

# #AMERICORPS WORKS FOR WEST VIRGINIA



Volunteer  
West Virginia

*The State's Commission for National and Community Service*

ANNUAL REPORT 2017



**"This AmeriCorps experience is only the beginning -wherever you go and whatever goals and dreams you achieve, there will always be inside of you the knowledge that you can touch a life and make a difference."**

*Gayle Manchin*

Cabinet Secretary Gayle Manchin at the  
2017 AmeriCorps Swearing-In



Volunteer West Virginia is an agency of the Office of the Secretary of  
Education and the Arts with Cabinet Secretary Gayle Manchin.



# MESSAGE FROM VOLUNTEER WEST VIRGINIA

Ask any volunteer (or astronaut!) and they will tell you - it all starts with one small step.

When we set out to change the world, it can feel like a massive undertaking. However, Neil Armstrong hit the nail on the head during the first moon landing when he announced, "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind."

Volunteering is as simple as that: One small step, preparing a meal for the hungry, weeding a community garden, or simply reading a book to a child. All of these small steps add up.

#AmeriCorpsWorks because it empowers future community leaders to take one small step. Playing an active role in West Virginia's future unearths the realization that we are all capable of much more than we ever imagined. From empowering a laid off coal miner to find a new career helping fellow Veterans, to becoming the Mayor of Beverly, all of this is possible because AmeriCorps helped someone take their first step.

We hope this annual report fills you with West Virginia goodness and inspires you to take your next step, here are some simple ways to get started:

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

- **IF YOU HAVE A MINUTE:**

Spread a small act of kindness: Smile at a stranger, let a fellow driver merge into your lane, ask someone how they are doing - and really listen.

- **IF YOU HAVE AN HOUR:**

Visit [www.volunteerwv.org](http://www.volunteerwv.org) to find a volunteer gig in your community.

- **IF YOU HAVE A YEAR:**

Pay-it-forward as an AmeriCorps member in West Virginia.

