

# Career Development Outcomes Among Current and Former Literacy and Math Tutors in Colorado



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# About the National Science & Service Collaborative

We believe partnerships between researchers, AmeriCorps programs, and communities can transform research and practice, leading to sustainable, community-driven solutions.

We value a broad and inclusive definition of “collaboration” because improving societal outcomes is maximized when the tools of science, expertise of communities, and resources of AmeriCorps are deployed in a truly collaborative way.

The Center’s portfolio includes independent and collaborative projects to evaluate the impact of AmeriCorps programming and advance the existing knowledge base in education, as well as development projects to bring new and innovative programming to communities across the nation.

In this evaluation, NSSC evaluators worked closely with Dr. Peter Nelson, who is the Principal Evaluator and Consultant at Slate Evaluation Group. Slate Evaluation provides low-cost program and assessment design services as well as evaluation services for initiatives in a range of issue areas.

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# Executive Summary

Colorado Youth for a Change recruits and trains AmeriCorps tutors to deliver literacy and math support to students in grades PreK-8<sup>th</sup> grade via three programs: Early Learning Corps, Reading Corps, and Math Corps. All three programs have demonstrated strong evidence of impact on student learning; however, each program also strives to build the technical and career skills of tutors, positioning them for a career in education.

In this evaluation, Colorado Youth for a Change sought to better understand important career outcomes for current tutors and recent alumni of the tutoring programs. The purpose of this focus was twofold: (1) collecting and summarizing data on career outcomes for members provides a foundation for uncovering the degree to which program assumptions about the value of service are borne out in data, and (2) an analysis of career development and related outcomes among tutors is likely to be instructive for future support that can be provided during and after a member's service.

## Methods

A subset of current members (n = 75) and recent alumni (n = 36) completed a comprehensive career development survey (CDS). The CDS included elements of Career Capital, program-specific skills, and post-service outcomes (e.g., employment). Members completed the CDS at the outset of the year and at the time of program exit.

Alumni completed the CDS 3-months after service and again 12-months after service. We evaluated outcomes descriptively and formally evaluated changes in Career Capital and member skills using paired t-tests.

## Main Findings

**Positive Impact of Service for Members.** Over the course of the year, current members demonstrated significant growth in their sense of purpose, career skills, and professional network. Likewise, members reported increases in educational-skills directly aligned with program activities. Members also increased their interest in an educational career and **by the end of the year, 27% of current members were already employed, nearly half of which were employed in education.** Further, more than half of members were returning for another service year.

**Members demonstrated statistically significant growth in program-related skills and Career Capital over the course of the program year.**

## **Alumni Tend to Stay in Education and View AmeriCorps as a Valuable Career Development Experience.**

67% of alumni were employed, over half of which were employed in education. A quarter of employed alumni were working at their original host site. **Over 90% of alumni indicated that AmeriCorps helped them further their professional goals and would recommend serving with AmeriCorps to friends or family.** Even among alumni not in education, service was viewed as a valuable asset for career development.

**“Service prepared me by teaching me how to show up consistently, communicate, work with others, and join a new community, even though the subject matter doesn’t relate to my current training program.”**

- Former tutor working outside of education

**Individualized and Tangible Career Support is Valued and Desired.** In ratings scales and qualitative responses, members overwhelmingly reported that tangible career supports such as assistance for resume and cover letter writing, as well as meaningful networking opportunities were the most useful. In addition to expressing appreciation for these supports, members indicated a need for a higher volume and quality of assistance. In future years, Colorado Youth for a Change might consider facilitating more opportunities for 1:1 support and/or offer more opportunities for strengthening professional networks and job application materials.

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# Introduction

## Programming Overview

Colorado Youth for a Change recruits and trains AmeriCorps tutors to deliver literacy and math support to students in grades PreK-8<sup>th</sup> grade. These tutors are part of a larger national network of tutors under three programs: Early Learning Corps (PreK), Reading Corps (K-3), and Math Corps (K-8). During the 2024-25 program year, there were 120 tutors in Colorado across Reading Corps (79), Math Corps (32), and Early Learning Corps (9), serving more than 3,000 students.

