

The Impact of National Service on Employment Outcomes

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Acknowledgements

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Background

- Previous research shows better odds of becoming employed if people volunteer (Spera, Ghertner, Nerino, & DiTomasso, 2015)
- Young people who participate in service-related programs have improved economic, academic, and psychosocial outcomes compared to peers (Dávila & Mora, 2007; Flanagan & Levine, 2010)
- Communities with higher levels of civic engagement recover from economic hardships quicker (Kawashima-Ginsberg, Lim, & Levine, 2012)
- Hiring managers see volunteering as relevant experience to consider when making employment decisions (Day & Devlin, 1998; Deloitte, 2016)

The Challenge

Much of the research in this area is based on surveys of managers who may **say** they want to hire volunteers even though volunteering may not actually matter in reality.

Study Aim

This study employs a randomized field experiment to answer the question:

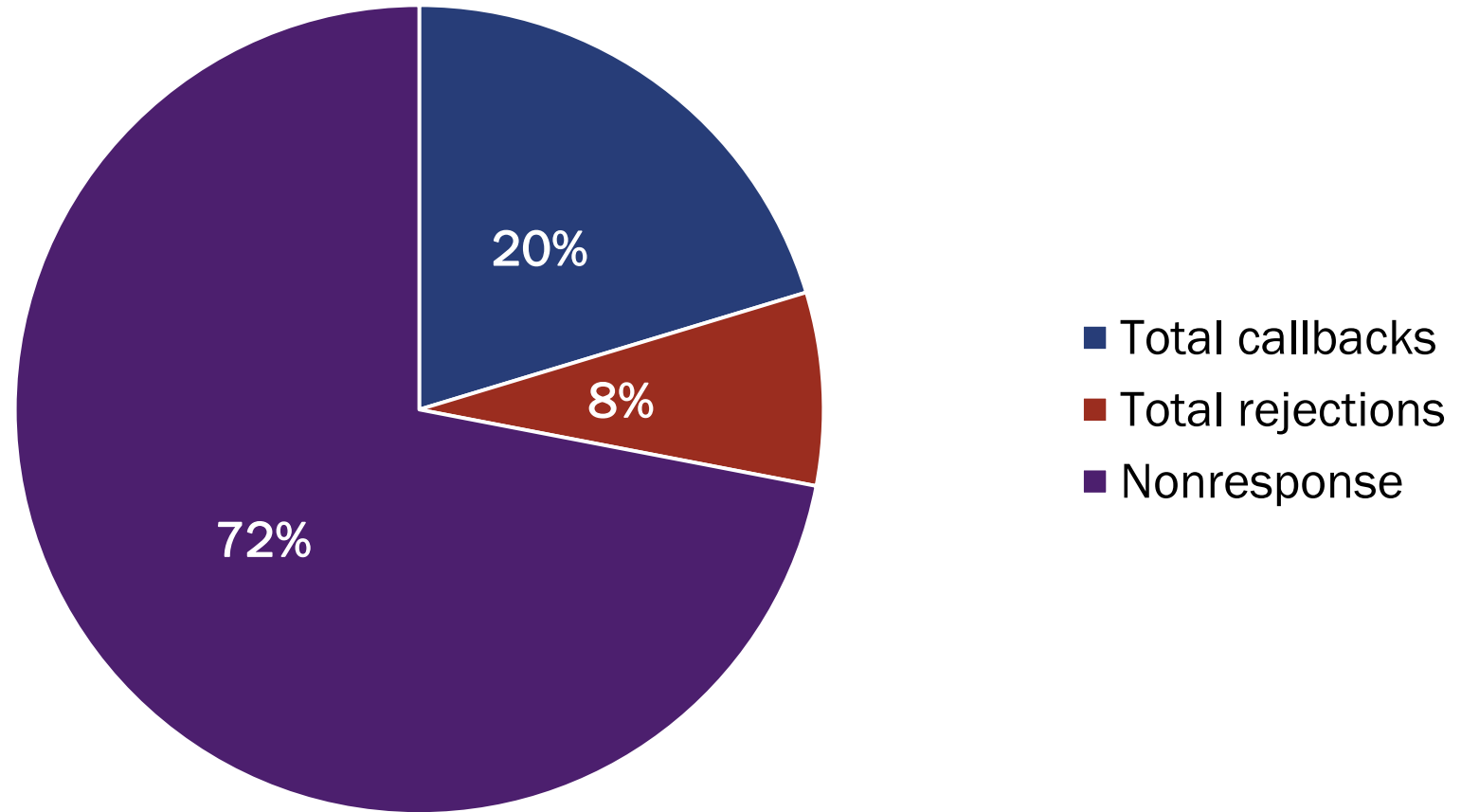
What is the effect of listing AmeriCorps on one's resume on receiving a callback for a job?

The outcome is the likelihood of being selected for an interview by a real hiring manager.

Methodology

- Randomly assigned resumes and cover letters based on national service and other factors (e.g., education, quality, race, gender)
- Applied for 2,010 jobs in Boston and Chicago during two waves of data collection (summer 2016 and 2017)

