



25 Years of Service
See the Need, Meet the Need



2018 - 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

Year 25 | September 2018 - August 2019

IN THIS REPORT



Reflections on 25 years of National Service & our 20 year partnership with the U.S. Forest Service

Highlights from:



Disaster Response



Environmental Stewardship



Wildland Fire



My Mother's House



Community Impact



Member Development

“The Mission of AmeriCorps St. Louis is to enhance the professional skills and life-long service ethic of the people who serve; to respond to critical unmet needs in the areas of emergency response and environmental conservation; to leverage service of volunteers; and to build the capacity of our partnering agencies and communities we serve.”



A MESSAGE FROM OUR TEAM

Dear Partners, Friends, and Alumni of AmeriCorps St. Louis,

This past year we celebrated a significant milestone: 25 years of National Service. Since the inception of AmeriCorps St. Louis in 1994, we have strived to create a lasting impact, both for our Members and the communities they serve.

We were thrilled to host a gala to commemorate a quarter-century of service. It was a wonderful night to connect with alumni, volunteers, supporters, partners, and community members from over the years. The celebration reminded us of how fortunate we are to have that strength of community and the common bond that unites us all.

The tribute reminded us of the tale of the lamplighter:

Long ago, a lamplighter dutifully set about lighting the street lamps, as day faded to night. When asked why the lamplighter is so committed to this repetitive, mundane task, the lamplighter replied, "I do it for the light I leave behind."

As a National Service organization, we too are lamplighters, casting a beacon of hope from positive-minded individuals who form a community to serve, for the betterment of others. It is our privileged duty and responsibility to shed light for others, especially on their darkest days or in their hours of need. The light we leave behind illuminates the paths of those we touch, enabling them to spread their own light throughout their individual communities.

Whether you are near or far, we greatly appreciate your support and commitment to AmeriCorps St. Louis. Thank You to everyone who has made this organization special the last 25 years, and we look forward to casting a bright light and making lasting impacts in our forthcoming chapters.

