

Celebrating



YEARS



Serving West Virginia



**Volunteer
West Virginia**

The State's Commission for National and Community Service

Annual Report 2014

Message from *Governor Tomblin*

This year marked the 20th anniversary of Volunteer West Virginia, our state's Commission for National and Community Service. The continued works of this agency are far from small, as it administers the AmeriCorps program and strengthens volunteer efforts across the state by encouraging individuals to get involved in their local and surrounding communities.

West Virginians never hesitate to offer their time and talents to serve those in need, strengthening towns and communities across the state through the act of service. This September, as part of the third annual Day to Serve, 6,000 volunteers donated more than 25,000 hours of their time. Throughout West Virginia, our friends and neighbors were fed,

local parks were given a facelift, and our streets were rid of trash. These projects, and many others, had a positive effect in our communities – and more importantly, brought West Virginians together.

I hope this annual report inspires you and shines a bright light on the importance of volunteerism. Together, we can and will build a brighter future for the Mountain State.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Earl Ray Tomblin".

Governor Earl Ray Tomblin
State of West Virginia

2014 GOVERNOR'S Service Awards

In 2014, there were 14 recipients of the annual Governor's Service Award, which recognizes extraordinary individuals and organizations making West Virginia a better place to live and work. The recipients illustrate the true meaning of volunteerism.

*Back Row (From Left):
Mitch Anthony, Mario
Liberatore, Zac Tardiff
(Empty Bowls), Jim Bordas
(Bordas & Bordas), Jamie
Bordas (Bordas & Bordas),
Tom Myslinsky, Travis
Delaplain (FNB Bank), Greg
Smith, Paul Bud Billiard*

*Front Row (From Left):
Rene White, Kellan Sarles
(Friends Unlimited), Gayle
Manchin, Emma Brannare,
Jean Evansmore, Jean
Srodes (Not Pictured)*



Message From Secretary Goodwin

As Cabinet Secretary of the West Virginia Department of Education and the Arts, I am pleased to present this annual report underscoring the impact Volunteer West Virginia has made throughout our state in 2014.

Volunteerism is a creative solution to West Virginia's toughest problems. Community service through programs such as AmeriCorps, ensure our hometowns have the support needed to bring about change and create an even brighter West Virginia.

Given its twenty years in West Virginia, AmeriCorps' impact can be proven and measurable. Since 1994, more than 10,000 West Virginia residents have served more than 17 million hours. Through AmeriCorps, members play a much needed role in the Mountain State – tutoring and mentoring our youth, preparing our communities for emergencies, preserving our state's heritage, and helping to provide a healthier future for our residents. AmeriCorps is a pathway to economic opportunity providing members with valuable leadership skills and abilities, to help jumpstart their careers. Since 1994, West Virginia AmeriCorps members have received Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards totaling more than \$25,490,000.

On its 20th anniversary, AmeriCorps is poised for an even greater impact on our state. Our volunteers pledge to "make a difference and get things done!"



