

# Experience After School

Engaging Older Adults in After-School Programs



AN EXPERIENCE CORPS TOOL KIT





## Introduction

High quality after-school programs serve a critical need in today's society. They support working families, improve students' academic performance, boost children's social and problem-solving skills, increase school attendance and graduation rates, and, according to a survey of police chiefs, are the most effective way to reduce juvenile crime. And more kids need them every day.

As we find the funds and the facilities to meet the need for more high quality after-school programs, people will turn to the human resource side of the equation. Who will we find to staff these programs?

In two words, older adults. Older adults are our nation's only growing natural resource. The need for staffing and volunteers in after-school programs offers a great opportunity to tap that resource, to begin to see that the aging of America represents enormous potential for good.

I'm biased, of course. As a leader of Experience Corps, I have the chance to see older adults in action in after-school settings. I see their commitment to children, education, and community. I see their patience and drive, their talents and character, their desire to give back and their need to pass on their lifetime of experience. I see the potential of older adults to make a great contribution to the after-school world.

This publication is designed to help you see that potential, too. The tool kit is a practical, hands-on resource for providers of after-school services who are interested in older adults as volunteers or staff, and for senior service organizations interested in partnering with after-school programs. I encourage you to read it, talk about it, and copy from it (with proper attribution). Most important, I encourage you to think about how you can develop and enhance meaningful roles for older adults in after-school programs in your community.

There's a wave coming. Catch it!

John S. Gomperts, CEO  
Experience Corps

## Acknowledgments

Civic Ventures and Experience Corps are grateful to the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation for funding the research, writing, meetings, and technical assistance that ultimately led to this tool kit. We would like to thank our program officer, An-Me Chung, for her support of our efforts. More information about the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation and its significant long-term investment in after-school programs and networks across the country is available at [www.mott.org](http://www.mott.org).

We would also like to thank Richard P. Adler, whose report is included in the tool kit, and whose consistent interest in this project was instrumental to its success; Carol T. Everett, who provided significant writing and editing assistance for the final product; and Experience Corps program directors Ann Birnbaum (DC), Eunice Lin Nichols (San Francisco), Mary O'Donnell (Boston), and Judith Simmons (Kansas City) for providing sample materials and thoughtful comments for inclusion in this publication.

Photos by Alex Harris®

Design by Cutting Edge Design

Edited by Michelle E. Hynes and Stefanie Weiss

Questions or comments? Contact Michelle Hynes, director of programs, at [mhynes@experiencecorps.org](mailto:mhynes@experiencecorps.org).

© Civic Ventures 2004

# Table of Contents

|                                                                                   |           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>Executive Summary .....</b>                                                    | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>Why Older Americans? The Opportunity .....</b>                                 | <b>8</b>  |
| <b>The Demographics: A Fact Sheet on Aging in America .....</b>                   | <b>10</b> |
| <b>Creating After-School Programs that Tap the Resource of Older Adults .....</b> | <b>15</b> |
| ■ Designing Successful Programs the Experience Corps Way .....                    | 16        |
| ■ Creating Roles for Older Adults in After-School Programs .....                  | 18        |
| ■ Designing Great Recruitment Plans.....                                          | 21        |
| ■ Finding Recruitment Partners .....                                              | 23        |
| ■ Mastering the Message for Recruiting Older Adults .....                         | 26        |
| ■ Tackling the Tactics for Recruiting Older Adults .....                          | 30        |
| ■ Supporting and Retaining Older Adults.....                                      | 33        |
| ■ Figuring Out the Dollars and Cents .....                                        | 35        |
| ■ Evaluating the Experience: What Difference Does It Make? .....                  | 37        |
| <b>Resources: Sample Materials from Experience Corps Projects.....</b>            | <b>39</b> |
| ■ Position Descriptions .....                                                     | 40        |
| ■ Recruitment Fliers .....                                                        | 43        |
| ■ Volunteer Application .....                                                     | 49        |
| ■ Volunteer Screening Interview Form .....                                        | 52        |
| ■ Volunteer Interview Summary Form .....                                          | 54        |
| ■ Code of Conduct .....                                                           | 56        |
| ■ Volunteer Service Contract .....                                                | 57        |
| ■ Mentor/Mentee Agreement Form .....                                              | 59        |
| ■ Staff Training Agenda.....                                                      | 60        |
| ■ Pre-Service Training Agendas .....                                              | 62        |
| ■ In-Service Training Agenda.....                                                 | 65        |
| ■ Training Activity Evaluation.....                                               | 66        |
| ■ Newsletter .....                                                                | 68        |
| ■ Evaluation: Tutoring Performance Review.....                                    | 70        |
| ■ Evaluation: AmeriCorps/Experience Corps Member Survey .....                     | 71        |
| ■ Exit Interview .....                                                            | 73        |

## A Note about Sources and Resources

This tool kit draws on promising practices gathered from four Experience Corps projects working in after-school settings, information about Experience Corps and related after-school or senior service efforts, and social marketing research about effectively recruiting and engaging older adults in service. Information was gathered over a period of two years, from 2002-2004. The four projects described here have grown considerably since the tool kit research began.

The *Seniors for Schools Effective Practices Guidebook*, published by the Corporation for National & Community Service in April 2000, served as an important source of information about recruiting, training, and retaining older volunteers. Seniors for Schools was a national demonstration initiative modeled on Experience Corps, and eight of the nine sites that participated are currently part of the Experience Corps national network. Another key source was the social marketing research that Margaret Mark and Marvin Waldman conducted on behalf of Civic Ventures, including the report *Recasting Retirement: New Perspectives on Aging and Civic Engagement*.

Each section of the tool kit includes suggested links to further information. These do not constitute an exhaustive bibliography, but rather a quick way to help you learn more about areas of particular interest. In addition—the report authored by Richard Adler includes a reference list of its own if you are interested in further research.

Please feel free to copy any material here, with attribution to Experience Corps. For additional distribution, all materials included here can be found on the Experience Corps web site at [www.experiencecorps.org](http://www.experiencecorps.org).

## Executive Summary

Numerous programs exist across the country—in schools, community organizations, recreation centers, churches, libraries, and other neighborhood sites—that provide a safe place for children to learn and play during after-school hours. Likewise, many national, state, and local programs exist to engage older and/or retired individuals in service to their communities—Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions, or Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) just to name a few. To date, however, few resources have explored how these two types of programs might join forces or examined how to tap older adults as a resource to meet the enormous need for more capacity in after-school programs.

It's a perfect time to begin thinking about how to bring older adults and after-school programs together.

- **America's older population is about to expand dramatically as a result of the aging of the Baby Boomers.** The 55+ population will almost double between now and 2030, while the number of Americans 65 and older will *more* than double.
- **This rapidly growing older population represents an untapped social asset that, if properly directed, has the potential to alleviate some of society's most significant problems.** Currently, nearly half of all Americans age 55 and over volunteer at some point during each year. As a whole, 27.5 million Americans over the age of 55 are providing a total of 7.5 billion hours in volunteer time annually. (See *The Demographics: A Fact Sheet on Aging in America*, page 10.)
- **Participating in after-school programs is an appealing option for older adults.** “Working with children and youth” was the top choice of volunteer options in a national survey of older adults. “Education/tutoring” was the most popular volunteering option in a survey of AARP members in New York. After-school settings give older adults a unique window into community needs and offer them flexible opportunities for intergenerational interaction.
- **Experience Corps illustrates a variety of roles in which older adults can work successfully with youth after school.** Since 1995, Experience Corps has been recruiting older adults to work with young students. Four of the 12 cities in which Experience Corps operates involve older volunteers in after-school programs (Boston, Washington, DC, Kansas City, and San Francisco). The older volunteers serve as reading coaches, literacy tutors, mentors, homework helpers, and leaders of enrichment activities. Some older volunteers take on part-time staff positions or assume other leadership roles.

- **An Experience Corps after-school program conforms to a research-based model and distinct approach that engages older adults in teams of their peers to provide intensive, purposeful service to young people.** The program design is based on research and best practice drawn from the fields of national service, effective tutoring, adult learning and healthy aging. At various stages in its development, the program model has been studied and commended by researchers from Public/Private Ventures, American Institutes for Research, Temple University's Center for Intergenerational Learning, Johns Hopkins University's Center on Aging, and the University of Virginia's Reading Center. (See recent research by Dr. Linda Fried of Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions, published in the *Journal of Urban Health*, at <http://jurban.oupjournals.org>.)
- **Peer-to-peer contacts and word-of-mouth are valuable recruiting strategies.** Established after-school programs report the best way to find older volunteers is through word of mouth, using current volunteers as spokespeople. Other important channels for reaching older adults include community newspapers, local fairs and festivals, and meetings of local civic organizations. Anywhere that older adults gather or visit—public libraries, neighborhood association meetings, senior centers, active retirement communities, religious organizations, even the bulletin board at a local coffee shop or pharmacy—can be excellent sources for older volunteers.
- **A good volunteer recruitment strategy must be matched with a good volunteer retention strategy.** First and foremost, this means providing effective training both before and during service. Program leaders recommend designing training modules that use role-playing, draw on older adults' accumulated knowledge and experience, set realistic expectations about impact on children, and reassure older adults they can cope with the concerns and behavior of today's youth. Other important ways to support older volunteers? Provide them with opportunities for personal growth and social connection, schedule periodic "job reviews," and devise a variety of methods for letting them know they're valued and appreciated.
- **After-school programs based on the Experience Corps model range in cost depending on the number of volunteers, service sites, children, and local activities.** A new program with 30-50 volunteers could be established within an existing organization for about \$125,000 per year, with the biggest budget items being personnel and volunteer costs in the form of stipends and out-of-pocket costs for transportation. (To put this number in perspective, 30 volunteers serving 150 children per week for 40 weeks each year works out to a per child cost of about \$20 per week.) Program managers should be sure to allocate adequate resources for recruiting, training and recognizing volunteers as well as for program evaluation.

- **Funding for after-school programs engaging older adults can come from a variety of public and private sources, including businesses, individuals, foundations, and federal/state/local government.** Many of the current Experience Corps projects participate in AmeriCorps, or utilize VISTAs for a portion of their staffing. Several also receive small grants from city or state government. Annual fees from participating schools provide another source of funding. Local businesses provide both cash and in-kind support. Older adults are a valuable, cost-effective resource for after-school programs; those who volunteer are also engaged citizens and aware consumers. Effectively recruiting and retaining older adults in after-school roles, therefore, can help you connect with a variety of local funding sources.

This tool kit is designed to help existing after-school programs and senior service programs learn more about how older adults can be a valuable resource for after-school programs; what program features, messages, and recruitment strategies are attractive to and effective with older adult volunteers; and what keeps older adults engaged and interested in after-school service opportunities.

The kit includes actual sample materials from four Experience Corps after-school projects located in Boston, Washington DC, Kansas City, and San Francisco.

For more information about Experience Corps, please visit our web site at [www.experiencecorps.org](http://www.experiencecorps.org). If you have questions or comments, please contact us at [info@experiencecorps.org](mailto:info@experiencecorps.org).

## Why Older Americans? The Opportunity

“Older adults bring a wonderful calmness and wisdom to their relationships with the students. There’s just an ease about them. Faced with situations that might frustrate younger adults, older adults bring patience and a different perspective to the work they’re doing. I think this comes from their life experience.”

—Ann Gardner Birnbaum, Director, Experience Corps Washington, DC

Older Americans today are healthier, better educated, more active, and more numerous than ever before. Because there is an overwhelming need for caring adults to work with children in the after-school hours, increasing volunteerism among older adults represents a special opportunity to support young people’s academic and social development.

Older Americans are:

- **Available.** More than any other group, people who have retired from the full-time workforce are the most likely to be available during the hours when after-school programs are generally held. In fact, a 1999 study by the Independent Sector suggests that older Americans are already volunteering a significant amount of time: the biennial survey found that 27.5 million senior volunteers gave approximately 7.5 *billion* hours. Indeed, according to this study, volunteerism is on the rise among seniors, and many more older Americans would engage in volunteer activities if only they were asked. Clearly, targeted recruitment strategies, attuned to the social networks and needs of older people, have the potential to generate thousands of volunteers to staff after-school programs.
- **Motivated.** In the past, retirement was viewed primarily as a time for recreation and retreat. Today, with baby boomers on the cusp of retirement, this paradigm is changing. More and more, seniors view their “third phase” of life as a time for continued personal growth and for renewed engagement in community service. This commitment to community service follows from older volunteers’ strong motivation to pass on their experience to future generations. A 2002 study commissioned by Civic Ventures found that older adults ranked “working with children and youth” as their top volunteer interest.
- **Consistent.** Experience Corps program leaders, school principals, and managers of after-school sites report that older adults are remarkably reliable. Free from many of the stresses of full-time work and family life, older volunteers rarely fail

to keep their service commitments. Further, older volunteers often stick with their programs year after year, maintaining relationships with students as they progress through their schooling.

- **Versatile.** Older volunteers bring a wealth of life experience to their service work. In after-school programs, with the right support and encouragement from program managers, older volunteers can help launch and guide enrichment activities that benefit the whole program. Program managers can count on older volunteers to take leadership roles when appropriate and to pitch in to help in various ways.
- **Effective.** Research on Experience Corps programs shows that older volunteers improve school culture, limit behavior problems, and contribute to student achievement. Moreover, many experts and school reformers believe that multi-generational environments benefit students by providing models for healthy, lifelong development. In after-school programs, which often hire very young staff members, the impact of older volunteers on program quality can be especially significant.

Older adults are a great resource for after-school programs, and the benefits of their involvement can far exceed the costs. However, programs must invest in planning, management, and operations to create an environment where older adults will thrive.

### *For More Information*

**Civic Ventures**, at [www.civicventures.org](http://www.civicventures.org): “The New Face of Retirement: An Ongoing Survey of American Attitudes on Aging” (2002, by Peter D. Hart Research Associates).

**Independent Sector**, at [www.independentsector.org](http://www.independentsector.org): “Experience at Work: Volunteering and Giving Among Americans 50 and Over” (2003); and the Signature Series “Giving and Volunteering in the United States” (1999, 2001).

