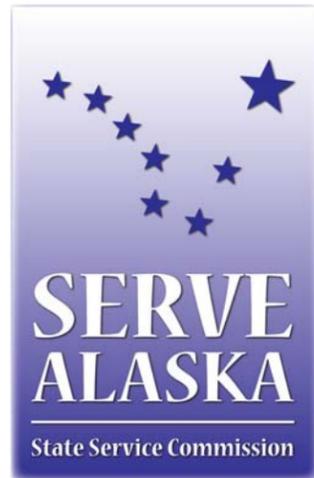


The quilt featured on the cover was put together by Margaret Novak, an AmeriCorps member serving at SAGA as the Community Volunteer Specialist from September 2008 to August 2009. It was quilted by Ellen Place, an avid quilter from North Carolina and mother of a SAGA AmeriCorps member.

The quilt was presented to the Serve Alaska State Service Commission in honor of AmeriCorps Week 2009 by the AmeriCorps members of Alaska.



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To obtain a copy of this publication in an alternative format, please contact the Commission.

**Serve Alaska**  
**State Service Commission**  
**2009 Annual Report**



# Message from Governor Sean Parnell



Dear Alaskans,

Serve Alaska, (the State Service Commission) is committed to strengthening national service and volunteerism throughout Alaska. Each year Serve Alaska partners with organizations across the state to recruit thousands of volunteers who tackle projects across the 49th state.

Serve Alaska works with the federal AmeriCorps and Learn and Serve America programs. These programs strengthen our communities and provide opportunities for young people to acquire work skills and experience. Serve Alaska and the Corporation for National and Community Service programs are actively building a culture of citizenship, service and responsibility.

In Alaska alone, AmeriCorps members are helping communities fight poverty, mentor youth, recover from disasters, raise graduation rates, build homes, and tackle our toughest social challenges. Just as important, Alaska AmeriCorps is building lifelong civic leaders who are active in their communities.

I commend Serve Alaska for its accomplishments, dedication, and commitment to national service and volunteerism. Working together, we can continue to “foster, support and promote the ethics of service and volunteerism for all Alaskans.”

Sincerely,

Sean Parnell, Governor

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# Commissioners and Staff

## COMMISSIONERS

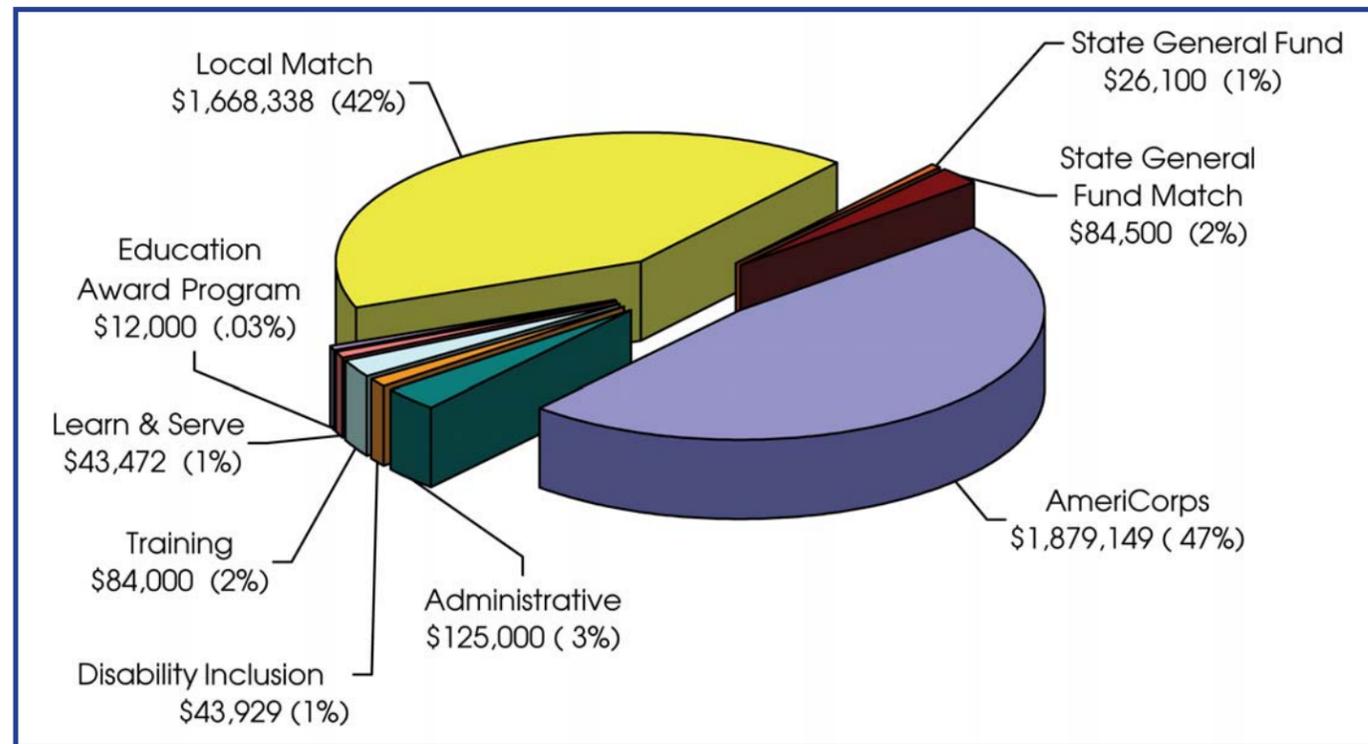
- Dawn Grossmann (Chair) Community Based Organization
- Angelina Estrada-Burney Department of Commerce Designee
- Becky Judd Youth Development
- Billie Joe Caldwell Officio CNCS
- Denise Morris Tribal
- Elaine Dahlgren Older Adults Service
- Jeff Wheaton K-12 Education
- Judy Bredberg Education
- Kathleen Bugbee Local Labor Organization
- Kirsten Vesel Local Government
- Konnie Shuey Youth Development
- Lebron McPhail Education
- Leona Grishkowsky Business
- Melora Gaber Department of Education Designee
- Nicholas Henderson Individuals between 16-25 years
- Ron Yeager Individuals between 16-25 years
- Wilson Justin Tribal



