



2020-21 REPORT

CITY YEAR

DETROIT





## WHAT WE DO

We believe that supporting children and young adults contributes to just, equitable and vibrant communities, and that when students rise, we all rise.

City Year helps students and schools succeed, while preparing the next generation of leaders who can work across lines of difference to make a positive impact. In partnership with teachers and schools, diverse teams of City Year AmeriCorps members cultivate learning environments where students can build on their strengths, fully engage in their learning and experience success.

We know more than we ever have about how young people learn and develop. Yet too many students do not have access to the learning environments they need to thrive, due to systemic failings that have contributed to inequitable access to educational opportunities. These inequities disproportionately impact students of color and students growing up in low-income households. Disparities in opportunity and resources have created inequitable educational, health and economic outcomes: for example, children living in poverty graduate

high school at significantly lower rates than their middle- and upper-income peers.<sup>1</sup>

Our AmeriCorps members serve in schools full-time as student success coaches who help students build on their strengths and cultivate foundational social, emotional and academic skills, whether that's learning to work in teams, cope with frustration or master fractions—skills that are important in school and in life. Through their service in schools and communities, City Year AmeriCorps members not only make a difference in the lives of students they serve, but also acquire valuable skills and experience that prepare them to lead and make meaningful contributions to where they live and work.

1 2020 Building A Grad Nation: Progress and Challenge in Raising High School Graduation Rates. (2020). Civic and the Everyone Graduates Center at the Johns Hopkins University School of Education. Retrieved from: <https://www.americaspromise.org/report/2020-building-grad-nation-report>

## HOW CITY YEAR WORKS IN SCHOOLS

City Year works closely with the school principal and teachers to deliver a suite of interconnected services that cost-effectively and efficiently improve student, classroom and whole school outcomes.



One-on-one and small group instruction in English and math with embedded social-emotional supports



Use of data to monitor student progress and better meet student needs



Additional capacity in the classroom, supporting classroom routines and providing and enabling differentiated instruction



Extended-day activities: afterschool programming, homework assistance, enrichment curricula and civic projects that build and serve community



Small group social-emotional skill building sessions



Whole school activities that improve conditions for learning, engage families and inspire civic engagement







# CITY YEAR'S SERVICE DURING COVID-19

COVID-19 caused an abrupt closure of schools and a shift to distance learning that further exposed long-standing, systemic inequities. City Year was able to lean into our evidence-based, holistic Whole School, Whole Child (WSWC) services and the strength of our school and district partnerships. This enabled us to adapt to local needs, innovate, and continue serving students, teachers and schools through the pandemic.

## HOW WE RESPONDED

As student success coaches, City Year AmeriCorps members serve full-time as near-peer tutors, mentors, and role models who are trained to connect with and support student academic and social-emotional growth and success. During the pandemic, some aspects of service have looked different, but the core of our work remained the same.

### AMERICORPS MEMBERS FOCUS ON:

- Building consistent, caring, and positive relationships with students every day
- Partnering with teachers to ensure students are engaged with their learning, which is critical to their durable skill development
- Bringing a sense of joy, stability, and belonging to the school experience

Students have experienced interruptions in their learning and in their lives because of the pandemic. Because City Year's research-informed services emphasize both social-emotional and academic growth, we've worked to provide mental health and holistic well-being supports that students and teachers need right now—and that are essential for learning to take place.

## OUR RESPONSE IN DETROIT

The families, schools, and neighborhoods we serve are and have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. Individuals in these communities are more likely to struggle with housing, food, and job insecurity as a result of the economic impact of the pandemic. The impact on students and families in DPSCD has been dramatic and estimates of long-term impact on learning and achievement are significant. Students not only lost learning time, but also experienced disruptions in relationships they developed with supportive, caring adults in school at an especially difficult time. The encouraging news is that City Year's presence in a school makes a huge difference. **Students in our schools are two-to-three times more likely to improve on their math and English assessments<sup>1</sup>.**



### VIRTUAL SERVICE SPOTLIGHT

Service looked a little different this year. To learn more, check out this video of 2020/21 AmeriCorps member, Anaya.