**Points of Light Foundation**, at [www.pointsoflight.org](http://www.pointsoflight.org): “50+ Volunteering: Working for Stronger Communities” (2004).

“In addition to bringing patience, understanding and experience, older volunteers also bring commitment that is beyond belief. I’m always amazed, it can be snowing, the weather can be absolutely awful for months on end, and most of our volunteers will still show up day after day, week after week despite health and other personal challenges. They just have a real desire to help these children.”

—Mary O'Donnell, Director of Training,  
Generations Incorporated (Boston)

## THE DEMOGRAPHICS: A FACT SHEET ON AGING IN AMERICA

### DEMOGRAPHICS

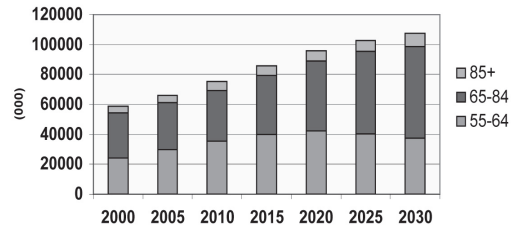
The number of Americans age 55 and older will almost double between now and 2030—from 60 million today (21 percent of the total US population) to 107.6 million (31 percent of the population)—as the Baby Boomers reach retirement age.

During that same period of time, the number of Americans over 65 will more than double, from 34.8 million in 2000 (12 percent of the population) to 70.3 million in 2030 (20 percent of the total population).

The next generation of retirees will be the healthiest, longest lived, best educated, most affluent in history.

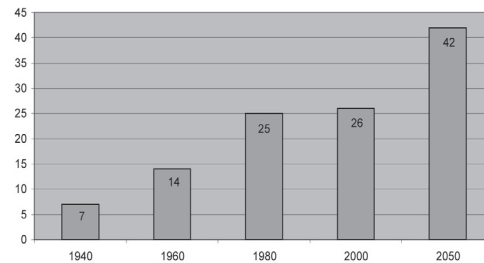
- Americans reaching age 65 today have an average life expectancy of an additional 17.9 years (19.2 years for females and 16.3 years for males).
- The likelihood that an American who reaches the age of 65 will survive to the age of 90 has nearly doubled over the past 40 years—from just 14 percent of 65-year-olds in 1960 to 25 percent at present. By 2050, 40 percent of 65-year-olds are likely to reach age 90.

US 55+ Population, 2000-2030



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

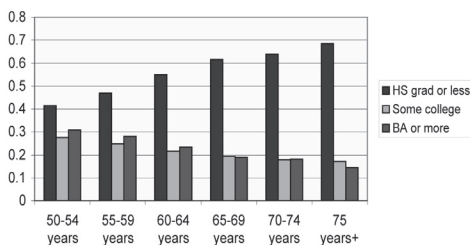
Percentage of Americans Age 65 Expected to Survive Age 90



Source: National Center for Health Statistics Bureau

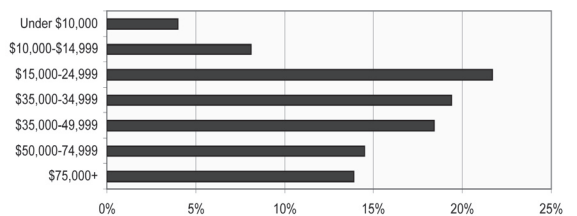
### EDUCATION AND INCOME

Educational Attainment by Age, 2002



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Educational Attainment in the US, 2002

Income, 65+ Households



Source: Administration on Aging, Profile of Older Americans, 2001

The older population is becoming better educated. While less than one-third of today's adults aged 70-74 have at least some college education, that percentage will increase to more than 50 percent by 2015.

## THE DEMOGRAPHICS: A FACT SHEET ON AGING IN AMERICA (CONTINUED)

Most older Americans today have more financial resources than did previous generations. Households headed by persons age 65 and older reported a median income in 2000 of \$32,854 (\$33,467 for whites, \$27,952 for African-Americans, and \$24,330 for Hispanics). While one of every eight (12.1 percent) households headed by someone age 65 or older had incomes less than \$15,000, nearly half (49.2 percent) had annual incomes of \$35,000 or more, and nearly three in ten households (29.8 percent) had incomes greater than \$50,000 per year.

### OLDER VOLUNTEERS

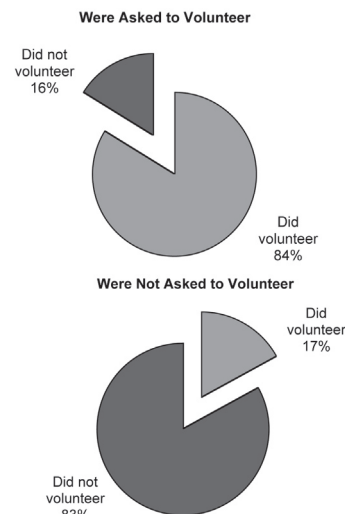
| Older Adults as Volunteers         | Age 55 to 64      | Age 65 to 74      | Age 75+           |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Percent of age group who volunteer | 50.3 percent      | 46.6 percent      | 43.0 percent      |
| Total number of volunteers         | 11.9 million      | 8.5 million       | 7.1 million       |
| Avg weekly hours per volunteer     | 3.3 hours         | 3.6 hours         | 3.1 hours         |
| Total time volunteered annually    | 4.8 billion hours | 1.6 billion hours | 1.1 billion hours |

Nearly half of all Americans age 55 and over volunteered at least once in the past year. Even among those age 75 and older, 43 percent had volunteered at some point in the previous year.

Older volunteers devoted the most time to community activities—almost double the national median for all ages. Compared with the U.S. median commitment of 52 volunteer hours annually, those 65 and over contributed 96 hours per year. (U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Volunteering in the United States," December 2002).

The number of older volunteers could be expanded substantially if more were asked to volunteer or were offered an incentive to serve.

- Just 17 percent of adults age 55 and over who were not directly asked to volunteer did volunteer on their own. Among those who were asked, however, 84 percent— or more than four times as many— volunteered.
- According to the 2002 Hart survey sponsored by Civic Ventures, an additional 21 percent of older Americans would commit at least five hours a week to volunteering if they received a small incentive for their service, such as discounts on prescription drugs and/or a
- \$200/month stipend. Offering such an incentive could double the current older adult volunteer workforce.



Source: Independent Sector, America's Senior Volunteers, June 2000 & 2001

## THE DEMOGRAPHICS: A FACT SHEET ON AGING IN AMERICA (CONTINUED)

### THE EMERGENCE OF A NEW LIFE STAGE

Older Americans no longer see retirement as an “endless vacation,” but increasingly as an active, engaged phase of life that includes work and public service.

According to a 2002 survey conducted for Civic Ventures, 59 percent of older Americans see retirement as “a time to be active and involved, to start new activities, and to set new goals.” Just 24 percent see retirement as “a time to enjoy leisure activities and take a much deserved rest.”

Those who plan to work in their retirement cite the desire to stay active and productive, rather than economic necessity, as the primary reason.

More than half of the respondents (56 percent) say civic engagement will be at least a fairly important part of retirement (Peter D. Hart Research Associates, “The New Face of Retirement: An Ongoing Survey of American Attitudes on Aging,” San Francisco: Civic Ventures, 2002).

Factors in the Decision to Work in Retirement (%)\*

|                                         | Pre-retirees who plan<br>to work in retirement | Working<br>retirees | Total |
|-----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|---------------------|-------|
| Desire to stay mentally active          | 87                                             | 68                  | 83    |
| Desire to stay physically active        | 85                                             | 61                  | 80    |
| Desire to remain productive or useful   | 77                                             | 73                  | 76    |
| Desire to do something fun or enjoyable | 71                                             | 49                  | 66    |
| Need health benefits                    | 66                                             | 20                  | 56    |
| Desire to help other people             | 59                                             | 44                  | 56    |
| Desire to be around people              | 58                                             | 47                  | 55    |
| Need the money                          | 54                                             | 51                  | 53    |
| Desire to learn new things              | 50                                             | 37                  | 48    |
| Desire to pursue a dream                | 32                                             | 20                  | 29    |

\* Respondents could choose as many factors as apply to them.

Source: AARP, “Staying Ahead of the Curve 2003”

A 2003 survey conducted for AARP found that many Americans between the ages of 50 and 70 plan to work far into what has traditionally been viewed as their “retirement years”:

- Nearly half of all pre-retirees (45 percent) expect to continue working into their 70s or later. Of this group, 27 percent said they would work until they were in their 70s, and 18 percent said “80 or older,” “never stop working,” or “as long as they are able to work.”

## THE DEMOGRAPHICS: A FACT SHEET ON AGING IN AMERICA (CONTINUED)

- The most common reasons given by pre-retirees for wanting to continue working in retirement were the desire to stay “mentally active” (87 percent) or “physically active” (85 percent), and the desire “to remain productive or useful” (77 percent). Slightly more than half of the pre-retirees (54 percent) indicated that their motivation was based on “a need for money.” (S. Kathi Brown, “Staying Ahead of the Curve 2003: The AARP Working in Retirement Study,” Washington, DC: AARP, 2003).
- The result of these demographic trends is the emergence of a new life-stage between adulthood and true old age—which has been called the “third age” or “midcourse” or “my time.”

“The third age is no longer a brief intermezzo between midlife and drastic decline... [Instead, it] has the potential to become the best stage of all, an age of liberation when individuals combine newfound freedoms with prolonged health and the chance to make some of their most important contributions to life.”

— Marc Freedman, founder of Civic Ventures, author of *PrimeTime: How Baby Boomers Will Revolutionize Retirement and Transform America*.

“[Midcourse] connotes the period in which individuals begin to think about, plan for, and actually disengage from their primary career occupations and the raising of children; launch second or third careers; develop new identities and new ways to be productively engaged; establish new patterns of relating to spouses, children, siblings, parents, friends; leave some existing relationships and begin new ones.... The fact that most retirees say that they retired ‘to do other things’ suggests that midcourseers are retiring to move to something else, not simply from boring or demanding jobs.”

— Phyllis Moen, McKnight Presidential Chair, Sociology, University of Minnesota.  
From: “Midcourse: Navigating Retirement and a New Life Stage.” In Jeylan Mortimer and Michael J. Shanahan, eds., *Handbook of the Life Course*. New York: Kluwer Publishers, 2003.

“Something huge is happening here... The emergence of an older, more vigorous population is the most significant story of our times.”

— Abigail Trafford, Washington Post health columnist and author,  
*My Time: Making the Most of the Rest of Your Life*.



# Creating After-School Programs

That Tap the Resources of Older Adults



# Designing Successful Programs The Experience Corps Way

Experience Corps is a distinct model and approach to intergenerational learning. In fact, Experience Corps is a registered trademark—meaning an organization can only start an Experience Corps program with the consent and formal approval of Civic Ventures, Experience Corps’s parent organization. The purpose of the trademark is to assure that local programs are a unified network, with the consistency, quality control, and identity that reflect the Experience Corps movement. However, any after-school program that wants to effectively engage older adults can learn from the research-based program design and the experience of our local projects over the last eight years.



The Experience Corps model grew out of a 5-city pilot project launched in the fall of 1995. The results of the pilot project showed that recruiting older adults to serve as mentors and tutors for at-risk youth can make a significant difference in the lives of students as well as enrich the lives of the volunteers when certain conditions are met. For example, an effective service model must include adequate training and support; older adults must serve consistently, multiple days each week, in teams of their peers; there must be clear roles

for the older adults and a simple way to evaluate children’s progress; and there must be thoughtful collaboration between a local “host” for the program and service sites (such as schools).

Today, Experience Corps operates in 12 different communities across the country connecting children to Americans 55 and older with the goal of improving academic and social outcomes for children, while at the same time yielding benefits for older adults that result from purposeful, meaningful activity. Four of these ventures—in Boston, Washington DC, Kansas City, and San Francisco—have active after-school programs in addition to in-school activities.

## CORE PROGRAM ELEMENTS

Here’s what distinguishes an Experience Corps program:

- **Focus on Impact.** From the beginning, the Experience Corps model has focused on a project’s efforts to achieve measurable impact on students, institutions, and communities.

- **Critical Mass.** The model calls for the placement of a sufficient number of older adults in schools or nonprofit organizations so that large numbers of youth are reached and the entire climate of the service site is affected.
- **Collaboration Through Teams.** Older adults work together in teams to deliver significant service. The teams are an important strategy to affect institutions and provide significant benefits to participating seniors.
- **Service Options for Older Adults.** Seniors participating in Experience Corps may make a commitment of 15 hours per week or more (the centerpiece of the program), but may also serve part-time (generally 4-8 hrs. per week) or full-time (frequently in leadership positions).
- **Connectedness.** Emphasis is placed on recruiting seniors who live in local communities adjacent to the service sites.
- **Lifelong Learning.** Older adults receive extensive training in tutoring, mentoring, literacy, or other topics relevant to their service assignment. In addition, they are given personal development opportunities to support their continued civic engagement.
- **Leadership.** Older adults are encouraged to assume leadership roles that will strengthen the institution and communities where projects are located.

Beyond these guidelines, the Experience Corps model is flexible so that it can be adapted to a variety of settings. The diversity in the current Experience Corps after-school programs illustrates the flexibility inherent in the model. Some are highly structured and academically oriented; others include multiple types of activities. Some are focused primarily on tutoring, while others put more emphasis on mentoring. Some programs operate entirely on school premises, while others are housed in other types of facilities, such as YMCAs or Boys and Girls Clubs. Some operate only during the school year, while others operate year-round.

### *For More Information*

Heather E. Quick, Carmen Martinez-Sussmann, and Freya Makris, *Experience Corps—PM: Results from Year 2 of the Implementation Study*, **American Institutes for Research**, 2001. Contact Experience Corps for a copy.

Visit the **Corporation for National and Community Service** web site, [www.cns.gov](http://www.cns.gov), for links to a vast array of program tools, research, and publications related to designing effective service experiences.

