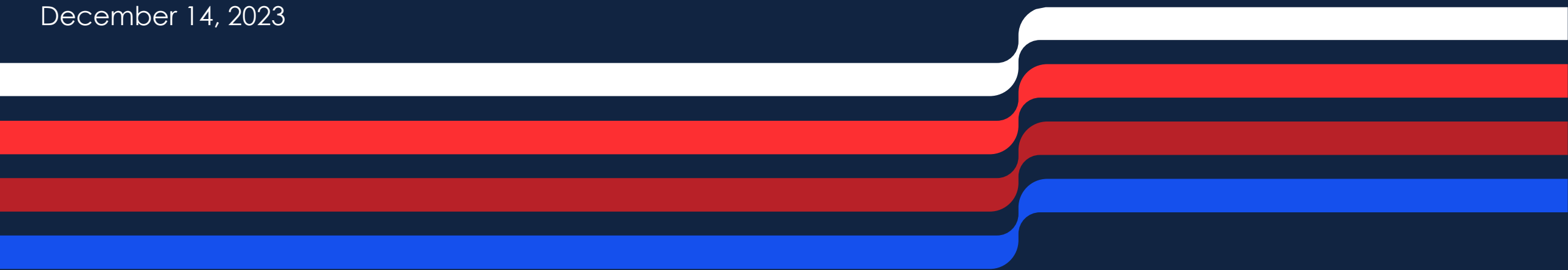




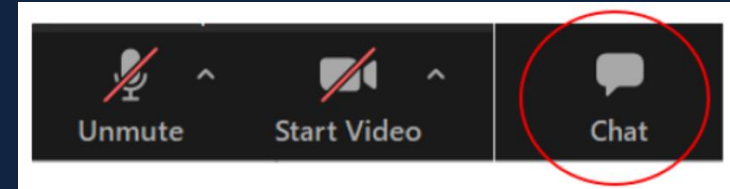
# AmeriCorps ROI Studies – Proof that the Cost of ‘Doing Good’ Benefits the Personal, Community and Federal Bottomline

December 14, 2023



# Virtual Meeting Tips & Best Practices

## Rules of Engagement



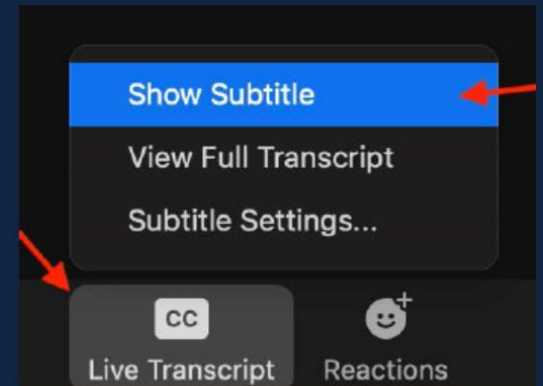
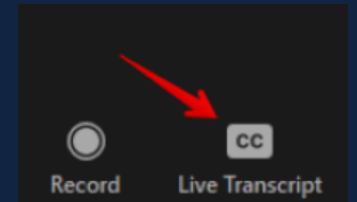
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# AmeriCorps ROI Studies – Proof that the Cost of ‘Doing Good’ Benefits the Personal, Community and Federal Bottomline

December 14, 2023



# Today's Presenters



- **Mary Hyde, PhD**, Director, AmeriCorps Office of Research and Evaluation
- **Emily Pindilli, PhD**, Assistant Director Ecosystem Services & Natural Capital, Office of Science & Technology Policy, Executive Office of the President
- **Emily McDonald, PhD**, Research Analyst, AmeriCorps Office of Research and Evaluation
- **Benjamin Miller**, Senior Director, Community Development, ICF
- **Dominic Modicamore**, Lead Labor Economics Consultant, Economic and Workforce Development, ICF
- **Tess Mason-Elder**, Director, AmeriCorps Office of Government Relations

# Webinar Learning Objectives



- Define ROI and how it helps AmeriCorps and grantees quantify the value of program activities
- Describe how various agencies are exploring frontiers of benefit-cost analysis
- Consider how four FY 2023 AmeriCorps ROI studies add to the growing body of evidence on AmeriCorps-supported programs
- Reflect on how the ROI approach may be applied to programs you help to implement or may choose to study

# Setting the Stage

The importance of return-on-investment analysis for AmeriCorps  
and the larger field

Mary Hyde, PhD

Director, Office of Research and Evaluation,  
AmeriCorps



# The AmeriCorps Office of Research and Evaluation

## ORE Vision:

AmeriCorps strives to make **a lasting and sustainable impact** across the FOUR domains of our Impact Framework and **foster the powerful synergies between these interconnected domains**.