<https://bit.ly/cydvideo>

<sup>1</sup> Policy Studies Associates. (2015). Analysis of the Impacts of City Year's Whole School Whole Child Model on Partner Schools Performance. Retrieved from: <https://www.cityyear.org/sites/default/files/PSAstudy2015.pdf>;



## OUR SERVICE IN DETROIT

“I am a veteran teacher of more than 20 years. I strongly support City Year as role models for students in the urban classroom setting.” -CITY YEAR DETROIT PARTNER TEACHER

### OUR REACH IN DETROIT



11 SCHOOLS



7,000+ STUDENTS



195,000+ HOURS OF  
SERVICE ANNUALLY

### SCHOOL PARTNERS

Bethune Elementary-Middle School  
Brenda Scott Academy  
Burns Elementary-Middle School  
Central High School  
Clark Preparatory Academy  
Cody High School  
Durfee Elementary-Middle School  
Gompers Elementary-Middle School  
Mason Academy  
Noble Elementary-Middle School  
Osborn High School

## THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS SUPPORTERS





# CITY YEAR'S EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

## SNAPSHOTS OF SUCCESS

### 94% of teachers

believe their City Year AmeriCorps members provided valuable support to their classroom and students during the 2020-2021 school year.<sup>1</sup>

### 100% of principals

were satisfied with the quality of service City Year provided their schools.<sup>2</sup>

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606 Detroit students received nearly **6,000 intervention sessions in math**.<sup>3</sup>



629 Detroit students received nearly **5,500 intervention sessions in English Language Arts**.<sup>4</sup>



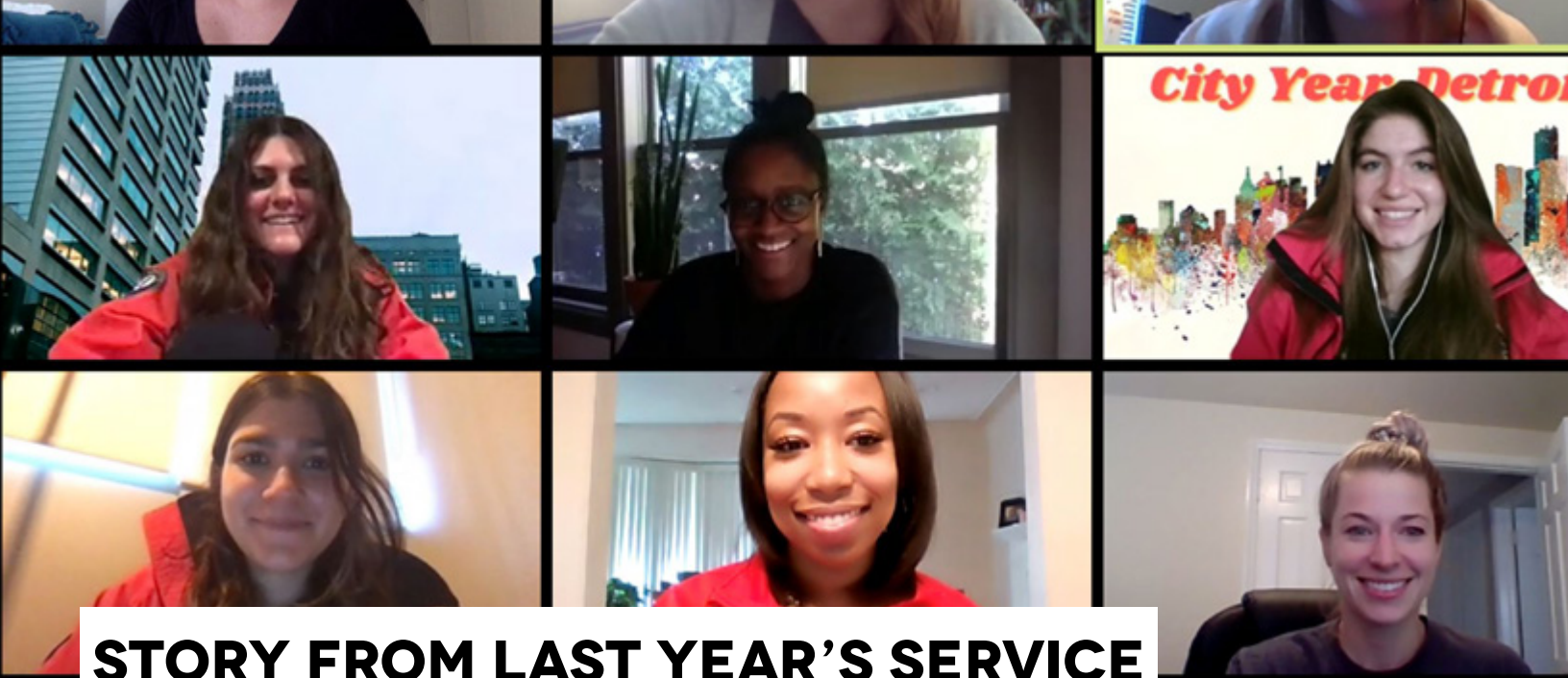
374 Detroit students received more than **650 hours of social-emotional development**.<sup>5</sup>

