

SAN JOSE



CONSERVATION CORPS



+ CHARTER SCHOOL



**IMPACT
REPORT**
2022

DEVELOPS OUR MISSION YOUNG ADULTS...

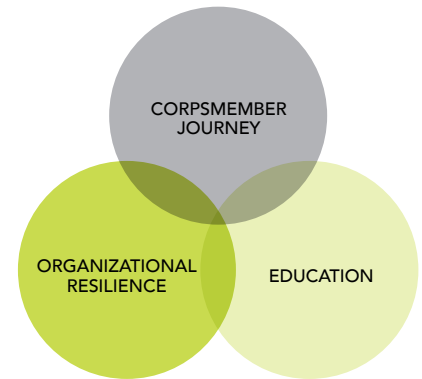
Dear friends of the Corps,

We're filled with pride to share that we served 704 corpsmembers in our workforce development and high school program this year. Behind each number, we've seen the faces full of excitement and sometimes anxiety as they enter our program, we've heard the stories of resilience they bring and overwhelmingly, we feel their hope for a fulfilling future for themselves and their families. It is those faces and that hope that inspire us to do better every day in service to self, community, and environment.

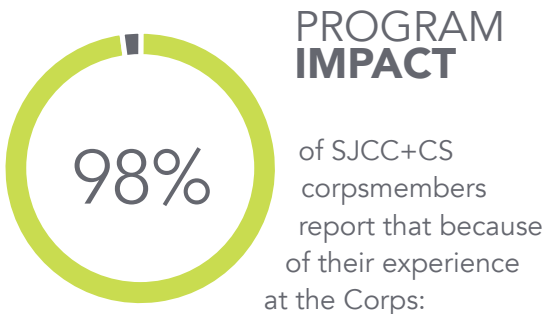
This year we completed a Strategic Plan that will guide us through the next three years with a focus on the corpsmember journey, education, and organizational resilience. Specifically, we are making our corpsmember journey more intentional and ensuring access to the support services corpsmembers need to succeed. In education, our goal has changed from a high school diploma to a post-secondary program like community college or other vocational training. We are creating stronger pipelines from our program to post-secondary

education so that corpsmembers can enter careers that will give them the financial sustainability they need to fulfill their dreams within our community. Organizationally, we are ensuring that we are as effective at serving corpsmembers as we can be.

In addition to these goals, our new Plan includes an updated mission and vision which are highlighted in this report. We believe that they showcase the core of what we do as well as the depth and breadth of our impact. We're excited to share with you more progress towards our goals in the years to come and appreciate your support in helping us along the way.



Sincerely,
SJCC+CS Leadership



- "I feel more confident."
- "I have learned to communicate better."
- "I know how to work well in a group."
- "I can overcome obstacles that come up in my life."
- "I have learned technical skills that will serve me in a future job."



“ SJCC+CS made me excited about my future and different opportunities I could get into.”



“ I've improved my mental health a lot from being treated with value and getting out into nature daily.”



“ I feel more confident in teaching others how to use tools. Also, [I've learned how] to work as a group coming up with strategies and plans on how to get the project done faster and safely.”

“ I've learned a lot of skills that will help me with my dream job. I've also gained more confidence in the work I do and am comfortable asking my boss any questions and for help.”

ROSALINA RECOGNIZED NATIONALLY AS CORPSMEMBER OF THE YEAR

Rosalina joined the Corps because, like many corpsmembers, she wanted a way out of dead-end jobs but still needed to support her family. From the beginning, Rosalina didn't let the adversity she faced as an immigrant and single mother affect her but instead inspired others with her drive and perseverance. She was always the first to try something new on the job site and helped keep her whole crew safe. Rosalina even used her AmeriCorps Award to enroll in citizenship classes and became a U.S. citizen!

Because of her inspirational journey, Rosalina was recognized as Corpsmember of the Year by The Corps Network and received her award in Washington, D.C. where she shared her story with the likes of the Secretary of the Interior.



