

TEACHFOR AMERICA

Teach For America is developing a movement of leaders who will help drive change at every level of our education system toward the goal of closing the achievement gap. These leaders start their paths as corps members, helping students in high-need communities make the academic progress that expands their opportunities. We believe that providing a great education for all is the most effective means of ensuring equal opportunities for everyone.

Mike Broschart

For me, community engagement and community building are essential for the success of our students. AmeriCorps offers a unique opportunity for corps members and the greater community to come together to create opportunities for Rhode Island's youth to be successful.

Last year, Jalisa, one of my 11th grade students, began the year reading on the equivalent of a 7th grade level. By the end of the year, with the support of other teachers and the community, she was reading on an 11th grade level and is now a star student in her British Literature class. Her teacher this year says she has never

Cara Harrison

As an AmeriCorps service member, I know that I am making a difference in our community and preparing my students with the skills they will need to be successful in the 21st century global economy. Last year, half of my kindergarten students began the year with limited or no English skills, and a majority of my students had limited knowledge of the alphabet. By the end of Kindergarten, with hard work, all of my students ended the year reading on a 1st grade reading level.

Serve Rhode Island is the state's commission for national service, administering twelve AmeriCorps programs with 280 members dedicating a year of service to our state. Our members assist many youngsters from pre-K to college along the spectrum of public education.

Our AmeriCorps members are mentors, tutors and creative expanders of the learning experience for many children living in our state's most disadvantaged urban communities. Our AmeriCorps members work in health and human services as well, bringing assistance to hundreds of low-income families. Last year our AmeriCorps teams helped over 25,000 Rhode Island youth and adults.

For every one of our AmeriCorps members there are stories of their daily service, each member making a difference, getting things done, directly for many and indirectly for all of us. As Dr. King said, "Injustice anywhere, is a threat to justice everywhere." Our AmeriCorps members are about righting the wrongs, about works of justice.

We are all connected. In so many ways, our AmeriCorps members are building a wonderful web of connections within our community, uniting us behind a common purpose, exciting us to the possibilities of a better neighborhood, community and world.

Here are some of their stories. They give insight to daily miracles of service.



Bernie Beaudreau
Executive Director



Charter Corps

Jill Willette

I work in one of two fourth grade classrooms at Highlander Charter School. Only, there are not really two fourth grade classes. My teachers decided this year to try a new approach to teaching fourth grade. The concept is simple – sort your students according to ability, then assign a teacher who can help each group of students achieve. This concept is used in most classrooms, from reading groups to interventions. What makes this setup different, however, is that my teachers decided to integrate an old resource in a brand new way. That resource is me. Our already small classes are divided into even smaller sections. Struggling students work with a teacher who has a lot of experience. Advanced students are allowed to work at their own pace. Small groups mean that it is very hard for any student to fall through the cracks. We started the year with four students reading at an advanced grade level and six students in math above grade level. Now, we have expanded our high reading group to include ten students at an advanced level. Almost all of the ten students that were behind in reading are now at or above grade level. We are seeing extraordinary success in our fourth grade class, and each and every student is given the chance to excel. When you boil it down, the most important ingredient in this success is that extra teacher in the classroom. This success is only possible because of AmeriCorps.



Volunteers in Service to America (AmeriCorps*VISTA) is a year-long national service program for men and women 18 years of age and older committed to increasing the capacity of low-income people to improve the conditions of their own lives, and building permanent infrastructure in nonprofit organizations to help them more effectively bring individuals and communities out of poverty.

Kayla Ringelheim

In my second year as an AmeriCorps VISTA at Farm Fresh RI, I am continuously working to build capacity within our nutrition education/food access programs. Our Healthy Foods, Healthy Families program offers weekly bi-lingual activities at our summer farmers markets to WIC/SNAP families. Families learn together about shopping for affordable, seasonal foods that kids will eat and are easy to prepare.

In 2012, 400 low-income families made 2,540 visits to our market tent and earned \$14,880 in nutrition incentives to spend on fruits and vegetables. In collaboration with URI SNAP Ed, our Healthy Servings for Seniors workshops provide seniors with hands-on tips and opportunities to buy fresh, healthy food. Senior centers host six-week sessions, including a visit by a nearby farmer and a field trip to a farmers market. 212 low-income seniors participated at 5 seniors centers in 2012 and received \$1,575 in nutrition incentives.

In collaboration with Thundermist Health Center, 50 families received Fruit & Vegetable Prescriptions, where doctors prescribed farmers market produce – \$1 per family member per day– to young patients highly at-risk for diet-related disease. Some statistics that guide my work include: In RI, 61% of the population is overweight or obese and only 28% consume 5+ daily servings of fruits and vegetables. Almost 15% of Rhode Islanders experienced food insecurity in 2010. 11% of RI's elderly live in poverty and experience food insecurity.

