

CONSERVATION CORPS (COMBINED) MILITARY VETERAN PARTICIPANT OUTCOMES 2017-2018



-FINAL REPORT-

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*Photos: (L) Mt. Adams Vetswork, (R) CL/SCA Veteran Fire Corps. Courtesy of Conservation Legacy/SCA and Mt. Adams Institute



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2016, a quasi-experimental, multi-year study was commissioned by three conservation corps programs to assess the impact of corps experiences on military veteran participants. This report details results from the portion of the study that specifically examined the influence of corps participation on outcomes associated with **civilian job readiness** and **career success**.

Survey data were collected from 91 participants who had served among three corps and a comparison group of 114 veterans with similar demographic profiles who had not participated in the corps experience. Both groups completed surveys that asked questions associated with various career-related competencies (see Figure 1). Respondents were asked to indicate how they *currently* felt about the personal truthfulness of a series of statements, such as “I compare ideas when thinking about a topic” related to the competencies and how they felt about each statement *before* participating in their corps (or for the comparisons 3-12 months in the past).



Figure 1. The seven competencies evaluated

Results indicated that participants reported **statistically significant** growth in four of the competencies:

- **Job Confidence**
- **Civilian Job Confidence**
- **Sense of Purpose**
- **Initiative**

Participants reported significant pre-post changes above and beyond the comparison sample on these same four competencies (See Figure 2). **Job Confidence** scores increased by 1.16 points (38%); **Sense of Purpose** scores increased by .65 points (19%); **Civilian Job Confidence** increased by .47 points (13%); and **Initiative** increased by .23 points (6%) for corps participants. The quasi-experimental nature of this study (i.e., analyzing change differences between participant and comparison group members) increases confidence in the fact that the corps experience influenced the observed positive outcomes.

Call out boxes are included throughout the report to draw attention to key findings and results.

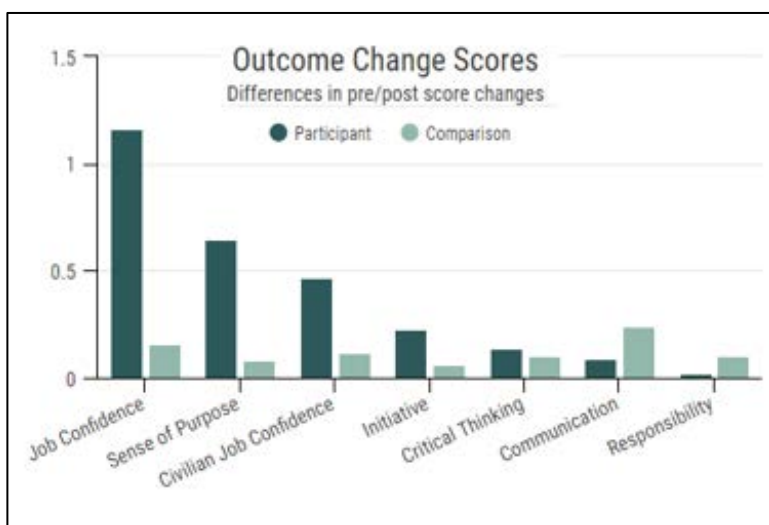


Figure 2. Comparison of outcome changes scores

Veteran Corps

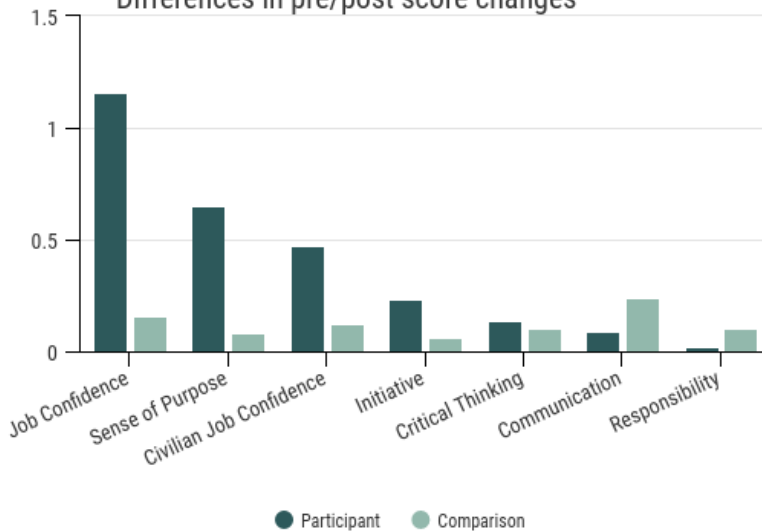
Participant Outcomes



Summary report of study findings and significance

Outcome Change Scores

Differences in pre/post score changes



91 corps participants were surveyed

114 veteran non-corps participants were surveyed



Responses between these groups were compared in pre/post evaluations

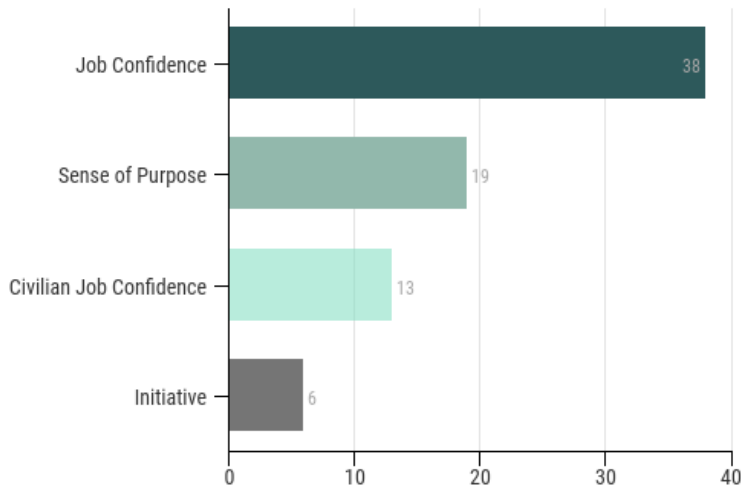
Previous research has found that veterans can have difficulty transitioning back into civilian life, particularly related to career.

The results outlined in this study indicate that veteran corps participants experienced a significant increase in their **Job Confidence & Civilian Job Confidence** after their completion of the program.

Results with Comparison Sample

Four indicators had statistically significant increases compared to the non-participant sample

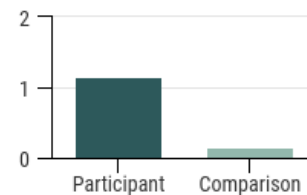
% Change from Pre- to Post-



Job Confidence



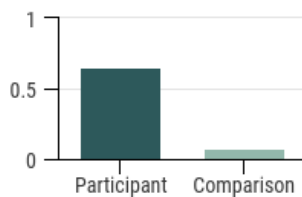
Job confidence scores increased by 1.16 points or 38% for corps participants compared to only a 5% increase for non-participants



Sense of Purpose



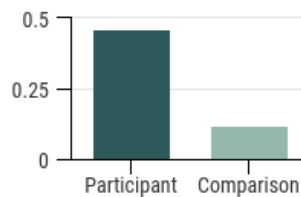
Sense of Purpose scores increased by 0.65 points or 19% for corps participants compared to only a 2% increase for non-participants



Civilian Job Confidence



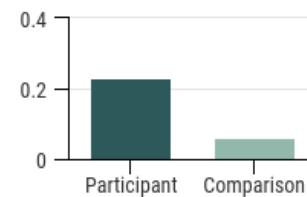
Civilian Job confidence scores increased by 0.47 points or 13% for corps participants compared to only a 3% increase for non-participants



Initiative



Initiative scores increased by 0.23 points or 6% for corps participants compared to only a 2% increase for non-participants



PARTICIPANTS

This study was commissioned by Mt. Adams Institute, Conservation Legacy, and the Student Conservation Association (SCA) to evaluate participants in their veteran corps programs:

Mt. Adams VetsWork Environment	Conservation Legacy & SCA Veterans Fire Corps
An eleven-month internship for veterans interested in careers in natural resources management, public lands, or the environmental sector. The program offers career development opportunities as vet participants are placed in local, state, or federal land agencies to gain experience and skills for their future careers.	A 13-week program that engages military veterans in fire mitigation on federal lands across the country. Participants receive valuable training and field-based experience, including wildland fire and chainsaw training, as well as leadership, group dynamics, and conflict management training.

EVALUATION PROCEDURES & RESEARCH DESIGN¹

The approach used for this study followed many of the tenets of **action-oriented research** where the population under study contributes to the production of the research. Action-oriented approaches to research emerge from the realization that complete objectivity is unattainable in the social sciences. However, it provides significant potential to bridge the divide between theory and practice. For this evaluation, researchers and the three corps organizations collaborated in identifying relevant outcomes to be evaluated. The corps were engaged as partners in the research process, rather than simply subjects of or settings for the research being conducted.

For the purposes of this study, we used a **quasi-experimental design** using a comparison group of military veterans who had not participated in a corps experience. The use of a comparison group allows researchers to compare experiences of corps participants with veterans from the general public. The comparison group was recruited from a national sample of Qualtrics online panel members who were pre-screened to match similar demographic profiles (e.g., age, education level) to the participant group. This population was chosen for recruitment because we wanted a sample of veterans with similar demographic profiles to the veteran participants. The use of online panels as a “nationally reflective” sample has demonstrated many of the same properties and limitations as other methods of collecting self-report data from household surveys or phone interviews.

The survey used a **retrospective pre-test design** that asked participants at the end of their programs to report their attitudes and knowledge *following* the program as well as *before* they began the program (e.g., “Before participating in the conservation corps, how would you have responded to this statement?”). Compared to traditional pre-post designs, this approach allows participants to more accurately report changes in attitudes and behaviors because they are able to more accurately assess their pre-participation attitudes and behaviors upon reflecting back on them. This is particularly true in the case for measures of perceptions, motivations, and intentions. For members of the comparison group, a standard time was chosen to represent a similar elapsed time as the corps participants (e.g., “How would you have responded to this statement two months ago?”). Like a true control group, it is assumed that the comparison group would receive no “treatment” (i.e., corps participation) and therefore would expect no changes in perceptions and attitudes other than those that might occur naturally over a similar period.

¹ See Appendix A for citations related to evaluation procedures and design

DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE

Data were collected from **91 corps participants from three conservation corps units:** Conservation Legacy, Mt. Adams Institute, and SCA and a **comparison group of 114 veterans** who had not participated in a corps program. The following tables provide a demographic overview. Overall, both participant and comparison groups were similar in age, gender (Table 1.1), branch of military in which they served (Table 1.2), educational attainment (Table 1.3), and marital status (Table 1.4).

TABLE 1.1: AGE AND GENDER DEMOGRAPHICS

Mean Age		Gender	
		Male	Female
Comparison	30.38	102	12
		89.5%	10.5%
Participant	29.95	78	12
		85.7%	13.2%

TABLE 1.2: BRANCH OF THE MILITARY

	Army	Navy	Marines	Air Force	Coast Guard
Comparison	51	12	30	18	3
	44.7%	10.5%	26.3%	15.8%	2.6%
Participant	34	13	29	12	3
	37.4%	14.3%	31.9%	13.2%	3.3%

TABLE 1.3: EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

	High School	Vocational/ Technical	Some College	Bachelors	Masters	Doctorate/ Professional
Comparison	36	13	28	33	4	0
	31.6%	11.4%	24.6%	28.9%	3.5%	0.0%
Participant	15	15	31	24	6	0
	16.5%	16.5%	34.1%	26.4%	6.6%	0.0%

TABLE 1.4: MARITAL STATUS

	Now Married	Widowed	Divorced	Never Married	Civil Union
Comparison	52	3	9	47	4
	45.6%	1.8%	7.9%	41.2%	3.5%
Participant	30	1	15	41	2
	33.0%	1.1%	16.5%	45.1%	2.2%

The participant and comparison groups differed slightly on Race/Ethnicity (Table 1.5) and Highest Rank (Table 1.6), with the comparison group being overrepresented with White, non-Hispanic respondents and participants more likely to be E4-E6.

