The best way to control garbage is not to buy it in the first place.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | \$2,000         |                |                |
| Member has worked with community groups, teachers, school children to organize the first ever Earth Day Festival in one county to be held on April 15. About 60 students are preparing recycled art projects to be judged at the event, an earth quilt is being made by students, high school and community groups are planning activities to be held throughout the day, agencies will be manning exhibits, environmental songs and skits will run continuously. The festival will be held on the courthouse lawn with local officials participating and local businesses sponsoring. Member secured seed funding for this event by writing a grant which was approved from a private foundation. | \$2,000         |                |                |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <b>\$15,050</b> | <b>\$5,645</b> | <b>\$9,405</b> |

\* Estimated at costs based on the known "going rate" in the RC&D region for similar services.

\*\* Cost based on \$11.76/hr for AmeriCorps Member. Estimate \$20,000/Member (stipend plus educational award plus health plus basic support) divided by 1700 hours of service equals \$11.76. 12 wk/qtr X avg. 40 hr/wk X \$11.76 equals total.

### Environmental Education Specialist

| AmeriCorps Member Accomplishments During Second Quarter                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Estimated Cost to Community if Service Provided on the Open Market* | Estimated Cost as Provided Through AmeriCorps ** | Estimated Cost Savings to Community Through AmeriCorps |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Member taught 933 students in 42 classrooms in five counties lessons to teach them to be more responsible citizens toward the environment and how to encourage grown ups to do the same (Garbage Busters). Don't litter, recycling and careful use of natural resources are key objectives in the lessons. This is a five week program in each classroom. Member administered 2,991 individual student lessons during 135 presentations. Member developed a Pre and Post Test to measure student learning and program effectiveness. The evaluation instrument is being administered to students. | \$3,375                                                             |                                                  |                                                        |



|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                 |                |                |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Member developed and conducted an in-service for 25 teachers from across Tennessee specifically teaching them about her environmental education program                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | \$200           |                |                |
| Member represents her region on the State Envirothon Committee (one state mtg this qtr) and is helping to organize the state event and is arranging for T-Shirts for participants.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | \$300           |                |                |
| Member is totally responsible for and is organizing, promoting, training and facilitating a regional Envirothon competition to be held April 25. Participation has more than doubled (from 7 teams to 17 teams) since last year representing all but one eligible high school in the region. About 90 students are currently being trained for this team competition.                                                                                                                                                    | \$1,280         |                |                |
| Member is responsible for and is organizing a Conservation Camp for 1,200 sixth grade students and teachers including development of a companion workbook. Member has successfully located property and negotiated a lease for long term use of a riverfront environmental education center for the Camp and other environmental education programs. Pledges for assistance and participation have been obtained from 26 agencies and 6 school systems. Funding has been secured for the event to be held May 2, 3, & 4. | \$768           |                |                |
| Member has successfully secured funding through grants from outside funding to assist with funding Garbage Busters, Conservation Camp, Envirothon, and Water Wizards making it possible to administer 27,561 individual lessons to 2,629 students in order to continue preparing them to be environmentally conscious, action oriented adults. A total of \$36,667 has been secured as a result of members efforts through grants.                                                                                       | \$3,667         |                |                |
| Member has completely revised a third grade water quality curriculum called Water Wizards and is facilitating this education program to about 400 students in five counties. A total of nine lessons including a parental outreach component is enriching the third grade science curriculum                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | \$1,789         |                |                |
| Member is working with the TN Dept. of Education to have her programs evaluated and referenced to the state curriculum so that teachers can use them in lieu of and enhance required curriculum framework. Results will be mainstreamed environmental education.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | \$200           |                |                |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <b>\$11,579</b> | <b>\$5,645</b> | <b>\$5,934</b> |

\* Estimated at costs based on the known "going rate" in the RC&D region for similar services.



**\*\*** Cost based on \$11.76/hr for AmeriCorps Member. Estimate \$20,000/Member (stipend plus educational award plus health plus basic support) divided by 1700 hours of service equals \$11.76. 12 wk/qtr X avg. 40 hr/wk X \$11.76 equals total.

9. Unique successes or "great stories": (Briefly describe unique and/or exceptional successes, program highlights, or "great stories" about AmeriCorps people, projects, or partnerships that occurred this quarter).

