



ServeMinnesota

The power of AmeriCorps. The power of you.



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Vision

Inspiring action to change Minnesota communities for the better.

Mission

ServeMinnesota is a catalyst for positive social change, working with AmeriCorps and community partners to meet critical needs in Minnesota.

We get measurable results by:

Innovation: Researching and applying the best methods to create powerful local solutions.

Investment: Raising and allocating funds for AmeriCorps program development, and people serving in those programs, to maximize return.

Alignment: Aligning with local community and government priorities and setting consistent program standards to ensure measurable results.



Dear Friends,

Life-changing. If you've ever met an AmeriCorps member, you'll most likely hear how the experience changed their life. They'll tell you how they learned a new skill, discovered a new career path or were personally able to make a difference in someone's life. And if you ever talk to someone who has been the beneficiary of working with an AmeriCorps member, they will describe it as life-changing too. They'll tell you how they learned how to read, discovered how technology could help their job search or found the mentor they needed.

In this year's report, we highlight four programs that represent the quality and creativity of all the programs funded by ServeMinnesota. We invest strategically to help address Minnesota's most pressing issues. We focus our investments in three areas: Economic Sustainability, Educational Achievement and Environmental Protection. ServeMinnesota is a catalyst for solving community problems through the power of AmeriCorps. In fact, the programs we support are so effective that Minnesota ranks fourth among all 50 states in its allocation of federal funds.

In a struggling economy, we hear a lot about careful investing and maximizing resources. AmeriCorps provides an unparalleled return on investment and combines three key factors: exceptional programming, innovative thinking and amazing members – resulting in powerful solutions for individuals, families and communities all over the state.

We've seen a surge in community and civic engagement over the past year; applications to join AmeriCorps more than tripled last year. People want to serve their neighborhoods, schools and communities. ServeMinnesota is poised to leverage this increased enthusiasm for national service, because of our ability to support innovative and results-oriented initiatives – especially in the vital area of education.

When we align service with proven approaches that yield measurable results, we see the transformative power of this program. We appreciate your interest and involvement and hope you'll tell others about the impact and potential of our work. AmeriCorps changes lives...including yours.

Sincerely,

Audrey Suker
Chief Executive Officer

Bob Rumpza
Board Chair



Getting Things Done Across Minnesota

- 841 AmeriCorps members engaged in service throughout Minnesota this year
- 35,057 community volunteers managed or mobilized by AmeriCorps members
- 23,702 disadvantaged children and youth served
- 12,286 individuals mentored
- \$11.5 million invested in nonprofit, community, educational and faith-based community groups through AmeriCorps programs
- Nearly 400 sites hosted AmeriCorps members














2008-2009 AmeriCorps Program Grants

The AmeriCorps program is an instrument for solving community issues and is a pathway for people to make significant contributions in their community through service. ServeMinnesota provides AmeriCorps grants to organizations across the state that focus on a wide variety of issues including economic opportunity, educational achievement and environmental protection.

