

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

Marc S. Miller for the degree of Master of Science in
Human Development and Family Studies presented on February 5, 1998
Title: An Evaluation of Oregon Youth Conservation Corps 1996 Summer Programs

Redacted for Privacy

Abstract approved: _____

Clara C. Pratt (Major Professor)

Redacted for Privacy

Patricia Moran (Major Professor)

The Oregon Youth Conservation Corps (OYCC) is a youth work program created by the Oregon Legislature in 1987. The OYCC provides both summer and year-round employment programs primarily for disadvantaged and at-risk youth. The legislatively defined purpose of the OYCC is to protect, conserve, and improve the natural, historical, and cultural resources of the state, and to increase the education, training, and employment opportunities for participating youth. In addition, youth are given the opportunity to improve work skills and work-related social skills, develop the work ethic, and increase employability. The OYCC's impact on Oregon's resources, such as the improvements made to parks and the enhancement of public recreation areas, has been well documented. What has not been methodically studied are the outcomes of OYCC participation on youths' work skills, social skills, employability, and educational goals.

This study examined participant outcomes for 400 of the over 600 youth enrolled in OYCC 1996 summer programs. Summer programs operate in nearly all of Oregon's 36 counties, and programs vary in length from 5 weeks to 10 weeks duration. Crew sizes vary from 4 to 10 participants, and are led by an adult crew leader. Pretest surveys were completed by participants and crew leaders at the beginning of each program. Participants and crew leaders completed posttest surveys again at the end of each program. Retrospective (post-then pre) pretests were also used.

Measures were adopted from a Colorado State University evaluation of Youth Conservation Corps (Johnson, Driver, Ross, & Shikiar, 1982) These measures assessed changes in work skills, work-related social skills, educational goals, and potential for future employability. Data were analyzed to determine if outcomes of OYCC participation varied by program length, residential status, or participants' risk status. Investigator-designed measures were used to obtain demographic data.

Both the traditional pretest-post test and the retrospective pretest methodologies revealed significant increases in participants' work competence and skills, work attitudes and behaviors, and comfort with diversity among co-workers. Increases were most significant among higher risk youth. Residential programs were particularly effective. Suggestions for future evaluation development and implementation are made.

An Evaluation of Oregon Youth Conservation Corps 1996 Summer Programs

by

Marc S. Miller

A THESIS

submitted to

Oregon State University

**in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the
degree of**

Master of Science

**Completed February 5, 1998
Commencement June 1998**

Master of Science: thesis of Marc S. Miller presented on February 5, 1998

APPROVED:

Redacted for Privacy

Co-Major Professor, representing Human Development and Family Studies

Redacted for Privacy

Co-Major Professor, representing Human Development and Family Studies

Redacted for Privacy

Head of Department of Human Development and Family Sciences

Redacted for Privacy

Dean of Graduate School

I understand that my thesis will become a part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University Libraries. My signature below authorizes release of my thesis to any reader upon request.

Redacted for Privacy

Marc S. Miller, Author

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the friends, relatives, and faculty who offered me support and guidance throughout my graduate program.

My Co-Major Professors Clara Pratt and Pat Moran provided me with significant guidance and support at various times in my graduate career, and especially so when it came to my thesis. For your patience, concern, and kind understanding I will always be grateful. I would also like to thank my committee members, Alan Sugawara, Susan Prows, and Lizbeth Gray for their support and contributions to my graduate school experience. Thanks as well to Joanne Sorte and the staffs of the Child Development Center and Family Study Center for providing valuable moral support.

Thank you to my brothers, Scott, Gary, and Matt, as well as my sisters, Lori and Kim. You all believe in me as I believe in you.

Thank you, Alison. Your love and support made all the difference during the year leading up to the completion of this thesis. I know that the years we spend together beyond this one will prove to be everything we have dreamed of.

Finally, I would like to dedicate this thesis to my parents, Stuart and Jayne Miller. Your influence and guidance throughout my life has helped me become the person I am. Your love and support has helped me achieve one of my life's goals. Sharing this accomplishment with you will always remain as one of the most cherished experiences of my life. Thank you, Mom and Dad, for always being there for me.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter		
I	INTRODUCTION	1
	History of the Youth Corps	1
	Youth Corps Participants	4
	Focus on Skills and Education	5
	The Oregon Youth Conservation Corps	6
	Purpose of This Study	6
II	REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	7
	Introduction	7
	Economic Value Studies	7
	Outcome Studies	8
	Outcomes related to Oregon Youth and Program Characteristics	11
	Summary	13
III	METHODS	14
	Overview	14
	Procedures	14
	Evaluation Instruments	15
	Evaluation Design Including Research Questions	20
IV	DATA ANALYSIS	21
	Description of Sample	21
	Risk Characteristics	23
	Participant Outcomes by Time (pretest-post test)	25
	Participant Outcomes: The Impact of Program Variability and Risk	28
	Participant Outcomes: Correlation Analyses	33
V	DISCUSSION OF RESULTS	38
	Summary and Conclusions	38
	Evaluation and Program Recommendations	44

TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONTINUED)

BIBLIOGRAPHY	47
APPENDICES	49
Appendix A	
Forms Detailing the Evaluation and Instructions for Administering Surveys	50
Appendix B	
Surveys Used in the Evaluation	56
Appendix C	
Members of the OYCC Advisory Group	74
Appendix D	
Individual Items Used to Create Survey Scales	76
Appendix E	
Participant Consent Form	79

LIST OF TABLES

<u>Table</u>	<u>Page</u>
1. Characteristics of Summer 1996 Oregon Youth Conservation Corps Participants	22
2. Characteristics of Summer 1996 Program Participation	23
3. Mean Number of Risk Factors and Percentage of OYCC Participants Experiencing Risk Factors	24
4. Percentage of Participants Experiencing Personal, Peer, or Neighborhood Risk Factors	25
5. Means (Standard Deviations), Alpha Levels, and Paired-T Values for Crew Leaders' Pre-Post Assessments of Crew Members' Abilities, and Crew Leader Retrospective Pretest Scores	27
6. Means (Standard Deviations), Alpha Levels, and Paired-T Values for Participants' Pre-Post Assessments of Work Abilities	28
7. General Linear Models Procedure Means, Standard Deviations, and F-Values for Participants' Retrospective Assessments of Changes in Work Behaviors by Risk, Residential Status, and Program Length	29
8. General Linear Models Procedure Means, Standard Deviations, and F-Values for Crew Leaders' Retrospective Assessments of Changes in Work Behaviors by Risk, Residential Status, and Program Length	30
9. General Linear Models Procedure Means, Standard Deviations, and F-Values for Crew Leaders' Traditional Pre-Post Change Scores by Risk, Residential Status, and Program Length	32
10. Correlation of Participant Change Scores Based on Retrospective Pretest and Traditional Pretest-Post Test	34

LIST OF TABLES (CONTINUED)

- | | |
|---|----|
| 11. Correlation of Crew Leader Change Scores Based on Retrospective
Pretest and Traditional Pretest-Post Test | 35 |
| 12. Correlation of Change Scores on Traditional Scales and
Retrospective Scales for Crew Leaders and
Participants | 36 |

AN EVALUATION OF OREGON YOUTH CONSERVATION CORPS 1996 SUMMER PROGRAMS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Youth conservation and service corps programs are referred to collectively as youth corps. Youth corps programs engage young people, generally 16 to 24 years old, in paid, productive work projects that serve to benefit both the youth and their communities (National Association of Service and Conservation Corps [NASCC], 1995). Specifically, youth corps programs seek to increase employability by increasing participant's work skills, education, and job training. Youth corps programs also seek to preserve public properties, staff public services, or serve communities in other constructive ways.

History of the Youth Corps

Today more than 100 Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) and youth service corps nationwide can track their origins back to the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) of the 1930's. Nevertheless, the CCC was disbanded in 1942 after seeing 6 million young men pass through its ranks. The concept of the CCC lived on in the United States and was revived in 1957 as the Student Conservation Association or SCA (NASCC, 1995). The model provided by the SCA led to formal legislation that created the Youth Conservation Corps in the late 1960's. Reaching it's height in the 1970's, the YCC was funded at \$60 million annually and admitted 32,000 youth

each summer in both state-sponsored and Department of Interior and Agriculture-sponsored programs (NASCC, 1995).

Late in the 1970's, an ambitious federal program was launched that provided young people with year-round conservation-related employment and education opportunities. Called the Young Adult Conservation Corps (YACC), this program operated at both the federal and state levels with an annual budget of \$260 million (NASCC, 1996). By the early 1980's, however, federal budget cuts ended almost all funding for YCC and YACC programs.