Figure 1. Total Callbacks



*Of the 20%: 86% interview requested, 10% low interest, 4% high interest; 20

Figure 2. Callbacks by Service and Other Characteristics

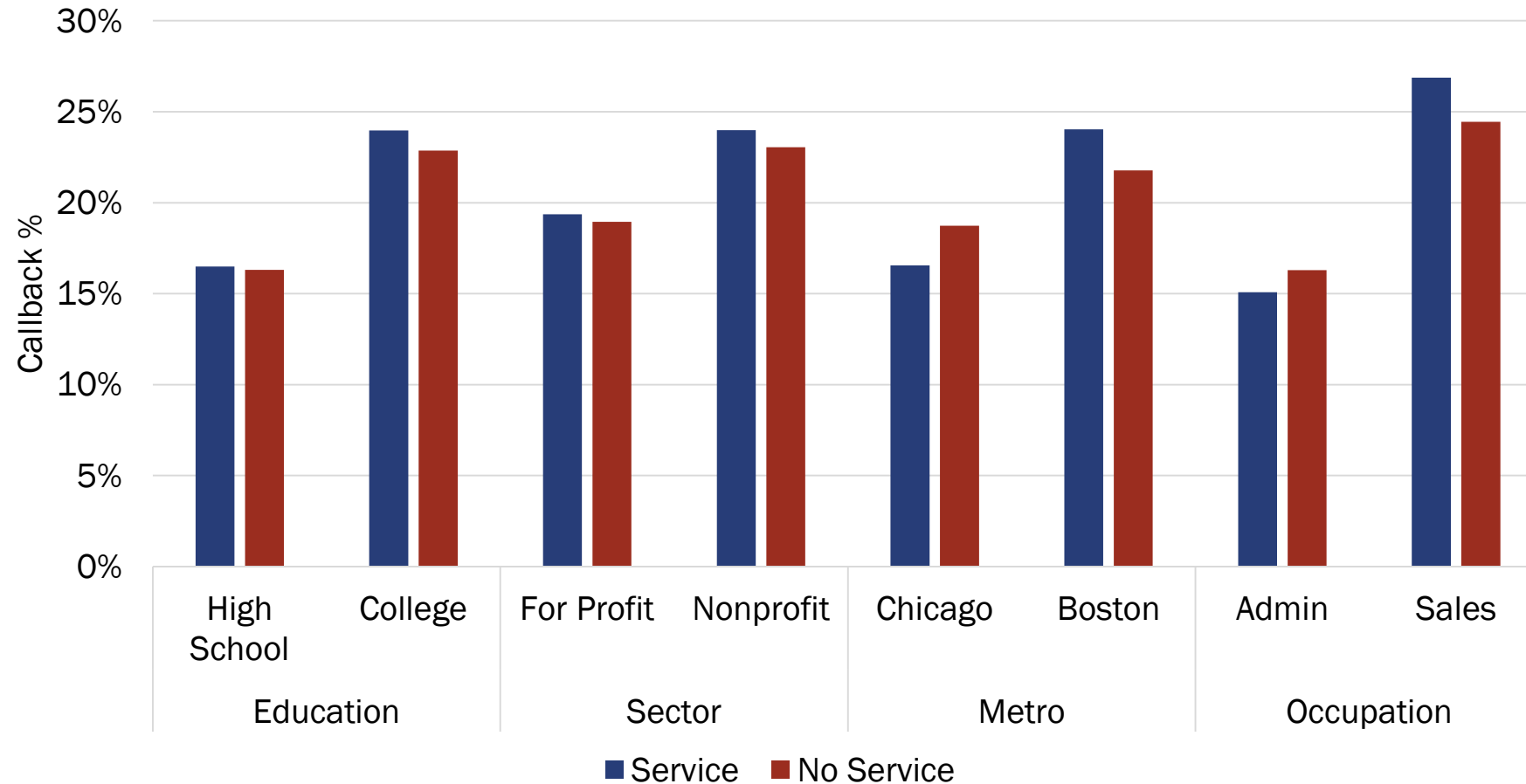
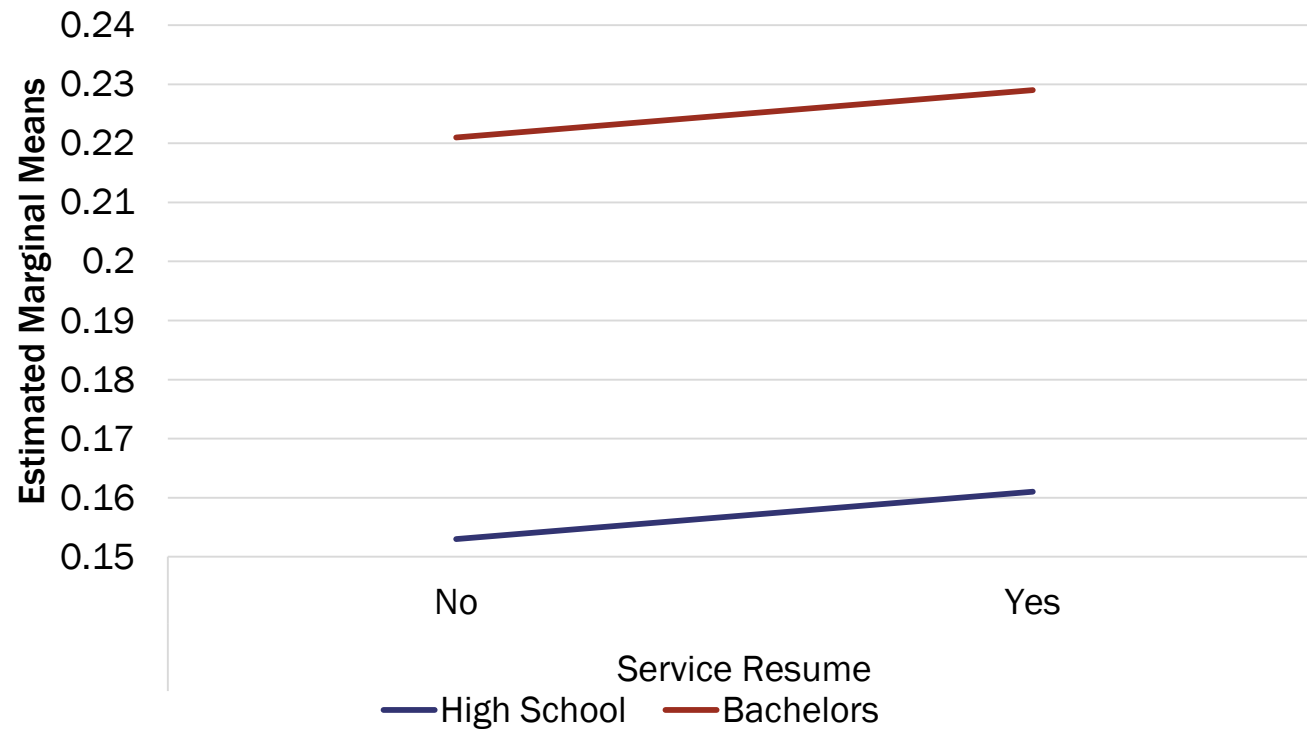


Figure 3. Callbacks by Education



Significant at $p \leq .001$ with covariates Race, Gender, City Name, Sector and Occupation.

Trends by Race, Ethnicity, and Gender

- Gender
 - Of callbacks received, higher for females than males
- Race/Ethnicity
 - Of callbacks received, highest for Latino, followed by Asian, White, and Black
- Gender and Race/Ethnicity
 - Callbacks highest for Asian males and Latino females
 - Callbacks lowest for Black and Asian females and white males

Supplemental Study Methodology

- Hiring Manager Survey
 - Employers of National Service (ENS) list + HR list purchased from private firm
 - N=72 hiring managers across 26 states, 35=ENS and 37=non-ENS, 63% nonprofit sector and 37% for-profit sector
- In-depth interviews with hiring managers
 - N=13 (8=ENS and 5=non-ENS)
 - Interviews recorded and transcribed
 - Conducted thematic analysis using NVivo
- Employers of National Service (ENS) field experiment
 - 2 fictitious resumes and cover letters (one with service and one without service) sent to each ENS organization with open jobs
 - Total resumes sent (N=147); Total ENS organizations (N=78)

Figure 4. Hiring Manager Survey

In your opinion, why do you think people choose to pursue a year of AmeriCorps service?
(Percentage responses ranked 1 or 2)

