ANDREA ROBLES: I'm going to start again. So, hi

everyone. Thanks so much for joining us today. My

name is Andrea Robles and I'm from the Office of

Research and Evaluation and CNCS and, as you all

know, our webinar series is one way we share our

ongoing research and findings and today we are very

excited to host a webinar that shares information

about two of our CNCS programs, AmeriCorps NCCC and

AmeriCorps VISTA. This gives our research grantees

and the community partners an opportunity to learn

more about these programs and how we may be able to

link these programs to your communities. At a future

date, we will also invite staff from Senior Corps and

AmeriCorps state national to hear more about their

programs. We believe this webinar to be informative

for all our research grantees; however, we thought

this might be of particular interest to our 2018

community conversations grantees as they are in the

midst of conducting participatory research with

community residents and partners identifying

community concerns and taking steps to engage

stakeholders in developing action plans to tackle the

community identified concerns. We are hoping that

the information presented today can help you and your

community partners figure out how these CNCS programs

may assist your work in strengthening your

communities. But, before we begin, we'd like to

cover a few housekeeping items for Adobe Connect and

I'll pass it on to Emily.

EMILY REINAS: Alright. Thank everyone for joining

today. We ask that everyone remain on mute during

the presentation until the Question and Answer

session at the end and if you experience any

technical difficulties or have any questions during

the presentation, just please let us know in the chat

box below. We also want to let you know that this

webinar will be recorded and posted on-line following

the presentation. And I believe that covers our

housekeeping for today.

ANDREA ROBLES: Okay thanks Emily. So, just in terms of

our format, NCCC will begin and we have Tanya Gipson-

Nahman, the Deputy Regional Director for Programming

at the NCCC Pacific Region based in Sacramento,

Amanda Cochran, Assistant Program Director NCCC

Pacific Region, Kevin Anderson who is the Program

Associate, he deals with social media and recruitment

here at NCCC Headquarters. VISTA will follow and we

have Craig Kinnear, Program and Budget Analyst from

VISTA and Melissa McNeily, a Program Impact

Specialist and then we have an example of how one of

our research grantees, the University of Nevada-Reno,

is working with our NCCC Pacific Region campus to

develop projects that have been identified by the

research they are conducting. So, we have Melissa

Gouge, Jennifer Willett, Assistant Professor of

School Social Work at the University of Nevada, Tanya

Gipson and Amanda. We will then have just a very

short remark from Dr. Melissa Gouge and then we'll

open it up to Q&A. So, I know webinars can be a bit

awkward and we definitely want a chance to hear your

questions and to hear from you directly. So, during

the webinar, please feel free to ask any questions or

provide comments in the chat box, but during the Q&A,

you can raise your hand and Emily will tell you a

little bit more how to do that or I will at the end
of this portion and you have chances to ask questions
in the microphone directly. So, right now what I'll
do, is I'll pass it on to Tanya and Amanda to talk
about NCCC.

AMANDA COCHRAN: Perfect. Thank you so much Andrea. This
is Amanda Cochran and as Andrea noted, I'm an
Assistant Program Director over here at AmeriCorps at
NCCC's Pacific Region and I'll let Tanya introduce
herself.

TANYA GIPSON-NAHMAN: Hi everyone. My name is Tanya
Gibson-Nahman and I'm the Deputy Region Director for
Programming here at the Pacific Region in Sacramento
and our office is responsible for developing service
projects for our AmeriCorps teams in nine states in
the western region.

AMANDA COCHRAN: And AmeriCorps and NCCC is one of the
programs under the corporation for national community
service that you will be hearing about today as

Andrea noted. AmeriCorps VISTA is also here, so
they'll be talking about their program. So, we're
one of the branches and NCCC stands for National
Civilian Community Corps. We are a residential, team
based and direct service AmeriCorps program and we do
short-term high-impact projects. That makes us a
little different than other AmeriCorps programs. Our
teams of AmeriCorps NCCC members live together, work
together, travel together and they do about three to
five projects during the 10 months in which they are
serving. So, as you can see here, actually, if you
want to go back to the map, we have actually four
different regions throughout the country. We have
headquarters in D.C. and then each region is
responsible for a multitude of states, so we are out
of Sacramento, California and you can see we have
actually nine states in the western part of the U.S.
We also have three other campuses, so one is in
Denver, Colorado, one is in Vinton, Iowa and one is
in Vicksburg, Mississippi, so each of those campuses
is responsible for that region as you can see in the
map. And then on the next slide, so, our members are

from all walks of life, all different types of

experiences from around the country, they are 18-24

years old and they might be high school graduates,

they might be taking a gap year during college, they

might have graduated from college, just kind of a

wide range and I know Kevin Anderson will be talking

a little more about our members here shortly. As far

as our projects, so, we have also a wide range of

projects. There's not too many limitations as far as

what we can do so, we have projects with Habitat for

Humanity building houses, we do fire mitigation work,

we do mentorship in schools and after-school

programs, we might support food banks, school

gardens, student conservation work, it's really, kind

of, whatever the community need is, we want to help

support that. So, as you can see here, and as I

mentioned previously, we are a direct service

program, so just like that extra people, power of

hands and boots on the ground, getting things done

and we are team based, which makes us pretty

different from other AmeriCorps programs. Usually,

our teams have anywhere between 8-12 members, one

member of the team is a team leader who is
responsible for managing and supporting the team.
The members on the team are between 18-24 years old
and our projects range between 6-12 weeks, typically,
they might be a little bit shorter, but that's our
basic time frame. And then we have five major areas
in which we serve, kind of steam areas, we work in
disasters, national and other disasters, we do
environmental stewardship and conservation work as I
mentioned, energy conservation is one of our areas,
we do infrastructure improvement, so, like I
mentioned, Habitat for Humanity type work and urban
and rural development. Those are our five different
areas. Really, we can do pretty much any type of
work though our limitations are, we cannot do
anything inherently political or religious. We can't
do direct fundraising and we cannot do any direct
work that is supporting a for-profit partner. Beyond
that, not too many limitations. Alright, and then
the next slide, our project sponsors, so, as I
mentioned, there's not a lot of limitations beyond
really the for-profit side as far as who can be a

