Serve Idaho, the Governor’s Commission on Volunteerism, exists to inspire service to build a better Idaho. We promote collaborative efforts among private and nonprofit organizations, schools, and state and local government agencies to advance national service programs and volunteerism throughout the state. Serve Idaho achieves this through the administration of Idaho’s AmeriCorps grants, hosting the annual Serve Idaho Conference on Service and Volunteerism to provide volunteer management training and professional development, and through partnering with the Idaho Nonprofit Center’s annual Idaho Philanthropy Day to recognize Idaho’s outstanding volunteers and philanthropists. We also serve as the state leader in national days of service including Martin Luther King Jr. Day and September 11th National Day of Service and Remembrance.
Kayeloni Scott serves as the Communications Manager for the Nez Perce Tribe. She served as an AmeriCorps member from 2006-2007 through Community Action Partnerships in Lewiston and served at a local child care facility. There she worked with children ages 0-5 teaching fundamental skills and interactive play. Since that time, she has developed a passion for volunteerism and philanthropy. She has taken on several volunteer roles over the years through various youth activities, the business sector and small community needs. Her passion comes from the idea that it takes a village and if we all play even just a small role in bettering our communities we will flourish and prosper; it starts with creating that fire within our youth to continue leading future generations down the same path.
Laura Dickson has always wanted to help people and was first inspired to serve as a Senior Companion at the age of 45 when seeing an advertisement in the Nickels Worth. She was disappointed to discover she was too young to serve in the program, but that didn’t stop her! In 2019, she joined the North Idaho AmeriCorps Senior Companion program hosted by the Panhandle Health District where she now serves as a Senior Companion and a volunteer lead. Laura says that her service gives her a feeling of joy and happiness and that she wouldn’t want to do anything else at this point in her life. She serves as a senior companion for five clients, taking them to doctors’ appointments, out to lunch, grocery shopping or just sitting down for a visit. Her service is important for the mental health of her clients, easing their loneliness and depression and letting them know that someone cares. Over the years she has become friends with her clients, and she looks forward to seeing them each week and learning about their lives. Recently she has become a companion to a senior who traveled the world and loves to learn about her travels.

NORTH CENTRAL IDAHO
NCCC TEAM GREEN 5

AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) team Green 5 spent five weeks in Lapwai supporting the Nez Perce Tribe with infrastructure efforts which included preparing the community and native medicinal garden. Additionally, the team supported the Tribe in preparation for the re-naming of the Spalding-Allen Collection including building display cases for the collection and providing logistical support for the celebration acknowledging the return of the artifacts to the Nez Perce Homeland. The team was honored to be recognized by the Nez Perce Tribe for their contributions during the ceremony in June 2021.
SOUTHWEST IDAHO, CALDWELL
SUE SCHANBECK

Sue Schanbeck, affectionately known as “Ms. Sue” credits her service as an AmeriCorps Seniors Foster Grandparent for bringing her out of a dark place and giving her purpose. After her husband died in 2014, she struggled to get out of bed and leave her home. She knew she needed to find something that allowed her to focus on others, and that is when she found the Foster Grandparent Program. Ms. Sue works with kindergarteners at Sherman Elementary and Nampa Online Virtual Academy (NOVA), helping students learn the fundamentals of how to read and assisting teachers with assessments. She loves working with kindergarteners and seeing them progress in their reading. “Some of the students that I work with were 15% to 20% behind on their reading progress, and with one-on-one help are now succeeding. My reward is seeing them achieve something when they work so hard. It is a success for both of us!”

Listening to her speak about her work, it is evident that Ms. Sue has a passion for what she does, and the students love her. “This age is so important as they are forming their ideas about school. It is important that we treat them with lots of positives.” Ms. Sue shared a story of one little girl who started school in the middle of the year and was nervous about being in a new school. Ms. Sue assisted her with her reading watching her thrive. At the end of the year, the student said, “I really like my new school, but I love you better.”

SOUTHWEST IDAHO, BOISE
SEQUOIA SOLMORALES

In 2021 Sequoia Solmorales served as an AmeriCorps member with Jannus through the Out-of-School Network. He was drawn to AmeriCorps as an opportunity to provide education opportunities to kids on a larger level. During his year of service, Sequoia served as the lead in creating the Think Make Create trailers. These trailers provide STEM activities to communities in underserved areas throughout the state. He led the process in researching communities to place trailers, leading a team of students from One Stone to build the trailers, and ensuring that the communities and volunteers had training and resources needed to ensure the project’s success. Throughout the process he was able to build his leadership skills and gain skills that will be useful to him throughout his career. By the fall of 2021, there were 12 Think Make Create trailers across Idaho.
AmeriCorps members with the Student Conservation Association spent the summer in central Idaho completing a variety of projects. They supported the Salmon-Challis National Forest in their efforts to preserve several historic buildings, scraping lead paint from four historic buildings and helping to repaint the Yellowjacket Guard Station. In addition to their additional trail maintenance projects with the forest, they also provided support with campground maintenance, picnic table and fence repairs, boat launch improvements and invasive species eradication.

