



Youth in Environmental Service Program

The Youth in Environmental Service (YES) Program aims to be the premiere broker of environmental education and service opportunities for youth in the Bay Area. CCNB AmeriCorps members are already serving as partners with the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA), Point Reyes National Seashore (PRNS), and the Marin Municipal Water District (MMWD), and we are now expanding to reach additional sites in grassroots organizations that specifically serve youth.

Conservation Corps North Bay has three goals for the YES Program: 1) To bring youth into the parks to learn more about the environment and develop a strong environmental ethic and commitment, 2) To strive for rewarding corpsmember development opportunities that ensure the success and commitment of corpsmembers working in the YES Program, and 3) To help strengthen inter-agency collaboration through corpsmember work projects, corpsmembers build partnerships between Bay Area youth groups/schools from underserved areas and agencies responsible for environmental management of public lands.

The Youth in Environmental Service (YES) team is comprised of AmeriCorps members organized into pairs. Each pairing is assigned to: 1) a middle- or high school and 2) an Environmental Partner (a grassroots organization with a mission to engage youth in restoration and environmental service learning projects). From the conclusion of the pre-service training in September through June, YES AmeriCorps members have roughly three “youth-focused” service weeks per month and one “restoration-focused” service week per month. In addition, YES members lead large-scale community service events in observance of National Service Days such as Martin Luther King Day of Service, Cesar Chavez Day, Earth Day, and Summer Service Days. In the summer months, all the YES members serve as leaders for Project ReGeneration (ReGen).

During the eight-weeks of summer, as a capstone to their year of service, YES AmeriCorps members provide leadership to youth in ReGen by facilitating community asset and needs assessments, implementing environmental science curriculum, and guiding members in community service projects. Youth participants in the program are drawn from schools in North Bay low-income communities. With leadership from AmeriCorps YES members, the program integrates academic preparation (high school participants are eligible to receive Life Science), leadership training, civic engagement, and a wider range of environmental projects with over 30 community partners.

The ReGen summer program consists of two four-week sessions, with participants serving seven hours each day. The crews are led by trained AmeriCorps YES members, who serve as the educators, team builders, and liaisons to the service project sponsors. Site supervisors direct ReGen teams during environmental service projects focused on restoration projects in streams, marshes, and on hillsides of parklands. Beach clean-ups, “waste audits” at various non-profit organizations around the North Bay, and recycling projects are features of the service-learning projects completed by ReGen participants.

The AmeriCorps Program is administered by CaliforniaVolunteers and sponsored by the Corporation for National and Community Service. For more information on the Youth in Environmental Service Program, please contact Recycling and AmeriCorps Manager Will Becker at (415) 454-4554 ext. 270 or at wbecker@conservationcorpsnorthbay.org. www.conservationcorpsnorthbay.org.