

## **Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism**

March 19, 2026, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Virtual

Board Members Present: Jason Ascher, Debra Rapone, Joy Parker, Dominick Rascona, Carl Street, Kimberley Martin, Christine Harris, Joel Morgan, Victoria Proffitt, Clovia Lawrence, Jonathan Stallings

Board Members Absent: Aaron McClung, Kimberly Luckabaugh, Amanda Gannon, Shane Roberts-Thomas, Linda Malone-Colon, Veronica Evans, Mark Creason, Sam Parham, Clifford Yee

Ex-Officio Members Present: Melissa Hartung, Carol Ayars

Virginia Service Foundation Members Present: Julie Strandlie, Sheila Williamson-Branch, Maggie Bowman

Serve Virginia Staff Present: Kathy Spangler, Analise Gammel, Jae-Young Choe, Samantha Lukasiewicz, Mackenzie Vuotto, Sasha Bronder, Maxwell Gruber

Guests: Dana Silicki, David Gogal

The Board Meeting was called to order at 10:02 a.m. by Board Chair Joel Morgan.

### **Adoption of Agenda and Minutes**

The Chair called for the adoption of minutes from the February 17, 2026 meeting. The motion to adopt the minutes was made by Carl Street, Dominick Rascona seconded, and all were in favor. The minutes from February 17, 2026 were adopted.

The Chair called for the adoption of the agenda. Carl Street motioned to adopt the agenda, Joy Parker seconded, and all were in favor.

### **Ratification of 2/17/2026 Board Actions**

Given that the February 17<sup>th</sup> meeting did not have a quorum, the Chair called for approval of the February 17<sup>th</sup> agenda, the September 18, 2025 minutes, and the adoption of a remote meeting policy which will allow the Board to have non-consecutive virtual board meetings this year. The motion to ratify all board actions from the February 17, 2026 meeting was made by Joy Parker, seconded by Dominick Rascona, and all were in favor.

### **Mission Moment**

The Chair introduced Dana Silicki, Director of STEM, Service, and Lifelong Learning at the Institute of Advance Learning and Research (IALR) in Danville to share a Mission Moment. For than 11 years, the Dan River Year AmeriCorps program, operated by IALR, has been a driving force for positive change in Southern Virginia. The program connects passionate individuals with opportunities to serve in schools, neighborhoods, and community organizations, meeting local needs while creating pathways for personal and professional growth. What started as a

STEM tutoring initiative has evolved into a multi-faceted program that addresses education, health, and wellness. Today, AmeriCorps members serve across three core focus areas: STEM and Literacy Education, Youth Mental Health, and Community Health Outreach.

### **Discussion on Volunteerism**

The Chair invited the board members to share their personal stories of volunteering and discuss the local volunteer landscape of where they live. Board members shared their stories of volunteerism and contributed to the discussion.

### **Serve Virginia Update**

Serve Virginia Director Kathy Spangler reported that AmeriCorps has made some changes including making the decision to move from calling those serving through AmeriCorps “members” to calling them volunteers. Kathy asked the Board to start calling members “volunteers.”

### Youth Mental Health Corps (YMHC)

The Youth Mental Health Corps program addresses the youth mental health crisis in Virginia and across the nation. It’s also a response to the growing shortage of qualified professionals to address the demand for such services. In 2024, Serve Virginia applied for and received a planning grant from the Schultz Family Foundation and Pinterest to explore developing a Youth Mental Health Corps in Virginia. In 2025, Serve Virginia received a two-year \$500,000 grant to implement the Virginia Youth Mental Health Corps through the Virginia Service Foundation.

Launched in September, the Youth Mental Health Corps has three primary objectives:

- Build local capacity and create opportunities for young people to earn credentials and expand youth mental health programming.
- Meet community needs by meeting young people where they are and filling gaps in services
- Develop the talent pipeline for future behavioral health professionals. (pathways for workforce development)

Serve Virginia Statewide Engagement Officer, Analise Gammel, discussed the YMHC Pathways. The YMHC program model in Virginia differs slightly from the 10 other operational states in that it includes both AmeriCorps and Serve Virginia volunteers. They are serving within three different pathways: School-based Mental Health, Community-based Mental Health, and Youth Peer Recovery. New strategic partnerships are being established.

YMHC Coordinator, Mackenzie Vuotto, shared some highlights of the program: 11 members finished service in December 2025; Members reached over 1,300 individuals outside of their caseloads through whole-school wellness and youth mental health supports, and 7,168 hours were completed between 9/25/25 and 12/25/25.

