

Grant Continuation Report: June 2019

Task Force reviewers: Joe Schmidt, Ed Barrett

Date: June 14, 2019

Legal Applicant:	Trekkers
Program/Project Name:	AmeriCorps Aspirations Project
Grant Type:	Maine Rural State/Cost Reimbursement

	From (date)	To (date)	
Grant Period (full 3 year time)	9/1/2018	8/31/2021	
Continuation period covered by request	9/1/2019	8/31/2020	Year 2 of 3 years

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Trekkers proposes to have 2 AmeriCorps members who will act as role models for youth in Knox County, Maine. At the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for doubling the number of contact hours each Trekkers student spends with a trained, caring adult role model. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage an additional 24 volunteers who will be engaged in building caring relationships with students. This program will concentrate on the CNCS focus area of Education.

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATION:

Approve award of positions and continuation funding with no conditions. The program has full enrollment and retention, is on target to meet or exceed performance goals, and to-date any operating concerns are routine in nature for a sponsor with no AmeriCorps experience.

Award Resources in Next 12 mo Budget Period				
	CNCS	Match	Total	Cost Per Member
Financial	\$30,294	\$38,009	\$68,303	\$15,147 (< max.)
Percentages	44%	56%	100%	

AmeriCorps Member Positions	1700 Hr	1200 Hr	900 Hr	675 Hr	450 Hr	Min 300
Number of Slot types requested	2					
Member Service Years [Total: <u> 2 </u>]	2					

MOTION FOR COMMISSION:

MOVE that Trekkers AmeriCorps program be funded for year 2 of the 3-year grant at the requested level of \$30,294 Federal Share, to be matched by at least \$38,009 in local funds, supporting 2 member service years distributed over 2 slots. The proposed cost per member service year is \$15,147.

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Legal Applicant:	Maine Youth Alliance		
Program/Project Name:	Game Loft AmeriCorps		
Grant Type:	Maine Rural State/Cost Reimbursement		
	From (date)	To (date)	
Grant Period (full 3 year time)	3/1/2019	12/31/2019	
Continuation period covered by request	1/1/2020	12/31/2020	Year 2 of 3 years

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Maine Youth Alliance dba The Game Loft proposes to have two (2) AmeriCorps members for 1700 hours each who will provide mentoring to students age 12-15 and recruit and manage volunteers in the Regional School Unit (RSU) #3 in Waldo County, Maine. At the end of the first program year the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for preparing at risk students for success in the classroom and beyond. In addition, the AmeriCorps volunteers will leverage an additional ten volunteers who will be engaged in mentoring relationships with the students. The program will concentrate on the CNCS focus areas of Education and Member Development and Capacity Building.

This program has been operating 17 weeks. What may appear to be an expansion is actually the natural change of going from a 9 month first “year” to a full 12-month year. The first budget and program period were shortened due to the Commission’s funding process and the time funds were available. The continuation year under consideration will put them into full program periods and a January-December grant cycle. The program is requesting two 1700 hour members rather than two 1200 hour slots.

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATION:

Approve award of positions and continuation funding with one condition. The program has full enrollment and retention and to-date any MCCS staff concerns are routine in nature for a sponsor with no AmeriCorps experience in its first quarter of operation. Corrections to budget need to be made before June 28 submission to CNCS.

Award Resources in Next 12 mo Budget Period				
	CNCS	Match	Total	Cost Per Member
Financial	\$30,140	\$31,051	\$61,191	\$15,070 (< max.)
Percentages	49%	51%	100%	

AmeriCorps Member Positions	1700 Hr	1200 Hr	900 Hr	675 Hr	450 Hr	Min 300
Number of Slot types requested	2					
Member Service Years [Total: <u> 2 </u>]	2					

MOTION FOR COMMISSION:

MOVE that the Maine Youth Alliance AmeriCorps program be funded for year 2 of the 3-year grant at the requested level of \$30,140 Federal Share, to be matched by at least \$31,051 in local funds, supporting 2 member service years distributed over 2 slots with the stipulation that budget corrections are made. The proposed cost per member service year is \$15,070.

