

RESEARCH REPORT

City Service Corps

AmeriCorps Program Outcome Evaluation

Nathan Dietz

Daniel Teles

Deondre' Jones

Amanda Gold

with Benjamin Docter

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Executive Summary

NYC Service, a division of the NYC Office of the Mayor, promotes service and volunteerism as vehicles for increased citywide civic engagement. In 2015, NYC Service launched the City Service Corps program. City Service Corps unites a diverse group of AmeriCorps members to serve full time at City agencies and their partner community-based organizations (CBOs) to address pressing needs and make New York City a more equitable place for all New Yorkers through increased knowledge about programs and services offered to residents. City Service Corps members have served with 76 City agency divisions and CBO partners and perform resident outreach and training, research and project planning, and management. Since its founding, nearly 450 individuals have served as members.

Urban Institute, an independent nonprofit research organization in Washington, DC, evaluated the City Service Corps program in 2017–18 to assess the extent to which organizations benefit from the City Service Corps members, the extent to which members gain valuable skills from their service, and whether members continue to be civically engaged after completing the program. This evaluation focused on the first two program years, 2015–16 and 2016–17.

The evaluation’s key research findings include the following:

- The clear majority (86 percent) of City Service Corps members reported that their work made a positive difference in the community. In addition, 83 percent of City Service Corps alumni reported that they have a clear understanding about city government and how it works.
- City Service Corps members support the operational capacity of their host sites. Site supervisors reported that members help expand services and improve efficiency. At many locations, City Service Corps members’ work builds a foundation for long-term organizational needs and priorities.
- Host sites often look at City Service Corps as a pipeline to bring in new talent. Although most alumni stated that their service aligned with their preexisting career path, many City Service Corps alumni reported that their service term helped illuminate their career goals. In fact, City Service Corps alumni were more likely than other AmeriCorps alumni to continue in the same service program for another year and approximately one-third of City Service Corps alumni transition directly into a job at their host site or a partner organization.
- Host sites support opportunities for City Service Corps members to grow their skills, preparing them for their postservice plans. Almost all City Service Corps members reported that they

considered the opportunity to gain skills and experience as a motivation for joining and agreed that their service provided them with that experience. Specifically, members reported improved project management, time management, and team leadership skills.

- Many City Service Corps alumni continue their civic engagement after their terms end. At least 40 percent of City Service Corps alumni report that they are more likely to volunteer, keep informed about public issues, and participate in community organizations than they were before they enrolled in the program. In addition, 75 percent of alumni reported voting in at least some local elections over the past 12 months.

Introduction

New York City shows a tremendous need for robust social services. According to data provided by NYC Opportunity, nearly 3.8 million people (45 percent of residents) live in poverty or just above the threshold—and income inequality continues to rise. Approximately 1.4 million New Yorkers face food insecurity, and more than 400,000 people live in public housing. New York City has the largest number of youths disconnected from school and employment in the country, and fewer than three-quarters of the city’s youths complete high school.

These needs were recognized by the Office of the Mayor in its long-term strategic plan, *One New York: The Plan for a Strong and Just City* (2015). The plan outlined a set of goals designed to lay out Mayor Bill de Blasio’s vision for the city. One of this plan’s goals was that “All New Yorkers will have access to high quality, conveniently located, community-based City resources that promote civic engagement” (City of New York 2015, 126).

With this goal in mind, NYC Service founded City Service Corps in 2015. The program unites a diverse group of AmeriCorps members to serve full time at City agencies and (during the program years studied for this report) their partner CBOs to address pressing community needs and help make the City of New York a more equitable place for all New Yorkers. Members serve in agencies and perform the functions of research, resident outreach and training, and project planning and management. A member’s service builds to the following three main objectives, referred to as “the trifecta of benefits”: (1) investing in Corps member workforce development, (2) addressing community needs across all five boroughs, and (3) cultivating Corps members’ civic engagement and leadership skills.

The evaluation’s goal was to analyze the program’s outcomes and potential impact, with an emphasis on the trifecta of benefits. Formally stated, we seek to answer the following research questions:

1. What outputs and outcomes might reasonably be attributed to the members’ service?
2. Do City Service Corps members add value/build capacity at their host sites in ways that could not happen without their presence?
3. How does the program affect members’ postservice career choices?
4. What are the tangible skills that alumni gained from their experience serving with City Service Corps?
5. Do alumni continue to be engaged in civic life?

To answer these questions, we draw on a combination of administrative data and survey data provided by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). We also fielded a new survey of City Service Corps alumni and held focus groups with alumni and supervisors of City Service Corps members. Our analysis focuses on the first two years of the City Service Corps program, 2015–16 and 2016–17.

Program Theory, Logic Model and Outcomes of Interest

A City Service Corps member's service builds to three main objectives, referred to as the "the trifecta of benefits." The program is comprised of high-impact programs, led by City agencies in focus areas addressing critical capacity and community related issues. Each City Service Corps project has the following three critical objectives:

1. **Workforce Development.** Projects provide AmeriCorps members, most of whom are young adults, with workforce skills and pathways to quality careers with advancement opportunities. Intrinsic socioeconomic factors impede many City Service Corps members' access to workforce skills and pathways to quality careers with advancement opportunities. Through the monthly Professional Development training program—led in partnership with the City University of New York (CUNY)—and hands-on experience at their host sites, Corps members are provided with robust workplace training that serves to support and promote Corps members' growth as professionals. City Service Corps is adding a way to provide disconnected young adults with opportunities to further their interest in education, enhance their personal and social skills, enrich their commitment to civic engagement, and expand their skills for professional success.
2. **Community Solutions.** Members develop solutions to pressing socioeconomic issues. City Service Corps members address specific areas of need in education, economic opportunity, public health, environmental sustainability, and emergency preparedness. City Service Corps uses monitoring and evaluation tools to assess the efficacy of each of its projects and partnerships, and to ensure the continued professional development of Corps members. Across all projects, City Service Corps measures impact by counting the number of low-income New Yorkers impacted (directly and indirectly) by members' service. Other performance measures are tailored to each member's position description. Some examples of performance measures include number of justice-involved youth group home residents involved in community service projects; number of households engaged in waste diversion; number of students with improved academic performance in literacy; and number of individuals receiving job training or other skills development services.

3. **Civic Leadership.** Members build civic engagement and leadership. City Service Corps provides members with opportunities to unite behind a common purpose: civic engagement. The program is comprised of talented, energetic, and innovative individuals who are stepping up to serve their city. The City Service Corps experience strengthens not only civic engagement but participant commitment to community engagement, connection to community, knowledge of community problems, and personal growth.

Appendix A contains the logic model that NYC Service submitted to CNCS with their original AmeriCorps application.

Research Design

Sample

During the first two years of the City Service Corps program, 131 members completed the program with 76 agency divisions or projects, most of which were New York City government agencies. Because these groups are relatively small, we collected data from the full group and administered surveys to all the alumni from these cohorts and all the sites where these members served. Both web-based surveys borrow question wording and concepts from existing surveys. Appendix B summarizes the source material used for the survey of City Service Corps alumni while appendix C contains the instruments created for all surveys.

Administrative Data

The analysis in this report uses data collected by AmeriCorps and CNCS, including data from the CNCS member exit survey, which is collected through the MyAmeriCorps portal. We acquired data from CNCS under a newly designed data sharing agreement and used it to form outcome measures and to conduct propensity score analysis that enabled the comparison of outcomes from City Service Corps members with members of other AmeriCorps programs. CNCS also provided demographic data, collected by the National Service Trust on the member enrollment form, which we used to create demographic measures for members.

We also analyzed the data from the existing pre- and postservice member surveys conducted by NYC Service and the data from the supervisor end-of-year survey to assess members' impact on their respective organizations and communities.

Surveys

Web-Based Survey of Host Site Supervisors (Site Survey)

In late 2017, Urban fielded a web-based survey, which was administered through Qualtrics, to organizations that served as City Service Corps placement sites in at least one of the 2015–16 or 2016–17 program years. This survey collected information from site supervisors about how their

organizations recruit, place, and manage AmeriCorps members, and about the neighborhoods and populations served by their organizations. The survey borrowed items from the placement site survey—conducted for the AmeriCorps Longitudinal Study—to identify specific management practices used by organizations that serve as AmeriCorps host sites. The questions are designed to yield information about a member’s impact and value to a host organization. We also used the survey to collect basic background information about the sites (to supplement administrative data collected by NYC Service and to gather information that guided the focus group discussions with site supervisors).

Web-Based Surveys of Former Members (Alumni Follow-Up Survey)

We developed a closed-ended survey of former members to gather information not collected by the existing pre-post member surveys. This survey yields both qualitative and quantitative data on how a service year can affect program alumni’s career decisions, professional skills, and civic engagement levels. The survey questions were adapted from various sources, including the AmeriCorps member exit survey, which is administered by CNCS; previous surveys of AmeriCorps members, such as the 2015 JBS Alumni report and the AmeriCorps Alumni Outcomes Study;¹ and other surveys of workforce development and training outcomes.

Analysis of Member Survey Data (CNCS Member Exit Survey)

We reached an agreement with CNCS to use data from the AmeriCorps member exit survey, which is administered to all departing AmeriCorps members by CNCS. CNCS placed a response rate requirement on programs that wish to use member exit survey data in their external evaluations (the agency established that City Service Corps met this requirement).

Quantitative Data Analysis

Most of this report is made up of descriptive analyses of City Service Corps members’ responses to the alumni follow-up survey and CNCS member exit survey. From these data, we constructed “Key Outcomes” that summarize these data. We further compare City Service Corps members to a matched comparison group and examine how their answers to the CNCS member exit survey differed.

Defining Key Outcomes

We constructed key outcome measures from groups of questions on the postprogram surveys of members (conducted by CNCS immediately after the member's term ends, and by Urban on the alumni follow-up survey). These measures are designed to characterize ways in which City Service Corps might impact its members. Many of these outcomes were originally formulated for the AmeriCorps Longitudinal Study (ACLS).² In several cases, the original ACLS questions were adapted for inclusion on the CNCS member exit survey, and were also used (often with few or no changes) on Urban's alumni follow-up survey. Many of these outcomes are constructed from multiple survey questions to simplify the treatment of later research questions. Appendix B contains the complete list of key outcomes and details about their construction.

The following constructed outcome measures are used in this report:

- Connection to Community
- Innovation and Teamwork
- Interpersonal Relations
- Management Skills
- Problem-Solving Ability
- Impacts of Service
- Problem-Solving Techniques
- Civic Engagement
- Communications Skills
- Leadership Skills
- Job Skills
- Appreciation of Diversity

These constructed outcome measures are used to address research question 1. We also analyze the individual questions that make up the key outcome measures to address research questions 3, 4, and 5.

Creating a Matched Comparison Group

To assess the impact of City Service Corps on member outcomes, we created a propensity score-matched control group and compared key outcome measures based on the CNCS exit survey. This method was designed to replicate an experimental design in which sites are randomly assigned to two groups, where one group receives treatment and the other does not. Here, participating in City Service Corps is the treatment. In an experimental design, statistically significant differences between groups after treatment provide evidence of the program's effect.

Functionally, the propensity score matching works by running a probit model over all AmeriCorps members using demographic information as explanatory variables and a flag for serving in City Service Corps as the outcome variable. The model predicts the probability of being a City Service Corps member based on the members' years of education, age, gender, race, and ethnicity. Then, City Service Corps members are matched one-to-one to other AmeriCorps members with the same predicted probability of joining in the City Service Corps group based on the output of the probit model. To the extent that these measures are correlated with differences in AmeriCorps before serving, we can “balance” the treatment and control groups to simulate random assignment.

Table 1 shows demographic information for City Service Corps members, all other AmeriCorps, and the matched comparison group. Nationally, AmeriCorps programs tend to be about two-thirds female with most members being recent college graduates. City Service Corps is typical in this way. However, like New York City's adult population, City Service Corps is more racially and ethnically diverse than the national AmeriCorps population. Our matched comparison group mimics this racial and ethnic composition. It also provides a slightly older cohort for comparison, with an average age around 27 instead of 25.

TABLE 1

Member Demographic Characteristics

	City Service Corps	All other AmeriCorps	Comparison group
Gender			
Female	65%	65.3%	64%
Male	35%	35.7%	36%
Racial/ethnic identity			
Non-Hispanic Black or African American	33.3%	17.2%	35.1%
Non-Hispanic White	21.9%	52.4%	21.1%
Hispanic	15.8%	17.1%	14.0%
Asian	7.9%	6.7%	7.9%
Other, Multiple Races, or No Answer	22.8%	9.1%	22.8%
Age	27	25	27
Years of education	15	16	15
Observation	114	16,665	114

Source: Urban Institute calculations based on data from the CNCS member exit survey.

Note: Table displays demographic information for City Service Corps members, all other AmeriCorps, and a propensity matched comparison group for the 2015–16 and 2016–17 program years.

Once the comparison group is defined, we can compare their survey responses to those of City Service Corps members. We use *t*-tests to determine the statistical significance of differences between the two groups.

It should be noted that the comparison group contains some members who served in well-established programs. In contrast, the City Service Corps members in our sample served in the program’s first 2 years. The comparison, therefore, is between preliminary outcomes for City Service Corps and typical, or business-as-usual, outcomes for other AmeriCorps programs.

Other Analyses

We also examine the CNCS preservice survey and, focusing on questions that were repeated on the CNCS exit survey, examine how answers may have changed over time. We calculate the key outcome aggregates from preservice and exit surveys and test the statistical significance of changes between the two using *t*-tests. Finally, we examine how City Service Corps members’ responses might differ based on host site characteristics. Unfortunately, we did not have enough matches between site supervisors who responded to the site survey and members who responded to the alumni survey. As such, this analysis does not provide useful results.

Qualitative Data Analysis

With the invaluable assistance of NYC Service, the Urban study team convened focus groups of City Service Corps site supervisors and alumni in August 2018. Two members from the study team conducted the focus group discussions using the finalized and approved protocols, which can be found in appendix D. We also analyze qualitative data found in the open-ended responses to the organizational surveys and collected from the focus groups to address postservice career choices, skill development, and lifelong civic engagement.

Focus Groups with City Service Corps Alumni

In August 2018, Urban invited City Service Corps members from program years 2015–16 and 2016–17 to attend focus groups and discuss the impact made by AmeriCorps and their postservice experiences. Focus groups took place in the NYC Service office. Discussion topics included the types of workplaces; professional and personal (“soft”) skills that members have strengthened through their service; the ways in which training and member development differs across sites; the parts of the AmeriCorps experience that have had the most profound and longest-lasting impact; the social capital that the alumni have accumulated through their service; and the ways in which service has enhanced the ability of alumni to help themselves and others, and to work with city agencies. The results of these focus groups yield evidence aimed to assess service impact on members and alumni.

Focus Groups with Site Supervisors

In August 2018, Urban invited supervisors from City Service Corps sites to attend focus group discussions in the NYC Service offices to discuss the impact made by their AmeriCorps members. Discussion topics included supervisors’ assessments of the contribution of service to the development of workplaces, skill development, the benefits and costs of supervising members, and the lasting contributions that the members made to the offices in which they served. The results of these focus group discussions address outputs and outcomes of member service and contributions to organizational capacity. These results also supplement the data collected from administrative surveys and from the closed-ended Qualtrics survey.

City Service Corps Members

Demographics

As described in table 1, the cohort that responded to the CNCS member exit survey was racially and ethnically diverse—roughly one-third African American, one-fourth white, one-sixth Hispanic, and one-fourth other races and ethnicities. However, two-thirds of members were female, and large majorities were between 22 and 29 years of age and held a college degree.

Basic Member Information

Before their service, 50 percent of City Service Corps members were working professionally, approximately 25 percent were in college or graduate school, and 7 percent were serving in another AmeriCorps program (table 2).

TABLE 2

Members' Job or Student Status before Service

	Percent response	Members
Working in the private sector	24%	18
Attending college/community college	22%	17
Working in the nonprofit or social service sector	17%	13
Unemployed	9%	7
Working in the public/government sector	7%	5
Serving in another AmeriCorps or service year program	7%	5
Attending graduate school	4%	3
Working in my own small business	1%	1
Working at a nonprofit or social entrepreneurship venture that I created	1%	1
Attending high school	0%	0
Attending a vocational/technical training program	0%	0
Serving in the military	0%	0
Other	8%	7

Source: Urban Institute analysis of the alumni follow-up survey question 3.

Note: Alumni were asked, "What were you doing in the six months before you first entered City Service Corps?"

Almost universally, both City Service Corps alumni and similar members of other AmeriCorps programs reported that they considered the ability to gain skills and experience as a motivation for joining and agreed that their service provided them with that experience. Of the 114 City Service Corps members who responded to the exit survey (out of 131 alumni from program years 2015–16 and 2016–

17 who were included in the evaluation), 91 percent listed “to gain general skills or competencies that would be useful in school or work” as a motivation. At the same time, 95 percent listed “to gain direct experience in a specific career and/or future profession” as a motivation. In the comparison group, these figures were similar—89 percent and 91 percent, respectively (table 3).

TABLE 3
Reasons for Joining

Answer	City Service Corps		Comparison Group		p-value
	Percent agree	Observations	Percent agree	Observations	
To gain general skills or competencies that would be useful in school or work.	91.2%	114	89.5%	114	0.672
To have a chance to work with people who share your ideals.	85.1%	114	92.1%	114	0.088
To fulfill your duty as a citizen.	78.9%	114	75.4%	114	0.529
To receive an education award.	84.2%	114	74.6%	114	0.086
To gain direct experience in a specific career and/or future profession.	94.7%	114	91.2%	114	0.287
To help in solving a community need or challenge.	56.1%	114	61.4%	114	0.425
To make friends and meet people.	66.7%	114	61.4%	114	0.417
To do something while also enrolled in school.	31.6%	114	35.1%	114	0.549
To do something during a break in school or work.	41.2%	114	37.7%	114	0.588

Source: Urban Institute analysis of the CNCS member exit survey question 1.

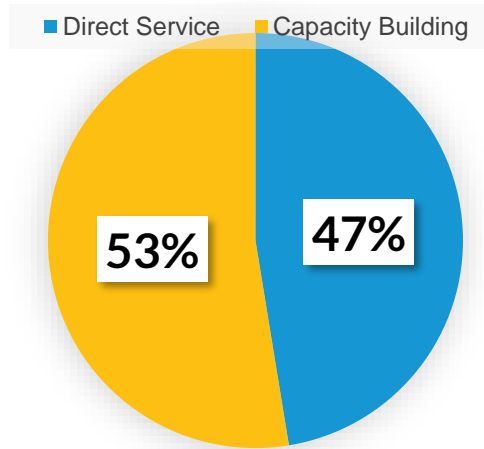
Note: Percent agree includes people who selected either agree or strongly agree.

City Service Corps members provide a mix of direct service and capacity building (figure 1). In the aggregate, alumni reported that they spent about equal time on each. Sites tend to work across multiple boroughs, although 42 percent of alumni said their service was “primarily focused in [only] one borough” (table 4).

Following their service year, most members stayed in New York. Of the 77 that responded (table 5), 35 New York City residents joined City Service Corps and stayed in the community in which they already lived, and 20 City Service Corps members moved to a new community for the program and stayed there afterward.

FIGURE 1

Time Spent in Direct Service and Capacity Building



Source: Urban Institute analysis of the alumni follow-up survey question 2.

Notes: Alumni were asked, "During your City Service Corps term, how much of your time was spent providing direct service to community residents, and how much was spent on internal work that builds the organization's capacity to provide service?" Calculations based on 77 respondents.

TABLE 4

Service Area

Outcome	Yes	No	Responses
Was your service primarily focused in one borough?	42%	58%	77

Source: Urban Institute analysis of the alumni follow-up survey question 4.

