

Maryland Civic Justice Corps Alternative Funding Sources
Joint Chairman's Report Response
December 1, 2009

Introduction

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Maryland Department of Juvenile Services and the Maryland State Department of Education respectfully submit the following 2009 Joint Chairman's Report regarding "Civic Justice Corps Alternative Funding Sources."

The Maryland Civic Justice Corps (CJC) was launched in 2008 to provide at-risk youth ages 14-17 with six-week summer jobs performing conservation service projects in Maryland State Parks. Managed by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources' Maryland Park Service, the CJC program represents an extension of the agency's existing 25-year, award-winning AmeriCorps program, the Maryland Conservation Corps, which serves older youth ages 17-24 years. The CJC program employs the time-tested benefits of fostering a connection between youth and nature through conservation service to enrich their physical and mental well-being, while preparing them for future success in the workforce.

Background

The CJC program is based on a national Civic Justice Corps model, developed by The Corps Network in 2006, a national association representing youth conservation corps programs, to engage at-risk youth in conservation service. There are approximately 14 CJC programs operating nationwide. The Maryland CJC model includes the following areas of focus described as the "Essential Pillars" that define the program:

1. Provide youth with job and life skills through conservation service.
2. Restore natural and cultural resources in Maryland State Parks and other public lands.
3. Foster an environmental stewardship ethic in youth.
4. Invest in the well-being of youth through the development of personal connections to nature.

The Maryland Park Service CJC operating budget of \$1,000,000 supports all program costs not covered through other funding and in-kind sources (see chart below), including: crew supervisors, transportation, uniforms and project supplies and materials. Maryland Park Service staff, including park management, administrators, park rangers, park maintenance supervisors and technicians and other seasonal employees provide direct support, supervision and coordination at each park location hosting a CJC program. In addition, the Maryland Park Service's Maryland Conservation Corps members are assigned support roles to oversee park restoration projects and to mentor CJC youth.

In 2008, the CJC program enrolled 200 Baltimore City youth and graduated 118 at the conclusion of the six-week summer program. CJC members participated in a wide variety of natural habitat and park facility restoration projects that benefited Gunpowder Falls State Park and Patapsco Valley State Park (see 2008 CJC Program report attached as Appendix 1).

In 2009, the program expanded to 264 youth, including youth from Baltimore City, Harford County, Prince George's County and Worcester and Somerset Counties. The program graduated 202 youth or 77% of the CJC class. Per the chart below, the Maryland Park Service developed partnerships with local and regional agencies to support new CJC programs at Merkle Wildlife Sanctuary, Susquehanna State Park, Assateague State Park, Pocomoke River State Park and Janes Island State Park (see Appendix 2 for list of 2009 projects completed on public lands).

Funding Support

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is committed to pursuing agency and organizational partners, as well as, diverse funding sources to help expand and offset CJC program costs. The chart below offers a summary of alternative funding and in-kind support totaling \$371,909 that was secured for CJC in 2009.

CJC Agency and Organizational Supporters	Funding /In-Kind Support for 2009 program year	Application
Baltimore City Mayor's Office of Employee Development – YouthWorks	\$250,000 In-kind staff support	Cost of youth stipends for 200 Baltimore City youth, plus in-kind support for payroll administration, recruitment, hiring and contract completion.
Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation	\$27,000	Youth stipends for Merkle Wildlife Sanctuary State Park CJC program
Chesapeake Bay Trust	\$25,000	Materials & supplies for CJC tree-planting project at Gunpowder Falls State Park
Macy's Department Stores	\$8,000	Cost of CJC graduation ceremony and related expenses at North Point State Park
Susquehanna Workforce Network	\$34,909	Youth stipends and other program support for Harford County CJC program at Susquehanna State Park

Lower Shore Workforce Alliance	\$27,000 In-kind staff support	Youth stipends plus staff support for CJC program at Assateague, Pocomoke and Janes Island State Parks
State Highway Administration	In-kind staff support	Services of landscape architects and engineers to prepare landscape plan, renderings, etc. for 30-acre tree-planting and trail project at Gunpowder Falls State Park
Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission	In-kind staff support	M-NCPPC conducted recruitment, administration, and outdoor enrichment activities for CJC program at Merkle Wildlife Sanctuary State Park in Prince George's County
Harford County Sheriff's Office	In-kind support	Assisted in making connections, building partnerships in the community, and facilitated access to grant funds to support CJC youth at Susquehanna State Park
Department of Juvenile Services	In-kind support	Recruitment of court-involved CJC youth participants from Baltimore City
Harford County Public Schools	In-kind support	Staff prepared and administered grant for Susquehanna Workforce Network in support of CJC youth at Susquehanna State Park
Herring Run Watershed Association	In-kind staff and volunteer support	HRWA personnel planned and supervised restoration projects in Herring Run Park, Baltimore City performed by CJC youth
Worcester County Public Schools	In-kind staff support	Identification, recruitment and administration of contracts of CJC youth at Assateague, Pocomoke and Janes Island State Parks
Total Cash	\$371,909	

Role of the Department of Juvenile Services

DNR has partnered with the Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) from the inception of the CJC program in 2008. DJS has provided in-kind contributions, providing assistance and expertise in recruiting court-involved youth to participate in the program.

In 2010, DNR is collaborating with DJS to secure AmeriCorps and federal Department of Labor stimulus grant funds to support a CJC program in Western Maryland for up to 200 DJS youth at youth centers located at Meadow Mountain, Backbone Mountain, Green Ridge and Savage Mountain. DJS will provide in-kind and cash funding for the 6-month programs including staff supervision, meals, transportation and other program components.

The federal stimulus funds will be accessed through the Maryland Department Labor, Licensing and Registration (DLLR) and Frostburg State University's A-Star program. These funds will support youth stipends, uniforms and safety equipment, as well as, materials and supplies to support CJC projects. Projects will include the restoration of State Park cabins using green technologies, providing skill development in carpentry, electric and plumbing. DJS youth will also become eligible for AmeriCorps college scholarships up to \$1,250 after 450 hours of service through a long-standing partnership between DJS and the A-Star AmeriCorps program.

Role of Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE)

CJC projects resemble current MSDE environmental education efforts that occur as part of the regular school curriculum or as part of the Student Service Learning requirement. These restoration projects must directly address the State Content Standards, be embedded as part of the curriculum, and require research, action and reflection upon the action in order to qualify as a meaningful outdoor experience as required by the Chesapeake Bay 2000 Agreement and the Governor's Children in Nature Plan. Several school systems, as noted in the above text, currently have partnerships with the State Parks and engage students in long-term, curriculum-based activities designated by the local boards of education.

MSDE also sponsors similar programs through the MSDE Juvenile Services Education program. MSDE Juvenile Services administers the instructional program at five DJS residential facilities, including the Charles H. Hickey Jr. School, Baltimore City Juvenile Justice Center, J. DeWeese Carter Children's Center, Lower Eastern Shore Children's Center, and Victor Cullen Center. The Juvenile Services Education programs at these locations have not developed partnerships with the CJC since all but one of these facilities house detained youth whose average length of stay is 17 days. Because of the length of the stay, these students cannot engage in these activities as part of the regular curricular program.

MSDE Juvenile Services and MSDE Environmental Education have no funds to support program development or student participation. Should funds become available

and there is opportunity to align student participation in the Maryland Civic Justice Corp with the education program, MSDE would be happy to explore a partnership.

A suggested source of funding may be through the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Environmental Education grants program. MSDE is also monitoring an amendment to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act which would provide funding for Environmental Education. This bill is expected to be addressed in 2010.

APPENDIX 1

See attached 2008 CJC report

APPENDIX 2

Partial List of Accomplishments by 2009 CJC Program
(these projects were completed by CJC youth during the 6-week summer program)

1 historic canal lock restored

776 trees planted

1 camper recycling center built

5 trail head parking lots improved

19 disc golf tees built

69 picnic tables built

300 pounds of scrap metal recycled

10,267 yards of trail repaired

3 miles of park bondary recovered

194 campsites upgraded

2,000 feet of dune fencing repaired

1 brick stairway repaired

over 4 tons of trash removed from Maryland waterways

over 3,000 pounds of trash removed from public lands

2 Baywise gardens planted

3,000 feet of boat dock restored

1 park truck engine rebuilt

150 dock pilings recapped

30 picnic tables refurbished

1 bee garden planted

23 fire rings installed

1 endangered butterfly enclosure built

1 Scales and Tales aviary refurbished

2,350 feet of fencing installed

3 footbridges built

20 park benches built

5 acres of invasive species removed

360 square feet of shoreline restored

8 floating wetland gardens installed

731 native perennials planted
2 ADA trails completed
1 equestrian compost bin built
2 rain gardens planted
11 rain barrels installed
6 horseshoe pits rebuilt
1 historic springhouse restored
20 new shutters built for historic grist mill
6,380 yards of new trail constructed
1 marsh observation deck built
20 park buildings painted
1 garden trellis constructed
50 park signs installed
12,000 pounds of lumber recycled
8 bat boxes built and installed
1 youth group camping area refurbished
over 200 bags of invasive plant material removed
1 wildlife habitat garden planted
6,000 pounds of rip-rap placed
1 historic train station refurbished
18 dead and dangerous trees removed
6 miles of stream bank cleaned up



MARYLAND CIVIC JUSTICE CORPS

"Conservation Service, Reconnecting Youth and Nature"

Report on the First-Year Implementation of the Civic Justice Corps Program

October 2008

**Prepared for the Maryland Park Service,
Department of Natural Resources, Annapolis, Maryland**

Report on the First-Year Implementation of Civic Justice Corps Program

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MARYLAND CIVIC JUSTICE CORPS 2008

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Maryland Civic Justice Corps 2008 Program

The Maryland Civic Justice Corps (CJC) is a six-week summer program that builds job skills and environmental stewardship through participation in restoration and improvement projects in Maryland State Parks. The CJC was established in 2008 by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) under Governor Martin O'Malley's Executive Order establishing the "Maryland Partnership for Children in Nature" that promotes outdoor experiential activities and environmental education. In its inaugural year, CJC fulfilled the intent of the Order by providing Baltimore City youth aged 14-20 with stipends and program funding to support their engagement in meaningful outdoor recreational and stewardship experiences in Gunpowder Falls and Patapsco Valley State Parks.

In collaboration with local and state agencies, foundations, nonprofit organizations, the Baltimore City Public School Systems (BCPSS) and the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services (DJS), CJC provided youth with six weeks of structured and unstructured opportunities for play, outdoor recreation, learning, and scientific study. Under the administration of the Maryland Park Service (MPS), CJC is defined by four "Pillars:"

- Teach life skills through conservation service.
- Build personal connections to nature through outdoor recreation and interpretation.
- Develop environmental citizenship through the introduction and application of stewardship principles.
- Restore natural and cultural resources in Maryland State Parks and other public lands.

Program Evaluation and Report Approach

In an effort to incorporate accountability and performance measurement into the program, MPS contracted with the Parks & People Foundation's Urban Resources Initiative (URI) to support recruitment and hiring efforts and to conduct an internal preliminary evaluation of the 2008 CJC program's implementation process and operations, and to evaluate and summarize the benefits accrued to program participants. This report describes CJC participants' characteristics, performance, and career and educational aspirations before and after the program. The report also includes a summary of the administration of the Civic Justice Corps, challenges to expansion, and recommendations for sustainability of the program in 2009 and beyond.

