Corporation for National and Community Service (AmeriCorps)
AmeriCorps Member Exit Survey
OMB Control Number 3045-0094
Justification – Part A Supporting Statement

Overview of Information Collection

This is a request for revision of the clearance for the Corporation for National and Community Service, doing business as AmeriCorps (AmeriCorps) to provide its exiting AmeriCorps members with surveys. The questionnaire submitted for clearance is being slightly revised. The revisions being made to the form are: 1) to change the original title of the information collection from the "Member Feedback Survey" to the "AmeriCorps Member Exit Survey;" and 2) to make changes to the response options in question 8 (a to j) from an 'strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree' to 'not at all true, hardly true, moderately true, exactly true,' in order to correspond with an internationally recognized scale to measure self-efficacy. ORE is clearing both sets of responses for question 8 (a to j) since ORE is still working with the web developers and it is unclear whether the system can support the changes.

1. Need & Method for the Information Collection

AmeriCorps engages people of all ages from across the country in national service to improve lives, strengthen communities and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering. The AmeriCorps suite of programs, comprised of AmeriCorps State and National (ACSN), VISTA, and the National Civilian Conservation Corps (NCCC), engage more than 75,000 Americans each year in national service placements in communities across the country. In addition to striving to improve communities and the lives of beneficiaries served through its programs, AmeriCorps values the development of AmeriCorps members into empowered, engaged citizens. AmeriCorps 2022-2026 Strategic Plan includes as its second goal to enhance the experience for AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers. To track progress towards achieving this strategic goal, it is necessary to annually assess AmeriCorps members' service experience upon their exit from the program.

AmeriCorps' annual member exit survey captures the member experience more accurately, and is mapped against sociological constructs that can provide insight into member development as it occurs throughout the term of service. AmeriCorps has successfully administered this survey since 2015. As of Spring 2024, over 400,000 have responded to the survey. In the past five years, 78.5% of all AmeriCorps members completed the AmeriCorps Member Exit Survey.

The first member exit survey was administered from 2011 to 2014. AmeriCorps then engaged in an effort to redesign the survey to tap into the various aspects of member development, and began with the construction of a member theory of change (see Appendix A) to articulate what AmeriCorps believes comprises the member service experience and desired outcomes. The process of creating this theory of change engaged

AmeriCorps program staff and members of the Office of Research and Evaluation in a working group to determine the key components of the service experience, and later, to agree on the best way to measure them. These components were then mapped to developmental or sociological constructs to explain potential "pathways"[1] of member development. These pathways were then matched to extant, validated survey instruments or scales[2] and included in a draft survey. Select items from the previous version of the member exit survey were included at the direction of the working group. (Additional information about the redesign process, including stakeholder engagement and pilot testing efforts, is included in Part B.) This led to a redesigned Member Exit Survey that was cleared by OMB and the redesigned survey was administered starting in 2015 and is the same survey ORE is renewing with OMB in 2023, other than the requested title change and clearance of revised response options for Question 8.

The member theory of change is central to the survey. It posits that the member development goal of the AmeriCorps program is to "contribute to the creation of empowered and prepared citizens. These citizens will be more civically engaged, will work to strengthen their communities, and will be dedicated to improving the lives of those in their community." We propose four "pathways," or areas of development, that contribute to achieving this goal and that will be measured by the member exit survey: Cultural Competency, Getting Things Done, Civic Engagement, and Life and Career Skills. The member service placement (also referred to as the term of service) is the primary mechanism by which members develop along these pathways. As members personally experience the challenges and needs of a community, and as they engage in the service placement's activities (whereby they become engaged in and develop solutions to address community problems), they develop greater cultural competency skills, enhanced self-efficacy, become more civically engaged, and enhance their ability to work productively and effectively.

Our theory of change operationalizes the Cultural Competency pathway as developing or enhancing members' ability to work effectively with and within diverse groups (Martin and Vaughn, 2007). Cultural competence is essential for uniting different or disparate groups to achieve a common goal, which is frequently a task of AmeriCorps members during their service experience. Consistent with the Contact Hypothesis, we hypothesize that members gain cultural competency through interactions with supervisors and staff, fellow members, and clients.