TABLE 5

Member Community Connections

Outcome	Share of responses	Members
Yes - I was not originally from that community but I stayed there after City Service Corps.	26%	20
Yes - I was originally from that community and I stayed there after City Service Corps.	45%	35
No - I moved back to where I was living before City Service Corps.	9%	7
No - I moved to a new community.	19%	15

Source: Urban Institute analysis of the alumni follow-up survey question 5.

Note: Alumni were asked, "After your City Service Corps service, did you reside in the community in which you were serving?"

Research Question 1: Outputs and Outcomes Attributed to Service

Question: What outputs and outcomes might reasonably be attributed to the members' service?

Takeaway: The vast majority of City Service Corps members reported that their service made a positive difference in the community.

Member Outcomes

Using data from the CNCS member exit survey and the Urban-administered alumni follow-up survey, we constructed several outcome measures that measure personal efficacy and civic engagement outcomes. The key outcomes featured in this section cover a wide variety of outcomes related to educational attainment and aspirations, occupational and postcareer outcomes and aspirations, civic engagement, and personal efficacy. The “personal efficacy” category contains a number of different types of outcomes, including both “hard” and “soft” management and job skills, identifying community needs, problem-solving abilities and techniques, interpersonal skills, and an appreciation for diversity. Many of these outcomes were originally formulated for the AmeriCorps Longitudinal Study (ACLS). In many cases, the original ACLS questions were adapted for inclusion on the CNCS member exit survey, and were also used (often with few or no changes) on Urban’s baseline and follow-up surveys. Appendix B details how these key outcomes were constructed.

Most City Service Corps alumni were satisfied with their experience and believed that their service was personally impactful. In the alumni follow-up survey, respondents reported that they were very satisfied with their experience overall (an average score of 4.3 out of 5). Answering the CNCS member exit survey, most respondents agreed that their experience was both a personally defining experience (4.1 out of 5), and professionally defining (4.1 out of 5). They also agreed that their service contributed toward their overall goals (an average score of 4.4 out of 5 across three measures).

As part of the exit survey, members were asked about their problem-solving abilities, appreciation for diversity, and connections to their community. On average, exiting members believed that they had the ability to assess, plan, and address problems (an average score of 4.3 out of 5). Members agreed that they had an appreciation of diversity (an average score of 4.4 out of 5), and reported that they felt

connected to their community, ranking their awareness, attachment, and contributions to their local communities as a 3.7 out of 5.

Overall, alumni agreed that their service was impactful, and reported that they developed several skills during their experience. During the follow-up survey, alumni were optimistic about the likelihood of their service having a positive impact (an average score of 3.9 out of 5 across 9 different measures). The clear majority (86 percent) of alumni reported that their service made a positive difference in the community. Alumni in general also agreed that they developed their management skills (an average score of 3.5 out of 5) and exiting service members agreed that they had opportunities to develop their interpersonal skills (an average score of 3.8 out of 5). Alumni reported that their experience somewhat helped them improve their innovation and teamwork (an average score of 3.4 out of 4), communication (an average score of 3.2 out of 4), problem-solving, and leadership skills (both scoring an average of 3.1 out of 4).

Since their term ended, alumni reported that they were about as civically engaged as they had been when they enrolled in the program.³ Alumni reported that they discussed and thought about political and social issues about as often as they did before they enrolled in the program (average score of 2.4 out of 3). Alumni reported that they took part in activities related to civic engagement (such as volunteering) about as often as before they enrolled (average score of 2.3 out of 3). When asked in the CNCS member exit survey about their level of trust in others and institutions (specifically corporations, the media, and schools), exiting members reported that they only had some confidence (average score of 2.6 out of 5). Approximately 13 percent of alumni reported that they decided to vote in the 2016 national election as a result of their City Service Corps experience; 56 percent said that their service made them more likely to vote.

When asked specifically about the impact of their service on their career pathways, responses were more mixed. Alumni strongly agreed that they would include AmeriCorps experience on their résumé. On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being “strongly disagree” and 5 being “strongly agree”), the average score was 4.8. However, alumni reported that their service had only impacted their career and educational choices a little. Scoring “No” as 1, “A little” as 2, and “A lot” as 3, the average responses to questions about the impact of service on career and educational choices were 2.2 and 2.1 respectively. Alumni also reported that they were somewhat happy with the job skills they had obtained during their service. On a 4-point scale with “not at all” as 1, “very little” as 2, “somewhat” as 3 and “a great deal” as 4, the average score was 2.7.

TABLE 6

Summary of Key Outcome Measures

Outcome	Scale	Average	Std. Dev.	Responses
Connection to community	1-5	3.7	0.8	79
Innovation and teamwork	1-4	3.4	0.5	79
Interpersonal relations	1-5	3.8	0.8	67
Management skills	1-5	3.5	0.6	79
Problem-solving ability	1-5	4.3	0.5	67
Impacts of Service	1-5	3.9	0.6	79
Problem-solving techniques	1-4	3.1	0.7	79
Civic engagement	1-3	2.3	0.5	79
Communications skills	1-4	3.2	0.6	79
Leadership skills	1-4	3.1	0.6	79
Job skills	1-4	2.7	0.9	79
<i>Other Questions from CNCS Exit Survey:</i>				
Appreciation of Diversity	1-5	4.4	0.6	79
Overall satisfaction with [program/AmeriCorps]	1-5	4.3	0.8	79
Discuss and think about political and social issues	1-3	2.4	0.7	78
Trust in others/trust in institutions	1-4	2.6	0.7	67
Voting and registration - 2016 election	1-2	1.1	0.4	78
AmeriCorps' contribution toward goals	1-5	4.4	0.7	79
AmeriCorps was a personally defining experience	1-5	4.1	0.8	67
AmeriCorps was a professionally defining experience	1-5	4.2	0.8	67
Impact on educational choices	1-3	2.2	0.6	67
Impact on career choices	1-3	2.1	0.6	78
Including AmeriCorps experience on resume	1-5	4.8	0.5	79

Source: Urban Institute analysis of data from the CNCS member exit survey, site survey, and the alumni follow-up survey.

Research Question 2: Added Value and Capacity Building

Question: Do City Service Corps members add value/build capacity at their host sites in ways that could not happen without their presence?

Takeaway: City Service Corps members support the operational capacity of their host sites, supplementing staff with needed skills. A member’s work also builds a foundation for long-term organizational needs and priorities.

Operational Capacity

Host sites reported that most City Service Corps members (88 percent) fully met their expectations. All host sites reported at least some investment in training members, though this varied by site. On average, sites spent about 4 percent of total staff time on planning or leading member development activities. The frequency of these trainings ranged from weekly occurrences (six host sites) to once or twice a year (seven host sites). Most host sites fell somewhere in the middle, with about one-third of host sites providing training either monthly or every other month. Eight host sites responded that they provided these opportunities at a frequency other than the option choices provided (table 7).

TABLE 7
Frequency of Site-Provided Formal Development or Training for City Service Corps Members

	Frequency	Responses	Non-response
Weekly	12%	6	29
Every two weeks	12%	6	29
Monthly	29%	14	29
Every two months	4%	2	29
Every three to four months	12%	6	29
Once or twice a year	14%	7	29
Other	16%	8	29

Source: Urban Institute analysis of site survey question 11.

Note: Site supervisors were asked, "Outside of the monthly City Service Corps planned training, how often does your organization provide formal development/training for the City Service Corps member?"

Sites were asked how important it was for members to achieve six different goals: develop commitment to civic engagement, social responsibility, and volunteerism; learn skills that they can use

on the job, or for future employment; have an opportunity to serve communities from diverse backgrounds; develop teamwork or leadership skills; work towards unit or agency priorities; expand the number of New Yorkers that a site can reach. Most sites ranked each goal as either important or very important. Nearly all sites (94 percent) thought that a member learning skills that could be used on the job or for future employment was either important or very important. A similar proportion of sites thought that working toward unit or agency priorities was either important or very important. Fewer, but still more than two-thirds of sites thought that it was important for members to develop a commitment to civic engagement or volunteerism, or to expand the number of New Yorkers that a unit or agency is able to reach (table 8).

TABLE 8
Importance of Members Achieving Different Goals

	Not Important			Very Important		Responses
	1	2	3	4	5	
Develop commitment to civic engagement, social responsibility, and volunteerism	2%	2%	27%	29%	41%	49
Learn skills that they can use on the job, or for future employment	0%	0%	6%	31%	63%	49
Have an opportunity to serve communities from diverse backgrounds	0%	0%	16%	18%	65%	49
Develop teamwork/leadership skills	2%	0%	10%	24%	63%	49
Work towards unit/agency priorities	0%	4%	2%	35%	59%	49
Expand the number of New Yorkers that your unit/agency is able to reach	6%	4%	20%	16%	53%	49

Source: Urban Institute analysis of site survey question 12.

Note: Site supervisors were asked, "While serving with your unit, how important was it that your members..."

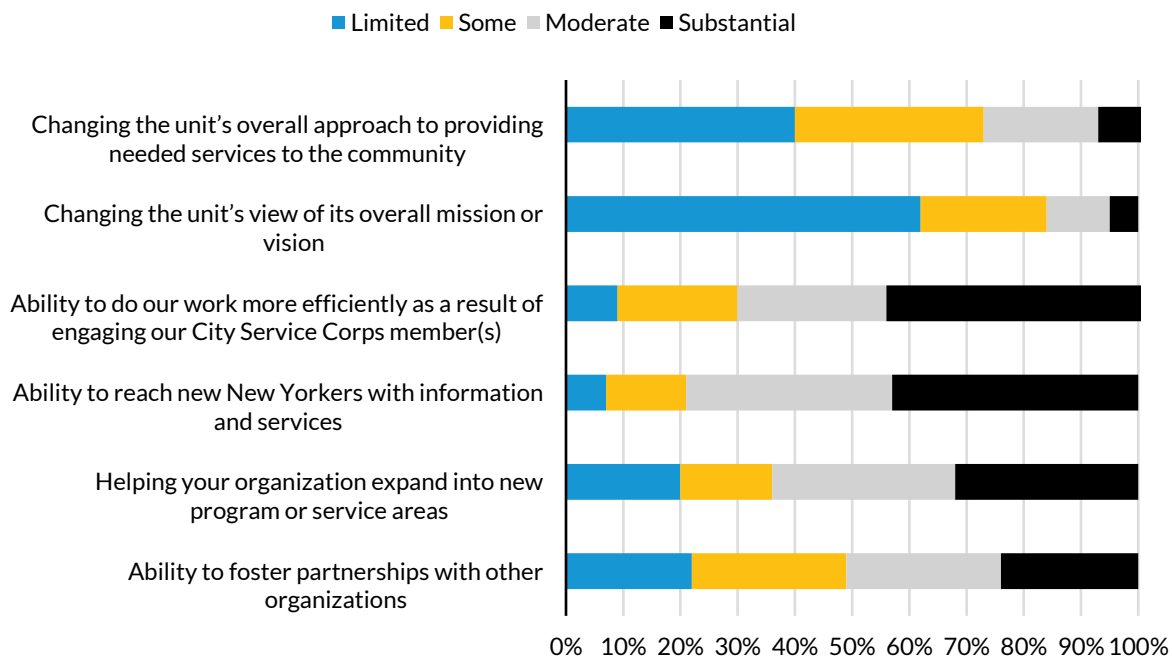
Sites reported City Service Corps members helped expand services. Ninety-three percent of site supervisors reported that Corps members helped the organization reach New Yorkers with information and services and nearly one-half (43 percent) described their members' contribution to this effort as substantial (figure 2). One site supervisor said,

[M]y unit is two full-time staff members, and we're trying to basically educate all New York City businesses on recycling practices, etc. [...] I think these members go a long way in being able to help us reach as much of the public as possible that we wouldn't otherwise be able to do as two people.

Similarly, 91 percent of site supervisors reported that their members helped them work more efficiently, and 80 percent of site supervisors reported that their members provided at least some contribution with regards to helping the organization expand into new program or service areas (figure 2). One site supervisor explained,

The project that the person was working on, we just wouldn't have gotten that work done.... that's an extra piece of work that we all know we would like our unit to be doing more of this outreach work, but our capacity is limited so it's been on the back burner all the time.

FIGURE 2
2016–17 City Service Corps Member Contributions to Sites



Source: Urban Institute analysis of the site survey Q20.

Notes: Site supervisors were asked, "How would you describe the contribution made by your 2016-17 City Service Corps member(s) in the following areas..."

Benefits to Supervisor. City Service Corps members may have also made their colleagues, and especially their supervisors, more efficient by taking on additional tasks that are needed by the unit. Some supervisors indicated that their member made their jobs significantly easier because it allowed them to get additional tasks completed. In the focus groups a supervisor shared:

[O]ur capacity is limited so [this task has] been on the back burner all the time, even though the deputy commissioner of our division is telling me I'm supposed to do this. I'm [wondering], how am I supposed to do this with the three people I got? I think we did benefit because we were able to make some progress on this project.

During focus groups, supervisors also discussed the trade-offs between the time spent training members and the time saved after the members are trained. Some supervisors felt that it took a second year to get the balance right. Others suggested the effort to train members was almost always worth it.

Challenges with Members. Before City Service Corps members are placed at host sites, NYC Service staff and host site supervisors perform their due diligence by reviewing the applications of the members and interviewing them before the selection process is finalized. While many supervisors speak positively about the experience of hosting a member, member hosting does often come with challenges, such as the member's lack of experience, investment, and/or consistently high performance.

To learn more about challenges with supervising City Service Corps members, we included an open-ended question on the site supervisor survey that asked them to share how members “did not meet [their] expectations” (question 7). The most frequently recurring theme among these answers was that there were issues with members' capabilities. One supervisor stated that “members were not always able to execute tasks of their position.” Multiple supervisors mentioned communication issues and professionalism. Two supervisors reported that some of their members did not complete their year of service:

There was some difficulty with communication. Some members had difficulty following instructions and adhering to established office and fieldwork protocols. There were also discrepancies in how time was being spent in the field and accuracy of data collected by some members.

Notably, the concerns of site supervisors generally focused more on soft skills than on specific job skills. In a focus group, one site supervisor summed this up as follows:

But again, I think it's such a varied background that everyone's coming from, and for us it's not really that there's hard skills. We're looking for soft skills. Again, in that extreme case, I think that individual just wasn't a fit probably for the program to begin with and maybe didn't have a strong background that was fit for a professional environment.

Members also suffer from personal issues at times, negatively impacting their service performance. Personal issues and members' backgrounds came up again during the focus groups. As one site supervisor put it, “you know, these folks have families.”

Capacity for Increased Organizational Scope and Efficiency

City Service Corps members improved efficiency at host sites. Ninety-two percent of site supervisors reported that Corps members made at least some contribution to doing their work more efficiently and 45 percent gave members substantial credit. At more than 75 percent of sites, members also helped host sites foster partnerships with other organizations.

Members Adding Value to Host Site. Most supervisors who participated in focus groups indicated that their City Service Corps members added value to their organization through increased organizational capacity. Generally, they did this in two ways. First, by working on long-term projects that the existing staff did not have the capacity to take on. For example, one site supervisor in the focus groups noted that a member did initial research that could help to create a new program. Second, City Service Corps members brought new and fresh perspectives. In the focus groups, this seemed especially important at public sector organizations in which many staff members had long tenures. As one supervisor put it, “We've been embedded and ingrained in some of the bureaucracy when newcomers come they right away see the gaps.” Another site supervisor explained how this fresh perspective benefited the community:

In other division[s] of [our organization] we also have staff that have been there for decades, and it's kind of refreshing to bring someone who's really passionate and can kind of relate more to the youth, who can see a gap in service, they make suggestions and recommendations.

Research Question 3: Impact on Members' Career Choice

Question: How does the program affect postservice career choices made by members?

Takeaway: Host sites often look at City Service Corps as a pipeline to bring in new talent, while members use the service term to refine and illuminate their career goals.

Effect on Educational Attainment or Further Education

Because AmeriCorps engages so many young adults and offers an education award, we expect service to impact longer-term educational goals and attainment. On the CNCS member exit survey (question 10e) majorities of both City Service Corps members and comparison group AmeriCorps members stated that they agreed with the statement “I figured out what my next steps are in terms of educational goals.” A larger share of the comparison agreed with the statement—73 percent versus 61 percent. Yet, on our alumni follow-up survey (table 9), 85 percent of City Service Corps alumni said that “City Service Corps made my personal goals for educational attainment increase.”

TABLE 9
Service Impact on Education Pathways

Outcome	Yes, a lot	Yes, a little	No	Responses
<i>How did your City Service Corps experience affect the degree/major you chose?</i>				
City Service Corps made me more interested in the topic I pursued in school:	37%	33%	30%	46
City Service Corps made my personal goals for educational attainment increase:	50%	35%	15%	54
The education award made continuing my education possible:	71%	0%	29%	52
Are there any other ways City Service Corps has influenced your education choices?	18%	0%	82%	74

Source: Urban Institute analysis of the alumni follow-up survey Q34.

Notes: Alumni were asked, “How has your City Service Corps experience shaped your education choices? For the following statements, please respond yes, a little; yes, a lot; or no.”

Whether or not alumni’s educational goals changed during service, the value of the education award is clear. Every one of the alumni that responded to our survey reported that they planned to use the education award (table 10). Seventy-one percent of Alumni further reported that “the education award made continuing my education possible” (table 9). Moreover, 48 percent of alumni had already used the education award at the time of the follow-up survey (table 10).

TABLE 10
Service Effects on Members (Yes/No)

Outcome	Yes	No	Responses
Q27 (alumni survey): Have you used the AmeriCorps education award you received at the end of your City Service Corps term?	48%	52%	75
Q29 (alumni survey): Do you plan to use the AmeriCorps education award you received at the end of your City Service Corps term?	100%	0%	65

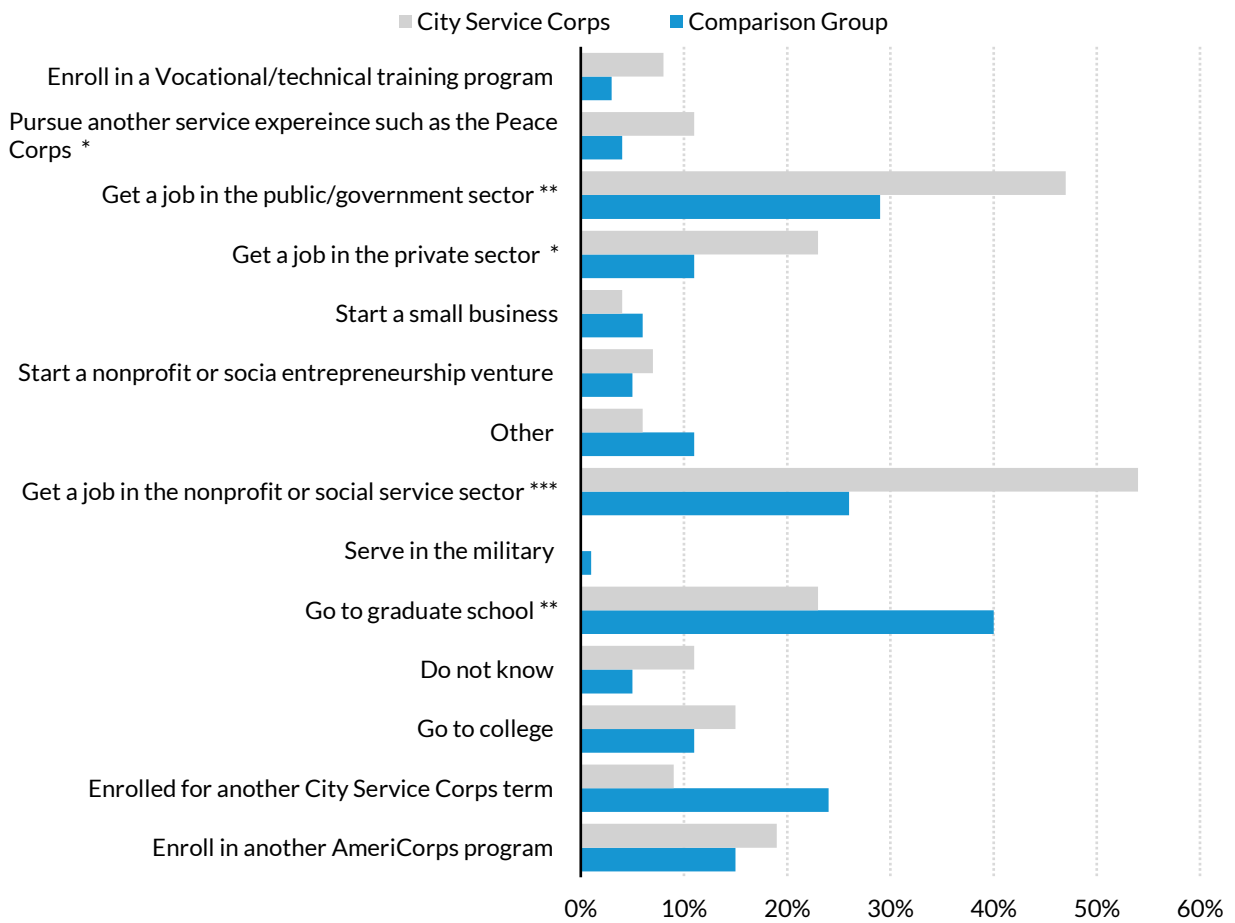
Source: Author’s analysis of the alumni follow-up survey.

