

Profile of AmeriCorps NCCC Members at the Start of Service

December 10, 2021

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Value of solution.*

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This report was prepared by JBS International, Inc. 155 Bovet Road, Suite 210, San Mateo, CA, 94402, pursuant to a contract with AmeriCorps, a U.S. government agency.

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Acknowledgements

We thank all the participants and staff. We also thank the Field Working Group and Technical Working Group members for their valuable insights and feedback through the development questionnaires and analysis. The survey would not have been possible without the participants who enrolled and participated in the data collection activities. We thank Cris Dorr, Jazmin Ledesma Duque, Thao Phan, and Alejandra Juarez Rojas for administering the survey.

Citation

Georges, A., Smith, S.J., & Fung, W. (2021). Profile of AmeriCorps NCCC Members at the Start of Service. San Mateo, CA: JBS International, Inc.

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Executive Summary

The Corporation for National and Community Service (AmeriCorps) engages Americans of all ages and backgrounds in community-based service. The work of AmeriCorps' core programs is embodied in its mission statement: *To improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering.* AmeriCorps's Office of Research and Evaluation (ORE), in collaboration with AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC), retained JBS International (JBS) to design and conduct a national evaluation consisting of three studies: a mixed methods impact study to determine how NCCC promotes leadership skills and qualities, a mixed methods study on member retention, and an exploratory qualitative case study to gauge how NCCC strengthens the communities in which its members serve.

To measure the impact of the NCCC service experience on members' leadership skills and qualities, the study identified comparable individuals from a comparison group drawn from the pool of candidates who applied for entry into NCCC and were invited, but who did not accept. This is a matched quasi-experimental design whereby NCCC's impact on leadership is assessed by comparing the outcomes of Corps members (treatment group) to the outcomes of individuals who are observationally equivalent to program participants (comparison group). The design allows for an assessment of the extent to which the NCCC service experience, programmatic experience, and characteristics cause any observed change in leadership following service.

This initial report uses data from the baseline survey administered to NCCC members who began their service between February 2020 and March 2021 and to corresponding individuals in the comparison group. The baseline survey administration to both incoming Corps members and individuals recruited for the comparison group began in January 2020 and ended in April 2021. This report describes the characteristics of the sample, including how each group perceived their own leadership skills and qualities, which can then be compared to subsequent surveys to assess NCCC service's impact on the change in members' leadership skills and qualities.

Characteristics of the sample prior to service

- The sample of Corps members exhibited the following characteristics: About half of Corps members were female, with 2 percent describing themselves as non-binary. The age range, as expected, was 18 to 26, with a very small percentage of members over the age of 24 because the upper age limit was changed from 24 to 26 years old in 2020.
- More than one-fourth identified as Hispanic or Latino. More than half identified as White and non-Hispanic, nine percent as Black non-Hispanic, four percent as Asian, five percent as more than one race, less than one percent as Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and less than one percent as American Indian or Alaskan Native.
- More than half (57%) of Corps members were from two-parent/guardian households; slightly more than one quarter (26%) were from single parent/guardian households; three percent had no parent in the household; two percent were in one parent and one guardian households; two percent were in households with one guardian only; ten percent declined to answer the question about their household. More than one-third of Corps members had a parent/guardian with a master's degree, one-third had one or more parent/guardian with an associate's or bachelor's degree.

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- More than one-third of Corps members have an associate's or bachelor's degree as their highest level of education.
- More than three-fourths of Corps members lived at home with their parents or guardians, while a quarter of Corps members lived in a place where they paid rent.
- Prior to service, Corps members worked in the private sector (29%), in the food preparation and service industry (28%), or attended college (35%).
- Corps members were motivated to serve to make a positive impact to communities, yet they also wanted to gain new skills for career development. They primarily used AmeriCorps' website to learn about the NCCC service experience, followed by the AmeriCorps handbook.

Leadership skills and qualities

We compared whether the incoming Corps members differed in their leadership skills and qualities from the comparison group participants. Prior to service, the comparison group participants were comparable on some leadership measures but also showed some differences from Corps members. At the start of service compared to the comparison group participants:

- A lower proportion of Corps members exhibited confidence in their professional skills and ability to solve problems.
- A lower proportion of Corps members reported being civically engaged in their community.
- The two groups did not differ in how they value cultural diversity.

Introduction and Background

The Corporation for National and Community Service (AmeriCorps) provides opportunities for volunteers to serve their communities and address local needs through its core programs – AmeriCorps State and National, AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC), AmeriCorps VISTA, and AmeriCorps Seniors. The work of the core programs is embodied in AmeriCorps’s mission statement: *To improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering.* AmeriCorps’s Office of Research and Evaluation (ORE), in collaboration with NCCC, retained JBS International (JBS) to design and conduct a national evaluation consisting of three studies: a mixed methods impact study to determine how NCCC promotes leadership skills and qualities, a mixed methods study on member retention, and an exploratory qualitative case study to gauge how NCCC strengthens the communities in which its members serve.

This initial report uses data from the baseline survey, administered to NCCC members who began their service between February 2020 and March 2021 and to corresponding individuals in the comparison group. The baseline survey administration to both incoming Corps members and individuals recruited for the comparison group began in January 2020 and ended in April 2021. This initial report describes the characteristics of the sample, including how each group perceived their own leadership skills and qualities. In subsequent reports, this baseline data, in conjunction with corresponding data from the follow-up surveys, can measure change in leadership skills and skills of members relative to those of the comparison group.

AmeriCorps NCCC Overview

NCCC engages members in structured training and service activities designed to enhance personal development, promote professional development, and foster leadership skills that shape program alumni for a lifetime. NCCC fits into one or more of the CNCS focus areas: disaster services, economic opportunity, education, environmental stewardship, healthy futures, and veterans and military families. The NCCC program is a full-time, residential, team-based program whose mission is to strengthen communities and develop leaders through team-based national and community service. NCCC combines practices of civilian service with aspects of military service, including short-term on-site deployments, leadership development, and team building. All members receive training in leadership, team building, disaster services, and civic engagement. Teams are assigned to three rounds of service, each of which includes one or more projects.

NCCC has two programs: Traditional NCCC and FEMA Corps. In the Traditional NCCC program, members perform service projects in one or more focus areas, including constructing and rehabilitating low-income housing, performing environmental clean-up, coordinating volunteers, helping communities develop emergency plans and respond to emergencies, and addressing other local needs. FEMA Corps is a partnership with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), where members gain professional skills in emergency management while serving with FEMA on disaster response and recovery efforts. These members work solely on emergency management and long-term recovery activities within FEMA, helping coordinate services for disaster survivors. FEMA Corps projects may involve indirect work in the FEMA offices that support FEMA’s overall mission or direct work in disaster sites, such as helping survivors in remote regions sign up for Disaster Survivor Assistance.

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NCCC members are assigned to one of four regional campuses and placed into teams of approximately 10 members. Teams perform a variety of projects throughout their members' term of service, performing a minimum of three different projects. The projects often last six to eight weeks and support local community needs in every state.

There are two types of NCCC member assignments at each regional campus: team leaders or Corps members. Corps members serve for 10 months (FEMA Corps serve for 12 months) on teams of 8-12 members and are led by a team leader. Team leaders are enrolled through a separate selection process and are generally similar in age to Corps members. Team leaders are responsible for team performance in fulfilling the NCCC mission. Team leaders are assigned a group of about 10 members for the 10-month period (12-month period for FEMA Corps). Corps members may be assigned the role of assistant team leader, or one of five other specialty roles within a team.

Corps members and team leaders live in dormitory- and barracks-like facilities when on campus. Teams eat, live, serve, and travel together to project sites. Some projects may require a team to temporarily establish a base of operations in another community away from campus; these projects can occur in a wide variety of settings from remote rural areas to inner cities. Campuses may also have projects that are in the same community as the NCCC campus. Participants selected to serve in NCCC are between the ages of 18 and 26. Team leaders are older than 18, with no upper age limit, and they have demonstrated a strong interest in and commitment to national service.

Sponsors are typically non-profits who apply for support in specifically designed projects that can benefit from the addition of NCCC Corps members. Sponsors are responsible for matching NCCC support with in-kind resources, assisting teams in obtaining housing and meeting basic needs during their service, and supervising them during their project work. Community beneficiaries are wide-ranging and include disaster survivors, seniors, people with disabilities, and people in low-income communities facing housing or food insecurity.

Overview of Research Design

The impact evaluation will measure the degree to which the NCCC service experience affects members (treatment group). To do so, the study identified comparable individuals from a comparison group drawn from the pool of applicants for entry into AmeriCorps NCCC who were accepted but did not enroll. The pool of comparison individuals is limited to those candidates in the same class and campus as the candidates who did enroll and served with NCCC. This quasi-experimental (QED) design provides rigorous estimates of the impact of participation in NCCC on members' leadership skills and qualities following service. The matched QED assesses NCCC's impact by comparing the outcomes of Corps members (treatment group) to those of individuals who are observationally equivalent to the treatment (comparison group) and assesses the extent to which the NCCC experience caused any observed change in leadership skills and qualities following service.

Matching methods are a reliable approach for producing rigorous impact evaluations, particularly when a random assignment design is not feasible. Matching methods provide credible impact estimates when: 1) the data include large samples of comparison participants, and 2) matching is

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performed based on rich information on treatment and comparison characteristics. Rich data collection on treatment and comparison group participants is necessary to ensure that observable characteristics influencing program participation can be sufficiently approximated. Ideally, comparison group participants should be as similar as possible to Corps members prior to statistical adjustments in terms of background characteristics and other relevant observable measures that could affect the likelihood of service but also leadership skills and qualities measures. To construct the matched comparison group, we rely on survey and administrative data, which provide rich information on the characteristics of eligible candidates who could have served with NCCC. The available sample for the comparison group is large enough to find matches for Corps members in the treatment group.

The leadership assessment survey is administered at three time points to treatment and comparison groups. The baseline survey is administered immediately prior to the start of service. The first follow-up is collected around the time the treatment group is completing their term of service (approximately 10–12 months after the baseline). The second follow-up survey is administered one year after the treatment group completes their service. In addition to the survey, a small sample of Corps members participate in focus groups at the time of the first follow-up survey; these same members are interviewed one to two times following the end of their terms of service. The design also includes focus group with NCCC regional staff and interviews with a sample of sponsors. The focus group is intended to gather in-depth information about the members' service experience.

Impacts of the Covid-19 Pandemic

The baseline and first follow-up surveys and the protocols for focus groups and interviews were revised to include questions about Covid-19. The revisions to the survey capture information about how the pandemic might have affected the NCCC service experience specifically in relation to leadership development. The revisions to the focus group and interview protocols for NCCC campus staff and community-based sponsors are intended to learn how the pandemic is affecting operational aspects of the NCCC program and how sponsors engage NCCC teams in service projects. The revised focus group and interview questions ask about disruptions to training and leadership caused by the pandemic. For Corps members, and team leaders, this included questions about the skills they brought to NCCC, the skills they acquired or enhanced during NCCC service, and the trainings and resources provided by sponsors. Additional questions were added to the focus group protocol with NCCC staff regarding their perceptions of changes in members' skills.