Sincerely,



Heather Foster,  
*Executive Director*



Michael Hooper,  
*Volunteer West Virginia  
Commission Chair*

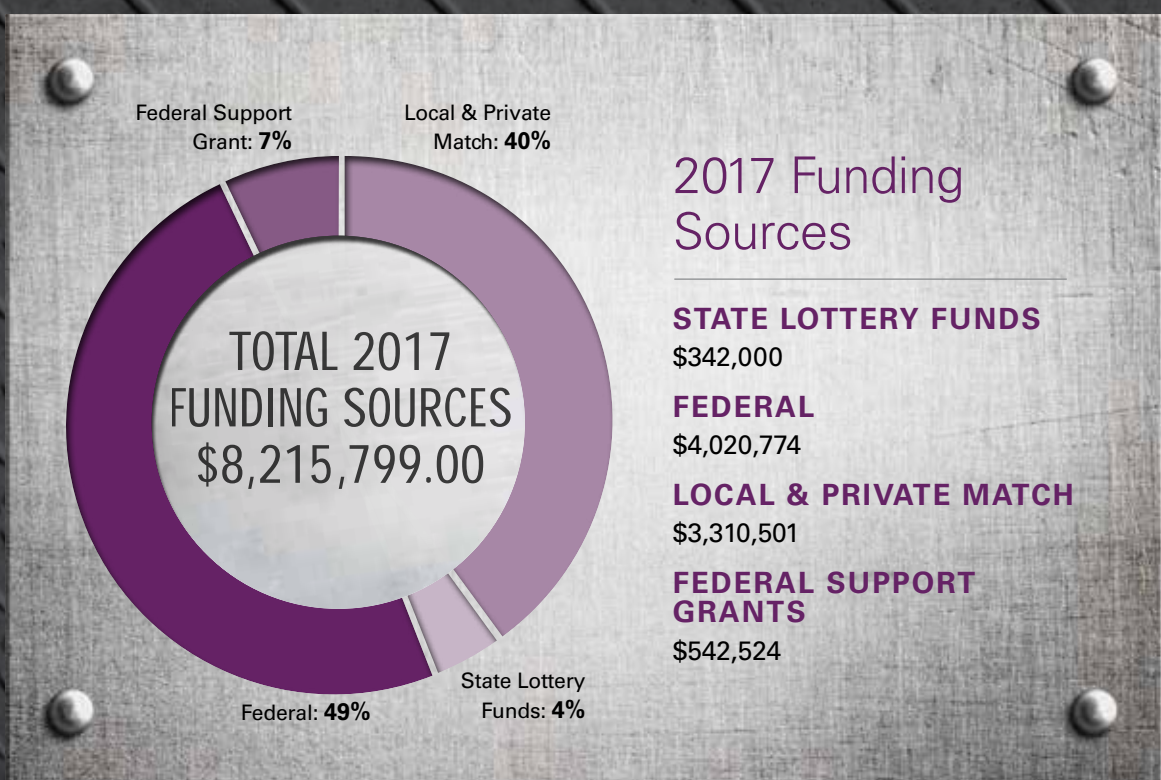


# VOLUNTEER WEST VIRGINIA WORKS

Volunteer West Virginia's mission is simple:

**To promote volunteerism and  
service across the state.**

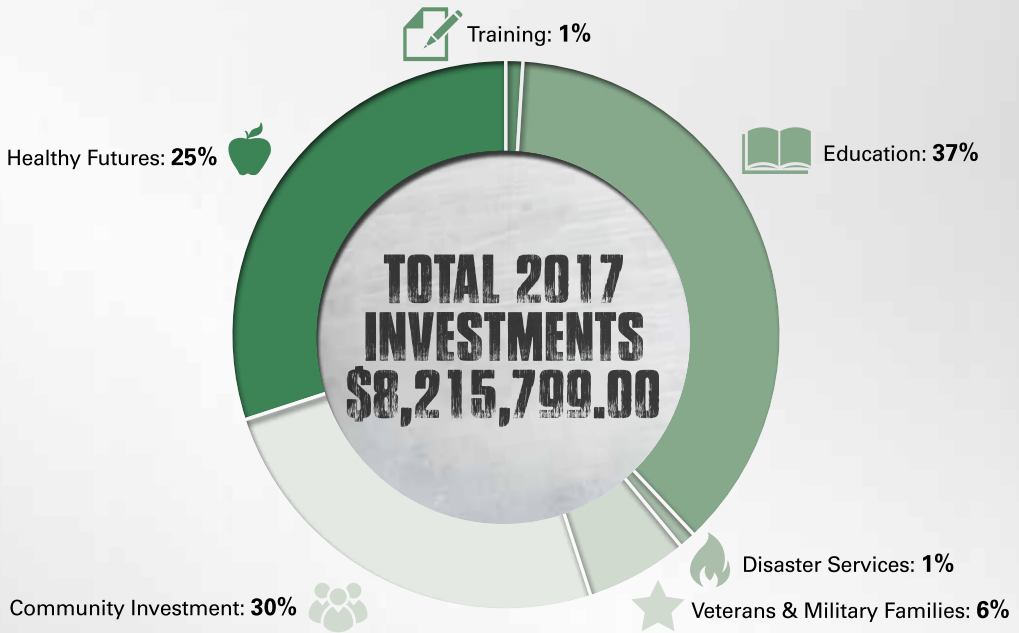
**WE BELIEVE IN GIVING TAXPAYERS  
THEIR MONEY'S WORTH.**





# HOW WE SPEND IT

In 2017, for every state dollar invested in Volunteer West Virginia, the state received \$23 additional dollars from federal, local and private sources.



# HOW WE HELP

## AMERICORPS • PG 4 & 5



## VETERANS • PG 8 & 9



## JOBS • PG 10 & 11



## VOLUNTEERS • PG 14 & 15



# #AMERICORPS WORKS FOR WEST VIRGINIA

At a time when so many people are leaving West Virginia, AmeriCorps gives them a reason to stay.

Each year more than 1,100 individuals serve as AmeriCorps volunteers in West Virginia. Many volunteers serve in their hometowns, while others come from across the country to make West Virginia their home for the year.

AmeriCorps programs do more than move West Virginia communities forward; they also serve the AmeriCorps members themselves. Of the members serving in West Virginia, 90% go on to pursue a degree or find a career opportunity as a direct result of their AmeriCorps service.\*

In exchange for a year of service, volunteers receive a living-allowance, an Education Award for college or student loans, and work experience.