TABLE 1.5: RACE/ETHNICITY

	White non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Asian	Other
Comparison	104	2	6	0	2
	91.2%	1.8%	5.3%	0.0%	1.8%
Participant	64	2	13	2	2
	70.3%	1.3%	14.3%	2.2%	2.2%

TABLE 1.6: HIGHEST RANK

	E1-E3	E4-E6	E7-E9	W1-W5	O1-O3
Comparison	30	54	11	13	6
	26.3%	47.4%	9.6%	11.4%	5.3%
Participant	15	67	2	2	5
	16.5%	73.6%	2.2%	2.2%	5.5%

OVERALL RESULTS

Survey participants were asked to rank several statements related to one of seven competencies:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JOB CONFIDENCE • SENSE OF PURPOSE • CIVILIAN JOB CONFIDENCE • INITIATION 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CRITICAL THINKING • COMMUNICATION • RESPONSIBILITY
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Participants were given statements related to each of the competencies and selected one of five options to indicate to what degree they personally agreed with the statement: Very Untrue, Untrue, Somewhat True, True, and Very True. An example statement for critical thinking: “I compare ideas when thinking about a topic.”

For all combined corps participants, using both dependent t-tests and repeated measures ANCOVAs (controlling for length of program time), participant scores increased with **statistical significance** in **four** out of the seven competencies.

- **JOB CONFIDENCE** reported the largest increase in score from pre to post-testing with an increase of 1.16 points.
- **SENSE OF PURPOSE** was significant with an increase of 0.65 points.
- **CIVILIAN JOB CONFIDENCE** was significant with an increase of 0.44 points.
- **INITIATIVE** was significant with an increase of 0.23 points.



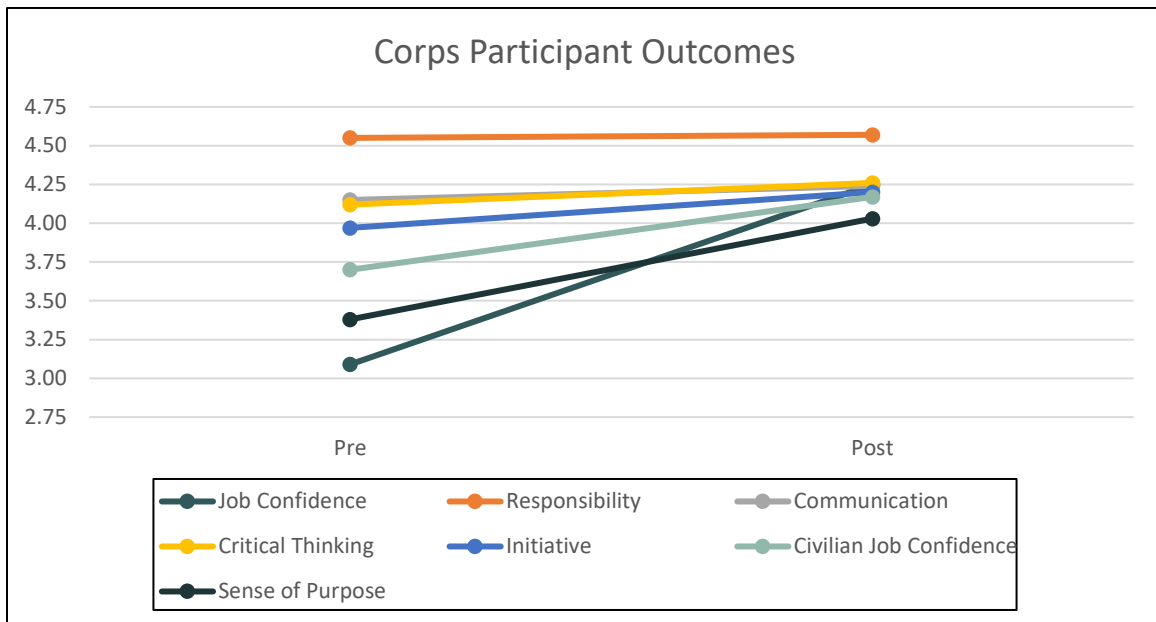
RESPONSIBILITY had the lowest positive change for corps members, a change of only .04 points. **Figure 2.1** and **Table 2.1** show the change in scores from pre- to post-service for corps participants.

Previous research has found that veterans can have difficulty transitioning back into civilian life, particularly when it comes to finding a new career.

The results outlined in this study indicate that veteran corps participants experience a significant increase in their Job Confidence and, specifically, Civilian Job Confidence after their completion of the program.

Statistical significance means the results indicate with 95% certainty that differences between groups genuinely exist.

FIGURE 2.1: CHANGE IN CORPS PARTICIPANT OUTCOMES



Though results were statistically significant for only four of the seven indicators, **ALL indicators increased from pre- to post-evaluation.**

TABLE 2.1: CHANGE IN SCORE FROM PRE- TO POST FOR PARTICIPANTS ONLY

Measures	Pre	Post	Change	% Change
Job Confidence	3.09	4.25	+1.16	38%
Sense of Purpose	3.38	4.03	+0.65	19%
Civilian Job Confidence	3.70	4.17	+0.47	13%
Initiative	3.97	4.20	+0.23	6%
Critical Thinking	4.12	4.26	+0.14	3%
Communication	4.15	4.24	+0.09	2%
Responsibility	4.55	4.57	+0.02	0%

The highest percent changes from pre- to post-evaluation were in the **Job Confidence with a 38% change** and **Sense of Purpose at 19%**

Comparison group Scores

Participants reported a higher percent change in **FOUR** of the indicators: **JOB CONFIDENCE**, **SENSE OF PURPOSE**, **CIVILIAN JOB CONFIDENCE**, and **INITIATIVE**.

The other three competencies had either a lower percent change or an equivalent change: **COMMUNICATION**: participants had a 1% lower percent change; **CRITICAL THINKING** and **RESPONSIBILITY**: both groups reported the same percent change from pre to post.

TABLE 2.2: OUTCOMES FOR PARTICIPANT AND COMPARISON GROUPS

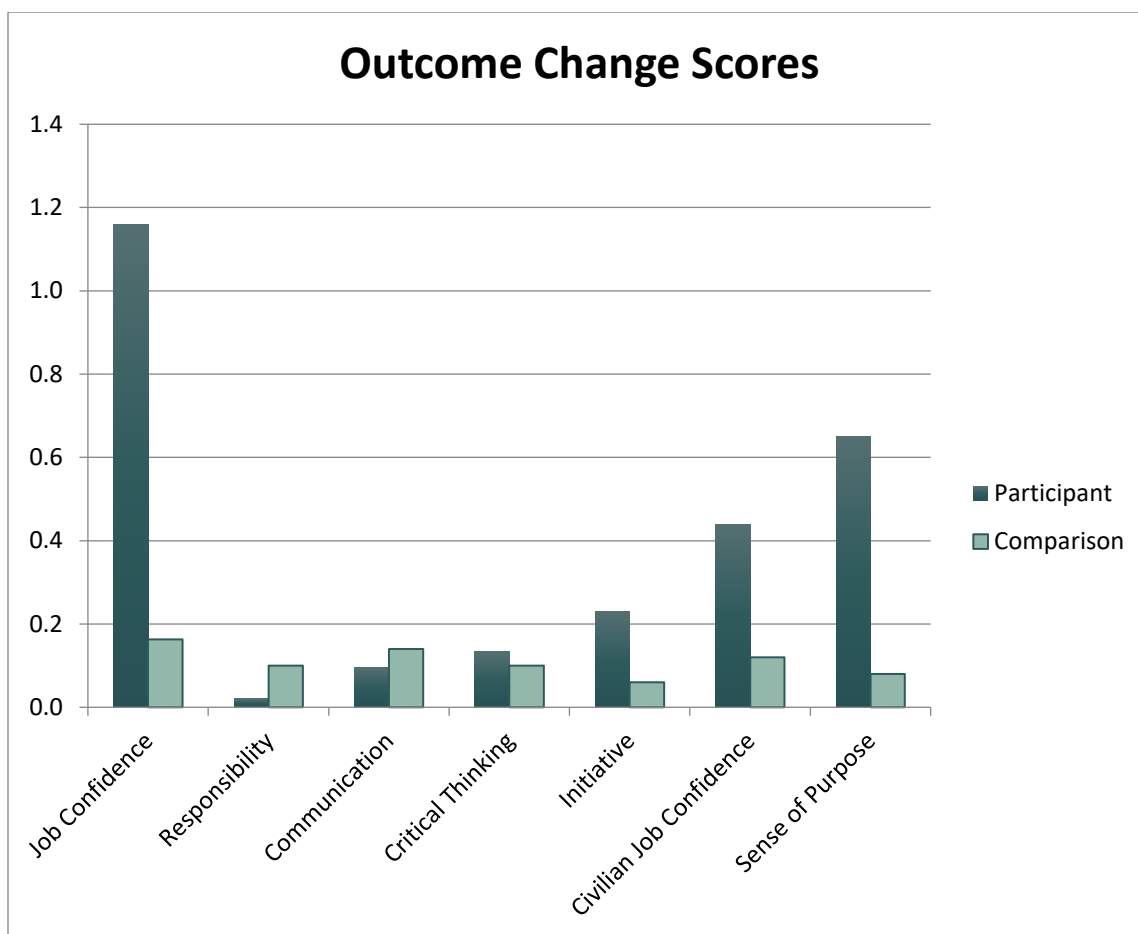
Measures		Pre	Post	Change	% Change
Job Confidence	Participant	3.09	4.25	1.16	38%
	Comparison	3.46	3.62	0.16	5%
Sense of Purpose	Participant	3.38	4.03	0.65	19%
	Comparison	3.32	3.40	0.08	2%
Civilian Job Confidence	Participant	3.70	4.17	0.47	13%
	Comparison	3.53	3.65	0.12	3%
Initiative	Participant	3.97	4.20	0.23	6%
	Comparison	3.69	3.75	0.06	2%
Critical Thinking	Participant	4.12	4.26	0.14	3%
	Comparison	3.69	3.79	0.10	3%
Communication	Participant	4.15	4.24	0.09	2%
	Comparison	3.69	3.93	0.24	7%
Responsibility	Participant	4.55	4.57	0.02	0%
	Comparison	4.05	4.15	0.10	2%

When compared with non-participants, corps participants had **higher post- scores for each of the seven competencies** and while **Responsibility** had 0% change for corps participants, it had the **highest pre-score of any indicator at 4.55** meaning participants entered the program already having a strong sense of responsibility.

The largest differences in pre/post score change between participants and the comparison group were in **JOB CONFIDENCE**, **SENSE OF PURPOSE**, **CIVILIAN JOB CONFIDENCE**, and **INITIATIVE**.

The three indicators that had the lowest pre/post change (**RESPONSIBILITY**, **COMMUNICATION**, and **CRITICAL THINKING**) were also the indicators on which corps participants had the **highest pre-scores**. This suggests a ceiling effect for these areas because corps members entered high in each one and therefore were unable to experience much additional growth.

FIGURE 2.2: COMPARISON OF CORPS PARTICIPANT OUTCOME CHANGES



Individual Measures

The following tables show the change in score for each specific theme. The four competencies that experienced **STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT CHANGES** for corps participants were **JOB CONFIDENCE**, **SENSE OF PURPOSE**, **CIVILIAN JOB CONFIDENCE**, and **INITIATIVE**. All other competencies experienced positive changes but were not statistically different from the comparison sample.

Figures 3.1-3.4 highlight the outcomes with significantly different changes.