Any number of above accomplishments could be considered great stories.

10. Summary of Progress this Reporting Quarter Toward Accomplishing Annual Objectives: (Briefly describe how accomplishments this quarter relate to achieving each of your three sets of annual outcome objectives: (1) Direct Service Objectives; (2) AmeriCorps Member Development Objectives, and (3) Community Building/Strengthening Objectives. Where available, describe evaluation data that indicate progress during the past quarter toward achieving your annual outcomes. Summarize activities related to establishing an evaluation system or conducting your local evaluation (e.g., instruments developed, data collection plans established, etc.).

#### **Direct Service Objectives**

**Solid Waste Specialist Objective #1:** Provide technical assistance in solid waste management and recycling to communities in Claiborne, Grainger, Hancock, Hawkins and Union Counties, TN resulting in a 10 percent increased recycling rate and improved solid waste management through three grant proposals and two recycling program start ups as outlined in the Ten Year Regional Solid Waste Management Plans approved by the State of Tennessee.

**Progress:** Three grant proposals have been written seeking funding for needed source reduction, solid waste training programs and programs to raise citizen awareness. Technical assistance has been provided in solid waste management and recycling as outlined in accomplishments including: assistance with a convenience center collection system, a recycling center and a transfer station.

**Environmental Education Specialist Objective #1:** Conduct or arrange 150 environmental education presentations (written and verbal) resulting in increased knowledge of citizens as measured by pre and post program quizzes and interviews, with program quality judged by teachers and increased participation in environmental education programs of 15 percent in the region of Claiborne, Grainger, Hancock, Hawkins and Union Counties, TN.

**Progress:** 174 presentations to date through first and second quarter (135 in the second quarter). Testing instrument has been developed and is being administered to participants. A 28% increase in participation in environmental education has already been realized in the region.

#### **Member Development**

##### **Individual Member Development Objective**

Member development has included training in grant writing and training in Forest Service Rural Development programming in the regional office and solid waste training during a conference.

Solid Waste Specialist hours training in second quarter = 64 hours

Environmental Education Specialist hours training in second quarter = 56 hours

### **Community Building/Strengthening Objectives**

Two members spent a day planting trees along a half mile stretch of the Clinch River in order to stabilize the riverbank.

Two members assisted with a leadership conference for 22 high school students. Members have agreed to serve and are being trained as advisors to teams of these leadership students for the remainder of their terms.

11. Primary challenges encountered this quarter: (Report on problems resolved and unresolved, obstacles to achieving program objectives, significant sources of delay, program elements not meeting expectations, events or incidents that caused concern.)

Primary challenges have been related to member stress. Members are serving in positions with more responsibility than they have probably had before. Additionally, working with communities for change can be a slow and tedious process with big highs and big lows. Members also feel stress from pressure to produce big results in a short period of time and the uncertainty of the future of the AmeriCorps program. It is depressing and somewhat demoralizing to members to hear the program being rundown often in the media from Washington D.C. when they are working so hard in service to their country.

12. Primary Training and Technical Assistance Needs this Quarter: Time management, Managing Stress, Leadership Training

13. National Identity Activities this Quarter:

Worked with AmeriCorps Members from NRCS to plant trees in a river restoration project on private land. News articles on programs have been published in the regions papers. Members prepared reports on their activities to present to the Tennessee Commission on National and Community Service and to Congressman Van Hilleary.

14. Changes in Program Organization or Key Staff Positions during this Quarter: No changes.





June 13, 1995

MEMORANDUM

TO: Carol L.B. Patey, Issue Area Manager  
U.S. General Accounting Office

FROM: *for* Joel Berg *Ron De Munbrun*  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Director of National Service

SUBJECT: Response to June 8, 1995 Request for Information

On June 8, 1995 you faxed me a questionnaire in which you requested additional information concerning the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Service Program. Attached is our response to that questionnaire, which given the short turn around time of the data call consists of our best estimates and not necessarily actual figures. If you have any further questions please contact Mr. Ron De Munbrun at (202) 690-3894.

