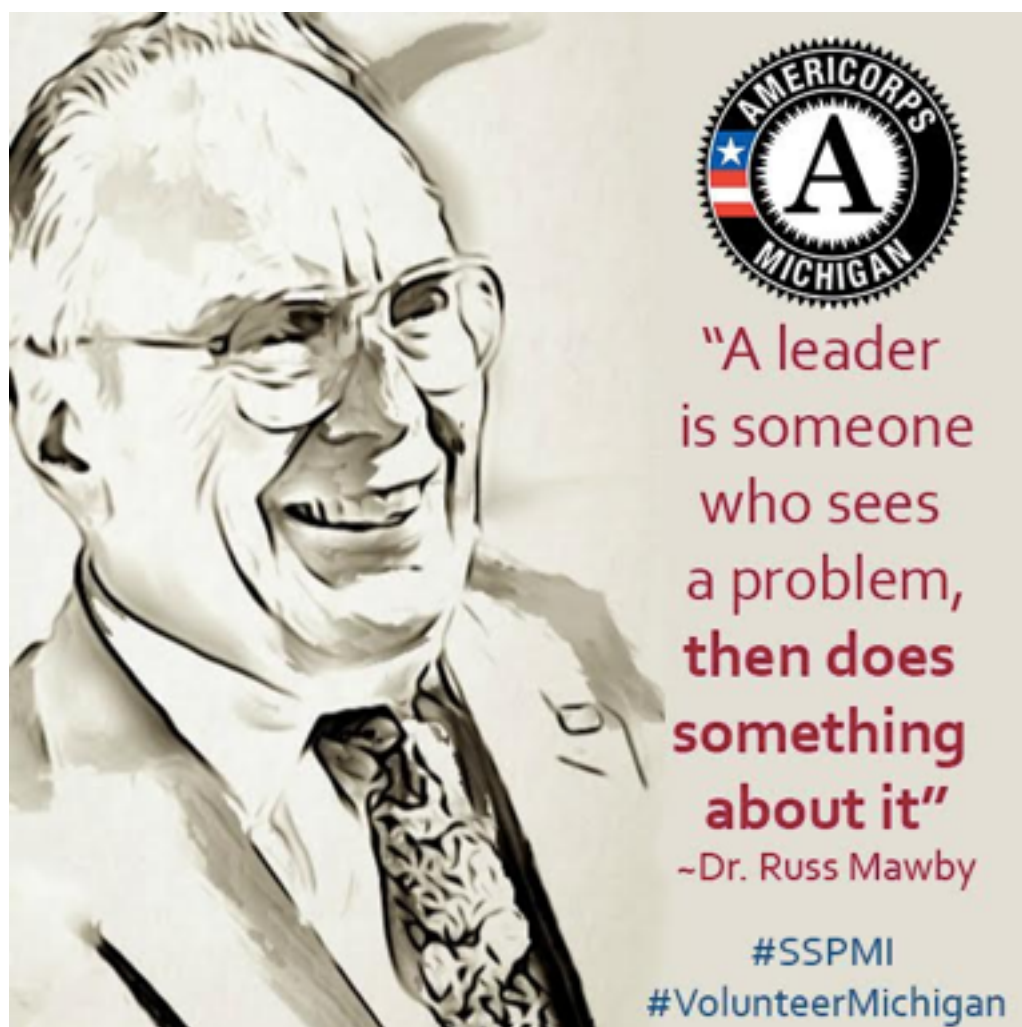

Michigan's AmeriCorps Regional Russ Mawby Signature Service Projects

MAY 18-19, 2018



"AMERICORPS MEMBERS ALWAYS SEEMS TO GO ABOVE AND BEYOND," SAID MICHIGAN COMMUNITY SERVICE COMMISSION EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, GINNA HOLMES. "THEY ACCOMPLISH SO MUCH DURING THEIR SERVICE YEAR, YET TO SEE THEM ALL COME TOGETHER FOR THE RUSS MAWBY SIGNATURE SERVICE PROJECTS AND MAKE AN IMPACT ACROSS THE STATE IS TRULY INSPIRING."

Dr. Russell "Russ" Mawby was a tremendous advocate for youth and volunteer service. Dr. Mawby was instrumental in convening a series of meetings leading to the formation of the Michigan Community Service Commission.

Dr. Mawby passed away on October 20, 2017, leaving behind his legacy as a philanthropic leader and a devoted community service advocate. To honor Dr. Mawby's commitment to volunteerism, service, and AmeriCorps, it is only fitting that the service project has been named Michigan's AmeriCorps Regional Russ Mawby Signature Service Project for more than a decade.