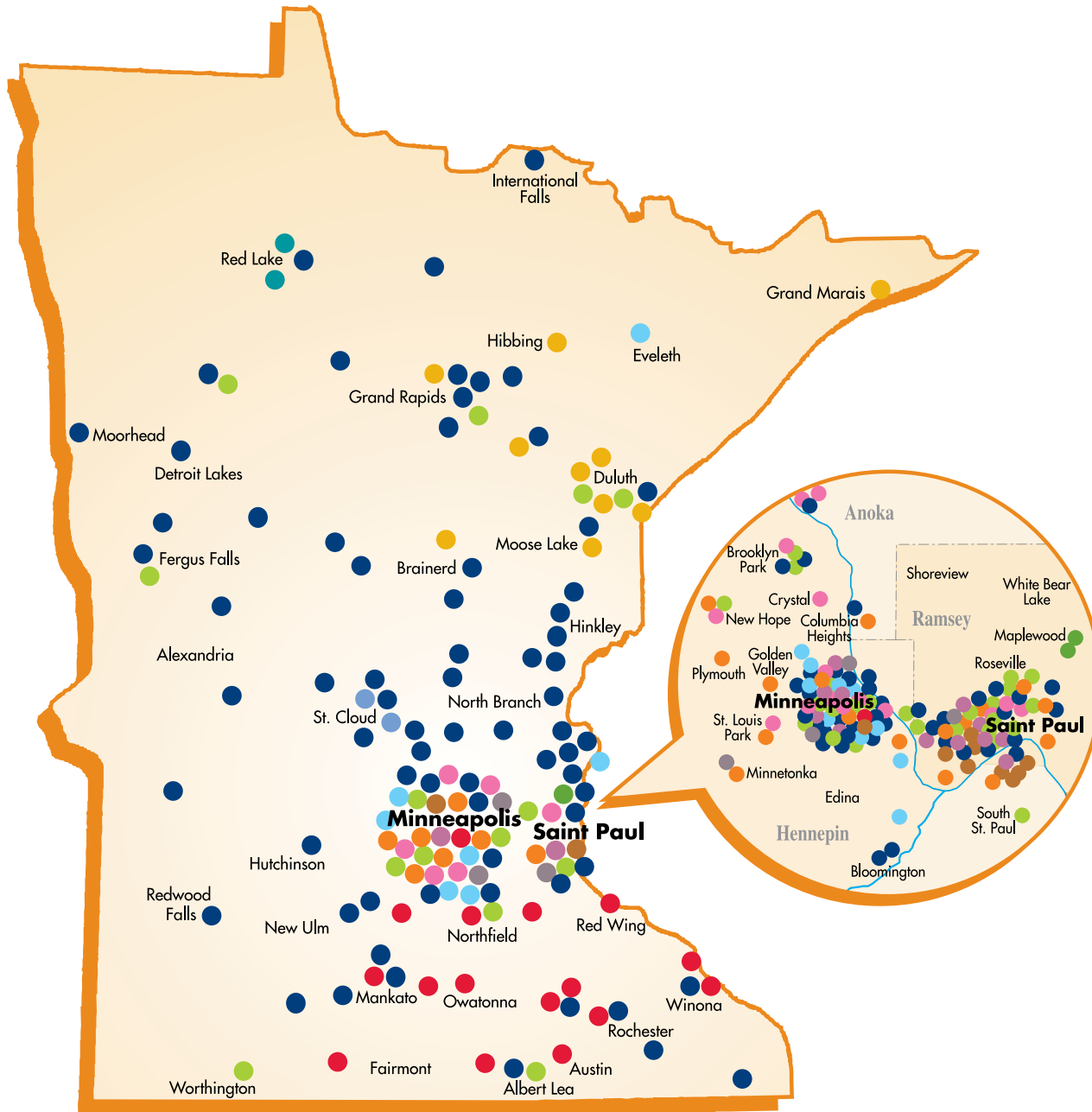
AmeriCorps members dedicate a year of their lives to tutor and mentor youth, build affordable housing, teach computer skills, clean parks and streams, run after-school programs, help communities respond to disasters, and enhance

the capacity of nonprofit groups to become self-sustaining. Collectively, they recruit, train and supervise thousands of community volunteers to extend and complement their efforts.

Interest in the program is growing: The number of AmeriCorps members increased by nearly 16 percent over the last program year. By aligning this powerful group of dedicated individuals with issues that need attention, ServeMinnesota makes a significant impact on the most critical needs facing the state.

PROGRAM	MEMBERS	GRANT AMOUNT	PROGRAM IMPACT
 Admission Possible	44	\$587,395	College Admission
 City of Lakes AmeriCorps	75	\$610,184	Tutoring/Homework Assistance, After-School Programs, Mentoring
 Community Technology Empowerment Project (CTEP)	26	\$333,651	Digital Divide/Computer Education, Employment
 Learning Early Achieves Potential (LEAP)	24	\$266,997	Early Childhood Social/Emotional Development, School Readiness Skills
 Minnesota Alliance with Youth – Promise Fellows	62	\$800,978	Tutoring/Homework Assistance, Mentoring, Leadership/Civic Engagement
 Minnesota Conservation Corps	31	\$267,000	Environmental Protection, Youth Development
 Minnesota Math Corps	12	\$231,859	Math Tutoring
 Minnesota Reading Corps	375	\$5,636,200	Literacy Tutoring
 Multicultural Communities in Action	37	\$480,564	Tutoring/Homework Assistance, After-School Programs
 Partners in Service to America	27	\$333,740	Tutoring/Homework Assistance, After-School Programs, Cultural Activities
 True North AmeriCorps	73	\$667,500	Tutoring/Homework Assistance, After-School Programs, Mentoring
 Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity/Project for Pride in Living	33	\$430,979	Affordable Housing, After-School Programs
 Work in Progress	22	\$287,024	Employment

