



## **Ohio Association of Foodbanks**

*Community Services Report: July 2018*





Total Members Currently Serving: **36**

Members Working on Capacity Building: **36**

Members Working on Food Security: **13**

Members Working on Financial Literacy/Career Development: **7**

ShareCorps members are part of the AmeriCorps VISTA program. They work on indirect, capacity building initiatives like improving technology at food pantries, developing resources, and coordinating volunteers. They serve full-time for year-long service terms.

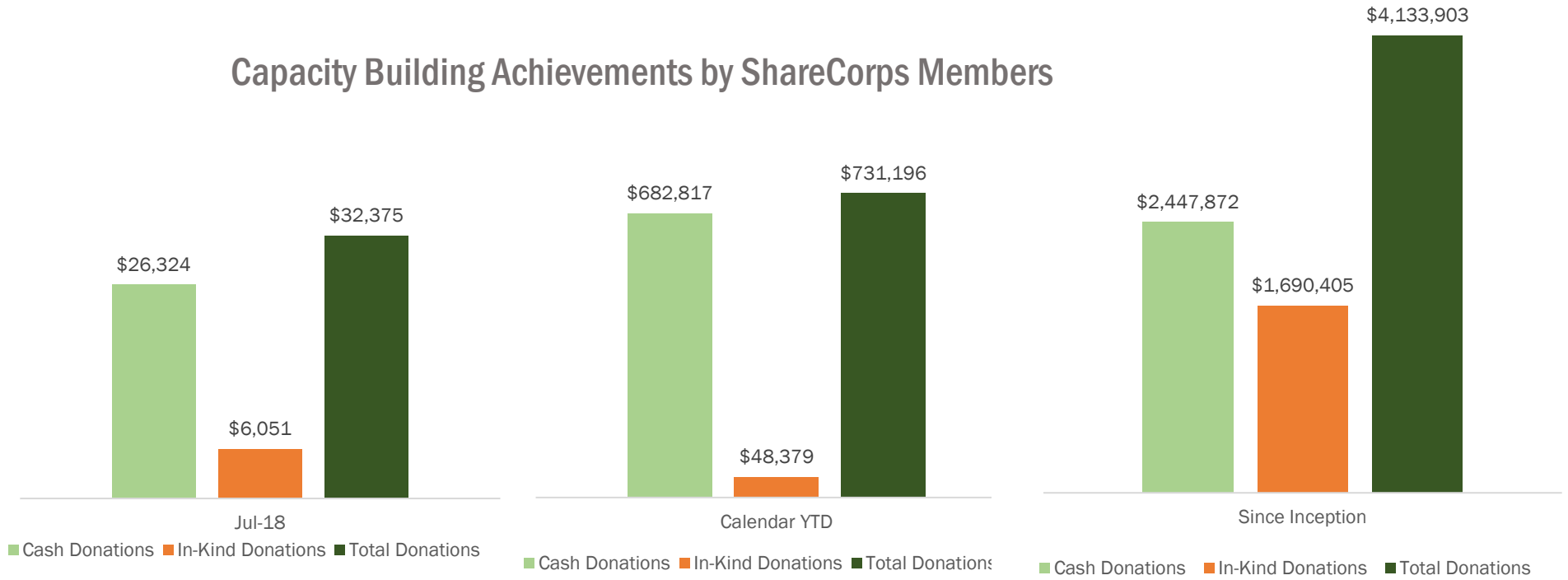
“I began a project called PantryTrak “Closing the Gap.” The project plan’s goal was to address the last remaining 27 agencies who are not on PantryTrak. I conducted a Google survey to identify why they were not using PantryTrak and what we could do as a Food Bank to help them. The similar responses from the surveys were that agencies could not afford the equipment to run PantryTrak, laptops and the internet. With the results from the survey and the data possibilities from PantryTrak, I was able to put together a project to plan to show why capturing data in PantryTrak is essential to the growth of Second Harvest as an organization. From the project plan, our CEO was able to make a pitch to a local foundation who released \$25,000 for data development and PantryTrak. This was a major accomplishment for Second Harvest and me as an AmeriCorps VISTA.”

*Comments from AmeriCorps VISTA member Brittney Hopkins (Second Harvest Foodbank of North Central Ohio)*

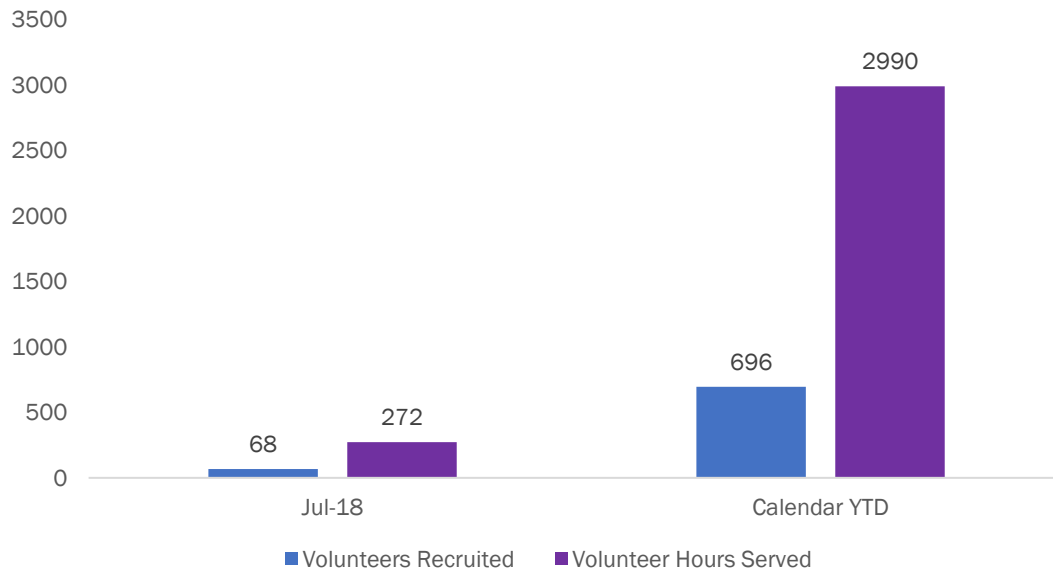
“I spent this month researching and meeting with professionals in the community. I am researching ways to build an effect reentry and after care program for the Vineyard Community Center that serves those recovering from opioid addiction. The organization already hosts recovery-centered support groups and has a health clinic that serves anyone in the community in need of healthcare resources but unable to go to a traditional doctor. We are considering certifying at least one of the physicians in the health clinic to prescribe buprenorphine. Buprenorphine is commonly known as Suboxone and helps prevent cravings and withdrawal so that those who take the medication do not feel the need to use heroin or prescription pills to feed their disease. We are also creating a community resource map and database that will help those in the program navigate through the needed services while they are in recovery. I have finished the rough draft of the community resource map. It gives a visual aid to the database of organizations that allows for those who use the map to see where services are located.

