

2016

Annual Report

AMERICA'S SERVICE COMMISSIONS

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Who We Are

America's Service Commissions (ASC) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit association representing and promoting state service commissions across the United States.

ASC's work is focused on membership support services in three core areas including:

- Commission Capacity Building
- Federal Advocacy
- Activation of the State Service Network

Our Mission

Our mission is to lead and elevate the state service network.

Our Vision

Our vision is that all states embrace service as a strategy to build community in solving local challenges.



Message from the CEO

We are thrilled to present the 2016 ASC Annual Report! 2016 was a year of growth for ASC and the state service commissions we serve. The role of state commissions and ASC continues to be essential and fundamental to maintaining a healthy, vibrant, and effective national service network. Consider the following objectives that we collectively accomplished in 2016 to advance state service:

- Completed an intensive strategic planning process to help re-align ASC's mission, vision, strategies, activities, and objectives;
- Ensured the inclusion of Commission Investment Fund (CIF) dollars in federal legislation as a tool to help commissions provide training and technical assistance (TTA) to AmeriCorps programs, particularly in rural and underserved regions of their states;
- Further developed the role of states in administering national service funding, increasing the amount of State/National AmeriCorps resources administered by state service commissions from 75% to 78%;
- Planned and executed four successful regional training conferences in collaboration with partner host states (Massachusetts Service Alliance, Nevada Volunteers, Serve Alabama, and Serve Indiana);
- Expanded ASC member services to include a variety of new offerings as part of our CIF and TTA services, including a commission evaluation capacity webinar series, a new AmeriCorps program start-up webinar series, and peer exchange coordination; and
- Grew ASC's membership with a record 244 AmeriCorps state service partner programs.

Perhaps most importantly, ASC has continued to grow our advocacy efforts and provide stability to the state service network in times of significant budget and policy change. Governors and other key elected officials increasingly rely on our network to meet critical community needs, including disaster relief services.

We are excited for the future. In alignment with our new three-year strategic plan, ASC staff and Board members are already hard at work planning for the launch of our new Public Policy Coalition, updated branding, enhanced Commissioner outreach and engagement efforts, and other new membership services. We are also excited to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of ASC in September 2017!

Thank you for your continued support and leadership. We are grateful for the opportunity to work with you to advance state service together this year and beyond. As always, we welcome your thoughts, ideas, questions, and partnership.

— **Kaira Esgate, Chief Executive Officer, kesgate@asc-online.org**

Who and Where are ASC Members?

ASC supports a network of 52 state service commissions across the nation, including the District of Columbia, Guam and Puerto Rico. ASC also provides membership opportunities and support to AmeriCorps State programs and individuals.

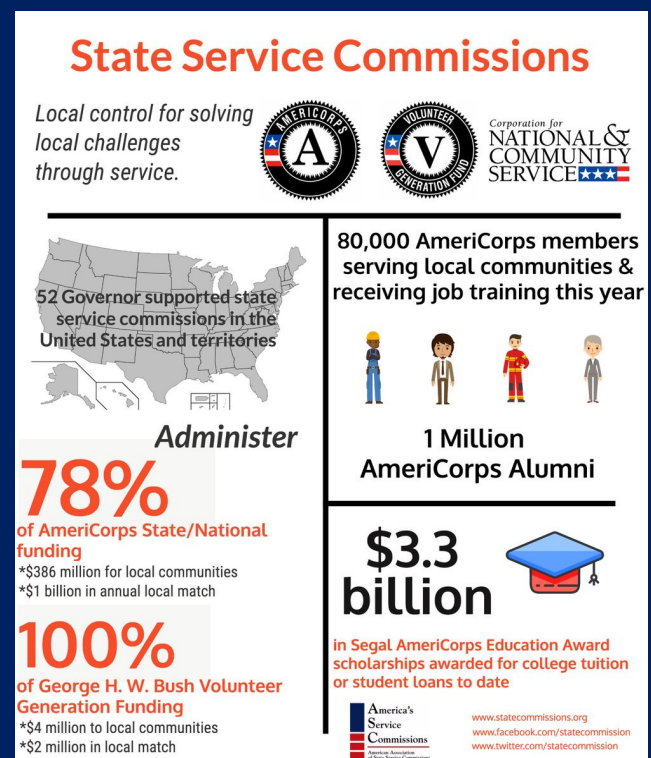
Click here to view an interactive map of State Service Commissions.