INVESTING IN SOLUTIONS ACROSS MINNESOTA



- Admission Possible
admissionpossible.org
- City of Lakes AmeriCorps
commed.mpls.k12.mn.us/AmeriCorps.html
- Community Technology Empowerment Project (CTEP)
technologypower.org
- Learning Early Achieves Potential (LEAP)
smifoundation.org
- Minnesota Alliance with Youth – Promise Fellows
mnyouth.net
- Minnesota Conservation Corps
conservationcorps.org
- Minnesota Math Corps
minnesotamathcorps.org
- Minnesota Reading Corps
minnesotareadingcorps.org
- Multicultural Communities in Action
commonbond.org/ameriCorps
- Partners in Service to America
rlnn.org/MinorSponsors/AmeriCorpsMain.html
- True North AmeriCorps
truenorthamericorps.org
- Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity/Project for Pride in Living
tchabitat.org
- Work in Progress
rise.org

Reddi for Action: Building a Digital Bridge



“My clients can bank on my being here to give them a one-hour tutorial.”

— Ravi Reddi
AmeriCorps Member
CTEP

Ravi Reddi lives up to his name – he is ready to change lives. “How many lives have I changed today?” he asks. And the answer is: a lot. Ravi is an AmeriCorps member serving with the Community Technology Empowerment Project (CTEP). Most days you can find him working with a wide variety of clients at the Brian Coyle Center, helping older adults, new Americans and other community members learn technology skills to secure employment or improve academically.

Ravi balances a heavy load – he is a full-time student at the University of Minnesota and a full-time AmeriCorps member. Before he came to the Brian Coyle Center, the center didn’t offer computer classes, because its technology was outdated and attendance was low. After investing in brand-new computers with the latest Microsoft applications as

well as free wireless access, the center is bustling with community members eager to gain new skills.

Ravi knows how important his presence is to the community. Residents show up day after day to learn basic programs that will further their education and employability. “My clients can bank on my being here to give them a one-hour tutorial,” Ravi says. “They have so much on their plates and I’ll be waiting here to help them with whatever they need – technological literacy and empowerment.”

CTEP started in 2004 to teach technology literacy to a wide spectrum of individuals and focuses on both access and achievement. And its mission couldn’t be more important: the current job market and educational systems are increasingly reliant on technology.



While jobs are shrinking across many sectors, estimates say that more than 1 million new technology-related jobs will be created over the next four years in the United States, an increase of more than 10 percent, and that these positions will help power the economy out of the downturn.

U.S. Worker Population 2009- 2013 Forecast



More than 80 percent of Fortune 500 companies, including many companies that hire entry level service positions like Wal-Mart and Target, require online job applications, up from 27 percent in 2000 and 53 percent in 2003.

Taleo Research, 2009



But here's the conundrum: broadband use by low-income families nationally has actually dropped since 2007, as many Americans have disconnected their broadband service during the economic downturn. While this recent decrease in connectivity among low-income families has been the trend, there has conversely been an increased push for more and more services to be provided only online. To cut costs, many public- and private-sector services have moved from paper to electronic formats, and residents who need these services most are told to go online.

In partnership with nonprofits and community centers throughout the Twin Cities, 25 AmeriCorps members work side by side with nearly 4,000 adults and youth – exploring learning goals, teaching classes, and targeting training to the needs of their students. Members don't

have to be IT professionals, but need to be comfortable with technology. It could be as easy as teaching clients how to use a free e-mail account or submit résumés online to prospective employers.

