

Maryland Conservation Jobs Corps



2019 Annual Report

MARYLAND CONSERVATION JOBS CORPS

"Conservation Service, Reconnecting Youth and Nature"

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Program Overview



The Maryland Conservation Jobs Corps (CJC) is a summer employment program for youth, ages 14-17. Operated by the Maryland Park Service, the goal of CJC is to provide a wide array of job and life skills training, while engaging youth in conservation service projects that restore Maryland State Parks and other public lands. CJC combines outdoor experiential activities and the power of nature to challenge and enrich the lives of youth while preparing them for future success in the workforce.



The youth, known as Corps Members, work five days a week and engage in habitat and facility restoration projects in Maryland State Parks, as well as in nearby city or county parks. Corps Members learn the necessary skills to remove invasive species, maintain trails, plant native species of trees and plants, perform entry-level construction projects, and maintain historic sites. These skills provide them with valuable work experience needed for today's job market, and they leave the program with a sense of confidence and the ability to work as a team. The opportunities provided by the Maryland Conservation Jobs Corps expose youth to new possibilities, including higher education, trade and technical schools, or "green jobs" which they may have never previously considered.

Mission and Goals



Mission

To provide underserved youth with opportunities for skills training, empowerment, and employment, and to restore natural and recreational resources in Maryland State Parks, on public lands in general, and in and around the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.

Goals

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



Program Accomplishments



CJC employed **352 youth** to work in parks across Maryland.



111 projects were completed at 15 sites over a 5-week period.



21 former Corps Members were employed as program staff members.

265 youth went camping for the first time.

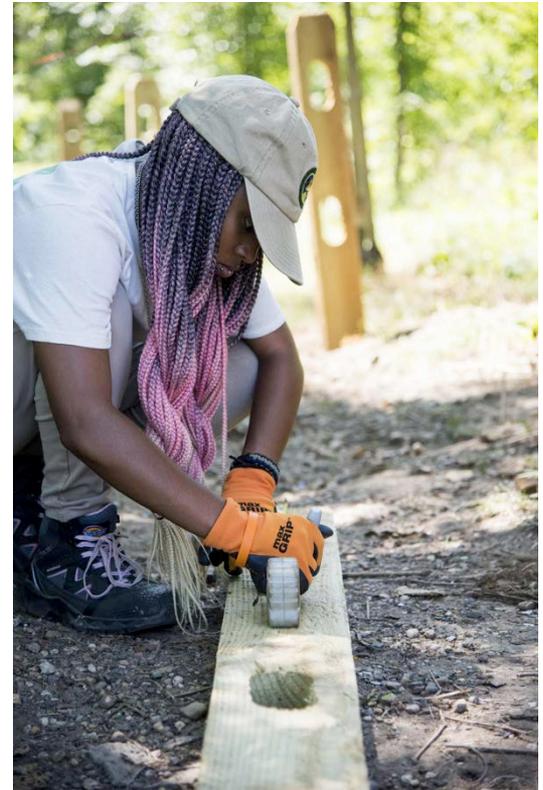


Corps Member Benefits



The CJC Program provides the following benefits to Corps Members:

- Paid for the service they provide
- Provided with breakfast, a morning snack, lunch, and an afternoon snack every day
- Transported to and from work sites
- Provided with a work uniform (shirts, pants, belt, and boots)
- Given the chance to learn to work with hand tools and equipment
- Trained to perform basic landscaping and construction tasks
- Taught about Maryland Park Service careers
- Educated about natural resources and the Chesapeake Bay
- Offered leadership skills through peer leader opportunities
- Offered the chance to work outside in beautiful State Parks