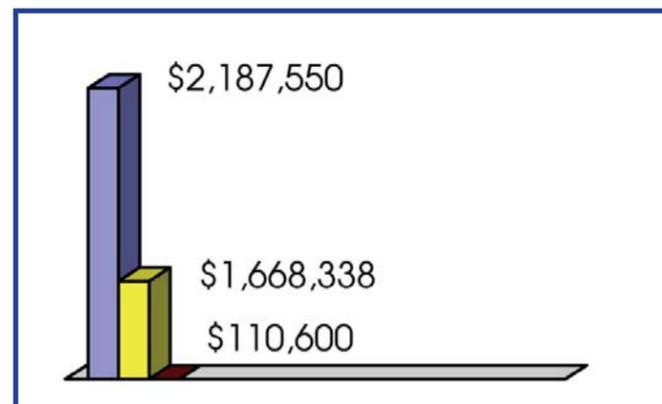
## STAFF

- Nita Madsen Executive Director
- Margy Hughes Program Coordinator
- Colleen Stuvick Administrative Assistant/Disability Coordinator

# Commission Funding

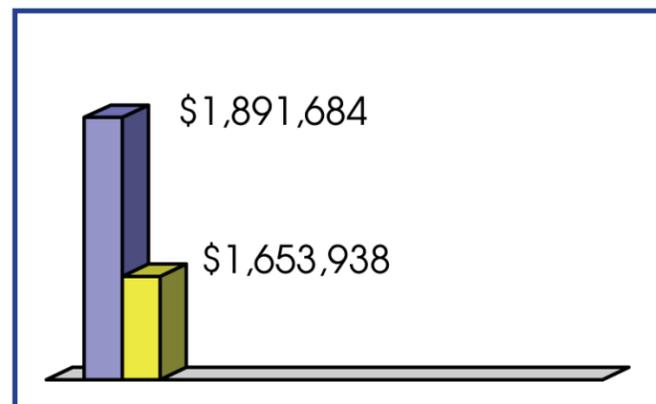


**Total Federal, State, and Local Amounts**



- Federal Funding
- Local Match
- State General Fund & State General Fund Match

**Program Grant Awards and Match**



- Grant Awards
- Match Generated

# About the Commission



Dear Alaskans,

It is with great honor and respect that I present to you Serve Alaska's 2009 Annual Report. Inside this cover you will see a tiny view of the amazing story and huge effort of volunteers all around the state to meet the challenges faced by everyday Alaskans.

We are an unparalleled state in size and beauty but you don't really see Alaska unless you look in its heart. The heart of Alaska is seen in its volunteers. When I meet folks from outside they ask what it is about my state that is so incredible. My response, Alaska is a big place, where little people join together to do big things. This is so evident in this Report.

Serve Alaska's State Community Service Commission has worked hard to help make Alaska one of the top volunteer states in the country. The amazing programs

we administer serve thousands of residents and promote service and volunteerism all over this Great Land. These national service programs and volunteers are the unsung heroes, who through their ingenuity and determination make our Alaska the best place on earth.

I am proud of the Commission's accomplishments, dedication and hard work. They are a dynamic board of energized volunteers who are a catalyst for "Getting Things Done" in Alaska. I encourage each of you to be inspired by these stories and step outside your door and volunteer in your community.

