The Social and Economic Value of Private and Community Foundations*
Robert J. Shapiro, Ph.D. and Aparna Mathur, Ph.D.
An Analysis by Erin Brackney, OneStar Foundation

Groundbreaking report proposes a new nonprofit metric through analysis of the return on foundation investments.

A Fresh Approach

In a climate where operating budgets and overhead dictate how nonprofits’ benefits are measured, authors Robert Shapiro and Aparna Mathur challenge readers with a fresh approach: measuring the impact of the nonprofit sector through social and economic outcomes. Considered the first wide-ranging estimate of its kind in the U.S., Shapiro and Mathur’s report – titled “The Social and Economic Value of Private and Community Foundations” – examines the return on investments made by U.S. private and community foundations in 2007.

Traditionally, the corporate sector has calculated the rate of return (ROR) or return on investment (ROI) to communicate a firm’s effectiveness in generating profit from capital. Using similar analysis, this report introduces a powerful new nonprofit metric – social profit. Shapiro and Mathur compared the rates of return for investments in nonprofit activities across 11 broad nonprofit categories and various subcategories. Their survey of literature included over 90 reports and evaluations on the social and economic return of nonprofit activities and a representative sample of over 1,263 U.S. private and community foundations.

While the estimated ROI of nonprofit activities varies across grant categories, the authors found that “on average, each dollar that private and community foundations provided in grants and support in 2007 produced an estimated return of $8.58 in direct, economic welfare benefits.” Therefore, the $42.9 billion invested in nonprofits by private and community foundations produced a ROI estimated at $367.9 billion in benefits to individuals and communities.

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...On average, each dollar that private and community foundations provided in grants and support in 2007 produced an estimated return of $8.58 in direct, economic welfare benefits.” (Shapiro & Mathur, 2008)
**Direct and Indirect Benefits**

The authors found that all categories of foundation activity produced returns at least equal to their support, with seven of the ten categories producing an estimated ROI of 5:1 or more. Most significant was their finding that $4.6 billion in foundation grants and other support for Public Affairs/Society Benefit activities (representing a 10.7% share of all foundation support) produced an estimated $101 billion in benefits — a rate of return of over 22:1. Other categories with extremely high returns were Human Services, Arts and Culture and Health, with returns of 10.91, 9.77 and 7.60 respectively. The types of benefits analyzed in the ROI calculations varied depending on the grant activity, but overall, they encompassed “…many hard-to-measure economic and social effects…” that foundations sought to improve through support provided. Examples include the number of people assisted combined with the estimated cost savings for in-home care of the elderly rather than hospitalization, the increases in household income and assets resulting from assistance to low-income women or the benefit in increased salaries from participation in job training, case management and job placement services and support.

Although Shapiro and Mathur focused primarily on the direct social and economic benefits generated by foundation investments, they also discussed the significant indirect benefits generated from foundation activities. They found that every dollar extended through a foundation grant also produces indirect economic benefits such as increased employment and incomes for the beneficiaries of these private and community foundation activities. Moreover, this income increase has a “multiplier effect” – the spending by those who gained jobs and additional income stimulates additional job creation and income for suppliers of the goods and services consumed by the initial beneficiaries. This economic activity and job creation also generates added revenue for federal, state and local government through property, income, state and city taxation. Much like the direct benefit calculations, these indirect benefits vary substantially across grant areas. However, overall “…the authors found that the $42.9 billion in foundation support in 2007 helped to generate nearly $512 billion in additional household income and some $145 billion in additional government revenues.” The report criticized the practice of policy makers targeting the tax-exempt status of foundations and the nonprofits they support in search of new revenue sources. Shapiro and Mathur presented substantial evidence that foundation support actually creates exponentially greater revenue – equal to at least three times the estimated tax monies forgone from these exempt entities.