project sponsor, so, our sponsors are typically non-profits, faith based organizations, we have a lot of governmental organizations whether it's federal, state or local, that are project sponsors, public schools, colleges, universities, tribal councils, native corporations, as you can see, just a wide range of organizations that can be project sponsors and support a team. As far as the application process, really, it's directly working with each campus, so as you saw in the map, there's four different regions. Each region has a campus and staff, like Tanya and I, that work directly with our sponsors to help develop projects. So, the last slide I have will have some contact information for each of the regions, but basically, if you are interested in being a sponsor, you would reach out to the program office and they would help support you in developing a project. So, similar to what Jennifer will be talking about as far as our Reno, Nevada partnership, I've been working closely with her in that development. From there, you would submit a project concept form and that's just a short

document, kind of, initially introducing the idea of a project and then really just working with the campus throughout that process for the full application and all the details of the project. And then the next slide talks about what teams receive from us and what we ask our sponsors to provide, so, form our program we have 15-passenger vans that are provided to each team, they have a food and a laundry budget so their needs are covered with that, camping and cooking gear so if camping is part of the project, we have some camping gear. If a project requires some tools, we have some limited tools. They get personal protective equipment like hard hat, eye pro, all that fun stuff to keep them safe and then we also cover them with Worker's Compensation. As far as what we ask of our sponsors, each project is very different so sponsors know what best to prepare … how to best prepare the team, so the sponsors would provide orientation and training on the project, regular ongoing supervision, any tools and materials relevant to that project, housing is the big one and that can be very creative. If you're

interested in being a sponsor, we can talk more about

how … I won't delve into it too much here, but that

can be a wide range of options, whether it might be a

church basement, working with partners to see if they

have some housing available, it could be YMCA, all

kinds of different options. Really, they just need a

safe space for the team, access to bathroom, shower,

kitchen, are, kind of, the minimal space that we

require. Of course, the team needs sufficient,

meaningful work to keep them engaged in the

community. Each member of the team, like I said,

between 8-12 members, they need to be working 40

hours a week. So, it's a quite a bit of work, you

can get a lot done in a short amount of time. And

then another piece of our program is service learning

so, not only are they going into communities and

doing work, but they are also learning about the

impact of that work and why it's meaningful to the

community. And then, the final slide here, as I

mentioned, so, the four regions you saw on the map

are broken down here, so we have the Pacific region

which is us in Sacramento, and then each of the

consecutive regions there. You can see their email

addresses and then we have a national request for

applications document. It's actually linked in the

file section here on the Adobe Connect meeting page,

so you should be able to see that and I definitely

suggest that you check that out and look at the

information on there because there's some different

dates and all the contact information is also on that

document and I think that's it. Thank you so much.

I think we're handing it off to Kevin Anderson now to

talk a little more about our members.

KEVIN ANDERSON: Great. Thank you, Amanda. So, obviously

this webinar is talking a lot about programming, but

I thought it would be valuable to give you guys a

glimpse at who our members are. If you're going to

be potentially giving them a bunch of work, you

should know what kind of young adults you're signing

up to have. So, as Amanda mentioned, these people

are between the ages of 18-24 years old.

We do have a team leader leading each team, which can

be any age, there's no upper age limit, they just

need to have a valid driver's license to use the van.
Our members also have to be U.S. citizens or lawful
permanent residents of the United States and then,
beyond that, that's kind of the two basic
eligibility, but then there's more soft eligibility
things, they have to be willing to relocate and serve
for 10 consecutive months on a variety of projects.
They don't get to choose which projects they are
going to go on, we assign those to them, so they have
to be flexible and then, they do not have work or
education or skills requirements, there's no barriers
to that in them joining, but they do have to have,
sort of, motivation and altruism, which we review as
part of our assessment of their application. So,
there's a lot of factors in that we look at their
references, we look at a motivational statement that
they write, and we use these to decide who is, kind
of, fit to serve. Once they are invited, they
receive a conditional invitation at which point we
conduct a criminal history check and a medical
history check to make sure that they are fit for
service and this includes sex offender registry track

and felonies and misdemeanors and all that stuff.

There are exceptions that allow us to let people in

based on their history, but that's too much to go

over for right now, but we do our due diligence in

that. One other quick thing that I wanted to mention

that I didn't get on the slide is that, just talking

about in the character of our members, we actually

did some informative audience research of our own

recently and I just wanted to shout out a few things.

So, one I have, over 90% of our members agree that

volunteer work aligns with their personal values,

which is just kind of saying that the people doing

this work, the people who are applying to serve in

our program, this is exactly what they want to be

doing and then 95% of them say volunteer work is

something to be proud of, which kind of helps to

reinforce that. And then a larger majority of them

are joining for the purposes of gaining life

experience, wanting to make a difference, to be a

part of some kind of meaningful work and then also,

to learn new skills. So, these people who are

joining our program and who are applying, by and

large, our mission is to serve communities and
develop leaders and these are leaders that we are
developing, so, we definitely have a lot of power
behind the work that we're offering. And that is
about it when talking about our members, so I'm going
to go ahead and pass it over to Craig and Melissa
from VISTA.

