



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
Office of the Commissioner

Danny TK Avula MD, MPH
Commissioner

January 30, 2024

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Glenn Youngkin
Governor of Virginia

Members, Virginia General Assembly

FROM: Danny TK Avula MD, MPH

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "DTK", written over the printed name of the sender.

SUBJECT: Annual Report on the Governor's Advisory on Service and Volunteerism

This report is submitted in compliance with § 2.2-2481 of the Code of Virginia, which provides the following regarding activities of the Governor's Advisory Board on Services and Volunteerism:

5. Submit an annual report to the Governor and the General Assembly for publication as a report document as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents and reports. The chairman of the Board shall submit to the Governor and the General Assembly an annual executive summary of the interim activity and work of the Board no later than the first day of each regular session of the General Assembly. The executive summary shall be submitted for publication as a report document as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents and reports and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.

Please contact me with any questions at (804) 726-7011.

DA:kc
Attachment

cc: The Honorable John S. Littel, Secretary of Health and Human Resources

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**Virginia Department of Social Services
Annual Report on the Governor's Advisory Board
Service and Volunteerism**

July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023

Executive Summary

Section 2.2-2478-2.2-2482 of the Code of Virginia charges the Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism with advising on matters related to promotion and development of national service in the Commonwealth and meeting the provisions of the federal National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993. The Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism was established in compliance with the provisions of the National and Communities Trust Act of 1993 under which Virginia receives AmeriCorps State grant funds. The following report documents the efforts and results achieved through the collaboration of DSS staff and the Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism for July 2022 - June 2023 to meet the power and duties of the Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism as established in 2.2-2481:

- Advise the Governor, the Secretaries of Health and Human Resources, Education, and Natural Resources, the Assistant to the Governor for Commonwealth Preparedness, the State Board of Social Services, and other appropriate officials on national and community service programs in Virginia in order to (i) fulfill the responsibilities and duties prescribed by the federal Corporation for National and Community Service and (ii) develop, implement, and evaluate the Virginia State Service Plan, which outlines strategies for supporting and expanding national and community service throughout the Commonwealth.
- Promote the use of AmeriCorps programs to meet Virginia's most pressing human, educational, environmental, and public safety needs.
- Collaborate with the Department of Social Services and other public and private entities to recognize and call attention to the significant community service contributions of Virginia citizens and organizations.
- Assist the Department of Social Services to promote the involvement of faith-based organizations in community and national service efforts.
- Submit an annual report to the Governor and the General Assembly.

Major activities and outcomes achieved during this report period include:

- In 2022, the Corporation for National and Community Service (AmeriCorps) provided more than \$16 million in federal funding to support Virginia communities through national service initiatives. These initiatives were carried out by national service members

and volunteers participating in AmeriCorps, VISTA, the Foster Grandparent Program, the Retired Senior Volunteer Program, and Senior Companions.

- Training was provided for members and program staff virtually. Members received training on the AmeriCorps education award and how best to leverage their end of service benefits to further their education, pay back student loans, and about the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program. Program staff were immersed in training provided by *Do Good Be Good* on best practices in Recruitment, Retention, outreach, and marketing strategies; with an additional opportunity outside of the training for 2 hours of consultation.
- There was a strong presence of the National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) in Virginia. Teams of AmeriCorps members traveled to 9 projects in Virginia and served about 17,000 total hours from 68 members. This translates to an economic benefit in Virginia of about \$546,957.97.
- With the help of the Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism, Governor Youngkin selected winners of the 2022 Governor's Volunteerism and Community Service Awards. Winners, selected from 67 nominations, provided significant contributions in far reaching areas of the Commonwealth -- from Southwest Virginia to Hampton Roads. Winners were recognized on October 25, 2022, during an awards program held at the Executive Mansion. The event was hosted by Governor Youngkin, Secretary of Health and Human Resources John Littel, The Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism, and the Virginia Service Foundation.
- The Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism continued the implementation of the three-year State Service Plan in partnership with the Virginia Service Foundation. The State Service Plan promoted strategies to increase participation in service and volunteer activities and recommended strategies to improve the capacity and quality of the volunteer and service ecosystem statewide.
- The activities of the Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism improved the quality of life for Virginians. Working hand in hand with community partners, the Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism tackled some of the most pressing challenges facing the Commonwealth.

**Annual Report on the Governor’s Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism
July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023**

Report Mandate

Section 2.2-2481 of the Code of Virginia directs the Governor’s Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism to carry out the following responsibilities:

§ 2.2-2481. Powers and duties of the Governor’s Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism.

