



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES *Office of the Commissioner*

James Hunter Williams
Commissioner

December 9, 2024

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Glenn Youngkin
Governor of Virginia

Members, Virginia General Assembly

FROM: James H. Williams *James Williams*

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.

JW:kc



Attachment

cc: The Honorable Janet V. Kelly, Secretary of Health and Human Resources



Annual Report on the Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism

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Pictured on cover: GABSV members with Governor Youngkin during the 2023 Governor's Awards.

ANNUAL REPORT ON THE GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY BOARD ON SERVICE AND VOLUNTEERISM

A Report to the Governor and the Virginia General Assembly

October 01, 2024

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REPORT MANDATE

§ 2.2-2481 of the Code of Virginia 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.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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 (GABSV) tackled some of the most pressing challenges facing the Commonwealth.

The GABSV leveraged a federal investment of **\$14 million** to support AmeriCorps members serving across the Commonwealth and continuing the implementation of the three-year State Service Plan (SSP) in partnership with the Virginia Service Foundation. The SSP 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 new Virginia Community Engagement Index (VCEI), a comprehensive, first-of-its-kind study, **surveyed over 6,300 engaged Virginians**. The GABSV also championed Serve Virginia's effort to **secure \$100,000 in grant funding** to support the creation of a new Youth Mental Health Corps program in Virginia as part of a national initiative to help youth access critical mental health resources.

About VDSS and Volunteerism

The Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) partners with local departments of social services and community organizations to promote the well-being of children and families across the Commonwealth.

We proudly serve alongside nearly 13,000 state and local human services professionals throughout the Social Services System, who ensure that thousands of Virginia's most vulnerable citizens have access to the best services and benefits available to them.

Together, we work each day to serve, empower, and create opportunities for brighter futures.

The Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism (GABSV) improves the quality of life for Virginians. Americans of all ages and backgrounds united to meet local needs, strengthen communities, and expand opportunity through national service in Virginia. AmeriCorps invests federal funding to support cost-effective community solutions, working hand in hand with local partners to empower individuals to help communities tackle their toughest challenges.

DEFINITIONS

The Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism

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

In accordance with VA Code § 2.2-2478, the GABSV 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. GABSV membership is included in Appendix B.

AmeriCorps

AmeriCorps is the federal agency for national service and volunteerism. AmeriCorps provides opportunities for Americans of all backgrounds to serve their country, address the nation's most pressing challenges, and improve lives and communities. The AmeriCorps mission is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement.

National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC)

AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) is a full-time, team-based residential service program for 18-26 year-olds. AmeriCorps members serving in the NCCC program represent a wide variety of socioeconomic, cultural, geographic, and educational backgrounds.

AmeriCorps members serving in the NCCC program are assigned to one of four regional campuses and then placed into teams ranging between 8-12 members. The teams complete a variety of service projects, which are generally 3 to 13 weeks in duration, and respond to local communities' needs throughout the United States and territories. Each team has a specially trained Team Leader who serves and resides with the team. Each team is provided with one 15-passenger van and fuel is covered by AmeriCorps (for locations in the continental US). Each team is also allocated funds for food and laundry. All members are background-checked and fully insured by the Federal Tort Claims Act and Federal Employees Coverage Act.

Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA)

Founded in 1965, Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) is an anti-poverty program designed to provide needed resources to nonprofit organizations and public agencies to increase their capacity to lift communities out of poverty. AmeriCorps VISTA provides opportunities for Americans 18 years or older from a diverse range of backgrounds to dedicate a year of full-time service with an organization ("sponsor") to create or expand programs designed to empower individuals and communities in overcoming poverty.

CONTACTS

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ANNUAL REPORT ON THE GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY BOARD ON SERVICE AND VOLUNTEERISM

BACKGROUND

The Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism (GABSV) 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 Virginia Service Commission (VSC), now called Serve Virginia, operates within the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) and leads national service and community volunteerism for the entire state by setting priorities for service and volunteerism, serving as catalysts and ambassadors for service, creating a sustainable infrastructure for service and volunteerism, and developing resources for the Commonwealth. In addition to overseeing the annual grant competition that awards funding to AmeriCorps State and other community service programs, Serve Virginia actively works to determine community needs, set policy and program priorities, provide training and assistance, support national days of service, promote service and volunteering, and actively recognize individuals and organizations from all sectors for their contributions within their communities. Serve Virginia is supported by the Virginia Service Foundation (VSF), an independent 501(c)(3) organization, works intimately with the Volunteer Center Network of Virginia, and is guided by the Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism.

Section 2.2-2481 specifies four mandates for the GABSV. The following report documents the efforts and results achieved through the collaborative efforts of VDSS staff and the GABSV for July 2023-June 2024.

SECTION 1: AMERICORPS AND THE VIRGINIA STATE SERVICE PLAN

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 (now operating as AmeriCorps) 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.