## HOW WE KNOW IT WORKS

- **ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT:** Studies show that schools that partner with City Year are up to two to three times more likely to improve<sup>6</sup> in English and math assessments.
- **HOLISTIC GROWTH:** The more time students spend with AmeriCorps members, the more likely they are to improve on social, emotional and academic skills<sup>7</sup> and on attendance, with students who are furthest behind benefitting the most.
- **STUDENT VOICE AND ENGAGEMENT:** A 2021 student survey<sup>8</sup> found that 84% of students feel that their City Year AmeriCorps member teaches them how to self-advocate and ask for help when they need it, which are critical skills for life and workforce success.
- **EDUCATOR SUPPORT:** Our partners<sup>10</sup> find our work valuable: 94% of partner principals agree that City Year has supported their schools' transitions between in person and distance or hybrid learning, and 95% of partner principals and partner teachers say City Year AmeriCorps members have supported the engagement and participation of students in school during the pandemic.
- **COST-EFFECTIVENESS:** An analysis by Deloitte<sup>11</sup> showed that for the schools we partner with, City Year is 78% more cost effective than contracting with individual providers to deliver the same set of services.
- **WORKFORCE AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT:** City Year's 35,000 alumni continue to lead and serve across a broad range of professions, including education. According to the latest alumni survey<sup>12</sup>, nearly half of AmeriCorps members—44%—remain in the community where they served, contributing to the local economy, workforce and social fabric.

<sup>1</sup> Spring 2021 City Year partner principal survey n=18. <sup>2</sup> Spring 2021 City Year partner teacher survey n=69. <sup>3</sup> Math intervention sessions logged with students (tracked in internal database "cyschoolhouse"); Enrollment of non-unique students, students may receive services in multiple areas <sup>4</sup> ELA intervention sessions logged with students (tracked in internal database "cyschoolhouse") <sup>5</sup> Social emotional intervention sessions logged with students (tracked in internal database "cyschoolhouse") <sup>6</sup> Meredith, J., Anderson, L.M. Analysis of City Year's Whole School Whole Child Model on Partner Schools' Performance. (2015). Policy Studies Associates. Retrieved from: <https://www.cityyear.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/PSAstudy2015.pdf> <sup>7</sup> Balfanz, R. Byrnes, V. Connecting Social- Emotional Development, Academic Achievement, and On-Track Outcomes: A multi-district study of grades 3 to 10 students supported by City Year AmeriCorps members. (2020). Everyone Graduates Center at the Johns Hopkins University. Retrieved from: [https://www.cityyear.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/EGC\\_CityYearReport\\_BalfanzByrnes.pdf](https://www.cityyear.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/EGC_CityYearReport_BalfanzByrnes.pdf) <sup>8</sup> A student survey was administered at one City Year site in February 2021; there were 487 responses, with 480 responses in English and 7 responses in Spanish. Survey items included customized questions from Search Institute's Developmental Relationships survey tool and University of Chicago's Cultivate survey tool. <sup>9</sup> MDRC. Addressing Early Warning Indicators: Interim impact findings from the Investing in Innovation (i3) Evaluation of Diplomas Now. (2016). Retrieved from: [https://www.cityyear.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Addressing-Early-Warning-Indicators\\_2016.pdf](https://www.cityyear.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Addressing-Early-Warning-Indicators_2016.pdf) <sup>10</sup> City Year's Spring 2021 Service Partner Surveys. Partner principals n=295; partner teachers n=825 <sup>11</sup> In 2017, Deloitte Consulting LLP was engaged to aggregate and synthesize various industry and internal analyses to help City Year estimate and articulate ROI; City Year costs as compared to benchmark analysis of costs to provide similar services provided by a combination of individual providers. <sup>12</sup> City Year Alumni Survey, April 2020, 21,786 alumni contacted; 20% response rate, which is statistically significant.