This report relies on the following data sources:

- Review of program documents, including recruitment and application forms.
- Observations of partners, CJC staff, and program participants.
- Informal discussion and correspondence among MPS, DNR, DJS, and PPF staff responsible for designing and implementing the program and youth recruitment.
- Pre- and Post Surveys of CJC program participants and staff administered by Parks & People Foundation staff.
- Program administrative data that includes mid-term and final performance evaluations conducted by crew chiefs.
- A database created by the Parks & People Foundation, which contains some administrative information about applicant and participant demographic and geographical characteristics, survey responses, participants' time-sheets, and payroll data.

Program Implementation

In the spring of 2008, the Maryland DNR initiated CJC as an expansion of the Maryland Conservation Corps (MCC), a highly successful award-winning conservation corps program operated by MPS that targeted Baltimore City in its first year. As the lead agency for the development of CJC, MPS implemented the program with the support of the PPF and DJS and operated in partnership with Baltimore City Mayor Sheila Dixon, the Mayor's Office of Employment Development-YouthWorks, MCC and others committed to the use of natural resource conservation service and environmental stewardship as a strategy for promoting the social and economic development of disadvantaged youth.

Participant Recruitment

MPS and its partners sought to recruit and place a total of Baltimore City 200 youth aged 14-20 in a 6-week conservation service and enrichment activity summer program. It was estimated that a minimum of 192 crew members would participate. Half of the youth were recruited by the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services from a population of youth currently involved in the court system.

Program Locations and Management Structure

CJC's summer program staff and activities were located at Gunpowder Falls and Patapsco Valley State Parks, and the daily operations of each site were managed by CJC Coaches. Designed as a crew-based system, each CJC participant was assigned to a team consisting of eight crew members for a total of 24 crews. Each Crew operated under the supervision of a Crew Chief who reported directly to his or her site Coach. Crew Chiefs assisted in the management of assigned restoration projects and provided environmental and naturalist education and job-skills training to their crew

members. Additionally, 24 peer leaders (one for each crew) were selected from among the corps members and given a slightly higher stipend. These peer leaders would also be responsible for setting a positive example for their peers, but did not have any direct supervisory authority over their fellow corps members. (See Appendix I for Job Descriptions) Three additional staff persons were hired by Parks & People Foundation to provide on-site program and logistical support for non-DJS participants and during transport of crew members to their assigned parks.

Compensation for Crewmembers and Peer Leaders

CJC began ran from June 30 to August 8, 2008. Crew members were employed Monday through Friday, 7:00 am to 3:00 pm, for 40 hours a week (including a half-hour lunch each day and transportation time to site.) Participants were supported by a living allowance of \$6.55/hour; peer leaders earned \$8.00/hour. Timesheets that were filled out by crew chiefs and signed by both the chief and the crew member.

Transportation

CJC is non-residential program and youth were provided free transportation to Patapsco Valley State Park and Gunpowder Falls State Park daily by bus from five sites throughout the city. (See Appendix II for an aerial map of these locations.)

Westside Pick-up and Drop Off Locations	Number of Buses	Eastside Pick-up and Drop-Off Locations	Number of Buses
CVS (Parking Lot) 2509 Pennsylvania Avenue, Baltimore, MD	1	Harry & Jeanette Weinberg YMCA 900 E 33 Street Baltimore, MD	1
Lemmell Middle School 2801 N. Dukeland Street, Baltimore, MD	1	Hope Academy 1808 Edison Hw, Baltimore, MD	1
Reisterstown Plaza Metro Station 6301 Wabash Avenue, Baltimore, MD	2	Baltimore City Juvenile Justice Center 300 Gay Street, Baltimore, MD	2

Restoration Projects

CJC projects included regular park maintenance, new construction, removal of invasive species, and installing new plantings. **Twenty-eight buildings** were scraped and painted or otherwise repaired, over **eleven miles of hiking trails** were improved, over **nine tons of trash and debris were removed** from rivers, streams, and park areas, including the North Point Battlefield, and more than **100 large trees were planted**. In addition, the renovation of **two dilapidated park structures** was begun by CJC crews; these structures are now being restored to their prior use as nature centers.

Project selection was based on the need to restore natural resources and public facilities, as well as the value of the project as a learning experience in terms of skills development (carpentry, landscaping, etc.) or environmental stewardship messages that would be embedded in the work (trail improvements to slow erosion and improve water quality in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries, tree planting to improve air quality, offset carbon emissions, etc.)

Recreation and Camping

In addition to their work duties, crew members also had opportunities to experience outdoor recreation. Activities included a ropes course program at North Bay Adventure Camp, a two-night camping trip to Swallow Falls State Park in Garrett County, an orienteering course at McKeldin State Park, canoeing and fishing at Gunpowder Falls State Park, the Scales & Tales program (injured wildlife), and environmental stewardship learning opportunities and nature-based creative expression activities. Each week crews attended “Fun Fridays” in their home parks, where they participated in structured and unstructured play and recreational activities facilitated by park rangers, seasonal park naturalists, and park volunteers. Finally, a graduation ceremony and picnic was held as a capstone to the program with parents and guardians attending as special guests. Certificates of completion were handed out by Governor Martin O’Malley to CJC program graduates.

Evaluation Report Approaches and Data Collection

The Maryland Conservation Corps engaged the Parks & People Foundation to conduct an evaluation of the first year implementation of the Civil Justice Corps. The Parks & People Foundation, with the assistance and input from Maryland Conservation Corps, designed a pre- and post-survey administered to program participants and staff. A sample of crew members responded to questionnaires administered during the first week of the program and the last week of the program. A total of 170 surveys were administered. The evaluation had a 67% percent response rate among program completers. Survey responses were also received from participants who had been terminated or voluntarily dropped out of the program. Additionally, crew leaders (chiefs) administered midterm and final evaluations for crew-members. Data from these is used to discuss crew-member performance and behavior.

Summary of First-Year Outcomes

In its first year CJC achieved a good level of satisfaction participants, a consistent level of program completion and created a foundation for the continuation and expansion of the program. Overall, the program participants reported that they enjoyed their experience as reflected in the pre- and post-survey. CJC crew members may also be more likely to consider going to college, more likely to spend time outdoors and less likely to instigate physical conflict as a result of their participation in CJC. This section outlines key findings and recommendations.

Program Hiring and Retention

MPS accepted and reviewed 294 applications from youth through the recruitment efforts of community-based and non-profit organizations, educational institutions and government agencies. Additional publicity was provided by a *Baltimore Sun* article that resulted in hundreds of phone calls to PPF and MPS, showing that the need for and interest in this type of opportunity far exceed the 200 slots available in 2008.

Two-hundred fourteen youth were hired and signed contracts, however, 23 were “no shows,” 2 dropped out in the first week and 12 left the program voluntarily (often for personal reasons). Of the remaining 167 program participants, 112 graduated (55 were terminated) resulting in a **67.07% retention rate**. (See Appendix II for Geographic Distribution of Hires by Neighborhood.)

Personal Connections to Nature and Program Satisfaction

Based on their responses to application questions, the majority of youth applied to the program because they needed summer employment or were encouraged to do so by their parents, guardians, or caseworkers, who felt that the program would keep them off the streets and out of trouble. Very few CJC program participants expressed an interest in environmental stewardship prior to entering the program. In fact, 57.4% of CJC respondents reported that prior to CJC they had never participated in an outdoor recreational activity. By the end of the program, participants reported that canoeing, camping, and construction-related activities were among their favorite; invasive plant removal and debris removal were their least favorite activities.

On average, participants entering the program had very little experience engaging in outdoor recreational activities, and very little exposure to careers or job skills related to natural resources management. However, CJC graduates reported that they were satisfied with program activities, and 77% of survey respondents reported that they were glad that they participated in CJC and that they would apply again in 2009.

Career Aspirations and Interest in Environmental Stewardship

In general, participants and staff felt that the program could improve the youths' chances for employment in the future. Anecdotally, participants expressed a belief that program staff cared about them, and 94% of program graduates responded positively to the statement, “I believe that other people believe in me and want me to succeed.”

By the conclusion of the program, a greater percentage of graduates hoped to pursue college and post-secondary careers and articulated more clearly defined occupational choices than at the start of the program. More than 54% believed that they would complete college, and many expressed a more detailed knowledge of post-baccalaureate fields and professional careers such as engineering and marine biology. (A more detailed discussion of this result is provided later in the report.)

According to staff evaluations and end-of-program surveys completed by program participants, 67% percent of CJC graduates expressed an interest in returning to the program in 2009 and 57% wished to continue engaging in outdoor activities during the academic year in an afterschool setting.

Report on the First-Year Implementation of Civic Justice Corps Program

Civic Justice Corps Program Overview

Maryland CJC was modeled after Civic Justice Corps, a program within the National Association for Service and Conservation Corps, which currently operates 14 programs across the country serving court-involved or adjudicated youth aged 16-24 years. Each CJC offers 4-month service Corps programs that involve partnerships between conservation corps programs and justice agencies with a focus on program enrollment and graduation rates, completion of GED, recidivism, and retention in job or college placement. Adapting the national model to reflect the emphasis by Governor Martin O'Malley's and the Department of Natural Resources on reconnecting youth and nature, the Maryland CJC program is open to all youth aged 14-20, targeting recruitment efforts toward those living in urbanized and low-to-moderate income communities, and emphasizing not only conservation service but also building personal connections to the natural world through outdoor recreation and the development of environmental citizenship.

Goals and Objectives

In addition to the benefits articulated by CJC programs across the country, many studies have found that playing and working outdoors in teams improves personal confidence and self-esteem, and engenders a sense of personal and civic responsibility. Building on this research, the Maryland CJC reflects the hypothesis that the earlier young people develop a connection to nature, the more likely they will develop a life-long interest in and commitment to outdoor recreational activities and environmental stewardship. Additionally, the program seeks to address the need for summer job employment and green career development for teens by enabling them to gain experience in landscaping, basic construction, and park maintenance. Toward the above ends, the Maryland CJC's objectives are to:

- Improved and expanded outdoor recreational and conservation programs that serve to restore Maryland's State Parks and the Chesapeake Bay.
- Increased the number of Baltimore City residents aged 14-20 participating in outdoor recreational activities.
- Removed barriers to participation and employment faced by lower- and middle-income youth.
- Provided opportunities for life skills training, personal empowerment, summer employment, and environmental education.
- Targeted recruitment efforts toward African-American youth and youth under the supervision of the Department of Juvenile Services.

This report presents findings from the first year of the program and focuses primarily on the planning, implementation, and day-to-day administration of the program, as well as youth recruitment, graduation, behavior, educational aspirations, satisfaction with the program, attitudes about themselves and familiarity and interest in outdoor experiences and environmental stewardship activities. Additionally, this report makes recommendations concerning the above related to

program expansion. Future evaluation reports will continue to examine the administrative and survey data collected during the first year of the program for use in subsequent evaluations and planning for summer and after-school outdoor recreation or environmental stewardship programs.

Program Implementation:

MPS began planning meetings with its partners in late March 2008 and continued through the start of CJC in June 2008. MPS entered in a contractual agreement with the Parks & People Foundation through the Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks to provide administration and recruitment, hiring and retention support in the following areas:

- *Application Process:* Secured missing signatures on waiver forms; permission to participate; transportation; permission to use image; medical waiver; permission for overnight camping; and contact info. Each of these was created by DNR with the approval of the Legal Department. The youth filled out the forms as part of the application process.
- *Recruitment and Hiring Process:* Assisted crew members on state contract complete paperwork by May 27, 2008 so that the contracts could be processed by the program starting date of June 23, 2008. In order to meet target number 206 hires, staff and crew members signing after that date were hired and processed by the Parks & People Foundation.
- *Screening/Interview Sessions:* Early in the hiring process DNR held individual in-person interviews for each applicant. However, as the State's contractual deadline approached, applicants met MPS and PPF staff in group and open-house formats. In order to meet participation targets for court involved youth, MPS relied heavily on recommendations from DJS.
- *Peer Leader Selection:* DJS peer leaders were selected based on DJS recommendations and Non-DJS peer leaders were selected based on interviews and reviews of crew member applications by DNR and PPF.
- *CJC Waiting List:* Once the goal of 200 crew members and crew leaders was met, DNR offered contracts to an additional 17 youth to account for potential attrition from the time of contract hire to program start date. Due to program funding constraints, 77 youth who had applied for the program were not hired.
- *Contract Signing and Uniforms:* Sessions to sign contracts and fit uniforms were scheduled by MPS, DJS, and PPF. Locations for the sessions were planned.
- *Certification and Graduation:* Program graduation was scheduled for August 8, 2008, the last day of the program. MPS and DJS created an invitation list.