I believe that food is medicine, and I am working to build sustainable programs that improve the health and well-being of RI's underserved populations.



VISTA

Leah Glass

It's Wednesday evening, a little before 6 pm, as I'm rushing back to Roger Williams Middle School to meet my volunteers and several eager Spanish-speaking parents. "Hello! I'm Leah from Serve Rhode Island. I'm the volunteer coordinator at Roger Williams...it's nice to meet you!" I say in my broken and rusty Spanish.

We shuffle in from the cold to settle into an open classroom where my volunteers take over. Some students work on learning the alphabet, something they don't even know in Spanish. Others are a little further ahead and practice "W" questions: Who, What, Where, When, Why? I talk with a student, trying to figure out the word for dragonfly in Spanish.

As an AmeriCorps VISTA at Serve Rhode Island, I've had the opportunity to help develop and implement a volunteer program in Roger Williams Middle School, one of the most underperforming middle schools in the state. My goal is to find the needs of the teachers and staff members, and find volunteers who have the skills to match that need. Part of my role consists of finding niches that could be filled, such as ESL classes for parents

Each week I get to learn more and more about these parents and see their passion further fuel their desire to learn more. I've seen the first hand transformative power education can have on these parents to help them improve their everyday lives and relationships. This is an invaluable service and I'm honored to be a part of it.

A partnership between three RI site-managed public charter and independent schools, will enroll 14 Corps members to provide in-class and afterschool academic support. Corps members will receive support for educational and service-related employment in distressed RI communities. The Charter Corps will also aid local families by offering support to the most needy students while providing adults with a mode for creating change personally, professionally, and publicly.

Dianny Pena

Getting to build rapport with students could be tricky, and some might argue against it, but research shows that although rapport does not result in learning, it creates conditions conducive to learning. What could be better for learning than having an environment in which there is trust, loyalty, respect, motivation, comfort, and communication? These are the conditions we are creating for our students, especially our mentees. We are forming bonds that will stay with us. It is captivating to see how much this experience is positively influencing all of us. In myself, I have seen how I'm more open and conscious of others' thoughts. And my mentees have improved their self-esteem. One third grader wrote a story, and after reading it to me, he wanted to read it to the whole third grade classroom. He ended up reading it to five other teachers. He also wanted his story published! On the other hand, one fifth grader was so stage frightened that she ran off the stage when giving a speech for Student Council's election. Afterwards, we had a talk in which I told her that I also suffer from stage fright and dislike public speaking, but there are techniques that we could practice to become better. After giving her some of these techniques, her words were: "Miss Dianny, thank you. I will keep practicing, and I will be able to do it just like you do one day!"





City Year Rhode Island

Amy Waddell

Michael is a student in my fourth grade class. For the first few weeks of school, he slipped by almost everyone's radar. Over time, his constant absences and lack of participation in class showed that he wasn't very focused on school. In September, he only attended school 74% of the time, missing one of every four school days! He stopped turning in homework, and began taking naps on his desk during lessons. Because of his slipping behavior and poor attendance, Michael started to work with our City Year team.



We called home whenever he was absent and enrolled him in our behavior coaching and leadership development program, 50 Acts of Greatness. Almost immediately, we saw a change in Michael. When we spoke to his mother, we learned she had no idea he was missing school. Since connecting with Michael's family, his attendance rate in these last months improved to 88%. Once he started attending class more regularly, he had more opportunities to work closely with the City Year team. In his 50 Acts of Greatness sessions, Michael has been learning to work in a team, which requires trust and patience. He has had a chance to reflect on his actions and identify the ways in which he is a leader in his school. By getting Michael to school more often, he has been given the opportunity to realize his own strengths. And, just last week he told me he wanted to be a City Year corps member when he grows up.

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The Learning Community supports 4 AmeriCorps Education Fellows. Fellows serve as academic tutors with our students and get to see firsthand strategies in the classroom, at recess and after school that will help close the achievement gap. Each Education Fellow is assigned cohorts of students with whom they work in small groups or in one-on-one tutorials throughout the academic year. Education Fellows will also work with students during non-classroom time, building relationships during recess, lunch and after school tutoring.

Janna Cunnion

Three days a week, I take two first grade boys for reading instruction. These two kids were selected based on their need to practice listening and speaking English. They are often given the choice of what books we are reading that day, but because of the depth to which we read the book, we often don't get the chance to finish one. Sometimes it's the language that is the barrier. I started walking them through translating their sentences from Spanish to English, as well as translating words in the books from English to Spanish. Other days, our time is allotted to pointing out pictures, discussing what's happening in the story, and predicting what may happen next. It may mean that we only finish half the book in thirty minutes, but I find that slowing the pace, gives the two of them a fuller understanding of language and a deeper interest in the story.