When asked how his clients would describe him, Ravi replied, "I would hope they would say that I helped them, that I've given them a permanent asset. And that's all I want – I want to give them a substantive capability that they didn't have before, no matter how small."

In a world where Blackberries aren't fruit, tweeting has nothing to do with birds and LOL doesn't mean Land of Lakes, Ravi and CTEP are bridging the gap. "It's not just computer classes, it's helping people making substantive changes – they're getting jobs, improving academically and discovering all these resources that they never knew existed before," says Ravi. "It's incredible to see that evolution."

For more information, please visit www.technologypower.org



Nearly 40 percent of individuals surveyed in the Twin Cities metro area do not have access to broadband Internet in their homes, and 22 percent do not even have computers. Dial-up users said that the cost of broadband was the single largest barrier.

Minnesota Internet Survey, 2008



CTEP Partner Agencies

- Casa de Esperanza
- City of Minneapolis Parks and Recreation
- CommonBond Communities
- Eco Education
- Emerge Community Development
- Employment Action Center
- Hope Community
- La Escuelita
- Minneapolis Television Network
- Minnesota Workforce Center
- Neighborhood Learning Community
- Pillsbury United Communities
- Project for Pride in Living
- Saint Paul Neighborhood Network
- Saint Paul Public Library
- Science Museum of Minnesota
- Amherst H. Wilder Foundation

- 59 percent of African Americans are online, compared with 79 percent of whites
- 38 percent of Americans with disabilities are connected
- 44 percent of people who have not graduated from high school are connected, compared to 91 percent of college graduates

The Pew Internet and American Life Project, 2008

Where Children Not Only Learn to Read, They Love to Read



“The ability to read is something that can never be taken away from you.”

— Tessa Berens
AmeriCorps Member
Minnesota Reading Corps

Study after study shows: reading by third grade equals success in life. However, an urgent literacy gap faces thousands of early learners across the state. Half of Minnesota’s children are not ready for kindergarten and one in four third-graders is not reading at grade level.

Tessa Berens is setting out to conquer that gap, one student at a time. “I’ve been an avid reader my entire life – I know what a difference it makes to have that skill. So many studies show that if you don’t have reading down by third grade, the huge implications that can have on the rest of your education.”

Tessa became a Minnesota Reading Corps member because she fell in love with working with schools and kids struggling to overcome an education gap. “I had a sheltered upbringing and didn’t realize the full effects of the education gap,” she says. “Now I’m witnessing it firsthand.”

The Minnesota Reading Corps, a strategic initiative of ServeMinnesota, blends the people power of AmeriCorps with the science of how children learn to read. It is specifically designed to help children who won’t succeed without an extra boost – those who might fall through the cracks.

The program has grown steadily over the years due to its impressive results. In its sixth year, it is the state’s largest early literacy program, with more than 500 Reading Corps members working with nearly 15,000 students in preschools and elementary schools throughout Minnesota. But beyond the numbers, the Reading Corps is also gaining supporters, from state legislators to national funders who see the power in its replication.



How many children will the Minnesota Reading Corps serve in 2011?

- A. 15,500
- B. 16,750
- C. 17,250
- D. 18,000

Answer: D



A Vision for Reading Success

All Minnesota children
will become
proficient readers
by third grade



Tessa serves in an elementary school in Bloomington, the largest suburb in the Twin Cities. By working directly with students and teachers, she enhances the classroom experience and provides her students an average of 90 minutes of extra one-on-one tutoring each week. “They’re learning strategies to help them be successful even when they’re not working with me,” she explains. She also notes that teachers are seeing the difference and want the program to be available to more students.

A consistent theme throughout the program is that the children enjoy the tutoring sessions – they are excited to learn and catch up with their friends. They might not get one-on-one time anywhere else, but they receive 20 minutes with a

trained reading tutor every day. One of Tessa’s most memorable moments of the year? “I had one student tell me I’m his favorite – better than recess!”

As is the story for so many before her, Tessa’s AmeriCorps experience has shifted her path. “I’ve changed what I want to do with my life. I’m going back to school to become a teacher,” she says. “I’ve learned so much more about the world around me and the real difference one person can make. You can do something!”