Contact Hypothesis, a longstanding sociological hypothesis, contributes to explaining how members develop or enhance their ability to work successfully in diverse groups (Allport, 1954; Brown and Hewstone, 2005). The Contact Hypothesis holds that during interpersonal contact between majority and minority groups, given that certain conditions are met, members can effectively overcome prejudices, biases, and preconceived notions

[1] These four pathways were selected based on qualities the working group believes are essential in developing the empowerment and preparation necessary to be a change-oriented, active community member.

[2] A comprehensive literature search across social science, psychology, and education literatures yielded extant, validated instruments and scales. Scales or instruments considered by relevant fields to be the most respected, most used, and most frequently validated were prioritized for inclusion.

of the minority group. When, in the course of their service placement, AmeriCorps members interact with populations such as the homeless, impoverished, incarcerated, or socially marginalized, they learn how to work productively with these different groups. Members also learn to work productively with community members and other AmeriCorps members from different cultural, socioeconomic, or ethnic backgrounds. For the purposes of the member exit survey, we are drawing broad boundaries around what is meant by "background," incorporating different races/ethnicities, socioeconomic statuses, genders, religions, sexual orientations, national origins, and ages to represent the breadth of exposure most members will gain during their term of service.

Using Chen and Starosta's established framework of cultural competency, we posit that members will develop intercultural sensitivity, intercultural awareness, and intercultural communication competence (see Chen and Starosta, 1996, 1998 for descriptions of those concepts). To assess these competencies in our members, we selected the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale developed by Chen and Starosta, which measures the cognitive, behavioral, and affective components of cultural competency. The Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (24 items total) has undergone extensive psychometric testing and has been found to be valid and reliable, especially when administered to workplace populations. Given space limitations in the member exit survey and the desire to reduce burden on members, we chose four items from the scale that assessed each component of cultural competency listed above, and that seemed most relevant to the member service experience.[3] The cultural competency pathway is assessed by Final Question (FQ) 7 in the attached instrument.

The "Getting Things Done" pathway is defined as instilling motivation to solve problems and promoting the ability to take initiative in planning, preparing, executing, and assessing an endeavor. National service experiences provide a structured environment in which members can gain hands-on experience with this type of consequential and deliberate action, carrying much of the responsibility expected in the "real world." Along this pathway, members develop a change and action orientation to the world, a positive self-orientation, and sense of self-efficacy. Theories of human development infrastructure, specifically positive youth development theory, point to the importance of the member service experience in that it provides several critical components needed for developing internal and external assets. Specifically, the member service placement provides an opportunity to develop empowerment assets (external), and positive values, social assets, and positive identity assets (internal).

Importantly, the member service experience occurs, for most members, during a critical period of life known as "emerging adulthood." In industrialized nations, emerging adulthood occurs roughly between the ages of 18-25, and is "the age of identity explorations, especially in the areas of love and work; it is the age of instability; it is the most self-focused age of life; it is the age of feeling in-between, neither adolescent nor adult; and it is the age of possibilities, when optimism is high and people have an unparalleled opportunity to transform their lives" (Arnett, 2006). The member service

[3] Please see Part B for detailed information on psychometric testing on the newly developed survey, including results of factor analyses on individual pathways and corresponding scale items.

placement offers exposure to new ideas and experiences at a highly unstable but receptive time in members' lives, when they are actively seeking answers to the question of personal identity and beliefs. It also provides the opportunity for emerging adults to have their first consequential experiences with preparing, planning, executing, and assessing an endeavor (Heath, 1999, pg. 64), opportunities which anthropologists have noted are few and far between for American youth (Larson, 2000 citing Schlegel and Barry, 1991).

For the purpose of the member exit survey, the idea of "getting things done" encompasses the ability to self-start, to go beyond what is required, to be consistent in effort, and to persevere in the face of challenge. This is an essential set of skills future change-agents must possess because solving long-standing, systemic community problems of any size will require persistence, focus, an action orientation, and proactivity. We are defining "getting things done" broadly, to include the concepts of personal initiative, grit, and self-efficacy, to encompass the many traits needed to be successful in creating community change. We hypothesize that members develop or enhance these qualities through the hands-on experience of working with an organization doing community change work. Members experience similar challenges, roadblocks, and frustrations that they would experience in the course of work in the professional world and develop mechanisms to cope with these and move forward.

