

# 2024 Annual Report



BUILDING TOGETHER.  
SHARING OUR STRENGTHS.



[SERVEVIRGINIA.ORG](http://SERVEVIRGINIA.ORG)

## ABOUT SERVE VIRGINIA

Serve Virginia aspires to build a culture of service and volunteerism in all corners of the Commonwealth by inspiring individuals and organizations to engage, connecting them with the resources they need to make a difference, and celebrating the tremendous impacts we make together.

We believe in the power of service and volunteerism to spark change, strengthen lives and produce lasting impacts for communities throughout Virginia. We act on this belief by collaboratively setting statewide priorities, serving as a catalyst for our network of partners, cultivating a sustainable infrastructure for all to engage in service and volunteerism, and developing resources for the Commonwealth.

Serve Virginia represents a more intentional partnership between the Virginia Service Commission, which operates within the Virginia Department of Social Services as the lead agency for volunteerism and service for the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the Virginia Service Foundation, an independent 501(c)3 organization.

## ABOUT THE VIRGINIA SERVICE FOUNDATION

The Virginia Service Foundation supports the activities of the Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism. The purpose of the Virginia Service Foundation is to promote volunteer involvement, civic engagement, and citizen participation in community and national service programs to address needs across the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Virginia Service Foundation was established in 2007 and continues to be an active fundraising organization.

The Virginia Service Foundation supports several initiatives each year which all support the goals of the Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism, including the National Day of Service Mini Grants program, the Governor's Volunteerism & Community Service Awards, the National Service Awards, and the Virginia Volunteerism Summit.

The Virginia Service Foundation is also working to advance Virginia's workforce by supporting specific policy changes that present a clear roadmap for increasing participation in national service programs in Virginia.

## CONTACT US

Learn more about supporting and engaging in our work.

[ServeVirginia.org](https://ServeVirginia.org)

[VirginiaServiceInfo@dss.virginia.gov](mailto:VirginiaServiceInfo@dss.virginia.gov)



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF  
SOCIAL SERVICES

# WORKING TOGETHER FOR A Resilient Virginia

Greetings from Serve Virginia! 2024 was an exciting year for service and volunteerism across the Commonwealth and we are pleased to share the various projects and initiatives we have undertaken to inspire more Virginians from all parts of the Commonwealth to engage in national service and volunteer efforts that reduce disparities and meet our most pressing needs.

Throughout this annual report you will learn about our collective efforts to strengthen our culture, expand partnerships, and build a robust resource infrastructure for the service and volunteerism ecosystem. From the expansion of our AmeriCorps portfolio, demonstration of the Virginia Community Engagement Index (VCEI), and development of the SERVE Framework to amplifying the extraordinary stories of service and volunteerism and the development of a new Youth Mental Health Corps, Serve Virginia has been guided by our key stakeholders, the Governor's Advisory Board on Service & Volunteerism and the Virginia Service Foundation.

As we conclude our three-year State Service Plan and projects supported by American Rescue Plan funding provided through AmeriCorps with match support from the Commonwealth of Virginia, this report will reflect upon the progress we have made since 2022. We will also look ahead to the next three-year cycle of our State Service Plan to set the stage for continued advancement of our goals.

We are grateful for all those individuals and organizations we have engaged with during the past year and look forward to strengthening our culture, deepening our partnerships, and building relevant resources together. Our efforts will spark change, strengthen lives and produce lasting impacts for communities through service and volunteerism.

Warm regards,



**Kathy J. Spangler, Director**

Serve Virginia



# Leadership

## 2024-2025 GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY BOARD

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Kimberly Luckabaugh, Vice Chair, Fairfax  
Jason Ascher, Arlington  
Mark Creason, Henrico  
Veronica Evans, Midlothian  
Amanda Gannon, Manassas  
Clovia Lawrence, Henrico  
Linda Malone-Colon, Hampton  
Kimberley Martin, Hanover County  
Aaron McClung, Chesterfield  
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Debra Rapone, Fauquier County  
Dominick A. Rascona, MD, Norfolk  
Shane Roberts-Thomas, Richmond  
Clifford Yee, Fairfax  
Carol Ayars, ex officio  
Jillian Winters, ex officio

## VIRGINIA SERVICE FOUNDATION

Julie Strandlie, Chair, Fairfax  
Maggie Bowman, Secretary, Richmond  
Clifford Yee, Treasurer, Fairfax  
Vanessa Diamond, Richmond  
Bryan Pearce-Gonzales, Winchester  
Kevin Quigley, Arlington  
Dr. Sheila Williamson-Branch, Danville  
Kathy Spangler, ex officio

## SERVE VIRGINIA TEAM

Kathy J. Spangler, Director  
Jae-Young Choe, Executive Assistant  
Samantha Lukasiewicz, AmeriCorps Manager  
Christina Dumas, Fiscal & Administration Officer  
Kimberly Brown, AmeriCorps Program Officer  
Sasha Bronder, AmeriCorps Program Officer  
Alex Vanik, Program Development Officer  
Analise Gammel, Statewide Engagement Officer  
Sarah Lawson, Communications & Outreach Officer  
Alyssa De Las Salas, AmeriCorps VISTA Leader  
Mackenzie Vuotto, AmeriCorps VISTA  
Maurice Huff, AmeriCorps VISTA  
Elizabeth Richardson, AmeriCorps VISTA