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Legal Applicant:	Midcoast Conservancy		
Program/Project Name:	AmeriCorps Outdoor Adventure Program		
Grant Type:	Maine Rural State/Cost Reimbursement		
	From (date)	To (date)	
Grant Period (full 3 year time)	9/1/2018	8/31/2021	
Continuation period covered by request	9/1/2019	8/31/2020	Year 2 of 3 years

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Midcoast Conservancy proposes to have four AmeriCorps members who will build capacity and with volunteers, implement programs, at our Community Hubs for Outdoor Adventure and Learning located in Lincoln and Waldo counties, Maine. At the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for providing convenient and affordable access to trails and recreation gear to a minimum of 800 children ages 9-13 at six schools and four Community Hubs. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage an additional 76 volunteers who will be engaged in planning and implementing Community Hub programming, getting kids to become enthusiastic about outdoor recreation in nature, and in the long term, reducing the incidence of childhood obesity. This program will concentrate on the CNCS focus area of Healthy Futures.

Approve award of positions and continuation funding with no conditions. The program has full enrollment and retention, is on target to meet or exceed performance goals, and to-date any operating concerns are routine in nature for a sponsor with no AmeriCorps experience. Minor correction in budget

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATION:

Approve award of positions and continuation funding with no conditions. The program has full enrollment and retention and to-date any MCCS staff concerns are routine in nature for a sponsor with no AmeriCorps experience in its first year of operation. Minor correction to budget needs to be made before June 28 submission to CNCS.

Award Resources in Next 12 mo Budget Period				
	CNCS	Match	Total	Cost Per Member
Financial	\$60,061	\$110,620	\$170,681	\$15,015 (< max.)
Percentages	35%	65%	100%	

AmeriCorps Member Positions	1700 Hr	1200 Hr	900 Hr	675 Hr	450 Hr	Min 300
Number of Slot types requested	4					
Member Service Years [Total: <u> 4 </u>]	4					

MOTION FOR COMMISSION:

MOVE that the Midcoast Conservancy AmeriCorps program be funded for year 2 of the 3-year grant at the requested level of \$60,061 Federal Share, to be matched by at least \$110,620 in local funds, supporting 4 member service years distributed over 2 slots with the stipulation that budget corrections are made. The proposed cost per member service year is \$15,015.

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Legal Applicant:	The President and Trustees of Colby College
Program/Project Name:	Colby Rural AmeriCorps Program
Grant Type:	Maine Rural State/Cost Reimbursement

	From (date)	To (date)	
Grant Period (full 3 year time)	8/15/2018	8/14/2021	
Continuation period covered by request	8/15/2019	8/14/2020	Year 2 of 3 years

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Colby College proposes to have two AmeriCorps members who will work with community partners to increase the capacity of community partners to increase volunteers in the Greater Waterville Area (GWA). At the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for creating, implementing, and participating in the establishment of programs to support capacity building with community partners. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage an additional 200 volunteers and 15-20 community partners who will be engaged in programs that improve community partners abilities to utilize volunteers for the long term. This program will concentrate on the CNCS focus area of capacity building.

Approve award of positions and continuation funding with conditions:

- Revise performance measure targets to reflect actual experience in year 1. A number of targets in the first year have been exceeded by a significant amount. There is no indication that year 2 would not reach the same or greater targets.
- Clarify how the outputs are defined in the performance measure addressing increased services. The number reported as accomplished seems excessive.
- The program has some compliance issues that must be corrected and it needs to submit reports on time. The program director or an appropriate designee must participate in technical assistance and training for grantees.
- Corrections to budget and performance measures need to be made before June 28 submission to CNCS.

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATION:

Approve award of positions and continuation funding with conditions and with the stipulation that corrections described above are made. The program has full enrollment and retention.

Award Resources in Next 12 mo Budget Period				
	CNCS	Match	Total	Cost Per Member
Financial	\$30,384	\$111,677	\$170,681	\$15,192 (= max.)
Percentages	21%	79%	100%	

AmeriCorps Member Positions	1700 Hr	1200 Hr	900 Hr	675 Hr	450 Hr	Min 300
Number of Slot types requested	2					
Member Service Years [Total: <u> 2 </u>]	2					

MOTION FOR COMMISSION:

MOVE that the Colby College AmeriCorps program be funded for year 2 of the 3-year grant at the requested level of \$30,384 Federal Share, to be matched by at least \$111,677 in local funds, supporting 2 member service years distributed over 2 slots. The proposed cost per member service year is \$15,192.