How Career Paths Change

While most members continue along the same career path, City Service Corps members often find that the service term illuminates their career goals. City Service Corps alumni were more likely to say they planned to work in nonprofit social services or in the public sector. City Service Corps members were less likely to say they planned to go directly on to graduate school after their program ended (figure 3).

The alumni follow-up survey provided information on where 64 alumni were professionally the following year (figure 4). Most alumni were either working in the nonprofit sector (14 alumni) or for the public or government sector (21 alumni). At the same time, 10 alumni were doing a second year of AmeriCorps, either through NYC Service or elsewhere.

FIGURE 3
Post AmeriCorps Plans

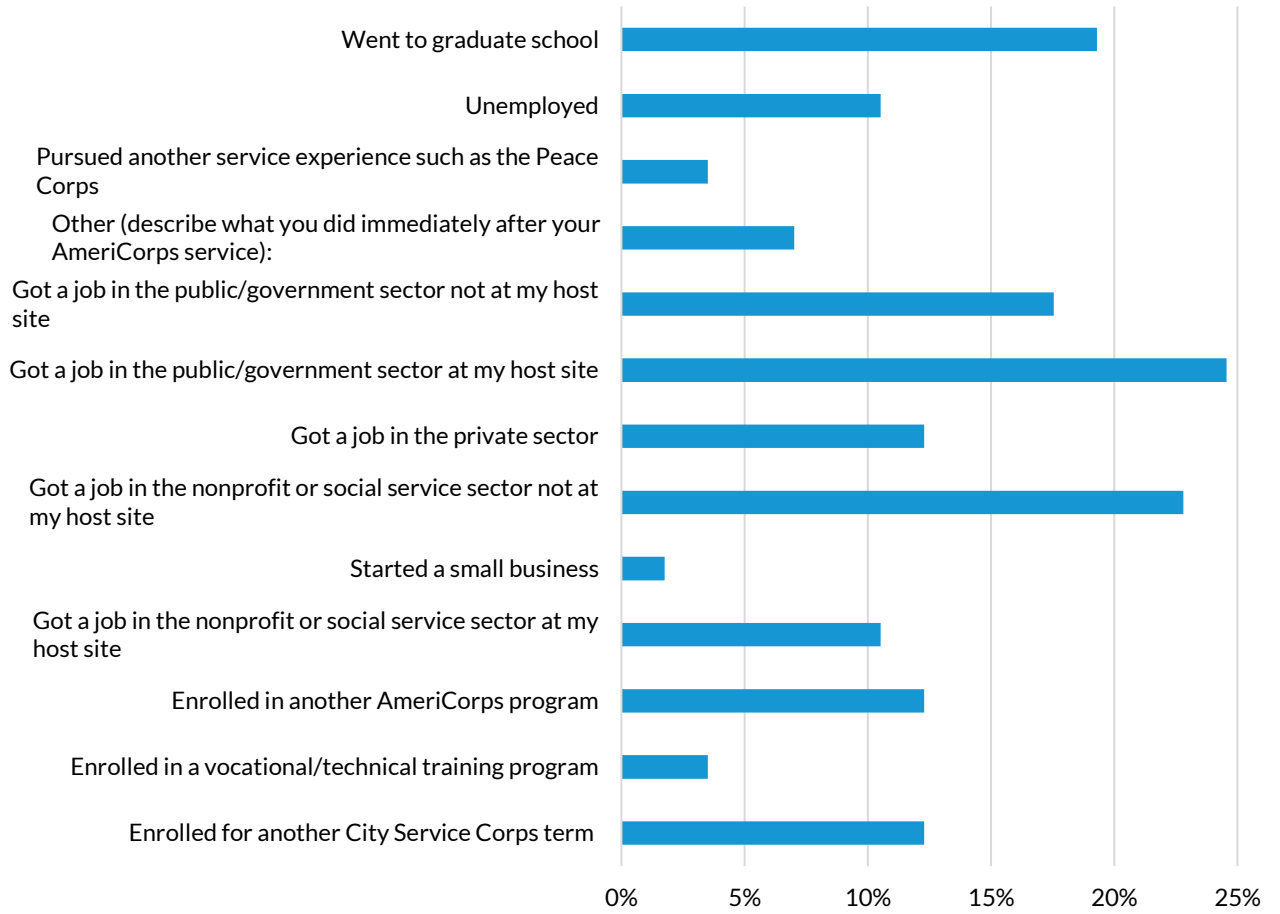


Source: Urban Institute calculations from CNCS member exit survey question 28.

Notes: Statistics show the percent of respondents who selected the option. Options were not mutually exclusive—many respondents chose multiple—and therefore do not sum to 100 percent.

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

FIGURE 4
Postservice Occupational Choices



Source: Urban Institute analysis of the alumni follow-up survey Q31.

Note: Alumni were asked, “What did you do in the six months after your City Service Corps service?”

Seventy percent of alumni stated that City Service Corps affected their career pathways at least a little (table 11). While 65 percent of members stated that City Service Corps aligned with their existing career path (table 12), large majorities (85 percent) of alumni stated that their service increased their interest in “the types of jobs that [they] pursued.”

TABLE 11

Service Effects on Members (Yes/No)

Outcome	Yes	No	Responses
City Service Corps affected the career pathway I chose.	70%	30%	74
City Service Corps made me more interested in the types of jobs that I pursued.	85%	15%	73
City Service Corps made my personal goals for occupational attainment increase.	83%	17%	70
Q35 (alumni survey): Are there any other ways City Service Corps has influenced your career choices?	25%	75%	61

Source: Urban Institute analysis of the alumni follow-up survey Q35.

Note: Alumni were asked, "After your City Service Corps service, did you reside in the community in which you were serving?"

TABLE 12

AmeriCorps Members Opinions on Service

	Frequency	Responses
AmeriCorps aligned with the career path I was already pursuing.	65%	74
My career took a different path into private/business sector after AmeriCorps, but then I returned to nonprofit and public sector.	4%	74
My career took a different path into private/business sector after AmeriCorps.	5%	74
My career took a different path into work in a nonprofit and the public sector after AmeriCorps.	26%	74

Source: Urban Institute analysis of the alumni follow-up survey question 30.

Note: Alumni were asked, "After your City Service Corps service, did you reside in the community in which you were serving?"

City Service Corps Is a Job Pipeline

Host sites often look at the City Service Corps as a pipeline to bring in new talent. In our site survey, 68 percent of sites reported that they viewed City Service Corps as a workforce development strategy and 41 percent of sites told us that they hired City Service Corps members within the last 2 years (tables 13 and 14). Not surprisingly then, 35 percent of members reported that within 6 months of finishing their term of service, they got a job directly connected to the organization or agency in which they served (table 13).

TABLE 13

Service Effects on Members (Yes/No)

Outcome	Yes	No	Responses
Q15 (site survey): Within the last two years –including the 2016-2017 program year –has your organization hired any of the City Service Corps members that have served there?	41%	59%	49
Q32 (alumni follow-up survey): If you got a job in the six months after your AmeriCorps service, was it a position in, or directly connected to, the organization or agency in which you served? If yes, please explain:	35%	65%	74

Source: Urban Institute analysis of the CSC placement site survey and member follow-up survey.

TABLE 14

Workforce Development

	Yes	No	Responses
Do you view the NYC City Service Corps as a workforce development strategy for your unit?	68%	32%	47

Source: Urban Institute analysis of the Site survey question 19.

The topic of hiring City Service Corps members at the end of their term came up frequently in the focus groups with site supervisors. Multiple sites discussed hiring alumni and the value of being able to hire someone that they had already trained while others mentioned the value of continuity, especially in case management. As one supervisor said, “I hope that we can find a way to keep him on if possible. But if not, I would say that would be the biggest drawback, is to train someone, and have someone doing a really good job, and then they leave.”

Research Question 4: Skills Gained

Question: What are the tangible skills that alumni gained from their experience serving with City Service Corps?

Takeaways: Members credit their experience with helping them build on various skills. Host sites support opportunities for City Service Corps members to grow their skills, preparing them for their postservice plans.

Overall Experience

At the time of exit, 85 percent of City Service Corps members and 89 percent of the comparison group agreed that “participating in AmeriCorps was a worthwhile experience in terms of furthering my professional goals and professional endeavors.” The majority of both groups also agreed that “participating in AmeriCorps was a worthwhile experience in terms of furthering my educational goals and educational endeavors.” Although City Service Corps members were less likely to agree or strongly agree (71 percent) than the comparison group (89 percent), majorities of both groups agreed that City Service Corps furthered their personal goals and endeavors (table 15).

TABLE 15
Worthwhile Experience for Members

Answer	City Service Corps		Control		P-value
	Percent Agree	Responses	Percent Agree	Matches	
Participating in AmeriCorps was a worthwhile experience in terms of furthering my educational goals and educational endeavors.	71.1%	114	89.5%	114	0.000
Participating in AmeriCorps was a worthwhile experience in terms of furthering my professional goals and professional endeavors.	85.1%	114	89.5%	114	0.338
Participating in AmeriCorps was a worthwhile experience in terms of furthering my personal goals and personal endeavors.	86.0%	114	87.7%	114	0.707

Source: Urban Institute analysis of the CNCS Member exit survey question 20.

Tangible Skills

In the follow-up survey, alumni were asked the extent to which their service increased 33 different soft skills or abilities. We used these questions to construct the following five of our key outcomes: management skills, innovation and teamwork skills, problem solving techniques, communication skills, and leadership skills. Alumni report that City Service Corps helped them somewhat more with regards to management skills and innovation and teamwork than with regards to communication or leadership skills. The average scores for these key outcomes appear in figures 5 through 7.

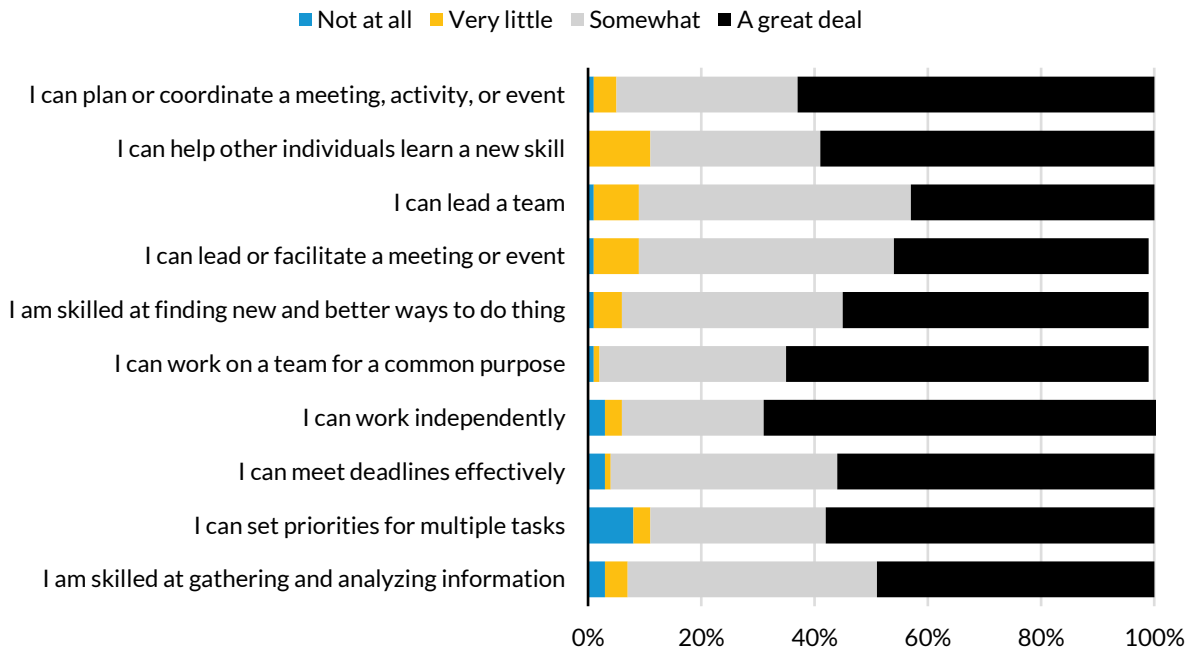
Figure 5 displays responses to answers about management and innovation and teamwork. We scored responses on a 4-point scale with “Not at all” as 1 and “A great deal” as 4 (see figure 5). The average score for management was a 3.5, midway between “somewhat” and “a great deal,” and the average score for innovation and teamwork was a 3.4. Almost universally, alumni stated that these skills improved at least somewhat. At least 89 percent of alumni agreed to this for each question. With regards to individual skills, alumni reported the greatest improvement in the ability to set priorities for multiple tasks, meet deadlines effectively, work independently, work on a team for a common purpose, find new and better ways to do things, help other individuals learn a new skill, and plan or coordinate a meeting, activity, or event. In each of these cases, a majority of alumni said that their City Service Corps experience helped them build or develop those skills “a great deal.”

The CNCS member exit survey asked AmeriCorps members how frequently they used these skills during their service terms. Except for leading a team or leading or facilitating a meeting, City Service Corps members did all of these tasks “often” or “very often.” Results were generally consistent with the comparison group. While City Service Corps members spent less time helping other individuals learn a new skill, 89 percent of alumni reported that they still improved in this area.

Alumni also reported strong growth in communication and leadership skills as a result of serving with City Service Corps. The average scores in these constructed outcomes were 3.2 and 3.1, respectively, which corresponds to an average score of “somewhat” (see table 6, under the results for research question 1). While the responses were not quite as universally positive as those relating to management skills, at least two-thirds of alumni reported gaining skills in each category (figures 6 and 7). In these areas, alumni were most likely to report that their service helped them “a great deal” with “collecting and disseminating information for internal and external audiences.” Alumni reported that they gained the least experience at “managing during a crisis.”

FIGURE 5

Skills Gained in Management, Innovation, and Teamwork

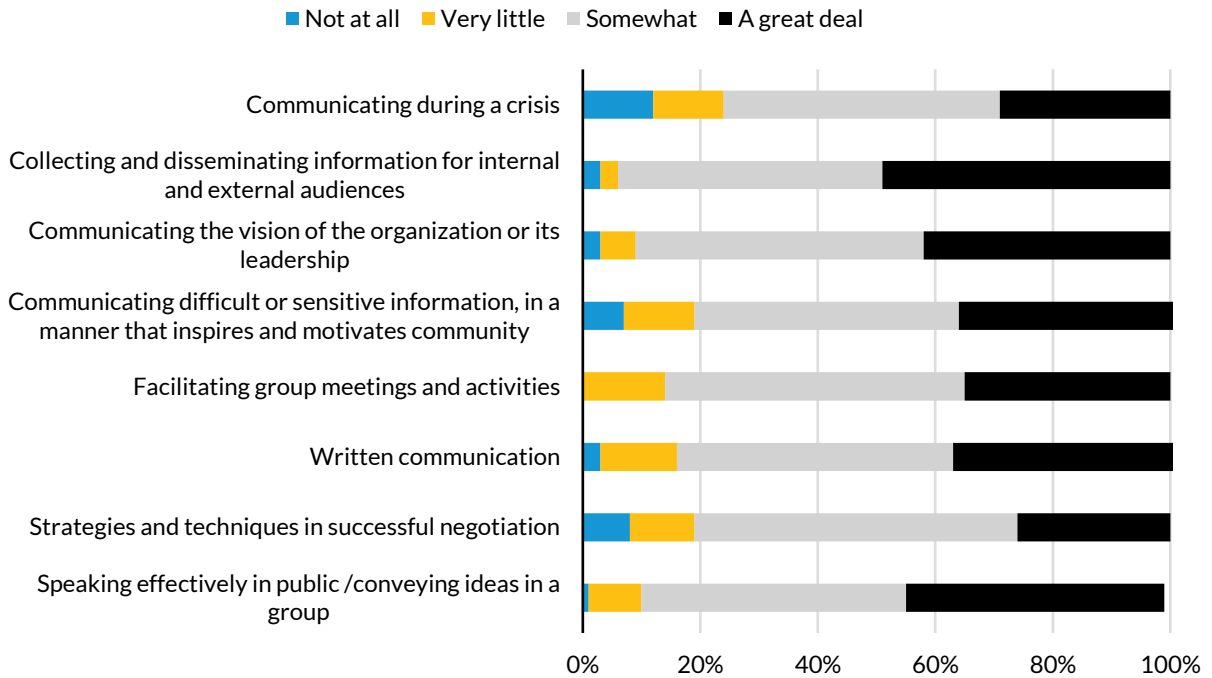


URBAN INSTITUTE

Source: Urban Institute analysis of the alumni follow-up survey question 11.

Note: Alumni were asked, "For each of these skills, please indicate the extent to which your City Service Corps experience has helped you to build or improve them."

FIGURE 6
Skills Gained in Communication

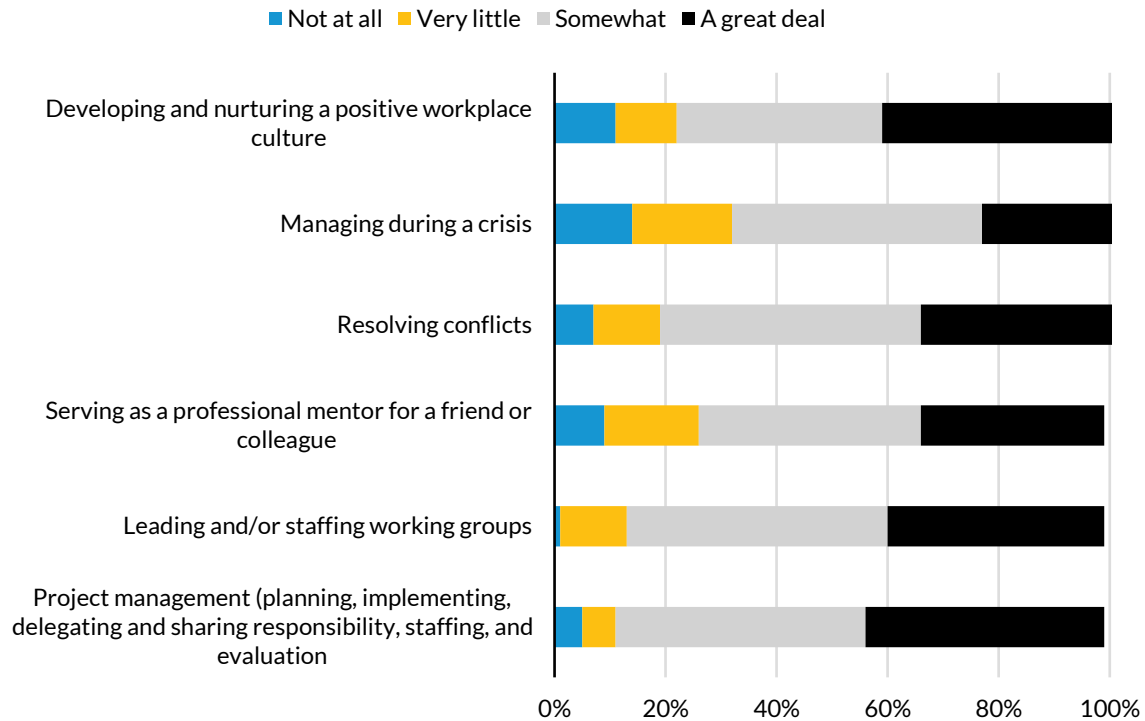


URBAN INSTITUTE

Source: Urban Institute analysis of the alumni follow-up survey question 12.

