

NYC Service Legacy Report

2014-2021



Celebrating eight years of volunteering
and civic engagement in New York City



The City of New York
December 2021

NYC Service

Welcome



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A LETTER FROM THE MAYOR OF NYC



Dear Friends:

For the last eight years, my administration has worked tirelessly to lay a solid foundation for our city's future and build One New York where all our residents could rise. Our vision for a progressive city that held opportunities for all was an ambitious one, but thanks to the unwavering dedication of my team and everyday New Yorkers like you, we have seen the five boroughs change for the better in so many ways. The energy that has driven this evolution has inspired countless people to step up to serve their communities. The actions of our residents and the ability of nonprofits, businesses, and City agencies to leverage this growing spirit of service to address our greatest needs is a testament to the ability of New Yorkers to show up for each other when it's needed most.

NYC Service has been at the forefront of this work, providing support and resources to the people who choose to serve our great City and the individuals and organizations who coordinate volunteer and service efforts. Thanks to its leadership over the last eight years, we have seen a more engaged and responsive community of New Yorkers.

The COVID-19 pandemic underscored just how essential it is for our residents to come together to help their communities and how each one of our actions contributes to something larger than what we can do alone. As we move forward on our path of recovery, our volunteer and service community continues to reinforce the importance of everyday actions and the power of collective achievement.

In this report, you will find information on the resources and support provided throughout my time in office that facilitated this incredible wave of service, from the thousands of residents who stood up to distribute food to their neighbors during the height of the pandemic to the AmeriCorps members providing critical response support to City agencies and nonprofits. The report also showcases the success we achieved in our mission to build partnerships and use volunteering and service to address our city's greatest needs. No matter how large or how small, these everyday actions multiply to create movements that impact communities in real ways and are the building blocks for systemic change.

I am incredibly proud of everything that my administration has accomplished, and I know that we would not have been able to realize our goals without the compassion and commitment to service that so many New Yorkers share. I am grateful for your efforts and look forward to this era of service continuing to drive New York City's progress for many years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in white ink on a dark blue background. The signature is cursive and reads "Bill de Blasio".

Bill de Blasio, Mayor

A LETTER FROM THE NYC SERVICE CHIEF SERVICE OFFICER

Dear Friends:

As the administration comes to a close, it has been particularly meaningful to look back at the critical role volunteers and national service members have played over the last eight years. Our residents and your efforts in neighborhoods across New York City have moved us forward amongst some of the greatest challenges our city has ever seen.

As we continue to address the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and respond to the racial, social, and civic reckonings that have been laid bare in the last 18 months, one thing has been made clear: people power fuels our city at its core, providing critical support to local communities in the times we need it most.

Over the last eight years, NYC Service has learned so much about how residents come together. From our NYCivic Engagement studies, we now know how active our city is in service, with half of our residents volunteering each year – and we've been able to track over one million of those volunteers in our annual Volunteers Count report. We have supported the nonprofit and business communities to engage residents and employees in ways that intentionally build local impact. High school youth have built leadership skills to advocate for change on what matters to them most in their schools and communities. And thousands of residents have served as AmeriCorps members, using service to provide more capacity to City agencies and nonprofits to address the City's greatest needs.

We are pleased to share this final NYC Service report of the administration with you, our NYC community, and thank you for your efforts over the last eight years. We also deeply thank and recognize the NYC Service staff who have driven this work for their diligence, energy, and passion.

It has been a privilege to serve with and alongside you.

In Service,



Laura Rog
Chief Service Officer



Introduction

Together. Through tragedy, through victory, through the mundane, day in and day out, the spirit of volunteerism is critical to what it means to be a New Yorker. Our city boasts thriving communities and service opportunities as diverse as the people who live here, across our neighborhoods, our boroughs, and the City at large. Our work at NYC Service centers the service of everyday people at its core and works to support the communities that are the lifeblood of our city: their contributions enliven us, sustain us, and help us evolve.

For 12 years and counting, NYC Service has been at the epicenter of New York City volunteerism, paving the way for the incubation of volunteer opportunities for residents, nonprofits, corporations, and city agencies. We've spent the last eight years fostering a mission to build partnerships that deepen and expand civic engagement through volunteer and service programs and support all our constituents and affiliated programs with meaningful community-based research and resources.



LEADING AMERICA'S RESPONSE TO "UNITED WE SERVE"

In 2009 as part of his economic recovery plan, President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama launched United We Serve, a nationwide initiative to prioritize community needs and enlist all Americans in a life of daily community service. "Economic recovery," Obama explained, "is as much about what you're doing in your communities as what we're doing in Washington—and it's going to take all of us, working together." New York City would lead the way, pledged Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, and NYC Service was born. The agency's model modernized service for the 21st century with its root in the Mayor's Voluntary Action Center (later, the Mayor's Volunteer Center, or MVC) of New York City, founded in 1967.

Today, NYC Service creates and elevates volunteer opportunities that address New York City's most urgent needs, connecting New Yorkers to these opportunities like never before. As a result of our efforts, we have cultivated one of the largest networks to support volunteers and national service in our nation. Since 2009, we have forged and nurtured effective partnerships with a range of City agencies, businesses, and nonprofit organizations to grow and expand our reach in New York City.

These efforts are made possible by the number of access points residents have to learn about volunteer opportunities, which is also a result of our work. In fact, New York City was the first of its kind to launch across the United States—leading to the designation of “Cities of Service” with 11 other municipalities launching six months later—helping mayors build stronger cities by changing the way local governments and residents work together. Since NYC Service launched, over 280 U.S. and European cities have joined the Cities of Service network. As we continue to serve as a model agency for other municipalities, NYC Service situates volunteerism and service as a core strategy for community success by investing the time and resources into building both local and national networks of committed and reliable partners.

