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# 2012-13 Annual Report



*With support from the Corporation for  
National & Community Service & ServeMinnesota*

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City of Lakes AmeriCorps is a program of Minneapolis Community Education

# City of Lakes AmeriCorps

## About Us

City of Lakes AmeriCorps (CoL) has been serving MPS students since 1994. Starting in 2011, CoL became a partnership between Minneapolis Community Education and the Multilingual Department of Minneapolis Public Schools. We strive to bridge the language gap for intermediate English Learner students in Minneapolis Public Schools.

## Mission

The mission of City of Lakes AmeriCorps is to engage and empower intermediate English Learners in academic language development through intentional interactions, research-based tutoring strategies, out-of-school enrichment opportunities, and technology incorporation.

## Vision

Our vision is for all English Learners to be college- and career-ready by graduation.

## Strategies

1. Building relationships with students through intentional interactions and youth development best practices.
2. Utilizing a gradual release of responsibility and tutoring strategies from research-based approaches.
3. Creating a home connection between members and students' families.
4. Collaborating closely with teachers to form a teacher-member-student partnership.

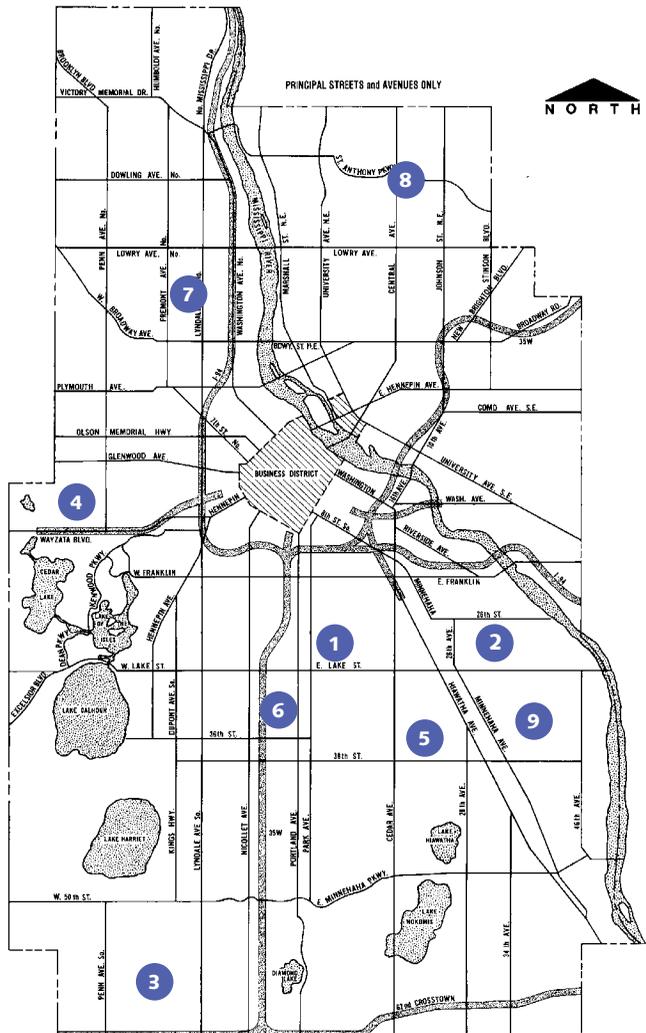


# MPS AmeriCorps Sites

From August 2012 through July 2013, 29 full-time and 2 part-time members served in nine MPS schools. In total, 996 total K-8 MPS students were served in at least one arena by a CoL AmeriCorps member over the 2012-2013 school year (tutoring, after school activities, and/or enrichment).