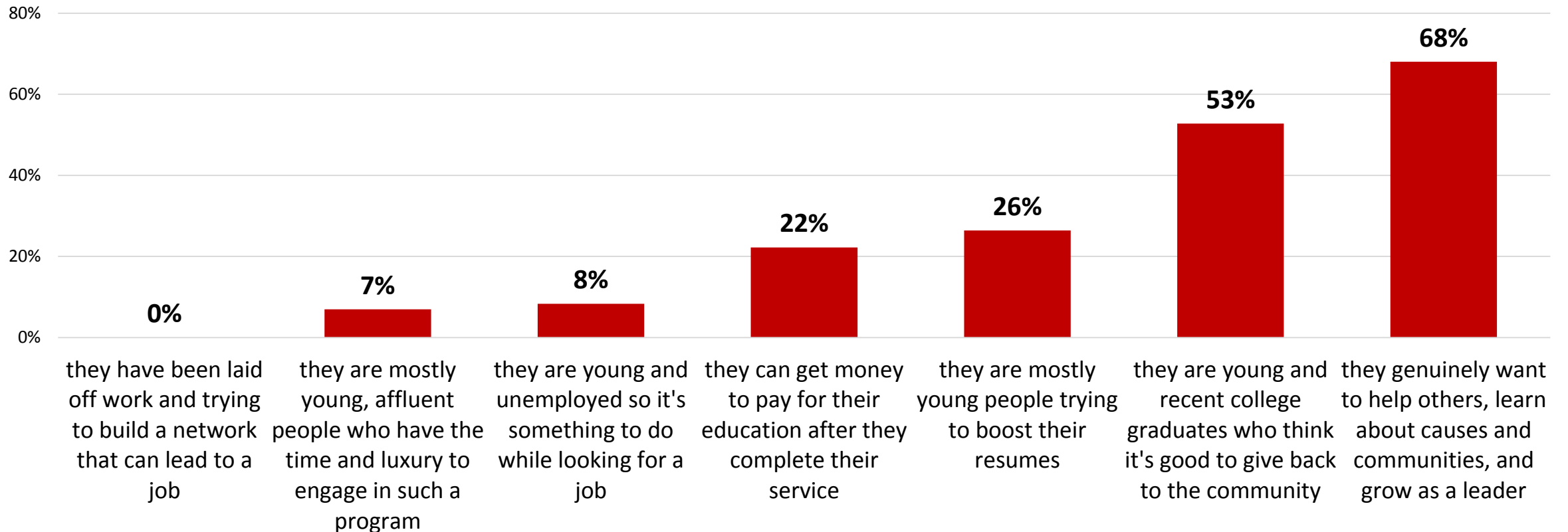
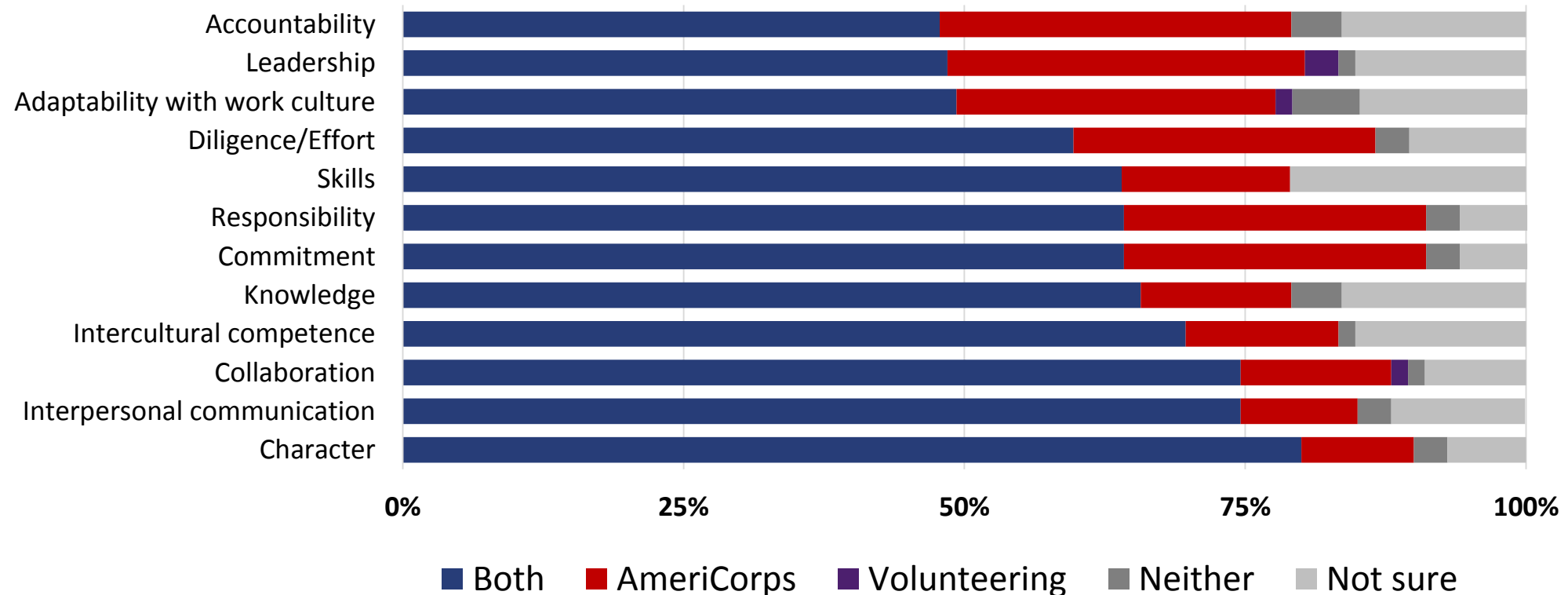


Figure 5. Hiring Manager Survey

In your opinion, which of the following options, do you believe best develops the competencies listed below for candidates like Jessica?



In-depth Interviews

- Employers had a preference toward “somebody they don’t have to train”
- If hiring managers were familiar with AmeriCorps, it stood out to them:
 - “...VISTA- brings training; routine; cohort building; more experience and accountability than the regular position; VISTA demands more autonomy and responsibility- richer experience for the same position.”
- Most nonprofit employers sought a cover letter and resume that showed more “personality” as well an application that highlighted certain skills skills (e.g., collaboration, communication, adaptability, leadership)
- A college degree was very important to employers

Figure 6. Employers of National Service Total Callbacks

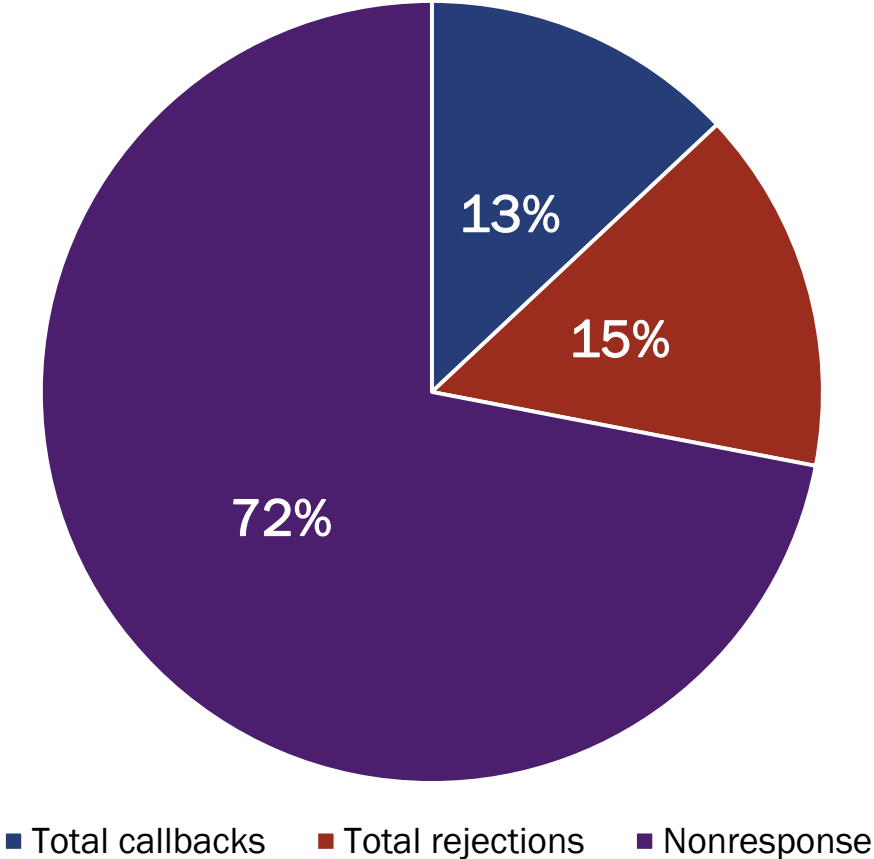
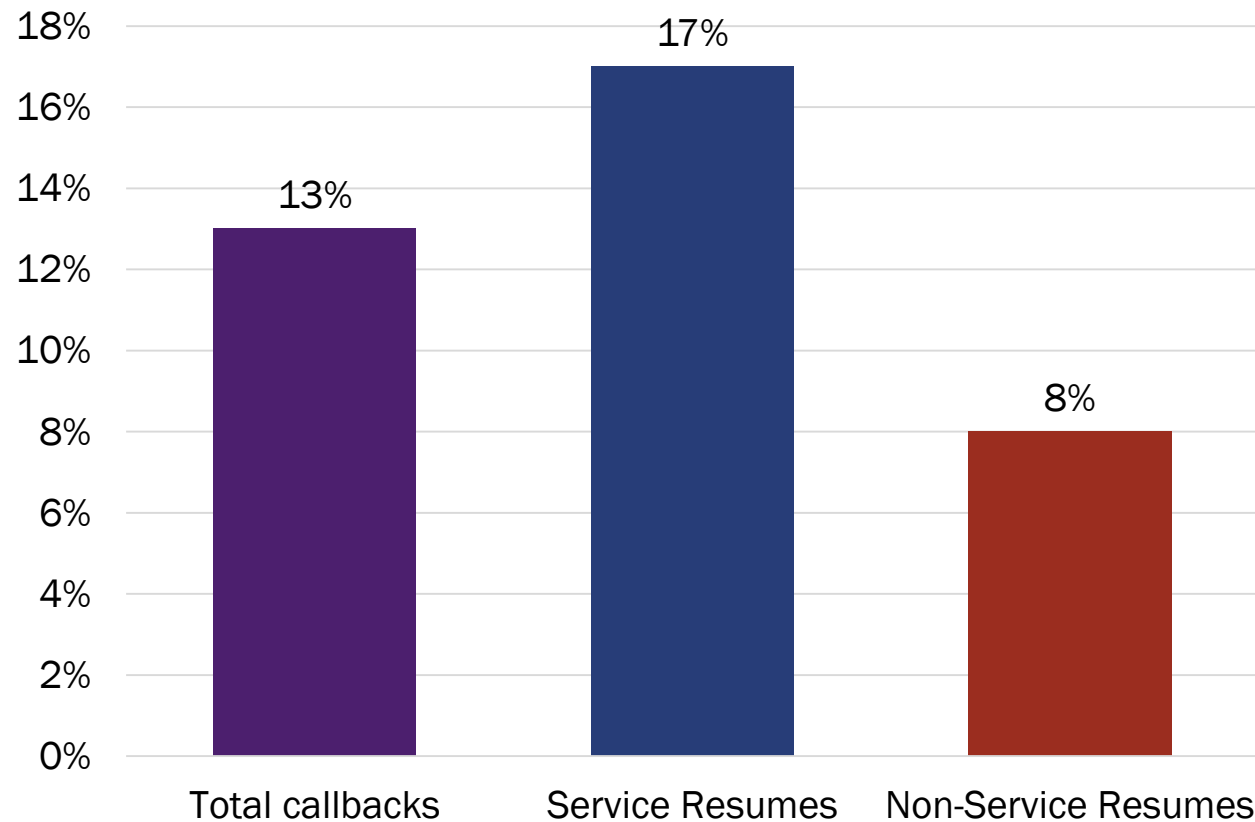