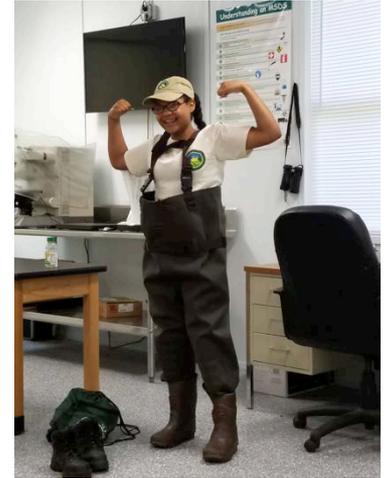


Program Principles



Program staff promise to uphold the core “SPIRIT” principles of CJC by modeling the following program principles for the members at all times:

- **Stewardship**
- **Professionalism**
- **Initiative**
- **Respect**
- **Integrity**
- **Teamwork**



As mentors to the Corps Members, staff do their utmost to help youth successfully embrace SPIRIT principles and provide them with a work environment that is safe, supportive, and positive, as well as disciplined, structured, and fair.

Program Structure



The program is structured around the tradition of “conservation work crew” and is place-based, similar to the Maryland Conservation Corps (MCC) and other conservation corps around the country. The CJC uses a team approach that includes a variety of skilled staff to operate effectively. The CJC program employs a variety of staff during the summer including :

- **Crew of Corps Members**
- **Crew Chiefs**
- **Park Coaches**
- **Camp Coordinators**

Program Structure - The Crew



Crews are comprised of **4-7 CJC Corps Members (ages 14-17)** who are placed in crews by their age and park assignment.



Crews work together as a team throughout the summer to complete conservation and restoration projects at various work sites throughout Maryland's State Parks and public lands.

Program Structure - Crew Chief



Crew Chiefs are seasonal employees of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources who supervise, support, and encourage the positive development of the crew.



Crew Chiefs are responsible for:

- Ensuring the regular, reliable, and professional field-based implementation of conservation service projects at the work sites
- Maintaining the training, safety and quality work performance of the crew
- Mentoring members by seizing opportunities to enhance and model the “SPIRIT” Program Principles: Stewardship, Professionalism, Initiative, Respect, Integrity and Teamwork
- Providing the crews with weekly enrichment activities that are designed to enhance environmental knowledge, stewardship, and the enjoyment of nature. These activities include canoeing, hiking, archery, fishing, environmental science activities, and visiting historic sites.

Program Structure - Park Coach



Park Coaches are responsible for:

- Supervising all Crew Chiefs at each park
- Carrying out the mission and goals of the program at the field level
- Articulating and interpreting the program vision for youth development and conservation service to the staff, youth, and other program partners
- Upholding CJC program standards of performance and working to ensure effective daily operations and the accomplishment of program goals
- Providing leadership, direction, and motivation for staff as they relate to Corps Members
- Reinforcing training strategies for staff and youth



Program Structure - Camp Staff



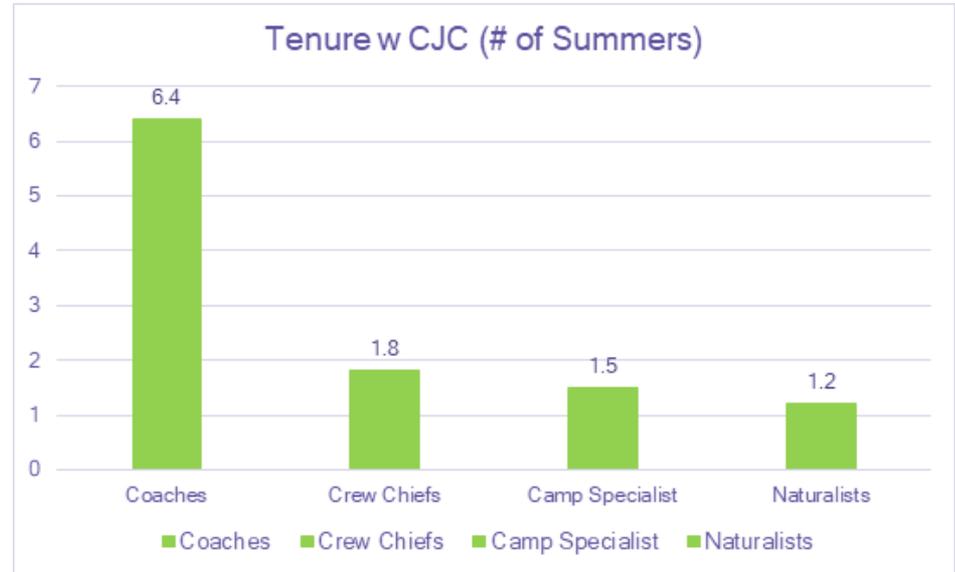
The Camp Staff is comprised of Camp Coaches and Camp Specialists. Camp Staff are responsible for:

- Providing Corps Members with a three-day, two-night camping experience
- Providing enrichment opportunities for Corps Members that include canoeing, hiking, outdoor living skills, challenge activities, and wildlife engagement opportunities
- Providing unique and meaningful outdoor opportunities for youth to enjoy nature

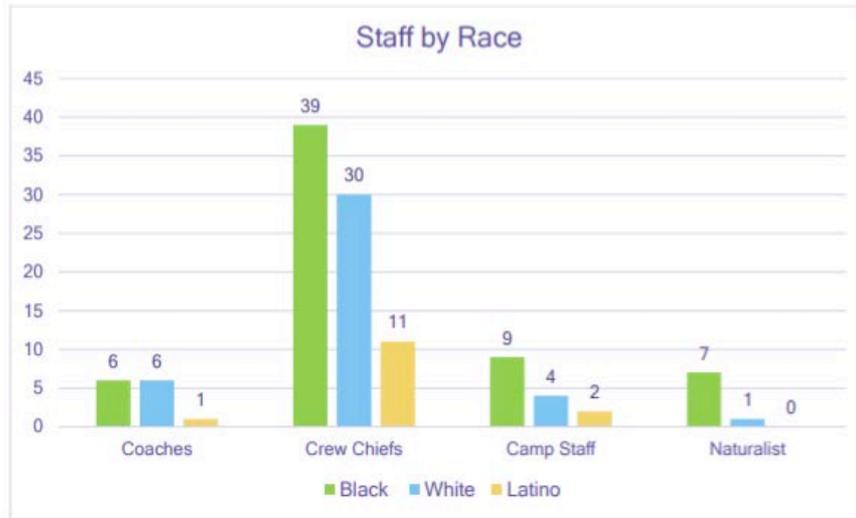
Staff Profile - Program Tenure



Crew Chiefs, Camp Staff, and Naturalists typically spend 1-2 summers and Coaches usually spend 6-7 summers working with the program.



Staff Profile - Race and Gender



Many staff members are college students and teachers from the local schools in the counties where the crews are located.