## MPS sites served by CoL AmeriCorps:

1. **Andersen United Community School**  
1098 Andersen Lane 55407
2. **Anne Sullivan Communication Center**  
3100 E. 28th St. 55406
3. **Anthony Middle School**  
5757 Irving Ave. S. 55419
4. **Anwatin Middle School**  
256 Upton Ave. S. 55405
5. **Folwell Performing Arts Magnet**  
3611 20th Ave. S. 55407
6. **Richard R. Green Central Park School**  
3416 4th Ave. S. 55408
7. **Nellie Stone Johnson School**  
807 27th Ave. N. 55411
8. **Northeast Middle School**  
2955 Hayes St. N.E. 55418
9. **Sanford Middle School**  
3524 42nd Ave. S. 55406



# 2012-13 Progress Toward Goals

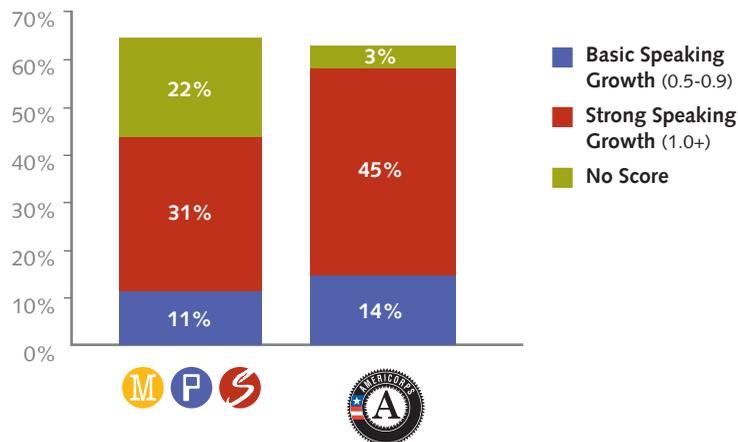
**Goal #1: Our goal for our students is that they are engaged and empowered to achieve their full potential.**

## Performance Measures Reported to CNCS:

1. 275 Level 3 & 4 ELL students at the middle school level will receive tutoring from an AmeriCorps member.  
**✓+ This goal was exceeded with 315 students receiving tutoring.**
2. At least 75% of students (or 206) will complete the program by working with AmeriCorps members for a minimum of 60 minutes per week for at least 12 weeks throughout the school year.  
**✓+ This goal was exceeded with 231 students receiving tutoring.**
3. At least 70% of students (144 students) who complete the program will move up at least one year's growth (0.5 points) on the World Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) ACCESS Assessment.
  - *In our target domain of Speaking, 137 students who had received 12+ weeks of tutoring moved up at least one year's growth on the WIDA ACCESS.*

## Speaking Growth 2012-13

MPS vs. City of Lakes AmeriCorps WIDA Access



- ✓ **When including all students who received any amount of CoL Tutoring, 184 students moved up at least one year's growth on the WIDA ACCESS.**

### **Other Measures:**

Over the 2012-2013 school year, City of Lakes AmeriCorps members...

- Tutored MPS students for over 300,000 minutes;
- Mentored 21 MPS students in grades 3 thru 8;
- Engaged 638 MPS students in K-8th grade in after school enrichment and academic programs;
- Recruited an additional 39 volunteers to serve MPS in some way;
- Provided more than 16,500 hours of service in total. The estimated value of volunteer time for 2012 is \$22.14 per hour. Given this, City of Lakes AmeriCorps members provided services to MPS valued at \$365,310 over the 2012-13 school year.



“ Caitlin gives me really good feedback on where our kids are struggling and what they understand, and that helps me plan better.

When things go well, like the experience I've had, it's great for the kids, it really is. It also helps me think of what I'm doing

and why I'm doing it, so it was really good for me as well.

A lot of the students will work with Caitlin more so than with me, and I think it is because **she concentrates on them in a way that I just can't.** ”

—Jon Iverson, Science Teacher



### Impact on Engagement

The Student Engagement Instrument (SEI) is used to measure a student's level of engagement at school and with learning, including multiple dimensions of engagement that go beyond academics. In evaluating SEI scores, we looked at grade 6 ELL students who were matched by ELL status only.

