



# Glenwood Research

A Community Service Consulting Company

**AmeriCorps,**  
**A Successful Social Service Investment Strategy:**  
An Analysis  
of Maine Dispersed Site AmeriCorps Project  
Leverage and Sustainability Resource Development

For  
The Maine Commission for Community Service

January 21, 2002

By  
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## Forward

The Corporation for National and Community Service's AmeriCorps program, the domestic Peace Corps, engages more than 40,000 Americans in intensive, results-driven service each year. The AmeriCorps program offers opportunities to individuals over the age of seventeen to participate in community service programming. Through AmeriCorps, adults of different ages and backgrounds are involved in strengthening America's communities.

AmeriCorps members train volunteers, tutor and mentor youth-at-risk, build affordable housing, clean up rivers and streams, help seniors to live independently, provide emergency and long-term assistance to victims of natural disasters, and meet community needs through more than 1,000 projects.

AmeriCorps members serve through a variety of projects including Habitat for Humanity, the American Red Cross, and Boys and Girls Clubs. Others serve in AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) and AmeriCorps NCCC (the National Civilian Community Corps). After their term of service, members receive education awards to help finance college, or pay back student loans.

Projects selected for funding must demonstrate they will meet a community need, and result in direct and demonstrable benefits valued by the community. A key to the AmeriCorps program is that projects selected for funding also need to demonstrate their proposed activities are not being conducted elsewhere in the community, and may not have otherwise been undertaken, if not for the availability of AmeriCorps funding.

### **Venture Capital for Social Service**

AmeriCorps is to community service what venture capital is to capitalism. Venture capital has been defined as *money made available for investment in innovative enterprises or research, especially in high technology, in which both the risk of loss and the potential for profit may be considerable* (American Heritage Dictionary, 1999). It has also been described as private equity placements by institutions well versed in risk capital and creating sustainable companies. A venture capitalist is defined as an entrepreneur, a risk taker, and a gambler.

AmeriCorps provides capital, in terms of money and labor, to further social service activities. Where capitalism builds economic capital, AmeriCorps works to build social capital. Social capital refers to connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them (Putnam 2000).

Like venture capital investment, AmeriCorps projects are risk ventures – they are activities designed to meet community needs, but are untried. In this manner, AmeriCorps investments are similar to venture capital in that *both the risk of loss and the potential for ‘profit’ (success) may be considerable.*

And, like venture capital, which is generally governed by a set of investment rules, AmeriCorps has established certain ‘investment criteria’ to guide the award of Federal dollars. AmeriCorps programs are selected based on an assessment of their potential to meet the four national performance standards of:

1. Getting Things Done – helping communities meet educational, public safety, human, and environmental needs.
2. Strengthening Communities – bringing people together from all backgrounds to solve problems at the local level.
3. Encouraging Responsibility – through opportunities to engage in community service, and through civic education.
4. Expanding Opportunity – helping to make post secondary education more affordable to AmeriCorps members

Venture capitalists generally attempt to leverage resources to the new venture, usually in the form of fund-raising, and work to sustain the new venture over the long term – in other words, they look to sustain venture activities. Similarly, AmeriCorps requires its projects to attempt to leverage new resources to them, and work to sustain their activities beyond the limited term of Federal funding.

These two activities – leverage and sustainability – are the focus of this study. Throughout this report you will encounter the terms “leverage success” and “sustainability success.”

### **Definition of Terms**

***Leverage Success*** - In this study, leverage was defined as “any resources provided by individuals and/or organizations that did not have an initial contractual relationship with the AmeriCorps project. Therefore our definition of leverage success only includes resources generated by the projects above and beyond those required to make the contractual match.

***Sustainability Success*** - refers to the assumption, by other organizations, of any or all of the activities initiated by AmeriCorps after AmeriCorps funding has ended.

## **Acknowledgements**

We wish to express our sincere gratitude to the AmeriCorps members, project directors, supervisors, host-sites, and staff who so willingly shared their thoughts and experiences with the developers of this report. Study participants contributed in many significant ways to the benefit and completion of this study.

In particular, we wish to acknowledge Maryalice Crofton, the Director of the Maine Commission for Community Service, for her valuable assistance in completing this study, and her confidence in our ability to accomplish it.

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## **Executive Summary**

### **A. Study Purpose**

This study sought to explore the concepts of resource leveraging and project sustainability in Maine AmeriCorps dispersed site projects. The Maine Commission for Community Service, whose mission is to *foster community service and volunteerism that meets human and environmental needs in Maine*, requested assistance from Glenwood Research in conducting an evaluation of dispersed site AmeriCorps projects.

The study sought to identify conditions and/or characteristics associated with successful leverage outcomes, as well as the identification of conditions and/or characteristics associated with successful sustainability of project activities. Further, the study sought to investigate and identify any observed relationship between AmeriCorps dollars invested and the value of additional resources generated, and determine if such a relationship is constant and predictable.

Data were gathered between August and December 2001, from AmeriCorps members, project supervisors, project directors, Commission staff, and through artifact data gathering.

### **B. Research Questions**

The Commission and Glenwood Research identified two primary questions for study:

1. Have Maine dispersed site AmeriCorps projects demonstrated an ability to leverage additional resources to the needs addressed by the initial Federal investment?
2. Have Maine dispersed site AmeriCorps projects demonstrated an ability to engage local citizens in ways that led to the development of local capacity to sustain activities focused on the initial community need, beyond the approved funding, as provided by AmeriCorps?

### **C. Study Methodology**

The study methodology drew from both qualitative and quantitative traditions.

- From a qualitative approach, the research questions served to explore the perspectives of the study participants.
- Data were also analyzed quantitatively to provide numerically descriptive information to develop a model, and to test for relationships between project variables.

### **D. Sampling**

It is necessary to note that the scope of this investigation did not include detailed interviews with every project site within every project under study. Due to the large number of actual project sites involved, it was, in some cases, necessary to sample sites for leverage and sustainability results. As a result, the data and examples we collected were often considered to be typical of the activity for all sites within a particular project. Having noted this limitation, we should also note that in most cases, the majority, if not all of the project site locations were actually contacted and interviewed.

## **E. Study Participants**

Site samples of Maine AmeriCorps projects were selected for the study and included stakeholders from:

<b>Active Projects</b>	<b>Closed Projects</b>
Maine Service Corps	Maine's Promise
Promise Fellows	Born to Read
Teach Maine	
Project GOALS	
Maine Conservation Corps	

## **F. Key Findings**

For Leverage

- We identified key characteristics, known to be essential to successful leverage activity, and confirmed their presence in the projects under study.
- We observed leverage success in each of the projects under review.
- The Maine dispersed site projects all demonstrated a number of the characteristics shown to contribute to success in generating leveraged resources.
- Key characteristics were shared by programs that demonstrated successful leverage activities.
- We found that a predictable mathematical model could be built from the project data to predict local leverage value generation (in monetary terms) on Federal dollar investment. The strength of the relationship between initial investment and leverage success was found to be statistically significant.

For Sustainability

- Maine dispersed site AmeriCorps projects demonstrated an ability to engage local citizens in ways that led to the development of local capacity to sustain activities focused on the initial community need, beyond the approved funding as provided by AmeriCorps.
- We were able to confirm the presence of key characteristics found to contribute to program sustainability.
- Many of these sustainability characteristics were found to be common to the majority of the projects under review.
- In addition to the characteristics found in the literature base, we discovered during the current study that the likelihood of project continuation beyond the initial period of AmeriCorps involvement improves if the AmeriCorps members' work-related duties are assumed by someone, or some organization, to provide coordination and continuation of project activities. We observed assumption of the AmeriCorps member activities by one of two means - either by the creation of a position, financially supported by the host site, or the assumption of member activities by an existing organization that considered the AmeriCorps activities to be in keeping with their own mission.
- That closure of the two *closed* projects under study was the result of host site decisions, and in both cases, activities initiated with AmeriCorps funds have continued with financing by others, including local sources.

These observations suggest that when characteristics associated with successful leverage and sustainability are present, projects are more likely to experience both leverage and sustainability success. Moreover, similarities, or an overlap of characteristics indicative of successful leverage and sustainability emerged in the study. Observed characteristics common to both leverage and sustainability success included:

- Developing community partnerships
- Expanding volunteer base
- Accessing additional funding
- Fostering program expansion
- Building community awareness



## **G. Recommendations**

- We recommend that the Commission expand the study to test and refine the initial model with future AmeriCorps sponsored projects. Additionally, expanding the study to include a larger sample of closed project sites, both successful and unsuccessful in terms of sustainability, is recommended.
- We recommend the Commission use both the key characteristics identified in this report, along with the mathematical model, to assess the likelihood of success at both leverage and sustainability for ongoing projects, and for new projects that may be funded in the future.
- We recommend the Commission develop, from the research data provided in this report, a checklist of key activities found to be critical to both leverage and sustainability, and use this information as the basis of new training curricula for delivery to AmeriCorps project administrators.
- In order to expand its ability to assess both project leverage success and the likelihood of project sustainability, we recommend the Commission add provisions to their required project reporting that would enable them to receive, along with current data collection from projects, the identification of strategies and activities that fit within the definition of leverage and sustainability.

# Evaluation of Selected Maine Dispersed Site AmeriCorps Projects

## I. Introduction

Since the AmeriCorps Program began in 1993, Maine AmeriCorps participants have earned money for college while working in Maine's schools, hospitals, neighborhoods, and parks. To date, more than 1,100 Maine residents have qualified for education awards totaling more than \$4,200,000. Two-thirds of AmeriCorps grants in Maine are made by the Maine Commission For National and Community Service (CNS, 2001).

AmeriCorps financial support to participating local projects in Maine is based on a three-year funding cycle. The local match required increases in both years two and three, based on a strategy to move programs to locally, or otherwise supported sustainability, in preparation for the conclusion of AmeriCorps funds.

AmeriCorps is known to place its volunteers in one of three ways: in crews or teams; as individual placements; and in a modified individual placement method. The term 'dispersed site project' refers to a variation on the crew placement method where members of a 'crew' are placed in geographically dispersed organizations. Although they work singly on a daily basis at their host site, the crew as a whole is working toward common goals and objectives using common strategies. In Maine, seventy-five percent (75%) of the programs are fielded in a 'dispersed' form.

The Maine Commission for Community Service, whose mission is to *foster community service and volunteerism that meets human and environmental needs in Maine*, requested assistance from Glenwood Research in conducting an evaluation of dispersed site AmeriCorps projects.

For this study, the Commission identified seven projects for review. Of the seven projects, five are still active AmeriCorps projects, and two are 'closed' projects, meaning they no longer receive funds from the AmeriCorps program. The study sought to identify conditions and/or characteristics that led to, or appeared to be leading to, sustaining local continuation of the programming initiated by the AmeriCorps project. In addition, the study was to identify and quantify conditions and/or characteristics where Maine AmeriCorps projects succeeded in leveraging additional local resources to address community needs.

Further, Glenwood Research was tasked with investigating and identifying any observed relationship between AmeriCorps dollars invested and the value of additional resources generated, and determine if such a relationship is constant and predictable.

Glenwood was asked to build upon earlier research, completed by Fossel (2001), under a grant from the Corporation for National Service. In that study, Ms. Fossel identified a number of examples of successful leverage and sustainability activities conducted by dispersed site programs in Maine. However, Fossel's study was not designed to fully value leverage examples in dollar terms, nor was it designed to address questions regarding the relationship between AmeriCorps investment and leverage success. Therefore, an additional study was commissioned to further examine this type of inquiry.

This report explains the data collection, analysis methodology, and results obtained from information gathered during focus group and key informant interviews with AmeriCorps stakeholders from the five active programs of: *Maine Service Corps*, *Teach Maine*, *Promise Fellows*, *Maine Conservation Corps*, and *Project GOALS*. In addition, we gathered information from the two closed projects of: *Maine's Promise*, and *Born to Read*.

The data were gathered between August and December 2001, from AmeriCorps members, project supervisors, project directors, Commission staff, and through artifact data gathering. Three focus group interviews were conducted, as well as key informant interviews involving a total of 52 participants. The data collected included audio-taped and interview logs highlighting key points during the interview sessions. Data were analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative methods.

### **Definition of Terminology**

Since this study sought to explore the concepts of 'leveraging' and 'sustainability' in Maine AmeriCorps dispersed site projects, it was necessary to define these concepts in an effort to clarify their meaning as they related to this study.

**Leveraging** - has been defined as the ability of a project to maximize impact, through community investment, available capital, financial, and human resources through joint partnerships and collaboration. In this study, leveraging was broadly defined to include any resources provided by individuals and/or organizations that did not have an initial contractual relationship with the AmeriCorps project, and that were above and beyond the amount required to make the local match.

**Sustainability** - of a project can be described as the ability of the local community to assume responsibility for an AmeriCorps initiated project. This includes the likelihood that any or all of the activities initiated by AmeriCorps will continue in the local community after AmeriCorps funding has ended.