**A Call to Action**

Shapiro and Mathur’s work represents a call to action not only for foundations, but for the entire sector to reclaim the definition of effectiveness away from outdated discussions of operating budget and overhead. Today, the term “nonprofit” must be replaced by a new metric of impact: social profit. Nonprofits, foundations, government, corporate sector stakeholders and volunteers each have a role in collaborating, investing in, evaluating or communicating to maximize the social and economic benefits of the nonprofit sector. By redefining this standard of measurement together, we can increase our collective impact – not just to strengthen the nonprofit sector’s infrastructure or provide a higher quality or scope of services to those in need, but to make revolutionary strides in addressing and solving challenges now and for generations to come.

Full Citation:


www.OneStarFoundation.org
National Service, Local Action: Stories from AmeriCorps

by AnnMaura Connolly, President, Voices for National Service

This blog was produced as a part of Field Focus: Local Action, a three-month digital series examining how individuals and organizations plug in to the communities they care about and spur others into action, as well.

Mahatma Gandhi famously said that, “the best way to find oneself is to lose yourself in the service of others.” Service reveals to people the power they have within themselves to change the trajectory of another’s life – and in so doing change their own.

Service is part of our American fabric, dating back to the first volunteer firefighters in the 18th century and the launch of the Red Cross, YMCA, and other charitable organizations in the 19th century.

AmeriCorps embodies Americans’ commitment to serve others. Building on the foundation of domestic service programs established under presidents from John F. Kennedy to George H. W. Bush, President Bill Clinton founded AmeriCorps in 1993 to harness the energy and ingenuity of citizens to improve communities and get things done for America.

AmeriCorps’ mission is about activating our American community in service of the countless communities we belong to as individuals. By blending national and local programming and impact, we promote a stronger civil society. One that is built on knowing each other better.

This is a human story, so we believe it is best told by and through the people themselves. What follows are three stories of Americans who recognized a need in their national community and stepped forward to lead community change, spurring countless others into action where it’s needed most.
By blending national and local programming and impact, we promote a stronger civil society. One that is built on knowing each other better.

Responding to Natural Disasters

In just the first month after Hurricane Harvey devastated communities in Texas and Louisiana in the summer of 2017, the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) (https://www.nationalservice.gov/) deployed more than 1,800 AmeriCorps and Senior Corps members to areas impacted by the storms. In Texas, more than 800 AmeriCorps members supported recovery activities. Their service included volunteer and donations management, disaster survivor assistance, operations and logistics, damage assessments, and muck and gut operations, working alongside local response organizations.

Caleb Bell was deployed from Conservation Corps Minnesota & Iowa (CCMI). He was excited because disaster relief work was the reason he joined AmeriCorps.

“Houston was definitely different than I expected. It was a shock at first to see how much devastation the flooding caused,” said Bell. “In the neighborhood where we served, there were people who had experienced four or five feet of water in their homes. The people we helped hadn’t started mucking and gutting at all; the water had just receded a few days prior to our arrival.

“I was in one house that really needed help. The homeowner had belongings in every room, floor to ceiling. At first it was extremely difficult to work on her home. I had a really hard time believing what I was seeing, and she had a hard time letting things go. The more I worked on the home and talked to the owner, the easier it became to help her. It really showed how 10 strong backs and three long days can really change someone’s life. In the case of this survivor, she would never have been able to remove everything herself. I think that everyone should take the opportunity to help with disaster response if they have the chance. This deployment has definitely been life-changing for me.”

Caleb Bell is hardly alone in his experience: since 2011 CNCS has responded to over 500 state and federally declared disasters. AmeriCorps and Senior Corps have deployed over 13,000 national service members and engaged more than 1 million volunteers in disaster response, acting as a force multiplier to provide key resources and significantly expand the capacity of existing organizations on the ground. Whether it’s responding to forest fires, floods, hurricanes or tornadoes, AmeriCorps members — through NCCC (https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/americorps/americorps-programs/americorps-nccc), FEMA Corps (https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/americorps/americorps-programs/americorps-nccc/fema-corps/) and other programs — often arrive on Day One and typically stay in communities for substantial periods of time, not just in the immediate aftermath of a disaster.

