



### What is the community challenge?

Communities throughout California face a number of challenges, including unemployment, poverty, poor housing, educational needs, and language barriers. Many of the community organizations working to address these challenges are also dealing with shrinking budgets. Support from volunteers would be a greater help than ever, but often these same organizations lack the capacity to maximize this help.

### What is CaSERVES-NCOE's promising solution?

The AmeriCorps Volunteer Infrastructure Program (VIP) was developed to build the volunteer capacity of non-profit and educational organizations serving California communities. Since 2009, AmeriCorps VIP has placed hundreds of members in community organizations with the specific targeted goal of systematically increasing their capacity to recruit, train, support, and utilize volunteers in order to more effectively serve their clients.

### What did the evaluation of AmeriCorps VIP find?

As a grantee of AmeriCorps State and National through CaliforniaVolunteers, CaSERVES-NCOE engaged an independent evaluator to evaluate AmeriCorps VIP. The evaluation found that:



- AmeriCorps VIP had a **strong and much larger positive impact on organizational capacity concerning volunteers** than non-AmeriCorps VIP programs did,
- AmeriCorps VIP had a particularly strong, positive impact on:
  - **Clarity of volunteer roles**
  - **Volunteer recruitment and management**
  - **Including volunteers in decision-making**
- AmeriCorps VIP has a **high likelihood of producing similar results if replicated** with fidelity throughout California, and
- The differences in results between AmeriCorps VIP and similar programs were found to be **statistically significant**.

**Program At-a-Glance**

**Intervention:** AmeriCorps Volunteer Infrastructure Program (VIP)

**Grantee:** CaSERVES-Napa County Office of Education (NCOE)

**Intermediary:** CaliforniaVolunteers

**Focus Area:** Capacity Building

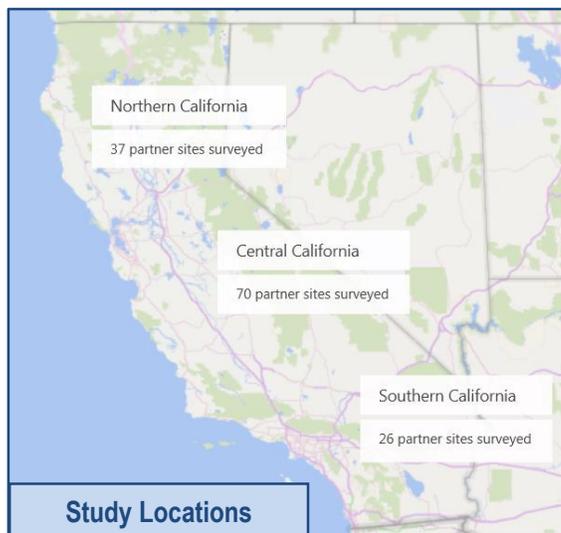
**Focus Population:** Community organizations

**Communities Served:** Communities facing social, economic, and educational challenges across California

To access the full report and learn more about CNCS, please visit [nationalservice.gov/evidence-exchange](http://nationalservice.gov/evidence-exchange).



## Evaluation design, timeline and study locations



The evaluation of CaSERVES-NCOE's AmeriCorps VIP by JBS International, Inc. began in 2011 and finished reporting in 2012. The report was funded in part through CaSERVES-NCOE's AmeriCorps State and National award.

### Evaluation At-a-Glance

Level of Evidence\* after Evaluation: Moderate

Evaluation Design: Impact Evaluation (Quasi-Experimental Design)

Study Population: Non-profit and educational organizations in California that use volunteers

Evaluator: JBS International, Inc.

\*SIF and AmeriCorps currently use different definitions of levels of evidence.

## How is CaSERVES-NCOE using the evaluation findings to improve?

CaSERVES-NCOE has used the evaluation findings to improve services and expand its research agenda to address key areas of implementation.

- AmeriCorps VIP continues to focus on building volunteer capacity by refining and establishing clarity of volunteers' roles, assessing their contributions, and including them in decision making.
- AmeriCorps VIP is focusing on developing protocols and other systems to build sustainability of volunteer capacity within those organizations.
- AmeriCorps VIP is assessing the types of organizations (both in size and scope of work) that benefit the most from the CaSERVES VIP program and the services that are most effective by organization type in order to increase impact even further moving forward.
- The organization has been able to use the evaluation results to communicate more effectively with stakeholders and build program support.



The content of this brief was drawn from the full evaluation report submitted to CNCS by the grantee/subgrantee. The section of the brief that discusses evaluation use includes contribution of the grantee/subgrantee. All original content from the report is attributable to its authors.

AmeriCorps State and National supports a wide range of local service programs that engage thousands of Americans in intensive community service each year. We provide grants to a network of local and national organizations and agencies committed to using national service to address critical community needs in education, public safety, health, and the environment.