AmeriCorps works for the Mountain State by building strong leaders and vibrant communities. It helps create the future that West Virginia deserves.

*\* Based on 2015 Volunteer West Virginia AmeriCorps Member Survey*



## BENEFITS



Monthly living stipend



Education Award for college or student loans



Health Insurance



Student loan forbearance

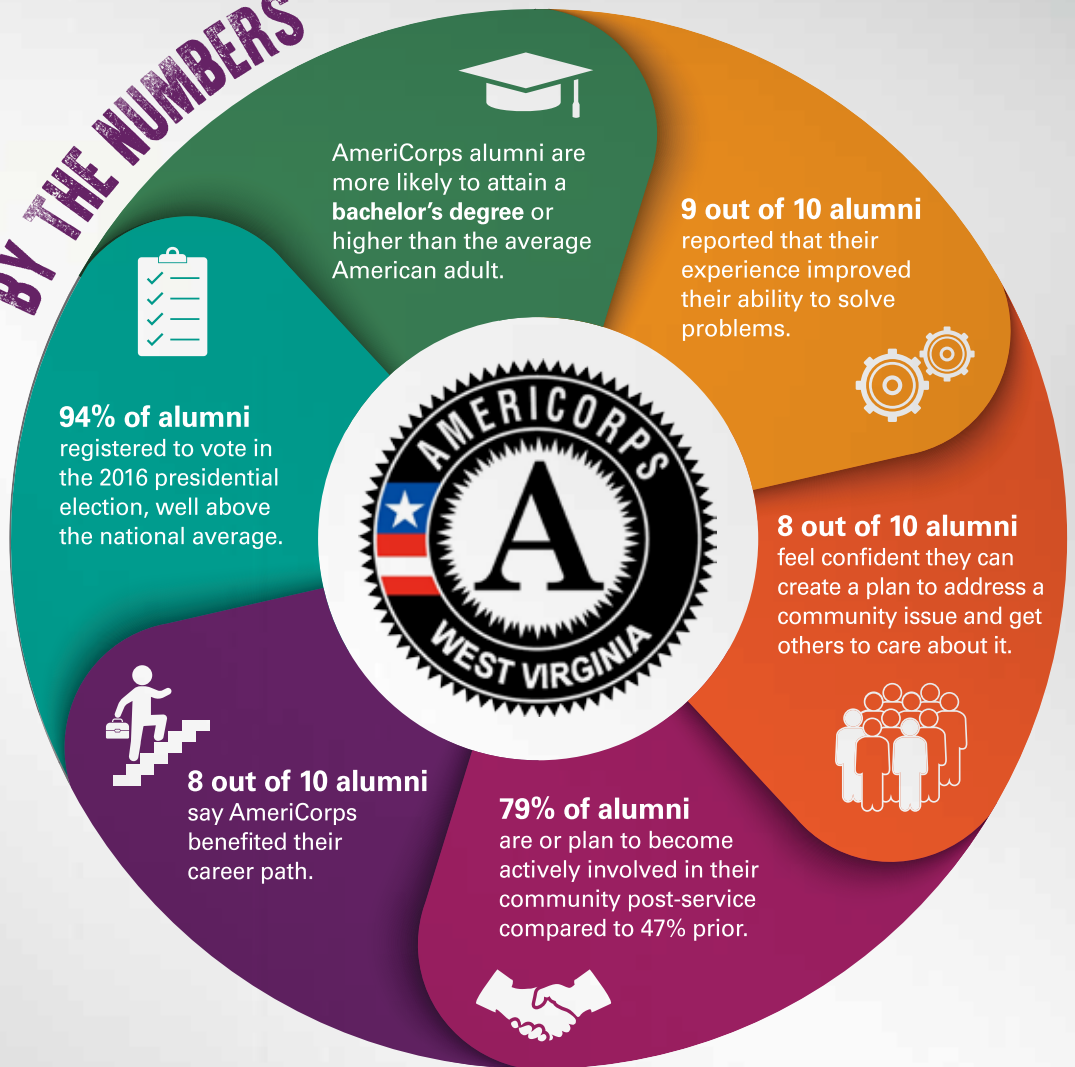


Career development



Knowing you made West Virginia a better place

# BY THE NUMBERS



## 2017 AMERICORPS PROGRAMS







# VOLUNTEER WEST VIRGINIA TRANSFORMS THE MOUNTAIN STATE

OUR 2017  
IMPACT



WEST VIRGINIA RANKED  
**3rd in the nation**  
for enrolling AmeriCorps members.