Recruitment and Hiring Timeline

The Department of Natural Resources sent letters to each applicant accepted into the program by May 15, 2008. Contracts were created for these youths and they were notified that they must complete signing no later than May 24, 2008. The letters notified applicants that they were accepted into CJC and requested that they come to a contract signing event with a parent or guardian and/or mail a signed permission slip to participate in the program activities, as well as a report of health. (An additional letter was sent to 20 youths, notifying them that they would be notified by June 7

if a space became available for them.) Applicants were also told that they must bring a copy of their birth certificates, work permits, and social security numbers. An orientation consisting of a signing of the final state contract, fitting for pants and boots and obtaining final information was held on May 24, 2008, at the Lemmel Middle School. The Parks & People Foundation and the Maryland Park Service organized subsequent orientations for youths not on DNR contracts.

The Department of Juvenile Services sent an additional set of letters with the same content to applicants who had not provided the necessary documentation and/or assigned a state contract prior to the deadline because the CJC had not yet met its recruitment goals. These applicants were categorized as “in process.” Parks & People Foundation sent similar letters to non-DJS applicants. These youths were instructed that if they wished to participate in the program that they could sign contracts and be fitted for uniforms between Saturday, June 14, and Tuesday, June 17, 2008 YMCA (Non-DJS.) at the Baltimore Criminal Justice Juvenile Center (DJS) and the Harry and Janet Weinberg.

Once contracts were signed, an additional letter including basic information, such as the location of the participant’s bus stop, the date of Graduation (August 8), the workday hours, and basic uniform information was sent to participants the week of June 23, 2008. The contract stated clearly that NO substitutions or additions would be accepted, that there would be three paychecks, and the check dates. Participants were notified that the first two paychecks would be delivered to the youth at their assigned park and that the last paycheck, issued August 14, 2008, would be mailed to their homes unless other arrangements were made for pick-up or delivery.

Additionally, the letter notified participants that there would be overnight and special events, a leadership seminar at North Bay, and Fun Fridays. They were also provided with the contact information for the CJC Coaches, who acted as the on-site managers of CJC for Gunpowder and Patapsco State Parks.

On June 30, 2008, the first day of the program, surveys were administered, uniforms issued, crew assignments made, and the youth were introduced to their Crew Chiefs. Participants engaged in trust activities and crew leaders guided youth to develop their own code of conduct and went over safety rules and how to properly wear uniforms.

Retention and Logistics for First Day

Parks & People Foundation (PPF) contacted all contracted non-DJS youth and notified them of their bus stop assignments, both by letter (approximately 120 letters, sent on letterhead and in envelopes with postage printed at the PPF office) and with 3 reminder telephone calls placed to each youth. Four members of the Parks & People staff stood in as transportation chaperones for the first week, with 3 contractual, temporary employees hired only for the remainder of the program. In addition to taking daily attendance, these four PPF staff provided assistance to DNR staff and placed calls to all youth who did not come the first day the program to determine if these slots were available for other applicants who had been put on the “wait list.”

Transportation

DNR contracted with Harris Bus & Terminal Service of White Marsh to transport the crewmembers. Two buses were designated for DJS and two for Non-DJS. The Parks & People Foundation geo-coded all CJC youth addresses and bus locations were selected based on their centrality to the greatest number of crew members. Three were selected this way; one bus stop was at the Department of Juvenile Services main office. There was a suggestion that Bus Monitors be hired, but instead Parks & People Foundation provided staff for each of the 2 Non-DJS buses and 4 DJS buses. The staff also served as logistical and administrative support—checking off the names of crew members as they boarded the buses each morning, working with crews during the day, and then traveling home with the buses in the evening. There was no security on the DJS buses until the third week of the program). Once crewmembers arrived at their assigned parks, they were transported to their project areas by vans assigned to each crew and driven by a crew chief. (See Appendix IV. Aerial Maps of bus locations.)

2008 Program Costs

2008 Estimated Program Costs	DNR	Parks & People Foundation
Staff Salary and Youth Living allowance	\$306,577	\$192,000
Vans	\$68,854	N/A
School Buses	\$61,750	N/A
Gas	\$4,000	N/A
Education and Activity Day Supplies	\$24,767	N/A
Outdoor Discovery Camp supplies	\$8,000	N/A
Uniforms & Personal Equipment	\$35,164	N/A
Meals (breakfast snack, lunch, afternoon snack)	\$45,000	N/A
Graduation Event	\$5,000	N/A
2008 Estimated Program Total by Partner	\$559,112	\$192,000
2008 Estimated Program Total		\$751,112*
* excludes in-kind staff time contributions from partners like DJS Tools, Supplies, Site and other project and site needs		

First Year Outcomes: Establishing the Baseline for CJC Success

This section reports CJC program participants' characteristics, retention, performance, career and educational aspirations as measures of the achievement of program goals. While were administered pre and post survey the following results should be considered as establishing a baseline for future evaluation of CJC program and participants. The report also includes a summary of the administration of the CJC, challenges to expansion, and recommendations for sustainability of the program in 2009 and beyond.

Participants Characteristics, Retention and Performance

GOAL NUMBER 1: IMPROVE AND EXPAND OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL AND CONSERVATION PROGRAMS THAT SERVE TO RESTORE MARYLAND'S STATE PARKS AND THE CHESAPEAKE BAY. (ACHIEVED)

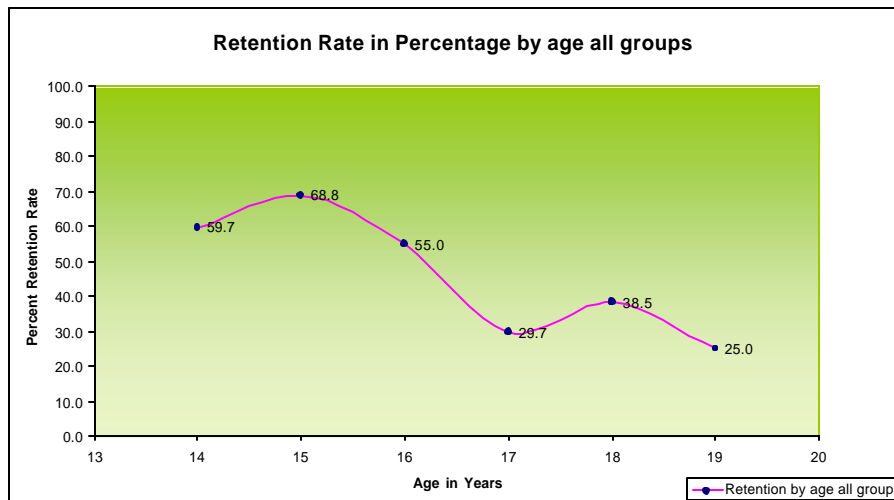
GOAL NUMBER 5: TARGET RECRUITMENT EFFORTS TOWARD AFRICAN-AMERICAN YOUTH AND YOUTH UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE SERVICES. (ACHIEVED)

Crew member Characteristics

Fifty-three percent of Civic Justice Corps participants were hired through contracts with DNR and 47 % were employed through the Parks & People Foundation. The 2008 class of CJC has a geographic distribution of 23 neighborhoods (see Appendix V), and an average age of 15.5 years. Sixty-six and half percent of recruits were classified as male and 33.55% identified a female. Racial and ethnic identity data was collected from each applicant, 98% of respondents identified themselves as African-American.

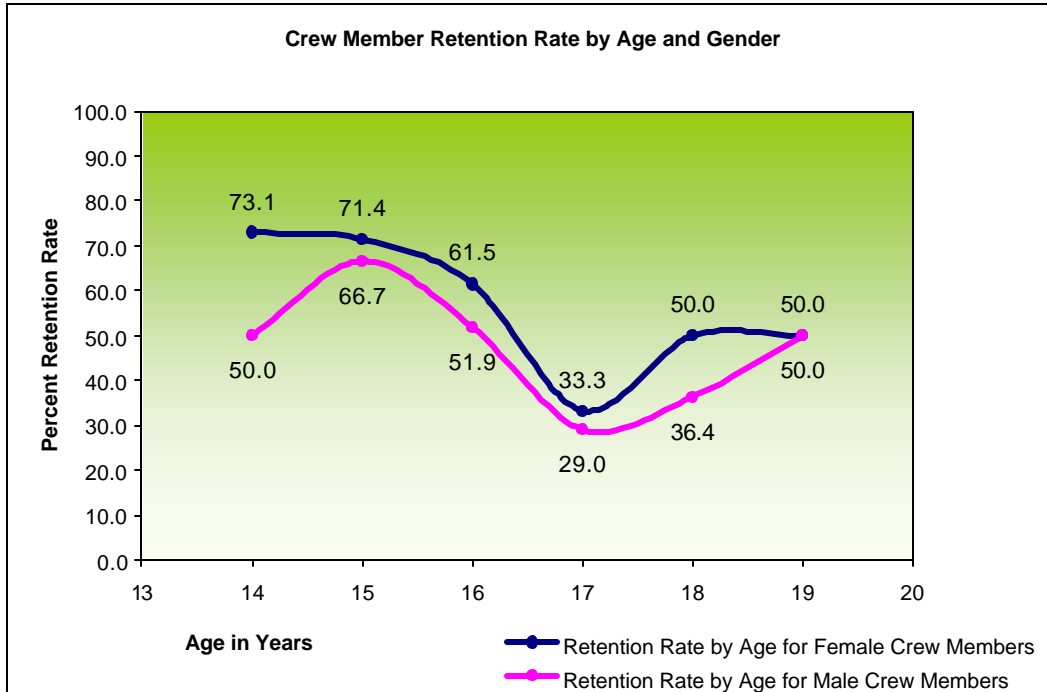
Program Retention/Graduation

Excluding no-shows and those who left after the first week of the program, the retention rate of the program was 63%. While additional research is required to determine how CJC compared to similar programs with similar demographics and structure, there are some notable variations in retention rates by age, gender, and referral (DJS vs.non-DJS). As illustrated in the chart below, older crew members were more likely to leave the program.

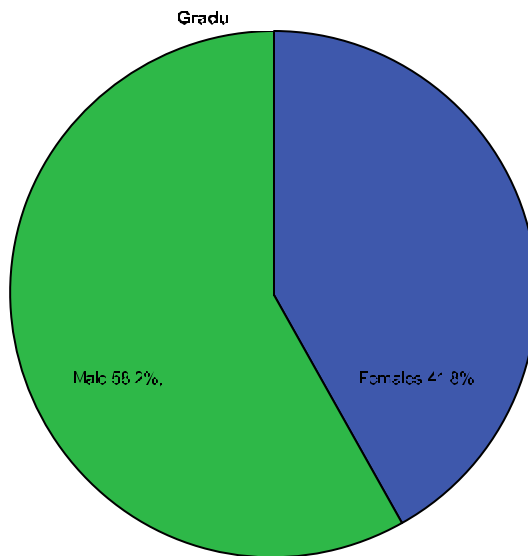


We cannot suggest causality, without additional information, but the association is clear. We recommend that the 2009 cohort could be overrepresented by younger recruits so that crew members that could grow with the program. The best age appears to be 14-16.