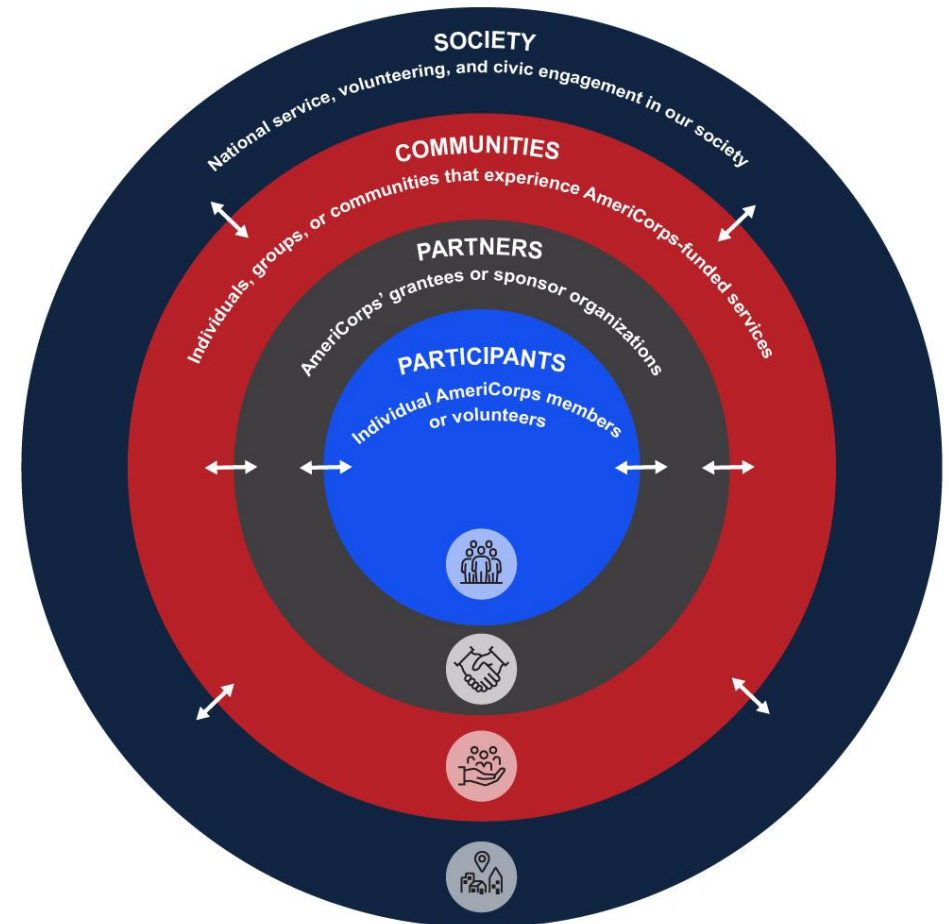
## ORE Mission

- **Identify** national service and volunteering **trends**
- **Conduct research** and **build scholarship** on civic engagement
- **Measure** national service **impact**
- **Promote evidence-based models** and program **expansion**

## Culture of Learning:

**Knowledge** and **evidence built** across the FOUR domains of impact can be used to **improve** the participant service **experience**, **strengthen organizations**, **support communities** and **inform** the **civic health of society**.

## AmeriCorps Impact Framework



# Federal Benefit/Cost Analysis

Emily Pindilli, PhD

Assistant Director Ecosystem Services & Natural  
Capital, Office of Science & Technology Policy,  
Executive Office of the President





# AmeriCorps ROI Studies

## Strategy & Vision

Emily McDonald, PhD

Research Analyst

AmeriCorps Office of Research and Evaluation



# About Return on Investment



$$\frac{\text{Total Benefits}}{\text{Total Costs}} = \text{ROI}$$

# About the ROI Studies Project



ICF supporting a multi-year effort to:

- Review AmeriCorps's national service portfolio for ROI-ready programs
- Select programs for a deeper look at ROI feasibility
- Develop four ROI studies per year

## **Key Distinction:**

Composite studies (prior to this project)

vs.