Perhaps the greatest displays of the critical need for volunteerism and service have appeared in the City's grimmest hours. New York City volunteers were the first to flock to help with rescue and recovery on September 11, 2001, and in the weeks that followed the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center, contributed critical human services support in the 2008 financial crisis, and were key to helping our hardest hit neighbors clean up and rebuild after Hurricane Sandy in 2012. Most recently, volunteering became even more critical to offer assistance and





comfort to communities across New York City grappling with COVID-19. NYC Service was able to document almost 242,000 volunteers in 2020, a monumental feat for the City as people found ways to volunteer in support of racial, social, and economic justice during the pandemic amidst social distancing and health restrictions. Nonprofits, community and mutual aid groups, businesses, and individuals came together in a critical moment to support their fellow New Yorkers.

Despite the tragedies of these events and many others, they have been unifying moments that mobilized collective action. But these are only the most widely publicized demonstrations of mass volunteerism. On a local scale, there are countless acts of everyday volunteerism and service that go unnoticed, as they are just what people do as neighbors, colleagues, and friends. All these actions, however large or small, show us who we are as New Yorkers.

Underlying our mission at NYC Service is the belief that the power of community—and volunteer service—is transformative. To actualize this transformation in response to local needs, NYC Service acts as a catalyst, convener, and capacity builder for service, working with nonprofits, businesses, and city agencies to strengthen individual civic engagement and organizational effectiveness—and, as a result, to serve more New Yorkers.

As one mayoral administration ends and another begins, this report serves as a reflection on our legacy and celebrates the critical work we've done over eight years from 2014-2021, highlighting achievements, lessons learned, and suggestions for the future. In looking back, we reinvigorate our vision: to unite New Yorkers in service to advance lifelong civic engagement for a more equitable and inclusive city.

OUR CORE VALUES

Deeply ingrained in NYC Service's mission and vision and guiding all our work are our core values:

- ✓ **DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION:** All residents have value and have lived experience central to finding solutions to community and city challenges.
- ✓ **COMMUNITY:** Volunteerism and service exist in many forms across NYC, and all are assets woven into the City's democracy.
- ✓ **COLLABORATION:** The present and future of NYC depends on residents working together across communities and sectors.
- ✓ **PARTICIPATION:** Lifelong civic engagement is a right, privilege, and responsibility of every New York City resident.





"In December, I held my first outreach event in Kensington, distributing information about COVID testing and safety, as well as hand sanitizer and masks for the community. I helped serve almost 300 families and businesses in the area!"

Ateea Kazi, City Service Corps
Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs

What We've Learned

Conducting community-based research is one of the many ways NYC Service supports volunteerism across the City. People, institutions and agencies are critical to the City and its future, and making the effort to listen to them and understand their needs is crucial. Research is how we listen and has served as the foundation for the volunteer programs and initiatives we have developed over the last eight years. It also informs the many resources we offer, including toolkits, videos, and community forums that we develop to guide organizations in partnering with one another to address a common goal. While volunteers keep our city running, NYC Service keeps track of it all, helping to inform our work and share what we know with partners at city agencies and nonprofits across NYC. To this end, NYC Service produces data and reports on the City's volunteer infrastructure by conducting in-house research and commissioning studies.

Volunteers Count

Since 2014 NYC Service has annually surveyed a growing number of organizations that engage volunteers in service. We use the survey findings to produce the annual *NYC Volunteers Count Report*, the largest scan of volunteering across New York City. These data and reports, among others, have served as a benchmark to widen understanding of trends across NYC and to add to existing knowledge on volunteerism. Our last full report in 2019 engaged 549 organizations, tracking 1,020,607 volunteers, and is included in NYC Open Data as a searchable format to make the data set accessible, usable, and collaborative for the NYC community.



NYCivic Engagement Studies

NYC Service has also worked to better understand how volunteerism and service are viewed and utilized in diverse communities across NYC.

At the start of the administration, the commonly accepted volunteer rate in NYC came from an annual survey conducted by the Corporation for National and Community Service. The survey reported the adult volunteer rate as 18% for NYC in 2014 (and compared it to the national average of 25%). In our community work and in conversations with city agency partners, we knew that this rate did not reflect the enormous amount of volunteer efforts we witnessed every day, and we set out to gather our own data and analyze the results.

Our 2017 *NYCivic Engagement Study* worked closely with the Mayor's Community Affairs Unit and the Center for Urban Research at The Graduate Center, CUNY, and also received support from the Mayor's Public Engagement Unit to use volunteers to go door-to-door and conduct a neighborhood-wide volunteer and civic engagement survey. Our volunteers were able to speak with over 850 residents in Western Queens to amass significant quantitative measures, and we conducted an additional 14 focus groups to gather qualitative information. Going directly to people produced compelling results: we found that rates of volunteering in New York City are three times higher (48%) than what was traditionally reported. From our findings, we know that residents are engaging at high levels and in ways beyond the traditional concept of volunteerism. We also know that people tend to look for service opportunities that are personal to them, whether relevant to their own experiences or to what they see happening in their communities.



Building on that study's findings, we once again commissioned the Center for Urban Research at The Graduate Center, CUNY, to conduct an additional online citywide survey in late 2018; this study investigated whether the initial community study results translate to the citywide level. The study confirmed that they do, revealing a volunteer rate of 53% across NYC.

Our Work

Reliance on more traditional research did not paint an accurate picture in NYC and did not account for the unique conditions in NYC that require volunteerism data to be reviewed in nuanced ways. As a result, the research we do is not only meaningful, but also necessary.

Listening to our neighbors and key volunteer stakeholders and asking for feedback has led us to adopt a substantial broadening of the definition of volunteering.



In other words, where many studies and research have relied on formal and traditional modes of volunteerism, NYC Service recognizes, embraces, and nurtures the diversity of volunteerism. Our research indicates not only that the actual rate of New Yorkers volunteering is much larger, but also that there is a greater need to support the already active systems in NYC communities. Important ways communities come together are often undercounted – such as volunteering on behalf of a person’s house of worship, child’s school, and other informal connections – and these tell a wider and more complete story of volunteerism in New York City.

We have worked tirelessly over the past eight years to increase the number of people actively volunteering across the City, and we celebrate the fact that our work is informed by the people of New York themselves. This diversity of perspective encourages us continually to find more inclusive ways of involving volunteers and reporting on their work.

