



VERMONT YOUTH CONSERVATION CORPS

Overview

Across Vermont, deep-rooted inequities block low-income and at-risk students from educational opportunities and achievements enjoyed by higher income peers. The Vermont Youth Conservation Corps (VYCC) has offered meaningful employment to youth and young adults for more than three decades. The organization is uniquely positioned to expand and enhance effective education and training opportunities that align directly with Vermont's high-priority and strategic objectives. Let's make the VYCC experience possible for every young Vermonter.

From Brattleboro to Newport, VYCC's work-based programs teach the value of hard work and convey essential employment skills demanded by every employer. A solid work ethic, combined with structured learning and specific pathways to promising futures, allow hundreds of VYCC Corps Members to seize opportunities they deserve and need. Together, we can build social capital and strengthen the fabric of Vermont communities. VYCC now seeks to:

1. Increase the number of high school students obtaining summer employment;
2. Increase the number of young adults (18-24), enrolled in paid non-seasonal employment, pre-apprenticeship, and on-the-job training programs;
3. Increase the percentage of Crew Members who are at-risk and/or come from low-income households;
4. Increase the number of Vermont communities served by VYCC programming;
5. Increase the number of VYCC alumni attaining meaningful employment after their VYCC experience pathway milestones.

Each summer, approximately 300 young people serve on six- to 10-member VYCC crews, joining a community of more than 6,500 alumni. This model of small teams working together on tangible projects is at the heart of the VYCC mission, which is to *teach personal responsibility through meaningful group work that connects us to the land, community, and one another.*

When it comes to completing high-quality work, VYCC teaches that one's economic status matters little – what matters most is one's work ethic, an ability to collaborate, a positive attitude, and a willingness to learn. Confidence in the VYCC model is high. A 2016 qualitative study of youth development at VYCC, prepared by the Search Institute, confirms that Corps Members consistently acquire new leadership and technical skills; attain better mental, emotional and physical health; gain environmental consciousness; acquire new friendships and relational skills; and improve personal strengths, including personal responsibility, a sense of agency, and future orientation. *The goal now is to build upon this foundation, enroll more young people, and enhance the education and training outcomes of the VYCC experience.*

Program Design

Community-Based Employment

In the past five years, VYCC has brought its residential model “out of the woods” and into Vermont communities, creating Community Crews where high school students commute from home and work eight-hour days on farms, in city parks, and other community properties. Corps Members can be employed for four or eight weeks during the summer months.

VYCC's strategy to invest in community programming is informed by low-income Corps Members seeking employment who frequently share that they are not ready for an away-from-home camping experience. This program model promotes sustainability because work within communities is more visible and can, therefore, attract local project partners and funding.

Over the next three years, VYCC is prepared to provide 419 high school juniors and seniors employment in 15 communities throughout Vermont.

Pre-Apprenticeships and Non-Seasonal Employment

VYCC offers real work for the real world. Leveraging existing program infrastructure and partnerships, VYCC seeks to offer young adults – ages 18-24 – non-seasonal employment in the carpentry and food service industries – these two sectors were identified as having openings the most difficult to fill in the *2016 Vermont Workforce Education and Training Report*. Forestry and other natural resource management sectors can be added in the coming years.

VYCC Corps Members have long enjoyed meaningful interactions with carpenters, construction managers, farmers, caterers, executive chefs, health care professionals, wildlife refuge managers, civic engineers, town managers, and forestry technicians. Several of these professions are among the 67 careers listed in the McClure Foundation's *Pathways to Promising Careers Report* and pay more than the median Vermont wage of \$15 per hour. Over the next three years, VYCC will combine the work-based nature of VYCC programming with industry-specific projects to provide a continuum of learning, helping VYCC to integrate the Corps Member experience with a career pathway. This will help Vermont meet its goal of having 70% of the state's working age adults possess postsecondary degrees or credentials of value by 2025.

Over the next three years, VYCC is prepared to provide 70 18-24 year-olds 20-week pre-apprenticeship opportunities Vermont.