## STORY FROM LAST YEAR'S SERVICE

This article was published in Chalkbeat Detroit

### WHAT A MEANINGFUL (VIRTUAL) SCHOOL DAY LOOKS LIKE NOW

Here's how I'm helping my students manage stress and find joy during COVID.

**BY RACHEL PFANNES**

**JANUARY 29, 2021**

**"Good morning, everyone!** Let's turn our cameras on, mute our microphones, and remember to raise your hands for questions. Who's ready to learn something new today?" My virtual background was a custom birthday shoutout for one of my students, and I was excited for them to enjoy a bit of celebration in the meeting chat.

As my partner teacher began laying out the lesson plan for the day, I started to think about how the average school day has changed since the start of the pandemic. When school went online, the usual peer bonding time during class, recess, and lunch evaporated, and individual curiosities became harder to explore. Regardless of current circumstances, students still deserve to feel like their school days are meaningful, and that they're active participants in their own education.

So, what does a fulfilling school day look like right now? My colleagues at City Year Detroit and I have been trying to find out. And while it's been a

challenge, we've hit on a few strategies that have helped.

First is doing everything we can to make the classroom environment comfortable, rather than frustrating. Creating consistency in the virtual classroom establishes a sense of comfort for students and is essential to student success. Alongside the partner teachers we work with, the City Year Detroit AmeriCorps members have generated a set of virtual norms for our students to review and follow at the start of each class.

In my classes, I post a "Today's Work" list in the main classroom channels to give students a static place to find their work. It helps them ask specific questions about their assignments and prevents students who are late or having technology trouble from feeling confused or excluded. We also created spaces for small groups, separate from the main classroom, that are dedicated to providing students with



**When I was a student, having peers and teachers I could rely on made me feel heard and that someone was looking forward to seeing me in class every day. ”**

individual attention and making sure no one gets lost in the flurry of new rules.

Making students comfortable also means simple things like using student’s names in conversation. Asking students about their lives outside of school and praising thoughtful questions fosters a classroom community that feels less distant.

When I was a student, having peers and teachers I could rely on made me feel heard and that someone was looking forward to seeing me in class every day. This year, I’ve focused on building tutor-mentor relationships with students strong enough for them to feel like they have a real ally as they confront the challenges of virtual learning. My students know that if they have a question, I will always try to answer it, and that dynamic has resulted in rewarding conversations about their lives in and out of school.

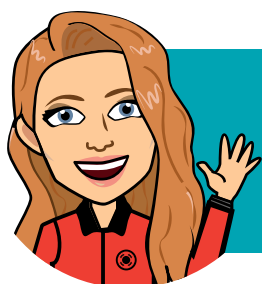
During one of my small group sessions, a student was telling me about her plan to create a calmer space for herself at home to improve her focus and her progress on iReady, an online lesson platform. She was so absorbed in that day’s work that she asked for a few extra minutes to finish up so she could tell me her final score. A few weeks before, I could barely get her to log on to class or do her assignments, let alone show

excitement about classwork. Now, I can see on her face that she’s happy with the success resulting from her hard work.

Still, virtual school can be difficult or frustrating for many students. Spending time getting them to articulate their feelings and find healthy ways to manage stress — reflective thinking, journaling, stretches, and breathing exercises — has been more helpful than ever.