LEVERAGED  
**252,818**  
volunteer hours,  
valued at over  
**\$5.3 million.**



Recruited and managed  
**21,860 volunteers.**



AmeriCorps members earned  
**\$2.2 million**  
in Segal Education Scholarships.







- > Coordinated 978 service events.
- > 649 AmeriCorps members served at 157 education sites.
- > 28,538 youth served by all Volunteer West Virginia programs.



# 6,056

VETERANS AND MILITARY families served.

IMPROVED  
**2,138 ACRES**  
of public land.

PROVIDED  
**223,467**  
healthy meals.



# 13

veterans served  
as AmeriCorps  
and VISTA members.



# AMERICORPS WORKS FOR VETERANS

The story of how Wayne McDonald, an Army Veteran and laid off coal miner, transformed his life - all thanks to AmeriCorps.

Wayne McDonald was determined to finish college and graduate before his son. Through his transformational experience in AmeriCorps, he made it happen. This spring Wayne walked across the stage to accept his diploma, right before his son did.

Wayne has worn many hats in his life, including his recent graduation cap! He's an Army Veteran, former coal miner, and LifeBridge AmeriCorps member.

After serving three years in the Army, he was honorably discharged and returned to his home in the southern coalfields. "My mind wasn't right, I knew I needed to come home," he said. Wayne found work as a strip miner, it wasn't his first choice, but he had a wife and small son to support.

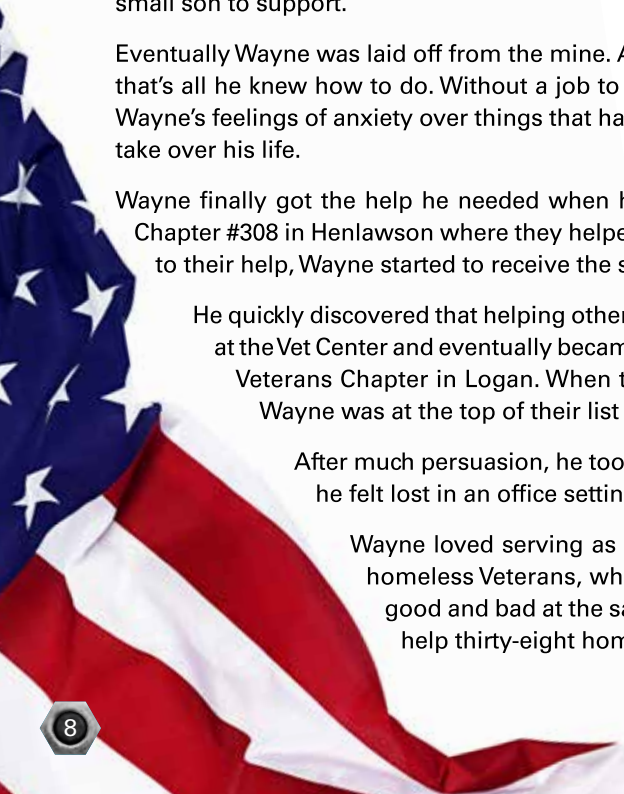
Eventually Wayne was laid off from the mine. At first, he felt lost. He was a coal miner and that's all he knew how to do. Without a job to occupy his time and provide for his family, Wayne's feelings of anxiety over things that happened during his military service began to take over his life.

Wayne finally got the help he needed when he visited the Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter #308 in Henlawson where they helped him get an appointment at the VA. Thanks to their help, Wayne started to receive the support he needed.

He quickly discovered that helping others also helped him, so he began to volunteer at the Vet Center and eventually became the Commander of the Disabled American Veterans Chapter in Logan. When the Vet Center became an AmeriCorps site, Wayne was at the top of their list for recruitment.

After much persuasion, he took the AmeriCorps position and even though he felt lost in an office setting at first, he didn't give up!