ASC Fast Facts & Figures

Collectively, our nation's 52 state service commissions:

- Support citizen service and volunteerism in America;
- Administer **78%** of AmeriCorps State funding;
- Grant more than **\$252 million** from federal national service funds while matching these federal dollars with over **\$30 million** from state and local sources;
- Provide funding and oversight for more than **40,000** AmeriCorps members; and
- Represent more than **1,110** commissioners — private citizens appointed by the Governor of each state/territory who are leading the nation's philanthropic and service movement.





Public Policy Brief

2016 began with increased funding for state service commissions and the AmeriCorps program.

In addition to the \$16.038 million that commissions received for Commission Support Grants in the FY 2016 appropriations legislation, commissions received another \$5.6 million for the Commission Investment Fund that provides support for program development and training and technical assistance activities.

The securing of these funds brings resources available to state service commissions to levels not seen since sequestration in 2013. Additionally, AmeriCorps State and National received a \$51 million increase making the total funding an historic \$386 million in the FY 2016 appropriations legislation.

Later in the year ASC was able to secure an additional \$1 million for Commission Support Grants totaling \$17.038 million and language providing an additional \$2 million for the Commission Investment Fund totaling \$7.5 million in the FY 2017 Senate appropriations legislation.

Further, ASC convened a reauthorization working group that developed a number of principles and policy concepts that would strengthen CNCS and its programs for a possible future reauthorization legislation effort.



2016: The Year of Strategic Planning

ASC was excited to use 2016 as a year to take a step back, reflect on our progress and goals as an organization and association, and create longer-term strategies to meet our mission even more effectively moving forward.

After nearly 20 years of coalescing, supporting, and advocating for the network of state service commissions, ASC was at an important inflection point. Growing external interest in national service, coupled with changes to our external funding landscape and an internal desire to grow the reach of the association, created a need to assess our current capacity and chart a more strategic future direction.

ASC hired Social Velocity to convene an advisory group of staff, board, members and key external stakeholders over a six-month period and develop a three-year strategic plan.

As a result, we created:

- Theory of Change
- Revised Vision & Mission Statement
- 3-year Strategic Plan and Budget
- Financial Model Assessment
- Marketplace Map
- Year 1 Operational Plan
- System for Monitoring the Plan



With a clearer understanding of where ASC can grow its financial sustainability and well-defined strategic goals, objectives and budget for the next 3 years, ASC's staff, board and membership are facing the future with confidence and excitement. Beginning in 2017, ASC is now working to implement the strategic plan and share their plans with key stakeholders. Having a clearer articulation of who we are and where we are going is allowing ASC to forge stronger partnerships, attract greater resources, and better leverage board, staff and members for growth.

Looking Back on the Process

"I can say with certainty that developing a strategic plan is one of the best things we've done. Working with Social Velocity through the process this past year has been eye-opening, clarifying, and fulfilling. Our staff and leadership can now move forward with confidence in our direction as an organization. All of our individual actions and activities make more sense and roll up into shared goals that we all care deeply about. Thank you, Social Velocity!"

— Kaira Esgate, Chief Executive Officer, America's Service Commissions (ASC)



View the ASC Strategic Plan Summary as approved by the ASC Board of Directors on November 10, 2016.



Thank you to our ASC Strategic Planning Committee members for being part of this important process:

Diana Algra, Michigan Community Service Commission
Kyle Caldwell, Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy
Liz Darling, OneStar Foundation
Kaira Esgate, ASC
Adam Lounsbury, Volunteer Iowa
Amber Martin-Jahn, Nevada Volunteers

Beth McGuiness, Massachusetts Service Alliance
Shirley Sagawa, Service Year Alliance
Jim Snell, Volunteer Tennessee
Chester Spellman, Volunteer Florida
Audrey Suker, ServeMinnesota
Marty Weinstein, Bay Area Community Resources



ASC Member Engagement: Committees & Communities

The ASC network represents an incredible breadth of knowledge that when working together helps to advance and improve service nationwide. ASC facilitates a number of learning communities, work groups, and initiatives to facilitate peer learning amongst state service commission staff and to address emerging network challenges.

Highlights from 2016 include:

Learning Communities

ASC facilitated regular learning communities for targeted commission staff groups to facilitate ongoing training, support, and peer sharing amongst the network. The Executive Director Learning Community met monthly on topics related to public policy, commission performance measures, and state legislation. The Program Officer Learning Community met monthly with a wide range of topics related to program monitoring, compliance, outreach and training. The Volunteer Generation Fund Learning Community met monthly sharing updates on their grant activities and guests from partner volunteer management organizations.

