

APRIL MAY JUNE 2009
NorthState Rural Assets Project
AmeriCorps Quarterly Newsletter



AmeriCorps Graduation

The NSRAP Annual Graduation ceremony took place on June 30th this year at the Shasta Builders Exchange in Redding from 10am-12pm. The celebration was in honor of the sixty NSRAP AmeriCorps members who completed their 2008/2009 term of service. The program was commenced by the NSRAP Program Coordinator- Julie Wright and the schedule of events included; refreshments, a message from the CAPCC Executive Director- Betty Futrell, guest speakers Anna Diaz and Melissa Peterson, special member recognition, and the keynote speaker- Shawn Avery. Each graduating member received a certificate of National Service, AmeriCorps graduation token gift, and special recognition. The ceremony was concluded with an invitation to enjoy a specialty cake with their guests while mingling with fellow NSRAP AmeriCorps graduates, which included first and second term members.



All AmeriCorps Week

This year's AmeriCorps Week took place May 9-16, 2009. AmeriCorps Week is a recruitment and recognition event designed to bring more Americans into service, salute AmeriCorps members and alums for the powerful impact, and thank community partners who make AmeriCorps possible.

This year, the NSRAP program formed a sub-committee to plan and organize a week long event to get the word out to the community about the AmeriCorps program. The committee met once a week to organize events such as; an open house at the Child Abuse Prevention Council on May 11, 2009 which included a blood drive through the local Blood Source of Redding, a Root Beer Social with raffle prizes, and activities for children.

A press release was written and sent to local media to invite both Alum, current members, and the community to the open house. All members were invited and encouraged to sign a guest book designed specifically for the NSRAP program. A flyer was also designed and sent to local preschools, community partners, other sites, and home-day care providers. Project Manager Rachelle Neal, along with many of the sub-committee members attended the Redding City Hall Council meeting on May 7, 2009 to share information about AmeriCorps programs.



Along with the open house, the sub-committee hosted a "member for a day" project. The event gave community members the

opportunity to choose a portion of their busy day during AmeriCorps week to serve alongside an Asset Development Coach at an after school program host site school. Some of the guests that were invited to participate included: Mary Stegall (Redding City Council), Eddie McAllister (Shasta County Public Health), Christine Haggard (Anderson City Planners Office).

Lorie Harris
Volunteer Coordinator



A Project of the Child Abuse
Prevention Coordinating Council
of Shasta County
2280 Benton Dr Bldg C, Ste B
Redding, CA. 96003



This grant funded project
is administered by
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COMMUNITY
SERVICE**

Ropes Course

This past April, I was invited to participate in the Ropes Course along with 65 other AmeriCorps members. This was going to be an exciting day, although I had already pre-planned in my head that I would be more of an observer than participant as I have a tremendous fear of heights and I knew that most all of the events took place several hundred (actually 30) feet in the air.

The day started off with simple activities to get us pumped and interactive, but quickly we were moved into groups of fellow AmeriCorps members where we would spend the rest of the day trusting our lives among each other, and one fearless Odyssey leader. My first experience of putting my own life on the line was when I was to fall off a table 3 (or 9) feet off the ground onto a specially made tarp being held by my fellow mates. Being that I "pre-planned" to not climb up the pole (an event later in the day) I thought that I would take the chance of making smooth landing into said tarp, and volunteered to be one of the first 10 to fall backwards to what turned out to not be my death. It did take me several attempts to actually make the drop, but it was pretty amazing knowing that I did it and that I finished my one task for the day.



The second station of death consisted of tying ropes to our bodies and climbing up a thirty foot pole, pulling ourselves up to stand on a circular pole top smaller than my size 7 converse, and then jumping to a trapeze where we would fall to the ground-softly. This task was not for the weak at heart which is why I decided to stand back and help prepare others in their gear and not go up myself. I must have watched 15 people put their life into our hands-by mere twine, when I decided in one quick, unclear, and heat-stricken thought to gear up and go out in a blaze of glory. It only took 2 seconds to get to the top of the pole where I spent a good 5 very shaky minutes looking at the top wondering how I was to stand on it. A miracle in the least, I did make it to the top and then ever-so-gracefully jumped to bar where I released and floated to the ground-unhurt and goddess-like.

Feeling quite jazzed about life after that, the third task was nothing as we were to pair up with another member and asked to climb up another pole and walk across parallel lines that "v" out while holding on to our mates until we eventually have to separate and fall to the ground. We were given the choice to either stop at the first set of lines or go "to the top", a set of lines that seemed horribly higher. Surprising to myself, when a brave soul named Breeana asked to be my buddy, I quickly agreed and offered to go "all the way". Having felt like a pro at climbing extremely high poles, the feat of sliding my feet across hot lines as my Chuck Taylors melted to the wires was not an easy task. My comrade was able to talk me through it, holding on to each other, we treacherously slithered down the line until we grasped on and, in the words of the Grammy nominated rock band Radiohead, we "floated like a feather" to defy our own fears and come out as champions. I know I may not have done anything marvelous to anyone else that day, but I know that I was a champion by accomplishing those obstacles and I know that I can do just about anything.

April Carlton
Parent Partner

Asset Coach Success Story

As a second year member of AmeriCorps, I have been accustomed to the world of Mistletoe A.C.E after-school program, from the greetings the staff give each other to the conversations you continue to carry with individual children over the course of the year(s). As with any other workplace, there are disagreements, and dramatic events, and everything that is involved with that kind of behavior.

