

# AMERICORPS IN CONNECTICUT 2015-2016

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## AMERICORPS\*STATE PROGRAMS

Most federal AmeriCorps grant funding provided by the Corporation for National and Community Service to Connecticut goes to the Governor-appointed Connecticut Commission on Community Service, which in turn awards grants to nonprofits to respond to critical local needs. ServeCT, the Connecticut Commission on Community Service, is charged with managing, monitoring and evaluating AmeriCorps\*State programs.



### **AARP Experience Corps – Greater New Haven**

*Hamden, New Haven, East Haven*

As an intergenerational literacy tutoring program, AARP Experience Corps Greater New Haven specifically addresses two regional priorities: the achievement gap among school-aged children and the need for older adults to remain engaged with the community as fully contributing members. Experience Corps recruits, trains and places trained older adults (age 50+) as AmeriCorps literacy tutors in participating Hamden, New Haven and East Haven elementary schools and an after-school literacy tutoring program to help K-3 students. Bringing with them a wealth of life experience, compassion, and a love of learning and reading, Experience Corps AmeriCorps tutors form bonds with their students that foster learning and confidence. Beyond the classrooms, Experience Corps' AmeriCorps tutors promote a love of reading and learning at community events by helping children choose just the right (gently used) children's book to take home.



### **CT Area Health Education Center (AHEC)**

*Waterbury, Shelton, Willimantic, Hartford*

The Connecticut Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Network AmeriCorps program engages middle and high school students in the Youth Health Service Corps (YHSC) and college students in the Collegiate Health Service Corps (CHSC), which lead students in service learning projects that address pressing community health issues. The AmeriCorps members aim to improve academic engagement of economically disadvantaged students through participation in the YHSC and CHSC service learning programs, as well as through health workshops. The four regional centers of the Connecticut AHEC Network host full-time AmeriCorps members impacting communities across the entire state of Connecticut. The program increases AmeriCorps members' educational and professional status by providing a vast amount of experience working with schools, non-profits, health care agencies and other community partners.



### **FoodCorps Connecticut**

*Bridgeport, East Hartford, Hartford, New Britain, New Haven, Norwalk, Norwich, Putnam, Vernon, Waterbury, Windham, Woodbridge*

In the last 30 years, the percentage of overweight or obese children in this country has tripled. The impact of the obesity epidemic has been disproportionately felt by some children more than others. FoodCorps recruits, trains, and places emerging leaders into limited-resource schools for a year of service implementing a three-ingredient recipe for healthy kids: 1) hands on food and nutrition education, 2) experiential education in school gardens and through cooking lessons, and 3) healthy food access in cafeterias. FoodCorps members based in some of the highest need school districts work side-by-side with committed teachers, school administrations, food service directors, and high impact community-based organizations to help improve school food environments. The 15 communities and school districts selected for FoodCorps Connecticut were chosen based on eligibility rates for free and reduced priced school lunch, and the districts' capacities to supervise and make effective use of FoodCorps service members. In order to carry out their terms of service, members acquire training in experiential education of nutrition and gardening, building classroom management, volunteer management, community engagement, and safe food preparation. Project impacts are carefully tracked, including gardens built, children reached, pounds of produce harvested, and volunteers mobilized.



**GREAT OAKS  
CHARTER SCHOOL**  
*Great oaks, from little acorns grow*

### **Great Oaks Charter School - Bridgeport**

*Bridgeport*

Great Oaks Charter School – Bridgeport is run by Great Oaks Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to the launch and support of high-performing, college preparatory charter schools, with two such schools running in Newark, NJ and New York, NY, in addition to its Bridgeport, CT location, and a fourth anticipated school opening in Wilmington, DE. Great Oaks Charter School will recruit AmeriCorps members who will provide high-dosage tutoring to students in grades 6 and 7. Student academic performance in literacy and math will improve, and additional support will be provided to foster increased rates in student high school completion and engagement in post-secondary education. Great Oaks Charter School has been utilizing this model of national service-delivered tutoring with success in its other sites. Further, the program has worked diligently to build community connections and presence in the greater Bridgeport community throughout the development process that resulted in the opening the Great Oaks Charter School in 2014.



### **Green Crew**

*Hartford*

People Planting Programs

While participating in life skills, GED and job skills trainings, full-time Green Crew AmeriCorps members partner with Knox, Inc. in serving in the City of Hartford by leading horticultural service projects across the city, supporting community and corporate volunteer groups, maintaining green spaces and Knox's community gardens, and planting trees to enhance Hartford's urban forest. At the end of their one-year term of service, members will have the skills they need to become self-sufficient, socially-responsible members of the Hartford community.