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# Leading the Way: Virginia's State Service Plan

## LOOKING BACK: 2022-2024 STATE SERVICE PLAN

As Serve Virginia's 2022-2024 State Service Plan concludes, we reflect on how it advanced our mission over the past three years with the collaboration of many partners across Virginia. Our strategic plan was informed by nearly 400 key stakeholders in 2021 and has guided our strategies and work through three interconnected strategy areas. We sought to 1) Build a Stronger Culture of Service, Volunteerism, & Civic Engagement; 2) Build a More Representative, Integrated, & Aligned Network of Partners; and 3) Build a More Robust Resource and Support Infrastructure.

### In fulfilling the 2022-2024 State Service Plan, Serve Virginia:

- Launched a new brand, website, communications plan, and policy roadmap,
- Brought new visibility to AmeriCorps through elected official visits at program sites,
- Hired project staff to expand and strengthen the service and volunteer ecosystem,
- Collaborated with Volunteer Centers and institutions of higher education to enhance volunteer recognition,
- Launched the Virginia Community Engagement Index,
- Leveraged a new AmeriCorps VISTA project to support stakeholder capacity-building,
- Established an official partnership with the Virginia Service Foundation, and
- Connected partners for dialogue on addressing community needs across sectors, among other achievements.

We have seen the impact of this work through record numbers of applications for awards, mini grants, and AmeriCorps grants, growing the number of AmeriCorps members and community volunteers meeting needs across Virginia.

## WHAT COMES NEXT: PLANNING FOR 2025-2027

We believe in the power of service and volunteerism to spark change, strengthen lives, and produce lasting impacts for communities throughout Virginia. Through the 2025-2027 State Service Plan, our goal is to inspire more Virginians from all parts of the Commonwealth to engage in national service and volunteer efforts that reduce disparities and meet our most pressing needs. This goal will guide our work to advance three interrelated strategies:

### **BUILD**

a stronger culture of service, volunteerism & civic engagement.

### **UNITE**

a more representative, integrated & aligned network of partners.

### **CREATE**

a more robust resource & support infrastructure.

Thanks to collaborative planning efforts this year, the full 2025-2027 State Service Plan will be formalized and shared publicly in early 2025. We invite you to join us in realizing the full potential of this work.

Learn more about the State Service Plan at [ServeVirginia.org/state-service-plan](https://ServeVirginia.org/state-service-plan)

# Bringing the Data to Life

## VIRGINIA COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INDEX

Throughout 2024, in partnership organizations across sectors, Serve Virginia utilized the data insights from the Virginia Community Engagement Index (VCEI) to create tangible strategies for strengthening community and civic engagement in the Commonwealth, including an interactive data dashboard for local use.

## VCEI APPLIED: CENTRAL REGION PROJECT

The Central Region project kicked off in July of 2023 with a convening of nonprofit, business, faith, and education leaders in the greater Richmond area. Jointly funded by the Community Foundation for a greater Richmond, the Bob and Anna Lou Schaberg Foundation, and the Virginia Service Foundation, this core team gathered around the VCEI Central Region Data to establish focus areas and implement strategies to address community needs and advance community engagement in the region. Using the SERVE Framework, this pilot project utilized seven focus groups that each implemented one of five strategic focus areas which strengthened the volunteer ecosystem in the greater Richmond area. These deliverables include an asset map of organizations in the Commonwealth doing advocacy and policy work around a variety of areas of need, a continuum of resources for volunteer managers, and collection of resources for volunteers to help them be better prepared for serving their community. The work done with the Virginia Community Engagement Index in the Central Region will inform the implementation of the VCEI throughout the Commonwealth.



## THE SERVE FRAMEWORK

The SERVE Framework was distilled from VCEI data by the Central Region core team. The framework outlines five strategic focus areas (defined to the right) and three tactics that can be implemented to make progress towards the overall SERVE Framework goal: Build a stronger service, volunteerism, and civic engagement ecosystem to meet needs in Central Virginia. Through the framework, five strategic focus areas can be paired with any of the three defined tactics:

1. Communicate strategically.
2. Engage intentionally.
3. Invest resources.

When applied, this tool can help create projects that strengthen volunteerism and service while addressing community needs more effectively—not just in the Central Region, but across the Commonwealth.