Combating the Opioid Epidemic

In response to the opioid crisis ravaging communities across the nation, CNCS has significantly increased its work and investment in opioid abuse prevention, education, and recovery programs. Nonprofit groups, faith-based and community organizations, hospitals and health clinics, and state and local agencies across the country are using AmeriCorps members to provide drug abuse education, serve as recovery coaches, build capacity for anti-drug organizations, provide screening and assessments, establish state and local anti-drug coalitions, and prevent relapse, recidivism, and more.

In Massachusetts, for example, 22 AmeriCorps members serve as Recovery Coaches and Program Coordinators in police departments across the state through the Police Assisted Addiction & Recovery Initiative (PAARI). These AmeriCorps members help opioid users access treatment and recovery services, prevent opioid overdose deaths, and build the capacity of non-arrest law enforcement programs.

Erin Berecz works as a PAARI AmeriCorps Recovery Coach in the behavioral health unit of the Lynn, Mass. Police Department. She connects with people in her community who are struggling with substance use disorder and guides them through the treatment and recovery process. Erin has a deep understanding of overcoming these challenges because she has navigated this path herself, having struggled with alcohol addiction for about 15 years.

Erin reached her recovery goals through hard work and the guidance and inspiration of her parents and young sons. But she realizes that not everyone has the strong support network she had, so she works with PAARI to offer help and hope to those who might not have anyone else. She is on the ground in critical moments, coaching people in her community who have just come forward seeking help for their substance use disorder or have recently overdosed. She sees addiction both through the eyes of someone in long term sobriety, and, as a mother, finds herself relating strongly to the family members of her mentees as well.
Since October 2017, PAARI members have provided support and information to more than 3,400 people struggling with a substance use disorder and their loved ones. And nationally, over the past two years, more than 1,800 AmeriCorps and Senior Corps members have been deployed to projects in all 50 states (http://voicesforservice.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Opioid-One-Pager_Aug2018_V2.pdf) focused on prevention, education, and recovery, making a tremendous impact in countless communities and across the nation.

Rapid Response in Flint, Michigan

The narrative that many of us read about Flint, Mich. is one of blight, unemployment, poverty — and lead in the water. But there’s a much more positive — often untold — story in Flint. A story of neighbors helping neighbors, of people of all backgrounds serving their community, and of alignment between the city, nonprofit partners, funding partners, schools, and residents to champion service as a strategy to reinvent the community. AmeriCorps has been integral to that story.

In 2011, leaders from Flint’s nonprofit community, with support from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, established the Flint National Service Accelerator based on a growing sense that with more coordination, training, and community support, both the number and the impact of these hardworking service members could be much greater. The Accelerator provides the capacity-building and technical assistance that local nonprofits need to successfully apply for, recruit, and train AmeriCorps members.

Through the Accelerator, nonprofit organizations are coordinating to more effectively address community needs. National service members are tutoring and mentoring students, maintaining the city’s parks, improving community safety, and eliminating blight. In 2016 the Accelerator supported AmeriCorps’s NCCC teams who came to Flint to assist in responding to the city’s drinking water crisis. Today, AmeriCorps members continue to help with recovery efforts, serving in Flint schools to support students’ and families’ long-term needs, supporting neighborhoods with resident outreach, and acting as a resource to nonprofits through the newly created Flint Recovery Corps.

The Accelerator is expanding the national service presence in Flint, creating new programs and positions to address issues. Starting in 2011 with 25 members and one Flint-based AmeriCorps program, the community now has over 200 AmeriCorps members and six Flint-based AmeriCorps programs, plus three Senior Corps programs that are meeting emerging needs in education, safety, and most recently, opioid abuse prevention.

According to Jenny McArdle, the Chief Service Officer of Flint, “The service provided by engaged citizens is critical if the city is to become the place we've all envisioned it being. We also believe the experiences that are shaping the members and volunteers will create the next generation of civic-minded leaders who will help to determine our future.”

