



## Why National Service Matters: Results for Lasting Impact



2010 Annual Report

## 2009-2010 Highlights

1,063 AmeriCorps members engaged in service throughout Minnesota this year

\$14.6 million invested in nonprofit, community, educational and faith-based community groups through AmeriCorps programs

50,460 community volunteers managed or mobilized by AmeriCorps members

6,387 individuals mentored

30,232 disadvantaged children and youth served

More than 650 sites hosted AmeriCorps members

More than 2,000 third-graders passed their statewide reading assessment exams

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 3-4** AmeriCorps Programs
- 5-6** Scaling What Works
- 7-8** Nurturing Community Leaders
- 9-10** Cost-Effective Results
- 11-12** Statement of Financial Position
- 13-14** Board Members, Community Support, Staff



Dear Friends,

ServeMinnesota. It's implicit in our name; our organization exists for the express purpose of serving the people and communities in our state. Now more than ever, Minnesota needs cost-effective and sustainable solutions for some of our most persistent challenges. In our role of serving as Minnesota's Commission for National and Community Service we are addressing these issues through the power of AmeriCorps.

By applying evidence-based practices, bringing scale to what works and producing measurable results, ServeMinnesota has a formula for increased impact. Our education initiatives, Minnesota Reading Corps and Minnesota Math Corps, are helping thousands of children achieve grade-level proficiency in reading and math – two critical indicators for future success. We have the results to prove that these AmeriCorps programs can help even more students fulfill their potential and compete in a global economy.

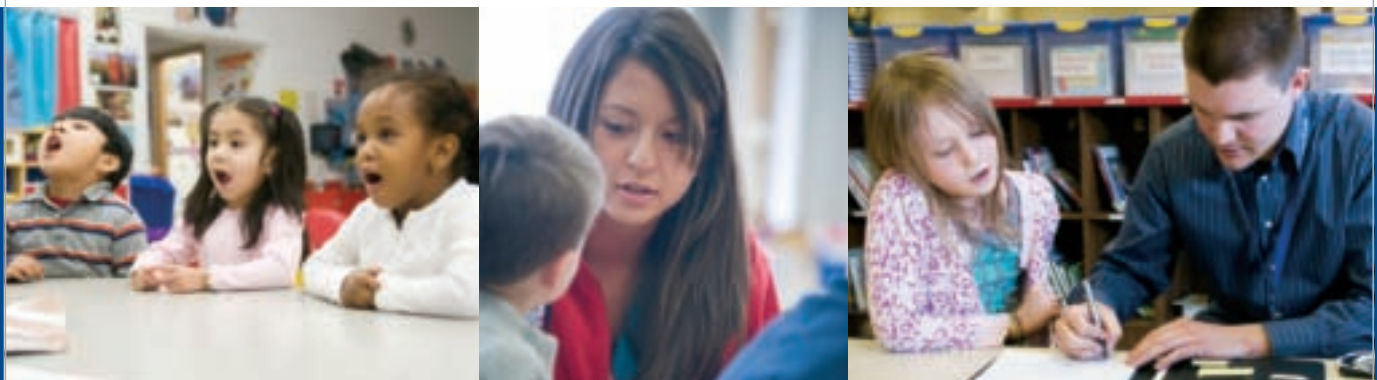
As we approach our 10<sup>th</sup> year as a nonprofit organization, ServeMinnesota has emerged as a national leader in developing private-public partnerships to support educational improvement strategies. Target Corporation, Cargill, the Greater Twin Cities United Way and Cub Foods are among our partners on a growing list of organizations who have seen the impressive results and want to help these programs grow, so more children can achieve in the classroom in Minnesota and beyond.

We owe a debt of gratitude to the people who serve as AmeriCorps members, as well as the government leaders, individuals and companies who aid our efforts.

The standard for successful AmeriCorps programs is right here in Minnesota. Thank you for your continued interest and support to build thriving communities together.

Audrey Suker  
Chief Executive Officer

Bob Rumpza  
Board Chair



**2009-2010 AmeriCorps Programs**

	<b>Members</b>	<b>Grant Amount</b>	<b>Program Impact</b>
□ Admission Possible	52	\$642,795	College Admission
△ City of Lakes AmeriCorps	74	\$584,767	Tutoring/Homework Assistance, After-School Programs, Mentoring
■ Community Technology Empowerment Project (CTEP)	30	\$399,152*	Digital Divide/Computer Education, Employment
■ Conservation Corps Minnesota	31	\$267,000	Environmental Protection, Youth Development
○ Learning Early Achieves Potential (LEAP)	28	\$371,797*	Early Childhood Social/ Emotional Development, School Readiness Skills
● Minnesota Alliance With Youth Promise Fellows	70	\$931,978*	Tutoring/Homework Assistance, Mentoring, Leadership/Civic Engagement
△ Minnesota GreenCorps	22	\$352,000	Environmental Improvement
□ Minnesota Math Corps	23	\$414,627*	Math Tutoring Algebra by 8th Grade
● Minnesota Reading Corps	533	\$8,293,329*	Literacy Tutoring Reading by 3rd Grade
△ Multicultural Communities in Action	40	\$526,614*	Tutoring/Homework Assistance, After-School Programs
▲ Partners in Service to America	29	\$333,740*	Tutoring/Homework Assistance, After-School Programs, Cultural Activities
● True North AmeriCorps	91	\$871,797 *	Tutoring/Homework Assistance, After-School Programs, Mentoring
● Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity/ Project for Pride in Living	40	\$522,636*	Affordable Housing, After-School Programs
<b>Planning Grant</b>			
□ St. Croix River Education District	0	\$45,959	Math Curriculum Development and Testing