### KEY SPACES

Meeting people where they are—at work, at school, and in faith communities



### EQUIP

Equipping nonprofits with what they need to serve their communities



### CORPS

Utilizing national service as a way to meet community needs



### VOICE

Empowering nonprofits to advocate for their cause



### EXPERIENCE

Ensuring that volunteers have a meaningful and impactful volunteer experience

Read the VCEI report and SERVE Framework at [ServeVirginia.org/why-serve](https://ServeVirginia.org/why-serve)



# Addressing Needs & Expanding Local Innovation Through National Service



## BUILDING COMMUNITY & RESPONDING IN TIMES OF NEED

Each year, thousands of young Americans choose to serve in AmeriCorps NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps), completing service projects across the country, including supporting efforts to mitigate the effects of climate change, provide critical disaster response, and more.

In Virginia, a disaster relief and recovery memorandum of understanding (MOU) was signed between AmeriCorps NCCC and Serve Virginia to streamline the process for Virginia agencies and organizations to utilize AmeriCorps NCCC as an integral part of recovery and relief efforts in times of disaster.

In 2024, AmeriCorps NCCC members supported efforts to repurpose nonprofit space for new community initiatives, implement wildfire mitigation strategies in partnership with local Emergency Management teams, and respond to the devastating effects of Hurricane Helene in Southwest Virginia, removing close to 200,000 pounds of debris from around affected properties and helping organize and move 4,600 pounds of donated goods while also providing 100 homes with post-disaster aid.

## SERVICE SPOTLIGHT: EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

National service provides service-to-career pathways for its members while also creating pathways for others to access new opportunities and resources as well. In Virginia, this is evident in the **Virginia College Advising Corps (VCAC)**. With a mission to increase the number of low-income, first-generation, and underrepresented high school students who enter and complete higher education, VCAC is an AmeriCorps State program housed at the University of Virginia. With members serving in high schools across the Commonwealth, VCAC recruits graduating college seniors and recent college graduates to serve as full-time college advisers in high-need high schools throughout Virginia, addressing structural inequities in the education system that have systematically advantaged specific populations.



*Pictured, clockwise from top left: AmeriCorps NCCC members responding to Hurricane Helene; AmeriCorps members at the Institute for Advanced Learning and Research, Teach for America D.C. & Virginia, and Virginia College Advising Corps.*



Through its unique public-private partnership model, AmeriCorps continues to expand opportunities for Virginians to gain valuable life and career skills while strengthening communities and building the capacity of organizations to meet critical challenges.

In the past year alone, the various streams of AmeriCorps service and partnerships have made lasting impacts on countless lives and communities.

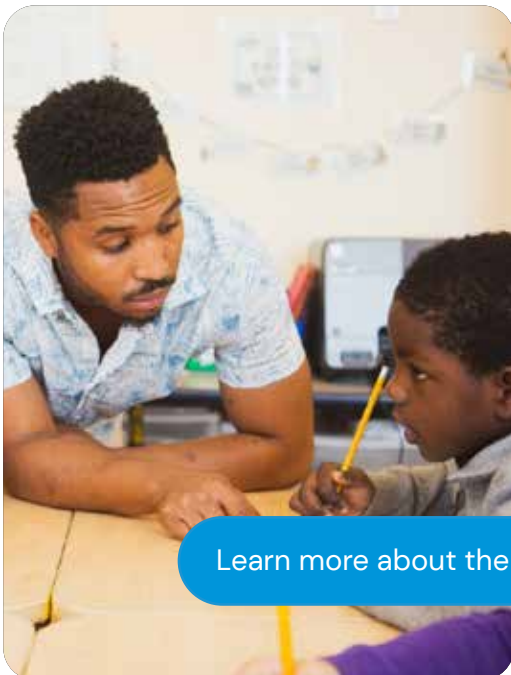


## CREATING NEW PATHWAYS FOR YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

Serve Virginia has partnered with over 45 organizations, including state and local government, K-12 and institutions of higher education, nonprofit and philanthropic leaders, and regional networks across the state to develop the Virginia Youth Mental Health Corps.

A partnership between the Schultz Family Foundation, Pinterest, America Forward, and AmeriCorps, the **Virginia Youth Mental Health Corps** will engage young adults in service to youth, providing services and support to youth while offering opportunities for career exposure and professional development to behavioral health careers.

Serve Virginia has identified the ways national service can be used as a tool to engage young adults in workforce development programming and create a talent pipeline that offers young adults the opportunity to “earn while they serve”, or receive a living allowance and engage in direct service while earning certificates and credentials that will support them in future professional endeavors. Further, Serve Virginia has partnered with Youth-Nex, the Virginia Department of Education, and the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services to support organizations in identifying ways member service activities can support youth mental health.



The Virginia Funders Network, including the Cameron Foundation, the Claude Moore Charitable Foundation and Claude Moore Opportunities, the Wellspring Foundation, the Path Foundation, and the Community Foundation for Loudoun and Northern Fauquier Counties, have partnered on conversations about partnering with leaders from state government to develop community support and sustainability for this program.

Partners from across programming, training, and funding spaces are creating pathways for this program to provide members access to earn credentials including Behavioral Health Technician and Behavioral Health Technician Assistant, Peer Recovery Specialist, Community Health Worker, and Youth Support Partner credentials.