FIGURE 3.1: JOB CONFIDENCE FIGURE

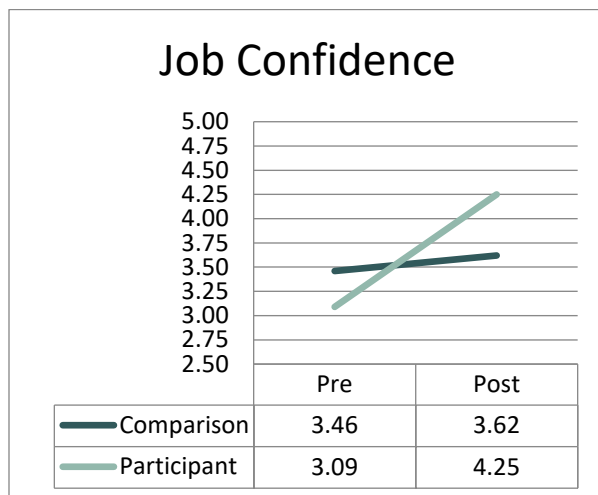


FIGURE 3.2: SENSE OF PURPOSE

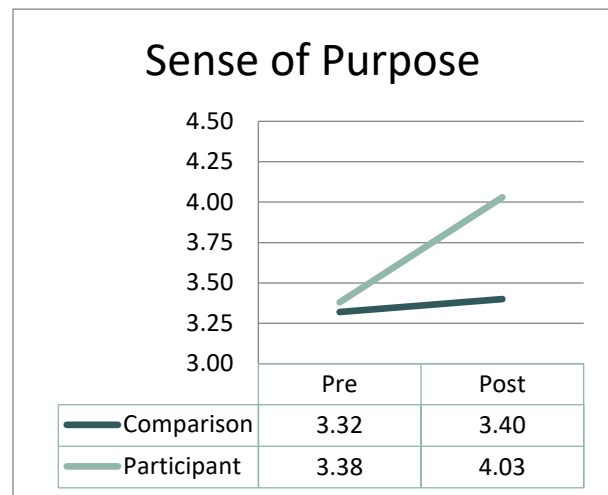


FIGURE 3.3: CIVILIAN JOB CONFIDENCE

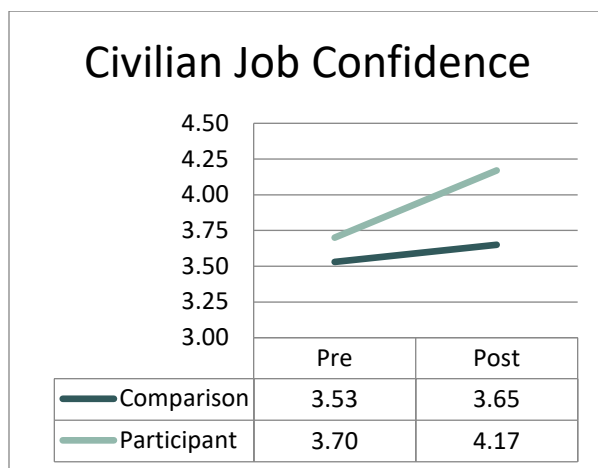
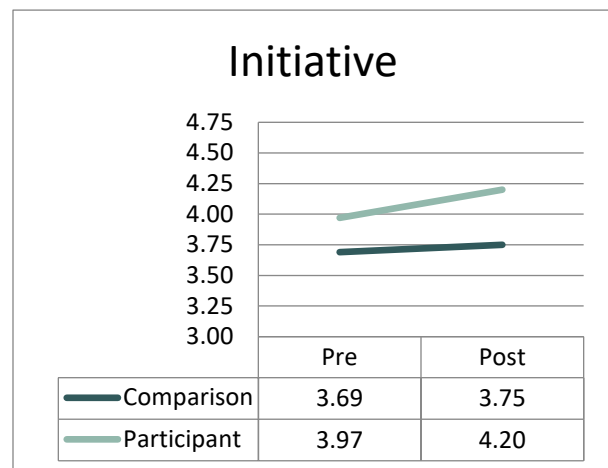


FIGURE 3.4: INITIATIVE



CONCLUSIONS

The results for this study found that participation in a conservation corps helps veterans improve in valuable competencies such as **Job Confidence**, **Sense of Purpose**, and **Initiative**. These competencies are associated with civilian job readiness and career success, providing evidence of the value that veteran corps participation can contribute to participants' post-corps endeavors. The study also suggests that veteran corps participants enter the programs with an already strong sense of responsibility and confidence in their critical thinking and communication skills.

Veterans face myriad of challenges upon their discharge from the service including transitioning from a military identity to a civilian one and bridging the gap between a successful military career and what should be a successful civilian one. The average pre-ranking for corps participants for Job Confidence was 3.09, meaning corps participants felt that statements about job confidence were "somewhat true" to them personally. After their corps experience, this number jumped to an average of 4.25, meaning participants felt these statements applied to them and were "True." Through their participation in VetsWork and Veterans Fire Corps, average Job Confidence increased an entire category. Veteran-focused corps such as VetsWork and the Veterans Fire Corps provide transitioning veterans a space to gain the confidence and skills to be successful in the civilian workplace.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Citations

Citations to Support Quasi-Experimental Evaluation Design and Use of Online Panels as “General Population” Comparison Groups

- Benson, K., & Hartz, A.J. (2000). A comparison of observational studies and randomized, controlled trials. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 342(25), 1878-1886.
- Concato, J., Shah, N., & Horwitz, R. I. (2000). Randomized, controlled trials, observational studies, and the hierarchy of research designs. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 342(25). 1887-1892
- Rothwell, P. M. (2005). External validity of randomised controlled trials: “to whom do the results of this trial apply?” *Lancet*, 365(9453). 82-93.
- Basil, M. D., Basil, D. Z., & Deshpande, S. (2009). A Comparison of Consumers and Dieticians: Nutrition Focus, Food Choice, and Mental Accounting. *Journal of Nonprofit & Public Sector Marketing*, 21(3), 283-297.
- Vining, J. (1992). Environmental Emotions and Decisions. *Environment and Behavior*, 24(1), 3-34.
- Taylor, S. M., Ward, P., Zabriskie, R., Hill, B., & Hanson, C. (2012). Influences on Active Family Leisure and a Healthy Lifestyle Among Adolescents. *Leisure Sciences*, 34(4), 332-349.
- Ward, P., & Buswell, L. (2009). *Review of online data collection techniques in leisure research*. Paper presented at the National Recreation and Parks Association National Congress: Leisure Research Symposium, Salt Lake City, UT.

Citations to support Action-Oriented Research Approach

- Lewin, K. (1946). Action research and minority problems. *Journal of Social Issues*, 2, 34-46.
- Rodríguez, L. F., & Brown, T. M. (2009). From voice to agency: Guiding principles for participatory action research with youth. [Article]. *New Directions for Youth Development*, 2009(123), 19-34.
- Small, S. A. (2005). Bridging research and practice in the family and human sciences. *Family Relations*, 54(2), 320-334.

Citations to support retrospective pre-post instrument

- Pratt, C. C., McGuigan, W. M., & Katzev, A. R. (2000). Measuring program outcomes: Using retrospective pretest methodology. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 21(3), 341-350.
- Davis, G. A. (2003). Using a retrospective pre-post questionnaire to determine program impact. *Journal of Extension*, 41(4).
- Hill, L. G., & Betz, D. L. (2005). Revisiting the Retrospective Pretest. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 26(4), 501-517.

Additional Citations

- McAllister, C. P., Mackey, J. D., Hackney, K. J., & Perrewé, P. L. (2015). From combat to khakis: An exploratory examination of job stress with veterans. *Military Psychology, 27*(2), 93–107.

Appendix B: Survey Instrument

Job Seeking Confidence					
<p>1. IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS: The following items ask you to respond to statements about your current and past attitudes, knowledge, and behavior towards a variety of topics. Each item has two parts:</p> <p>1a. The first part is about your current attitudes, knowledge <u>and</u> behavior.</p> <p>1b. <u>The</u> second part asks you about your attitudes, knowledge and behavior before participating in a conservation corps program.</p>					
	Very Untrue	Untrue	Somewhat True	True	Very True
1a. I feel certain about my ability to get the job I want	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
1b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2a. I have what it takes to get the job I want	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3a. I am certain that my job search will be successful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Self-Sufficiency					
<p>* 3. IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS: The following items ask you to respond to statements about your current and past attitudes, knowledge, and behavior towards a variety of topics. Each item has two parts:</p> <p>1a. The first part is about your current attitudes, knowledge <u>and</u> behavior.</p> <p>1b. <u>The</u> second part asks you about your attitudes, knowledge and behavior before participating in a conservation corps program.</p>					
	Very Untrue	Untrue	Somewhat True	True	Very True
1a. I accept responsibility for my actions	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
1b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2a. I own up to my mistakes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3a. I <u>don't</u> blame others for my mistakes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4a. If I mess something up, I try to make things right	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5a. If I make a mistake, I try to fix it	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6a. If I hurt someone's feelings, I apologize	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Communication					
<p>* 4. IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS: The following items ask you to respond to statements about your current and past attitudes, knowledge, and behavior towards a variety of topics. Each item has two parts:</p> <p>1a. <u>The</u> first part is about your current attitudes, knowledge <u>and</u> behavior.</p> <p>1b. <u>The</u> second part asks you about your attitudes, knowledge and behavior before participating in a conservation corps program.</p>					
	Very Untrue	Untrue	Somewhat True	True	Very True
1a. <u>When</u> I communicate I try to keep eye contact	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
1b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2a. When I communicate I recognize when two people are trying to say the same thing, but in different ways.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3a. When I communicate I try to see the other person's point of view	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4a. <u>When</u> I communicate I change the way I talk to someone based on my relationship with them (i.e. friend, parent, teacher, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5a. <u>When</u> I communicate I organize thoughts in my head before speaking.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6a. <u>When</u> I communicate I make sure I understand what another person is saying before I respond.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Critical Thinking					
<p>* 5. IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS: The following items ask you to respond to statements about your current and past attitudes, knowledge, and behavior towards a variety of topics. Each item has two parts:</p> <p>1a. The first part is about your current attitudes, knowledge <u>and</u> behavior.</p> <p>1b. <u>The</u> second part asks you about your attitudes, knowledge and behavior before participating in a conservation corps program.</p>					
	Very Untrue	Untrue	Somewhat True	True	Very True
1a. I can easily express my thoughts on a problem	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
1b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2a. I usually have more than one source of information before making a decision	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3a. I compare ideas when thinking about a topic	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4a. I keep my mind open to different ideas when planning to make a decision.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5a. I am able to determine the best way to handle a problem	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Initiative

* 6. IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS: The following items ask you to respond to statements about your current and past attitudes, knowledge, and behavior towards a variety of topics. Each item has two parts:

1a. The first part is about your current attitudes, knowledge and behavior.

1b. The second part asks you about your attitudes, knowledge and behavior before participating in a conservation corps program.

	Very Untrue	Untrue	Somewhat True	True	Very True
1a. I actively attack problems	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
1b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2a. <u>Whenever</u> something goes wrong, I immediately search for a solution	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3a. <u>Whenever there is a chance to get actively involved, I take it</u>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4a. I take initiative immediately even when others don't	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5a. I can quickly find ways to attain my goals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6a. <u>Usually</u> I do more than I am asked to do	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7a. I am good at making my ideas happen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Civilian Job Confidence

* 7. IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS: The following items ask you to respond to statements about your current and past attitudes, knowledge, and behavior towards a variety of topics. Each item has two parts:

1a. The first part is about your current attitudes, knowledge and behavior.

1b. The second part asks you about your attitudes, knowledge and behavior before participating in a conservation corps program.