CRAIG KINNEAR: Thanks Kevin. As Andrea said, my name is
Craig Kinnear, I'm a program and budget analyst at
AmeriCorps VISTA. AmeriCorps VISTA is one of the
oldest continuing federal anti-poverty programs,
having been around since 1965. Over 220,000 VISTA
members have served in high poverty communities since
that time. VISTA has four core principles that guide
our work and the work that sponsors and members
accomplish in their community. The first principle
is ending poverty. A VISTA process goal is to move
individuals and communities out of poverty rather
than making poverty more tolerable through short-term
services. The second is empowering communities. As
a way to empower communities, a VISTA project engages

residents of the low-income communities in the

planning, development and implementation of the anti-

poverty project. The third principle is building

capacity. To build capacity, VISTA members leverage

resources, including financial resources and

volunteers. They create effective management

systems, build community partnerships and expand

outreach to populations in need. The fourth

principle is creating sustainable solutions. VISTA

members build a capacity of organizations to continue

to address poverty long after the VISTAs are gone.

VISTA members leave behind new and expanded resource

networks, management systems, communications networks

and partnerships that continue to support anti-

poverty efforts. The annual impact of the work being

done in the field is impressive. In FY 2018, the

program placed over 8,000 members at 4,500 different

sites across the United States and its territories.

VISTA members leveraged over $195 million in cash and

in-kind resources to support their projects. In

addition, over 720,000 volunteers were mobilized to

work on anti-poverty programming. And now, I'd like

to turn it over to Melissa McNeily.

MELISSA MCNEILY: Thanks Craig. Hello everyone. So, now

I'd like to talk a little bit about the VISTA sponsor

application process. So, we have a two-step process

for the VISTA sponsor application. First, the

interested organization submits a concept paper in

the e-grant system. E-grants is a separate system

from grants.gov, so please be sure that you are using

e-grants. The organization creates an account and

uploads and submits a concept paper in this platform.

CNCS reviews the concept papers to gain a better

understanding of the proposed project and to

determine if the activities and the organization are

in alignment with VISTA's programming priorities,

which include, economic opportunities, education,

health futures and veterans and military families.

The proposed project must be focused on anti-poverty

work and the concept paper must clearly demonstrate

how the proposed VISTA project breaks the cycle of

poverty and helps uplift communities. Concept papers

that do not clearly align with VISTA's anti-poverty

mission will not be approved. VISTA resources cannot

be used to carry out activities for which an

organization has already received CNCS or grant

dollars to carry out. We're happy to have VISTA

resources support the work, particularly the

implementation of action plans; however, this must be

separate from what the community conversation's grant

money is supporting. This fiscal year, we

implemented a new request for concept papers process.

The concept paper submission deadlines are now on a

quarterly basis and the next deadline is July 1st. If

CNCS approves the concept paper, the organization is

invited to submit a full application, much of which

is exported from the responses that the applicant has

already provided in the concept paper. CNCS field

staff are available to provide technical assistance

and guidance during the writing of both the concept

paper and the full application. Now, I'd like to

briefly touch based upon some member recruitment

ideas. So, after the application has been approved

and the CNCS field staff will help your organization

develop a service opportunity listing to begin the

VISTA recruitment efforts. All listings are posted

on our AmeriCorps application portal. At that time,

the organization will also develop a VISTA assignment

description or a VAD. The VAD is a required member

position description for each VISTA member. It

serves as a power guide for recruitment, for planning

and implementing activities. It can be used to

assist with selecting a VISTA candidate, guiding and

supporting members during their year of service and

assessing performance by measuring their work against

the stated goals and objectives. VISTA has marketing

materials available for sponsors to use during the

recruitment efforts, such as brochures, fliers,

posters, postcards and an on-line photo library, just

to name a few. You should promote the benefits of

service such as the education award, non-competitive

eligibility for federal jobs and relocation

assistance. It's important to emphasize how your

organization and VISTA will provide professional

development to members once they're on board. You

should post jobs on sites like: idealist, indeed,

Linked In and also use local job boards. You can
also use social media and bulletin boards to get the
word out. Lastly, develop recruitment contacts with
local colleges, universities, career centers and
community organizations. Forage connections with the
Rotary club, Lions club, links, Hot Teens of America
or other social organizations in your area and ask to
give a presentation about your program and any VISTA
openings during one of their meetings. And I'll hand
it back over to Craig.

CRAIG KINNEAR: Thanks Melissa. The last thing we'd like
to touch upon are benefits for both the members and
sponsors. As you become a VISTA sponsor, you'll want
to know all of the benefits available to VISTA
members so that you can support them and inform
candidates during the recruitment process. In
addition to benefits which range from a living
allowance, health coverage and childcare support,
non-competitive hiring eligibility for federal jobs
and an end of service award, we have many others that
aren't listed, such as student loan forbearance and

relocation assistance. To learn more about VISTA

member benefits, visit the VISTA webpage or VISTA

campus. Sponsoring agencies also receive numerous

benefits for hosting a VISTA member, such as

strengthening their capacity, recruiting and managing

additional volunteers, expanding partnership

opportunities in their community. The impact that

VISTA members make in their communities is

invaluable. Please reach out to CNCS field staff if

you have any questions and thank you for considering

VISTA. And now, I'll hand it over to the other

Melissa.