Tessa reflects on her AmeriCorps service and, just like reading has, she knows that it will make a lasting impression on her life. “Every sacrifice I’ve made doing service, I’ve gotten back tenfold from the kids and the experience,” she explains. “What a better world we would have if everyone took a year to serve.”

For more information, please visit www.minnesotareadingcorps.org

Growing for the Future

Harnessing the power of national service, the Minnesota Reading Corps is the largest statewide initiative to help Minnesota children become successful readers by the end of third grade.

The Minnesota Reading Corps blends the people power of AmeriCorps with the science of how children learn to read. Rigorously trained members work with children from age three to grade three in schools with a high concentration of students below the reading level for their age group.

Reading Corps members have tutored more than 25,000 preschool and elementary school children since the program was introduced in 2003. Currently, the program is in more than 300 sites across Minnesota.



Studies show that by increasing investments in quality early learning, the whole community can anticipate lower crime and poverty rates, a better-prepared workforce and a return of up to \$12 for every \$1 invested.

HighScope Perry Preschool Study, 2005



Community Collaborations: Guiding Youth in the Right Direction



“I see the impact the AmeriCorps program has had on the community as a whole.”

— Lacy Habdas
AmeriCorps Member
True North AmeriCorps

When you think of the North Shore, you think of spectacular scenery and unparalleled recreational destinations. What you might not know is that amid the rocky shores and majestic pines lurks one of the highest poverty rates in the state.

Children who grow up in poverty sometimes lack the basic assets many people take for granted; key among them is the presence of positive adult role models outside of the family. True North AmeriCorps offers a strong mentoring program along with enrichment opportunities that families might not otherwise be able to afford.

“Mentoring, tutoring, academic success and volunteer development are at the heart of what we do,” says Blair Gagne, program director for True North. “We see every day how AmeriCorps can really make a difference in the lives of kids and communities.”

But they don’t go it alone...in fact, quite the opposite. The cornerstone of True North’s success is its ability to build strong collaborations with a large network of local nonprofits. “Collaborating has really enabled us to do things that we would never had been able to do if we had all been working in our silos,” says Blair. “We knew we wanted to create an AmeriCorps program for northeastern Minnesota, so we contacted at least 200 different organizations to get as much community input as we could.” That process led to partnerships with local schools, colleges and other youth agencies to create a strong program that delivers results in both rural and urban settings.

True North places members in more than 50 agencies in a 10-county region across northeastern Minnesota. One of those sites is located in the East Hillside



The single most important indicator of whether or not a child will succeed in life is based on the number of adult role models in his/her life.

— Search Institute



What percentage of Minnesota’s school-aged children are home alone while parents work?

- A. 10
- B. 18
- C. 26
- D. 32

Answer: D



neighborhood of Duluth, where 82 percent of the children qualify for free or reduced lunch.

In its fifth year there, True North offers programs for children from kindergarten through age 16. In addition to direct academic support, children are able to explore their skills and strengths through a wide variety of programs that enrich their educational experience. AmeriCorps Member Lacy Habdas plays a vital role: she recruits and trains 150 volunteers per semester to tutor students, help out in classrooms and coordinate after-school activities.

The program has attracted more than 6,000 volunteers across the region and Lacy sees her role as helping her volunteers grow and take initiative. "This is lifelong learning for our kids and

anyone who comes into contact with the program," she says. "Volunteers like coming here, because they can share things they are excited about and use their talents. It inspires the children to open up to new horizons." Parents are seeing a difference, too. They note that their children are better behaved, more apt to help out at home and learning how to be participants rather than observers.

Like the Split Rock Lighthouse, the True North AmeriCorps program represents a safe harbor for families from Hinckley to Ely. Nearly 100 percent of participants said "yes" when asked if they have met an adult who cares about them. This combination of caring adults and a structured setting makes all the difference for these kids.

For more information, please visit www.truenorthamericorps.org



Ninety percent of students who participated in True North's tutoring program improved at least a half grade level in math and 82 percent improved at least a half grade level in reading.