Notes: Alumni were asked, “To what extent did your experience in City Service Corps help you improve at the following skills?”

FIGURE 7
Skills Gained in Leadership



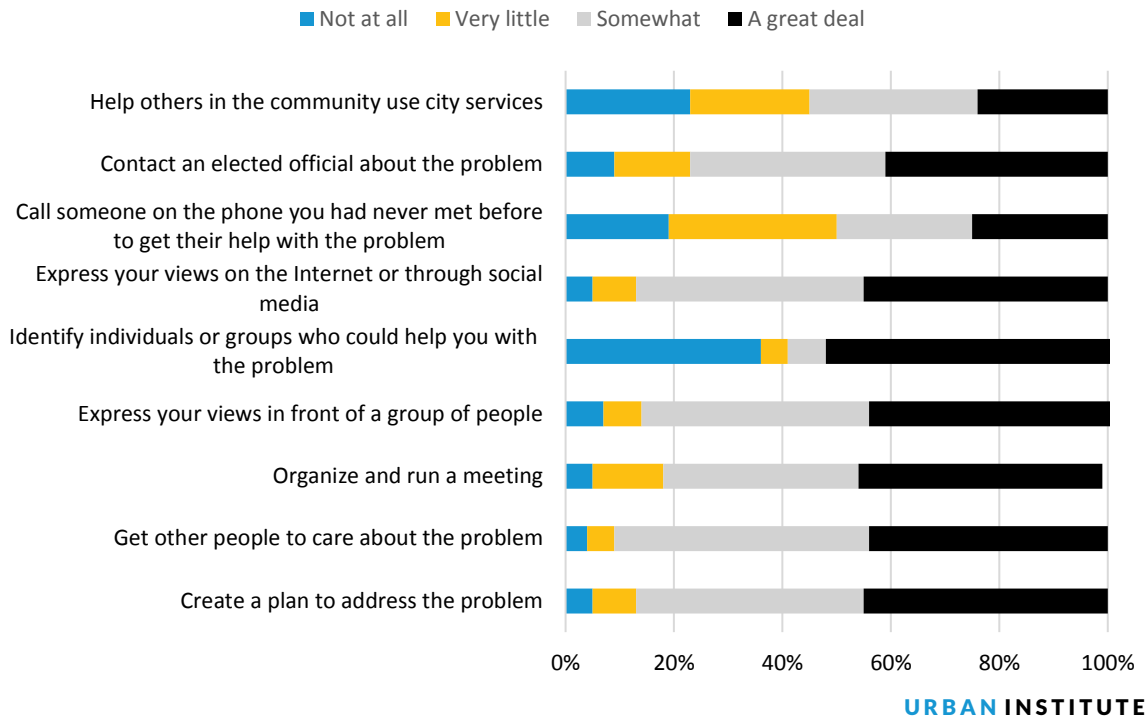
URBAN INSTITUTE

Source: Urban’s analysis of the alumni follow-up survey question 13.

Notes: Alumni were asked, “To what extent did your experience in City Service Corps help you improve at the following skills?”

Finally, alumni were asked about skills gained in problem solving techniques (figure 8). On average, alumni responded with a 3.1 (“somewhat”). Alumni reported that they gained skills in areas related specifically to problem-solving such as “creating a plan to address the problem,” “[identifying] individuals or groups who could help you with the problem,” and “[getting] other people to care about the problem.” For each of these areas, at least 87 percent of alumni said they gained skills. Alumni were less likely to say they gained skills in areas related to organizing around larger issues. Fewer than 60 percent of alumni reported gaining skills at “[expressing their] views on the Internet or through social media,” “[contacting] an elected official about the problem,” or “[helping] others in the community use city services.”

FIGURE 8
Skills Gained in Problem Solving Techniques



Source: Urban Institute analysis of the alumni follow-up survey question 16.

Notes: Alumni were asked, “To what extent did your experience in City Service Corps help you improve at the following skills?”

We were also able to use data from the entry and exit surveys administered by NYC Service to explore how members’ opinions of their skills changed over the course of their service. The results gave general support to the analysis conducted by the evaluation team at CUNY, who conducted pre-post surveys of members in the 2016–17 class to assess the monthly member trainings. According to the NYC Service-administered surveys, members reported improvements in their project management, time management, and team leadership skills. Both before and after their service, City Service Corps members were asked about their confidence with certain job skills (table 16). In three categories, we found statistically significant percentages of members who expressed that they were confident or very confident with that type of skill or ability. The fraction of members who reported confidence in project management rose from 68.6 percent to 91.4 percent, the fraction who reported confidence in team leadership rose from 60.0 percent to 86.7 percent, and the fraction who reported confidence in time management skills rose from 68.6 percent to 85.7 percent.

TABLE 16
NYC Service Survey Pre-Post Service Comparison

Question Text	Percent yes before	Percent yes after	P-value
Ability to Build Relationships with Diverse Community Members	85.7%	88.6%	0.661
Ability to Communicate with Community Organizations	80.0%	85.7%	0.487
Ability to Understand and Analyze Data	85.7%	88.6%	0.661
Ability to Work in Diverse Teams to Reach a Common Goal	97.1%	97.1%	1.000
Basic Computer Skills	97.1%	100.0%	0.324
Project Management Skills	68.6%	91.4%	0.009
Team Leadership	60.0%	85.7%	0.010
Time Management Skills	68.6%	85.7%	0.032

Source: Urban Institute analysis of the City Service Corps Member Data.

During the focus group discussions, City Service Corps alumni gave examples of specific skills they learned that would help them in future jobs. Many of these skills involved business software and database management. Multiple alumni mentioned improving their ability to use Excel, while another pointed to Salesforce.

“There was a lot more database construction than I anticipated was going to happen, because we had to figure out who we were reaching out to in the first place. We didn't come in and there was a preestablished list. They said, this is a district, figure it out. Then I had to go and figure it out and then reach out to all the people, which was fine. It was actually very useful.”

—City Service Corps alumnus

Mentorship and Professional Connections

Focus groups and surveys also show that City Service Corps members receive training, guidance, and mentorship. More than 80 percent of City Service Corps alumni stated that their host site supervisor, staff and colleagues at the host site, and their City Service Corps peers helped them develop skills.

Moreover, most alumni stated that their host site supervisor (61 percent) and colleagues (63 percent) were “very helpful” (table 17).

TABLE 17
Member Skills Development

	Not Helpful at all	Not Very Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Very Helpful	Responses
Host site supervisor	10.67%	5.33%	22.67%	61.33%	75
Staff and colleagues at the host site	5.26%	7.89%	22.37%	64.47%	76
City Service Corps Monthly Seminars	18.42%	14.47%	40.79%	26.32%	76
City Service Corps peers	2.67%	10.67%	41.33%	45.33%	75

Source: Urban Institute analysis of the alumni follow-up survey Q15.

Note: Alumni were asked, “Which parts of your training, and which of the people you met during your City Service Corps term, have helped you to develop your work skills the most?”

However, there appears to be room for improvement around interpersonal relationships and mentorship. In focus groups, site supervisors discussed the difficulties that come from trying to train and mentor multiple people with varying skill levels and backgrounds. At a focus group with City Service Corps alumni, one person recalled explaining to staff at the host site,

You should be a mentor to the members and really think about their development after service, and sit down and have a conversation with them and understand what they want to do next, and connection them with anybody in your network that may be in that field.

We asked site supervisors to describe any innovative or effective member development activities or strategies that they felt had the greatest impact on their members during the 2016–17 program year (site survey question 22). The most commonly named member development strategy was providing training opportunities for the member. Eleven sites report exposing members to training opportunities, with 10 of those sites providing internal training opportunities for their members. One site shared that,

I conducted several professional development trainings periodically throughout their service which seemed to be useful. One was a proactive outreach training that taught each member out to increase visibility in their target communities and increase the frequency of engagements.

Seven sites also listed member involvement as a priority as it relates to member development. Sites expressed that when they gave their member responsibility (such as allowing them to play a significant role) over a project, the members developed their skills as a result. One supervisor shared that,

I gave the Members an assignment this year where they are able to identify new target audiences and gauge interest. By giving them more ownership of projects and allowing them to

work collaboratively to manage them, I have witnessed growth in data management and analysis skills.

Regular communication was also important for member development, according to our survey results. While not as prominent as the aforementioned themes, 4 sites expressed that being intentional about setting aside time for regular check-ins and supervision to be an important activity for member development. Here are the remarks that one site had on this subject:

Weekly check-ins with real time feedback, modeling how to give feedback, allowing time to attend trainings and workshops offered internally and externally, being positive as a rule try to have a positive to negative feedback ratio of 10 to 1. You need to build people's confidence and believe in them from the start, so they can believe in themselves and reach and exceed expectations.

Sites also reported that members developed through collaboration with peers and colleagues in the work place. Four of our sites report that they intentionally promoted collaboration efforts for their members to achieve this result. When asked about member development in the placement site survey, one site supervisor explained that they assign members to certain personnel,

Members were assigned to work along-side key personnel in each of the three food programs. They received the daily expertise and support of the manager, the team, and leadership and on-going supervision and project training. Each were given opportunities to participate in special projects that raised awareness for the programs but also raised the CSC member's self-esteem for a job well done. Feedback and encouragement was provided on a daily basis. Daily check-in meetings kept all personnel abreast of new developments or upcoming events and it demonstrated how a team plans for a successful outcome.

Research Question 5: Alumni Engagement in Civic Life

Question: Do alumni continue to be engaged in civic life?

Takeaway: Some City Service Corps members continue their civic engagement after their terms end and most credit their service with making them more likely to vote.

While developing member commitment to engagement and civic life is important to most (70 percent of) host sites, it appears to be less of a priority than skill development and internal goals (table 18). For this reason, perhaps member outcomes related to civic engagement are mixed.

TABLE 18
Site Value for Members

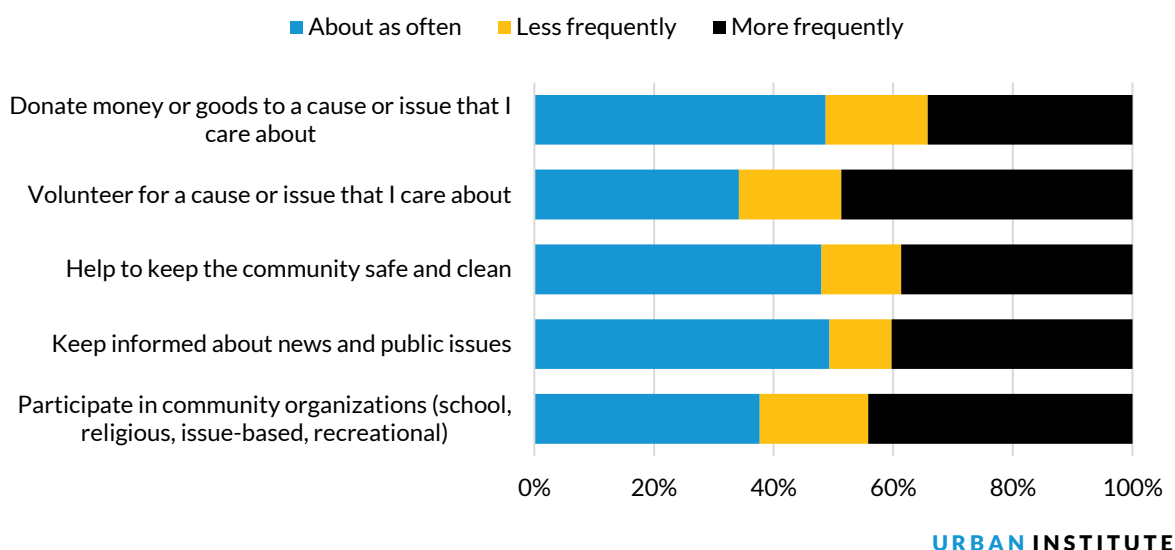
	Not Important		3	Very Important		Responses
	1	2		4	5	
Develop commitment to civic engagement, social responsibility, and volunteerism	2%	2%	27%	29%	41%	49
Learn skills that they can use on the job, or for future employment	0%	0%	6%	31%	63%	49
Have an opportunity to serve communities from diverse backgrounds	0%	0%	16%	18%	65%	49
Develop teamwork/leadership skills	2%	0%	10%	24%	63%	49
Work towards unit/agency priorities	0%	4%	2%	35%	59%	49
Expand the number of New Yorkers that your unit/agency is able to reach	6%	4%	20%	16%	53%	49

Source: Urban Institute analysis of site survey question 12.

Note: Site supervisors were asked, “While serving with your unit, how important was it that your members...”?

A significant portion of City Service Corps alumni are more engaged in civic life after service. More than one-third of respondents say they participate in community organizations, keep informed about the news and public issues, and help to keep the community safe and clean more frequently than they did before their service. Nearly one-half (49 percent) of alumni reported that they volunteer for causes they care about more frequently than they had before their service (figure 9).

FIGURE 9
Post-City Service Corps Activities



Source: Urban Institute analysis of the alumni follow-up survey question 17.

Note: Alumni were asked, “In the time since your City Service Corps term ended, have you done the following activities?”

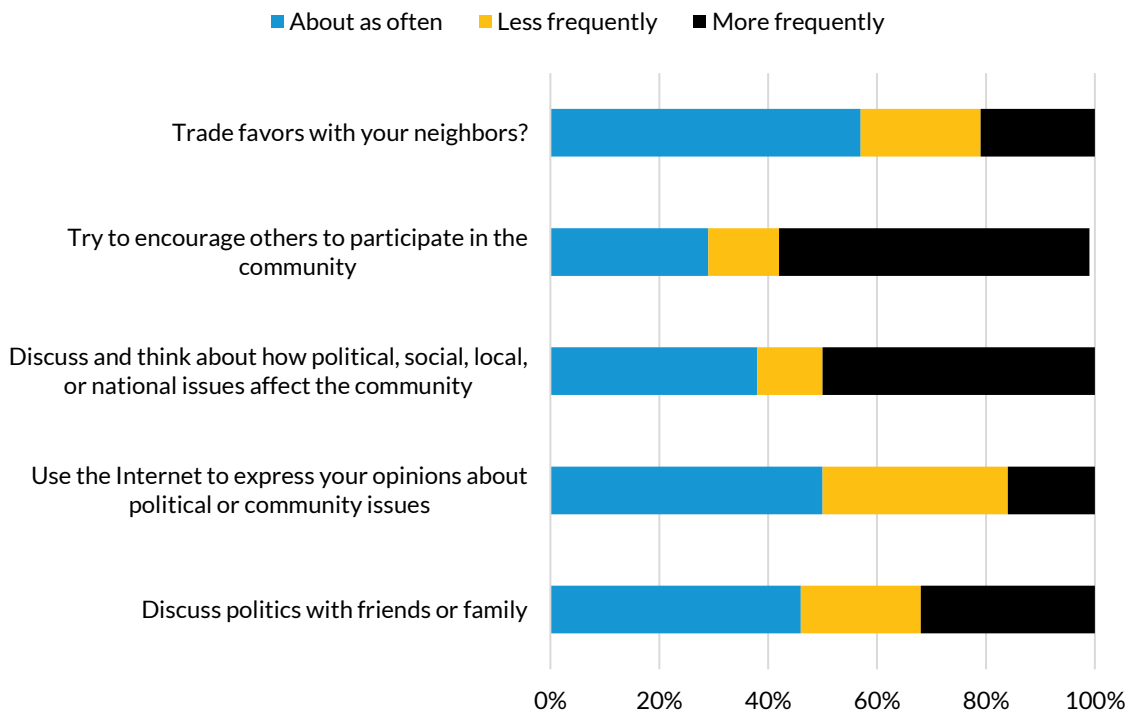
When asked specifically about how they felt about service—on the CNCS member exit survey—City Service Corps members reported that they felt they had contributed to their community and gained an understanding of the community where they served. These feelings are typical of AmeriCorps and not specific to City Service Corps. The CNCS member exit survey asked 8 related questions about connection to community, and we did not find statistically significant differences between City Service Corps members and the comparison group in any of them.

Most (83 percent) of City Service Corps Alumni reported that they had a clear understanding about city government and how it works (alumni follow-up survey). Connection to the city of New York came up in focus groups with members. Alumni specifically discussed better understanding of local civic institutions such as community boards.

I recently tabled an event through my community board, asking people to sign petitions for better bus service, I'm also an advocate with the Riders Alliance, which they're like a transportation advocacy, so I've been helping to facilitate a relationship between the community board and the organization. But that's not something I ever would've conceived of doing without having that knowledge beforehand of what a community board was, what it did, and how you got involved with it. So, it's informed me a lot.

FIGURE 10

Member Community Connections



URBAN INSTITUTE

Source: Urban Institute analysis of the alumni follow-up survey question 18.

Notes: Alumni were asked, “Since your City Service Corps term ended, have you done the following activities more frequently, less frequently, or about the same as before you enrolled?”

Finally, members credit their service with making them more likely to vote. In the CNCS Member Exit Survey 56 percent of members said that their service made them more likely to vote (Table E.11). Table 19 shows that 81 percent of members were registered to vote before their term began. Of the remain 19 percent, 13 percent said they decided to register to vote as a result of their City Service Corps experience. At follow-up, 3 in 4 members had voted since their service term ended (table 20).

TABLE 19

Service Effects on Members (Yes/No)

Outcome	Yes	No	Responses
Q19 (alumni follow-up survey): Did you decide to register as a result of your City Service Corps experience?	14%	86%	77
Q20 (alumni survey): Were you registered to vote before your City Service Corps term began?	91%	9%	75
Q21 (alumni survey): Did you decide to vote as a result of your City Service Corps experience?	13%	87%	76
Q22 (alumni survey): Did you vote in the last presidential election?	81%	19%	75

Source: Urban Institute analysis of alumni follow-up survey questions 19-22.

TABLE 20

Member Voting

	Response	N
I did not vote in any elections offered in my district.	21%	16
I voted in all elections offered in my district.	34%	26
I voted in some elections offered in my district.	41%	31
No elections were offered in my district in the last 12 months.	4%	3

Source: Urban Institute analysis of alumni follow-up survey question 23.

Note: Alumni were asked, "Since your City Service Corps term ended, have you done the following activities more frequently, less frequently, or about the same as before you enrolled?"

Feedback from Members and Sites

Member Feedback on Program

The Alumni Follow-up Survey asked members about the quality of their training and their satisfaction with service overall. Responses about training, shown in table 21, vary based on the topic area. On one hand, 44 percent of alumni reported that the City Service Corps monthly seminars and other trainings were very helpful with regards to understanding and implementing communication strategies for diverse populations. However, more than one-half (54 percent) of alumni stated that training with regards to business and administrative skills related to planning, funding, budgeting, and staffing an organization was either not very helpful or not helpful at all.

