

New Jersey Youth Corps

Needing to address the State's growing dropout population in 1984, New Jersey looked to create an innovative, alternative path to an education; blending the hard-working aspects of the Civilian Conservation Corps (of the 1930's) with the best educational strategies toward obtaining a high school diploma. The result was the formation of the New Jersey Youth Corps. Now entering its 33rd year, New Jersey Youth Corps is currently housed within the [NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development](#).



Youth Served by New Jersey Youth Corps:

- Out of School, Opportunity Youth are 16-25 years old, with an average age of 18. Approximately 60/40 ratio, male to female, predominately African American and Hispanic youth.

Serving the challenging needs of Opportunity Youth, most Corpsmembers are:

- Justice Involved
- Welfare Involved
- Engage in Substance Abuse
- Aging Out of Foster Care
- Homeless
- Have Mental Health Issues
- Gang Involved/affiliated

New Jersey Youth Corps provides a remedy of services, including:

- High School Diploma Preparation
- Intensive Case Management
- Drivers Education
- Crew Based Community Service/Work Experience
- Counseling
- Health Education
- Career Exploration/ Work Readiness
- Mentoring
- Pregnancy Prevention
- Liberal Learning
- Nutrition
- Life Skills
- Recreational Evening Programming

New Jersey Youth Corps is an effective model for redirecting at-risk youth - Over the past 4 years, (FY12-16) NJYC has achieved the following results:

- 83% of participants enrolled successfully completed the program.
- Youth achieved an average academic growth of 2 grade levels in math and 2 grade levels in reading.
- 80% of youth enrolling at the High School Level earned their High School Diploma (260 youth)
- Additionally, 826 Corpsmembers enrolling BELOW the high school level successfully earned their High School Diploma.
- 93% of those completing the Youth Corps program achieved placement in work, college, advanced training or the military.

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Return on Investment from Youth Corps Service Projects:

- Over the past 4 years, NJYC has provided 460,817 Service hours to communities across New Jersey working in food banks and soup kitchens, building & maintain trails, working in hospitals, performing ecological restorations, landscaping and much more!

Valued at a rate of \$26.70 per hour* that equals a \$12.3 million return on investment. Measured against a total investment of \$21.4 million over the same period, NJ Youth Corps can claim a **57% quantifiable return on investment from service alone!**

*Value of hourly rate of service provided by the Independent Sector (IndependentSector.org)



Alleviating the burden 'at risk' youth present to taxpayers:

- Failing to fully educate the next generation of employees has substantial long-term consequences for New Jersey's economic well-being. The average high school non-graduate imposes a net fiscal burden of nearly \$122,000 over the course of his or her lifetime, realized through cash assistance and other benefits (such as food stamps, healthcare, child care and housing subsidies). In comparison, the average high school graduate will contribute \$344,700 more in taxes than received federal and state aid. The result is a gap of approximately \$467,000.



Corpsmembers at the Great Swamp NWR

- 1.8 million young adults ages 16-21 are not enrolled in school or have not finished their high school education. This education participation gap has enormous consequences for the economic health of our cities - and the nation as a whole. The economic value of Opportunity Youth, a recent study by labor economists, estimated that each youth who is out of school and out of work "imposes – on average and compared to other youth – an immediate taxpayer burden of \$14,800 per year and an immediate social burden of \$40,000 per year."

Currently 11 NJYC programs across the state:

(Click Map to the right for directions to each, links to websites in blue below)

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|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------------------------|--------------|
| • Camden | 856-486-7390 | • Pleasantville | 609-485-0052 |
| • Elizabeth | 908-659-5177 | • Phillipsburg | 877-270-7266 |
| • Jersey City | 201-200-3101 | • Paterson | 973-321-0760 |
| • New Brunswick | 732-745-5325 | • Trenton | 609-570-3153 |
| • Newark | 973-641-2094 | • Vineland | 856-794-6943 |
| • Newton | 973-940-3500 | | |