## **II. Participating Projects**

Seven Maine AmeriCorps projects participated in this study. The five active projects included for study were:

### **Maine Service Corps**

The Maine Service Corps is a 25-member AmeriCorps program which addresses compelling housing issues in Maine's second and third largest cities, Bangor and Lewiston, as well as in the mid coast area. AmeriCorps members upgrade housing units to be used as affordable, accessible housing for persons with limited incomes and people with disabilities. In addition, Lewiston crew members help expand the opportunity for first-time youth offenders to perform community service.

### **Teach Maine**

Teach Maine promotes 'service learning' for students in local schools. Service Learning is a method of teaching that enriches learning by engaging students in meaningful service to their schools or communities through careful integration with established curricula (National Service Learning Exchange). The engagement of students in community service helps students learn to balance the rights of citizenship with the responsibilities of community membership.

### **Promise Fellows**

The Maine AmeriCorps Promise Fellows Program is an 11-member AmeriCorps program addressing the five fundamental promises outlined by America's Promise: The Alliance for Youth. The Fellows operate out of 11 different host sites throughout Maine in activities ranging from direct service mentoring projects to capacity-building activities with Statewide networks that support Maine's Model State Initiative. Fellows are housed at various non-profit or governmental agencies in southern, western, and central Maine.

### **Maine Conservation Corps**

The Maine Conservation Corps is a Statewide environmental program. Its dispersed site projects include twenty-six members placed individually with natural resource agencies and schools as volunteer coordinators to recruit, train and lead volunteers in conservation activities, including: watershed stewardship and other environmental projects; provision of environmental education and environmental education activities; and youth service projects.

### **Project GOALS**

A 'Governor's Initiative' to increase Internet use, Project GOALS members work in six different hub sites around the state of Maine (Caribou, Lincoln, Bangor, Lewiston, Topsham, and Portland) tutoring librarians, teachers, library patrons and parents of school-aged children in ways to use the Internet for research, education, communication, and information. AmeriCorps members work with hub supervisors as a team to plan and deliver services to the communities surrounding the hub site.

The following two projects selected for study were closed at the time of our review.

**Maine’s Promise**

The goal of Maine’s Promise was to collaborate with community organizations and assist them in building their capacity to develop sustainable mentor programs for at-risk youth by incorporating life skills training and community service principles.

**Born to Read**

The Born to Read project sought to train child care providers, home visitors, health professionals, and parents of children ages 0 to 5 years, in family literacy techniques – primarily by the promotion of reading, where reading was not part of family daily life.

### III. Study Questions

The Commission and Glenwood Research identified two primary questions for study:

1. Have Maine dispersed site AmeriCorps projects demonstrated an ability to leverage additional resources to the needs addressed by the initial Federal investment?
  - If yes, what were the leveraged resources, and what was the value of the leveraged resources?
  - What were the characteristics of programs that were successful in generating leveraged resources, and were those characteristics responsible for the leveraging success?
  - Did all leverage successful programs share these characteristics?
  - Could a predictable mathematical model be built from the projects under study and be used to predict local value generation (in monetary terms) on Federal dollar investment through AmeriCorps?
  
2. Have Maine dispersed site AmeriCorps projects demonstrated an ability to engage local citizens in ways that led to the development of local capacity to sustain activities focused on the initial community need, beyond the approved funding as provided by AmeriCorps?
  - If yes, what appeared to be the key ingredients that led to program continuation?
  - Were these ingredients common to all sites that demonstrated sustainable activity?
  - If activities were not sustained, what appeared to be the reasons for project closure?

## **IV. Methodology**

The study methodology drew from both qualitative and quantitative traditions. From a qualitative approach, the research questions served to explore the perspectives of the study participants. Participants were asked to share their observations pertaining to key study questions through in-depth, and/or focus group interviews. The data gathered from interviews were analyzed qualitatively, and reported as a narrative of participant's ideas and experiences.

The study sample, containing the seven selected dispersed projects, offered a heterogeneous group of project directors, supervisors, and AmeriCorps members working in a variety of project sites, and in various dispersed formats: some in modified teams, and some as singular placements. The study sample represented rural, urban, and suburban regions of Maine.

### **Qualitative Methodology**

Since the data analysis sought to understand the experiences of Maine AmeriCorps project stakeholders from the participant's perspective, qualitative methodology was indicated.

Four data collection strategies were employed for this study:

#### 1. Key Informant Interviews

Structured interviews, developed by the researcher, were used to interview key project stakeholders. Key informants are individuals who have special knowledge, status, or communication skills and included 42 project directors and host site supervisors, as well as Commission staff.

#### 2. Focus Group Interviews

A facilitator's guide was developed for focus group sessions. Focus group interviews are conducted in a group setting and are used for obtaining a better understanding of participant's perspectives and experiences by interviewing a purposefully sampled group of people, rather than each person individually. Focus group participants for this study included a total of 10 AmeriCorps members, host site representatives, and project representatives.

#### 3. Audiotaping

All interviews were audiotaped and researcher field notes documented the interview process.

#### 4. Artifact and Historical Data Gathering

Artifact and historical data were gathered, including documents related to the operation of the projects, to accomplish data triangulation in support of cross-validation of the data. Artifact and historical data refers primarily to project records, reports, and other locally developed written information. This included a review of accomplishment reports, initial and annual reports, expectations of the Maine Commission for Community Service, initial project contracts, and internal monitoring and evaluation materials as developed in compliance with the expectations of the Corporation for National and Community Service.

### **Narrative Characteristics of Qualitative Data**

The descriptive data in qualitative research are in the form of words rather than numbers. Relevant data are presented in narrative form, rather than statistics. The primary method of collecting data for this analysis was audiotaped interviews with Maine AmeriCorps stakeholders. A facilitator's guide (see Appendix) was developed for use during the sessions. The interviews were transcribed verbatim, capturing the participant's own words as well as the interaction among focus group interviewees. The interviews averaged 60 minutes in length.

### **Inductive Analysis of Data**

In qualitative analysis, the results are derived from the words of the participants in a research study, rather than from a prescribed list of possible survey responses. Since AmeriCorps stakeholders were free to say anything they felt was appropriate, a broader range of responses was possible than would have been allowed through other research methodologies.

### **Constant Comparative Method of Analysis**

Study participant's comments from the interviews were transcribed and the data collected from interview transcripts, facilitator logs, and artifact data collection were analyzed with a specialized software program known as Hyper RESEARCH 2.0.

### **Validity and Reliability**

The study participant data were compared with the facilitator interview logs ensuring internal validity and the reliability of the results. Internal validity in qualitative research is a measure of how the results match the reality of the participants. In other words, internal validity requires that the results present an honest reconstruction of the perspectives of the participants in the study.

Reliability in qualitative research is defined by an audit trail, which makes sense of the data collected. The audit trail is documentation of the development of the major themes. Glenwood Research has conducted a final audit of the data analysis in preparing this report. We are confident in the validity and reliability of the conclusions derived from the audiotaped transcriptions.



## **Quantitative Analysis**

The primary quantitative task in this project was to investigate if a reliable mathematical model existed to provide a predictive capability of the relationship between initial resource investment and leverage success.

The criteria used to test for the predictable outcome of successful leveraging was measured by a condition we defined as its 'goodness of fit' -- how well the model was able to account for the variability in the leveraged resources as a function of the initial resource investment. For this modeling task, Regression analysis was chosen to approximate the average annual leveraged resources required as a function of the average annual initial investment.

A non-linear regression model, known as the Quadratic non-linear model, was used to test for an observed relationship between initial average annual investment and average annual leveraged resources developed. The 'goodness of fit' measure we employed indicates that there is a predictable relationship between investment and leverage success for the projects included in this study ( $R^2 = .72$ ,  $p = .12$ ).

## V. Findings and Observations

All data gathered for this study, including key-informant and focus group interview transcripts, researcher field logs, and artifact and historical data were analyzed to address the following research questions. Using the combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, as described above, the following outcomes were observed.

### A. Study Questions of Inquiry - For Leveraging of Resources

- Q. Have Maine dispersed site AmeriCorps projects demonstrated an ability to leverage additional resources to the needs addressed by the initial Federal investment?*
- *If yes, what were the leveraged resources, and what was the value of the leveraged resources?*

Each of the seven projects sites in this study demonstrated the ability to leverage additional community resources (above and beyond their required match) to the needs addressed by the initial Federal investment. Table 1 indicates the project site and the value associated with resources leveraged over the life of the program.

**Table 1 – Value of Leveraged Resources**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Leveraged Resources</b>	<b>3 Year Estimated Value of Leveraged Resources</b>
<b>Promise Fellows</b>	Yes	\$2,438,889
<b>Maine Conservation Corps</b>	Yes	\$1,272,130
<b>Maine’s Promise</b>	Yes	\$729,390
<b>Project GOALS</b>	Yes	\$337,874
<b>Teach Maine</b>	Yes	\$282,831
<b>Maine Service Corps</b>	Yes	\$68,934
<b>Born to Read</b>	Yes	\$28,168 (2 yr)

\*\* Born To Read was operational for just 2 of the 3 years under study

The value of leveraged resources is derived from several sources.

- First, the hourly value of non-member volunteer time was calculated as the number of non-member volunteer hours, totaled across the years the project had been in existence, and multiplied by an hourly rate of \$12.53. This hourly rate was derived from the Maine Department of Labor Income and Wage Report for the year 2000 under the category “Service,” because it appeared to most accurately reflect the activities in which the volunteers were involved.
- The second source of the value of leveraged resources was derived from calculations of donated training hours by volunteers from various agencies. Unless a specific dollar amount was indicated, the \$12.53 per hour rate was applied.

- The third source of the value of leveraged resources was derived from the reported dollar value of grants, donations, and equipment and supplies provided to the project by various community agencies.

**NOTE:** -- Details of the reported leveraged resources are included in the project summaries that are located in the Appendix to this report.

## B. Estimated Value of Leveraged Resources by Project

Although based on examples from anecdotal information, the data analysis indicated that resources leveraged during the period of AmeriCorps involvement were substantial. To determine the degree to which projects were successful at leveraging additional resources, a ratio was calculated to numerically describe the magnitude of initial investment to leverage amount.

Table 2 indicates, by project, the most successful at converting investment to leverage, based on a calculation of the ratio of leverage per \$1,000 of initial investment.

**Table 2 – Estimated Value of Leveraged Resources**

Project	3 Year Estimated Value of Leveraged Resources	Ratio \$ Leveraging Per \$1000 Initial Investment
Promise Fellows	\$2,438,889	\$3,235
Maine's Promise	\$729,390	\$813
Maine Conservation Corps	\$1,272,130	\$291
Teach Maine	\$282,831	\$263
Project GOALS	\$337,874	\$175
Born to Read	\$28,168 (2 yr)	\$58
Maine Service Corps	\$68,934	\$34

\*\* Born To Read was operational for just 2 of the 3 years under study

*Q. What were the characteristics of programs that were successful in generating leveraged resources, and were those characteristics responsible for the leveraging success?*

From a review of literature (Marek & Mancini 1996, 1998, Senge 1994, 1999, and the Kellogg Foundation 2000), it is generally agreed that the characteristics of social service programs successful in generating leveraged resources include a demonstrated ability to:

- ❑ Develop community partnerships
- ❑ Access community support for volunteer (member) development / training
- ❑ Expand the volunteer base
- ❑ Access additional funding
- ❑ Foster program expansion
- ❑ Access needed equipment and supplies
- ❑ Build community awareness

Table 3 indicates characteristics of successfully leveraged resources generated by each project. Data were derived through the qualitative analysis of key-informant and focus group interview data relative to the definition of leverage success.

**Table 3 – Leveraged Resources**

Project	Examples of Leveraged Resources by Category
<b>Maine Service Corps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Community Partnerships</li> <li>▪ Expanded Volunteer Base</li> <li>▪ Additional Funding</li> <li>▪ Volunteer (member) Development/Training</li> <li>▪ Building Community Awareness</li> <li>▪ Equipment &amp; Supplies</li> </ul>
<b>Teach Maine</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Community Partnerships</li> <li>▪ Expanded Volunteer Base</li> <li>▪ Additional Funding</li> <li>▪ Program Expansion</li> <li>▪ Building Community Awareness</li> </ul>
<b>Promise Fellows</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Community Partnerships</li> <li>▪ Expanded Volunteer Base</li> <li>▪ Additional Funding</li> <li>▪ Program Expansion</li> <li>▪ Building Community Awareness</li> </ul>
<b>Maine Conservation Corps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Community Partnerships</li> <li>▪ Expanded Volunteer Base</li> <li>▪ Additional Funding</li> <li>▪ Program Expansion</li> <li>▪ Building Community Awareness</li> <li>▪ Equipment &amp; Supplies</li> </ul>
<b>Project GOALS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Community Partnerships</li> <li>▪ Expanded Volunteer Base</li> <li>▪ Additional Funding</li> <li>▪ Program Expansion</li> <li>▪ Building Community Awareness</li> <li>▪ Equipment &amp; Supplies</li> </ul>
<b>Maine’s Promise</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Community Partnerships</li> <li>▪ Expanded Volunteer Base</li> <li>▪ Additional Funding</li> <li>▪ Program Expansion</li> <li>▪ Building Community Awareness</li> <li>▪ Equipment &amp; Supplies</li> </ul>
<b>Born to Read</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Community Partnerships</li> <li>▪ Expanded Volunteer Base</li> <li>▪ Additional Funding</li> <li>▪ Program Expansion</li> <li>▪ Building Community Awareness</li> <li>▪ Equipment &amp; Supplies</li> </ul>

Community partnerships, volunteer development/training, expanding the volunteer base, accessing additional funding, accessing equipment and supplies, program expansion, and building community awareness were considered in terms of a project’s ability to leverage additional resources during the initial years of project development, with an eye toward sustainability of the program.