To assess the "getting things done" pathway, we will use select items from the General Self-Efficacy Scale (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995). Self-efficacy is defined as "the extent or strength of one's belief in one's own ability to complete tasks and reach goals" (Ormrod 2006). Bandura (1977) identifies four factors that affect self-efficacy: experience, modeling, social persuasion, and physiological factors (all of which may present themselves during a member's term of service). Successful experiences generate higher self-efficacy, and a member's term of service offers many chances for successful experiences to build self-efficacy. The General Self-Efficacy Scale specifically measures one's ability to deal with daily hassles and adaptation after experiencing stress, which is particularly relevant for assessing the AmeriCorps service experience. The scale has been used extensively in research on young adults for over 20 years, and has been proven to be reliable and valid. Because the scale is relatively short, we incorporated all ten items from the scale into the survey; the Getting Things Done pathway is assessed by FQ.8 in the attached instrument. The response options for the original AmeriCorps Member Exit survey used 'strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree' response options and in 2024, we are hoping to change the response options to Bandura's original response options of 'not at all true, hardly true, moderately true, exactly true' in order to correspond with an internationally recognized scale to measure self-efficacy. For this information collection clearance, ORE is clearing both sets of response options given that ORE is still working with the web developers, and it is unclear whether the system can support the changes.

Along the Civic Engagement pathway, AmeriCorps seeks to develop members' civic attitudes and behaviors. When expressed, these attitudes and behaviors (such as volunteering or voting) help propel community change. This is supported by the positive youth development and emerging adulthood literature, detailed above.

For the purpose of the member exit survey, civic engagement is defined as "working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities, and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values, and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes" (Ehrlich, 2000). This is an essential skill for future change agents because in order to solve community problems, one needs to be involved in the community and aware of the challenges it faces. We define civic engagement broadly, to reflect the continuing academic dialogue around civic activities and outcomes, and to reflect their growing diversity. We hypothesize that members develop a civically minded orientation or enhance their penchant for civic activity through immersion in a community problem, and in taking responsibility for part of a project working to address that problem (see Kahne and Westheimer, 2002, for an excellent discussion and analysis).

To measure civic engagement, we will measure civic attitudes and civic efficacy. After examining the literature, we decided to incorporate items from several sources to cover the variety of ways civic engagement may be manifested in our member population. First, we selected relevant items from the Civic Engagement Supplement to the Current Population Survey (CPS, 2011) regarding trust and confidence in neighbors and various institutions. We also selected two questions from the Voting Supplement to the CPS (2013) to measure voting behaviors. Next, we incorporated items from the Competence for Civic Action scale (Flanagan, 2007) to look at action orientation and efficacy related to civic behaviors. We also incorporated items from the Civic Responsibility Scale (Furco, Muller, and Ammon, 1998) to further assess efficacy and attitudes. Finally, select items from the old exit survey were incorporated. These questions are reflected in the final questionnaire as FQ.11-18.

The Life and Career Skills pathway holds that the service experience broadens or enhances members' ability to work productively and effectively, both in the workplace and in the community. This encompasses both hard skills, such as project management, and soft skills, such as strategic thinking. Enriching the employment prospects of members is important in creating a pipeline of new employees for the public and nonprofit sectors. Members seeking employment in public serving roles may be better positioned to influence community change from positions of relative power.

For the purpose of the member exit survey, career skills are defined as the capabilities needed to succeed in the workplace. Life and Career Skills also encompasses educational attainment, defined as the achievement of a higher level of education or training. While we explored the possibility of including scales or items specific to career self-efficacy or motivation, the scales described above, particularly the General Self-Efficacy scale, seemed to make these redundant. Therefore, to avoid unnecessary duplication, we chose to focus on a human capital perspective aimed at lifelong learning and employability, encompassing such things as self-presentation, career control, and work exploration. We included items from the existing exit survey to measure hard and soft skills employed or developed during the term of service as FQ.4-6.