The theory of change underlying these programs is that high-dosage tutoring provided by AmeriCorps members will help schools meet the literacy/math needs of students and increase the number of students reaching key proficiency milestones. Early Learning Corps tutors are placed in early childhood classrooms to provide literacy and math support to all students, as well as targeted support for a smaller number of students with greater need. Reading Corps tutors are placed in elementary schools and provide targeted evidence-based intervention for a caseload of students across grades K-3. Math Corps tutors are placed in elementary or middle schools and provide targeted evidence-based intervention for a caseload of students across grades K-3 or 4-8. Each of the three programs is supported by multiple rigorous impact evaluations evidencing the impact on student literacy and math outcomes (Markovitz et al., 2014; 2015; 2018; Coddling et al., 2022).

In addition to building foundational literacy and math skills for students, each program is also intended to build the technical and career skills of tutors, positioning them for a career in education. Tutors build valuable content-specific skills (e.g., delivering evidence-based support) during their service year and are provided opportunities to explore various careers in education and building general career development skills (e.g., resume writing and networking). This is relevant because to date, less is known regarding the impact of service on *tutor outcomes*, which are an important focal point of the program.

## Evaluation Purpose

When programs have sufficient evidence for their primary impact argument, it is useful to consider other outcomes or means to improve program impact or efficiency. In the current evaluation, Colorado Youth for a Change sought to better understand important career outcomes for current tutors and recent alumni of the tutoring programs. The purpose of this focus was twofold.

First, there is a need to clearly articulate tutor career development and outcomes because it is a component of each program's logic model. Collecting and summarizing data on career outcomes for members provides a foundation for uncovering the degree to which program assumptions about the value of service are borne out in data.

Second, an analysis of career development and related outcomes among tutors is likely to be instructive for future supports. For example, tutors may provide feedback that certain career development opportunities are more valuable than others. Alternatively, there may be patterns in career development across different demographic categories, which could aid Youth for a Change in designing career supports in the future.

## Guiding Evaluation Questions

There were two groups of tutors of interest for the evaluation: current members and recent alumni. Below we outline the primary evaluation questions.

### Among **current members**:

1. To what extent did serving as an AmeriCorps tutor with Reading/Math/Early Learning Corps improve content-specific skills during their service year that may assist them in future careers or educational pursuits?
2. To what extent did serving as an AmeriCorps tutor help develop professional skills (referred to as "Career Capital") during their service year?
3. To what extent did tutoring affect the post-service plans of members?
4. To what extent do AmeriCorps members pursue or obtain a career or additional education at the end of their service year? And, to what extent are those careers and/or education pursuits in the field of education?
5. To what extent did tutors view different program experiences as useful for career development and what additional support could the program provide to assist members with their professional development?

### Among **recent alumni**:

1. What is the self-reported Career Capital among alumni?
2. What is the self-reported Civic Engagement among alumni?
3. To what extent did serving as an AmeriCorps tutor prepare members for future careers or educational pursuits, as measured 1-year after their service year?
4. To what extent do AmeriCorps members pursue or obtain a career or additional education at the end of their service year? And, to what extent are those careers and/or education pursuits in the field of education?

# Methodology

## AmeriCorps Career Development Survey (CDS)

Current member and alumni data were obtained using the Career Development Survey (CDS) managed by ServeMinnesota’s National Science and Service Collaborative. The CDS tracks the career interests, skills, and outcomes for AmeriCorps members. Programs use the CDS to inform career development efforts and communicate on the impact of service on career development more generally. The survey is administered at the onset of service (Baseline CDS), end of service (Exit CDS), and annually thereafter (Alumni CDS). The nature of the survey differs somewhat across time. In Table 1, we provide an overview of the primary survey elements included on the Baseline, Exit, and Alumni CDS.