AmeriCorps Service Lasts a Lifetime

AmeriCorps programs do more than move communities forward; they serve their members by providing pathways to opportunity as they enter the workforce. AmeriCorps places thousands of people into intensive service positions where they learn valuable skills, earn money for education, and develop a strong sense of civic responsibility.

A 2016 report (https://www.nationalservice.gov/impact-our-nation/evidence-exchange/AmeriCorps-Alumni-Outcomes) by CNCS documented the long-term outcomes of AmeriCorps alumni — showing that service has an effect on more than just communities served, but also on the AmeriCorps members themselves.

The alumni reported that there were substantial benefits to participating in AmeriCorps programs, including helping them figure out the next steps of their career and increasing their ability to work with others and to respond to unexpected challenges. In fact, an overwhelming 90 percent of AmeriCorps alumni agreed or strongly agreed that they could solve difficult problems, accomplish goals, handle unexpected events and unforeseen situations, remain calm, and identify multiple solutions. They also reported having high levels of cultural competency and the ability to work with diverse groups of people (Corporation for National and Community Service, 2016) — extremely important skills in an increasingly diverse country and world.
One More Story: My Own

I began my life in service immediately after graduating from college. I moved cross-country to spend a year working for the Jesuit Volunteer Corps (JVC) at St. Anselm's Immigrant and Refugee Center. I spent most of my time working with the counseling program, helping young people from South East Asia assimilate to their new home in California. JVC was an exceptionally formative year in my early life and it ignited in me a lifelong passion for service. Since then, I've spent the last three decades working toward the day when every young person would be challenged and given the opportunity to do a service year.

Today, more than 333,700 people serve our country and the world through AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, YouthBuild and the Peace Corps annually. That is real progress, but it is not enough. We can't stop until every person in this country is challenged and given the opportunity to spend a year in service. By working together, sharing our stories, and investing in data-driven and cost effective programs like AmeriCorps, we can make this dream a reality. And the result will be a nation and a world that is more tolerant, more connected, and more just.

References


AnnMaura Connolly is the President of Voices for National Service (https://voicesforservice.org/), a coalition of service organizations that work together to advance citizen service policy, established in 2003. Additionally, she is a member of City Year’s Management Executive Committee, overseeing City Year’s international work, public policy, and public affairs. For three decades, she has worked to expand opportunities for young people to serve across the United States and around the world.

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Written Testimony of Barbara Stewart
Chief Executive Officer, Corporation for National and Community Service
Before the Committee on Education and the Workforce

Chairwoman Foxx, Ranking Member Scott, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the invitation to testify today. With only two months in this role, I appreciate the opportunity to meet with the Committee and share my commitment to accountability and good stewardship of taxpayer dollars – a top priority I share with the dedicated professionals of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS).

Introduction

I am grateful to President Trump for affording me the opportunity to lead this agency, and I am humbled by the trust he and the Senate have placed in me through the confirmation process. It is my hope, that with time and action, I will earn this Committee’s trust as well.

Before I share my vision for the agency, I would like to share a little about me, my leadership style, and my approach for addressing the critical issues facing CNCS and the national service community.

Over the course of my more than 30-year career, I have served in the private, public, and nonprofit sectors, bringing with me strong management skills, operations experience, and a passion for service that I hope will lead CNCS to higher levels of accountability, effectiveness, and impact. Through each role, I have endeavored to manage budgets with fiscal responsibility, build strong teams, and deliver results.

I have spent many years helping nonprofits strengthen their governance, operations, and sustainability so they can better pursue their mission and achieve greater community impact. I also have firsthand experience as a grant-maker, having co-founded and led a family foundation that supports organizations to expand economic opportunity through education, training, and work experience.

My management expertise and passion for service will steer my actions as the CEO of CNCS, and I hope to earn the trust of this Committee and all Americans with a laser-like focus on accountability, efficiency, effectiveness, and impact.