Read recent research published by the **Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions** in the *Journal of Urban Health* to learn more about how and why the Experience Corps model works for older adults and for children. Abstracts and articles are available at [urban.oupjournals.org](http://urban.oupjournals.org), or see the links at <http://www.experiencecorps.org/research/>.

# Creating Roles for Older Adults In After-School Programs

“Children benefit from having the older adults in the program because they can provide that patience and understanding and love and support to our children who don’t receive it on a daily basis. They’re the ones that give that smile and that hug, and say ‘I believe in you.’ They’re the ones that can take the time to really listen when a child makes a joke or wants to talk about a problem at school.”

—Judith Simmons, Experience Corps Project Director, YMCA-Kansas City

There are many roles older adults can play in after-school programs, everything from homework helper to staff member. Here are the most common roles:

- **Reading or Math Tutor.** Many after-school programs now use proven math and literacy programs aligned with state standards. With appropriate training, older volunteers are perfect providers of extra help in reading, writing, literacy development and math. They can also design educational games that combine fun and learning. One source for ideas is the national organization Reading Is Fundamental, [www.rif.org](http://www.rif.org).
- **Homework Helper.** Older volunteers can provide individual attention for students in completing and reviewing homework in all subjects, and can help students develop stronger study skills. Many large, traditional service organizations such as YMCAs offer after-school homework assistance, as do smaller community-based youth organizations and recreation centers.
- **Mentor.** Mentors commit to building a relationship with individual students over time. Programs with a mentoring component must develop procedures to screen, match, and support mentors, especially if mentoring activities take place off site. The National Mentoring Partnership ([www.mentoring.org](http://www.mentoring.org)) provides a wealth of resources, along with zip-code search for local mentoring opportunities.
- **Activity Leader.** Trusted volunteers can either run existing activities within an after-school program or develop new activities that are related to their careers, hobbies, or interests. Whether it’s chess, baking or poetry, older volunteers often have the time and motivation to add variety and enrichment opportunities to after-school programs.
- **Committee Member.** Often, older volunteers who become involved as tutors or mentors are also willing to contribute their skills and experiences in other ways such as serving on fundraising or special events committees.

- **Volunteer Coordinator.** After they've gotten their feet wet, some older volunteers may want to take on more responsibility—especially if they have strong organizational skills. The duties of a volunteer coordinator include acting as a liaison between volunteers and staff, facilitating training, team building, volunteer appreciation, and recruitment of new volunteers.
- **Staff Member.** “Retirement” no longer means the end of gainful employment. Many individuals who have retired from public service or corporate careers take part-time jobs, either because they need extra income or because they want the satisfaction that comes from meaningful work. Because after-school positions are part-time and involve children, they have appeal for older workers seeking to transition from their full-time careers.

## Older adults play many roles in Experience Corps after-school programs.

### For example:

**In Boston,** a group of older volunteers meet with second and third graders two afternoons a week to help them improve their reading skills. These one-on-one “Reading Coaches” are part of an Experience Corps after-school program operated by Generations, Incorporated, a non-profit organization that provides programs that bring youth and seniors together at community-based facilities like Boys & Girls Clubs. At each after-school site, a staff person maintains a library of approximately 100 to 150 books, each accompanied by a folder that provides suggested activities. Prior to meeting with a student, tutors pick a book to read, review the text, and create a written session plan. In the session with the student, the tutor introduces the book, goes through vocabulary that may be difficult for the student, and then listens as the student reads the book out loud. After finishing the book, the student is asked to complete an activity based on what he or she has read. To

ensure that the program is fun for the students as well as academically useful, the Boston program includes field trips, “game days,” parties, and other social activities to supplement the reading activities.

**In Washington DC,** a group of retired men serve as mentors at Birney Elementary School. The participants in the after-school program are boys in the fifth and sixth grades at the school, many of whom come from low-income, single-parent homes, and therefore have few strong male role models. In order to address these challenges, the program pairs each boy with a male mentor who meets with him throughout the school year. The goal of the mentors is to become “big buddies” with the students, meeting with them several times a week, offering friendship and support, but not interfering directly with the students' home lives. The mentors are an impressive group—about half are former mid-level managers in the federal or district government. In contrast to other Experience Corps after-school programs, the Birney School program is relatively unstructured. The mentors talk with their students and will help them with homework if asked, but there is no fixed schedule of activities. Sometimes the mentors organize

field trips to professional sports events or museums.

**In San Francisco,** program organizers make a special effort to use older adults' previous experience to shape their service to children. The coordinator at one middle school program describes an Experience Corps volunteer this way: “Of all the Experience Corps volunteers, ‘Diamond Dave’ Whitaker is probably the best suited to the fluidity and diversity of the Mission Beacon. He is a poet from the beat generation, the original mentor of Bob Dylan, a down-in-the-dirt full-time community activist, and a long-time Experience Corps volunteer. Many of the people at Everett Middle School and Community Bridges Beacon have known him for a good portion of their lives. Talk to him about his past sometime and you will know that he has already had a significant impact on the community here. Whether conducting read alouds in classrooms, hanging out with kids in the Drop-Zone (a drop-in center), inviting Experience Corps volunteers and staff to speak on his radio show, or pounding the pavement to spread the word about the need for more older adult volunteers in our public schools, Diamond Dave is a unique resource to students and staff alike.”

“After-school is a great place for caring adults from all walks of life to contribute something meaningful and creative. Even if a volunteer doesn’t speak English as a first language, they can still make a significant impact in an art class or in a culture class or in a talking circle [a peer support group for kids].”

—Eunice Nichols, Director,  
Experience Corps-San Francisco

The challenge for program managers is not just getting the initial placement right; it’s also keeping older adults engaged over the long haul. This can be accomplished by letting older adults transition naturally from lower intensity roles, such as tutor, to more demanding roles such as activity leader or volunteer coordinator.

### *For More Information*

The **Afterschool Alliance** ([www.afterschoolalliance.org](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org)) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to raising awareness of the importance of after-school programs and advocating for quality, affordable programs for all children. Their web site is a great source of information about after-school programs generally, and it includes a variety of practical program tools.

The **National Network of Statewide Afterschool Networks** ([www.publicengagement.com/afterschoolnetworks/](http://www.publicengagement.com/afterschoolnetworks/)) brings together established statewide after-school networks in their collective mission to build partnerships and policies that are committed to the development and sustainability of quality after-school programs. These partnerships—funded through the support of the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation and other funders—are focused on actively engaging key decisionmakers in support of school-based/school-linked after-school programs, particularly in underserved communities. Currently 18 statewide after-school networks are funded to coordinate and influence the systems that support the success of children and young people. Nationally available resources exist on the web site, where you can also find out if your state is among the lucky 18. If yes, contact the statewide network for more information and assistance.

The **Experience Corps** web site ([www.experiencecorps.org](http://www.experiencecorps.org)) includes first-person stories from older adult volunteers and descriptions of the roles they play in each of the twelve cities where the program operates.

The **Senior Corps** web site ([www.seniorcorps.org](http://www.seniorcorps.org)) includes research and program tools relevant to designing roles for older volunteers.

The **Harvard Family Research Project’s** evaluation periodical, *The Evaluation Exchange*, addresses current issues facing program evaluators of all levels. The spring and summer 2004 issues will address the challenges and possibilities for evaluating after school programs in the new era of accountability. You can find it at <http://www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/eval/issue25/index.html>.

## Designing Great Recruitment Plans

Effective recruitment starts with a thoughtful plan. When you sit down to develop your recruitment plan, take note of these ten tips.

- **Develop a marketing plan.** Identify your “audience,” your recruitment messages, the major strategies you plan to use to recruit older volunteers, and your target goals (i.e., how many volunteers do you want to recruit over the next year). As you develop your marketing plan, think about ways your overall program budget can be structured to help you recruit volunteers. For example, can you allocate some of your budget to hire a volunteer coordinator? Can you set aside funds for stipends for volunteers who work 10 or more hours per week?
- **Write volunteer position descriptions.** Volunteer job descriptions should outline the responsibilities and expectations for participation in your program. What types of activities will they be engaged in? What skills and attributes will a volunteer need to be successful?
- **Use social networks to find your first volunteers.** When recruiting in retirement communities, don’t just put out flyers and talk to staff. Attend community events and seek out one resident who might be willing to serve as a recruitment liaison for the whole community. Advertising for recruiting events often works better than advertising that merely announces a volunteer opportunity.
- **Find recruiting partners.** Programs seeking to build an older volunteer service component from scratch should reach out to institutions and individuals trusted by volunteers over 55. You can jump start your recruitment effort by forging a special relationship with a local church or service organization, so that your program becomes a primary service opportunity for members. It’s also important to reach out to all the local and national organizations that connect volunteers with service opportunities in your community. (See the section of this tool kit called “Where to Find Older Volunteers” for more ideas.)
- **Make regular presentations to partner organizations.** While a good first step is to get mentioned in a partner’s newsletter or listed in a directory of volunteer



opportunities, generally this will not be sufficient to produce referrals. Make sure you spend time with staff members at your partner organizations, so they understand your program and feel comfortable referring people to you.

- **Create an intake system** so that prospective volunteers feel welcomed and valued when they contact your program. This should include guidelines for how prospective volunteers are greeted, what information they receive about how they can be involved, a clear application process, and timelines for follow-up at each stage of the process.
- **Support word-of-mouth recruitment with multi-faceted community outreach.** In after-school programming, as in so many other arenas, word-of-mouth is by far the most effective recruitment strategy. A good recruitment plan will focus on creating opportunities, tools, and incentives for current volunteers to act as ambassadors for your program.
- **Empower everyone connected to your program to recruit friends, family, and acquaintances.** Find stakeholders who are members of communities of potential volunteers (service organizations, church congregations, retirement communities). Deputize those people to be recruiters for your program. Create recruiting events. Use an annual or seasonal celebration as a forum to attract new volunteers. Give current volunteers/stakeholders the support and funds to plan a fun event. Print inexpensive “business cards” for current volunteers at a local copy shop with the name of your program, a contact phone number, and web address.
- **Produce recruitment fliers and other materials** such as t-shirts, buttons, and giveaway items. Highlight the idea of teamwork in your recruitment flyers and materials; use words that convey belonging (“join,” “team,” “family,” “community”) and photos that show older volunteers working or celebrating as a group. Be sure the photos include both men and women, and represent the diversity of your community.
- **Develop a process for screening recruits.** A good screening process can determine whether volunteers have a positive attitude and a serious level of commitment. This process is often a two-way street that involves providing potential volunteers with information about what is involved in a program as well as seeking information about the volunteers. Make sure your screening process also satisfies state and local laws that may require a criminal background check and a TB test for your volunteers.

## Finding Recruitment Partners

You don't have to recruit older adults one by one, on your own. It can help to turn to other groups in your community, including the following:

- **Churches, Synagogues, Mosques and Other Religious Organizations.** A survey conducted by Independent Sector in 2000 found that religious institutions are, by far, the organizations that seniors turn to most when seeking to volunteer. According to the survey, 52% of older volunteers found their service opportunity through a church or synagogue. (The next most popular conduit was membership organizations, which helped recruit 13% of senior volunteers.) Developing strong relationships with local clergy is often the key to successfully launching a new volunteer program, especially one focused on seniors.
- **Senior Corps Programs.** Senior Corps is a network of programs administered by the federal Corporation for National and Community Service. Three Senior Corps programs offer partnership opportunities for after-school programs:
  - ***Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP).*** RSVP affiliates in all 50 states help recruit older volunteers and place them in service that meets their skills and interests. RSVP affiliates typically work with three to five programs each to provide a range of opportunities for volunteers. For a list of RSVP affiliates, see [www.seniorcorps.org/joining/rsvp](http://www.seniorcorps.org/joining/rsvp).
  - ***The Foster Grandparent Program (FGP)*** is open to people age 60 and over with limited incomes. All applicants undergo a background check and a telephone interview, as well as pre-service and in-service training. Foster Grandparents serve as mentors, tutors, and caregivers for at-risk children and youth with special needs through a variety of community organizations, including schools, hospitals, drug treatment facilities, correctional institutions, and Head Start and day-care centers. Foster Grandparents serve 20 hours a week. In exchange for their service, they receive a small tax-free stipend, reimbursement for transportation, meals during service, annual physical examinations, and accident and liability insurance while on duty. For more information, see [www.seniorcorps.org/joining/fgp](http://www.seniorcorps.org/joining/fgp).
  - ***Senior Corps Network.*** The national Senior Corps program operates an on-line volunteer matching system and can help connect your program to local Senior Corps grantees. To get your program included in the Senior Corps directory, or to learn more, visit [www.seniorcorps.org/partners](http://www.seniorcorps.org/partners).

- **Organizations that Serve Seniors.** Senior Centers are community organizations that offer a mix of services and activities for older Americans. Depending on the focus and level of programming, Senior Centers can make excellent recruiting partners for after-school programs. You can find a local senior center through state-funded entities known as Area Agencies on Aging, which also can sometimes help with volunteer recruitment. An online directory of these agencies is available at [www.n4a.org](http://www.n4a.org), or you can call the U.S. Administration on Aging's hotline at 1-800-677-1116. (This hotline is intended primarily to help family members seeking care for elderly relatives, but Area Agencies on Aging and Senior Centers also work with active and healthy people who could benefit from volunteer opportunities.)

Like Senior Centers, retirement communities can be great volunteer recruitment partners. Some retirement communities are single apartment buildings while others resemble small cities with thousands of housing units for older residents.

You can generally find nearby retirement communities in the Yellow Pages, or you can search on-line at [www.eldernet.com](http://www.eldernet.com).

Corporate retiree programs also provide information to large numbers of older people and can be effective recruitment partners. Retiree programs may be found through Corporate Volunteer Councils. See [www.pointsoflight.org/organizations/corp\\_vol\\_council.cfm](http://www.pointsoflight.org/organizations/corp_vol_council.cfm) for a national directory.