Program-specific studies (under this project)

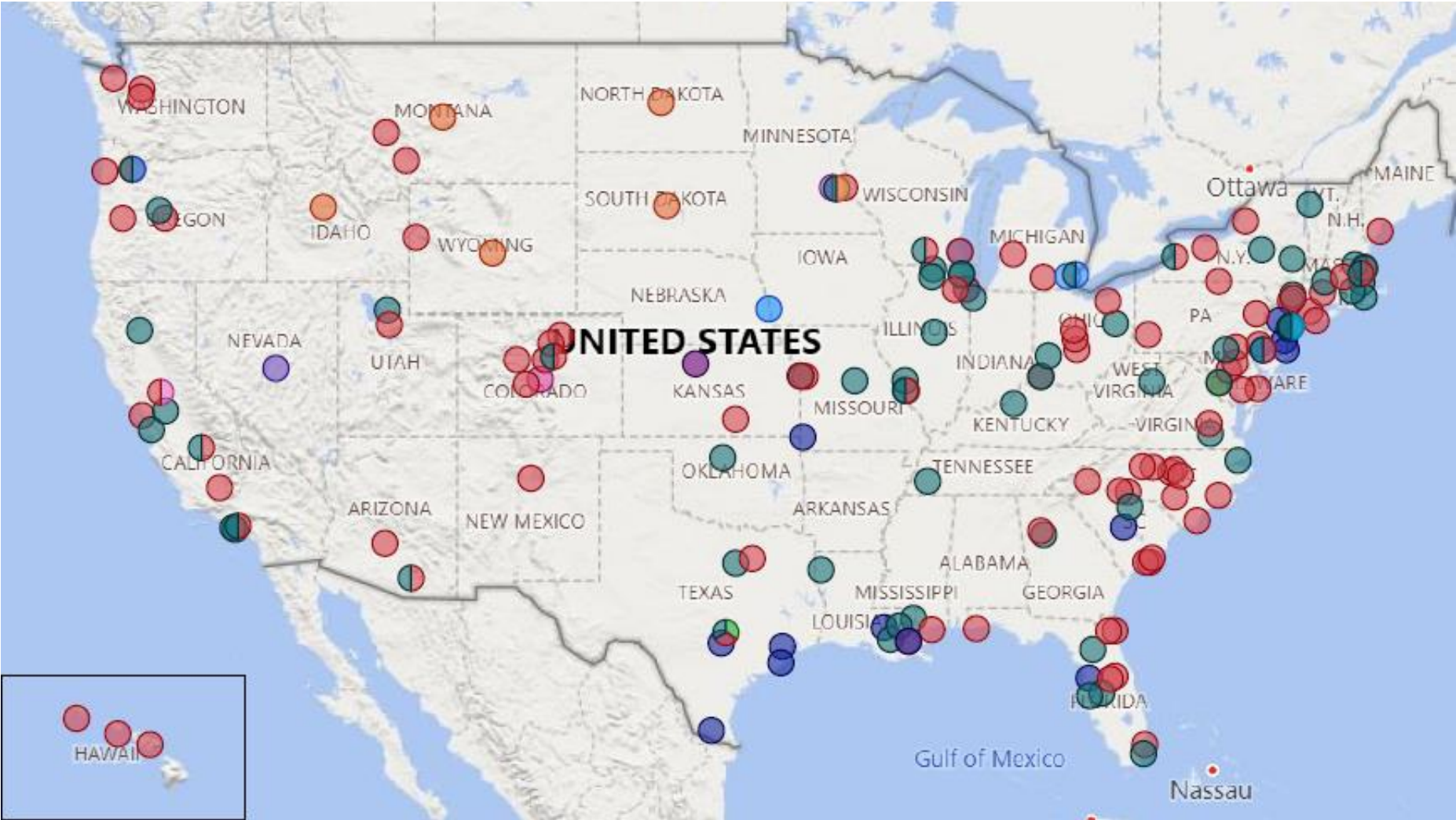
# Published Program-Specific Studies



# Programs Studied in FY 2023



# National Coverage



# With an ROI study, programs can...



- Articulate their value in a more measurable way
  - Example: “For each dollar of funding invested, this program produces \$X of benefits over Y years.”
- Strengthen their recruitment messages
- Broaden support by demonstrating benefits that matter to different audiences
  - Example: Summer youth program that has both workforce / education benefits and crime reduction benefits
- Allocate resources based on the return on different activities
  - Example: Wildfire mitigation activities vs. noxious weed abatement

# Questions to reflect on...



- Do you have benefit and cost data that would make an ROI study possible?
- What's the “counterfactual” for your program that would help you estimate your program's impacts?
- What are gaps in the data you could use for an ROI analysis of your program?