Thank you,  
Dawn E. Grossmann, Chairman, Serve Alaska

## In 2009, The Commission...

**Administered** funding for seven AmeriCorps and four Learn and Serve America programs

**Hosted** training opportunities for the community

**Established** the Disability Inclusion Leadership Team

**Conducted** eight Oaths of Service to AmeriCorps members

**Developed** Media Packet and orientation/training materials for Commissioners

**Participated** in National and Local Community Service events

**Recognized** eleven AmeriCorps member recipients with the Alaska 2009 Outstanding Service Award

The Commission encourages community service and volunteerism as a means to problem-solving across the state. The Commission addresses this goal by administering federal funds, such as AmeriCorps and Learn and Serve America, to support community service and volunteer programs. The Commission also manages a disability inclusion project to assist programs with making national service and volunteerism accessible to more individuals.

**Mission** To foster, support and promote the ethics of service and volunteerism for all Alaskans.

**Goal** Developing young Alaskans, meeting the needs of rural Alaska, meeting Alaska's unmet social needs.

**Strategies** Promote national service programs; Collaborate in national service activities and provide training with other Corporation for National and Community Service partners; Allocate resources to organizations for implementation of AmeriCorps and Learn and Serve America programs.

**AmeriCorps** is a network of national service programs that engages more than 70,000 individuals each year statewide. These AmeriCorps members help to meet educational, environmental, public safety, homeland security or human service needs for nonprofits, public agencies and faith-based organizations throughout the United States.

The Alaska Commission awarded \$1,907,130 in AmeriCorps grants for national service programs across the state. In turn, the programs generated an additional \$1,653,938 of local resources to support their services.

The 287 Alaska AmeriCorps members serving these programs decreased the achievement gap in schools, increased literacy among children and adults, improved and restored public lands and facilities, provided meals to underprivileged youth, and recruited thousands of volunteers to further their efforts.

## AmeriCorps Members...

**Educated** 2,200 adults toward work readiness and job development

**Hosted** 413 health activities involving 4,647 youth

**Provided** 2,476 shelter nights for 72 children

**Assisted** 386 students to receive their GED or high school diploma

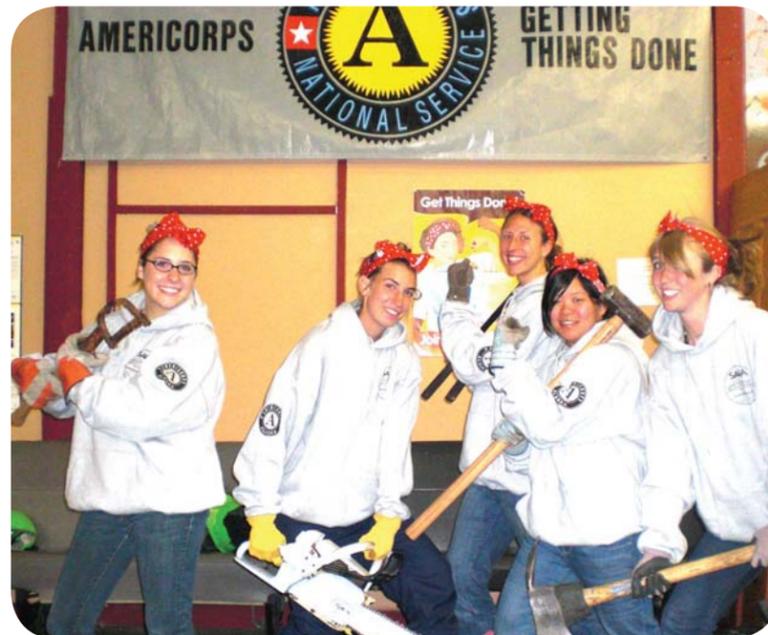
**Recruited** 3,805 volunteers to serve AmeriCorps projects across the state

**Tutored** 655 students

**Received** \$770,175 from the Segal Education Award

**Served** mothers in crisis by holding & comforting their children

**Provided** 1,872 offenders with pre-release or after-incarceration services



2009 AmeriCorps Week - Getting Things Done



**Cordova School District** has three Service Learning programs:

The Peer Helpers Resource - started with three students and has grown to seven. Some of their activities included teaching elementary and middle school students about such topics as bullying, drug and alcohol prevention; giving new students tours around campus; working the Teen Hotline; participating in the Diabetes Walk as well as helping with set up and clean up.



Cordova High School Science Club students on Kayak Island

Raising Student Voice and Participation - students are given the opportunity to voice their opinions and initiate change. The students learned about civic action and creating consensus. They developed an action plan and implemented their goals: improved school environment, improved student lunches, and developed a recycling program.