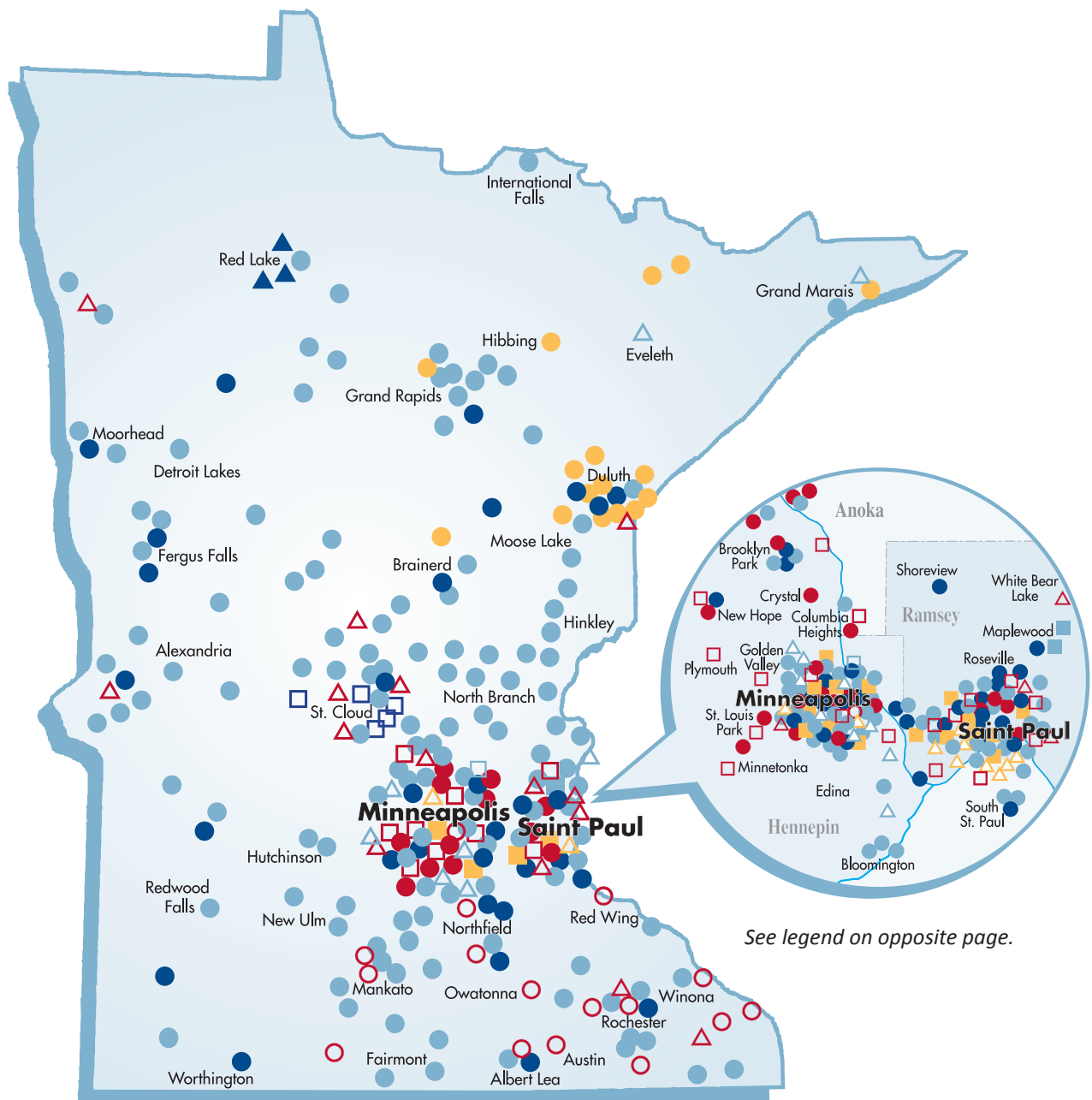
\*includes funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

## Investing in solutions across Minnesota

The AmeriCorps program 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 educational achievement, economic opportunity and environmental protection.

AmeriCorps members dedicate a year of their lives to tutor and mentor youth to close the achievement gap, build affordable housing, teach computer skills, clean parks and streams, run after-school programs and help communities respond to disasters. 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 in Minnesota increased by more than 30 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.



