



Dear Legislator,

As the session opens, we want to express our deep gratitude for the past legislature's support of the Serve Learn Earn workforce development coalition led by Vermont Youth Conservation Corps (VYCC), ReSOURCE, Vermont Works for Women (VWW), and Audubon Vermont. Thanks to your support, our organizations had another successful year providing paid employment, meaningful public service, and critical workforce training to an amazing group of hardworking participants.

In our first two years of public support we served 1,004 people and completed 7,228 weeks of service and training. Our participants earned over 300 credentials of value and \$2.75 million dollars in wages and stipends. 77% in our short-term trades training course participants (150 total) completed a paid internship or landed a job in the sector. This past year alone, our participants completed over 70 service projects in affordable housing, conservation, environmental education, weatherization, food access and flood recovery.

While we are proud of our accomplishments, we know there is much more to do to address Vermont's workforce challenges. In looking to the year ahead, we plan to:

- Further expand our training programs so that we can help even more youth, disadvantaged and out-of-work individuals gain high skills and meet critical worker shortages. Maintaining current **legislative funding of \$2.37 million** will allow SLE to serve 550 Vermonters, complete important public service projects, and will help Vermont employers meet critical hiring needs.
- Champion youth and young-adult pathways to increase access to career training and service-driven opportunities across Vermont. Flood recovery and resilience projects are priorities.
- Collaborating with state agencies, community partners, and employers for continued growth of the work-based learning ecosystem. Build collective efforts to recruit and train Vermonters for trades and climate-related jobs.

With your support, we can continue to expand and improve our programs, respond to the present workforce challenges, serve Vermont communities, and, most importantly, empower our participants to improve their own lives. This year we are asking for Serve Learn Earn to be included in the state's annual budget. This sustained and predictable funding will allow us to invest in strategic expansion, deeper collaboration, and the development of new programs.

We look forward to discussing this opportunity with you and your colleagues in the General Assembly. Please feel free to contact us if you have questions.

Sincerely,

Kate Gluckman
Director, Serve Learn Earn

Breck Knauft
Executive Director, Vermont Youth Conservation Corps

Kim Guertin
Director of Gr. Mtn. Audubon Center, Audubon VT

Tom Longstreth
Executive Director, ReSOURCE

Rhoni Basden
Executive Director, Vermont Works for Women



SERVE LEARN EARN

Serve Learn Earn (SLE) is a collaboration of Vermont Youth Conservation Corps (VYCC), Vermont Works for Women (VWW), Audubon Vermont, and ReSOURCE. Our shared vision is for every Vermont resident to have a viable pathway to employment and affordable education.

The VT State Legislature has invested in Serve Learn Earn since 2021. With public support, SLE has increased access state-wide, improved programmatic impact, and leveraged over \$5 million dollars annually in private philanthropy to train Vermonters in the critical fields of conservation, sustainable farming, education, and the construction trades.



Map of participant hometowns
July 2022-
June 2023



Over 1000 Vermonters served in the last two years.

Strengthened by public investment, our programs saw a 12% increase in participants since 2021. In the past year, 504 people, aged 14 years and up, earned skills, credentials and experience in conservation, education, and the building trades.



7500 weeks of service and training completed since 2021.

Participants increased their service and training weeks by 44% since year one. In the past year, 73 service projects were completed on vital state priorities including flood rebuilding, affordable housing construction, weatherization, public facility construction, land conservation, habitat restoration, and recreational infrastructure.



Map of work-based service project
July 2022-
June 2023



307 credentials of value in the trades earned by SLE graduates including OSHA-10, NCCER, and Game of Logging.



77% of participants in short-term trades training were placed in an internship or job within the first quarter after program completion.



Over \$2.75 million dollars earned in wages and stipends by SLE participants.