Wayne loved serving as a Vet Corps member, "I started out helping homeless Veterans, which was very hard because it made me feel good and bad at the same time," he said. "I had the opportunity to help thirty-eight homeless Veterans."





AmeriCorps programs like Vet Corps enable Veterans to continue their public service while helping their peers. "Veterans are some of the hardest people to help because pride keeps them from asking for help," said Wayne. "This is where I come in, it's easier to talk with another Veteran because of the immediate bond and trust."

Wayne's service in AmeriCorps has transformed his life. With an Associate's Degree in Social Work, Wayne is determined to continue helping fellow Veterans like himself.

"If anyone has the chance to become a Vet Corps member, please don't let it pass you up. You will learn so much and meet a lot of new people. Your service will change the way you think about yourself and others," said Wayne. "In my mind, the Vet Corps is a very important program because there are so many veterans in West Virginia that need help. . . I hope you can tell how I feel about Vet Corps and the things the program let me do for other Veterans. I am thankful for all things I have learned and the people who have helped me."



*In recognition of his service Wayne received the President's Lifetime Achievement Award as well as the 2017 West Virginia AmeriCorps Transformational Service Experience Award.*



# WHAT OUR AMERICORPS MEMBERS ARE SAYING



"Energy Express really helped me find a solid footing for my career in education. There is nothing more valuable than getting to learn firsthand what your strengths and weaknesses are. I took the victories that came along, such as kids willingly wanting to write a paragraph . . . or seeing them challenge themselves with a book that they normally would not pick. When you see the excitement on the children's faces, it is all worthwhile."

-Greg Cochran, *Wood County Energy Express*



"AmeriCorps has helped me jump-start my career by way of thrusting me into a position where I HAVE to stretch beyond my comfort zone boundaries. I abhorred speaking in public, let alone in front of a camera, but now it's not so bad! I love the fact that something I do as a volunteer contributes in some way to the betterment of fellow West Virginians."

- Chris Moore Nielsen, *West Virginia's Promise*

"AmeriCorps is a great way to network with community professionals and organizations. I have strengthened my presence in my service community and have built trust among the community members; because of this I have had a few job opportunities that align with similar things I accomplished during my service. This year I have committed to serve an additional two years to continue my professional development and further enhance my commitment to High Rocks, the youth of West Virginia, and the Greenbrier Valley."



-Tristan Nutter, *High Rocks*





"My AmeriCorps experience has solidified my desire to establish my own nonprofit in the future. I want to make sure I am able to be a service to society."

- Ariel Crawford, *Veterans Community Outreach Team*



"Through serving with Grow Ohio Valley, I know I need to pursue a career in outdoor education. It's what excites me, and it encompasses all of my passions. My experience with AmeriCorps has been critical in helping me figure this out."

- Justine Yglesias, *Grow Ohio Valley*

"My time as a VISTA showed my town I was a worker bee. Only months after my service ended, they elected me as their Mayor. Never saw that in my future before AmeriCorps."

- Mayor Cindy Camp Karelis  
*Beverly ONTRAC - The Coal Heritage Highway Authority*





# DISASTER SERVICES - HOW WE HELP YEAR ROUND

**WE:**

- Support Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) in training.
- Mobilize AmeriCorps members to respond to disasters through WV Disaster Corps and WV Strong.
- Promote disaster preparedness through Ready WV.
- Partner with response agencies to engage citizens in disaster response and recovery.



**In 2017**

CERT volunteers invested 5,265 hours in the community hosting preparedness events and service projects.

CERT volunteers responded to 7 disasters serving over 253 hours.

AmeriCorps and VISTA members assisted 2,123 disaster survivors.



# PREPAREDNESS PUTS BECKLEY ON THE MAP

Beckley City Councilwoman Ann Worley is passionate about helping Beckley be the most prepared city in the state.

She jumped at the opportunity to join Beckley's Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) in 2014. Through the program, volunteers like Councilwoman Worley are trained in disaster preparedness, search and rescue, ropes, rappelling, and first aid.

Retirees, students, housewives, and businesspeople have banded together to join the Beckley Fire Department Community Emergency Response Team. "People who live in Beckley really care about their neighbors and want to make a difference," said Worley. CERT volunteers host preparedness events throughout the community and are trained to help during disasters and emergencies.

