Serving Wyoming

Annual Report 2016

Improving lives & strengthening Wyoming communities through volunteerism
Dear Friends in Service,

I am moved by the stories of service and volunteerism across Wyoming. Every day AmeriCorps members are making a powerful impact on issues facing our state. The various projects include improving schools, fighting poverty, rebuilding after disasters, providing health services, preserving the environment, or supporting veterans and military families. AmeriCorps members are making a difference.

ServeWyoming, Wyoming’s Commission for Service and Volunteerism, oversees AmeriCorps and operates a statewide volunteer center. This year, nearly 250 AmeriCorps members served at nonprofits, schools, and community groups throughout the state. Since 1994, more than 2,500 AmeriCorps Wyomingites have contributed over than 2.8 million hours of service and earned over than $6 million to help pay for college or put towards student loans. I am proud that Wyoming ranked #1 in the nation in College Volunteering!

Service and volunteerism help meet critical needs in Wyoming and provides significant economic and social value for our citizens and communities. I encourage all our citizens to look at the work done by ServeWyoming and think about how each individual can make a difference.

Sincerely,

Matthew H. Mead
Governor

ServeWyoming is Governor Matt Mead’s Commission on National & Community Service, promoting efforts among private, non-profit governmental organizations that advance community service, volunteer programs and activities in each Wyoming community. We also collaborate with other Corporation for National & Community Service programs such as AmeriCorps VISTA and Senior Corps. ServeWyoming gives every citizen an opportunity to help solve our biggest challenges in education, the environment, public safety, human needs, and homeland security.
National Service Convening


ServeWyoming celebrated the amazing ways members serve our state and its citizens by hosting a national service convening, where programs could share best practices and network with other members in our state. Wendy Spencer kicked off the event by addressing the importance of National Service followed by the swearing in of AmeriCorps members by Casper’s Mayor Sandovol. Topics throughout the event included volunteer recruitment and management, program evaluation, and highlights of various AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs in action.

As part of the convening ServeWyoming also hosted a roundtable discussion with key Wyoming leaders, as well as Wendy Spencer, the CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), a federal agency that administers AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, the Social Innovation Fund, and other programs that engage millions of Americans in National Service and volunteering. The roundtable discussion focused on how National Service resources could alleviate the struggle nonprofits and other agencies are experiencing with a decrease in state, corporate, and other funding with the downturn of Wyoming’s economy.

National Service has a long history in our state. Every year thousands of Wyoming citizens, people of all ages and backgrounds, meet local needs, strengthen communities, and increase civic engagement through national service, including AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA). Serving at more than 160 locations throughout the state, these citizens tutor and mentor children, support veterans and military families, provide health services, restore the environment, respond to disasters, increase economic opportunity, and recruit and manage volunteers.

Check out our 2016-2017 AmeriCorps Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programs</th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Program Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University of Wyoming-Wyoming Conservation Corps</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Promote leadership &amp; provide natural resource &amp; environmental management experiences to young adults.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greater Wyoming Big Brothers Big Sisters</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Provide outreach &amp; support to new mentors &amp; recruit mentors/ AmeriCorps members to improve the lives of youth in Wyoming.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teton Science Schools</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Provide education &amp; science training for educators, youth, &amp; young adults &amp; promote environmental education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyoming Coalition Against Domestic Violence &amp; Sexual Assault</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Provide leadership, education &amp; systems advocacy to advance social change &amp; end violence, including crisis intervention.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northwest Wyoming</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Provide after school educational &amp; enrichment activities, mentoring, &amp; homework assistance to local youth.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tutored or mentored more than 250 CHILDREN & YOUTH

Provided nearly 55,000 HOURS of service valued at over $1.5 million

Recruited more than 1,200 VOLUNTEERS who reported over 4,600 HOURS OF SERVICE

Leveraged more than $420,000 IN CASH OR IN-KIND RESOURCES from January-November

BY THE NUMBERS

AmeriCorps programs in Wyoming have:
Many organizations that need volunteers lack the capacity to effectively find and recruit volunteers. This is why, in 2007, a central resource was created to match needs and opportunities across Wyoming. We call this resource, Volunteer Wyoming. The Volunteer Wyoming initiative encourages awareness of the importance of volunteering as a way to mobilize people and resources to deliver creative solutions for community problems and opportunities.