Organization of this Report

This initial report uses data from the baseline survey. It describes the characteristics of the sample focusing on NCCC members. It then compares how each group perceived their own leadership skills and qualities. The report then describes NCCC members' motivations for serving, how they heard about NCCC, the sources they used to learn about NCCC, and how incoming members perceive the NCCC experience prior to the start of their service. The report compares NCCC members' leadership and civic engagement prior to the start of service to that of the comparison participants. The summary section of the report discusses plans for future analysis that will use the follow-up survey to measure the impact of the NCCC service experience on change in leadership.

Characteristics of AmeriCorps NCCC Members

This section describes NCCC members at the time they began their service. The members in this study began their service between Winter 2020 and Winter 2021. Between Winter 2020 and Winter 2021, 1,617 Corps members began their service with NCCC. Of these, 1,250 enrolled in the study, an overall response rate of 77 percent. Of the study enrollees, we focused the analysis more on the 1,120 Corps members (90%) than on the 130 (10%) team leaders.

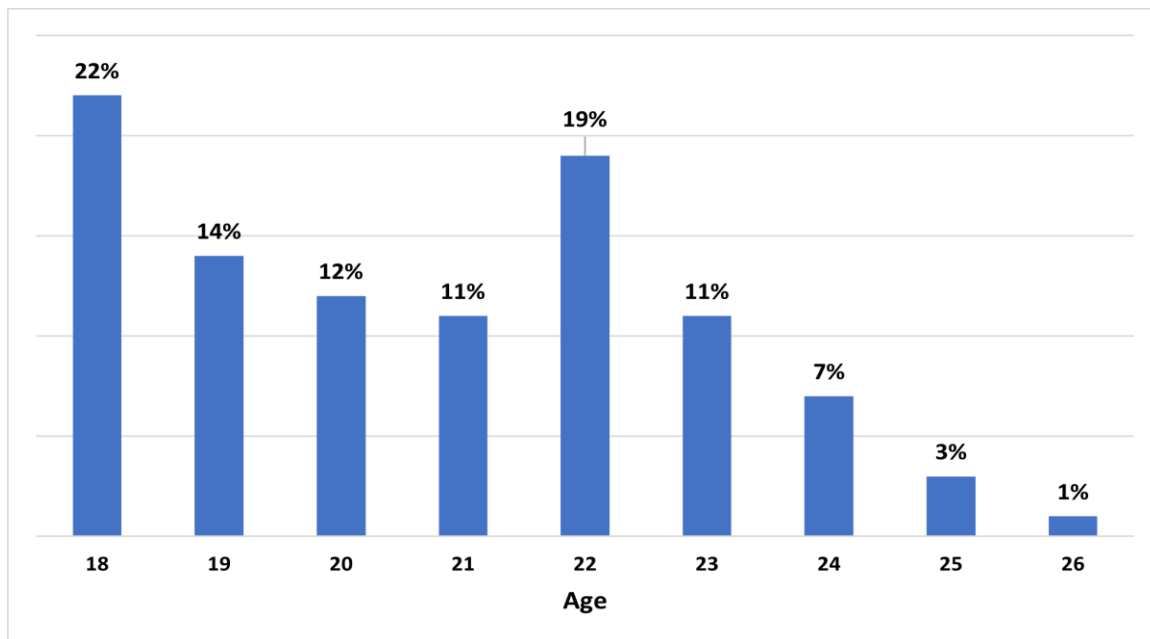
Demographic Characteristics

This section describes the basic demographic characteristics of Corps members: age, gender, race and ethnicity, education level, previous volunteer experience, family background, prior activities, and military experience.

Age

To be eligible to serve as Corps members, individuals must be between 18 and 26 years old. The average age is 21. Figure 1 shows the age distribution. Age representation of incoming Corps members peaks for ages 18 and 22, both of which correspond to graduation (from high school or college). Less than one quarter (22%) are aged 18, and close to half (42%) are aged 22 and older.

Figure 1: Age Distribution of Corps Members



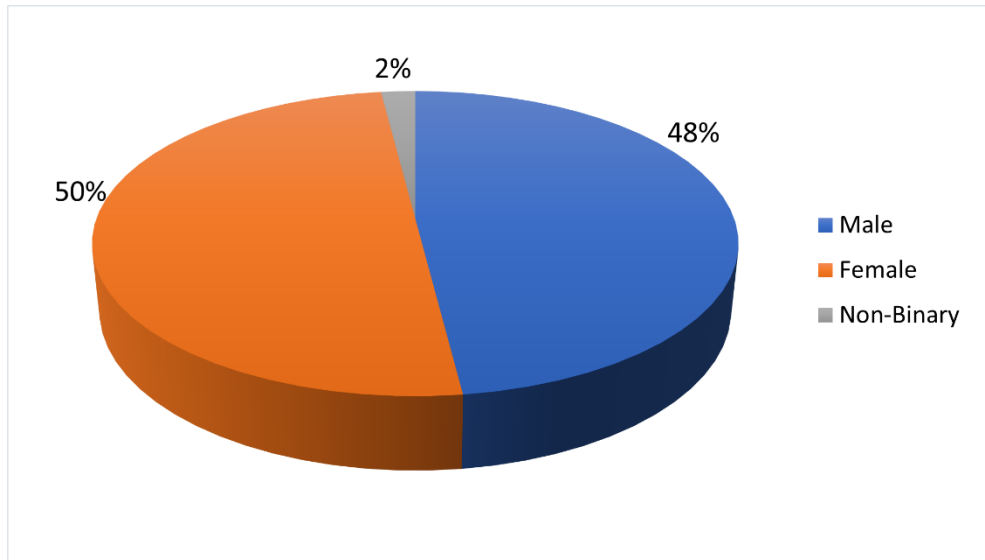
Sample size is 1,120

Gender

Participation rate is about the same for female and male (Figure 2). Of the 1,120 Corps members, 537 members (48%) identified as male, 560 members (50%) identified as female, and 23 members (2%) identified as non-binary.

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Figure 2: Gender Distribution of Corps Members



Sample size is 1,120

Race and Ethnicity

More than half (55%) of Corps member respondents were White, 9 percent identified as Black or African American, 5 percent identified with more than one race, and 4 percent identified as Asian (Figure 3). Less than one percent (0.4%) identified as Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and one percent (1%) identified as American Indian or Alaskan Native (Figure 3).¹

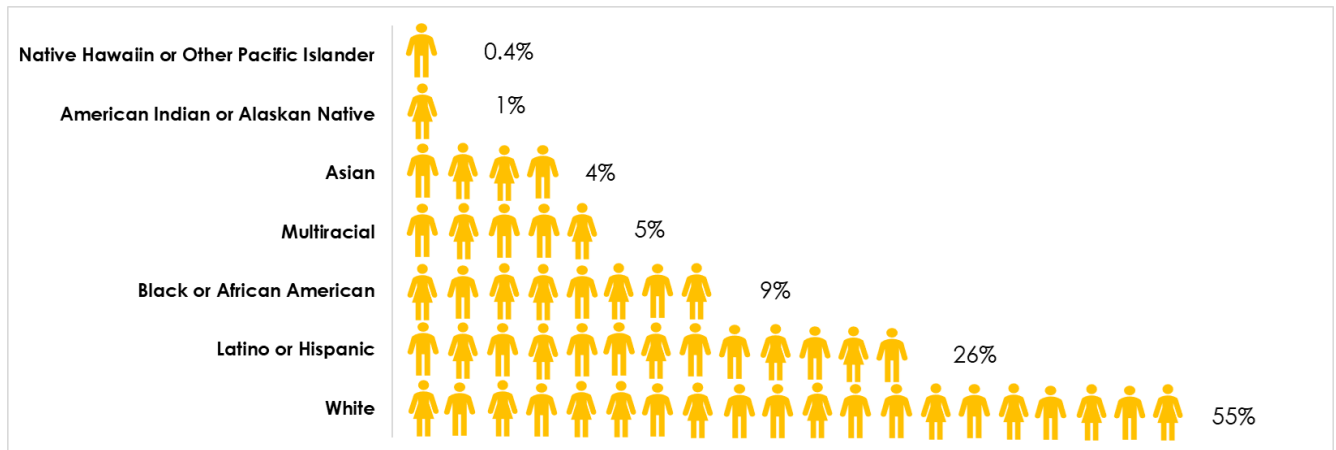
Slightly more than one quarter (26%) of Corps members consider themselves of Hispanic or Latino origin, which is consistent with the percentage of Hispanic and Latino individuals in the 18-24 age group as reported by the United States Census Bureau.²

¹ The U.S. Census estimates ([2019 Population Estimates by Age, Sex, Race and Hispanic Origin \(census.gov\)](https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2019/2019-population-estimates-by-age-sex-race-and-hispanic-origin.html)) show that in 2019 the percent of individuals between 18 and 24 who are White not Hispanic was 53 percent, Black not Hispanic was 14 percent, more than one race was 3 percent, and Asian was 6 percent. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander was 0.2 percent; American Indian or Alaskan was 1 percent.

² The U.S. Census estimates that the percent of individuals between 18 and 24 who are Latino/Hispanic was 20 percent in the 2010 Census, and that percentage has increased every year according to [2019 Population Estimates by Age, Sex, Race and Hispanic Origin \(census.gov\)](https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2019/2019-population-estimates-by-age-sex-race-and-hispanic-origin.html). In 2019, the latest year that the Census has released data for individuals 18-24, the percent reporting they are Latino/Hispanic is 22.69 percent. The U.S. Census has not yet released race and ethnicity data by single age category from the 2020 Census. But based on yearly trends since 2010 among individuals, the percent Latino/Hispanic in the 18-24 age group would be around 23 percent.

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Figure 3: Race and Ethnicity Distribution of Corps Members



Sample size is 1,094

Education

Over 95 percent of Corps members have at least a high school diploma or GED. Table 1 shows that 32 percent have completed a bachelor’s degree, and one percent have completed a graduate degree.

Table 1: Highest Level of Education Completed

Level of Education	Percent
Middle school	0%
Some high school, I do not have a diploma	1%
High school diploma or GED	38%
Technical school / Apprenticeship certificate	2%
Some college	21%
Associate degree	5%
Bachelor's degree	32%
Graduate degree	1%
Other	1%

Sample size is 1,120. There were 24 (1%) participants who responded ‘Other’ to this question. Their written responses reflected they were still enrolled in school (“Still in college”, “Still in high school, “graduates in May”). Additional responses indicated that some participants had completed specialized certificates or diplomas (“Assistant veterinary and groomer diploma,” “Photography school,” and “PCT certificate”).