TABLE 21
Helpfulness of Training

	Not at all Helpful	Not Very Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Very Helpful	Responses
Basic business and administrative skills related to planning, funding, budgeting, and staffing an organization	24%	30%	9%	37%	77
Understanding and implementing communication strategies for diverse populations	10%	23%	22%	44%	77
Use of office information technology such as word processing, spreadsheets, etc.	18%	25%	26%	31%	77
Project management	19%	23%	25%	32%	77
Critical thinking and problem-solving skills	14%	20%	28%	38%	76
Working and communicating effectively with others	12%	17%	34%	38%	77
Managing time effectively	13%	18%	32%	36%	77

Source: Urban Institute analysis of the Alumni Follow-Up Survey Q14

Note: Alumni were asked, "How well have the City Service Corps monthly seminars, and other on-the-job trainings you received throughout the service year, helped you obtain the skills needed to operate at a high level in your occupation? Please rate each of the following skills according to how helpful they were..."

Overall, however, City Service Corps alumni consistently reported satisfaction with their service experience. Nine out of ten members reported that they were satisfied with their service experience

and nearly one-half (48 percent) were “very satisfied”. Similarly, 89 percent of alumni would recommend or strongly recommend City Service Corps to a friend or family member who said they were interested.

TABLE 22
AmeriCorps Members Opinions on Service

	Frequency	Responses
Q40 (alumni survey): Dissatisfied	4%	77
Q40 (alumni survey): Neither	6%	77
Q40 (alumni survey): Satisfied	42%	77
Q40 (alumni survey): Very Satisfied	48%	77
Q41 (alumni survey): Advise against it	4%	77
Q41 (alumni survey): Have second thoughts about recommending it	12%	77
Q41 (alumni survey): Recommend it	51%	77
Q41 (alumni survey): Strongly recommend it	38%	77

Source: Urban Institute analysis of the Alumni Follow-Up Survey Q40-41

Note: Alumni were asked (Q40), “All things considered, how do you feel about your overall City Service Corps service experience?” And, Q41 “If a good friend or family member told you he or she was interested in joining City Service Corps, would you:”

Site Feedback on Members

In our site survey, we included an open-ended question to supervisors asking them to, “describe the primary challenges of managing City Service Corps members. For instance, do staff members who manage City Service Corps members have responsibilities that take more time than expected?” The most common theme in the responses was that members needed additional oversight. Supervisors also noted difficulties in getting members to be punctual and keeping them interested.

“Managing the Members’ interests, expectations, concerns, and challenges is on-going. Based on the projects assigned, the supervisor often has to take extra time to meet with Members individually as well as facilitate meetings with other staff members in the division to clarify Member roles and responsibilities.”

—City Service Corps site supervisor

Despite these concerns, site supervisors reported that their members added value to the organization and that the benefits outweighed the costs. Table 23 shows the value site supervisors believe their City Service Corps Member provided their unit relative to the costs of managing them and the dollar value the members provided relative to the monetary costs of hosting them. With supervisors ranking the value on a scale of 1 being “very little value” and 5 being “a great deal of value,” the average responses were 3.9 and 4.1 respectively.

TABLE 23
Member Feedback

	Very Little Value		A Great Deal of Value			Responses
	1	2	3	4	5	
Q25 (site survey): How much value would you say your 2016-17 AmeriCorps member(s) provided to your unit, considering the costs of managing the member(s)?	0	8%	27%	31%	33%	48
Q26 (site survey): How does the dollar value of the service provided by City Service Corps members compare to the monetary costs of hosting members?	2%	0%	23%	36%	38%	47

Source: Urban Institute analysis of the site survey.

We also discussed the value of members and the challenges related to managing them with the site supervisors at length during the focus groups. Key quotes are included in appendix F. The primary takeaways were that City Service Corps members provided the most value when they brought educational and professional experience that matched the needs of the host sites. Conversely, issues arose when City Service Corps members’ backgrounds and experiences were not in line with their host site’s needs. Supervisors further noted that underlying issues are exacerbated if there is a lack of clarity around roles or a lack of communication.

Site Feedback on Partnership with NYC Service

The site survey also asked several questions about the relationship between the sites and NYC Service. Tabulation of these responses appear in table 24 below. Sites consistently agreed that NYC Service values what their organization brings to the collaboration (question 30). A clear majority also agreed

that their collaboration with NYC service is effective (question 32). Opinions were more varied, however, regarding to the effectiveness of supervisor or member trainings conducted by NYC Service.

TABLE 24
Relationship with NYC Service

	Strongly Disagree		Strongly Agree			Responses
	1	2	3	4	5	
Q27 (site survey): NYC Service takes our organization's opinions seriously when decisions are made.	0%	2%	35%	39%	24%	49
Q28 (site survey): Meetings with the NYC Service office accomplish what is necessary for the collaboration to function well.	0%	8%	31%	44%	17%	48
Q29 (site survey): You, as a representative of your organization, feel pulled between trying to meet both your organization's expectations and the expectations of City Service Corps program.	24%	16%	24%	24%	10%	49
Q30 (site survey): You feel that what your organization brings to the collaboration is appreciated and respected by NYC Service.	0%	2%	14%	47%	37%	49
Q31 (site survey): My organization can count on NYC Service to meet its obligations to the collaboration.	0	2%	22%	37%	39%	49
Q32 (site survey): How effective has this collaboration been in achieving its expected purpose and outcomes?	0	2%	31%	33%	35%	49
Q33 (site survey): How would you rate the quality of the working relationship that has developed between your organization and NYC Service?	0	2%	22%	53%	22%	49
Q34 (site survey): To what extent has your organization increased its interaction with other organizations as a result of the collaboration?	18%	22%	37%	20%	2%	49
Q35 (site survey): Effectiveness of supervisor training and support mechanisms provided by NYC Service	2%	15%	46%	25%	13%	48
Q36 (site survey): Effectiveness of member training and support mechanisms provided by NYC Service	8%	13%	46%	19%	15%	48

Source: Urban Institute analysis of the site survey.

Conclusion

This evaluation asked five big questions about the impact of the first two program years of City Service Corps, examining Corps member workforce development, the program's ability to address community needs across all five boroughs, the cultivation of City Service Corps members' civic engagement and leadership skills. Specifically, we asked the following questions:

1. What outputs and outcomes might reasonably be attributed to the members' service?
2. Do City Service Corps members add value/build capacity at their host sites in ways that could not happen without their presence?
3. How does the program affect postservice career choices made by members?
4. What are the tangible skills that alumni gained from their experience serving with City Service Corps?
5. Do alumni continue to be engaged in civic life?

We find that the City Service Corps program impacts both the members and the communities in which they serve in a variety of ways. Most (86 percent) of City Service Corps members reported that their service made a positive difference in the community, and their supervisors generally agreed. In addition, 83 percent of City Service Corps members reported that they have a clear understanding about city government and how it works.

City Service Corps members add value and, in many cases, help to build capacity at their host organizations. Members support the operational capacity of their host sites, supplementing staff by providing an additional source of skilled labor. Sites supervisors reported that members help expand services and improve efficiency. At many locations, City Service Corps members' service further builds a foundation for long-term organizational needs and priorities.

Alumni report that they use the service term to clarify their career goals. While most members continue along the same career path, City Service Corps members often find that the service term alters or illuminates their career goals. At the same time, host sites often look at City Service Corps as a pipeline to bring in new talent. In fact, City Service Corps members were more likely than other AmeriCorps members to continue in the same service program for another year and approximately one third of City Service Corps alumni transition directly into a job at their host site or a partner organization.

Alumni report gaining a variety of tangible skills. The biggest reported gains were in soft skills, while alumni in focus groups also discussed specific administrative skills. Host sites support opportunities for City Service Corps members to grow their skills, preparing them for their postservice plans. Almost universally, City Service Corps members reported that they considered the ability to gain skills and experience as a motivation for joining and agreed that their service provided them with that experience. Specifically, members reported improved project management, time management, and team leadership skills.

Finally, we find that many City Service Corps members continue their civic engagement after their terms end. At least 40 percent of alumni report that they are more likely to volunteer, keep informed about public issues, and participate in community organizations than they were before they enrolled in the program. In addition, 75 percent of alumni reported voting in at least some local elections over the past 12 months.

Conversations in focus groups highlight issues around the value having City Service Corps members whose skills and expectations match those of their host sites. In the best scenarios, City Service Corps members' educational and professional backgrounds were often an asset to their host site. However, when City Service Corps members' backgrounds and experiences were not in line with their host site's needs, problems surfaced. Supervisors explained that these issues are exacerbated if there is a lack of clarity around roles or a lack of communication. Collaboration between NYC Service and host sites to clarify that needs and expectations are established and communicated at the outset, should alleviate many problems.

Taken together, these findings show that City Service Corps has a positive impact on both members and host sites. Despite the issues highlighted in focus groups, it appears that the experiences of members in the first two cohorts of City Service Corps were, in many ways, similar to those of a comparison group of AmeriCorps who served in other, generally more established programs. While measuring the impact on the larger community is beyond the scope of this analysis, both members and host site staff and supervisors report the City Service Corps allowed sites to increase capacity and make a difference for the people that they serve.

Appendix A. City Service Corps Logic Model

TABLE A.1

Question Number	Question Wording	CNCS Member Exit Survey	JBS Alumni Survey	Source
1	What were the main focus areas of your City Service Corps experience? Select all that apply.	Q2	Q17	
2	During your City Service Corps term, how much of your time was spent providing direct service to community residents, and how much was spent on internal work that builds the organization's capacity to provide service? Please estimate both percentages: they should add to 100%, but your best estimates are OK.			New question added at NYC Service's Request
3	What were you doing in the six months before you first entered City Service Corps? Select all that apply.		Q16	
4	Was your service primarily focused in one borough? If so, which borough?		Q37 (adapted)	
5	After your City Service Corps service, did you reside in the community in which you were serving?		Q37 (adapted)	
6	[IF NO] What US state do you currently live in?		Q10 (adapted)	
7	Thinking back to before your City Service Corps experience, how much would you agree or disagree with the following statements? a. I had a strong and personal attachment to my community b. I was aware of the important needs in my community c. I felt a personal obligation to contribute in some way to my community d. I was actively involved in issues that positively affect my community e. I had been exposed to new ideas and ways of seeing the world f. I made a contribution to the community g. I understood the concerns of all members of my community	Q19		
8	Thinking about before your City Service Corps experience, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: a. I enjoyed exploring differences between co-workers and/or friends from different cultures or backgrounds and me b. I enjoyed interacting with people from different cultures and backgrounds c. I respected the values of people from different cultures and backgrounds d. I felt confident when interacting with people from different cultures and backgrounds	Q7	Q18	

Question Number	Question Wording	CNCS Member Exit Survey	JBS Alumni Survey	Source
9	<p>Please rate how well developed your skills were in each of the following categories before you enrolled in City Service Corps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Basic business and administrative skills related to planning, funding, budgeting, and staffing an organization b. Reading and comprehending written materials designed for professional audiences c. Use of office information technology such as word processing, spreadsheets, etc. d. Project management e. Critical thinking and problem-solving skills f. Working and communicating effectively with others g. Managing time effectively 			American Apprenticeship Initiative Evaluation Q3a
10	<p>Thinking about the period during your City Service Corps experience, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The majority of my work has made a positive difference in the community b. I have made a noticeable difference in the life of at least one person c. I was able do things I never thought I could do d. I got along well with my supervisor and/or my teammates e. I have figured out what my next steps are in terms of educational goals f. I have figured out what my next steps are in terms of career/professional goals g. I have a better understanding about city government and how it works h. I sometimes feel overwhelmed by the scope of the problems I work on i. I have reexamined my beliefs and attitudes about other people 	Q10		
11	<p>For each of these skills, please indicate the extent to which your City Service Corps experience has helped you to build or improve them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. I am skilled at gathering and analyzing information. b. I can set priorities for multiple tasks. c. I can meet deadlines effectively. d. I can work independently. e. I can work on a team for a common purpose. f. I am skilled at finding new and better ways to do things. g. I can lead or facilitate a meeting or event. h. I can lead a team. i. I can help other individuals learn a new skill. j. I can plan or coordinate a meeting, activity, or event. 	Q5, Q4 (Skills were used from both questions, intro question and item scales rewritten to control for passage of time)		

Question Number	Question Wording	CNCS Member Exit Survey	JBS Alumni Survey	Source
12	<p>To what extent did your experience in City Service Corps help you improve at the following skills?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Speaking effectively in public /conveying ideas in a group b. Strategies and techniques in successful negotiation c. Written communication d. Facilitating group meetings and activities e. Communicating difficult or sensitive information, in a manner that inspires and motivates communities f. Communicating the vision of the organization or its leadership g. Collecting and disseminating information for internal and external audiences h. Communicating during a crisis 			Used skill list from AMCHP Title V Workforce Assessment survey Q33
13	<p>To what extent did your experience in City Service Corps help you improve at the following leadership skills?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Project management (planning, implementing, delegating and sharing responsibility, staffing, and evaluating) b. Leading and/or staffing working groups c. Serving as a professional mentor for a friend or colleague d. Resolving conflicts e. Managing during a crisis f. Developing and nurturing a positive workplace culture 			Used skill list from AMCHP Title V Workforce Assessment survey Q35
14	<p>How well have the City Service Corps monthly seminars meetings, and other on-the-job trainings you have received throughout the service year, helped you obtain the skills needed to operate at a high level in your occupation? Please rate for each of the following skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Basic business and administrative skills related to planning, funding, budgeting, and staffing an organization b. Reading and comprehending written materials designed for professional audiences c. Use of office information technology such as word processing, spreadsheets, etc. d. Project management e. Critical thinking and problem-solving skills f. Working and communicating effectively with others g. Managing time effectively 			Adapted from American Apprenticeship Initiative Evaluation Q3b
15	<p>Now, we'd like to find out about how your City Service Corps training, and the people you met during your term, helped you to develop your work skills. Please rate the following items below according to how helpful they were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Host site supervisor b. Staff and colleagues at the host site c. City Service Corps Monthly Seminars d. City Service Corps peers <p>Please list anyone else who has played an especially important role in helping you develop your work skills: _____</p>			Adapted from American Apprenticeship Initiative Evaluation Q3b

Question Number	Question Wording	CNCS Member Exit Survey	JBS Alumni Survey	Source
16	Now, we'd like to ask a few questions about working with others to solve community problems. How much did your experience in City Service Corps help you improve at the following skills? a. Create a plan to address a community problem b. Get other people to care about the problem c. Organize and run a meeting d. Express your views in front of a group of people e. Identify individuals or groups who could help you with the problem f. Express your views on the Internet or through social media g. Call someone on the phone you had never met before to get their help with the problem h. Contact an elected official about the problem i. Help others in the community use city services	Q18 (Used the skill list from this question, but reworded question text for a different outcome)		
17	In the time since your City Service Corps term ended, have you done the following activities more frequently, less frequently, or about the same as before you enrolled?: a. Participate in community organizations (school, religious, issue-based, recreational) b. Keep informed about news and public issues c. Help to keep the community safe and clean d. Volunteer for a cause or issue that I care about e. Donate money or goods to a cause or issue that I care about	Q12 (Used the skill list from this question, but reworded question text for a slightly different outcome)		
18	Since your City Service Corps term ended, have you done the following activities more frequently, less frequently, or about the same as before you enrolled? a. Discuss politics with friends or family b. Use the Internet to express your opinions about political or community issues c. Discuss and think about how political, social, local, or national issues affect the community d. Try to encourage others to participate in the community e. Trade favors with your neighbors? By favors we mean such things as watching each others' children, helping with shopping, house sitting, lending garden or house tools and other small things to help each other.		Q24 (Took indicators but reworded intro question and items)	
19	Were you registered to vote before your City Service Corps term began?		Q28	
20	Did you decide to register as a result of your City Service Corps experience?			Added at NYC Service's request.
21	Did you vote in the last presidential election?	Q17	Q29	
22	Did you decide to vote as a result of your City Service Corps experience?			Added at NYC Service's request.
23	How often did you vote in the last 12 months?		Q30	
24	How closely do you associate your City Service Corps service with each of the following? a. AmeriCorps b. NYC Service c. The specific agency or organization where you served d. Other (please specify):	Q26		

Question Number	Question Wording	CNCS Member Exit Survey	JBS Alumni Survey	Source
25	Have you earned a college degree since completing your City Service Corps service? If so, please select the highest degree you have earned.		Q7	
26	[IF YES] If so, please select the highest degree you have earned.		Q7	
27	Have you used the AmeriCorps education award you received at the end of your City Service Corps term?			Not included on any existing survey
28	[IF YES] how did you use the AmeriCorps education award you received at the end of your City Service Corps term? Select all that apply.	Q27 (Derived from here, but rewritten for NYC)	Q40	
29	[IF NO] Do you plan to use the AmeriCorps education award you received at the end of your City Service Corps term?	Included in Q27		
30	How did your City Service Corps service fit into how your career path has unfolded? Select the option that most closely describes your career path.		Q36	
31	What did you do in the six months after your City Service Corps service? Select all that apply	Q28	Q41	
32	If you got a job in the six months after your City Service Corps service, was it a position in, or directly connected to, the organization or agency in which you served?		Q42	
33	[IF NO] What are you doing now? Select all that apply.		Q43	
34	How has your City Service Corps experience shaped your education choices? For the following statements, please respond yes, a little; yes, a lot; or no. 1. How did your City Service Corps experience affect the degree/major you chose? 2. City Service Corps made me more interested in the topic I pursued in school 3. City Service Corps made my personal goals for educational attainment increase 4. The education award made continuing my education possible 5. Are there any other ways City Service Corps has influenced your education choices? 6. [if yes] Please describe those other effects:			Adapted from American Apprenticeship Initiative Evaluation Q22
35	How has your City Service Corps experience shaped your career choices? For the following statements, please respond yes, a little; yes, a lot; or no. a) City Service Corps affected the career pathway I chose b) How did your City Service Corps experience affect the career pathway you chose? c) City Service Corps made me more interested in the types of jobs that I pursued d) City Service Corps made my personal goals for occupational attainment increase e) Are there any other ways City Service Corps has influenced your career choices? f) [if yes] Please describe those other effects:			Adapted from American Apprenticeship Initiative Evaluation Q22

Question Number	Question Wording	CNCS Member Exit Survey	JBS Alumni Survey	Source
36	Think about the services that you received while you were serving in City Service Corps. If you have received the services in the list below, how helpful have they been in assisting you to find and/or keep a job or enroll in school? Have these services been very helpful, somewhat helpful, not very helpful, or not at all helpful? a. Training in job search skills (for example, help preparing your resume, what to do when interviewing for a job, how to dress for an interview and/or work) b. Information about job openings, schools, training programs, or the military c. Help scheduling an interview with an employer or a school official d. Formal and informal networking opportunities at events and trainings			Adapted from American Apprenticeship Initiative Evaluation SA1/SA2
37	We'd like to ask about the people you met, and the training you received, during your City Service Corps term. How helpful have each of the following been in helping you find your current job? a. Host site supervisor; b. Host site staff/ colleagues; c. City Service Corps AmeriCorps Monthly Seminars; d. City Service Corps AmeriCorps peers; e. NYC Service Staff			Adapted from American Apprenticeship Initiative Evaluation SA3/SA4
38	Do you include your City Service Corps experience on your resume ?	Derived from Q30	Q45	
39	How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements: a. Participating in AmeriCorps was a worthwhile experience in terms of furthering my educational goals and future educational endeavors. b. Participating in AmeriCorps was a worthwhile experience in terms of furthering my professional goals and future professional endeavors. c. Participating in AmeriCorps was a worthwhile experience in terms of furthering my personal goals and future personal endeavors.	Q20	Q33	
40	All things considered, how do you feel about your overall City Service Corps service experience?	Q11	Q21	
41	If a good friend or family member told you he or she was interested in joining City Service Corps AmeriCorps, would you: Advise against it Have second thoughts about recommending it Recommend it Strongly recommend it	Q25	Q38	
42	Overall, how would you describe your City Service Corps term and the impact it has had on your professional and personal life? Please use the space below to tell us anything that we have not already asked about.			Open ended question added at NYC Service's Request

Source: Provided by NYC Service.