### THE LITERACY CHALLENGE

Illiteracy is threatening the economic competitiveness of the American workforce. Intervening early not only leads to reduced costs for public assistance and unemployment, but higher graduation rates; reduced costs for remedial and special education; reduced costs for school social workers, school truancy and dropouts; and reduced crime.

### PREDICTORS

From age 3 to grade 3, children learn to read. From third grade forward, children read to learn.

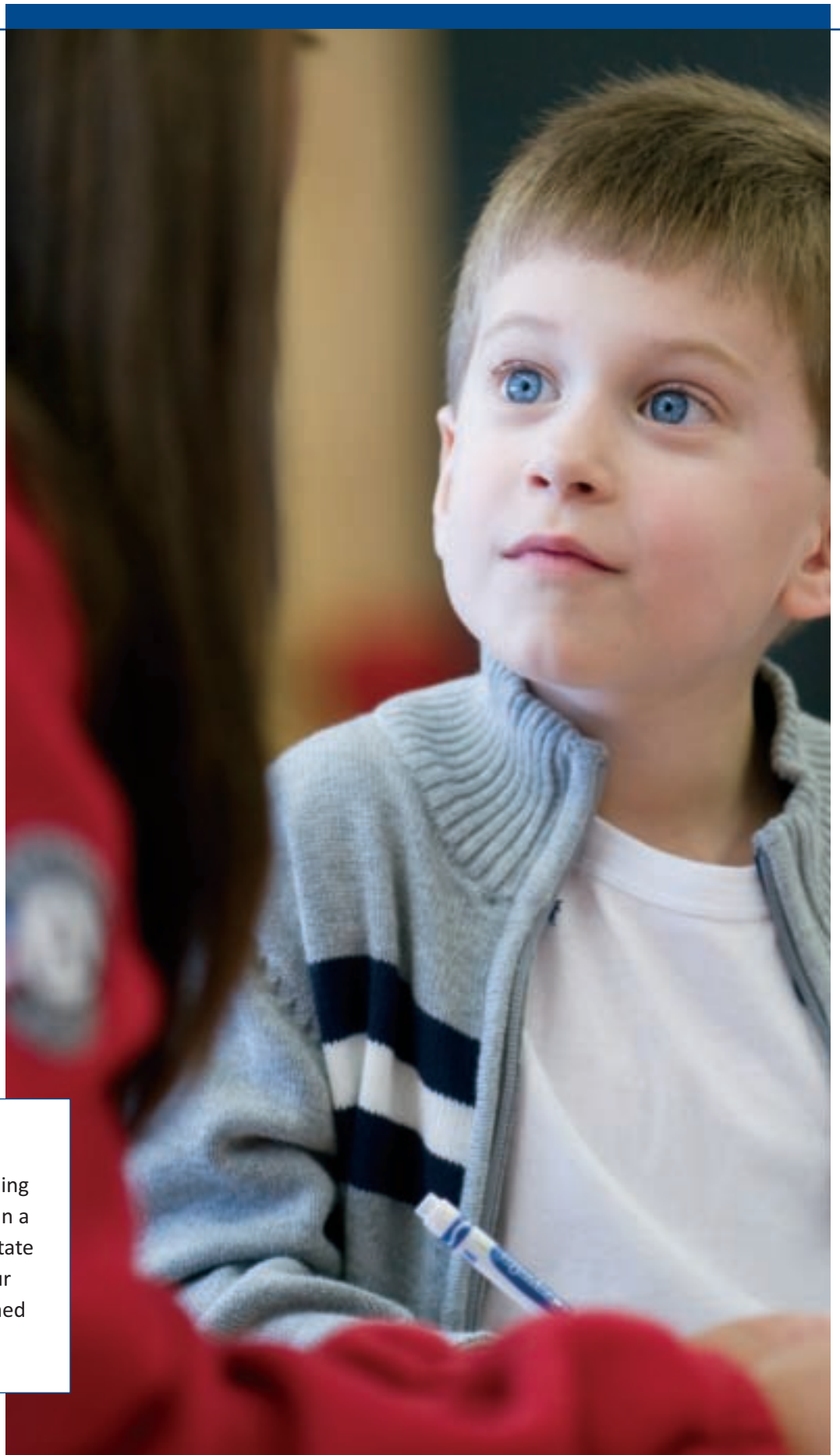
Children who start out behind are unlikely to achieve future reading success without targeted interventions.

If children are not proficient readers by the end of third grade, they are less likely to graduate from high school.

Reading failure is linked to substance abuse, teen pregnancy, delinquency and crime.

### SOLUTION

Nearly 80 percent of Minnesota Reading Corps participants achieved more than a year's worth of progress, exceeding state and national averages. In addition, our preschoolers consistently outperformed their peers in a five-year study.



## Starting behind and getting ahead: Solving Minnesota's literacy crisis

### Minnesota Reading Corps

When Garrett Bakke started third grade, he was shy, quiet and not confident about his reading abilities. "On the first day of school, he came to my desk," says Emily Nebben, Garrett's teacher at Ridgeview Elementary School in Bloomington, "and said, 'My name is Garrett, and I just want you to know that I'm pretty good at math, but I'm no good at reading.' And that was heartbreaking for me."