**Table 1. Career Development Survey Elements across Administrations**

Primary Survey Elements	Baseline	Exit	Alumni
<b>Demographics</b> <i>E.g., race, gender, household income, highest education earned</i>			
<b>Career Plans</b>			
<b>Program-Related Skills</b>			
<b>Career Capital</b>			
<b>Perception of Career Supports During Service</b>			
<b>Employment Status</b> <i>Including salary and nature of employment.</i>			
<b>Retrospective Service Experience and Value</b>			

There are two sections of the CDS that are useful to highlight. First, note that Career Capital is assessed across all occasions as a way to measure the impact that service has on the overall career development of members and alumni. Career Capital is defined as the competencies, knowledge and attributes one needs to succeed in their career (Defillippi & Arthur, 1994). There are three main elements of career capital: *Knowing Why*, *Knowing What*, and *Knowing Who*.

- *Knowing Why* includes values and identity related to AmeriCorps member careers and life goals, meaning that an individual is able to set career goals that align with their values, has strong identity/affiliation with their career, and has confidence that they can achieve their career goals (Abele & Spurk, 2009).
- *Knowing What* refers to the wide-ranging set of skills, knowledge and competencies members need to succeed, including sector-specific skills, transferrable (soft) skills, and skills related to successfully obtaining employment.

- Finally, *Knowing Who* refers to the social and professional networks that support career development. Members with strong networks are more likely to grow and be satisfied with their careers (Wolff & Moser, 2010).

The CDS assesses Career Capital using 9-items from a validated Career Resources Questionnaire (Hirschi et al., 2018). On each item, members indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree using a 7-point scale, with 1= strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=slightly disagree, 4= neither agree nor disagree, 5=slightly agree, 6=agree, and 7=strongly agree. The items that compose career capital are displayed in Table 2 below. For analysis and reporting, Career Capital is reported using average scores for *Knowing Why*, *Knowing What*, *Knowing Who*, and an overall average Career Capital scale score.

**Table 2. Career Capital Items.**

Career Capital	Items
<b>Knowing Why</b>	1. I have a clear understanding of career goals. 2. I have career goals that reflect my personal interests and values. 3. When I set goals for my career, I am confident I can achieve them.
<b>Knowing What</b>	4. I have many skills and competencies that I could use in a range of different occupations. 5. I have a good understanding of the root causes facing the career field and strategies to address them. 6. I know how to successfully obtain employment in the field
<b>Knowing Who</b>	7. I know many people who support me in my career development. 8. I know how to build contacts with other people who are important to my career development. 9. I have the professional relationships and networks to support my career and/or continuing education goals.

Secondly, the CDS includes a series of items related to content-related skills wherein members rate their perceived competency using five response options, which we converted to numeric codes for analysis: (1) Novice, (2) Advanced Beginner, (3) Competent, (4) Proficient, and (5) Expert. The skill-related items are displayed in Table 3.

**Table 3. Content-Related Skills for Colorado Tutors.**

Items
1. Understanding of evidence-based approaches to teaching literacy/math 2. Understanding of how students learn and develop foundational skills 3. Planning for effective implementation of interventions on a daily basis 4. Implementing strategies for effective student engagement 5. Using information about students' families, cultures, and communities to connect learning to students' experiences 6. Administering and scoring assessments to measure student progress 7. Using data to make informed decisions 8. Using educational technology to collect and manage student progress data 9. Collaborating with school staff 10. Reflecting on your own practice and seeking opportunities for improvement.