Previous Volunteer Experience

Previous volunteer experience is common among Corps members. More than two-thirds (69%) previously volunteered with other organizations before NCCC. About nine percent previously volunteered with AmeriCorps. Of those who previously volunteered with AmeriCorps, 64 percent volunteered with NCCC or FEMA Corps, 29 percent volunteered with AmeriCorps State and National (ASN), and 6 percent volunteered with VISTA. Of those who previously volunteered with AmeriCorps, 79 percent completed their service.

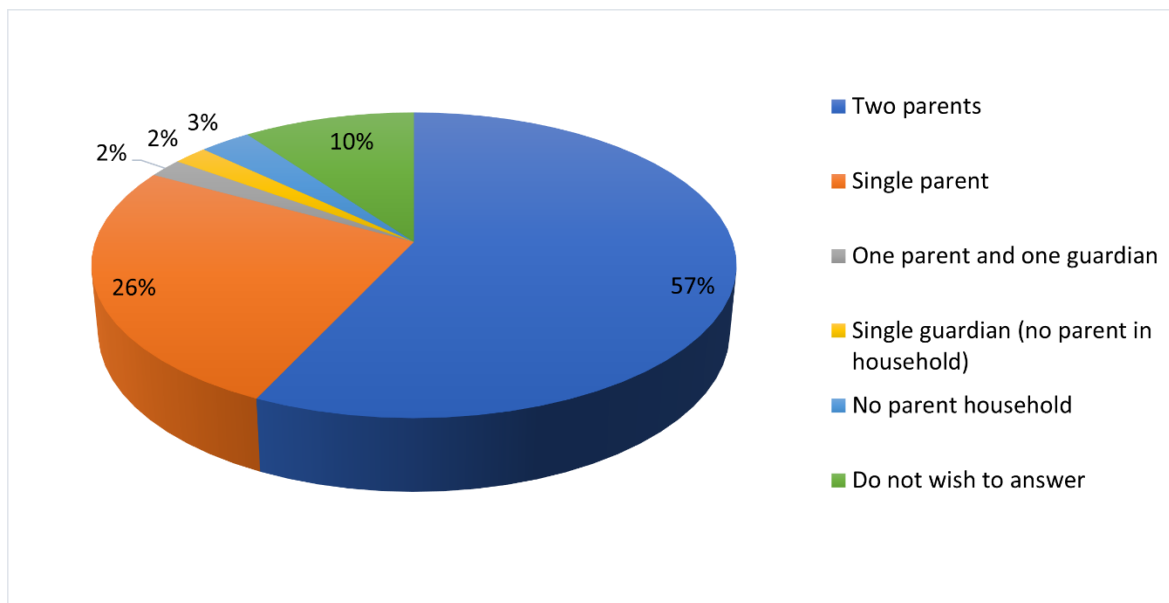
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Family Background

The survey questions provide insights about three family background characteristics prior to service such as household structure, which asks participants to indicate the parent or guardian they live with most of the time, the parent or guardian's highest level of education, and whether the parent or guardian is currently working.

More than half (57%) of Corps members lived in a two-parent/guardian household, and slightly more than one quarter (26%) lived in a single parent household (Figure 4). About two percent lived in a household with one parent/guardian, while five percent lived in a household with neither a parent nor guardian (Figure 4). Close to half (49%) of Corps members lived in households where their mother was present, and 33 percent lived in households where their father was present. Less than one percent lived with foster parents or with other female and male relatives.

Figure 4: Household Structure Prior to Service



Note: Parent is defined as: biological parent, adoptive parent, or stepparent. Guardian is defined as: foster parent, partner of relative, grandparent, other relative, or other guardian. Sample size is 1,065.

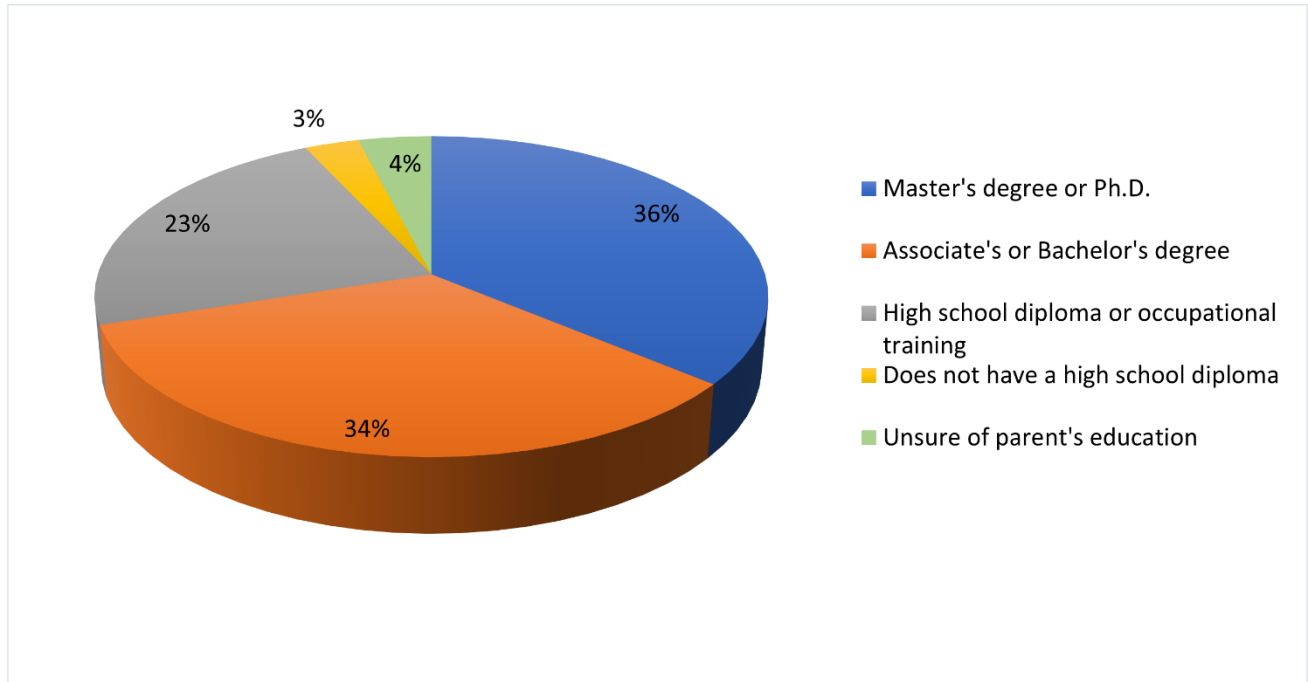
Overall, Corps members come from highly educated families. Figure 5 shows more than one-third (36%) have at least one parent or guardian with a master's degree or Ph.D. as their highest level of education. An additional 34 percent have at least one parent or guardian with an associate's or bachelor's degree. Less than one quarter (23%) stated that their parents or guardians have at least a high school diploma or occupational certificate. Just three percent of Corps members come from a household where neither the parent nor guardian had a high school diploma.

Among the Corps members, 49 percent indicated they lived with their mother (biological or adoptive). Consistent with overall parent education, Corps members reported high levels of maternal education. Fifty percent of Corps members reported that their mothers completed a bachelor's or master's degree, while 21 percent of Corps members reported that their mothers

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had a high school diploma or GED as their highest level of education. Corps members also reported high levels of paternal education. Close to half (48%) of Corps members reported their fathers (biological or adoptive) completed a bachelor's or master's degree. Less than one quarter (22%) of Corps members reported that their fathers had a high school diploma or GED as their highest level of education.

Figure 5: Parent/Guardian Education



Sample size is 936

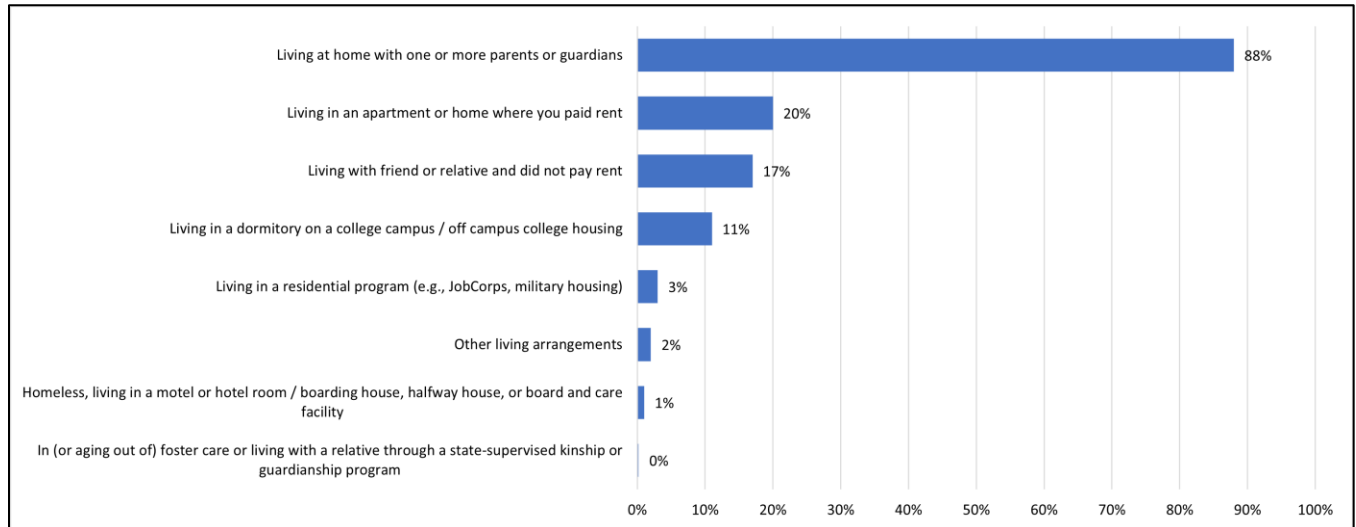
Most Corps members reported their parents or guardians are employed. About 7 percent of Corps members responded that their parents or guardians did not have a job at the time of the survey. Of the Corps members whose parents or guardians were unemployed, 2 percent reported the parents or guardians had never held a paying job, while 92 percent reported the parents or guardians were previously employed. Six percent of Corps members did not know about their parent/guardian employment.

Living Arrangement

The majority (88%) of Corps members lived at home at some point in the six months prior to their service. About 20 percent lived in an apartment or home while paying rent. None of the participants were in foster care; and one percent were homeless/living in a hotel or other facility in the six months prior to service.

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Figure 6: Living Arrangements Prior to Service



Multiple living arrangements in the six months prior to their service were less common than one single living arrangement. About 35 percent of Corps members had multiple living arrangements. The most common multiple living arrangements were living at home with their parents or guardians and living with a friend or relative and not paying rent (10%). The second most common arrangements were living at home with parents or guardians and living in an apartment/house while paying rent (9%).