Appendix B. Survey Items and Data Sources

TABLE B.1
Construction of Key Outcome Measures

Outcome	Questions - Alumni Survey	Questions - CNCS Exit Survey
Reasons for Joining AmeriCorps		Q1 (a-i)
Connection to Community	Q7 Thinking back to before your City Service Corps experience, how much would you agree or disagree with the following statements? a. I had a strong and personal attachment to my community b. I was aware of the important needs in my community c. I felt a personal obligation to contribute in some way to my community d. I was actively involved in issues that positively affect my community e. I had been exposed to new ideas and ways of seeing the world f. I made a contribution to the community	Q9 (a-c, e); Q19 (a-d)
Innovation and Teamwork	Q11. For each of these skills, please indicate the extent to which your City Service Corps experience has helped you to build or improve them. a. I am skilled at finding new and better ways to do things. b. I can lead or facilitate a meeting or event. c. I can lead a team. d. I can help other individuals learn a new skill. e. I can plan or coordinate a meeting, activity, or event.	Q4 (a-e)
Interpersonal Relations		Q6 (b-f)
Management Skills	Q11. For each of these skills, please indicate the extent to which your City Service Corps experience has helped you to build or improve them. a. I am skilled at gathering and analyzing information. b. I can set priorities for multiple tasks. c. I can meet deadlines effectively. d. I can work independently. e. I can work on a team for a common purpose.	Q5 (a-e)
Problem-Solving Ability		Q8 (a,c,d,f,g,h)

Impacts of Service	<p>Q10. Thinking about the period during your City Service Corps term, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The majority of my work made a positive difference in the community b. I made a noticeable difference in the life of at least one person c. I was able do things I never thought I could do d. I got along well with my supervisor and/or my teammates e. I knew what my next steps would be in terms of educational goals f. I knew what my next steps would be in terms of career/professional goals g. I had a clear understanding about city government and how it works h. I sometimes felt overwhelmed by the scope of the problems I work on 	Q10 (a-h)
Problem-Solving Techniques	<p>Q16. Now, we'd like to ask a few questions about working with others to solve community problems. How much did your experience in City Service Corps help you improve at the following skills?</p>	Q18 (a-h)
Civic Engagement	<p>Q17. In the time since your City Service Corps term ended, have you done the following activities more frequently, less frequently, or about the same as before you enrolled?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Participate in community organizations (school, religious, issue-based, recreational) b. Keep informed about news and public issues c. Help to keep the community safe and clean d. Volunteer for a cause or issue that I care about e. Donate money or goods to a cause or issue that I care about 	Q12 (a-f)
Communications Skills	<p>Q12. To what extent did your experience in City Service Corps help you improve your communication skills?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Speaking effectively in public /conveying ideas in a group b. Strategies and techniques in successful negotiation c. Written communication d. Facilitating group meetings and activities e. Communicating difficult or sensitive information, in a manner that inspires and motivates communities f. Communicating the vision of the organization or its leadership g. Collecting and disseminating information for internal and external audiences h. Communicating during a crisis 	

Leadership Skills	<p>Q13. To what extent did your experience in City Service Corps help you improve your leadership skills?</p> <p>a. Project management (planning, implementing, delegating, and sharing responsibility, staffing, and evaluating) b. Leading and/or staffing working groups c. Serving as a professional mentor for a friend or colleague d. Resolving conflicts e. Managing during a crisis f. Developing and nurturing a positive workplace culture</p>	
Job Skills	<p>Q14. How well have the City Service Corps monthly seminars, and other on-the-job trainings you received throughout the service year, helped you obtain the skills needed to operate at a high level in your occupation? Please rate each of the following skills according to how helpful they were:</p> <p>vs. Q9. Please rate how well developed your skills were in each of the following categories before you enrolled in City Service Corps:</p>	
Other Questions from CNCS Exit Survey:		
Appreciation of Diversity	<p>Q8. Thinking about before your City Service Corps experience, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:</p> <p>a. I enjoyed exploring differences between co-workers and/or friends from different cultures or backgrounds and me b. I enjoyed interacting with people from different cultures and backgrounds c. I respected the values of people from different cultures and backgrounds d. I felt confident when interacting with people from different cultures and backgrounds</p>	Q7 (a-d)
Overall satisfaction with [program/AmeriCorps]	Q40. All things considered, how do you feel about your overall City Service Corps service experience?	Q11
Discuss and think about political and social issues	<p>Q18. Since your City Service Corps term ended, have you done the following activities more frequently, less frequently, or about the same as before you enrolled? C. Discuss and think about how political, social, local, or national issues affect the community</p>	Q13
Trust in others/trust in institutions		Q14/Q15 (a-c)
Voting and registration - 2016 election	Q21. Did you decide to vote as a result of your City Service Corps experience?	Q16, Q17

AmeriCorps' contribution toward goals	<p>Q39. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements:</p> <p>a. Participating in AmeriCorps was a worthwhile experience in terms of furthering my educational goals and future educational endeavors.</p> <p>b. Participating in AmeriCorps was a worthwhile experience in terms of furthering my professional goals and future professional endeavors.</p> <p>c. Participating in AmeriCorps was a worthwhile experience in terms of furthering my personal goals and future personal endeavors.</p>	Q20 (a-c)
AmeriCorps was a personally defining experience		Q21-Q22
AmeriCorps was a professionally defining experience		Q23-Q24
Impact on career choices	<p>Q34. How has your City Service Corps experience shaped your education choices? For the following statements, please respond yes, a little; yes, a lot; or no.</p> <p>1. How did your City Service Corps experience affect the degree/major you chose?</p> <p>2. City Service Corps made me more interested in the topic I pursued in school</p> <p>3. City Service Corps made my personal goals for educational attainment increase</p> <p>4. The education award made continuing my education possible</p> <p>5. Are there any other ways City Service Corps has influenced your education choices?</p> <p>6. [if yes] Please describe those other effects:</p>	
Impact on educational choices	<p>Q35 How has your City Service Corps experience shaped your career choices? For the following statements, please respond yes, a little; yes, a lot; or no.</p> <p>a) City Service Corps affected the career pathway I chose</p> <p>b) How did your City Service Corps experience affect the career pathway you chose?</p> <p>c) City Service Corps made me more interested in the types of jobs that I pursued</p> <p>d) City Service Corps made my personal goals for occupational attainment increase</p> <p>e) Are there any other ways City Service Corps has influenced your career choices? f) [if yes] Please describe those other effects:</p>	
Including AmeriCorps experience on resume	Q38 Do you include your City Service Corps experience on your resume?	Q30

Appendix C. Survey Instruments

Site Survey Instrument



Thank you for participating in this survey. At the request of NYC Service, this survey is being conducted by researchers at The Urban Institute, a private, nonprofit research organization in Washington DC. The Urban Institute is nationally known for high-quality, objective, and nonpartisan research and evaluation, and has been asked to conduct a study of the impact of AmeriCorps service on members working with LISC sites.

The goal of this survey is to learn about how organizations like yours manage AmeriCorps members and to learn about the value they provide to the organization. The information gathered in this survey will be used to inform current policies and procedures that impact NYC Service's management of its City Service Corps program.

The survey should be completed by the member's immediate supervisor and takes an average of 15 minutes to complete. If you are unable to complete the survey in one session, your answers will be saved and you can return to the last page of the questionnaire you visited.

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Informed Consent

Your participation is completely voluntary; you may stop the survey at any time. If any question makes you feel uncomfortable, you can choose to skip that question. The information you provide will be kept confidential. To better understand responses to this survey, researchers at The Urban Institute may link survey responses with administrative data provided by NYC Service. However, in no way will responses be reported individually or identified by name. Your answers will be combined with those of other site representatives and results will be reported in the aggregate so that individuals cannot be identified.

We greatly appreciate your help with this important study. Please complete the entire questionnaire by **Friday, January 26, 2018**.

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Organization Information

1) How would you best characterize your organization? (Check only one)

- City agency
- Community-based organization (nonprofit)

2) Which of these do you consider major focus areas for your organization? For your AmeriCorps program? (Check all that apply)

	Organization	AmeriCorps Program
Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Youth Development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parenting skill development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Early childhood development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Homelessness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environment/conservation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Job training/placement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mental health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Economic/community development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Immigrant Affairs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Overview of City Service Corps Member Activities

3) What are the primary activities, programs, and/or services provided by the member(s) at your site? *(Please check all that apply)*

- Community Outreach
- Trainings
- Volunteer Recruitment/Engagement
- Research
- Project Management
- Program Development
- Direct Service to Constituents
- Other

4) Please rank the following three primary goals of AmeriCorps in order of their priority to your organization, with “1” being the highest priority and “3” being the lowest priority:

- _____ Providing needed direct services
- _____ Developing member’s civic leadership skills and knowledge
- _____ Developing members’ professional skills

5) In an average month, what percent of time do your AmeriCorps members spend on the following tasks, overall?

- _____ % on direct contact or providing direct service with service beneficiaries
- _____ % on projects where they do not have direct contact with service beneficiaries
- _____ % on other community service projects (e.g. special projects or signature projects)
- _____ % in member training or member development activities
- _____ % on paperwork, administrative duties
- _____ % on other activities (please specify) _____

[Total must equal 100%]

6) During the most recent program year, about what percentage of your AmeriCorps members fully met your expectations for entering members (e.g., educational background, experience level)?

Members fully meeting criteria: _____%

7) (If #7 is less than 90%) Please share how the City Service Corps member did not meet your expectations.

8) How many full-time staff (please include yourself) directly supervised your City Service Corps member(s)?

Total number of full-time equivalents: _____

City Service Corps Member Development

9) What percentage of total staff time is spent planning or leading member development activities?

_____ % of total staff time

10) How much time do you, and others at your organization, spend on onboarding orientation for your City Service members?

(Please write in number of days OR number of hours.)

_____ Total number of days OR _____ Total number of hours

11) We understand that organizations provide all members with “on-the-job” training; but on average, outside of the monthly City Service Corps planned training, how often does your organization provide formal development/training for the City Service Corps member?

(Check only one)

- Weekly
- Every two weeks
- Monthly
- Every two months
- Every three to four months
- Once or twice a year
- Other (Please specify) _____

12) While serving with your organization, how important was it that your members: (Use a 5-point scale where 1 is not at all important and 5 is very important. Circle one number for each item.)

		Not Important			Very Important	
1.	Develop commitment to civic engagement, social responsibility,	1	2	3	4	5

and volunteerism

2.	Learn skills that they can use on the job, or for future employment	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Have an opportunity to serve communities from diverse backgrounds	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Develop teamwork/leadership skills	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Work towards unit/agency priorities	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Expand the number of New Yorkers that your unit/agency is able to reach	1	2	3	4	5

Member Interaction with Your Organization

13) On a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being never and 5 being every meeting with member, how often did you provide feedback on performance?

- 1 2 3 4 5

14) On a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being no emphasis and 5 being the primary factor in assignment decisions, how much emphasis did you put on tailoring member's work assignment to a member's abilities?

- 1 2 3 4 5

15) Within the last two years – including the 2016-2017 program year – has your organization hired any of the City Service Corps members that have served there?

- Yes
 No

16) How many members did you hire? _____

____As Full-time staff

____As Part-time staff

____As Contract position(s)

17) For what purpose did you hire the member(s) (Check all that apply)?

- Continue to offer existing services
 Expand into a new program area
 Offer existing services to more clients
 Other: _____

18) If you did not hire any of your AmeriCorps members your organization hosted within the last five years, including the most recent program year, please indicate why. (Check top two reasons)

- Lack of funding
- Decision to discontinue program or service
- Member did not have the needed skills
- Member was not interested in working for our organization
- Member pursued other opportunities, including higher education
- Member's task had been completed
- Other _____

Overall Member Assessment

19) Do you view the NYC City Service Corps as a workforce development strategy for your unit? Please explain.

- Yes
- No

Please explain:

20) How would you describe the contribution made by your 2016-17 AmeriCorps member(s) in the following areas:

	Limited	Some	Moderate	Substantial	N/A
Technical skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
New ideas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enthusiasm and energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ability to foster partnerships with other organizations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Helping your organization expand into new program or service areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ability to reach new New Yorkers with information and services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ability to do our work more efficiently	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Changing the organization's view of its overall mission or vision	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Changing the organization's overall approach to providing needed services to the community

21) How would you rate your 2016-17 AmeriCorps member(s) on the following attributes:

	Needed improvement	Acceptable	Above Average	Outstanding
Ability to work within the established AmeriCorps job description or task plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ability to work independently	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ability to use supervisor feedback to improve performance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ability to work with others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ability to engage with diverse groups/communities in NYC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interest and enthusiasm for assigned work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Effectiveness in supporting the overall mission and goals of the unit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quality of work produced	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quantity of work produced	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

22) Please describe any innovative or effective member development activities or strategies that you feel have had the most impact on your members this year. (Please be as specific and detailed as possible.)

23) Next, please describe any especially effective techniques or strategies for managing City Service Corps members that you implemented during the 2016-2017 program year.

24) Finally, in the space below, please describe the primary challenges of managing City Service Corps members. For instance, do staff members who manage City Service Corps members have responsibilities that take more time than expected?

25) On a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being very little value and 5 being a great deal of value, how much value would you say your 2016-17 AmeriCorps member(s) provided to the unit, considering the costs of managing the member(s)?

- 1 2 3 4 5

26) Overall, on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being very little value and 5 being a great deal of value, how does the dollar value of the service provided by City Service Corps members compare to the monetary costs of hosting members?

- 1 2 3 4 5

Relationship with NYC Service

Now, we'd like to ask you a few questions about your relationship with NYC Service and to the extent to which you view working with NYC Service as a relationship, partnership, or

collaboration. Please limit your answers to the relationship with the AmeriCorps program only.

Please select the number that best indicates how much you agree with the following statements: (Use a 5-point scale where 1 is disagree and 5 is agree)

27) NYC Service takes our organization's opinions seriously when decisions are made.

Not at all					To a great extent
1	2	3	4	5	

28) Meetings with NYC Service accomplish what is necessary for the collaboration to function well.

Not at all					To a great extent
1	2	3	4	5	

29) You, as a representative of your organization, feel pulled between trying to meet both your organization's expectations and the expectations of the City Service Corps program.

Not at all					To a great extent
1	2	3	4	5	

30) You feel that what your organization brings to the collaboration is appreciated and respected by NYC Service.

Not at all					To a great extent
1	2	3	4	5	

31) My organization can count on NYC Service to meet its obligations to the collaboration.

Alumni Follow-up Survey Instrument



Dear [First Name],

NYC Service is working with a research team from the Urban Institute, a private, nonprofit research organization in Washington DC, to conduct a required evaluation of the City Service Corps AmeriCorps program. The Urban Institute's study will focus on the impact of AmeriCorps service on members who have served with City Service Corps sites.

As part of the study, the Urban Institute is conducting a survey of all former City Service Corps AmeriCorps members. The goal of this survey is to learn about the impact of City Service Corps service on the professional and education pathways you have taken. The information gathered in this survey will be used to inform current policies and procedures that impact NYC Service's management of its City Service Corps program.

The survey should only take about 15 minutes to complete. If you are unable to complete the survey in one session, your answers will be saved and you can return to the last page of the questionnaire you visited.

Informed Consent

Your participation is completely voluntary; you may stop the survey at any time. If any question makes you feel uncomfortable, you can choose to skip that question. The information you provide will be kept confidential. To better understand responses to this survey, researchers at The Urban Institute may link survey responses with administrative data collected by City Service Corps or by your local operating site (the organization that hosted you as a member). However, in no way will responses be reported individually or identified by name. Your answers will be combined with those of other City Service Corps alumni and results will be reported in the aggregate so that individuals cannot be identified.

We greatly appreciate your help with this important study. Thank you for participating in this survey.

1. What were the main focus areas of your City Service Corps experience? Select all that apply.

- Education
- Public Health
- Disaster Services
- Veterans and Military Families
- Environmental Stewardship
- Economic Opportunity
- Not Sure/Does Not Apply

2. During your City Service Corps term, how much of your time was spent providing direct service to community residents, and how much was spent on internal work that builds the organization's capacity to provide service?

Please estimate both percentages: they should add to 100%, but your best estimates are OK.

Direct service: _____% Capacity building: _____%

3. What were you doing in the six months before you first entered City Service Corps? Select all that apply.

- Working in the private sector
- Working in the nonprofit or social service sector
- Working in the public/government sector
- Attending high school
- Attending a vocational/technical training program
- Attending college/community college
- Attending graduate school
- Serving in another AmeriCorps or service year program
- Working in my own small business
- Working at a nonprofit or social entrepreneurship venture that I created
- Serving in the military
- Unemployed
- Other: (Please explain)

4. Was your service primarily focused in one borough? If so, which borough?

- Yes (Please explain):
- No

5. After your City Service Corps service, did you reside in the community in which you were serving?

- Yes – I was not originally from that community but I stayed there after City Service Corps.
- Yes – I was originally from that community and I stayed there after City Service Corps.
- No – I moved back to where I was living before City Service Corps.
- No – I moved to a new community.

6. [IF NO] What US state do you currently live in? _____
 I live outside the US

7. Thinking back to **before** your City Service Corps experience, how much would you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

- a. I had a strong and personal attachment to my community
- b. I was aware of the important needs in my community
- c. I felt a personal obligation to contribute in some way to my community
- d. I was actively involved in issues that positively affect my community
- e. I had been exposed to new ideas and ways of seeing the world
- f. I made a contribution to the community
- g. I understood the concerns of all members of my community

8. Thinking about **before** your City Service Corps experience, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

- a. I enjoyed exploring differences between co-

- workers and/or friends from different cultures or backgrounds and me
- b. I enjoyed interacting with people from different cultures and backgrounds
- c. I respected the values of people from different cultures and backgrounds
- d. I felt confident when interacting with people from different cultures and backgrounds

9. Please rate how well developed your skills were in each of the following categories before you enrolled in City Service Corps:

	Highly skilled	Somewhat skilled	Not very skilled
a. Basic business and administrative skills related to planning, funding, budgeting, and staffing an organization			
b. Understanding and implementing communication strategies for diverse populations			
c. Using office information technology such as word processing, spreadsheets, etc.			
d. Project management			
e. Critical thinking and problem-solving skills			
f. Working and communicating effectively with others			
g. Managing time effectively			

10. Thinking about the period **during** your City Service Corps term, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

	Strongly				Strongly
	Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Disagree
a.	The majority of my work made a positive difference in the community				
b.	I made a noticeable difference in the life of at least one person				
c.	I was able do things I never thought I could do				
d.	I got along well with my supervisor and/or my teammates				
e.	I knew what my next steps would be in terms of educational goals				
f.	I knew what my next steps would be in terms of career/professional goals				
g.	I had a clear understanding about city government and how it works				
h.	I sometimes felt overwhelmed by the scope of the problems I work on				
i.	I frequently re-examined my beliefs and attitudes about other people				

11. For each of these skills, please indicate the extent to which your City Service Corps experience has helped you to build or improve them.

	A great deal	Some-what	Very little	Not at all	Not sure
a.	I am skilled at gathering and analyzing information.				

- b. I can set priorities for multiple tasks.
- c. I can meet deadlines effectively.
- d. I can work independently.
- e. I can work on a team for a common purpose.
- f. I am skilled at finding new and better ways to do things.
- g. I can lead or facilitate a meeting or event.
- h. I can lead a team.
- i. I can help other individuals learn a new skill.
- j. I can plan or coordinate a meeting, activity, or event.