Staff Support

The Staff Support Committee leads the development of topics for the monthly Program Officer Learning Community and facilitates the ASC Mentor Program. In 2016, the committee facilitated 11 Program Officer Learning Community Calls on topics including:

- Intermediary Program Models
- ASC Monitoring Tool Templates
- Fiscal Monitoring
- AmeriCorps Alums and Commission Performance Measures
- Preparing for an Audit and Common Audit Findings

- NSCHC Training, Monitoring, Disallowances
- Partnering with AmeriCorps Alums
- Desk Monitoring
- New Program Support
- Performance Measurement Support for Programs
- Program Evaluation

In 2016, the ASC Mentor Program had the largest number of participants with 29 commission staff matched with a mentor. Twenty commission staff served as mentors providing support via phone, email and in-person interactions. Of those who completed the end of year survey, 77% of program participants stated they made progress in their work as a result of their mentor relationship.

"My mentor has been an invaluable resource for me during my first year as a Program Officer. Having a colleague that works at another State Commission with a completely unique point of view and set of experiences is such an added benefit to my own personal and professional development.

Her approachability and willingness to share insights, advice, and best practices is such a breath of fresh air."

-- 2016 ASC Mentor Program Participant



Program Evaluation

The Program Evaluation Learning Community was formed to discuss challenges and opportunities for the commission network related to program evaluation. In 2016, the committee held monthly calls alternating between guest speakers and discussing emerging issues. Some highlights of the committee's work in 2016 included the development of a policy brief on evaluation challenges facing AmeriCorps programs and potential solutions for each challenge. In addition, the committee spearheaded the development of a nationwide program evaluation readiness survey. The survey was a tool for each state service commission to assess their AmeriCorps State programs readiness related to program evaluation and understanding of CNCS evaluation requirements. The data provided a national outlook on how ASC and others can better provide support to AmeriCorps State programs related to evaluation.

NSCHC

The National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) Work Group met regularly in 2016 to review and discuss the implementation of the CNCS Disallowance Guide. The committee spearheaded sharing of commission policies and procedures related to NSCHC monitoring, compliance and training sharing best practices and leading a call for commissions in the summer of 2016. Throughout the year the group continued to monitor NSCHC issues and concerns for the commission network.

Monitoring Tool Review Panel

In 2016, the Monitoring Tool Panel compiled guidance and best practice materials for state service commissions within the areas of program readiness assessments, fiscal monitoring, and data quality review. These topics now have either template materials or examples that are available to commissions.

Service Year Founding States

The Service Year Founding States is a monthly call of state service commissions who are “Founding States” on the Service Year Exchange. The group received updates from Service Year Alliance and piloted the launch of the Service Year Exchange by posting AmeriCorps program positions for their state.

National Direct Consultation

The National Direct Consultation Work Group consists of state service commission staff and AmeriCorps National program staff working to improve coordination and collaboration amongst state service commissions and AmeriCorps National programs. In 2016, the work group developed a set of short-term recommendations to improve the national direct consultation process, a requirement for applying for AmeriCorps funding.

AmeriCorps Alums Work Group

In partnership with the AmeriCorps Alums national organization, ASC and participating state service commission staff met regularly to discuss areas of opportunity for commissions and AmeriCorps Alums to partner in support of alumni. A highlight of the group’s work in 2016 included the release of an alumni activation guide for state service commissions, **“3 Steps to Alumni Engagement”** which can be found at **www.statecommissions.org**.

Commission Performance Measure Work Group

This work group developed a state service commission performance measure that adequately reflects the work of state service commissions to satisfy the requirement for commissions to have a performance measure for their Commission Support Grant. The developed measure was presented to commission executive directors in July of 2016 with 34 commissions voting to adopt the measure. The work group developed a tool to measure the aligned performance measure and presented the tool to CNCS and the commission network.

Thank you to all of our ASC members who served on ASC committees, work groups, and learning communities in 2016!