Grant Continuation Report: June 2019

Legal Applicant:	Seeds of Hope		
Program/Project Name:	AmeriCorps Community Outreach		
Grant Type:	Maine Rural State/Cost Reimbursement		

	From (date)	To (date)	
Grant Period (full 3 year time)	3/1/2019	12/31/2019	
Continuation period covered by request	1/1/2020	12/31/2020	Year 2 of 3 years

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Seeds of Hope Neighborhood Center proposes to continue two (2) AmeriCorps members who will recruit and train Center volunteers, staff our Career Resource Center, serve as front-line managers of the drop-in center, and work actively with the Executive Director on addressing the needs of the homeless in Biddeford, Saco, Old Orchard Beach and the surrounding communities in southern Maine. At the end of the second year the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for continued expansion of the services offered in our Career Resource Center and managing the day-to-day operations of our drop-in center. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage an additional twenty (20) volunteers, ten of whom will be engaged in preparing the breakfast and lunch dining options for our neighbors (those we serve), sorting donated clothing and other household items for distribution, responding to requests for referrals, and being supports to neighbors who access our services. Additional volunteers will work with the Career Center member on providing mentorship and teaching of the WorkReady model for those seeking employment. This program will concentrate on the CNCS focus area of Economic Opportunity.

This program has been operating 17 weeks. What may appear to be an expansion is actually the natural change of going from a 9 month first “year” to a full 12-month year. The first budget and program period were shortened due to the Commission’s funding process and the time funds were available. The continuation year under consideration will put them into full program periods and a January-December grant cycle. The program is requesting two 1700 hour members rather than two 1200 hour slots.

Approve award of positions and continuation funding with conditions:

- The Commission applauds the dedication and effort of this tiny nonprofit. That said, the AmeriCorps members need adequate supervision when/if the Executive Director is unavailable. The organization needs to identify a skilled volunteer or board member who will be the back-up supervisor with an adequate understanding of the program goals, requirements, and member assignments.

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATION:

Approve award of positions and continuation funding with the stipulation that condition be met before the award is issued.

Award Resources in Next 12 mo Budget Period				
	CNCS	Match	Total	Cost Per Member
Financial	\$29,772	\$30,178	\$59,950	\$14,886 (< max.)
Percentages	50%	50%	100%	

AmeriCorps Member Positions	1700 Hr	1200 Hr	900 Hr	675 Hr	450 Hr	Min 300
Number of Slot types requested	2					
Member Service Years [Total: <u> 2 </u>]	2					

MOTION FOR COMMISSION:

MOVE that the Seeds of Hope AmeriCorps program be funded for year 2 of the 3-year grant at the requested level of \$29,772 Federal Share, to be matched by at least \$30,178 in local funds, supporting 2 member service years distributed over 2 slots. The proposed cost per member service year is \$14,886.

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Legal Applicant:	Main Street Skowhegan
Program/Project Name:	Skowhegan AmeriCorps Outdoor Recreation Program
Grant Type:	Maine Rural State/Cost Reimbursement

	From (date)	To (date)	
Grant Period (full 3 year time)	3/1/2019	12/31/2019	
Continuation period covered by request	1/1/2020	12/31/2020	Year 2 of 3 years

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Main Street Skowhegan proposes to have three AmeriCorps members who will coordinate and execute no-cost outdoor recreation programming designed to increase physical activity and engagement with nature for local community members in Skowhegan, Maine. At the end of the second program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for increasing participation rates in outdoor recreation programming by four percent (344 people). In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage an additional 25 volunteers who will lead community outdoor recreation programming. This program will concentrate on the Healthy Futures Focus Area.

This program has been operating 17 weeks. What may appear to be an expansion is actually, the natural change of going from a 9 month first “year” to a full 12-month year. The first budget and program period were shortened due to the Commission’s funding process and the time funds were available. The continuation year under consideration will put them into full program periods and a January-December grant cycle. The program is requesting two 1700 hour members rather than two 1200 hour slots.

Approve award of positions and continuation funding with condition:

- Grantee contributions from general operations are mistakenly listed as in-kind rather than cash under Source of Funds. This minor correction to the budget needs to be made before submission to CNCS on June 28.

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATION:

Approve award of positions and continuation funding with the stipulation that budget corrections are made.