- ▶ City of Lakes had about 60% of students with SEI growth scores.
- ▶ While nothing was statistically significant, in looking at Mean growth compared to other groups:
  - For School Work, CoL students had the smallest drop in scores.
  - For Peer Support and Aspirations, CoL students had the greatest gains.

“**Having that extra knowledgeable person who's in it evenly with you is invaluable.** I've been teaching alone for 22 years, but we had an interesting group this year, and **I couldn't have done it without Sara.** Honestly, having Sara in here **working with kids and giving me ideas** has saved me tons of time.”

—Hayley Forrest, Social Studies Teacher



**Goal #2: Our goal for our members is that they are engaged and empowered to serve as values-driven leaders in their communities.**



**Esprit de corps is defined as, “A common spirit of comradeship, enthusiasm, and devotion to a cause among the members of a group.”**

Member development is a huge focus for City of Lakes AmeriCorps. Each CoL member received more than 200 hours of training over the course of the 2012-2013 program year. Members begin their year with eight full days of pre-service orientation, which includes both MPS and AmeriCorps onboarding and significant time spent on team building.

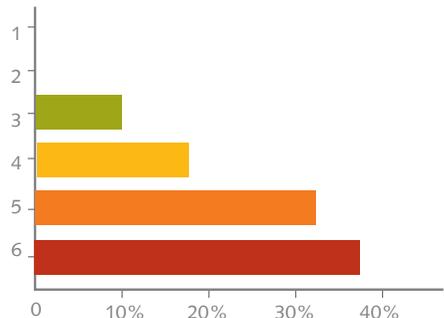
Trainings continue every other Friday throughout the school year. Trainings in the first half of the year focus on skills and knowledge needed for service activities. Topics covered include Middle School Brain, Question Answer Relationship, Assessments, Quality After School Programs, and Technology Integration. Skills trainings around tutoring are led by CoL’s District Program Facilitator Lynn Harper, a licensed ESL teacher; other experts within the district are also utilized.

AmeriCorps programs are also evaluated based on the *esprit de corps* they create. Team-building activities are included in trainings throughout the entire year, but a particular focus is paid to them in the second half. Members take part in Justice Talks (in-depth discussions of topics such as poverty, diversity, educational equity, etc.), small group discussions, and member-led Leadership Committees.

In a **mid-year program evaluation** (right), 90% of members reported feeling like a valuable part of our group, with the majority reporting they felt included above and beyond what they had expected.

CoL member training has ongoing benefits to MPS in the form of well-qualified and trained candidates for permanent positions. In the 2012-13 program year, at least 20% of CoL members were hired into MPS positions after they completed their year of service.

**On a scale of 1 to 6, how welcomed and included have you felt to the overall CoL Corps, 1 being “not at all” and 6 being “above and beyond what you expected”?**



# Stories of Service

## **Building Student's Confidence through Consistent Support**

*by Atalie, 2012-13 CoL Member*

**O**ne of my students was struggling in a particular class due to his relationship with the teacher. Because of this, he was unmotivated to do any of his work for her or give her any respect in class. Since I work with him daily in a small group setting, I'm able to see his strengths and abilities in a way that the regular teacher does not. After talking to him and reminding him of his strengths, we came up with a plan for the rest of the year. Instead of just continuing the conflicts between himself and the teacher and not trying in her class, he was going to work harder in the last few months of school.

I was able to see noticeable differences in him the next day, and the positive behavior has continued for the rest of the year. The teacher has also noticed his change and is allowing him to attend the reading picnic, even though she originally told him his behavior would make him unable to attend. This made him incredibly proud. He was able to discover for himself that he was in charge of his own learning and he became determined to improve this for himself. I was able to show him I really cared about his struggles with his teachers and his success in schools, and gave him some of the encouragement he was lacking. Because of this, he was able to gain some confidence in himself and greatly improve his behavior and grades.

## **Finding the Right Environment**

*by Micah, 2012-13 CoL Member*

**O**ne of my students has been extremely quiet throughout the year. She never raises her hand in class, she avoids answering questions in front of others, and she even hesitates to speak with me one-on-one.