Now that we have established virtual academic basics, we are channeling more focus into fun. No physical school means the loss of field trips and other chances to explore and find meaning outside of the classroom. I have used my Bitmoji classroom — an animated virtual class space — to bring exciting activities to my fourth grade students. From the Bitmoji classroom, students can visit the Detroit Institute of Arts, watch weekly PBS videos, practice their vocabulary, and even swim with the fish at the Shedd Aquarium. One of my AmeriCorps colleagues, Zelda, arranged virtual trips to Disneyland and used first-person videos to “ride” the rollercoasters with their class. To help their students focus, other members Matt and Steph had their students create music playlists to listen to while they work.

Virtual learning and excursions are not the same as being able to offer students hands-on exploration, but we’re making every effort to ensure that this school year is as “normal” and as meaningful as possible for our students.



*Rachel Pfannes was an AmeriCorps member proudly serving with City Year Detroit (2020/21). Rachel is from Detroit, Michigan and graduated from the University of Michigan with degrees in biomolecular science, Spanish, and sociology.*

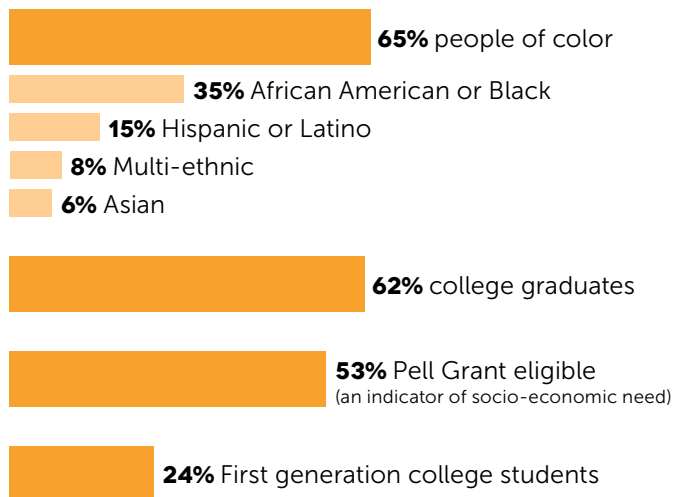


# CITY YEAR AMERICORPS MEMBERS

City Year AmeriCorps members are inspiring young adults, ages 18–25, who share a commitment to a cause greater than themselves. While our corps members come from all walks of life, they bring to their service experience similar characteristics: they are deeply empathetic, they are strong at building relationships, and they cultivate a “growth mindset”—the belief that abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work.



3,000 serving nationally



Based on 2019–2020 data.

## WHAT DO AMERICORPS MEMBERS GAIN DURING THEIR EXPERIENCE?

Throughout their service year, City Year AmeriCorps members receive valuable training and professional development to help support their work with students and to help further their own personal and career goals.

City Year AmeriCorps members receive ongoing coaching and feedback from City Year staff, as well as formal training sessions, guided reflection, peer learning, and career support. Training and professional development topics include:

- Social, emotional and academic training curricula and assessments
- Leadership, communication and professional skills to be an effective team member and community leader
- Community context, civic knowledge, social justice and equity
- Career planning and strengthening skills such as networking, interviewing, and resume, cover letter and personal statement writing

## DIVERSE LEADERS AND CHANGEMAKERS

**91%** of alumni said that their City Year experience had a **significantly positive impact on their life.**

**92%** of alumni said that through their City Year experience they **learned about issues of systemic inequity.**

**93%** of alumni said City Year helped them to **develop relationships with people from different backgrounds** than their own.

Based on City Year's 2020 Alumni Survey (n=4,453)