Activities Prior to Service

We examined Corps members' employment and school enrollment in the six months prior to service. Participants were asked to select all options that applied to them, as seen in Table 2. In the six months prior to the start of service, almost half (47%) reported they were not in school; 35 percent were attending college; 20 percent were attending high school; 2 percent were attending graduate school. Corps members also worked. For example, 29 percent of Corps members were working in the private sector, and 28 percent indicated they had spent time working in the service industry. About nine percent of Corps members reported their private sector work was also in the service industry. A smaller percentage of Corps members worked in a non-profit (13%), the government sector (12%), or own small business (5%), or their own non-profit (1%).

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Table 2: Prior Activities of Corps Members

Activity	Percent
Not in school/taking a break from school	47%
Attending college	35%
Working in the private sector	29%
Working in food preparation and serving related occupations	28%
Not working / unemployed, and actively looking for work	25%
Attending high school	20%
Other	18%
Working in the nonprofit or social service sector	13%
Working in the public/government sector	12%
Working in your own small business	5%
Attending a vocational / technical training program	4%
Engaged in another national service experience	4%
Attending graduate school	2%
Working at a non-profit or social entrepreneurship venture that I created	1%

One quarter of the participants were unemployed and looking for work at some point in the six months prior to their service. About half (49%) of these participants also selected one or more options that showed they also worked at some point during that time. Fourteen Corps members indicated that their prior activities were impacted by Covid-19, with seven Corps members stating they lost their job due to Covid-19 and either found a new one or were in the process of finding another job.

More than one-third (35%) of Corps members were attending college prior to their service. Most Corps members still attending college were also working (59%), while 34 percent were only attending college. Write-in responses captured activities not listed in the survey options. These activities included travel, volunteer work, and taking care of family members.

Military Experience

About 18 percent of Corps members served in the military prior to service. Given the age range, Corps members' military service is likely a single tour of duty. Among the members who served on active duty, 22 percent were 18-years old, 13 percent were 19-years old, and 14 percent were 20-years old. Of those Corps members who indicated they had served in the military, 44 percent of them had obtained a high school diploma or GED, 24 percent obtained a bachelor's degree, and 21 percent indicated they completed some college. Corps members with prior military service worked in the private sector (20%) or food preparation service industry (22%) in the six months prior to the start of their service with NCCC. Of the 18 percent with prior military service, 13 percent were unemployed prior to joining NCCC.

Differences in Characteristics Between Traditional & FEMA Corps Members

Of the 1,120 participants in the treatment group, 923 began their service in the Traditional program, and 197 in FEMA Corps. The characteristics of both groups were similar, with the following notable differences in age, gender, education, and employment activity:

- FEMA Corps members were older, with an average age of 22 compared to 21 for Traditional Corps members.
- A higher percentage of FEMA Corps members identified as male, at 52 percent compared to 47 percent for Traditional Corps members.
- A higher percentage of FEMA Corps members completed an associate's degree or a bachelor's degree, at 41 percent compared to 36 percent for Traditional Corps).
- A higher percentage of FEMA Corps members worked in the public or government sector, at 18 percent compared to 11 percent of Traditional Corps members.
- A higher percentage of FEMA Corps members served on active duty in the military at 20 percent compared to 17 percent for Traditional Corps members.

Differences in Characteristics between Corps Members and Comparison Group

The matched QED design requires identifying comparable individuals from a comparison group that was drawn from the pool of candidates who applied for entry into NCCC and were accepted but did not enroll. As previously discussed, comparison group participants should be as similar as possible to Corps members prior to statistical adjustments in terms of background characteristics and other relevant observable measures that could affect the likelihood of service as well as leadership skills and qualities. Overall, the 927 participants in the comparison group were older, more educated, and more likely to work in the social services workforce.

- More than half (62%) of the comparison group participants were at least 22-years old compared to 42 percent of Corps members.
- A higher proportion of the comparison group identified as female, at 67 percent compared to 50 percent of Corps members.
- A higher percentage of the comparison group identified as Black or African American (13%), Asian (5%), and Hispanic or Latino (28%) compared to the treatment group with Black or African American (9%), Asian (4%), and Hispanic or Latino (26%).
- A higher percentage of comparison group participants completed a bachelor's degree, at 55 percent compared to 32 percent for Corps members.

A higher percentage of comparison group participants were attending college prior to what would have been the start of their service (41% compared to 35% for treatment participants). More comparison group participants were working in the non-profit or social services sector at some point in the six months prior to their service, at 28 percent compared to 13 percent of treatment group participants.

- About 13 percent of the comparison group participants previously volunteered for AmeriCorps, most for AmeriCorps State and National (56%) or VISTA (30%).
- A lower percentage of comparison group participants lived in two parent households (48% compared to 57% for treatment participants). By contrast, a higher percentage of

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comparison group participants lived in households with neither a parent or guardian (13% compared to 3% for treatment participants). There is no difference in the percentage of Corps members and the comparison group that lived in households with one parent. Less than two percent of comparison participants lived in households with one guardian, or in households with one parent or a guardian. This distribution was two percent for treatment participants.

Reasons Given by the Comparison Group for Not Serving

Employment opportunities and financial needs are top reasons applicants decide not to serve (Table 3). Almost two-thirds (64%) of comparison group respondents reported they had found a job or were working. Almost half (48%) reported the stipend from the program was insufficient. About 36 percent reported both work and financial need as reasons for not serving. The next most common reasons are the decision to return to school (37%) or joining another AmeriCorps program (27%). Some comparison respondents had reservations about NCCC that contributed to their decision not to serve, including their perception that NCCC is too strict (11%) or might be too difficult for them (10%).

Table 3: Reasons for Not Serving

Reason	Percent
Found a job/I am working	64%
Will not be earning enough money as a NCCC member	48%
Going back to school	37%
Going to serve with another AmeriCorps program	27%
Need to care for a family member or close friend	12%
NCCC has too much structure/is too strict	11%
Have difficulty doing some activities because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition	10%
Concern about ability to do some physical activities	9%
Going to serve with Peace Corps	3%
Joining the military	1%
Other	30%

Thirty percent of the comparison group participants provided written reasons for not joining NCCC. Among these, the Covid-19 pandemic impacted the decision according to 40 responses: concerns about traveling and living in communal spaces during the pandemic, dissatisfied with the Covid-19 safety protocols implemented by AmeriCorps (e.g., lack of testing after quarantine), family obligations that required them to stay home due to the pandemic, and concerns about mandatory vaccinations.

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Beyond Covid-19, participants also listed the following as factors for not serving :

- Location: Participants were not satisfied with the assigned location, they wanted to have a choice in the location, or the cost to relocate was not viable.
- Program Structure: They did not like the communal living situation, they were concerned about team dynamics, or they found the program to be too long.

Motivation, Learning about Service and Perception of the Service Experience

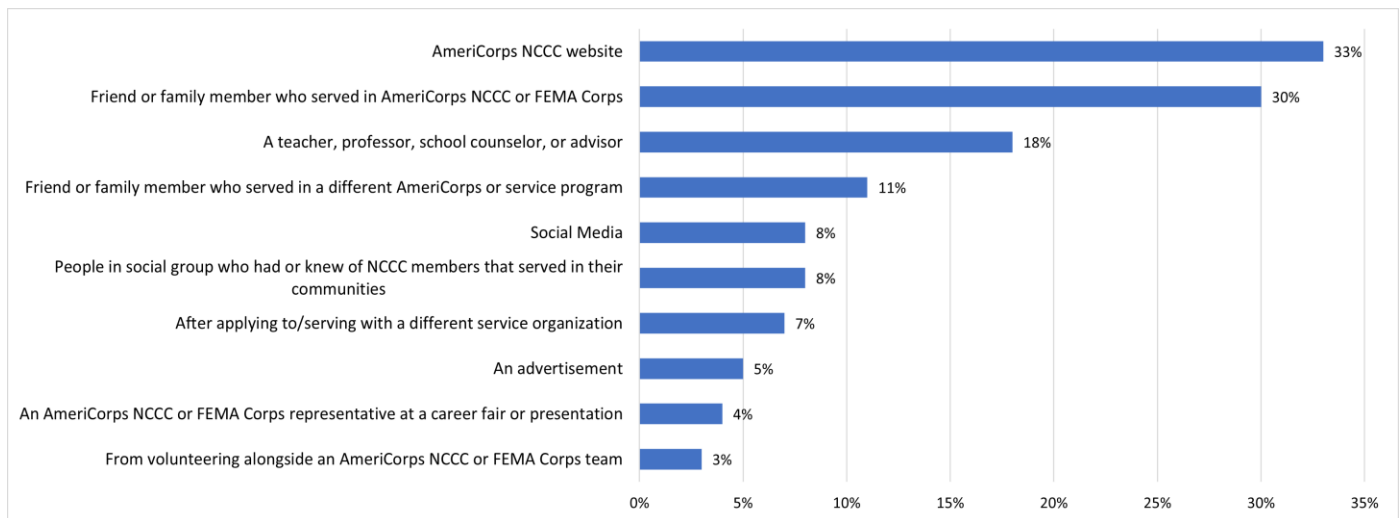
This section summarizes how members heard about NCCC, motivations for serving, and sources to learn about NCCC. It also summarizes how members perceived the NCCC experience prior to the start of their service. This section is organized into the following four parts:

- First heard about NCCC,
- Motivation for serving,
- Learning about the service experience,
- Perception of the service experience

First Heard About NCCC

The most common source where candidates heard about NCCC is the AmeriCorps website (33%) followed by word-of-mouth from their friends and family members who had previously served in an AmeriCorps program (30%), teachers or advisors (18%), people in their social group who were or knew of NCCC members (8%), directly from AmeriCorps or FEMA representatives (4%), and from volunteering alongside an AmeriCorps or FEMA Corps member (3%), see Figure 7. Fewer than one-tenth of participants first heard about NCCC through social media (8%) or advertisement (5%).