Garrett's parents tried to help him – they worked with him every night – but didn't see improvement. They placed him in summer school and after-school programs, but the transformation didn't take place until he started working with his Minnesota Reading Corps tutor. "All of those things were with other kids," says mom, Jill. "but the one-on-one approach really made the difference with Garrett."

Garrett is not alone. Each year, more than 15,000 Minnesota children fail their third grade reading tests. As a result, Minnesota is home to one of the nation's most dire literacy

achievement gaps. And because third grade is the pivotal transition from "learning to read" to "reading to learn," the Minnesota children who aren't reading proficiently by third grade often never catch up.

"In class, Garrett really didn't want to raise his hand," says Reading Corps tutor Tiah Colacci. "He was nervous about answering any questions; he really didn't want to fail."

By using innovative, evidence-based practices and personalized tutoring, Minnesota Reading Corps has demonstrated proven results to help close Minnesota's growing achievement gap. Nearly 80 percent of participants achieved more than a year's worth of progress in one year's time, exceeding state and national averages and dramatically surpassing what would have been typically expected.

And Garrett was no exception. "You actually see the progress in the child and on paper," says Tim, Garrett's dad. "It's not fuzzy in any way, shape or form."

His teacher agrees. "I just saw him bloom from that first day, like you would not believe," says Emily. "His confidence, his demeanor, the way he held his whole body...it was a different kid. Like caterpillar to butterfly."



*Garret Bakke, Minnesota Reading Corps graduate at Ridgeview Elementary*

*Tiah Colacci, Minnesota Reading Corps tutor*

### A Winning Equation

#### Minnesota Math Corps

Achievement in early math is a great predictor of future success. In fact, 90 percent of sixth graders who fail math will not graduate from high school. Right now, nearly 12,000 Minnesota eighth graders are failing algebra. By applying a proven model for student success, Minnesota Math Corps, ServeMinnesota's newest initiative, is changing outcomes for fourth through eighth graders who are struggling in math. More than 50 percent of participants, all of whom had failed their previous year's math exams, have now passed grade-level state assessments.



## THE DROPOUT CHALLENGE

There are 7,000 students dropping out of school every day nationwide. Here in Minnesota, more than 18,000 students are not graduating from high school on time each year. That's 25 percent of high school seniors.

This statistic has sobering consequences for our economic future:

- 30 of the fastest growing jobs require 2- and 4-year college degrees.
- Currently, there are 2 million unfilled jobs that require a high talent, high-skilled applicant pool.
- More than \$320 billion is lost each year in wages and buying power among our citizens. Businesses have articulated that they need active, creative and analytical thinkers to ensure their organizations thrive. Minnesota Alliance With Youth is doing its part to ensure a well-prepared applicant pool for the future.

## DROPOUT PREDICTORS

According to research from Johns Hopkins University, there are three early warning signs: attendance, behavior and core subject competency. As early as sixth grade, a student who is struggling in these areas has more than a 75 percent chance of not finishing high school.

## SOLUTION

In 2006, the graduation rate for Latino students in Northfield was 36 percent. Today, that percentage tops 90 percent – higher than the overall graduation rate for all students in Minnesota. The individualized support provided by AmeriCorps members was an essential ingredient of this success.

## Investing wisely: Individual success with whole community benefits





*AmeriCorps Member Mundo Garza (right) with Northfield High School student Josh Wood (left)*



### Minnesota Alliance with Youth Promise Fellows

At age 14, Josh Wood decided he was done with school. His truancy officer, Marnie Thompson, who is also the assistant principal at Northfield High School, physically went to his house to force him to go to school.

“When you’re not going to school, or doing bad in school, you come to the conclusion that it’s not beneficial to go to school,” says Josh. “College was unheard of and I didn’t have a long-term perspective of what life could be like.”

But Marnie saw something that Josh didn’t – his potential. “I knew it was there,” says Marnie, “and I knew we were going to have to work hard to get to it.”

She invited Josh to participate in TORCH (Tackling Obstacles and Raising College Hopes), a program designed to help increase the graduation and college attendance rates of low-income and minority students. This highly collaborative school-community partnership intertwines a system of support for 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders that hinges on the service of AmeriCorps members. These members are part of a statewide AmeriCorps program – Minnesota Alliance With Youth – which is specifically designed to ensure more Minnesota students graduate from high school.

The program is based on research done at Johns Hopkins University

that has isolated both the reasons students drop out and the practices that can turn around a failure trajectory.

“I see a lot of myself in these students,” says Mundo Garza, an AmeriCorps member serving in Northfield and a graduate of Carleton College. “My parents didn’t go to college, but I really benefitted from having dedicated, caring adults in my life. My teachers, parents and guidance counselors were very supportive and if I didn’t have that, things would have turned out a lot differently for me.”