The program has grown to include a Teen CERT Program in every high school in Raleigh County. Councilwoman Worley plans to expand the program even further.



"One of my goals as a councilperson is to have a CERT team in every ward. Then if there was a disaster, like the derecho, Beckley's residents would be ready and able to help each other."

Councilwoman Worley hopes that programs like CERT put Beckley on the map for community preparedness. "As a state we are tired of being last," said Worley. "If Beckley can be on the cutting edge of something - let's do it!"

*Pictured Above: Councilwoman Ann Worley volunteering for flood response during the 2016 Flood.*

**To find a CERT program near you contact Gina Namay at 304-558-0111 or visit <http://ready.wv.gov>.**





# VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION



The 2017 Governor's Service Awards recognized outstanding volunteers on September 14th at the State Culture Center.

From creating foundations to organizing fundraisers and starting volunteer organizations, recipients of the 2017 awards have helped to clean up our highways and revitalize and reopen some of our state's most beautiful hiking trails. They have helped children and families and cared for the homeless. They have worked to expand health care, provided food and company to those in need, assisted with disaster relief and provided support to hospital patients with mental illness.



*From left to right: Mitchell DeBoard, Col. Paul McCroskey (Civil Air Patrol-WV Wing), Lt. Col. Connie Moody (Civil Air Patrol-WV Wing), Jean Phillips, Paul Lively, Kinsington Hammack-McClure, Becky Arthur, Gayle Manchin, Secretary Education and the Arts, Governor Jim Justice, Shannon Delaney (First Exchange Bank), Ethel Brown (Happy Tails Pet Salon), Terri Lindsay (Happy Tails Pet Salon), Gary Morefield, Alice Ferrell, Brady Hanshaw, Jennifer Beach (First Exchange Bank), Jerry Morris*



Volunteering West Virginia



West Virginia  
Library Commission

Have you seen our TV show on the Library Television Network?  
Launched in 2016, the program showcases local organizations  
and opportunities to serve.





## Governor's Day to Serve

This fall, neighbors united for the sixth annual Day to Serve, making the Mountain State shine a little brighter. Volunteer projects ranged from children reading to rescue horses in Tornado to sprucing up historic Arthurdale.



Volunteers: **7,342**



Volunteer hours: **31,276**



Service Events: **369**

"West Virginia is truly blessed to have an abundance of individuals and organizations who positively impact communities across our state and who illustrate every day the true meaning of volunteerism. The mountaineer spirit endures through the volunteer work that so many individuals and organizations do throughout our state's communities, improving the quality of life of West Virginians each and every day."



Governor Jim Justice



**FEELING INSPIRED?**

Visit [volunteerwv.org](http://volunteerwv.org) to find a volunteer gig near you!

# GRANTS

## AMERICORPS

### Appalachian Forest Heritage Area

Multiple Sites, 40 Members

To enhance economic resources through heritage tourism and to improve public lands.  
\$512,000.00

### Citizen Conservation Corps of WV

Southern West Virginia, 20 Members

To construct and improve public recreational and cultural heritage projects in southern West Virginia.  
\$165,000.00

### Grow Ohio Valley

Wheeling, 17 Members

To expand local food, gardening education programs, and food availability in the Northern Panhandle.  
\$143,543.00

### High Rocks Educational Corporation

Pocahontas & Greenbrier County, 36 Members

To provide mentoring to students during the school year as well as academic summer camps and nonprofit support.  
\$360,327.00

### Mid-Ohio Valley Board of Health

Multiple Sites, 20 Members

To provide information, support and education to help improve the health and wellness of West Virginians.  
\$163,824.00

### Ohio West Virginia Youth

#### Leadership Association

Mason County, 20 Members

To build the entrepreneurial and civic leadership skills of children and teens during summer camps.  
\$95,729.00

### Preservation Alliance of West Virginia

Multiple Sites, 30 Members

To support nonprofit organizations in the preservation of historic properties.  
\$310,337.00

### The Education Alliance

Multiple Sites, 35 Members

To support the curriculum-based mentoring of students to improve graduation rates.  
\$225,761.00

### United Way of Central West Virginia/LifeBridge

Multiple Sites, 70 Members

To serve and support education, veteran, and health and human service organizations to improve the lives of West Virginians across the state.  
\$903,068.00

### West Virginia University Research Corporation/Energy Express

Multiple Sites, 510 Members

To promote reading skills for more than 2,800 children living in rural and low-income communities.  
\$1,250,996.00

## PLANNING-GRANT

### West Virginia Healthy Kids & Families Coalition

\$34,960.00

## DAY TO SERVE MINI-GRANT

### Alderson Community Food Hub

Alderson • \$250.00

Construction of raised beds for community garden.