I find this experience incredibly rewarding as the students are always excited when I come to their classrooms, and they jump on the chance to pick out which books they'd like to read. I am amazed by how absorbent their minds are and how many thoughtful questions they ask. Their talent and self-awareness reminds me of why I serve.



The Learning Community Education Fellowship

Meagan Amylon

The Education Fellows at Learning Community Charter School have a special role in that they are both teachers and non-classroom facilitators. The Education Fellows spend time with children teaching them reading and math skills in classrooms, but we also oversee games of tag and hula hoop contests on the playground. This gives



us a unique perspective into the inner workings of our students.

A great example of this is Robert, a student I work with in my English Language Development class. Robert is bright and energetic, but oftentimes came to class listless and sad. This affected his participation and effort,

and subsequently, his academic performance. As I started to spend more time with Robert on the playground, I noticed that sometimes he lacked the skills to interact successfully with other students. Usually, the days he played alone were also the days he struggled in class. I reached out to the social workers about this, and Robert is now getting counseling to learn how to interact positively with his peers. As his social and emotional capabilities improve, so do his assessment scores. As an Education Fellow I can laugh and play with students on the playground, but I can also notice the way my students interact. I feel so lucky that I have the opportunity to help students grow as both academic and social learners.

City Year employs 18-24 year olds across the country to work to end the drop-out crisis. Our focus is on attendance, behavior and coursework and members provide one-on-one instruction and tutoring during the school day and in after school. Our members organize and lead activities, celebrations, and projects to improve the community and school environment. Members also lead mentoring groups and make positive calls home to encourage school attendance.

Esther Cajahuaringa

When a student in my class asks me why our name is “City Year,” I get excited. It’s easy to respond saying, “corps members give a year to serve in a city”. However, I affirm this questioning student



telling them why I serve. I tell this student that our organization provides me with the opportunity to become part of their school and their lives for a year. The student looks at me smiling, asking, “how come only one year?” City Year’s slogan says “give a year, change the [student’s] world”, but our world gets turned around as well. We have corps members coming from all over the country, having their own unique set of experiences, yet nothing really prepares us for our “City Year.” I was expecting the long hours, the in-school tutoring, service projects, and after-school programs. What surprised me was the joy in watching one of my students grow in self-confidence both on the basketball court and the classroom; reading through poetry pieces with my mentees to work on their behavior and rapping skills; translating for students and families; and collaborating with my teammates to serve our whole school. I was prepared to give a year to my students, but didn’t know in what ways I would give: to my students, the community, even myself. I serve for the small steps that are taken each and every day by corps members and students. Together all those steps forward and back become one.



East Bay Community Action Program

Joseph Depasquale

The East Bay Community Action Program (EBCAP) AmeriCorps Team is a team of 9 members deployed in the fight against poverty in both the upper and lower bay areas. Whether the EBCAP AmeriCorps team is marketing our various programs or creating their own projects based on community need, they keep the lamplight of service burning brightly.

In one such project, the EBCAP AmeriCorps Team volunteered with Operation Stand Down Rhode Island Weekend for two days in September. OSRI is a nationwide non-profit that helps homeless and returning veterans and their families become engaged, employed and educated in their home state of Rhode Island. Picture a M*A*S*H style tented encampment for an entire weekend laden with amenities for the homeless, from basic necessities to DMV services to free massage therapy. Our mission was threefold: promote, identify and educate. The EBCAP AmeriCorps worked in several areas, promoting our various social services, determining eligibility and mapping out a road of sustainability in conjunction with other agencies.

One veteran we helped had a suspended driver's license, multiple driving violations, and hadn't filed his taxes for several years. With a combined effort of three agencies, we were able to file his taxes which resulted in a \$1,400 return, clear his fines and get his license reinstated. Coordinating all these services under one tent in one day made the impossible possible. I was proud to be one of the many dedicated volunteers that were able to help homeless and impoverished veterans at this event.

The College Advising Corps (CAC) at Brown University provides in-school college advising to increase the number of urban, low-income & first-generation students entering & completing higher education. College Guides are placed at 11 urban public high schools and CCRI. Students at RI schools with a CAC adviser are 14 percentage points more likely to attend college than students in similar schools without a CAC adviser. 12 full-time and 10 minimum-time members annually serve 2000 high school students.