Achieving Great Heights

The True North AmeriCorps mentoring program helps each participant grow and develop in several areas* to become more academically and socially successful. The commitment of more than 6,000 community volunteers accounts for its success: 75 percent of participants reported growth in at least two of these areas, with some making progress in all 10.

- Healthy lifestyle
- Family
- Values
- Community
- Communication
- Mentor relationship
- School
- Decision making
- Friends
- Self concept

*Based on the 40 Developmental Assets identified by the Search Institute, 2003

Seeding Innovation: Powered by Community Energy



“I think my most rewarding moment is seeing the change when it clicks. People learn that they can really make an impact without changing their entire lifestyle.”

— Rachel Olm
AmeriCorps Member
Minnesota GreenCorps

After seeing the Minnesota Reading Corps in action at his daughter’s school, Kevin McDonald got an idea. He saw how AmeriCorps members were tackling literacy issues for kids, so as a Sustainable Development Supervisor for the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MCPA), he wondered what might happen if you applied the same theory to addressing environmental issues at a local level.

A similar conversation was happening at the University of Minnesota – Morris, nationally recognized for its sustainability practices, about how environmental studies majors could acquire real-world experience in the field.

Each approached ServeMinnesota and because ServeMinnesota seeks out strategic alliances to address Minnesota’s most challenging issues, a partnership to establish a Minnesota GreenCorps was

born. The goal is to blend government resources and civic engagement with people on the ground, encouraging action at the community level and putting systems in place that can be continued after the members leave. In addition, the program will train a new generation of environmental professionals.

Interest in the first year of the program was high: nearly 60 communities applied. Mahtomedi was one of the communities selected – a small city whose residents have rallied around renewable and sustainable energy.

“We look for things we can catalyze,” said Mary Hoff, founding member of the Mahtomedi Area Green Initiative (MAGI). “We want to connect residents, businesses, schools, churches and local government. When we saw that the Minnesota GreenCorps was looking for



Results from Minnesota GreenCorps’ first year include:

- 1,349 lbs. of holiday lights recycled
- Over 5,000 urban trees inventoried
- Over 2,400 students, teachers and staff in Minnesota schools learned how to reduce waste and recycle more



Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to power a TV or computer for three hours.



communities to apply, we thought our community could really use someone."

Enter Rachel Olm, a Living Green Outreach Specialist for the Minnesota GreenCorps and graduate of the University of Minnesota – Morris. According to local organizers, Rachel joined their community at a pivotal time. Serving in the school district's community education department, she is a resource for mobilizing the community around waste reduction and renewable energy.

Rachel has led community workshops, planned a community-wide Earth Day event, worked with students and their families to raise awareness and helped the school district save money by evaluating their waste activities. And she's leaving the community with the framework to continue the work after her service is completed.

Having a Minnesota GreenCorps member right in Mahtomedi means the program has had a broader community impact. "People know she's here, and because she's young and enthusiastic," says Mary, "she makes it cool to do things – especially for our youth."

Rachel is already making a big impact on her community. But the community is supporting her too. "If I see that they could increase their recycling here, I have access to the resources to make change," says Rachel. For example, she works with summer school students at the local elementary school during lunch time. "I help the kids weigh their garbage, so they actually see how much is thrown away." Just like the lessons at home: Eat what you take, then go back for seconds if you're still hungry.

For more information, please visit www.pca.state.mn.us/mngreencorps

Minnesota GreenCorps Members Across the State

Minnesota GreenCorps is a statewide initiative to preserve and protect Minnesota's environment, while training a new generation of environmental professionals. In 2009, 18 full-time members and four half-time members served in practical ways to help communities and individuals save energy, reduce waste, improve natural resources, and reduce their overall impact on the environment.

All-Purpose Cleaner

¼ cup white vinegar
 2 tsp. borax
 3 ½ cups hot water
 20 drops lemon juice or lavender essential oil
 ¼ cup liquid dish soap

In a 32-oz. spray bottle, mix the vinegar, borax, and water thoroughly. Add lemon or lavender if desired. Add dish soap last.

For additional recipes, visit www.care2.com and www.thegreenguide.com.



Where does MOST of the garbage in Minnesota go?