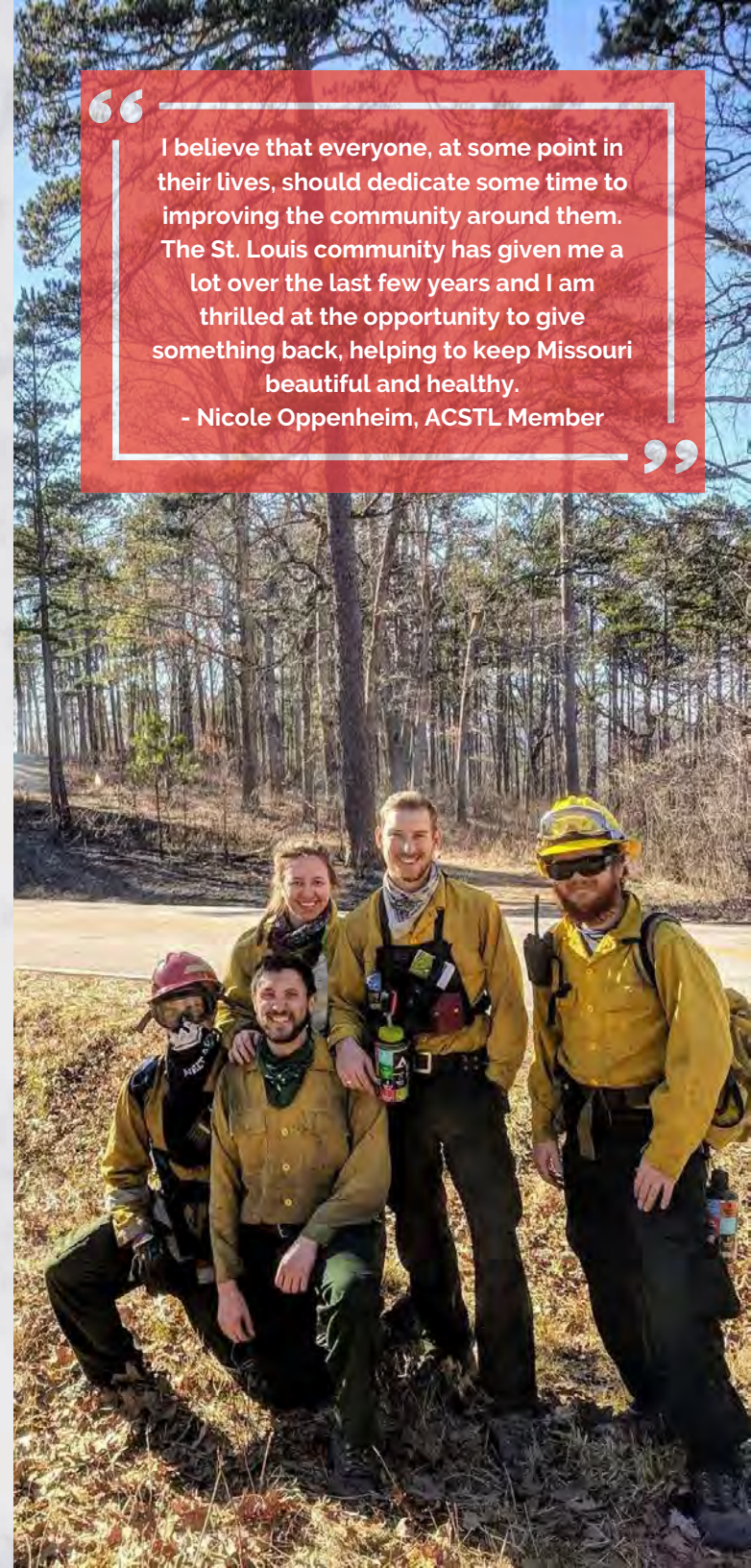
**Thank You,
-AmeriCorps St. Louis**

“

I believe that everyone, at some point in their lives, should dedicate some time to improving the community around them. The St. Louis community has given me a lot over the last few years and I am thrilled at the opportunity to give something back, helping to keep Missouri beautiful and healthy.

- Nicole Oppenheim, ACSTL Member

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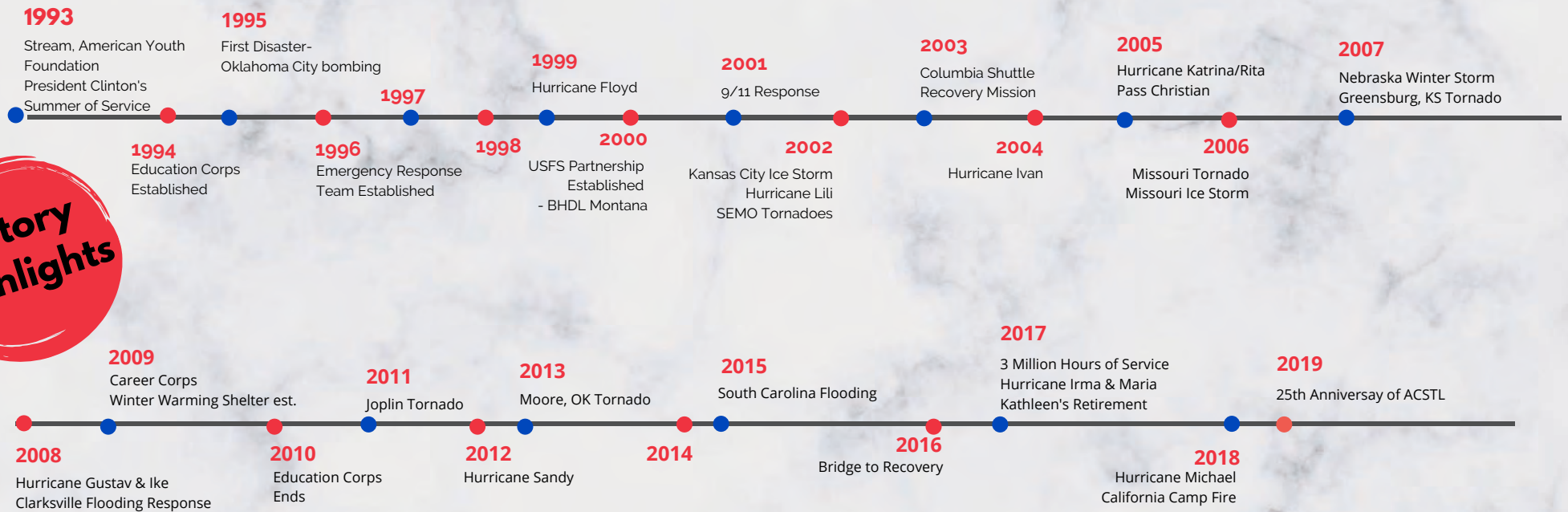