Andrea McWilliams

A college education is arguably what American society considers the most important factor in succeeding in the world today. While it is perceived to be the great key to social and economic mobility, there are countless low-income, first-generation students whose ability to apply, matriculate, and graduate from a college or university is considerably more difficult compared to their more affluent peers. This reality motivated me to apply for a position with the College Advising Corps.

On a daily basis, I assist students with their college and financial aid applications as well as provide enrollment support. Through my service work, I have encountered countless students who, despite their strong work ethic and desire to learn, will have to work exceedingly harder than their wealthier peers in order to succeed and graduate from college.

For this reason, I also spend a considerable amount of time meeting one-on-one with students in order to identify their specific needs and subsequently provide them with information on the resources available to ensure their success.

The students who I serve are no strangers to hard work and are resilient in the face of challenges. They deserve to have their dreams come to fruition regardless of their circumstances. The advising services that my colleagues and I provide every day have a strong impact on addressing the challenges that low-income students face when applying to and completing college—challenges that stem partly from a lack of access to information and support.



College Advising Corps at Brown University

Michelle Un

As difficult as some days are, and as frustrated as I sometimes get, I wouldn't change my decision to serve with the National College Advising Corps for anything. When I first think of what this service means to me, I immediately think about the numerical takeaways—over 450 college applications submitted, 170 students registered for the SAT, 80 students completed the FAFSA, and 85 students applying to 4-year colleges this year so far. As much as I have had an impact on the students at Mount Pleasant, I know that being here has changed me and helped me grow in so many ways. In my first year here, I was nervous and lacked confidence. I feared that I wouldn't be able to achieve all the lofty goals I had set for myself, but slowly and surely, I have gained confidence and grown into the college advisor I hoped I would be. In my second year, I feel like a leader, an ally to the students and a resource to the teachers, administrators, and school, someone who people come to for advice about college, school, or even life.



10 AmeriCorps members will serve on the Family Advocates Team to bridge the gap between people in crisis situations and corresponding supplemental resources. Team members not only offer referrals, but also are trained to assess client needs and assist clients with applications for rental and/or mortgage assistance, food stamps, heating assistance and income tax preparation. Members are also trained to conduct intake/screenings for client referrals; perform comprehensive assessments using a standardized empowerment-based tool; coordinate and implement food pantry operations; and support Head Start programming activities.





Generations of Learning

Claudette Harris

When I walk into the classroom each morning I hear a buzz around the classroom of kids saying, “Hi Miss Claudette!” over and over. Kids tell me about what they did over the weekend, about their families and about their siblings. Students feel comfortable sharing their lives with me, which makes me smile. While the main classroom teacher is the “heavy” in the room, I get the opportunity to connect emotionally with the kids. We have 24 neighborhood children in my 2nd grade ESL classroom, and I work with 8 children in a small group setting to review remedial level work. My comfortable and easy relationship with the kids helps to remove their stigma of being academically behind their peers. The kids who are behind need a second person in classroom especially when the achievement gap is so significant within one classroom. I find the smile in their faces all the reward I need.



Scholarships for Service is an AmeriCorps Education Award Only program that engages college students committed to service. Scholarships for Service (SFS) is administered by Rhode Island Campus Compact, through generous financial support from Serve Rhode Island, and involves institutions of higher education throughout the state. Member campuses in Rhode Island have a deep commitment to the value of service in education and to fulfilling their public trust by graduating people who are active participants in civic life.

Genevieve Bormes

Over the past few months, I have been working with RISD Project ED. It's a club started by a student, Jennifer Wibowo, that works with Providence Head Start School to bring art to underprivileged students. Seeing art education in action and helping to foster art in schools is a big point of interest for me, as I am considering becoming an art teacher. The opportunity to learn more about education and the role of art in education was a major reason that I joined Scholarships for Service. ED has been a really great, hands-on learning experience. In addition to going to the school every week to teach mini-lessons and do projects with the kids, I joined the Special Events Committee. We planned a Winter Fiesta, an event for the students and their families, that took place at RISD. I planned a mural activity, in which all the kids help paint three huge paintings on large sheets of cardboard. It was really nice to hear about the students that I had been working with from their parents' point of view. One mother told me that her daughter loves art and draws all the time at home. Knowing that I had helped bring more art to her school, especially when her family could not afford to get her private art lessons, was a wonderful feeling!



Scholarships for Service Student Civic Fellows

Kevin Spencer

The impact that I am leaving on my work through AmeriCorps is teaching teenagers good character. I volunteer with the Boy Scouts, and each week I guide kids ages 11-17 on life skills. These life skills help these kids avoid drugs, bad behavior, and unhealthy lifestyles. What I do specifically is sometimes work one-on-one with a scout and teach them outdoors management, survival skills, and various other skills that have to do with the outdoors. The results of my service are having these urbanized children experience the outdoors and all of the great things about it. In today's society, children are so wrapped up in video games, work, relationships and cars, that when they come to a scout meeting they can get away from that and learn how to live without as many distractions in life.