A schedule change halfway through the year changed the class in which I work with her from Language Arts to Math. I worked with her in a small group of students working on math literacy. In this small group setting and with material she was confident with, this student changed into someone I didn't even recognize. She was the first to answer, the first to talk, and eager to share her work. The students in our group were also surprised with her ability and confidence.

This is what I love about City of Lakes AmeriCorps. We have the chance to tailor the activity to the student. We can figure out what works best and are gifted with the flexibility and time to implement those changes. I am happy this student had the opportunity to express herself in an environment she felt comfortable with. I hope this experience helped her to build confidence that will stick with her as she continues to grow.

## **180 Degrees**

*by Jessica Gould, 2012-13 CoL Member*

I used to call CV my “I don’t know” kid. When she angrily shuts down, and often she does, every single response to her question is a shrug and “I don’t know.” I feel like I spent months trying to find a way to get this kid to try. I tried joking around, I’ve tried to get other teachers involved, I tried being tough, and I tried telling her how much I cared and wanted her to do her best. Nothing worked to get CV to try.

Then one month ago, I had my breakthrough. CV was staring blankly at her Math test, refusing to do anything, and I knew that she couldn’t stay in the class. We went to a nearby room and I decided to try just being silly. I make CV stand up and give me windmill high fives, something I used to do all the time with my friends. She eventually got into it, her wall came down, and she started opening up. She told me she was angry and that’s why she didn’t want to take her test. I was able to talk to her about how not taking her test doesn’t hurt the people she’s mad at, it just hurts her. Eventually, CV finished her math test.

I don’t think that I gave CV the keys to life. I don’t think any of her anger issues are solved. I’m not convinced that my relationship with her alone will solve long-term learning patterns. But, on the other hand, for the past month CV has been trying. She’s talking more with her teachers and she’s turning in her homework. She came up to me last week and gave me a stack of missing Math assignments so that I could turn them in for her. Two different teachers came up to me and told me how impressed they were with CV’s turnaround.

When I told CV this, she responded:

“Miss Jessie, I’m tired.”

“Why is that?” I had said, afraid she was going to pull away again.

“I’ve been up all night doing my homework.”

## **Collaborating with Teachers**

*by Caitlin, 2011-12 and 2012-13 CoL Member*

**A**s a City of Lakes AmeriCorps member, I am grateful for the opportunities I was able to utilize during my years of service. By encouraging me to reach out to the community and work so closely within the schools and classrooms, CoL has given me the opportunity to build meaningful relationships both professionally and socially within my community. It was my work here at Andersen that inspired me to become a teacher. Because I've been in such a unique position, I was able to network with current teachers and administrators which allowed me to gather valuable information about the reality of becoming an educator in this school district. It has been a rough two years but I am extremely grateful to have been given this opportunity.

## **Minneapolis Peacemaker**

*by Jenny, 2011-12 and 2012-13 CoL Member*

**O**ne day I received an email from Hanna Miller informing the Corps of the Minneapolis Peacemaker Award. I looked it over and a student, Anahi, came to mind. I wrote up an entire essay on how amazing she is. I submitted it not thinking that anything would come of it. I did not even tell Anahi about it because I did not want her to be sad if she lost. Well, last week I got a letter in the mail inviting us to lunch with Mayor RT Ryback, where Anahi will be presented with an award and some books to read this summer! When I told her about it, I showed her the essay I wrote about her and she grinned so big. I am so excited to take her Wednesday, it will be such a cool experience for her and she will learn how important her role is at Sanford.

## **Mutual Positive Impacts**

*by Beth, 2012-13 CoL Member*

**I** have really enjoyed working so closely with my students this year because I have had the opportunity to watch them grow both academically and personally. I have loved building relationships with each of them separately, and I think that has helped me to be successful in my tutoring sessions and after school classes.