State and local offices of **AARP** can also be excellent recruiting partners. Experience Corps, Big Brothers Big Sisters, and Everybody Wins are among the organizations with whom AARP state offices have developed youth mentoring partnerships. AARP also has a Senior Community Service

Employment Program, whose services include paid temporary work assignments with non-profit organizations. See <http://www.aarp.org/volunteer/>.

- **Volunteer Centers.** There are 360 Volunteer Centers around the country that refer potential volunteers to service opportunities. The purpose of these centers is to “bring people and community needs together through a range of programs and services based upon community needs, demographic area, population size, and other factors.” For a directory, visit the Volunteer Center National Network at [www.pointsoflight.org/centers/centers.cfm](http://www.pointsoflight.org/centers/centers.cfm).
- **CityCares Affiliates.** CityCares affiliates, known as “Cares” or “Hands On” organizations, engage over 250,000 volunteers in direct service to their communities each year. In cities large and small, 30 Cares affiliates have been established in the U.S., one affiliate in the Philippines, and an additional 13 partner organizations in the U.K. CityCares was formed in 1992 to serve as the umbrella organization for these local CityCares organizations. Visit [www.citycares.org](http://www.citycares.org).



- **Service Organizations.** Many service organizations have a long tradition of involving members in community work. Often, a partnership with one of these groups can yield both volunteers and funding. Here are a few of the largest national and international networks:
  - **Junior Leagues** are organizations of women committed to promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women, and improving communities through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. Interests include family literacy, school readiness, and youth leadership development. A Junior League organization exists in 294 communities throughout the United States, Canada, Mexico, and Great Britain. See [www.ajli.org](http://www.ajli.org).
  - **Kiwanis International** is a social and service organization for businesspeople and professionals. The average age of members is 55 and most Kiwanis service projects focus on children. There are over 6,000 U.S. Kiwanis clubs. You can find your local club by using the club locator tool at [www.kiwanis.org](http://www.kiwanis.org).
  - **Elks of the USA** has more than 1 million members belonging to 2,100 local lodges nationwide. Their mission includes serving “people and communities through benevolent programs.” Their programs for youth include sports activities, essay contests, scholarships, partnerships with Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops, and service to veterans. See [www.elks.org](http://www.elks.org).
  - **Lions International**, a service organization with 13,000 clubs in the U.S., is best known for service to the blind and disaster relief. They also provide prevention programs that educate youth about the dangers of drug use, and sponsor youth activities. See [www.lionsclubs.org](http://www.lionsclubs.org) for more information.
  - **Rotary** is “dedicated to fostering the ideal of service.” With 400,000 U.S. members, there are Rotary clubs in most cities and many towns. Their website, [www.rotary.org](http://www.rotary.org), includes a club locator.
- **Alumni Organizations, Sororities, and Fraternities.** Many alumni organizations sponsor service opportunities for their members. If your program operates in a community with a strong college, university, or alumni network presence, you may want to develop a partnership through a chapter of the alumni organization, an inter-fraternity council, or a specific sorority/fraternity. For example, Alpha Phi Omega ([www.apo.org](http://www.apo.org)) is a national, co-ed service fraternity. One umbrella organization you can contact is the National Panhellenic Conference, founded in 1902. Their web site ([www.npcwomen.org](http://www.npcwomen.org)) has links to the web sites of 26 inter/national women’s fraternities and sororities. The National Pan-Hellenic Council ([www.nphchq.org](http://www.nphchq.org)) is the international governing council made up of the nine largest African-American sororities and fraternities.

## Mastering the Message For Recruiting More Older Adults

If you'd like more older adults to help staff after-school programs, researchers say you have to ask them. According to recent research by Independent Sector, less than half of those over 50 are being asked to volunteer despite the finding that “the volunteering rate is about three times higher for those [over 50] who were asked than for those who were not.”

But how do you make the ask? How do you craft recruitment messages that hit home with this growing population of people with more time to give?

A number of researchers and organizations, including Experience Corps, have been exploring this question in focus groups, in surveys, and in real-life trials. There is much more to discover, but this list represents what has been learned so far.

**To craft a message that succeeds with older adults, consider the following:**

- **Retirement is a time of conflicting emotions for almost everyone, regardless of background or where they live.** According to focus group research sponsored by Experience Corps and conducted by Margaret Mark, retirees universally love their exhilarating, new-found freedom and the feeling of control they have over their lives. On the other hand, many retirees seemed to fear too much freedom and too little structure. They miss the purposeful relationships and friendships they found at work. They miss the validation. And they miss feeling useful. When creating messages, it's important to take the negative feelings into account.
- **Retirees care about legacy.** One of the things retirees miss most about work, according to Mark's focus group research, is the ability to share or pass on their experience. This desire to pass on experience—and perhaps, in the process, to validate the value of one's own life and work experiences—seems to carry special meaning for men (and possibly women who have been in the workforce their entire lives), whose identities and often strongest social ties outside the family were integrally connected to their jobs.
- **Helping helps.** Retirees who are involved in volunteer activities say they regain a sense of purpose and an affirmation of their value that tends to mitigate some of the loss they experienced after leaving the workplace.

- **The most satisfied volunteers seem to be those who find an outlet for their own unique talents and abilities.** The singer who discovers he can use his music to brighten the lives of older people, and the retiree who reads her favorite books out loud while making recordings for the blind, have found their niche. Validating life experience and acknowledging specific skills and talents is crucial in recruiting volunteers. Offering to match those abilities to relevant local needs is a very promising message.
- **Optimism is the ultimate sell.** Researchers have found that older adults don't process or retain negative images as well as younger people do. When shown positive, negative, and neutral photo images, older adults remembered nearly as many positive images as younger people, but their memory for negative and neutral images was significantly less. Recent brain research reinforces this conclusion.
- **Meaningful goals may become more important with age, while expanding horizons may become less important.** According to research done by Stanford professor Laura Carstensen, goals change across the lifespan. When people think their time is unlimited, they tend to focus on expanding horizons, acquiring knowledge, meeting new people, and taking chances. When people sense that their time is finite, they tend to focus more on what's important in the present. They choose to live in the moment, invest in sure things, deepen existing relationships, and savor life.
- **Given their focus on emotionally meaningful goals, older adults prefer emotional messages to informational ones.** Professors Laura Carstensen and Helene Hoi-Lam Fung showed older and younger people two different ads for the same products. Older people preferred the emotional messages, while younger people preferred the informational ones. In addition, older people remembered slogans better when they were emotionally meaningful.
- **Successful messages stress that service offers benefits to those who serve.** According to an AARP survey, "One of the top motivations among 45 and older volunteers is a sense of responsibility to help others." But appealing to that responsibility may not be persuasive...and may not be enough. It helps to include in your pitch the benefits volunteering can offer to the volunteers—in this case, older Americans. These can include, according to Mark, the sense of new possibilities; a feeling that one's life is expanding, not constricting; renewed energy and vitality; camaraderie and shared goals; a sense of community; a feel-



ing of accomplishment; recognition that one's life experience counts for something; and a renewed sense of purpose. In addition, new research by the Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions shows that giving back can help keep older people healthier and more vital than those who don't volunteer.

- **Words matter; labels offend.** Mark's focus group research shows that people do not like to be labeled by their age. In other words, they don't like being called "older," "senior," or "elderly." They don't like phrases that imply "lines of demarcation," including "older boomers," and "older retirees." And they don't like the idea of life being carved up into sections and described with phrases like "the third age." More appealing descriptors have nothing to do with growing older, but include the acknowledgement of accumulated wisdom and life experience. Words like "coaches" and "the experienced" work well. (Apologies for our own terminology in this report; the words we need clearly haven't been invented yet.)
- **Americans over 55 are not one, big homogenous group.** Research shows that people of different ages, genders, and races react differently to different messages. It's also quite likely that people of different faiths and varying degrees of religious commitment will have different reactions to different messages, as will people of different economic classes and geographic locations. Try to be as specific as possible when determining your target recruits.
- **Appeals that include the promise of camaraderie and teamwork will probably be met with skepticism by men.** It seems logical that retirees who miss the relationships they formed at work would respond to volunteer opportunities that promise teamwork. But be careful of the gender divide. Women seem to like the idea of working as part of a group or team, sight-unseen. Despite missing work-related relationships and on-the-job camaraderie, men are more skeptical and adopt a wait-and-see attitude. It may be more effective to convey the idea of teamwork implicitly, through pictures, for instance, and as a word-of-mouth message delivered by current volunteers.
- **Motivations for volunteering may differ by race.** According to Mark's research, urban African Americans tend to respond more to the urgency of the need to help solve pressing urban problems. Most likely, they witness and internalize the need more acutely and are more likely to feel an obligation to do something about it. Those who are more removed geographically and in other ways may be less empathetic toward our neediest citizens.
- **Clever appeals may not work with all age groups.** Those under 60 seem to appreciate and get word plays and innuendo, according to Mark's research. Those over 60 may favor more concrete communication.

- **Be careful with humorous appeals.** Humor is likely to be an attention-getter, but will likely alienate some people. Along age lines, the same joke will probably not be funny to those who grew up with Bob Hope and to those who grew up with Saturday Night Live.
- **Best of both worlds: Older adults tend to like volunteer opportunities that involve simultaneously helping younger generations while working with peers.** The opportunity to work with younger people provides an outlet for older adults to pass their experience on to the next generation. Working with peers creates the kind of team and purposeful activity that people seem to miss most when they retire.

## Tackling the Tactics for Recruiting Older Adults

“Our Experience Corps volunteers have the highest retention rate of all our site-based volunteers. Publicizing the Experience Corps program has assisted with recruitment and volunteer recognition. But most importantly, having pictures of local volunteers has made the biggest impact.”

—Judith Simmons, Project Director, Experience Corps Kansas City

Many after-school programs find it challenging to reach out to older adults for the first time. And of course, the challenge is not merely to recruit enough volunteers, but to recruit the right volunteers whose interests and abilities are compatible with your program’s needs.

Established after-school programs offer the following lessons:

- **The most successful recruitment campaigns use multiple channels to reach potential volunteers.** Reaching out to older volunteers can be done through community events, public service announcements on radio and television, fliers, transit ads, announcements in community and city newspapers, tables at community health fairs, personal letters, and more. Remember that “older adults” are not a single group; many people 55 and older are still working full-time, and those in the 55-65 age range have different life experiences than those in their 70s and 80s. (Think about the differences between your peers, your parents, and your grandparents.) Some older adults are more likely to read classified ads in the newspaper; others are more likely to find you on a web site or listserv.
- **The most effective single strategy is word of mouth.** Current volunteers tend to be the most articulate, most convincing spokespeople for the benefits of participating in an after-school program. Some programs take advantage of this fact by basing their recruitment efforts around encouraging current volunteers to recruit others—sometimes with financial incentives. For example, the Kansas City Experience Corps director runs a contest each year among current volunteers to see who can recruit the most new people and offers cash prizes to those who bring in five new people. Other programs create recruitment committees, made up of current volunteers. Staff members make sure to take at least one member of the committee with them when they make recruitment presentations at churches and organizational meetings. Current volunteers can also help organize bring-a-friend recruitment events; send postcards, note cards, and other personalized letters to people they know; and help sponsor and invite friends to open houses.

■ **Volunteers for after-school programs tend to come from the neighborhoods in which the programs operate.** Understanding this dictates where you spend your time recruiting new volunteers. The Experience Corps program coordinators in San Francisco, for example, place ads in community newspapers, attend local fairs and festivals, and speak at meetings of local organizations.

■ **Working with other organizations that have access to potential volunteers is a valuable recruitment strategy.** Because many older adults are active in religious organizations, churches, synagogues and mosques can be particularly valuable potential partners for recruiting older volunteers. The next best source for older volunteers is membership organizations. Several Experience Corps projects have developed effective partnerships with the state AARP office or the Area Agency on Aging. Local civic organizations make good partners, too. For example, the Experience Corps in Washington, DC, has developed a relationship with a local group of African-American Masons (Prince Hall Grand Lodge), which has been the source of approximately half of the male mentors in the program at Birney Elementary School.

*“The images, ads, and logo have helped us to gain credibility as an established, reputable organization in San Francisco, opening up new doors for us in the arena of partnership and funding.”*

*—Eunice Nichols, Director,  
Experience Corps San Francisco*

■ **Advertising or the use of PSAs or publicity through local media outlets can be useful strategies for attracting new volunteers, but their effectiveness varies widely.** Studies show that seniors are active readers of newspapers and also spend considerable time listening to radio and watching television. The most economical use: classified ads and public service announcements. If you have funding to buy print advertising space or radio and cable TV commercial time, consider the buys to be long-term investments. Experience Corps has found that these venues generally do not yield the same numbers of new recruits compared to other recruitment strategies such as word of mouth and partnering with other organizations. However, they do spread the word about the program and, over time, the more people who have heard of your efforts, the easier it will be to recruit. And there are other benefits, too. As Eunice Nichols, director of Experience Corps San Francisco notes, “The media attention and high-profile ads generated strong excitement in volunteers and program partners, resulting in a new sense of pride in the program and a stronger sense of team citywide.”

■ **Try to anticipate and respond to the needs and interests of older volunteers before they ask.** Some new retirees may be very protective of their new-found freedom. Some potential older volunteers may be concerned about such issues as personal safety and their ability to connect with young people. Others may be concerned about their qualifications to do the work that needs to get done or their ability to cover the costs of transportation and lunch. In materials that promote your program or specific opportunities, be as specific as you can about hours, stipends, locations, transportation, qualifications, and training. In

addition, testimony from happy older volunteers in your program can provide reassurance to potential recruits.

- **Create a professional, inviting image for your program by producing quality materials.** Your materials create a first impression of your program; you want it to be a good one. As much as finances allow, use good design, clear text that large and easy to read, and quality color photographs of current older adults in after-school programs. The photos can be critical in forming that first impression and conveying the message to a potential volunteer that the task is approachable, fun, and rewarding. As Ann Birnbaum, director of Experience Corps Washington DC says, “The photos capture the essence of Experience Corps in a way that text on paper does not.”