Award Resources in Next 12 mo Budget Period				
	CNCS	Match	Total	Cost Per Member
Financial	\$45,575	\$58,627	\$104,202	\$15,192 (= max.)
Percentages	20%	80%	100%	

AmeriCorps Member Positions	1700 Hr	1200 Hr	900 Hr	675 Hr	450 Hr	Min 300
Number of Slot types requested	3					
Member Service Years [Total: <u> 3 </u>]	3					

MOTION FOR COMMISSION:

MOVE that the Main Street Skowhegan AmeriCorps program be funded for year 2 of the 3-year grant at the requested level of \$45,575 Federal Share, to be matched by at least \$58,627 in local funds, supporting 2 member service years distributed over 2 slots. The proposed cost per member service year is \$15,192.

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Legal Applicant:	MSAD 70
Program/Project Name:	Access to Success AmeriCorps
Grant Type:	Maine Rural State/Cost Reimbursement

	From (date)	To (date)	
Grant Period (full 3 year time)	3/1/2019	12/31/2019	
Continuation period covered by request	1/1/2020	12/31/2020	Year 2 of 3 years

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Maine School Administrative District #70 (MSAD #70) proposes to have three AmeriCorps members who will provide K-12 Academic Success and 7-12 College/Career Mentoring through tutoring, summer school and interventions in the County of Aroostook in Maine in the towns eight towns served by MSAD #70. At the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for showing progress towards increased academic achievement, engagement, social/emotional skills, and college/career planning. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage an additional 10 volunteers who will be engaged in mentoring of students.

This program has been operating 17 weeks. What may appear to be an expansion is actually the natural change of going from a 9 month first “year” to a full 12-month year. The first budget and program period were shortened due to the Commission’s funding process and the time funds were available. The continuation year under consideration will put them into full program periods and a January-December grant cycle. The program is requesting three 1700 hour members rather than three 1200 hour slots.

Approve award of positions and continuation funding with conditions:

- This rural school district has individuals in leadership filling multiple roles, each very demanding. As a condition of the continuation, MSAD 70 must present a reasonable staffing plan for the AmeriCorps program and a transition plan that ensures transfer of all critical information to the incoming program director (proposed to be the new superintendent but not a reasonable plan). There must be adequate time dedicated to the program to ensure member support, supervision, and timely reporting.
- Budget corrections need to be made before submission to CNCS on June 28. Source of Funds does not account for all of grantee share.

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATION:

Approve award of positions and continuation funding with one condition.

Award Resources in Next 12 mo Budget Period				
	CNCS	Match	Total	Cost Per Member
Financial	\$47,794	\$22,459	\$70,253	\$15,931 (>max.)
Percentages	20%	80%	100%	

AmeriCorps Member Positions	1700 Hr	1200 Hr	900 Hr	675 Hr	450 Hr	Min 300
Number of Slot types requested	3					
Member Service Years [Total: <u> 3 </u>]	3					

MOTION FOR COMMISSION:

MOVE that the Maine School Administrative District AmeriCorps program be funded for year 2 of the 3-year grant at the requested level of \$47,794 Federal Share, to be matched by at least \$22,459 in local funds, supporting 3 member service years distributed over 3 slots. The proposed cost per member service year is \$15,931.

Grant Continuation Report: June 2019

Legal Applicant:	Axiom Education & Training Center
Program/Project Name:	Maine Digital Inclusion Initiative
Grant Type:	Standard AmeriCorps Formula/Cost Reimbursement

	From (date)	To (date)	
Grant Period (full 3 year time)	08/15/18	08/14/21	
Continuation period covered by request	08/15/19	08/14/20 (see staff recommendation for change)	Year 2 of 3 years

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Axiom Education & Training Center proposes to enlist 16 AmeriCorps Members who will provide basic computer skills (i.e., digital literacy) instruction throughout the state with two volunteers allocated to eight of Maine's 16 counties. At the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for providing instruction to 5,220 disadvantaged adult learners throughout Maine at 126 training sites to improve program participant employability and provide technology training to seniors to help them age in place. In addition, the AmeriCorps Members will leverage 64 volunteers who will be engaged in continuing digital literacy training within the community. This program will concentrate on the CNCS focus areas of Economic Opportunity and Healthy Futures.