Kay Goodwin
Secretary Kay Goodwin

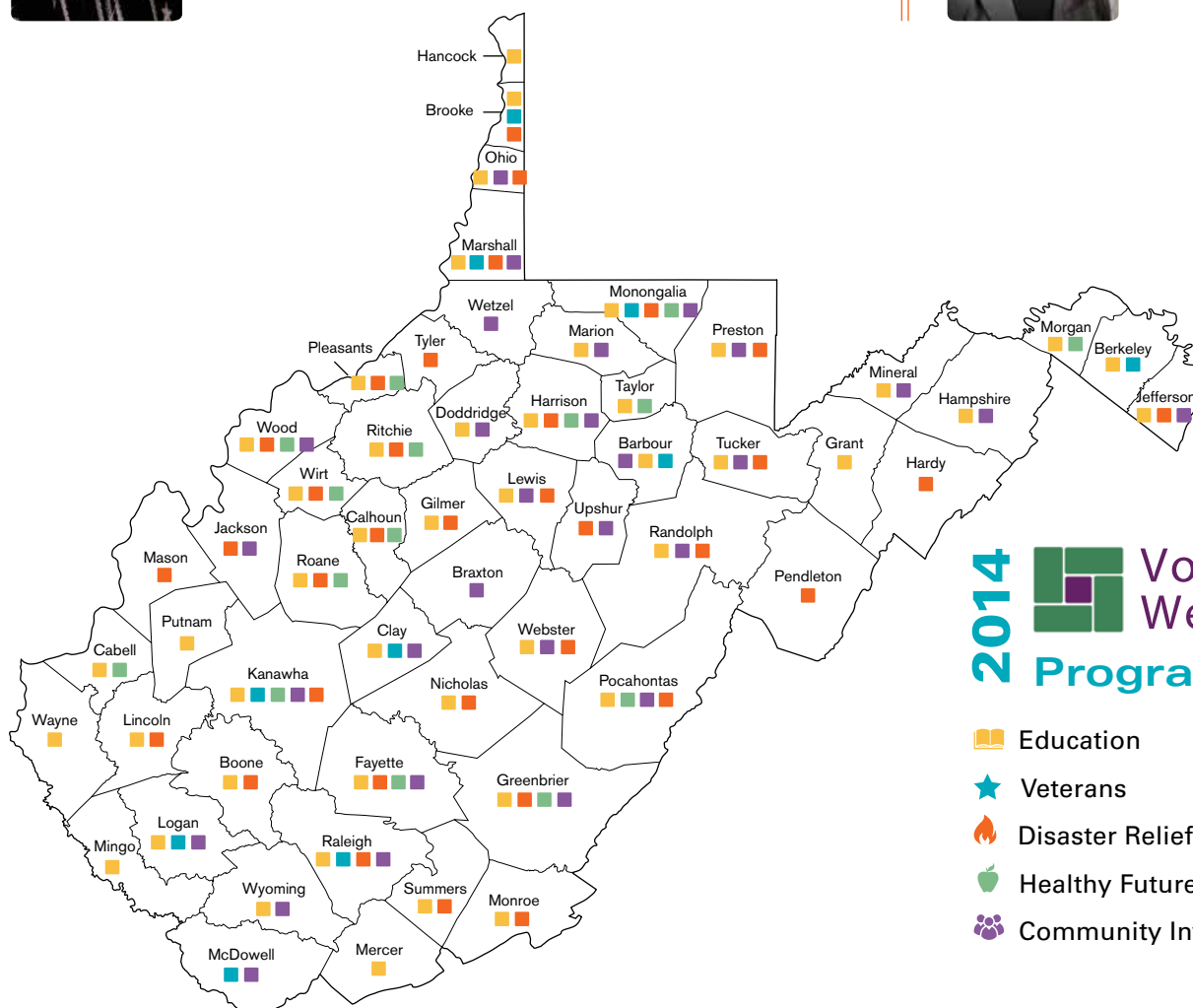
Message From The Director

As the Executive Director of Volunteer West Virginia, it is my pleasure to present our annual report. This is a small snapshot of the time, effort, and heart that our staff puts into our work all year long. We have the privilege of serving the people that serve others, supporting our volunteers and AmeriCorps members throughout the state. We are also charged with the responsibility of creating a State Service Plan, working with all our providers, clients served, volunteers, community organizations, and other stakeholders to identify the most pressing needs in our state and developing service-based solutions to address them. We rely on your feedback to tell us where our resources are most needed. Please go to our website at www.volunteerwv.org to join the conversation.



Stephanie Yu

Stephanie Yu,
Executive Director
Volunteer West Virginia





AmeriCorps

Across the country on September 12th, thousands of AmeriCorps members and supporters participated in a simultaneous swearing-in ceremony to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of AmeriCorps.