AmeriCorps members provide research-based interventions during and after school that include mentoring, service learning, academic support and family engagement. Last year, 100 percent of the participants served by AmeriCorps members graduated on time.

“The program really helped me connect with people and helped me see that I’m part of a larger community,” says Josh. “Without the relationships and that personal one-on-one support, I don’t think I would be graduating from high school and I know I wouldn’t have 23 college credits.” Josh just learned that he was accepted at Hamline University for the fall semester.

### THE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE

Developing civically-engaged leaders in the midst of declining community participation, high unemployment, increased demand for social services and reduced resources.

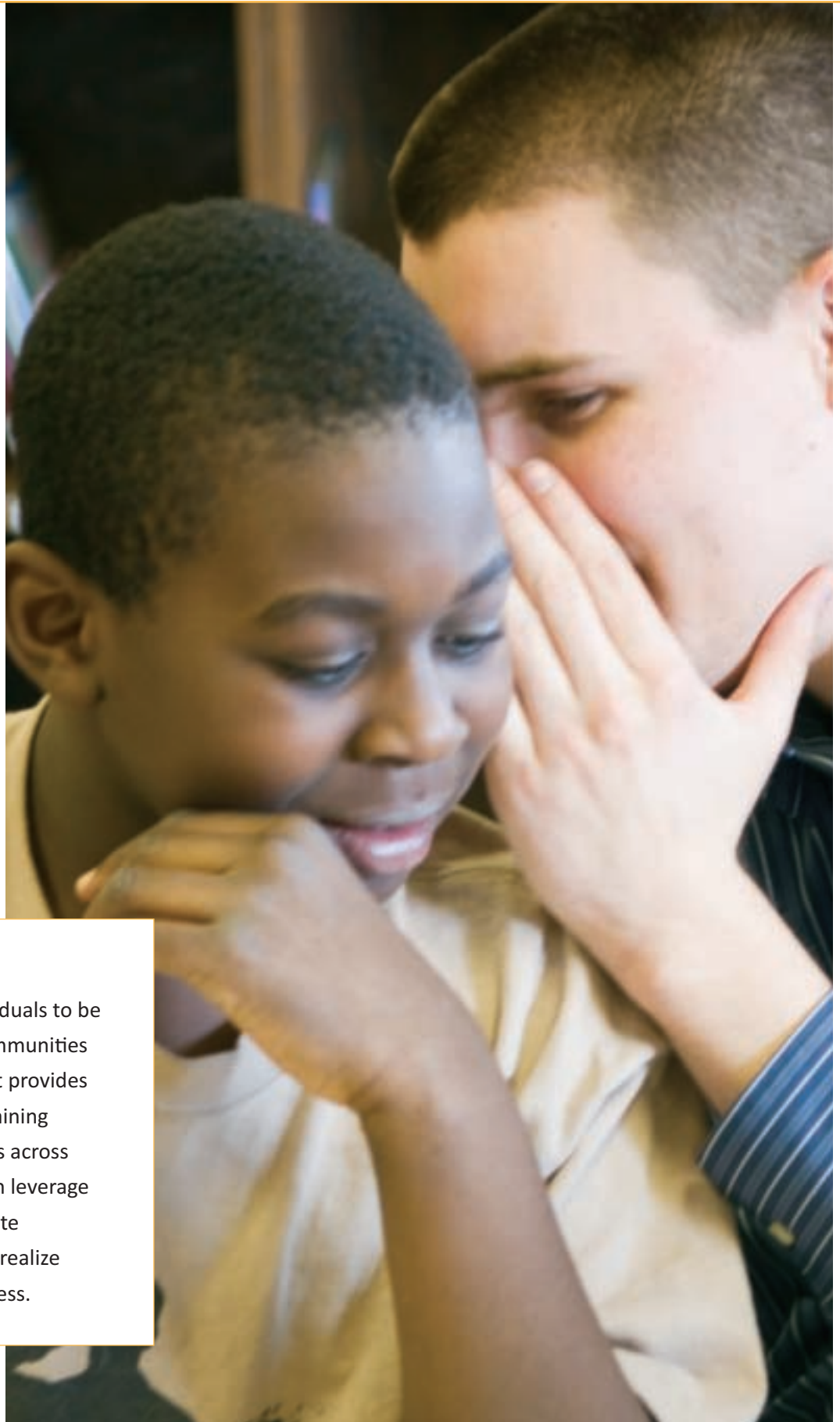
### PREDICTORS

Strong leaders demonstrate greater:

- Connection to community
- Involvement in community meetings and events
- Duty to neighbors
- Volunteering and voting habits

### SOLUTION

The AmeriCorps program spurs individuals to be agents of positive change in their communities long after their AmeriCorps service. It provides meaningful service, real-world job training and economic growth in communities across Minnesota. AmeriCorps members can leverage their community engagement to create pathways to future employment and realize educational, civic and economic success.



## Where life meets launching pad: Developing leaders through service

### City of Lakes AmeriCorps

“Dedicate your life to something more important than yourself.” These are words that Daniel Liles lives by.