Outcomes

VYCC now seeks additional funding to ensure our work is adequately capitalized. A detailed pro-forma budget articulates revenue and expense projections. Over the next three years, funding at the proposed level will ensure:

- Increased Summer Employment for High School Students – VYCC will offer an estimated 419 additional seasonal employment positions to high school students.
- Pre-apprenticeships and Non-Seasonal Employment – VYCC will enroll 70 young adults, ages 18-24, in 20-week training programs. Participants will report gains through at least one of three metrics: procurement of meaningful employment within 12 months of their VYCC experience; enrollment in a career-oriented training program (VT Tech, CCV, apprenticeship, etc.); or, returning for a second experience with VYCC in a progressively challenging and more focused career pathway program.
- More Communities Served – VYCC will bring community crew programming to at least three new Vermont communities, making for a total of 15 Vermont communities with VYCC crews.
- AmeriCorps Service Opportunities and Education Awards – VYCC expects to offer 274 AmeriCorps positions on community crews. Each AmeriCorps position provides an education award that alumni can use to defray the costs of higher and continuing education.
- Post-Experience Support of Participants – VYCC will communicate quarterly with participants. Consistent and personalized check-ins will support alumni, offer service opportunities, and allow VYCC to track long-term outcomes and program effectiveness.
- Increased Conservation Impact and Food Security Efforts – All VYCC crews complete projects that benefit the health and resilience of Vermont communities. Over three years, we anticipate participants completing 636 crew weeks of work for an estimated 200,000 service hours. An estimated 2,050 families will receive 12 weekly shares of food, plus three larger fall shares.

Apprenticeship and Youth Mentoring Program

Vermont Youth Conservation Corps

9-Feb-18

	2018	2019	2020	Notes
REVENUES				
Other Federal	\$353,352	\$353,352	\$353,352	AmeriCorps via The Corps Network and the Corporation for National Community Service
Other State	\$48,307	\$48,307	\$48,307	Youth in Agriculture funding
Municipal Fee-For-Service	\$238,000	\$238,000	\$238,000	Community support for conservation projects and health care share funding
Institutional	\$92,500	\$92,500	\$112,500	Hospital support for Health Care Shares
VYCC Sales	\$51,499	\$54,074	\$56,778	Wholesale and retail sales of farm products
Secured Philanthropy	\$90,000	\$0	\$0	2018 secured funding from Lookout Foundation and National Life
Vermont Funds Needed to Increase Capacity	\$494,625	\$744,900	\$759,206	Requested to increase impact
VYCC Annual Fund	\$663,918	\$953,918	\$1,153,918	Private and corporate support
Net Revenue	\$2,032,201	\$2,485,051	\$2,722,061	

# of Corps Member Weeks	1084	1344	1484
# of Crew Weeks	176	216	244
Community Crew Members (High School)	137	137	144
Adult Pre-Apprentice Program Members	13	26	31

EXPENSES

Program Expenses

Corps Member Wages	\$398,198	\$493,707	\$545,135
Corps Member FICA	\$30,462	\$37,769	\$41,703
Crew Leader Labor	\$247,791	\$304,107	\$343,529
Crew Leader FICA	\$18,956	\$23,264	\$26,280
Worker's Compensation	\$64,599	\$79,781	\$88,866
Other Benefits	\$20,108	\$24,931	\$27,528
Transportation	\$79,676	\$92,895	\$104,937
Communications	\$22,271	\$27,333	\$30,876
Field Supplies	\$185,979	\$230,587	\$254,606
Food	\$56,512	\$70,066	\$77,365
Uniforms and Outerwear	\$9,377	\$11,152	\$14,211
Equipment	\$24,479	\$30,042	\$33,936
Misc	\$42,195	\$51,785	\$58,498
Variable Crew Cost	\$1,200,604	\$1,477,420	\$1,647,470

Program Coordination and Design	\$236,380	\$290,102	\$327,708
Program Manager *New Hire	\$25,530	\$51,060	\$52,592
Program Support	\$189,683	\$235,179	\$259,676

Total Direct Costs	\$1,652,196	\$2,053,761	\$2,287,446
Indirect Costs	\$380,005	\$431,290	\$434,615

23%, 21%, and 19%; 2018 thru 2020

Total Project Cost	\$2,032,201	\$2,485,050	\$2,722,061
Total Project Revenues	\$2,032,201	\$2,485,051	\$2,722,061
	\$0	\$0	\$0