Generations of Learning will enroll 8 AmeriCorps Members ages 55+, who will work with 250 K-5 students both during the school day, as well as in CCF's after-school programs, providing tutoring and enrichment programs to reinforce classroom instruction. Members will also work with students during vacation weeks and during the summer to address the high incidence of "summer learning loss" typical in high poverty, urban communities such as Woonsocket.

Carol Brown

When I first arrived to my classroom, most of the students in my room could not complete their first grade spelling tests. Out of the 24 kids in my room, only 5 could complete their spelling tests flawlessly. The test included words the "the", "A", "and", "bat". Each week I work with three small groups of kids, each with about three kids per group. We review their sight words, homework, rhyming words and the alphabet.

Some of the students in my classroom attend our afterschool enrichment program. Before our enrichment starts, they have time to work on homework and receive small group tutoring. I continue to work with the kids from my classroom on sight words, among other topics.

Each month I see progress with the students. Those who weren't getting any words correct, started to get 3 or 4 words correct. Those who were getting 7 words started to all 10 words correct: 100%! I see improvement with all of the children, but the most progress has been made from the ones who attend our enrichment program where they see the continuity between classwork to tutoring sessions.





Inspiring Minds

Ready to Learn Providence will implement an Education & Healthy Futures model with 35 members: 29 to support children's school readiness via literacy programs in various early education settings and six members who will conduct developmental screenings for young children and deliver community activities such as health education workshops for families. In total, 1,600 children will complete a high-quality early education program and 1,500 children will participate in health education activities.



Alyssa Shelley

Some of the students that I work with came to kindergarten in September without knowing how to write their own names. Some didn't know which letters of the alphabet made which sounds. So I work with small intervention groups to help close the gap between where the students are and where they need to be. It can be repetitive and sometimes frustrating to say things like, "The name of this letter is 'M' and the sound that this letter makes is 'mmm'," as many times a day as I do. On the very same token, when a student that has been struggling finally "gets it," it is truly an incredible feeling. Today a colleague stopped me in the middle of one of my kindergarten reading intervention groups and she said, "These two girls have improved so much, whatever you're doing with them is working!" That's really all I need to feel the impact of my work.

Ana Velez

I am a bilingual Health Team member with Project Launch, a project that helps identify children with developmental, social, emotional and/or behavioral delays and bring it to the attention of the child's



physician. I am deployed at St. Joseph Health Services, a community-based health center that serves a diverse population that is generally medically underserved. When patients have difficulty or are hesitant to complete the many lengthy developmental screening questionnaires, I take time to explain and help complete the parent them. Recently a young mom came into the clinic with three young children and I was asked by the front desk staff to help interpret in Spanish. It was late fall and the family had walked to the clinic wearing only thin jackets over their clothing. The newborn was sick and needed to be seen. The mother had missed several crucial well-child visits, and because the clinic is short on providers, they were unable to see the baby and referred the mother to Hasbro. She told me that she could not walk a mile to Hasbro and that she would return home, carrying the newborn, pushing the 2 year old in the stroller and walking with the oldest. I asked the clinic staff where to find warm clothing, and I gave all the children hats to keep them warm. That night, before the clinic closed for the evening, I helped to reschedule the visit and planned to bring her family used clothing.



Ready to Learn Providence

Esteban Hurtado

As a member of the Professional Development team at Ready to Learn Providence, our goal is to provide support and resources to Family Childcare providers. I joined for my first term in 2010-2011 and was not sure how my years of experience in business might be useful. I quickly became the “computer guy” and this prompted an idea for a computer class for our under-resourced local Family Childcare providers. We began a partnership with Dorcas International Institute of RI, who had a large computer lab and wanted to give free instruction in Spanish. I now run three classes each year for 20 students each class, half of whom are providers and half that are community members. Family Childcare providers in Providence care for early learners in their homes, and the strengths of their model are small numbers of mixed age children; home-like surroundings and meal; Spanish immersion; and their ability to care for sick children so the parent does not miss work. One computer student, Patty, stands out in my memory as my best saleswoman. My class and her ability to grow her skills had such an impact that she registered her husband, pastor, mom, aunt and sister. Patty is the kind of student who you could say learned so fast she was better than her teacher. She created wonderful, detailed work using the computer. I am proud of her work as a student and she says she will always be grateful for the class and my help.