Despite the higher than average rate of volunteerism we found among New York City residents, there are always critical issues and a great need for more people to get involved. The work of NYC Service is thus even more relevant now than ever. Over the last eight years, the increasing political dysfunction and polarization, fueled by the spread of mis- and disinformation through mass and social media and by social isolation due to the COVID 19-pandemic, demonstrate a need for greater community engagement. A robust democracy is dependent on community and a respect for diversity, and at NYC Service, we look to use innovative and new ways to document the wide and diverse ways New Yorkers are involved in service and volunteering. We continually use this information to seek to address inequities in volunteer work—from who sees volunteer opportunities to who becomes a volunteer and where they serve—to inform our programs and resources.



"I don't think I can begin to explain the amount of gratitude I feel for this opportunity. Civic Corps is not something that I take for granted, this is a program that I truly feel is a great way to build yourself up and make a difference. You find out that you really have no limit to what you can do if you put our mind to it."

Cierra Crawford, Civic Corps
Snug Harbor Cultural Center and Botanic Garden

What We've Accomplished

No city in the nation demonstrates social resilience like New York City, and few cities' resilience is so catalyzed by public infrastructural support like that of NYC Service. If that public infrastructure is the engine of progress, then NYC Service and the volunteer network it cultivates are the fuel. Together, we drive change throughout our city with the goal of benefiting all our 8.8 million residents.

The most challenging issues in our city demand cooperation among local governments, community-based organizations and the business community. The core function of NYC Service is using our network to build coalitions among these entities and coordinate volunteers, with the goal of effecting deep and lasting transformation around the City's greatest needs. The partnerships we foster do not exist merely for building volunteer programs geared to one partnering organization. Instead, our partnerships contribute resources to NYC's volunteer and service ecosystem and result in programs, initiatives, forums, workshops and tools that can benefit any NYC institution or resident. Since 2014, our partnerships and coalitions have grown to include 200 nonprofits, 50 City agencies, 50 businesses, 40 colleges and universities, and 15 K-12 schools — and these contribute towards the over 500 groups who report into our *Volunteers Count* survey each year. By our estimates, the wider networks these groups represent provide opportunities and support to millions of NYC volunteers each year.



In addition to NYC Service, two other mayoral offices have been established within the administration to build on NYC's civic infrastructure. NYC Service collaborates with both, fostering civic opportunities and behaviors across the City:

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT COMMISSION

Created by a citywide referendum in 2018, the Civic Engagement Commission (NYCCEC) is charged with enhancing civic participation to foster civic trust and strengthen democracy in NYC. The NYCCEC's work spans across the electoral and participatory budgeting processes, including supporting NYC's local representative bodies: Community Boards. Their mission is to build programs and services that are informed by the needs of residents and designed in partnership with communities to create equitable access to civic life, working with underrepresented communities, youth, seniors, immigrant communities, and the private and public civic organization to build a more engaged NYC.

DEMOCRACYNYC

DemocracyNYC is a nonpartisan initiative focused on increasing voter participation and civic engagement in NYC. Their goal is to help make NYC the fairest big city in America by making sure everyone's voice is heard in government. Part of that mission is to encourage every eligible New Yorker to make their voice heard at the ballot box. DemocracyNYC also works to address and eliminate historical barriers to voting through public education, outreach, and policy reform efforts. Starting in 2021, they have supported the use of Ranked Choice Voting – a new system of voting in which residents can rank up to five candidates in order of preference in primary and special elections for local offices.



Nonprofits + Community-Led Groups

We've strengthened the support of local nonprofits and community-based organizations.

In NYC, most nonprofits and community-led groups rely on volunteers for their resiliency and ability to thrive. NYC Service has prioritized providing local nonprofits with resources and support to recruit and mobilize volunteers to help them reach the full potential of their mission. Since the founding of NYC Service, we have focused on placing both long- and short-term volunteers and national service members within our partnering organizations' service programs, on their boards of directors, among their administrative teams, and throughout emergency efforts.



NYC Civic Corps

NYC Civic Corps (an AmeriCorps program) builds volunteer capacity and volunteer management systems at community-based organizations in New York City. Each year, NYC Civic Corps members are placed at community-based organizations to serve a 10-month term, with 1,200 members serving since the start of the program in 2009. These AmeriCorps members serve full-time to build volunteer management systems around volunteer recruitment, training, management, evaluation, and strategy. Through their service, these members have managed over 100,000 volunteers and recruited over 40,000 new volunteers in the current administration who, in turn, address impact areas that are priorities of New York City and the nation, including Disaster Services, Economic Opportunity, Education, and Healthy Futures.

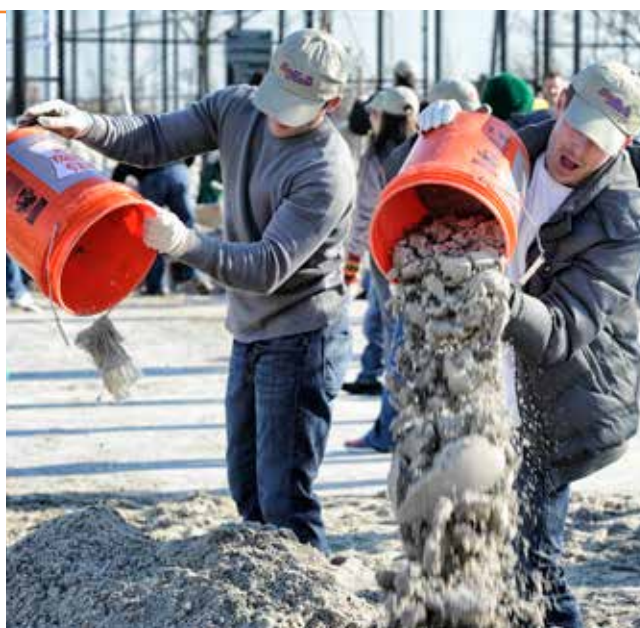


Love Your Block

An initiative of NYC Service, in partnership with NYC Department of Transportation, NYC Parks, and NYC Department of Environmental Protection and, from 2009-2020 with the Citizens Committee for New York City, *Love Your Block* provides a unique opportunity for City residents to transform and beautify their neighborhoods while leveraging City services. Approximately 25 grants are given out annually to neighborhoods across the five boroughs, and to date, the program has served 395 neighborhood groups. In addition to engaging community members in beautification and civic engagement activities in their community, the program has provided street tree planting, graffiti removal, speed bump installation, rain barrels, and garbage pickup to local communities. The *Love Your Block* model's success led it to be adopted as a national program by Cities of Service, expanding to 50 municipalities across the country.