- A. Landfills
- B. Waste to energy incinerators
- C. Burn barrels
- D. Compost facilities
- E. Recycling centers

Answer: E

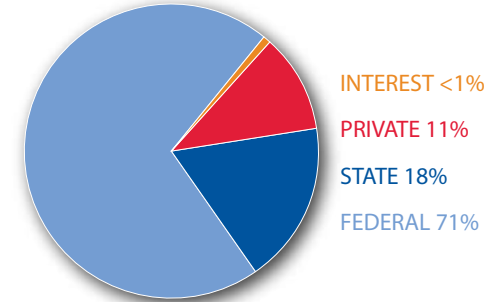


2009 Financial Statement

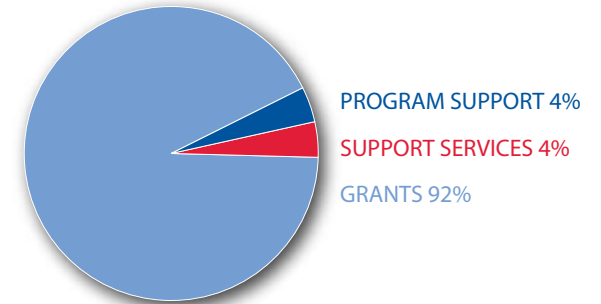


ASSETS	2009	2008
Current Assets:		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	573,927	512,012
Accounts Receivable		644
Grants Receivable	883,817	1,086,447
Pledges Receivable	661,666	105,000
Prepaid Expenses	21,366	3,888
Total Current Assets	\$2,140,776	\$1,707,991
Non-Current Assets:		
Pledges Receivable	50,000	
Equipment – Net	11,362	15,431
Security Deposit	3,798	3,798
TOTAL ASSETS	\$2,205,936	\$1,727,220
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Current Liabilities:		
Accounts Payable	52,944	45,696
Grants Payable	602,431	865,014
Refundable Advance		70,916
Total Current Liabilities	\$655,375	\$981,626
Net Assets:		
Unrestricted:		
Designated	150,000	150,000
Undesignated	130,272	126,491
Total Unrestricted	\$280,272	\$276,491
Temporarily Restricted	1,270,289	469,103
Total Net Assets	\$1,550,561	\$745,594
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$2,205,936	\$1,727,220

REVENUE



EXPENSES



Board Members

Karen Anderson
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 Penny Scheffler
 Sam Schuth
 Alice Seagren
 Christine Wiegert

Corporate and Foundation Support

Cargill
 Cargill Foundation
 Curtis L. Carlson Family Foundation
 Cub Community Cares Foundation
 Ecolab Foundation
 General Mills Foundation
 Greater Twin Cities United Way
 The McKnight Foundation

Medica Employees
 Minnesota Bank & Trust (Heartland Financial)
 Opus Philanthropy Group
 Pohlad Family Foundation
 Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation –
 Tuohy Furniture Corp & Hormel Foods Corp
 Target
 Travelers Foundation

Staff

Becky Adair, program associate
 Marc Hosmer, program officer
 Janet Johnson, vice president of operations
 Lynn Lewis, accountant/grants officer
 Stacy Scherschligt, senior program officer
 Steve Struthers, vice president of strategy
 Audrey Suker, CEO
 Lisa Winkler, vice president of marketing and communications
 Michael Zuniga, administrative coordinator



A Legacy for Service

The Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act is landmark legislation that expands opportunities for national service and will engage millions of Americans in meeting national needs and solving local problems. The bill garnered bipartisan majorities in both houses of Congress and illustrates that national service is quickly gaining recognition as a valuable and meaningful way to serve our country.

For the first time since AmeriCorps was founded in 1993, this act increases opportunities for Americans of all ages to serve and sets AmeriCorps on a path to increase from 75,000 positions annually to 250,000 by 2017. It focuses service on education, health, clean energy, veterans, economic opportunity and other national priorities. The new law is designed to strengthen America's civic infrastructure through initiatives that will inspire social innovation, support volunteer mobilization, and build nonprofit capacity. President Obama signed the legislation into law on April 21, 2009.



ServeMinnesota

The power of AmeriCorps. The power of you.

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Alternative formats of this report available upon request.