Staff Training and Development



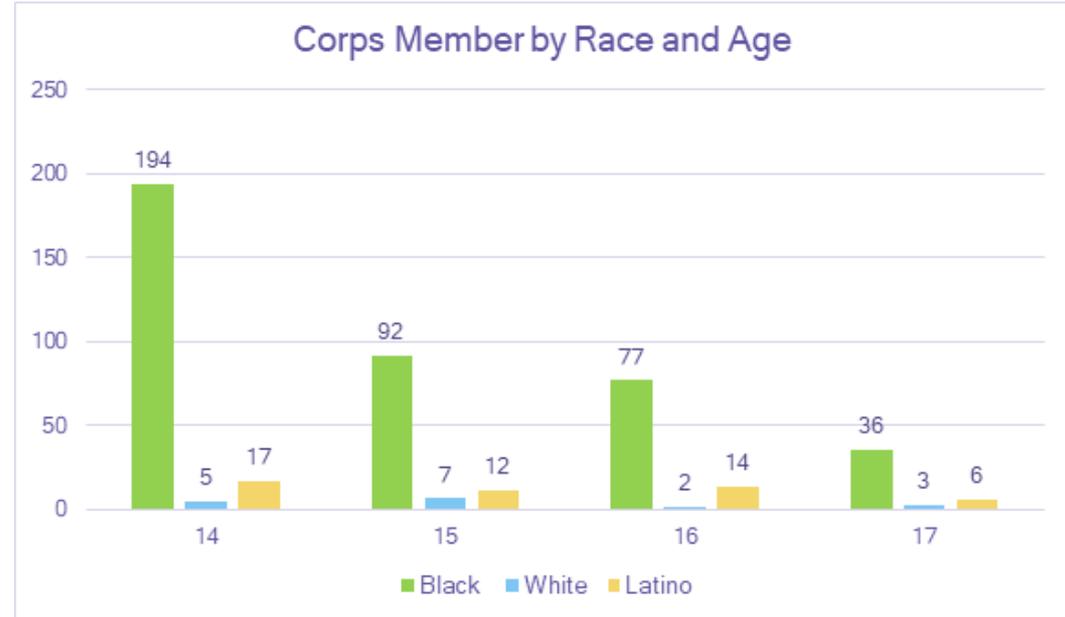
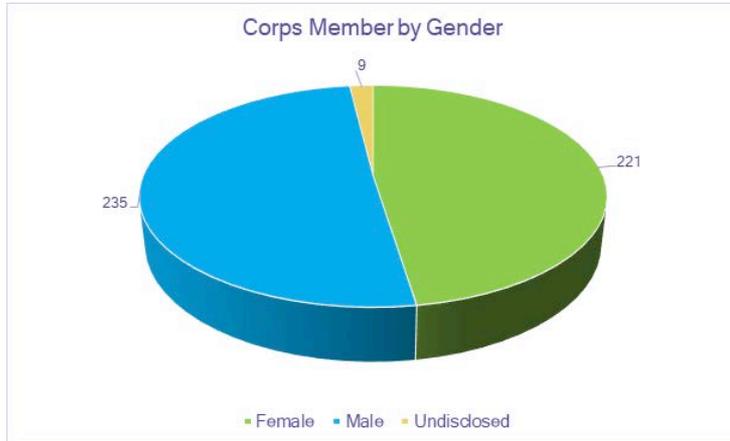
Crew Chiefs must attend and successfully complete approximately 56 hours of mandatory staff training prior to the start of each summer program. They must also provide proof of current certification in Basic First Aid and CPR, obtained through physical attendance in classes. Staff training includes, but is not limited to:

- Program logistics, structure and philosophy
- Emergency procedures
- Youth development policies and strategies
- Safety training
- Driver training
- Bloodborne pathogens training
- Sexual harassment prevention
- Bullying and conflict resolution in the workplace
- Basic tool safety
- Introductory skills in tree planting
- Introduction to carpentry
- Introduction to principles and practices of trail design and maintenance
- Introduction to Leave No Trace principles
- Overview of outdoor and environmental hazards
- Basic plant and wildlife identification
- Introduction to the principles of interpretation
- Use of field guides, first aid kits, phones and other issued equipment
- Roles of MPS, MCC, and other partners
- Basic administrative procedures – completion of shift logs, timesheets, evaluations, etc.
- Food safety
- Basic canoe/kayak skills
- Basic camping skills