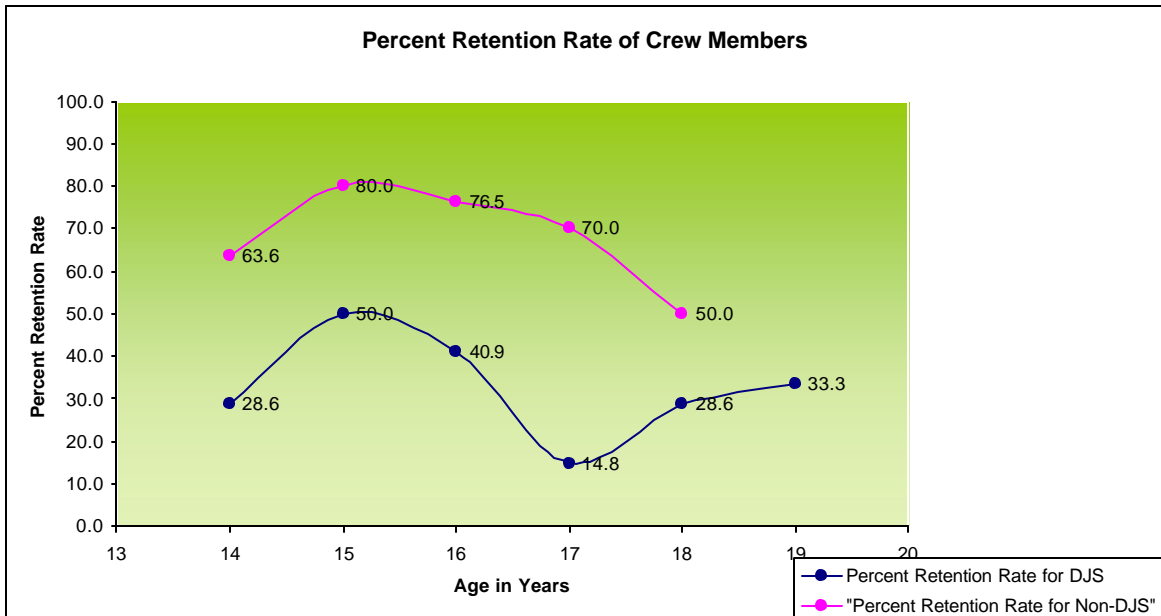
Interestingly, the result holds true for each gender but as seen in the next chart, the retention rates was higher for females.



Also as seen in the chart below, females made up a greater proportion of graduates, 58% Male and 41.8% female than started the program, 66.5% and 33.55%, respectively.



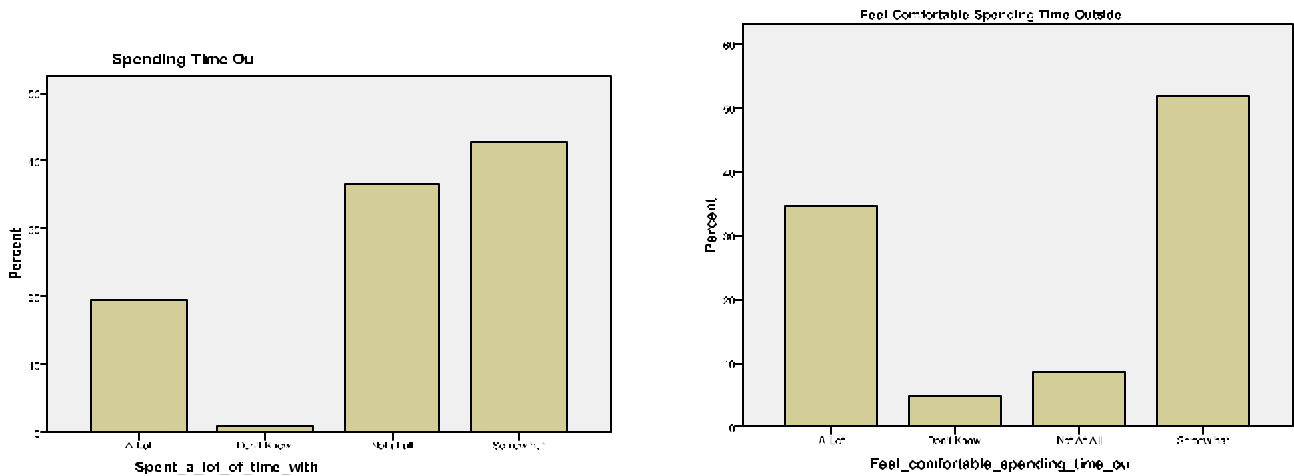
There was also a sharp contrast in the retention rates between court-involved (DJS) and at-risk (Non-DJS) youth. While older recruits were retained at lower rates, the gap between the two groups is startling and necessitates further investigations for the cause of this variation (See below.)



GOAL NUMBER 2: INCREASE THE NUMBER OF BALTIMORE CITY RESIDENTS AGED 14-21 PARTICIPATING IN OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES. (ACHIEVED)

Interest in Pursuing Outdoor Recreational Activities

As noted earlier, fewer than 60% of CJC crew member respondents reported ever having participated in an outdoor recreation activity prior to the program. When asked to respond the following statement in Survey 1, “I have spent time with my family and friends outside in the garden, local park, or in the woods,” only 18% of crew members reported that they spend “A lot of time” outside with family and friends; (See chart below to the left), by the end of the summer a little more than 35% felt comfortable spending “A lot of time” outside. (See chart below to the right)



GOAL NUMBER 3: REMOVE BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT FACED BY LOWER AND MIDDLE INCOME YOUTH. (ACHIEVED)

Participant Satisfaction

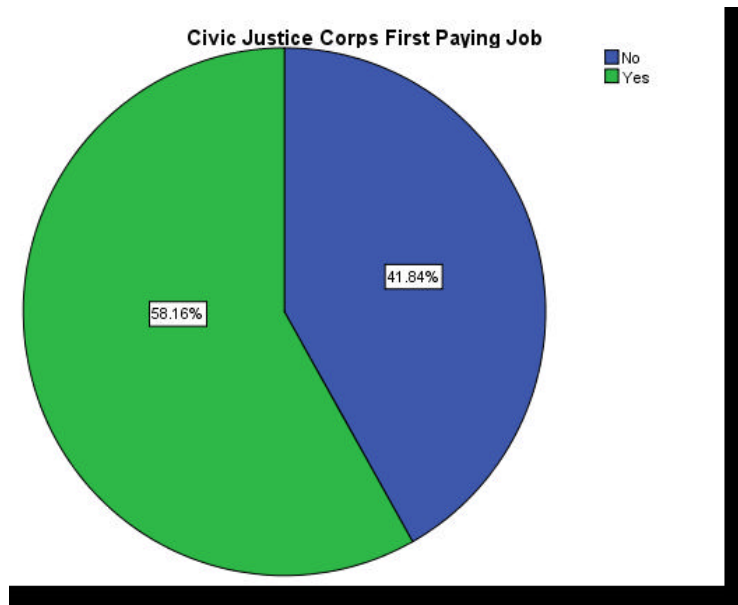
Ninety-six percent of CJC Survey respondents reported “Yes” when asked “Overall are you glad that you participated in the MD CJC?” Additionally, 56% of respondents said that they would participate in similar outdoor recreational activities during the school year if they were offered.

Limited Access to Transportation

Because nearly 38 % of Baltimore City residents do not own a vehicle or have access to personal transportation, and public transportation from Baltimore City to Maryland State Parks located is virtually nonexistent, the CJC provided free bus transportation. Without this vital service, regular participation in the program would have been greatly hampered and not available to those most in need.

First Job Experience

Providing each graduate with a record of job performance was a strategy to remove barriers to employment for youth targeted by CJC. CJC provided more that 41.84% of program participants with their first paid full-time employment and therefore laid the foundation for developing a means to develop job skills and recommendations for future employment.



Career Aspirations

The career aspirations of moderate and low-income youth affect are often limited by relatively poor educational attainment and knowledge of the range well-paying occupations. As noted earlier, CJC appears to have broadened the participants’ awareness of careers and desire to pursue post-secondary education or job training. In both surveys participants were asked, “Where do you see yourself in 10 years?” The results from the first survey suggested that 26.15% saw themselves

completing college; 13.85% believed that they would be “professional athletes” and 9.23% expressed an interest in the health or sciences. By the end of the program more than 54% believed that they would complete college, and expressed a more detailed knowledge of post-baccalaureate fields such as engineering and marine biology. Interesting, the percentage of respondents choosing “professional sports” shrank from 13.85% to a little more than 5%, and interest in the health and sciences increased nearly 75%.

Job Performance

According to final evaluations completed by crew chiefs, the performance of 63% of graduating crew members was good or excellent in the following areas critical to seeking and keeping employment: Adaptability, Cooperation, Relations with Co-workers, Attendance, and Punctuality. Additionally 76% were recommended by their crew chiefs for rehire.

	Adaptability	Cooperation	Relations with Coworkers	Attendance	Punctuality
N/A	16.4	17.3	16.4	16.4	18.2
Excellent	30.9	40.0	30.9	40.9	61.8
Fair	16.4	11.8	16.4	10.9	1.8
Good	33.6	27.3	33.6	27.3	17.3
Poor	2.7	3.6	2.7	4.5	.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

GOAL NUMBER 4: PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR LIFE SKILLS TRAINING, PERSONAL EMPOWERMENT, SUMMER EMPLOYMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION (ACHIEVED).

Professional confidence and personal efficacy

The survey and crew leader evaluations provide a sense of the degree to which the CJC program may have improved the personal confidence, sense of responsibility and citizenship, self-esteem, and teamwork skills of its participants.

The CJC participants were to respond to several statements that gauge their self-confidence:

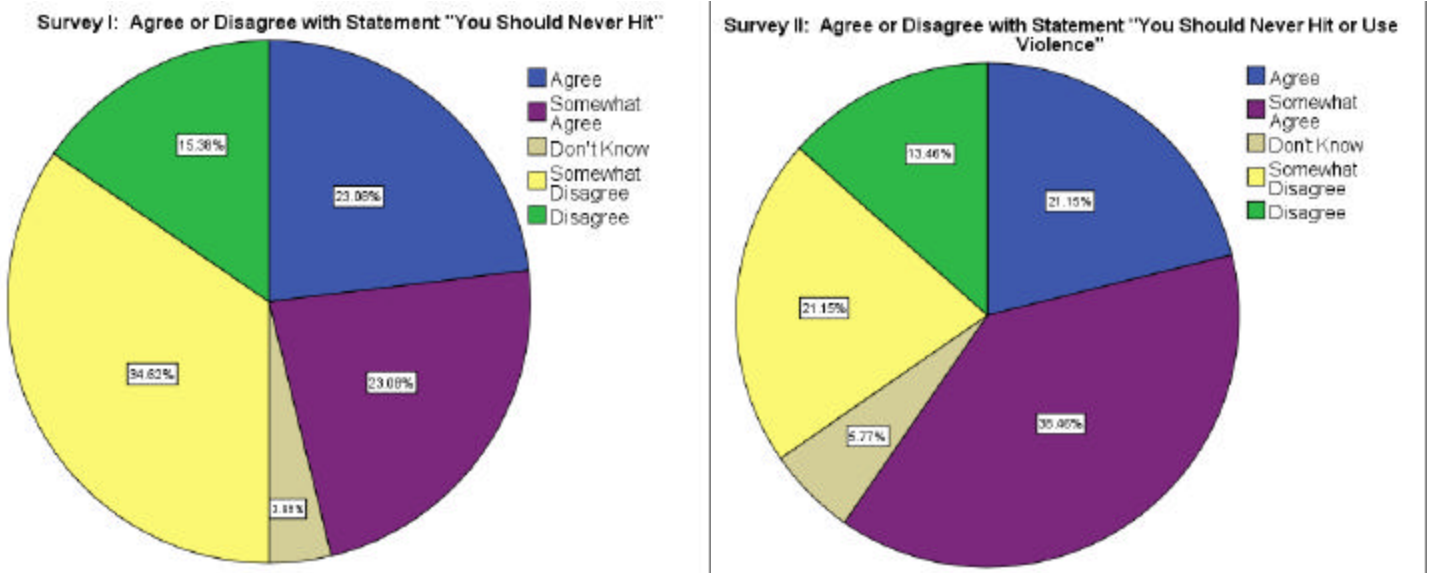
- *I feel like I'm in control of what happens to me.*
- *I feel like my life is going in a good direction.*
- *I feel that I am successful.*
- *I am good at solving problems.*
- *I think that other people believe in me and want me to succeed.*
- *I believe I can do anything I set my mind to do.*

Interestingly, there was no significant change in the percentage of respondent that agreed (~60%) with these statements between Survey 1 and Survey 2. We believe that this suggests that more detailed analysis is needed and perhaps reflects the relatively short length of the program.