Renewable Energy Projects - students and their science teacher attended the Association of Alaska School Boards Conference where they presented their ideas for renewable energy. Students partnered with the Kodiak Coast Guard and Light Keepers Association to install a wind turbine at a lighthouse on Kayak Island. The turbine provides renewable quiet power to the visitors at the main cabin.

## In program year 2008-2009...

**25** students participated in service learning

**1125** hours served by students

**86** volunteers were generated

**15** community partnerships were created

**Sitka School District** provides service-learning opportunities to Sitka's youth with a strong emphasis on intergenerational programs. Through the Peer Helpers program students had the opportunity to assist people with disabilities, serve lunch at the senior center, and visit residents at a long term care unit. The Literary Project allowed 6th grade students to be trained in reading to younger children and then to demonstrate those skills by reading to K-6 classrooms. In the Service Learning Mentoring/Tutoring class, high school students received hands-on experience working with K-5 classrooms helping individuals or small groups of students. Other service learning projects included: Grandparents Dinner, students provided decorations, entertainment, set-up and clean-up and Baby Quilt Project where students partnered with adult volunteers to design and sew baby quilts that were given to newborn babies during a home visit by Public Health Nurses.

## In program year 2008-2009...

**245** students participated in service learning

**13,378** hours served by students

**16** volunteers were generated

**5** community partnerships were created

**Alaska Learn and Serve** programs combine classroom learning and community service activities to engage students in service through community partnerships and to promote an ethic of service that will develop students, leadership skills and character. The Commission awarded \$27,981 in Learn and Serve America grants for national service programs across the state. In turn, the programs generated an additional \$46,433 of local resources to support their services. In 2009 more than 375 students participated in 13,378 hours of service learning activities.

## In program year 2008-2009...

**91** students participated in service learning

**3822** hours served by students

**39** volunteers were generated

**30** community partnerships were created

to which they can provide some solution. The problem they identified was education, and the solution was to be "writing buddies" with a 2nd and 3rd grade class; the product was an illustrated story book for the elementary students to take home.

**Juneau Douglas School District** service learning program focused on projects that served the community and fostered a sense of belonging for a group of students who have difficulty finding a place in society. Students enjoy their Internships, the Junior Project, Culture Camp and Beyond School.

Students participated in Beyond School classes, made blankets for seniors at the Pioneer Home, created Tlingit wood carving and worked with AWARE on healthy relationships. Students in the Native Alaskan Culture Camp participated in Alaska Native Story Telling, Traditional Beading, and Traditional Food Preparation. Students that participated in the internship program received real world experience as they helped their community by becoming involved. The Junior Project was a culminating service project in which the students identify a problem



Students serving lunch at the Swan Lake Senior Center assisted by AmeriCorps members Katja and Molly

**Kuspuk School District** - Four schools participated in the service learning program: Aniak Junior and Senior High School, Gusty Michael School, George Morgan Senior High School and Crow Village Sam School. Student service learning activities included; putting together three district-wide newsletters which are distributed to 600 households in seven villages; creating and publishing a district wide year book; collecting cans and creating a presentation that explained the consequences of not recycling in rural Alaska; working on a campaign to educate teens about safe sex and teen pregnancy, and creating a power point presentation to show all high school classes; mentoring youth in the core academic areas of reading, writing and math; and creating for publication a book about life in the mid-Kuskokwim villages titled "In Our Villages, Life on the Mid-Kuskokwim River."