## Survey Procedures

The CDS was administered twice to current tutors and alumni. Tutors were prompted to complete the Baseline CDS in September of the 24-25 program year and the Exit CDS in May of the 24-25 program year. Alumni—all of whom were tutors during the 23-24 program year and not serving during the 24-25 program year—were prompted to complete the first Alumni CDS in September of the 24-25 program year and again in May of the 24-25 program year. During each administration of the CDS, tutors and alumni received unique links tied to their personal email address. The window for completing the CDS was 3-weeks for each administration. Program staff and the evaluation team provided reminders during each survey window, and alumni who responded were entered into a random drawing to win one of ten \$20 dollar gift cards.

## Participants

**Alumni.** A total of 48 alumni completed the CDS in September 2024 and/or May 2025, a 59% response rate. For the purposes of analysis and reporting, we exclude Alumni who did not complete the May 2025 CDS (n = 12). Thus, the alumni results include responses from 36 former tutors who finished their service term in May of 2024. Demographic characteristics for Alumni are displayed in Table 3. Among alumni for whom program data were available, 40% were serving in Reading Corps, followed by Math (24%) and Early Learning Corps (8%). The highest level of education for a majority of alumni was a Bachelor's degree (40%), 42% of alumni were White and/or female (47%). Alumni reported income across a range of household income categories, for reporting and analysis we organize those data into two groups—those with household incomes less than \$45,000 and those with incomes equal to or greater than \$45,000. Approximately 42% of alumni who responded to that item reported a household income less than \$45,000.

**Table 3. Distribution of Alumni across program and demographic characteristics.**

Variable	Percent	Variable	Percent
<b>Program</b>		<b>Highest Education</b>	
Early Learning Corps	8%	High School Diploma or GED	5%
Math Corps	24%	Some College - No Degree	8%
Reading Corps	40%	Associate's Degree	5%
Unknown	29%	Bachelor's Degree	40%
<b>Time</b>		Master's Degree or Higher	13%
12-Month	29%	Unknown	29%
Both	71%	<b>Ethnicity</b>	
<b>Gender</b>		White	42%
Man	18%	Latino	11%
Woman	47%	Multiracial	8%
Non-Binary	5%	Black	3%
Unknown	29%	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	3%
<b>Income</b>		Unknown	33%
< \$45,000	42%		
> = \$45,000	27%		
Unknown	31%		

**Members.** A total of 75 tutors completing the Exit CDS and 67 tutors completed both the Baseline and Exit CDS, a 74% response rate. The distribution of member characteristics (Table 4) was generally similar to alumni in that the largest distribution of members were serving in Reading Corps (61%), White (76%), women (75%), held a Bachelor's degree (45%), and reported a household income below \$45,000 (52%).

**Table 4. Distribution of Members across program and demographic characteristics.**

Variable	Percent	Variable	Percent
<b>Program</b>		<b>Ethnicity</b>	
Reading Corps	61%	White	76%
Math Corps	30%	Biracial or Multiracial	9%
Early Learning Corps	9%	Black or African American	9%
<b>Gender</b>		Hispanic, Latinx, or Spanish origin	5%
Woman	75%	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	1%
Man	15%	<b>Highest Education</b>	
Agender	3%	Bachelor's Degree	45%
Genderfluid	3%	Some College - No Degree	16%
Non-Binary	3%	Associate's Degree	12%
Genderqueer	2%	High School Diploma or GED	11%
<b>Income</b>		Certificate, Credential, or License	9%
< \$45,000	52%	Master's Degree or Higher	7%
>= \$45,000	36%		
Prefer not to Answer	12%		

## Current Member Results

In the subsections below we outline the primary results for members. For outcomes associated only with Exit CDS data, we use all Exit respondents (N = 75). For outcomes examining changes on the CDS, we restrict analyses to only members who completed the CDS during both administrations (N = 67).