The following section describes various examples of these characteristics, but is not to be considered as comprehensive. In other words, from the leveraging examples provided by study participants, a snapshot of the characteristics of leverage success was derived.

### **C. Community Partnerships**

Building effective community partnerships in the initial years of project development enhances a sense of community ownership. It also fosters a sharing of space, resources, services, tools, and talents. Community partners may support various aspects of the project, provide it with infrastructure, and integrate, or combine activities. Each of the seven projects demonstrated their commitment to partnering with community organizations.

For example, a representative from the Teach Maine project stated that they developed a relationship with *...the Portland Housing Authority and Teach Maine AmeriCorps members working at after school tutoring education centers in the Portland Housing Authority community.*

Project GOALS partnered with the Southern Maine Library Network to *...obtain an innovative mobile wireless laptop lab where GOALS members would provide training to librarians when their library received use of the “traveling laptop laboratory.”*

Additionally, a Conservation Corps site *...successfully developed partnerships with four elementary schools where they developed curriculum and successfully recruited and trained high school students to deliver in-school curriculum in the elementary grades.*

### **D. Member Development/Training**

Although projects are tasked with member (volunteer) development and training, this characteristic, as a leveraged resource, is described as development and training of the AmeriCorps member through resources provided over and above the initial contractual investment. For example, a representative of the Maine Service Corps project indicated that *...the project is as much about member development as it is about housing. The members themselves undergo a form of rehabilitation - learning new job skills and employment discipline.*

In that vein, the project sought out community resources to support member development and training. For example, the project *...receives training two times per year from the City of Bangor Public Works on OSHA safety. Additionally, AmeriCorps members received ten hours per year of safety construction certification training from the Maine Department of Labor.*

### **E. Expanded Volunteer Base**

Expanding the volunteer base, as a leveraged resource, is important to project expansion and building community awareness. Each of the seven projects provided examples of their efforts to expand their volunteer base, and thus, their services to communities. For example, Teach Maine reported that one of their sites developed *...a new water quality monitoring group, called River Keepers volunteer program - monitoring water quality in local rivers and streams. For this project, the program generated 12 new, non-member volunteers.*

Maine's Promise reported that a project site *...developed a relationship with the YMCA, which has formed a men's group charged with recruiting new mentors to Down East Big Brothers Big Sisters.*

Additionally, Born to Read reported that they had *...developed a large number of community volunteers who provided man-hours on the literacy project.*

## **F. Additional Funding**

Creative fundraising practices allow for project support from a variety of sources. Accessing additional funding may be in the form of grants, donations, or various community campaigns to generate support. Each of the seven projects provided examples of how they leveraged additional funding to support their projects.

For example, the Promise Fellows project *...partnered with WGME Channel 13 in Portland and developed their public service centerpiece 'Giving Maine Promise' around Maine's Promise / Promise Fellows projects valued at \$700,000 per year.*

Additionally, Maine's Promise was able to *...obtain a donation of \$10,000 from MBNA America (they are a personal service (credit card) finance company with offices in the mid coast area). The money was used to expand school-based programming into Waldo County Maine school districts.*

Fleet Bank provided the Born to Read project *...a grant for \$10,000 and set up book drives/book drops in stores and bank locations around the State.*

## **G. Program Expansion**

Carefully planned expansion of the project in the initial stages of development appeared to be important to long-term sustainability. With the exception of the Maine Service Corps, whose focus appeared to emphasize member development more than program activity expansion, the other six projects provided examples of expansion or project spin-off efforts.

For example, a Promise Fellows site reported that they *...developed a new relationship with the Oxford Hills Community Education Exchange to result in the creation of new school / business partnerships for the purpose of recruiting adult mentors. They also developed a relationship with the Western Maine Community Coalition for the purpose of sharing resources, and with the University of Maine Cooperative Extension for the purpose of developing a job shadowing project allowing mentored youth an opportunity to sample different careers and employment scenarios.*

Project GOALS stated that one of their project sites collaborated with ...the *Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)*, and were asked to train RSVP volunteers to enable them to train their clients (elders) who then in turn went out to train other RSVP clients.

## **H. Equipment and Supplies**

Five of the seven projects provided examples where they were able to access additional equipment and supplies to support their programs. The projects providing examples included Maine Service Corps, Maine Conservation Corps, Project GOALS, Maine's Promise, and Born to Read.

Maine Service Corps, in describing a new partnership with the Bath Housing Department stated that they had ...*completed two housing renovation projects not originally anticipated. Bath values the services received at approximately \$3,000. Further, the Housing Director reported that at least one of the projects would not have even been possible without AmeriCorps participation.*

A Conservation Corps project site ...*developed a grant from the National Tree Foundation and received 200 trees for a project. They went to 10 schools and got the school kids to participate in watershed protection curriculum, and then spent time planting the trees. They have been notified they will get another grant of trees this year.*

Project GOALS was not only able to gain access to a portable laptop laboratory, but they were provided with the Internet tutorial program ...*Cyber Seniors curriculum, which was brought to the project instead of writing something from scratch.*

## **I. Building Community Awareness**

Successful projects also appear to develop the skills necessary to "sell" their projects to the community from the very beginning. As a resource leveraged in the initial stages of the project, tapping into the local media, training volunteers, and establishing coalitions of partners can advocate the importance of the project to potential supporters and to the community in general. Each of the seven projects provided examples of how they demonstrated this ability in one form or another.

For example, a Teach Maine project site reported that they ...*were able to attract speakers to the Farm that generated additional community interest in it due to the development of a speaker series, developed in part by the AmeriCorps member.*

Additionally, a Conservation Corps site reported that ... *they were successful in securing a Maine Title IV grant from the Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities program for \$7,000 per project year. The program has enjoyed positive publicity, which has led to increased support for the program within the school district.*

In addition to the Promise Fellows project accessing over two million dollars worth of television media to promote their project, a site reported that *...an AmeriCorps member was able to generate increased local news coverage of program activities in two area newspapers.*

**Q. Were these leverage characteristics shared by all leverage successful programs?**

We found that a majority of the leverage characteristics cited appeared to be common to all seven projects. These include:

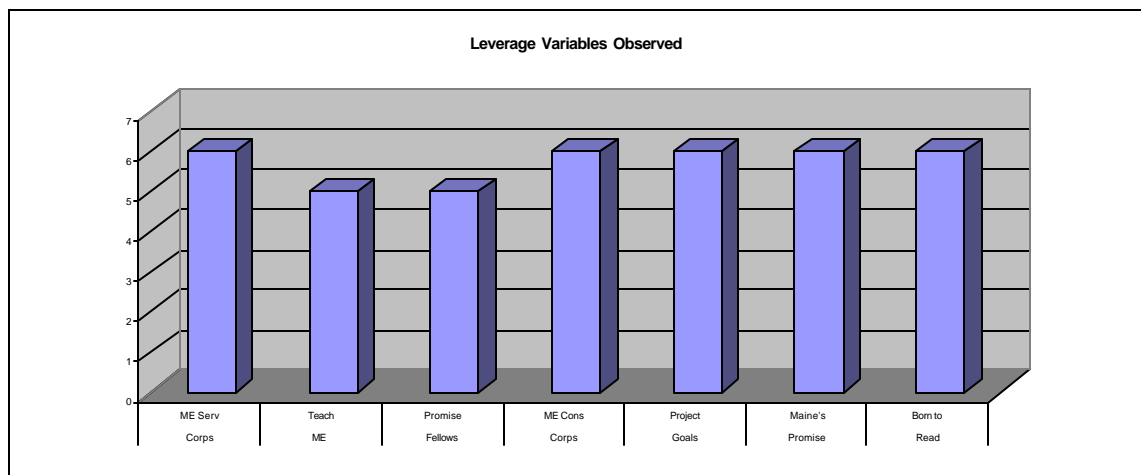
- Development of community partnerships
- Expansion of the volunteer base
- Accessing additional funding
- Building community awareness of the project.

**Table 4 - Characteristics Common to All Projects**

Project	Common Characteristics
<b>Maine Service Corps</b> <b>Teach Maine</b> <b>Promise Fellows</b> <b>Maine Conservation Corps</b> <b>Jobs for Maine Graduates (Project GOALS)</b> <b>Maine’s Promise</b> <b>Born to Read</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Community Partnerships</li> <li>▪ Expanded Volunteer Base</li> <li>▪ Additional Funding</li> <li>▪ Building Community Awareness</li> </ul>

Six of the seven projects were also successful at fostering program expansion – another key characteristic of leverage success. The exception was the Maine Service Corps, which did not specifically identify any examples of program expansion.

Graphically, the presence of observed leverage characteristics by program would appear as follows. Five of the projects reviewed demonstrated six out of seven leverage characteristics observed in this study.





## **J. Quantitative Results & Observations - Leverage**

*Q. From the projects under study, could a mathematical model be built to predict local value generation (in monetary terms) on Federal dollar investment through AmeriCorps?*

The methodology used to conduct the quantitative analysis portion of this study was a phased process model referred to as ‘CRISP-DM,’ which stands for Cross Industry Standard Process Model for Data Mining developed by the CRISP-DM Consortium in 1999. Data mining simply refers to the process of extracting usable knowledge and relationships from data.

From a quantitative perspective, our objective was to examine the data from a subset of projects, and provide insight into the relationship between the resources initially invested and the additionally leveraged resources identified by each project. The intention of the quantitative analysis was to explore whether an observed relationship existed between initial investment and subsequent leveraged resources; and, if such a relationship was observed, could it be converted to a predictable mathematical model?

We collected data from various project sites, project administrative offices, and Commission files on the seven projects under study. Although sufficient data exists to perform an initial quantitative analysis, there is a certain amount of risk incurred in an attempt to use mathematical models generated from a sample size of only seven projects. However, with that said, we did observe a mathematical relationship between the initial investment and leveraged resources for these projects.

Since our data were collected from various sources, the first step was to integrate the data into a single database delineating the source type, resource category, and resource amount. The resource data were provided by the various sources in terms of dollars, non-member volunteer hours, and material contributions. The raw data were converted into dollar equivalents, and organized by project. The raw resource data were organized into the following four categories:

- 
- Federal AmeriCorps investment
  - Required local match investment (cash & in-kind)
  - Local non-member volunteer leveraged contribution (in dollar equivalents)
  - Additional locally leveraged resources (in dollar equivalents)
- 

The local non-member volunteer hours were converted into dollars by multiplying them by \$12.53 as described in detail earlier in this report. An assumption was required to approximate the total additional leveraged resources for project sites that did not participate in interviews. To accomplish this, we calculated an average of the locally leveraged resources by project we interviewed, and applied the average to all locations within that project.

Table 5 summarizes the original ‘raw’ resources in dollars for each of the projects, broken down by the categories described above.

**Table 5 - Original Project Resources in Dollars**

Project	--Required --			--- Leverage ---	
	AmeriCorps Investment \$	Local Match \$	Local In-Kind \$	Value of Local Volunteer Hours in \$	Additional leveraged resource amounts \$
Maine Service Corps	854,856	1,200,642	0	58,314	10,620
Teach Maine	461,276	368,472	244,456	34,558	248,273
Promise Fellows	412,600	341,379	0	303,889	2,135,000
Conservation Corp	1,823,522	2,184,251	356,693	507,263	764,867
Project GOALS	944,275	547,782	434,642	17,879	319,995
Maine's Promise	407,723	398,287	91,626	408,390	321,000
Born to Read	253,648	207,915	26,350	18,168	10,000

Our goal was to obtain insight into the relationship between the resources initially invested and the leveraged resources, including non-member volunteer contributions. The AmeriCorps investment, the local match, and the in-kind investments were combined for each project to define an attribute we labeled as “Total Initial Investment.”

The dollar value of additional locally leveraged resources we identified were then combined for each project and labeled “Total Leveraged Investment.”