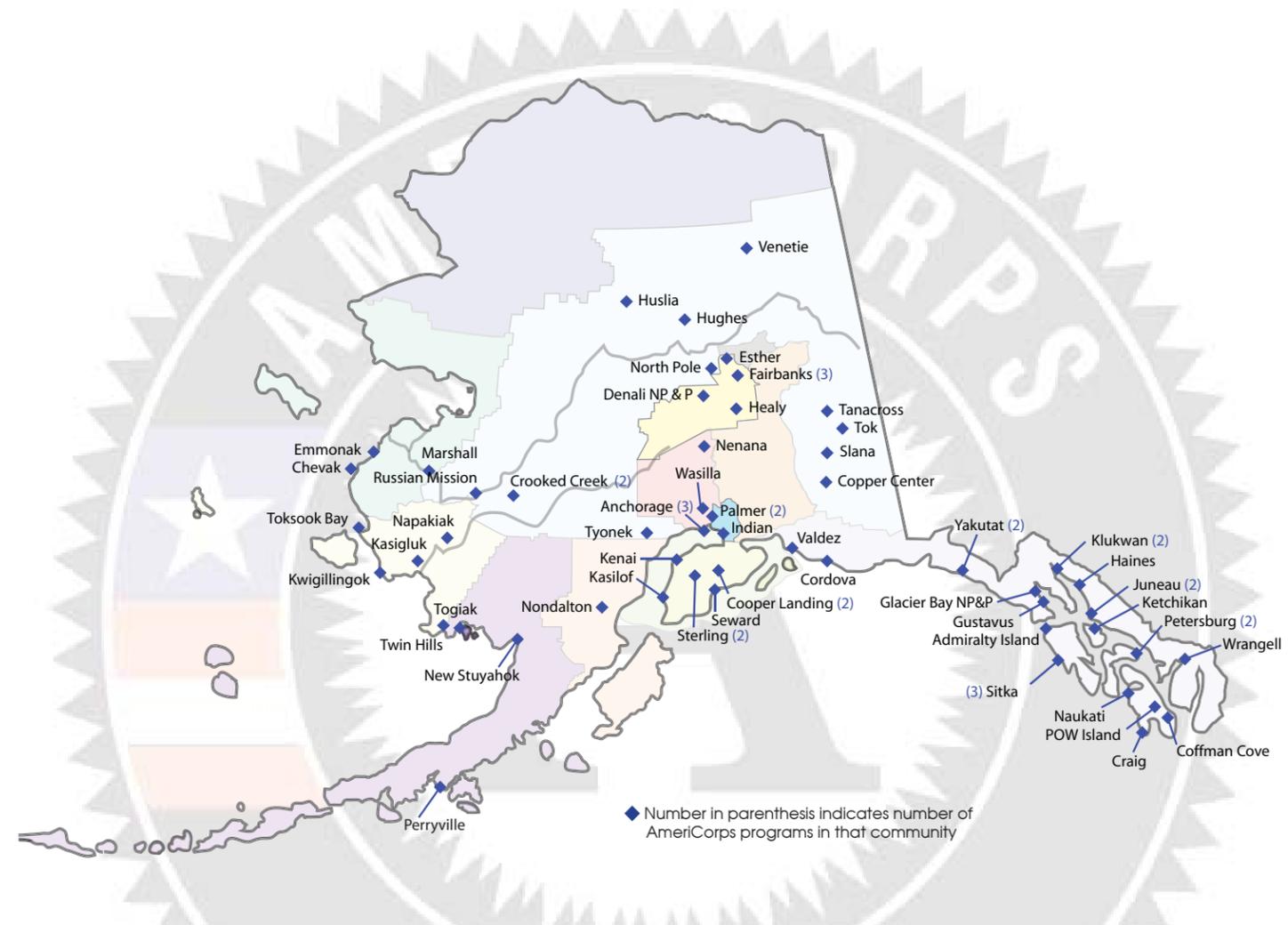
## In program year 2008-2009...

**14** students participated in service learning

**1036** hours served by students

**14** volunteers were generated

**4** community partnerships were created



◆ Number in parenthesis indicates number of AmeriCorps programs in that community

<p><b>Nine Star Education &amp; Employment Services</b> Alaska Coalition for Prisoner Re-Entry <i>Learn and Earn</i> 55 Members</p>	<p><b>Joel's Place</b> <i>Summer of Service</i> 30 Members</p>
<p><b>Rural Alaska Community Action Program</b> <i>Rural Alaska Village Environmental Network</i> <i>Building Initiatives in Rural Community Health</i> <i>Students In Service</i> 115 Members</p>	<p><b>SAGA</b> <i>Serve Alaska Youth Corps</i> <i>Connections</i> 60 Members</p>
	<p><b>Sitka AmeriCorps</b> <i>Summer Youth Camp</i> <i>Helping Hands</i> 27 Members</p>

# SAGA - Serve Alaska Youth Corps

# Sitka - Helping Hands

The **SAYC (Serve Alaska Youth Corps)** is a summer program specifically designed to provide leadership experience, work readiness and life skills to young Alaskans (16-24 years of age) struggling with educational barriers and/or employment. Youth gain skills through the service projects performed and educational activities during evenings and weekends.

Project sites are located throughout Alaska, and projects are completed outdoors in all weather conditions. Projects commonly include trail work, stream restoration, cabin maintenance, water diversion, bridge building, road safety projects which include tree-clearing, brush removal and clearing behind highway guardrails.

## AmeriCorps Members...

**Completed** projects in 15 National and State Parks from Fairbanks to Ketchikan

**Completed** projects that directly benefit over 300,000 people each year through more than 14,000 hours of service

**Were** recruited from 15 mostly rural communities

**Transition** from the SAYC into schools, jobs, and/or full time service programs (including military)



Member raking trail at Mendenhall Visitor Center in Juneau on the Nugget Falls

## AmeriCorps Members...

**Completed** 22,000 hours of service

**Mentored** 265 individuals in the Sitka community

**Assisted** 115 youth of incarcerated parents

**Recruited** 228 disadvantaged youth, college students and baby boomers to volunteer

**Tutored** 544 students

**Received** 560 hours of hands on career development and training



Members and volunteers rake new gravel at local skate park

## Everyday Impact

In 2008 five young people from Noatak raised the funds required to join Serve Alaska Youth Corps in Anchorage; none of them had been farther from home than Kotzebue. That same year, three young people from Little Diomedes Island joined us; none of them had ever left the island before.