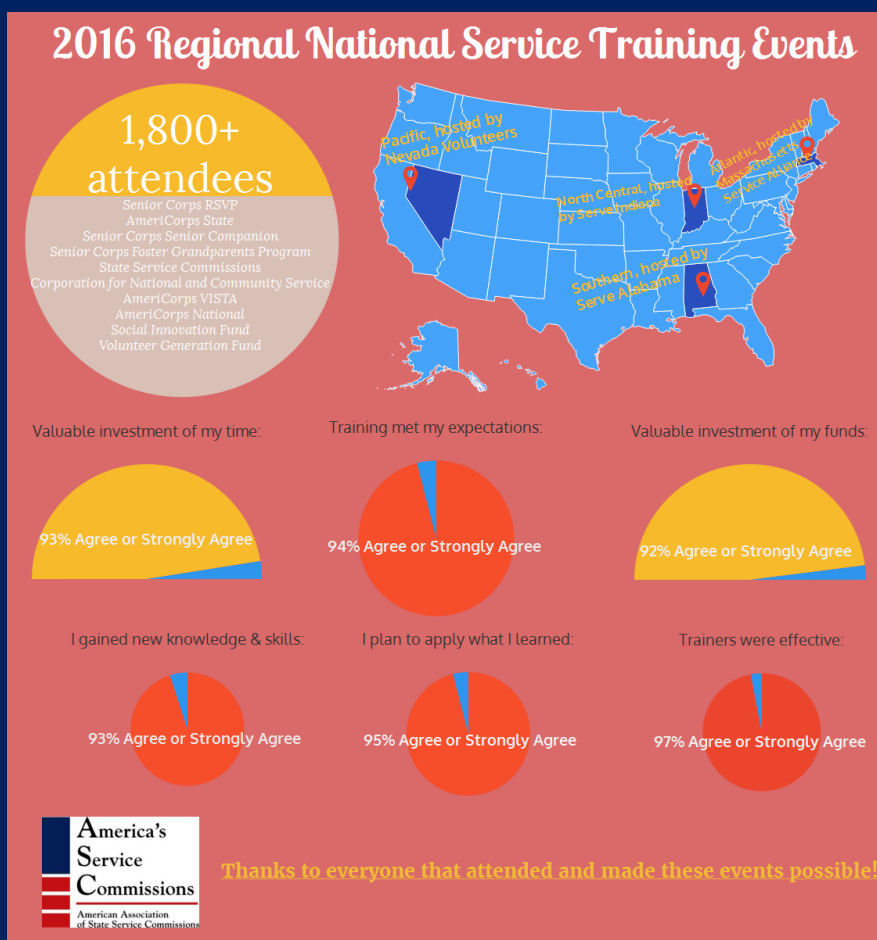


2016 Regional Trainings

America's Service Commissions supported the implementation of four regional national service trainings for more than 1,800 attendees in partnership with our host state service commissions: **Nevada Volunteers**, **Serve Alabama**, **Massachusetts Service Alliance**, and **Serve Indiana**. These events are a heavy but important lift for the host commissions who take on the responsibility of convening hundreds of grantees in their region to provide critical training on topics related to program and grants management.

As demonstrated by post-event evaluations, more than **90% of attendees gained new knowledge and skills as a result of the training events.**

The events were made possible with funding from the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), the host commission, and sponsors. ASC provided support to the host commissions in areas of planning committee management, agenda development, and coordination with CNCS.



Thank you to our 2016 Regional Training host states and regional planning committee members!

2016 Annual Recognition Reception

2016 ASC Reception: Innovation & Leadership Awards

Each year as part of the annual ASC Reception, we present awards to honor individuals and organizations that have advanced state service in innovative and impactful ways. These Innovation and Leadership Awards recognize the outstanding accomplishments and leadership of state service commission staff, commissioners, and programs in uniting states in service.

The 2016 award winners below were honored in Alexandria, VA on September 21, 2016:



Friend of ASC:
Senator Thad Cochran of Mississippi

The Friend of ASC Award is given annually to an individual for their outstanding contributions to the field of national and community service and for their support of the work of state service commissions.

New in 2016, the ASC Honor Roll recognizes former state service commission staff and commissioners who have made a lasting impact on the field of national service and volunteering.

Inaugural Honor Roll Inductees:

Bill Basl

Thomas Devine

Wendy Spencer



Congratulations to our 2016 Innovation & Leadership Award recipients and Honor Roll Inductees! Thank you for being leaders and champions of state service.



State Service Leadership Award:
Governor Jay Inslee of Washington

The State Service Leadership Award recognizes state and local leaders championing the role of national service and volunteering in their communities. This award recognizes leaders who understand how service is a unique strategy to meet pressing community needs.