Great Volunteer Management System

Through a partnership with New York Cares, NYC Service developed The Great Volunteer Management System (GVMS), a strategic volunteer management guide accessible to NYC's nonprofits and City agencies. Together, we have also developed volunteer management trainings and a list of best practices to support organizations' and City agencies' strategic volunteer planning efforts in the areas of education, environment, health, economics, and emergency preparedness and response.



NYC Civic Impact Funding

Launched in March 2020 at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, NYC Civic Impact Funding (CIF) supports nonprofit and community-based organizations' efforts to engage volunteers who help deliver essential services to New York City residents. Organizations across the City are on the front lines – along with their volunteers – supporting residents in a multitude of ways. NYC Civic Impact Funding helps organizations strategically leverage volunteers to deliver essential services during (and after) the COVID-19 crisis, as well as strengthen community engagement and support at a time when it is desperately needed. As food access continues to be a particularly high need area, funding is focused on supporting food-supplying and/or serving organizations over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the program's inception, CIF recipients have engaged 4,630 volunteers to distribute more than 1.6 million pounds of food to nearly 200,000 New York City residents.



Volunteer Systems – GoPass

NYC Service, in partnership with the Department of Education, offers nonprofit organizations the opportunity to register with GoPass, a simple, thorough, reliable, and inexpensive screening process for volunteers who work with vulnerable populations. Once an organization joins the GoPass network, all sponsored volunteers undergo a one-time, \$60 fingerprint-based background check. Currently, 188 organizations are registered to use GoPass.

A Strategic Approach to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA) for NYC Nonprofit Boards

In collaboration with Evolv, NYC Service hosts an annual 3-part training series for nonprofit executives dedicated to helping organizations develop a strategic approach to integrating Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility models into their nonprofit Boards. As part of this series, attendees learn how to: 1) articulate a common language around DEIA and its benefits, 2) build the internal support and infrastructure to mobilize change, 3) create strategic and tangible DEIA goals and practices for implementation, and 4) dedicate the board and organization to sustained awareness and accountability surrounding DEIA practices. Organizations can also apply to take part in ongoing, quarterly consultation calls to address organization-specific challenges in developing and implementing a DEIA plan on their Board. To date, 11 organizations have participated over two cohorts and received on average 10.5 hours of training and individualized consultation support.



Nonprofit Board Development Coalition

The NYC Nonprofit Board Development Coalition, led by NYC Service, included 20 organizations that worked to support nonprofit boards across New York City. The Coalition developed the *NYC Good Governance Blueprint*, a resource for nonprofit and board leadership which consolidated best practices, tools, and references for nonprofit governance. The *NYC Good Governance Blueprint* resource was also developed into a four-session training series to enable staff leadership and board members to gain expertise in good governance concepts and implement these concepts within their own boards.

Strategic Volunteer Planning – Service Enterprise Initiative

NYC Service, in partnership with Points of Light, launched the Strategic Volunteer Planning – Service Enterprise Initiative (SVP-SEI) in the fall of 2016 and ran the program through January 2021 as a capacity-building approach for NYC organizations to intentionally engage volunteers as part of their strategic plan and across all levels of their organization to more successfully achieve their social mission and address community needs. The program certified 69 organizations, with participating organizations increasing volunteers by at least 25%, as well as showing volunteer impact, effectiveness, and return on volunteer investment.



Trainings & Workshops for Community-Based Organizations

In addition, the trainings conducted in partnership with New York Cares and GVMS, NYC Service offers an array of regular trainings for community-based organizations based on demonstrated need and interest. Past trainings included a Management for Mental Health series conducted in partnership with NYC Mayor’s Office of Community Mental Health, as well as sessions on Virtual Volunteerism as an Emerging Field, Developing Effecting Partnerships, and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA) in Volunteer Programs.

Neighborhood Engagement Portfolio

In response to the many CBOs, mutual aid networks, and other volunteer collectives that spent much of 2020 and 2021 responding to the COVID-19 crisis on the front lines, NYC Service has commissioned a study on the rise of mutual aid networks to be published in early 2022. In addition, it is working to develop a toolkit that will support organizations as they work to identify critical needs in their communities, increase their organizational capacity through partnerships and volunteers, and evaluate and share out stories related to their volunteer programming



NONPROFIT RESOURCES

Great Volunteer Management System

To access the guide, visit www.nycservice.org/pages/pages/123

The NYC Good Governance Blueprint

Visit nyc.gov/goodgovernance to access the NYC Good Governance Blueprint.

To access recordings of these trainings, visit www.nycservice.org/pages/pages/216

Visit nyc.gov/service to learn how your organization can register and post volunteer opportunities. Sign up for our newsletter at <http://eepurl.com/gKil5n>



City Agencies

We've aligned with NYC government agencies to place volunteers throughout the public sector.

NYC Service has developed strategic alliances with local government agencies across the City dedicated to serving the volunteer community by creating volunteer positions and events for residents interested in helping to address the City's greatest needs. Contrary to the widespread misconception that volunteers are needed only in support of nonprofit organizations, there are currently around 50 NYC government agencies and mayoral offices that act as host sites for volunteers in social services, community affairs, corrections, education, health departments, and parks departments, just to name a few. When City agencies across all five boroughs need volunteers to help address community issues, they look to NYC Service as their go-to resource for support. Some of the main ways NYC Service supports volunteer engagement with City agencies include the following programs.