During my brief tenure, I have met some of the 300,000 AmeriCorps members and Senior Corps volunteers serving in more than 50,000 locations to tackle some of the country’s most-pressing and persistent challenges. They are helping disaster survivors by removing debris and cleaning up communities devastated by floods and hurricanes. They are serving in schools, helping improve educational outcomes and changing young lives through mentoring and tutoring. They are helping seniors to live independent and meaningful lives. They are serving in communities...
affected by the opioid crisis connecting people to treatment options. And they are assisting veterans transition to civilian life, post-military service.

While there is no question as to the noble mission of the agency, I also understand the management challenges the agency has had over the years. While some may be isolated incidents, I understand – and share – the Committee’s concerns that each occurrence may be a symptom of larger management problems that impede our ability to make an impact in communities.

Taking the lessons learned from prior incidents, I am committed to making meaningful changes to address them. Our responsibility is too great and our mission is too important not to make the improvements necessary to produce the lasting change we all desire.

During this testimony, I will share with the Committee my firm commitment to address the agency’s challenges, course correct when necessary, and make agency-wide reforms where needed. I will also highlight some recent progress that has been made and share my vision to continue to strengthen the effectiveness and quality of service our grantees, programs, members, and volunteers provide.

**Improving Agency Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Compliance**

My experience in the private sector has taught me that every organization can and must look for opportunities for improvement. CNCS is no exception.

I have focused my first two months in the job on evaluating what works and identifying what needs to be improved. My leadership team and I are guided by several core principles: ensure efficient and effective use of tax payer funds; strengthen accountability; streamline systems to improve the grantee, member, and volunteer experience; and create an environment of innovation and creativity.

I have identified a number of operational and management challenges that require immediate attention and renewed leadership. I understand this Committee and the agency’s Office of the Inspector General (OIG) have identified many of these same issues over the years. I am pleased that the agency has made some improvements and I am committed to accelerating that work.

Since I have arrived, I have learned that CNCS is managing information technology infrastructure that are woefully outdated. I will oversee the management of this critical system to allow us to streamline our work, strengthen our grants management and oversight ability, and improve the services we provide to our grantees.

The continued delays of the agency’s IT modernization efforts, particularly related to the Grants and Member Management (GMM) system are a point of frustration across the agency, as our grantees count on these systems to be reliable. Quite frankly, the project has experienced significant delays and the agency has struggled to meet several milestones.
A project of this magnitude requires strong leadership. That’s why I am pleased to share that after a rigorous selection process, I’ve hired a highly qualified Chief Information Officer who will bring more than 20 years of public and private sector experience to the role. He started work yesterday and his first and most-urgent task will be to immediately assess the agency’s IT systems and identify the necessary changes to successfully develop the GMM system and other critical improvements.

Like information technology, strong financial management systems are foundational to the day-to-day operations of any organization. In response to last year’s audit—which identified several significant process, documentation, and procedural problems—I directed the Chief Financial Officer to work with the OIG, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the U.S Department of the Treasury, and any necessary external experts to put the agency on stronger footing for a clean audit opinion in the future.

I have also made several significant changes to the leadership within the Office of the Chief Financial Officer, including the hiring of new directors of Procurement, Budget, and Accounting. These departments are the backbone of the agency and these changes will support strengthened financial operations and management going forward. I am committed to working closely with these new leaders to make formidable progress on this top priority area.

Our core function is grant-making and strong monitoring and oversight throughout the grant lifecycle are essential activities. The agency has made improvements to enhance this work in recent years, and I am committed to accelerating that progress.

Specifically, CNCS is committed to detecting compliance issues and holding noncompliant grantees accountable. That means reclaiming unallowable costs when necessary, and ensuring timely resolution of all compliance issues, audits, and investigations. Since January 2017, CNCS has closed more than 115 audits, investigations, and other unresolved issues.