However, given the duration of the program and the evaluation tools employed it is difficult to say that the program caused this effect. We do see some interesting responses to questions that could reflect the participants' shift toward conflict resolution, interpersonal skills and attitudes away from resorting to violence. This could also mean that those less likely to engage in violence were more likely to complete the program in greater numbers than those dismissed.

Attitudes Toward Conflict Resolution

In Survey 1, CJC participants were asked the degree to which they agreed with the statement, "You should never hit or use violence against another person." Only 23.08% of respondents agreed, about the same amount agreed conditionally, and more than half, 53.85% disagree or were unsure. By the end of the program, 59% agreed or agreed conditionally, but most important the proportion that disagrees to any extent decreased 44%.



Because the nature of the work and pre-program observations of physical play and verbally aggressive banter among many CJC recruits, we wanted to understand the participants' attitudes on a more personal level and also asked participants to fill in a response the following statement "It's Ok to Hit someone if . . ." in both survey 1 and 2.

The responses were grouped by type and coded. In Survey 1, 64.77% crew members reported that it was okay to hit some only when hit first; 22.73% thought that verbal harassment, invasion of person space, or anger justified a "first strike." In Survey 2, 88% of crew members' respondents who completed the program wrote that it was okay to hit someone only when hit first; 16% thought that verbal harassment or invasion of personal space justified a "first strike." . Additionally, performance evaluations suggest that fighting was a major cause of terminations with the first three weeks of the program. This might explain in part the nearly a 30% reduction in "first strike" respondents, more analysis is necessary to tease this out.

Challenges and Opportunities for Achieving Program Goals

Drawing on field observations of program operations, crew chief interviews, crew member surveys and evaluations, and end-of-season focus group debriefing, the following challenges and opportunities facing the inaugural year of the Civic Justice Corps:

Program Mission, Function and Structure

The Maryland Park Service articulated three objectives for CJC: to provide a job skills training program; to provide non-traditional outdoor recreational alternatives to urban youth; and to promote environmental education, stewardship, and good citizenship. The objectives were expressed by the five goals evaluated in this report. Crew chiefs expressed concern that to achieve the above, youth should be more carefully screened to ensure their fitness and readiness to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the program. Crew chiefs and some others felt that taking this step would improve the program's ability to empower youth, increase achievement, and introduce at-risk youth to possibilities they had not previously considered for themselves. MPS staff noted that additional training for crew chiefs may also be necessary to help them more effectively implement the multiple objectives of the program, and to better impart those goals to corps members. Some crew leaders expressed preferences either for the enrichment, "camp-like" portions of the program that focused on stewardship, citizenship, and outdoor recreation, while others expressed personal preference for the conservation service portion of the program. MPS has expressed a continued commitment to merging these objectives as part of a larger vision to use the Civic Justice Corps not only as a tool for completing work projects, but as a way to build relationships with at-risk youth and help those youth reconnect with the natural world even as they enjoy the benefits of a conservation service experience.

Administration

The administration of the program required significant support from MPS staff and PPF, as well as assistance from DJS staff. Crew leaders were required to maintain field records on daily progress of projects and the attendance and performance of crew members. Since much of the supporting administration was dependent upon timely and accurate completion and submission of these field records, it is critical to refine the process for more efficient completion of payroll distribution records, timecards, attendance sheets, mid-term and final evaluations, daily shift logs, and vehicle fleet records.

Partnerships

Managing the many partnerships that made CJC possible will continue to be a challenge. As the program continues to grow and partnerships evolve, efforts should be made to build in opportunities for CJC partners to get to know one another during the "off-season" to help facilitate working relationships while the program is in progress. The inaugural year of the program was implemented quickly, and partnerships formed in record time to ensure that youth were served in the summer of 2008. The biggest benefit to be gained from the natural growth of these partnerships is a better mutual understanding of the respective roles, strengths, and weaknesses of each partner.

One example of this clarification would be the role of DJS personnel in the field during the program. When some significant disciplinary issues arose in the first week of the program, focused among youth recruited through DJS, MPS requested that DJS send staff to assist in the field. While DJS agreed sent staff to the parks, the strategy met with mixed results, depending on the availability of DJS staff

members who were personally motivated to participate in the program and who were aware and supportive of the program mission, structure and goals. Understandably, DJS' staffing shortages made it difficult for them to provide such personnel consistently.

While DJS's staff efforts in the field were greatly appreciated, it was generally agreed by DJS and MPS personnel that DJS's contribution to the program could be more effective, and less of a resource strain on DJS, if it focuses on improving and refining the screening process for court-involved youth applicants to the program. Additionally, DJS could assist with youth retention during the hiring process, and perhaps make contributions to the life skills/leadership training components of the program that need further development. DJS might also make a valuable contribution in the area of job-readiness training, helping to prepare court-involved youth for their CJC experience, which will assist with retention in the program, and help more youth experience success in the Civic Justice Corps and in life. Such a strategy would allow DJS to focus investment on its area of expertise and reduce a staffing burden for which it had no budget, but it would reduce and perhaps even eliminate the need for a more disciplinary presence on site.

It also became apparent during the course of the program that some DJS personnel believed that participation in the program was mandatory for court-involved youth. Since voluntary participation is a cornerstone of the program's success, this basic premise must be better communicated to all partners and to all youth.

Both crew leaders and MPS staff expressed a desire to build on working relationships from this summer, and to gain a better understanding of each others' respective roles. Crew chiefs suggested that they receive more training in the technical execution of projects to alleviate some of the technical oversight required by park staff. MPS staff expressed a desire to pursue new partnerships within Baltimore City, such as YouthWorks and Baltimore City Recreation and Parks, and also to pursue alternative funding sources through partners such as the Chesapeake Bay Trust and by growing the relationship between MCC and CJC.

Curriculum and Activities

The staff and participants felt the youth would benefit from more exposure to the outdoor setting and some environmental education prior to the beginning of their work in the parks. The suggestion was that such a program could be a "remedial" enrichment or an introduction to the outdoors. The staff felt that something simple like a day-long hike as part of the orientation, or a requirement for hiring well before the start of the program, would allow participants to become acquainted with the natural habitat and not be distracted by it. For example, participants needed to be acclimated to insects and plants, so those do not become too great of a distraction during the program. MPS staff has recommended continued engagement between park staff and youth during the school year that involves visits into the city by park staff, as well as visits to the parks by youth.

Crew leaders felt that the Fun Friday model should incorporate more environmental stewardship messages in addition to outdoor recreation to help youth connect the relevance of the fun activity to the missions and goals of the program. Crew leaders recommended a continued focus on experiential activities, and noted the need for additional training to enhance crew members' work and life skills. MPS staff has recommended that an additional day be set aside for life skills, leadership development, team building, and conflict resolution, as well as additional stewardship learning, perhaps with a "Green Jobs" emphasis. MPS staff also noted that Fun Friday activities met with more success when

facilitated by paid, trained park rangers and park naturalists rather than park volunteers. MPS staff has recommended more intensive training and collaboration among all Fun Friday staff to ensure better implementation across the board.

MPS staff recommended additional training for some crew leaders who are more accustomed to managing groups of youth in an indoor classroom setting. Time management, planning, and logistics in an outdoor setting required a somewhat different approach which was challenging for some crew leaders. This challenge was exacerbated on Fun Fridays, when there was a greater burden on crew chiefs to maintain logistical flow for their crew for the day. Crew leaders who incorporated familiar games and sports into their break and planning time experienced more success on Fun Fridays than those who did not. Crew chiefs who also took advantage of activities that were available as last-minute substitutes or “switch-ups” also experienced better success than those that did not take advantage of these opportunities. Additional efforts need to be made to ensure that these opportunities are universally available, and that all crew leaders are maximizing their utility for crew management and engagement.

Restoration Projects

Some crew leaders expressed that they would like more training to help them better understand the natural resources management purpose or the expectations for the restoration projects. They felt that such training would help them to better measure the performance of their crews. They expressed an interest in participating in project planning, as well as in the implementation of the projects. They also requested that crews be allowed to follow up or to maintain their specific sites for the entire summer. If this is not possible and the project is too early in the process for crews to “see the big picture,” they should have opportunities to review renderings or other visual representation of their contribution to the final project.

Crew members expressed a strong desire to understand the environmental impact of the projects. This is to answer the question, “Why are we doing this?” The crew members expressed an interest and enjoyment in digging holes and in stream clean-ups, but were not of the invasive removal. Understanding the connection of these activities to improvements and restoration in parklands might improve crew members’ willingness to participate.

Going forward, thought should be given to developing a set of more advanced work projects so that returning corps members can build on skills that were acquired the previous summer. This will further the mission of enhancing youth life skills while also improving the environmental impact of the work by allowing returning crew members to lead their crews in increasingly complex projects.

Uniforms

Youth were issued uniforms and were required to wear them. Each crew member received five t-shirts, two pairs of pants, a belt, work boots, ball caps, rain ponchos, backpacks, water bottles, and other safety and protective equipment (sun block, insect repellent, etc.). Because of the late start-up of the program, delayed shipments on pants prevented some youth from receiving them in a timely fashion. Having more lead time in future years should resolve this issue. One park conducted daily uniform inspections and one park simply enforced uniform violations upon observation during the course of the day. Both models yielded roughly equal results in terms of uniform appearance and

policy compliance. However, the inspection process provided some structure and order to morning routines, which promoted improved and noticeable camaraderie among corps members.

Food

MPS staff members were primarily responsible for preparing the menus, purchasing the food, storing the food onsite, maintaining the inventory, and ensuring efficient distribution in a timely fashion. All of this had to be done in locations that were not designed for large scale of food service. MPS staff recommends seeking a grocery vendor capable of delivering goods to the locations where they are needed in a timely fashion.

Hiring of Crew Members

Staff felt that the youth hired should be interviewed more closely for their compatibility with the program goals and objectives. It was felt that some participants simply wanted a job and that they were not aware of how demanding it would be. School counselors should continue to be involved in this process to identify good candidates. Crew chiefs felt that Juvenile Services focused on getting youth “off the streets” for the summer but would rather that MPS identify youth who would benefit most and have the job-readiness skills to succeed. Perhaps DJS recruit targets should be reduced by 50%, but with the same staffing levels. If properly screened, DJS youth should be just as excited about working in the program as other youth.