GRANTS MANAGEMENT

Members of the GABSV continue to move the Virginia State Service Plan forward. During this reporting period they played a significant role in ensuring that VDSS met the AmeriCorps requirements. 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, formula grant proposals, and American Rescue Plan funds. The approved recommendations totaled approximately \$9,619,204 which utilized a portion of the \$14 million in federal funding. The GABSV also approved an additional \$5,196,008 in recommendations leveraging other available public and private funding streams.

AMERICORPS NATIONAL DAYS OF SERVICE

GABSV members provided additional assistance in meeting AmeriCorps requirements by participating in activities on National Days of Service in communities across the Commonwealth. AmeriCorps programs recognize and support the 9/11 Day of Remembrance and MLK Day. The Virginia Service Foundation awarded 20 mini grants to 17 unique organizations, supporting national days of community service projects and events.

COMMUNITY SERVICE IN VIRGINIA

In 2023, AmeriCorps provided more than \$14 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 programs, including AmeriCorps State and National, AmeriCorps VISTA, AmeriCorps NCCC, and AmeriCorps Seniors. This impacted over 360 service sites in communities across the Commonwealth.

Other major accomplishments include the Virginia Community Engagement Index, rebranding the Virginia Service Commission (VSC) to Serve Virginia, and implementing 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.

First Lady Of Virginia: Spirit Of Sisterhood Program

GABSV members and Serve Virginia partnered with the First Lady of Virginia's "Women +girls" program which hosted a series of four events promoting service and volunteerism. These events connected attendees with information and resources about national and community service in Virginia, as well as tangible resources for supporting community initiatives.

SECTION 2: PROMOTE AMERICORPS PROGRAMS

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

The GABSV led efforts to promote and increase the use of other AmeriCorps national service programs.

ELECTED OFFICIALS PROMOTING AMERICORPS PROGRAMS

Elected officials promoted AmeriCorps programs by visiting program sites. The following elected official visits were conducted during this reporting period:

- Delegate McNamara and Senator Sutterlein visited the Virginia College Advising Corps at Salem High School
- Delegate Wilt visited the Virginia College Advising Corps at Harrisonburg High School
- Delegate Carr visited RVA Health Corps at the Richmond Henrico Health District
- Senator Hashmi visited Recovery Corps at the Chesterfield Public Defenders Office
- Delegate Shin and Senator Pekarsky visited RSVP Northern Virginia at Volunteer Fairfax

NCCC & FEMA CORPS

Serve Virginia signed a new memorandum of understanding for disaster response with National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) in March 2024 to support critical projects statewide. NCCC teams contributed more than 16,116 total hours from 77 members in Virginia. This translates to an economic benefit of nearly \$537,952.08.

Wildfires, Shoreline Protection, Hurricane Preparation, and Community Accessibility

Two NCCC Forest Teams suppressed more than 1,100 acres of wildfires in Natural Bridge State Park and the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests. Another NCCC team was deployed to the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge to install the final 3.5 miles of environmentally sustainable fencing. This effort completed a shoreline protection project that included building over 10 miles of fencing which protect 4.7 miles of shoreline. Two NCCC teams supported the FEMA Tech Lab in Winchester, VA, in preparation for hurricane season response efforts. The team provided 465 hours to cleaning, over 1,100 hours of IT work, and 51 pallets of computer cases. Five NCCC teams served with nonprofit organizations, assisting with building 12 new houses and supporting community accessibility efforts.

VISTA AND HEALTHY FUTURES

VISTA programs provide capacity building support to address poverty related issues statewide and at the community level. Serve Virginia administers a VISTA capacity-building project operating within multiple departments at VDSS and in local nonprofit organizations. 1 VISTA leader and 11 VISTA members served in this project offering practical support for a myriad of challenges faced by the commonwealth. These 12 individuals assisted the advancement of economic opportunity and self-sufficiency for Virginians through:

- substance use abatement,
- building infrastructure and pilot new programs,
- resource mapping,
- implementation of the statewide Healthy Pantry Initiative,
- update the Homeless Management Information System (HIMS),
- facilitated cross-sector collaboration,
- and provide services to refugee and immigrant groups.

AMERICORPS IN VIRGINIA

Across Virginia AmeriCorps members served in local government, institutions of higher education, public schools, and nonprofit organizations. Over the last year, AmeriCorps members served



11,632 students in public schools,



6,020 economically disadvantaged individuals,



653 acres were renewed in parks and public lands.

In addition to the impact made through their service, AmeriCorps members earned \$2,654,631 in Segal Education Awards to use for qualified education expenses.

VIRGINIA VOLUNTEERISM SUMMIT

The Virginia Volunteerism Summit is the Commonwealth's leading event for organizations and individuals making a difference in their communities. Presented by Serve Virginia, the Virginia Service Foundation, and VDSS, the May 2024 theme was "Mapping the Future of Civic & Community Engagement." The event featured more than twenty workshops, networking opportunities, and keynotes to promote innovation across organizations and institutions that utilize volunteers. Fifty-five Virginia counties and cities were represented in the nearly 300 individuals who participated in this year's summit. The Summit's emphasis on volunteerism was highlighted by attendees as an important resource for the Commonwealth.