In West Virginia, more than 300 National Service members, alumni, and community leaders gathered in Charleston to participate in a city-wide service project and swearing-in ceremony. In conjunction with the Governor's Day to Serve kick-off, participants teamed up to collect over 83 bags of trash from the streets of Charleston, and then gathered at the State Capitol for the swearing-in ceremony.

Since 1994
in West Virginia

OVER
\$45 million Federal Dollars Invested
\$24 MILLION Leveraged in Additional Local Dollars

10,000



AmeriCorps
Members Served

17 **MILLION**



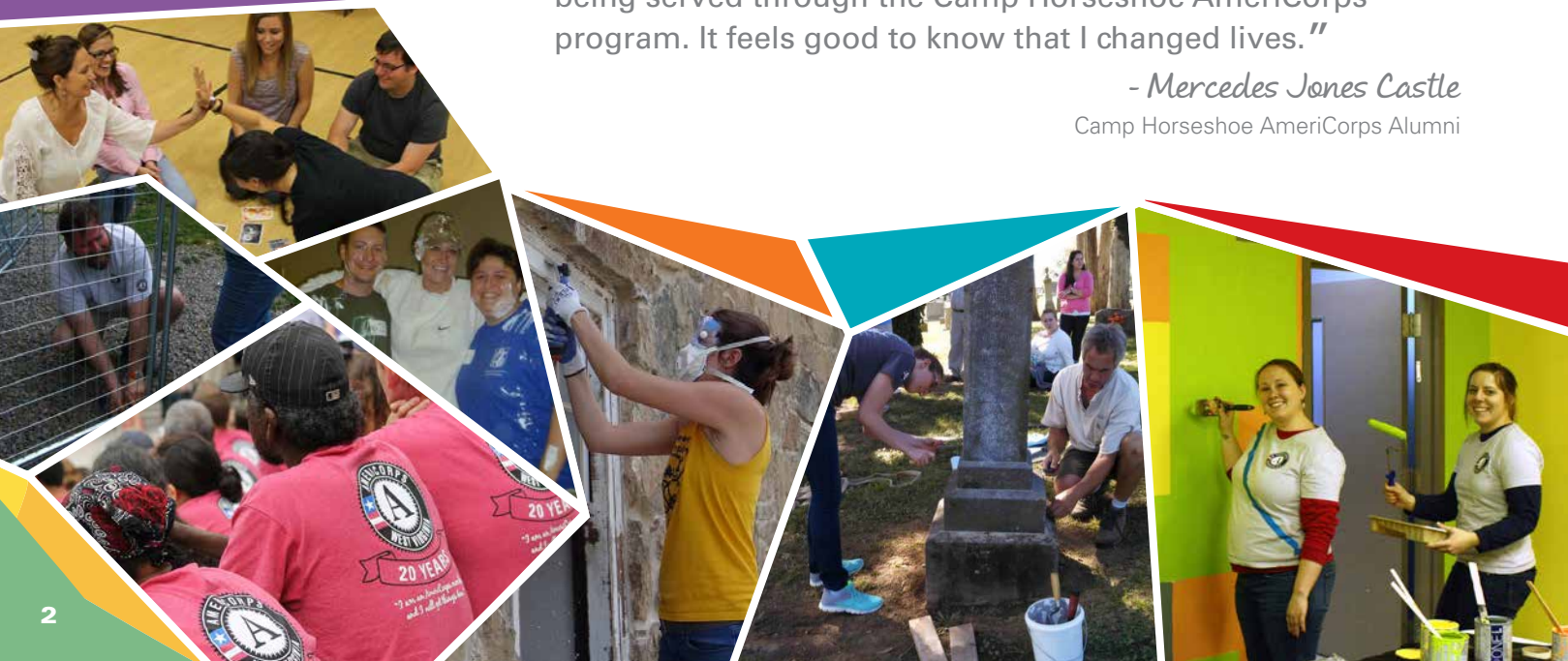
VOLUNTEER
HOURS SERVED

\$25,490,000 Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards Granted

"Being "Made in AmeriCorps" means that I gave my all; my time, my knowledge, and unconditional love to the children being served through the Camp Horseshoe AmeriCorps program. It feels good to know that I changed lives."