Learn more about the Virginia Youth Mental Health Corps at [ServeVirginia.org/mental-health](https://ServeVirginia.org/mental-health)

# American Rescue Plan Supporting Transformational Change

Serve Virginia received \$451,287 in federal American Rescue Plan funding from AmeriCorps which was matched 1-1 from the Commonwealth of Virginia, totalling \$902,574. This one-time infusion was transformational in supporting efforts and laying groundwork to advance Virginia's workforce through AmeriCorps, in partnership with the Virginia Service Foundation.



## How Serve Virginia Supports AmeriCorps

### SUPPORTING PROGRAMS

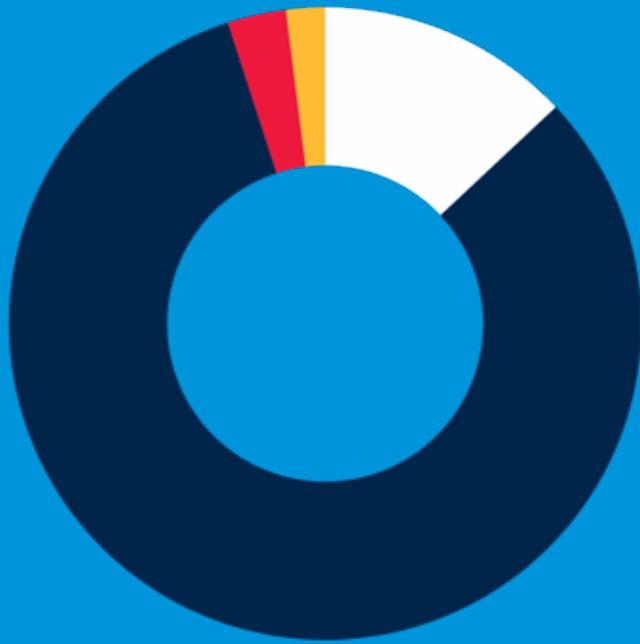
Serve Virginia oversees the AmeriCorps State program that exists alongside AmeriCorps VISTA, NCCC, and Seniors programs. Managing a grant portfolio of more than \$7.7 million in 2024, Serve Virginia helped grantees prepare their applications and budgets, support their members, measure their impact, and much more.

AmeriCorps annually engages communities, public-private partnerships, and governmental collaborations to address local challenges through service. Together, we use evidence-based solutions in six focus areas: education, economic opportunity, disaster services, environmental stewardship, healthy futures, and veterans and military families. In addition to meeting community needs, AmeriCorps programs create diverse talent pipelines, increase the capacity of nonprofit and public agencies and have positive impacts on the AmeriCorps members themselves.

### SHOWCASING PARTNERS

Serve Virginia was honored to host visits by state leaders and elected officials to AmeriCorps sites this past year, including:

- First Lady of Virginia Suzanne S. Youngkin and AmeriCorps leaders at CARITAS (Recovery Corps)
- Delegate Tony Wilt at Harrisonburg High School (Virginia College Advising Corps)
- Delegate Betsy B. Carr at Richmond Henrico Health District (RVA Health Corps)
- Delegate Joe McNamara at Salem High School (Virginia College Advising Corps)
- Senator David R. Suetterlein at Salem High School (Virginia College Advising Corps)
- Senator Ghazala F. Hashmi at the Chesterfield Public Defenders Office (Recovery Corps)
- Delegate Irene Shin at Volunteer Fairfax (RSVP Northern Virginia)
- Senator Stella G. Pekarsky at Volunteer Fairfax (RSVP Northern Virginia)
- Senator R. Creigh Deeds at the University of Virginia (Virginia College Advising Corps)



## National Service Membership in Virginia

Of the 2,805 AmeriCorps members who served in Virginia in 2023–2024:

**98**  
were VISTA members  
in 35 service locations

**56**  
were NCCC members  
in 10 service locations

**355**  
served across 17  
AmeriCorps State &  
National programs at  
163 service sites

**2,296**  
AmeriCorps Seniors  
volunteers served in  
130 service locations

## AmeriCorps Impact in Virginia By the Numbers

Working hand-in-hand with local partners and Serve Virginia, AmeriCorps programs in Virginia changed lives and strengthened communities in 2023–2024. **Here's a closer look at their impact:**

**\$7.7M** distributed in AmeriCorps funding through Competitive grants (\$1.7M), Formula grants (\$5.2M), and Public Health AmeriCorps funding (\$794K)

**16,694**

children and youth supported through programming and services



**\$49M**

financial aid secured for graduating high school students



**10,022**

college applications supported

**874**

individuals connected with job training or placement



**2,557**

individuals connected with substance use intervention services

**\$956,369.67**

earned in Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards for members to put toward the cost of continuing education

# 2024-2025 AmeriCorps State Operational Grantees in Virginia

AmeriCorps operational grants support programs that engage members in evidence-based interventions to strengthen communities. Awards may include up to \$27,000/MSY (AmeriCorps Member Service Year, equivalent to one full-time term of service), with no limits on the number of MSY.