### Content-Related and Professional Skills

On average, members tended to view their skills more favorably at the end of the year, with average scores increasing from 3.49 at Baseline (corresponding to between competent and proficient on the rating scale) to 3.93 at Exit (closer to an average rating of proficient). The largest changes in perceived skill were observed for skills related to administering and scoring assessments, planning for effective intervention implementation, and collaborating with school staff (see Table 5). In addition, we used a paired t-test to more formally evaluate differences in perceived skill at baseline and exit and observed a statistically significant and positive (approximately a half-point) difference favoring average skill ratings at the time of exit,  $t(66) = 5.39, p = .00$ .

In regard to Career Capital, members tended to increase their scores from baseline ( $M = 5.29$ ) to exit ( $M = 5.65$ ). The largest gains were observed in the domain of *Knowing Who*, suggesting that tutors in Colorado tended to establish a stronger professional network across the service year. As with skill ratings, we used a paired t-test to more formally evaluate differences in career capital scores at baseline and exit and observed a statistically significant and positive (0.39 point) difference between spring and fall career capital,  $t(60), = 3.39, p = .001$ .

**Table 5. Distribution of Members across program and demographic characteristics.**

Outcomes	Baseline		Exit	
	M	SD	M	SD
<b>Skills</b>				
Understanding of evidence-based approaches to teaching literacy/math	3.45	0.97	3.75	0.84
Understanding of how students learn and develop foundational skills	3.27	0.90	3.64	0.90
Planning for effective implementation of interventions on a daily basis	3.48	0.93	3.97	0.89
Implementing strategies for effective student engagement	3.48	0.99	3.85	0.86
Using information about students' families, cultures, and communities to connect learning to students' experiences	3.25	1.05	3.60	0.94
Administering and scoring assessments to measure student progress	3.61	1.00	4.24	0.82
Using data to make informed decisions	3.60	0.91	4.04	0.88
Using educational technology to collect and manage student progress data	3.49	1.01	4.12	0.81
Collaborating with school staff	3.60	1.00	4.07	0.84
Reflecting on your own practice and seeking opportunities for improvement	3.70	0.78	4.00	0.63
<b>Average Skill Rating</b>	<b>3.49</b>	0.81	<b>3.93</b>	0.67
<b>Career Capital</b>				
Knowing Why	5.24	1.04	5.62	1.06
Knowing What	5.44	0.93	5.74	0.88
Knowing Who	5.23	1.17	5.67	1.04
<b>Career Capital</b>	<b>5.29</b>	0.87	<b>5.65</b>	0.87

## Post-Service Outcomes

On both the Baseline and Exit CDS, members were asked to indicate their agreement with the statement “I intend to pursue work or further training in education.” Alternatively, members could also indicate that they were retired. In Table 6, we provide the distribution of member responses at the onset of service and at the conclusion of their service year (N = 67).

**Table 6. Member ratings of post-service intentions.**

Intent to Pursue Work or Further Training in Education	Baseline	Exit
Strongly Agree	25%	<b>31%</b>
Agree	24%	<b>33%</b>
Slightly Agree	6%	<b>7%</b>
Unsure	28%	<b>12%</b>
Slightly Disagree	3%	<b>1%</b>
Disagree	1%	<b>7%</b>
Strongly Disagree	4%	<b>1%</b>
Retired	7%	6%

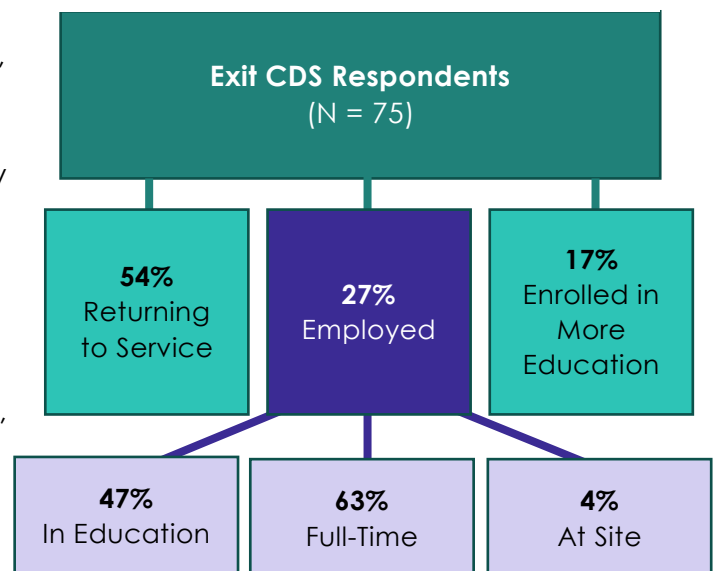
In general, members tended to report stronger intentions to pursue work or further training in education on the Exit CDS. For example, 31% of members