25 YEARS OF NATIONAL SERVICE

2019 marked a quarter century of National Service for AmeriCorps St. Louis. We commemorated the milestone with a weekend in March full of reunions, reminiscing, and rejoicing. Alumni from all 25 years were present throughout the weekend, from the Emergency Response Team/Safety Service Corps to the Education Corps. Board Members, conservation partners, volunteers, friends, and family came together to honor and celebrate our history of National Service.



ACSTL Founder & Executive Director Bruce Bailey with alumni Jeannette (Bowden) Hoffman, Eric Kalish, and Meaghan Lakey at the 25th Anniversary Celebration on March 25th at the Moto Museum in Downtown St. Louis.



20 YEARS IN MONTANA

AmeriCorps St. Louis recently marked our **20th** year of service with the U.S. Forest Service on the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest, a partnership that has prevailed through many seasons and has achieved impactful results.

There are many individuals that have made this partnership possible over two decades, and we are forever appreciative of their time, energy, and resolve in continuing to support these shared opportunities to produce lasting positive effects on these beautiful public lands. We would like to give a special acknowledgement to **Jocelyn Dodge** for starting our partnership 20 years ago and for her unfailing commitment to bringing AmeriCorps St. Louis to Montana every year to serve on the Forest. We truly appreciate her dedication and support for our program and for her understanding of the importance of developing the next generations of environmental stewards.

An organizational pillar of ours is to develop the next generation of public servants, and their interaction with U.S. Forest Service personnel and their experiences on the Forest are uniquely special. The Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest provides critical training and opportunities for learned skills that are investments that immediately pay off in efficient, cost-saving services provided by a dedicated group of young and energized service volunteers.

The Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest has been a special place for our program. We greatly appreciate the opportunity and partnership



STEWARDSHIP PARTNERS

Federal

Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest
Mark Twain National Forest
Shawnee National Forest

State

Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Missouri Department of Conservation
Missouri Department of Natural Resources

Local & Nonprofit

Forest Park Forever
Great Rivers Greenway
L-A-D Foundation
Ozark Trail Association
St. Louis Department of Parks, Recreation, and Forestry



Logan Bleyl, Michelle Recinos Flores, Heather McSherry, Mikala Waldrup, and Missouri DNR staff at Bennett Spring State Park.



Mo Huynh, Kim Shonborn, Meredith Brown, Saroja Schwager, and Justin Davies from the Mark Twain National Forest at Grasshopper Hollow.

“

Thank you so much AmeriCorps St. Louis for helping us get more done on some important areas. AmeriCorps's efforts directly contribute to the quality of life for Missouri residents (whether or not they realize it). The areas that you work to improve provide vital habitat for a whole host of species that can't go anywhere else – either we maintain those habitats or they could disappear from the Missouri landscape. Thanks again!

- John George, Missouri Dept. of Conservation
Central Office Regional Supervisor

”

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Where Our Funds Come From

56%

Program Services

Conservation Projects	\$491,094
Mission Assignments*	\$323,099

38%

CNCS Grant

\$553,414

6%

Additional Income

Foundations & Trusts	\$45,000
Donations	\$57,937
Other	\$12,122

Total Income \$1,436,783



How We Use Our Funds

83%

Emergency Response Team \$1,135,050

12%

Management & General \$164,591

5%

Additional Expenses

Client Services*	\$21,970
Special Programs	\$29,593
Fundraising	\$6,400

Total Expenses \$1,357,604

Thank You to our Major Donors

Bland Family Foundation
 Dula-Kobusch Charitable Trust
 Joyce Meyer Ministries, Inc.
 L-A-D Foundation
 Nestle Purina PetCare Company
 The Northern Trust Company/Pettus Foundation Trust
 The Saigh Foundation
 Triangle Community Foundation

*Mission Assignment income is generated from federally declared disaster deployments, through our agreements with the Corporation for National & Community Service and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

*Client Services expenses refers to our "My Mother's House" programs- the Winter Warming Shelter and Shower Services.