	Very Untrue	Untrue	Somewhat True	True	Very True
1a. I can find a civilian job that matches the salary and benefits that I want	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
1b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2a. Employers understand my skills and experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3a. I can find career opportunities for which I am qualified	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4a. I can communicate my skills and experiences into civilian work settings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5a. I can find civilian career opportunities I want to pursue	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6a. I can network with individuals to help my career advancement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7a. I can be successful in a civilian working environment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8a. I can clearly communicate with co-workers in a civilian working environment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9a. I understand how to be successful in a civilian working environment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Very Untrue	Untrue	Somewhat True	True	Very True
9b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10a. I can successfully use technology in a civilian working environment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Sense of Purpose

* 8. IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS: The following items ask you to respond to statements about your current and past attitudes, knowledge, and behavior towards a variety of topics. Each item has two parts:

1a. The first part is about your current attitudes, knowledge and behavior.

1b. The second part asks you about your attitudes, knowledge and behavior before participating in a conservation corps program.

	Very Untrue	Untrue	Somewhat True	True	Very True
1a. I have found a meaningful career	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
1b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2a. I view my work as contributing to my personal growth	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3a. <u>My</u> work really makes no difference to the world	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4a. I understand how my work contributes to my life's meaning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5a. I have a good sense of what makes my job meaningful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6a. I know my work makes a positive difference in the world	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7a. <u>My</u> work helps me better understand myself	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8a. I have discovered work that has a satisfying purpose	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9a. <u>My</u> work helps me make sense of the world around me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10a. <u>The</u> work I do serves a greater purpose	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10b. <u>How</u> would you have responded to this statement before your corps experience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Importance of Program Elements

9. Please indicate how important each of the following components of your Corps experience was for you?

	Very Unimportant	Unimportant	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
Opportunities for networking and civilian career connections	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Opportunities to learn new skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leadership opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provided training	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The work project setting (e.g., backcountry, city, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interactions with crew leaders/staff/supervisors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Opportunities to make a difference	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Opportunities to gain more professional training and certifications	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Opportunities to gain knowledge about civilian careers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Opportunities to learn more about public lands and natural resource management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

NPS

10. How likely is it that you would recommend this corps experience to a friend or colleague?

Not at all likely Extremely likely

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11. Which corps program did you participate in?

☐ Mt. Adams Institute

☐ Conservation Legacy

☐ Student Conservation Association

☐ Other (please specify)

Mt. Adams Institute Skills

12. Please rank the perceived importance of each of the following skills gained during the Mt. Adams Institute program in terms of their impact on your future employability. If you did not gain a particular skill select the NA option.

	Very Unimportant	Unimportant	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important	N/A
Defensive Driving	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Timber Marking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fee Collection/Permit Issuance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Heritage Para Professional Training	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
GIS	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leave No Trace	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pesticide Applicator	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Trail Maintenance and Construction	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hand Tool Use and Maintenance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Trail Sign Installation and Inventory	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
S130- Firefighter Training	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
S190- Intro to Wildland Fire Behavior	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
S212- Wildland Fire Chainsaws	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
IS100b- Intro to Incident Command System	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
IS700a-National Incident Management System	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
First Aid/CPR	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
USA Jobs Orientation/Training	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Resume & Cover Letter Writing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Conservation Legacy Skills

13. Please indicate the perceived importance of each of the following skills gained during the Conservation Legacy program in terms of their impact on your future employability. If you did not gain a particular skill select the NA option.

	Very Unimportant	Unimportant	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important	N/A
S130- Firefighter Training	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
S190- Intro to Wildland Fire Behavior	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
S212- Wildland Fire Chainsaws	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other trainings as available (pump/helitack trainings)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
IS100b- Intro to Incident Command System	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
IS700a-National Incident Management System	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
USA Jobs Orientation/Training	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
On the job exposure to trail and recreation management via federal agency partners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leave No Trace	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hand tool use and maintenance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Contact with potential employers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
First Aid/CPR	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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14. Please respond to the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Veterans Fire Corps connected me with other veterans who are adjusting from military to civilian life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Veterans Fire Corps helped me adjust from the pace of military life and work to the pace of civilian life and work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Veterans Fire Corps provided me an opportunity to connect with a supportive network and community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Service with the Veterans Fire Corps gave me a sense of purpose	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Veterans Fire Corps helped me with training and skills necessary for employment after the program	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Veterans Fire Corps prepared me for entry-level employment in natural resources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Veterans Fire Corps prepared me for entry-level employment specifically in wildland fire	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

15. If you have already received employment in wildland fire or a related job, please give us the details below. (Include the location, agency, and specific position title)

Demographics

16. Prior to beginning your military career, what was the highest level of education you completed?

17. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

18. In what branch of the military did you serve?

19. How many years did you serve in the military?

20. What was your rank upon leaving the military?

21. Please indicate your gender

☐ Female

☐ Male

22. Choose the category that best describes your race/ethnicity

23. What is your age?

24. What is your marital status?

25. Did you serve in combat or a war zone?

☐ No

☐ Yes

Appendix C: Return on Investment Study and Findings

Table 1. Veteran Population vs. Respondent Size

Veteran Population	19,998,799
Total Conservation Corps Alumni	143
Conservation Legacy Alumni	52
SCA Alumni	42
Mt. Adams Alumni	49

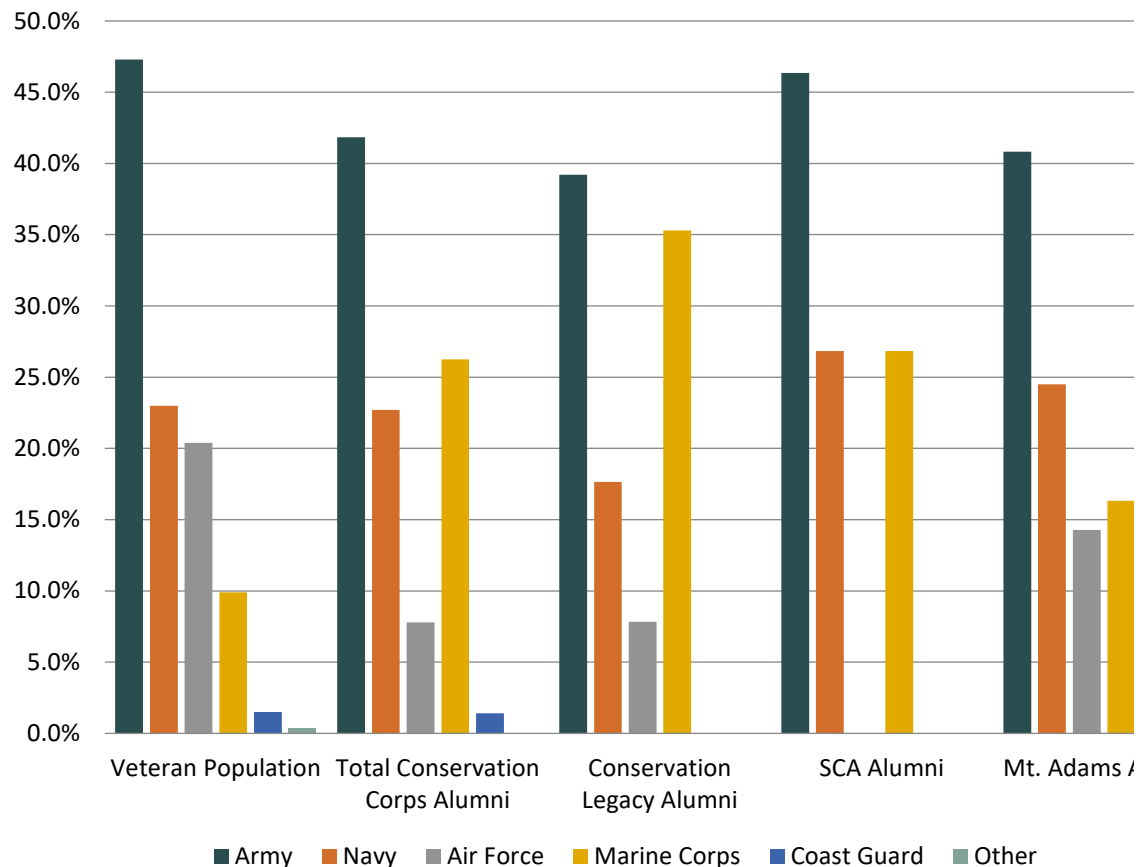
Representativeness of Study Sample

- Prior to looking at the economic impact of the Conservation Corps, we must first look at the representativeness of the study panel to the veteran population. The more representative the study panel, the better able we are to determine the economic impact of the Conservation Corps on the lives of its veteran graduates. Traditionally, representativeness to the veteran population is based on several characteristics. These are: branch of service, gender, race, whether the veteran served in a combat zone, and the presence of a service-connected disability.
- Although this study will explore the representativeness of the sample across these dimensions, it should be noted that the study is limited in size. The veteran population in the United States is estimated at nearly 20 million, of which less than a thousandth of one percent appear in this study (see Table 1). If, however, the characteristics of study sample are similar to those of the veteran population, then the analysis of any sample with a response rate of 31 or greater can reflect a statistically probable outcome.
- The first dimension of consideration is the branch of the military in which veterans have served. Figure 1 shows the share of the veteran population and survey respondents by branch. While the Conservation Corps as a whole, as well as the three corps programs, reflect the dominance of Army in its alumni, they are consistent in over-representing the Marine Corps. The representativeness of the Navy in the survey sample is mixed, with the combined corps showing a similar rate of service as the veteran population, Conservation Legacy is below the population rate and both SCA and Mt. Adams are above the population rate. Additionally, the Air Force and Coast Guard are consistently underrepresented, with the exception of Mt. Adams which over-represents the Coast Guard. However, more important than the appearance of representativeness is the statistical measure of representativeness.
- We are able to statistically compare the results of the survey with what we would have expected to see if the distribution of the veteran population were imposed onto it.² Based on the test, there is no statistical difference between the veteran population and the total

² The statistical analysis was conducted using a chi-square test was conducted to compare whether the observed responses from the study sample differed from the expected responses given the distribution of the veteran population. The results were confirmed by calculating the margins of error for the data to determine whether the observed responses were within the margin of the expected responses.

conservation corps. There is also no statistical difference between the veteran population and the samples from the Conservation Corps alumni, the SCA alumni, and Mt. Adams alumni.

Figure 1. Share of Veterans by Branch of Service



- The second dimension of consideration is gender. Figure 2 shows the share of the veteran population and survey respondents by gender. Based on survey respondents, Conservation Legacy and Mt. Adams overrepresented female veterans and they were underrepresented in SCA. Using a chi-square test for the difference in the observed responses to the survey as compared to the expected responses given the veteran population, we difference that there are significant differences between the population and our survey sample. The combined Conservation Corps, Conservation Legacy, and Mt. Adams were all statistically different from the veteran population. SCA, however, showed itself to be statistically indifferent from the veteran population given its respondent size. Whether the gender distribution remains consistent across the population of Conservation Legacy and Mt. Adams alumni remains uncertain; however, it suggests that there may be a gender problem with these two programs in terms of its recruitment practices. For the purposes of the study at hand, the lack of gender representativeness suggests that there may be an underestimation of the programs economic impact due to the income and economic inequalities that are observed across the gender divide.