- Mercedes Jones Castle

Camp Horseshoe AmeriCorps Alumni

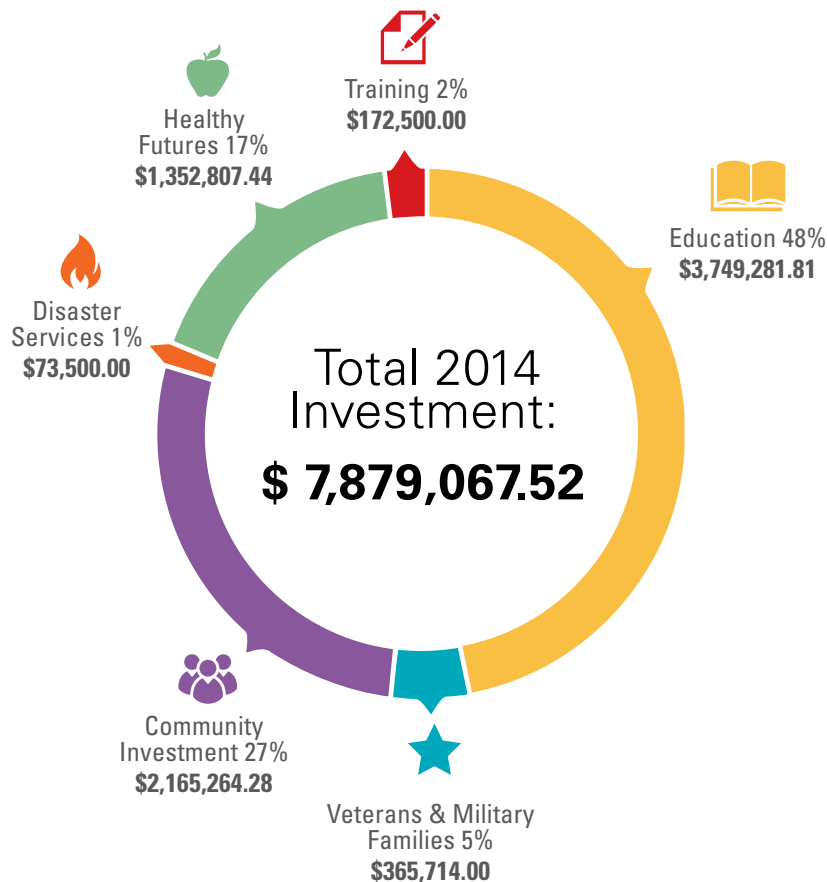


"Working together everyone has the opportunity to be involved in community service and volunteerism, people young and old plan together, play together, work together and learn together."

- Unified State Service Plan

2014 by Focus Area

Total grant and leveraged funding resources.



The Commission brings together state and local government, nonprofit organizations and volunteers to effect community change.

Today in West Virginia:

11,517 nonprofit organizations statewide

Nonprofits employ **68,900 people**, **10%** of the state's workforce

Nonprofits generate **\$7.9 billion** in economic value to the state⁽¹⁾

Volunteers contribute **35.8 hours** per capita per year in West Virginia⁽²⁾

Sources: The Independent Sector, Nonprofit Sector in West Virginia (1)

CNCS Office of Research and Policy, Volunteering in America 2010: National, State, and City Information (2)

2014 Focus Area Impact

Recruited & Managed
19,967
VOLUNTEERS

Leveraged **57,875**
COMMUNITY
VOLUNTEER HOURS

VALUED AT
\$1,143,610
IN DONATED TIME

IMPLEMENTED
679 COMMUNITY
SERVICE
events

Responded
TO **85**
EMERGENCIES

Provided disaster
assistance to
8,465 CITIZENS

CONNECTED
4,318
veterans and military
families to resources

TRAINED
8,000
INDIVIDUALS

Impacted the lives of
more **13,487**
AT-RISK YOUTH



Education

AmeriCorps and VISTA members can be found in West Virginia's schools and communities helping student engage and succeed. The Commission invests 48% of its resources to address education. These programs utilize National Service to address literacy, drop-out prevention and other pressing needs in the state.