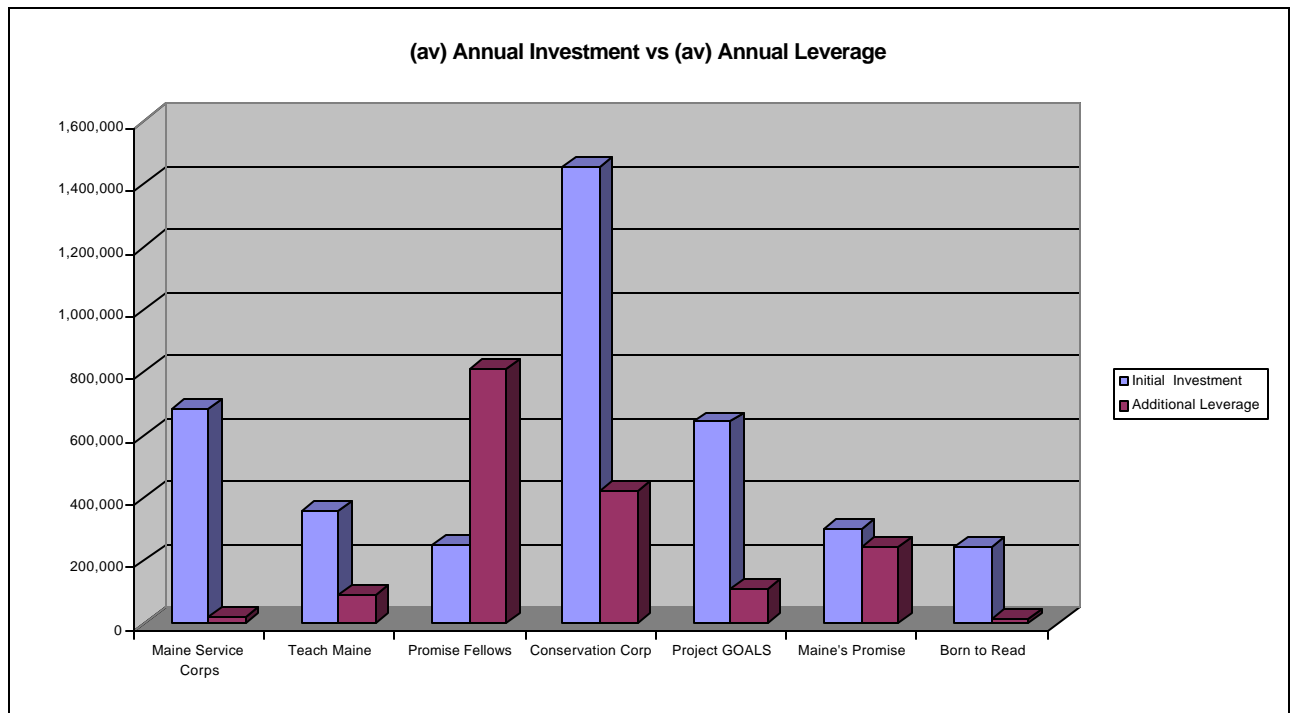
Two additional attributes were defined, which captured the average annual resource investment. They are labeled “Average Annual Initial Investment” and “Average Annual Leveraged Investment.” This was completed because the Born to Read project only operated under the federally supported scheme for two years, as opposed to the typical three-year period.

In addition, an attribute was defined and calculated to capture the ratio of the leveraged investment as a function of the initial investment. This attribute is labeled “Ratio,” and is defined as the number of dollars leveraged per each thousand dollars initially invested. Table 6 depicts these derived attributes.

**Table 6 - Derived Attributes in Dollars**

Project	Total Init Inv	Ave Annual Init Inv (total initial / 3)	Total Lev Inv	Ave Annual Lev Inv (total initial / 3)	Ratio (per 000)
Maine Service Corps	2,055,498	685,166	68,934	22,978	33.54
Teach Maine	1,074,204	358,068	282,831	94,277	263.29
Promise Fellows	753,979	251,326	2,438,889	812,963	3,234.69
Conservation Corp	4,364,466	1,454,822	1,272,130	424,043	291.47
Project GOALS	1,926,699	642,233	337,874	112,625	175.36
Maine's Promise	897,636	299,212	729,390	243,130	812.57
Born to Read	487,913	243,957 (/2)	28,168	14,084 (/2)	57.73

We developed the Average Annual Initial Investment and Average Annual Leveraged Investment calculation in order to normalize all project data to the same scale.



Due to the extraordinary success of one of the projects, Promise Fellows, which was able to leverage over two million dollars worth of television time for project efforts, we had to modify the data set to account for this phenomenon. We accomplished this by eliminating its leverage results from our calculations. Leaving this data in would have greatly skewed the results. This technique, described as ‘ignoring the outliers,’ is often employed in statistical research.

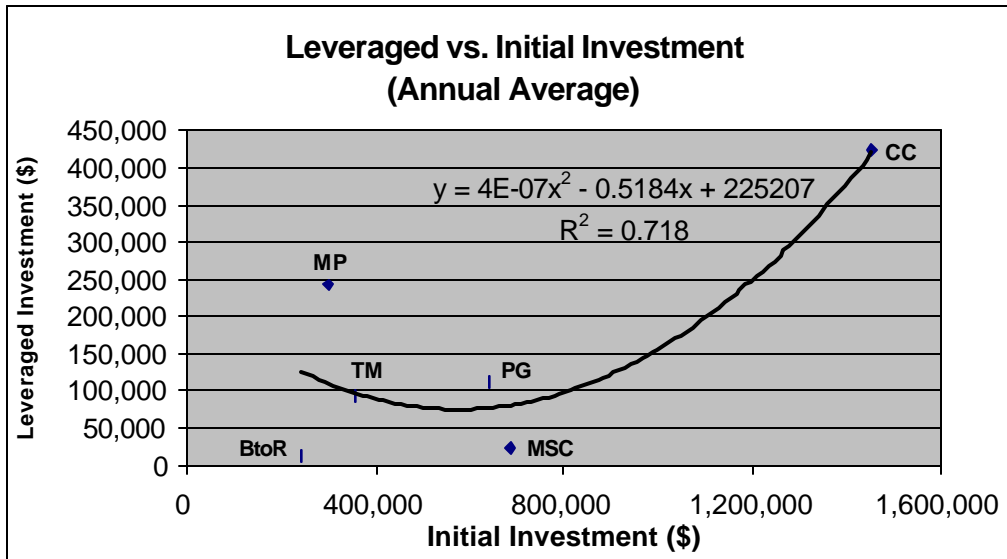
Since the success criteria was defined as the model’s predictive power, as measured by its ‘goodness of fit,’ the metric used to measure the goodness of fit was the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ).  $R^2$  is defined as the proportion of the variation in the dependent variable (leveraged resources in dollars) ‘explained’ by the model (which in this case is initially invested resources in dollars).

$R^2$  has a range of 0 to 1. Once a predictive model is created, the coefficient of determination enables the examination of the degree to which the model’s predictions fit the actual observed data. If every data point fell on the regression curve, predictions would be perfect, and the  $R^2$  value would be equal to 1. The further  $R^2$  is away from 1, the weaker the relationship between the prediction and the actual data.

Using a model known as the Quadratic non-linear model, we observed a statistically significant relationship between the average annual investment and the average annual leverage amount for the projects under study.

The relationship we observed can be expressed in the following mathematical expression of:  $(y = 0.0000004(x^2) - 0.5184x + 225,207)$ . In other words, the amount of average annual leveraged resources required to be successful equaled .0000004 times the average annual initial investment squared, minus .5184 times the average annual initial investment plus \$225,207. The  $R^2$  was .7180, ( $p=.12$ ). This result is graphically illustrated in the following graph.

**Graph 1 - Non-Linear Regression with Average Annual Data Set minus Promise Fellows data**



Based on this model, if the average initial investment amount was \$300,000, the average annual leverage amount would calculate to approximately \$105,680. This calculation would appear as:  $(300,000^2 * .0000004 = (9m * .0000004) = 36,000$ ;  $(.5184 * 300000 = 155,520)$ ;  $36,000 - 155,520 = -119,520$ ;  $-119,520 + 225,207 = 105687$ ;  $y = 105,687$ .

You can also approximate this result by using the graph. If you estimate a point on the 'x' axis at roughly \$300,000, then draw a line parallel to the 'y' axis from this point until it intersects with the regression line, the point of intersection has a 'y' value of roughly \$105,000. This method will be valid for any investment amount selected within the defined limits of the 'x' axis on the graph.

A critical point to remember is that the model's accuracy is restricted to the limits of the data used to create it. This means the model is limited by the data used in this study.

One need also keep in mind that the recommended model was built with data excluding the outlying (Promise Fellows) data point. This is a sound methodology, but it means that the model will, most likely, not provide reliable predictions for future data that behaves in a similarly anomalous fashion as the Promise Fellows data.

**K. Ability to Sustain Programming**

**Q.** *Have Maine dispersed site AmeriCorps projects demonstrated an ability to engage local citizens in ways that led to the development of local capacity to sustain activities focused on the initial community need, beyond the approved funding as provided by AmeriCorps?*

Based on data collected during this study, it appears that all seven projects were successful at conducting activities in support of sustainability. Each of the seven projects demonstrated an ability to engage local citizens in ways that led to, or appeared to be leading to sustained activities focused on the initial community need, but conducted beyond the approved AmeriCorps funding period.

We should note that in the case of Maine Service Corps, the host agency, Coastal Enterprises, Inc., was conducting housing rehabilitation projects prior to their AmeriCorps grant, and planned to continue such activity subsequent to AmeriCorps funding. However, if we accept their premise that their project is more about member development than generating low-income housing stock, the results of our inquiry appear to indicate sustainability from the standpoint of members empowered to move to self-sufficiency from their prior state of poverty and/or disability.

**Q.1** *If projects demonstrated sustainability success, what appeared to be the key ingredients that led to program continuation?*

Again, research indicated that there are several key ingredients that appear to lead to sustainability, including an ability to:

- Develop Community Partnerships
- Obtain Support of Oversight Committees or Advisory Boards
- Expand the Volunteer Base
- Access Additional Funding
- Foster Continued Program Expansion
- Continue to Build Community Awareness

In addition to these key ingredients, data from the current study indicated that the ‘Creation of a New Position’, to assume the tasks performed by the AmeriCorps member, was important to project sustainability. In other words, project continuation beyond the initial period of AmeriCorps involvement is greatly enhanced when the AmeriCorps members’ work-related duties are assumed by another organization to provide coordination and continuation of project activities.

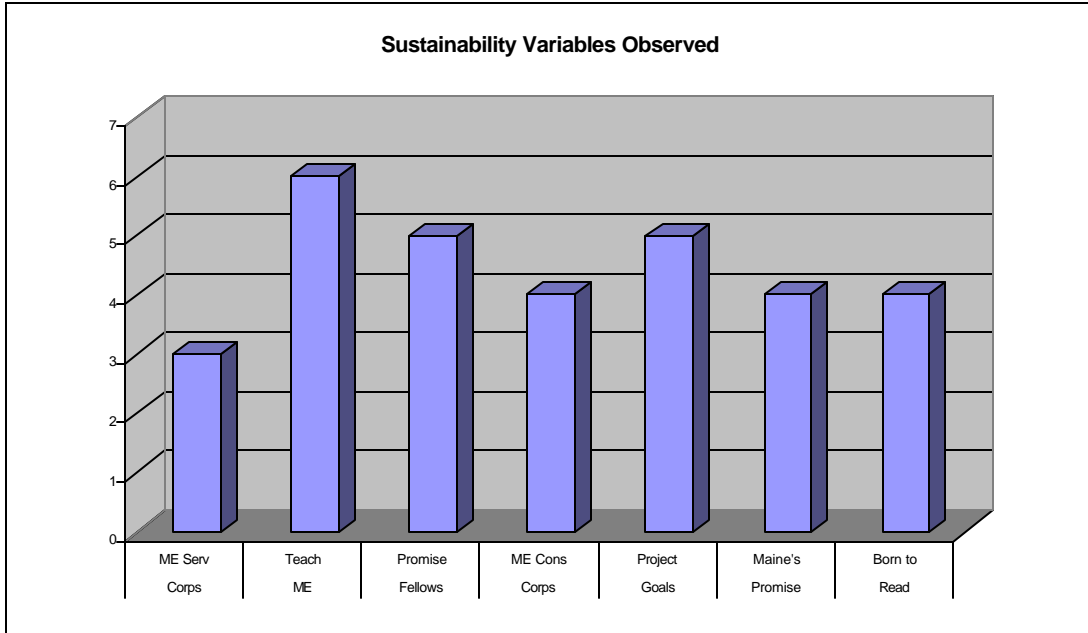
In almost all of the projects where we observed sustainability, we found that the AmeriCorps activities had been, or were planned to be assumed or coordinated by another organization, either through newly funded positions created by the host sites, or as in the case of Born to Read (Maine Humanities Council) and the RSVP program, by another organization that found these activities to be a match to their mission. In a number of cases where the host site funded a position, it was the AmeriCorps member, or a former member that was hired to fill the created position.

Table 7 lists examples of sustainable activities identified by each project.

