



SHORECORPS/PALS

Partnership for Adolescents on the Lower Shore at Salisbury University

The AmeriCorps Mission ... to strengthen communities, encourage responsibility and expand opportunities. On the Lower Eastern Shore, AmeriCorps members serve in positions providing tutoring/mentoring services, conflict resolution training, parent and family support.

Agency Partners and AmeriCorps Members 2003-04

Agency	Name
Dorchester County Health Department	Nora Smith
Kent County Department of Social Services	Gina Morris
Queen Anne's County Play to Learn	Joann Meekins
Somerset County Library Three Lower Counties Community Services	Ajibike Browne Andrea Patey
Talbot County Chesapeake Bay Museum Family Support Center	Mary Ann Ray Lesley Plugge
Wicomico County Bennett Middle School Pemberton Parks Salisbury Middle School Salisbury Zoo	Stacy Thomas, Jeanette Ibeh Haywood Barnes Marquita Harris Heather Bradley, Kelly Ibarra Tasha C. Saunders
Delmar Elementary School	David Dobbins, Theresa Jarrett Erin Bramble, Ashley Beach
King's Kids Academy Salisbury Urban Ministries Glen Avenue Elementary School Salvation Army Wicomico County Library Health Department Wicomico Alternative Learning Center Ward Museum	Cammie Robinson Lena Weston Jackie Cox Lisa Wright, Monica Crockett Yvette Walker Ellen Brown Alricko Hill, Montre' Jenkins Ray Emmons
Worcester County Pocomoke High School Health Department	Elizabeth Carson Heather LaRouque Scott Whittemore, Dante Wilson

Become an AmeriCorps Site
If you are interested in becoming an AmeriCorps site and can use the services of ShoreCorps/PALS members, please call Linda Beall, program director, at 410-543-6137.



AmeriCorps Members 2003-2004

ShoreCorps/PALS Needs You!

AmeriCorps is a national service movement that engages tens of thousands of Americans of all ages and backgrounds in domestic Peace Corps—getting things done across America by meeting our education, public safety, environmental and human needs.

The mission of AmeriCorps is to strengthen communities, encourage responsibility and expand opportunities. On the Eastern Shore of Maryland, AmeriCorps members serve in positions providing tutoring/mentoring services, conflict resolution training, parent and family support services, health education programs, counseling services for pregnant adolescents, establishing peer support groups, conducting community outreach activities and recruiting volunteers to support project activities.

ShoreCorps/PALS members embark upon a challenging experience that will have a lasting effect on their lives and the lives of people in Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico and Worcester counties. ShoreCorps/PALS is recruiting 42 members to serve on the Eastern Shore in May 2004. We seek competent and energetic citizens 20 years of age or older for one year of service with PALS. Commitment to children and a commitment to a year of service is key to placement. PALS is seeking individuals for full-time (1,700 hours) positions. We provide a living allowance (\$10,197), post education award (\$4,725) to help pay school loans or future educational expenses and six credit hours of University course work. There are also part-time (900 hours) positions available. These positions offer (\$5,099) living allowance, post education award (\$2,363) to pay school loans or future expenses and six credit hours of University course work.

For more information call the PALS office at 410-548-5119.

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Inspiration from Dr. King

by George Whitehead, Project Director

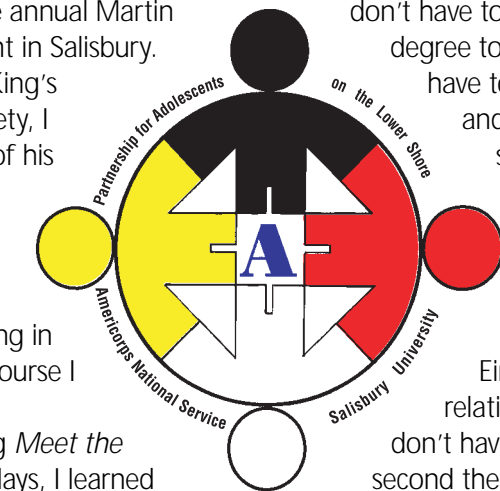
Since the inception of Shore Corps/PALS some of our members have served youth at the annual Martin Luther King Jr. event in Salisbury. As I reflect on Dr. King's impact on our society, I think immediately of his "I Have A Dream" speech and "Letter from Birmingham City Jail" that I included as a reading in a service learning course I co-taught.

While watching *Meet the Press* over the holidays, I learned of another speech by Dr. King about service. On this particular show, Moderator Tim Russert was interviewing Laura Bush and Carolyn Kennedy. The speech they discussed was "The Drum Major Instinct." This speech is included in Kennedy's new book, *A Patriot's Handbook*.