Figure 7: First Heard about NCCC



Sample size is 1,120

Participants could specify other sources not listed in the survey options. More than 50 participants indicated first hearing about NCCC from a family member who did not serve in any type of previous program. Based on the write-in answers, these family members had learned about NCCC through their own research or knew of someone affiliated with an AmeriCorps

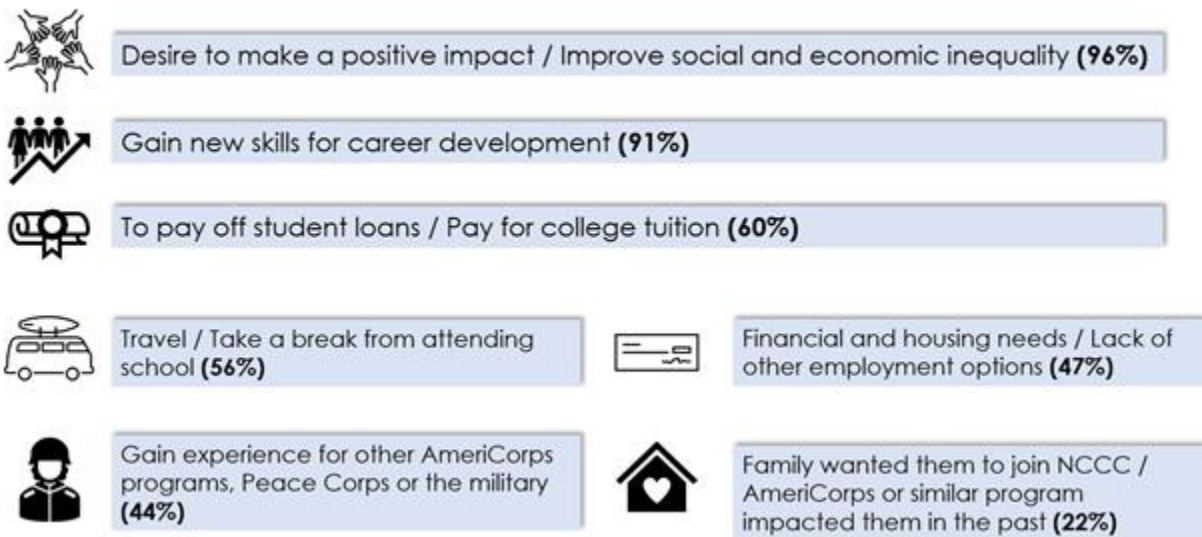
Profile of NCCC Members at the Start of Service

program. At least 20 participants stated that they found the NCCC program through researching volunteer opportunities online, and some participants were looking at the Peace Corps program before learning about AmeriCorps.

Motivations for Service

Motivation for serving is complex and multidimensional. Motivation is captured through 25 items that the participants rated on a scale of “Not Relevant” to “Very Relevant”. We combined these items into seven categories, shown in Figure 8. Appendix E summarizes the factor analysis, the statistical procedure used to combine the items.

Figure 8: Motivations for Service



Sample size is 1,110

It is not surprising that Corps members want to serve because they are altruistic. Almost all (96%) Corps members want to make a positive impact and improve social and economic inequality. Corps members simultaneously want to grow professionally during their service, with 91 percent being motivated to serve with NCCC to gain new career skills, gain leadership skills, find a direction for their career, or meet people to network within their desired professions. They are also motivated for financial reasons. A majority (60%) are motivated to serve in order to pay student loans or pay for college tuition. Almost half (47%) have other financial reasons such as lack of housing or employment options. Over half (56%) are motivated to serve to travel or take a break from school. Beyond the items listed in the survey, the write-in options captured other motivations as described by the participants. Sentiments expressed across the respondents include:

- A desire to improve their mental health:

“I found this program to be a good fit for me working through self-care and mental health. The required exercise, the structured service, and the community are qualities I was looking for.”

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- A desire for personal growth and development:

“I want to build confidence in myself and get over my anxiety, along with building my individuality/independence and work ethic.”

The Covid-19 pandemic motivated some individuals to serve. Several participants stated that they would rather join NCCC than take part in online schooling as they thought their time would be better utilized in the program. Three participants who were evacuated from the Peace Corps due to the pandemic chose to serve with NCCC.

Sources Used to Learn About the NCCC Experience

Once members hear about NCCC through their network of family, friends, teachers and advisors, their most utilized sources to learn about the service experience are the AmeriCorps website, the AmeriCorps handbook, online videos, and social media (Figure 9). Almost one-third (32%) spoke to people familiar with NCCC to learn more about the program, including friends who had previously served with NCCC or FEMA; 29 percent spoke with a teacher, counselor, or advisor. The least common source were AmeriCorps NCCC or FEMA Corps representatives at a career fair or volunteer activity (9%).

Figure 9: Sources Used to Learn about the NCCC Experience



We reviewed the write-in responses where participants described "Other Sources Used." Many of the responses referenced specific online resources and social media outlets. For example, 26 participants mentioned "Reddit," 42 mentioned "YouTube," and 18 mentioned "Blogs," specifically Tumblr, some of which were written by AmeriCorps alumni.

Perception of NCCC

The survey included several statements to gauge members' understanding of what the NCCC service experience would be like. Each statement describes a service experience which participants are asked to rate as either "Yes, this is true," or "No, this is not true." Table 4 shows the distribution of "Yes, this is true" to each statement about the service experience.

Profile of NCCC Members at the Start of Service

Table 4: Percent of Members Responding ‘Yes, this is true’ to the Statement

Perception about the NCCC Service Experience	Yes, this is true
I participate in physical training only when I want	12%
I can take time off anytime I want	22%
I can choose what type of work or project I will be doing	31%
I believe that there are times the rules can be bent	37%
I have complete privacy when I am not on duty	47%
I get to work in an office doing administrative duties	71%
I live in a dormitory that feels like being in the military	82%
I do my service projects between 9 am and 5 pm, and I have free time at night and on weekends	86%
I cannot take a part-time job or take night classes	87%
I am part of a team of 8-10 other members who share my values	94%
I travel all over the United States and meet a lot of people	95%
I serve on projects that are away from the dormitory and must be with my team all the time	97%
I will have a formal structure and processes to guide me on how, what and when things need to be done	98%
I always must conform to uniform standards when on duty	100%

Sample Size is 1,098

Incoming Corps members do understand that the NCCC service is a structured program with formal rules regarding work schedules and team requirements (Table 4). Prior to the start of service, more than 90 percent understood they would be part of a team, could travel in the U.S. and meet people, would serve on projects away from their dormitory and be with their team, and follow a formal structure and processes. All incoming Corps members understood the policy on wearing uniform when on duty. Fourteen participants stated that they believed the program could be challenging or stressful at times, but ultimately would be a rewarding experience. One participant said the following:

“It will be challenging. You have to be adaptable to new situations because things are always open to change.”

Seven participants mentioned aspects of team dynamics and how they perceived team members to be impactful to their time in NCCC.

“The experience by and large depends on the team and the leadership.”

“A group’s team leader is the biggest influence during your service.”

Some aspects of the service experience might not be well understood by most incoming members. For example, 22 percent of Corps members believed they could take time off at any time, 12 percent believed they had a choice of the physical training they could participate in, 31

percent believed they could choose the type of work they would do, 37 percent believed they would be able to bend the rules, and 47 percent anticipated having privacy when not on duty.

Comparability of Leadership Development and Civic Engagement

This section compares treatment and comparison group participants to assess how these two groups differ in leadership skills and qualities and civic engagement prior to the service. Five leadership skills and qualities will be measured prior to service, immediately upon completion of service, and one year after service:

- Professional skills
- Self-efficacy and life skills
- Collaborative work practices
- Community engagement
- Civic engagement

Professional Skills

The survey includes two questions consisting of ten items addressing confidence on specific work-related abilities. On a scale of ‘No confidence’ to ‘Complete confidence,’ participants in both the treatment and comparison groups rate their confidence in on how they gather and analyze information, motivate co-workers, and manage time.

A very low percentage of participants in both the treatment and comparison groups rated themselves as having ‘no confidence’ in their professional skills (0 to 3 percent). Corps members differ from comparison participants at the moderate and complete confidence rating level. Table 5A shows the percent of Corps members and comparison group participants who rated their professional skills with ‘moderate confidence,’ and Table 5B shows the percent who rated these skills with ‘complete confidence.’ A higher percentage of Corps members rated their professional skills with ‘moderate confidence’ while a higher percentage of comparison group participants rated these same professional skills with ‘complete confidence.’ For example, 35 percent of comparison participants indicated having ‘complete confidence’ in their abilities to plan meetings and manage projects compared to 18 percent of Corps members (Table 5B).

There is a similar difference in the percentage of respondents in each group regarding their confidence in community outreach and working with volunteers. Less than one-fifth (18%) of Corps members indicated ‘complete confidence’ in their abilities to conduct community outreach and manage volunteers compared to 32 percent among comparison participants. A slight majority (51%) of Corps members have ‘complete confidence’ in their abilities to adapt to new situations and complete assigned deadlines, and 55 percent of comparison participants have ‘complete confidence’ in this professional skill (Table 5B).

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Table 5: Professional Skills

Table 5A: Professional Skills – Moderate Confidence

Item	Treatment	Comparison
Plan, coordinate and manage meetings or events / Manage a project	79%	63%
Community outreach / Recruit, manage or train volunteers	79%	66%
Deliver presentations / Work with the media and public relations	74%	65%
Set priorities for multiple tasks / Follow through to complete assigned tasks	54%	45%
Adapt to new situations / Seek new information to learn new or better ways of doing things	49%	45%

Treatment sample size is 897, Comparison sample size is 706

Table 5B: Professional Skills – Complete Confidence

Item	Treatment	Comparison
Plan, coordinate and manage meetings or events / Manage a project	18%	35%
Community outreach / Recruit, manage or train volunteers	18%	32%
Deliver presentations / Work with the media and public relations	23%	33%
Set priorities for multiple tasks / Follow through to complete assigned tasks	46%	55%
Adapt to new situations / Seek new information to learn new or better ways of doing things	51%	55%

Treatment sample size is 897, Comparison sample size is 706

Self-efficacy and life skills

Self-efficacy and life skills were assessed in seven items. Each item uses a five-point Likert scale from ‘strongly disagree’ to ‘strongly agree’ to assess the ability to deal with problems and overcome unexpected situations.

The pattern of responses to the self-efficacy and life skills statements are similar for both groups. Table 6A shows the percent of participants in the treatment and comparison groups who selected the scale ‘neither disagree or agree’ to the statements, and Table 6B shows the percent of participants in both groups that ‘agree’ to each statement. More than 80 percent of respondents agreed they have the confidence to deal with unexpected events, can solve most problems if they invest the necessary effort, and can usually think of solutions if they are in trouble (Table 6B).

Table 6: Self-efficacy and Life Skills

Table 6A: Self-efficacy and Life Skills – Neither Disagree or Agree

Item	Treatment	Comparison
I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events	7%	7%
Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations	13%	10%
I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort	3%	4%
I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities	12%	10%
When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions	14%	11%
If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution	10%	10%
I can usually handle whatever comes my way	12%	12%

Treatment sample size is 892, Comparison sample size is 698

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Table 6B: Self-efficacy and Life Skills – Agree

Item	Treatment	Comparison
I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events	92%	90%
Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations	85%	87%
I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort	96%	95%
I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities	86%	86%
When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions	84%	86%
If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution	89%	88%
I can usually handle whatever comes my way	87%	87%

Treatment sample size is 892, Comparison sample size is 698

Collaborative Work Practices

NCCC promotes collaborative work practices by organizing members in teams during their service. Three broad aspects of collaboration could be impacted by participation in NCCC: 1) attitudes and behaviors in group situations; 2) communication skills, tolerance and appreciation for diversity; and 3) ability and participation in solving community problems.