**Table 7 – Observed Sustainable Activities**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Examples of Sustainability by Category</b>
<b>Maine Service Corps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Access Additional Funding</li> <li>▪ Build community awareness</li> <li>▪ Develop community partnerships</li> </ul>
<b>Teach Maine</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop Community Partnerships</li> <li>▪ Expand the Volunteer Base</li> <li>▪ Access Additional Funding</li> <li>▪ Foster Continued Program Expansion</li> <li>▪ Creation of New Positions</li> <li>▪ Build Community Awareness</li> </ul>
<b>Promise Fellows</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop Community Partnerships</li> <li>▪ Oversight Committees/Advisory Boards</li> <li>▪ Access Additional Funding</li> <li>▪ Foster Continued Program Expansion</li> <li>▪ Build Community Awareness</li> </ul>
<b>Maine Conservation Corps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop Community Partnerships</li> <li>▪ Access Additional Funding</li> <li>▪ Foster Continued Program Expansion</li> <li>▪ Creation of New Positions</li> </ul>
<b>Project GOALS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop Community Partnerships</li> <li>▪ Oversight Committees/Advisory Boards</li> <li>▪ Expand the Volunteer Base</li> <li>▪ Access Additional Funding</li> <li>▪ Foster Continued Program Expansion</li> </ul>
<b>Maine’s Promise</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop Community Partnerships</li> <li>▪ Access Additional Funding</li> <li>▪ Creation of New Positions</li> <li>▪ Build Community Awareness</li> </ul>
<b>Born to Read</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop Community Partnerships</li> <li>▪ Access Additional Funding</li> <li>▪ Foster Continued Program Expansion</li> <li>▪ Build Community Awareness</li> </ul>

Graphically, the presence of observed sustainability characteristics by program would appear as follows. One of the seven projects reviewed (Teach Maine) demonstrated six out of seven sustainability characteristics observed in this study. Two projects demonstrated five out of seven, three projects demonstrated four out of seven, and one project demonstrated three out of seven characteristics.



**Q.** *Were these ingredients common to all sites that demonstrated sustainable activity?*

Examples provided by study participants indicate that *accessing additional funding* and *developing community partnerships* were the sustainability ingredients we observed to be common to all seven projects.

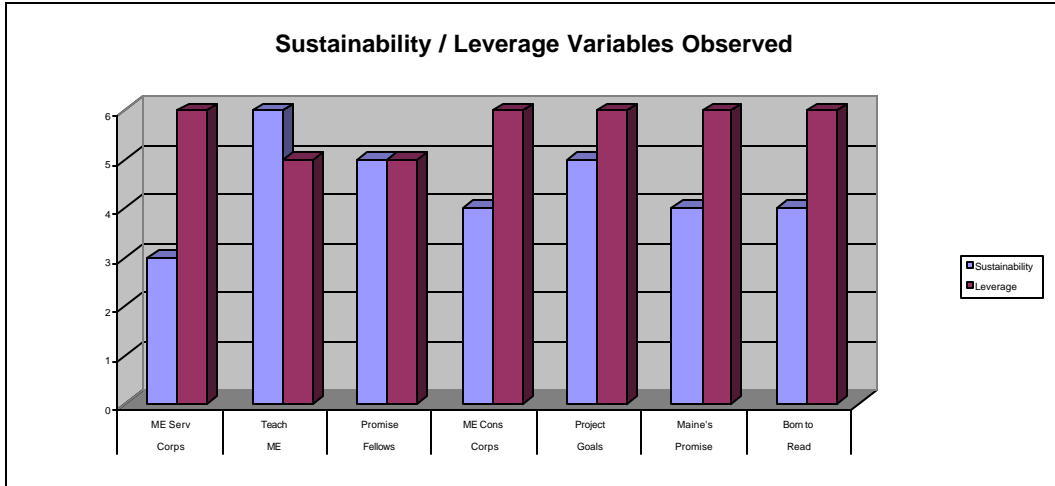
**Table 8 – Common Sustainability Characteristics**

Project	Common Ingredients
<b>Maine Service Corps</b> <b>Teach Maine</b> <b>Promise Fellows</b> <b>Maine Conservation Corps</b> <b>Jobs for Maine Graduates (Project GOALS)</b> <b>Maine's Promise</b> <b>Born to Read</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Accessed additional funding</li> <li>▪ Developed community partnerships</li> </ul>

Of the projects, other shared common sustainability activities observed included:

- Five were fostering project expansion or spin off
- Five projects demonstrated success at building community awareness
- Two projects had developed oversight or advisory boards

The following chart was prepared to graphically demonstrate the extent to which the projects were able to demonstrate key characteristics of both leverage and sustainability.



**Q.** *If activities were not sustained, what appeared to be the reasons for project closure?*

All projects, including the two closed projects reviewed, demonstrated successful sustainability of project activities.

Maine's Promise and the Born to Read programs are both classified as 'closed projects.' Maine's Promise was closed after the third year of AmeriCorps involvement, and the sponsoring agency pursued other mentor projects. The Born to Read project closed after two years of AmeriCorps involvement, but has sustained project activity. It accomplished this by developing a partnership with a local Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) which uses elder volunteers in place of the former AmeriCorps volunteers to deliver project activities.



## Summary of Results

### Key Findings

We observed:

- Leverage and sustainability success in each of the projects under review
- The relationship between the initial AmeriCorps investment and the leverage success had a statistically predictable relationship
- We were also able to confirm that each program demonstrated key characteristics, found in literature to be essential to leverage and sustainability
- A number of these characteristics were common to both leverage and sustainability success.

More specifically, we found:

#### For Leveraging of additional resources -

Maine dispersed site AmeriCorps projects demonstrated an ability to leverage additional resources to the needs addressed by the initial Federal investment.

- In each case we were able to approximate the value of the leveraged resources.
- We were able to confirm that these Maine dispersed site projects demonstrated characteristics that have been shown to contribute to success in generating leveraged resources.
- We were able to identify where the ‘success’ characteristics were shared by those programs considered to have demonstrated leverage success.
- We found that a mathematical model could be built from the project data to predict local leverage value generation (in monetary terms) on Federal dollar investment.

#### We also found that for Sustainability -

Maine dispersed site AmeriCorps projects demonstrated an ability to engage local citizens in ways that led to the development of local capacity to sustain activities focused on the initial community need, beyond the approved funding as provided by AmeriCorps.

- We identified characteristics leading to successful leverage and sustainability in the Maine dispersed site projects. These characteristics are:

## **Leverage Characteristics**

- Developed community partnerships
- Accessed community support for member development / training
- Expanded volunteer base
- Accessed additional funding
- Fostered program expansion
- Accessed equipment and supplies
- Built community awareness

## **Sustainability Characteristics**

- Developed community partnerships
  - Obtained support of oversight committees or advisory boards
  - Expanded the volunteer base
  - Accessed additional funding
  - Fostered continued program expansion
  - Developed / funded a position to continue the work initially conducted by the AmeriCorps member
  - Continued to build community awareness
- Further, we confirmed that a number of these characteristics were found in common when we observed both leverage and sustainability success, including:
    - Developing community partnerships
    - Expanding volunteer base
    - Accessing additional funding
    - Fostering program expansion
    - Building community awareness
  - In addition to the characteristics found in the literature base, we discovered during the current study that the likelihood of project continuation beyond the initial period of AmeriCorps involvement improves if the AmeriCorps members' work-related duties are assumed by someone, or some organization, to provide coordination and continuation of project activities.
  - We observed assumption of the AmeriCorps member activities by one of two means - either by the creation of a position, financially supported by the host site, or the assumption of member activities by an existing organization that considered the AmeriCorps activities to be in keeping with their own mission.
  - Observed characteristics were common to the majority of the projects under review.
  - That closure of two of the projects under study was the result of host site decisions, and in both cases, activities initiated with AmeriCorps funds have continued with financing from other, including local sources.

These observations suggest that when characteristics associated with successful leverage and sustainability are present, projects are more likely to experience both leverage and sustainability success.

## Recommendations

Although the recommended model provides adequate predictive capability, the observed results are based on only seven projects. We believe that a more accurate model could be built with an increased amount of data.

- We recommend the Commission expand the study to test and refine the initial model with future AmeriCorps sponsored projects. Additionally, if possible, expanding the study to include a larger sample of closed project sites, both successful and unsuccessful in terms of sustainability, is recommended

The Commission now has an identified set of characteristics that appear to be critical to project success at leveraging additional resources, and characteristics critical to project success at successful sustainability. The Commission also has a base line of data on which to predict the likelihood of both leverage and sustainability success based on the three-year period of study.

- We recommend the Commission use both the key characteristics identified in this report, along with the mathematical model, to assess the likelihood of success at both leverage and sustainability for ongoing projects, and for new projects that may be funded in the future.

The identification of the key characteristics that appear to be critical to both leverage and sustainability can be used to assess project progress, and to improve upon the likelihood of success of projects in developing these characteristics.

- We recommend the Commission develop, from the research data provided in this report, a checklist of key activities found to be critical to both leverage and sustainability, and use this information as the basis of new training curricula for delivery to AmeriCorps project administrators.

With the identification of the key characteristics of leverage and sustainability, the Commission would be better equipped to assist projects in achieving their goals for these two activities if it were collecting data relevant to leveraging and sustainability on a regular, scheduled basis.

- In order to expand its ability to assess both project leverage success and the likelihood of project sustainability, we recommend the Commission add provisions to their required project reporting that would enable them to receive, along with current data collection from projects, the identification of strategies and activities that fit within the definition of leverage and sustainability.

## **H. Study Limitations**

The purpose of this study was to explore the concepts of resource leveraging and sustainability of project activities in Maine AmeriCorps dispersed site projects. Because the study was qualitative in nature, the results we observed are limited to the projects reviewed and data collected. Our study focused on the project level rather than sites within projects, and therefore does not include a comparison among sites that failed to either successfully leverage or sustain themselves to sites that succeeded with these activities. Further, all of the projects we reviewed demonstrated success at both leverage and sustainability. As a result, our sample does not provide an adequate comparison, or control group, which might include unsuccessful projects and/or project sites against which to compare the validity and consistency of our findings.

In order to develop a more utilitarian model, we would need both a test sample and a control or comparison group. This research design would be more helpful in comparing successful projects to unsuccessful projects to allow a comparison of conditions and characteristics of each. This type of analysis might also be accomplished by comparing site locations to site locations within projects. Without this type of approach, our findings cannot be applied with confidence to all future dispersed site AmeriCorps projects in Maine, nor do we suggest it be used to generalize about all dispersed site AmeriCorps projects. However, the concepts generated from this study can be extended in subsequent studies with more structured, quantitative designs.

Although we observed a predictable mathematical relationship between investment and leverage, we do not feel that the model itself is the most telling piece of information developed by this analysis. We believe there is an important relationship between the key characteristics for leverage and sustainability emerging from this research and the resulting outcomes experienced by the projects included in the study.

Relevant literature, along with findings from this study regarding leveraging resources and sustaining project activities, highlights the necessity of incorporating the following key characteristics into the initial design of community-based programs:

- A clearly identified need for the program
- Strong leadership with the ability to create a common vision and strategy
- Effective program administration practices
- Efforts focused on the needs of the target audience
- A motivated and expanding volunteer base
- Timely planning and evaluation
- Building community awareness and mobilization
- Development of an advisory board
- Development of strong community partnerships with a sense of shared ownership
- Sustaining Political support –local, state, national
- Program expansion and spin off
- Creative fundraising practices
- The assumption of AmeriCorps member activities by another organization

Since many of these characteristics emerged during data analysis in the current research, their incorporation, along with the mathematical model developed by this study, may assist the Commission in enhancing project sustainability. Without these characteristics being present, we do not believe the Commission could rely on the mathematical model alone to predict leverage outcome success.

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# Appendix

## Facilitator's guide

### Maine Dispersed site AmeriCorps Evaluation Facilitator Guide for Member and Supervisor Focus Groups

(Facilitator)

Good Morning (afternoon)

First, let us introduce ourselves to you: Caroline / Peter

Second, it would be helpful if each of you could introduce yourself to the group, identify the program you are in, and its primary objective, your host site, and your length of service. (invite guests to begin introductions)

(Facilitator)

Allow me to briefly describe today's procedures. We prefer that you consider this an opportunity to express your opinions on the topics under study. As you can see, we are using both a tape recorder and video camera to assist in the collection of the information. The tapes from both these procedures will not be used for any purpose other than to help us accurately record your comments.

If at any time, you feel you want to say something that you do not wish recorded, please indicate that and we will shut the equipment off. We want to maintain your anonymity, and therefore none of your remarks, regardless of how positive or negative they may be, will be attributed to you directly. Does everyone agree?

Are there any questions on that?

(Facilitator)

We want to keep this as informal as we can. We are gathered as a group to stimulate discussion, so please feel free to participate. We will have you out of here within 90 minutes. If, during the discussion, you need to take a break, please just go ahead and take the break. Also, feel free to help yourself to any of the refreshments we have provided.

Thank you again for agreeing to attend this discussion. As you know, Glenwood Research has been hired by the Maine Commission for Community Service to conduct a study of seven of the so-called 'dispersed site' AmeriCorps projects. The active (open) projects included in this study are: Maine Conservation Corps, Project Goals, Maine Service Corps, Teach Maine, and Promise Fellows. Two projects under study have closed, namely: Maine's Promise, and the Maine Humanities Council.

Our objective for this session today is to learn from each of you with regard to the following two issues: leverage and sustainability.

I believe most, if not all of you have already received our definitions of these concepts, and I am now distributing another copy for you to have in front of you.

Lets begin with a discussion of leverage, which is broadly defined here to include any resources provided by individuals and/or organizations that did not have a formal relationship with the AmeriCorps project, at least initially.