“strongly agreed” at exit whereas 25% of those same members responded with strong agreement on the Baseline CDS. When aggregating responses into two categories—general agreement and general disagreement or uncertainty— 71% of members indicated they intended to pursue work or further training on the Exit CDS compared to 54% of members on the baseline survey.

Members also responded to a series of items related to their post-service plans (Figure 1). Of the members who completed the Exit CDS, 54% of members indicated plans to return for another service year. Of the members who completed the Exit CDS and were not already retired (N = 71), 27% had already obtained employment.

Among members who reported being employed, 63% were employed full-time and 47% were employed in education. In addition, three members (4%) reported employment at their service site. Among those employed, many (73%) reported an expected salary of less than 45K.

**Figure 1. Member post-service plans.**



## Perception of Program Experiences and Career Development

There were two primary sources to evaluate member perceptions of their service year and its impact on their career development. First, members responded to a series of items in which they indicated the degree to which different forms of career support were supportive for their career development. Second, both members and alumni provided open-ended responses to a number of items asking them to reflect on the resources provided during the year and the impact the service year had on their plans or current role.

Member responses to items related to career development resources are displayed in Table 7. Overall, members indicated that their program was either supportive (49%) or very supportive (33%) for their career development. Similar, albeit slightly smaller values, were observed when evaluating the supportiveness of host sites.

When examining perceptions of specific career supports, there were some members who did not participate in some of the resources (e.g., 25% did not attend or were not offered to attend a career panel). Across the resources, members tended to view career exploration, information on careers, job search skills, and goal setting and action planning as the most supportive for their career development. Taken generally, this seems to suggest that members benefit most from networking and other tangible resources for job searching.

**Table 7. Member ratings of career development resources.**

Area of Support	Did Not Participate	Not Supportive	Somewhat Supportive	Supportive	Very Supportive
Career Exploration	15%	1%	12%	42%	30%
Goal Setting and Action Planning	12%	4%	4%	40%	39%
Information on Careers	10%	3%	9%	36%	40%
Certifications, Credentials, or Degree Opportunities	16%	4%	13%	46%	18%
Support Completing Applications for Further Education	21%	4%	13%	42%	19%
Job Search Skills	6%	1%	10%	39%	40%
Career Panels	25%	7%	10%	37%	19%
Networking Opportunities	16%	4%	13%	37%	28%
Information on How to Volunteer	13%	4%	12%	33%	36%
Retirement Planning	31%	21%	16%	27%	4%
Overall Support from Program	-	3%	15%	49%	33%
Overall Support from Host Site	-	11%	22%	34%	33%

The qualitative survey responses from both members and alumni generally support the pattern of results observed on the scaled items. For many members, the service year was a critical factor in shaping their plans to pursue a career in education. For others, it helped them realize that another path was a better fit. In those cases, members and alumni still reported meaningful benefits. For example, one alum pursuing further education wrote that “[service] prepared me by teaching me how to show up consistently, communicate, work with others, and join a new community, even though the subject matter doesn't relate to my current training program.”