This year seven young people from

Kotlik raised the funds required to join us in Anchorage for this year's season.

SAGA's Serve Alaska Youth Corps provides the rural youth of our state the opportunity to experience more of Alaska's many eco-systems and everyday interaction with their urban counterparts.



L to R - Clinton Burdette, Team Leader, from Alabama; Daniel Fernandez from Miami; Louis Ozenna from Little Diomedes; Seth Davis Team Leader from North Carolina; Kevin Ozenna from Little Diomedes; Justin Ahkinga from Little Diomedes; Front, Jay Alexie from Kwethluk.

## Everyday Impact

AmeriCorps member LIVVY KING began her term by serving young children at a local early childhood school. Mid term she was asked to work with a little girl that was extremely emotionally disturbed; Livvy was so happy to work with the little girl one-on-one. She met with the little girl twice a week for an hour, each time developing her reading skills. After three months the little girl

began to open up to Livvy; smiling, laughing and telling stories. Livvy had become someone the little girl trusted and a bond was built that would never be lost. It has been over a year since Livvy first met the little girl and she sees her all around the community, involved in several AmeriCorps after school youth groups and her church.



Livvy King

## Sitka - Summer Youth Camp

The **Summer Youth Camp** is a youth focused program consisting of one full-time adult member and 12 part-time youth AmeriCorps members. These members are placed in an educational program that provides construction and maintenance training to the youth members. Under the mentorship of the adult member, the trained youth then provide services for the community, while developing job skills as future employees. The 12 members will return to school, gain employment or enter apprenticeship positions which are measured in a six-month post-service survey. The service to the community of Sitka, provided by these members in the ten-week program, encourage the public's physical activity choices, increase community volunteer recruitment and help provide a positive economical impact on the fishing industry.

### AmeriCorps Members...

**Completed** 3,523 hours of service

**Assisted** elderly adults

**Mentored** 86 individuals in the Sitka community

**Assisted** 26 youth volunteers

**Recruited** 47 volunteers



AmeriCorps members host International Community Fair

### Everyday Impact

Members from the Summer Youth Camp replaced the fallen roof at the local fish hatchery. The SJ Hatchery in Sitka was once a viable part of the now closed hatchery and is at risk of losing many of its small outside buildings due to disrepair. Sitka's Summer Youth Camp took this

service project on after attending class on the use of tools and construction. They replaced the roof on the egg take building and then rewired the inside for lighting. The building is now in full use securing the future of many salmon runs to return to the Sitka area.



Members replace roof on egg take building.

## SAGA - Connections

The **Connections** program is an AmeriCorps Individual Placement Program. Connections Members are full-time AmeriCorps members who provide up to 11 months of service with government agencies, non-profit organizations and public school systems throughout the state of Alaska. Their efforts support programs that improve school success and encourage healthy lifestyle choices. Connections Members come from varying social, cultural and educational backgrounds. Many have college degrees and experience in community involvement and education. All of them see the value of and are committed to community service and have come to Alaska to "Get Things Done," as evidenced by their willingness to serve.

### AmeriCorps Members...

**Served** 32 communities statewide in 45 organizations

**Provided** 2,476 shelter nights to 72 children

**Completed** 33,826 hours of service

**Recruited** 1,407 volunteers who provided 4,502 service hours

**Provided** direct services and programs to over 3,000 school-aged youth



Connections Member, Daniel Fernandez, facilitating the DOT Bike Rodeo in May 2009. Picture Taken by Margaret Novak

### Everyday Impact

Margaret Novak feels AmeriCorps gives her an opportunity to make a difference in the world while preparing for graduate school. She has been serving with Connections as a Community Volunteer Specialist for the past year. Margaret coordinated the annual Global Youth Services Day. Over 250 volunteers served at fifteen non-profit agencies, parks, and schools contributing over 500 volunteer hours to the community that day. "I learned so much

from this experience; having successfully organized an event with such a positive outcome was extremely rewarding." Margaret also organized a quilt-making project for AmeriCorps Week, and then completed the quilt. On August 19th the quilt was presented to the Serve Alaska, State Service Commission. Margaret's term of National Service is soon ending, but she will continue to lead a life of service wherever she goes.



Margaret Novak and quilt. "I had no idea I could sew together a quilt in 2 days!"