Figure 7. Employers of National Service Callbacks by Service



Implications for Policy and Research

- College degree is used as a “signal” for implicit qualities and earned skills
 - Heavily used as a heuristic for filtering out potential candidates
- Very few job opportunities are visible in an online search for non-college youth, including national service alumni
- Building familiarity with national service through Employers of National Service opens employment pathways
- Further exploration needed around why and for whom national service experience boosts employment prospects

Thank you!

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CIRCLE website: www.civicyouth.org

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Step 1: Identified metro areas and industries

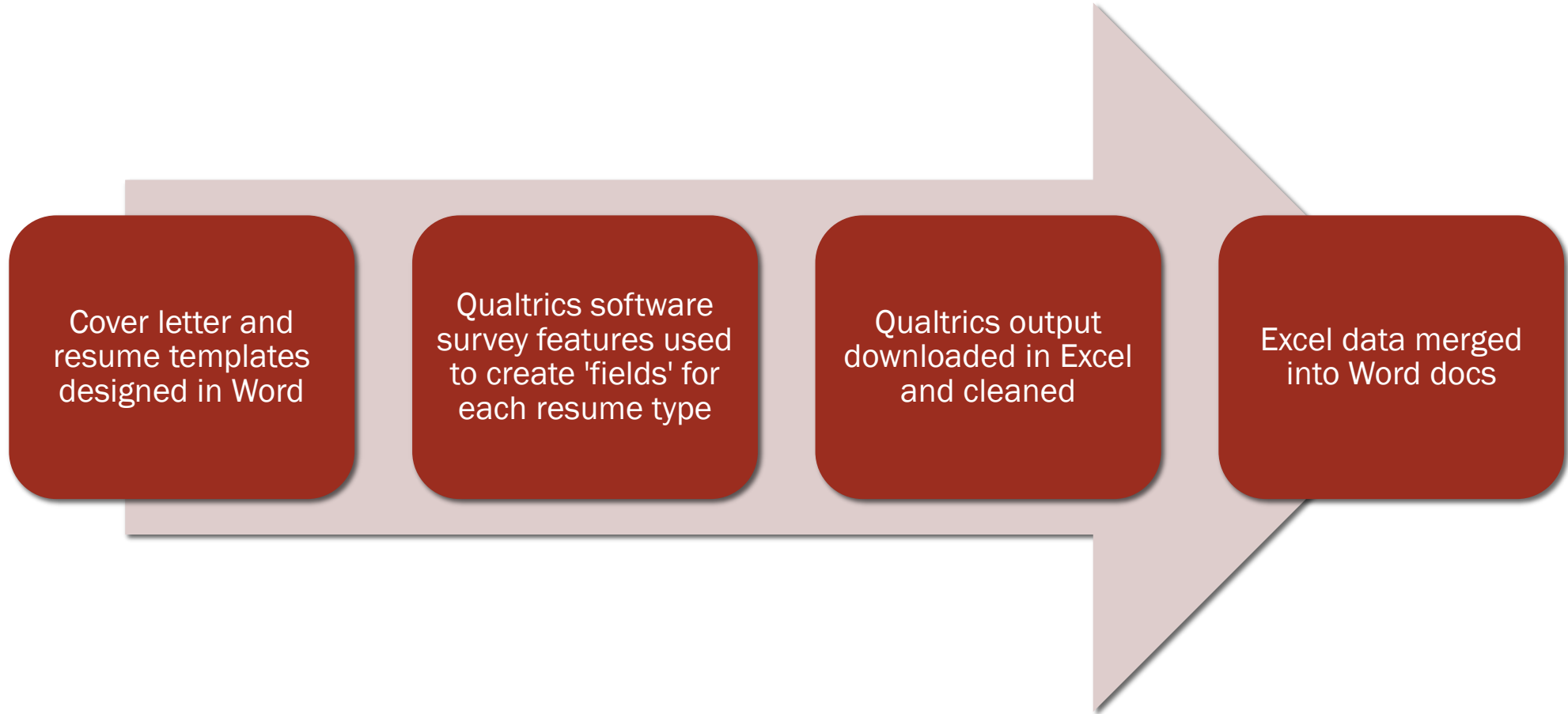
Resume Types				
Metro Area	Boston		Chicago	
Industry	Administrative	Sales	Administrative	Sales

Step 2: Defined resume and cover letter criteria

Resume Templates								
National Service	Service				No Service			
Resume Quality	High Quality		Low Quality		High Quality		Low Quality	
Education Level	High Education	Low Education	High Education	Low Education	High Education	Low Education	High Education	Low Education

**Also varied by race, gender, and zip code.*

Step 3: Created resumes and cover letters



Step 4: Created job search and application process

- Developed protocols with job search steps
 - Indeed.com, CareerBuilder.com, SimplyHired.com, LinkedIn.com, Idealist.org
- Designed Access database to enter data and track callbacks
- Applied for 1,120 jobs between May-September 2016, and 890 jobs between May-September 2017

The screenshot displays a web application interface for job search and application management. The interface is divided into two main sections: 'APPLICATION' and 'ENTRY FORMS'. The 'APPLICATION' section at the top contains fields for Application ID, Application Date, Entered by, Occupation, Experience Req, Resume Code, Resume File, Metro, Season, Job ID, and Company ID. There are also checkboxes for High Quality, Service Resume, and Interview Requested. The 'ENTRY FORMS' section below it has a navigation pane on the left with buttons for Job Postings, Companies, and Communications. The 'Job Postings' button is highlighted with a red circle and the number '2'. The 'Job Postings' form contains fields for Job ID, Title, Description, Requirements, URL, Source, and Date Posted. A 'SEARCH' panel on the right has buttons for Applications, Job Postings, Communications, and Companies. Red circles and numbers highlight specific elements: '1' circles the 'APPLICATION' header, '2' circles the 'Job Postings' button, '3' circles the 'Job Postings' form, and '4' circles the 'Job Postings' button in the search panel.