NYC Service Bureau

The NYC Service Bureau Program is an internal volunteer capacity-building model that equips City agency staff with volunteer management strategies to better meet community needs. Launched in 2017, NYC Service leads City agency partners through a volunteer program assessment, volunteer program development, and program implementation and evaluation. The objective of the NYC Service Bureau program is to increase resident volunteer engagement that builds a City agency's capacity to better serve and reach New Yorkers. Since the program's inception, the NYC Service Bureau has engaged more than 25 City Agency Divisions, who in turn have engaged nearly 60,000 volunteers.

Service in NYC Public Schools

A partner of NYC Service since 2010 and current member of the NYC Service Bureau, the NYC Department of Education's Service in Schools Program works to increase the number of students engaging in community service and service-learning, with the belief that such experiences enable students to use their voices, skills, and critical thinking abilities to make a positive impact in their communities and the world. Prior to school closings:

- 359,191 students participated in at least one school-led service and/or service-learning activity, and performed more than 9,259 school-led projects.
- An overwhelming majority of responding schools reported that school-led service and/or service-learning activities positively impacted their students' development and ability to benefit their community.
- Approximately 90 percent of 1,052 responding schools reported that they accessed resources and/or partnered with at least one community organization to support their service initiative.

National Service Programs

One of the crucial supports NYC Service provides is placing National Service (AmeriCorps) members at City agencies to increase the impact on the City's greatest needs. NYC Service placed significant support into building out national service programs, and several current and former National Service programs have played a significant role in this administration.

City Service Corps

NYC Service launched City Service Corps in 2015 as a keystone service program to provide critical support to City agencies and mayoral offices to address crucial priorities through AmeriCorps members. Those serving in the program build capacity by adding value to their host agency and increase the effectiveness, efficiency, scale and/or reach of new or existing high-priority projects. This model has turned into a blueprint for other cities and municipal governments across the country to use as a template to create their own City Service Corps. Over 500 individuals have served in City Service Corps since 2015, directly impacting over 100,000 low-income New Yorkers at over 25 City agency host sites.



Young Adult Success Corps

Young Adult Success Corps is a subset of City Service Corps that partners with the Department of Probation (DOP) to place young adults ages 18 to 25 on probation into AmeriCorps positions. As a result, participants gain workforce development experience and demonstrate partnership with the DOP.

Peer Corps

In partnership with the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), Peer Corps places AmeriCorps members with lived experience of substance use disorder (with a focus on opioid) in homeless shelters and adolescent teen centers. To date, NYC Service has placed over 60 Peer Corps Volunteers at host sites to address harm reduction and overdose prevention, impacting hundreds of individuals throughout its three year program cycle.

NYC VISTA

Created in 2015 to support City agencies that serve NYC residents affected by poverty, NYC VISTA partners with City agencies to design projects that support residents experiencing poverty. Members create trainings, design survey instruments, develop partnerships, donate in-kind supplies for youth-facing projects, develop data systems, and lead program elements. The vision of the program is that all New York City residents experiencing poverty are able to more easily access critical city services that are also more effective in helping their financial situation. Over 100 individuals have served in NYC VISTA since 2015 at 15 different City agencies, leading over 400 events serving more than 12,000 attendees and leveraging over \$270,000 of in-kind resources.

NYC VISTA Summer Associates

The summer program of NYC VISTA has placed over 100 members in three years of programming to support over 10 City agencies and nonprofits. Of note, members in the 2020 cohort played a key role in the distribution of food at City-run sites during the height of COVID-19.



NYC Community Schools Corps

NYC Service ran the NYC Community Schools Corps program in partnership with the NYC Department of Education's Community Schools from 2015-2017. With the three-part goal of decreasing chronic student absenteeism, increasing parent/guardian engagement, and strengthening student academic achievement, this diverse group of AmeriCorps State/National and VISTA members provided direct service and capacity-building support to 128 Community Schools—and over 60,000 NYC public school students.



Volunteer Coordination Task Force

Public emergencies, crises, and disasters often see an outpouring of residents wanting to step forward and support. NYC Service leads the City's Volunteer Coordination Task Force (VCTF) in collaboration with NYC Emergency Management, New York Cares, and NYC Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NYCVOAD), activating in times of need to coordinate volunteer activation and matching to support needs across the City. Most recently, the VCTF convened during the COVID-19 pandemic, setting up the infrastructure to direct over 11,000 volunteers to sign up with New York Cares to assist across a number of needs, as well as worked with 14 City agencies to connect with volunteer sources and provide best practices in managing their volunteers.



Service Year Network

We've worked to unify and support the NYC National Service community and advocate for service on a national level.

NYC Service has a strong commitment to national service programs as a pillar of a city's civic engagement strategy, including AmeriCorps State & National, AmeriCorps VISTA, AmeriCorps Seniors, and other programs that engage individuals in service to their city and country. Over the years, we have emerged across the City and nationally as a leader within the service movement, developing programs and serving as a convening organization for AmeriCorps programs across New York City. NYC Service founded several initiatives to mobilize the more than 30 service year programs in New York City and leverages our expertise to other municipalities across the nation.

NYC Service Year Leadership Council

In 2016, NYC Service founded the NYC Service Year Leadership Council, becoming a model for service year program collaboration and innovation across the country. Several initiatives have been developed to support the NYC community.

NYC Service Year Career Expo

NYC Service hosts an annual conference for the NYC national service community that focuses on professional development, career exploration, and networking for 400+ local service year members and alumni through workshops, plenaries, and a career fair. The Expo shifted to a virtual format during COVID-19, continuing to make career development resources accessible to members during the pandemic.





AmeriCorps Alums Support

NYC Service partners with the NYC AmeriCorps Alums Chapter to support the growth of chapter membership and programming. The partnership has entailed co-hosting professional development and civic leadership workshops, service projects, and networking events to serve over 10,000 local AmeriCorps alumni.

NYCorps Connections

NYC Service developed a citywide guide to navigating NYC on an AmeriCorps member stipend that is published annually. The guide received a national award from Service Year Alliance in 2017 and has been replicated in communities across the country.