“Having increased visibility is important but not effective enough unless we also engage individuals personally. On the other hand, peer-to-peer recruitment is very difficult unless the potential volunteer has heard of our organizations and is able to associate them with positive images and messages.”

—Mary Gunn, Executive Director, Generations Incorporated (host of Experience Corps Boston)

- **Screening potential volunteers is an important part of the recruitment process.** In many cases, programs that involve direct contact of volunteers with children are required to include criminal history record checks as part of their screening process. Screening can also help ensure that volunteers who are selected are likely to be successful. People interested in joining Experience Corps in Kansas City are invited to spend a day observing the program. They are then invited to a “mini-orientation” that provides more information about the program and what volunteers do. They are then invited to fill out an application, and about half of those who attend the orientation do so. Those who submit applications are interviewed to explore why they are interested in the program and what role they would like to play.

- **Matching volunteers to the right assignment helps determine whether they will be effective in and satisfied with their roles.** In Boston, newly recruited after-school literacy tutors, called Reading Coaches, are given an opportunity to observe what goes on at the site where they will work to make sure they are comfortable with those activities. In San Francisco, program staff discovered that some participants were uncomfortable helping middle school students with math assignments but were attracted by the prospect of working with elementary school students on arts and crafts projects. In other cases, the key to success has been to enable volunteers to make use of their personal interests or special skills. One volunteer in San Francisco turned out to be a Parcheesi champion and has been teaching students how to play the game, which provides them with an enjoyable intellectual challenge.

## Supporting and Retaining Older Adults

Recruitment and retention go hand-in-hand. Without a strong strategy for retaining volunteers, you may find the investment you've made in recruiting volunteers is wasted. Here are the major components of an effective volunteer retention strategy.

- **Training.** Providing volunteers with high quality orientation and training is probably the most important element for making volunteers feel valued and prepared. No one likes to be ill-prepared to take on the challenges they will face once they are “on the job.”

This can be especially true for older adults who may not be familiar with the issues that often arise in working with young students. In Experience Corps after-school programs, new recruits go through training programs that last from a half-day to a full day or more. A pre-service training session might include: information about tutoring and mentoring; ideas and suggestions for working with “challenging students or behavior”; exercises to help older volunteers to be aware of the ways in which the world they grew up in differs from what youth experience today; and discussions about what kinds of improvements or achievements are reasonable to expect from the students with whom they will be working.



- **Team Building.** Ongoing support for volunteers is also important. Most Experience Corps programs hold monthly team meetings that provide additional training and offer volunteers a chance to talk about their successes as well as the challenges they are facing. This kind of support gives volunteers a chance to reflect on and learn from their experiences and get help from peers and program staff when they need it.
- **Feedback—Giving it.** “Job reviews” can be useful for volunteers. They can help volunteers appreciate what they are contributing as well as recognize areas where they can improve their performance. Consider providing your volunteers regular feedback, both orally and in written form, plus a formal review at the end of the school year.
- **Feedback—Getting It.** Volunteers are more likely to stick around if they feel they have a real voice in improving the program. For some program staff,

accepting ideas from volunteers can seem like an annoyance. However, to the extent that volunteers feel like they are colleagues working toward a common cause, they will feel appreciated and stay engaged for the long haul. When they feel like their thoughts are not valued, that's when things start to break down, they start to drift, and then they leave.

- **Personal Development/Leadership Opportunities.** Everyone likes to grow as a person. The flexible nature of after-school programs allows you to be creative about how you use your volunteers. Empower your volunteers to take the reins or try new activities. Let veteran volunteers play a role in trainings.
- **Recognition.** Recognition takes two forms. One involves treating volunteers with respect on a day-to-day basis. This means taking the time to give volunteers an update on what you're planning for the day, and occasionally asking their opinions on how to carry out a task. The second type encompasses things that are special, like annual award dinners, invitations to attend concert performances or other cultural events, and articles that feature individual volunteers in local publications. All of these can provide "psychic rewards" that let your volunteers know their contributions are noticed and appreciated.

A successful retention strategy can do more than just keep volunteers motivated and engaged. If you empower your volunteers, they can become the best advocates for your program.

## Special strategies for supporting and retaining older volunteers

The **San Francisco** Experience Corps after-school program has recently piloted a new training module for after-school program staff on how to effectively utilize older adult volunteers. Designed to last 75 minutes, the training uses brainstorming, case studies, and discussion to explore what motivates volunteers to stay or leave. Special handouts list tips for success and suggest ways to recognize volunteers. San Francisco program director Eunice Nichols says, "this is a work in progress, but it gives a sense of the type of things to cover in this sort of training." (The training agenda is included in the sample materials at the end of this tool kit.)

In **Boston**, Experience Corps host agency Generations, Incorporated has created an Experience Corps Council. This is a group of volunteers who represent the various program sites and meet approximately once every other month to give input into upcoming projects. Boston's training director Mary O'Donnell says, "the Council is a way for us to express how much we value the strengths this diverse population brings to our efforts."

The **Washington, DC**, Experience Corps program makes an effort to test its volunteers' innovative ideas. In 2003 one of its mentors suggested bringing all of its mentors and mentees together for "rap sessions" where they would watch a video relevant to an issue the kids and their mentors were struggling to address and then talk about it as a group. DC Experience Corps program director Ann Birnbaum says the rap sessions have been a big success and something they will incorporate

into the program. "Allowing the volunteers to come up with solutions and incorporating them into the program gives them a higher sense of ownership in the program."

In **Kansas City**, Experience Corps helps older volunteers to understand their importance in the program through a special training event called "around the world." It focuses on the era in which the older volunteers grew up—what the political scene was like at the time, what the neighborhoods were like, what families were doing, what the fad of the day was, what music was like. The training then travels forward in time to discuss how many aspects of our society have broken down over the years. Kansas City Experience Corps program manager Judith Simmons says she uses the African proverb that it takes a village to raise a child to make the point that "it's up to the older generation to restore societal cohesiveness and community again."

## Figuring Out the Dollars and Cents

While volunteers provide valuable services at a low cost, every good volunteer manager knows that they are not free. Well-run programs budget for expenses such as staff time, recruitment and screening, training, volunteer recognition, and evaluation.

Experience Corps programs, and similar “national service” models, also budget for stipends that encourage intensive service—12 to 15 hours a week or more—and that offset the costs associated with volunteering several days per week. These costs may include transportation, purchasing lunch near the service site, and incidental out-of-pocket expenses. Offering a monthly stipend of \$200-\$300/month can help attract an economically and racially diverse mix of older adults. It also enhances retention and consistent service, particularly in lower-income communities.

### HOW MUCH WILL A PROGRAM COST?

There is a great range in individual program costs; they depend primarily on the size of the local program—the number of older adult volunteers, service sites, children, and the types of local activities. In a 2001 report prepared on four Experience Corps after-school pilot programs, researchers found the average budget was \$124,000 per year. (See Heather E. Quick, Carmen Martinez-Sussmann, and Freya Makris, “Experience Corps PM: Results from Year 2 of the Implementation Study,” American Institutes for Research, 2001).

The biggest cost elements to budget for are:

- **Personnel.** At least one staff person is required to manage the program, oversee the work of the volunteers, provide training and periodic feedback, and conduct evaluation activities. For smaller programs, staff may be part-time.
- **Stipends and Reimbursements to Volunteers.** These costs include stipends for those individuals who make a substantial time commitment to the program each week and reimbursement of transportation expenses for volunteers who do not receive a stipend.
- **Recruitment, Training, and Recognition.** Include such expenses as design and reproduction of flyers and brochures; travel to community meetings; meeting space and materials for training; identity items such as badges for volunteers to wear during service; small rewards such as mugs, pins, T-shirts, award certificates, or gift certificates; and an annual celebration of accomplishments.

- **Operating Costs.** Think of these costs as being comparable to those typically required for running a social service program, including space, supplies, insurance, materials, transportation, and communications.
- **Evaluation.** Plan for data collection, analysis, and communication related to the impact of the program on children, older adults, and service sites.

## WHERE MIGHT YOU FIND FUNDING?

Funding for Experience Corps after-school programs typically comes from a variety of public and private sources, including businesses, individuals, foundations, and government. The key, as with any social service program, is to try to diversify funding sources to maximize the chances a program can be sustained over time.

If you are interested in developing a new program, or expanding an existing one, here are some resources to consider:

- **AmeriCorps/Senior Corps/VISTA.** Contact your state service commission and state office of the Corporation for National and Community Service ([www.nationalservice.org/stateprofiles](http://www.nationalservice.org/stateprofiles)) to learn about opportunities to participate in federally-funded service programs. This can be a way to design a program that includes stipends for full- or part- time positions.
- **Regional and Community Foundations.** Identify a list of potential foundations and isolate a handful of most likely candidates to whom to submit individual proposals. Look for foundations interested in healthy aging, volunteerism, civic engagement, children, and after-school learning/enrichment. The Foundation Center (<http://fdncenter.org/funders/>) is a good starting point for research on this type of funding.
- **State and Local Funding.** Don't forget about state and local public funding sources. Your local Community Development Block Grant Program is a good place to start. (See <http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/>). You can also contact the office of the mayor, the school board, and/or county legislators.
- **School, Organization, and Individual Donations:** Consider asking partners who will benefit from your program's services to make a small contribution to offset a portion of the costs of running your program. Some Experience Corps programs receive \$5,000-\$15,000 each year from sites where older adults serve children.
- **Host Agency Funds.** The organization sponsoring the program can provide in-kind support such as space, equipment use, workers' compensation insurance for staff, and accounting services.

## Evaluating the Experience: What Difference Does It Make?

Every good program needs to build in evaluation as part of its design. Even if you don't have a research director or sophisticated evaluation tools at your disposal, you can do some simple things to gather information about your program's impact on the people who deliver and receive services. What's important is to decide at the beginning of each program cycle what you want to evaluate, who's going to be responsible for getting information, and how you will go about gathering information from older adults, children, and close observers such as teachers, after-school program managers, or community-based organization directors. What you learn from this information-gathering process can help you build on your program's strengths, improve its effectiveness, and tell partners and funders about your success.

Written surveys, in-person interviews, observations of interactions between children and older adults at different points in the year, and review of children's work over time are just a few examples of how you might learn about the progress and impact of after-school activities. Be sure to get any required permission from parents or caregivers before conducting evaluation directly with children.

The sample materials at the end of this tool kit include a few examples used by Experience Corps projects, including an exit interview for volunteers, a participant satisfaction survey, and a "performance review" for tutors.

To get started on your own evaluation plan, take a look at these resources:

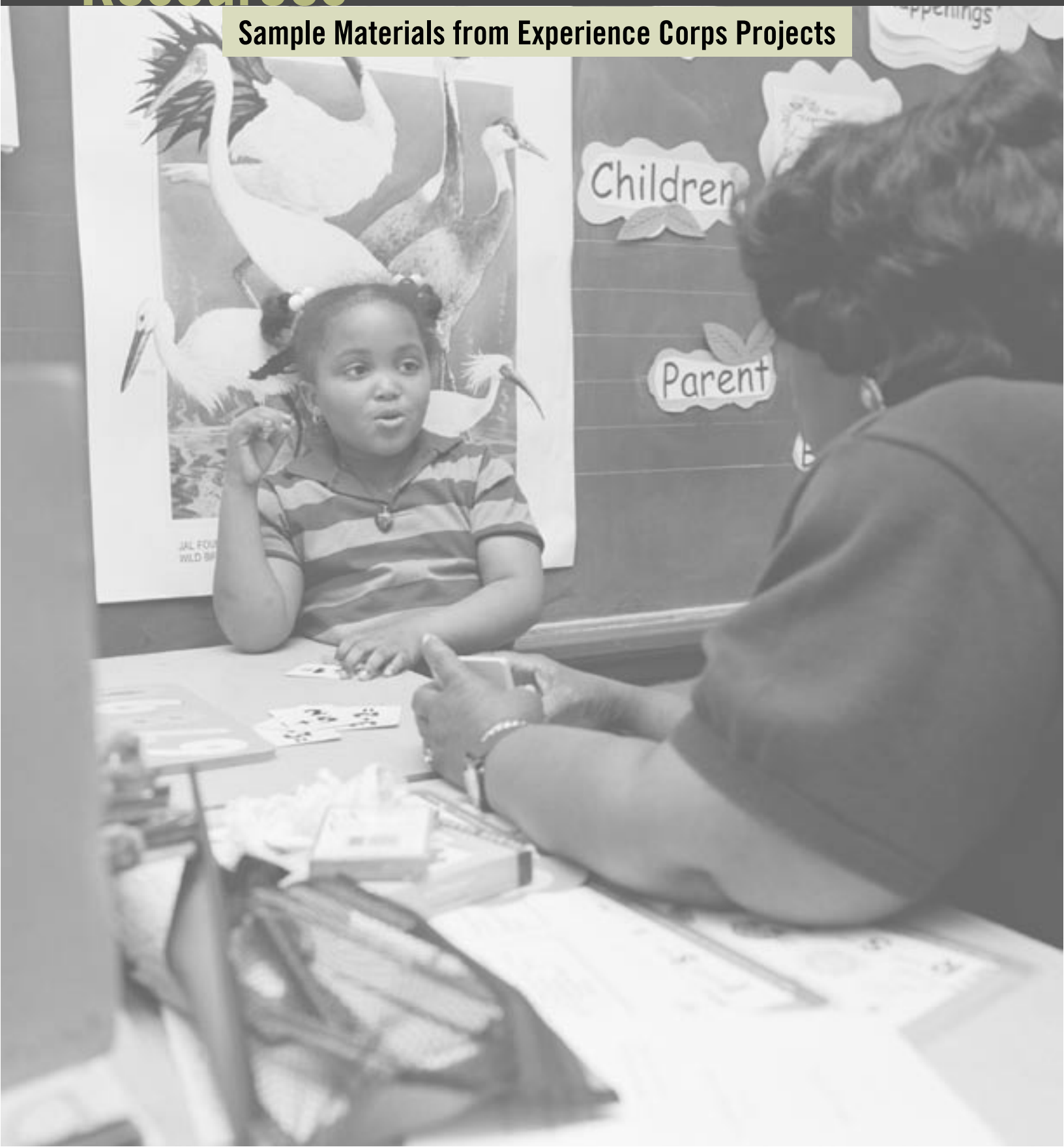
- The **Innovation Network** is a national nonprofit organization that provides program planning and evaluation consulting, training, and Web-based tools to nonprofits and funders. Their web site includes free access to a variety of assessment tools, including an "Evaluation Plan Builder." See <http://www.innonet.org/tools/plan>.
- A national **After School Summit**, held in Washington, DC from June 5-6, 2003, produced a report that includes a list of student participant performance indicators in five areas: academic, social, skill-building, health, and community relationships. The list of indicators is followed by related evaluation measures and program elements in each area. The summit was hosted by Arnold Schwarzenegger and the U.S. Department of Education, and supported by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. For the summary report, see <http://www.publicengagement.com/afterschoolsummit/>.