- 1. Advise the Governor the Secretaries of Health and Human Resources Education and Natural Resources the Assistant to the Governor for Commonwealth Preparedness the State Board of Social Services and other appropriate officials on national and community service programs in Virginia in order to (i) fulfill the responsibilities and duties prescribed by the federal Corporation for National and Community Service and (ii) develop, implement, and evaluate the Virginia State Service Plan which outlines strategies for supporting and expanding national and community service throughout the Commonwealth.*
- 2. Promote the use of AmeriCorps programs to meet Virginia's most pressing human, educational, environmental, and public safety needs.*
- 3. Collaborate with the Department of Social Services and other public and private entities to recognize and call attention to the significant community service contributions of Virginia citizens and organizations.*
- 4. Assist the Department of Social Services to promote the involvement of faith-based organizations in community and national service efforts.*
- 5. Submit an annual report to the Governor and the General*

§ 2.2-2482. Staffing.

The Department of Social Services and any other executive branch agencies as the Governor may designate shall serve as staff to the Governor’s Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall assist the Governor’s Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism upon request.

Background

Section 2.2-2478-2.2-2482 of the Code of Virginia charges the Governor’s Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism with advising on matters related to promotion and development of national service in the Commonwealth and meeting the provisions of the federal National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993. The Governor’s Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism was established in compliance with the provisions of the National and Communities Trust Act of 1993 under which Virginia receives AmeriCorps State grant funds. The following report documents the efforts and results achieved through the collaborative efforts of DSS staff and the Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism for July 2021-June 2022 to meet the power and duties of the Governor’s Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism as established in 2.2-2481.

The Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism

The Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism is part of the Department of Social Services' Division of Community and Volunteer Services. This organizational placement allows staff to integrate service and volunteerism priorities with ongoing statewide programs and projects.

In accordance with § 2.2-2478, the Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism is established as an advisory board, within the meaning of § 2.2-2100, in the executive branch of state government to advise the Governor and Cabinet Secretaries on matters related to promotion and development of national service in the Commonwealth and to meet the provisions of the federal National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993. A list of the Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism membership is included at the end of this report.

Activities and Outcomes

This section of the report details the activities and outcomes for each of the mandates of the Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism.

Mandate 1: Advise the Governor, the Secretaries of Health and Human Resources, Education, and Natural Resources, the Assistant to the Governor for Commonwealth Preparedness, the State Board of Social Services, and other appropriate officials on national and community service programs in Virginia in order to (i) fulfill the responsibilities and duties prescribed by the federal Corporation for National and Community Service and (ii) develop, implement, and evaluate the Virginia State Service Plan, which outlines strategies for supporting and expanding national and community service throughout the Commonwealth.

- Members of the Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism played a significant role in ensuring that the Virginia Department of Social Services met the responsibilities and duties of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). The Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism met four times during the fiscal year and received regular reports on sub-grantee progress and new initiatives. A primary contribution included participation on grant-review panels, which reviewed, scored, and recommended programs and funding levels for AmeriCorps competitive grant proposals, Public Health AmeriCorps grant proposals, and formula grant proposals. The approved funding recommendations totaled approximately \$8,096,185.
- Other major accomplishments included the implementation of the inaugural Virginia Community Engagement Index, rebranding the Commission to *Serve Virginia*, and an awareness building recruitment campaign in partnership with the Virginia Service Foundation. These projects were made possible through American Rescue Plan funding with a funding match from the Commonwealth of Virginia.
- Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism members provided additional assistance in meeting CNCS requirements by participating in required AmeriCorps Days of

Service in communities across the State. AmeriCorps programs recognize and support 9/11, MLK Day, and AmeriCorps Opening Day. The Virginia Service Foundation awarded 19 mini grants to 17 unique organizations, supporting national days of community service projects and events.

- As AmeriCorps members started their formal year of service, a virtual statewide launch ceremony was held with the Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism participation. Vanessa Diamond, Sr. VP, Civic Engagement at the Community Foundation for a Greater Richmond was the keynote speaker. Vanessa graced the audience with some inspirational words about place-making and *bringing your genuine self to your work*, and as a VISTA Alum, she was able to impart words of wisdom to folks who were just starting their own service journeys. Vanessa then hosted a panel of current AmeriCorps program directors who also served in AmeriCorps: Audia Harris, Institute for Advanced Learning and Research; Alex Johnston, UVA College Advising Corps; Meredith Collie, Literacy Lab; and Katie Heroux, International Rescue Committee. Members of the panel spoke about their service, the ups and downs and learning opportunities, and each was able to engage with and answer questions from the corps of members in the audience. The Launch ended with Cliff Yee, Chair of the Governor's advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism who administered the AmeriCorps oath and thanked the members for their service.
- Four elected official visits were conducted to visit AmeriCorps programs during FY23 that included Congressman Rob Wittman visiting Essex High School in Tappahannock; Delegate Amanda Batten visiting York River State Park in York County, staff from Congressman Griffith's office visiting Central High School in Wise County, and Senator Barbara Favola and Delegate Alfonso Lopez visiting Aspire! Afterschool Learning in Arlington. The Commission and Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism also hosted AmeriCorps leadership at a site visit to the Public Health AmeriCorps program at George Mason University in Fairfax; and hosted a national press event for the award of Public Health AmeriCorps funding, including an award to the City of Richmond for the RVA Health Corps.