MELISSA GOUGE: Thank you so much. Thank you to Tanya

and Amanda, Kevin, Craig and Melissa for providing

very brief overviews of your very large program that

you could have talked about for a very long time. As

the program officer for all 16 of the community

conversations grantees, I've worked with our newest

cohorts of grantees. We're conducting participatory

research along side communities across the country.

Drs. Jennifer Willett and Mary Hilton, P.I.'s at the

University of Nevada, working with their community
partner, Communities in Schools and their amazing
group of student scientists, are working together to
address slow violence and its impact on the local
community. More to come on what "slow violence" is
in a minute. Their collaborative efforts to
determine research questions, methods for data
collection and analysis of these issues led them to
identify the need for sidewalks in the Sun Valley
neighborhood and they are currently collaborating
with our NCCC program and local stakeholders to
implement this much needed public infrastructure
project. This is only a part of the action plan
that's been identified by the team that is exemplary
of one way that the CNCS program can help you, as our
Research Grantees, implement your action plans that
are developed in the course of your project.
Jennifer, I'll turn it over to you to described your
project in your work with NCCC so far.

JENNIFER WILLETT: All right. Thank you. As, Melissa
said my name is Jennifer Willett, I'm an Assistant

Professor at the University of Nevada-Reno. And along with my colleague Mary Hilton, we've been working on making the invisible visible. So this is most of our research team. We have two faculty members. You can see me in the back right there, and Mary is behind the camera, unfortunately. But the key to our work is we hire 15 high school students from local Title 1 schools to be our co-researchers, and we call them Youth Scientists. So they help us determine the methods, and they collect data through photography and interviews.

And what we're working on is documenting slow violence through the photo-voice methodology. Slow violence focuses on the hidden environmental degradation that occurs in historically marginalized communities. So this is something like air pollution, which you can't usually see that impacts at the rates in communities of color. By photographing these hidden slow violence problems, we can make them visible so we can start to work on them.

We recruited our Youth Scientists from the Title I because they live in the impacted communities. So where you and I might not be able to see the hidden environmental problems, they live this every day, and they know how to document them appropriately. We definitely guide the youth in the process, but we do try to stay within topic that they want to work on and that they are passionate about.

So far we have been documented things like winter flooding and homeless populations, lake flooding in an elementary school, and inadequate garbage collection. Coming up tomorrow, actually, we're taking a big field trip to look at wild fires and mining pollution, and we're also going to meet with the Governor's Office, which we're super excited about, but for the remainder of this presentation I'm going to talk about what they've been doing with another one of their areas of focus, which is the lack of sidewalks and ditches and flooding in Sun Valley.

So Sun Valley is an area near Reno, about half of the Youth Scientists live in this neighborhood. It's really only 3 miles from Reno, many people walk back and forth from Sun Valley, but it is not technically considered part of Reno. It's this strange situation where it's an unincorporated area, so there is no local government. Instead it's governed by the county government, which is not in Sun Valley, and they are focused on county-level initiatives rather than these hyper-local initiatives like sidewalks.

Sun Valley has a higher poverty rate than other areas. Sun Valley has a high Latino population. Mobile homes without infrastructure are common. And then other types of community level infrastructure, like drainage systems, sewers, and lighting are very weak. There are some really great non-profits in the area, but there really aren't that many operating.

Because there isn't a normal drainage system, there are ditches on the side of the road. You can see that on the right of this photo. So this is important

because we live in a desert, so there are flashfloods and then the water can flow into the ditch. However, as you can also see in this photo there are no sidewalks. So residents have to bike or walk on the road. So, as you can imagine this creates a really dangerous situation, particularly for kids, if a car comes too close to you there is nowhere to go except into the ditch. And then the water can fill up in the ditches because they got blocked, sometimes, or there's just too much water because of the flashflood. And that makes it hard to see where the ditch is and then people fall in. So all of our youth scientists have a story of when they, or a family member, fall in the ditch and couldn't get out.

Our youth scientists are particularly interested in the lack of sidewalks and the ditches around the schools in the area, which you can see here. A few years ago a student was hit and killed by a car while waiting for a school bus near a ditch. So that accident is often referred to when talking about these issues in this area. And the youth scientists

are also very concerned about the safety of their younger siblings, who have to walk to work alone because their parents are working 2 to 3 jobs.

So keeping this problem in mind, we began developing partnerships for solutions at our site visit, which is really great. In this photo you can see our youth scientists, along with Andrea, and Melissa, NCCC, and Nevada volunteers. So this was really the beginning of coming together to move towards a real solution.

So I think as Amanda, from NCCC, and I kept connecting, we felt that addressing the sidewalk was probably the easiest first win of all of the complicated issues the youth scientists wanted to work on. We were fortunate that NCCC, Sacramento office is just over the mountain, so Amanda can come over, and she's been over several times, so we can meet with people together.

And NCCC has also built sidewalks in another Nevada community which gives us a model, and it also helps

Sun Valley feel comfortable that NCCC knows what they're doing and can hold to their word and get this done. So together, NCCC and our research team, we met with the County Commissioner that represents Sun Valley, and had actually built sidewalks before. She connected us to the Sun Valley General Improvement District, which manages some of the infrastructure in lieu of a formal local government. We, Amanda, the Youth Scientists, and I presented to them, and they were very supportive, and they are actively trying to help us move forward with the county to get this done.