# Questions? Discussion?



For more information, please contact:

Emily McDonald  
AmeriCorps Office of Research and Evaluation  
[EMcDonald@americorps.gov](mailto:EMcDonald@americorps.gov)

# FY 2023 AmeriCorps ROI Studies

Benjamin Miller

Senior Director, Community  
Development, ICF

Dominic Modicamore,

Lead Labor Economics, ICF



**GREEN  
CITY  
FORCE**

Green City Force



# About Green City Force



- Uses workforce training to enhance the economic mobility of AmeriCorps members, all of whom reside in New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) housing in Brooklyn, New York.
- Exposes members to various facets of the green economy, equipping them with the necessary skills and preparation to pursue related careers.
- Engages members in green service projects including:
  - Building and maintaining urban farms that distribute free organic produce to residents
  - Educating other NYCHA residents on environmental sustainability

# GCF Program Benefits



## AmeriCorps Members

- **Additional earnings from reduced unemployment**
- **Additional lifetime earnings from increased educational attainment** as a result of education awards
- Post-tax living allowances and education awards

## Government

- Tax revenue from increased earnings by GCF members post-program and sales tax revenue from increased economic activity
- Tax revenue from living allowances and education awards
- **Reduced lifetime spending** on corrections, public assistance, and social insurance from increased educational attainment by GCF AmeriCorps members as a result of education awards
- Lifetime tax revenue from increased educational attainment by GCF AmeriCorps members as a result of education awards
- Lifetime tax revenue from increased educational attainment by GCF AmeriCorps members as a result of education awards
- Reduced spending on processing of waste resulting from composting of organic waste

## Society

- **Reduced carbon emissions resulting** from composting of organic waste decreases monetized value of damages to society caused by carbon emissions

## NYCHA Residents

- **Savings from access to free organic produce**

# GCF Program ROI Results



ROI calculation	Short-term ROI scenario	Medium-term ROI scenario	Long-term ROI scenario
Total benefits per federal dollar	\$1.39	\$9.45	\$17.93
Total benefits per funder dollar	\$0.69	\$4.09	\$7.60
Federal government benefits per federal dollar	\$0.21	\$1.67	\$3.10

**ROI analysis estimated a \$4.09 return on each dollar invested in Green City Force over a medium-term scenario.**



# Colorado Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY)



# About Colorado Home Instruction for Parent of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY)



- Parent Possible is a Colorado-based organization that equips parents with the tools they need for success in their children's education and lives.
- Since 1991, Parent Possible has administered HIPPY, a home visitation program model with a curriculum designed to enhance children's development before kindergarten.
- The HIPPY model is used throughout the United States and internationally.



# AmeriCorps' Role in HIPPY



AmeriCorps members:

- Conduct one-on-one weekly visits with parents, engaging them in role-playing activities from the curriculum to promote the development of early literacy, social/emotional skills, and cognitive and physical abilities in their children
- Collaborate with professionally trained program coordinators to ensure effective supervision and support in executing home visits
- Foster a nurturing and supportive environment for parents to maximize their child's learning potential

# HIPPY Program Benefits



## AmeriCorps Members

- Additional earnings from reduced unemployment
- Additional lifetime earnings from increased educational attainment as a result of education awards
- Post-tax living allowances and education awards

## Government

- Tax revenue from increased earnings by AmeriCorps members post-program and sales tax revenue from increased economic activity
- Reduced educational spending due to reduced grade repetition of HIPPY preschooler participants
- Tax revenue from living allowances and education awards
- **Reduced lifetime spending** on corrections, public assistance, and social insurance from increased educational attainment by AmeriCorps members and **HIPPY participants**
- Lifetime tax revenue from increased educational attainment by AmeriCorps members and HIPPY participants