Six statements asked participants to indicate how often they engage in specific attitudes and behaviors in group situations. There are no differences in the percent of how Corps members and the comparison group participants responded to these statements. A similar percentage in both groups had positive attitudes and behavior in group situations. More than 90 percent of participants in both groups ‘often’ encouraged the participation of others and support everyone’s right to be heard (Table 7B). About 20 percent of Corps members and comparison group participants ‘sometimes’ encouraged different points of view without worrying about agreement (Table 7A).

Table 7: Attitudes and Behaviors in Group Situations

Table 7A: Attitudes and Behaviors in Group Situations – Percent Responding ‘Sometimes’

Item	Treatment	Comparison
I try to understand other people’s ideas and opinions before arguing or stating my own	12%	10%
I try to present my ideas without criticizing the ideas of others	12%	12%
I encourage different points of view without worrying about agreement	21%	20%
I try to consider all points of view or possible options before forming an opinion or making a decision	12%	9%
I encourage the participation of other people and support their right to be heard	6%	8%
I help find solutions when unexpected problems arise	12%	11%

Treatment sample size is 884, Comparison sample size is 694

Table 7B: Attitudes and Behaviors in Group Situations – Percent Responding ‘Often’

Item	Treatment	Comparison
I try to understand other people’s ideas and opinions before arguing or stating my own	87%	89%
I try to present my ideas without criticizing the ideas of others	87%	87%
I encourage different points of view without worrying about agreement	75%	77%
I try to consider all points of view or possible options before forming an opinion or making a decision	88%	90%
I encourage the participation of other people and support their right to be heard	94%	92%
I help find solutions when unexpected problems arise	87%	88%

Treatment sample size is 884, Comparison sample size is 694

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Two questions were posed, consisting of 17 statements about communication skills, tolerance and appreciation for diversity. For each statement, participants rated on a five-point Likert scale from ‘Strongly disagree’ to ‘Strongly agree’ their communication style and awareness and skills in dealing with people of different backgrounds. Almost all (over 90 percent) Corps members and comparison participants agree to statements that exhibit positive communication style and tolerance and appreciation for diversity (Table 8B).

Table 8: Communication Skills, Tolerance and Appreciation for Diversity

Table 8A: Communication skills, Tolerance and Appreciation for Diversity – Neither Disagree or Agree

Item	Treatment	Comparison
I can verbally communicate my ideas to other people / I listen to other people’s opinions on an issue	6%	5%
I collaborate on projects as a team member to achieve a shared goal / I get along with other people in my work environment	4%	4%
I resolve conflicts through discussion and dialog / I treat other people with courtesy and respect	5%	5%
If people from different backgrounds took the time to understand each other, there wouldn’t be so many social problems / people are motivated and productive when they feel they are	5%	6%
I feel comfortable: belonging to groups where people are different from me / in forming friendships with people who are different from me	4%	6%
Diverse viewpoints bring creativity and energy to a work group / multicultural teams can be stimulating / Diversity brings many perspectives to problem-solving	3%	4%

Treatment sample size is 884, Comparison sample size is 694

Table 8B: Communication skills, Tolerance and Appreciation for Diversity – Agree

Item	Treatment	Comparison
I can verbally communicate my ideas to other people / I listen to other people’s opinions on an issue	93%	94%
I collaborate on projects as a team member to achieve a shared goal / I get along with other people in my work environment	95%	95%
I resolve conflicts through discussion and dialog / I treat other people with courtesy and respect	95%	94%
If people from different backgrounds took the time to understand each other, there wouldn’t be so many social problems / people are motivated and productive when they feel they are	94%	92%
I feel comfortable: belonging to groups where people are different from me / in forming friendships with people who are different from me	95%	93%
Diverse viewpoints bring creativity and energy to a work group / multicultural teams can be stimulating / Diversity brings many perspectives to problem-solving	97%	95%

Treatment sample size is 884, Comparison sample size is 694

One goal of service is to enable members to become leaders who solve community problems and take personal responsibility. The survey collects information on members’ perceptions of their ability and participation in solving community problems.

For each of eight statements, participants are asked about their ability and participation in solving community problems. The percent distribution how participants in each group ranked their ability and participation is shown in Tables 9A through 9C. Most participants in each group felt they had the ability to solve and participated in solving community problems (Table 9C). Across all statements, a higher percentage of comparison group participants felt they had the ability to solve and participated in solving community problems (Table 9C). For example, 84

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percent of Corps members felt they could express their views in front of a group of people, and 88 percent could identify individuals who could help them solve a problem. By contrast, for the same statements, 91 percent of comparison participants felt they could express their views in front of a group and identify individuals to help solve a problem (Table 9C). The largest difference between the two groups was whether they believed they could ‘Organize and run a meeting,’ with 70 percent of Corps members responding they could do it compared to 85 percent of comparison group participants (Table 9C).

Table 9: Ability and Participation in Solving Community Problems

Table 9A: Ability and Participation in Solving Community Problems – Could not do the following

Item	Treatment	Comparison
Create a plan to address the problem	3%	3%
Get other people to care about the problem	5%	4%
Organize and run a meeting	8%	3%
Express your views in front of a group of people	5%	2%
Identify individuals or groups who could help you with the problem	2%	1%
Express your views on the Internet or through social media	8%	7%
Call someone on the phone you had never met before to get their help with the problem	6%	4%
Contact an elected official about the problem	6%	5%

Treatment sample size is 879, Comparison sample size is 689

Table 9B: Ability and Participation in Solving Community Problems – Not sure about the following

Item	Treatment	Comparison
Create a plan to address the problem	18%	14%
Get other people to care about the problem	20%	18%
Organize and run a meeting	22%	12%
Express your views in front of a group of people	11%	7%
Identify individuals or groups who could help you with the problem	10%	8%
Express your views on the Internet or through social media	15%	11%
Call someone on the phone you had never met before to get their help with the problem	17%	13%
Contact an elected official about the problem	15%	13%

Treatment sample size is 879, Comparison sample size is 689

Table 9C: Ability and Participation in Solving Community Problems – Could do the following

Item	Treatment	Comparison
Create a plan to address the problem	79%	83%
Get other people to care about the problem	75%	78%
Organize and run a meeting	70%	85%
Express your views in front of a group of people	84%	91%
Identify individuals or groups who could help you with the problem	88%	91%
Express your views on the Internet or through social media	78%	82%
Call someone on the phone you had never met before to get their help with the problem	77%	83%
Contact an elected official about the problem	79%	82%

Treatment sample size is 879, Comparison sample size is 689

Community Engagement

Six statements gauge participants’ attitude toward engaging in their community. The pattern of responses among Corps members and comparison group participants is similar across the statements. As shown in Table 10C, for the response of whether participants ‘agree,’ a higher proportion of comparison group participants agreed to the statements suggesting they are engaged in their community (i.e., obligation to contribute, actively involved in issues, make a difference, have the ability to make a difference, and find time to make a positive difference). The proportion of Corps members who agreed they plan to become more active in their communities is about the same as comparison group participants (Table 10C).

Table 10: Attitudes toward Community Engagement

Table 10A: Attitude toward Community Engagement – Disagree

Item	Treatment	Comparison
I feel a personal obligation to contribute in some way to my community	1%	2%
I am actively involved in issues that positively affect my community	17%	12%
I can make a difference in my community or neighborhood	2%	2%
I am not active but plan to become active in issues that positively affect my community	12%	15%
I feel I have the ability to make a difference in my community	3%	2%
I try to find the time or a way to make a positive difference in my community	10%	7%

Treatment sample size is 879, Comparison sample size is 689

Table 10B: Attitude toward Community Engagement – Neither Disagree or Agree

Item	Treatment	Comparison
I feel a personal obligation to contribute in some way to my community	11%	8%
I am actively involved in issues that positively affect my community	33%	25%
I can make a difference in my community or neighborhood	12%	12%
I am not active but plan to become active in issues that positively affect my community	27%	25%
I feel I have the ability to make a difference in my community	11%	10%
I try to find the time or a way to make a positive difference in my community	24%	16%

Treatment sample size is 879, Comparison sample size is 689

Table 10C: Attitude toward Community Engagement – Agree

Item	Treatment	Comparison
I feel a personal obligation to contribute in some way to my community	87%	90%
I am actively involved in issues that positively affect my community	50%	63%
I can make a difference in my community or neighborhood	86%	86%
I am not active but plan to become active in issues that positively affect my community	61%	60%
I feel I have the ability to make a difference in my community	86%	88%
I try to find the time or a way to make a positive difference in my community	66%	78%

Treatment sample size is 879, Comparison sample size is 689

Civic Engagement

Almost all participants in both groups were eligible to vote. However, a higher proportion of comparison members stated they ‘definitely will’ vote in the next election.

Table 11: Voter Status and Plans to Vote

Voter Status	Corps Members	Comparison
Not eligible	2%	3%
Don't know	2%	1%
Yes	96%	95%
Plans to Vote	Corps Members	Comparison
Definitely will not	4%	3%
Probably will not	5%	4%
Probably will	18%	12%
Definitely will	73%	81%

Corps members N=879, Comparison N=687

Summary and Future Analysis

The baseline survey is administered to Corps members (treatment) and comparison group individuals during the same timeframe prior to the start of service for those who decided to serve. This report describes the participants’ demographic characteristics, motivation for service, how they heard about NCCC, the sources they use to learn and understand the service experience, and their perception of the service experience. The average age of Corps members is 21; they are college educated and living at home with their families prior to service. Corps members have a strong commitment to service. They are motivated by a desire to make a positive impact in the communities they serve, and they are as strongly motivated by the desire to gain professional skills that will help them in the future.

We compare the leadership qualities and skills of Corps members to the participants in the comparison group who were eligible but decided not to serve. Although, in general, the treatment and comparison groups were similar, there were some differences in leadership qualities and skills at the start of service. Both the Corps members and the comparison group individuals value diversity and practice collaborative work practices. The biggest differences between the two groups can be seen in their professional skills and their abilities and participation in solving community problems.

Future analysis will use the first follow-up survey, which is administered at the time Corps members complete their service, to examine changes in NCCC members (compared with their counterparts in the comparison group) one year after baseline, when members will have completed their service experience. In addition to reporting on change in leadership, the first follow-up report will include an analysis of selected programmatic features and their relationship to changes in leadership. The final analysis will incorporate data from the second follow-up survey, which is administered one year after service would have ended for those who serve. The follow-up analysis will control for baseline variables to adjust for any bias associated with initial differences between the treatment and comparison group participants prior to assessing the extent

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to which the NCCC service experience, programmatic experience, and characteristics caused any observed change in leadership development outcomes.

Appendices

Appendix A: Response Rate

The completion rate is 77 percent for the treatment group and 61 percent for the comparison. During the study enrollment period, there were two Southern winter FEMA classes. The completion rate for FEMA Corps is 78 percent for the treatment group and 57 percent for the comparison group.