In the December 2000 evaluation report, this question of leverage was phrased as: *What is the relationship between the investment of national service resources in programs and resources (broadly defined) that have been leveraged by the program's service work?*

Have any of you experienced any of the following examples of leveraged resources? (to be asked one-by-one)

- To what extent have you developed new connections to other needed services
- To what extent have you built or enabled collaborations among organizations
- To what extent have you developed new partners
- To what extent have you developed any expansion of services from original project plan
- To what extent have you developed any improvements to existing services
- To what extent have you developed any project planning assistance
- To what extent have you developed any recruitment of new / additional volunteers (i.e. referrals to you), or additional volunteer time by existing volunteers
- To what extent have you developed any provision of money, or solicitation on behalf of the AmeriCorps project
- To what extent have you developed spin off projects
- To what extent have you developed any involvement by other area institutions
- To what extent have you received any project training provided by other organizations not originally anticipated
- To what extent have you received any administrative services
- To what extent have you developed any other resources

**Q.** Follow-up to each question answered in the affirmative

Who was responsible for bringing these to the project?

Why were these brought to the project – what was the motivation?

What has been, or will be the impact on the community from these actions?

Probe for value or costs – what was that worth to your project?

Sustainability - by this we mean: what is the likelihood that any or all of the activities initiated by AmeriCorps will continue in the local community after AmeriCorps is ended?

Again, the 2000 evaluation put the question as: *In what ways have the AmeriCorps programs been successful with regard to implementing programs that engage citizen volunteers in such a way as to build community capacity to ultimately meet local need without AmeriCorps?*

Have any of you experienced any of the following examples of sustainability? (to be asked one-by-one)

- Are you aware of any continuation of some part or all of the project activities?
- Are you aware of any stated intent to continue project activities?
- Are you aware of any success at building local community capacity to address the community need targeted by the project after the federal funding ends?
- Are you aware of any local organizations and/or local volunteer groups agreeing to assume responsibility for some (or all) of the former AmeriCorps activities?
- Are you aware of any community mobilization?
- Are you aware of any change brought about in community attitude around project need / activities?
- Are you aware of any other example of sustainability?
- Can you give us the name(s) of any community officials / employees with whom you worked, or who have developed an interest in the project?

**Q.** Follow-up to each question answered in the affirmative

Who/what has indicated an interest in continuation?

Why will these activities be continued? What do you believe is the motivation to continue?

Have you provided, or are you providing training to non-AmeriCorps volunteers in project activities?

## Project Summaries

### **Maine Service Corps**

The Maine Service Corps is a 25-member AmeriCorps program which addresses compelling housing issues in Maine's second and third largest cities, Bangor and Lewiston, as well as in the mid coast area. AmeriCorps Members upgrade housing units to be used as affordable, accessible housing for persons with limited incomes and people with disabilities. In addition, Lewiston crew members help expand the opportunity for first-time youth offenders to perform community service.

Maine Service Corps works to provide affordable, accessible housing for people with special needs and people with lower incomes; and to provide options in the judicial system for sentencing non-violent juvenile offenders through community service alternatives.

#### **Original Partners**

New Beginnings – Youth Program in Lewiston  
Governor's Office – Blaine House Service Corps  
Coastal Enterprises, Inc.

#### **Financials**

##### **Project Revenue Sources**

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
CNS	281,256	281,250	292,350
Local	436,889	328,400	435,353
In-Kind	**	**	**
Other			
Total	<u>718,145</u>	<u>609,650</u>	<u>727,703</u>

\*\* In-Kind breakout not available

#### ***Non-Member Volunteers Generated***

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Volunteers		146	512 (3 qtrs)
Volunteer hours	2,397	601	1,242

### *Leverage Examples*

- Program developed a new relationship with the Bath Housing Department that resulted in the completion of two housing renovation projects not originally anticipated. Bath values the services received at approximately \$3,000. Further, the Housing Director claims that at least one of the projects would not have even been possible without AmeriCorps participation.
- The Project received training 2 times per year from the City of Bangor Public Works on OSHA safety. Each training lasted at least 4 hours. Subsequently, whenever CEI arranges for training they always offer Bangor Public Works the opportunity to join in.
- Project arranged to receive 10 hours per year of safety construction certification training from the Maine Department of Labor. DOL provided 2 trainers for over 2 days (a total of 10 hours)
- Project gets major suppliers (Wick's Lumber is a primary example) to offer free demonstrations on new materials, installation and construction practices. Estimated at 1 hour every 2 months (6 hours per year)
- Project gets sub contractor plumbers and electricians to donate training time to crew on building codes and job site safety. Estimate of value is \$35 per hour for 64 hours per year – (\$2,240 per year)

### *Sustainability*

Jon Underwood believes that the project benefits will be sustained through the members themselves. Although the program is focused on the provision of affordable housing, members are recruited from the target communities, and from among low-income residents. According to Jon this program is as much about member development as it is about housing. The members themselves undergo a form of rehabilitation - learning new job skills, employment discipline (getting to work on time, arriving ready to work, and behaving in appropriate ways) and taking advantage of the education credits.

CEI was successful in obtaining a YouthBuild grant to continue to rehabilitate housing for low-income families. This is the activity they engaged in with AmeriCorps funds. Therefore, they are sustaining the activity for at least one more year, possibly three, if they can successfully compete for a three-year YouthBuild grant.

Teach Maine

Steve Niles - Wolf's Neck Farm

Teach Maine promotes 'service learning' for students in local schools. Service Learning is a method of teaching that enriches learning by engaging students in meaningful service to their schools or communities through careful integration with established curricula (National Service Learning Exchange). The engagement of students in community service helps students learn to balance the rights of citizenship with the responsibilities of community membership.

Twelve full-time Members and 12 summer Members will work with local non-profits, municipalities and schools to teach local students and give them opportunities to develop and complete service projects to help their communities.

**Original Partners**

- Wolfe's Neck Farm
- Portland Water District
- Greater Portland Landmarks
- Maine Historical Society
- Morris Farm Trust
- Pejepscot Historical Society
- Tanglewood 4-H Club
- Kelmscott Farm
- LC Bates Museum
- KIDS Consortium
- Cumberland County Soil & Water Conservation District

**Financials**

**Project Revenue Sources**

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
CNS	158,194	163,082	140,000
Local	55,958	82,829	229,685
In-Kind	107,728	136,728	**
Other			
Total	321,880	382,639	369,685

\*\* breakdown of in-kind from local cash share unavailable

***Non-Member Volunteers Generated***

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Volunteers	346	98	148 (3 qtrs)
Volunteer hours	1,712	395	650

## *Leverage Examples*

A new partnership with University of Maine where student teachers can earn Ed awards if they develop learn & serve programs as part of their student teaching efforts.

1. Extended Teacher Education Program (ETEP). Objective was to initiate serving learning as a teaching method in new teachers in training.
  - The impact also worked backwards - student teachers brought the service-learning concept back to their teacher mentors (located in local schools -mentoring student teachers). Out of 6 mentors, 3 teachers reported gaining experience with Service Learning and introducing this learning tool into their curriculum. This amounted to 900 hours of intern contact to teacher around service learning.
2. Developed a new partnership with Portland Housing Authority, providing assistance to kids in Housing projects on academic assistance in an after school setting in the Housing Authority neighborhoods.
3. Greater Portland Landmarks - developed funding for two permanent positions, which they filled with former AmeriCorps members.
4. Morris Farm Trust –
  - Developed additional funds and created an Education Director position and hired the former Member to the job.
  - Developed a \$1,500 grant to the Maine Community Forestry Department based on the skills and experience of the AmeriCorps member. Without those skills, they would not have applied and conducted the forestry program.
  - Were able to attract speakers to the Farm that generated additional community interest in it due to the development of a speaker series, developed in part by the member.
  - Member developed an ‘adopt and animal’ program that raises about \$1,000 per year.
  - Member outreach activities increased the number of visitors to the Farm
  - Member was successful in connecting the Farm to Bates College as a source of student volunteers
  - Member generates, through outreach, about 10 to 15 new non-member volunteers per year.
5. Tanglewood 4H Club - new water quality monitoring group, called River Keepers volunteers program - monitoring water quality in local rivers and streams. For this project, the program generated 12 new, non-member volunteers.

The program also developed new grant funds from the State Planning Office – Maine Coastal Program, and the National Marine Fisheries Service. The total value of the two grants was \$10,300.

In addition, the AmeriCorps members developed the River Keeper training manual and curriculum. This led directly to the development of a curriculum adopted by teachers in local schools engaged in teaching about the local watershed management.

6. Wolf's Neck Farm
  - Was able to generate new funds through ME Development Foundation - Value \$25,000
  - Developed a membership component to the farm allowing members of the public to join the farm for a fee. Also developed special events at farm, admission by fees. Fees pay for salary for one Member. Value - \$40,000 per year.
  - Davis Foundation (\$7,500) to develop a new model education program at Farm
  - Maine Nutrition Network (\$3,000)
  - Developing 35 new non-member volunteers each year
  
7. Cumberland County Soil & Water Conservation
  - AmeriCorps member developed a forestry service grant for \$1,500 used to assist to cover part of the cost of hosting the 'Environthon' program
  
8. Portland Water District
  - AmeriCorps member initiated a Watershed protection project involving restoration of a vegetation buffer on a portion of shorefront on Sebago Lake. The Member recruited students and Water District employees to the project. These volunteers donated 42 hours of time, valued at \$ 380.
  
9. Maine Historical Society
  - Generated new non-member volunteers to conduct their education programs. This was not part of the original project design.
    - A. Year 1 – 10 volunteers for 4 to 6 hours per month for 9 months
    - B. Year 2 – 10 volunteers for 4 to 6 hours per month for 9 months
    - C. Year 3 – 7 volunteers for 4 to 6 hours per month for 9 months
  
10. Pejeboscot Historical Society
 

Grant activity

  - Androscoggin Savings Bank - \$5,000 used to make the year one local match requirement of the program.
  - In year, 2, the project successfully applied to the Davis Family Foundation and received a \$20,000 grant for project support.
  
11. Kelmscott Farm
  - Having the AmeriCorps position enabled the farm to develop a new initiative to outreach, through a new marketing initiative, to all high schools in the region. Those responding to this outreach would pay a fee to participate in Farm tours and curriculum.

Other leverage examples

The Little Red Barn Museum – is a project of the local Jr. High School – the AmeriCorps member re-kindled local school interest in the museum and was able to get the local Navy Base, the Brunswick Naval Air Station Officer Cadets to donate a day worth of labor (15 cadets for 8 hours) to paint the barn. In addition, a local teacher was recruited to write a successful grant to the Maine Historical Society for \$2000 in funds to support the Red Barn project.

## Sustainability Examples

A new partnership with University of Maine where student teachers can earn Ed awards if they develop learn & serve programs as part of their student teaching efforts.

1. Extended Teacher Education Program (ETEP). Objective was to initiate service learning as an acceptable teaching method among new teachers in training - ensuring continuation of 'service learning' activities as student teachers move to teaching positions.
  - The impact also worked backwards - student teachers brought the service-learning concept back to their teacher mentors (located in local schools – those experienced teachers assigned to mentor student teachers). Out of 6 mentors, 3 reported gaining experience with Service Learning and introducing this learning tool into their curriculum.

Greater Portland Landmarks - developed funding for two permanent positions to perform activities formerly conducted by AmeriCorps positions – project education and outreach. (they filled positions with former AmeriCorps members)

Morris Farm Trust – generated sufficient funds to create an education curriculum and outreach position (the member job) in-house (they hired the former Member to the Job).

Tanglewood 4H Club –

- Developed a new water quality-monitoring group, called River Keepers volunteers program - monitoring water quality in local rivers and streams.
- The Program credits AmeriCorps for providing “an inspirational boost” to the program through the development of the River Keeper project. This project successfully infused new community volunteers in to the program, improving the likelihood of sustained water quality testing activities. Tanglewood wants to continue with the River Keeper project after AmeriCorps ends.

Wolf's Neck Farm

- Developed a membership component to the farm allowing members of the public to join the farm for a fee.
- Developed a program of special events at farm - admission by fees. Fees pay for salary for one Member. Together, memberships and special events generate - \$40,000 per year.
- Generating an average of 35 new non-member volunteers each year

Kelmscott Farm

- AmeriCorps member activities (outreach education and tours) generated approx \$8,500 during this year.
- Farm is looking to hire member full time to continue AmeriCorps initiated activities because the payback on the activities demonstrated the position would generate additional needed program revenues.



#### Pejepscot Historical Society

- The Society intends to try to continue the position of Director of Education (developed by the AmeriCorps project), and is now actively seeking funding to accomplish this goal.

#### Cumberland County Soil and Water Conservation District

- Currently is working with the Environmental Protection Agency to include 'education activities' within the scope of their 310 grants. 310 grants provide technical assistance but do not include educational programming. If successful, AmeriCorps initiated education role will be continued with this funding source.
- The District is also involved in a school program called 'Environmental Learning for the Future'. This is a curriculum introduced into local school districts. The S&W Conservation District is attempting to get school districts to budget the funds to sustain this program

#### Maine Historical Society

The society believes that the school project service learning partnerships with Longfellow elementary, Catherine McCauley High School, and King Middle School will continue beyond the life of AmeriCorps, and that the relationships will include student service learning opportunities.

Steve Niles reports - all of the projects are working to grow and sustain the project activities beyond AmeriCorps funding. Each year the projects tell him they are working toward developing the AmeriCorps position into a full time position, funded by the host site.