▶ **KNOW AN OUTSTANDING 18–25 YEAR OLD INTERESTED IN SERVING WITH CITY YEAR?**

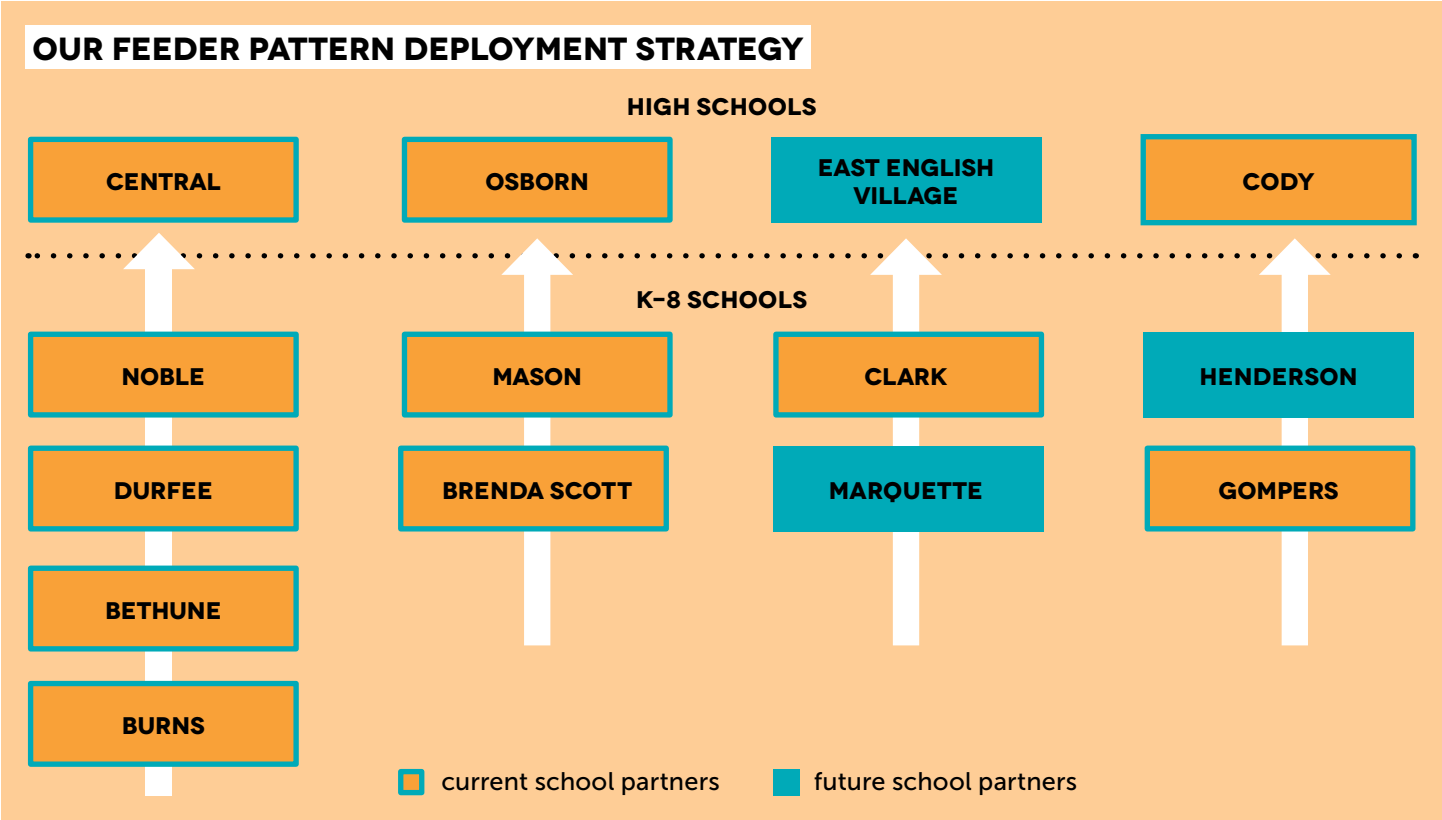
Contact Alli Knox at 248-703-0131 or [aknox@cityyear.org](mailto:aknox@cityyear.org)





# LONG-TERM IMPACT STRATEGY

City Year has a long-term impact strategy to significantly increase the graduation pipeline in Detroit. City Year is most effective when consistently working with the same students during key years of their educational experience. To achieve this goal, we are deploying our AmeriCorps members in four high schools and the K-8 schools that feed into the high schools. By saturating these feeder patterns, our AmeriCorps members are able to work with the same students year-over-year between grades 3-9 with the goal of increasing the number of students reaching 10th grade on time and on track. Research shows that students that hit this benchmark are almost four times more likely to graduate high school.



“ It's exciting to see City Year's expansion grow throughout our district. City Year's work is directly aligned to our vision to provide consistent and day-to-day academic, behavior and attendance support to our students.