- The Harvard Family Research Project's evaluation periodical, **The Evaluation Exchange**, addresses current issues facing program evaluators of all levels. The spring and summer 2004 issues address the challenges and possibilities for evaluating after school programs. You can find current and past issues at [www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/](http://www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/). You can also sign up on the web site, through the link to The Out-of-School Time Learning and Development Project, for email updates on out-of-school-time research.

The following materials, generated by local Experience Corps projects, are reproduced here to provide you with ideas and inspiration. Feel free to copy the materials with appropriate attribution to Experience Corps. Better yet, review the materials and adapt them to suit your own local programs and needs.

# Resources

## Sample Materials from Experience Corps Projects





## MEMBER POSITION DESCRIPTION

**Position Title:** Experience Corps Member

**Position Description:** Experience Corps Members provide academic and social support to young students throughout the school day and in after school programs. Members are encouraged to tutor students one-on-one or in small groups in academic subjects as well as take the lead in enrichment activities such as recreation, art and music. Members are a part of the Experience Corps team at school and after school program sites and receive daily support from a neighborhood-based Experience Corps Volunteer Coordinator.

**Qualifications & Responsibilities:**

- ▶ Life experience
- ▶ 55+ years old
- ▶ 1-year commitment preferred
- ▶ Willingness to learn and contribute to an intergenerational environment
- ▶ Commitment to working with students and building relationships with young people
- ▶ Attend monthly team meetings and workshops to enhance tutoring and mentoring skills
- ▶ Bilingual speakers encouraged

**Mandatory Training and Orientation:**

- ▶ Deepen your mentoring skills
- ▶ Expand your tutoring techniques
- ▶ Learn conflict resolution and behavior management strategies
- ▶ Increase your sensitivity to different cultures and age groups

**School Day and After School Placement Options:**

- ▶ A.P. Giannini Middle School - 3151 Ortega St. at 38<sup>th</sup> Ave
- ▶ Cabrillo Elementary School- 734 24<sup>th</sup> Ave. at Cabrillo St.
- ▶ Everett Middle School- 450 Church St. at 16<sup>th</sup> St.
- ▶ Francis Scott Key Elementary School (FSK) – 1530 43<sup>rd</sup> Ave at Kirkham St.
- ▶ Gloria R. Davis Middle School- 1195 Hudson St. at Bertha Ln.
- ▶ Lafayette Elementary School- 4545 Anza St. at 36<sup>th</sup> Ave.
- ▶ Malcolm X Academy Elementary School – 350 Harbor Rd.
- ▶ Marshall Elementary School- 1575 15<sup>th</sup> St. at Capp St.
- ▶ Sanchez Elementary School- 325 Sanchez St. at 16<sup>th</sup> St.
- ▶ Sunset Elementary School – 1941 41<sup>st</sup> Ave. at Ortega St.

**Benefits:**

- ▶ Access to free trainings and workshops to enhance your tutoring and mentoring skills
- ▶ Develop meaningful relationships with young people and fellow volunteers
- ▶ Opportunity to make a real difference in your community
- ▶ Volunteers serving 15 hours a week receive a \$150+ monthly stipend

**Contact Information:**

Visit [www.experiencecorps.org/sanfrancisco](http://www.experiencecorps.org/sanfrancisco) or contact Janet Oh at 415.759.3690 / [joh@sabc.org](mailto:joh@sabc.org)



## **Experience Corps Member Position Description Reading Coach™**

Generations Incorporated unites older adults and youth in service to strengthen individuals and communities. We advance our mission through our intergenerational programming, specifically the Experience Corps® Program. Experience Corps is a national program that mobilizes older adults in community service, with a strong focus on education.

The program has three components: literacy, mentoring, and community service. Youth and older adults have a positive impact on their communities and each other in school and after-school settings. Our programming is carried out through community-based service teams that serve within three of Boston's most underserved urban neighborhoods- Roxbury, Dorchester, and South Boston.

Generations Incorporated is seeking Reading Coaches to read one-to-one with a 2nd or 3rd grader during 40 minutes sessions in an effort to enhance the student's reading skills and to give the student the opportunity to develop a caring relationship with an older adult. The volunteer will attend a 3-hour training on how to use the Generations Incorporated Reading Coaches model.

### **Responsibilities**

- Arrive to site at least 10 to 15 minutes prior to coaching session
- Pick out a book (provided by the site coordinator) and read it prior to the coaching session and review and/or prepare the accompanying Session Plan
- Follow the Session Plan and complete the comment section of it
- Phone in advance if the coach will be late or cannot make it
- Must commit to volunteer for the entire school year (until the end of May)
- Must follow school and after-school site rules, including signing in and out, parking, and confidentiality
- Know that you are making a difference

**Qualifications**

- Strong interest in the power of intergenerational relationships as solutions to community problems
- Comfortable around elementary school students
- NO teaching experience necessary

**Hours**

- From 2 hours a week to 12 to 15 hours a week. If the volunteer serves 12 to 15 hours a week, with 3 hours counted as travel time, he/she is eligible for a monthly stipend.

**Benefits**

- Opportunity to receive a stipend
- Satisfaction of helping out a child and developing a close relationship with him/her
- Attend social events and meet other older adults and volunteers

**For more information, please contact:**

Generations Incorporated  
Volunteer Recruitment Office  
59 Temple Place, Suite 200  
Boston, MA 02111  
617-778-0553  
volunteerinfo@generationsinc.org



**Generations Incorporated** seeks older adults (55+) to serve as Reading Coaches and Mentors. Help students with their literacy skills in elementary schools in Dorchester, Roxbury and South Boston.



Photograph by Alex Harris, original in color

- Help a young child succeed in school
- Meet older adult volunteers
- Earn a monthly stipend by volunteering as little as 12 hours/week
- Be a part of the national **Experience Corps®** movement
- No experience necessary
- Training included

**Call 617-778-0553**

Email: [volunteerinfo@generationsinc.org](mailto:volunteerinfo@generationsinc.org)  
[www.generationsinc.org](http://www.generationsinc.org)



## Interested in helping to bring new volunteers to Experience Corps but not sure how?



### Attend this interactive workshop and improve your outreach skills!

- Become more knowledgeable about the Experience Corps program (our history, funders, partners, etc.)
- Practice talking about Experience Corps and the need for older members in our community to get involved
- Craft a compelling personal story and develop your "pitch" to potential volunteers and partners (friends, businesses, community groups and more)

### Your personal appeal can help us build our volunteer team!

#### WORKSHOP DETAILS

**Wednesday, August 27th**  
**10:30 am - 1:00 pm**

Mission Police Station Community Room  
630 Valencia St. between. 17th and 18th St.  
*Near 16th St./Mission BART, Muni lines 26, 14, 49, 22*

Please **RSVP** to Eunice Nichols at (415) 759-3690  
by **Monday, August 25th** if you would like to join us.  
Snacks and beverages provided.



# Still a Major Asset

(ANITA ANDREWS, RETIRED DEPT. OF REVENUE EMPLOYEE, BOSTON)



PHOTO: MARC TEATUM

Experience is the best teacher, and you have a lifetime's worth. Don't let it go to waste. Share it.

Experience Corps will give you the opportunity.

Just a few hours a week in a neighborhood school can make a world of difference in a kid's life, not to mention yours.

Over 1,000 volunteers age 55 and older in 13 cities nationwide have already joined.

We'll show you how easy it is. Call us toll-free at 1.866.789.8787 or visit us online at [www.generationsinc.org](http://www.generationsinc.org).



Generations  
INCORPORATED



# Still Ironing Out the Wrinkles

(MARGARET HOLMAN, RETIRED DRY CLEANER, KANSAS CITY)



PHOTO: GARY ROHMAN

Experience is the best teacher, and you have a lifetime's worth. Don't let it go to waste. Share it.

Experience Corps will give you the opportunity to be a mentor or tutor.

Just a few hours a week in a neighborhood school or YMCA center can make a world of difference in a kid's life, not to mention yours.

Over 1,000 volunteers age 55 and older in 13 cities nationwide have already joined.

We'll show you how easy it is. Call Judith Simmons at 816.923.5675 or visit online at [www.ymca-kc.org](http://www.ymca-kc.org).



# Still Telling Great Stories

(ENRIQUE BACHINELO, RETIRED JOURNALIST, SAN FRANCISCO)



PHOTO: BRIAN MOORE

Experience is the best teacher, and you have a lifetime's worth. Don't let it go to waste. Share it.

Experience Corps will give you the opportunity.

Just a few hours a week in a neighborhood school can make a world of difference in a kid's life, not to mention yours.

Over 1,000 volunteers age 55 and older in 13 cities nationwide have already joined.

We'll show you how easy it is. Call us at 415.376.3618 or visit us online at [www.experiencecorps.org](http://www.experiencecorps.org).



# Still Bringing Magic to the Page

(FRANK ARKWRIGHT, RETIRED GRAPHIC DESIGNER, WASHINGTON D.C.)



PHOTO: BEVERLY REZNICK

Experience is the best teacher, and you have a lifetime's worth. Don't let it go to waste. Share it.

Experience Corps will give you the opportunity.

Just a few hours a week in a neighborhood school can make a world of difference in a kid's life, not to mention yours.

Over 1,000 volunteers age 55 and older in 13 cities nationwide have already joined.

We'll show you how easy it is. Call us at 202.797.1150 or visit us online at [www.experiencecorps.org](http://www.experiencecorps.org).





SAN FRANCISCO

## Volunteer Application

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth (mo/day/yr) \_\_\_\_\_

 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

 How did you hear of the San Francisco Experience Corps Program (please be specific)?  
 \_\_\_\_\_
**AVAILABILITY**

Circle the amount of time you are interested in volunteering.

15 or more hours/week

2-9 hours/week

As Needed Basis

Are you interested in learning about stipend options for those who serve 15 hours a week?

Yes, I would like to learn more.

No, I am not interested.

What days and times are you available? (Please include morning and afternoon hours)

| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|
|        |         |           |          |        |

In which neighborhood(s) are you interested in serving?

Bayview/Hunters Point

Mission

Richmond

Sunset

What grade level are you interested in tutoring? Circle all that apply.

K – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade          6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade          Wherever Needed

What subjects are you interested in tutoring? Circle all that apply.

reading    math    science    art    other \_\_\_\_\_

What tutoring situation are you interested in? Circle all that apply.

Individual    small group    classroom assistance    other? \_\_\_\_\_

When can you start? \_\_\_\_\_

**EXPERIENCE** *(Please note that volunteering does not depend on education or job experience)*

Highest level of education completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary language spoken: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional languages: \_\_\_\_\_

List or describe your past work experience:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

List or describe any previous experience you have had with youth or volunteer groups (i.e. clubs, churches, service groups).

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any special skills, talents, or interests?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Why do you want to volunteer with San Francisco Experience Corps tutoring children?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**BACKGROUND CHECK** – Experience Corps volunteers serving in the San Francisco Unified School District are required to complete a health screening (TB test), criminal background check (fingerprint clearance), and reference check to ensure the safety and well-being of our children.

Please list two references.

Name:

Daytime Phone # or email:

Relationship:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been convicted of a crime?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If "Yes," please describe the circumstances of the conviction (use additional paper if necessary).  
If the criminal background check reveals any conviction(s) that you did not disclose in this application, your failure to disclose the convictions will result in termination from the program.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

I certify that the information provided in this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that during the course of my association with Experience Corps my personal information may be shared with program partners for volunteer placement purposes. I authorize Experience Corps to disclose this information with program partners.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Applicant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

📧 **Please mail this application to** 📧

San Francisco Experience Corps  
3925 Noriega St.  
San Francisco, CA 94122

**THANK YOU!!!**



## Volunteer Screening Interview

Name of Applicant \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer \_\_\_\_\_

1. Do you have any questions up front about Experience Corps and the volunteer position?
2. Why are you interested in volunteering with SFEC?
3. What experiences with youth have you had in the past?
4. What experience do you have working in a diverse environment? What were some challenges you encountered and how did you overcome them?
5. What are the three most important things you can provide to a child you are mentoring or tutoring?
6. What kinds of resources and support do you think you'll need or want as a volunteer with Experience Corps?

## SCENARIOS

- A. You have been working with Tommy on his reading and he is slowly making improvements. His teacher says that she could use your assistance in the classroom during the math period instead. You are not comfortable with math or with shifting your attention away from Tommy when he still needs your help. What might you do?
- B. You have been working with Donna on her reading for one month and have developed a connection with her. In the last week, however, she seems reluctant to attend any of your sessions. What might you do?
7. Do you have any special skills, experiences or interests that you will bring to Experience Corps?
8. What would you personally like to get out of this experience? What are ways you would like to develop?
9. What kind of position are you interested in?    Member(15+ hours)    Volunteer(2-14 hrs)
10. Can you commit to the program for a full school year?    Yes    No
11. What neighborhood are you most interested in serving?
- Bayview/Hunters Point    Mission    Richmond    Sunset
12. Which times and days?
- Monday    Tuesday    Wednesday    Thursday    Friday
13. Do you need help setting up an appointment for a TB test?
14. When are you available to be fingerprinted?
15. When are you available to attend a citywide new volunteer training?