Additionally, staff felt that there should be more regulation of the age distribution on teams or a program restriction to youth 14 to 17 years old instead of 14 to 21. However, other staff members pointed out that the upper age of 17 would exclude many Baltimore City juniors and seniors. Alternatively, crews could be organized by age or class (freshman, sophomores, juniors, and seniors) so that younger members are not intimidated by older ones and to create a more balanced power structure. This can also facilitate a more targeted approach for the college and career development component of the programs, as well as guide the restoration project assignments.

Another change recommended regarding staffing and participant organization addressed the role of peer leaders. While peer leaders were given the responsibility of setting a good example for their fellow crew members, and were in some cases successfully challenged with additional responsibilities by their crew chiefs, this was not successful across the board. Some crew chiefs advocated for additional responsibilities for peer leaders. MPS staff cautioned that the primary driver of the evolution of peer leader duties would need to be the abilities demonstrated by the peer leaders themselves. It is generally agreed that additional leadership training for youth will enhance the abilities of peer leaders and help to broaden the definition of the peer leader role over time.

It was also felt that returning youth and staff will be a resource in administering the second year of the program. Toward that end, peer leaders should be chosen based on their performance evaluations. When possible, returning crew chiefs should be matched with peer leaders with whom they have worked. This will create a cohesive atmosphere among the whole crew. Alternatively, returning crew members, now hired as peer leaders, could serve with new crew chiefs. This will provide a leadership development opportunity for the youth that will also assist the crew chief in understanding the program.

Crew member Payroll

Crew member stipends were distributed by paychecks to youth on site, due to concerns that some youth would not receive mailed checks. However, some crew leaders felt that distributing paychecks on site was logistically difficult: there was no central and secure location where the check could be stored prior to payday, and coaches distributed the checks in the morning to each crew chief, who had no way to check them for accuracy prior to distribution that afternoon. It was generally agreed that if paychecks are going to be distributed on site in the future, additional administrative staff and a centralized distribution site managed by MPS would be necessary.

MPS staff agreed that if PPF and DNR continue to administer payroll, a second look should be taken at options for check distribution, including mailing the checks to the address on record. Another suggested option was to explore the possibility of creating direct deposit accounts.

MPS has indicated that it is also interested in exploring outside alternatives for payroll funding and administration, including partnerships with organizations that offer these services. Such alternatives would lift the administrative burden from personnel whose time and attention needs to be focused on delivering service and mentoring youth.

Attendance Sheets, Time-Cards, Disciplinary Action Slips, and Mid-Term and Final Evaluations

The timely and accurate completion of attendance sheets, time cards, mid-term and final evaluations, and attendance logs was a challenge for the crew chiefs. The results seemed to vary by crew; the documentation for some crews provided much detail, while others were incomplete or missing altogether. It is recommended that coaches state clearly that crew chiefs must complete all of the above and that they be submitted every Friday, bi-weekly, or within 3 days of their due date in the case of mid-term and final evaluations. Crew chiefs should be given time at the beginning or end of their days and weeks to review, correct, or finish paperwork. These times should be used to reconcile the dates of attendance sheets, time-cards, and disciplinary action slips before submitting them to payroll. The lack of documentation for the latter made it difficult for the DNR and PPF payroll to address questions and ensure that crew members be paid only for the time they worked and that disciplinary actions such as “docking pay” are enforced. Evaluations must be completed and dated, as they will be used for rehiring or for referrals to partner programs. Mid-term reviews should be reviewed with each youth and a copy sent home for parental or guardian review. Parents should be notified in writing when to expect mid-term reviews. Perhaps an electronic form should be created to allow crew-members to complete this online or using Adobe. It is recommended that the final evaluation be mailed after graduation with the final check.

CJC Staffing and Training

Staffing needs and partner roles should continue to be clarified while moving forward. Currently CJC has only one full-time position in MPS, that of the program director. This is an inadequate dedication of staff resources, and not a sustainable organizational model, even with the inclusion of partners in the capacity-building process. It is insufficient for the program at its current size and is not conducive to successful expansion of the program.

Crew chiefs received five days of training and field orientation the week before the start of the program from, June 23 to June 27, 2008 that consisted of natural resource training and field guides provided by MPS and gang awareness training offered by DJS staff. From a review of field observations and performance evaluation notes, additional disciplinary, cultural awareness,

communication and empowerment training centered on the needs and responsibilities of people working with urban and African-American youth should be added. The crew chiefs also need support to identify age-appropriate recreational and educational activities.

The CJC staff felt that the role of the crew chief and assistant crew chiefs ought to be clearly defined to ensure that their duties are complementary but do not overlap. At times there was not a clear understanding of the intended role of the assistant crew chief, and therefore they were included in different and inconsistent ways. Each crew should have an assistant crew chief and the gap in compensation between the crew chief and assistant crew chief should not be so wide. Assistant chiefs could help with the day-to-day disciplinary and administrative functions of the program and perhaps run “time-outs” and serve basic disciplinary functions.

However, MPS staff also had concerns about the role of the assistant crew chief, and is planning on eliminating the assistant crew chief position in 2009 to improve efficiency, clarity, and overall staff qualifications in the field. The 2009 model will reduce crew sizes from the 2008 adult to youth ratio of 1 adult to 8 youth to 1:4.

CJC Staff expressed a concern that visitors on work sites (such as volunteers not registered with a primary program partner) should be screened and perhaps subject to the same background and screening requirements as staff, depending upon the frequency and nature of their involvement with the program, to ensure the safety of all youth. They suggested that stricter measures be instituted to restrict access to work sites by people who are not affiliated with the program. MPS staff recommends that the same standards apply in these instances as for contractual staff or volunteers who may work or spend time alone with minors during the course of their duties. MPS staff agrees that as general principle visitors and volunteers should be kept to a minimum to maintain the integrity of the corps member experience and to ensure a safe environment. The DJS Bus Monitor role is an important one, but needs modification. Some staff suggested that bus monitors receive training similar to or perhaps at the same time as the crew chiefs and assistant crew chiefs and have their roles clearly defined at the start of the program. More discussion is necessary to determine how best to fulfill to ensure crew member safety and appropriate behavior on the bus.

Parental or Guardian Communication

Communication with parents and guardians was particularly challenging in some cases. While some parents were very engaged and wanted to stay informed about program developments, others were far more difficult to reach or engage. To streamline communication with all parents and simplify access for parents seeking information, MPS staff recommends an off-season review and update of all parental correspondence and documents requiring parent/guardian signatures to update information, create a timeline for distribution to parents, and ensure consistency of message. Additionally, MPS staff recommends establishing a central contact phone number and hiring a contractual administrative assistant to manage parent communications and other administrative inquiries that arise during the program.

Behavior Management and Discipline

Behavior management proved to be one of the more challenging aspects of the program. Largely due to insufficient time for screening of some DJS youth, several serious incidents occurred in the first week of the program that necessitated a more stringent approach to behavior management and discipline. Prior to joining the program, each crew member and his or her parent or guardian signed a code of conduct. Also, because of the nature of the work, the age range of the youth and the program goals, the program should screen out youth with a history of violent offenses or specific behavioral issues, such as anger management problems. Consequences for violations, along with more specific descriptions of violations, were introduced in the second week of the program, in response to the serious incidents. This disciplinary policy was effective in moderating negative behavior, but MPS intends to review and revise the policy before 2009 CJC implementation. MPS staff also recommends specific review of how “pay docking” is utilized and whether this portion of the policy requires clarification to ensure fair and consistent application. Clarification is necessary for definitions of verbal threats and other violations that presented discretionary challenges to crew chiefs in the field. The language for establishing the authority to suspend and terminate crew members should also be strengthened and standardized.

Additionally, efforts should be made to increase awareness and agreement with the CJC code of conduct and discipline procedures and policies among program applicants. Crewmembers could sign a contract stating that they have received, reviewed, and understand the discipline policy. That process would be considered fair warning in the event that an infraction occurs.

Recommendations and Next Steps

Based on the evaluation of survey data and the first-year successes and challenges, we made the following recommendations:

- CJC expansion efforts in years 2 and 3 of the program should focus on actualizing program mission, goals, and administration by further clarifying its partnership relationships, recruitment, hiring and disciplinary practices; strengthening staff training; developing strategies to identify youth who are ready for the program; and better incorporating environmental education into daily activities and restoration projects. Toward this end, it is recommended that no more than one additional State Park site or additional 100 participants be added to the program during this time.
- Case management support was an important component of the program provided to some youth. Where implemented appropriately, crew chiefs were able to identify and support participants on an individual basis, particularly with issues that affected their retention and engagement with CJC. It is recommended that case management remain a significant and expanded component in the future.
- Program sustainability should be a major priority. A strategy for capacity-building should be developed by MPS, with the ultimate goal of serving 1,000 youth per year by the year 2015 that identifies additional funding partners.
- Years two and three of CJC should be utilized to establish the framework of a proposed Partner Provider Certification program.

- A strategy for capacity-building should developed by MPS, with the ultimate goal of serving 1,000 youth per year by the year 2015 that identifies additional funding partners.
- Expansion should include a staffing structure that increases site supervision and field resources for crew chiefs and coaches.
- Administrative assistance is also crucial to the staffing structure, as the tracking and monitoring of large numbers of minors in a work setting is an especially sensitive endeavor and one requiring impeccable record-keeping. Dedicated administrative staff should be built into any expansion plan in MPS.
- Efforts should continue to develop a CJC after-school program that provides opportunities to stay engaged with summer program youth throughout the school year.
- Strategies must be developed for geographic expansion of the program beyond Baltimore City and into other Maryland jurisdictions with populations of at-risk youth. Prince George's County and Harford County have already been identified as interested partners in expansion efforts, and should be targeted for development of partner relationships in those communities.
- Provided additional "job-readiness" training or screening for applicants accepted into the CJC 45-30 days prior to the start of the program.
- Organize crews by age group, such that the age rage within a crew does not exceed 18 months.
- Provide opportunities for parents and guardians to participant in the CJC program as recruiters or on site.
- It is recommended that the crew members who completed the 2008 Civic Justice Corps be followed-up in 2009 and each successive year of the program, to determine if they remain engaged in outdoor recreational and education, training or employment. This would assist in identifying the long-term personal development outcomes for crew members who have participated in the program.

Investments in long-term and sustainable solutions are urgently required. This evaluation indicates that the CJC has the potential to be a successful strategy that needs to be implemented every year.

Annual and expanded delivery of the program would increase the program's effectiveness in achieving program goals statewide and provide every youth an opportunity to engage in a program that can increase their life skills and employability, making schools and communities healthier and prosperous.

Recommended Next Steps for CJC Program Evaluation and Research

In the next phase of the evaluation, CJC evaluators will continue to examine the implementation of the program for planning purposes and to conduct more detailed analysis of both survey and administrative data. Evaluators could explore participants' careers, academic and attendance performance after completing the CJC program and assess short-term outcomes in participant knowledge and skills as they relate to working in the after-school field. The evaluation would also collect additional data from participants who drop out of the program before completion in order to identify characteristics and supports that contribute to retention in the certificate program. In addition, the evaluation could examine in depth the career and education experiences of participants, including evidence of increased understanding of youth development and the after-school community and development of academic skills through continued association with CJC.