## HIPPY Participants

- **Additional lifetime earnings from increased educational attainment as a result of educational support services**

# HIPPY Program ROI Results



ROI Calculation	Short term ROI scenario	Medium term ROI scenario	Long term ROI scenario
Total benefits per federal dollar	\$0.21	\$7.13	\$12.32
Total benefits per funder dollar	\$0.12	\$3.92	\$6.77
Federal government benefits per federal dollar	\$0.04	\$1.92	\$4.01

**ROI analysis estimated a \$3.92 return on each dollar invested in HIPPY over a medium-term scenario.**



# Montana Conservation Corps



# About Montana Conservation Corps (MCC)



- Founded in 1991, MCC is an environmental service program dedicated to promoting field research and direct conservation service.
- MCC has operated as an AmeriCorps program since 1993, with teams of AmeriCorps members implementing conservation interventions.
- MCC supports communities and public lands in the Northern Rockies, including Montana, Wyoming, Idaho, North Dakota, and South Dakota.

# AmeriCorps' Role in MCC



AmeriCorps members:

- Develop beaver dam analogs (BDAs) that improve drought and flood resilience and increase ecosystem services of adjacent habitats
- Reduce wildfires through fuel reduction and habitat restoration
- Treat and abate noxious weeds
- Conduct post-fire re-seeding and reintroduce native plants
- Implement trail management measures

# MCC Program Benefits



## AmeriCorps Members

- Increased earnings of national service members due to increased employment and education of AmeriCorps members
- AmeriCorps member living allowances and education awards

## Government

- Avoided costs to government from wildfires
- Increased federal and state income tax revenue due to increased earnings of AmeriCorps members
- Increased Social Security and Medicare tax revenue due to increased earning of AmeriCorps members
- Increased sales tax revenue due to increased earnings of AmeriCorps members
- Reduced spending on public assistance, corrections, and social insurance due to educational attainment of AmeriCorps members

## Society

- **Improved ecosystem services, carbon sequestration, extreme event moderation, and water quality benefits from BDA installation**
- **Avoided costs to society from wildfires**
- **Increased ecosystem services**
- **Health and recreational benefits of trails**

# MCC Program ROI Results



ROI Calculation	ROI Scenario		
	Short-Term	Medium-Term	Long-Term
Total Benefits per Federal Dollar*			
With low ecosystem benefits	\$0.73	\$7.75	\$11.66
With average ecosystem benefits	\$2.39	\$27.37	\$41.38
With high ecosystem benefits	\$7.81	\$92.69	\$144.32
Total Benefits per Funder Dollar*			
With low ecosystem benefits	\$0.66	\$6.63	\$9.79
With average ecosystem benefits	\$2.11	\$23.83	\$35.84
With high ecosystem benefits	\$6.86	\$81.07	\$126.05
Federal Government Benefits per Federal Dollar	-\$0.02	\$0.18	\$0.49

\* These ROI estimates are provided based on low, average, and high estimates of ecosystem benefits to society.

**ROI analysis estimated a \$23.83 return on each dollar invested in Montana Conservation Corps over a medium-term scenario and with average estimates of ecosystem benefits.**



# AMUS DETROIT

AmeriCorps Urban Safety Program

AmeriCorps Urban Safety  
Program Detroit (AMUS)

# About AmeriCorps Urban Safety Program Detroit (AMUS)



- AMUS works to improve public health and safety in the City of Detroit and Wayne County, Michigan.
- Participating AmeriCorps members with service terms up to one year:
  - Create partnerships with community stakeholders to identify crime “hot spots”
  - Organize neighborhood block clubs and community patrols
  - Provide outreach and support to survivors of intimate partner violence
  - Implement safe routes for youth walking or biking to neighborhood schools
  - Secure vacant and open structures
  - Provide resources to residents to help reduce property crime, such as home safety assessments and anti-theft auto devices
  - Install water filters to reduce blood lead levels
  - Distribute air purifiers and HEPA filters to improve home indoor air quality

# About AMUS Summer Youth Program



In addition, AMUS operates a summer youth employment program:

- Participants are engaged as AmeriCorps members with shorter service terms.
- Participants contribute to public service.
- Weekly seminars for participants build college and career readiness.