Days of Service

NYC Service supports the local service year community to engage in annual National Days of Service, including 9/11 Day of Service, MLK Day of Service, and National Service Recognition Day, providing service opportunities for more than 3,000 current and former members.

National Service Blueprint

NYC Service has served at the cutting edge of AmeriCorps programming with our development of the City Service Corps program. A unique model in both its form and function, it places members at New York City agencies to fill vital community needs, using a funding model that brings public agencies and private donors together to make an impact on New York City. With the program's success over the last eight years, NYC Service developed a tool to provide communities across the nation with the building blocks to create their own program. The *City Service Corps Blueprint* was created in 2020 to give other cities a comprehensive look into the creation of the City Service Corps, the ongoing operation of the program, and the key tools used to build out their own programs across the country.

Business Partners

We've leveraged public/private sector collaboration to increase the impact of the business community's volunteer efforts.

NYC Service has leveraged public-private partnerships as a way to drive our mission and vision by tapping into the time, talent, and skills that businesses (and their employees) offer to create local change and build nonprofit capacity. Employee volunteer engagement is an essential mission for many New York City businesses, and over the past eight years, NYC Service has continued to support businesses of all sizes as they foster and grow employee volunteer initiatives. Through our work, we've witnessed these businesses springing to action with great flexibility, showcasing how both corporations and local businesses can impact change for communities across New York City and respond to the City's ever-changing needs.



"Good for Me. Good for My City." Campaign

Launched in 2017, *Good for Me. Good for My City.* is a breakthrough campaign to unite businesses in championing employee volunteer engagement as a means to address New York City's greatest challenges. Businesses that are interested in joining the campaign pledge to engage their NYC-based employees in volunteer engagement. NYC Service has recruited 40 business partners to join each year, resulting in an average of over 46,000 volunteers engaged annually pre-pandemic. As we emerge into post-pandemic life, the campaign continues to invite businesses of all sizes and all industries to join with a focus on using skills-based volunteerism as a means to maximize recovery in communities hardest hit by the pandemic.

Youth Mentoring

As a subset of *Good For Me. Good For My City.*, business partners have significantly contributed to youth mentoring initiatives across the City. Providing opportunities to engage private sector professionals as mentors across NYC has helped expose high school students to new pathways around career and college exploration and positive models to further decision-making and educational achievement. These initiatives have included:

Speed Mentoring

NYC Service began holding one-time Speed Mentoring with business partners and in partnership with the NYC Department of Education's Career and Technical Education high schools in 2017. Sessions engaged youth in an evening of direct conversation with professionals in a broad range of fields. NYC Service also organized a Citywide Speed Mentoring Day with events that mobilized over 520 mentors in all five boroughs on the same day in May to serve students in transfer schools, serving over-age, under-accredited youth.



MLK Day of Service

In collaboration with New York City Football Club, Brooklyn Sports and Entertainment, and the Grammy Museum, NYC Service has conducted half-day speed mentoring events to bring together professionals in the sports and entertainment fields. The sessions support business engagement to see the January holiday as a day on, not a day off, and build on the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. for volunteers to improve their communities. The sessions were designed to help students understand the wide range of career opportunities available to them in sports and entertainment.

NYC Success Through Engaging Professionals (NYC STEP)

NYC Service has encouraged companies to take on longer-term mentoring relationships with students. In 2018, we launched the NYC STEP program, a group mentoring model designed to match businesses with groups of students from the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) Learn & Earn programs. The five-session program is designed to provide college and career readiness during the calendar year, bridging students' junior and senior years of high school, engaging over 300 students and 220 mentors since it was founded, and continuing as a virtual model despite the challenges during the pandemic.

Convening Business Partners

Part of the mission for our business partner programming is to provide ongoing support and convene a network of companies in NYC to foster the importance of corporate volunteerism as a strategy to support our city, create community solutions, build nonprofit capacity, and attract and develop employees. Two central initiatives have paved the way for this in NYC:



NYC Corporate Volunteer Council

The NYC Corporate Volunteer Council (CVC) hosts quarterly meetings designed to help the business community engage with and learn from each other and hear directly from high-level City leaders about the potential for employee volunteer engagement to drive solutions to challenges across the City. Since 2015, the NYC CVC has held over 23 quarterly convenings attended by more than 54 partners covering a variety of City needs and priorities, especially those pressing to the moment, including voter registration, census, mentorships, veteran's needs, and more.

Partnering For Impact Forums

NYC Service has also hosted two larger *Partnering for Impact* forums designed to bring together leaders from the private, nonprofit, and government sectors to discuss how to maximize the impact of their partnerships and use corporate volunteerism as a strategy to address the City's immediate needs. The forums were attended by over 180 individuals from 80 companies, 20 nonprofit organizations, and City agencies.



Technical Assistance Offerings

One of NYC Service's key goals in partnering with NYC-based businesses is to be able to act as a liaison to connect and build mutually beneficial partnerships with the NYC community, helping local nonprofits receive the assistance they need while also supporting businesses to benefit from making supportive and positive relationships throughout communities. Our team has helped facilitate this in a variety of ways.



Partner Matching: NYC Service facilitates connections between corporations and nonprofits/City agencies to carry out days of service and volunteer engagement projects and built out a *Corporate Service Look Book* to help businesses connect with NYC Service's nonprofit partners.

Fostering Best Practices: NYC Service continues to provide best practices to businesses through consultation on service projects. In 2018, NYC Service released *NYCorporate Volunteer Engagement: Guide to Impact* to provide a snapshot of corporate volunteer engagement in NYC and to provide a broad guide for companies interested in implementing volunteer programs. The guide was met with continued interest and engagement from business partners.

Driving Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA): To promote greater best practices and volunteer program development from our business partners, NYC Service offered a DEIA workshop through our NYC Corporate Volunteer Council. The session was designed to help businesses integrate DEIA into their employee volunteer engagement programs, and the workshop's success drove NYC Service to expand upon this work. A new guide – *Maximizing Impact through Community Partnerships* – is set to launch by the end of 2021, providing continued resources to help businesses maximize authentic and genuine impact on partners across a diversity of NYC communities.