Educational attainment falls under the Life and Career Skills pathway, and posits that members' ability to obtain higher education and training are important in providing additional tools and resources necessary to address community problems, especially over time. Because most AmeriCorps programs do not have an explicit educational component, the incentive of an education award can encourage members to pursue further education and training. This education and training may provide them with more targeted strategies and solutions as they strive to create change in their communities. This pathway is supported by the positive youth development and emerging adulthood literatures described above. We modified items from the existing exit survey to measure plans to pursue different types of education FQ.26 and 27.

We propose that these four pathways lead to four short-term outcomes: (1) increased knowledge of one's own worldview; increased knowledge of different cultural practices and worldviews; increased positive attitude towards cultural differences; increased cross-cultural skills, and increased level of skill in cultural competence (in sum, increased awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills in dealing with people different from oneself) (Cultural Competency); (2) increased knowledge of strategies and skills needed to plan, prepare, execute, and assess an endeavor; increased attitude of action or change orientation to the world; increased positive self-orientation and sense of self-efficacy (Getting Things Done); (3) increased level of civic orientation and civic attitudes; increased belief in the ability to affect change through civic action; increased knowledge of civic opportunities and outlets (Civic Engagement); and (4) increased "hard" skills needed to succeed in the workplace (e.g. computer literacy, public speaking, industry certifications); increased "soft" skills needed to succeed in the workplace (e.g. leadership, consensus building, fluent communication); increased desire to pursue higher education, advanced education, specialized training (Life and Career Skills).

For the latest version of the survey, certain items from the existing member exit survey were retained from an earlier version of the survey despite the fact that they did not necessarily map to one of the four pathways. These questions are important to because they generate useful information about training and supervision, overall satisfaction, and a member's general valuation of the utility of the AmeriCorps experience. These questions appear in the final questionnaire as FQ.1-3, 10, and 19-22, 24, 25, 28, and 29.

While collecting member experience data upon exiting the term of service is critical to testing our member theory of change and for monitoring progress towards the achievement of the agency's strategic goals, it is also important for informing future research at AmeriCorps. Examples of future research informed by the member exit survey include analyzing variation in member outcomes by program and by subpopulation, and possibly tracking members over time through longitudinal panels. Data on the member service experience is also crucial for improving programming at the agency and grantee levels, as well as for informing the broader national service field and external stakeholders.

Since the redesigned AmeriCorps Member Exit Survey was administered in 2015, yearly responses increased (See Table 1, Justification B) and approximately 400,000 members have completed the instrument.

2. Use of the Information

As described in section 1, the purpose of the member exit survey is to collect information about AmeriCorps members' experiences for the purpose of monitoring progress towards the agency's strategic goals around member development. The information obtained from the member exit survey is also critical to informing decision making around Strategic Goals 3 and 4[4], particularly regarding policies and programming to enhance member development.

It is anticipated that the primary users of this data continue to be internal to AmeriCorps. Stakeholders in the AmeriCorps program offices and in the CEO's office use this valuable data to make decisions about program and service experience improvement. Internal stakeholders have access to the data through the Office of Research and Evaluation (ORE), and ORE has compiled customized reports as requested rather than provide the entire dataset to an internal client.

External stakeholders, such as grantee programs, state service commissions, external researchers, and practitioners find value in the member exit survey data to improve the service experience, adjust trainings and professional development offerings, and to conduct more focused research on national service. These groups may have been and can be supplied with data reports as is relevant and necessary. ORE will strive to ensure appropriate use of results through explaining the strengths and limitations of the data and any analyses.

Since the last clearance of this survey, ORE has conducted routine analyses on responses to the Member Exit Survey, and published reports and datasets on with the approval of program offices. ORE has made data publicly available through the AmeriCorps Open Data Platform (https://data.americorps.gov/) and published data dashboards for both staff and public engagement. ORE has also promoted survey findings and analyses through webinars and other presentations. Additionally, ORE regularly responds to inquiries made by AmeriCorps staff and often times its external partners to provide targeted Member Exit Survey data and analyses.