**AMERICORPS PROGRAM SURVEY FOR FEDERAL AGENCIES**  
**Program Year 1994-1995**

Grant Number: 94ADFDC047  
 Program Applicant: Department of Agriculture  
 CNS Funds Awarded: \$2,627,551  
 Matching Funds Pledged: \$22,136,312  
 Program Contact: Mr. Joel Berg  
 (202) 720-6350

- 1a. What are your finding sources for this program year? Include sources and types of funds that, as of April 30, 1995 you are certain you will receive. Note that these totals include as "in-kind" the expense of the three USDA staff personnel who are managing the program for the Department. The numbers below are estimates and not actual figures.

| Origin                                                                                                                                                    | Amount            | Type (cash, in-kind) | If in-kind, description of the method of valuing contribution |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Federal Sources (All federal monies, including agency's contributions (staff time, supplies, etc.) as well as potential pass through, such as JTPA, etc.) |                   |                      |                                                               |
| USDA                                                                                                                                                      | 15,143,094        | cash                 |                                                               |
| USDA                                                                                                                                                      | 5,381,386         | in-kind              |                                                               |
| other                                                                                                                                                     | 632,477           | cash                 |                                                               |
|                                                                                                                                                           |                   |                      |                                                               |
|                                                                                                                                                           |                   |                      |                                                               |
| State Sources (General revenues, educational assistance, non-Federal funds)                                                                               |                   |                      |                                                               |
| Various State sources                                                                                                                                     | 53,760            | cash                 |                                                               |
| Various State sources                                                                                                                                     | 238,260           | in-kind              |                                                               |
|                                                                                                                                                           |                   |                      |                                                               |
|                                                                                                                                                           |                   |                      |                                                               |
| Local Sources (Cities, counties, authorities, tribes, development agencies)                                                                               |                   |                      |                                                               |
| Various local sources                                                                                                                                     | 453,065           | cash                 |                                                               |
| Various local sources                                                                                                                                     | 234,270           | in-kind              |                                                               |
|                                                                                                                                                           |                   |                      |                                                               |
| <b>TOTAL:</b>                                                                                                                                             | <b>22,136,312</b> |                      |                                                               |



**1b. Private Matching Funds:**

Have you received matching funds from private sources, such as foundations or businesses? If so, please provide the following information:

\$740,250 Dollar value of cash contributions

\$777,323 Dollar value of in-kind contributions

Please provide some examples of the in-kind contributions and explain how you arrived at that value.

For example the Houston Light and Power Company provides office space, greenhouses and four salt water ponds for the reproduction of coastal grasses which are then planted in Texas coastal areas to prevent erosion. The value was determined by Houston Light and Power.

**2. Program Information:**

- a. What are the missions and goals of each AmeriCorps project? What specific agency goals do the projects fulfill?

The "AmeriCorps/USDA Second Quarter Report", dated December 1, 1994 - March 31, 1995 gives a description of the program, its projects and objectives.

- b. When did AmeriCorps participants begin with your program? The majority of members began in September 1994 but some started in January of 1995 or soon thereafter.
- c. What is your program year? July 1994 through September 1995.

**3. Member Information:**

- a. How many members did you originally budget for? Full-time 1200 Part-Time 11

- b. As of your last quarterly report, how many members did you have?

Full-time 1063 Part-time 17.

What is the date of this report? December 1, 1994 - March 31, 1995

- c. At the end of your program year, how many members do you expect to have in your program?

Full-time 1080 Part-time 120.

- d. At the end of your program year, how many members do you expect to be eligible for an education award?

Full-time 1080 Part-time 120.

It should be noted that these numbers are estimates. It is very difficult to derive an accurate number because we are in the first year of the program and there is no history on which to judge the rate at which members can/will be replaced.

#### 4. Staffing/Personnel:

- a. Please provide the number of agency staff overseeing project (anyone hired and paid by the agency, whether acting as an agency coordinator or directly involved in the projects):

Total number: 54

Number of Full-time 3

Number of Part-time 51

As Mr. Berg has stated in conversations with Ms. Carol Patey, it is very difficult, if not impossible to distinguish between the duties a person does in overseeing an AmeriCorps project and their regular duties. The number of Full-time personnel includes Mr. berg and his staff of two people. The number of Part-time personal is an *estimate*. It should also be noted that since these people are performing duties associated with AmeriCorps as part of their normal duties it is almost impossible to distinguish between the two but at the very best it should be considered that any AmeriCorps duties are part-time. We are looking at better ways to distinguish the percentage of time they spend on AmeriCorps work.