We've also been able to meet jointly with some of the resources that need to be in place from NCCC's team, like housing. And we're continuing on moving this forward, we just met with the General Improvement District, again, last week, and they're connecting us to other county members who then give us the proper authorization to build sidewalks.

And I really feel like this is coming together. We're making progress because we are a legitimate team. You know, the problem came from the local residents. The University supports the residents, and we have a resource, NCCC that wants to work on these issues. I think this goes really, really far when working with communities that are sometimes skeptical of outsiders, like a lot of communities in Nevada are. And I thought that we would have to argue for this issue in advancing solutions a lot, but we really don't. They see us as a team that can get things done and provide a solution or their needs.

So I'd like to conclude fast by talking about the benefits for our research team. Clearly we are involved in more than just the research, and that does create more work. But it has been hugely beneficial for our research to have the backing of AmeriCorps behind us. We have been able to get into other communities to do research by discussing AmeriCorps, and the potential that we can certainly clean things up together. And this are communities

that I've never been able to get in with just the
University backing.

It's also been really beneficial for our Youth
Scientists who see that they can create change in
their communities. And it's helped them frame how to
see the hidden environmental problems. These are
sometimes hard for them to grasp because you can't
see them, right, so you have to think about how to
photograph them creatively. So when we think about it
from a solutions-focused perspective we can see these
issues easier and that makes our work just more
trustworthy which is making the research better, too.

And then it's also just been really fun. I think
that, probably anybody who has been an assistant
professor can say that research is a little isolating
sometimes. So having a team behind me is great. And
accomplishing things is fun and seeing what these
kids do is just really inspiring. So, thank you for
the support. And I will pass it along.

FEMALE: Thank you so much, Jennifer. We cannot wait to

hear updates on this work and we're so happy that

this partnership is proving fruitful for progress on

this one element of your action plan. And I'll hand

this off to Andrea to facilitate the Q&A session.

ANDREA ROBLES: Okay, Tanya and Amanda I do want to hear

from your perspective of the University of Nevada. So

let me just open it up. And then I'll just ask you to

talk a little bit more about that. So, we want this

to be an informal and a discussion. I know this was

webinar was a little at the last minute, and a lot of

people are off. But I do some of you on. So take this

sudden opportunity to as all the questions you wanted

and how you would be able to hook up with your

community, or anything you ever wanted to know about

NCCC's existence. But, anyway, for our in-person

audience, which means the people in this room, just

state your name before responding or asking a

question. I mean, we do have two Melissa's, so

[laughter – unintelligible] And for those of you

online, you can either type a question, or if you

don't mind just use the microphone which – Let's see,
do you want to say how you do it, Emily.

EMILY REINAS: Yeah, if you see on the top bar there's
an icon of a person raising their hand, if you click
that it should give you microphone access to your
computer, so you can ask a question verbally, or
there's also a pipeline if you're dialed into that,
and then you can just un-mute yourself and ask a
question.

ANDREA ROBLES: Okay, great. So before we take any
questions I just want to turn again to Tanya and
Amanda, and you heard from the perspective of
Jennifer, so again you all have a different take on
this, can you say a little bit about what the project
has been like for NCCC in terms of how the research
proceeds project development or any other benefits
that you see from doing this, or challenges?

AMANDA COCHRAN: Absolutely, yeah, I mean you heard kind
of the introduction to NCCC and how we work in all

these different communities, but we're located out of

Sacramento, and we're not really experts in all of

these different communities. We don't see the day to

day needs, and we don't necessarily know what the big

issues are that we can help support. So having people

like Jennifer and her folks on the ground in Reno,

where we've tried to have more projects, and we're

really interested in expanding our support into some

of these more rural communities and states, like

Nevada, it's been beyond amazing to just be a part of

because we're – You know, I've been able to – and

Tanya has too – to interact with these scientists and

meet with them and hear what their stories are, and

it's much more impactful, and really exciting to see

what kinds of projects we can develop from actual

true need, and hearing, you know, especially from

youths on the ground, but really anyone in the

community that's stating what they're needed.

And saying, hey, like Jennifer said, we have this

resource. How can we perfectly matchup this team to

come and help support the community with the need

that you're saying that you have? So it's not us

going into a community and saying that we see

something that we can help fulfill, but it feels just

much more impactful. So it's not just on Jennifer's

that's been amazing, it's been a perfect partnership

on our side as well. Tanya.

TANYA GIPSON-NAHMAN: Yeah. And I'll just add too, you

know, we're still in obviously the planning stages of

getting this project off the ground. And we're really

excited at the level of community involvement. So the

other component to think about when our teams come

and do these short-term projects is that they're not

just extra workers. They are also young people and

they are really, as Kevin was talking about, they

really want to see the meaningfulness of their

project work. So when you have a project like the one

in Nevada where you've got youth that are engaged.

You've got the City Council that's engaged. You've

got a lot of different people really invested in the

success of this project, and explaining to our team,

why are you doing this work?

I'm sure when people think about joining AmeriCorps they're not like, "Oh, you know, building sidewalks is why I want to do this work." But if they can see, like, there is a huge issue in this community, and by coming in, bringing in NCCC team, and doing this work, I really see the value in how it's connected and why it's important, and when we can find a project that can connect those pieces, so what we call service learning, it makes it just so much more impactful all around. So we get absolutely – The priority is getting the work done, but also providing an experience where our members get to learn and see how communities solve the issues that they're trying to address. That's just icing on the cake when we can find a project that has all of those components.