Inspiring Minds, a 47 year-old education agency, will enroll 10 AmeriCorps Members to tutor K-3rd grade students in four low performing elementary schools in Providence. Members will increase the number of students served over three years and advance existing program outcomes that show participating students outperform their peers by 20%-40% in early literacy and math skills. Members will also work to maximize the efforts of 200 in school volunteers through targeted capacity building activities.

Courtenay Good

The familiar ‘tap, tap’ on my office door startled me today. I smiled knowing exactly who waited on the other side. “Come in!” I called. The door slowly opened, and a little face peeked in with a smile. “Hi Ms. Good!” Jonel, a former student, stops by every afternoon to check in. “Do you miss me?” He shuffled his feet and looked up. “Every day,” I replied. His face glowed as he retorted, “Every day?” A fourth grade student of mine defined success as ‘reaching your goals,’ and he is right. We are successful when we cross the finish line of a big race. We are successful when we spend weeks studying for a test and ace it. We are successful when we make it to the peak of a mountain after a strenuous climb. But, success isn’t always big. Success can come in the small things, the passing moments, and the little victories.

Jonel is one of the many students I see on a day to day basis. Every moment with my students is imperative, from the 30 minute blocks of literary intervention to the passing waves and smiles that surround me as I walk through the hallways. Every minute counts. Showing my students they matter: that counts. I teach them they deserve to learn. The little things are the big things. The little things are the victories.





The Institute for the Study and Practice of Nonviolence

Marielba Pena

The Institute has been serving in schools for 10 years providing a range of services from one-on-one intervention to in-class nonviolence trainings to hosting special events focusing on nonviolence.

At Robert L. Bailey Elementary School, we were in charge of National Bullying Prevention Day. Our main purpose was to spread awareness about bullying prevention and get as many students and teachers as possible to advocate this topic, specifically by wearing orange. Our goal for the day was to have everyone wearing orange in some form. We cut out handmade peace signs from orange construction paper for those not wearing the color orange for whatever reason. Not knowing what to expect, 100 peace signs were created, and honestly it wasn't enough.

We walked into Bailey Elementary and were ecstatic to see so many students and staff participating in National Bullying Prevention Day. As soon as the first few peace signs were passed out to those who needed them, word got around and everyone wearing orange or not wanted one. By the end of the school day, we managed to have everyone in the school wearing orange. It felt great to have accomplished this while spreading the word about bullying prevention. I have never in my life seen so many students excited about one topic, and it was even better because of the support of the staff.

That day we did not see any difference of age, job titles, grades, language barrier or color. That day, all the staff and students at Robert L. Bailey Elementary became one.

EDTAP helps to improve student outcomes by embedding teaching artists in classrooms throughout the school day and into community-based after-school programs. It is envisioned that low/underperforming schools can be turned around by an expanded day model in which arts learning is an integral strategy for student success. Arts integrations help students deepen understanding of core curriculum, strengthen approaches and attitudes to learning, and encourage creative thinking—ultimately leading to greater student success in school.

Vanessa DeNino

In my second week as a teaching artist for Roger Williams, I was able to shadow and work with a 6th grade social studies class focusing on Mesopotamian culture. I led the class in a project working with air dry terra cotta clay. When the students were collaboratively working on their clay models in small groups, I walked by and tried to help a student work the clay into a ball. As I was helping her, her friend stepped in and explained how the ball could be shaped and how her clay would become easier to shape if she moved it through her hands more. This was what I think was the most beneficial point of the lesson. It was moments like that one that allowed me to take a step back and realize that my huge plans for Roger Williams wouldn't happen overnight. This young, quiet girl was so unfamiliar with this new material at the beginning of the week, and at the end had discovered her own way to work with it and be able to teach that to her peer. It's about the small moments of understanding, the light that goes on in a student's mind when he or she begins to understand something new. That is when I realized that small moments in the education of these learners will be the big impact that we all make as teaching artists in these Providence schools.





Expanded Day Teaching Artist Project

The Institute for the Study and Practice of Nonviolence will deploy 16 AmeriCorps members to address unique needs of gang-involved youth. The team will provide nonviolence training in schools, empower local residents to organize violence prevention events, and provide positive skill-building opportunities for youth. Our national focus areas are Education and Opportunity. Measurable outcomes include lower school disciplinary rates and increased youth receiving work readiness skills training.



Jesse Smolover

All the EDTAP members went to a conference on arts education in Rhode Island. There was one line that really stuck out to me. "How do you know you're teaching a great class? If they run into it faster than they run out of it." It's that simple. All of a sudden, I wasn't annoyed that we had to keep telling our students to slow down in the halls when we brought them from the cafeteria to the art room.