Report Authorship

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Email: ptaylor@dnr.state.md.us

Acknowledgments

Civic Justice Corps, administered under the auspices of the Maryland Park Service received assistance from a number of individuals and organizations. Their generous support contributed to the achievements of individual youths and to the overall success of the program in achieving positive outcomes with young peoples at risk.

Appreciation is expressed to Governor Martin O'Malley, Secretary John R. Griffin, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Secretary Donald W. DeVore, Maryland Department of Juvenile Services, and Baltimore Mayor Shelia Dixon.

Appreciation is also due to the employees and volunteers of the Maryland Park Service at Patapsco Valley State Park and Gunpowder Falls State Park, the Maryland Conservation Corps, Maryland Department of Juvenile Services, Baltimore City Mayor's Office of Economic Development, Baltimore Department of Recreation and Parks, North Bay Adventure Camp and the Parks & People Foundation. The numerous individuals working in all of these organizations offered the flexibility, technical expertise and support to ensure a successful program. Each person involved with the program contributed significantly to the success of a truly collaborative operation.

The young people who attended the program on a daily basis deserve special mention. Without their on-going enthusiasm and interest this program would not have been possible. They showed a level of commitment to the program, to their team and to themselves, that deserves recognition.

In appreciation:

The Graduating CJC Class of 2008 and their parents, guardians and teachers

MD Department of Juvenile Justice Directors, Case Management Specialists and Supervisors Assistant Area Directors:

Robert Johnson and William Foy

Walter Jackson

Dan Fouts

Delmonica Hawkins

Daniel Zlotowitz

Lawrence Gillis

Maurice Sessoms

Ronald Staples

Jessica Hurtt

Chris Heidelberg

Marco Thomas

Kenyetta Allen

Charles Whitfield

Wallace Laster

Roosevelt Alston

Timothy McMillion

Tanisha Waters

Thai Thompson

Additional DJS Staff who assisted include:

Claudius Adenagen

Tammy Haskins

Christina McGriff

Berhanu Engidawork

Markeith Muse

Vivian Hockaday

Kent Way

David Dawson

Linda Richardson

Maybelle Purviance

MD Civic Justice Corps Staff:

Eugene Flanagan	Kristen Moretz	Yasemin Goksenin
Darius Alexander	Jim Perry	Tim Gordon
Eric Benjamin	Andrea Soule	Jason Grau
Nicole Brechbiel	Holly W. Bennett III	Jonathan Jacobs
Jesse Dortzbach	Ken Bouchat	Debbie Kendrick
Amy Ensign	Alicia Campbell	Amy Lincoln
Martin Fitzgerald	Derek Dias	Ian McCullough
Caitlin Harris	Sarah Dobson	Ramona Taylor-Knox
Bill LaBarre	Molly Flanagan	Amber Wagner
Brandon Lessner	Michael Fletcher	

MD State Parks Staff and Volunteers:

Mike Browning, Park Manager	Walt Dufour	Dennis Cutcher
Robin Melton, Park Manager	Tina Bianca	Rodney Harris
Brenda Lee	Andrew Hangen	Alvin Cottrell
Lance Langrehr	Jen Cashell	Robb Paxton
Christina McCullough	Robin Reed	Joe Vogelpohl
Paul Roberts	Rob Dyke	Joe McAllister
Sarah Witcher	Dorna Cooper	Chris Brooks
Bryan Gomes	Laurie Witcher	Suha Peng
Sara Rollins	Marianne Wagandt	Andy Rinta
Bob Iman	Claudia Macy	Melody Nevins
Eli Tsismanakis	Dave Fischbach	Amy Lutsko
	Brian Thomas	Larry Martin
		David Chrest

Maryland Conservation Corps Crews:

Christine Jones	Amy Lutsko	Nathan Thomas
Stu Campbell	Matt Hildebrandt	Luke Mongrain
Brandy Elliott	Rick Campanale	Roy Musselwhite
Peter Kirchmann	Adam Regula	
David Bitler	Bobby Morgan	

MD Department of Natural Resources Annapolis staff:

Linda Wiley	Inez Sears	Donna Jones
Cindy Hawkins	Diane Russell	Linda Davis
Shea Niemann	Stephanie McHenry	Diane Feheley
Mark Hoffman	Marti Woodfield	Missy Kelly
Shiela Harrison	Barbara Knisely	

Parks & People Foundation CJC Field Staff:

John Hager	Nicole McDaniels	Courtney Francik
George Hager	Milton Muldrow	Satish Serchan



**Maryland Conservation Corps
2008 Summer Programs
CREW CHIEF
Position Description**

POSITION: Crew Chief
SALARY: \$20.00/hour, 40 hours per week
CLOSING DATE: April 28, 2008
BENEFITS: None – position is contractual
TERM OF CONTRACT: June 23 – August 13, 2008.
HOURS: Monday – Friday, 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. generally, with some variation possible
LOCATION: Position will be assigned to report to either Patapsco Valley State Park or Gunpowder Falls State Park. Reporting locations within the park may change at any time. Position may periodically be required to report to additional locations, subject to the needs of the MCC program and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

Organization Summary

The Maryland Conservation Corps (MCC) oversees two Summer Programs, the Outdoor Discovery Corps (ODC) and the Civic Justice Corps (CJC). The mission of both the ODC and CJC is to provide disadvantaged or otherwise at-risk youth with development opportunities that integrate conservation service experience and job skills training with exposure to nature, experiential learning and recreation opportunities in the outdoors. The programs are open to youths aged 14 – 17. Both nature immersion and public service have restorative properties for the human spirit, and together they offer young people a unique opportunity to define their future - and themselves - in a positive way. It is the goal of these programs to maximize that opportunity.

Participants in CJC, called crew members, join because they face a number of complex challenges which may include one or more of the following: previous incarceration, a lack of work experience or work readiness, low income, low academic functioning and/or personal, behavioral and social problems. CJC members are selected with assistance from the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services (DJS), from a pool of court-involved youth. ODC members are selected from a broader candidate pool of youths considered to be at risk for a variety of reasons. Members in both groups are selected based on a determination of their readiness to take advantage of the services offered by the program.

Position Description

The MCC Summer Programs Crew Chief is responsible for ensuring the regular, reliable and professional field-based implementation of conservation service projects while ensuring the training, safety and quality work performance of a maximum crew size of 8 corps members. The Crew Chief mentors members by seizing opportunities to enhance teamwork, cooperation, self esteem, self confidence, decision making, problem solving, trust, leadership and goal setting for individuals and for the group as a whole. The Crew Chief accompanies members on outdoor recreation and experiential learning excursions, including but not limited to one two-night camping trip to Swallow Falls State Park in Garrett County, and other locally based activities such as canoe or kayak adventures, hikes, swimming trips, environmental education and other outdoor activities.

The Crew Chief is also responsible for tracking and managing the data from the field-based duties, including paperwork and some reporting. The Crew Chief oversees the crew of corps members, interacts with the public, as well as with internal contacts and supervisors, and maintains the integrity of the MCC program by always demonstrating reliable and professional behavior.

Field-based duties may include some or all of the following: litter abatement, recycling, invasive species and weed control, trail construction and maintenance, wildlife habitat restoration, tree planting, park development, light construction, landscaping, campground renovations, general beautification and maintenance of park buildings, facilities and grounds. Tools required for the job include most hand tools such as hammers, screwdrivers, loppers, saws, digging bars, pulaskis, hoes, rakes, wheelbarrows, brooms, shovels and axes, as well as power tools such as chainsaws, commercial weed eaters, circular saws and power drills.

Maryland Conservation Corps 2008 Summer Programs ASSISTANT CREW CHIEF Position Description

POSITION:	Assistant Crew Chief
SALARY:	\$12.00/hour, 40 hours per week
CLOSING DATE:	April 28, 2008
BENEFITS:	None – position is contractual
TERM OF CONTRACT:	June 23 – August 13, 2008.
HOURS:	Monday – Friday, 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. generally, with some variation possible
LOCATION:	Position will be assigned to report to either Patapsco Valley State Park or Gunpowder Falls State Park. Reporting locations within the park may change at any time. Position may periodically be required to report to additional locations, subject to the needs of the MCC program and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

Organization Summary

The Maryland Conservation Corps (MCC) oversees two Summer Programs, the Outdoor Discovery Corps (ODC) and the Civic Justice Corps (CJC). The mission of both the ODC and CJC is to provide disadvantaged or otherwise at-risk youth with development opportunities that integrate conservation

service experience and job skills training with exposure to nature, experiential learning and recreation opportunities in the outdoors. The programs are open to youths aged 14 – 17. Both nature immersion and public service have restorative properties for the human spirit, and together they offer young people a unique opportunity to define their future - and themselves - in a positive way. It is the goal of these programs to maximize that opportunity.

Participants in ODC and CJC, called corpsmembers, join because they face a number of complex challenges which may include one or more of the following: previous incarceration, a lack of work experience or work readiness, low income, low academic functioning and/or personal, behavioral and social problems. CJC members are selected with assistance from the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services (DJS), from a pool of court-involved youth. ODC members are selected from a broader candidate pool of youths considered to be at risk for a variety of reasons. Members in both groups are selected based on a determination of their readiness to take advantage of the services offered by the program.

Position Description

The MCC Summer Programs Assistant Crew Chief is responsible for assisting a Crew Chief in ensuring the regular, reliable and professional field-based implementation of conservation service projects while ensuring the training, safety and quality work performance of a maximum crew size of 8 corpsmembers. The Assistant Crew Chief supports mentoring efforts of the Crew Chief to enhance teamwork, cooperation, self esteem, self confidence, decision making, problem solving, trust, leadership and goal setting for individuals and for the group as a whole. The Assistant Crew Chief accompanies members on outdoor recreation and experiential learning excursions, including but not limited to one two-night camping trip to Swallow Falls State Park in Garrett County, and other locally based activities such as canoe or kayak adventures, hikes, swimming trips, environmental education and other outdoor activities.

The Assistant Crew Chief assists in tracking and managing the data from the field-based duties, including paperwork and some reporting. The Assistant Crew Chief may oversee the crew of corpsmembers during temporary absence of the Crew Chief. The Assistant Crew Chief interacts with the public, as well as with internal contacts and supervisors, and maintains the integrity of the MCC program by always demonstrating reliable and professional behavior.

Field-based duties may include some or all of the following: litter abatement, recycling, invasive species and weed control, trail construction and maintenance, wildlife habitat restoration, tree planting, park development, light construction, landscaping, campground renovations, general beautification and maintenance of park buildings, facilities and grounds. Tools required for the job include most hand tools such as hammers, screwdrivers, loppers, saws, digging bars, pulaskis, hoes, rakes, wheelbarrows, brooms, shovels and axes, as well as power tools such as chainsaws, commercial weed eaters, circular saws and power drills.

State to hire 200 Baltimore youths

Summer jobs in parks part of program expansion

BY TOM FELTON
SUN REPORTER

Maryland will hire 200 Baltimore youths — including juvenile offenders — and give them summer jobs building trails, painting shelters and pulling invasive weeds at state parks.

Gov. Martin O'Malley and other state officials announced the expansion of the 24-year-old Maryland Conservation Corps during a news conference yesterday at Patuxent Valley State Park in Calverton.

"It's not just a summer job, it's a program of nature immersion, team building, service and getting important work done in the parks," said Nita Settina, state parks superintendent.

The project is an echo of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Civilian Conservation Corps, which built numerous public works projects to create jobs during the Depression.

John Griffin, secretary of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, said the program will cost about \$1 million this year. But the administration hopes to expand the number of jobs significantly in future years and include people from all parts of the state, he said.

"The idea is to help troubled youth learn employment skills and improve their physical and mental health through exposure to the outdoors, he said. The program also includes camping, canoe trips and art projects.