So we're really appreciative of the Office of Research and Evaluation for making the connection. For Jennifer and her team, for being so open and willing to educate us on all the different things, I know so much more about Nevada now after having gone

there. And then I'm just really hopeful that this
project will get off the ground, and I'm sure it will
be a success when we can do it. So, yeah, it's just a
real win-win partnership. So we've appreciated the
opportunity.

ANDREA ROBLES: Thank you so much. I'm not trying to sell
any – But I really, again, this webinar is about how
do we with the research that's going on, how do we
best send – make that link to either NCCC or VISTA.
And I think the recruiting is important, what's Kevin
is talking about, just because as researchers you
work in universities, you have access to undergrads,
some of you are working in high schools like
Jennifer. And this is also – These programs are just
really good, like use that as a gap year, or someone
who doesn't know what their next step is, or someone
is graduating from college and is waiting for their
next thing. So that's why we want to make sure that,
you know, both how one becomes the sponsor to do the
work that you want to do. But then how you might, how
the recruiting happens, and so I know with VISTA also

you all recruit from the community. Can you say
something about that? So let's there's a community-
based project going on, are you able to recruit. So
let's say the students graduate high school here in
Reno. Could they become a VISTA member and stay in
their communities to do some of the capacity building
work at one of the non-profits?

FEMALE: That's a great question. And we'll tag team, I
      think. So we definitely do encourage that sponsoring
      organizations reach out to community members because
      they definitely are aware of what's happening where
      they live. And they're able to really help guide and
      impact the work that the sponsoring organization is
      going to do, that anti-poverty work, and those
      projects. And so we think it's a really valuable
      experience, and we find that we have many different
      types of members. Whether they're members that come
      straight out of high school, as you mentioned, or
      they can be members that sign-up after college, or
      sometimes you have people in the community that are
      maybe changing careers, or just people in the

community that are leaders that really want to be a

part of this type of project, and so CNCS field staff

definitely will work with sponsoring organizations to

help them think about ways to recruit the most

impactful members, if you will, and definitely

community members are great.

And even if a project does not have community members

serving on their projects as members, we definitely

require that the community has a say in the planning,

the implementation, and the evaluation of VISTA

projects. So it's very important.

ANDREA ROBLES: So I just want to see if there are any

questions from some of you. If you're interested in –

I think Kesha, I think Kesha had her hand up.

KESHA MOORE: Hi, yes. Yes, I have a question, or a

series of questions. So, thank you so much. It's been

– Can you hear me? Hello? Can you hear me?

FEMALE: Yes, we can hear you.

KESHA MOORE: Okay, great, sorry. So it's helpful to

see how the CNCS research and the volunteer

activities can come together, particularly in the

example in the University of Nevada-Reno. My question

really revolves around the timeline of that. So, it

sounds like the – Is the work that's going on now

with the NCCC and the project, is that like – it's

already been through the application process or is

this part of the application process? Because I'm

trying to think about in-terms of our timeline, when

do we being to engage the programs that we think

could really support us in our community work?

AMANDA COCHRAN: Hi Kesha, this is Amanda with NCCC.

That's a great question. And depending on which

region you're in we have different project timelines.

So I've been working with Jennifer and her team just

kind of on a rolling basis. And we have a few ideas

as far as the timeline in which this project might

happen, but we're kind of wanting to get everything

in place as far as who is the sponsor, and getting

the housing together, and all of that good stuff

before we really get it off the ground. So definitely

still in the planning phase of everything, no

application has been submitted or anything like that.

But in the attachments of the Adobe, Adobe Connect

thing, there is a schedule on the 2nd page of that

NCCC document, and it shows basically per region what

the timelines are for our project dates. So it's

different, like I said, for every region. Here in the

Pacific region our year kind of starts in the

beginning of November and goes through the end of

July. So we look at different timeframes within that

period of time.

ANDREA ROBLES: So Amanda, Kesha is in New Jersey. So,

     what would – Her campus is Southern Region?

AMANDA COCHRAN: Yes, it is actually Southern Region. So,

     that would be the campus in Vicksburg, Mississippi.

     So it looks like their project year starts in August

     and it goes through May. So you can see based on

     which timeframe within that year you might be

interested in. I would say, if you have a project in
mind or just want to get connected to the campus, go
ahead and just start doing that and they'll help you
kind of develop that, and think about what the best
timeframe might be, and kind of walk you through that
application process.

KESHA MOORE: Okay, that's helpful to know. We were
looking to connect with the VISTA program, and is
that the same? Because I'd doubt we'd be able to make
a July 1st deadline for our Concept Paper, but should
we still just reach out and at least begin the
conversation and do more collaborative planning or
should we wait until we're further along in the
process?

MELISSA MCNEILY: Hi, this is Melissa from VISTA. So we
have a brand new request for Concept Papers process
that we implemented this year. And as we've mentioned
our next deadline is July 1st, but you can definitely
reach out to the CNCS field staff in your state and
begin having those conversations, you can propose the

project that you are thinking of, and you can work

together, and then you would have to wait until the

next deadline which will be October 1st.

KESHA MOORE: Thank you. And I won't take up too much

    time. My one last question, can a government agency

    be a sponsor for a VISTA project?

CRAIG KINNEAR: Yes, we're exactly the same as NCCC,

    except that we can't place VISTAs at Federal

    Government offices, but state and local we can.

KESHA MOORE: Great.