MEET THE TEAM

Leadership Staff



Bruce Bailey
Executive Director



Amanda Henderson
Operations Director



Kenan Ender
Program Director



Kelley Hower
Member Services
Director



Brenna Thompson
Disaster Support
Coordinator
Westmoreland, NH
University of New
Hampshire - BFA



Wren Wells
Stewardship Coordinator
Victor, ID
Carleton College - English



Ellen Alston
Outreach VISTA
Floosmoor, IL
Saint Louis University - Social
Work, Tulane University -
Master of Social Work



Jane Kersch
Development VISTA
Dubuque, IA
Iowa State University -
Political Science, Global
Resource Systems



Jimmy Tyler
Disaster Support VISTA
Indianapolis, IN
Indiana University - History

MEET THE TEAM



42 AMERICORPS MEMBERS

20 U.S STATES + ENGLAND



“ I serve because civic engagement and civic service is an absolute necessity, in my opinion. All people could benefit from doing some sort of national service. It's an incredibly insightful, moving, and meaningful experience. - Meredith Brown ”

73,224 hours served in the areas of disaster response, environmental stewardship, and wildland firefighting



Emergency Response Team Members



Year 25

DISASTER RESPONSE

Federal Deployments



Hurricane Florence - South Carolina | DR-4394

October 2018

For this short deployment, 4 Members assisted the United Way with database management in response to Hurricane Florence. The database Crisis Cleanup was utilized to connect survivors to disaster response organizations.



Hurricane Michael - Florida | DR-4399

November 2018 - February 2019

During this deployment, Members took on Incident Command roles to help oversee other AmeriCorps Disaster Response Teams (A-DRT) in the field. Members also helped train A-DRT Members on debris removal and chainsaw use.



Camp Fire - California | DR-4407

November 2018 - February 2019

In Butte County, California, Members assisted California Volunteers with a wide variety of tasks including volunteer and donations management, as well as human and animal sheltering.



Flooding and Severe Storms - Nebraska | DR-4420

March - May 2019

In response to severe and historic Midwest flooding, Members deployed to Nebraska to assist with Multi-Agency Resource Centers, volunteer opportunities, and connecting with homeowners in need of assistance.

Disaster Response in Nebraska // Mikala Waldrup

In March my team was pulled off of a conservation project and deployed to Fremont, Nebraska, to assist with volunteer management in response to severe flooding. While I was hesitant to go on the deployment, I enjoyed getting to know this wonderful community. The folks of Fremont have been so kind and ready to help their community. The amount of love and support is outrageous.

Three individuals left a mark in my heart forever - Kathy, Pam, and Karen. These ladies jumped in to support the Volunteer Resource Center, sacrificing their time to ensure volunteer opportunities in the community are filled. Each of them took over a critical portion of the Volunteer Reception Center and executed their positions with poise in the mists of chaos. These ladies were a huge support to our team, ensuring we were well taken care of. While our meeting was under hard circumstances, I am glad our paths crossed.

“

"Please let me extend to you my sincerest gratitude and thanks for all of the great work that you all have done here in Nebraska in response to the Spring floods. Nebraska is greatly indebted to you for humble selfless service, leadership, and support these past few months. THANK YOU!"

- Quinn Lewandowski
Nebraska Emergency Management Agency

”

DISASTER RESPONSE

Local Deployments



Severe Flooding - Clarksville, Missouri May - June 2019

During the historic 2019 Midwest flooding, Members deployed to Clarksville, MO, to assist with sandbagging operations. ACSTL has deployed several times over the years to the river front community, and as always the town welcomed us with open arms.



