



## SUMMARY OF RESEARCH 2006-2012 COLORADO YOUTH CORPS

### **NATIONAL YOUTH CORPS STUDY – 2012**

In early 2012, Texas A & M University released results from a national youth corps study. Four Colorado youth corps participated in the study and accounted for 38% of the total sample. Researchers assessed corpsmembers in several key areas of intention related to: *outdoor recreation participation, natural resource-related education and careers, and outdoor recreation-related purchasing*. The study also assessed: *community engagement, attitudes toward public lands, environmental activism, teamwork, leadership, and self responsibility*. Significant increases were realized across all outcome measures in comparison to the control group.

- Corps participants were more likely to intend to pursue education and careers in natural resource management.
- Participants were more likely to have intentions to engage in outdoor recreation activities. The most popular outdoor recreation activities were backpacking, camping, biking & climbing. More than half of the corpsmembers indicated that their corps experience strongly influenced their desire to participate in outdoor recreation.
- Participants were more likely to indicate an intention to purchase equipment and gear (91% of participants vs. 60% of control group). Forty two percent of corpsmembers attributed this intention to their corps experience.

### **ROCKY MOUNTAIN YOUTH CORPS STUDY - 2009**

In 2009, Rocky Mountain Youth Corps replicated the 2006 statewide youth corps study with OMNI Research and Training, Inc. The RMYC study revealed similarly positive results. Corpsmembers demonstrated statistically significant improvements in several outcomes: *job skills, leadership skills, civic engagement, self-esteem, recent substance abuse, and perceived importance of regular exercise and fruit and vegetable consumption*.

### **STATEWIDE YOUTH CORPS STUDY - 2006**

The Colorado Youth Corps Association, in partnership with OMNI Research and Training, Inc., conducted a formal evaluation of Colorado's accredited youth corps to examine outcomes for youth corps participants. Corpsmembers were assessed in several key areas, including: *educational and career objectives; civic engagement; psychological well-being and resiliency; and environmental awareness*. Results of the evaluation demonstrate that participation in Colorado youth corps has a positive, meaningful, and broad impact on its members, and that youth corps are accomplishing their objectives to train, educate, and inspire youth to be productive, caring, and committed citizens.

Following participation in youth corps:

- Participants were significantly more likely to believe they could help the environment through their own actions and by educating others.
- Participants at risk for low academic achievement were significantly more likely to say they intended to graduate from high school and enroll in college.
- Over a third (37%) of participants who had never held a job prior to youth corps reported having obtained part- or full-time employment. Note that many other members returned to high school or college.
- Participants showed statistically significant improvements in job readiness, job skills, and leadership skills.
- Participants showed a statistically significant increase in civic engagement and a meaningful improvement in their levels of interest and investment in their communities.