### **Jumpstart Connecticut**

*Chaplin, New Britain, New Haven, Storrs, Vernon, Willimantic*

Jumpstart is active in 16 states across the nation, bringing together Corps members and preschool children in low-income neighborhoods to help these children develop the language and literacy skills they need to be successful in school, setting them on a path to close the achievement gap before it is too late. This school year, 816 college students from fifteen university partners will work with over 2,000 preschool children in New York City, New Jersey, and Connecticut. Jumpstart Connecticut will recruit AmeriCorps members supervised by team leaders to provide in-classroom literacy tutoring to low-income children in community-based early education programs, including Headstart, in six communities throughout the state of Connecticut.



### **MYO AmeriCorps**

*Bridgeport*

The MYO AmeriCorps Program is a revolutionary initiative that provides life skills development for young adults while promoting social-emotional literacy for thousands of area teens. MYO stands for Mine. Yours. Ours. and is about growing as a person, working together as a team, and making the world a better place. The development of high quality youth directors and after-school programming addresses the critical need to create safe in-school and after-school programming for middle school aged youth. By facilitating emotional intelligence and dating violence curricula, members aim to reduce the rate of in-school violence, promote a healthy learning environment, and improve academic achievement. By offering high quality after-school youth groups, the program will provide an outlet for area youth to participate in enriching activities during the time period in the day when the rate of juvenile crime and risky behavior triples. Members will serve as youth directors for either the academic year component or the summer component. Members will undergo an intensive orientation that covers RULER and Safe Dates (our two key curricula), conflict resolution, blogging/social media, leading small groups, teamwork, responsibility, social justice, event planning, program design, marketing, etiquette, professionalism, critical thinking, facilitation, and leadership development.



### **NESS SEA AmeriCorps Program**

*New London, Stonington*

The NESS SEA (STEM Education Ambassadors) AmeriCorps Program will serve students of the Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School in New London, CT. The community is challenged with serious social issues including poverty, illiteracy, homelessness, mental/physical illness, and a lack of access to resources. The NESS SEA AmeriCorps Program aims to improve school attendance and positively impact students' personal growth in the areas of life skills, self-esteem, self-confidence, and citizenship. Through STEM-based adventure education, classroom sessions complement field experiences including sailing, kayaking, snorkeling, and exploring local tide pool, marsh, and beach areas. The NESS SEA program takes students 1) out of their comfort zones to heighten learning and increase confidence, and 2) out of their traditional classrooms to make learning relevant and real. While the field-based members are trained in sailing, kayaking, lifeguarding, and power boating, all members receive training in inquiry method, classroom management, US Sailing REACH Program, among other topics.



### **Public Allies Connecticut**

*Bridgeport, Hartford, New Haven*

The mission of Public Allies is to create a just and equitable society and the diverse leadership to sustain it. Public Allies Connecticut (PACT), one of 23 Public Allies sites around the country, meets the emerging needs of the nonprofit sector in Greater New Haven, Bridgeport and Hartford by: 1) creating a pipeline of leaders from diverse backgrounds (race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, education, professional experience, etc.) for the nonprofit sector; 2) increasing the capacity of nonprofit organizations in a cost-effective manner; and 3) strengthening civic participation by promoting service opportunities. PACT's vision is to change the face and practice of leadership in communities across Connecticut by demonstrating our conviction that everyone can lead, and that lasting social change results when citizens of all backgrounds step up, take responsibility, and work together.



**Teach For America – Connecticut**

*Bridgeport, Hartford, New Britain, New Haven, Stamford, and Windham*

Teach for America-Connecticut is committed to closing the achievement gap and expanding educational opportunities for Connecticut's children growing up in low-income communities. Full-time members teach grades K-12 in schools where students underperform, putting them on a path toward educational equity. In Connecticut, we envision a day when all students from low-income communities are graduating from college at the same rate as their peers in higher income communities. With visionary, driven, and capable people at the helm, our model hinges on leadership: we seek to attract quality individuals to education, nurturing their development to become truly transformational leaders. Thus, we continue to focus our efforts on the following priorities: 1) growing to scale while increasing the diversity of our corps; 2) maximizing the impact of our corps members on their students' achievement; 3) fostering the leadership of our alumni as a force for change; and 4) building an enduring American institution.