ANDREA ROBLES: Are there other questions? So I'd like to

    ask about a couple of things. I mean, I've worked

    here now several years, and I'm still learning every

    time I hear about Keith's program. So there is a lot

    of detail. But can you give us some examples, both

    programs, about the range of different types of

    projects that maybe you've developed in the last year

    so people have a better idea? I mean, Amanda you

talked about a range of a project, but give us some
specific ones that you've done in the past year or
that you're developing this year for your team.

AMANDA COCHRAN: Yeah, sure. So we do have a wide-range
for sure. I cover in my role, I do outreach and
coordinate projects in Idaho, Nevada, and Southern
California. Those are my areas of my region, so
specifically as far as my experience. We actually
have a team working in Harrington, Nevada, that's our
Nevada project currently, working with the Boys and
Girls Club. So the team is a team of eight and they
separate out into actually three different Boys and
Girls Clubs, very rural spots in that area. So the
team kind of separates out each day to each of those
club offices. And they mentor and do some programming
development for the different offices. So they work
individually with youths in the communities. That's
one project that they're doing. They're also helping
do some event planning for a country music festival.
That's kind of the main fundraising for the Boys and
Girls Club there. So that's one project.

Also have a project up in Idaho working with a national forest up there, [unintelligible] National Forest, and the team is working to protect Riparian river communities, river areas in this very rural ranching community. And they're working alongside ranchers to put in fencing and clean up some post-fire issues in some of those remote, like, campgrounds. That's another project.

And then in Southern California we had a team working with Mojave Desert, a land trust down there, and they were doing some conservation work. They were counting desert tortoises and protecting habitat. And they were working with community members and just education type work. Those were just a few examples. And, [unintelligible] that's a good example, too.

So another project, actually, that just ended. We had a team up in Idaho, in Lapwai, Idaho, on the Nez Perce reservation working with the Nez Perce Tribe. And the team was actually living in a church and then

working in the community doing some medicine garden builds. Doing some bilingual signage, some infrastructure improvement for the community, working with a little bit of mentorship with some of the youth, and cleaning up like elder homes, and kind of whatever the needs were in the community. Those were some of the few wide range project examples.

ANDREA ROBLES: Thank you, what about VISTA?

CRAIG KINNEAR: So we have everything from large national intermediary projects like Habitat for Humanity International. And while the VISTA project, one single project generally lasts from 3 to 5 years, we've had a relationship with Habitat for Humanity for years and years. And the way it works is that they have various sites throughout the country, and after one site has the VISTA for that 3 to 5 year period, they'll close that site down, and then start a new one with a new VISTA project.

So we have those kinds of projects. We have Habitat for Humanity, NeighborWorks USA, and several others. There are also projects that are multisite within a specific state, Ohio has a few of those. Ohio Community Development Corporation-Coalition is one of those. Again, same thing, they have multiple sites throughout the State of Ohio, and they rotate those sites in and out for VISTA projects. And then there are lots of single site projects.

Just one location, multiple VISTA members. And some examples of the kinds of projects are we do a lot in education, a lot of tutoring, mentoring, college access kinds of programs, in housing we do a lot of homeless prevention, housing for temporary housing for homeless. Housing development projects, housing preservation projects, helping futures. We do a lot in obesity prevention and opioid and other addiction prevention programming, access to healthcare, and those kinds of things.

ANDREA ROBLES: Great, thank you.

TANYA GIPSON-NAHMAN: Andrea, this is Tanya from NCCC. If

I could just use the Habitat example and just kind of

distinguish the different AmeriCorps programs because

it gets very confusing when you hear all of these

different – like AmeriCorps VISTA and NCCC, and I

know you're going to have another call that's talking

about state and national. The best way I've been able

to describe it, is you were thinking about Habitat.

So as I was just talking about, the organization who

was building homes for, you know, low income

individuals, right? So the AmeriCorps NCCC, we would

be that short-term resource, so say Habitat, you know

has a really hard time recruiting members over the

winter months because, you know, people don't want to

work in the cold. They can work with their local NCCC

campus and get a team of 8 to 12 members to come in

there for six to twelve weeks. They're the ones who

are hammering the nails, putting up the drywall,

pulling the concrete, you know, laying roof shingles,

or whatever.

AmeriCorps VISTA might be working with that same
Habitat, but they're working behind the scenes.
They're working within the organizations office,
maybe recruiting volunteers, or helping them setup
systems, kind of that capacity building of the
organization. And I know we're not talking about
state and national, but when we get to them, that
same Habitat organization might say, hey, we really
love this AmeriCorps, we really want our own
AmeriCorps program. So they would apply for a grant,
and they would get money to fund their own AmeriCorps
members. So that Habitat would get money to recruit
and train and supervise a full-time or part-time set
of AmeriCorps members that they themselves are
directly managing and supervising and operating.

So that's just kind of one example of an organization
how each of the three strings of AmeriCorps programs
could be utilized to achieve different program goals.

ANDREA ROBLES: Thank you for that clarity. So I just
want to ask a little bit about recruiting before we

go. So can you tell us, again, these are professors
dealing with maybe college students or that age
group, or maybe working with [unintelligible]
transitioning to college. How do you recruit that
age? I'm asking NCCC, Kevin.

KEVIN ANDERSON: Yeah, this is Kevin.

ANDREA ROBLES: Who by the way was also a VISTA, Habitat
for Humanity.