The Volunteer Wyoming program includes our online matching database, that allows individuals to look for and respond to volunteer needs across the state while also enabling organizations to set up agency profiles, post volunteer needs, promote community events, and even advocate for donations. Additionally, our call center connects local nonprofits and agencies through various community opportunities. Our Volunteer Management Trainings also help strengthen volunteer programs across Wyoming. In 2016, we conducted 8 volunteer management trainings throughout the state, which saw 90 total participants and over 100 training hours. These trainings focused on volunteer management, volunteer recruitment, utilizing higher skilled volunteers and how to use volunteerwyoming.org.

In 2016, over 17,000 volunteer referrals were provided through the Volunteer Wyoming program, resulting in more than 1,633 recorded hours of service. These volunteer opportunities are generated through our call center, the matching database, the Pro Bono Volunteer Network, and service events such as MLK Day of Service, the 9/11 Day of Remembrance, and others projects and partnerships.

This past year, we produced five volunteer guides, distributed in Sheridan, Laramie, Park, and Natrona counties (two editions). The purpose of our Volunteer Guides is to provide a complimentary, localized resource to our online database (volunteerwyoming.org). These guides encourage and inspire community members to volunteer by providing specific information about local nonprofit volunteer opportunities, while also highlighting local businesses committed to our communities. Across all five 2016 editions, 313 local nonprofits participated and 637 volunteer opportunities were promoted.

Wyoming is ranked #1 in the Nation for College Volunteering & 19th overall for general volunteering (last year we were 21st-wahoo)! 29.1% of Wyoming residents volunteered more than 16 million hours of service, adding $413 million in services to our state! 51.7% of Wyomingites donated $25 or more to charity. Keep it up Wyoming!

Volunteer Wyoming
A project of Serve Wyoming

Source: www.nationalservice.gov/vcla
Working carefully, I added another coat of dark indigo paint to the porous concrete wall. My hands were doing their best in the delicate balance between adding consistency to the color of the shirt of a character in the mural while also avoiding covering his much lighter toned fingers with blue paint. As I worked and occasionally chatted with a number of ServeWyoming and AmeriCorps partners as well as community volunteers, I felt mentally focused on my artistic objective and physically sheltered within the Beverly Street Underpass. The process of painting was meditative and freed me to focus on the task at hand.

Being a new resident of Casper, I deeply needed an opportunity like this to connect with others who care and who also choose to dedicate their time and energy into serving others through building a better community one project at a time. I felt a familiar sense of connection to the others also painting this mural even though I hardly knew them personally. We were coming together and creating something meaningful, not only in the creation of the mural, but through building a spirit of service and a willingness to contribute. If everyone could be involved in helping in this project or one like this, maybe we could transform our world into one where we are all a little more understanding. We would all be kinder to each other as we would know we are all linked to one another.

As I reached down to coat the tip of the brush with more paint, I realized how familiar these thoughts felt and then it struck me: these were the same things I told myself in the months following 9/11/01. Being part of a community is about finding connection and meaning in what we do. I can thank ServeWyoming for reminding me of this.

Eric Defoe, Mural Volunteer

“Being part of a community is about finding connection and meaning in what we do.”
Emergency Preparedness

On October 11, 2015 in the town of Evansville, many citizens were displaced due to the Cole Creek Fire that destroyed approximately 20 homes and left countless others with destroyed structures, damaged fencing, and other personal and professional losses. Because of ServeWyoming’s federal grant management experience, we stepped up to manage the Cole Creek Fire Fund, where 100% of the monetary donations went to fire victims. ServeWyoming donated staff time to manage the fund and support the Cole Creek Fire Fund Committee as they reviewed applications for unmet needs and awarded donor dollars to help cover those needs.

Because of monetary donations from generous donors around the state, $43,919.39 was awarded in 2016 to help those affected recover.

Here is just some of what the Cole Creek Fire Fund helped victims with:
- Hotel/temporary housing fees
- Fencing materials
- Home/structure repairs
- New housing
- Irrigation supplies and erosion control

We all know the next disaster could happen at any time and it’s far better to be prepared than not. ServeWyoming plays an important leadership role by addressing issues related to volunteers before and after a disaster. In addition to managing monetary donations for the Cole Creek Fire (as well as the Sheep Herder Fire in 2012), our Emergency Preparedness programing includes Volunteer Reception Center (VRC) Training and Disaster Response Volunteer recruitment.

ServeWyoming is proud to have 100% of the commissioners financially contribute to our mission!
Wyoming’s Commission for National and Community Service

Serve Wyoming

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Be sure to follow us on Facebook to stay updated on AmeriCorps and volunteer opportunities around the state.

www.servewyoming.org
www.volunteerwyoming.org