



# IMPACT REPORT 2023

SAN JOSE  
CONSERVATION  
CORPS+CHARTER  
SCHOOL



## OUR MISSION

San Jose Conservation Corps and Charter School develops young adults to create transformational change for our community and our planet.



Corpsmember Angel clearing downed trees damaged by Typhoon Mawar in Guam, that are blocking access to a survivor's home.

## OUR VISION

A hopeful and sustainable community that nurtures the aspirations of all young people.

The San Jose Conservation Corps was founded in 1987 by two City Council members who modeled it after the Civilian Conservation Corps of the Great Depression, which put young people back to work restoring America's natural resource infrastructure. Since then, corpsmembers have developed their skills and launched their careers through service to the San José area in conservation, zero waste and emergency response.

Recently, The Corps has responded to needs in our wider region, namely CZU fire recovery and natural disaster response in Florida and Guam. While expanding our geographic reach, the Corps is still innovating ways to serve our local community, like placing interns at the City of San José and exploring ways to address the housing crisis.

As evidenced by the creation of the American Climate Corps, the needs that the Corps addresses are widespread and the solutions that Corps provide are still relevant. Like the revamp of the CCC into the ACC, the San Jose Conservation Corps is reinventing itself for this new period in time because now more than ever, we must develop young people to create transformational change for our community and our planet.

## THE CORPS

BY THE NUMBERS 02–03

IN SAN JOSÉ 04–07

IN THE BAY AREA 08–11

BEYOND 12–13

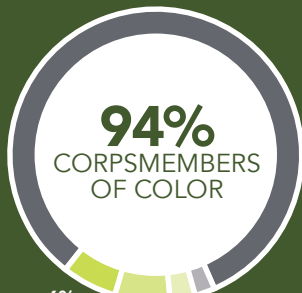
service to  
**SELF**



**869**  
CORPSMEMBERS  
SERVED

**\$374,214**  
IN AMERICORPS  
EDUCATION AWARDS  
EARNED BY  
**171** CORPSMEMBERS

**2,638**  
TRAININGS AND  
CERTIFICATIONS  
COMPLETED



**158**  
HIGH SCHOOL  
GRADUATES



service to  
**COMMUNITY**



**351,875**  
HOURS IN SERVICE  
TO THE COMMUNITY

**415**  
MILES OF TRAILS  
MAINTAINED

**38**  
ZERO WASTE  
COMMUNITY EVENTS



THE CORPS

BY THE

NUMBERS

service to  
**ENVIRONMENT**

**1,985**

METRIC TONS OF  
CO<sub>2</sub> EMISSIONS  
ELIMINATED

**THAT IS  
EQUAL  
TO...**

**1,545**  
TONS OF WASTE  
DIVERTED



**5,077,130**  
MILES DRIVEN BY  
A GAS-POWERED  
VEHICLE



**2,187,776**  
POUNDS OF  
COAL BURNED



**223,376**  
GALLONS OF  
GAS CONSUMED

**12,550**

CUBIC YARDS OF HARMFUL  
VEGETATION REMOVED

**1,281,406**  
SQ FT OF FIRE FUEL  
REMOVED



**209,325**

POUNDS OF LITTER REMOVED  
FROM PUBLIC SPACES



Highlighting the positive impact of corpsmembers throughout the City of San José.



## VERONICA'S VICTORY: FROM NO CREDITS TO NEW HORIZONS

Veronica first enrolled at our Charter High School in 2019 in hopes of obtaining her high school diploma. She had a child on the way and was given the option to return to school or work. She didn't think it was possible to do both at the same time, until she discovered the Corps. "No experience, no school, no history, no resume. I had nothing. I couldn't believe there was an opportunity like this."

She attended school while working part-time in a COVID-19 emergency shelters. Despite starting with zero credits, she was motivated to be a role model for her brother, who also attended the Charter School. They both graduated in 2023 and today, Veronica works as a Residential Services Coordinator at LifeMoves. The experience she gained operating one of their shelters as a corpsmember made her realize that she's passionate about supporting her community and she's able to do so now by connecting clients with services and stable housing opportunities.

## CICI'S PATH FROM CORPSMEMBER TO CARPENTER

When Cici joined the Corps it was her first job outside of retail. She was drawn to the program because she was able to work outside and serve the community. "It was a different kind of service for the community, and I was very interested in that."

Cici's biggest takeaway from her experience at the Corps was confidence, which she used to start over in a new field of work. After the Corps, she went on to be indentured into NorCal Carpenters Union. Cici was sponsored to join Women in the Trades, which will ensure a spot for her in the Union. "My main goal is to be extremely well versed in carpentry, figure out how to build homes, network with whatever contractors I can, potentially become a contractor myself, and get funding for areas with a high [rate] of homelessness."