2014 Education Impact:

Education programming reached **161 schools** and educational sites

648 National Service members served in education programs statewide

An investment of **\$3.7** million in this social focus area

Service Snapshots

- ▶ AmeriCorps on the Frontline members fill a critical gap in services, mentoring at-risk youth in behavior, attendance and course performance. Of the 560 students mentored through the program over 80% improved or maintained attendance and behavior.


▶ LAST SUMMER ENERGY EXPRESS AMERICORPS MEMBERS:


3,000
Students
SERVED

20,028

BOOKS
PROVIDED

139,520
MEALS
PROVIDED


 **63.2%**
of enrolled
STUDENTS
maintained or
Increased their
READING
achievement
SCORES

CHILDREN
attending
Energy
Express
showed a:
MONTH
increase in
broad reading
ACHIEVEMENT


- ▶ AmeriCorps members at High Rocks Education Corporation educate, empower and inspire. They provide mentoring and tutoring to students during the school year and at two academic summer camps. Members also assist with community garden projects, with recruiting volunteers and plan activities for youth at community centers.

"As a woman and former teen, I have been empowered by the camaraderie that High Rocks facilitates among its girls — this is a community where girls trade gossip and competition for appreciation circles and teambuilding exercises. Whether I am learning about selfies or selflessness, the dynamic remains the same. At High Rocks, the relationship between mentor and girl is a reciprocal one."

- Caitlin Kennedy

High Rocks AmeriCorps member

"I'm taking away from this experience courage and strength and new friends and memories. I love Camp Steele, it keeps me calm and gets me to relax throughout the year and it helps me get through the hard times in life when I know that I have a huge support system behind me no matter what."

- High Rocks Camper

"This is my mentor, Amanda, and she is helping me turn my life around."

- AmeriCorps on the Frontline Student Participant

Spoken to a judge who commented on the dramatic behavior change observed in the student during a recent court hearing.

Community Investment

Throughout the state neighbors are joining forces to build a stronger West Virginia. The Commission empowers communities by devoting 27% of its resources, more than \$2.1 million, in community investment. These programs allow communities to improve park and wildlife areas, implement community service projects, and spur economic growth through heritage tourism development.

Service Snapshots

- ▶ “Since beginning my service with the Preserve WV AmeriCorps program, I have been working on the National Register of Historic Places nomination for the Prince Depot so it can be recognized for its significance to the state and nation. Working to list such a cultural and historical building in the National Register has been a pleasure for me. The fact is that there are many places in the southern coal fields that deserve the same recognition as the Prince Depot, and I look forward to learning more about them and getting their stories publicized throughout my year of service.”
- Michael Burk, Preserve WV AmeriCorps
- ▶ Appalachian Forest Heritage Area AmeriCorps members help create connection to the local environment through the preservation of at-risk ecosystems and wildlife. Members assist with research and monitoring of the northern long-eared bat and the eastern small-footed bat. Members gather data to track the spread of white nose syndrome and level of endangerment.



2014 West Virginia Results



Service Events: 404

2013: 569 | 2012: 330



Volunteers: 6,000

2013: 5,000 | 2012: 1,200



Youth Volunteers: 2,000

2013: 1,200 | 2012: 300



Total Volunteer Hours: 25,000

2013: 15,500 | 2012: 2,900



Food Collected: 75,000 lbs

2013: 78,000 lbs | 2012: 72,000 lbs



Garbage Collected: 6,207 bags

2013: 8,613 bags

Trash bags of garbage and debris



Trees Planted: 47



Cash Donations:

Over \$4,000

In September the Commission organized the third annual Governor's Day to Serve. Projects varied from food collections to neighborhood cleanups.