Outstanding Commissioners:

John Albright, Missouri Community Service Commission
Carolyn Bloodworth, Michigan Community Service Commission



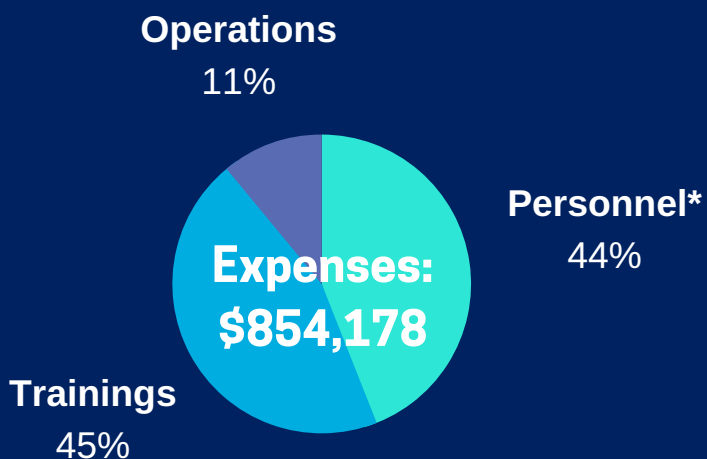
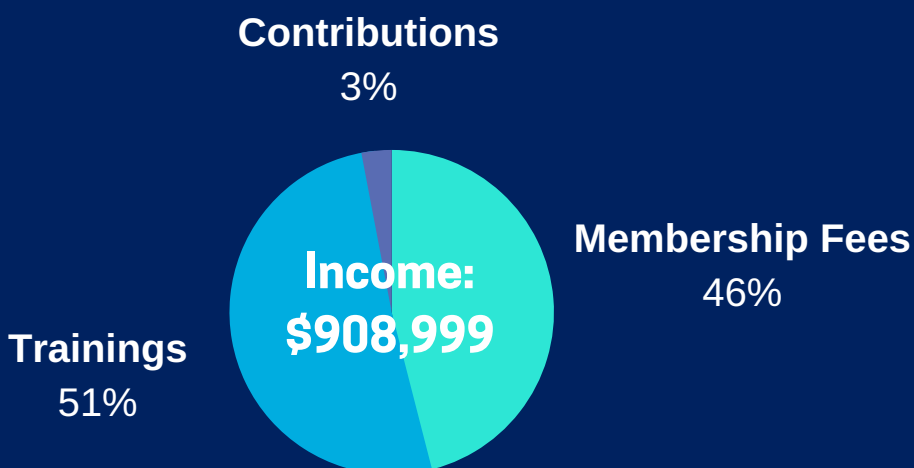
Outstanding Commission Staff:
Emily Steinberg, Director, National Service, OneStar Foundation

Outstanding Service Program:
AmeriCorps Urban Safety





2016 Financial Fitness



Key Indicators:

- ✓ 55% growth in income over 2015
- ✓ Nearly \$54,000 or 6% of income put into organizational financial reserves
- ✓ All 49 state-based service commissions and the District of Columbia paid membership dues

*Includes consultants and contractors



2016-2017 Board of Directors

Chester Spellman, Volunteer Florida - Chair
Scott McFarland, Serve Illinois - Public Policy Chair
Debbie Schuffenhauer, Serve Washington - Resource Development Chair
Amber Martin-Jahn, Nevada Volunteers - Treasurer
LaDawn Stoddard, UServeUtah - Membership Chair
Emily Haber, Massachusetts Service Alliance - Secretary
Phil Kolling, SerVermont
Peter Sacco, Serve DC
Diana Algra, Michigan Community Service Commission
Adam Lounsbury, Volunteer Iowa
Audrey Suker, ServeMinnesota
Stacy Higa, Hawaii Commission on National and Community Service
John Albright, Missouri Community Service Commission
Pamela Ballard, Oklahoma Community Service Commission
Liz Darling, OneStar Foundation
Patricia L. Chavez, New Mexico Commission for Community Service
Jim Snell, Volunteer Tennessee
Jon Mason, Serve Alabama**
Jeff Mixon, North Carolina Commission on Volunteerism & Community Service**
Celeste Connors, Hawaii Green Growth
Bill Hulterstom, United Way of Utah County
Lindsay Dolce, Reading Corps
Leslie Silverman, The Giving Practice

Thank you to our outgoing Board members who departed in 2016:

Brandon Bodor, Nicky Goren, Myung Lee, David Mallery, and Bob Shogren

Special thanks to our 2016 ASC sponsors:



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