Mandate 2: Promote the use of AmeriCorps programs to meet Virginia's most pressing human, educational, environmental, and public safety needs.

- The Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism led efforts to increase the use of other CNCS national service programs including The National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) and FEMA Corps. NCCC projects are generally short term, high impact, and relatively low cost to the communities in which they occur. The Virginia Service Commission maintains a memorandum of understanding with NCCC to support critical projects statewide and these projects resulted in additional 2022/23 AmeriCorps engagements in Virginia that otherwise would have not been completed. NCCC teams contributed more than 16,700 total hours from 68 members. This translates to an economic benefit in Virginia of nearly \$546,957.97.
- One NCCC team deployed to serve with the Habitat for Humanity of the Peninsula and Greater Williamsburg to create stability through energy-efficient affordable housing and

through exterior home repairs by performing activities such as home construction using insulating concrete forms (ICF) and various safety and security-related exterior home repairs. Another team served with the South Hampton Roads Habitat for Humanity, assisting with the interior construction of one home and the groundbreaking of a second home. These teams not only assisted the nonprofits in providing hands-on service, but also working alongside volunteers and learning about the housing needs of the respective areas.

- Four NCCC teams served in projects to support local environmental stewardship efforts, including working with the City of Norton to develop a mountain biking and hiking trails at the city's 1,000-acre Flag Rock Recreation Area and serving in Chincoteague to replace four miles of fencing to protect wild ponies that live in the Wildlife Refuge managed by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Two teams helped conduct prescribed burns and mitigate wildfire risks in two different regions of the George Washington & Jefferson National Forest.
- Two NCCC teams assisted FEMA in planning and preparedness efforts. A team provided additional capacity to Incident Management Assistance Team efforts, working directly with their counterparts on IMAT Blue, assisting with policy and procedure development. Members also served in the FEMA Tech Lab whose mission is to provide support for all end-user computing devices and peripherals deployed in disaster response efforts and to assist those engaged in disaster response. As the tech lab annually prepares for the hurricane season, one of the non-technical tasks that must be performed at the Virginia Disaster Operations Center (VDOC) is the physical preparation of laptop cases for use in future shipments to the field including paring iPad boxes for reutilization. Members assisted in this effort, as well as supporting end users in utilizing the deployed technology.
- VISTA programs provide capacity building support to address poverty related issues statewide and at the community level. The Virginia Service Commission administers a VISTA capacity building project operating within the Virginia Department of Social Services across six departments and two local nonprofit partners. Thirteen VISTA members and one VISTA leader served in the Healthy Futures priority area addressing the opioid epidemic priority area, food insecurity, economic opportunity, supporting the strengthening and expansion of statewide networks for immigrant services and volunteer centers, and expanding the implementation of diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives across the service sector statewide.
- AmeriCorps programs work toward pre-identified outcomes. The following are just two examples of program results.
- The impact of AmeriCorps in Virginia has both breadth and depth across the Commonwealth. The emphasis on measurable change and performance measurement leads to constantly evolving and high-quality programs and services for Virginians. Programs have been able to bring all their members back to in-person service, while serving in the classroom or at an after-school program. Over the last year, AmeriCorps Members served 11,124 students

through hybrid learning and support as they were able to continue to adapt to the changing ways in which they serve youth in their respective communities.

- AmeriCorps programs also provided services designed to meet the unique community needs identified across the Commonwealth. Over 100 Members served 5,364 unduplicated adult individuals in identified refugee, low-income, and Latinx communities by providing information, resources, and support over the course of the last program year, 9/2022 – 8/2023. Results from AmeriCorps Member’s service includes increased job readiness, increased knowledge about individual health needs, and secured employment. In addition to serving at local government and nonprofit organizations across Virginia, AmeriCorps Members served at organizations with missions that included being good stewards of the environment. In 2022 – 2023 they were able to improve, by removal of invasive species and the remediation and building of trails, over 1,100 acres of public land.