Healthy Futures

AmeriCorps members serve rural and urban communities to ensure healthy futures in West Virginia. The Commission invests 17% of its resources, more than \$1.3 million each year, in these programs.

Healthy future programs cover a wide scope of needs and issues. AmeriCorps members engage youth through farm to school programs, community gardens, and provide nutritious meals throughout the summer months. Other programs focus on improving local food choices, providing nutrition education, and offering support for cardiac disease and diabetes prevention.

Service Snapshots

- ▶ Almost 500,000 people in West Virginia are estimated to have prediabetes. Change the Future WV AmeriCorps members go into the hills of West Virginia to deliver community-based programs which may prevent diabetes. Participants learn how to create a healthier lifestyle, lose weight, eat healthier and increase physical activity.
- ▶ “Almost immediately after my service began, I started changing my life. I stopped drinking soda and started eating a lot more fruits and vegetables. My grandmother lost her eye sight and had one leg amputated due to diabetes. My friend’s legs were black from the knee down due to unwillingness to deal with diabetes.” -Tina Thomas, Change the Future WV AmeriCorps member
- ▶ During this school year, local schools procured \$650,000 of local foods from the outreach efforts of WV Farm to School AmeriCorps members. This was an increase of \$300,000 from the previous school year. Thirteen additional counties began purchasing and serving local food in their cafeterias.
- ▶ “I think that teaching children about sustainable agriculture, growing food, and nutrition is in a way teaching them to grow up thinking on more of a global level. AmeriCorps programs teach kids and communities how important it is to put others first, and to gain something better in return.” -Vanessa Onkow, WV Farm to School member



Disaster Services

From floods and blizzards, to house fires and disaster preparedness training, volunteers play a critical role in strengthening West Virginia communities before, during, and after disasters. In 2014, the Commission invested more than \$73,500 to support organizations that aid the state's community preparedness, mass care, donation and volunteer management capabilities.

2014 Disaster Services Impact:

Supported **18 active** Community Emergency Response Teams

Trained more than **2,000 individuals** and engaged volunteers in community disaster education, exercises and drills



142 CERT volunteers served 670 hours during National Preparedness Month in September, helping **over 4,600 residents** become better prepared for disasters

Service Snapshot

- ▶ Volunteer based Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) are busy preparing communities throughout the state. The Sleep Safe in Monroe County Project has already saved lives. Members of the Monroe County CERT team and Health Department distributed over 150 smoke alarms to at-risk populations. This allowed one family to escape safely from a house fire.

To address Monroe County's frequent power outages, the county's CERT team and Health Department initiated the Safety Check Project. The project allows residents who depend on electricity for their medical needs to register to be checked on during emergencies. Both projects engaged 87 teen and adult CERT volunteers.



In 2014, the Commission launched the West Virginia Disaster Corps to enhance the state's capacity to respond to disasters with trained volunteers. The program, a collaboration between AmeriCorps, VISTA and Senior Corps, trains national service members in disaster response and recovery and links members to disaster service opportunities. This year, more than 100 members signed up for training and will be available to support emergency response.



Launched in 2009, ReadyWV was developed to promote the message of citizen preparedness, emergency response, and raise awareness of what to do before, during and after an emergency. This year the campaign reached 107,000 residents through print, online, and social media messaging.

★ Veterans and Military Families

Volunteer West Virginia collaborates with veterans in communities across the state to serve those who serve us. The Commission invests \$365,714 of to address the needs of the state's veterans and military families, with a focus on transitioning homeless veterans into sustainable housing and employment.

Programs like LifeBridge Vet Corps and the VISTA Veterans Community Outreach Team identify and develop links to veteran services, such as employment opportunities, housing options, and peer support networks.

IN 2014 COMMISSION PROGRAMS SERVED 4,318 veterans and military families throughout the state of West Virginia.