- b. Please list the title, grade/salary, and functions and responsibilities of agency staff involved in projects. Also provide the percent of their time spent on AmeriCorps work:

|                    |       |                 |
|--------------------|-------|-----------------|
| Director           | ES 01 | \$97,990        |
| Admin Coord        | GS 15 | \$83,363        |
| Recruitment Coord. | GS 12 | <u>\$47,691</u> |

\$229,044



- c. Please list the title, grade/salary, and function of each non-agency project staff (those persons paid with project funds) working on the AmeriCorps projects. Also provide a percent of time spent on the AmeriCorps work:

Explained verbally to Ms. Patey.

**5. Other Costs to the Agency and Others:**

- a. Which agency offices are responsible for managing each AmeriCorps project? Are these offices also responsible for evaluating the project?

Mr. Joel Berg is responsible for coordinating the USDA AmeriCorps project.

- b. Please give your best estimate of the total dollar amount of other costs to the agency associated with managing/overseeing the AmeriCorps projects. What are the amounts by type, such as agency staff salary, xeroxing, supplies, etc?

The cost of Mr. Berg's salary and the salary of his staff (\$229,044) is given in section 4b. There are additional costs of approximately \$42,000 associated with management of the program. These costs are for such items as site visits, training materials, mailings to prospective members, applications, and various office supplies and expenses.

- c. Does this amount include the staff time or costs that may not be thought of as regular program operating costs?

No.

- d. Are there other costs incurred at projects sites that are not covered by corporation or agency funds (such as staff, xeroxing, etc)? What is your best estimate of this amount? Is this information included on page one of this survey?

These costs are the totals of the State and Local dollar amounts given in section 1a and the private funds given in section 1b.

release

Release: 9/7/95  
Contact: J. TOSCANO  
202-606-5000 ext 277

## SECOND G.A.O. REVIEW CONFIRMS BENEFITS OF AMERICORPS

- \* FEDERAL DOLLAR INVESTED RETURNS \$1.60 TO \$2.60 IN BENEFITS
- \* G.A.O. DEEMS AMERICORPS PROGRAMS STUDIED "WORTHWHILE INVESTMENTS"

The U.S. General Accounting Office (G.A.O.), watchdog of the federal till, today released its analysis of a first-of-its-kind econometric study done recently by four noted economists that predicted that AmeriCorps national service programs studied will provide an impressive return on investment for federal taxpayers. The G.A.O. report agreed, stating that "as the authors concluded, the three programs analyzed would appear to be worthwhile investments."

In the initial report, The Benefits and Costs of National Service, the "Chicago school" economists predicted that, in the three representative programs analyzed, the return on every federal dollar the Corporation for National Service invests will range from \$1.60 to \$2.60 in direct, measurable benefits, noting that "these measurable benefits underestimate the total benefits." G.A.O. concurred, stating that "during site visits we conducted as part of an earlier study, we observed benefits that may also apply to the three programs the study analyzed, including strengthening communities and fostering civic responsibility. Inclusion of an estimate for the value of these benefits would raise reported benefit-cost ratios."

The new G.A.O. analysis follows an August G.A.O. report that confirms that the program is meeting or beating its budget targets, and catalogues significant accomplishments of AmeriCorps Members.

The initial Benefits study was commissioned by the IBM Foundation, the Dana Foundation, and the Irvine Foundation -- three AmeriCorps partners, and Youth Service California.

Eli J. Segal, CEO of the Corporation for National Service, said, "I am gratified that yet another independent look at AmeriCorps yields the same conclusion: AmeriCorps is a great investment. The two G.A.O. reviews, the Benefits study, and the survey of programs' results by the firm of President Ford's



Commissioner of Education (Aguirre International) help us cut through the fog of rhetoric generated by a few beltway critics. In over a thousand communities across America, AmeriCorps Members are getting things done in a cost-effective way."

"IBM expects a return on an investment, and bases its funding decisions on demonstrable results," said IBM executive Stan Litow. "We (with two other AmeriCorps partners and YSC) commissioned a team of leading economists to provide a conservative assessment of rock-hard, tangible benefits of the programs we invest in (AmeriCorps\*Project First). The returns are in and the 'return' is considerable. This program works."

The Benefits and Costs of National Service is available from Kormendi/Gardner at 202-822-0900.

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