“Looking back at everything I have accomplished these past few years and how much my life has completely changed gives me hope for my future. I felt defeated, unmotivated with no support. Now I can accomplish anything I set my mind to. I'm not ashamed of being a single mother, on the contrary I thank life for putting me in that situation because I've realized that I can accomplish many things without depending on anyone... Thank you San Jose Conservation Corps + Charter School for preparing me for tomorrow's success.”

ROSALINA



94
HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

TRAININGS AND CERTIFICATIONS COMPLETED
3,876

\$369,473
IN AMERICORPS EDUCATION AWARDS TO 228 MEMBERS

TO CREATE
TRANSFORMATIONAL
CHANGE...

FOR OUR COMMUNITY...



BUILDING A STRONG SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Corpsmembers at our Charter School have always credited the teachers and staff with creating a strong community, but in 2022, having regular Community Events solidified that sense of belonging. By bringing together students, parents, school staff, public agencies and community-based organizations in a fun environment, the bonds between all of these groups grew stronger. These bonds act to improve mental well-being, while helping to alleviate personal struggles.

Many of our corpsmembers come to our program feeling isolated after being failed by the systems that should have supported them. Building relationships with school staff outside of the classroom helps create bonds of trust and a network of support that are fundamental to their success in school and in life.

27

LOCAL PARKS MAINTAINED

117,900,000

POUNDS OF FOOD FOR OUR COMMUNITY



RIISING TO THE CHALLENGE: BAY AREA FLOOD RESPONSE

During the winter atmospheric river chaos, corpsmembers emerged as true community heroes across the Bay Area. They worked tirelessly, day and night, to build retaining walls, produce thousands of sandbags, construct and staff emergency shelters, and repair parks and trails damaged by the floods. Their dedication saved lives in this moment of crisis and helped our community recover in the aftermath. Their actions inspire us all to unite and support one another.



HOW THE CORPS COMBATS CLIMATE CHANGE

Corpsmembers make significant contributions to reducing greenhouse gas emissions through their Zero Waste work. By taking what would be trash and recycling it, new products are made with less energy, therefore reducing emissions. Also, the 83,090 pounds of edible food that we rescued in 2022 was kept out of landfills, where it would have produced methane, one of the most harmful greenhouse gases. Instead that food was enjoyed by our community or turned into compost which helps to grow more nutritious food for all.



Water conservation is another climate resilience area that corpsmembers have an impact on through the maintenance of bioretention sites. These sites are created in developed areas with mostly impenetrable surfaces to capture runoff and filter out pollutants with expertly designed layers of rocks, mulch, and native plants. The water is then diverted from the storm water drainage system, which goes to the ocean, and instead replenishes our groundwater. This helps keep more fresh water in use for our community, which is essential in our region.



1,269

TONS OF WASTE
DIVERTED FROM
LANDFILLS

4,105

CUBIC YARDS OF
HARMFUL VEGETATION
REMOVED

FIRE FUEL REDUCTION
PERFORMED ON

708,121

SQ. FT. OF LAND

AND OUR PLANET.



OUR VISION A HOPEFUL AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY...



Gio took on leadership positions at the Corps and now works in Santa Clara County Parks Maintenance.

Gio

Giovanni, "Gio," joined SJCC+CS because he wasn't on track to graduate high school and felt that the Corps' earn and learn model would allow him to earn his diploma. While taking high school classes, he took on a leadership role in his work crew as a Tool Specialist. After earning his diploma, he signed up for a special opportunity with the **California Conservation Corps' Backcountry Trails Program**, where he lived in the mountains for five months completing challenging trail work. Gio came back to San José with the technical and leadership skills to become a Crew Lead and passed along the skills he had learned to the other corpsmembers on his crew.

Those skills and experiences led him to his current position working in Santa Clara County Parks Maintenance. "I felt like the Corps was never willing to give up on me. They taught me to **take any opportunity that came up** and encouraged me to do what I was interested in. I was able to gain lots of certifications and always pushed myself to be better. I am now part of the **Santa Clara County Park staff.**"

Frida

Frida graduated from the Corps' workforce development program in 2021 and credits the corpsmember journey for getting her job as a **paraprofessional at Piedmont Hills High School**. With the help of her AmeriCorps Education Award, Frida was able to accomplish her goal of transferring from community college into a **four-year university**. Now, she provides one-on-one support to a special education student for the entire school year. Frida says, "Being able to have the job I'm in due to knowing so many people I've met through the program is one of my proudest achievements." In addition to the network she created at the Corps, one of the most valuable parts of her experience was earning money for college. **"The more knowledge you have, the easier life is."**



Recent program graduate Frida started at a four-year college and is a paraprofessional at a local high school.