**Members viewed the service year as a critical factor in shaping their plans to pursue a career in education**

In their open-ended responses, a majority of members called out resources, relationships, and interactions with an explicit connection to strengthening their job search. These included formal supports such as resume or cover letter training, where members liked that it was facilitated by professionals who review resumes, that it provided opportunities for direct feedback, and that it addressed a more challenging job skill. However, members also called out more informal supports in this area. For example, some members indicated that they received direct guidance from school staff on the job search process and that host sites sometimes shared information on jobs members could be eligible for, or offered trainings, volunteer opportunities, references, applications, and even job positions.

While members tended to appreciate support from their program and host site, there was a strong and consistent desire for more personalized support, particularly for networking and job searching. Across both current members and alumni, there was a repeated call for more tailored career coaching, one-on-one mentoring, and more specific job-related guidance. Networking opportunities were viewed as especially helpful because they provide a direct path to jobs and the chance to ask professionals about a specific career trajectory. Thus, member and alumni responses indicate that networking and job search skills were both the most appreciated *and* the area of most need for additional resources and opportunities.

## Alumni Results

In the subsections below, we outline the primary results for alumni. For outcomes associated only with the Alumni CDS at 12 months, we use all data from that time period (N = 36); however, there was also a subsample of alumni who completed the Alumni CDS at 3-months and 12-months (N = 20). We use this subsample to examine changes in data collected at both time points.

### Career Capital and Post-Service Outcomes

Career Capital data were available for the full sample and the subsample of alumni referenced above. Among members who completed the 3-month and 12-month survey, there was a slight increase in average Career Capital despite smaller decreases on *Knowing What*

and *Knowing Who* items. Yet, there were no significant differences in Career Capital among alumni who completed the survey at 3- and 12-months. When examining all alumni who completed the 12-month survey, responses tended to be generally high, ranging from 5.54 (*Knowing Who*) to 5.82 (*Knowing Why*). Overall, the Career Capital scores for alumni seem to indicate relatively high levels of Career Capital (seven is the max score on the Career Capital scale) and that scores were relatively stable across a 9-month period. Consistent with member reported needs in the area of networking, the largest need in Career Capital was observed in the area of *Knowing Who*.

**Table 8. Alumni Career Capital ratings.**

Career Capital	3-Month: Subset (n = 20)		12-Month: Subset (n = 20)		12-Month All (N = 36)	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Know Why	5.23	1.24	5.63	1.46	5.82	1.30
Know What	5.80	0.73	5.63	1.46	5.81	1.26
Know Who	5.33	1.22	5.20	1.62	5.54	1.42
Average Score	5.41	1.01	5.46	1.47	5.71	1.27

Alumni also provided information on their current employment status, nature of employment, and salary (Table 9). Of the 36 responding alumni, 67% were employed and 29% were pursuing further education. A majority of employed alumni were working in full-time positions (71%) and in education (54%). Further, 25% of alumni who were employed reported employment at their service site. The most common salary range reported by alumni was between 35K and 45K (47%).

**Table 9. Alumni employment outcomes.**

Employment Outcomes	Percentage
<b>Status (n = 36)</b>	
Employed	67%
Retired	8%
Seeking	25%
<b>Nature of Employment among those Employed (n = 24)</b>	
Full Time	71%
Part Time	29%
Employed in Education	54%
Employed at Service Site	25%
<b>Salary (n = 17)</b>	
25K-35K	29%
35K-45K	47%
45K-55K	6%
55K-65K	18%

## Alumni Service Retrospective

Finally, alumni were asked to reflect on their service, including the relevance of AmeriCorps service for their current role and general value. As with previous sections, we examined data for the subsample completing the 3- and 12-month survey as well as the full alumni sample. 93% of alumni expressed agreement that they would recommend serving with AmeriCorps to friends or family and 85% expressed agreement that their service experience prepared them for their current role. Alumni who responded to both surveys tended to increase slightly (+5%) in their agreement on those items from the 3-month to the 12-month period. Finally, high levels of agreement were also observed in regard to AmeriCorps furthering educational goals (84%), personal goals (88%), and most notably, professional goals (94%).