Currently, there are 15 YMHC programs: 4 AmeriCorps programs, 3 non-national service programs, and 8 community service boards. They have been able to enroll 45 members, with an additional 20 being recruited and placed in the spring, bringing the total to 65 YMHC Members projected by the end of the program year (8/31/26).

As the YMHC program continues to expand and enroll more members into the second year, new partnerships are being developed. The Board's assistance is requested with help identifying local or regional program and/or funding partners. With the grant term set to conclude at the end of June 2027, Serve Virginia has engaged research firm SIR to assist with developing a sustainability and expansion plan with budget needs in time for the submittal of a budget request for consideration by the Governor's Office by this summer. Collaboration with the Virginia Funders Network is underway to expand a network of regional funders to support YMHC programs locally—the George Mason University YMHC program will be featured during a luncheon at the annual Virginia Funders Network Conference in May. Additionally, Serve Virginia is working with the VDSS Commissioner to host a Virginia leadership event with Administration officials and members of the General Assembly this spring to socialize the potential of the YMHC program and the need for ongoing public funding support. Furthermore, discussions are being planned on how the potential social media settlement funding could sustain and expand this initiative in future years.

### Statewide Volunteer Hub

There are three main goals for developing the Serve Virginia Volunteer Hub.

- Equip community-based organizations with a strong & connected infrastructure for volunteer recruitment, management, and engagement.
- Enhance the experience for Virginians searching for volunteer opportunities.
- Amplify existing Serve Virginia projects

There are currently 16 volunteer centers across Virginia providing online systems to match individuals with volunteer opportunities and supporting organizations with volunteer management tools. These volunteer centers are promoted on the Serve Virginia website. Building a statewide volunteer hub will strengthen the ability to promote, inspire, and mobilize volunteerism across the Commonwealth. Building the Volunteer River Counties platform has better positioned Serve Virginia to support other communities, particularly in rural areas where volunteer centers are sparse or nonexistent. The Statewide Volunteer Hub is slated to launch at the 2026 Volunteerism Summit in May.

Some ways that board members can be involved are: 1) help identify key partners in underserved areas to potentially host or fund a local volunteer center; 2) assist with outreach to local organizations and businesses and amplify the Serve Virginia hub when it launches; and 3) help identify what performance metrics may be helpful to track the development and progress of this project.

### **Partner Updates**

#### Virginia Service Foundation

Virginia Service Foundation Chair Julie Strandlie reported that February 17, 2026 was AmeriCorps Hill Day at the Capitol in Richmond, Virginia. Coinciding with National Service Day, the activities were focused on educating Virginia's leaders on the impact and importance of AmeriCorps in Virginia. Members of the Virginia Service Foundation and the Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism convened with AmeriCorps alumni, volunteers, program staff, and other key allies in being recognized during Morning Hour at the General Assembly.

Although the HB1454 bill to remove the tax on the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award had a great start and passed through the House Finance Committee unanimously, it did not pass through the Budget Committee. The Foundation has made some efforts at the federal level, and the bill was reintroduced last week.

The Foundation needs the Board's help to support AmeriCorps by identifying within their networks any decision-makers or key relationships that could help promote and advocate for AmeriCorps and the HB1454 bill. Strandlie requested board members to complete the legislative connections survey. The funding letter is about to close out, so any prospective connections to Senators are encouraged to be shared promptly with Julie Strandlie.

#### AmeriCorps Update

Melissa Hartung, AmeriCorps Senior Portfolio Manager for the Mid-Atlantic region, provided an update on AmeriCorps. Hartung also serves Maryland, Delaware, and Pennsylvania. AmeriCorps is currently deeply involved in grant making. There are multiple open Notice of Funding Opportunities which all close within the next two weeks. AmeriCorps is undergoing a renovation project resulting in a smaller workforce and a focus on internal processes. The agency has transitioned from calling AmeriCorps members to calling them AmeriCorps volunteers.

#### **Public Comment, Final Remarks, and Adjournment**

Chair Joel Morgan opened the floor for public comments. The next board meeting takes place in-person on May 20, 2026 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. A quorum will be necessary at that meeting for the annual voting on AmeriCorps grants for the upcoming program year.

The Chair entertained a motion to close the meeting. The motion was made by Carl Street, Joy Parker seconded, and all were in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Prepared by Jae-Young Choe  
Submitted by Analise Gammel