Service Snapshots

- ▶ "Service to my community has helped me recognize the importance of being a part of a greater good. Vet Corps has allowed me to uplift veterans, bring hope to citizens and become inclusive to organizations doing similar work. I appreciate the opportunity to continue to be a productive member of society and a selfless servant to my community as a Vet Corps member."
- Elvin Campbell, LifeBridge Veteran Corps Member
- ▶ This summer 270 military children were served through VISTA support. Veteran VISTAs, placed with National Guard Family programs in Charleston and Martinsburg, assisted in coordinating summer activities during military youth camps.
- ▶ Veteran VISTAs also promote partnership development at In Touch & Concerned Inc. of Morgantown. As a result of this VISTA placement 1,850 elderly and disabled veterans and their families were linked to services that provided free rides to and from medical appointments.



✍ Training Services

This year the Commission invested over \$172,000 in training services, which included Strength-Based Grant Writing, Faces of Leadership, and Mountain State Leaders.



Faces of Leadership is the Commission's signature event on service and volunteerism each

year. The 2014 conference was attended by 300 people from more than 166 organizations. Participants learned skills and techniques related to grant management, fundraising, non-profit marketing, and organizational leadership.

"Attend this conference, there's just a wealth of knowledge that can be gained. The networking; the energy; the ideas and conversations. Amazing!"

- Faces of Leadership Attendee

Mountain State Leaders brings together almost 200 AmeriCorps members for training in leadership and service project development. Over 50 service projects were implemented throughout West Virginia during Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service and National Volunteer Week in April.

Strength-Based Grant Writing is a hands-on, intensive training, intended to help build new capacity for nonprofit organizations. In 2014, this three-day training was offered in Fairmont and Charleston. More than 90 people participated in the two workshops.

"This training changed my entire focus on writing grants from dread anxiety to comfort and strength by changing my idea about the grant application process (80% planning) and not a one-woman show!"

- Strength-Based Grant Writing Attendee



2014 Commissioners

Mark Mangano, *Chairman*, Northern Hancock Bank & Trust, Chester

Josh Asbury, West Virginia Department of Education, Summersville

John Ballengee, United Way of Central West Virginia, Scott Depot

Shannon Cunningham, Central West Virginia Community Action Association, Weston

Jimmy Gianato, West Virginia Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, Charleston

Secretary Kay Goodwin, Department of Education and the Arts, Charleston

Sister Barbara Fidler, Susan Dew Hoff Memorial Clinic, West Milford

Sammy Gray, FirstEnergy Corporation, Charleston

Reta Griffith, Frontier Communications, Marlinton

Michael Hooper, Jackson Kelly PLLC, Wheeling

Julia Keehner, West Virginia Wesleyan College, Buckhannon

Nick Mayo, Huntington

Larry McCallister, Washington

Linda Miller, Communication Workers of America, Charleston

John Reisenweber, Jefferson County Development Authority, Martinsburg

Janet Somerville, Mid-Ohio Valley Regional Council, Elizabeth

Betsy Southall, Corporation for National and Community Service, Charleston

Pauline Sturgill, Williamson Housing Authority, Naugatuck

Robin Taylor, Department of Education and the Arts, Charleston

Staff

Stephanie Yu, Executive Director

Moya Doneghy, Deputy Director

Cass Argo, AmeriCorps Program Officer

Krista Bradshaw, AmeriCorps Program Officer

Heather Brunton, Financial Manager

Waylon Bryant, VISTA & Community Services Coordinator

Heather Foster, Director of Programs

Dana Myslinsky, Communications Coordinator

Gina Namay, Disaster Services Coordinator

Lisa Tignor, Volunteer WV Program Coordinator

2014 AmeriCorps Programs





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.

710 Central Avenue | Charleston, WV 25302

(304) 558-0111

(800) WV-HELPS (toll-free)

(304) 558-0101 (fax)

volunteerwv.org