DR. NIKOLAI VITTI, DPSCD SUPERINTENDENT



# RETURN ON INVESTMENT

City Year is made possible by public and private sector support, including federal funding from AmeriCorps, local contributions and private donations from corporations, individuals and foundations. **EVERY DOLLAR INVESTED IS MATCHED AT LEAST 1:1 BY OTHER RESOURCES.**

## A SMART INVESTMENT



For schools we partner with, City Year is **78% more cost effective** than contracting with individual providers to deliver City Year's holistic set of services<sup>1</sup>

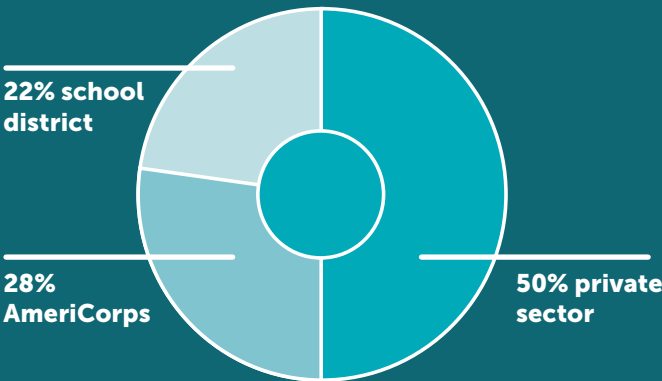


**\$7 million** in increased government revenue and cost savings from new high school graduates in each class served by City Year<sup>2</sup>



**17:1 return**  
Every \$1 of federal taxes invested in AmeriCorps and Senior Corps returns over \$17 to society, program members and the government.<sup>3</sup>

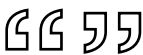
## OPERATING BUDGET: \$6.4 MILLION



## CHARITY NAVIGATOR HIGHEST RANKING



Charity Navigator is America's premier charity evaluator. Since 2003, City Year has earned Charity Navigator's highest rating, certifying our commitment to accountability, transparency and responsible fiscal management. Less than 1% of rated organizations have received this distinction for at least 16 consecutive years, placing City Year among the most trustworthy nonprofits in America.



All young people should get the advising, tutoring, and coaching they need to get on the college pathway that's right for them. And because of COVID-19, this work is especially urgent for the next few classes of graduating seniors. As the country focuses on the needs of these young people, supporting College Advising Corps, City Year, and Saga would be a great start. - **BILL GATES, BILL & MELINDA GATES FOUNDATION**

<sup>1</sup> In 2017, Deloitte Consulting LLP was engaged to aggregate and synthesize various industry and internal analyses to help City Year estimate and articulate ROI; City Year costs as compared to benchmark analysis of costs to provide similar services provided by a combination of individual providers. <sup>2</sup> City Year cost savings based on an estimate of \$292,000 benefit to society per graduate from: The consequences of dropping out of high school. (2009). Center for Labor Studies, Northeastern University. Retrieved from: [https://repository.library.northeastern.edu/downloads/neu:376324?datastream\\_id=content](https://repository.library.northeastern.edu/downloads/neu:376324?datastream_id=content). <sup>3</sup> AmeriCorps and Senior Corps: Quantifying the Impact. (2020). Retrieved from: <https://voicesforservice.org/research-and-reports/national-service-produces-171-return-on-investment/>