#### Portland Water District

AmeriCorps member initiated a trail construction project using Bonney Eagle High School students. After Member left, Water District continued work on the trail and continued the relationship with the School.

Many of the schools in which the AmeriCorps member conducted education outreach and conservation curriculum development for the Water District have continued to deliver the curriculum, incorporating it into their regular school curriculum. Evidence of this is that teachers who originally participated in Water District workshops on conservation curriculum development have returned to participate in new workshops to share their knowledge and experiences with teachers new to the program.

The Water District Board is moving to develop the Education Coordinator position (the AmeriCorps position) as a full time, permanent position of the District in response to the value they place on these types of activities, as demonstrated by the AmeriCorps members.

## Promise Fellows

ME DHS

Project Director - Rosalynne Petrie – Special Assistant to the Commissioner

DHS involvement – Commissioner asked her to do project work of youth issues, to develop resources for Foster Care children. She heard about a governor’s program on mentoring. She inquired to Governor’s Committee on mentoring youth. Through that project she met Maryalice and others.

### **Project Purpose:**

Current-The Maine AmeriCorps Promise Fellows Program is an 11-member AmeriCorps program addressing the five fundamental promises outlined by America’s Promise: The Alliance for Youth. The Fellows operate out of 11 different host sites throughout Maine in activities ranging from direct service mentoring projects to capacity-building activities with statewide networks that support Maine’s Model State Initiative. Fellows are housed at various non-profit or governmental agencies in southern, western, and central Maine.

Original – Address issues of unequal access to the fundamental five resources of the AmeriCorps Promise Initiative, through recruitment and training of volunteer mentors, recruitment of youth participants, recruitment and training of teen mentors, and increase community awareness.

According to Rosalynne Petrie, in 2001, year 3 of project, they moved away from promoting and supporting local youth programming to an approach of developing increased capacity to networks involved in each of the five promise areas. They will continue in this effort over the next three years – they were renewed for 3 more years.

### 5 Promise Areas

1. Marketable Skills
2. A Safe Place
3. Healthy Start
4. Opportunities to serve
5. Caring adults

Will also work on two products of America’s Promise: Establishing / building additional new communities of Promise; and, implementing the Small Community Checklist Project. This is a community-organizing checklist of activities and methods provided to communities as a guide for building momentum around the America’s Promise Program.

### **Original Partners**

MSAD #58  
Workforce Development Centers  
Winthrop Communities for Children  
Down East Health Services  
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Mid Coast  
Maine

Maine State Planning Office  
Down East Big Brothers Big Sisters  
DHS Office of Child Care and Head Start  
American Red Cross  
Youthlinks

## ***Financials***

### **Project Revenue Sources**

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
CNS	156,000	128,300	128,300
Local	241,379	50,000	50,000
In-Kind	**	**	**
Other			
Total	<u>397,379</u>	<u>178,300</u>	<u>128,300</u>

\*\* breakdown of in-kind from local cash share unavailable

### Non-Member Volunteers generated

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Volunteers	65	2,460	476 (3 qtrs)
Volunteer hours	189	20,469	2,696

## ***Leverage Examples***

### DownEast Health Services – Big Brothers Big Sisters

- Program developed a relationship with the YMCA, which has formed a men’s group charged with recruiting new mentors to DownEast Big Brothers Big Sisters.
- The program developed a relationship with a literacy program called – Reading is Fundamental – which now supplies books to kids being mentored.

### Youthlinks

- Developed a new relationship with school system SAD 5 (Rockland) to develop in-school mentoring
- As a result of their involvement with Promise Fellows Youthlinks, the host agency, developed a teen mentoring program
- Member was able to generate increased local news coverage of program activities in two area newspapers.

### Child Health Center

- Developed a new relationship with the Oxford Hills Community Education Exchange to result in the creation of new school / business partnerships for the purpose of recruiting adult mentors.
- Developed a relationship with the Western Maine Community Coalition for the purpose of sharing resources
- Developed a relationship with the University of Maine Cooperative Extension for the purpose of developing a job shadowing project allowing mentored youth an opportunity to sample different careers and employment scenarios.

## DHS Child Care &B Head Start

- Developed a new partnership with the Maine Department of Education for the purpose of addressing the need for new before and after school child care programs

## Private sector Fund raising committee

Promise Fund – the 12 to 15 million dollar endowment –currently \$35,000

Media partnership – WGME channel 13 in Portland – they developed their public service centerpiece ‘Giving Maine Promise’ around the Maine Promise / Promise Fellows projects valued at \$700,000 per year.

## *Sustainability*

### Overall

- Developed a relationship with Maine’s Promise. Maine’s Promise has lined up \$150,000 from private sources to make the local match for the next three years. They are working to develop enough support from private sector to ensure continuation of the project.
- Local communities – have quickly embraced the notion of the program, but this may be due to the availability of money (opinion of Rosalynne).
- Maine’s Promise has also developed a prominent group of business people who have signed onto the program. They are attempting to raise a 12 to 15 million-dollar endowment to keep the programs for children in the communities supported for the future.
- Private sector Fund raising committee
- Promise Fund – the 12 to 15 million dollar endowment
- Local communities have ‘leadership councils’ which evolved from ‘Communities for Children, the children’s initiative of the Governor’s office.
- The shift in program emphasis from local community, one-to-one mentoring projects, to the development of a statewide infrastructure around each of the 5 promise areas. This is a move away from direct service to resource development around the needs of youth.
- Local leadership councils are now charged with the development of 5 new partners (business, non-profit, school, individual, etc.) with resources that can be made available to meet the needs of children in the community.

### Mid Coast Big Brothers Big Sisters

- Local school system, in which program provided mentoring, has included the program coordinator position in the school budget.
- Big Brothers Big Sisters has doubled its number of mentored youth throughout the school-based mentor model, and is committed to continuing the support of this model.

### Youthlinks

- The host agency, Youthlinks has decided to keep the two mentoring programs -School-based ‘Tiger Pal’s, and their Teen mentoring program going after their involvement in AmeriCorps ended.

## DHS Child Care & Head Start

- The number of ongoing after school and before school child care programs increased under AmeriCorps, and are expected to continue
- DHS will continue AmeriCorps initiated activities at some level after AmeriCorps funding ends

# Conservation Corps

## Project Purpose

Director: Ken Spaulding, Maine Dept of Labor  
Project coordinator: Christine Wolfe

### Project Purpose:

A statewide environmental program in Maine with 90 AmeriCorps members. 64 members serve in teams to improve public access to natural areas by building trails and completing other outdoor recreation and conservation projects. The teams are led by members who complete a Leadership Academy.

26 Members are placed individually with natural resource agencies and schools: as volunteer coordinators to recruit, train and lead volunteers on watershed stewardship and other environmental projects; as environmental educators, to organize and conduct environmental education activities; and as youth service developers, to organize service for youth to participate in.

### Multi-Year Partners

Maine Conservation Corps  
Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands, Maine  
Department of Conservation  
Bureau of Land and Water Quality, Maine  
Department of Environmental Protection  
Bureau of Air Quality, Maine Department of  
Environmental Protection  
Auburn Department of Education  
Maine School Administrative District 6  
Maine School Administrative District 48  
Portland Water District  
Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve  
Hancock County Soil and Water  
Conservation District  
Somerset County Soil and Water  
Conservation District  
Cumberland County Soil and Water  
Conservation District  
University of Maine Cooperative Extension  
Sea Grant Program, University of Maine  
Cooperative Extension  
Wild Salmon Resource Center  
Maine Audubon Society  
Maine Department of Transportation  
York River Association  
Maine State Planning Office  
Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program  
Tanglewood 4-H Camp and Learning Center  
Portland Trails  
Hallowell Conservation Commission  
Rangeley Lakes Heritage Trust  
Damariscotta River Association  
Sheepscot Valley Conservation Association

Hurricane Island Outward Bound School  
Baxter State Park  
Appalachian Trail Club  
Friends of Acadia  
Acadia National Park  
Appalachian National Scenic Trail, National  
Park Service  
Mount Desert Island Water Quality  
Coalition

## Financials

	<u>Project Revenue Sources</u>		
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
CNS	577,950	590,928	654,644
Local	315,582	886,393	982,276
In-Kind	359,693	**	**
Other			
Total	<u>1,253,195</u>	<u>1,477,321</u>	<u>1,636,921</u>

\*\* breakdown of in-kind from local cash share unavailable

## Non-Member Volunteers generated

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Volunteers	1,553	2,288	4,809
Volunteer hours	13,373	4,751	20,407

## Leverage Examples

### 1. Auburn Land Lab

- The AmeriCorps members were able to connect to other AmeriCorps members in Maine who contributed to the Land Lab programming, and/or participated in Land Lab sponsored learning events (fairs).
- By leveraging the AmeriCorps relationship in Maine, the Land Lab was able to secure Teacher Guides from the Maine Department of Environmental Protection, and bring programs from DEP to the Land Lab - the programs are called 'Stream Team', and 'Buffering Boat Launch'.

### 2. Bonny Eagle Middle School – Pathfinders Program

- They were successful in securing a Maine Title IV grant from the Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities program for \$7,000 per project year
- The Title IV grant staff have suggested the program apply for Title I money, implying that they will be successful in securing additional grant funds
- The program has enjoyed positive publicity, which has led to increased support for the program within the school district.
- AmeriCorps position enabled the program to follow-up with kids who 'graduated' from this middle school program (Pathfinders) to determine if the interventions had any lasting impact on client youth. The findings indicate that positive outcomes have been maintained by client youth, and this led to increased local school department support for the program.

- School District has budgeted \$10,000 per year to the program for operating funds.

### **3. Maine DEP – Land & Water Bureau**

- Program successfully conducted outreach to lake associations (groups of private citizens usually living on or in close proximity to bodies of water, and which volunteer to conduct lake improvement projects).
- Program was also successful in reaching school children, and raising their awareness of water quality issues.
- With the assistance of one of the lake associations, the DEP was able to deliver curriculum to a local school district (Greene, ME), and the school has adopted the curriculum into its regular programming.
- The program developed a grant from the National Tree Foundation and received 200 trees for a project. They went to 10 schools and got the school kids to participate in watershed protection curriculum, and then spend time planting the trees. They have been notified they will get another grant of trees this year.

### **4. Maine DOT**

- The DOT now budgets \$ 10,000 per year for project activities
- Project was successful in obtaining donations of needed materials, such as tree / shrubs used in watershed planting programs. The value of the donations is estimated at \$300 per year.

### **5. Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve**

- Developed partnerships with
  - York Rivers Association
  - Town of York
- AmeriCorps was instrumental in developed a partnership consisting of 22 organizations, focused on the Coastal Mosaic Project
- Developed a funding partnership with the Laudholm Trust, which funds 1/3 of their operating budget.

### **6. Mount Desert Island Water Quality Coalition**

- Successfully developed partnerships with 4 elementary schools. Developed curriculum, and successfully recruited and trained high school student volunteers to deliver the in-school curriculum. In the elementary grades.
- Engaged elementary kids in ‘learn & serve’ type conservation projects
- A local teacher, working with the project, wrote a successful \$12,000 grant for the project.



- Partnered with the Friends of Acadia which now provides volunteers and money to the Coalition
- Partnered with the Town of Bar Harbor – Marine Resources Center for advice and information to contribute to the curricula
- Partnered with the University of Maine – Cooperative Extension, which facilitates meetings, provides training, and grant writing assistance.
- Partnered with the Maine department of Marine Resources, which provides training, in conjunction with the Cooperative Extension Service, and advice to Coalition staff and volunteers.

#### **7. Department of Environmental Protection / Maine Energy Education Programs**

- Developed a partnership with the American Ling Association, which has contributed \$50,000 to the program over the past 2 years; and contributed a program called “tools for Schools” which focuses on air quality issues.
- Have successfully engaged fifteen schools over three years in their programming
- Developed a partnership with the New England States for Coordinated Air Use Management, that brought \$10,000 to the program
- Developed a partnership with the Maine Department of Transportation which contributed \$6,000 last year and has pledged \$4,000 this year for the production and distribution of a project newsletter

## **Sustainability**

### **1. Bonny Eagle Middle School – Pathfinders Program**

- School Department is indicating a willingness to increase its annual funding to cover the \$7000 previously received from Title IV funding, but which is no longer available.
- Next year, the program intends to ask the school department to fully fund the program, to the tune of \$37,0000
- This budget includes funding of the position, previously held by AmeriCorps members.

### **2. Maine DEP – Land & Water Bureau**

- The outreach and partnering with Lake Associations has led to a continuation of program activities conducted by the associations. The Associations continue to come back to DP for ongoing assistance in the conduct of watershed protection / improvement activities.
- Partner schools have adopted watershed protection curricula and continue to deliver it without AmeriCorps assistance

### **3. Maine DOT**

- The DOT is attempting to partner with local groups who will continue to perform conservation projects with DOT. They have successfully developed 6 such partnerships to date.
- DOT was able to partner with local community groups to create local ‘community nurseries’, where planting stock is cultivated for conservation projects. The plan is to move these nurseries to a state of self-sufficiency, and self-direction, thus sustaining ongoing local conservation efforts.
- They are also attempting to get local groups, including schools, to adopt a DOT facility (an overlook, a stretch of scenic highway, a DOT maintenance facility) to continue to maintain that facility (area) on an ongoing basis.