Mandate 3: Collaborate with the Department of Social Services and other public and private entities to recognize and call attention to the significant community service contributions of Virginia citizens and organizations.

- With the help of the Governor’s Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism, Governor Youngkin selected winners of the 2022 Governor's Volunteerism and Community Service Awards. Winners, selected from 67 nominations, provided significant contributions in far reaching areas of the Commonwealth -- from Southwest Virginia to Hampton Roads. Winners were recognized on October 25, 2022, during an awards program held at the Executive Mansion.
- Throughout the year, the Virginia Service Commission hosted virtual training programs on a variety of topics including annual events for AmeriCorps program directors and members as well as the statewide service and volunteerism sector. Trainings were offered virtually for AmeriCorps program staff to highlight best practices in AmeriCorps and grants management. These sessions provided sub-grantees with tools and knowledge to support members in active service to the community. Nonprofit organizations and stakeholders in the service sector participated in the 2023 Virginia Volunteerism Summit, providing three days of big ideas and tactical skill building sessions for attendees to engage with the Virginia State Service Plan, learn new skills, and build relationships with other stakeholders from across the Commonwealth. Over 300 individuals representing more than 116 Virginia counties and cities participated in the Summit. Attendees reported feeling engaged, challenged, and inspired in their work. The Summit’s unique emphasis on volunteerism was highlighted by many attendees as an important resource for the field.

Mandate 4: Assist the Department of Social Services to promote the involvement of faith-based organizations in community and national service efforts.

- The Governor’s Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism promoted the involvement of faith-based organizations in community and national service efforts through the various

national service days; annual conference; and targeted outreach and participation in the Virginia Community Engagement Index survey. Staff partnered with VDSS colleagues to promote its volunteerism and service resources to the faith community including during emergencies and disasters in northern Virginia and southwest Virginia.

- Resources continued to be available through virginiashservice.virginia.gov and servevirginia.org for community services, volunteer resources, and partnerships. Faith-based organizations were engaged through the Virginia Volunteerism Summit as well, benefitting from recorded sessions and presenter materials to build strategic volunteer management skills. The Summit was specifically promoted to faith-based communities through the Faith & Community Initiative, also housed at VDSS.
- Partnering organizations were also engaged through monthly e-newsletters to share resources, connections, and opportunities.

Conclusion

The accomplishments and activities of the Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism helped the citizens improve the lives of Virginians through service. The work of the Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism goes well beyond the federally mandated role of overseeing the work of Virginia's AmeriCorps program. The Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism promotes service among the citizens of the State and works closely with the Governor and local mayors and county supervisors to recognize those volunteer efforts. The Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism and its support staff at the Virginia Service Commission/Office on Volunteerism and Community Service work closely with the volunteer centers and faith-based groups across Virginia, offering information and training to those organizations. Working hand in hand with local partners, the Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism tapped the can-do spirit of Virginians to tackle some of the most pressing challenges facing the Commonwealth.

Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism Membership

Naila Alam, Councilmember, Town of Herndon; Herndon

Jessica Bowser, Host, Virginia Outdoor Adventures; Fairfax Co.; Alexandria

Vanessa Diamond, Sr. Vice President, Civic Innovations, The Community Foundation for a Greater Richmond; Richmond

Cynthia Downs-Taylor, Senior Advisor, Office of U.S. Senator Mark R. Warner; Chester

Mark Fero, Director of Programs and Outreach, Office of the Attorney General; Ruther Glen

Zachary Leonsis, President, Media & New Enterprises, Monumental Sports and Entertainment; Washington, DC

Peppy Linden, Volunteer; Charlottesville

Kimberly Luckabaugh, Executive Director, Reset180; Reston

Priscilla Martinez, Senior Projects Director, Loudoun Literacy Council; Hamilton

Adria Merritt, Director of Culturally Responsive and Inclusive Practice, Department of Education; Richmond

NaQuetta Mitchell, President, Hopewell Youth Services; Hopewell

Enid Mpumwire Machayo, Founder and CEO, Global Inheritance Inc.; Leesburg

Joy Parker, Director of Volunteer Services, Children's Hospital of The King's Daughters

Bryan Pearce-Gonzales, Professor of Hispanic Studies, Shenandoah University; Winchester

Reagan Polarek, Student, James Madison University

Jamie Seagraves, Grants Manager, Community Impact and Investment; Capitol One; Richmond

Julie Strandlie, Public Affairs Consultant, Strandlie Advocacy, LLC; Alexandria

Sheila Williamson-Branch (Vice Chair), Treasurer, City of Danville; Danville

Clifford Yee (Chair), Executive Vice President and CFO, Northern Virginia Family Service; Fairfax County