12. To what extent did your experience in City Service Corps help you improve your communication skills?

	A great deal	Some- what	Very little	Not at all	Not sure
a. Speaking effectively in public /conveying ideas in a group					
b. Strategies and techniques in successful negotiation					
c. Written communication					
d. Facilitating group meetings and activities					
e. Communicating difficult or sensitive information, in a manner that inspires and					
f. Communicating the vision of the organization or its leadership					
g. Collecting and disseminating information for internal and external audiences					
h. Communicating during a crisis					

13. To what extent did your experience in City Service Corps help you improve your leadership skills?

- | | A
great
deal | Some-
what | Very
little | Not at
all | Not
sure |
|---|--------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|-------------|
| a. Project management (planning, implementing, delegating and sharing responsibility, staffing, and evaluating) | | | | | |
| b. Leading and/or staffing working groups | | | | | |
| c. Serving as a professional mentor for a friend or colleague | | | | | |
| d. Resolving conflicts | | | | | |
| e. Managing during a crisis | | | | | |
| f. Developing and nurturing a positive workplace culture | | | | | |

14. How well have the City Service Corps monthly seminars, and other on-the-job trainings you received throughout the service year, helped you obtain the skills needed to operate at a high level in your occupation? Please rate each of the following skills according to how helpful they were:

	Very helpful	Somewhat helpful	Not very helpful	Not helpful at all	Not applicable
a. Basic business and administrative skills related to planning, funding, budgeting, and staffing an organization					
b. Understanding and implementing communication strategies for diverse populations					
c. Using office information technology such as word processing, spreadsheets, etc.					
d. Project management					
e. Critical thinking and problem-solving skills					
f. Working and communicating effectively with others					
g. Managing time effectively					

15. Which parts of your training, and which of the people you met during your City Service Corps term, have helped you to develop your work skills the most?

	Very helpful	Somewhat helpful	Not very helpful	Not helpful at all	Not applicable
a. Host site supervisor					
b. Staff and colleagues at the host site					
c. City Service Corps monthly seminar trainers					

- d. City Service Corps peers

Please list anyone else who has played an especially important role in helping you develop your work skills: _____

16. Now, we'd like to ask a few questions about working with others to solve community problems. How much did your experience in City Service Corps help you **improve** at the following skills?

17.

	A great deal	Some-what	Very little	Not at all	Not sure
a. Create a plan to address a community problem					
b. Get other people to care about a community issue					
c. Organize and run a meeting					
d. Express your views in front of a group of people					
e. Identify individuals or groups who could help you with the problem					
f. Express your views on the Internet or through social media					
g. Call someone on the phone you had never met before to get their help with a community issue					
h. Contact an elected official about the problem					
i. Help others in the community access city services					

18. Did you decide to register as a result of your City Service Corps experience?

- Yes
- No

19. Were you registered to vote before your City Service Corps term began?

- Yes
- No
- No, was not eligible to vote
- Don't Know

20. Did you decide to vote as a result of your City Service Corps experience?

- Yes

No

21. Did you vote in the last presidential election?

- Yes
- No, was registered but chose not to vote
- No, was not eligible to vote
- Don't Know

22. How often did you vote in the last 12 months?

- I voted in all elections offered in my district.
- I voted in some elections offered in my district.
- I did not vote in any elections offered in my district.
- No elections were offered in my district in the last 12 months.

23. How closely do you associate your City Service Corps service with each of the following?

	Very closely	Closely	Some- what	Not much	Not at all	Not applicable
AmeriCorps						
NYC Service						
The specific agency or organization where you served (Host Site)						
Other (please specify):						

24. If yes, please select the highest degree you have earned since completing your City Service Corps term:

- 2-year college degree (AA)
- Technical or vocational degree or certificate
- 4-year college degree (BA, BS)
- Graduate or professional degree (MA, MS, MD, JD, Ph.D., etc.)
- Other (specify):

25. Have you earned a degree since completing your City Service Corps service? If so, please select the highest degree you have earned.

- Yes
- No

26. Have you used the AmeriCorps education award you received at the end of your City Service Corps term?

- Yes
- No

- Not eligible because City Service Corps was my third (or more) AmeriCorps term
27. [IF YES] how did you use the AmeriCorps education award you received at the end of your City Service Corps term? Select all that apply.
- To attend college in New York City
 - To attend college outside of New York City
 - To repay student loans
 - To attend graduate school in New York City
 - To attend graduate school outside of New York City
 - To attend a technical or vocational training program in New York City
 - To attend a technical or vocational training program outside of New York City
 - I transferred my education award to a family member
28. [IF NO] Do you plan to use the AmeriCorps education award you received at the end of your City Service Corps term?
- Yes, I plan to use it
 - No, I plan to not use it
 - Not applicable
29. How did your City Service Corps service fit into how your career path has unfolded? Select the option that most closely describes your career path.
- It aligned with the career path I was already pursuing.
 - My career took a different path into work in a nonprofit and the public sector.
 - My career took a different path into private/business sector after AmeriCorps.
 - My career took a different path into private/business sector after AmeriCorps, but then I returned to nonprofit and public sector.
30. What did you do in the six months after your City Service Corps service ended? Select all that apply.
- Got a job in the nonprofit sector at my host site
 - Got a job in the nonprofit sector not at my host site
 - Got a job in the public/government sector at my host site
 - Got a job in the public/government sector not at my host site
 - Got a job in the private sector
 - Enrolled in a vocational/technical training program
 - Went to college
 - Went to graduate school
 - Enrolled for another City Service Corps term
 - Enrolled in another AmeriCorps program
 - Pursued another service experience such as the Peace Corps
 - Started a small business
 - Started a nonprofit or social entrepreneurship venture

- Served in the military
- Unemployed
- Other (describe what you did immediately after your AmeriCorps service):

31. If you got a job in the six months after your City Service Corps service, was it a position in, or directly connected to, the organization or agency in which you served?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please explain:

32. [IF NO] What are you doing now? Select all that apply.

- Working in the nonprofit sector
- Working in government or in the public sector
- Working in the private sector
- Serving in the military
- Self-employed
- Looking for work
- Staying at home to take care of a family or household member or for other reasons
- Working as a supervisor or in a management capacity
- Serving in another national service program (another AmeriCorps program, Senior Corps, NCCC, or VISTA project)
- Serving with the Peace Corps
- Engaging in other volunteer service
- Making plans to attend school
- Attending college or graduate school
- Enrolled in a certificate, technical, or vocational program
- Other (specify):

How has your City Service Corps experience shaped your education choices? For the following statements, please respond yes, a little; yes, a lot; or no. If you did not go to college after your City Service Corps year, please select "N/A".

33. How has your City Service Corps experience shaped your education choices? For the following statements, please respond yes, a little; yes, a lot; or no.

1. How did your City Service Corps experience affect the degree/major you chose?

2. City Service Corps made me more interested in the topic I pursued in school

- YES A LOT
- YES, A LITTLE
- NO
- N/A

3. City Service Corps made my personal goals for educational attainment increase

- YES A LOT
- YES, A LITTLE
- NO
- N/A

4. The education award made continuing my education possible

- YES A LOT
- YES, A LITTLE
- NO
- N/A

5. Are there any other ways City Service Corps has influenced your education choices?

- YES
- NO
- N/A

6. [if yes] Please describe those other effects:

34. How has your City Service Corps experience shaped your career choices?

a) City Service Corps affected the career pathway I chose

- YES, A LOT
- YES, A LITTLE
- NO (GO TO part c)
- N/A (GO TO part c)

b) How did your City Service Corps experience affect the career pathway you chose?

- c) City Service Corps made me more interested in the types of jobs that I pursued
- YES, A LOT
 - YES, A LITTLE
 - NO
 - N/A
- d) City Service Corps made my personal goals for occupational attainment increase
- YES, A LOT
 - YES, A LITTLE
 - NO
 - N/A
- e) Are there any other ways City Service Corps has influenced your career choices?
- YES
 - NO
 - N/A
- f) [if yes] Please describe those other effects:
-

35. Think about the services that you received while you were serving in City Service Corps. If you have received the services in the list below, how helpful have they been in assisting you to find and/or keep a job or enroll in school? Has it been very helpful, somewhat helpful, not very helpful, or not at all helpful?

Service	Very Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Not Very Helpful	Not at all Helpful	Did not receive service
a. Training in job search skills (for example, help preparing your resume, what to do when interviewing for a job, how to dress for an interview and/or work)					
b. Information about job openings, schools, training programs, or the military					
c. Help scheduling an interview with an employer or a school official					
d. Formal and informal networking opportunities at events and trainings					

36. We'd like to ask about the people you met, and the training you received, during your City Service Corps term. How helpful have each of the following been in helping you find your current job?

	Very helpful	Somewhat helpful	Not very helpful	Not helpful at all	Not applicable
a. Host site supervisor					
b. Host site staff/colleagues					
c. City Service Corps Monthly seminars trainers					
d. City Service Corps peers					
e. NYC Service Staff					

Please list the name and role of anyone else who has played an especially important role in helping you find your current job: _____

37. Do you include your City Service Corps experience on your resume?

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

Please explain:

38. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. Participating in AmeriCorps was a worthwhile experience in terms of furthering my educational goals and future educational endeavors.					
b. Participating in AmeriCorps was a worthwhile experience in terms of furthering my professional goals and future professional endeavors.					
c. Participating in AmeriCorps was a worthwhile experience in terms of furthering my personal goals and future personal endeavors.					

39. All things considered, how do you feel about your overall City Service Corps service experience?

- Very Satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neither
- Dissatisfied

Please explain:

40. If a good friend or family member told you he or she was interested in joining City Service Corps, would you:

- Advise against it
- Have second thoughts about recommending it
- Recommend it
- Strongly recommend it

41. Overall, how would you describe your City Service Corps term and the impact it has had on your professional and personal life? Please use the space below to tell us anything that we have not already asked about.

CNCS Member Exit Survey Instrument

1. People join AmeriCorps for a variety of reasons. How much do you agree that each of the following reasons motivated you to join?

- a. To gain general skills or competencies that would be useful in school or work.
- b. To have a chance to work with people who share your ideals.
- c. To fulfill your duty as a citizen.
- d. To receive an education award.
- e. To gain direct experience in a specific career and/or future profession.
- f. To help in solving a community need or challenge.
- g. To make friends and meet people.
- h. To do something while also enrolled in school.
- i. To do something during a break in school or work.
- j. Other (specify)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

2. What were the main focus areas of your AmeriCorps service experience? Please check all that apply:

- Disaster Services
- Environmental Stewardship
- Economic Opportunity
- Healthy Futures
- Education
- Veterans and Military Families
- Not Sure/Does Not Apply

3. The next two questions ask you about the training and resources you received during your service experience. The first question asks about the training and resources you received from AmeriCorps, while the second question asks about additional training and resources you may have received from your specific program site(s) or project sponsor(s).

a. Overall, how well did the training and resources you received from AmeriCorps prepare you and support you in having a successful service experience? Training might include orientation (PSO, Orientation, or CTI), online tutorials and resources, NCCC transition/mid-year/Life After AmeriCorps training, webinars, blended courses, and social media forums presented by AmeriCorps (including AmeriCorps NCCC, FEMA Corps, and AmeriCorps VISTA)?

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- I did not receive any

b. Please explain.

c. Overall, how well did the coaching, on-the-job training, supervision, and professional support you received from your program/project sponsor prepare and support you in having a successful service experience? This might include an orientation to the organization and the community, supervision and training from your sponsor, one-on-one meetings and team meetings, and general guidance throughout the year.

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- I did not receive any

d. Please explain.

4. During your AmeriCorps service, how frequently did you do the following activities listed below?
- a. Solve unexpected problems or find new and better ways to do things.
 - b. Lead or facilitate a meeting or event.
 - c. Lead a team.
 - d. Help other individuals learn a new skill.
 - e. Support a meeting, activity, or event through planning or coordinating.
 - Very Often
 - Often
 - Sometimes
 - Rarely
 - Never
5. During your AmeriCorps service, how frequently did you do the following activities listed below?
- a. Gather and analyze information.
 - b. Set priorities for multiple tasks.
 - c. Meet deadlines effectively.
 - d. Work independently.
 - e. Work on a team for a common purpose.
 - Very Often
 - Often
 - Sometimes
 - Rarely
 - Never
6. During your AmeriCorps service, how frequently did you do the following activities listed below?
- a. Listen to other people's suggestions and concerns.
 - b. Negotiate and compromise with others.
 - c. Decrease conflict between people.
 - d. Work with people different from yourself.
 - e. Form organizational partnerships.
 - f. Identify or leverage community resources.
 - Very Often
 - Often
 - Sometimes
 - Rarely
 - Never
7. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.
- a. I enjoy exploring differences between co-workers and/or friends from different cultures or backgrounds and me.
 - b. I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures and backgrounds.

- c. I respect the values of people from different cultures and backgrounds.
 - d. I feel confident when interacting with people from different cultures and backgrounds.
 - Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Neither Agree nor Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree
8. How much do you agree or disagree that each of the following statements describes you?
- a. I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough.
 - b. If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to get what I want.
 - c. It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals.
 - d. I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events.
 - e. Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations.
 - f. I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort.
 - g. I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities.
 - h. When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions.
 - i. If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution.
 - j. I can usually handle whatever comes my way.
 - Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Neither Agree nor Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree
9. Thinking about your AmeriCorps experience, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.
- a. I felt I made a contribution to the community.
 - b. I re-examined my beliefs and attitudes about myself.
 - c. I was exposed to new ideas and ways of seeing the world.
 - d. I felt part of a community.
 - e. I learned more about the "real" world or "the rest" of the world.
 - f. I gained an understanding of the community(s) where I served.
 - g. I gained an understanding of the solutions to the challenges faced by the community(s) where I served.
 - h. I spent a lot of time doing meaningless "make work" tasks.
 - Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Neither Agree nor Disagree
 - Disagree

Strongly Disagree

10. Thinking about your AmeriCorps experience, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

- a. The majority of my work did not make a difference in the community.
- b. I felt I made a difference in the life of at least one person.
- c. I did things I never thought I could do.
- d. I did not get along well with my supervisor and/or my teammates.
- e. I figured out what my next steps are in terms of educational goals.
- f. I figured out what my next steps are in terms of career/professional goals.
- g. I felt defeated by the scope of the problems I worked on.
- h. I re-examined my beliefs and attitudes about other people.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

11. All things considered, how satisfied are you with your overall AmeriCorps service?

- a. Please select a response.
 - Very Satisfied
 - Satisfied
 - Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied
 - Dissatisfied
 - Very Dissatisfied
- b. Please explain:

12. Think about how likely you were to participate in the following activities before you did AmeriCorps, and how likely you are now. Would you say that your AmeriCorps experience has made you more or less likely to:

- a. Participate in community organizations (school, religious, issue-based, recreational).
- b. Vote in elections.
- c. Keep informed about news and public issues.
- d. Help to keep the community safe and clean.
- e. Volunteer for a cause or issue that you care about.
- f. Donate money or goods to a cause or issue that you care about.
 - Much more likely
 - Somewhat more likely
 - No effect
 - Somewhat less likely

Much less likely

13. In the last 12 months, how often did you discuss and think about how political, social, local, or national issues affect the community?

- Basically every day
- A few times a week
- A few times a month
- Once a month
- Less than once a month
- Not at all

14. Generally speaking, would you say that you can trust all of the people, most of the people, some of the people, or none of the people in your neighborhood?

- All of the people
- Most of the people
- Some of the people
- None of the people

15. For each of the following institutions, would you say you have a great deal of confidence, only some confidence, hardly any confidence, or no confidence at all in them to do what is right?

- a. Corporations
 - b. The Media
 - c. Public Schools
- A great deal of confidence
 - Some confidence
 - Hardly any confidence
 - No confidence at all

16. Did you vote in the last presidential election?

- Yes
- No
- No, I was not eligible to vote
- Don't know

17. Were you registered to vote in the last presidential election?

- Yes

- No
- No, I was not eligible to vote
- Don't know

18. If you found out about a problem in your community that you wanted to do something about, how well do you think you would be able to do each of the following:

- a. Create a plan to address the problem.
- b. Get other people to care about the problem.
- c. Organize and run a meeting.
- d. Express your views in front of a group of people.
- e. Identify individuals or groups who could help you with the problem.
- f. Express your views on the Internet or through social media.
- g. Call someone on the phone you had never met before to get their help with the problem.
- h. Contact an elected official about the problem.
 - I definitely could do this
 - I probably could do this
 - Not sure
 - I probably could not do this
 - I definitely could not do this

19. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

- a. I have a strong and personal attachment to a particular community.
- b. I am aware of the important needs in the community.
- c. I feel a personal obligation to contribute in some way to the community.
- d. I am or plan to become actively involved in issues that positively affect the community.
- e. I believe that voting in elections is a very important obligation that a citizen owes to the country.
 - Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Neither Agree nor Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree

20. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

- a. Participating in AmeriCorps was a worthwhile experience in terms of furthering my educational goals and educational endeavors.
- b. Participating in AmeriCorps was a worthwhile experience in terms of furthering my professional goals and professional endeavors.
- c. Participating in AmeriCorps was a worthwhile experience in terms of furthering my personal goals and personal endeavors.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

21. How much do you agree or disagree that your AmeriCorps service was a defining personal experience? A defining experience is one that confirmed your beliefs and aspirations, or one that resulted in a change or shift in your beliefs and aspirations.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

22. In what ways was it defining?

23. How much do you agree or disagree that your AmeriCorps service was a defining professional experience? A defining experience is one that confirmed your professional goals, or one that resulted in a change or shift in your professional goals.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

24. In what ways was it defining?

25. If a good friend or family member told you he or she was interested in joining AmeriCorps, would you advise against it, have second thoughts about recommending it, recommend it, or strongly recommend it?

- Advise against it
- Have second thoughts about recommending it
- Recommend it
- Strongly recommend it

26. How closely do you associate your AmeriCorps service with each of the following?

- a. AmeriCorps
- b. NCCC, FEMA Corps, VISTA, or AmeriCorps State and National
- c. The agency or nonprofit that operated your program
- d. The specific organization or site where you served
- e. Other (please explain):
 - Very Closely
 - Closely
 - Somewhat
 - Not much
 - Not at all
 - Not applicable

27. What do you plan to use your AmeriCorps education award for? Please select the option that best describes your plans.

- To attend college
- To repay student loans
- To attend graduate school
- To attend a technical or vocational training program
- Transfer education award to a family member
- I do not qualify to receive an education member
- I chose to receive a stipend instead of an education award
- I do not have any plans to use my education award

28. What are you planning to do in the next six months after your AmeriCorps service?
Please select the options that best describe your desired plans.

- Get a job in the private sector
- Enroll in another AmeriCorps program
- Get a job in the private sector
- Enroll in another AmeriCorps program
- Get a job in the nonprofit or social service sector
- Pursue another service experience such as the Peace Corps
- Get a job in the public/government sector
- Start a small business
- Enroll in a vocational/technical training program
- Start a nonprofit or social entrepreneurship venture
- Go to college
- Serve in the military
- Go to graduate school
- Do not know
- Enroll in the same AmeriCorps program
- Other

29. If you selected "Other" in the previous question, please describe what you plan to do next. Please explain:

30. If you plan to include AmeriCorps on your resume, in which section of your resume will you include it?

- Professional or work experience
- Volunteer or community service
- I may do either of the above, depending on the particular use of the resume
- I do not plan to include AmeriCorps on my resume

31. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statement: I feel that I received adequate training to describe my AmeriCorps experience on a resume,

college application, or job application.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Appendix D. Focus Groups Protocols

Focus Group Protocol for City Service Corps Site Supervisors

We are researchers from the Urban Institute, a private, nonprofit research organization based in Washington, DC, which conducts policy-related research on a variety of social welfare and economic issues. We are interested in talking with you today about the City Service Corps program, which is administered by NYC Service.

The Urban Institute is under contract to NYC Service to conduct an assessment of the City Service Corps; this week, we are holding focus groups with former AmeriCorps members to learn about the lasting impact of your service.

Your participation in this focus group style discussion is voluntary and you may choose not to answer questions you do not wish to. We'll be taking notes today to make sure we capture everything you say accurately. We'll also be recording the session today in order to have reference for anything we might miss in our notes. When at Urban, the recording will be stored on a confidential drive and will be destroyed after the end of the project. If you object to this, you're free to leave before the focus group begins.