SPECIAL NOTES:

- In assessing the original proposal, MCCS did not detect through the application, the degree to which the program was still in development and proceeded on the conclusion it was ready to be fully implemented. Thus, technical assistance and training was provided based on that conclusion and the program staff, whose strength is administration, faithfully developed forms, documents, systems, and reports as requested. What the program didn't realize (being novices and not knowing what they didn't know) was the loss of the AmeriCorps program consultant and the decision to figure it out on their own was not a sound decision and contributed to significant problems in the first year. At the Commission, the fact there were 4 program officers between August and January meant the usual insight that comes with continuity on our end was absent.
- The grant funding expected from the Economic Development Administration played a larger role in the program success than expected. The program staff did not abandon the model of having part-time employees act as member supervisors and took on the role themselves rather than enlist aid from their community partners. The lack of funding also meant the set of laptops each member was to use in hands on training was not available. Some equipment was eventually secured but members had to change their teaching methods to demonstration and not hands on experience for learners.
- The program staff experience with independent contractors, delivering services online, and providing one-on-one support to rural entrepreneurs was inappropriately applied to AmeriCorps members. Many of the problems and a level of interpersonal drama created by members can be traced to a lack of peer relationships and support on the team, a lack of team cohesion, an absence of validation of individual efforts to compensate for implementation issues, and failure to apply basic volunteer management practices to support of the AmeriCorps members.
- The community need is still present and the program model *as described in the proposal* is still valid. If the EDA funding (decisions scheduled to be announced before August 1) is awarded, the program should be given a second year to reboot/restart under the conditions listed below.
- At urging of MCCS Grant Officer, the year 2 request for positions was changed to 1200 hours and 900 hours to better match the service activities. All members will serve 40 hours a week. It is our understanding that the 900

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hour members will serve in an area where there is another 1200 hour member, making a team for at least 6 months.

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATION:

Approve award of positions and continuation funding with conditions:

- The program annual cycle be changed so it begins on October 1 and ends September 30. This will give the program staff more time to correct issues related to member management including selection and onboarding. (Start date now is August 15.)
- The EDA grant funding or an equivalent amount from one other source must be secured *before* the award for year 2 is issued.
- Performance measure targets need to be reset to more attainable goals and may not be increased.
- The grantee organization needs to add as staff an individual with the type of human resource experience that leads to appropriate selection of members based on more than technical proficiency or personal need for the skills. The staff person should be skilled in team development; committed to fostering teamwork, peer respect, a sense of membership in the program, motivation; and be able apply basic volunteer management principles to AmeriCorps member management.
- The program will change its model to have partner host sites in each region with an identified supervisor at the partner organization. The members can still be organized in teams under leadership of a team leader and provide classes in regions but the site supervisor provides the routine support and advising.
- Program staff must participate in a peer exchange with an AmeriCorps program known for high quality member development. The Commission will orchestrate and support this learning arrangement which may be in-person or virtual. The exchange should be completed before September 1.
- Selection criteria for AmeriCorps members needs to be revised and applied to the recruitment process. Selection and onboarding as well as member development during the year need to be revised. In particular, member development needs to use a balanced mix of weekly virtual team meetings and periodic in-person meetings that foster positive relationships among program participants and staff.
- Program staff must meet with the MCCS Training Officer for regular technical assistance sessions to address member onboarding, training, supervision, and site selection, agreements, and supervisor training issues. (These will be independent of the monthly group sessions for all grantees). The MCCS Training Officer may identify an experienced but not active AmeriCorps program director to serve as coach/mentor if the program needs exceed available time.

Award Resources in Next 12 mo Budget Period				
	CNCS	Match	Total	Cost Per Member
Financial	\$243,072	\$1,181,864	\$1,424,936	\$15,004 (<max.)
Percentages	17%	83%	100%	

AmeriCorps Member Positions	1700 Hr	1200 Hr	900 Hr	675 Hr	450 Hr	Min 300
Number of Slot types requested		16	10			
Member Service Years [Total: <u>16.2</u>]		11.2	5			

MOTION FOR COMMISSION:

MOVE that the Axiom Education & Training Center AmeriCorps program be funded for year 2 of the 3-year grant at the requested level of \$243,072 Federal Share, to be matched by at least \$1,181,864 in local funds, supporting 16.2 member service years distributed over 26 slots providing the specified conditions above are met. The proposed cost per member service year is \$15,004.