KEVIN ANDERSON: So, really quickly. One thing I did want
to mention on the topic of recruitment is that NCCC,
we do all of our recruitment. We are a wholly owned
and operated program here at CNCS. So we do the
recruitment selection and placement of our members.
And then of course we manage them throughout their
service here. Whereas VISTA, I know that they are
involved in recruitment, but the community
organization that are hosting VISTA members will also
be involved in that recruitment process themselves.
So for NCCC, having full control over it is a little

bit different in that we are – outside of marketing we do a lot of social media and email marketing and things of that nature, but also have on the ground recruiters both through a recruitment organization, excuse me a recruitment contractor, as well as we engage our alumni who are our biggest champions in recruitment efforts, as well.

But they are going to a variety of high schools and universities all across the country. We are of course a very diverse program, so we try to make sure that our recruitment efforts are focused in, you know, not just high population schools, but also hitting up all of the HBCUs, HSIs, and just everywhere across that we can really get the word out.

Recently with this disaster season, we have had a presence in Puerto Rico because that's a community that has a lot of need both in youth who might be inspired by the work that needs to be done around them, and also might be a job market of people who are impacted and might need opportunities.

So we're pretty exhaustive in all of the recruitment
avenues that we approach. There's not really any
single answer for us, but we're always looking for
people. So if you know anybody 18 to 24 just let us
know.

ANDREA ROBLES: I'm just mindful of the time, but I do
want to give everyone a chance. I don't think there's
any questions right now from people listening. So I
wanted to start with Jennifer. Jennifer, any
recommendations for any of our research grantees or
other universities who might be interested and are
working with communities who identify an issue and
can reach out to kind of like the way you're working
with our programs?

JENNIFER WILLETT: I think their recommendation is - I
didn't realize all of the things that they could
possibly do. I thought AmeriCorps was more like
VISTA. They would go in to an established
organization, build capacity, which is great in many

cases, like where I'm from Connecticut, that would be great. But there is no organization working in Nevada, so I wasn't really sure how it works. But they could do so much more than that. Also, when Amanda was talking about how they can build on sidewalks, and I was shocked that they could do that type of labor. And then explaining how they go in and help with firefighting sometimes, and also can wear hazmat suits. So there is such a wide variety of things that the teams can do that are very impactful for local communities.

I think just don't write anything off. Let them know what's going on in the community, and maybe you can make a plan on how to address it, even if it seems completely wild. They can probably figure out a way to make it happen.

ANDREA ROBLES: Amanda and Tanya, any last words or again how the research helps inform the project?

TANYA GIPSON-NAHMAN: Yeah, I was saying before, and

Amanda too, we're based out of Sacramento, and so

that in-depth knowledge about communities. Like who

are the community leaders? What are the real issues

that are affecting the community, why are some

initiatives successful and others not? Which

communities have resources and which don't, those

level of details is just – we try to do our research,

but it's just difficult when you don't live in a

place and so, having a partner like a research

grantee that is just really, you know, enveloped into

a community and researching and looking at these

issues, not just living there, but also deeply

researching them is just a valuable partner for us to

have that on the ground knowledge, and be able to

open some doors and gateways. I know that Jennifer is

saying that AmeriCorps was helping her open doors,

but she's helping us open doors. So, again, it' just

a really great partnership that we've appreciated.

AMANDA COCHRAN: And I really hope that it can become a

model, potentially, for other partnerships like this.

I know there's other research projects that we've

connected with already in Washington and Southern

California just to see if there's some potential,

whether it is partnering with those grantees or, like

Tanya said, just becoming more knowledgeable about

the community, what the needs are, and maybe getting

connecting to partners. I think there is a lot of

opportunity for moving forward with that, and we're

really excited.

TANYA GIPSON-NAHMAN: Yeah, and I think what is beautiful

about it, as Jennifer is saying for the youth, you

know, it's not just doing the research. Their actions

are actually going to help impact their community,

and so I think just for that empowerment of making

the research applicable, so taking the research out

from behind the data and graphs, and pictures, and

saying, "Okay, how can we really use this information

to impact our communities?" I think is a really

beautiful piece of this as well.

JENNIFER WILLETT: I think it's almost in full circle

as far as recruitment too. We've been able to connect

with some of the students, some of the youths in the

community, share what AmeriCorps is, not just NCCC,

but VISTA and the other streams, and really garner

some interest in the future generations, the younger

members wanting to become AmeriCorps members as well,

so that's exciting.

ANDREA ROBLES: Thank you. And you've got one right? An

undergrad. So that's great. Thank you and the last,

VISTA, I turn to you.

CRAIG KINNEAR: So I just wanted to speak real quickly to

Jennifer's point about the lack of established

nonprofits, especially in rural areas. It is a

challenge that VISTA's had for years trying to do

that. So we're trying to use the intermediary model

more. Having an established nonprofit, educational

institution, government agency, something that can –

that has the capacity to manage a VISTA project that

can place members in those rural areas where there

aren't those established nonprofits. So we're always

on the lookout for those. And there are college and

universities who might be interested, we'd like to

know.

ANDREA ROBLES: All right, well, thank you everyone. For

those listening, please just connect Melissa or I,

and then we can help you connect with the VISTA folks

at the NCCC campuses that are most appropriate. And

we will put this on our website and hopefully it's a

place to go to just learn more about this and if

there are other community partners who you think

might be interested you could just – we'll send you

the link, and they're always free to listen to this.

It'll be publically available. So anyway, thank you

for everyone and for being enthusiastic. And I'm

really looking forward to seeing how all of this

works out. Have a good day. Thank you so much.

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