- The third characteristic of representativeness to the veteran population is race. Figure 2 shows the share of the veteran population and survey respondents by race. By appearance, the Conservation Corps as a whole, as well as the organizations within it, over represent veterans that identify as white while underrepresent those who identify as a racial minority. On testing for

Figure 2. Share of Veterans by Gender

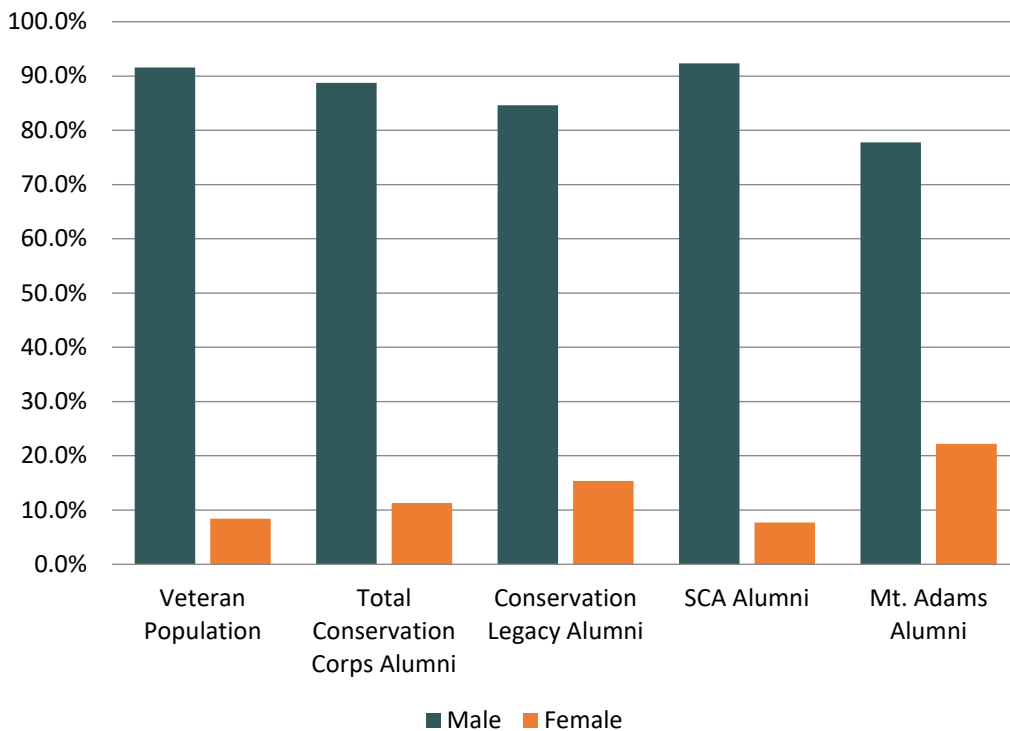


Figure 3. Share of Veterans by Race

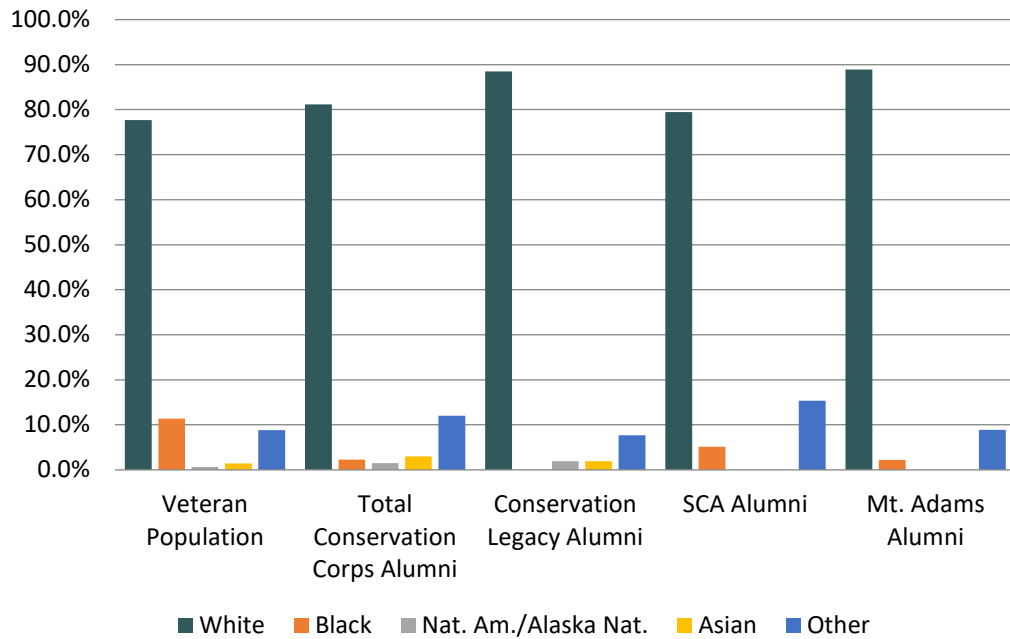
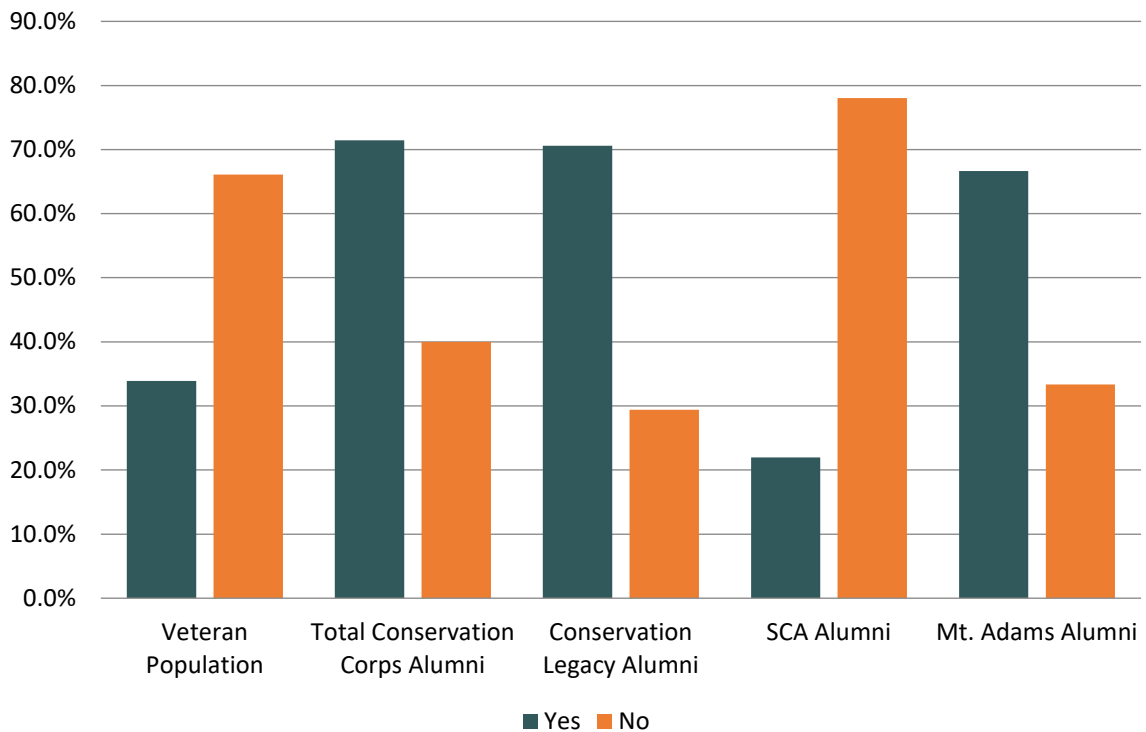
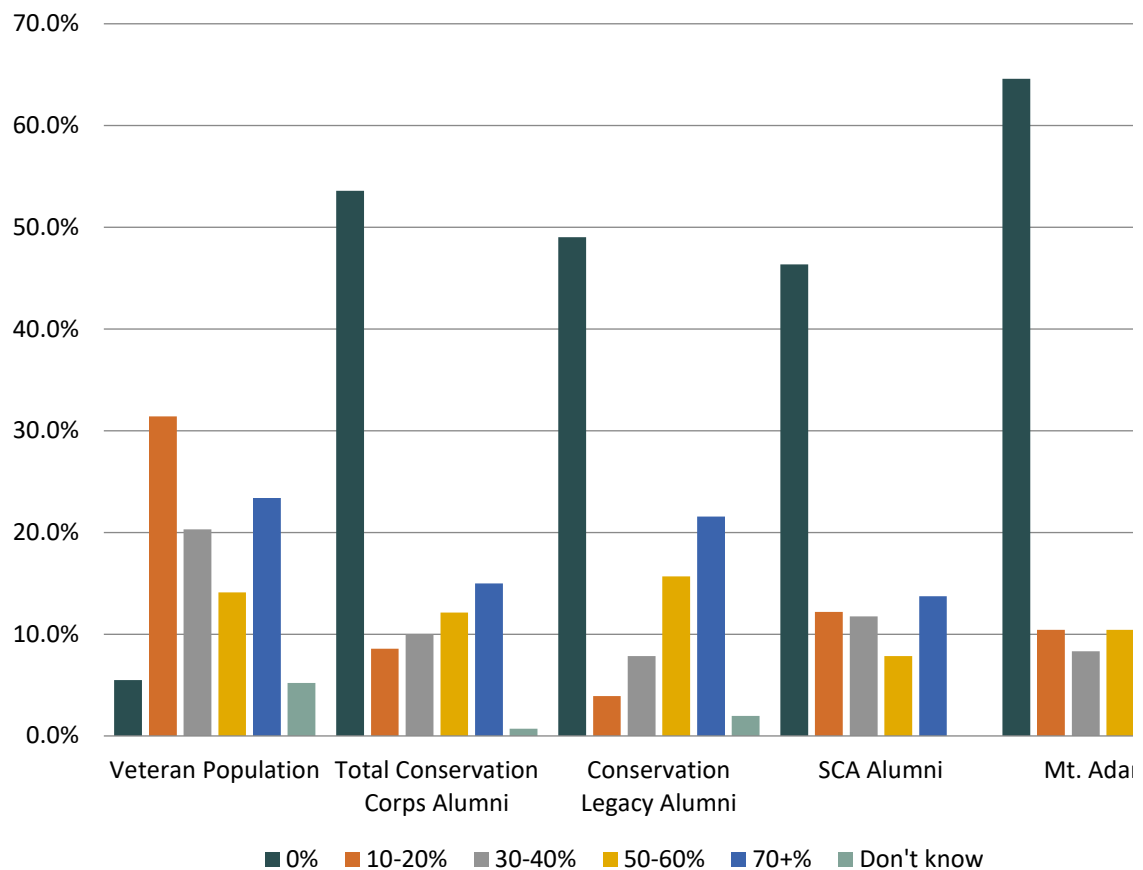