He and Janae Krantz-Odendahl are two of 74 AmeriCorps members serving with the City of Lakes program in the Minneapolis Public Schools. Their stories illustrate the transformational power of a year of service and how that translates into lasting contributions for our communities.

They note the components that are challenging: long work hours (often more than 40 hours a week), a small living stipend (in other words, experiencing what it’s like to live below the poverty line) and facing societal issues that can feel overwhelming. But Daniel and Janae can also cite a litany of reasons that make facing these challenges well worth the effort: extensive training to provide a tangible service; professional development to better understand the “big picture” and their role as catalysts for positive social change; experience in problem solving, teamwork and flexibility; and the opportunity to cultivate life-changing leadership skills.

“Serving with AmeriCorps allows for meaningful, lasting change within oneself as well as reflection on one’s purpose in their community on the deepest level,” says Daniel.

Members consistently agree that the real-world knowledge and meaningful

experience they gain through their AmeriCorps service is invaluable.

Not only does the AmeriCorps program turn out a civically-engaged, energized force into the community, the impact they leave on others carries into the future. Studies show that successful service-learning leads to increased academic engagement, academic performance (including increased test scores), civic engagement, and positive social-emotional development.

“We have a special impact on the youths lives we become a part of,” says Janae. “They’ll remember that someone cared about them, cared enough to dedicate their time to helping them and perhaps be that one person that believed in them when no one else did.”

More than 1,000 AmeriCorps members are serving across the state of Minnesota in vastly different roles. From raising academic achievement for children to raising walls on a Habitat for Humanity home, each AmeriCorps member is gaining a unique perspective on his or her community and discovering how to translate that experience into lifelong leadership.

“AmeriCorps instills this sense of duty and accomplishment, that maybe serving in the military also does,” says Daniel. “I am serving our country and the people who need it most.”



NURTURING COMMUNITY  
LEADERS



*“AmeriCorps has changed the trajectory of both my personal and professional life.”*

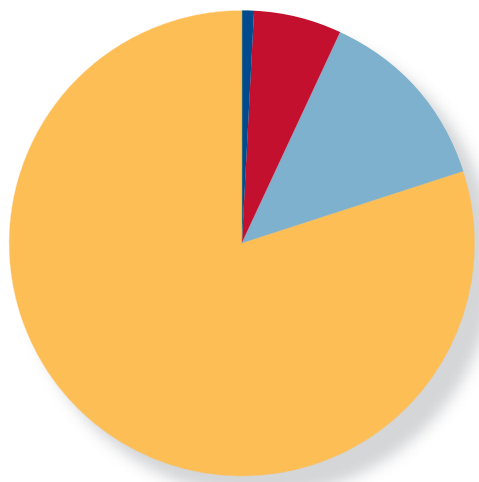
*- Daniel Liles, AmeriCorps member*

*“I’ll have experience to put behind all the theory I learned, and put more meaning to what I’m doing.”*

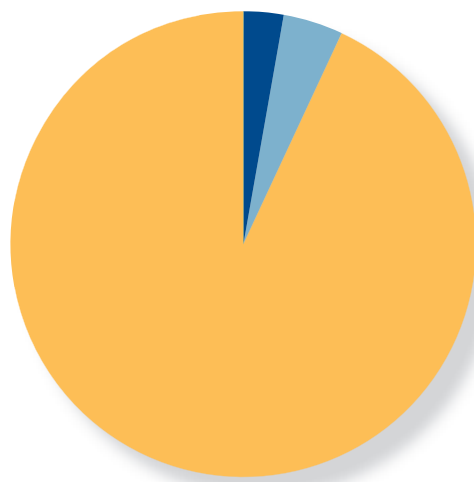
*- Janae Krantz-Odendahl, AmeriCorps member*

Statement of Financial Position  
August 31, 2010 and 2009

	2010	2009
<b>Assets</b>		
Current Assets		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	841,260	573,927
Grants Receivable	1,329,034	883,817
Pledges Receivable	749,266	661,666
Prepaid Expenses	12,848	21,366
Total Current Assets	\$2,932,408	\$2,140,776
Non-Current Assets		
Pledges Receivable	00	50,000
Equipment - Net	7,294	11,362
Security Deposit	3,798	3,798
Total Assets	\$2,943,500	\$2,205,936
<b>Liabilities &amp; Fund Balance</b>		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	67,205	52,944
Grants Payable	1,206,583	602,431
Total Current Liabilities	\$1,273,788	\$655,375
Net Assets:		
Unrestricted:		
Designated	150,000	150,000
Undesignated	146,516	130,272
Total Unrestricted	\$296,516	\$280,272
Temporarily Restricted	1,373,196	1,270,289
Total Net Assets	\$1,669,712	\$1,550,561
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>\$2,943,500</b>	<b>\$2,205,936</b>