CNCS is also improving its debt collection policy, practice, and oversight to ensure more accurate and timely collections. In FY 2016 and 2017, CNCS issued a combined total of $5.18 million in debt collections, returning these funds to the U.S. Treasury. It is important to note that the majority of the hundreds of millions of dollars we award each year to thousands of grantees are spent as governed by law. However, the agency uses the full range of enforcement options if an individual or organization violates the rules and our monitoring identifies those issues.

A key part of the national service grant management infrastructure are the Governor-appointed State Service Commissions. The State Service Commissions are responsible for the oversight and monitoring of the AmeriCorps programs in their portfolios, more than two-thirds of all AmeriCorps State and National programs across the country. They, too, are required to identify and enforce subgrantee activities that are not in compliance with the law.

However, like all grantees, if a State Service Commission fails to conduct the necessary oversight, the agency has and will continue to hold them accountable. Last year, CNCS made the decision, at the recommendation of our OIG, to discontinue funding to new competitive
Applicants of one State Service Commission that demonstrated insufficient oversight and monitoring practices.

Two areas related to compliance that are of utmost importance to me are ensuring programs and grantees fully comply with the statutory requirements related to the National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) and member-prohibited activities. In both of these areas, the agency has made progress but there is still more work to do to ensure member and community safety and meet our statutory responsibilities.

Given the vulnerable populations with which our programs, members, and volunteers often serve with, CNCS and our grantees have a responsibility to ensure that all who participate in national service programs meet the requirements of the three-part National Service Criminal History Check that Congress outlined in the Serve America Act. These requirements include checking the National Public Sex Offender Website (NSOPW), a state-based repository, and/or an FBI fingerprint-based system. These NSCHC checks must be completed correctly and on time, and if any portion includes an error or is late, by even one day, the check is considered noncompliant.

As previously shared with the Committee, CNCS implemented a strategy to enable our grantees to directly obtain fingerprint-based checks from a private vendor known as an “FBI Channeler.” Since engaging in this solution in January 2016, the FBI Channerler has helped reduce bureaucratic barriers and instances of delays. In fact, for the more than 700 grantees who have used the FBI Channerler, most checks are returned in less than 48 hours later, with 99% receiving a “cleared” recommendation. Only a small fraction required additional review by grantees to determine eligibility.

The agency instituted use of an online platform in December 2016 to track when all grantees complete required course modules, including modules on the legal requirements of criminal history checks which were added to the platform in 2018. The responsible party at a CNCS-funded organization is required to take the course and pass a test about its content. These actions and others are supporting our grantees to meet their administrative requirements.

While there is no silver bullet that guarantees grantees will meet the complex NSCHC requirements, we expect the organizations we fund to fully comply with them. When grantees fail to do so, we hold them accountable. During the last two and half years, CNCS has disallowed $3.17 million in costs due to lack of full and timely NSCHC compliance.

The agency has also:

i. strengthened efforts to educate grantees and members about prohibited activities,

ii. incorporated prohibited activities risk mitigation into the grant application review process, and

iii. initiated other efforts to prevent and detect possible violations.

In September 2017, the Director of AmeriCorps State and National issued additional guidance to that program’s grantees related to specific prohibited activities, and this was done with strong support from our Inspector General. Meanwhile, during their last two grant competitions, AmeriCorps State and National successfully incorporated a three-part review procedure in order
to assess a grantee’s risk of engaging in prohibited activities based on the type of grantee and the nature of member activities.

An additional area where the agency must continue to improve is related to improper payments. Like every federal agency, in accordance with the Improper Payments Improvement Act (IPIA), as amended, CNCS is required to assess payments that were made in an incorrect amount or to an ineligible recipient. The agency has struggled to calculate and report improper payment rates. In short, the process was flawed, and didn’t capture the information needed to provide confidence in the data the agency reported.

Last fiscal year, the agency implemented a new statistically valid sampling methodology that was approved by OMB, establishing a new improper payment baseline. I am pleased to see improvement in how we are testing and managing our program. We are on track to achieve the targets of our testing strategy that were presented to OMB in 2017. But let me be clear—while I believe this progress indicates that we are getting on the right track, we have significantly more work to do.