## RurAL CAP - BIRCH

The **BIRCH (Building Initiatives in Rural Community Health)** AmeriCorps program supports 15 AmeriCorps members from rural communities across Alaska. Members work with health providers and community residents to identify the highest priority health issues to address. BIRCH AmeriCorps members design and support community-wide events for youth, families and Elders in the areas of health education, substance abuse prevention and wellness.

The BIRCH AmeriCorps program strengthens communities by expanding opportunities for people of all ages to be involved in community activities and decision-making, and in creating local solutions.

### AmeriCorps Members...

**Served** 15 rural Alaskan communities

**Completed** 25,505 hours of service

**Organized** 107 educational events such as health fairs and wellness conferences

**Recruited** or served with 643 volunteers; Volunteers completed 3,706 hours of service

**Provided** 217 people with tobacco cessation referrals; 25 people successfully quit tobacco use



AmeriCorps member Heidi Young of Naukati organized a community health fair. I really hope the quality of this photo is good.

### Everyday Impact

During her first year of service, AmeriCorps member **ROBERTA BLUNKA** of New Stuyahok took on the issue of tobacco prevention in her community, even though she struggled with the addiction herself. She gained personal knowledge about the issue and was able to attend a national conference to learn more about how to address the issue locally. While she was at that

conference, she made a commitment to herself to quit, and she did!

After she overcame her own addiction, she made it her mission to help her family, friends and community members overcome their addiction. She assisted her mom in quitting and, as a result, her mom's photograph was used in an advertisement that encourages others to quit!



## Nine Star Education & Employment Services - CPR

The **CPR (Coalition for Prisoner Re-Entry)** AmeriCorps program supports ex-offenders as they begin the challenging process of leaving incarceration and re-entering into the community as productive citizens. Members served at 15 community agencies or the Alaska Department of Corrections. Their roles are designed to assist ex-offenders as they search for work, seek educational opportunities, find housing, and begin reunification with family members.

### AmeriCorps Members...

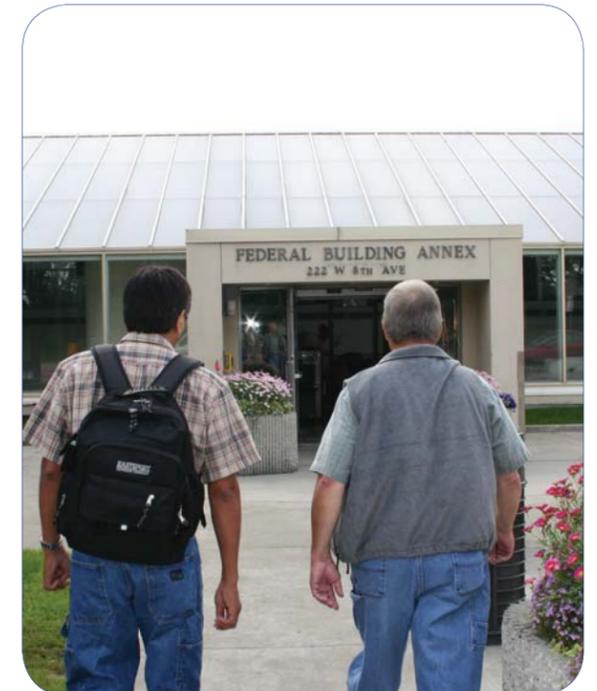
**Completed** 5,074 hours of service

**Recruited** 33 volunteers

**Provided** 1,872 offenders with pre-release or after-incarceration services

**Networked** with 94 organizations for coordination of re-entry services

**Served** with five Department of Correction entities



Members go from behind bars to behind a desk

### Everyday Impact

The success of this project was not only for the many ex-offenders who gained employment, or found a place to live, or took advantage of an educational opportunity, but for 14 of the 21 Members who were at one time themselves incarcerated. These Members used the know-how they gained from their own

re-entry experience to encourage the program participants to do the same. At the same time they increased their own professional and work-readiness skills. The community truly came together as Members served to assist in re-building the lives of those who had returned to their neighborhoods from incarceration.



The **Learn & Earn** AmeriCorps program supports under and unemployed Alaskans as they seek to become financially self-sufficient through a variety of educational and work readiness services. Members serve in 18 different educational institutions, governmental agencies and non-profit, community organizations in eight Alaskan communities as instructors, case managers, coaches, and job developers, all of which prepare Alaskans for the workplace.

The **RAVEN (Rural Alaska Village Environmental Network)** AmeriCorps program serves Alaskans communities by promoting environmental education energy conservation, encouraging recycling and waste reduction, and fostering community involvement in area-wide clean-up efforts. Each year, 20 RAVEN AmeriCorps members improve environmental conditions in their remote villages across Alaska.

RAVEN members also host healthy activities for youth. They organize youth events, provide volunteer opportunities for youth, and serve as local role models as they address local environmental issues with local solutions.