Peter

Peter Ortiz, Councilmember for the City of San José, is actually a **program alumni of the San Jose Conservation Corps**. He joined a special youth Corps program as a freshman at Independence High School in East San José after being referred by his school counselor and credits the Corps for successfully graduating high school.

“During the time in which I joined the program, I was having a lot of problems in high school. I was gang-impacted, my mother was working two different jobs, so there wasn’t a lot of guidance when I was at home waiting for her to come back from work. The San Jose Conservation Corps...gave me a positive area to grow as both an employee and as a student. They wanted to empower us by teaching us job skills...but they also exposed us to different outlooks and different opinions... that really **expanded the way I saw the world and to be honest, it changed my life.**”

Councilmember Peter Ortiz's path to leadership started at the Corps where he was supported to finish high school.

Ortiz recalls the community projects he participated in as being one of his favorite parts of working at the Corps. “During the program, we would go to different sites, whether it was to the Water District or San José parks, or to different community centers to do community projects. So it really exposed us to different career fields out there, careers that I had not even thought about as a young adult. And then of course the benefit to my high school education. I was so behind in credits when I joined the program that I can say one of the reasons why I graduated high school was because of the San Jose Conservation Corps.”

Ortiz in particular feels the **“earn while you learn”** experience benefited him and continues to benefit others at the Corps. “There are so many barriers [for] our youth. They’re getting experiences that they wouldn’t get any other way, and they’re getting paid to do it. It creates an environment where youth who may not have been successful in traditional high school can find success in an alternative route.”

Councilmember Ortiz **exemplifies the Corps’ mission of developing corpsmembers to become transformational leaders** who can then make our vision of a hopeful and sustainable community that nurtures the aspirations of all young people a reality. We are proud to have provided the support and guidance he needed at that time in his life to set him up for success and know that many more of our corpsmembers are following in his footsteps.

**THAT NURTURES THE
ASPIRATIONS
OF ALL YOUNG PEOPLE.**

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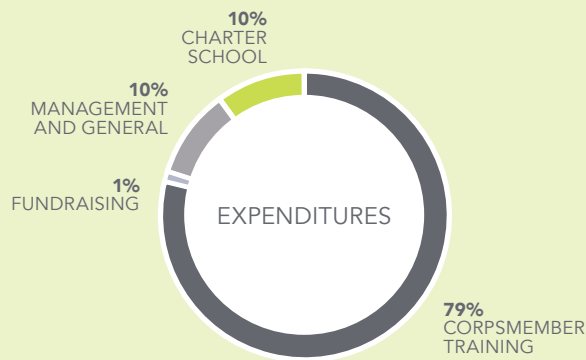
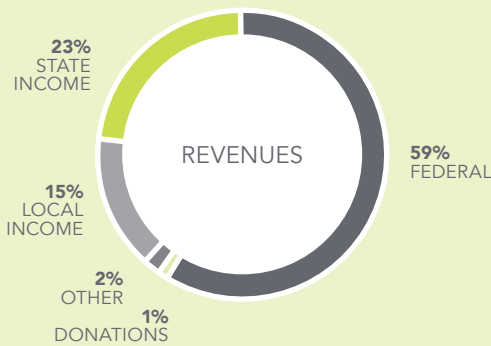
ALEX WEBB

DERYK CLARK

MICHELLE RETANA

FINANCIAL SUMMARY 2021/22

TOTAL BUDGET
\$24,524,712



CONTACT

**SAN JOSE CONSERVATION CORPS
+ CHARTER SCHOOL**

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SJCCCS.ORG

The work accomplished by SJCC+CS is made possible by the generous support and collaboration from our community partners and donors. We are thankful for your commitment to improving the lives of San Jose's opportunity youth. Together, we can create a community where all young people's talents are realized.

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