**Table 9. Alumni retrospective items.**

Retrospective Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Overall Agree	Overall Disagree
My AmeriCorps experience prepared me for my current role (3 Months: Subset, <i>n</i> = 18)	6%	17%	0%	28%	22%	28%	78%	23%
My AmeriCorps experience prepared me for my current role (12 Months: Subset, <i>n</i> = 18)	11%	6%	0%	33%	28%	22%	83%	18%
My AmeriCorps experience prepared me for my current role (12 Months: All, <i>n</i> = 32)	6%	3%	6%	41%	28%	16%	85%	15%
I would recommend serving with AmeriCorps to friends or family. (3 Months: Subset, <i>n</i> = 18)	6%	6%	0%	22%	33%	33%	88%	12%
I would recommend serving with AmeriCorps to friends or family. (12 Months: Subset, <i>n</i> = 18)	6%	0%	0%	28%	34%	33%	93%	6%
I would recommend serving with AmeriCorps to friends or family. (12 Months: All, <i>n</i> = 31)	3%	0%	3%	19%	29%	45%	93%	6%
Participating in AmeriCorps was a worthwhile experience for <b>furthering my educational goals.</b> ( <i>n</i> = 31)	6%	3%	7%	23%	19%	42%	84%	16%
Participating in AmeriCorps was a worthwhile experience for <b>furthering my personal goals.</b>	6%	3%	3%	7%	42%	39%	88%	12%
Participating in AmeriCorps was a worthwhile experience for <b>furthering my professional goals.</b>	6%	0%	0%	17%	35%	42%	94%	6%

Note: Percentages rounded to whole numbers. Purple shading represents responses from the same respondents at 3 months and 6 months.

## Discussion

In this project we examined career development outcomes among current AmeriCorps members and alumni of Early Learning Corps, Math Corps, and Reading Corps in Colorado. The purpose of this project was twofold: (1) evaluate the degree to which assumptions about the value of service for career development are borne out in data, and (2) uncover specific career development supports that may be particularly helpful for members. To these ends, there were multiple patterns in the data that indicate an overwhelmingly positive impact of service on current and former members, and both members and alumni highlighted areas of career development that were particularly helpful and could be strengthened into the future.

Over the course of the year, current members demonstrated significant growth in their sense of purpose, career skills, and professional network. Likewise, members reported increases in educational-skills directly aligned with program activities. Members also increased their interest in an educational career and by the end of the year, 27% were already employed, nearly half of which were employed in education. Further, more than half of members were returning for another service year. Open-ended responses from members underscored the impact of service, with many sharing that their experience helped confirm their interest in an educational career. Alumni results were equally compelling. In addition to relatively high Career Capital scores, 67% were employed—more than half of which were working in education and a quarter of which were employed at their original host site. Finally, alumni generally viewed their time in their program as relevant for their current role (even if not in education) and nearly all alumni indicated they would recommend AmeriCorps to their friends and family.

### Implications for Practice

Because members and alumni are not required to complete the CDS, it is important to note that only a subset of members and alumni responded to the survey, which limits interpretation. More specifically, the observed results may not generalize to the broader population of members and alumni in Colorado as there may have been characteristics of non-respondents that differ from respondents. Nevertheless, the results provide promising descriptive evidence of impact and may also be instructive for supporting future members.

By far, the most common feedback for improvement was to increase the volume and quality of job search skills and professional networks. This kind of support was seen as the most valuable and, likely as a result of that value, the most needed for improvement. For example, although members reported strong positive reactions to formal resume and cover letter support, and appreciated networking opportunities, they also highlighted a desire for more opportunities of the same nature, perhaps with a more individualized focus. Based on member responses, the program might consider resources to outline job options for those who don't have a degree, 1:1 mentoring/advising, shadowing in an education setting, information on moving into private tutoring, and a career panel for those whose paths are undecided.

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