Figure 4. Service in a Combat Zone



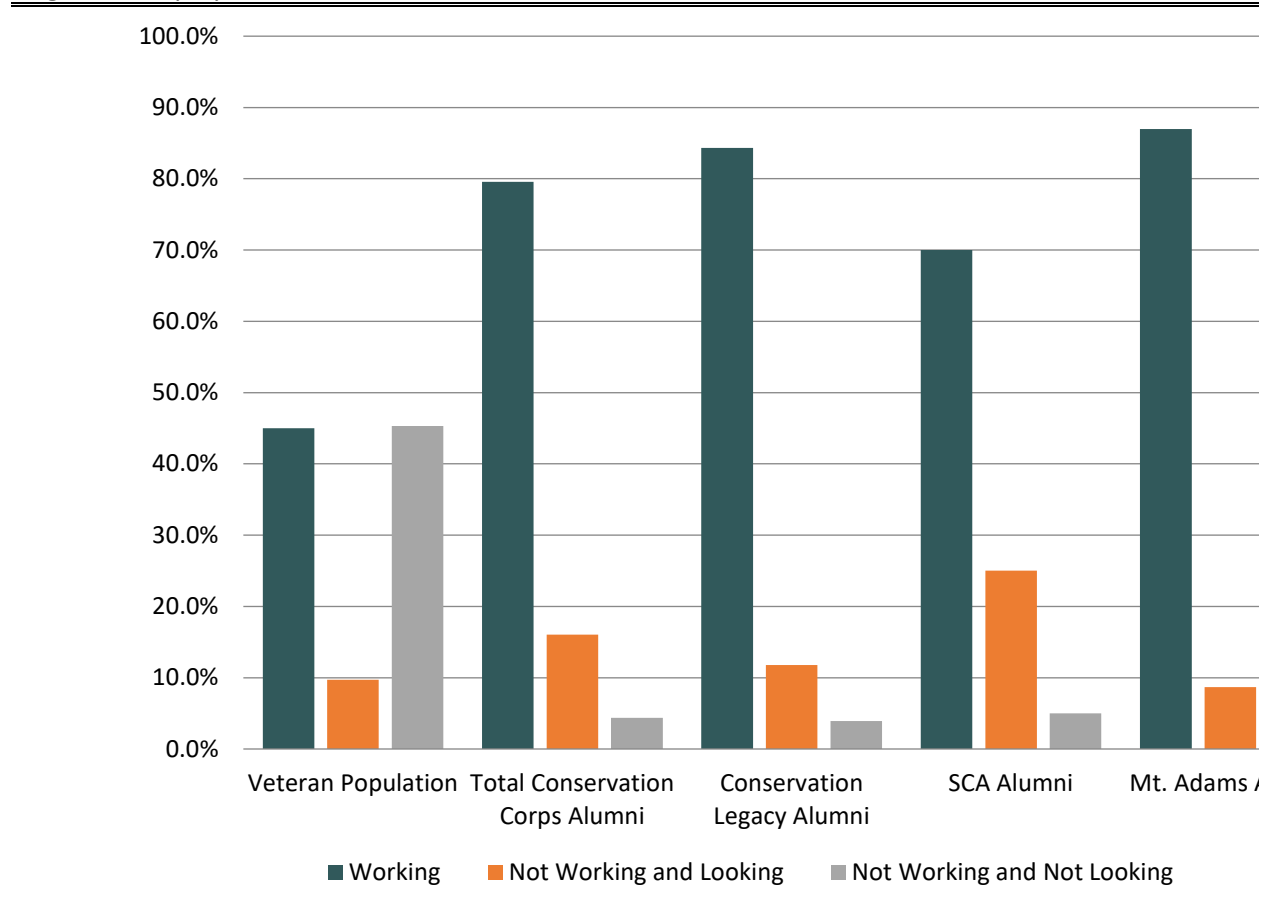
- representativeness, this observation holds true. By over-representing white veterans, the results of the impact analysis being conduct may be overestimated in some areas given the association between economic success and racial identities in the United States.
- Turning to the two characteristics which reflect the service experience of veterans, we find important differences between the veteran population and the study sample. In regard to whether the veterans served in a combat zone, Figure 4 shows that both Conservation Legacy and Mt. Adams over-represented veterans that served in combat. Conversely, SCA underrepresented combat veterans. Upon statistical analysis, no organization within the study sample was reprehensive of the veteran population. Looking at the service connected disability ratings of the respondents, as provided in Figure 5, the organizations consistently over-represent veterans with no disability rating. In combination, the lack of combat service and disability ratings do add concern regarding the representative nature of the study sample given the association between the characteristics and their association with a veteran's economic success after the completion of their service.

Figure 5. Service Connected Disability Rating



- The above discussion has noted some consistencies with the study sample and the veteran population, but it has also highlighted some inconsistencies. These inconsistencies suggest that the study has the potential to estimate the impact of the organizations on the economic status of its alumni, but the results may not be generalizable beyond the current alumni.

Figure 6. Employment Status



- Having discussed the study sample’s representativeness of the veteran population, our attention is now turned towards the economic impact of the corps on its alumni. At the individual level, economic impact is typically view as a combination of an individual’s employment, education, and household characteristics.

Employment Outcomes

- Beginning first with the employment characteristics of program alumni, the data show that program alumni maintain a higher rate of employment that veterans that have not undergone employment, as shown in Figure 6. Table 2 provides further clarity of this by looking at the share of veterans that are employed. Although the national rate is at 45%, all programs within the Conservation Corps exceeded this rate, with a total employment rate of nearly 80%. This suggests that completing the program has a positive impact on the ability of veterans to get and maintain employment.

Table 2. Share of Veterans Currently Employed

Veteran Population	45.0%
Total Conservation Corps Alumni	79.6%
Conservation Legacy Alumni	84.3%
SCA Alumni	70.0%
Mt. Adams Alumni	87.0%

Table 3. Average Current Income

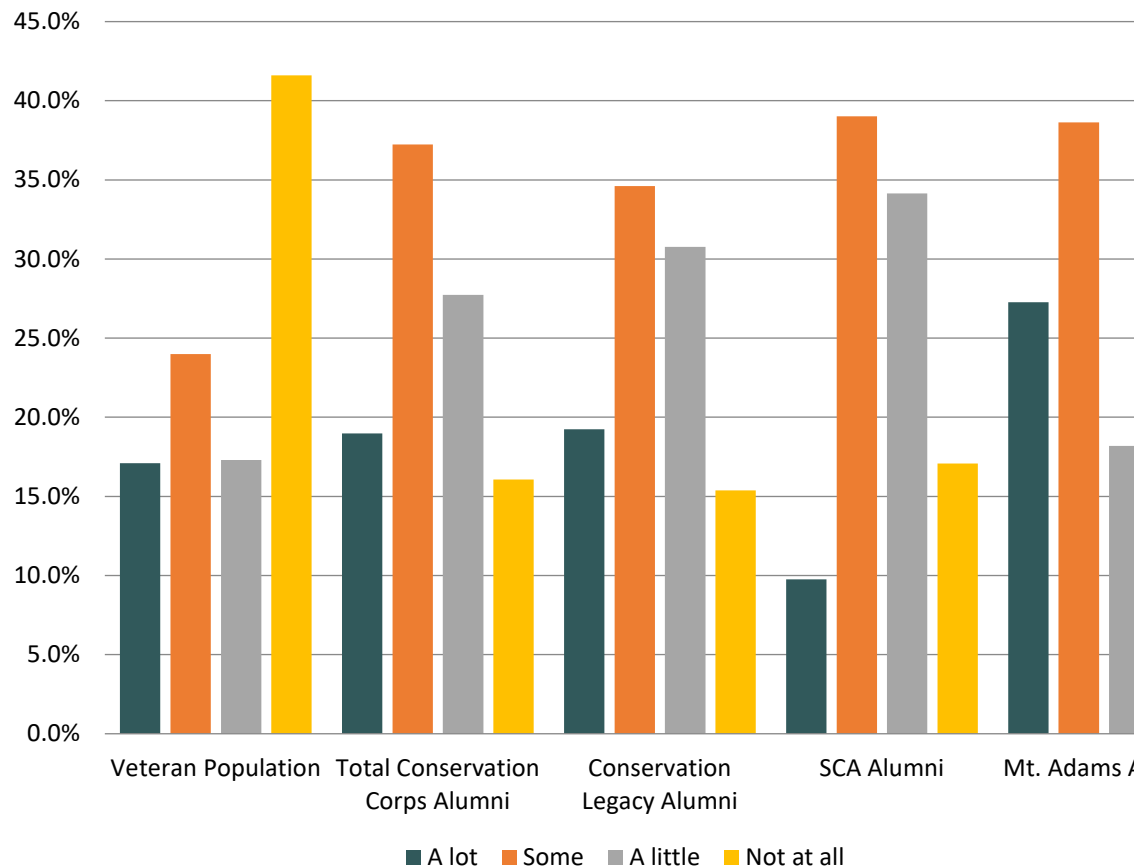
Veteran Population	\$43,370
Total Conservation Corps Alumni	\$30,888
Conservation Legacy Alumni	\$32,311
SCA Alumni	\$27,298
Mt. Adams Alumni	\$35,564

Table 4. Share of Jobs Aligning with Service Occupation

Veteran Population	21.7%
Total Conservation Corps Alumni	14.5%
Conservation Legacy Alumni	7.7%
SCA Alumni	9.8%
Mt. Adams Alumni	0.0%

- Although graduates of the Conservation Corps are more likely to be employed, on average their income tends to be less than that of the average veteran, as shown in Table 3. The typical veteran in the United States earns an annual income of \$43,370, an income that is not statistically different from the income of the typical non-veteran. However, on average survey respondents earned an income of \$12,482 less at \$30,888. Looking at the programs themselves, Mt. Adams had the highest average income at \$35,564 and SCA had the lowest at \$27,298.
- Further looking into the issue of employment, we consider several dimensions: the extent that military training has applied to civilian employment, how prepared veterans were for the civilian job market after military service, and how well Conservation Corps alumni were for the job market after completing the program. These dimensions are demonstrated in Figures 7, 8 and 9, respectively.
- In general, alumni of the Conservation Corps believe that their training in the military applies to the current employment (see Figure 7). On average, 17.1% of veterans reported that a lot of their training applies and 24.0% reported that some of the training applies to their current position. In comparison, 19.0% of corps program alumni reported that a lot of the military training applies and 37.2% reported that some of the training applies. This suggests that program alumni are more likely to have pursued careers that are at least similar to the military, which also tend to be lower paying than other civilian employment opportunities, than the typical veteran.

Figure 7. Extent that Military Training Applied to Civilian Employment



- While program alumni are more likely to associate their military training with their civilian employment, we find an important difference when looking at their preparedness for the civilian job market. Figure 8 shows the level of preparedness after the completion of military service. Based on the survey results, Corps alumni were more likely than the average veteran to feel unprepared for the civilian workforce. However, we see a dramatic change in the level of preparedness when looking at their preparedness after their time in the Conservation Corps, see Figure 9. After completing their program, 24.8% of alumni reported that they felt very well prepared and 49.6% reported that they felt well prepared. These are an increase of 327.6% and 74.0%, respectively, from how alumni felt after leaving military service. This is also an 88.9% increase over the general veteran population. A comparison of whether veterans and program alumni felt very well or well prepared for the civilian job market is provided in Table 5. Looking at the three Conservation Corps programs, the largest increase of preparedness was alumni of Mt. Adams, which increased from 27.3% to 88.9%.