The part I loved most about the class was when our students would go well beyond our expectations. When they were making shadow puppets while studying Bali, all we required them to do was have at least one moving part, one point of articulation, for it to be considered a puppet. One student built a WWI Doughboy with 12 points of articulation. Even better, when the other kids in the class saw what he was working on, several of them scrapped their modest projects and started building more complicated marionettes. They weren't intimidated, discouraged, or even just impressed; they were inspired. Seeing our students rush into class, go beyond what we expected them to do each week, and whine whenever we moved onto a new country only to become engrossed in the next one: that made CityArts Arts Explorations a great class.

Starria Sumner

At the Institute for the Study and Practice of Nonviolence, I work specifically with proven risk youth. Since the start of my year of service in September 2012, I have provided services to 67 clients in total, but I didn't realize the impact of my service until recently.

I received a page stating that I had a visitor. Upon arriving at the front desk, I realized the visitor was one of my current clients. I had only worked with him once prior to this unexpected pop-in. Back then, he asked for help because he wanted to apply for positions at Job Lot and Taco Bell. We provided him with a finalized resume and a mock interview. I was happy to see him, though unsure of what caused this random visit. He and I proceeded to my office, and immediately, I questioned him about how the applications went. His seemingly content facial expression changed. At first I thought he was going to say he didn't get hired, but to my surprise he said, "Thank you. You guys helped me so much!". Not only did he get the position at Job Lot, but he also got hired at Taco Bell. I knew providing people with basic resume writing and professionalism skills were good services, but it wasn't until I saw my surprise guest speak with such humility and enthusiasm that I actually realized how important these services are. That one moment gave me a sense of validation for everything I have been working on.

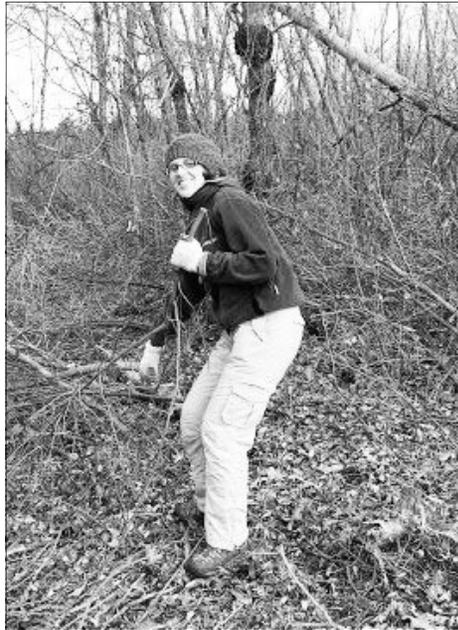




Ocean State Environmental Education Collaborative

Jennifer Sliney

The point of environmental education seems to be that if kids are not taught to experience and understand nature, they won't care about the future of our planet. We went to Central Falls and asked kids to touch dirt that we'd brought for them. They freaked out; one girl even asked me for gloves. I told them that because it was dirt from the Bird Sanctuary it was probably the cleanest dirt around. They looked at me like I had three heads. One table of boys was terrified of the thought of the bugs they were supposed to find. They had dug around with a magnifying glass and found a worm, but when I came around, they asked me how they were supposed to get it out. I picked it up with my hand and said, "like this" and they freaked out some more because I'd touched a worm. I asked if they wanted to hold it. One very timidly said yes, so I gave it to him. Then, I dared all the rest of the boys to hold it by the time I got back to the table. When I came back they were all actually digging with their hands and picking up bugs and presumably had all held the worm. I don't know if they'll remember any of the vocabulary words of the day, but they're not afraid of nature and the bugs in the dirt anymore! That's the most important thing after all.



Museum Corps is designed to help close the achievement gap between advantaged and disadvantaged children, MuseumCorps at Providence Children's Museum provides stimulating hands-on learning experiences not available to most low-income children. Working closely with Head Start, Boys & Girls Club and other CBOs, the Museum will deploy 16 full and part-time AmeriCorps members to provide engaging enrichment programs for 1,455 inner-city children in out-of-school time and preschool in three of the state's poorest cities.