3. Use of Information Technology

AmeriCorps will continue to administer the survey and collect exiting members' responses to these questions electronically through AmeriCorps' secure online member portal. Since members must utilize the portal to conduct other administrative activities, situating the survey in this central location minimizes the number of different interfaces members must interact with as they complete the close out process at the end of their

[4] Goal 3 in the Strategic Plan states that CNCS will "Maximize the value we add to grantees, partners and participants." Goal 4 aims to "Fortify management operations and sustain a capable, responsive and accountable organization". 2011-2015 Strategic Plan, pgs. 21 and 23, respectively.

term of service. Pre-exit email notifications, as well as post-exit email reminders, will be sent electronically through the portal as well.

4. Non-Duplication

There are no other sources of information by which AmeriCorps can meet the purposes described in 2 (above).

5. Burden on Small Business

This collection of information does not impact small businesses because they are not eligible to be members.

6. Less Frequent Collection

Since we began implementing this redesigned survey, we have already collected over 400,000 responses. If unable to collect data through the member exit survey, AmeriCorps will not be able to assess, monitor, and subsequently improve the member experience. Our member theory of change will remain untested, and progress towards Strategic Goal 2 will be undetermined. Additionally, internal and external stakeholders will lack critical feedback necessary to learn about members' needs and experiences, and will be unable to make data-driven decisions about programming, training, member development, and activities that could assist members in transitioning from service to employment.

7. Paperwork Reduction Act Guidelines

There are no special circumstances that would require the collection of information in these ways.

8. Consultation and Public Comments

A 60-day Notice requesting public comment was published in the Federal Register on March 26, 2024, at 89 FR 20951. No (0) public comments were received from this Notice. A 30-Day Notice was published in the Federal Register on May 31, 2024, at 89 FR 47136.

Between approximately 40,000 to 50,000 AmeriCorps members complete the Member Exit Survey annually. This represents an annual completion rate of approximately 75 to 80%, a high response rate according to social science standards. ORE conducts routine analysis on responses to the Member Exit Survey, publishes reports, and makes data publicly available through the AmeriCorps Open Data Platform (https://data.americorps.gov/). ORE publishes data dashboards for both staff and public engagement. ORE has also promoted survey findings and analyses through webinars and other presentations. Additionally, ORE regularly responds to inquiries made by AmeriCorps staff and often times its external partners to provide targeted Member Exit Survey data and analyses.

Through the process of publishing analyses of Member Exit Survey data, ORE confers with all program offices to ensure their programs are properly represented and obtains feedback related to the survey instrument and its findings.

9. Gifts or Payment

There are no payments or gifts to respondents.

10. Privacy & Confidentiality

We will make clear that we intend to keep information private and not share individual responses; the basis for the assurance of privacy is from the privacy statement in the survey invitation and instructions (see attached survey instrument). Measures will be taken by ORE to remove key identifiers prior to data analysis, so that individual responses cannot be linked to a specific individual. Additionally, all analyses, summaries, or briefings will be presented at the aggregate level and it will not be possible to identify individual respondents in any material that is presented.

The survey data will be stored on AmeriCorps' secure server, which is protected by a firewall that monitors and evaluates all attempted connections from the Internet. Access to any data with identifying information will be limited only to AmeriCorps staff directly working on the survey.

11. Sensitive Questions

The information collection does not include questions of a sensitive nature.

12. Burden Estimate

We expect approximately 80,000 respondents per year to take the survey. The frequency of response will not be greater than annually and should amount to approximately 15 minutes of effort per respondent. The estimated total burden hours equal 20,000 hours per year (80,000 respondents x .25 hour = 20,000).

Just as national rates of formal volunteering have decreased across the United States over the last several years, so too have AmeriCorps' overall number of members. By offering new opportunities within its programs (e.g., shorter service terms, Forest Corps, NCCC Summer of Service, etc.) to further engage a wider population than its traditional offerings, AmeriCorps is seeing an increase in the number of its overall applications. Therefore, ORE would like to keep the total estimated respondents at 80,000 members such as cleared in the past.