"... But recognize that he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. That's your new definition of greatness. And, this morning, the thing that I like about it. ... by giving that definition of greatness, it

means that everybody can be great. Because everybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve. You don't have to know about Plato and Aristotle to serve. You don't have to know about Einstein's theory of relativity to serve. You don't have to know about the second theory of thermodynamics in physics to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love. And you can be that servant."

As I think about this quote, I am reminded that one of the strengths of Shore Corps/PALS is the diversity of its members. I enjoy getting to know each member of PALS during our weekly class. We celebrate their successes and assist with their challenges. Together, they continue to serve their communities and make a difference.



Quote to Ponder

"Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as you ever can."
-John Wesley

Making a Difference

by Andrea Patey

As the semester progressed, the class material and the service at my site tended to intertwine and go hand in hand along the way. The order in which the material was presented was insightful and seemed to intersect accordingly with the turns my service has taken each step thus far. At the kick off (with the Fish Philosophy) to the most recent lectures on problem solving and conflict resolution, each method and technique taught has been relevant and beneficial.

The variety, extent and order of the material have undoubtedly influenced me, as well as other AmeriCorps members. Beginning with the Fish Philosophy seemed to motivate and encourage everyone to put forth his or her best effort by having a positive attitude and an open mind. Each of the four significant points seem to sum up how people should live out each day: Play, Make Their Day, Be There and Choose Your Attitude. This type of mentality gives way to great advice and I often found that I used these key points.

The child abuse and neglect speaker, the representatives from TTI Mobility Products and Dr. Dorsey Hammond (from SU), who spoke on educational tools, all added a new dimension and awareness to my service abilities. From this, I learned better strategies to deal with people, as well as to be more tactful in typical, everyday situations. I also applied bits of information to areas of my service with the youth from TLC. For example, I now have a better idea of what to look for when I make home visits thanks to Pam Thompson who spoke to us on child abuse and neglect. She gave specifics on what the proper sanitation in the bathroom and kitchen is supposed to be as well as pointing out that each child needs to have adequate sleeping space that meets a certain standard.

During home visits, I have been able to apply some of the techniques provided in class on improving my client's reading skills, in addition to using the positive encouragement techniques stressed by Dr. Hammond. The majority of at-risk youth today are struggling in their academics, which affects confidence levels as well as future success. This is the main reason why I am glad to be a part of the AmeriCorps program. It enables me to give assistance in the areas where help is most needed.

Conflict resolution has been a major topic addressed in the latter part of the semester and has not only helped me personally, but also has given me effective tools to use with the children and ultimately pass on to the youth I work with at TLC. I now make sure in conversations to use open ended questions, as opposed to yes/no questions. I have found this approach allows more of their feelings to be shared and, in the end, leads to better communication skills. I also focus on my body language, while making sure to listen carefully and restate what is being said. This helps to show that I care and it conveys that they have my undivided attention. The different problem solving approaches can be useful and I have shared some of them with my clients. A few kids also enjoyed taking the personality tests that we did for ourselves in class.

All in all, I was able to relate and use the course to positively influence my service with the youth whom I engage with at TLC. I enjoyed all the speakers and took something special away from each activity we touched upon. Lastly, I have learned a great deal about myself as well as a better means of positively influencing others and I look forward to the months to come.

From the Desk

by Linda Beall, Program Director

We are in the middle of winter and it's very cold outside. I'm looking forward to spring and warmer weather. The ShoreCorps/PALS members are busy at their sites regardless of the temperature outside. Their mission is to serve at-risk youth and adolescents. The first quarter progress report was completed in December and I would like to share with you what our PALS members have accomplished this program year so far.

- ShoreCorps/PALS members provided academic assistance to 533 students whose grades were poor or failing. 259 of these students improved school attendance or academic performance.

- ShoreCorps/PALS members improved life skills and self-esteem to 3,642 at-risk youth and adolescents including pregnant and parenting teens. It was reported by agencies that 432 of these youth and adolescents improved their life skills.

- It was reported that ShoreCorps/PALS members served in at least 14 safe places for at-risk youth and adolescents. 6,874 at-risk youth and adolescents were provided with a safe place to do their homework, recreational activities, etc.

- Site member agencies generated 449 volunteers this report. These volunteers generated 7,529 hours of service.

Regardless of the cold, rain, heat and snow, the ShoreCorps/PALS members trudge ahead to meet the needs of our youth and adolescents. ShoreCorps/PALS members make a difference in the lives of young people. They are committed to service, their community and their county. They continue to get things done.

Send Your Story Ideas

This newsletter is intended to let members' tell their stories about their projects, their lives, their communities and their aspirations. Each and every one of the members' has a story to tell, and it would be a shame if the public did not get to read them. Therefore, I would like members' to submit essays of no more than 300 words. We hope to publish the newsletter each quarter so keep those journal entries, re-read them, add to them and submit the finished product to me.

