



## **Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service**

On Monday, January 16<sup>th</sup>, the [Corporation for National and Community Service](#) (CNCS) led [MLK Day 2017](#), a national day of service dedicated to honoring the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Taking place each year on the third Monday in January, the MLK Day of Service is the only federal holiday observed as a national day of service – a "day on, not a day off." This day calls for Americans from all walks of life to work together to provide solutions to our most pressing national problems, by empowering individuals, strengthening communities, bridging barriers, and creating solutions.

As [Volunteer Tennessee](#) highlights the MLK Day service projects that AmeriCorps programs and their members contributed to, you can join the conversation on social media by using #MLKDay and #AmeriCorpsWorks.

How did AmeriCorps programs in Tennessee serve local communities for this national day of service?

- In Memphis, [BRIDGES USA, Inc.](#) youth enrolled in [Bridge Builders](#) served at the Carnes Garden community cleanup, picking up litter, and prepping new walkways and garden sites.
- [City Year Memphis](#) AmeriCorps members led projects at two of their partner schools. At Westside Achievement Middle School, members served with students to create a "Paving the Way" program that celebrates historic civil rights leaders. They also improved the school campus by painting murals in the cafeteria that featured inspirational quotes, school values and silhouettes of students graduating from high school.



*Photo courtesy of the BRIDGES, USA*

At Brownsville Road Elementary school, AmeriCorps members built picnic tables for an outdoor classroom, where AmeriCorps members can tutor their students and teachers can lead their classes. Additional beautification projects for the area included landscaping and adding a mural. AmeriCorps members and staff also participated in the MLK service day at the National Civil Rights Museum at the Lorraine Motel. Activities for the day focused on social justice, community service, and celebrating the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. You can read more about the City Year's commitment to MLK Day on this recent [blog post](#).

- [Teach For America - Nashville](#) supported Tennessee State University's "MLK HBCU Spread the Service" initiative, a CNCS-funded regional campaign to engage students, faculty, staff from historically black colleges and universities and community members in service activities across the South. On Saturday, January 21, more than 300 TSU students and volunteers participated in various projects around Nashville. Read more about this project [here](#).



- In East Tennessee, [CAC AmeriCorps](#), [Emerald Youth Foundation](#) and a VISTA member with the [United Way of Greater Knoxville](#) spent a Saturday volunteering at Lonsdale Elementary School working on a variety of beautification projects. Projects included community cleanup with several litter street teams, landscaping work around the school, and organizing some outdoor and indoor storage spaces.



*Photos courtesy of the CAC AmeriCorps*

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[Volunteer Tennessee](#) is a 25 member bipartisan board appointed by the Governor to encourage volunteerism and community service. Volunteer Tennessee pursues its mission through administration of AmeriCorps grants, training and collaborations and coalitions with public and private organizations interested in volunteerism and service. Connect with us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

AmeriCorps is a program of the [Corporation for National and Community Service](#) (CNCS), a federal agency that engages more than 5 million Americans in service through its AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, Social Innovation Fund, and Volunteer Generation Fund programs, and leads the President's national call to service initiative, United We Serve.