	Time/Respondent (minutes)	Estimated Total Respondents	Estimated Hours

Annual Member Exit Survey	15	80,000	20,000

The estimated respondent burdens and labor costs are shown in the following table.

Estimation of Respondent Burden	
Number of respondents	80,000
Responses per respondent	1
Number of responses	80,000
Hours per response	.25
Estimated hours (number of responses multiplied by hours per response)	20,000
Cost per hour (hourly wage)	$64.34
Annual public burden (estimated hours multiplied by cost per hour)	1,286,800

Notes: The cost per hour is based on the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) General Schedule (GS) hourly rate of $47.22 for a GS-12, step 5, employee (for calendar year 2024 for the rest of the U.S.) plus the 36.25% civilian personnel full fringe benefit rate from OMB memorandum M-08-13 ($47.22 + $17.12 = $64.34, rounded to the nearest dollar).

	Requested	**Program Change Due to New Statute**	**Program Change Due to Agency Discretion**	**Change Due to Adjustment in Agency Estimate**	**Change Due to Potential Violation of the PRA**	**Previously Approved**
Annual Number of Responses for this IC	80,000	0	0	0	0	80,000
Annual IC Time Burden (Hour)	20,000	0	0	0	0	20,000
Annual IC Cost Burden (Dollars)	1,287,200	0	0	1,287,200	0	0

13. Estimated Nonrecurring Costs

No total capital and start-up costs, operation and maintenance costs, or purchase of services beyond customary and usual operating costs are required by this information collection.

14. Cost to Federal Government

In 2015, this survey involved a one-time cost to the Federal Government to design and construct the survey interface in AmeriCorps' web portal, totaling $704,871. This

included revising the survey, making modifications to the administration process, developing an administrator platform that allowed the survey to be configurable for future changes to questions and response options.

After this development year, the annual cost to the Federal Government to administer the exit survey will be approximately $11,500 and includes federal oversight and any necessary updates to the IT platform used for survey administration.

Cost Category	Salary*	% of Effort	Cost	Total Cost to Government
Federal Oversight	$85,000.00	10		$8,500
Software Updates			$3,000	$3,000
Total				**$11,500**

This survey will be conducted annually, and costs may be adjusted year to year depending upon improvements required to IT systems that support the survey's administration and reporting.

15. Reason for Changes

The survey form has been changed to rename the form and to provide a new set of alternative responses options to one of the questions to correspond with an internationally recognized scale to measure self-efficacy. There is also a change to the annual IC burden estimate to reflect the estimated cost to the public of responding because this estimate was not included in the last submission for clearance.

16. Publicizing Results

The results of the member exit survey will be tabulated and analyzed by staff in the Office of Research and Evaluation; individual respondents will not be identified by their responses in analyses.

The data will be used primarily to learn about members' service experiences and their development along the four pathways defined in our member theory of change. Reporting and dissemination of results will be mainly in the form of written memos and reports with supporting graphs and tables on key data points. For internal stakeholders, these will be focused on information relevant to program improvement and enhancement, or on topics relevant to the particular stakeholder group. For external stakeholders, these results will be tailored to the specific request; an emphasis will be made on the strengths and limitations of the data and corresponding analyses to ensure appropriate use of results. The data gathered in this survey may be utilized in analysis and planning work for other program evaluations and research projects conducted by AmeriCorps as applicable.

17. OMB Not to Display Approval.

Not applicable.

18. Exceptions to the "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Submissions"

There are no exceptions to the certification statement in the submitted ROCIS form.

19. Surveys, Censuses, and Other Collections that Employ Statistical Methods.

A supporting statement B is included.

References

1. Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological review*, *84*(2), 191.

2. Chen, G. M., & Starosta, W. J. (1996). Intercultural communication competence: A synthesis. *Communication Yearbook*, 19, 353-384.

3. Chen, G. M., & Starosta, W. J. (1998). *Foundations of intercultural communication*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

4. Chen, G. M., & Starosta, W. J. (2000). The Development and Validation of the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale.

5. Duckworth, Angela Lee and Quinn, Patrick D. (2009). Development and validation of the short grit scale (grit-s). *Journal of Personality Assessment*, *91(2)*, 166-174.