The AmeriCorps Experience: Transformation Through Service

David Schlinkert, Policy Analyst

AmeriCorps Programs

24 years of AmeriCorps programming:

Personal development

Professional development

Commitment to public service





2016 Arizona Study

82.7% of host sites hired at least one AmeriCorps member

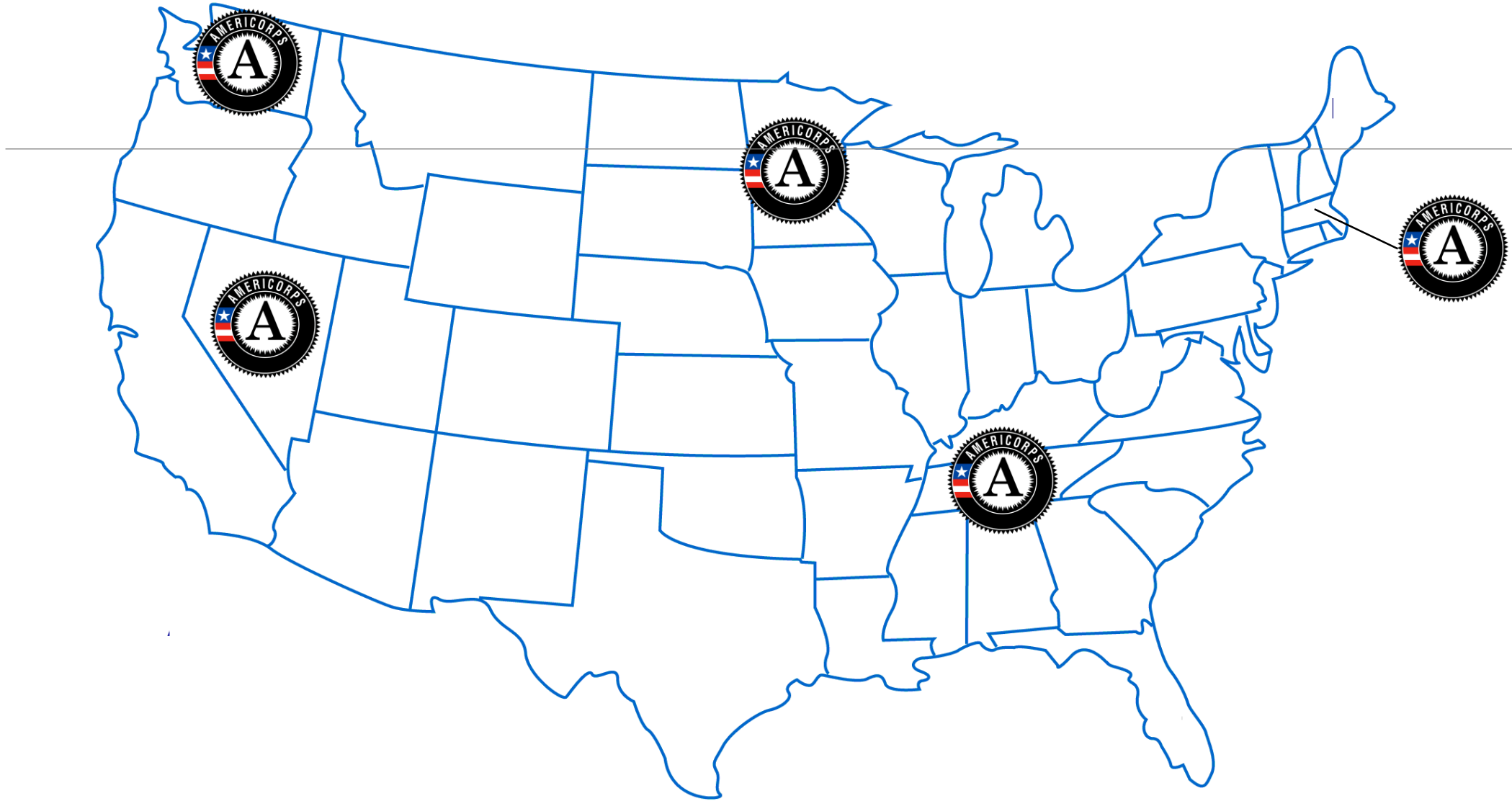
More than half of positions were full-time (64.3%)

AmeriCorps employment pipeline through:

- AmeriCorps host sites
- Affiliated non-AmeriCorps organizations
- AmeriCorps Alum

AmeriCorps members made service improvements, created programs, provided fresh perspective, and served as trailblazers within organizations

2017 Study Expansion



This year, we wanted to explore the AmeriCorps program and identify:

Benefits

Challenges

Impact on employment

Recommendations



AMERICORPS

★ GETTING THINGS DONE FOR AMERICA ★

1.4 BILLION

hours served by members

1 MILLION

members since 1994

2.3 MILLION

community volunteers mobilized

80,000

members serving this year

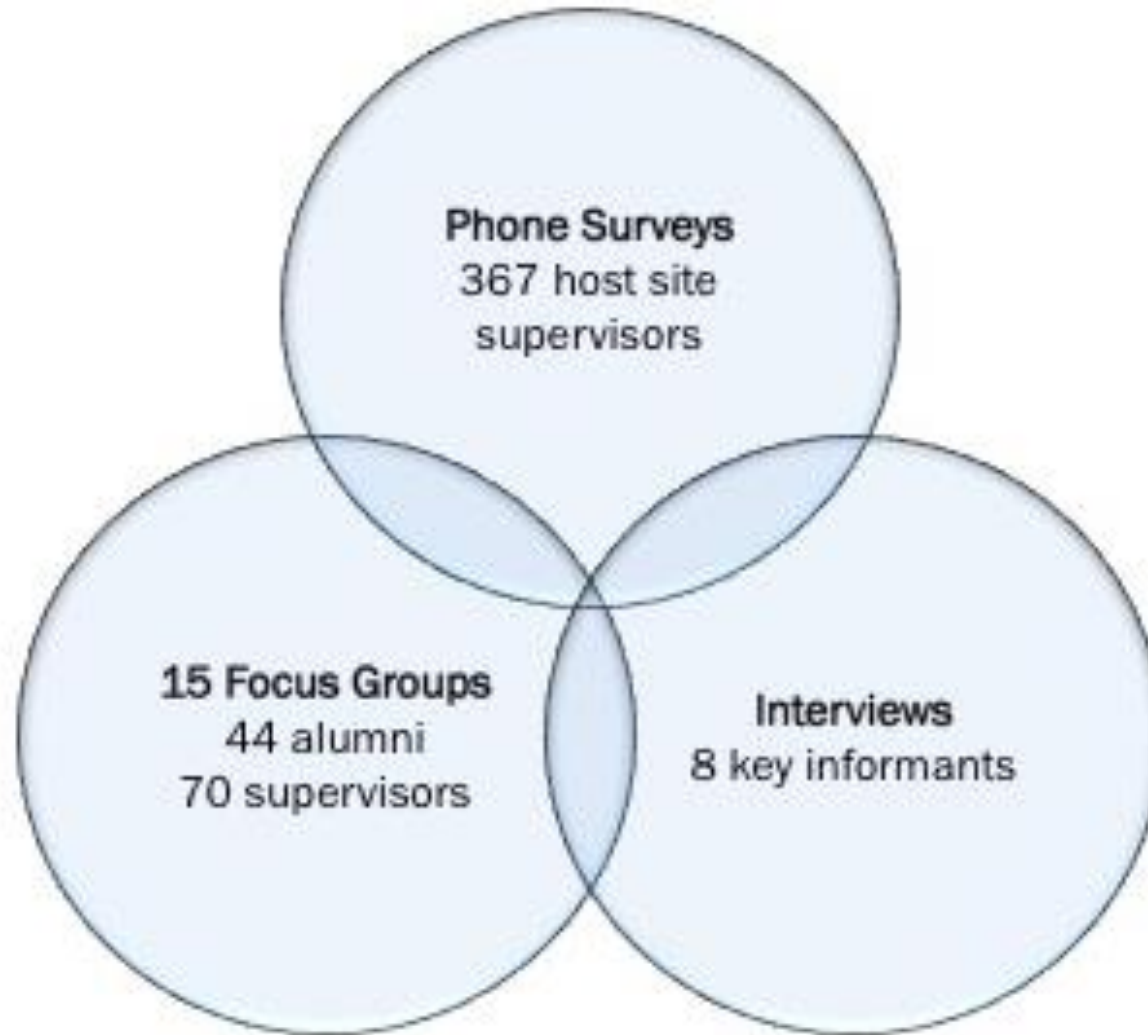
21,600

unique sites served last year

\$1 BILLION

resources leveraged each year from other sources

What we did



Key benefits for members

Transformative and rewarding

Personal and professional growth

New network of employment opportunities

Career exploration

Catalyst for continuing education

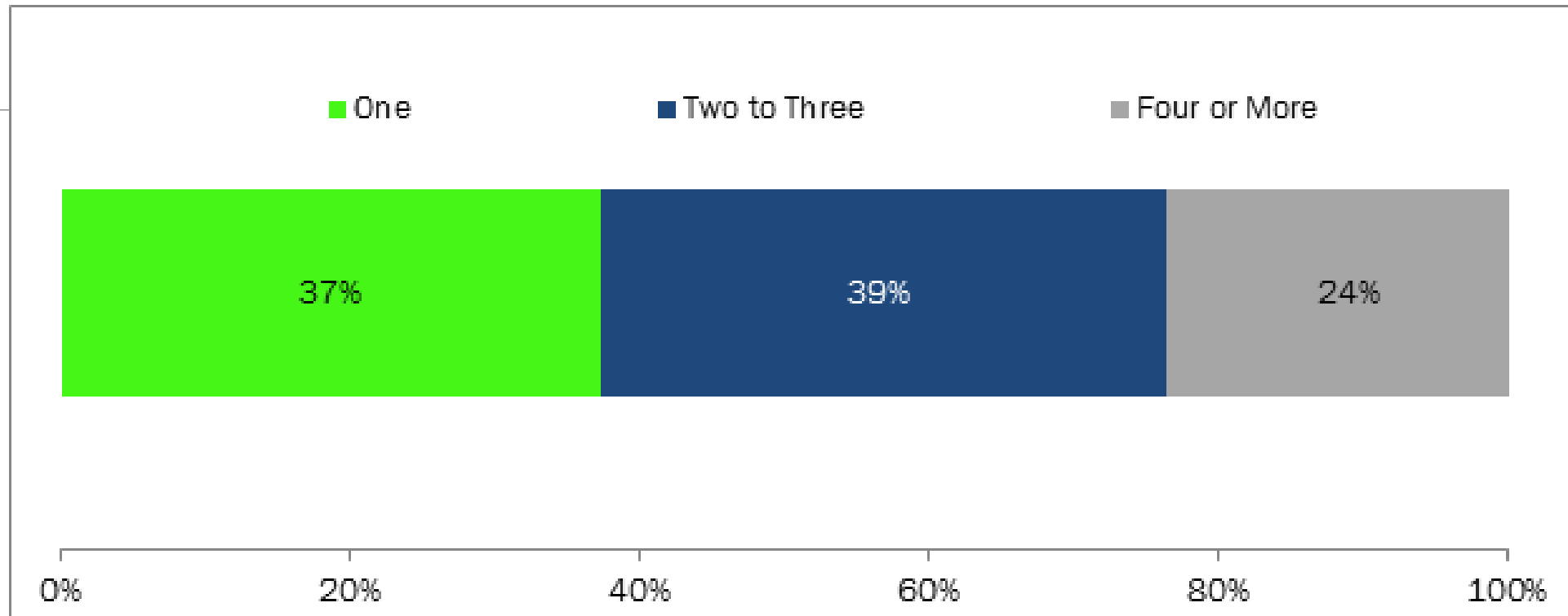
Giving back to community





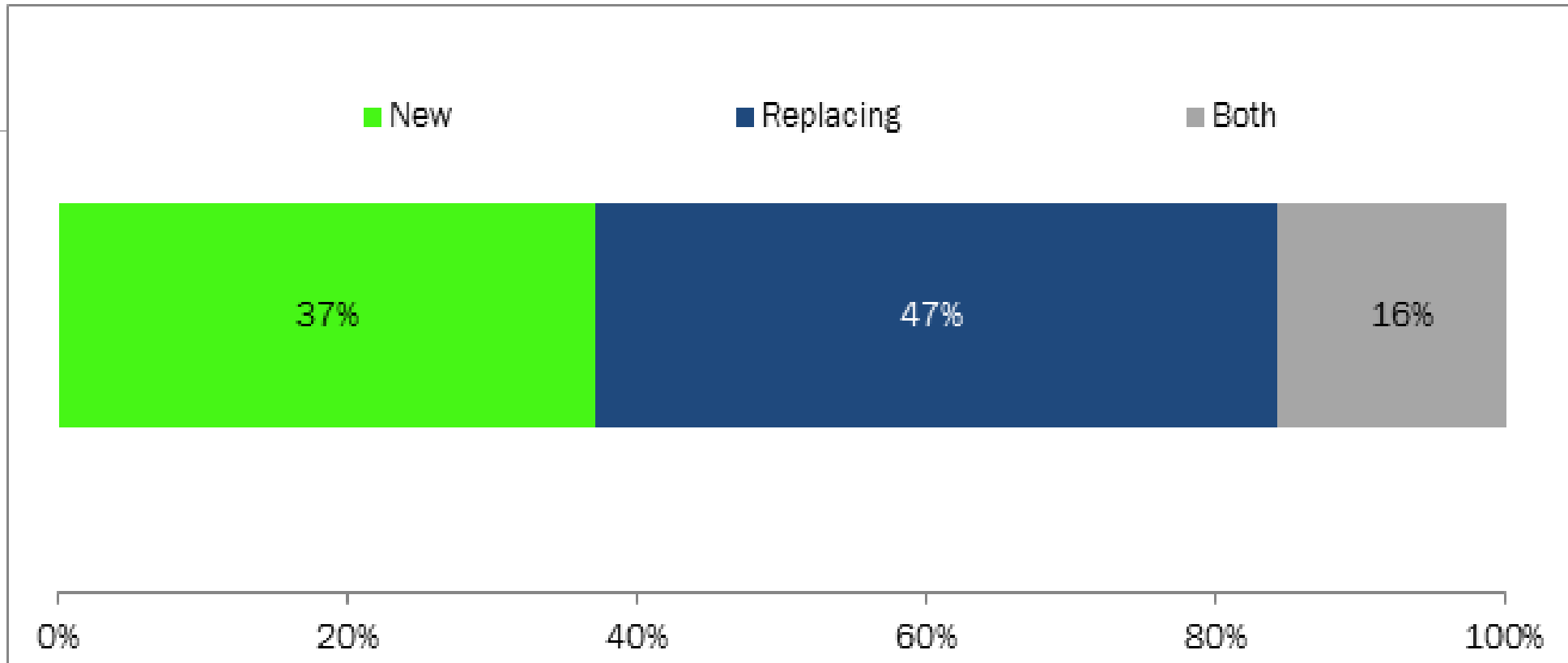
HIRED

Number of AmeriCorps Members Hired After Service Term



41.4% of sampled host sites hired their AmeriCorps members after their service term. **Most hired two to three members.**

Proportion of New or Replacing Positions



- Over half of the organizations that hired an AmeriCorps member after their service term created new positions specifically for those new hires

Rewarding

“I wish that everyone had to do an AmeriCorps service term, because I think it's so good for people to get out of your comfort zone, meet people you never would otherwise meet, be a little bit poor for a year and just get out there and experience it ...