## EASTERN VIRGINIA

**College of William and Mary:** Through this subgrantee, 49 members will provide in- and out-of-school time support through Head Start and local middle schools, helping children achieve school readiness by attaining social and emotional skills and increasing self-confidence, purpose, and connectedness to community. (Williamsburg, York)

## CENTRAL VIRGINIA

**Blue Ridge Medical Center:** Through this subgrantee, AmeriCorps members will serve as community health workers to address chronic disease. (Nelson, Appomattox)

**RVA Health Corps:** Through this subgrantee, 16 members will serve as community health workers providing nutrition education, mental health literacy, and informal counseling support in low-income neighborhoods. (Richmond)

**International Rescue Committee:** Through this subgrantee, 10 members will provide employment training and placement support, youth development, health navigation and wellness services, and organizational capacity support to support refugees. (Charlottesville, Richmond, Albemarle, Henrico, Chesterfield)



Learn more about these  
AmeriCorps State programs in Virginia  
and explore a map of service sites at  
[ServeVirginia.org/AmeriCorps](https://ServeVirginia.org/AmeriCorps)

## NORTHERN VIRGINIA

**CASA:** Through this subgrantee, 18 AmeriCorps members will provide financial literacy education, citizenship and legal support, and youth education, helping individuals and families improve financial literacy, achieve citizenship, and support youth in improving education outcomes and post-secondary readiness. (Fairfax, Prince William, Falls Church, Centreville)

**Edu-Futuro:** Through this subgrantee, 18 AmeriCorps members will deliver comprehensive youth leadership development and workforce development programming to improve academic and social emotional engagement by youth and develop the job readiness of adult participants and engage volunteers in support of this programming. (Arlington, Fairfax, Prince William, Alexandria, Falls Church)

**Aspire! Afterschool Learning:** Through this subgrantee, 25 AmeriCorps members will provide a critical link between school, afterschool, and home / community, improving academic performance. (Arlington)

**Teach for America:** This subgrantee will support 40 AmeriCorps members through the DC region who teach for two years in low-income and under-resourced schools. (Arlington, Alexandria)

Managing an annual portfolio of over \$7 million, Serve Virginia helps AmeriCorps State grantees prepare their applications and budgets, support their members, measure their impact, and so much more.

By coordinating these AmeriCorps grants, Serve Virginia assists these organizations in recruiting, training and placing AmeriCorps members to meet community needs.

## SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA

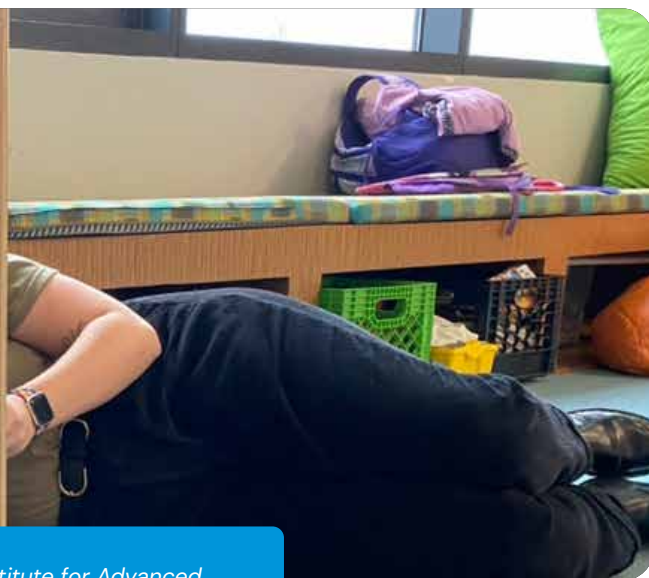
**Institute for Advanced Learning and Research:** Through this subgrantee, 31 AmeriCorps members will support upper elementary and middle school students in social and emotional learning and tutoring, in and out of school. (Danville, Pittsylvania, Martinsville)

**Carroll County Public Schools:** Through this subgrantee, 42 members will tutor PreK–8th grade students, helping them meet benchmarks. (Carroll, Galax, Smyth, Patrick)

**United Way of Henry County and Martinsville:** Through this subgrantee, 17 AmeriCorps members will tutor and assist with classroom support for PreK–2nd grade students, improving academic performance. (Martinsville, Henry)

## STATEWIDE

**Virginia College Advising Corps:** Through this subgrantee, 58 AmeriCorps members will serve in high schools across the state promoting post-secondary success for low-income and/or under-resourced students.



*Pictured, clockwise from top right: AmeriCorps members serving at the Institute for Advanced Learning and Research, Aspire! Afterschool Learning, and Teach for America D.C. & Virginia.*

# 2024-2025 AmeriCorps State Planning Grantees in Virginia

AmeriCorps planning grants provide resources, technical assistance, and support to develop the framework for an AmeriCorps program to propose for a subsequent operational grant. Awards range from \$75,000 to \$240,000 to cover the costs and staff time needed to design an AmeriCorps program.