Cici feels that the Corps is a "great opportunity" for those who are looking to expand their career choices. She chose the Corps in order to focus on herself and get out of a dead-end career and along the way she found that she could also make transformational changes in her community at the same time.



THE CORPS

IN SAN JOSÉ



## THE LARGEST GRADUATING CLASS IN NINE YEARS

Corpsmembers at our high school showed incredible dedication this year, leading us to our largest graduating class in nine years, with 158 students earning their diplomas. One graduating student shared, "It feels good graduating after three years of work." Another reflected, "I didn't think I could do it. A lot of things were in the way, but there were a lot of people here who helped me out." Throughout the year, students participated in post-secondary education tours, which helped them explore future opportunities and plan their next steps. These experiences and strong support from teachers and staff equipped our corpsmembers with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed after achieving this important milestone.

TINY HOME COMMUNITY

LIFEMOVES

NORCAL CARPENTERS UNION

HIGH SCHOOL CAMPUS



## BELEN'S JOURNEY: CORPSMEMBER, STUDENT, AND FORMER RESIDENT

In 2022, Belen was staying at a shelter and exploring options for going back to school. A case manager introduced her to the Corps and she was surprised to learn that she could "receive help [with housing] while going to school and working part-time." Belen created a schedule that worked for her—three days a week in our workforce development program and two days at school to focus on her education.

Living in the tiny home gave her a safe and stable place and allowed her to save up to find independent housing. Belen's journey continued as she moved into an apartment independently and is part of the graduating class of 2024. "I'm grateful that I've been able to take advantage of these opportunities and resources. The Corps has helped me grow as a person. My journey as a corpsmember has been extremely valuable to me."

Our internship program trains corpsmembers as paid interns, preparing them for city employment. This program sets a model for future internships between the Corps and other programs.

## CREATING CAREER CONNECTIONS

Corpsmembers begin their path to success by embarking on the Corpsmember Journey, which provides essential skills and experiences for their future careers. This journey, though challenging, equips them with professional training, leadership development, vocational readiness, and hands-on fieldwork.

Our partnership with the City of San José is a key part of this process. Through internships with the Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services Department, corpsmembers apply what they've learned to real-world settings, contributing to the care of our community's green spaces. Many of these internships lead to permanent roles with the city—a path successfully taken by 18 corpsmembers in 2023, who have transitioned to full-time employment thanks to their dedication and the valuable connections they made. These 18 young people have entered financially sustainable careers and are on a promising path to building brighter futures for themselves and our community.



# 46

CORPSMEMBERS PLACED AS INTERNS IN 2023

# 18

CORPSMEMBERS HIRED BY THE CITY



### CORPSMEMBER

RECEIVES TECHNICAL TRAINING, EARNS INDUSTRY-RECOGNIZED CERTIFICATIONS, AND BUILDS SENSE OF SELF



### INTERN

MAKES CAREER CONNECTIONS AND GAINS PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE



### CITY EMPLOYEE

CONTINUES ON A CLEAR PATH TO A FINANCIALLY SUSTAINABLE CAREER AS A STEWARD OF OUR COMMUNITY

# THE PATHWAY FROM CORPSMEMBER TO CITY EMPLOYEE

## CESAR'S COURSE TO CAREER SUCCESS

Cesar joined the Corps in 2023 and quickly excelled in his work, becoming a leader amongst his fellow corpsmembers. Interested in exploring his career options, Cesar signed up for our California Naturalist course. Moved by the course and earning his certification, he states, "It reawakened my love for nature, which I had forgotten." With his rediscovered passion, he set a new goal to become a park ranger. In October, he jumped at the opportunity to intern with the City, and in just three months, he was hired as a Park Maintenance Assistant.

“ I believe the Corps helped me get my job at the city because they made me the right guy for the job.”

**CESAR JIMENEZ**  
PARK MAINTENANCE ASSISTANT  
CITY OF SAN JOSE



Corpsmembers work across the Bay Area, providing environmental services and pursuing diverse careers, expanding our impact beyond San José.



## SAFEGUARDING OUR ENVIRONMENT

When Justin first heard about the Corps, he was excited for the opportunity to work outdoors and put his Biology degree into practice. He was able to do even more than that, gaining leadership and communication skills after being promoted to Crew Lead. As he started preparing for his career after the Corps, he "was offered help with his resume, as well as opportunities to bolster it."

Justin now works as an Agriculture Specialist in Customs and Border Protection at San Francisco International Airport. His job duties include asking passengers about the food they are bringing from their travels and deciding if it is safe to allow into the U.S.