**REVENUE**  
Interest 1%  
Private 6%  
State 13%  
Federal 80%



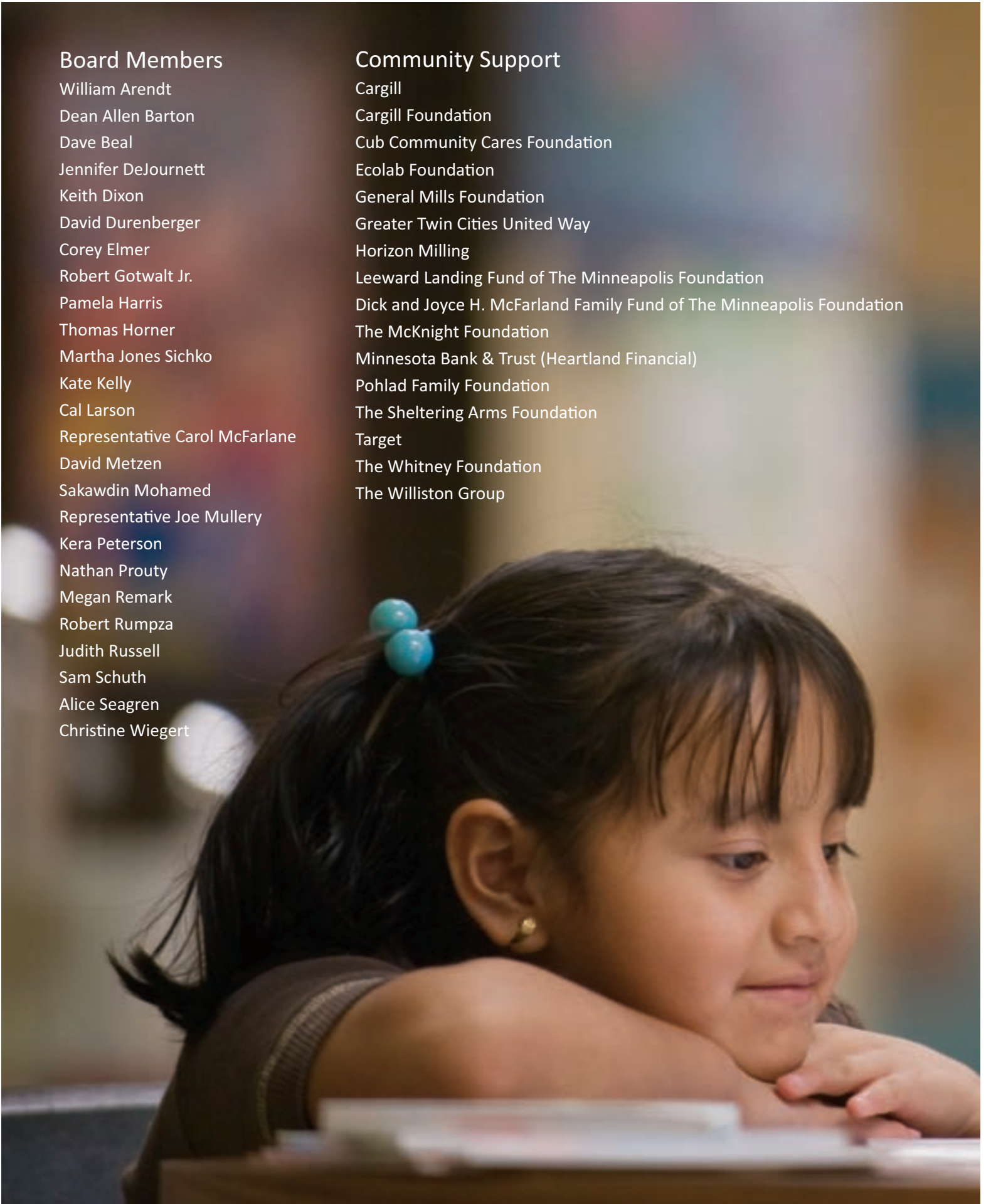
**EXPENSES**  
Program Support 3%  
Support Services 4%  
Grants 93%

## Board Members

William Arendt  
Dean Allen Barton  
Dave Beal  
Jennifer DeJournett  
Keith Dixon  
David Durenberger  
Corey Elmer  
Robert Gotwalt Jr.  
Pamela Harris  
Thomas Horner  
Martha Jones Sichko  
Kate Kelly  
Cal Larson  
Representative Carol McFarlane  
David Metzen  
Sakawdin Mohamed  
Representative Joe Mullery  
Kera Peterson  
Nathan Prouty  
Megan Remark  
Robert Rumpza  
Judith Russell  
Sam Schuth  
Alice Seagren  
Christine Wiegert

## Community Support

Cargill  
Cargill Foundation  
Cub Community Cares Foundation  
Ecolab Foundation  
General Mills Foundation  
Greater Twin Cities United Way  
Horizon Milling  
Leeward Landing Fund of The Minneapolis Foundation  
Dick and Joyce H. McFarland Family Fund of The Minneapolis Foundation  
The McKnight Foundation  
Minnesota Bank & Trust (Heartland Financial)  
Pohlad Family Foundation  
The Sheltering Arms Foundation  
Target  
The Whitney Foundation  
The Williston Group