## CENTRAL VIRGINIA

**Greater Richmond Fit4Kids:** This subgrantee will develop a program model to engage members in garden education for youth, promoting bike and pedestrian safety, leading active recess programs, and engaging families and community members in programs to promote healthy lifestyles. (Richmond, Henrico, Prince George, Petersburg, Hopewell)

**United Way of Greater Richmond & Petersburg:** This subgrantee will create a strategy to implement the region's upward mobility strategy, engaging members in programs aligned with regional priorities and service-to-career pathways. (Richmond, Petersburg, Colonial Heights, Hopewell, Hanover, Chesterfield, Dinwiddie, Goochland, Henrico)

**Virginia Learns:** This subgrantee will plan a high-impact tutoring initiative that will improve educational outcomes for students in Central Virginia, while also engaging partners to create workforce pathways. (Central Virginia, including Henrico County)

## NORTHERN VIRGINIA

**Northern Virginia Mediation Services:** This subgrantee will design a "Bridging Communities Program" to engage members in activities to develop stronger community and social relationships. (NOVA, Lorton, Alexandria, Springfield, Mt. Vernon, Franconia)

**United Way of the National Capital Area:** This subgrantee will develop a plan to engage members in delivering VITA programming and build supports for clients. (Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, Prince William County, Rappahannock, Culpeper, Fauquier)

## SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA

**United Way of Central Virginia:** This subgrantee will develop a program to engage members in supporting a Childcare and Workforce Center. (Lynchburg, Bedford, Appomattox, Amherst, Campbell)

**Horizon Behavioral Health:** This subgrantee will create a plan to engage members as peer recovery specialists to support programming & recovery-oriented systems of care, with a focus on workforce development. (Lynchburg, Amherst, Bedford, Appomattox, Campbell)

**Greater Roanoke Workforce Development Board:** This subgrantee will develop a "Rural Virginia Workforce Network" on behalf of 10 local workforce development boards to connect underserved individuals. (Amelia, Brunswick, Buckingham, Charlotte, Cumberland, Halifax, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Prince Edward, Augusta)

## STATEWIDE

**Great Oaks Foundation:** This subgrantee will explore and cultivate the expansion of a national program model to Virginia, using members to deliver high impact tutoring in math and language arts for K-12 students. (NOVA, Central VA, Hampton Roads)

**State Council of Higher Education for Virginia:** This subgrantee will develop "AdviseVA", a postsecondary advising program to evolve the Virginia College Advising Corps.

**LeadingAge Virginia:** This subgrantee will design a program for long-term services and support organizations, engaging members in service to older adults and developing workforce capacity.

# 2024-2025 AmeriCorps VISTA

## Serve Virginia Capacity Building Project in VDSS

In addition to serving as the pass-through entity for AmeriCorps State Funding, Serve Virginia also manages an AmeriCorps VISTA project called the Serve Virginia Capacity Building Project within the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS). This project places 13 VISTA members across the state with organizations, agencies, and institutions looking to make sustainable change in areas that impact poverty. Members currently serve in the following positions:

- **Bay Aging**, Regional Resilience Equity Workgroup Capacity Building VISTA (Urbanna)
- **Center for Nonprofit Excellence**, CNE Coordinator VISTA (Charlottesville)
- **Dan River Nonprofit Network**, Engagement and Marketing Specialist VISTA (Danville)
- **International Rescue Committee**, Volunteer Program Assistant VISTA (Charlottesville)
- **VDSS Office of Innovation and Strategic Initiatives**, Project Research VISTA (Richmond, remote); Project and Stakeholder Management VISTA (Richmond, remote)
- **VDSS Office of New Americans**, Immigrant Services Community Specialist VISTA (Richmond, remote)
- **The Equity Center**, TEC Community Research VISTA (Charlottesville); TEC Resource Knitting VISTA (Charlottesville)
- **Virginia Department of Emergency Management**, Access and Functional Needs Specialist VISTA, (Richmond)
- **United Way of Henry County & Martinsville**, EngageHCM Volunteer System Specialist (Martinsville)
- **Virginia Funders Network**, Virginia Funders Network Member Services Specialist (Warrenton, hybrid/remote)
- **Virginia Service Foundation**, Virginia Service Foundation Capacity Building VISTA (Glen Allen, hybrid)



*Pictured: AmeriCorps VISTA members in the Serve Virginia Capacity Building Project.*



# Service in the Spotlight: Recognizing Excellence

In Virginia, volunteers create more than \$5.5 billion in estimated economic impact each year and Serve Virginia offers several ways for volunteers to be celebrated by their communities and peers. In 2024, we continued our recognition of honorees for the annual **Governor’s Volunteerism & Community Service Awards**, **Serve Virginia Honor Roll**, and **National Service Awards**.