Figure 8. Prepared for the Civilian Job Market after Military Service

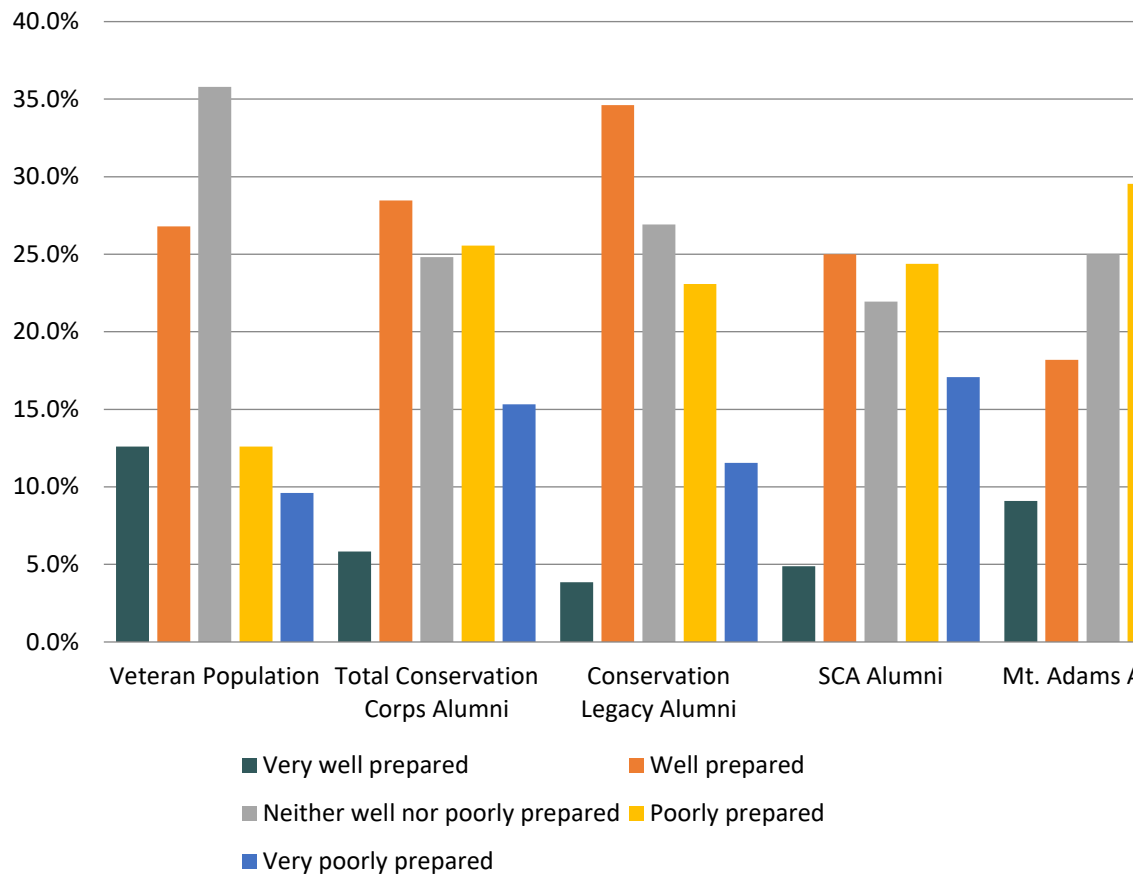


Table 5. Very Well or Well Prepared for the Civilian Job Market

	After Military Service	After Conservation Corps
Veteran Population	39.4%	---
Total Conservation Corps Alumni	34.3%	74.4%
Conservation Legacy Alumni	38.5%	69.2%
SCA Alumni	29.9%	82.1%
Mt. Adams Alumni	27.3%	88.9%

Table 6. Poorly or Very Poorly Prepared for the Civilian Job Market

	After Military Service	After Conservation Corps
Veteran Population	22.2%	---
Total Conservation Corps Alumni	40.9%	4.5%
Conservation Legacy Alumni	34.6%	5.8%
SCA Alumni	41.5%	2.6%
Mt. Adams Alumni	47.7%	2.2%

Figure 9. Prepared for the Civilian Job Market after Conservation Corps

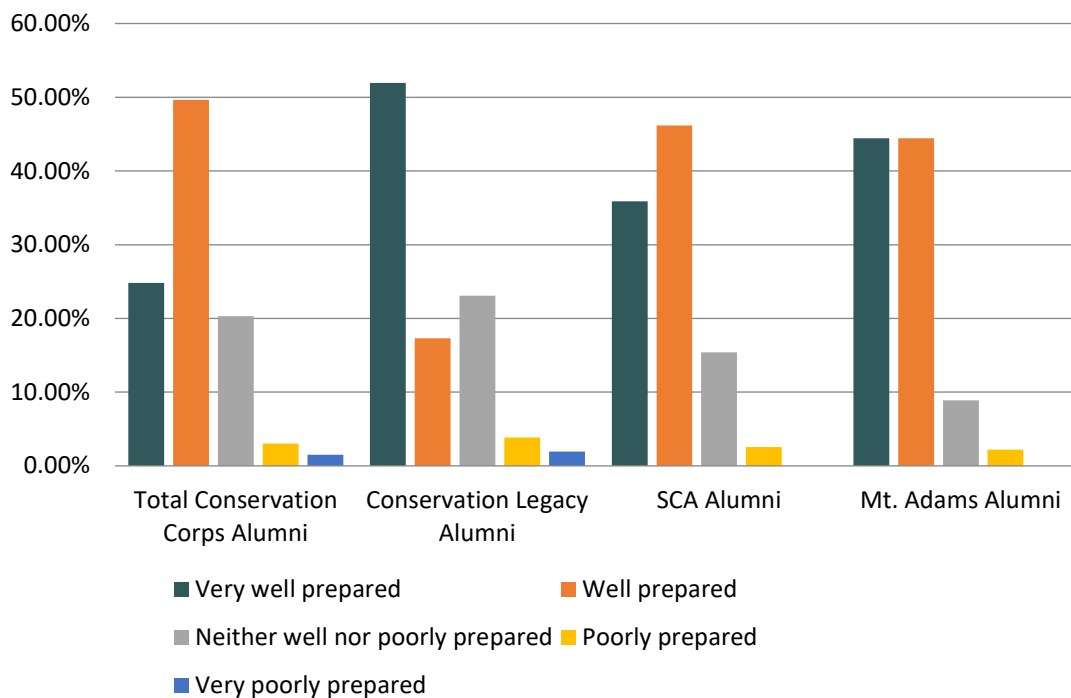


Table 6 provides a look at those who felt poorly or very poorly prepared for the civilian job market. On exiting military service, 22.2% of veterans felt ill prepared for a civilian job. Alumni of the Conservation Corps reported a higher rate of ill preparedness, at 40.9%. After completing the program, however, we find a notable decrease in how survey respondents felt. The data shows that there was an 89.0% decline in being ill prepared for the Conservation Corps as a whole. The difference in reduction among the programs was marginal, suggesting that they are equally effective in preparing alumni for the civilian job market.

The improvements that we find in level of preparedness can be tied to the higher rates of employment amongst program alumni. When an individual feels prepared for job market, they are more likely to actively pursue a career position. In turn, this leads to an increased chance of the veteran being employed. The level of preparedness may also be reflected in the current income of program alumni.

Individuals are most likely to pursue a career in an area for which they feel prepared. By completing a Conservation Corps program, they are more likely to pursue similar work, which may be at a lower average salary than other potential employment.

Table 7. Current Educational Level Completed

	High School	Voc./ Tech.	Some College	BA Degree	MA Degree	Doctorate or Prof.
Veteran Population	26.0%	9.1%	30.0%	17.8%	7.7%	3.9%
Total Conservation Corps Alumni	6.9%	16.0%	38.2%	32.8%	5.3%	0.8%
Conservation Legacy Alumni	3.9%	19.6%	35.3%	37.3%	39.9%	0.0%
SCA Alumni	7.9%	18.4%	36.8%	26.3%	7.9%	2.6%
Mt. Adams Alumni	9.5%	9.5%	42.9%	33.3%	4.8%	0.0%

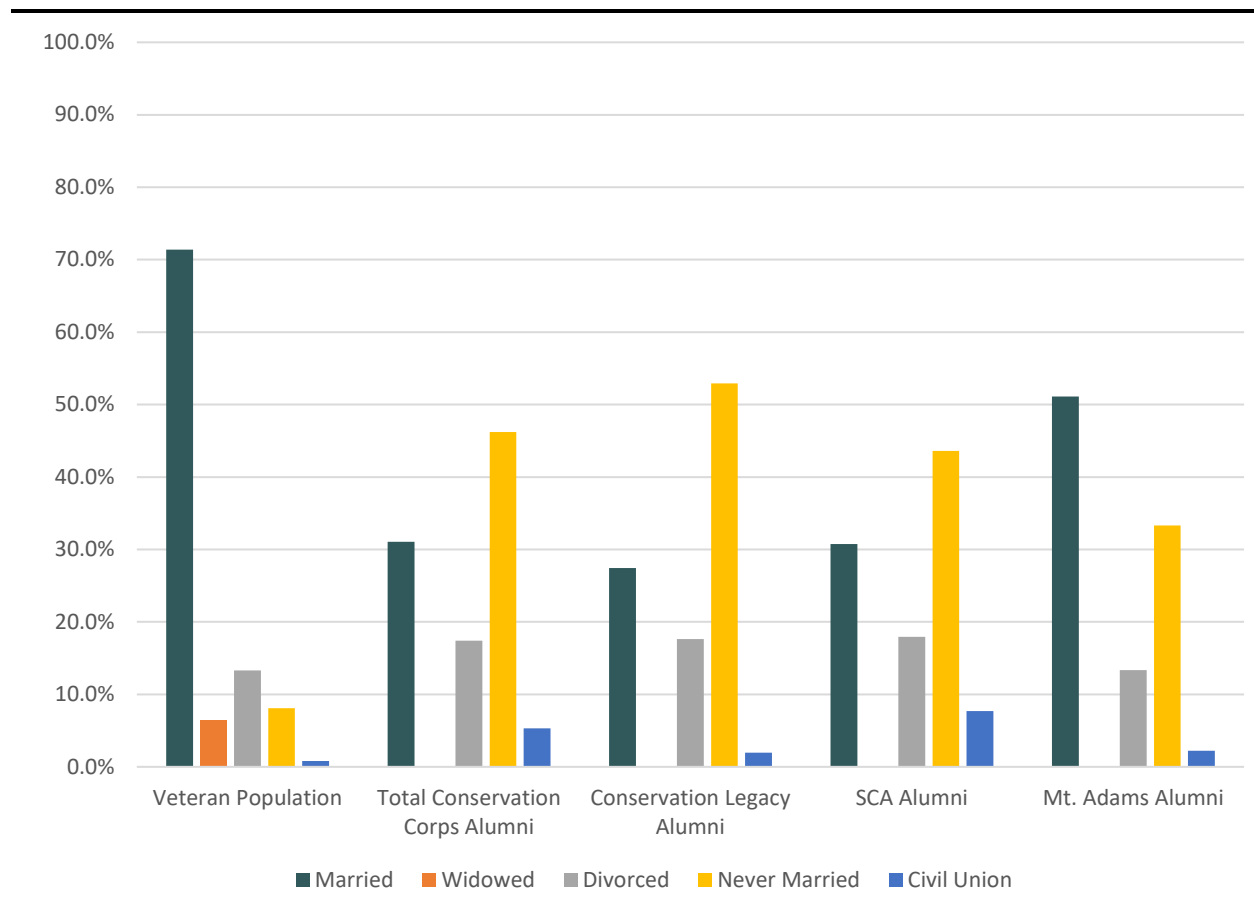
Education Outcomes

An important indicator for the economic impact on an individual is the educational outcome. Economical attainment is tied towards quality of life, as reflected in their salary-earning potential, health status, and family status. To explore the impact of the Conservation Corps on this area, we look to the level of education completed among corps alumni and compare that with the educational attainment of the veteran population. The results of this comparison are presented in Table 7. Overall, the results are encouraging in terms of demonstrating a positive economic impact of having completed a Conservation Corps program. Program alumni are more likely to have completed a Bachelor's degree. Approximately 17.8% of veterans have earned a Bachelor's degree, compared with 32.8% of program alumni. Similarly, program alumni are more likely to have completed at least some college or vocational/technical school (38.2% and 16.0% compared to 30.0% and 9.1%, respectively) than the veteran population. Most importantly, however, is the distinction between the veteran population and program alumni in terms of having earned a high school degree or equivalent. While 26.0% of veterans report a high school degree as their highest level of education, only 6.9% of program alumni do.

We do see an educational slowdown within program alumni occurring after they have earned a Bachelor's degree. Although some survey respondents indicated that they have obtained a Masters, Doctorate or Professional degree, the rate was less than that of the veteran population. Approximately 11.6% of veterans reported having earned a graduate degree. In comparison, only 6.1% of program alumni earned a similar degree.

To better understand the impact of the Conservation Corps on educational attainment, we look at the level of education that program alumni had obtained prior to starting their military service. This data is provided in Table 8. The data shows that among program alumni, the rate of earning a Bachelor's degree increased 331.6% between the time they entered the military and the present..