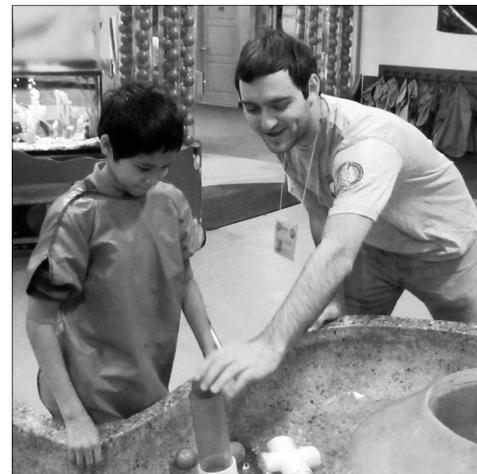
Dylan Maebly

I work with children from the south side of Providence who are rarely exposed to hands-on learning activities. My AmeriCorps teammates and I developed a series of activities focusing on the science behind magic. The last day was "potions," and kids were enthusiastically engaged as they used ingredients like "unicorn horn" (Alka-Seltzer) mixed with "dragon blood" (food coloring) to illustrate the power of chemical reactions. The kids were delighted as their mixtures bubbled and fizzed. Through careful observation, they determined which ingredients were responsible for the reactions they observed and which ones were not. But I saw the real impact of our efforts the next day, when a group of children met us at the door. "Jaden has something to show you," the kids told us. "I made this for you," Jaden said as he handed me a bottle filled with what looked like water, oil, and food coloring. "When I went home yesterday, I told my parents what we did, and then I asked if

I could make my own potions. This was the best one I made. It was hard to find the right balance of water and oil, but I did!"

"That's amazing," I said. He turned to walk away with a proud look on his face.

A moment later he hollered, "Oh, I figured out that it wasn't unicorn horn we were using, it was Alka-Seltzer!"





Providence Children's Museum

Alexandra Flaegle

Sometimes we work with challenging groups of kids. At the Fox Point Boys & Girls Club, we had to earn the 8-year olds' trust over the first two weeks. I wondered how they would respond to my lesson on acids and bases; it was content-heavy and involved "painting" with turmeric and alcohol. What was I thinking giving them something that permanently stains!? It turns out I had nothing to worry about; they were engaged from the beginning. It was going so well that I took a risk and started talking about chemical formulae. "Acids have high concentrations of H^+ ions, while bases have OH^- ions. When they come together, you get two 'H's and an 'O.' Does anyone know what those atoms make?" I saw their eyes widen with excitement and recognition. Shouts of "H₂O!" "Water!" "We just talked about this in school today!" showed that I had connected with something they had learned in school and were eager to share with me. During the main activity, Juliette, who was very vocal about her dislike of school and science, pulled me aside. "Let me tell you what I found!" she said, and proceeded to explain her results to me. Then while they were painting carefully with the turmeric solution, Jayhoni, previously one of the most cynical members of the group, exclaimed, "This is awesome!" The rest of the Club agreed. I knew our persistence with this group had been worth it.



The Ocean State Environmental Education Collaborative (OSEEC) is a strategic effort by Rhode Island's leading environmental organizations to improve science proficiency and environmental literacy among students in the state's urban core cities. 16 AmeriCorps members with science and education degrees will teach environmental-based science in school, after school and in the field. Members introduce children to the natural environment and help cultivate environmentally-literate, active citizens.





Providence After School Alliance Everyday Explorers

Everyday Explorers (EE) is a multi-state initiative, known as a National Direct program. EE was first funded in 2010. Everyday Explorer members in New York, Providence and Boston serve 450-, 675- or 900-hours in after-school programs doing hands-on science, technology, engineering and math projects (STEM). Members in Providence are managed by Providence After School Alliance.



James Kennedy

Bringing Spanish into PASA was daunting for me. I've never gotten to travel abroad, and the high water mark for me getting to practice my Spanish is usually no more than me pacing around the apartment talking to an MP3, or struggling through a foreign film. I think I expect to be exposed as a fake who really isn't fluent enough. Then I taped up the sign-up sheets to the lesson I entitled *Escribiendo la Poesía y Leyendo Libros en Español*. No one signed up. Cero. Nadie. From the outset, the lesson was shaping up to be an ulcer-producing anxiety attack of a failure.

It took some canvassing, but I found two students who would listen to me read to them in Spanish while they did homework. Better than nothing. And after a few minutes, they started to chime in, translate for the students around them, popcorn on paragraphs, and enjoy themselves. The first hour I read *Lily y el Bolso de Plástico Morado*. We only made it halfway through the book, but the participation was lively, and the students insisted on *más mañana*. "

Anna Marie Danayan

Although our program started of small, our kids are a bundle of joy and full of energy and excitement. One fun and educational experiment we worked on was invisible ink. The key ingredients are lemon/lemon juice, water and a source of heat (preferably a candle). Invisible ink is great for sending secret messages to friends. Our kids were engaged and had a great time pretending to be secret agents on very important missions. Although we had some complications in the beginning, the kids gave us some ideas on how to modify our experiment and believe it or not they turned out to be little Einsteins.