6. Ehrlich, T. (2000). Civic responsibility and higher education. New York, NY: Rowman & Littlefield.

7. Flanagan, C., Syvertsen, A., and Stout, M. (2007). Civic Measurement Models: Tapping Adolescents' Civic Engagement. *Circle Working Paper* 55.

8. Frese, Michael, Kring, Wolfgang, Soose, Andrea, and Zempel, Jeannette (1996). Personal initiative at work: differences between East and West Germany. *The Academy of Management Journal*, *39(1)*, 37-63.

9. Frese, Michale, Fay, Doris, Tanja, Hilburger, Leng, Karena, and Tag, Almut (1997). *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, *70*, 139-161.

10. Furco, A., Muller, P., and Ammon, M. (1998). Civic Responsibility Survey for K-12 Students Engaged in Service-Learning. Service-Learning Research and Development Center, University of California, Berkeley.

11. Kahne, Joseph and Westheimer, Joel (2002). The limits of efficacy: educating citizens for a democratic society. Presentation to the 2002 Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Boston, Massachusetts. August 2nd.

12. Miller, C.R. & Abell, N. (2008). Validation of the civic-efficacy scale. *Research on Social Work Practice*.

13. Ormrod, J. E. (2006). Educational psychology: Developing learners (5th ed.). Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Pearson/Merrill Prentice Hall.

14. Reeb, R. N. (2006). The community service self-efficacy scale: Further evidence of reliability and validity. *Journal of Prevention & Intervention in the Community*, *32*(1-2), 97-113.

15. Schwarzer, R., & Jerusalem, M. (1995). Generalized self-efficacy scale. Measures in health psychology: A user's portfolio. *Causal and Control Beliefs*,*1*, 35-37.

Additional References

16. Bowman, Nicholas A. (2010). Promoting participation in a diverse economy: a meta-analysis of college diversity experiences and civic engagement. Published online for the American Educational Research Association.

17. Duckworth, Angela Lee, and Peterson, Christopher (2007). *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *92(6)*, 1087-1101.

18. Fay, Doris, and Frese, Michael (2001). The concept of personal initiative: an overview of validity studies. *Human Performance*, *14(1)*, 97-124.

19. Fay, Doris, and Frese, Michael (2001). Personal initiative: an active performance concept for work in the 21st century. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, *23*, 133-187.

20. Miller, Christina (2008). Service-learning and civic efficacy among youth with disabilities. Electronic theses, treatises, and dissertations. Paper 2412.

Appendix A: AmeriCorps Member Theory of Change

Vision: Ultimately, AmeriCorps seeks to contribute to the creation of empowered and prepared citizens. These citizens will be more civically engaged, will work to strengthen their communities, and will be dedicated to improving the lives of those in their community.

Four Pathways to Achieving Vision: Program participants develop along four pathways that we believe are essential in developing the empowerment and preparation necessary to be a change-oriented, active community member. These pathways are: (1) Cultural Competency; (2) "Getting Things Done" (problem solving, self-efficacy); (3) Civic Engagement; and (4) Life and Career Skills.

Foundation of Pathways: The roots of each pathway lie in the member service placement. The service placement enables members to personally experience the challenges and needs of the community, and provides opportunities to develop and engage in solutions to address these problems.

- *Cultural Competency Pathway*: Developing or enhancing members' ability to work effectively with and within diverse groups (Martin and Vaughn, 2007). Cultural competence is essential for uniting different or disparate groups to achieve a common goal.
    - *Theoretical support*: Contact hypothesis, a longstanding sociological hypothesis, contributes to explaining how members develop or enhance their ability to work successfully in diverse groups (Allport, 1954; Brown and Hewstone, 2005). Contact hypothesis holds that during interpersonal contact between majority and minority group, given certain conditions are met[5], members can effectively overcome prejudices, biases, and preconceived notions of the minority group. When, in the course of their placement, members interact with populations such as the homeless, impoverished, incarcerated, or socially marginalized, they are forced to learn how to work productively with these different groups. Members also learn to work productively with community members and other AmeriCorps members from different cultural, socioeconomic, or ethnic backgrounds.
- *Getting Things Done Pathway*: Instilling motivation to solve problems, and promoting the ability to take initiative in planning, preparing, executing, and assessing an endeavor. National service experiences provide a structured environment in which members can gain hands on experience with this type of