Table 1. Response Rate

	Overall	Completed & Partial w/ Sufficient Information	Partial with Incomplete Information	Refusal	Completion Rate
Overall					
Treatment Group	1617	1187	63	49	77%
Comparison Group	1622	919	68	68	61%
FEMA Corps					
Treatment Group	297	221	11	7	78%
Comparison Group	371	195	16	14	57%

Appendix B: Survey Non-Response Bias Analysis

The purpose of the non-response analysis is to identify the potential for bias and, if any bias is present, describe its direction and magnitude. A non-response bias analysis determines if the non-response is random or if there are systematic differences in characteristics between respondents and non-respondents. The non-response bias analysis examines whether, at baseline, respondents differed systematically from the target population. We used the relative non-response bias formula as defined by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The relative non-response bias is: –

$$B(\bar{y}_r) = \bar{y}_r - \bar{y}_t = \left(\frac{n_{nr}}{n} \right) (\bar{y}_r - \bar{y}_{nr})$$

Where:

- \bar{y}_t = the mean based on all sample cases;
- \bar{y}_r = the mean based only on respondent cases;
- \bar{y}_{nr} = the mean based only on the nonrespondent cases;
- n = the number of cases in the sample; and
- n_{nr} = the number of nonrespondent cases.

We used available administrative data provided by AmeriCorps NCCC on all eligible individuals, as the administrative data contained observed characteristics on all participants whether they responded to the survey or not. Respondents and non-respondents can have similar demographic distributions, and significant bias may still exist. On the other hand, differences between respondents and non-respondents on a few demographic characteristics might suggest that non-respondents are not “missing at random,” and there might be similar differences on key survey variables. But there may be little or no bias after all if the key variables aren’t related to those demographics. In each instance, we compare differences between respondents and non-respondents to assess the presence or absence of response bias and calculate the size and direction of the bias by applying the OMB formula.

The NCCC administrative data contained the following characteristics: gender, age, college graduate, whether the participant identified as a Non-Hispanic White, any prior employment at the time of their application to serve with NCCC, number of previous jobs reported on their AmeriCorps NCCC application, if the participant is an immediate family member of active duty, National Guard or Veteran, and their NCCC application assessment score. Using these defined variables, we conducted relative non-response bias using the formula for non-response bias defined by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). JBS calculated non-response for all respondents combined (Table B1), then separately for treatment members (Table B3) and comparison group members (Table B5). The results show that individuals in the treatment group and female were more likely to participate in the study. However, bias was low for all variables, which indicates that there were only small differences between respondents and non-respondents.

Non-Response Bias in the Full Sample. We assessed the differences in response patterns for all respondents. Table B1 shows the relative bias for each variable. The relative bias is less than 3 percent between respondents and non-respondents for all variables except the comparison group

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variable, which has a relative bias of 13 percent. Individuals in the comparison group were less likely to participate in the study.

Table B1. Non-Response Bias—All Respondents

Variable	Mean - all	Mean - respondents	Mean non-respondents	Total respondents	Total non-respondents	Difference in means	Relative Bias
Type - Comparison	0.50	0.44	0.63	2237	1002	-0.19	-0.13
Female	0.59	0.60	0.56	2237	1002	0.03	0.02
Age	21.53	21.49	21.63	2196	972	-0.14	0.00
College graduate	0.43	0.42	0.44	2233	1001	-0.02	-0.02
Non-Hispanic White	0.72	0.71	0.72	2046	916	-0.01	-0.01
Prior employment	0.91	0.91	0.92	2237	1002	-0.01	0.00
Number of jobs	2.79	2.79	2.80	2037	920	-0.02	0.00
Prior volunteer experience	0.82	0.82	0.81	2237	1002	0.01	0.00
Veteran status	0.18	0.18	0.19	2210	990	-0.02	-0.03
NCCC application assessment score	66.40	66.67	65.79	2083	922	0.88	0.00
Hispanic / Latino	0.13	0.13	0.13	2137	960	0.00	0.01

To examine the effects of each variable on non-response when all other variables tested were held constant, we ran a logistic regression model (Table B2). Individuals in the comparison group and males were significantly less likely to participate. No other variables exhibited statistically significant differences.

Table B2. Likelihood of Non-Response Based on Participant Characteristics—All Respondents

Variable	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Type - Treatment	-0.4209	0.0412	104.2764	1	<.0001	0.431
Female	-0.1226	0.0401	9.3326	1	0.0023	0.782
Age	-0.1412	0.1832	0.5938	1	0.4409	0.868
College graduate	0.0193	0.0458	0.1769	1	0.6741	1.039
Non-Hispanic White	0.0703	0.046	2.3303	1	0.1269	1.151
Prior employment	0.0212	0.0734	0.0834	1	0.7727	1.043

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Prior volunteer experience	-0.0349	0.0521	0.4499	1	0.5024	0.933
Veteran status	0.0543	0.0501	1.1774	1	0.2779	1.115
NCCC application assessment score	-0.0269	0.0244	1.2147	1	0.2704	0.973

Non-Response Bias in the Treatment-Only Sample. We performed non-response bias analysis on the treatment group only (Table B3). Relative bias was low in the treatment group, in part because of the higher response rate in this group. The relative bias for the variables age, non-Hispanic White, prior employment status, prior volunteer experience, and NCCC assessment score were all zero, indicating no level of bias. In this treatment-only analysis, the variable that had the highest relative bias was college graduate status at four percent.

Table B3. Non-Response Bias—Treatment Members

Variable	Mean - all	Mean - respondents	Mean - non-respondents	Total respondents	Total non-respondents	Difference in means	Relative Bias
Female	0.52	0.53	0.51	1250	367	0.02	0.01
Age	21.08	21.03	21.24	1250	367	-0.21	0.00
College graduate	0.35	0.34	0.40	1250	367	-0.06	-0.04
Non-Hispanic White	0.75	0.75	0.76	1149	340	0.00	0.00
Prior employment	0.89	0.89	0.90	1250	367	-0.01	0.00
Number of jobs	2.68	2.63	2.82	1112	330	-0.19	-0.02
Prior volunteer experience	0.81	0.81	0.82	1250	367	-0.01	0.00
Veteran status	0.18	0.18	0.19	1239	364	-0.01	-0.02
NCCC application assessment score	66.41	66.57	65.84	1158	322	0.73	0.00
Hispanic / Latino	0.13	0.13	0.13	1195	352	0.00	-0.01

We ran a logistic regression model to predict non-response within the treatment group. When examining the treatment group only, none of the variables had statistically significant odds of predicting non-response (Table B4). Both the logistic regression and the relative bias analysis indicate that there is no bias due to non-response in the treatment group.

Table B4. Likelihood of Non-Response Based on Participant Characteristics—Treatment

Variable	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
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Female	-0.067	0.0611	1.2031	1	0.2727	0.875
Age	-0.0949	0.3109	0.0933	1	0.7601	0.909
College graduate	0.123	0.0765	2.5822	1	0.1081	1.279
Non-Hispanic White	-0.0103	0.0738	0.0196	1	0.8887	0.98
Prior employment	0.0246	0.1039	0.0559	1	0.8131	1.05
Prior volunteer experience	0.0167	0.0806	0.0427	1	0.8362	1.034
Veteran status	0.0527	0.0768	0.4708	1	0.4926	1.111
NCCC application assessment score	-0.033	0.0371	0.792	1	0.3735	0.968

Non-Response Bias in the Comparison-Only Sample. We performed non-response bias analysis on the comparison group only. The relative bias is low, as high as five percent for gender and four percent for college graduate status and veteran status (see Table B5). Most variables had relative bias of zero to three percent, once again indicating that non-response rates would not bias the results.

Table B5. Non-Response Bias—Comparison Members

Variable	Mean - all	Mean - respondents	Mean - non-respondents	Total respondents	Total non-respondents	Difference in means	Relative Bias
Female	0.65	0.69	0.60	987	635	0.09	0.05
Age	22.01	22.10	21.87	946	605	0.22	0.00
College graduate	0.50	0.52	0.47	983	634	0.05	0.04
Non-Hispanic White	0.68	0.66	0.70	897	576	-0.05	-0.03
Prior employment	0.93	0.94	0.93	987	635	0.01	0.00
Number of jobs	2.90	2.97	2.79	925	590	0.18	0.02
Prior volunteer experience	0.83	0.84	0.81	987	635	0.03	0.01
Veteran status	0.18	0.18	0.19	971	626	-0.02	-0.04
NCCC application assessment score	66.38	66.79	65.76	925	600	1.04	0.01
Hispanic / Latino	0.13	0.14	0.13	942	608	0.01	0.04

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We also ran a logistic regression model to determine which variables were significant predictors of non-response within the comparison-only sample. Within the comparison-only group, females had significantly lower odds of being a non-respondent, while non-Hispanic White individuals had significantly higher odds of non-response. (Table B7).

Table B7. Likelihood of Non-Response Based on Participant Characteristics—Comparison

Variable	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Female	-0.1805	0.0538	11.269	1	0.0008	0.697
Age	-0.1289	0.2369	0.296	1	0.5864	0.879
College graduate	-0.0725	0.0584	1.54	1	0.2146	0.865
Non-Hispanic White	0.117	0.059	3.9356	1	0.0473	1.264
Prior employment	0.012	0.1064	0.0127	1	0.9104	1.024
Prior volunteer experience	-0.069	0.0694	0.9865	1	0.3206	0.871
Veteran status	0.064	0.0666	0.9224	1	0.3369	1.136
NCCC application assessment score	-0.0177	0.0327	0.2937	1	0.5879	0.982

Appendix C: Item Non-response Bias Analysis

Item non-response examines the non-response rate for each required questionnaire item. It is calculated as the percent of respondents for whom no valid response was recorded (all missing answers were coded as "."). Questions with skip patterns were not included in this analysis.

Table C1 shows the item non-response rate for questions that were not eligible to be skipped by the participant. Item BQ2 was asked only to the treatment group and therefore the sample size used to calculate the item-nonresponse was 1,250. Items BQ4a through BQ4k were asked only of the comparison group with a sample size of 987. All other items were asked of both the treatment and comparison groups with a total sample size of 2,237 participants. For each item, the non-response rate was calculated with the number of participants who did not answer the item as the numerator and the number of participants eligible to respond to that item as the denominator.

Item BQ5 ("How did you hear about AmeriCorps NCCC? ") has the highest non-response rate at 15.29 percent. The second highest nonresponse rate was 12.66 percent for items BQ4a-BQ4k ("For each of the reasons please indicate whether it contributed to your decision not to serve with NCCC?"). The item with the lowest non-response rate was BQ6 ("Have you previously volunteered with AmeriCorps?") at 0.67 percent.

All items had non-response rates far below 30 percent, indicating that further analysis of non-response bias is not necessary per OMB guidelines.