Corps Member Profile



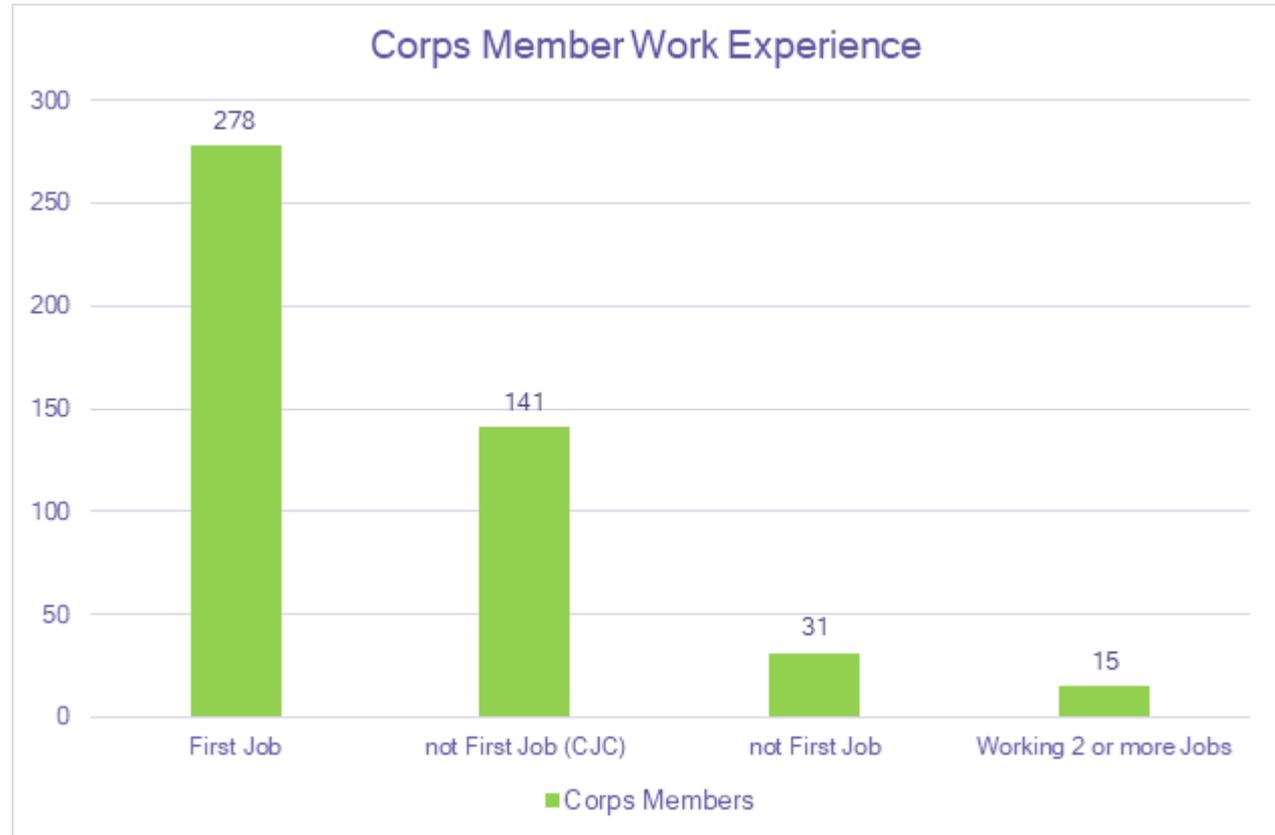
Corps Members are primarily underserved youth, ages 14 - 17, that reside in Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Harford County, Montgomery County, Prince George's County, and Worcester County, Maryland.



Corps Member Work Experience



For many Corps Members, CJC is their first job, providing valuable employment experience.



Program Financial Summary



The CJC Program is sponsored by the Maryland Park Service, a unit of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. The program is a joint effort combining resources from nearly 25 state, local, federal, and non-profit agencies. The funding to implement the CJC Program comes from the Department of Natural Resources, and from partnerships with local and municipal governments, State agencies, federal agencies, and non-profit organizations.

Program costs include:

- Youth and staff wages
- Uniforms and safety equipment
- Transportation and meals
- Project supplies, tools, and equipment

Program Operating Budget



	MD Park Service	Other Gov't Partners	Non-Profit / Private
Personnel	48%	47%	5%
Transportation	82%	18%	-
Uniforms and Supplies	65%	25%	10%
Project Materials	84%	16%	-
Camping and Enrichment Activities	58%	33%	9%

Partnerships



The Maryland Conservation Jobs Corps maintains invaluable partnerships with key partners such as:

