

2022 Regional Russ Mawby Signature Service Projects

May 20-21 2022

Every year, hundreds of Michigan's AmeriCorps members take part in the regional Russ Mawby Signature Service Projects (RMSSP) to honor the work and service of the late philanthropist.

Dr. Russell –“Russ”– Mawby was a tremendous advocate for youth and volunteer service. He spent the majority of his career leading the W.K. Kellogg Foundation in Battle Creek. While serving as CEO and chair, Dr. Mawby was instrumental in convening a series of meetings leading to the formation of the Michigan Community Service Commission (MCSC). Dr. Mawby passed away on October 20, 2017, leaving a legacy as a philanthropic leader and devoted community service advocate.



"The most exciting solutions to today's problems are not those coming from Washington or from Lansing. They are those coming from our local communities. Local leaders are the ones who are closest to the problems, and the ones best equipped to solve them."

— Russell G. Mawby

The RMSSP events tackle a variety of community needs, from park clean-ups to neighborhood beautification projects to trail maintenance. These projects visibly demonstrate the power of Michigan's AmeriCorps members in action, and also provide an opportunity for AmeriCorps members from all different programs to serve alongside one another to achieve a common goal.

"The Russ Mawby Signature Service Projects show the power of volunteerism and how when AmeriCorps members and community residents come together, it is wonderful to see what they can accomplish," said Michigan Community Service Commission Executive Director, Ginna Holmes.

Southeast MI RMSSP

The AmeriCorps Urban Safety Program project in Southeast Michigan engaged 93 volunteers, including youth and community residents, to build a community garden. Volunteers helped build and paint flower and vegetable planters. They also assisted in neighborhood clean-up. In total, the volunteers served for a combined 465 hours, collected 22 bags of yard waste, and created 10 flower beds and 2 vegetable gardens.



MSUE 4-H STEAM Corps RMSSP

Six families of 4-H STEAM Corps members came together to create more than 200 seed bombs and distributed them throughout their community to beautify the area for the upcoming warmer months.



Flint RMSSP

A total of 72 AmeriCorps members and community volunteers with the United Way of Genesee County hosted a full day of trash pickup, brush clearing, and flower planting. They worked closely with the Land Bank to beautify properties that border Max Brandon Park. At the end of the day, five dumpsters were filled with trash and debris and more than 50 hand-painted flower pots were given to members of the community.



Northern MI RMSSP

Huron Pines coordinated the Northern MI RMSSP, which took place at the Center Lake Bible Camp and Retreat Center in Tustin, MI. The project engaged 25 volunteers, who helped clean up the camp and prepare for the summer camp season. Volunteers broke up into teams to clean and clear trails throughout the camp's property, fenced in trees near the lakeshore to prevent beaver damage, cleaned cabin roofs of debris and moss, and mechanically treated invasive autumn olive. At the end of the day, volunteers were able to fence in 15 trees near the lake, clear two miles worth of trail, removed 60% of the autumn olive encroaching on the trail system, and cleaned six small cabin roofs.



West MI RMSSP

A total of 27 volunteers from multiple West Michigan AmeriCorps programs split into teams between Ele's Place and Equest Therapeutic Riding Center to participate in one combined RMSSP. Volunteers who served at Ele's Place collected 11 bags of weeds and helped beautify the area. Volunteers at Equest assisted with organizing a storage barn filled with donated equipment, detailed three watering troughs, and cleaned the property. Together, these members provided assistance to two different organizations.



MCAN RMSSP

For the Michigan College Access Network's RMSSP, 20 volunteers in the northern Michigan region assisted with a virtual no-sew tie blanket project. Together, members of the College Completion Corps and AdviseMI made 21 blankets to donate to local animal shelters, women's shelters, and foster closets.

Mid MI RMSSP

Six Economic Opportunity Coaching Corps AmeriCorps members and 12 Peckham staff members volunteered at Fenner Nature Center, an environmental education center in Lansing. Service activities included invasive species removal, trail maintenance, trimming brush, and digging out young cottonwood trees. Volunteers removed 525 lbs. of material and trash and spread 1,500 square feet of mulch.

The 2022 regional Russ Mawby Signature Service Projects not only allowed for multiple service projects to occur throughout the state, but they also brought AmeriCorps members and volunteers together to bond over a love of service and highlighted the power of AmeriCorps programs in action.