AmeriCorps NCCC Team Green 7 spent the spring of 2021 in Shoshone assisting the Lincoln County Youth Center in the renovation and opening of its facility located in Richfield. Work included refurbishing the building, adding new flooring and painting. Thanks to the team’s contributions the after school program opened a year and half ahead of schedule, providing a safe place for children in the area to go after school. The nine AmeriCorps NCCC members, ranging in age from 18 -26 years old, spent 10 months serving with the team across the country in exchange for a small living stipend and an education award.
Kassidy Akkula serves as an AmeriCorps VISTA member with the Idaho Department of Correction’s Freed2Succeed Program. As a VISTA member, she has the important job of assisting returning citizens as they transition out of the corrections system, placing them with community mentors. The mentors assist returning citizens, providing them with resources and helping them navigate the re-entry system. Since starting as a VISTA, she admitted that her perception has changed as a result of her service, helping her to better understand the challenges people struggling with addiction face. She has also gained a greater understanding of the criminal justice system and the importance of communication. Going forward Kassidy hopes to utilize her AmeriCorps Segal education award to get her master’s degree in social work at Northwest Nazarene University.

Haleigh Honeycutt has used her last two years as an AmeriCorps member serving with Pocatello Community Charter School to help launch her career as a teacher. As a military spouse, she spent many years traveling with her husband across the country, and they returned to Pocatello three years ago to raise their two kids. She knew she wanted to return to school and she researched multiple programs that would allow her to do so, eventually discovering AmeriCorps, deciding it would not only provide her with a living stipend but would allow her to earn an education award, which she hopes to use to return to school to earn a degree in elementary education.

During her time at Pocatello Community Charter School Haleigh has worked in the special education classroom helping students with math and reading. Her time working with the students has inspired her to remain in the field, and she hopes to continue working with children with special needs. Outside of her service she also coaches the boys’ and girls’ basketball teams for Pocatello Charter School and has become actively engaged with the student body.
Laura Wallis of Ammon was recognized for her volunteer contributions in eastern Idaho. Wallis serves as an advocate for families with children with special needs, spending her time volunteering for the Region 7 Behavioral Health Board’s Mental Health Subcommittee and the Idaho Parents Network. Through her volunteer work, she helped develop the Group Respite Care Program, which provides much-needed time off for families so their children can be cared for while they get a break. She has streamlined processes to ensure that families navigating the system have support, even volunteering to speak at Idaho State University to social work students about the unique challenges families with children with special needs face.

Georgianne Jessen of Hayden was recognized for her volunteer contributions in northern Idaho. Jessen dedicates her time to the Kootenai Health Foundation and Hospice of North Idaho, often volunteering more than 20 hours per week. She has served in a variety of leadership roles including serving as treasurer, secretary and committee chairs. She is passionate about the missions of the organizations where she serves, volunteering in every role from assisting with fundraising events to sitting with patients and providing comfort during their end of life.

Karma Fitzgerald of Shoshone was recognized for her volunteer contributions in southwest Idaho. Fitzgerald is heavily engaged in her community as a volunteer, recently spearheading efforts to build the Lincoln County Youth Center which included raising over $1 million dollars and organizing AmeriCorps team efforts. She has responded to COVID by mobilizing a team of over 30 volunteers who together made more than 5,000 masks, 500 isolation gowns and thousands of cookies. Additionally, Fitzgerald developed a help line to provide COVID resources and raise more than $5,000 in support. She also serves as a fire commissioner on sites on a steering committee to develop a new park in her community.
2021 SNAPSHOT OF SERVICE IN IDAHO

PROGRAM FUNDING
$4,519,228 FEDERAL FUNDS
$2,893,430 LOCAL SUPPORT

Local Project Support: $2,893,430
AmeriCorps State: $957,556
AmeriCorps Vista: $750,588
Foster Grandparent Program: $549,656
AmeriCorps National: $409,916
Senior Companions: $281,970
State Commission Operations Support: $265,000
RSVP: $153,966

COMPLETED PARTICIPANTS
901 TOTAL

Senior Companions: 48
AmeriCorps National: 147
AmeriCorps NCCC: 10
AmeriCorps State: 136
AmeriCorps Vista: 44
THANK YOU