[5] The scenario for successful intergroup contact necessitates creating "equal status" conditions between both groups. Specifically, the contact situation should: occur in circumstances that give equal social status to both groups; encourage or require a mutually interdependent relationship (cooperative achievement of a joint goal); the groups must disconfirm stereotypes about themselves; promote exchange of details about group members that encourages exploration into those members as individuals rather than as stereotypes; and promote group equality and egalitarian intergroup association (Cook, 1978, and Miller and Brewer, 1984, in Plank, 2000).

consequential and deliberate action, carrying much of the responsibility expected in the "real world". Along this pathway, members develop a change and action orientation to the world, and a positive self-orientation and sense of self-efficacy.

- *Theoretical support*:
  - Theories of human development infrastructure, specifically positive youth development theory, point to the importance of the member service experience in that it provides several critical components needed for developing internal and external assets. Specifically, the member service placement provides an opportunity to develop empowerment assets (external), and positive values, social, and positive identity assets (internal).
  - Importantly, the member service experience occurs, for most members, during a critical period of life known as "emerging adulthood". In industrialized nations, emerging adulthood occurs roughly between the ages of 18-25, and is "the age of identity explorations, especially in the areas of love and work; it is the age of instability; it is the most self-focused age of life; it is the age of feeling in-between, neither adolescent nor adult; and it is the age of possibilities, when optimism is high and people have an unparalleled opportunity to transform their lives" (Arnett, 2006). The member service placement offers exposure to a new ideas and experiences at a highly unstable but receptive time in members' lives, when they are actively seeking answers to the question of personal identify and beliefs. It also provides the opportunity for emerging adults to have their first consequential experiences with preparing, planning, executing, and assessing an endeavor (Heath, 1999, pg. 64), opportunities which anthropologists have noted are few and far between for American youth (Larson, 2000 citing Schlegel and Barry, 1991).

- *Civic Engagement Pathway*: AmeriCorps seeks to develop members' civic attitudes and behaviors. When expressed, these attitudes and behaviors (such as volunteering or voting) help propel community change.
  - *Theoretical support*: Positive youth development and emerging adulthood (detailed above).
- *Life and Career Skills Pathway*: Broadening or enhancing the ability to work productively and effectively, both in the workplace and in the community. This encompasses both hard skills, such as project management, and soft skills, such as strategic thinking. Enriching the employment prospects of members is important in creating a "pipeline" of new employees for the public and nonprofit sectors. Members seeking employment in public serving roles may be better positioned to influence community change from positions of relative power.
  - *Educational Attainment Pathway*: Enhancing members' ability to obtain higher education and training are important in providing additional tools and resources necessary to address community problems, especially over time. Because most AmeriCorps programs do not have an explicit educational component, the incentive of an education award can

encourage members to pursue further education and training. This education and training may provide them with more targeted strategies and solutions as they strive to create change in their communities.

- *Theoretical support*: Positive youth development and emerging adulthood (detailed above).

Outcomes: These pathways lead to four short-term outcomes: (1) increased knowledge of one's own worldview; increased knowledge of different cultural practices and worldviews; increased positive attitude towards cultural differences; increased cross-cultural skills, and increased level of skill in cultural competence (in sum, increased awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills in dealing with people different from oneself) (Cultural Competency); (2) increased knowledge of strategies and skills needed to plan, prepare, execute, and assess an endeavor; increased attitude of action or change orientation to the world; increased positive self-orientation and sense of self-efficacy ("Getting Things Done"); (3) increased level of civic orientation and civic attitudes; increased belief in the ability to affect change through civic action; increased knowledge of civic opportunities and outlets (Civic Engagement); and (4) increased "hard" skills needed to succeed in the workplace (e.g. computer literacy, public speaking, industry certifications); increased "soft" skills needed to succeed in the workplace (e.g. leadership, consensus building, fluent communication); increased desire to pursue higher education, advanced education, specialized training (Life and Career Skills).