Each year, the Regional Russ Mawby Signature Service Projects bring hundreds of AmeriCorps members to various Michigan communities for a day of intensive service. This year, several projects were completed on May 18 and 19, visibly demonstrating the power of Michigan's AmeriCorps members in action.

MID-MICHIGAN

73 Mid-Michigan AmeriCorps and VISTA members came together to “Get Muddy for Mawby” at the Fenner Nature Center in Lansing on Friday, May 18th. Fenner Nature Center is an environmental education center encompassing 134 acres of publicly accessible green space. Members removed approximately 239 pounds of garlic mustard, dug out black locust saplings that had rooted in the native prairie, and removed a long row of cattails and willow from the interior edges of the pond. Participants planted upwards of 500 milkweed seeds to create habitat for Monarch butterflies. They also chipped roughly 10,800 square feet of trail, benefitting the ecology of the park, reducing soil erosion through providing ground cover, and clearly defining 'safe' spaces for visitors to walk.



WEST MICHIGAN

The 2018 West Michigan Regional Russ Mawby Signature Service Project was held on May 18th. 130 AmeriCorps members convened in Muskegon Heights to serve with the Muskegon County Land Bank Authority. In addition to this, a small group of AmeriCorps members served at the Lakeshore Museum Center. Members serving with the Land Bank removed 17,060 pounds of garbage and 267 bags of yard waste from 19 vacant lots, two vacant houses were cleaned out and prepped for board up, and 39 hedges were trimmed to improve public safety. WZZM 13 filmed part of the service day and featured the story on the evening news. AmeriCorps members serving at the Lakeshore Museum Center created stain glass stenosis for youth to paint, distributed flyers around the community, and cleaned the museum galleries.



NORTHERN MICHIGAN

In northern Michigan, 107 AmeriCorps members and community volunteers assembled to “Enhance East Jordan”. The members and volunteers served at six sites in and around the community of East Jordan. At the various sites, more than 2 miles of trail were laid and/or groomed including the removal of three dozen small stumps and 1000 cubic feet of branches and underbrush. One ton of wood chips was spread and raked; a two-sided informational kiosk was erected; a bike bridge and a foot bridge were built; trail signage was replaced; an 8-yard dumpster was filled with scrap wood, siding, and other debris, 210 feet of border gardens and three 10x10 foot courtyard garden beds were weeded and prepared for planting. Three 103-gallon livestock watering tanks were planted with vegetables and herbs to create wheelchair accessible raised garden beds.



UPPER PENINSULA

On Saturday, May 19th AmeriCorps members serving in the Upper Peninsula came together with several community volunteers to host a free “Get Ready, Get Reading” Family Literacy Fair at Lemmer Elementary School in Escanaba, Michigan. Children who attended this event visited seven literacy activity stations lead by MARESA and Superior AmeriCorps member. The families in attendance left with a home literacy toolkit made up of books, activity bags, and a list of ideas for promoting literacy in the home.



FLINT/ TRI-CITIES

This year's Flint/Tri-Cities Regional Russ Mawby Signature Service Project brought 150 AmeriCorps members as well as over a dozen community volunteers to serve at the Flint Development Center on May 18th. The center's mission is to provide a space for residents and youth to safely engage in recreational, social, educational, cultural, community service, civic, and governmental activities. Together, members and volunteers secured 4 blighted buildings and removed 120 cubic yards of brush and garbage from these properties, spread 50 cubic yards of woodchips on two playgrounds, and filled an additional 350 bags with yard waste and 75 bags of garbage. Several neighborhood residents participated in the beautification project after seeing the AmeriCorps members hard at work.



SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN

The 2018 Southeast Michigan Regional Russ Mawby Signature Service Project was held on Saturday, May 19th at Rouge Park in Detroit. The service project was facilitated in collaboration with Friends of Rouge Park and the event also coincided with the City of Detroit's "Motor City Makeover", an annual community cleanup and beautification event. During the day, over 300 AmeriCorps members and community volunteers helped to clean the park, remove invasive species, clear and build trailways, construct a rainwater catchment system, and paint a playscape. Together, we collected 4,000 pounds of garbage, removed 612 pounds of invasive garlic mustard, cleared 179 cubic yards of buckthorn and honeysuckle, constructed a 250 square foot rain garden, planted 190 native plants and 5 shrubs, and cleared 100 feet of trail.