His experience at the Corps working on invasive species projects helped him realize the importance of the work he does now. "I'm trying to keep pests or invasive species out of the country before they even enter." He has been working as an Agriculture Specialist for about a year. "I couldn't ask for a better job."

SFO AIRPORT

UC BERKELEY

## CREATING ZERO WASTE SOLUTIONS

To improve recycling accessibility, we host Zero Waste Saturdays, offering convenient weekend events for those who need flexible recycling options. These events make recycling more inclusive for everyone in our community. We also partner with cities and non-profit organizations to support their zero waste events, further expanding our reach and impact.

This process promotes community engagement in zero waste practices and significantly improves waste diversion from landfills. Thanks to these efforts, we have exceeded our annual E-waste, tire, glass, and mattress collection goals. Creating a robust recycling network promotes environmental stewardship and contributes to a sustainable community, conserving resources and reducing the effects of climate change. We are always open to exploring new opportunities to bring zero waste to our community. If you have an event, program, or idea for collaboration, please contact us at [info@zerowastesv.org](mailto:info@zerowastesv.org).

SUNNYVALE ZERO WASTE EVENT

BUTANO STATE PARK



THE CORPS

# ACROSS THE BAY



## FROM CORPSMEMBER TO BOARD MEMBER

Sofia Jaquez is one of the Corps' Board Members, drawing from her lived experience as a Charter School graduate in 2019 and her social activism to advise the organization. Sofia sits on boards with the City of San Jose as well, including work2future and the Google fund commission. In addition to these accomplishments, Sofia co-founded the Youth Liberation Movement, a grassroots movement that aims to liberate young people from generational cycles of trauma and oppression by translating their lives into actionable solutions.

However, her social activism does not end there. Sofia not only advocates for social justice in her work, but in her art as well. She specializes in poetry, rap, and mural painting. She shares that what drives her to advocate is her family's involvement in the community. "I'm very proud that I'm able to open doors for my family and inspire them." Sofia has pursued a wide array of creative endeavors since leaving the Corps, including a music video funded by the Santa Clara County Office of Education to encourage young adults to participate in environmental activism. She states that "San Jose Conservation Corps is a great pipeline to green careers." Sofia is currently in pre-law at UC Berkeley and aspires to become a lawyer to further advocate for young people and continue her mission to create positive change.

FREMONT UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

MILPITAS ZERO WASTE EVENT

EAST SIDE UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

MORGAN HILL ZERO WASTE EVENT

## LEADING SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO ZERO WASTE

In the past year, our work with East Side Union High School District has allowed us to divert 834,925 pounds of waste from landfills. With seven years of experience operating recycling efforts for the District, the Corps has a strong practical understanding of what it requires to provide high-quality service.

A particularly notable development this year is the start of our partnership with the Metropolitan Education District, a regional provider of Career Technical Education and Adult Education. MetroEd is the largest career-oriented education organization for high school and adult students in Santa Clara County. By partnering with MetroEd, we work to the fullest extent possible in support of MetroEd's vision for a zero waste campus.

We work toward that goal by not only diverting recyclable materials from the landfill, but through education, outreach, waste analysis, and data reporting. Our services help keep schools clean and green, and continually push them towards a zero waste future. This year, we expanded our work with schools located in the Los Gatos-Saratoga Union School District and Campbell Union School District for zero waste services. Looking forward, we will be continuing to expand our services outside San José and across the Bay Area.



Corpsmembers helped restore Butano State Park over the course of five spikes. Spikes refer to projects where a crew camps out nearby instead of commuting daily.



## TRAIL RESTORATION AND FIRE PREVENTION

Butano State Park was created in 1957 to protect California's coastal redwoods from logging. The park is well known for its scenic hiking trails and diverse landscapes and wildlife in addition to its towering redwoods. Unfortunately, in 2020, the CZU Lightning Fire ravaged the park along with over 86,000 acres throughout the Santa Cruz Mountains, destroying old growth trees, campgrounds, and facilities throughout the park. This year, the Corps was given the opportunity to work with Butano State Park to help restore and reopen the Indian and Canyon trails.

Corpsmembers hiked to their worksite daily to perform fire fuel reduction, create burn piles, and clear trails. Their trainings and experience at the Corps prepared them to take on the task of making the park accessible and preventing future fires. In total they cleared 90 trees and other debris from the trails. While there's lots of work to be done to completely reopen, corpsmembers made a significant difference and are proud of the impact they made. The Corps plans to continue its partnership with State Parks in 2024 by combatting the damage caused by the CZU Lightning Fire in Big Basin State Park.



