



**Mile High Youth Corps
Denver, CO**

Mile High Youth Corps has a 16-year track record of engaging youth in jobs that help the planet and provide pathways to a promising future. MHYC Corpsmembers receive green jobs training and hands-on work experience through service on projects in four primary areas: energy conservation, water conservation, land conservation and green housing construction. The program started with a focus on land conservation 16 years ago, while a construction component was added six years ago and an energy and water conservation component three years ago. The program seeks to give opportunities to young adults 16-24 years old. Seventy percent of participants are from low- or very low-income households. More than fifty percent receive food stamps and 30 percent have been involved with the criminal justice system. This year, 152 youth will participate in Mile High Youth Corps. The largest number will serve in the YouthBuild program for five months on affordable housing construction.

This case study is current as of April 2009. For more information, visit <http://www.milehighyouthcorps.org/> or contact Kelly Causey, kellyc@mhyc.net.

<p>Training methodology</p>	<p>Mile High provides an orientation session for all Corpsmembers in teambuilding, tool training, safety, diversity, vehicle maintenance, goal setting, leadership development, career planning, healthy lifestyles and environmental education. Participants then participate in job-specific training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Energy</u>: Home Weatherization/ Energy Retrofits. energy conservation, basics of energy systems, system impacts of conservation efforts; climate change, energy justice/equity; - <u>Water</u>: supply side issues in water use, the state of water in the region and in the world, the privatization of water resources; - <u>Land</u>: fire, land use, conservation, population growth, resource use, wild life (COOL Curriculum). - <u>Construction</u>: OSHA certification, PACT curriculum, GED classes, Lifeskills classes and career preparation.
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This case study is meant to give a snapshot of the program profiled here. For the most up to date information on this program, please visit their website

<p>Participants and how recruited</p>	<p>Mile High Youth Corps recruits young people who want to serve their community, have a strong work ethic and are interested in green jobs. MHYC has a full time staff member devoted to recruitment and outreach. MHYC recruits through job fairs, internet postings, referrals from school counselors and other community agencies. Word of mouth has been a successful tool as many of our alumni encourage friends and family to apply to the Corps. Seventy percent of the Corps members are from low-income or very low income households, 16 percent are either homeless or from foster care, 23 percent receive public assistance. Some of the young people are parents and 30 percent have been involved in the criminal justice system.</p>
<p>Green program from the outset?</p>	<p>Mile High Youth Corps' programming has always been conservation oriented.</p>
<p>Length and frequency of training</p>	<p>Mile High Youth Corps operates year round. The length of each program varies and several cycles are offered so that MHYC can employ, educate and train a greater number of youth.</p> <p><u>AmeriCorps Leadership & Conservation</u> program is 11 months in land & energy conservation</p> <p><u>YouthBuild</u> program has 2 cycles of five months on green housing construction</p> <p><u>Water Conservation</u> program is has four cycles of 10 weeks</p> <p><u>Summer of Service</u> is a 10 to 12 week summer program in land conservation projects.</p> <p><u>Seasonal</u> crews in land and energy conservation serve for 10 weeks throughout the year based on the demand for the projects.</p>
<p>Include on-the-job training or paid apprenticeships?</p>	<p>Mile High participants are offered paid on-the-job training combined with orientations, trainings, educational activities including GED classes, certifications and college credit as well as an AmeriCorps Education Award and post-corps support for career planning. . All Corps members receive either wages or stipends.</p>
<p>Funding</p>	<p>Fee-for-service contracts, government and foundation grants, Corporate grants and sponsorships, individual donations.</p>

<p>Key relationships</p>	<p>Mile High Youth Corps has relationships with employers, community colleges and other educational institutions, labor unions, and several workforce development offices. These relationships include funding, credit hours for participants, job placements and involvement on advisory committees and the Board of Directors. Employers take part in Job Readiness Training through their participation in Mock Interviews, Career Panels, and Job Shadows. Corpsmembers are able to make connections to prospective employers at these events. MHYC created an Employer Council which advises the agency on aspects of programming including developing the appropriate skills and competencies related to Job Readiness. The Employer Council works to increase Mile High’s visibility in key industries and provides job placements.</p>
<p>Eligibility</p>	<p>Funding sources may have requirements for eligibility such as income, but otherwise, there is no set requirement for eligibility beyond the age range of 16-24. The minimum academic threshold participants would need is an 8th grade level of math and English proficiency. Some participants have been accepted who tested at a 6th grade level.</p>
<p>Credentials</p>	<p>Participants can receive these credentials:</p> <p><u>Land Conservation</u> – First Aid/CPR, Sawyer certification (through Forest Service) and the potential to earn college credit during the summer in Natural Resources (NRE 280 Internship and NRE 225 Environmental Education) through Front Range Community College.</p> <p><u>Energy Conservation</u> – First Aid/CPR, certification through local weatherization agency.</p> <p><u>Water Conservation</u> – training provided by the water authority but there is no certification.</p> <p><u>Construction</u> (YouthBuild) - OSHA 10-hr. certification, community college credit.</p>
<p>Placement and follow-up services</p>	<p>Mile High employs an outcomes measurement system to track participant success as well as to evaluate overall program</p>

effectiveness. MHYC focuses on helping participants achieve the following outcomes:

Job Readiness: Corpsmembers will have the skills and experience necessary to be successful in the workforce. Success will be measured by the number of youth placed in jobs after leaving the Corps.

Increased Education Level: Corpsmembers will improve their proficiency in basic educational subjects and will be motivated to continue education beyond high school. Success will be measured by the number of youth earning their GED and increasing in grade level on assessment tests.

Access to Higher Education: Corpsmembers will have the resources and support they need to enter post-secondary education and access financial aid resources. Success will be measured by the number of youth earning AmeriCorps education awards, accessing other financial resources and enrolling in post-secondary education or training programs.

Connection to the Community: Corpsmembers will have a sense of belonging and connection to their community and be willing to contribute to its well being. Success will be measured by participation in MHYC service projects and scores on project sponsor evaluations.

MHYC tracks outcomes for each program using a database designed specifically for youth employment programs. These results are used internally and externally to make programmatic improvements.