

Strategic Plan

Colorado Youth Corps Association
2018-2022

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STRATEGIC PLAN

COLORADO YOUTH CORPS ASSOCIATION

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

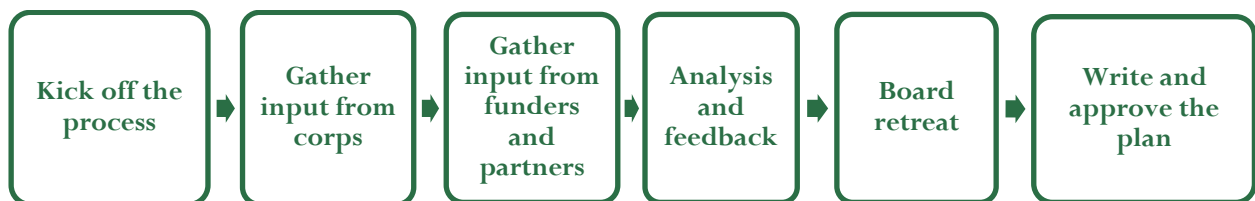
The Colorado Youth Corps Association (CYCA) was launched over twenty years ago by a group of community leaders to meet three needs: engaging young people in their communities, promoting work and life skills in youth, and protecting Colorado’s environmental legacy.

Today, CYCA works on behalf of youth conservation corps across the state who collectively serve more than 1,700 youth, young adults, and veterans. These participants serve on crews and in internships on land, water, and energy conservation projects while earning wages, college credit, and scholarships.

CYCA corps have grown and evolved to meet the needs of Colorado’s citizens and our project partners. In parallel, the association has grown alongside our members, adjusting our service delivery to meet their changing needs. The strong, sustained growth of CYCA and our members has resulted in increased capacity to transform lives and land. In 2017, CYCA board members determined the time was right to develop a new strategic plan to ensure CYCA is meeting the needs of our constituent corps and identify new ways to support their future interests and growth.

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The Colorado Youth Corps Association (CYCA) hired Corona Insights in 2017 to help develop a 5-year strategic plan. Over six months, Corona Insights learned about CYCA and member corps through large group conference calls, small group interviews with corps leaders, in-person interviews with key partners, online feedback from periphery partners, discussions with the CYCA executive director, and analysis of financial data. Corona summarized this knowledge and feedback into a report provided to corps leaders prior to a half-day session in September 2017. The outcome of the session was a corps-driven draft list of recommendations that was advanced to the CYCA Board of Directors at their November 2017 strategic planning retreat, facilitated by Corona. Goals and key strategies in this plan were identified at the retreat as most important and urgent.



OUR STRATEGIC PLAN (2018 – 2022)

MISSION

The Colorado Youth Corps Association serves on behalf of conservation corps that transform lives and communities through service, personal development, and education statewide.

VISION

The Colorado Youth Corps Association aspires to be the leader in conservation and service and empowers corps to change lives statewide.

VALUES

- ➔ **Transformation** – The power of the corps experience makes positive, significant, and enduring changes to the lives of youth and young adults
- ➔ **Collaboration** – We are better, stronger, and more impactful when we work together
- ➔ **Impact** – Every action seeks to maximize positive impact
- ➔ **Service** – We are dedicated to serving member corps and our partners
- ➔ **Stewardship** – Every place in Colorado is special, and therefore local knowledge and relationships are necessary for enduring stewardship

STRATEGY STATEMENT

The Colorado Youth Corps Association will advance its members and serve its long-time partners to maximize the positive transformative impacts that youth and young adults throughout Colorado receive from their corps experience. Over the next five years, we will support corps by securing project work and optimizing programs and member services. We will develop a new service to help tell our collective story to broad audiences. Acknowledging our social responsibility that all of Colorado's youth and young adults should have access to a youth corps experience, we will help members reduce barriers by exploring and providing resources to advance social equity, diversity and inclusion. These actions will benefit members as well as land management agency partners and non-profit funders who want to foster a new and diverse generation of land stewards.

Internally, CYCA will ensure its financial model is sustainable and supports strategic decisions and investments to advance our corps. We are committed to being member-driven, and we rely on corps leaders to initiate and execute tasks. We will collaboratively address organizational issues to ensure all corps feel confident that their membership is value-added.

5-YEAR STRATEGIC GOALS



Secure project work on behalf of members



Channel equity, diversity, and inclusiveness (EDI) resources to corps, and empower them to implement EDI programs and measure outcomes



Optimize member services and programs



Ensure revenues are resilient and sufficient



Tell the collective corps story to a broader audience

GOALS, OUTCOMES, KEY STRATEGIES, AND SUCCESS MEASURES

Goal 1: Secure project work on behalf of members

Outcomes:	Member corps have numerous opportunities to serve a variety of land management partners because CYCA efficiently administers contracts and grants.
Key Strategy A:	Continue to manage programs effectively to ensure member corps are well positioned to serve the needs of long-time partners
Key Strategy B:	Clearly communicate and demonstrate to partners the outstanding service and value of member corps, including professionalism, local impact, and ease of contracting
Key Strategy C:	Optimize underdeveloped partnerships to generate more project work or resources to facilitate work
Key Strategy D:	Facilitate member-driven conversations about new statewide or regional contracts