## Volunteer Interview Summary

Name of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Based on your interview with the applicant, please assess the applicant's attributes and skills using the following 1-5 scale. Please include specific comments.

1=Not Compatible    2=Weak Candidate    3=Average    4=Strong Candidate    5=Ideal Candidate

|                                                   |          |          |          |          |          |
|---------------------------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| <b>Commitment to E.C.</b>                         | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
| <b>Comfort with Diversity</b>                     | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
| <b>Ability to Work on a Team</b>                  | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
| <b>Leadership</b>                                 | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
| <b>Ability to Communicate/Build Relationships</b> | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
| <b>Maturity/Professionalism</b>                   | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
| <b>Comfort with Youth</b>                         | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
| <b>Overall Skills/Experiences</b>                 | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
| <b>Recommend for E.C. volunteer position</b>      | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |

**1. What are the applicant's strengths?**

**2. What are the applicant's weaknesses?**

**3. Do you have any concerns about this applicant?**

**4. Which site might be a good fit for this applicant?**

**Sunset**

**Mission**

**Richmond**

**Bayview-Hunters Point**



## Experience Corps Members Code of Conduct

- ▶ Experience Corps members must project a sense of professionalism to the staff, students, and parents at their YMCA sites.
- ▶ Experience Corps members will address others as Mr. Or Mrs. At all times at YMCA sites.
- ▶ Experience Corps members must be aware of their body and verbal language when in the presence of students.
- ▶ Experience Corps members must be firm and direct when handling students. BE FRIENDS LATER!
- ▶ Experience Corps members can praise students often.
- ▶ Experience Corps members will use the same disciplinary codes that applies for the YMCA and the Teen Challenge Program.
- ▶ Experience Corps members will never let a child go to the restroom unattended.
- ▶ Experience Corps members will conduct projects and or assist YMCA staff at all times.
- ▶ Experience Corps members need to be prepared for their projects when class meets.
- ▶ Experience Corps members should be prepared with a back up plan in case their classes change due to a project, or lack of staff.
- ▶ Experience Corps members should have a substitute folder or project planned in case of their absence.



## Volunteer Service Contract

*This contract is intended to assure you of our deep appreciation of your service to the children of San Francisco and to indicate our commitment to making your volunteer experience productive and rewarding. In return, we ask that you adhere to agency policies and consistently uphold the values of the Experience Corps program.*

### AGENCY

We, San Francisco Experience Corps, agree to accept the services of \_\_\_\_\_ (Volunteer Name) as a volunteer at \_\_\_\_\_ (Service Site), beginning \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_.

San Francisco Experience Corps commits to the following:

1. To provide adequate information, training, and assistance that will enable the volunteer to meet his/her responsibilities.
2. To provide supervisory aid and regular feedback to the volunteer.
3. To respect the skills, dignity, and individual needs of the volunteer, and to do our best to adjust to those individual needs.
4. To be receptive to any feedback from the volunteer regarding ways in which we might mutually better accomplish our respective tasks.
5. To treat the volunteer as an equal partner with agency staff, jointly responsible for completion of the agency mission.

**VOLUNTEER**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (Volunteer) agree to serve as an Experience Corps volunteer and commit to the following:

1. To serve \_\_\_\_\_ hours each week. (Stipends are contingent on completing the agreed-upon number of hours)
2. To perform my volunteer duties to the best of my ability.
3. To adhere to agency rules/procedures, including record-keeping requirements and confidentiality of agency and client information.
4. To meet time and duty commitments through regular participation in trainings, team meetings, and the activities outlined below, or to provide adequate notice so that other arrangements can be made.

| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|
|        |         |           |          |        |

Additional special projects (if applicable):

**SIGNATURES OF AGREEMENT**

All parties signing below acknowledge that they have read, understand, and agree to the roles and responsibilities outlined in this contract.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Experience Corps Volunteer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Experience Corps Staff

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



Washington, DC

**MENTOR/MENTEE AGREEMENT**

MENTOR \_\_\_\_\_

MENTEE \_\_\_\_\_

MEETING DAY & TIME \_\_\_\_\_

**BASIC TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

**COMMITMENTS OF THE MENTEE**

- ▶ I will meet with my mentor every week.
- ▶ I will arrive at the scheduled time.
- ▶ I will follow through on the assignments that I agree to do as part of the Mentoring Program.
- ▶ I will conduct myself in an acceptable manner at all times.
- ▶ I will follow all program rules and regulations.
- ▶ I will see that all parental consent and other forms are completed and returned as required.
- ▶ I will keep my parent(s)/guardian(s) informed about the ways in which my mentor is helping me.

Other \_\_\_\_\_

**COMMITMENTS OF THE MENTOR**

- ▶ I will meet with my mentee every week.
- ▶ I will arrive at the scheduled time.
- ▶ I will come prepared to work with my mentee on our agreed upon goals and objectives.
- ▶ I will keep an updated journal on my mentee's progress.
- ▶ I will make sure that our Action Plan is updated regularly.

Other \_\_\_\_\_

This is a one-to-one partnership. In order for our work to be successful, we do hereby agree to work diligently to live up to the commitments listed above.

Mentor \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Mentee \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

10/13/03



**After School Staff Training:  
How to Effectively Utilize Older Adult Volunteers**  
(Time: 1 Hour, 15 Minutes)

**1. Introductions & Program Overview (15 minutes)**

Ask for a show of hands:

- ▶ How many people have worked with volunteers before?
- ▶ How many people have worked with older adult volunteers before?

Show PowerPoint presentation, including:

- ▶ Statistics on shifting demographics and the opportunity to be seized
- ▶ Experience Corps' role in casting a new vision for aging
- ▶ Mindset of today's older adults
- ▶ Brief history, program model, program activities
- ▶ Volunteer screening, training, and placement procedure
- ▶ Volunteer Coordinator contact information

**2. Brainstorm (5 Minutes)**

Ask participants to think of reasons why volunteers stay with the program or leave. Write ideas in two columns. (Below are possible responses)

*Reasons Volunteers Stay*

- |                        |                                   |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ▶ Good Placement       | ▶ Connect with other volunteers   |
| ▶ Connect with Child   | ▶ Sharing talent/Experience       |
| ▶ Connect with Teacher | ▶ Feel like a part of a community |
| ▶ Connect with Staff   | ▶ Something 'productive' to do    |

*Reasons Volunteers Leave*

- |                                          |                                      |
|------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ▶ Bad Placement                          | ▶ Don't know what the degree of need |
| ▶ Bad relationship with teacher or staff | ▶ Feel unsafe                        |
| ▶ Don't feel wanted                      | ▶ Sick                               |
| ▶ Don't feel needed                      | ▶ Family Obligations                 |
|                                          | ▶ Unstructured environment           |

**3. Case Studies (30 min)**

An important part of successful volunteer management is extending an invitation to the volunteer to stay. A look at why volunteers stay reveals the importance of connections (to staff, students, and the school community); we've found that providing structured placement for volunteers allows these connections to form. To find the best way to utilize a volunteer, we have created case studies (see *Case Studies handout*) that capture the spectrum of volunteers we've frequently encountered.

- ▶ Split participants into small groups.
- ▶ Each group receives 3 sheets of poster paper, one for each volunteer case study.
- ▶ For each case study, the groups will discuss how to best utilize the volunteer. Ask each group to consider the following elements:
  - Which student will work best with the volunteer? (think of a specific student in your program.)
  - What level of structure/support does the volunteer need in order to be positioned for success?
  - What is the best way to communicate with the volunteer?
  - What type of recognition will the volunteer need or want?
- ▶ Allow 15 minutes (5 minutes for each case study) for groups to discuss the case studies and record their ideas on poster paper.
- ▶ Each group is matched with an Experience Corps staff person for guidance and feedback.
- ▶ Allow 15 minutes for each group to present one case study to the large group, and for discussion of specific challenges and key learnings.

**4. Tips For Success (5 minutes)**

*Review handout*

**5. Ways to Recognize Volunteers (5 minutes)**

*Review handout.* Highlight the importance of tailoring recognition to volunteer personality. (For example, Susan who is very shy would probably prefer something personal from her students. Lisa, on the other hand, enjoys large-scale projects and would be flattered by recognition from the principal.)

**6. Q&A/Wrap Up (15 minutes)**

Answer any final questions or concerns. Give everyone an Experience Corps folder containing the brochure, news clippings, relevant research, volunteer stories, and program outcomes. Reiterate the support structure for after school staff, including contact information for the Volunteer Coordinator.



## Pre-Service Training Agenda

- ▶ Welcome
  - Introductions
  - Icebreaker
  - Overview of the day
- ▶ Generations Incorporated 101-Introduction to our organization
  - History
  - Experience Corps partnership
  - Expansion goals
  - Overview of our programs
    - Literacy
    - Mentoring
    - Community Service Learning
    - Training
- ▶ Break
- ▶ How to present a Reading Coaches™ session
  - Icebreaker
  - Reading Coaches™ core principles
  - Student referral process
  - Before reading activities
  - During reading activities
  - After reading activities
  - Instructional strategies
  - Review of session
- ▶ What's next?
  - Site placement/Schedule
  - Site orientation
  - Getting to know your student
- ▶ Questions and Answers





## **Pre-Service Training: Day One**

- I. Introduction & Welcome!
  - a. Icebreaker
  - b. Agenda for the Day
  - c. Expectations and Ground Rules
- II. Experience Corps
  - a. Overview of the Program – National and in San Francisco
  - b. San Francisco Experience Corps Video
  - c. Handbook- Review Roles and Responsibilities
- III. Youth Development
  - a. The Qualities of a Mentor
  - b. The Youth Development Model
    - i. *Critical Features of the Youth Development framework*
    - ii. *Our Words Matter!*
  - c. Tips for Mentors
- IV. Active Listening
  - a. Gaining Experience
  - b. Tips for Active Listening
- V. Tutoring
  - a. *Ron's Letter*
  - b. Reading Prompts
    - i. *The Reading Process*
  - c. Challenges- Academic Based
    - i. *How To Handle Right and Wrong Answers*
    - ii. *What Do I Say If . . . ???*
  - d. Gaining Experience: Role Plays
- VI. Closing- Evaluation, Feedback

\* Italics indicate titles of handouts that complement each section



## **Pre-Service Training: Day Two**

- I. Introduction and Welcome Back!
  - a. Agenda for the Day
  - b. Review Expectations and Ground Rules
- II. Sessions with Students
  - a. How to Plan a Session
  - b. Fun Games to Play with Youth
- III. Diversity
  - a. Stereotypes- what are they and where do they come from?
  - b. Personal Timeline Exercise
  - c. Open discussion
- IV. Conflict Management
  - a. *Handling Problems and Conflicts Among School-Age Children*
  - b. *Tips for Diffusing and Reducing Conflicts When They Emerge*
  - c. Gaining Experience: Role Plays
- V. Boundaries
  - a. *Confidentiality Policy*
  - b. *Child Abuse Reporting*
  - c. Appropriate Interactions with Youth, Staff, and other Volunteers
  - d. Grievances/Complaints
- VI. Q & A and Next Steps
- VII. Closing: Paperwork, Evaluation, Wrap-up

\* Italics indicate titles of handouts that complement each section



## **In-Service Training Agenda Literacy Games**

- ▶ **Welcome**
  - Introductions
  - Icebreaker
  - Overview of the day
- ▶ **Literacy Games**
  - Why they are important
  - When to use them
  - Overview of the games we will make today
    - Board Games
    - Card Games
    - Puzzles
  - Rotations at different stations (15 minutes each)
    - Group 1-Board games
    - Group 2-Card games
    - Group 3-Puzzles
  - Rotate
    - Group 1-Puzzles
    - Group 2-Board games
    - Group 3-Card games
  - Rotate
    - Group 1-Card games
    - Group 2-Puzzles
    - Group 3-Board games
- ▶ **Come together to share and play the games that were made**
- ▶ **Discuss how these might be helpful in the Reading Coaches™ session**
- ▶ **Questions and Answers**





## Training Activity Evaluation Form YMCA Experience Corps / AmeriCorps

**Name:**

**Date:** 9/17/02 – 9/20/02

**Location:** Attucks School

**Training / Workshop:** Pre-Service Orientation

**Presenter(s):** Loretta Clark, Shirlyne Richardson, JoAnne Williamson,  
Rosie Rodgers, Pauline Hervey, Judith Simmons, Judith Jordan,  
Daisy Young

|                                         | 5<br>very<br>satisfied | 4<br>satisfied | 3<br>no<br>opinion | 2<br>dissatisfied | 1<br>very<br>dissatisfied |
|-----------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. How do you rate this activity        | 5                      | 4              | 3                  | 2                 | 1                         |
| 2. Did this activity help you to:       |                        |                |                    |                   |                           |
| a. learn more about the program         | 5                      | 4              | 3                  | 2                 | 1                         |
| b. learn more about tutoring children   | 5                      | 4              | 3                  | 2                 | 1                         |
| c. learn more about literacy            | 5                      | 4              | 3                  | 2                 | 1                         |
| d. learn more about youth development   | 5                      | 4              | 3                  | 2                 | 1                         |
| e. learn more about the school district | 5                      | 4              | 3                  | 2                 | 1                         |
| f. learn more about the positions       | 5                      | 4              | 3                  | 2                 | 1                         |
| g. learn more about program goals       | 5                      | 4              | 3                  | 2                 | 1                         |
| h. learn more about my duties           | 5                      | 4              | 3                  | 2                 | 1                         |
| 3. How would you rate the presenter(s)  | 5                      | 4              | 3                  | 2                 | 1                         |
| 4. How would you rate the materials     | 5                      | 4              | 3                  | 2                 | 1                         |

5. Describe three things that you like best about this activity.

---

---

---

6. How could this activity be improved?

---

---

---

7. Did this activity prepare you for service this school year?  
Why or why not?

---

---

---

8. Other comments

---

---

---

Generations  
INCORPORATED



## Experiences

### The Generations Incorporated Volunteer Newsletter

March 2004

---

#### MEETINGS

**Experience Corps Council Meeting:** Friday April 16th, 10am-12pm

All Experience Corps Volunteers are welcome to attend. If you have an issue you want addressed and are unable to attend, please call Charlie at (617) 778-0501.