- Maryland Department of Natural Resources
- National Park Service
- Baltimore Youthworks
- NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center
- Morgan State University
- National Aquarium
- Parks & People Foundation
- Baltimore City Mayor's Office of Employee Development
- Baltimore City Public Schools
- Baltimore City Recreation and Parks
- Maryland Department of Human Resources
- Maryland Department of Juvenile Services
- Montgomery County Department of Economic Development
- Montgomery County Parks
- Montgomery County Department of Recreation
- Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation
- Prince George's County Parks and Recreation
- Prince George's County Department of Social Services
- Worcester County Board of Education
- Harford County Department of Social Services
- Baltimore Civic Works
- Numerous other youth-based environmental organizations



Assateague Island and Pocomoke River State Parks



Assateague Island State Park Crews:

- Built a shade shelter
- Demolished and rebuilt the deck, steps, and bridge at the day-use beach area
- Built a contact station booth
- Built and painted a shed
- Maintained 3 trails, totaling 5 miles
- Spread mulch around the nature center, playground, and along trails
- Built and painted 15 life ring boxes
- Constructed a nature play house with a deck
- Constructed 100 picnic tables
- Replaced 8 trail signs
- Painted 30 road signs
- Demolished and rebuilt 400 feet of dune fence

Pocomoke River State Park Crews:

- Replaced a kayak launch
- Constructed trail kiosks
- Renovated campsites



Cylburn Arboretum



Cylburn Arboretum Crews:

- Removed 1.5 tons of debris (trash) from parks
- Spread 3 tons of mulch on playgrounds
- Removed 200 square feet of invasive plants
- Painted park bathrooms
- Cleaned 0.5 miles of stream bed and buffer
- Maintained 1.5 miles of trail
- Planted 500 native plants
- Worked on a pole barn renovation at Cunningham Falls State Park

Gunpowder Falls State Park



Gunpowder Falls State Park Crews:

- Maintained and rerouted 2.7 miles of trails
- Removed 2 tons of debris (trash) from the Hammerman Area and North Point State Park
- Built 21 picnic tables and refurbished 75 picnic tables
- Constructed a stone walkway
- Removed 3 tons of invasive species
- Constructed 225 yards of fence
- Recycled 750 pounds of cardboard
- Cleared 70 yards of brush
- Constructed drainage trenches
- Constructed observation decks
- Painted park facilities
- Planted 180 native plants
- Landscaped and planted 5 native gardens
- Made improvements to the Camp Wood Youth Group site



Gwynns Falls



Gwynns Falls Crews:

- Created a meditation garden
- Mulched 37 magnolia trees
- Mulched 34 playgrounds
- Removed 300 pounds of organic debris from trails
- Maintained 2.8 miles of trail
- Removed 250 pounds of trash
- Removed 1.2 tons of invasive plants
- Installed trail signs

Patapsco Valley State Park - Hilton



Patapsco Valley State Park – Hilton Area Crews:

- Constructed 43 Trash-Free Parks bag boxes
- Mulched Nature Play Space, Picnic Area, and the Sensory Trail
- Constructed bridge ramps at the Ilchester Road park entrance
- Built a reroute ($\frac{3}{4}$ mile of new trail) on the Ole' Ranger Trail
- Closed a dangerous and unsustainable social trail near the Union Dam Trail and installed 30 yards of split-rail fence
- Rock-armored about 25 yards of trail
- Hauled in over 2 tons of lumber for 2 new bridges on the Woodstock Trail and Soapstone Trail reroute
- Built a bridge on the Soapstone Trail
- Closed two unsustainable trails, a combined one mile in length, around Buzzards Rock Trail
- Built a reroute on the Saw Mill Trail
- Created and maintained 12 miles of trail
- Constructed a nature center walkway
- Painted 35 trail signs
- Planted 500 native plants



Patapsco Valley State Park - McKeldin



Patapsco Valley State Park – McKeldin Area Crews:

- Maintained and resurfaced 17 miles of trail
- Removed 1.5 tons of organic debris
- Resurfaced 21 picnic tables
- Planted 38 trees
- Removed 210 yards of dilapidated fencing
- Constructed 200 yards of fence
- Painted and installed park signs
- Removed 2 tons of stone from trails
- Closed 2 miles of unsustainable trail on the Rogue trail
- Transported lumber for a trail bridge
- Installed 7 bollards
- Upgraded 12 camp pads
- Removed 800 pounds of invasive plants

Merkle Natural Resources Management Area



Merkle Natural Resources Management Area Crews:

- Made 11 reef balls for fish habitat
- Maintained 9.5 miles of trail
- Constructed 30 bluebird boxes
- Constructed 9 Trash-Free Parks bag boxes
- Removed 200 yards of barbed-wire fencing
- Collected 400 pounds of trash
- Created erosion prevention areas
- Installed 6 wood duck boxes in the Patuxent River
- Restored an observation tower
- Stabilized a falling shed
- Restored an historic windmill
- Created a drainage basin to prevent flooding
- Removed and replaced 5 light poles
- Mulched playground at Rosaryville State Park
- Trimmed 200 feet of brush around the fishing pond
- Removed 3 hazardous trees
- Cleaned 1.2 miles of stream



Seneca Creek State Park



Seneca Creek State Park Crews:

- Constructed an octagon picnic pad
- Dug out 1,200 square feet of dirt and rubber chips from a playground and filled it in with 1 foot of wood mulch
- Constructed and maintained 5.3 miles of trail
- Cleaned mud from over 28,000 square feet of roadway after a flood
- Constructed a trail bridge
- Picked up 180 gallons of trash
- Cleared brush and vines on the access road to the entrance of the C&O Canal National Park



Susquehanna and Rocks State Parks



Susquehanna and Rocks State Parks Crews:

- Planted 40 trees, 55 native plants, and 90 native wildflowers, and spread 10 pounds of native wildflower seeds
- Removed 1,000 gallons of trash from the parks
- Removed over 100 pounds of bamboo
- Built and installed 5 pollinator boxes
- Built 3 rock walls
- Repaired and improved 100 feet of drainage to the rain garden in the picnic area
- Fixed 20 feet of fencing
- Removed 6 bags of the invasive plant wavy-leaf basket grass
- Installed two 10-foot-long culvert pipes in the trail at Palmer State Park
- Deconstructed and built new 8-foot planters around the park entrance sign
- Painted and installed 38 trail signs
- Built 245 feet of trail at Palmer State Park
- Maintained 2.2 miles of trail

Sandy Point State Park and Tawes Garden



Sandy Point State Park Crew:

- Installed 0.7 miles of dune fencing
- Maintained and rerouted 1 mile of trail



Tawes Garden Crew:

- Repaired a boardwalk
- Removed 200 pounds of invasive plants
- Performed gardening and landscaping projects in the Tawes Garden
- Refinished and repaired 12 picnic tables



Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad State Park



Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad State Park Crew:

- Built 4 pollinator gardens
- Planted 4 pollinator gardens with native plants
- Restored benches at the Bill Burton Fishing Pier

Outdoor Enrichment



Enrichment

Corps members have opportunities to fish, hike, explore, and canoe during enrichment days.



Camping

Corps members can participate in a 3-day, 2-night camping excursion during the program at one of three Maryland State Parks: Rocky Gap State Park, Pocomoke River State Park, or Greenbrier State Park.



Camp Activities include:

- Swimming and canoeing
- Wildlife programs
- Outdoor adventures



A Successful Summer!



On August 2, 2019, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources honored **352 graduating members** of the 2019 [Maryland Conservation Jobs Corps](#) Program.

The ceremony commemorated the members' completion of 5 weeks of job skills training and conservation work with the [Maryland Park Service](#). The graduation ceremony emphasized the participants' achievements and the values imparted by their work, including stewardship, professionalism, initiative, respect, integrity, and teamwork.



Corps Member - Kelita Davis "The work is hard but it is so rewarding to see something that you've done grow and be appreciated by all kinds of people."