## Staff

Becky Adair – *program associate*

Marc Hosmer – *program officer*

Janet Johnson – *vice president of operations*

Lynn Lewis – *accountant/grants officer*

Stacey Scherschligt – *senior program officer*

Brenda Squiers – *executive associate*

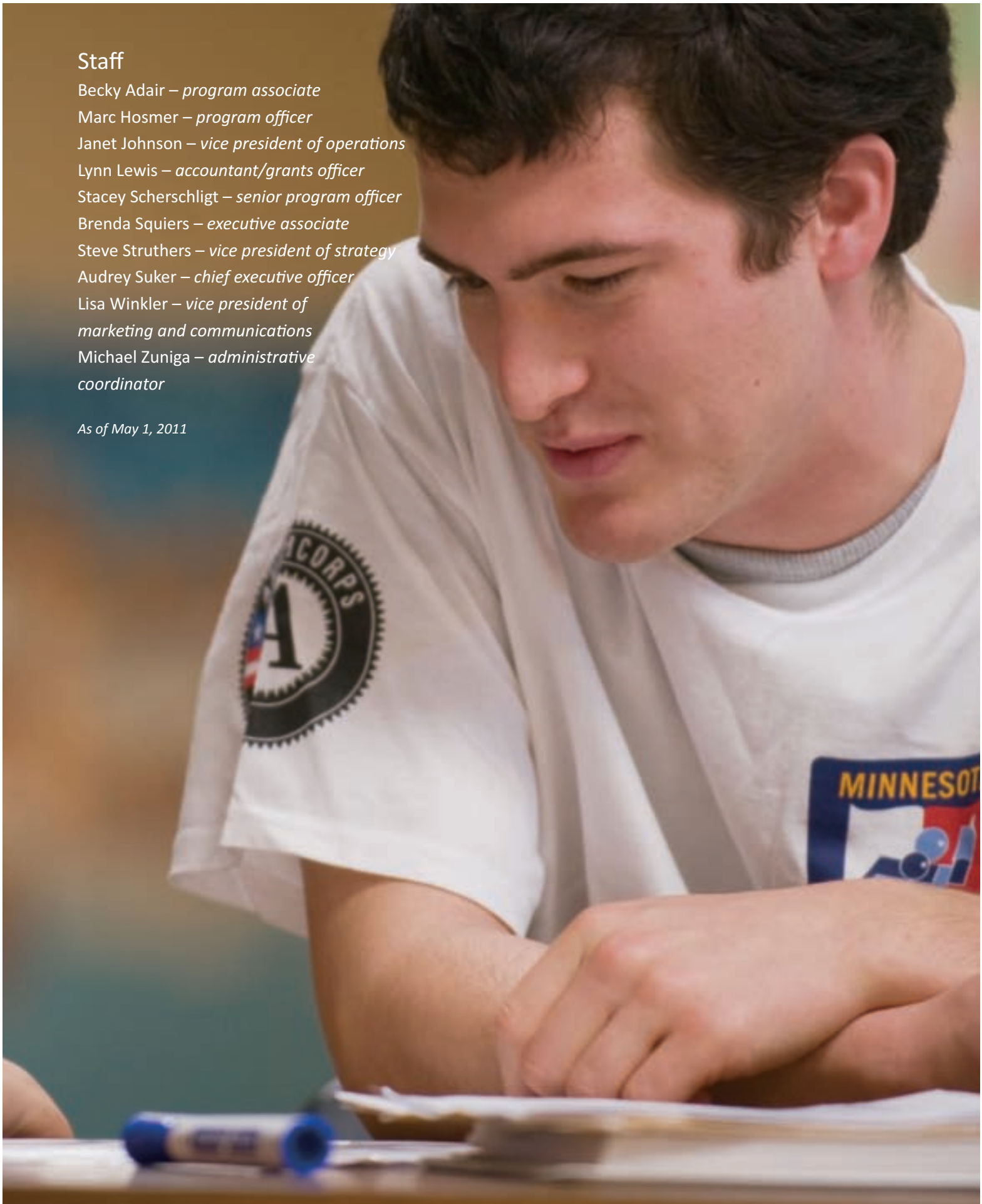
Steve Struthers – *vice president of strategy*

Audrey Suker – *chief executive officer*

Lisa Winkler – *vice president of  
marketing and communications*

Michael Zuniga – *administrative  
coordinator*

*As of May 1, 2011*



*"I will get things done for America – to make our people safer, smarter and healthier.*

*I will bring Americans together to strengthen our communities.*

*Faced with apathy, I will take action.*

*Faced with conflict, I will seek common ground.*

*Faced with adversity, I will persevere.*

*I will carry this commitment with me this year and beyond.*

*I am an AmeriCorps member, and I will get things done." – AmeriCorps Pledge*

## 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 through:

### **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.

**ServeMinnesota**

The power of AmeriCorps. The power of you.