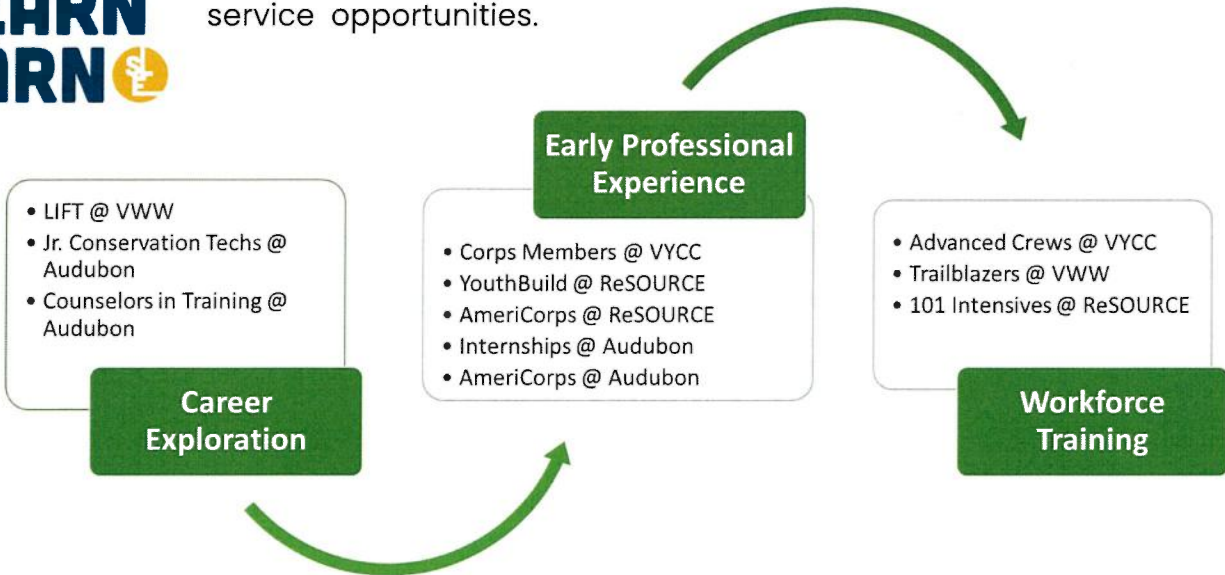
Serve Learn Earn's priorities for the 2024 Legislative Session:

- STATEWIDE OPPORTUNITY: Secure \$2.37 million dollars in sustainable funding to continue our work across the state.
- YOUTH PATHWAYS: Strengthen and expand service and training opportunities for youth and young adults, including youth apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship models.
- COLLABORATIVE ECOSYSTEM: Pursue collaboration across state agencies, nonprofits, and employer sectors to strengthen the ecosystem of work-based training programs.

Please contact us for relevant committee testimony, data, participant voice, and recommendations.
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SERVE LEARN EARN

Providing a progression of training, all Serve Learn Earn programs include durable skills training, wrap-around supports, and authentic service opportunities.



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Trailblazers: Seven-week trades training program supporting women and gender-expansive individuals to enter careers in construction trades. Includes a 3-week paid work experience.

LIFT (Launching Inclusive Futures in Trades): LIFT is a free, one-week summer program for girls and gender-expansive youth entering 9th-12th grade. Participants gain hands-on exposure to a variety of trades fields in a safe and empowering environment. All youth will complete the Explorer Fellowship through Harbor_Freight and receive a \$250 stipend.

Conservation: Corps members work outdoors in small teams on state and federal land including building and repairing trails, building shelters, improving timber stands, and removing invasive aquatic species.

Food and Farm: Corps members grow 70,000 pounds of produce each year. The majority of this food is provided to low-income families across Vermont through the Health Care Share program.

Corps members earn a living allowance, AmeriCorps Education Awards, college credit as well as industry-recognized credentials.



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101 Training in Construction/HVAC/Weatherization: Six-week workshop intensives are designed to equip individuals with the skills necessary for entry level job readiness in carpentry, construction, and weatherization.

YouthBuild: A paid 12-month training program for youth that are looking for alternative ways to earn a diploma while gaining job training and certifications in the construction trades.

AmeriCorps Position: Full-time year-long positions that support training programs for people with disability and complete community service projects. Members earn a living stipend and education award.

Junior Conservation Tech Program: A paid opportunity for teens to gain exposure to conservation work. JCTs are mentored and work alongside local foresters, biologists, environmental educators, ornithologists, and naturalists.

Counselor in Training Program: Teens work alongside experienced naturalists and educators to deliver environmental education programs.

Internship & AmeriCorps Positions: Year-long and seasonal positions available in outdoor education, environmental policy, and conservation. Participants earn a living allowance, AmeriCorps Educational awards, and college credit.