EF-3 Tornado - Jefferson City, Missouri May - June 2019

After a destructive tornado stormed through our state's capital, a team was deployed help set up a Volunteer Reception Center (VRC). In coordination with the United Way of Central Missouri, Members helped dispatch volunteers to service sites and led crews of volunteers in clean up and debris removal.

Additionally, from April to July, ACSTL Members served at Multi-Agency Resource Centers (MARC)s across Missouri and Illinois to assist flood and tornado survivors. Approximately 800 households were assisted during these events.



Disaster in Clarksville // Mo Huynh

My favorite memory from this past year was serving on disaster in Clarksville, Missouri. Being called to respond to the flood in Clarksville unexpectedly was one of the best times I have had with AmeriCorps St. Louis because of the community that came together in a time of need, and the wonderful teammates I had to surround me. The people I met, the sand bagging completed, the women from the nearby correctional facility, and the insane wind/sand/hail storm that happened made my deployment that much more memorable.

I am happy to say that I feel like we made an impact on the small town of Clarksville, and it will always be a special place to me.

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP



7,694
hazard trees
felled/removed
from trail



1,070
acres of
invasive species
treated/removed



492
miles of trail cleared,
constructed, and
maintained



Jason Ort cuts down an Eastern Red Cedar for Glade Restoration

9,124
total acres of land
improved



Michelle Recinos Flores bucks a log for firewood in Montana



Terragan Brouk, Erik Kommer, Elaina Zachos, and Matt Farrington gator up for a wildlife surveying project

WILDLAND FIRE



Logan Bleyl fights back against a wildfire with the Missouri Department of Conservation

“I had the new experience of assisting in a prescribed burn operation with the Illinois DNR. The unit was in a beautiful woodland in southern Illinois. I found the experience to be exciting, informative, arduous, and rewarding. It makes me feel very satisfied to have this experience under my belt. Developing skills in conservation and environmental stewardship is a large part of why I joined AmeriCorps.”

- Matt Flenniken, ACSTL Member



Steven Driest helps ignite a prescribed burn with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources



Tom Webb and Meredith Brown assist with a prescribed burn at Taum Sauk Mountain.



7,986
Acres of
Prescribed Burning

269
Acres of
Wildfires Fought



MY MOTHER'S HOUSE



For the 11th year, AmeriCorps St. Louis partnered with St. Louis Winter Outreach to operate our Emergency Winter Warming Shelter and other outreach services, known as "My Mother's House." Open on select nights between December and March when temperatures drop below 20 degrees, our shelter staff and volunteers provide two hot meals and a warm bed for roughly 60 unhoused guests.



In 2017, **Zippy Lee** and **John Pawloski** joined our team as our Shelter Coordinators. John and Zippy provide supervision of shelter guests, manage food and donations, help manage volunteers, coordinate with other shelters, and ensure the safety of all guests and volunteers.

John and Zippy both studied at Eden Theological Seminary in St. Louis, and have been advocates for St. Louis's unhoused population for many years.

2018 - 2019 Season Impact



13

Nights Open



833

Beds Provided



585

Volunteer Hours



1,666

Meals Served

Thank you to our Sponsors & Partners!

Our Lady of SORROWS
CATHOLIC CHURCH



BACK@YOU

Backpacks, Blankets, Comforters & Pillows
to help you stay warm and cozy in the winter!

COMMUNITY IMPACT

Community service and engagement is a key component of what we do here at AmeriCorps St. Louis. Our Service Day initiative aims to strengthen our presence in the community while also giving our Members more opportunities to learn about different organizations and neighbors of St. Louis.



A group of Members spent President's Day at LifewiseSTL/Kingdom House, whose mission is to help individuals and families achieve economic success.

National, Local, State Partners

Corporation for National and Community Service
Federal Emergency Management Agency
Missouri Community Service Commission
Missouri State Emergency Management Agency
Missouri Voluntary Agencies Active in Disaster (VOAD)
Nestle Purina Near Southside Coalition
St. Louis Community Organizations Active in Disaster
St. Louis Winter Outreach
United Way of Greater St. Louis

Service Day Sites

American Red Cross - St. Louis chapter
St. Louis Crisis Nursery - Centene Center
Food Outreach
Forest ReLeaf of Missouri
Greenwood Cemetery
LifeWise STL (formerly Kingdom House)
Missouri Botanical Garden
Twillman Elementary School



Michelle Recinos Flores helps prepare food with Food Outreach, a St. Louis nonprofit that provides nutritional support to enhance the quality of life for people living with HIV/AIDS or cancer.