Throughout the school year I have viewed my work here at school as me having a positive impact on the lives and academics of my students. I have learned,

though, that my students have had just as large of an impact on my life as I have on theirs. Each one of them has taught me something different about myself, how to work with students, about diverse life situations, and so much more. I am so thankful for the experiences that I have had with them, and I am excited to take these experiences with me in my future career.

### **Julian Chats with A Famous Author**

*by Dave, 2012-13 CoL Member*

**F**or a project with one of my students when we completed the book *The Snowball Effect*, I had Julian write a letter to the author explaining what he liked about the book, what he learned from the book, and some further questions he had for the author. Much to our surprise, the author—Deb Loughead—wrote back to Julian, thanking him for writing and even answering some of his questions.

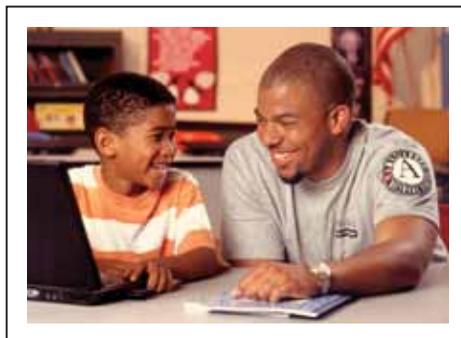
Needless to say Julian was very excited that the author took the time to write back; so much so, that when we were midway through our next book series *The Strange Case of Origami Yoda*, he began asking if we could write to the author (Tom Angleberger) when we were done reading them. I told him we could although secretly, I was pretty pessimistic that we would get a response. After all, it was one thing to hear back from a relatively unknown author (Deb Loughead) on her website's blog; it would be something completely different to hear back from the author of one of the most popular current children's book series which could be found on every shelf of every major store in the country. But I figured that he was so excited about reading the books and writing to the author, I would encourage his passion even if I was sure it would be a one-sided correspondence.

We finished the third book and wrote a five-paragraph letter to the author complete with questions, likes/dislikes, and even a list of ideas for future books he could write that Julian came up with himself. Much to my surprise and Julian's complete amazement, Tom wrote back within two days thanking Julian for his great ideas, his passion for reading, and some insider info on the release date for his next book! Julian was so excited he showed all his friends and all his teachers!

## Plans for Increased Impact

To increase our impact on students in years to come, our plan for moving forward includes:

- Increased parent communication,
- Increased student involvement in after school,
- Increased/restructured tutoring time during the day,
- Establishing specific curriculum for members to use, and
- Enhanced bench marking tools.



For example, in analyzing the students we tutored during the day and those involved in after school activities, only 10% of our caseload students were involved in CoL member-led after school activities. For the 2013-14 program year, we are increasing communication with parents and asking for them to commit to having their child participate in after school programs at least two days a week. We are also hoping to

pilot some off-site options for students who are unable to attend after school. This may involve utilizing the technology of our program (iPad Minis) or hosting classes at one of our partner sites, such as Hennepin County Libraries.



Identifying these specific changes was a multi-step process, which began with gathering member input and suggestions around obstacles they faced in their service around the mid-year point of the 2012-13 program year. CoL staff drafted proposed changes based on member

input and staff observations, and had repeated tuning meetings with Multilingual, Community Education, and Resource Development and Innovation departments to fine tune the proposed structure changes. We began to implement these changes in the 2013-14 program year, and are excited to see the increase in impact these changes are poised to help us make. ■

## **City of Lakes AmeriCorps 2012-2013 Program Staff**

**Lisa Lambert**, *Program Director*

**Hanna Miller**, *Program Coordinator, Member Support*

**Jean Fawver**, *Program Coordinator, Member Development*

**Lance Oberembt**, *Program Coordinator, Member Recruitment*

**Lynn Harper**, *District Program Facilitator*

### **2012-2013 Funding (Actual)**

Federal Funds	\$ 340,136
State Funds	15,000
District Funds	255,902
In-Kind Funds	22,676
Partner Site Fees	45,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 678,714</b>



## City of Lakes AmeriCorps

A program of Minneapolis Community Education

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### For more information, contact:

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