Figure 10. Marital Status

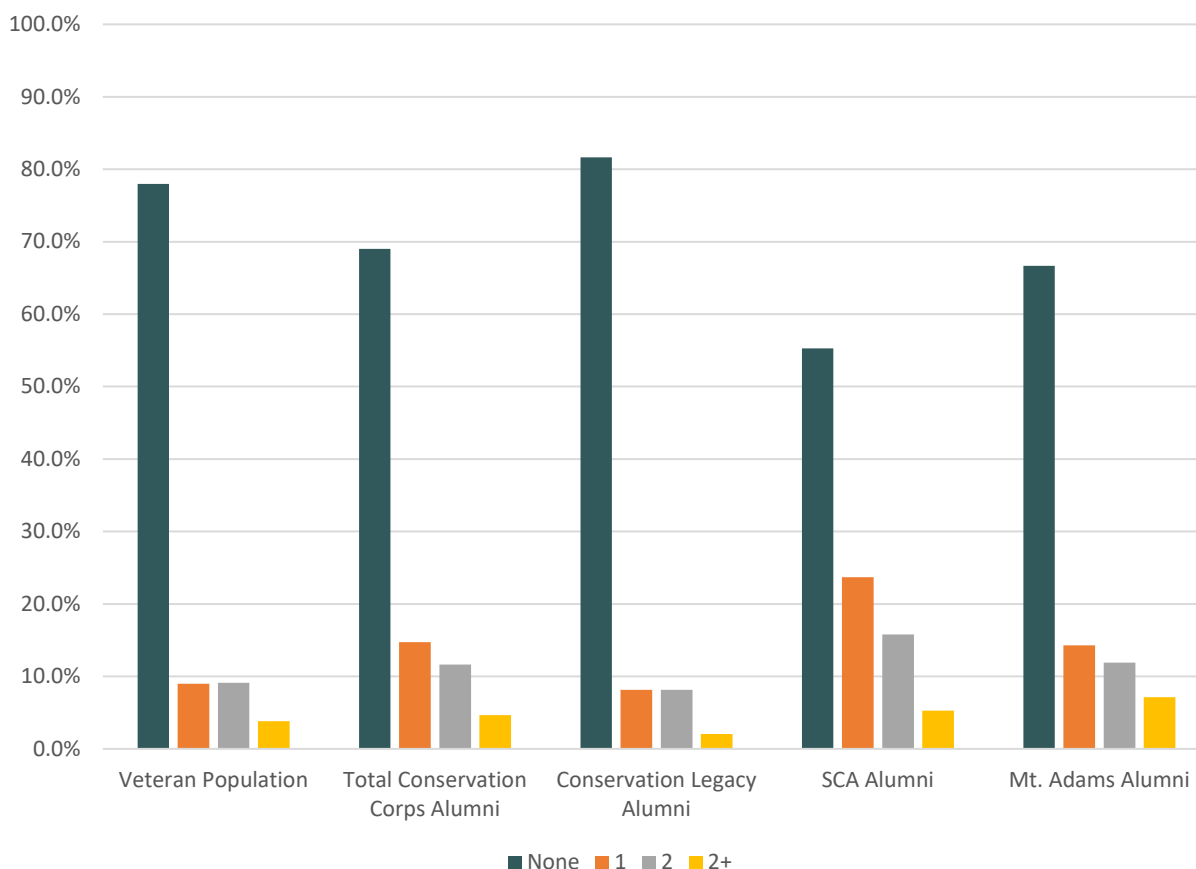


We also see notable increases in the pursuit of at least some college (44.2%). As expected, as we see overall improvement in the level of education that alumni have obtained, we see declines in the share of alumni with only a high school degree or a vocational/technical degree as their highest education earned.

The educational attainment of program alumni, however, may be associated with the earlier finding of job market preparedness and income. Individuals who feel unprepared for the workforce are more likely to pursue additional education opportunities. It is also likely that the area of employment where program alumni seek a career is less likely to require a higher degree, whereas the broader job market is moving towards a graduate degree as a minimal qualification.

The household conditions are a direct reflection of the micro-economy, such that individuals make choice about their personal life based on their perception of their economic status. For

Figure 11. Number of Dependent Children



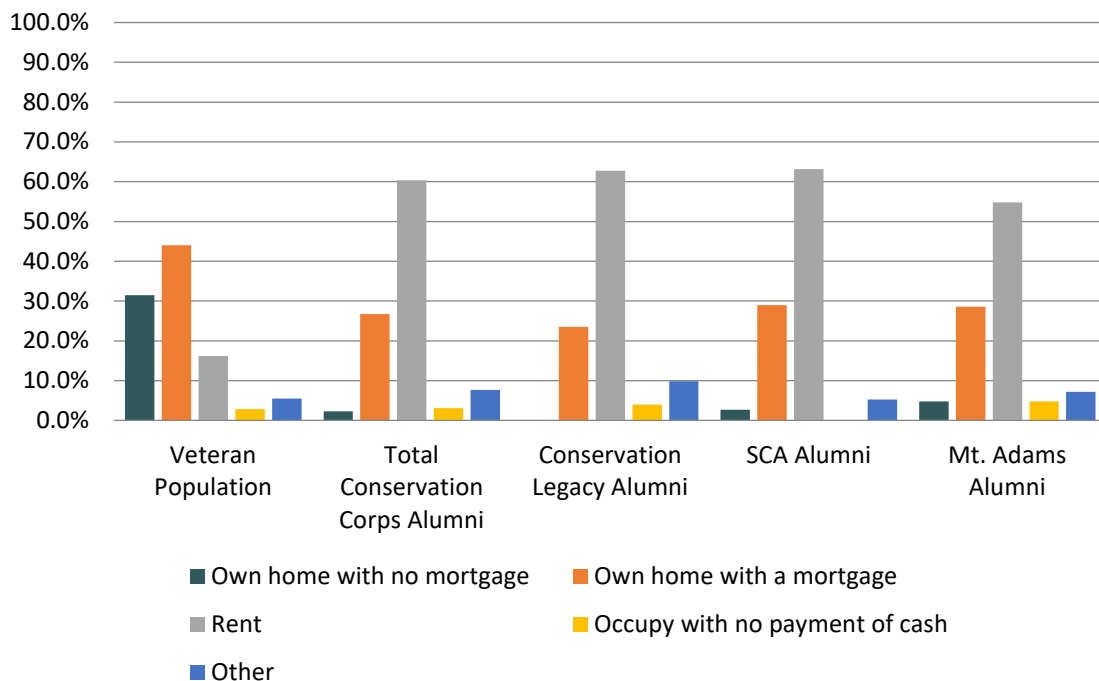
example, the more economically sound an individual is, the more stable their living arrangement are likely to be and the more likely they are to have fill those living quarters with a family. To understand the economic impact of the Conservation Corps on the household conditions of program alumni, we consider several characteristics which reflect on that condition. These are: marital status, the number of dependent children, living arrangements, and access to health

Beginning first with marital status, we find a significant depart of program alumni from the general trends of the veteran population, as shown in Figure 10. While 71.4% of all veterans are married, the average among program alumni is more than half of that at 31.1% At the same time, the divorce rate among alumni is higher than that of the veteran population at 17.4% compared to 13.3%; however, the

most startling difference comes in the decision of program alumni to have never gotten married. Only 8.6% of the veteran population reports having never been married as compared to 46.2% of the Conservation Corps alumni. At the same time, the Conservation Corps does boast a higher rate of civil unions than the veteran population (5.3% compared to 0.8%, respectively).

Figure 11 provides an overview of the number of dependent children that a veteran reports. Interestingly, while alumni of the Conservation Corps are less likely to have been married, they are more likely to have dependent children. Approximately 31.0% of program alumni report

Figure 12. Living Arrangements



having at least one dependent child, compared to 21.9% of the veteran population reporting the same thing. Alumni from SCA report having the most children, with 44.7% indicating that they have at least one dependent child. Interestingly, SCA alumni also reported a marriage rate below the study sample average. The presence of dependent children without a stable marital status often reflects a difficulty in an individual's economic status. The presence of these conditions, however, are more likely a reflection of the type of individual that pursues a term within the Conservation Corps rather than the impact of program involvement.

Turning our attention towards the living arrangements of Conservation Corps alumni, Figure 12 shows a sharp difference between the arrangements of the veteran population as a whole with program alumni.

Program alumni are less likely than the veteran population as a whole to own their own home. Approximately 75.5% of veterans own their own home, compared to only 29% of program alumni. The highest rate of home ownership was observed amongst SCA alumni, though the distinctions between program alumni groups are minimal. At the same time, program alumni are more likely to rent than the veteran population, 60.3% vs. 16.2%. Program alumni also showed an increase over the veteran population in unstable options, that is where they occupy a residence with no payment of cash rent and other, alternative living arrangements. The difference between veterans and program alumni, however, in these categories was marginal, suggested that no significant difference may exist.

Table 9. Health Insurance Coverage

	Private Insurance	Public Insurance	Both Public and Private	No Coverage
Total Conservation Corps Alumni	40.0%	29.6%	11.1%	19.3%
Conservation Legacy Alumni	34.6%	30.8%	11.5%	23.1%
SCA Alumni	55.0%	22.5%	15.0%	7.5%
Mt. Adams Alumni	32.6%	34.9%	7.0%	25.6%

Lastly, we look towards the issue of health insurance coverage among program alumni. Data on this coverage is provided in Table 9. The availability of health insurance coverage reflects on an individual's economic status. Individuals in a higher status are more likely to receive private health coverage through an employer, while those with a lower status are more likely to forgo coverage due to the cost. The availability of coverage is also a reflection of an individual's health care status, with healthier individuals reflecting better coverage and better access to care. Looking at the data for program alumni, 40.0% of survey respondents reported that they relied on private insurance. Reliance on private insurance was highest among alumni from SCA. Additionally, 29.6% rely on public insurance for their health coverage and 19.3% have no health insurance coverage. Given the veteran status of program alumni, the rate of reliance on public insurance is unusually low and the rate of no health coverage is unusually high. This reflects a trend within the veteran community where veterans may be unaware of the benefits afforded to them.

Conclusion on the Economic Impact of Conservation Corps

Based on the analysis of the survey sample provided by the Conservation Corps, there is some evidence to suggest that involvement in the corps' program is economically beneficial to the veteran community. The two areas of greatest impact of the corps are in terms of the employability of its alumni and its educational outcome. The findings show that program alumni feel better prepared than the general veteran population for entering the civilian job market. A criticism of the Department of Veterans Affairs efforts has been that veterans are unsuccessful at entering the civilian market because they feel a dissonance between themselves and the organizations that are seeking employees. Both the

Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense have made attempts to address this dissonance, but have been unable to successfully breach it. As a result, many veterans remain outside of the labor market or seek lower positions within organizations. By working with veterans in the program, the Conservation Corps has successfully overcome this barrier, as demonstrated by the high rate of employment among its alumni. Within the economic literature, employment is typically considered the ideal measurement of programs and policies focused on the individual rather than the broader economy as a whole. On this grounds, it is possible to say that the completing the Conservation Corps program is an economic success. The distinction between programs, however, is marginal, with both Conservancy Legacy and SCA showing a positive economic impact on the lives of its alumni. Mt. Adams gives the appearance of a positive impact as well, however, given that only two its alumni partook in the survey, it is not possible to definitively make the deduction of impact.

It should be noted, however, that there is also evidence to suggest that alumni completing the program are at an economic disadvantage when compared to the veteran population, though it is not possible to associate the disadvantage from the Conservation Corps with any measure of certainty. Generally speaking, alumni of the corps programs have lower incomes than the veteran population and are more likely to find themselves in economically unstable living and family arrangements. The absence of health insurance coverage among program alumni is also troublesome. When these factors are considered in combination, they give a reflection of how an individual may view their own economic position. For program alumni, this individual perspective is not promising.

Although the results do appear mixed, they should be taken from a positive economic perspective. The programs are successful at helping their alumni gain employment. The next step of the economic discussion should be how to help program alumni gain meaningful, financially stable employment.