#### **4. Mount Desert Island Water Quality Coalition**

- Each of the 4 elementary schools partnering with the project have continued to remain involved in the Coalition, and to incorporate conservation curricula into their regular school curricula.
- The Mt Desert Island Water Quality Coalition filed for and received no-for-profit status
- The Coalition hired the former AmeriCorps member as its new Executive Director
- The Coalition is actively engaged in grant writing sustain conservation activities

#### **5. Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve**

- Community watershed management plans are in place and being executed
- The reserve is attempting to continue the AmeriCorps position activities, in a new position, to be called Watershed Community Coordinator, through private funding

#### **6. Department of Environmental Protection / Maine Energy Education Programs**

- Engaged 15 schools in programming – modifying both school engineering and student behaviors and attitudes around energy use and conservation
- DEP will continue with program activities subsequent to AmeriCorps, but unable to confirm at what level activities will be maintained without AmeriCorps position.
- Have developed a close working relationship with the Maine Department of Education to result in their adoption of energy management principles into new school designs and old school refurbishing projects. They are looking to further develop this relationship into a partnership where Department of Education will contribute funding toward sustaining activities conducted by the AmeriCorps volunteer.

## Project Goals

### Project Director-

Kathleen Schulz- Job's for Maine Graduates [goals@gwi.net](mailto:goals@gwi.net) (207)-582-0924

### Job's for Maine Graduates Involvement-

Responsible for all aspects of its AmeriCorps program, including management, operation, development of sustainability, and evaluation.

### Project Purpose-

A 'Governor's Initiative' to increase Internet use. Project GOALS members work in six different hub sites around the state of Maine (Caribou, Lincoln, Bangor, Lewiston, Topsham, and Portland) tutoring librarians, teachers, library patrons and parents of school-aged children in ways to use the Internet for research, education, communication and information. AmeriCorps members work with hub supervisors as a team to plan and deliver services to the communities surrounding the hub site.

### *Original Partners-*

ME Association of Vocational Education Administrators (MAVEA)

ME Adult Education Association (MAEA)

ME Library Association (MLA)

ME School & Library Network (MSLN)

### *Financials-*

#### Project Budget Revenue Sources

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
CNS	337,500	325,433	281,342
Local	134,618	194,109	219,055
In-Kind	90,382	135,260	209,000
Other			
Total	<u>562,500</u>	<u>654,802</u>	<u>709,397</u>

### ***Non-Member Volunteer Generation***

	Year 1	Year 2
Volunteers	45	23
Volunteer Hours	226	601

### ***Leverage Examples-***

#### Southern Maine Library Network

*Due to collaboration with the Southern Maine Library Network, the network was able to obtain an innovative Mobile lab grant for a ‘wireless lap top’ lab. They hired one person to coordinate the project. This new initiative resulted from the collaboration with Project Goals, and was the result of Project Goals members providing training to libraries (this was not part of initial grant). In the grant, Goals members were included as in-kind contributors, who would provide training to librarians when their library received use of the ‘traveling’ lap top laboratory.*

- *Grant Total- \$81,895*
- *2 Project Goals trainers did the equivalent of more than \$9,200 in additional training assistance.*

(Value – In-Kind value of AmeriCorps member services in grant - \$10,700)

#### Unexpected Tangible Assets Developed (per Len Freeman)

- On-Line Tutorial for Statewide online card catalogue. Written by Project Goals members, and accessible to Curtis Memorial library, and available to all public libraries in the State.  
Value - \$ 16,000
- On-line tutorial – school system email system. Initially developed for SAD 75 (Topsham). The tutorial is being made available to any school system in the state. It will be ‘marketed’ by Project Goals. System is called “First Class”.  
Value - \$ 12,000

#### Training Trainers

- Maine DHS – Aspire Program relationship developed.

Project Goals is exploring a relationship where they train Aspire clients, who in turn become trainers for others in computer use. Women, Work and Community relationship (Welfare to Work).

- ME Community Foundation partnership – leveraged Ford Foundation money to Project Goals

Value - \$10,000

- Last year – Ford Foundation – \$50,000 – leveraged another \$75,000 from Pentagoet Foundation (total – \$125,000). This was required due to a cut in the original MSLN grant because they were supposed to serve librarians and teachers (defined as user groups/providers). In actuality, they serve parents of K-12, and library patrons (defined as end-users). This led to cut in grant of \$300,000. New money was applied to meet match requirement.
- Pentagoet – \$75,000 each in years 1 and 2. (Ford Foundation).
- Year 3, Ford Foundation again, (Points of Light) – \$10,800
- Cyber Seniors curriculum brought to the project instead of writing something from scratch.

### *Sustainability-*

- RSVP – Caribou-Project Goals was asked to train RSVP volunteers to enable them to train their clients (elders) who then they in turn went out to train RSVP clients.
- Presque Isle Elder Hostel – at request of Hostel, provided elder hostel participants with Goals training.
- Clients sometimes become volunteers.
- CyberSeniors trained AmeriCorps members on the use of the Internet at Curtis Memorial Library so that the members could return to their communities and teach others interested in going online.
- Maine Aspire-An active network of people exists as an oversight committee charged to ensure that Goals services exist after year 3 – Original partnerships with ME Association of Adult Ed; State Library Association form the basis of the oversight.
- ME Community Foundation partnership – has successfully leveraged Foundation money to the project. This relationship will continue.
- Original grant written on basis of hard data for training need completed by State Libraries & Dept of Education around computer training needs and levels of training available.
- As of end of year 2 - 138 librarians trained; 195 teachers trained. Their knowledge will continue to sustain the Project Goal activities long after AmeriCorps funding ends.
- Reports by school administrators – Where Project completed teacher training, school kids are now using school computer labs more because their teachers are using the computers more as part of their teaching tools.
- Need for service substantiated in numbers of people responding to and trained by Project

	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3
	Obj	Act			
Teachers & librarians	60	80	60	195	in progress
Librarians			60	138	
Public	2440	790	3,880	4,355	4000

- Topsham – Senior Passport Program – teaches health issues to elders. Curtis library referred them to this group, and supplemented their nutrition lectures by showing clients how to access nutrition info on Internet.
- Electronic Pen Pal program between middle school students and elders.

**Maine's Promise**  
 University of Southern Maine – Muskie School of Public Service

Project Director: Marty Zanghi  
 Project Coordinator: Kate Webb

**Project Purpose-**

Collaborate with community organizations to assist them in building their capacity to develop sustainable mentor programs for at-risk youth that incorporates life skills training and community service principles.

**Original Partners**

Penobscot Nation -  
 Department of Human Services  
 Big Brothers Big Sisters – Mid Coast; Greater Portland; DownEast  
 Portland Multi-Lingual Office  
 Portland Community Counseling  
 Presque Isle Schools system  
 YWCA Maine LEAP Program  
 Freeport Schools – Project Aspiration  
 Mt. Blue – Middle School  
 Portland West Planning Council  
 Portland Community Policing – Parkside  
 Maine DHS – Portland Office

**Financials**

**Project Revenue Sources**

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
CNS	131,263	149,315	127,145
Local	141,347	66,222	190,718
In-Kind	**	91,626	**
Other			
Total	272,610	307,163	317,863

\*\* breakdown of in-kind from local cash share unavailable

***Non-Member Volunteers Generated***

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Volunteers	187	422	1,190
Vol hours	not reported	12,500	16,727



## ***Leverage Examples***

- They researched and published the Maine Mentoring Resource Guide
- Developed a web site of [mainementoring.org](http://mainementoring.org)
- Assisted the Commission in locating placements for Maine's Promise Fellows
- Introduced the Governor's Task Force to the National Mentoring Partnership, which resulted in a formal link to that organization
- Facilitated membership among partner organizations on the Maine Mentor Partnership
- Portland Community Mentoring Program (DHS – Bureau of Child and Family Services) - In 1999 the AmeriCorps Member was hired by DHS to work on mentoring programs. That year, DHS put \$75,000 into community mentoring.
- In 2000, DHS put in \$ 108,000; In 2001, they put in \$ 128,000 (\$311,000 total contribution over 3 years)
- Mid Coast Big Brothers Big Sisters
  - Was able to obtain a donation of \$10,000 from MBNA America (they are a personal service (credit card) finance company with offices in the mid coast area). The money was used to expand school-based programming into Waldo County Maine school districts.
  - They were also successful in recruiting MBNA employees to both the school site-based mentor program, as well as to their traditional community mentor model of programming.
  - Wrote a successful grant to get Vista's in all of the big Brothers Big Sisters agency locations in the State. There are 8 sites, now with 15 VISTA's
  - Developed a working relationship with another of the Maine's Promise dispersed site host agencies – Youthlinks – to develop a new, spin-off mentor program for adjudicated first-time offender youth. Subsequently, this program has transformed to a school-based mentor program for at-risk kids, identified by the school system. It operates in 1 elementary school in Rockland, ME, and is scheduled for expansion into a second elementary school in Rockland. The relationship with Youthlinks around this program continues.

## **Sustainability**

- Nine of the original twelve partner sites (75%) sustained mentor programming as initiated by AmeriCorps members beyond the AmeriCorps program funding.
- Portland Community Mentoring Program (DHS Portland) –
- Hired two of the AmeriCorps members full time for the mentor program.
  - In 1999 DHS appropriated \$75,000 to support community mentoring.
  - In 2000, DHS put in \$ 108,000; In 2001, they put in \$ 128,000 (\$311,000 total contribution over 3 years)
  - DHS says that it was AmeriCorps members work in year 1 that demonstrated the value of developing a mentor program, and that has led to their continued interest and commitment to this activity.

**Born to Read**  
Maine Humanities Council

**Project Start-**

September 1998 (closed 2000)

**Project Co-Directors-**

Born to Read Program Directors: Denise Pendleton – Maine Humanities Council

[dpendle@mainehumanities.org](mailto:dpendle@mainehumanities.org) Myrna Koonce- Maine Humanities Council

[mkoonce@mainehumanities.org](mailto:mkoonce@mainehumanities.org) 207-773-5051

Jeff Aronson, Born to Read AmeriCorps Project Director

**Maine Humanities Council Involvement**

Maine Humanities Council was approached by ME Commission for Community Service to apply for the AmeriCorps grant. Responsible for all aspects of its AmeriCorps program, including management, operation, development of sustainability, and evaluation.

**Project Purpose-**

To train child care providers, home visitors, health professionals and parents of children, ages 0 to 5 years, in family literacy techniques – primarily by the promotion of reading aloud where reading is not part of family daily life or part of the daily program in child care. The Maine Humanities Council formed Born to Read AmeriCorps in cooperation with the Maine Office of Child Care and Head Start. The Council hired Jeff Aronson as project director; Jeff recruited AmeriCorps members who were placed in community sites throughout Maine, where they read aloud in day care programs, schools, and Head Start programs, and worked with community groups to organize family literacy events. The program also partnered with home visitor programs to bring volunteers and books into the home. In some communities, rural health centers were recruited as partners, agreeing to give out books and offer parents counseling on early literacy development.

**Original Partners-**

Maine State Office of Child Care & Head Start (DHS) & Maine Humanities Council

**Financials-**

B. Project Revenue Sources

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
CNS	148,750	104,898	Closed
Local**	129,368	78,547	
In-Kind		26,350	
Other			
Total	<u>197,382</u>	<u>209,795</u>	

\*\* breakdown of in-kind from local cash share unavailable in year 1 documentation

***Non-Member Volunteer Generation***

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Volunteers	55	102	Closed
Volunteer hours	621	829	

***Leverage Examples-***

*Eastport / Machias*

- Developed a large number of community volunteers who provided man-hours on the literacy project. They also contributed materials for children to use. Their AmeriCorps budget was very limited for materials. Value \$1,000.
- Shop and Save grocery store sponsored story hour.

*Fort Kent*

- Brought the library & adult ed. Program to the project.

**New Partnerships**

**Fleet Bank**

- Provided program with a grant for 10K.
- Bank set up book drives / book drops in stores and bank locations around the state.
- Sponsored story hours.
- Fleet Bank contact – (see Maine Children’s Alliance for info details Re: their program called ‘Great Beginnings’)

**Maine Children’s Alliance** <http://www.mekids.org/>

- Provided opportunities for the Maine Humanities Council to become more involved and more knowledgeable of other organizations in the State working with children.

## *Sustainability*

- Dropped AmeriCorps participation over concern in generating local match dollars. Instead, developed a partnership with RSVP programs (through Area Agencies on Aging –sponsor of RSVP in Maine) and trained elder volunteers to read to kids in day care locations.
- ME State Office of Child Care & Head Start contributed \$25,000 per year to purchase books for the new Born to Read program.
- Early Learning Opportunities Act grant from Dept of Education related to their participation in AmeriCorps program Value – \$135,000 over 17 months
- AmeriCorps members were able to strengthen local community ties to local libraries. Especially true in Fort Kent & East Port Machias.
- Fort Kent – members raised awareness for library to recognize new roles for the library – getting books to people who need them -- like day care centers)
- Connecting to statewide RSVP program – using RSVP volunteers to provide the intervention.