As noted above, questions BQ4a through BQ4k were asked only of the comparison group. The missing responses may not be missing at random. Specifically, for participants that initially entered the study in the treatment group but were subsequently moved to the comparison group because the participants did not report for service, we used their completed survey, but they would not have been asked BQ4a through BQ4k if, prior to being moved to the comparison group, the participants had completed the treatment survey. The number of treatment participants that moved to the comparison is still sufficiently low that the proportion of missing values at the item is far below the 30 percent threshold.

Table C1. Item Non-response for Items Without Skip Patterns

Item	Non-response Percent	Item	Non-response Percent	Item	Non-response Percent	Item	Non-response Percent
BQ2	1.44%	BQ9x	1.25%	BQ14b	4.34%	BQ19h	5.68%
BQ4a	12.66%	BQ10a	1.92%	BQ14c	4.34%	BQ20	5.81%
BQ4b	12.66%	BQ10b	1.92%	BQ14d	4.34%	Bq21	5.81%
BQ4c	12.66%	BQ10c	1.92%	BQ14e	4.34%	BQ24a	6.03%
BQ4d	12.66%	BQ10d	1.92%	BQ14f	4.34%	BQ24b	6.03%
BQ4e	12.66%	BQ10e	1.92%	BQ14g	4.34%	BQ24c	6.03%
BQ4f	12.66%	BQ10f	1.92%	BQ15a	5.01%	BQ24d	6.03%
BQ4g	12.66%	BQ10g	1.92%	BQ15b	5.01%	BQ24e	6.03%
BQ4h	12.66%	BQ10h	1.92%	BQ15c	5.01%	BQ24f	6.03%
BQ4i	12.66%	BQ10i	1.92%	BQ15d	5.01%	BQ24g	6.03%

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BQ4j	12.66%	BQ10j	1.92%	BQ15e	5.05%	BQ24h	6.03%
BQ4k	12.66%	BQ10k	1.92%	BQ15f	5.01%	BQ24i	6.03%
BQ5	15.29%	BQ11a	3.00%	BQ16a	5.01%	BQ24j	6.03%
BQ6	0.67%	BQ11b	3.00%	BQ16b	5.01%	BQ24k	6.03%
BQ8	0.89%	BQ11c	3.00%	BQ16c	5.01%	BQ24l	6.03%
BQ9a	1.25%	BQ11d	3.00%	BQ16d	5.01%	BQ24m	6.03%
BQ9b	1.25%	BQ11e	3.00%	BQ16e	5.01%	BQ24n	6.03%
BQ9c	1.25%	BQ11f	3.00%	BQ16f	5.01%	BQ24o	6.03%
BQ9d	1.25%	BQ11g	3.00%	BQ17a	5.01%	BQ25	6.12%
BQ9e	1.25%	BQ11h	3.00%	BQ17b	5.01%	BQ26	8.00%
BQ9f	1.25%	BQ11i	3.00%	BQ17c	5.01%	BQ27a	6.17%
BQ9g	1.25%	BQ11j	3.00%	BQ17d	5.01%	BQ27b	6.17%
BQ9h	1.25%	BQ11k	3.00%	BQ17e	5.01%	BQ27c	6.17%
BQ9i	1.25%	BQ11l	3.00%	BQ17f	5.01%	BQ27d	6.17%
BQ9j	1.25%	BQ11m	3.00%	BQ17g	5.01%	BQ27e	6.17%
BQ9k	1.25%	BQ11n	3.00%	BQ18a	5.63%	BQ27f	6.17%
BQ9l	1.25%	BQ11o	3.00%	BQ18b	5.63%	BQ27g	6.17%
BQ9m	1.30%	BQ12a	3.53%	BQ18c	5.63%	BQ27h	6.17%
BQ9n	1.25%	BQ12b	3.53%	BQ18d	5.63%	BQ28	6.93%
BQ9o	1.25%	BQ12c	3.53%	BQ18e	5.63%	BQ29	6.17%
BQ9p	1.25%	BQ12d	3.53%	BQ18f	5.63%	BQ38	6.39%
BQ9q	1.25%	BQ12e	3.53%	BQ19a	5.63%	BQ39	6.39%
BQ9r	1.25%	BQ12f	3.53%	BQ19b	5.68%		
BQ9s	1.25%	BQ13a	3.53%	BQ19c	5.68%		
BQ9t	1.25%	BQ13b	3.53%	BQ19d	5.68%		
BQ9u	1.25%	BQ13c	3.53%	BQ19e	5.68%		
BQ9v	1.25%	BQ13d	3.53%	BQ19f	5.68%		
BQ9w	1.25%	BQ14a	4.34%	BQ19g	5.68%		

Appendix D: Composite Measures

Factor analysis is a variable reduction procedure that can be used when there is redundancy among variables in the collected data. We used factor analysis to determine if the multiple items might be measuring a single construct and thus could be reasonably condensed with one encompassing label. Each section of this Appendix details the original question and item list and outlines the condensed items based on the results from the factor analysis.

Question ID BQ9 – Motivations for Serving

Table D1 shows the original item list for motivation for serving, question BQ9, which contains 24 items. We conducted the factor analysis with items BQ9a through BQ9x. The results show that the 24 items can be grouped into seven factors as indicated in Table D2. The Question ID column displays the grouping based on the item’s ID number; the Condensed Item column displays the new item label that was chosen.

Table D1. Original Item List – Motivations for Service

Question ID	Item
BQ9a	I want to try something new to find what direction I want to take in my career
BQ9b	I want to gain leadership skills
BQ9c	I want to gain professional skills/carpentry or construction skills/build my résumé
BQ9d	I want to meet new people/make friends
BQ9e	I want to have stable housing and other benefits
BQ9f	I want to travel the country/I want to leave the town that I am living in right now
BQ9g	There are not enough jobs where I live
BQ9h	I want to earn money for future college tuition
BQ9i	I want to earn money to pay off student loans
BQ9j	I want to take a break before college
BQ9k	I want to take a break while enrolled in college
BQ9l	I want to take a break between college or graduate school
BQ9m	I want the opportunity to network with professionals in my field of interest
BQ9n	I want to gain experience to serve in other AmeriCorps programs (ASN, VISTA)
BQ9o	I want to gain experience to join the military
BQ9p	I want to gain experience to join the Peace Corps
BQ9q	I want to make a difference/serve my country
BQ9r	I want to reduce social or economic inequality
BQ9s	NCCC will give me a sense of purpose
BQ9t	I have a friend or family member who was applying or participating
BQ9u	An AmeriCorps organization or one like it helped you (or a loved one) in the past
BQ9v	I want to earn money/I needed to get a job

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BQ9w	NCCC was my only employment option
BQ9x	My parents/guardians wanted me to join NCCC

Table D2. Condensed Item List – Motivations for Service

Question ID	Condensed Item
BQ9t, BQ9u, BQ9x	Family wanted them to join NCCC/AmeriCorps or similar program impacted them in the past
BQ9e, BQ9g, BQ9v, BQ9w	Financial and housing needs/Lack of other employment options
BQ9n, BQ9o, BQ9p	Gain experience for other AmeriCorps programs, Peace Corps or the military
BQ9h, BQ9i	To pay off student loans/Pay for college tuition
BQ9d, BQ9f, BQ9j, BQ9k, BQ9l	Travel/Take a break from attending school
BQ9a, BQ9b, BQ9c, BQ9m	Gain new skills for career development
BQ9q, BQ9r, BQ9s	Desire to make a positive impact/Improve social and economic inequality

Question ID BQ12, BQ13 – Professional Skills

Questions BQ12 and BQ13 measured professional skills. Factor analysis was done using items BQ12a-BQ13d. Based on the results from the factor analysis, the original 10 items from both questions can be grouped into five factors as shown in Table D4. Items pertaining to communicating with the community were condensed to one label, and items pertaining to completing multiple tasks were condensed to one label.

Table D3. Original Item List – Professional Skills

Question ID	Item
BQ12a	Plan, coordinate and manage meetings or events
BQ12b	Deliver presentations
BQ12c	Work with the media and public relations
BQ12d	Manage a project
BQ12e	Community outreach
BQ12f	Recruit, manage, or train volunteers
BQ13a	Set priorities for multiple tasks
BQ13b	Adapt to new situations
BQ13c	Seek new information to learn new or better ways of doing things
BQ13d	Follow through to complete assigned tasks

Table D4. Condensed Item List – Professional Skills

Question ID	Condensed Item
BQ12a, BQ12d	Plan, coordinate and manage meetings or events/Manage a project
BQ12e, BQ12f	Community outreach/Recruit, manage, or train volunteers

BQ12b, BQ12c	Deliver presentations/Work with the media and public relations
BQ13a, BQ13d	Set priorities for multiple tasks/Follow through to complete assigned tasks
BQ13b, BQ13c	Adapt to new situations/Seek new information to learn new or better ways of doing things

Question ID BQ15, BQ17– Collaborative Work Practices

Questions BQ15 and BQ17 all measured the participants’ collaborative work practices and feelings on diversity. BQ15 and BQ17 were condensed together as they both measure answers on a scale from ‘Strongly Disagree’ to ‘Strongly Agree’.

Table D5 shows the original item list for BQ15 and BQ17, a total of 13 items. The results show the 13 items can be grouped into six factors as indicated in Table D6.

Table D5. Original Item List – Collaborative Work Practices

Question ID	Item
BQ15a	I can verbally communicate my ideas to other people
BQ15b	I listen to other people’s opinions or positions on an issue
BQ15c	I collaborate on projects as a team member to achieve a shared goal
BQ15d	I get along with other people in my work environment
BQ15e	I resolve conflicts through discussion and dialog
BQ15f	I treat other people with courtesy and respect
BQ17a	If people from different backgrounds took the time to understand each other, there wouldn’t be so many social problems
BQ17b	I feel comfortable belonging to groups where people are different from me
BQ17c	Diverse viewpoints bring creativity and energy to a work group
BQ17d	Multicultural teams can be stimulating and fun
BQ17e	People are more motivated and productive when they feel they are accepted for who they are
BQ17f	Diversity brings many perspectives to problem-solving
BQ17g	I feel comfortable in forming friendships with people who are different from me

Table D6. Condensed Item List – Collaborative Work Practices

Question ID	Condensed Item
BQ15a, BQ15b	I can verbally communicate my ideas to other people/I listen to other people’s opinions on an issue
BQ15c, BQ15d	I collaborate on projects as a team member to achieve a shared goal/I get along with other people in my work environment
BQ15e-BQ15f	I resolve conflicts through discussion, and dialog/I treat other people with courtesy and respect

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BQ17a, BQ17e	If people from different backgrounds too the time to understand each other, there wouldn't be so many social problems/people are motivated and productive when they feel they are accepted for who they are
BQ17b, BQ17g	I feel comfortable: belonging to groups where people are different from me/in forming friendships with people who are different from me
BQ17c, BQ17d, BQ17f	Diverse viewpoints bring creativity and energy to a work group/multicultural teams can be stimulating/diversity brings many perspectives to problem-solving