# AMUS Program Benefits



## AmeriCorps Members

- Additional earnings from reduced unemployment
- Additional lifetime earnings from increased educational attainment as a result of education awards
- Additional lifetime earnings from increased educational attainment as a result of the summer youth program
- Post-tax living allowances and education awards

## Government

- Tax revenue from increased earnings by AmeriCorps members and sales tax revenue from increased economic activity
- Tax revenue from living allowances and education awards
- Tax revenue from increased earnings from increased educational attainment by AmeriCorps members due to education awards
- Reduced lifetime spending on corrections, public assistance, and social insurance from increased educational attainment
- Reduced costs of police protection, legal and adjudication services, and corrections programs due to reduced criminal activity
- Lifetime tax revenue from increased earnings by beneficiaries as a result of avoided lead exposure due to water filters

## Society

- **Reduced economic losses suffered by crime victims, including medical care costs, lost earnings, and property loss/damage as a result of youth summer program participation**
- **Reduced costs of crime displacing productive employment**

## AMUS Beneficiaries

- **Additional lifetime earnings from increased IQ as a result of avoided lead exposure**

# AMUS Program ROI Results



ROI calculation	Short term ROI scenario	Medium term ROI scenario	Long term ROI scenario
Total benefits per federal dollar	\$3.86	\$6.00	\$7.28
Total benefits per funder dollar	\$1.63	\$2.53	\$3.07
Federal government benefits per federal dollar	\$0.41	\$0.89	\$1.16

**ROI analysis estimated a \$2.53 return on each dollar invested in AMUS over a medium-term scenario.**



# Reflections

Tess Mason-Elder

Director, AmeriCorps Office of Government Relations



# Q&A Panel Facilitator

Emily McDonald, PhD

Research Analyst

AmeriCorps Office of Research and Evaluation



# Questions to reflect on...



- Do you have benefit and cost data that would make an ROI study possible?
- What's the “counterfactual” for your program that would help you estimate your program's impacts?
- What are gaps in the data you could use for an ROI analysis of your program?



# Q & A Panel Discussion:

- Mary Hyde, PhD, Director, AmeriCorps Office of Research and Evaluation
- Emily Pindilli, PhD, Assistant Director Ecosystem Services & Natural Capital, Office of Science & Technology Policy, Executive Office of the President
- Benjamin Miller, Senior Director, Community Development, ICF
- Dominic Modicamore, Lead Labor Economics Consultant, Economic and Workforce Development, ICF
- Tess Mason-Elder, Director, AmeriCorps Office of Government Relations

# Thank you for attending today's webinar

Join us in our year long [Celebration of Service and Its Evidence Story](#).

Our next Webinar: AmeriCorps – Building a Healthy Future in February 2024

The recording and support materials for this webinar will be provided in the next two weeks on the [AmeriCorps Our Impact Webinar page](#) and [AmeriCorps R&E YouTube Playlist](#)

To inquire about the work presented in this webinar, please reach out to [Evaluation@cns.gov](mailto:Evaluation@cns.gov)



The screenshot shows a banner for the "Evidence & Impact Webinar Series 2023-2024". On the left is the "30 YEARS of AmeriCorps" logo. The main title is "Evidence & Impact Webinar Series 2023-2024". Below this is the subtitle "Celebrating Service and Its Evidence Story". A section titled "About the 2023-2024 Webinar Series" contains a paragraph of text describing the series' focus on evidence and impact.

**30**  
YEARS of  
AmeriCorps

**Evidence & Impact  
Webinar Series**  
2023-2024

***Celebrating Service and Its Evidence Story***

**About the 2023-2024 Webinar Series**

The six-webinar series hosted by the AmeriCorps Office of Research and Evaluation will focus on evidence and impact with partners in the field, within the agency, and leaders in communities and the nation. Register, participate and celebrate AmeriCorps' 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of harnessing the transformative value of evidence use to strengthen community-based organization practices, members and volunteers, local impact, and public trust. This showcase year will highlight AmeriCorps' evidence journey and the evidence use movement sparked through the Evidence Act. Webinars will share how AmeriCorps not only supports research, evidence and evaluation capacity building that strengthens the local nonprofit missions to problem solve and tackle community inspired change, but also shows return in taxpayer dollars saved to local, state, and national budgets and sparks our nation's civic engagement.