There's plenty of jobs out there that you could just make more money and you could be comfortable, but you wouldn't become a better person for it.”

— AmeriCorps member from Minnesota





Personal and professional development

Critical-thinking skills

Increased employment options

Professional comportment

Planning and organizing

Change of perspective



"AmeriCorps really solidified my career goal. Working with college students, specifically in first-generation, low-income college students, I realized how many issues they're having once they got there."

"I'm a first-generation college student myself, and so, seeing kind of where the loopholes were, they were falling throughout the different public state and private state schools here in Washington, I decided to get my master's degree in higher education in student affairs."

"I ended up, honestly, because of my AmeriCorps experience, at my employment that I have now."

- AmeriCorps member from Washington



Supervisors play a vital role in their AmeriCorps members' post-service employment

Additional Supervisor Support:

- Networking for their member and helping them make professional connections
- Forwarding specific jobs and connecting them to employment opportunities
- Help with editing resumes
- References and/or help with graduate school applications
- Interview preparation help



A photograph of an older woman with glasses, wearing a white shirt and a dark vest with a circular logo, sitting at a table and reading a large, colorful book to a young girl. The girl is sitting on a blue chair, looking at the book with interest. The background shows a classroom setting with colorful posters and a bulletin board.

Key benefits for host sites

Capacity building

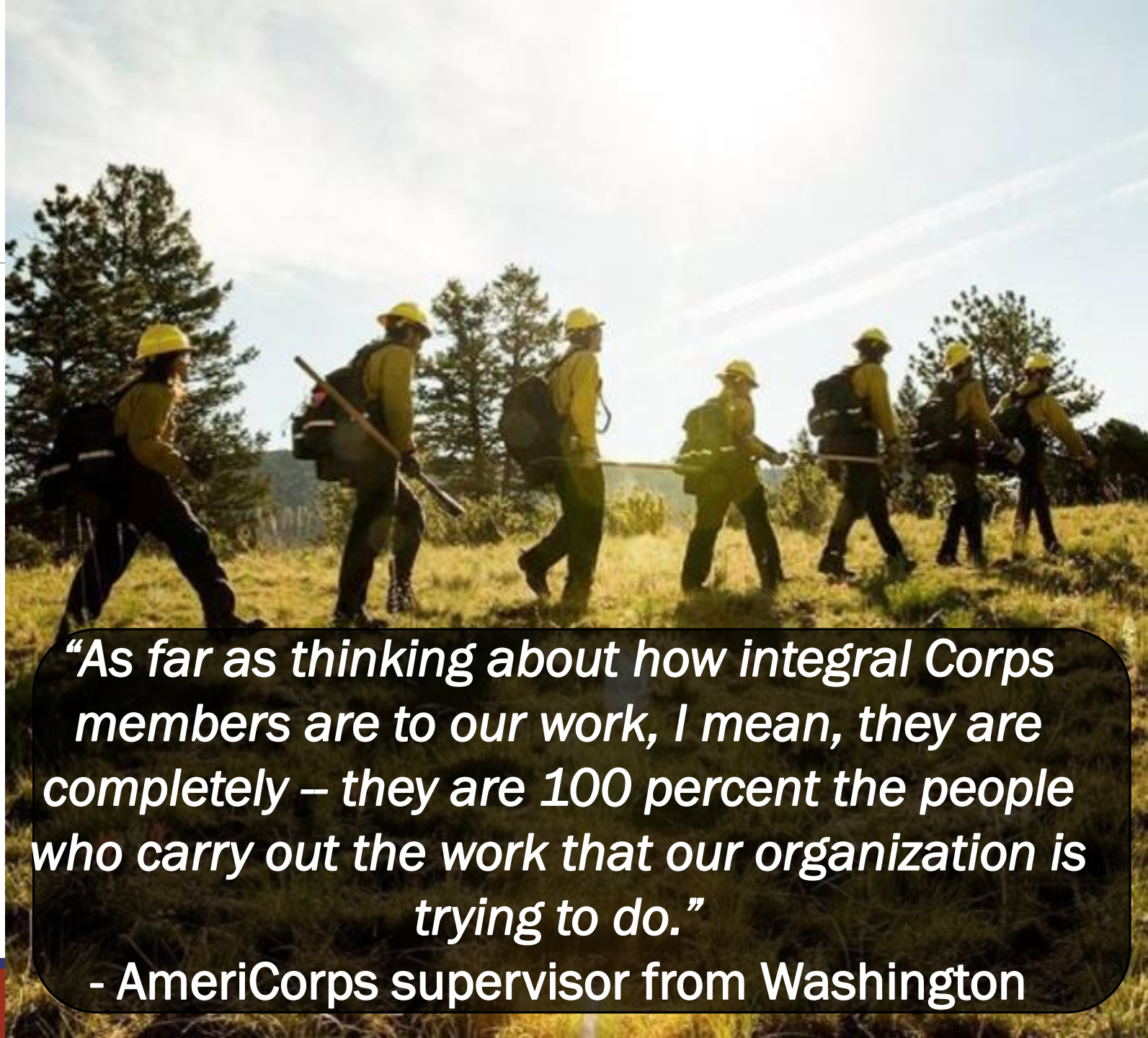
Job creation

Committed workers

Program support

Organizational capacity building

Host sites would not be able to deliver services to communities without their AmeriCorps members.



“As far as thinking about how integral Corps members are to our work, I mean, they are completely – they are 100 percent the people who carry out the work that our organization is trying to do.”

- AmeriCorps supervisor from Washington




Admiration of AmeriCorps members

Supervisors admire member's commitment to public service and hardworking demeanor.

"I think the caliber of AmeriCorps members has been terrific for us over the years. And a lot of them are extremely committed and go onto jobs of service-related positions."

– AmeriCorps supervisor from Massachusetts



They want to see AmeriCorps members succeed...
“One of the big advantages that we have promoted for our AmeriCorps is the fact that, ‘Hey, if you do a good job here, we may not be able to hire you, but you can bet we’re going to help you find employment outside.’ So that’s one of the really big (appeals) because we all know it’s who you know.”

– AmeriCorps supervisor from Nevada

A smiling man in a red AmeriCorps jacket is shown in profile on the left side of the image. He is in a meeting room with other people in the background. The text is overlaid on the image.

**Supervisors
prefer to hire
AmeriCorps
members**

“AmeriCorps members are totally and completely dedicated to the AmeriCorps philosophy. For me, if I could find a prior AmeriCorps then that would be a perfect situation for us because they know what they’re getting themselves into before we even have a conversation with them.”