6,643

FEET OF TRAIL REOPENED

90

DOWNED TREES CLEARED

# CZU LIGHTNING FIRE RECOVERY REGIONAL IMPACT

**5**  
ACRES OF FIRE  
FUEL REDUCTION



## UNPLUGGING AND CONNECTING IN THE WILDERNESS

The work day for corpsmembers at Butano State Park didn't end when they got back to camp. The crew had to come together every day to cook, clean and manage camp responsibilities while practicing Leave No Trace principals. Despite the extra effort involved in living in the backcountry, it brings its own beauty. Without cell service, corpsmembers slowed down and unplugged from the daily distractions. After a long day of hard work, they'd come together to share a meal, stories, and good laughs. They formed lifelong bonds and cherished the memories created with their peers. The corpsmembers return home with newfound connections, treasured experiences, and a sense of accomplishment.

“The work that we do is challenging, but it builds character. These spikes have been life-changing for me.”

**RAYMOND RUBIO**  
CORPSMEMBER

In 2023, SJCC+CS joined the official network of AmeriCorps Disaster Response Teams (A-DRTs). A-DRTs are AmeriCorps programs committed to disaster response and recovery and are nationally deployable resources.



## ANSWERING THE CALL OF SERVICE

Our commitment and skills were put to the test in 2023 when we responded to two major natural disasters: Typhoon Mawar in Guam and Hurricane Idalia in Florida. Corpsmembers and staff reacted quickly, dropping personal commitments and responsibilities to serve their distant community members for the next 30 days.

On deployments like these, the team operates a command center to connect with survivors and assess the damage to their homes. Most of the work involved clearing fallen trees blocking access to homes, primarily for people with health conditions or senior residents who could not remove the storm debris on their own. One resident explained, "After the storm, we saw the damage it caused. What used to be a home is no longer a home." Another shared, "Our big trees fell and blocked our driveways and access to our house." Some of the survivors were left with little options, resorting to taking refuge in their cars until they could regain access to their homes.



A corpsmember clearing storm debris from a collapsed building among overgrown vegetation.



# 6,158

HOURS OF EMERGENCY RESPONSE

THE CORPS

# BEYOND

## ANSWERING THE CALL OF SERVICE (CONTINUED)

Corpsmembers worked quickly, performing damage assessments to determine the time required for each job and executing the work in partnership with organizations from across the country. Corpsmembers used chainsaws and pole saws to clear fallen trees and lift heavy debris. Corpsmember Julian remarked, "Working six days a week, 10 hours a day, was a big change."

Despite the intense workload of a deployment, corpsmembers were fueled by their positive impact, motivating them to continue to respond to more cases. "It feels like now I can do anything if I put my mind to it." Between the two deployments, corpsmembers completed over 131 work orders, providing survivors immediate relief and a more profound sense of community beyond their neighborhood. As one survivor noted, "The corpsmembers were able to complete in a day what would have taken me months."

Corpsmember Joshua sums up the experience explaining, "I chose to serve because it was a great opportunity to help people, better myself, and gain new experiences."

Corpsmembers form a human chain to efficiently haul storm debris from a survivor's property in Florida.



**HURRICANE IDALIA, FLORIDA**

**131**

FAMILIES WHO RECEIVED SUPPORT IN CLEARING DEBRIS



Corpsmembers Lily and Belen operate the incident command center in Guam, managing data and connecting survivors with support services.

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The work accomplished by SJCC+CS is made possible by the generous support and collaboration from our community partners and donors. We are thankful for your commitment to improving the lives of San Jose's opportunity youth. Together, we can create a community where all young people's talents are realized.

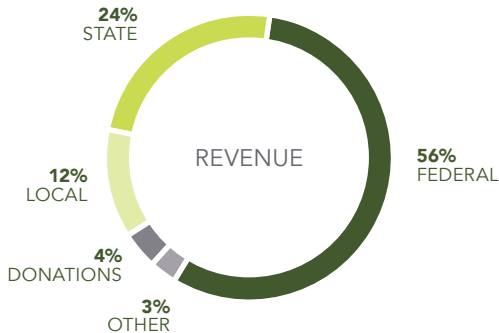
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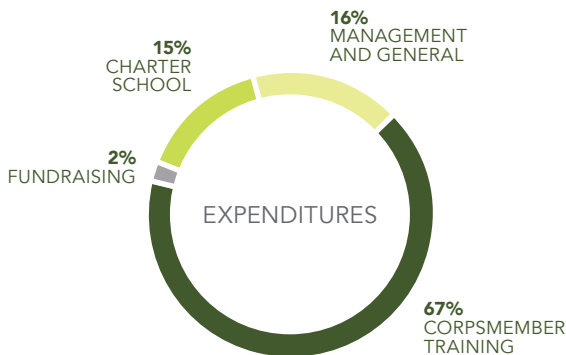
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## FINANCIAL SUMMARY 2022/23



**\$25,177,701**  
TOTAL BUDGET



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