## OUR LOCAL LEADERSHIP

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**ROD WOOD**

President  
Detroit Lions

### Site Leadership

**ANDREW STEIN** | Executive Director | 313-554-5110 | [astein@cityyear.org](mailto:astein@cityyear.org)

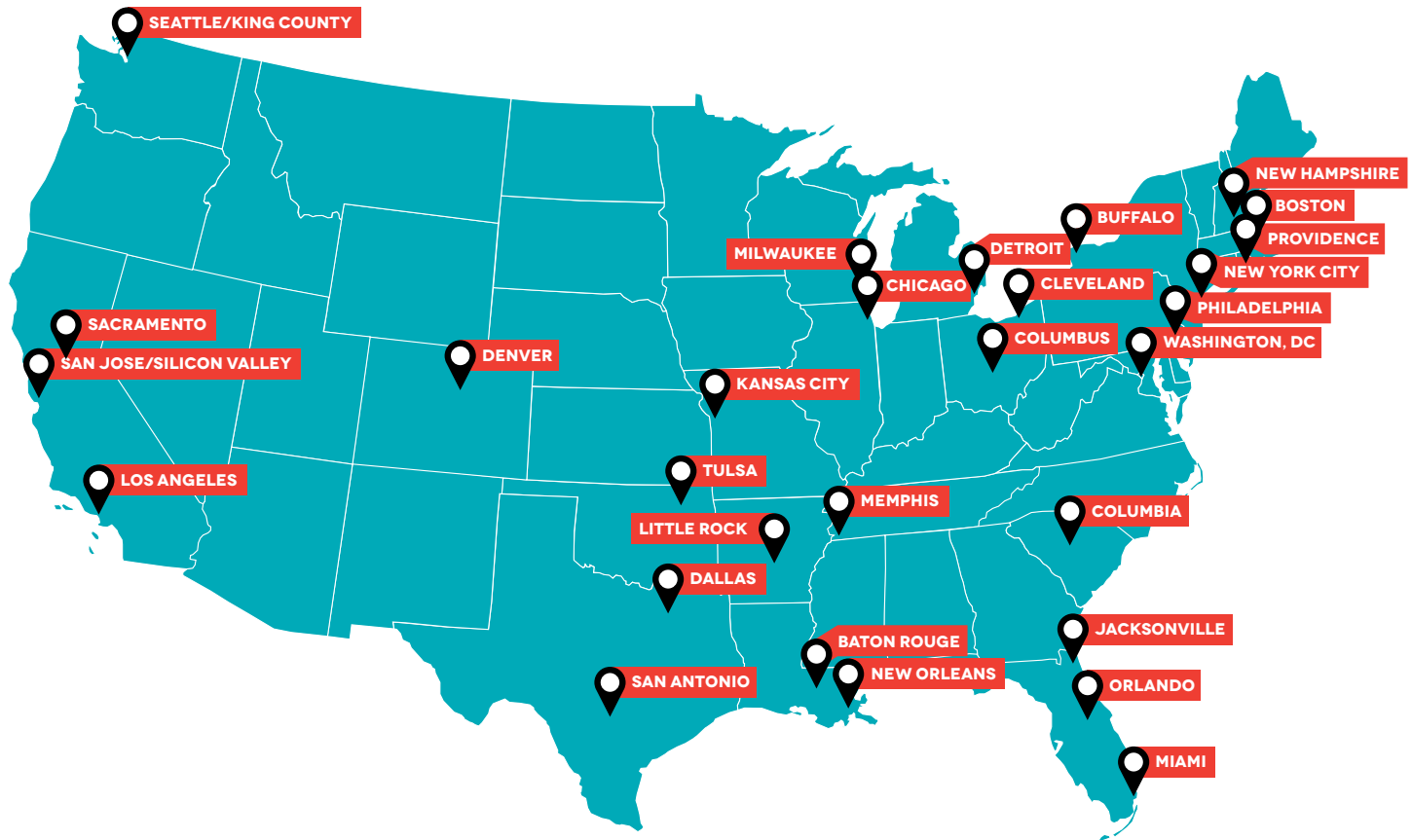
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**BRIAN KILKELLY** | Managing Director, Service | 313-686-2442 | [bkilkelly@cityyear.org](mailto:bkilkelly@cityyear.org)

**JESSICA STOWERS** | Managing Director, Impact | 313-686-2441 | [jlovy@cityyear.org](mailto:jlovy@cityyear.org)



# CITY YEAR SITES



For more information, visit us at:

   @CITYYEAR  CITYYEAR.ORG/BLOG  CITYYEAR.ORG

City Year helps students and schools succeed. Diverse teams of City Year AmeriCorps members provide support to students, classrooms and the whole school, helping to ensure that students in systemically under-resourced schools receive a high-quality education that prepares them with the skills and mindsets to thrive and contribute to their community. A 2015 study shows that schools that partner with City Year were up to two-to-three times more likely to improve on math and English assessments.

A proud member of the AmeriCorps national service network, City Year is supported by the Corporation for National and Community Service, local school districts and private philanthropy. City Year partners with public schools in 29 communities across the U.S. and through international affiliates in the U.K. and South Africa.