– AmeriCorps supervisor from Nevada

Host Site Supervisors

Builds organizational capacity

Access to highly skilled AmeriCorps alumni workforce

Organizations prefer to hire former AmeriCorps members

AmeriCorps Alumni

Professional and personal development

Career exposure and exploration

Access to supervisor resources and mentoring

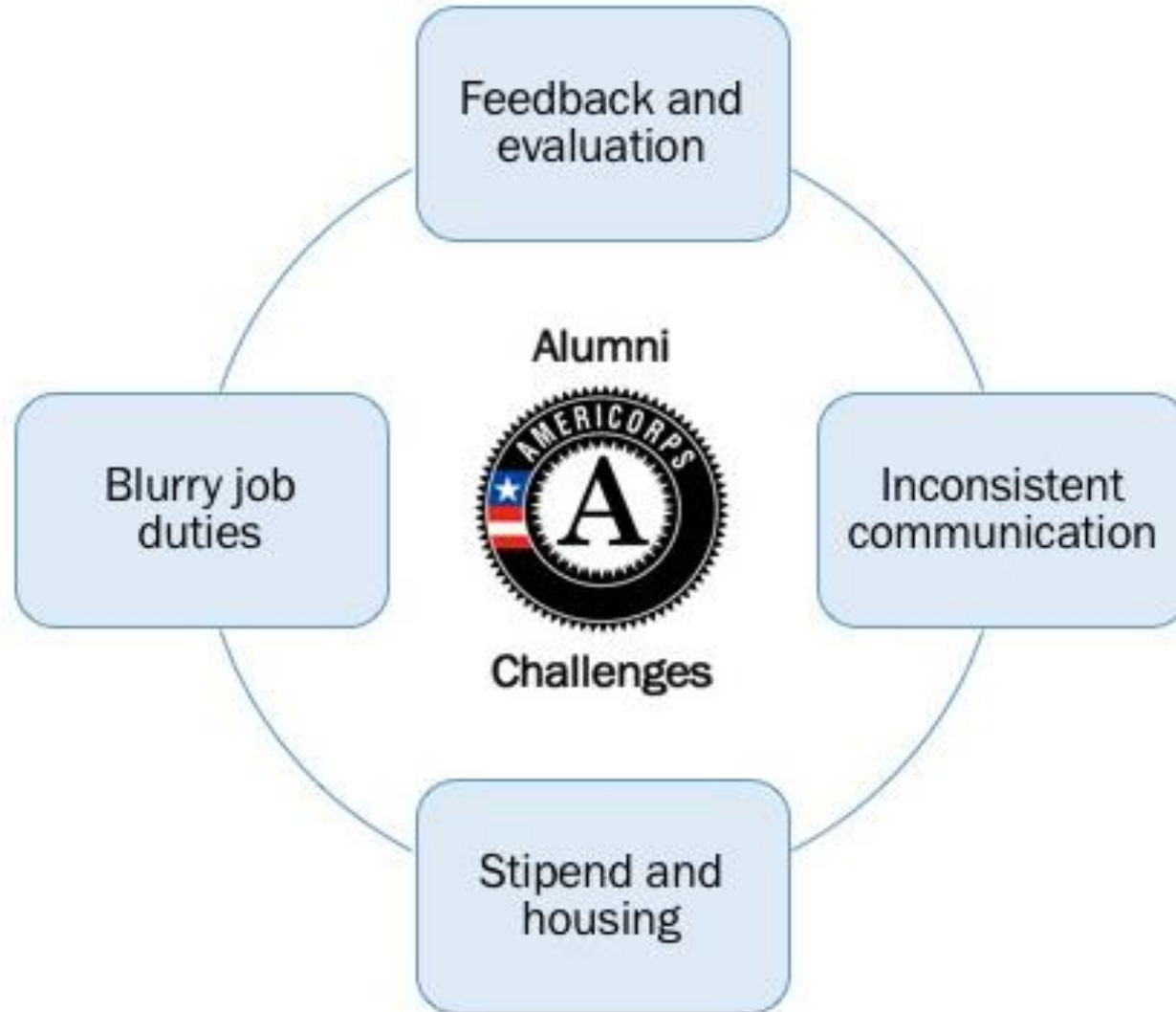
Employment of service members

AmeriCorps' Employment Network

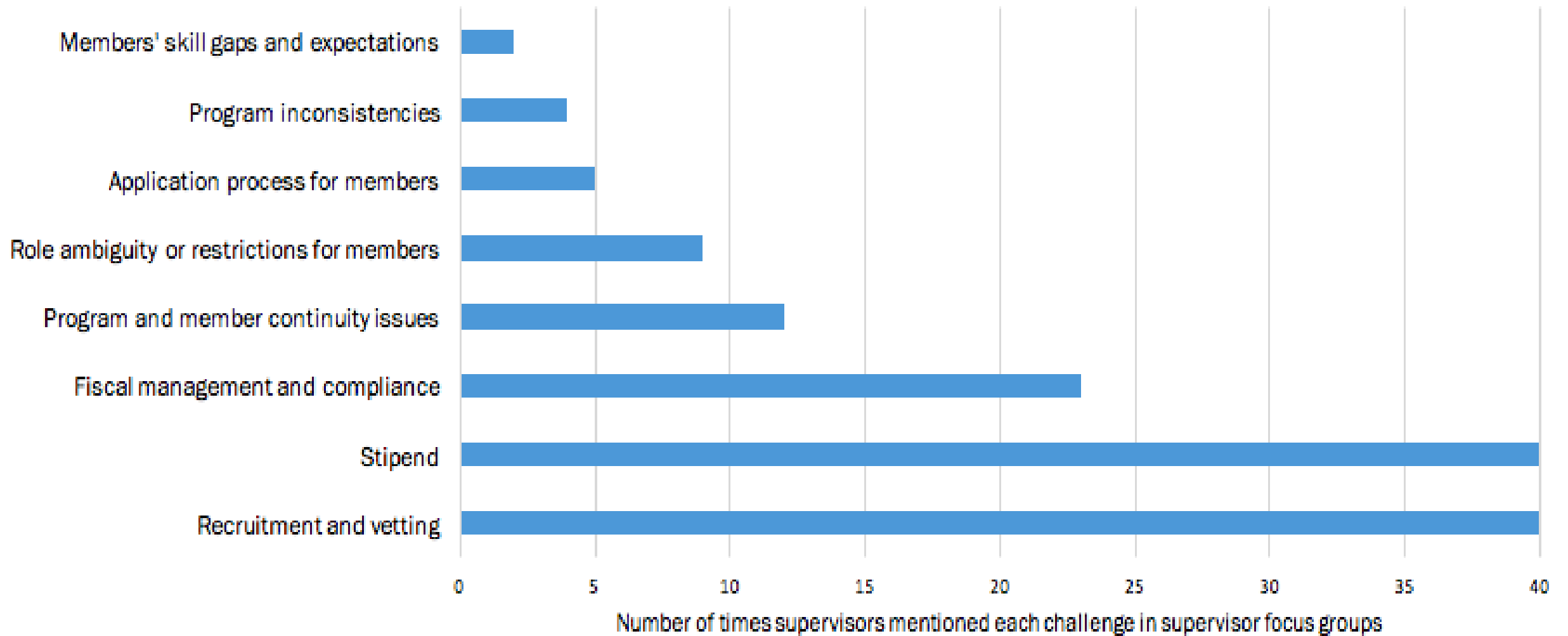
Communication with other AmeriCorps organizations, businesses and members



Areas for Improvement: Alumni Feedback



Main Challenges for AmeriCorps Supervisors



How can we make it better?

Encourage peer-to-peer collaboration networks

Increase stipends according to cost-of-living

Facilitate direct communication between communities and State Commissioners



- Do these findings reflect your experiences?
- Are there other benefits or challenges that we did not address?



For more information...

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