"The governor has been very interested in scaling up massive environmental restoration projects all around the state," Griffin said. "We'd like to have work going on all year round, with kids, inmates, even unemployed people doing work."

Similar youth programs have sprung up in recent years in the District of Columbia, New Orleans, South Carolina, Texas and a dozen other states.

Juvenile Services Secretary Donald W. DeWine said about half the 200 city youths will be on probation for nonviolent offenses, such as truancy, minor theft or possession of marijuana.

The department will select teenagers who say they want to work and learn, he said. No drug dealers or talkers will be in the state parks, he said.

"We are going to be working with our less serious kids," DeWine said. "We hope to keep them off the streets for the summer and keep them safe and provide them some good experiences."

An additional 200 teenagers from low-income homes will be recruited by the Parks and People Foundation, a city-based nonprofit organization.

The first year of the program is for Baltimore residents ages 14 to 17. The state will pay them \$4.55 an hour for 40 hours a week of work, starting June 30 and ending Aug. 3.

Users will pick them up every morning in the city and drive them to Patuxent Valley State Park and Gunpowder Falls State Park. They will repair trails and buildings in the parks and rip up invasive weeds, among other projects.

At the Patuxent Valley park yesterday, students from the city's Franklin Square Elementary School took water samples to check for pollution in Sawmill Branch.

"Maryland's children are losing their connection with our natural world, an alienation that threatens the future of our natural resources and the quality of life for future citizens," Griffin said.



Sina Niemann (left) of Outdoor Discovery helps Briell Johnson look through her findings as the and other students check the health of Sawmill Branch.

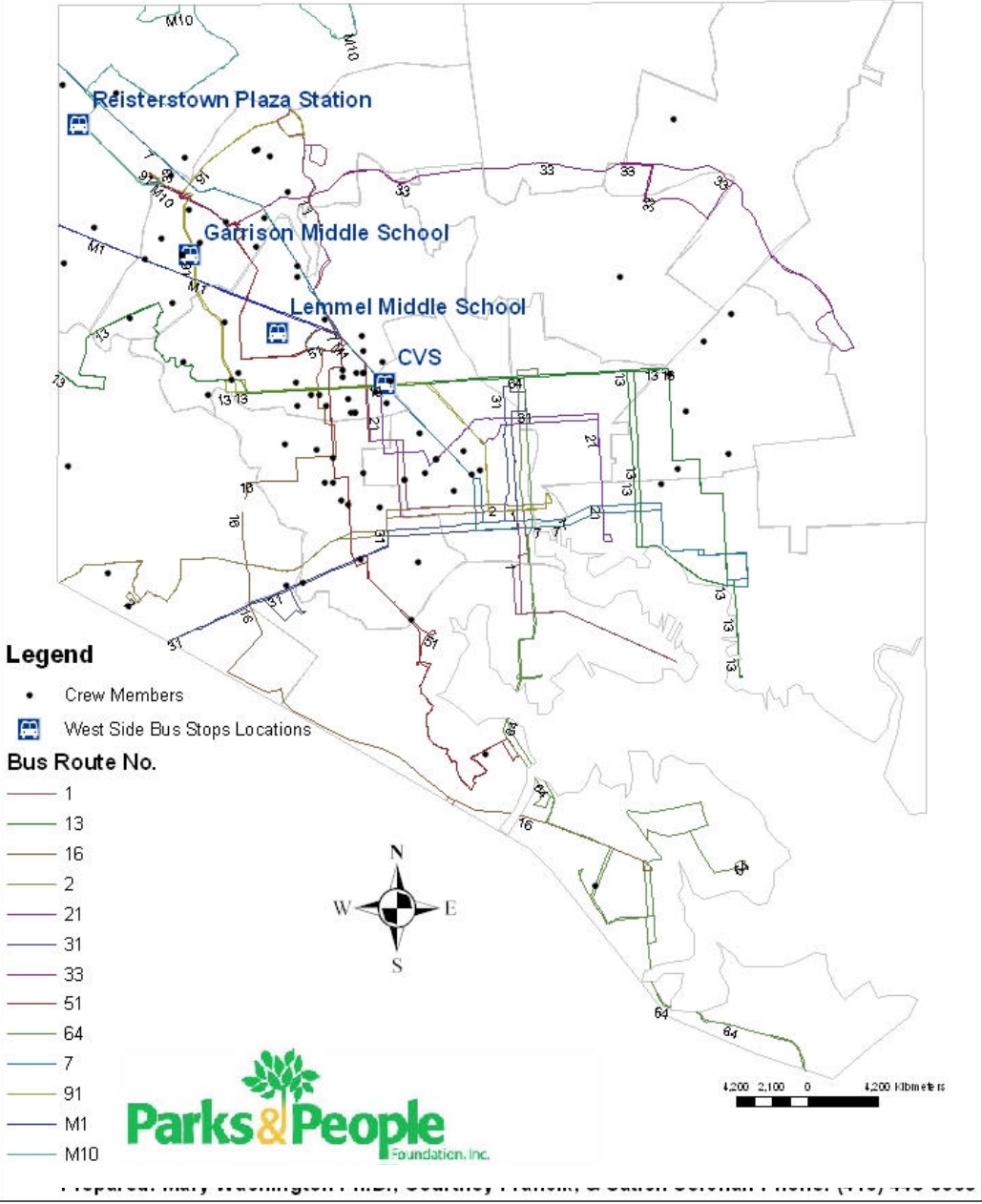
PHOTOS BY HONCAL GONZALEZ/SUN PHOTOGRAPHER



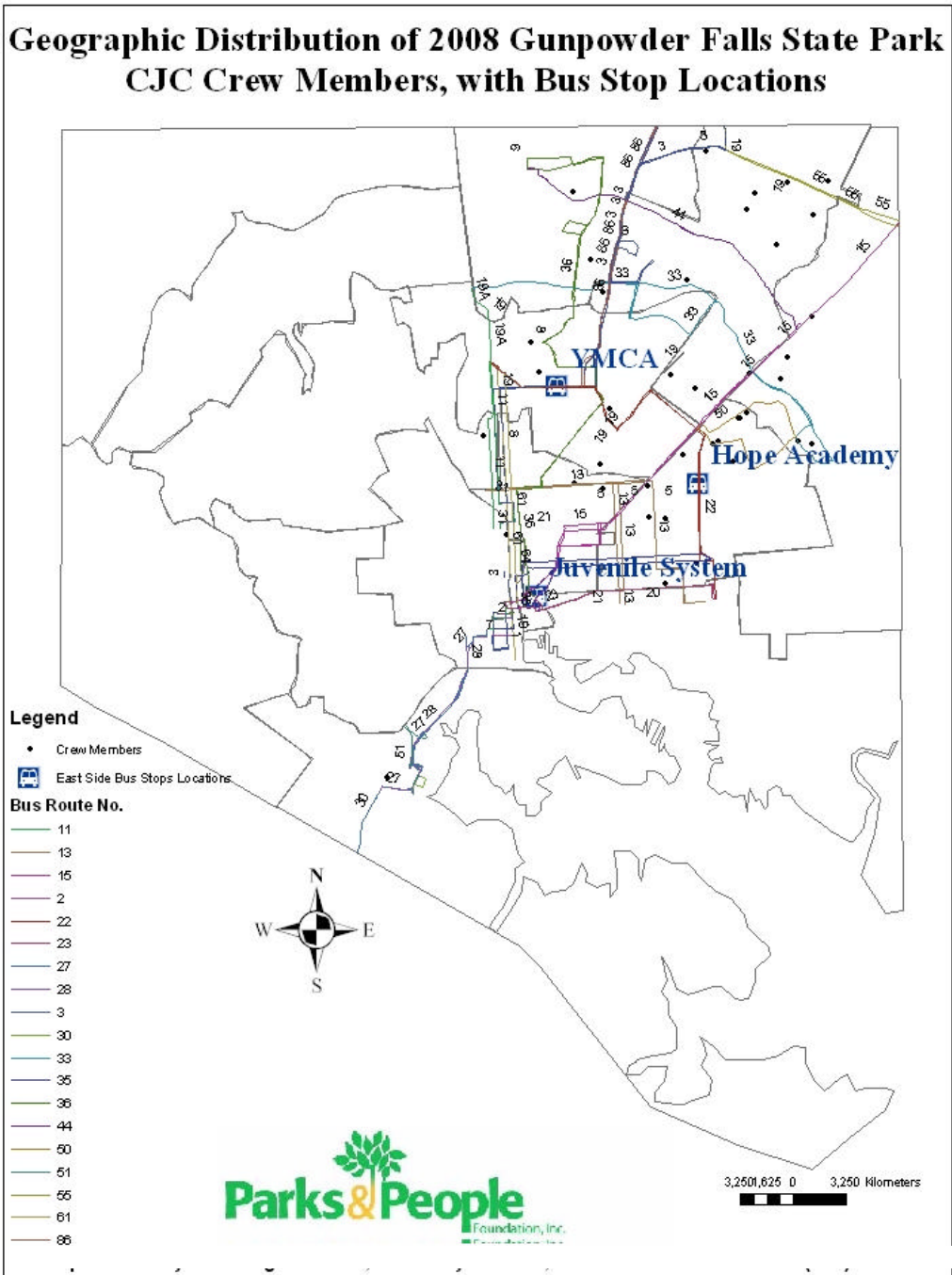
Niemann (left) helps Janelle Jackson look through her sample at Patuxent Valley State Park.

tom.peltos@baltoan.com

Geographic Distribution of 2008 Patapsco Valley State Park CJC Crew Members, with Bus Stop locations



Appendix III. Eastside Bus Locations and MTA Lines



Appendix IV. Civic Justice Corp Application Form



Application for the Maryland Civic Justice Corps. Positions are available at Gunpowder Falls State Park and Patapsco Valley State Park. Return completed application to: Ranger P. Taylor, Gunpowder Falls State Park, P.O. Box 480, Kingsville, MD 21087.

Social Security Number - -

1. Applying for: Please Print all Information

Title of State job: Maryland Civic Justice Corps Member

2. Tell Us Who You Are:

Name
Last First MI

Address
Street City State County Zip

Home Phone Work Phone
 Can you speak a language other than English? None Some Fluent Which language(s)?

3. Tell Us About Your Education:

High School graduate or GED? Yes No If no, highest grade completed

High School name, address and dates attended:	Trade/Technical School name, address and dates attended:
Major course of study:	

College graduate? Yes No If no, number of credits completed

Undergraduate College/University	Graduate School
address:	address:
pertinent undergraduate courses:	pertinent graduate courses:

4. Tell Us About Your Work Experience

Your present or last job. Where did you work? Name of employer:

Address where you worked:
Street City State Zip

Your Supervisor's name and phone number:

About Me:

This form is optional. You may answer as many or as few of these questions as you like. Even a few sentences will help us know you better. What are the most important things you think we should know about you?

Please write your name here: _____

1. Who are you? Describe your home life, your interests, or how you spend your free time:

2. What would you say is your best quality or strength?

3. Do you have special goals or ideas about what you would like to achieve? Please share:

4. Why do you want to be a part of the Civic Justice Corps?

Thank you for telling us about yourself!



Please join the Maryland Department of Natural Resources,
the Department of Juvenile Services and the Parks and People Foundation
for the

2008 Civic Justice Corps Graduation

Friday, August 8, 2008

at 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

(Graduation following a picnic lunch)

North Point State Park

Trolley Barn Pavilion

9000 Bay Shore Road

Edgemere, MD 21219

www.dnr.md.gov/publiclands/central/northpoint.html

Casual Attire

Limit 4 guests per youth