### Arthurdale Heritage Inc.

Arthurdale • \$250.00

Landscaping the Eleanor Roosevelt Memorial Garden.

### Bethany College Social Work Program

Bethany • \$250.00

Helping Heroes Inc. fundraiser.

### Citizens Conservation Corps

Davy • \$147.46

Construction of Little Free Library at Davy City Hall.

### Coalfield Community Action Group

Atwell • \$250.00

Landscaping and clean-up of Coalfield Community Park.

### Eastern WV Tech & Community College

Moorefield • \$250.00

South Branch river clean-up.

### Fayette County 4-H Leaders Association

Fayetteville • \$250.00

Preservation and restoration of Fayette County 4-H Camp.

### Forks of Coal Foundation

Charleston • \$225.00

Coal River clean-up.

### Kanawha Master Gardeners Association

Charleston • \$24.54

Landscaping around the Sojourner's Shelter.

### L.E.A.D.

Logan County • \$180.00

Chapmanville, Logan, and Man community clean-up.

### Manna Meal

Charleston • \$250.00

Install fencing around Rock Lake Garden space.

### Mid-Ohio Valley MRC

Parkersburg • \$250.00

First aid kits for the homeless.

### Morris Creek Watershed Association

Montgomery • \$200.00

Montgomery-Smithers Trail maintenance.

### MOVRC Senior Corps

Parkersburg • \$200.00

Breakfast for first responders.

### Paint Creek Watershed Association

Kanawha County • \$100.00

Paint Creek Road clean-up.

### Potomac Valley Audubon Society

Charles Town • \$100.00

Planting and maintenance of Cool Springs Preserve pollinator garden.

### Preservation Alliance

Lewisburg • \$198.88

Clean-up of historic Pointer Cemetery.

### Town of Rainelle

Rainelle • \$250.00

Replace town landscaping destroyed by June 2016 flood.

### Rainelle Parks and Recreation

Rainelle • \$200.00

Replace town landscaping destroyed by June 2016 flood.

### Roane County 4-H & FFA Youth Livestock Program

Roane County • \$250.00

Barn clean-up and repair.

### Sundale Nursing Home

Morgantown • \$135.94

Paint and stain resident's raised bed gardens spaces.

### United Way of Central WV

Charleston • \$250.00

Various Day of Caring projects.

### United Way of Southern WV

Beckley • \$159.75

Dancing with the Stars fundraiser.

### United Way of Central WV RSVP

Charleston • \$250.00

Blessing Boxes for low-income families.

### Village of Clearview

Clearview • \$250.00

Construction of Little Free Library.

### Wardensville Garden Market

Wardensville • \$250.00

Construction of community bulletin boards.

### West Central Extension Master Gardeners

Roane County • \$200.00

Produce bags for low-income seniors.

### Winfield Lions Club

Winfield • \$120.00

Clean-up and restoration of historic Hoge House in Winfield.

### WV Horse Network Inc.

Tornado • \$250.00

Read to a Rescue event.

### Hardy County Health & Wellness Center

Hardy County • \$250.00

Senior prom event.

## COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAMS (In-Kind Support)

### Beckley CERT

Beckley, 45 Members

### Gilmer County CERT

Gilmer County, 15 Members

### Greenbrier Valley CERT (RHEMA Team)

Greenbrier County, 60 Members

### Hardy County CERT

Hardy County, 31 Members

### Jefferson County CERT

Jefferson County, 50 Members

### Mason County CERT

Mason County, 9 Members

### Mid-Ohio Valley Regional CERT

Calhoun, Pleasants, Ritchie, Roane, Wirt & Wood County, 65 Members

### Monongalia County CERT

Monongalia County, 25 Members

### Monroe County CERT

Monroe County, 83 Members

### Pendleton County CERT

Pendleton County, 15 Members

### Pleasants County CERT

Pleasants County, 10 Members

### Raleigh County CERT

Raleigh County, 25 Members

### Summers County CERT

Summers County, 9 Members

### Tyler County CERT

Tyler County, 75 Members

### Upshur County CERT

Upshur County, 12 Members



# 2017 COMMISSIONERS

**Michael Hooper, Chairman**

Obermayer Rebmann Maxwell & Hippel LLP • Wheeling

**Josh Asbury**

WV Department of Education • Summersville

**Angelo Beblo**

Spillman Thomas and Battle • Charleston

**Mercedes Jones Castle** • Scott Depot**Dwight Coburn**

Southwestern Community Action Council, Inc • Huntington

**Emily Fisher**

Growing Wings Consulting • Triadelphia

**Jimmy Gianato**

West Virginia Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management • Charleston

**Kim Good** • United Way of Central West Virginia-Foster Grandparent Program • Charleston

**Sammy Gray** • First Energy • Charleston

**Blake Humphrey** • WVU Student • Morgantown

**Julia Keehner** • Buckhannon

**Philip Keith**

Appalachian Council Head Start • Buckhannon

**Secretary Gayle Manchin**

Education and the Arts • Charleston

**Mark Mangano**

Northern Hancock Bank and Trust Company • Chester

**Erica Mani** • American Red Cross • Charleston

**Larry McCallister**

Wood County Commissioner (retired) • Washington

**Linda Miller**

Communication Workers of America • Charleston

**Susie Nelson**

Community Foundation for the Ohio Valley • Wheeling

**Margaret Ann O'Neal**

United Way of Central WV • Charleston

**John Reisenweber**

The Civil-Military Innovation Institute Inc. • Martinsburg

**Daniel Richey**

State Farm • Richwood

**Janet Somerville**

FGP Mid-Ohio Valley Regional Council • Elizabeth

**Betsy Southall** • Corporation for National and Community Service • Charleston

**Ann Worley** • Beckley City Council • Beckley

## 2017 STAFF

**Heather Foster** | *Executive Director*

**Moya Doneghy** | *Deputy Director*

**Cassandra Argo** | *AmeriCorps Program Officer*

**Krista Bradshaw** | *AmeriCorps Grant Officer*

**Heather Brunton** | *Financial Manager*

**Dana Bryant** | *Communications Coordinator*

**Waylon Bryant** | *VISTA & Community Services Coordinator*

**Pam Dugan** | *Statewide Director, West Virginia's Promise*

**Gina Namay** | *Disaster Services Coordinator*

**Lisa Tignor** | *Volunteer Program Coordinator*



**Volunteer  
West Virginia**

*The State's Commission for National and Community Service*

## MISSION STATEMENT

Volunteer West Virginia, the state's Commission for National and Community Service, challenges West Virginians to strengthen their communities through service and volunteerism. We identify and mobilize resources, promote an ethic of service, and empower communities to solve problems and improve the quality of life for individuals and families.



## NATIONAL SERVICE IN WEST VIRGINIA

National Service has a long history in West Virginia. From the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) of the 1930's, to VISTAS fighting poverty in the 1960's, to the creation of AmeriCorps in 1993. Each year more than 3,200 volunteers serve in National Service programs like AmeriCorps, VISTA, and Senior Corps in West Virginia.

West Virginia has taken full advantage of the opportunities AmeriCorps programs offer to communities and to those who serve as members. Volunteer West Virginia is proud that our state currently ranks third in the nation for producing AmeriCorps volunteers.

*Left: Former VISTA volunteer Naomi Cohen in Raleigh County, Robert Sharpe Productions, Before The Mountain Was Moved. Right: Sen. J Rockefeller during his VISTA service in Emmons, WV  
Photo Credit Charleston Gazette-Mail.*



Volunteer  
West Virginia

*The State's Commission for National and Community Service*

600 Capitol Street | Charleston, WV 25301

304.558.0111 | [volunteerwv.org](http://volunteerwv.org)