Please note that while you are expected to treat anything other participants may say as confidential, you cannot control what some other participant may say they heard. We ask you to be mindful of this when making any comments that you may consider sensitive in nature. We also ask that you refrain from sharing anything we discuss today with others to help us ensure confidentiality, including NYC Service.

Please be assured that information that identifies you or any other participant by name is never shared outside of our evaluation team, including not sharing the information with NYC Service. When we write our report and discuss our findings, we will present information aggregated from across our interviews in order to shield the identities of individual focus group participants. However, if you are in a position that makes it so that you are the only person who could know a certain piece of information, it is possible someone reading our report might infer the source of the information. We will make every effort to avoid this, but you should be aware of the possibility.

Introduction

Before we begin our discussion, could we go around the room for introductions? Please tell us a little about your organization, and when and why your organization decided to participate in City Service Corps.

To start with, we'd like to ask you about how your organization helps City Service Corps members develop or strengthen various types of skills. Think of the City Service Corps alumni who served in your organizations during the first two years of the program (2015-2016 and 2016-2017).

1. What has your organization done to develop or strengthen the personal skills, such as the ones listed here, of these members? In your opinion, how much progress did these members make over the course of the term, compared to their skill levels when they enrolled?
 - Integrity
 - Responsibility
 - Resourcefulness
 - Adaptability
 - Initiative
2. Next, how has your organization helped City Service Corps members develop their people skills (examples shown below), and how much progress did your members make over the course of their terms of service?
 - Interpersonal communication
 - Teamwork
 - Respect
 - Cultural competency
3. How has your organization helped City Service Corps members develop their workplace skills (examples shown below), and how much progress did your members make during their terms of service?
 - Problem solving
 - Time management
 - Office information technology (word processing, spreadsheets, etc.)

4. Finally, how has your organization helped City Service Corps members develop their applied skills (examples shown below), and how much progress did your members make during their terms of service?
 - Critical thinking and analysis
 - Communication to external audiences
 - Business and administrative skills related to planning, funding, budgeting, and staffing an organization
5. How has involvement with the City Service Corps program added value or built capacity for your organization? What effect has your involvement with City Service Corps had on your organization's ability to deliver services effectively and efficiently?
6. Besides orientation and training, what steps do you take to make sure that your City Service Corps members learn how to operate effectively within your organization? What challenges have you encountered when trying to show your members how to be effective employees?
7. As a direct supervisor of City Service Corps member(s), could you talk about the main benefits and costs associated with hosting City Service Corps members? On balance, considering both the costs and the benefits, would you say that the experience has provided net benefits to your organization?
8. Would you say that your organization's participation in City Service Corps has contributed to a lasting change in the organization's culture? If so, please explain what has changed, and why you expect these changes to be long-lasting.
9. What could NYC Service do to help make your organization more successful as a host of City Service Corps members?

Focus Group Protocol for City Service Corps Alumni

We are researchers from the Urban Institute, a private, nonprofit research organization based in Washington, DC, which conducts policy-related research on a variety of social welfare and economic issues. We are interested in talking with you today about the City Service Corps program, which is administered by NYC Service.

The Urban Institute is under contract to NYC Service to conduct an assessment of the City Service Corps; this week, we are holding focus groups with former AmeriCorps members to learn about the lasting impact of your service.

Your participation in this focus group style discussion is voluntary and you may choose not to answer questions you do not wish to. We'll be taking notes today to make sure we capture everything you say accurately. We'll also be recording the session today in order to have reference for anything we might miss in our notes. When at Urban, the recording will be stored on a confidential drive and will be destroyed after the end of the project. If you object to this, you're free to leave before the focus group begins.

Please note that while you are expected to treat anything other participants may say as confidential, you cannot control what some other participant may say they heard. We ask you to be mindful of this when making any comments that you may consider sensitive in nature. We also ask that you refrain from sharing anything we discuss today with others to help us ensure confidentiality, including NYC Service.

Please be assured that information that identifies you or any other participant by name is never shared outside of our evaluation team, including not sharing the information with NYC Service. When we write our report and discuss our findings, we will present information aggregated from across our interviews in order to shield the identities of individual focus group participants. However, if you are in a position that makes it so that you are the only person who could know a certain piece of information, it is possible someone reading our report might infer the source of the information. We will make every effort to avoid this, but you should be aware of the possibility.

You can contact Nathan Dietz, Principal Investigator of this study, directly if you have any questions at ndietz@urban.org.

I understand:

- Everyone who works on this study has signed a Pledge of Confidentiality requiring them not to tell anyone outside the research staff anything I tell them during the focus group. The only exception is if I tell the facilitator about my intention to harm myself or someone else. The facilitator may be required by law to report this kind of information.
- The focus group will be audio recorded if all participants agree to this, but the audio will only be used to back up the notes that are taken during the discussion and will subsequently be destroyed at the end of the project.
- My participation is voluntary. I only have to answer questions I want to, and I can choose to stop participating at any time.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

Participant Signature:

Introduction

Before we begin our discussion, could we go around the room for introductions? Please tell us a little about why you decided to enroll in AmeriCorps, and in the City Service Corps in particular.

To start, we'd like to ask you about how your service term helped you develop or strengthen important professional and personal skills.

10. To what extent do you feel that your personal skills, such as the ones listed here, were developed or strengthened as a result of your City Service Corps service? What specific parts of your services contributed to the development of these skills?

- Integrity
- Responsibility
- Resourcefulness
- Adaptability
- Initiative

11. Next, to what extent do you feel your people skills (examples shown below) were developed, and what service components helped with that development?

- Communication
- Teamwork
- Respect
- Cultural competency

12. To what extent do you feel your workplace skills (examples shown below) were developed, and what service components helped with that development?

- Problem solving
- Time management
- Office information technology (word processing, spreadsheets, etc.)

13. Finally, to what extent do you feel that your City Service Corps service helped you develop your applied skills (examples shown below), and how did your service experience contribute to the development of those skills?

- Critical thinking and analysis

- Communication to external audiences
 - Business and administrative skills related to planning, funding, budgeting, and staffing an organization
14. Now, thinking about all of the skills we've discussed so far, which ones have been impacted the most by your City Service Corps service?
 15. As recent alumni of the City Service Corps program, could you talk about the main benefits and costs associated with serving as a member?
 16. Think about the civic work you've done in your community since you finished your service. Which of these experiences have been the most meaningful to you? How did your City Service Corps service help make these experiences meaningful?
 17. During your term of service, were you able to make or strengthen relationships with people who have helped your professional and/or personal life? If so, which people come to mind, and how have they been helpful to you?
 18. As a result of your service with the City Service Corps, do you feel that you understand New York city government more fully? Do you feel more connected to city government? Has this changed the way you participate in civic activities in your community, outside of work? If so, what has changed and why?
 19. Has your own service experience allowed you to help other community member(s) use services or benefits provided by New York city government? If so, please explain how.
 20. Overall, what is your opinion of your City Service Corps Experience?

Appendix E. Complete Set of Results

City Service Corps Members

TABLE E.1
Preservice Connections to Community

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree	N	Non-response
I had a strong and personal attachment to my community	0%	23%	19%	36%	21%	77	54
I was aware of the important needs in my community	1%	14%	21%	51%	13%	77	54
I felt a personal obligation to contribute in some way to my community	1%	4%	14%	48%	32%	77	54
I was actively involved in issues that positively affect my community	5%	18%	22%	38%	17%	77	54
I had been exposed to new ideas and ways of seeing the world	0%	3%	6%	51%	40%	77	54
I made a contribution to the community	4%	9%	18%	48%	21%	77	54
I understood the concerns of all members of my community	10%	18%	27%	30%	14%	77	54

Source: Urban Institute analysis of the alumni follow-up survey Q7.

Note: Alumni were asked, "Thinking back to before your City Service Corps experience, how much would you agree or disagree with the following statements?"

Research Question 1

TABLE E.2

% of Time Outcomes

	Mean (of listed percentages)	N	Non-response
What percentage of time do your members spend on direct contact with service beneficiaries or providing direct service to beneficiaries	22%	49	29
What percentage of time do your members spend on projects where they do not have direct contact with service beneficiaries	20%	49	29
What percentage of time do your members spend on other community service projects (e.g. special projects or signature projects)	9%	49	29
What percentage of time do your members spend on community engagement and outreach activities	24%	49	29
What percentage of time do your members spend in member training or member development activities	7%	49	29
What percentage of time do your members spend on paperwork, administrative duties	11%	49	29
What percentage of time do your members spend on other activities (please specify)	1%	49	29

Source: Urban Institute analysis of the Site Survey Q5.

TABLE E.3

Preservice Connections to Community

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree	N	Non-response
I enjoyed exploring differences between co-workers and/or friends from different cultures or backgrounds and me	0%	3%	10%	40%	47%	77	54
I enjoyed interacting with people from different cultures and backgrounds	1%	0%	4%	40%	55%	77	54
I respected the values of people from different cultures and backgrounds	0%	0%	1%	35%	64%	77	54
I felt confident when interacting with people from different cultures and backgrounds	3%	1%	13%	44%	39%	77	54

Source: Urban Institute analysis of the alumni follow-up survey question 8.

Note: Alumni were asked, "Thinking about before your City Service Corps experience, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements..."

TABLE E.4

Preservice Member Skills

	Not very skilled	Somewhat skilled	Highly skilled	N	Non-response
Basic business and administrative skills related to planning, funding, budgeting, and staffing an organization	21%	58%	21%	77	54
Understanding and implementing communication strategies for diverse populations	22%	58%	19%	77	54
Use of office information technology such as word processing, spreadsheets, etc.	5%	45%	49%	77	54
Project management	18%	62%	20%	76	55
Critical thinking and problem-solving skills	5%	44%	51%	77	54
Working and communicating effectively with others	6%	51%	43%	77	54
Managing time effectively	9%	49%	42%	77	54

Source: Urban Institute analysis of the alumni follow-up survey question 9.

Note: Alumni were asked, "Please rate how well developed your skills were in each of the following categories before you enrolled in City Service Corps:"

TABLE E.5

Mid-Service Member Impact

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree	N	Non-response
The majority of my work made a positive difference in the community	1%	1%	12%	47%	39%	77	54
I made a noticeable difference in the life of at least one person	0%	4%	13%	35%	48%	77	54
I was able do things I never thought I could do	4%	6%	22%	29%	39%	77	54
I got along well with my supervisor and/or my teammates	5%	4%	6%	43%	42%	77	54
I knew what my next steps would be in terms of educational goals	3%	9%	27%	36%	25%	77	54
I knew what my next steps would be in terms of career/professional goals	6%	9%	23%	34%	27%	77	54
I had a clear understanding about city government and how it works	1%	9%	8%	55%	27%	77	54
I sometimes felt overwhelmed by the scope of the problems I work on	8%	9%	23%	42%	18%	77	54
I frequently re-examined my beliefs and attitudes about other people	3%	10%	22%	49%	16%	77	54

Source: Urban Institute analysis of the alumni follow-up survey question 10.

Note: Alumni were asked: "Thinking about the period during your City Service Corps term, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:"

Research Question 2

TABLE E.6

% of Time Outcomes

	Mean (of listed percentages)	N	Non-response
Q6 (site survey): During the most recent program year, about what percentage of your City Service Corps members fully met your expectations (e.g., educational background, experience level)?	88%	49	29
Q9 (site survey): What percentage of total staff time is spent planning or leading member development activities?	4%	49	29

Source: Urban Institute analysis of the site survey Q6–9.

Research Question 3

TABLE E.7

Site Hiring Members

	Mean (of numbers listed)	N	Non-response
As Full-time staff	5	16	62
As Part-time staff	1	1	77
As Contract position(s)	3	5	73

Source: Urban Institute analysis of the site survey Q16.

Note: Site supervisors were asked, “How many members did you hire?”

TABLE E.8

Postservice Occupational Choices

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree
The majority of my work did not make a difference in the community.	21%	40%	16%	11%	11%
I felt I made a difference in the life of at least one person.	1%	2%	9%	40%	48%
I did things I never thought I could do.	5%	15%	13%	39%	27%
I did not get along well with my supervisor and/or my teammates.	35%	30%	16%	11%	9%
I figured out what my next steps are in terms of educational goals.	2%	7%	31%	39%	22%
I figured out what my next steps are in terms of career/professional goals.	0%	4%	24%	47%	25%
I felt defeated by the scope of the problems I worked on.	20%	39%	18%	14%	8%
I reexamined my beliefs and attitudes about other people.	0%	5%	31%	46%	18%

Source: Urban Institute analysis of the CNCS Member exit survey question 10.

Note: Members were asked, "Thinking about your AmeriCorps experience, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements."

Research Question 4

TABLE E.9

Member Attributes

	Needs Improvement	Acceptable	Above Average	Outstanding	N	Non-response
Ability to work within the established AmeriCorps job description or task plan	4%	38%	27%	31%	48	30
Ability to work independently	16%	29%	20%	35%	49	29
Ability to use supervisor feedback to improve performance	13%	39%	22%	26%	47	32
Ability to work with others	10%	27%	31%	33%	49	29
Ability to engage with diverse groups/communities in NYC	2%	29%	33%	36%	45	33
Interest and enthusiasm for assigned work	15%	17%	31%	38%	48	30
Quality of work produced	8%	27%	35%	29%	48	30
Quantity of work produced	15%	31%	33%	21%	48	30

Source: Urban Institute analysis of the site survey question 21.

Note: Site supervisors were asked: "How would you rate your 2016-17 City Service Corps member(s) on the following attributes:"

TABLE E.10

Reasons for Joining

Answer	City Service Corps	Comparison	P-value
a. To gain general skills or competencies that would be useful in school or work.	97% 239	99% 239	0.318
b. To have a chance to work with people who share your ideals.	96% 239	98% 239	0.286
c. To fulfill your duty as a citizen.	94% 239	92% 239	0.481
d. To receive an education award.	92% 239	96% 239	0.041
e. To gain direct experience in a specific career and/or future profession.	91% 239	95% 239	0.117
f. To help in solving a community need or challenge.	91% 239	94% 239	0.183
g. To make friends and meet people.	94% 239	94% 239	0.848
h. To do something while also enrolled in school.	72% 239	62% 239	0.015
i. To do something during a break in school or work.	72% 239	72% 239	0.917

Source: Urban Institute analysis of the CNCS Member exit survey question 1.

Notes: Members were asked: "People join AmeriCorps for a variety of reasons. How much do you agree that each of the following reasons motivated you to join?" Percentages are the share saying strongly agree, agree, or neither agree nor disagree.

Research Question 5

TABLE E.11

Impact of Service in the Area of Civic Engagement

	City Service Corps		Comparison		P-value
a. Participate in community organizations (school, religious, issue based, recreational).	37.7%	114	35.1%	114	0.649
b. Vote in elections.	56.1%	114	66.7%	114	0.064
c. Keep informed about news and public issues.	39.5%	114	46.5%	114	0.287
d. Help to keep the community safe and clean.	45.6%	114	47.4%	114	0.794
e. Volunteer for a cause or issue that you care about.	45.6%	114	49.1%	114	0.608
f. Donate money or goods to a cause or issue that you care about.	67.5%	114	71.9%	114	0.468

Source: Urban Institute analysis of the CNCS member exit survey question 12.

Note: Members were asked, "Think about how likely you were to participate in the following activities before you did AmeriCorps, and how likely you are now. Would you say that your AmeriCorps experience has made you more or less likely to:"

Appendix F. Feedback for NYC Service from Focus Groups

Key Takeaway 1: Service members' educational and professional backgrounds were often an asset to their host organizations.

She showed very early on that she was capable, she listened to direction, she was able to sort of manage her tasks well.

He's been like flawless in his soft skills, such as working well with others in the office, teamwork, and communication.

Key Takeaway 2: When City Service Corps members' backgrounds and experiences were not in line with their hosts' organizational needs, problems surfaced.

At about 3/4 of the way throughout the service year, their commitment and initiative drops. They struggle to follow project timelines.

At the end of the term of service the member was not meeting attendance, timeliness, or communication expectations.

There was some difficulty with communication. Some members had difficulty following instructions and adhering to established office and fieldwork protocols. There were also discrepancies in how time was being spent in the field and accuracy of data collected by some members.

[O]ne of the biggest challenges we encountered...was that our members had such varied background as far as the skills they were bringing into our unit, their professional experience, academic experience. Some people may have actually struggled with personal skills or people skills, workplace skills. It was really varied across the boards, so...applying a uniform approach to train all of them on these things was difficult.

I think it's such a varied environment that everyone's coming from, and for us it's not really that there's hard skills. We're looking for soft skills. Again, in that extreme case, I think that individual just wasn't a fit probably for the program to begin with...

Key Takeaway 3: At least part of this issue is the lack of clarity around roles. A recurring theme is that hiring agencies are not always clear about what they need or the role they want a City Service Corps member to fill.

I don't know what [the City Service Corps member's] expectations were. Maybe she thought she was going to be involved with something to do with that foster care aspect, and that wasn't what we gave her. So in hindsight, we needed to talk about 'What are your expectations?'

I also wanted to note that when he was brought on, there wasn't like a clear idea of what his role would be.

Notes

- ¹ Gina Cardazone et al., *AmeriCorps Alumni Outcomes: Summary Report*, October 2015, Corporation for National and Community Service.
- ² See Corporation for National and Community Service, *Serving Country and Community: A Longitudinal Study of Service in AmeriCorps* (Washington, DC: Office of Research and Policy Development, 2004); and Corporation for National and Community Service, *Still Serving: Measuring the Eight-Year Impact of AmeriCorps on Alumni* (Washington, DC: Office of Research and Policy Development, 2008).
- ³ The alumni survey asked participants about the following civic engagement activities: participating in community organizations (e.g., school, religious, issue-based, recreational), staying informed about news and public issues, helping to keep the community safe and clean, volunteering for a cause or issue that [they] care about, and donating money or goods to a cause or issue that [they] care about. A complete mapping of survey questions to outcomes appears in Appendix B.

About the Authors

Nathan Dietz, a published scholar and experienced practitioner of quantitative and qualitative social science research, joined the Urban Institute in April 2013. As a senior research associate in the Center on Nonprofits and Philanthropy, he has worked on several projects related to program evaluation and outcome measurement. Before joining Urban, Dietz served as senior program manager at the Partnership for Public Service, associate director for research and evaluation at the Corporation for National and Community Service, and an assistant professor of political science in the School of Public Affairs at American University. He received his BA from Northwestern University and his MA and PhD from the University of Rochester.

Daniel Teles is a research associate in the Metropolitan Housing and Communities Policy Center at the Urban Institute, where he specializes in applied microeconomic policy analysis. His research examines the effects of public policy on local communities. Previously, Teles worked on Louisiana's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program and for the New Orleans Area Habitat for Humanity. Teles earned a bachelor's degree from the George Washington University and a master's degree and a doctorate degree in economics from Tulane University. At Tulane, Teles was a community-engaged graduate fellow and coprincipal investigator of the AmeriCorps Crowd Out Study. He has contributed to the *Journal of Economic Inequality*, the *Handbook of Research on Nonprofit Economics and Management*, and the Lincoln Institute for Land Policy's *Significant Features of the Property Tax*.

Deondre' Jones is a research assistant in the Center on Nonprofits and Philanthropy at the Urban Institute, where he supports research, writing, and analysis on projects related to program evaluation and outcome measurement. Before joining Urban, Jones served in the 23rd class of the Emerson National Hunger Fellowship, a program hosted through the Congressional Hunger Center. He worked on food security and national antipoverty policy issues. Jones attended North Carolina State University, where he earned a BS in business economics with a minor in nonprofit studies.

Amanda Gold is a research analyst in the Metropolitan Housing and Communities Policy Center. Her research interests include affordable housing and community and economic development. Before joining Urban, Gold interned with the Metropolitan Policy Program at the Brookings Institution, New York City's Department of City Planning, the Center for an Urban Future, and the National Housing Conference. Gold holds a BA from Kenyon College and an MPP from Georgetown University.

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500 L'Enfant Plaza SW
Washington, DC 20024

www.urban.org