*AmeriCorps VISTA member Devan Smith (Vineyard Community Center)*

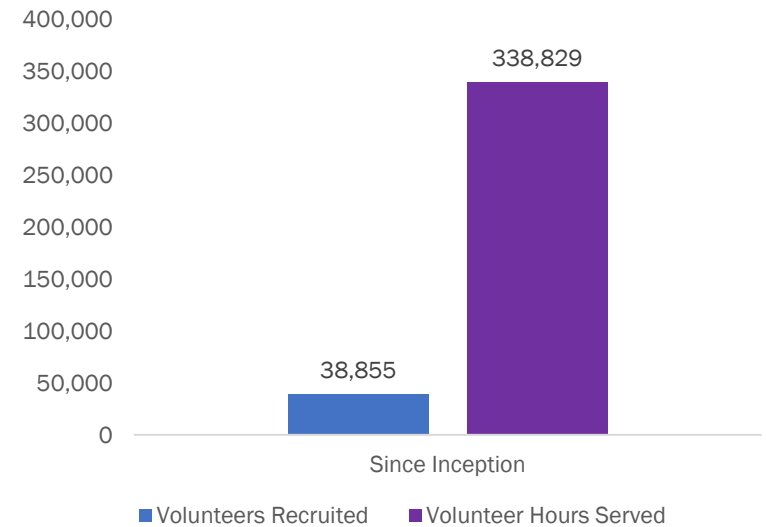
## Capacity Building Achievements by ShareCorps Members



## Volunteer Mobilization - Current Program Year



## Volunteer Mobilization - Since Inception





### **ShareCorps Member Highlight: Daniel Conklin, SON Ministries**

Daniel has served 9 months of his year-long service term in the focus area of Healthy Futures at Serving Our Neighbors (SON) Ministries. The organization serves to overcome suburban poverty one child, one family at a time through resources and education, therefore, by a hands-up instead of a hand-out. Daniel has been brought on to help implement and grow SON Ministries' existing Children's Entrepreneurial Programming.

During his service, Daniel has researched other organizations that help youth explore their potential through entrepreneurship for new ideas and perspectives, as well as researching different types of project management planning software. He made a contact with the office of Ohio Senator Stephanie Kunze and secured her attendance at one of the entrepreneurial children's restaurants to recognize the 100,000<sup>th</sup> lunch served at SON Ministries Summer Lunch Camp. He has also balanced this service work with participation in VISTA Blend courses in Volunteer Mobilization and Resource Development, which have benefited him in the short-term in his work with SON Ministries and in the long-term in his personal and professional development.

Daniel shared that he is "thankful for all the connections I have made in central Ohio and the sacrifice of not having much money to live on has been worth it. Helping children in poverty has been so fulfilling and I feel like I have served my country with honor."

## ShareCorps Member Highlight: Marisa Perez Searle, Homeport

Marisa has spent her service focused on several revitalization efforts in the Milo-Grogan neighborhood of Columbus. She has served as one of the main coordinators for a commercial repair grant program to help local businesses make exterior improvements to their buildings, as well as for a homeowner's repair program which helps local homeowners make repairs to their homes. Currently she is canvassing the neighborhood with a survey to assess perception and contribute to future strategies.

She's proud to have worked to earn the trust of neighborhood residents, building relationships with community leaders.

Marisa believes in the value of spending time in the community listening to people to better serve the community – by doing so, she feels she has made a lasting contribution to her community and host site. When her service term is over, she hopes to complete another year of VISTA, gaining additional professional experience. She would like to eventually pursue a graduate degree in city planning and feels that gaining more experience before making that life change will be invaluable.





## ShareCorps Member Highlight: Jennifer Green, The University Church Garden

Jennifer serves as a coordinator for volunteers and for the community garden affiliated with The University Church in Toledo. During her service, she has created an administrative foundation and structure for programs, allowing TUC to communicate more effectively with community gardeners and volunteers.

The director at her host site left the organization about six months into her service year, which led to some need for adjustment as new leadership entered. Jennifer shared that she learned to adapt and was grateful to be part of an effective team which hosted several wonderful and successful events, including a fundraiser that raised over \$30,000!

Following her service year, Jennifer plans to pursue a Master's of Library Science. She said her experience as an AmeriCorps VISTA member was "a joy to be able to help people that face the struggle [of living in poverty], and to try to point them toward available resources." She highly recommends national service as an opportunity to work for organizations that truly have a higher purpose. She'll take with her the lesson that encouraging a true team spirit in the workplace translates into success and a place where everyone enjoys coming to work.