The CNCS FY17 improper payment root cause analysis indicated that more than 90% of the agency’s improper payments are a result of grantees’ difficulty in completing a National Service Criminal History Check. As the agency improves its NSCHC compliance—which I am fully committed to achieving—we expect to see improved improper payment results.

In addition to the business process improvements and compliance efforts that we are taking, the individual programs are working to reduce administrative burdens, more efficiently use program funding and resources, and improve the experience of grantees and members.

After a strategic review, the agency proposed amendments to the Senior Corps regulations that remove unduly burdensome and obsolete administrative requirements. The proposed changes maintain program integrity while reducing regulatory hurdles and removing duplicative, conflicting, and outdated program guidance. We believe that the amendments will promote efficiencies, incentivize innovation, and allow programs to be more nimble and responsive to local needs. These regulations are currently on the Federal Register and will likely be put into practice in late 2018.

The AmeriCorps VISTA program developed and piloted a virtual pre-service training program for the full-time members who enroll each year. At the conclusion of the pilot in 2017 an assessment was made that a virtual training experience could be implemented for all full-time members in 2019, eliminating the need for more costly in-person training. This will result in substantial savings in 2019.

AmeriCorps NCCC, our residential AmeriCorps program, recently consolidated campus operations to improve efficiency and reduce operational costs. As a result, the program will be able to enroll the same number of AmeriCorps members, and complete as many community projects across the nation, while reducing overhead costs.
AmeriCorps State and National has streamlined its grant award process to be more efficient. Grantees determined to be in good programmatic and financial standing will receive full funding for three-year grants. Prior to streamlining, grantees were required to submit duplicative application and budget documents for both the second and third year of the grant. Those second and third year documents provided no new programmatic or performance information to the agency. AmeriCorps State and National retains the ability to terminate grants at any time during the three-year period if there are programmatic or financial issues, maintaining the agency’s ability to safeguard public funds.

My leadership team and I recognize the need to accelerate progress and, in some cases, make significant course corrections. I intend to leverage the agency’s enterprise risk management framework to make evidence-informed decisions that enable us to meet our oversight responsibilities; prevent waste, fraud, and abuse; improve compliance; and strengthen our impact in the communities we serve.

**Looking to the Future**

I am fully committed to improving the effectiveness and efficiency of this agency. It is paramount that we make the necessary changes to address the core agency operations once and for all.

As we realize these gains, we will also look to expand on that success to strengthen, streamline, and improve our program operations, ultimately enhancing the services we provide to those we fund. It is essential that we strengthen the use of evidence in our programs, improve the experience of our grantees and service members, create a strong talent pipeline for our agency staff, and ensure that we continue to use the American taxpayers’ dollar responsibly. With guidance from OMB and input from Congress, we are pursuing additional actions that address inefficiencies and redundancies.

**Closing**

During my brief time at CNCS, I have learned much about the people who come to work at this agency every day and the commitment they make to serve the American people. Like me, they are committed to strengthening the impact of this agency, its programs, and grantee performance. It is my honor to serve alongside them.

National service taps our nation’s greatest resource—the American people—to get things done. It provides opportunity for those who serve by helping them gain skills, pursue higher education, and find employment. It bolsters the nonprofit, civic, and faith-based organizations that are important to communities across the country.

I have seen this reflected in the Senior Corps volunteers I met helping older Americans maintain their independence and dignity, AmeriCorps members connecting neighbors to recovery resources to tackle their opioid addiction, Senior Corps Foster Grandparents mentoring young
people in juvenile detention centers, and AmeriCorps Disaster Response Team members helping repair the home of a family uprooted by a natural disaster.

I hope my testimony clarifies my commitment to a strong, accountable, and efficient CNCS. I don’t take the privilege to serve the American people lightly; it is a responsibility I take seriously and accept humbly.

I look forward to working with the Committee to further strengthen the impact of national service on the challenges facing our communities and the nation.

Thank you.