



New Jersey Youth Corps

History of the Corps

Created by legislation in 1984 (P.L. 1984, c. 198), New Jersey Youth Corps is designed to assist young adults (ages 16-25) who have left high school prior to completion with the skills needed to obtain a diploma and prepare for employment. The program combines community service “crew-based” projects with academic instruction in a service-learning environment, provides employability and life skills development, personal counseling and transition services.

New Jersey Youth Corps is a nationally recognized program by the U.S. Department of Labor, and received validation from the U.S. Department of Education as a replicable model. In addition, it has been the recipient of nine Exemplary Service awards from The Corps Network (formerly the National Association of Service and Conservation Corps) and is one of the largest Corps program in the country. It is a state-administered, locally operated program.

New Jersey Youth Corps provides youth with services not found in traditional programs. Data based on 5,000 young adults participating in traditional adult education programs over a five year period of time support the claim that youth who participate in New Jersey Youth Corps are five times more likely to be placed in jobs or training and three times more likely to receive a high school diploma than participants of the same age group in traditional programs.

The State of New Jersey recognizes the unique value of providing community service and instructional opportunities to youth through New Jersey Youth Corps. It provides opportunities for young adults to engage in community service to address unmet community needs, increase academic skills, develop career plans and transition to employment, college, or further vocational training.

New Jersey Youth Corps was one of the founding members of The Corps Network. Established in 1985, The Corps Network is the voice of the nation’s 113 Service and Conservation Corps. Currently operating in 41 states and the District of Columbia, Corps annually enroll more than 23,000 young men and women who contribute 13 million hours of service every year. Corps annually mobilize approximately 125,000 community volunteers who contributed more than 2.4 million additional hours of service.

Service and Conservation Corps are a direct descendent of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) that built parks and other public facilities still in use today. Like the legendary CCC of the '30s, today's Corps are a proven strategy for giving young men and women the chance to change their communities, their own lives and those of their families. Service and Conservation Corps provide a wealth of valuable conservation, infrastructure improvement and human service projects. Some Corps tutor and some fight forest fires. Others complete a wide range of projects on public lands. Still others improve the quality of life in low-income communities by renovating deteriorated housing, engaging in environmental restoration, creating parks and gardens and staffing after-school programs.

Our mission since 1985

“To restore and preserve the dignity of young adults who have been underserved, and enhance their value to society by providing a comprehensive program of academic instruction and community service that form a solid foundation upon which to build a brighter future.”