Volunteers for Small Business Recovery

In 2021, NYC Service engaged business partners in a skills-based volunteer project to benefit small businesses in communities hit hardest by the COVID-19 pandemic. In partnership with Common Impact and the NYC Department of Small Business Services, the program engaged 45 corporate volunteers to serve 26 small businesses with support.

Survey Results from Volunteers for Small Business Recovery

VOLUNTEERS

100%

reported that they enjoyed working with a small business through this program.

67%

believed that this program was a useful professional development experience.

78%

reported that they felt they made a real difference to their small business.

89%

said they planned to volunteer again (either through skills-based volunteering or other ways).

89%

said that they anticipated follow-up and/or continued involvement with their small business.

SMALL BUSINESSES

100%

reported that their corporate volunteer provided valuable insight.

55%

reported that they felt the conversation made a real difference to their business.

91%

reported that they felt this experience will help them to grow or improve their business.

In-Kind Resources

In addition to partnering on volunteerism, NYC Service recognizes and leverages business partners and resources through in-kind donation-focused initiatives. These programs help the City procure much-needed in-kind resources to support city agencies that serve low-income and/or poverty-affected clients.



Secret Snowflake

Secret Snowflake is the Mayor's Office annual holiday gift-giving initiative, which mobilizes mayoral and private sector employees to answer hand-written letters from children 0-16 in the foster care or shelter systems and to provide crucial necessities, such as clothing, shoes, and coats for the winter. Throughout the administration, NYC Service's coordination has helped provide gifts to over 10,000 youth, families, and caregivers in collaboration with the Administration of Children's Services, Department of Homeless Services, Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence, Human Resource Administration, Department of Education, Department of Veteran's Services, and Department for the Aging.

Project Move-In-Day

NYC Service collaborates with the NYC Department of Homeless Services and corporate partners to fill and donate duffle bags providing essentials for college-bound students transitioning out of the shelter system and into campus/off-campus housing. Since the program launch in 2018, NYC Service and partners have brought in over \$41,000 worth of supplies for DHS's future leaders students transitioning to college.



Volunteers

We've connected and supported volunteers with opportunities to better serve their communities.

Since its inception, NYC service has connected volunteers to opportunities across all five boroughs. These volunteers have generated program growth for hundreds of agencies, nonprofits and corporate foundations, increasing our collective social impact as a city. Our aim is to make it easy for residents to find and connect to what matters to them most.

NYC Service Website and Social Media

The NYC Service website connects New Yorkers to an average of 300 opportunities monthly throughout the City so they can easily contribute their time and talents as volunteers. Through quick and easy access, increased functionality, linkages, and search capabilities, the NYC Service website has and will continue to expand volunteerism in New York City. With over 1,000 organizations registered to our website, NYC Service offers nonprofits, community groups, and City agencies the opportunity to post volunteer opportunities and recruit volunteers from an average of 50,000 people visiting the site each month. In addition, NYC Service uses its social media channels, e-newsletter, and other electronic and print media to engage with New Yorkers on all the ways they can join in on the work being done.



Volunteer Recognition: Celebrating Successes

At NYC Service, we could not be more grateful to the hundreds of thousands of volunteers who support our communities. Their service is critical to the City and to the well-being of local neighborhoods and communities. As part of this celebration, we have made recognizing volunteer labor and accomplishments a central part of our work each year and developed the Mayoral Service Recognition Program as a sign of the City's appreciation. This program has several components and highlights the accomplishments of individual volunteers and board members, as well as corporations, nonprofits, and City agencies that have demonstrated a measurable commitment to service. All recognition is given annually in April to coincide with National Volunteer Month.

Mayoral Service Recognition Awards

The Mayoral Service Recognition Awards seek to highlight exceptional volunteer projects in New York City in four key areas.

- **Partnership Impact Award:** Honors an innovative organization and business partnership that came together in service to a community.
- **Community Impact Award:** Honors an organization that leveraged the power of volunteers in innovative and resourceful ways to strategically address city or community needs.
- **AmeriCorps Alum Impact Award:** Honors an AmeriCorps alum who has continued to embody the AmeriCorps spirit of "Getting Things Done" in New York City communities beyond their service year.
- **Youth Impact Award:** Honors an individual or group of youth (21 or under) that have gone above and beyond to create tangible impact in their community.

Mayoral Service Recognition Certificates

Every year, nonprofits and City agencies nominate volunteers and board members who have served 100 hours or more in the previous calendar year, and businesses are recognized for engaging at least 20% of their New York City-based employees in volunteerism. Certificates are signed by the Mayor and Chief Service Officer, with over 4,000 volunteers and board members and 30 business partners receiving the certificates annually.

Volunteers Count and Nonprofit/City Agency Certificates

As mentioned previously in the report, NYC Service has annually surveyed a growing number of organizations and City agencies that engage volunteers in service. We use the survey findings to produce the annual *NYC Volunteers Count Report*, the largest scan of volunteering across New York City, and release the report each April to celebrate the critical work nonprofits and City agencies do to engage residents. Submitting groups also receive a certificate signed by the Mayor and Chief Service Officer to honor their efforts each year. Our last full report in 2019 featured 549 organizations who were recognized for their efforts engaging 1,020,607 volunteers.

Mayoral Service Recognition Ceremony

Each year, NYC Service hosts a recognition event to honor community-based organizations, residents, and businesses for volunteer efforts. It has featured guest speakers from the administration who share their appreciation for the role volunteers play for the City each year, including Deputy Mayors and the First Lady of New York City, and remarks from volunteers and business leaders themselves. In 2020, the ceremony shifted to a virtual format, allowing NYC Service to widen the event and bring together hundreds of volunteers during a critical time.