Success Measures

By end of 2018	By end of 2020	By end of 2022
✓ Consensus group decision on USFS contract	✓ Met with 5 leaders of agencies identified as underdeveloped partners	✓ 5% (\$100,000) increase in total project work secured for corps
✓ Met with agency leaders and field staff	✓ 3% (\$60,000) increase in total project work secured for corps	✓ 4% (\$80,000) increase in project work from underdeveloped partners
✓ Met with key funders		
✓ Identified prime underdeveloped partnerships	✓ 2% (\$40,000) increase in project work from underdeveloped partners	✓ Engaged all members to ensure they are benefiting from goal
✓ Maintained total amount of project work secured for corps		

Goal 2: Channel equity, diversity, and inclusiveness (EDI) resources to corps, and empower them to implement EDI programs and measure outcomes

Outcomes:	Barriers to participating in youth corps are reduced, allowing young people from everywhere in the state have access to a local corps experience. Corps crews and interns are diverse across many factors such as race, geography, social-economic status, values, and previous experience; support for diversity is deeply integrated into corps culture.
Key Strategy A:	Evaluate staff and board expertise and capacity to increase EDI in corps, and consider investing in a consultant for guidance and proven approaches
Key Strategy B:	Conduct an external scan of funders, partners, and leaders in the field to learn how they established EDI goals, objectives, and outcome measures
Key Strategy C:	Corps leaders share definitions and ensure all programs have a comparable understanding of concepts
Key Strategy D:	Support implementation, monitoring, and evaluation

Success Measures

By end of 2018	By end of 2020	By end of 2022
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Scanned members about work in progress that could be built upon or shared. ✓ Explored and identified valuable resources to help guide implementation and monitoring ✓ Met with funders, partners, and leaders in this field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Discussed EDI terminology, status, and needs with corps leaders ✓ Established EDI taskforce ✓ Established financial plan, such as possibly modifying corps dues, third- party fundraising, and/or obtaining grants ✓ Invested in EDI resources ✓ Established baseline monitoring system of inputs and outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Analyzed and reported progress and challenges

Goal 3: Optimize member services and programs

Outcomes: Valuable programs and services are at full-potential and are effectively and efficiently provided by CYCA to member corps or on their behalf. Corps leaders are involved and invested in these programs and services, which are advancing corps throughout Colorado. CYCA members confidently know who CYCA is. They are proud to be in the association, and they feel it reflects their values and practices.

Key Strategy A:	Optimize accreditation
Key Strategy B:	Optimize the Natural Resources Career Initiative
Key Strategy C:	Optimize director meetings and retreats
Key Strategy D:	Improve the map of CYCA member service areas
Key Strategy E:	Engage with current members to create an evaluation criteria process for accepting new members

Success Measures

By end of 2018	By end of 2020	By end of 2022
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Gathered member-input on accreditation, Career Initiative, and director meetings, decided on adjustments ✓ Implemented director meetings adjustments ✓ Gathered initial member-input on evaluation process and criteria for accepting new members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Eliminated accreditation redundancies ✓ Implemented Career Initiative adjustments, including establishing baseline and subsequent year data of use and outcomes ✓ Gathered member-input on service area map use and ideas for improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Board approved a member-supported evaluation process and criteria for accepting new members ✓ Evaluated impact of Career Initiative ✓ Updated service area maps

Goal 4: Ensure revenues are resilient and sufficient

Outcomes:	CYCA makes strategic decisions and invests resources necessary for long-term success as it navigates changing external conditions.
Key Strategy A:	Review CYCA’s revenue profile and adjust to ensure it is diverse and resilient
Key Strategy B:	Identify specific needs for additional revenue (either to support corps or support CYCA programs and services) and raise third-party funds
Key Strategy C:	Explore members’ desire to adjust the dues structure

Success Measures

By end of 2018	By end of 2020	By end of 2022
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Analyzed recent revenue sources and discussed with board ✓ Determined amount of revenue available for investment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Discussed with corps possible uses of current or third-party funds ✓ Established a fundraising working group ✓ Met with 5 of potential funders to discuss goal alignment ✓ Reported on baseline outcome data to support proof-of-concept ✓ Discussed due structure with corps leaders, decided on adjustments and implemented if necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Coordinated storytelling with fundraising ✓ Analyzed outcome data to defend proof-of-concept ✓ Met with 9 of potential funders to discuss goal alignment ✓ Secured \$60,000 in third-party funds

Goal 5: Tell the collective corps story to a broader audience

Outcomes:	Key audiences throughout Colorado understand the collective influence of local conservation corps through statistics, stories, pictures, and video. Leaders recognize how the story of conservation corps and the corps experience aligns with the needs and values of their communities.
Key Strategy A:	Scan for corps' capacity and commitment
Key Strategy B:	With corps leaders and task force, identify desired key audiences and outcomes of marketing
Key Strategy C:	Create and implement a marketing plan, with help from expert board member(s) or consultant
Key Strategy D:	Facilitate a member-driven discussion regarding changing the association's name and creating a tagline

Success Measures

By end of 2018	By end of 2020	By end of 2022
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Confirmed commitment from corps leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Established marketing taskforce ✓ Identified desired outcomes, audiences, and evaluation criteria ✓ Established financial plan, such as possibly modifying corps dues, third-party fundraising, and/or obtaining grants ✓ Analyzed, discussed, and decided on possible name change ✓ Initiated marketing plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Added marketing expertise to the board and/or considered hiring a consultant ✓ Evaluated and reported inputs, outputs, and impacts of marketing and storytelling