## GOVERNOR’S VOLUNTEERISM & COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS

The annual Governor’s Volunteerism & Community Service Awards recognize the significant contributions of Virginia residents. In a November 2024 ceremony, Serve Virginia celebrated 10 selected honorees at the Governor’s Mansion:

- **Outstanding Youth Volunteer:**  
Ashley Coulson (Woodstock)
- **Outstanding Young Adult Volunteer:**  
Bezawit Getachew Mulatu (Richmond)
- **Outstanding Adult Volunteer:**  
Alisa Thornton (Woodbridge)
- **Outstanding Senior Volunteer:**  
Mary Lee Di Spirito (Annandale)
- **Outstanding Independent Group:**  
Michelle Smeltzer & Nichole Johns (Front Royal)
- **Outstanding Community Organization:**  
Youth Education Program, Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia (Arlington)
- **Outstanding Educational Organization:**  
ODU Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (Norfolk)
- **Outstanding Faith-Based Organization:**  
The Prison Ministry at The Chapel (Richmond)
- **Outstanding Small Business:**  
Notes n’ Beats Music School (Brambleton)
- **Outstanding Corporation:**  
Newport News Shipbuilding (Newport News),  
*pictured to the right*

## SERVE VIRGINIA HONOR ROLL

Celebrated twice per year, the Serve Virginia Honor Roll engaged diverse partner organizations, including four Volunteer Centers and four Virginia colleges and universities in the nomination process to spotlight some of the more than 1.8 million volunteers in Virginia who serve their communities in a variety of ways, promoting quality of life and creating a lasting impact for others. Combined, the Winter and Summer 2024 Honor Rolls honored 521 individuals.

## NATIONAL SERVICE AWARDS

In 2024, the 13 nominees from Virginia for the annual National Service Awards included AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps VISTA members serving in Virginia who performed outstanding service to their communities.



**“These extraordinary honorees embody the spirit of service that defines Virginia.”**

—  
GOVERNOR GLENN YOUNGKIN



# Sharing Virginia's Stories of Service

Serve Virginia's Stories of Service celebrate the extraordinary impact that dedicated Virginians make in their communities through volunteerism and service. These inspiring stories showcase the transformative power of individuals — from community volunteers to AmeriCorps members and alumni — coming together to improve the lives of others. In 2024, we shared 40 Stories of Service on the Serve Virginia website, social media, and newsletter, recognizing the Virginians who make our communities stronger and amplifying the organizations and groups through which they serve.

**Bryanna Folks** is an AmeriCorps NCCC alum and site supervisor for NCCC Team River 4. When Hurricane Helene hit earlier this year, she and her team were serving in Pulaski, Virginia, doing wildfire mitigation work. Under Bryanna's leadership, they pivoted to flood response efforts. She recalls, "The team and I assisted approximately 20 homes that had been affected by the flood. I also spent days going door to door assessing needs of residents, answering questions, documenting their information, assisting with FEMA applications, and delivering supplies."



As a Summer 2024 Serve Virginia Honor Roll honoree, **Lisa Dixon** serves the Chesapeake community as a champion of organizations committed to innovation, change, and solutions to the lives of those in need. She is a full-time volunteer responsible for the oversight and administration of the Burfoot House Program for homeless women. Through this service, she leads a team of volunteers who help single women experiencing homelessness achieve self-sufficiency. In the past seven years, she has helped more than 200 women obtain self-sufficiency.

**Mark Fero** concluded his term on the Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism this year. He got involved in service in 1988 when asked if he wanted to help him start the DC Central Kitchen, an iconic nonprofit and social enterprise that combats hunger and poverty through job training and job creation. Since then, Mark's service journey has continued to provide him with opportunities to support his community, state, and country. He reflects, "After years of public service, I still get excited about helping communities in Virginia to feel safe and live free."



Explore Stories of Service and share your own at  
[ServeVirginia.org/find-resources/volunteer-recognition/stories-of-service](https://ServeVirginia.org/find-resources/volunteer-recognition/stories-of-service)



# Making Connections & Supporting the Sector

## 2024 VIRGINIA VOLUNTEERISM SUMMIT

Each year, Serve Virginia hosts the Virginia Volunteerism Summit, the Commonwealth's leading event for organizations and individuals making a difference in their communities. Presented by Serve Virginia, the Virginia Service Foundation and the Virginia Department of Social Services, the 2024 event featured more than 20 workshops, networking opportunities, and keynotes to promote innovation across the sector, engaging more than 240 attendees representing hundreds of nonprofit, faith-based, and governmental organizations.

Taking place May 15-16, the 2024 Virginia Volunteerism Summit empowered stakeholders through engaging in powerful conversations and workshops to re-energize our shared passions for service. The 2024 theme was "Mapping the Future of Civic & Community Engagement."

Our 2024 keynote speakers were Sue Carter Kahl, a nationally-recognized expert on volunteer engagement, who gave the opening keynote, titled, "Volunteer Data: From Compliance to Curiosity!," and Breana Dorelus, AmeriCorps alum and founder of Connecting the Cause, who gave a keynote titled, "From Charity to Co-Dreaming: a Truth-Telling Conversation on Reclaiming Volunteerism."

