

Research Report Brief

AmeriCorps Alumni

Pilot Outcomes Study



Corporation for
**NATIONAL &
COMMUNITY
SERVICE**

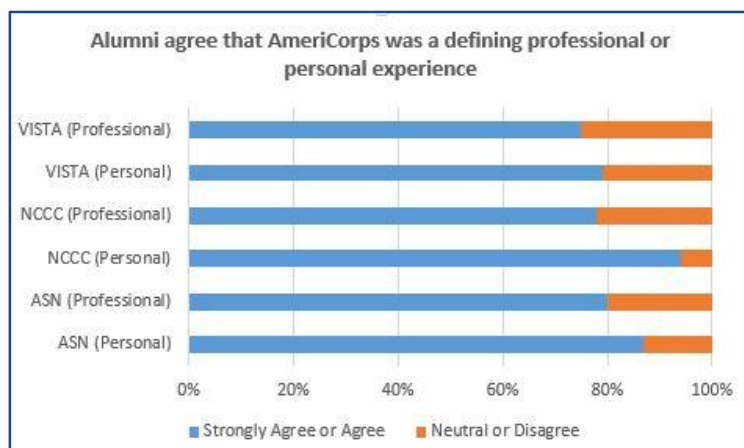
What was the research question?

The purpose of this study was to understand and document long-term outcomes for AmeriCorps alumni in four areas: development of career-oriented soft skills, career pathways, sense of community, and civic engagement. By comparing results for cohorts of AmeriCorps alumni who completed their service in 2012, 2009, and 2004, the study also identified outcomes at different life stages.

What did the survey find?

Overall, alumni indicated that there were substantial benefits to participation in AmeriCorps programs.

- A vast majority of alumni stated that they felt they made a **contribution to the community** (92 percent), gained an **understanding of the community** they served (94 percent), and were **exposed to new ideas and ways of seeing the world** (87 percent).
- A majority of alumni stated that they were **more likely to volunteer and to participate in community organizations** due to participation in AmeriCorps.
- 80 percent of alumni indicated their service experience was **worthwhile in furthering their careers**.
- Nine out of ten alumni agreed or strongly agreed that they **enjoyed exploring differences with others and interacting with different people, respected others' values**, and were **confident interacting with diverse people**. Alumni reported gains in all these areas compared to before service.
- Nine out of ten alumni agreed or strongly agreed that they could **solve difficult problems, accomplish goals, handle unexpected events and unforeseen situations, remain calm, and identify multiple solutions**. Alumni rated their current skills as higher than at pre-service, with the greatest gains in their ability to handle unexpected events and unforeseen situations.
- Almost 80 percent of alumni indicated that they definitely or probably had **civic self-efficacy**, defined as the ability to deal with community problems by taking a range of actions.



To access the full report and learn more about CNCS, please visit nationalservice.gov/research.

Research Report Brief

AmeriCorps Alumni Pilot Outcomes Study



Corporation for
**NATIONAL &
COMMUNITY
SERVICE**

Research Methodology¹

An online survey was fielded, with follow-up reminders and the option to complete the survey by telephone or mail. The survey instrument was based largely on the Member Exit Survey that CNCS administers to all members at the completion of their service, and was modified and pilot tested prior to widespread administration. The alumni outcomes survey project was a collaboration between the CNCS Office of Research and Evaluation and JBS International. Data collection and reporting occurred in spring/summer 2015. The project was funded by the Office of Research and Evaluation.

Survey At-a-Glance

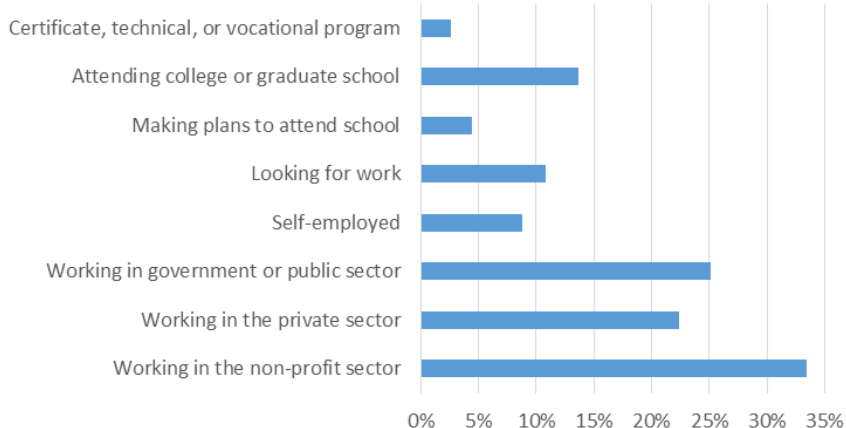
Study Design: Nationally representative survey

Study Population: AmeriCorps State and National, AmeriCorps NCCC, and AmeriCorps VISTA alumni from three cohorts who finished serving in 2004, 2009, and 2012

Research Partner: JBS International

Sample Size: 1468 useable responses

What are AmeriCorps alumni doing now?



Note: Respondents were asked to select all that apply.

How is CNCS using the findings to improve?

CNCS is engaged in a second alumni outcomes study, building upon what was learned through this project. The new project will use innovative methods to attempt to increase survey response rates and will also explore possibilities for utilizing administrative data sets as an alternative means to assess alumni outcomes. CNCS will share the survey instrument and results with programs that are conducting their own alumni research to ensure that efforts are aligned and complementary. Finally, CNCS will continue to encourage AmeriCorps alumni to update their contact information through the Member Portal so that the agency can reach out to former members and stay in touch.

The content of this brief was drawn from the full research report submitted to CNCS by JBS International. The brief was written by staff in the Office of Research and Evaluation at CNCS. All original content from the report is attributable to its authors.

AmeriCorps engages more than 75,000 Americans in intensive service each year at nonprofits, schools, public agencies, and community and faith-based groups across the country. Since the program's founding in 1994, more than 900,000 AmeriCorps members have contributed more than 1.2 billion hours in service across America while tackling pressing problems and mobilizing millions of volunteers for the organizations they serve.

¹ The survey response rate was 20%. The data were weighted using both sampling weights and nonresponse weights across programs and years so the reported frequencies correspond to a nationally representative sample of alumni across the sampled cohorts and programs.