However, Mistletoe has the unique title of being the only workplace that I've felt truly a part of... and I'm not even an actual staff member! The friendly faces, the jokes and genuine caring about well-being is not something that is found everywhere, and I am honored to have worked there for the past two years. It's helped me see so many things in a new light. A few years ago I would never have even thought of working with children, and now it seems it's what I want to continue doing for a while longer. There could even be a career for me in teaching!

Sitting down, trying to think of my biggest success story, my mind went over dozens of situations and ideas. The idea that I was my own biggest success story seemed selfish at first, but I decided to go with it anyways. I've matured and changed in many ways, and I am grateful for Mistletoe and AmeriCorps for helping me do that. This will always be a time of my life that I will not forget. I have seen and personally touched many young children's lives in these two years, and all of them mean something to me, however small or insignificant. I look forward to seeing them around town, and hopefully working with them again in the future. This has simply been an amazing experience.

Bryson Howell
Asset Coach



Parent Partner : Success Story

This client is now a single mom in her early twenties with 2 small children, a girl 2 ½ months and a son who will be 2 in June. At the time I met her she was a client at Mercy maternity clinic. Husband had recently abused her and she was hurt as a result of this. She went to the clinic because she was 8 months pregnant and the baby wasn't moving. In previous visits she heard about Parent Partners and decided to ask for a referral. At the time of my intake I was unaware of the abuse.

This client was living with her husband and her small son, and pregnant with their second child. Her husband was in the process of getting Social Security due to mental health issues he was diagnosed with. These mental health issues made it so he was not leaving the house for any length of time. As my relationship grew with my client and trust was established, she recently confided in me what was happening in her relationship with her husband and in the home. She left the home with the kids in May to live with her mother.

My client set small goals for herself with the Parent Partner program. I submitted a referral to Head Start for a home visitor to come in to the home to do parenting education and child development education. One of her goals was to exercise more and establish a routine for the children. I gave her handouts on exercises she could do in the home with the children, a referral to the YMCA's low income application and handouts on routines for children. She now goes to the gym regularly and the kids have a nap and eating schedule that is working well for the children. After she left the abusive relationship I assisted her with filing a police report and a restraining order. We also did a referral to Healthy Pathways for infants. She also has a Head Start Home visitor that comes into the home once a week.

I see the client about 4 times a month. We assisted the family with rental assistance through DCSF of 175.00; we also helped with bus passes so my client could get to Dr appointments for herself and the children. Since the intake on 9/25/08 she has delivered a healthy baby girl and left an abusive relationship. What this woman has gone through in the last 2 ½ years was horrible. But she took the information that was given her regarding what was considered abuse and made the decision for her and the kids to get out. She wanted a better life and is taking the steps to have that. She will be starting at Shasta College in the fall and has child care secured at the Head Start on the college campus. She has a very supportive mother who will allow her and the children to live with her until she feels safe and stable enough to get a place for her and the kids. She has been granted a restraining order and will attend an infant mental health group. My client is looking forward to her new life and the adventures that will follow.

Margie Milnes
Parent Partner



Ways to Show Kids you Care!

- ...Be available
- ...Welcome their suggestions
- ...Share a secret
- ...Giggle together
- ...Admit when you make a mistake
- ...Notice them
- ...Listen to them
- ...Share their excitement
- ...Marvel at what they can do



Meeting the Needs of Our Communities

The NorthState Rural Assets Project serves children and families in Shasta, Siskiyou, and Trinity Counties. Members serve to reduce high risk behavior in youth and to strengthen families with young children. Part-time members serving as **Asset Coaches** provide support to after school programs; in addition to developing and implementing small group activities based on the 40 Developmental Assets. Full-time Members serving as **Parent Partners** provide parenting support, mentoring, and linkages to other needed community resources.

For more information about the **40 Developmental Assets** check out: www.search-institute.org

Thank You!

Thank you to the following trainers who provided excellent presentation of essential information. We really appreciate your time and knowledge.

Christy Russell
Active Citizens

Shawn Avery
City of Redding

NSRAP AC Members are Awesome!

The following Members were recognized at our graduation.

2nd Year Members

| | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| April Carlton | Angela Yang |
| Lorie Harris | Jessica Breshears |
| Naomi Pursell | Vicki Tarsio |
| Debra Gardiner | Amy Wade |
| Lynnette Last | Colleen Burke |
| Estrella Aman | Tamra Abbott |
| Katherine Chenoweth | Tabitha Gomez |
| Isabel James | Samantha Ferguson |
| Bryson Howell | Romulus Ongaco |
| Elizabeth Piciullo | Maggie Hall |
| Robert Thomas | |
| Laura Meyer | |



Special Heart of Service

April Carlton
Ellen Payton
Joyce Root
Candee Hodson
Erica Hoffman



Special Recognition

NSRAP sponsored a Volunteer Recruitment Contest for members to engage the community in volunteerism. Jessica Breshears was the contest winner with a total of 30 volunteer hours contributed by community members to her host site, Verde Vale Elementary. For her efforts, Jessica received a surprise visit from NSRAP staff where she was presented a certificate, a balloon bouquet, and a \$100 Safeway gift card.

Laurel Bennett was nominated by NSRAP as an Asset Champion for the Assets in Action Celebration. Laurel is a Skill Builder for the Wrap Around program, mentoring at-risk youth in a variety of ways. She not only teaches and role models appropriate skills in social, academic and home settings, but she also helps them study, acquire jobs, interact with peers, organize and work on any other skill determined as a goal. The positive and purposeful approach Laurel takes with the youth she serves is an asset to NSRAP and the community.