## AmeriCorps Members...

**Completed** 7,468 hours of service

**Recruited** 145 volunteers

**Provided** classroom and web instruction to 1,975 adult students

**Educated** 2,200 adults about work readiness and job development

**Assisted** 386 students to receive their GED or high school diploma

**Served** 414 at-risk youth; 282 youth found jobs & 106 entered educational programs



Senior Alaskan Goes to Work

## AmeriCorps Members...

**Served** 20 rural Alaskan communities

**Completed** 25,302 hours of service

**Diverted** nearly 2.5 million pounds of solid waste from local dumps/landfills

**Educated** 538 community members about indoor air quality

**Hosted** 413 healthy activities involving 4,647 youth

**Presented** 5 workshops at the Alaska Tribal Conference on Environmental Management with over 100 people in attendance



Sasha Vale, RAVEN AmeriCorps member in Yakutat, readies a backhaul shipment of aluminum for recycling.

## Everyday Impact

JESSICA WALKER and JULIANNA TOBLER received their GEDs and served two AmeriCorps terms. Jessica joined the staff of Nine Star and Julianna enrolled at UAA and was on the Dean's List. Gerald Ward and Brian

Butters both served well in spite of their pronounced physical disabilities and both are on staff at Nine Star after serving as Members for two years. The AmeriCorps program works on many levels.



AmeriCorps members Brian Butters & Gerald Ward

## Everyday Impact

Kasigluk RAVEN AmeriCorps member LENA KEENE reports that the community Cleanup-Greenup was a huge success. The annual event took place in late June, and "was awesome and well organized," says Keene, who was involved in planning and supervision of the project. In all, 86 volunteers spent

three afternoons collecting nearly 1,200 pounds of trash, which included 500 pounds of lead-acid batteries. The trash pickers also rounded up a 220-pound steel tank and consolidated 400 pounds of aluminum cans which will be flown to a recycling center in Anchorage.



Lena Keene

## RurAL CAP - Students In Service

**RurAL CAP** works with the University of Alaska Anchorage and the University of Alaska Fairbanks to coordinate up to 80 part-time Students In Service AmeriCorps members each year. Members address a number of social and health issues including domestic violence, suicide, alcohol and drug abuse, employment and training, teen pregnancy, corrections and juvenile delinquency, child development, and child welfare. Students In Service AmeriCorps members contribute valuable service to their communities and use their AmeriCorps experience to further their education while preparing themselves for professional human service careers.

### AmeriCorps Members...

**Served** over 15,000 people statewide

**Completed** 27,411 hours of service

**Recruited** or served with 1,280 volunteers; volunteers completed 11,888 hours of service

**Partnered** with 52 host agencies to address social and health issues in Anchorage and Fairbanks



AmeriCorps member hosts exhibit table at a community event

### Everyday Impact

**SANDRA EDDINGTON**, a UAA student earning her bachelor degree in social work in Anchorage did her practicum at a local middle school. This is her story:

“A teacher brought to my attention a student who was struggling in her classes. A meeting with the parents and a team of teachers did not go well because there was

a language barrier. I am fluent in Spanish. The parents speak only Spanish and the teachers were unable to find anybody to help them. The teachers finally gave me the information hoping that I could help this student. I called the parents and introduced myself as the student Social Worker at (the) middle school and offered my help. The student is capable of getting

good grades, I just needed to see if there were any other issues. I had several meetings with the student and talked to her mother a few times and the student is improving her grades. I have received positive notes on the student from her behavior in class and turning in her homework. The students at (the) middle school respond well to me. I have a few that come to the office looking for me specifically.”

## Joel's Place - Seasons of Service

**Joel's Place** Seasons of Service is dedicated to providing a compassionate community for agencies and youth to serve one another. The AmeriCorps Summer of Service program provides training and service opportunities for youth ages 16-25. The AmeriCorps Fall Seasons of Service operates September through December for primarily high school students to explore their passion through service. This summer AmeriCorps members served in a variety of ways; painting picnic tables for Alaska State Parks, clearing land to create a seed garden for a local ecology center and serving at the World Eskimo Indian Olympics.

### AmeriCorps Members...

**Completed** 8,250 hours of service

**Recruited** and served with 22 volunteers

**Served** over 10,000 meals to low income children through Alaska Summer Food Service Program

**Restored** stream banks and cleared trails

**Baked** cookies for returning soldiers



Members and volunteers relax around the fire pit they built for the Fairbanks Rescue Mission

### Everyday Impact

**AMELIA PAUL**, 20, is a soft spoken Native Alaskan woman with a deep desire to care for young children. Daily she touches the lives of infants and children at our local women's shelter. Her gentle nature and consistency

help bring peace to the little lives that have already experienced so much trauma. Amelia has worked through a 40 hour Child Development course and is working towards her GED.



Amelia Paul