-Linda Beall

Salisbury's Promise

by Christie Smith

Salisbury's Promise Youth Alliance is a localized branch of America's Promise Youth Alliance. Salisbury's Promise is a non-profit organization whose main priority is to congregate the community and catalyze local organization's resources to benefit and serve Wicomico County youth. Salisbury's Promise embodies five promises deemed to be imperative for the area youth to receive. The five promises are Caring Adults, Safe Places, Healthy Start, Marketable Skills and Opportunities to Serve. Salisbury's Promise utilizes these five promises to bring together diverse institutions and organizations together for the greater good of the youth.

Salisbury's Promise has 10 Safe Sites. Safe Sites are the location where the same youth attend regularly and receive all five promises. Salisbury's Promise is partnered with 15 organizations, 12 schools and 11 faith-based organizations. One of Salisbury's Promise goals is to initiate partnerships among schools and faith-based organizations. Faith/school

First Freeze

by Ray Emmons

This morning, I went out to take photographs around the pond here at the Ward Museum of Wildfowl Art (my AmeriCorps site). Last night was our first real freeze. There was ice standing on the pond surface—not thick, but enough to show frost patterns and prevent wavelets from disturbing the surface. My goal was to see if I could capture some of the plants along the nature trail in their winter guises. Instead, my attention was captured by an arriving flight of geese. Their feathers were sleek and shiny, their patterns distinct and sharp. They came in for a landing, honking loudly with great enthusiasm. Obviously, they were from this year's class of goslings: brash, bold and inexperienced.

They glided in, feet to the fore as they had landed since they learned to fly. However, the water didn't give and their feet slid out from beneath them, while they back-pedaling to stop. They flapped their wings, useless now due to the awkward position their bodies had contorted into and slid across the ice. Some caught their balance and stood up, only to promptly fall through the ice when their weight beared upon it. Others succeeded only in breaking the ice with their flapping and scrambling, abruptly stopping in the wet water. If geese could look embarrassed, they certainly did. They held their heads high with a look of "I meant to do that." Goose braggadocio was rampant on the pond this morning. The gulls laughed at the inexperienced fledglings. A cormorant showed them how gracefully it really could be done. The resident ducks simply found open water and waddled up onto the ice when they wanted. The Great Blue Heron watched from the sidelines: He never simply flies in that way. He scans, plans and lands, in that order. Carefully, and deliberately, in order not to scare the fish. Silly geese!

Who are we? Who are our students? Are we geese?

partnerships help to meet the needs of both the school and the faith-based organization. There are currently 11 faith/school partnerships.

On December 13, 15 volunteers from the Wicomico Middle WISE after school program and Bennett Middle GEMS after school program sorted gift items and stuffed stockings for local children in need. The donated gifts and stockings were sorted for proper delivery to residences. One Wicomico Middle student stated that he learned "to help whenever you don't have anything to do." Another Wicomico Middle student stated "I feel good because I did something that matters and made people's Christmas better."

Salisbury's Promise and the Lower Shore Workforce Alliance coordinated a job shadowing event that lasted throughout the month of February. The kickoff date was February 2, and 12 businesses and agencies participated by hosting a student or students.

For more information on Salisbury's Promise, please call Christie Smith at 410-677-5396.

Ducks? Herons? Cormorants? Are we flying headlong into new and unusual situations? Are we deliberate as to not scare our students? Are we tentative, or graceful, or clumsy, or afraid to break the ice? Do we react with scorn or displeasure, cocky arrogance, indifference, condescension or unwarranted (untested) pride?

AmeriCorps is a small, protected pond that we can use to develop and hone our skills. Our students can learn to accept us in spite of our flaws if we let them see our flaws. They can see us grow by our actions in correcting our own faux pas. They can watch us take flight a second time and land with (hopefully) a bit more grace and poise. We can adapt to the learning experiences we encounter (and even create, often by accident). Our small pond gives us that freedom and security.

How different it might be if we all simply griped about the ice, the changes in the pond we weren't consulted about, the fool who just tries to make things difficult for us, just because! How silly it would look to the other ducks if we came in the second time, with the same braggadocio and bravado, with the same result. That may be the most embarrassing moment after all, when we know it was our fault this time.

The museum here is full of wonderful art, all based on waterfowl, much of it frozen in flight or in that marvelous moment before touchdown when the anticipation of landing, of resting, of feeding is highest. There is art and beauty in the flight of birds, even those just learning to fly (or to land). Open your eyes. Your students are beautiful in their struggles to fit in, you are beautiful in your struggles to lead the way, your teachers and mentors are beautiful in their graceful guidance and forgiving stances. Let's all soar ... together.