---

#### TRAINING SESSION

Our next Reading Coaches training session will be: **Tuesday April 6<sup>th</sup>, 1-4 pm.**

#### GENERATIONS INCORPORATED SPEAKER SERIES

The Recruitment Office holds monthly events featuring guest speakers to show appreciation to our volunteers. The series plans get-togethers in the Generations Incorporated site neighborhoods: Dorchester, Roxbury and South Boston. Volunteers and staff socialize, munch on snacks, and hear people speak on topics of special interest to us.

Our first event took place on February 27, at the Freedom House in Roxbury. Brian Souza from the Boston Partnership on Older Adults spoke about the future of older adults in Boston. He discussed the partnership's plan to enhance support for Boston's older adults, called "Boston's Vision for Aging with Dignity". He handed out booklets that laid out the plan and answered volunteers' questions about their concerns as older adults.

Our second event took place on March 26, at the First Parish Church of Dorchester, Meeting House Hill. Sarah Lamstein, children's book author, former librarian at the Mather School, and puppeteer, spoke about her experiences with children. She read her book, I Like Your Buttons, which tells of people doing or saying nice things to others and generosity. After reading her book, Ms. Lamstein performed an act that she gives to first graders with the help of her hand puppet friend, Mr. Bingly. The presentation was heart-warming and funny.

The Recruitment Office is planning to hold a third volunteer appreciation event at the **South Boston Community Health Center on Friday, April 30 from 10am to noon.** The guest speakers will be announced as soon as confirmation is received. Directions will be sent to everyone.

**THE DIVERSITY WORKING GROUP** presents the first in a series of films: Whale Rider. "A small Maori village faces a crisis when the heir to the leadership of the Ngati Konohi dies at birth and is survived only by his twin sister, Pai. Although disregarded by her grandfather and shunned by the village people, twelve-year-old Pai remains certain of her calling to learn the customs of her people. With remarkable grace, Pai challenges her family and embraces a thousand years of tradition in order to fulfill her destiny."

Join a diversity discussion by learning about the Maori of New Zealand: **Friday, April 16, 1 pm**, at the Generations Incorporated Office.

RSVP by April 12 to Mary O'Donnell at (617) 423-0401.

#### CSL EARTH DAY ACTIVITY

How do you celebrate Earth Day? The Boston Nature Center (BNC) is hosting The Multi Generational Earth Day Celebration from 4-7 PM on Thursday April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2004. Co-

sponsors are Generations Incorporated, the Massachusetts Intergenerational Network, and the Habitat Intergenerational Program.

Each year, people celebrate Earth Day throughout the world with art projects, community events, concerts and other activities. The special day reminds us that it's everyone's responsibility to care for and protect our earth. What better way to celebrate than spending the day having fun and learning outside? People of all ages in metropolitan Boston gather at the Boston Nature Center to celebrate Earth Day; children and grandparents together make a better world.

The BNC event brings 135 children and community members of all ages together. Participants enjoy games, crafts, food, and storytelling; or people can serve in a clean-up project or a tree planting ceremony. Special prizes are awarded!

#### **CABARET FUNDRAISER AT THE FIRST PARISH CHURCH**

The performance group, "Mike and Friends," of the First Parish Church of Dorchester, in conjunction with Historic Boston, Inc. is putting on "The Fundraiser," A Musical Review, to help raise money for the "Exterior Restoration" of this landmark church. Come and enjoy an evening of song and dance. Relive the wonderful songs of Broadway and Hollywood musicals. Listen to great songs seldom performed today! The event will take place at the First Parish Church, at 10 Parish St. in Dorchester, on the following dates:

**Friday, April 23, 2004 at 8pm**

**Saturday, April 23, 2004 at 8pm**

**Sunday, April 25, 2004 at 3pm**

Tickets are \$10.00 per person for General Admission and will be sold at the door. Tickets can also be obtained at Generations Incorporated from our very own Experience Corps volunteer, Dan Houton. To purchase tickets from Mr. Houton, call the Generations Incorporated Recruitment Office at 617-778-0553. For more information on the performance, call (617) 436-0527 or (617) 265-0749. There will be a raffle and silent artwork auction by local artists. The church has plenty of free parking.

#### **RSVP**

*The Retired Senior Volunteer Program for the City of Boston* is open to all volunteers over 55 years-old. Recently RSVP mailed applications to Generation Incorporated volunteers. By joining RSVP you will receive periodic notices on senior volunteer events and opportunities in Boston and be invited to the annual RSVP fall luncheon. In addition, the RSVP program provides small monthly reimbursements to senior volunteers who do not receive a stipend from Generations Incorporated. Please note that any older-adult volunteer, regardless of residence location, is eligible to join RSVP, so long as the volunteer activity takes place within the City of Boston. If you would like to become a member, call the RSVP staff at 617-634-3988 to receive an application.

#### **BOOK SALE AT BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY**

There will be a book sale on Saturday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>, at the Boston Public Library. We've heard this is a great way to pick up some books at very good prices. For more information, call the BPL at (617) 536-5400





### Experience Corps/AmeriCorps Member Tutoring Performance Review

The Project Director or Site Coordinators should complete the top section of this *Tutoring Performance Review* once in the middle and again at the end of each program year. Please be as thoughtful as possible so that we can use your assessment to improve the program.

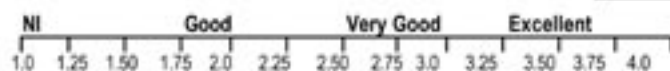
Member Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Students Tutored: \_\_\_\_\_

| Please select the rating that best describes the member's consistent skill level in each area below. Please mark <b>ONLY ONE</b> box. | Excellent | Very Good | Good | Needs Improvement |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|------|-------------------|
| Member is able to assess student's needs appropriately.                                                                               |           |           |      |                   |
| Member is able to follow-through with student's needs.                                                                                |           |           |      |                   |
| Member is able to build trust with the students.                                                                                      |           |           |      |                   |
| Member is able to communicate with students' parents as needed.                                                                       |           |           |      |                   |
| Member is able to communicate with students' teachers as needed.                                                                      |           |           |      |                   |
| Member is knowledgeable of about different tutoring techniques.                                                                       |           |           |      |                   |
| Member is creative in responding to a student's special needs.                                                                        |           |           |      |                   |
| Member starts every session on time.                                                                                                  |           |           |      |                   |
| Member arrives fully prepared to perform service.                                                                                     |           |           |      |                   |
| Member fully completes <i>Tutoring Logs</i> or other records after each session.                                                      |           |           |      |                   |
| Member routinely tracks and documents student progress.                                                                               |           |           |      |                   |
| Member is capable of asking appropriate questions to find solutions or options.                                                       |           |           |      |                   |
| Member discusses tutoring approaches and problems with other members & supervisors.                                                   |           |           |      |                   |
| <b>Total number of checks in each column (enter in [a] below)</b>                                                                     |           |           |      |                   |

**FOR STAFF USE ONLY** - To calculate the overall rating, follow the directions below.

|                                                                                                             | [a]<br>Number of checks in each column | [b] | [c]<br>Multiple [a] by [b]. Enter answer in [c]                    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-----|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Excellent                                                                                                   |                                        | 4   |                                                                    |
| Very Good                                                                                                   |                                        | 3   |                                                                    |
| Good                                                                                                        |                                        | 2   |                                                                    |
| Needs Improvement                                                                                           |                                        | 1   |                                                                    |
| Add numbers in column [c], and enter sum in [d]                                                             |                                        |     | [d]                                                                |
| Divide [d] by the number of questions answered, and enter sum in [e]. Circle the rating on the graph below. |                                        |     | [e] _____ Rating Number<br>Rating Name (i.e. good, very good, etc) |





## AmeriCorps/Experience Corps Member Survey

*All Experience Corps participants should complete this survey twice per year, once in the middle and once at the end of the year. We are interested in knowing how satisfied you are with the training and activities associated with your AmeriCorps/Experience Corps service. Thank you for your time!*

- Name (optional)

\_\_\_\_\_

- What is the name of the school where you serve? \_\_\_\_\_
- How many years have you been at your current school/site? \_\_\_\_\_ years
- How many days a week do you serve at your school/site? \_\_\_\_\_ days

**In the following section, we want to get your opinion about your community service experience.** Specifically, we are interested in how you feel that your social connectedness and usefulness to the community may have changed. Please mark only ONE box for each statement. You do not need to total the number of checks or complete the shaded area.

| <b>Social Connectedness</b><br>Since beginning with AmeriCorps/Experience Corps, how has your sense of "social connectedness" changed?<br>Select the rating that best reflects your opinion.                | <b>Much In-creased</b> | <b>In-creased</b> | <b>De-creased</b> | <b>No Change</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| My awareness of the needs of schools in my community has...                                                                                                                                                 |                        |                   |                   |                  |
| My opportunity to socialize with older adults has...                                                                                                                                                        |                        |                   |                   |                  |
| My awareness of general community events or activities has...                                                                                                                                               |                        |                   |                   |                  |
| My awareness of the value of older adult volunteers in schools has...                                                                                                                                       |                        |                   |                   |                  |
| <b>Total the number of checks in each column.</b> Circle the column with the highest number. In case of a tie, do not circle any number.                                                                    |                        |                   |                   |                  |
| <b>Usefulness to the Community</b><br>Since beginning with AmeriCorps/Experience Corps, how has your sense of "usefulness" to your community changed?<br>Select the rating that best reflects your opinion. | <b>Much In-creased</b> | <b>In-creased</b> | <b>De-creased</b> | <b>No Change</b> |
| My sense of the usefulness of my service to the school has...                                                                                                                                               |                        |                   |                   |                  |
| My sense of the usefulness of my service to the community has...                                                                                                                                            |                        |                   |                   |                  |
| My sense of the usefulness of my service to youth (students) has...                                                                                                                                         |                        |                   |                   |                  |
| My awareness of the importance of community service has...                                                                                                                                                  |                        |                   |                   |                  |
| <b>Total the number of checks in each column.</b> Circle the column with the highest number. In case of a tie, do not circle any number.                                                                    |                        |                   |                   |                  |

**In this section, we want to get your opinion about the training provided for you before and during your service.** How satisfied are you with the training that was provided for you this year? Please check only one box for each statement. (For some statements you may check "no training.")

| <b>Training</b>                                                                | <b>Very Satisfying</b> | <b>Satisfying</b> | <b>Not Satisfying</b> | <b>Very Unsatisfying</b> | <b>NO TRAINING</b> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Overall, how satisfied are you with the training you received this year?       |                        |                   |                       |                          |                    |
| The training I received about <u>literacy/reading strategies</u> was...        |                        |                   |                       |                          |                    |
| The training I received about <u>mentoring</u> was...                          |                        |                   |                       |                          |                    |
| The training I received about <u>tutoring strategies</u> was...                |                        |                   |                       |                          |                    |
| The training I received about <u>team-building/being part of a team</u> was... |                        |                   |                       |                          |                    |
| The training I received about <u>leadership and citizenship</u> was...         |                        |                   |                       |                          |                    |
| The training I received about <u>conflict resolution</u> was...                |                        |                   |                       |                          |                    |
| The other training I received this year was...                                 |                        |                   |                       |                          |                    |
| <b>Total number of checks in each column</b>                                   |                        |                   |                       |                          |                    |

- Overall, how satisfied are you with the work that you are doing with Experience Corps?  
Please check only one:

☐ **Very Satisfied**  
☐ **Satisfied**  
☐ **Not Satisfied**  
☐ **Very Unsatisfied**

- Do you have any other comments you would like to share? Please write them below:

---



---



---



---



---



---

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH!**



## Exit Interview Form

Volunteer Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### ***PROGRAM INVOLVEMENT***

Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ End Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Site: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Grade Levels: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Placement: \_\_\_\_\_

### ***REASON FOR LEAVING***

1. Why have you decided to leave San Francisco Experience Corps?

### ***VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE***

2. What was your most memorable experience as a volunteer?
3. What challenges did you encounter as a volunteer and how could we have better supported you?

4. Did you feel supported by Experience Corps staff? Beacon program staff? School staff? How could we have supported you better?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. Did our trainings prepare you to be a mentor/tutor? If not, what improvements to our training program would you suggest?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. Did you feel a sense of connection with other Experience Corps volunteers? How could we better facilitate a sense of team?

**CLOSURE**

7. If circumstances change, would you consider volunteering with Experience Corps in the future?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. Would you recommend SFEC to other people? Why or why not?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. Would you like to continue to receive information on trainings/workshops, adult classes, team-building opportunities, and Experience Corps updates?





## About Experience Corps®

Experience Corps offers new adventures in service for Americans over 55. Now in 12 cities, Experience Corps works to solve serious social problems, beginning with literacy. Today more than 1,300 Corps members serve as tutors and mentors to children in urban public schools and after-school programs, where they help teach children to read and develop the confidence and skills to succeed in school and in life. Research shows that Experience Corps boosts student academic performance, helps schools and youth-serving organizations become more successful, strengthens ties between these institutions and surrounding neighborhoods, and enhances the well-being of the volunteers in the process. Experience Corps is a signature program of Civic Ventures.

## About Civic Ventures

Civic Ventures is a national nonprofit organization that works to expand the contributions of older Americans to society, and to help transform the aging of American society into a source of individual and social renewal. Civic Ventures seeks to tap the talents and skills of older Americans by developing avenues for meaningful service to communities.

The graying of the American population is commonly portrayed as the source of impending strife—the cause of a series of crises related to Social Security, Medicare, greater strains on the family care system, and more. At a time when the middle-aged population confronts ever-increasing demands on their time, and when public funding is desperately short in education, Civic Ventures believes society can no longer afford to overlook an older population that should be an enormous resource.



2120 L St., NW · Suite 400 · Washington, DC 20037  
info@experiencecorps.org · www.experiencecorps.org