CULTIVATING NEW LEADERS

Year 25 Award Recipients

Corps of Discovery Leadership Award Monique Huynh

Golden Pulaski Exemplary Leadership Award Jamie Thorndike

Ethic of Service Award Maggie Bernetich

Spirit of Service Award Meredith Brown & Mikala Waldrup

Perseverance Award Kelly Zeller

Bedrock Award Erik Kommer

Compass Award Margaret Gerker

Team Award Saroja Schwager

Legacy Award Claire Schneider

Monique (Mo) Huynh

Where are they now? After ERT, Mo continued serving as a National Health Corps Member in Jacksonville, FL.

"Mo distinguished herself at the beginning of the term with her enthusiasm and her talent for relationship building. She developed strong relationships with many of her teammates, but never to the exclusion of others- she is always inclusive and welcoming. Mo admits when she is stepping outside her comfort zone, whether felling big trees or driving on steep muddy roads, but doesn't let new situations intimidate her or hold her back. Her determination & openness to trying new things have helped her to develop many hard skills.

- **Brigid Mulroe, Team Leader**



Jamie Thorndike

Where are they now? After ERT, Jamie worked at a hospital and was accepted into medical school at Brown University.

"Not only is Jamie a great leader, but he also makes a great teammate, which is just as important. He cares about the wellbeing and growth of each teammate. I have been thoroughly impressed by Jamie's ability to communicate, his attention to detail, his delegation of responsibilities, and his passion for service."

- **David Pierson, Team Leader**

The Next Step // Steven Driest

"As my 2 year stint with AmeriCorps comes to an end, I begin to hone-down on my next step. I joined AmeriCorps because I didn't have a true sense of self, or an understanding of what it means to be truly passionate about something. Through AmeriCorps I have learned not only about who I am as an individual, but I have realized what I believe is the meaning of life. Never once in my nearly 4,000 hours of service did I have the thought that life is meaningless. In fact, I believe it is almost impossible for one to think this whilst they are serving others.

When you are being hugged by someone who just lost their house, you don't think about your dissatisfaction with life; you think about how you are making an impact and you are literally feeling it. AmeriCorps taught me that service is everything and I have the intent to spend my life in the service of others as a result. AmeriCorps gave me hope in my generation, and it taught me to respect the ones before me when I was an arrogant teenager. It made a man out of a lost boy. It made an active community member, and an upstanding citizen. I will advocate relentlessly for AmeriCorps until the day I die, for I have made it my life's goal to create passion for service."

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ryan Nicholls | President

Washington University School of Medicine
Emergency Management

Angela R. Williams | Treasurer

MOST, Missouri's 529 College Savings Plan,
ACSTL alumnus Year 2

Rebecca Estes | Secretary

Columbia/Boone County Dept. of Public
Health & Human Services, Missouri
Emergency Managers Association

Lindsay Armstrong

St. Louis REI, ACSTL alumnus Year 15

Dante Gliniecki

City of Independence, Missouri Emergency
Management

Mike Pickerel

Federal Emergency Management Agency,
Region 7

William Siedhoff

City of St. Louis Human Services, retired

AWARDS



The **Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation** honored AmeriCorps St. Louis with the **2019 "Conservation Intersection" Award**. The award acknowledges those who "best demonstrate a commitment to providing that critical conservation intersection where Missourians have places to go to enjoy nature and understand the value of nature in their lives." The award was presented at the 2019 Lewis and Clark Conservation Awards Ceremony, and was accepted by ACSTL Board Member Rebecca Estes (pictured above with Barry Orschlen, Vice Chair of the Missouri Conservation Commission).

Photo via the Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation.



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Special thanks to our Members who took such great photos of their service year! This report was compiled by ACSTL Fellow Jane Kersch.

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