## VIRGINIA VOLUNTEERISM NETWORK

This year marked the launch of the Virginia Volunteerism Network, a group of representatives from diverse capacity-building organizations focused on developing resources to support volunteerism across the Commonwealth, facilitated by Serve Virginia. Building on the Volunteer Center Network, members meet virtually on a quarterly basis to discuss current needs and sector trends, share best practices, and support each other in helping direct service organizations connect with volunteers.

The Virginia Volunteerism Network will also begin publishing a quarterly newsletter for professionals working in the service and volunteerism sector. The Network also supports planning for the annual Virginia Volunteerism Summit and other training opportunities. The public launch of the Virginia Volunteerism Network will take place in February 2025.

Learn more about the Summit and see what's on tap for the 2025 event at [ServeVirginia.org/summit](https://ServeVirginia.org/summit)



*Pictured, upper left: Staff from the Community Foundation for a greater Richmond; lower right: Volunteers at Health Brigade*

# National Day of Service Mini Grants with the Virginia Service Foundation

Across the Commonwealth, nonprofit organizations, faith-based groups, and others plan National Day of Service projects in their communities, honoring Martin Luther King Jr. Day in January and 9/11 Remembrance Day in September. Serve Virginia and the Virginia Service Foundation support these efforts through mini grant funding opportunities of up to \$250.

## 2024 MLK DAY OF SERVICE MINI GRANTS

30 applicants, 10 funded:

- Alpha Phi Omega chapter of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority (Danville)
- Emory & Henry College, School of Health Sciences (Emory)
- Friends of the Mount Vernon Trail (Alexandria)
- Health Brigade (Richmond)
- Institute for Advanced Learning and Research (Danville)
- Kids Give Back (Annandale)
- King of Kings Lutheran Church (Fairfax)
- Lindsay Middle School (Hampton)
- Nursing CAP, Inc. (Suffolk)
- Volunteer Fairfax (Fairfax)

## 2024 9/11 DAY OF SERVICE MINI GRANTS

49 applicants, 12 funded:

- Franklin County Master Gardeners Association (Rocky Mount)
- GoochlandCares (Goochland)
- Health Brigade (Richmond)
- Huddle Up Moms (Roanoke)
- Kids Give Back (Annandale)
- King of Kings Lutheran Church Dulles South (Fairfax)
- Literacy Volunteers Winchester (Winchester)
- Shenandoah University Center for Civic Engagement (Winchester)
- SOAR365 (Richmond)
- Start 1 Spark (Henrico)
- Virginia Living Museum (Newport News)
- White Hall Ruritan Club (White Hall)



### Huddle Up Moms (Roanoke)

Thirteen volunteers hosted a pop-up shop for pregnant community members and parents in need, distributing more than 450 essential items—including 312 diapers—and directly serving 30 women.

### Literacy Volunteers Winchester (Winchester)

Volunteers hosted an outreach event with interactive activities such as crafting, story time, firefighter demonstration, and distribution of free books and swag, engaging approximately 30 attendees, including children, parents, and community members.



## SUPPORTING THE VIRGINIA SERVICE FOUNDATION

Community support has been fundamental to the success of Serve Virginia in 2024, and we are excited to offer more opportunities for you to engage with our work going forward. For \$250, you could fund a National Day of Service Mini Grant that would support a volunteer project commemorating Martin Luther King, Jr. Day or 9/11 Day of Remembrance.

If you are able to make a larger donation, consider becoming a sponsor of our annual Virginia Volunteerism Summit, where hundreds of volunteers and staff from across the state come together to share and learn best practices, as well as to connect and celebrate the achievements of the previous year.

The Virginia Service Foundation is also actively seeking to build new strategic partnerships with funding organizations interested in collaborating on innovative workforce development initiatives, in particular, like the Youth Mental Health Corps, which exemplifies our commitment and approach to improving health, education and economic opportunity for all Virginians.

## DONATE TO THE VIRGINIA SERVICE FOUNDATION

[ServeVirginia.org/about-us/virginia-service-foundation](https://ServeVirginia.org/about-us/virginia-service-foundation)

## EMAIL US TO LEARN MORE ABOUT SPONSORSHIPS

[VirginiaServiceInfo@dss.virginia.gov](mailto:VirginiaServiceInfo@dss.virginia.gov)

Your tax-deductible investment in our work supports individuals and organizations committed to improving lives and strengthening communities every day. Thanks to contributions from supporters like you, the service and volunteerism sector in Virginia is stronger than ever and poised for greater impact. And we have much more in store for 2025!

## THANK YOU TO OUR 2024 DONORS (LISTED ALPHABETICALLY):

Anonymous	Northern Virginia Family Service
Community Foundation for a greater Richmond	Kevin Quigley
Dairy Queen of Virginia	Julie Strandlie
The Leonsis Foundation	Sheila Williamson-Branch
Milestone Towers	

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## SUBSCRIBE TO THE SERVE VIRGINIA NEWSLETTER

[ServeVirginia.org/newsletter](https://ServeVirginia.org/newsletter)