Throughout the year, Serve Virginia hosted virtual training programs on a variety of topics including annual events for AmeriCorps program directors and members.

SECTION 3: RECOGNIZE COMMUNITY SERVICE CONTRIBUTIONS

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.

GOVERNOR'S VOLUNTEERISM AND COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS

With the help of the GABSV, Governor Youngkin selected winners of the 2023 Governor's Volunteerism and Community Service Awards. The annual awards program spotlights the outstanding efforts of individual volunteers and organizations, contributed on behalf of citizens throughout the Commonwealth. In 2023, 96 nominations were submitted. Of those, 11 honorees were recognized on November 13, 2023, during an awards reception sponsored by the Virginia Service Foundation at Virginia's Executive Mansion.

SECTION 4: PROMOTE INVOLVEMENT OF FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

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

The GABSV engaged faith-based organizations in community and national service efforts through National Days of Service Mini Grants, the Governor’s Volunteerism and Community Service Awards, and targeted outreach and participation in the Virginia Community Engagement Index (VCEI), and the Virginia Volunteerism Summit.

RESOURCES

Serve Virginia staff partnered with the VDSS Division of Public Affairs to promote volunteerism and service resources to the faith community through the Serve Virginia newsletter, social media, and ServeVirginia.org.

CONCLUSION

The accomplishments and activities of the GABSV helped improve the lives of Virginians through service. The work of the GABSV goes well beyond the federally mandated responsibilities. Promoting volunteerism through their own service initiatives and teaming up with the Governor and other elected officials to recognize those volunteer efforts. Working hand in hand with local partners, the GABSV continues to collaboratively set statewide priorities, while cultivating a sustainable infrastructure for all to engage in service and volunteerism and developing resources for the Commonwealth to meet Virginians’ most pressing needs.

APPENDIX A CODE OF VIRGINIA, ARTICLE 25

Article 25. Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism

§ 2.2-2478. Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism; purpose.

The Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism (the Board) 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.

§ 2.2-2479. Membership; terms; quorum; meetings.

A. The Board shall consist of no more than 20 nonlegislative citizen members, to be appointed by the Governor from the Commonwealth at large. Nonlegislative citizen members appointed to the Board shall be selected for their knowledge of, background in, or experience with the community and volunteer services sector and in accordance with guidelines provided in the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993. The Governor may appoint additional persons, at his discretion, as nonvoting members.

B. Nonlegislative citizen members shall be appointed for terms of three years. Appointments to fill vacancies shall be for the unexpired terms. No nonlegislative citizen member shall be eligible to serve more than two successive three-year terms; however, after the expiration of the remainder of a term to which a member was appointed to fill a vacancy, two additional terms may be served by such member if appointed thereto.

C. The voting members of the Board shall elect a chairman and vice-chairman annually from among its membership. A majority of the members of the Board shall constitute a quorum. The Board shall meet no more than six times per year. The meetings of the Board shall be held at the call of the chairman or whenever the majority of the members so request.

2015, cc. 26, 452; 2017, c. 395; 2018, c. 455.

§ 2.2-2480. Compensation; expenses.

Members shall receive no compensation for their services. However, all members shall be reimbursed for all reasonable and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties as provided in §§ 2.2-2813 and 2.2-2825. Funding for the costs of compensation and expenses of the members shall be provided by the Department of Social Services in accordance with federal law.

§ 2.2-2481. Powers and duties of the Board.

The Board shall have the power and duty to:

1. Advise the Governor, the Secretaries of Health and Human Resources, Education, and Natural and Historic 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 CNCS 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 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.

§ 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 Board. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall assist the Board upon request.

APPENDIX B **GABSV MEMBERS**

Clifford Yee, Board Chair, Fairfax
Executive Vice President and CFO, Northern Virginia Family Service

Sheila Williamson-Branch, Vice Chair, Danville
Treasurer, City of Danville

Naila Alam, Herndon
Herndon Town Council and Co-Owner, Express Realty USA

Jason Ascher, Arlington
Political Director, Mid-Atlantic Pipe Trades Association

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

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

Mark Fero, Ruther Glen
Director of Crime Reduction Initiatives, Office of the Attorney General

Clovia Lawrence, Henrico
Multimedia Personality and Chief Executive Officer, Project Give Back to Community

Peppy Linden, Charlottesville
Retired, Non-Profit Executive Director

Kimberly Luckabaugh, Fairfax
Nonprofit professional and community volunteer

NaQuetta Mitchell, Hopewell
President, Hopewell Youth Services

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

Sam Parham, Petersburg
The Honorable Sam Parham of Petersburg, Mayor, City of Petersburg

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

Reagan Polarek, Richmond
Student, James Madison University

Dominick Rascona, Norfolk
Pulmonary & Intensive Care Physician; Virginia; Captain, US Navy (retired)

Shane Roberts-Thomas, Richmond
Co-owner, Morse Group Corporation “dba” Southern Kitchen

Elizabeth Schultz, Richmond
Senior Advisor to the Chief Executive Officer of the Virginia Cannabis Control Authority

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

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