Our Youth

The most important piece to the future of NYC volunteerism

NYC Youth Leadership Councils

When NYC Service says we want everyone to serve, we also include the roughly 2.7 million young adult residents that comprise more than one-fourth of the City's population. At NYC Service, we recognize the importance of our youth and young adult voices and believe they are critical in both the current landscape as well as determining the City's future. NYC Service is mobilizing youth in the form of its NYC Youth Leadership Councils (YLC) — our leading youth program that serves to elevate youth voices and actions to engage youth to address policy, practices, and advocacy. Since 2014, NYC Service has lent support to an average of 100 YLCs a year and a total of 327 Youth Leadership Councils





over the last eight years, catalyzing authentic change, improving NYC neighborhoods and the City itself, and providing experiences for youth to develop lifelong agency, leadership, and civic skills.

During the 2019-2020 program year, YLCs attracted the most diverse group of young people to date, consisting of Black/African American (49%), Hispanic/Latinx (36%) and Asian youth (12%). The main focus of the majority of YLCs (77%) developed advocacy or communications campaigns.

Despite the pandemic, the 2020-21 year proved to be a success with the introduction of a host of new supports, including professional development sessions and youth workshops to create a learning environment for the YLC network; an updated *NYC Youth Civic Action Guide* providing a full year of curriculum for new advisors; supporting YLCs to transition from an in-person to a virtual model, which provided greater access to youth participants across the five boroughs during the pandemic; and hosting the first-ever youth-led event focused on leadership and civic engagement.

NYC YLCs Accomplishments

- From 2014-2021, almost 7,000 youth have participated in a YLC.
- From 2014-2021, there have been a total of 327 of YLCs, hosted by City agencies, nonprofits, and public high schools, at an average of 100 active in any given year.
- During the 2020-2021 program year, all NYPD neighborhood precincts and nine public service areas (PSAs) in NYCHA residences hosted a YLC. Using the *NYC Youth Civic Action Guide*, Youth Coordination Officers (YCOs) and youth focused on community mapping, which identified assets and needs across different neighborhoods. The information gained through community mapping allowed YCOs new and authentic strategies to engage with youth and communities. Each YLC presented their community mapping projects and suggestions for community policies and practices to NYPD executives during a virtual end-of-year summit.

As the City closes out an administration, we celebrate the coalitions and partnerships that NYC Service has built over the past 12 years, applauding all our partners and volunteers for taking action when our city needs it the most—and for being flexible, resourceful, and engaging along the way. From 2020 until now, all these programs and partnerships have had to shift in response to COVID-19, addressing the most immediate needs of NYC residents, crisis management, and critical supports in all neighborhoods across the City. This has meant pulling together more volunteers willing to serve as frontline workers in the City's most vulnerable communities, and this has also meant bringing a host of programs online, allowing us as a city to expand our reach and accessibility. While many of our programs took a back seat or left turn in 2020 and parts of 2021, we are committed to continually learning from this pandemic and all its ramifications and inspiring social innovations in volunteerism and civic engagement for years to come.





"It can be hard to see a future when you see everything happening, but that's why being involved, setting an example, and doing events so people can be aware of voting, knowing their rights in encounters with police officers – that's why all of it is really important stuff that communities, especially youth, need to learn."

Elijah Scott

Member, Staten Island Youth Chapter of the NAACP

How We Move Forward



New York City is changing, and its demography is expanding, as we saw with the recent U.S. Census results reporting the City's growth to 8.8 million residents. The pandemic and its aftermath have hit hard. But we are once again witnessing the perseverance of New Yorkers and the common purpose that has helped us overcome past challenges. As we complete an ambitious administration that brought residents and their needs into great focus, we also look to the future and the potential that lies ahead. NYC Service will continue to champion and execute an agenda to focus volunteerism and civic engagement at the heart of supporting the City's greatest needs.

We firmly believe the challenges of 2020 and beyond present an opportunity for NYC Service to continue furthering the use of volunteering and service to help secure opportunities for every New Yorker to contribute to their neighborhoods and each other. As we forge ahead, our mission to advance lifelong civic engagement for a more equitable and inclusive city will continue to guide us as we:

- Center NYC communities at the core of all we do by helping our partners to build on and solidify the outpouring of engagement we've seen with recent political and economic crises and reckonings around racial, social, and civic justice.
- Continue to listen to the NYC community, developing and sharing new community-based research in an effort to dismantle the various social, cultural, and logistical barriers that confound the well-intentioned efforts of many volunteer and service programs.

- Further embed Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility (DEIA) and human-centered processes in our approach to support communities. We will do this by encouraging and helping our partners bring their unique knowledge, tools, and ideas to community service, and by training volunteers and volunteer managers to think and provide solutions with social awareness and cultural competency.
- Further our AmeriCorps programming as a workforce development pathway and continue to train national service members in key skills applicable to future careers in local government and community service.

We know our city is at its best when people come together. As we continue forging partnerships across public and private sectors and mobilizing NYC residents to serve their communities, NYC Service will continue to use its unique skills and support structure to provide resources across City agencies, nonprofit and business partners, neighborhoods, and with residents themselves. We look forward to using the expertise we have developed since 2009 to continue leveraging volunteering and service as a critical resource to building and delivering greater services to address the challenges of NYC residents and their communities.

We thank our partners and the NYC community for your efforts over the last eight years and embrace the partnerships and collaborations to come.



Acknowledgements

The NYC Service Legacy Report reflects the hard work and dedication of millions of NYC volunteers, thousands of national service members, and a long list of community and nonprofit organizations, business partners, elected officials, consultants, and civic engagement experts who have contributed their time, passion, and commitment for their neighborhoods and our City. Our work would not be possible without them.

This report is released with special gratitude to our Mayoral Office and City Agency partners who have served as thought partners and tremendous supports over the last eight years. We also thank our consultants at Viney Group for the development and design of this report.

Our most profound appreciation goes out to Mayor Bill de Blasio for his vision; current and previous NYC Chief Service Officers Paula Gavin, Pat Eng, Anusha Venkataraman, and Laura Rog; and to our staff past and present for their work and dedication to the 8.8 million New Yorkers who serve as our inspiration.





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