State Conservation Corps. Despite the virtual eradication of both YCC and YACC programs following deep federal budget reductions in 1981, the value of youth conservation corps programs had been proven. States, led by the establishment of the California Conservation Corps (CCC) in 1975, began to launch YCC programs throughout the 1980's (NASCC, 1995). State sponsorship of YCC programs in the 1980's heralded the emergence of a new youth corps movement that lead to the establishment of local youth conservation corps programs in almost all states.

Urban Conservation and Service Corps. In 1983 California expanded the traditionally rural focus of conservation corps programs when it began an urban conservation corps program in San Francisco and nearby Oakland and Marin County. Seven more urban programs were established in California in ensuing years (NASCC, 1995). New York City followed by establishing the City Volunteer corps

in 1984. In addition to conservation work, this program enlisted youth in the provision of human services (NASCC, 1995). Despite the paucity of federal support, state and local corps continued to be established throughout the 1980's.

As the 1980's ended, a new brand of YCC became a reality. In partnership with several large corporations, Public/Private Ventures (P/PV) and the NASCC established and evaluated outcomes of urban youth corps programs in ten cities across the U.S. The first of these Urban Corps Expansion Project (UCEP) programs was established in 1990. For the first time, YCC programs were operated within a prescribed program model (NASCC, 1995).

Youth Conservation Corps Now. The decade of the 1990's heralded further important developments to YCC programs. The federal American Conservation and Youth Service Corps Act, included as a subtitle of the National and Community Service Act (NCSA) of 1990, appropriated the first federal funding for YCC programs in more than ten years. Youth corps program grants were awarded in 23 states by the Commission on National and Community Service. While the \$22.5 million in funding did not benefit every established YCC program directly, the number of YCC programs nearly doubled to over 100 programs as a result of these new federal dollars (NASCC, 1995).

President Clinton signed the 1993 National and Community Service Trust Act, expanding federal support for state and local YCC and service programs. This act also launched post-service educational benefits for participants in the AmeriCorps program. The AmeriCorps' first year witnessed 50 youth corps successfully contend

for grants made available through direct national applications and statewide population-based processes (NASCC, 1995).

In 1995, 120 YCC programs, most operated locally, were active in 38 states and the District of Columbia. Annually, over 26,000 youth participated, including nearly 2,500 AmeriCorps participants (NASCC, 1995). Many corps are in action year-round, while others are in operation only during the summer months. In addition to federal block grants to states for job training and community development, money for youth corps operations comes from several sources including state and county fund appropriations and grants from foundations and corporations.

Youth Corps Participants

Participants in youth corps programs come from various backgrounds. Typically between the ages of 16 and 25, many of these youth are considered at-risk because of family problems, low income, school failure, and juvenile delinquency, or other problems. Upon finding out about YCC programs through advertisements, job searches, or referral from schools, youth apply to programs that typically run from 4 to 12 weeks. Prerequisites for joining the most YCC programs are a desire to work outdoors and a generally good physical condition (Northwest Youth Corps [NYC], 1997). Applicants are hired regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or disability (NYC, 1997).

Participants in YCC programs normally work in crews of 8 to 12 led by a paid adult crew leader. Crew leaders serve as guides, teachers, and models of

appropriate behavior. Crew leaders supervise YCC participants in a wide variety of projects. In addition to traditional conservation corps projects conducted in parks and wilderness areas, corpsmembers renovate housing, restore historic and cultural landmarks, and assist in human service agencies. Projects may be rural or urban. All youth corps programs aim to meet community needs without displacing established labor services. While serving as important resources to communities, most corpsmembers receive at least minimum wage for their work.

Focus on Skills and Education

The promotion and development of both work and social skills is a hallmark of youth corps programs. Youth increase their employability by learning new work skills on the job. Of equal importance are the social skills that corpsmembers may acquire. Teamwork, responsibility, tolerance, respect, leadership, and self-control are examples of the social skills YCC programs seek to develop in participants.

Because basic education is related to employability (Johnson & Troppe, 1992), youth corps programs are committed to improving the basic education skills of crewmembers. Many corps programs interface with local high schools and colleges, and allow corpsmembers to earn academic credit. Education skills that assist participants to complete school and prepare for future employment are stressed. In addition to General Education Diploma (GED) and college courses, many corps also offer classes on essential life skills such as budgeting, health, and parenting (NASCC, 1995). Education scholarships and cash bonuses based on completion of service are available in some YCC programs.

The Oregon Youth Conservation Corps

The Oregon Legislature created the Oregon Youth Conservation Corps (OYCC) in 1987. The OYCC's defined purpose is to provide a work program primarily for disadvantaged and at-risk youth in order accomplish the following: (1) Perform conservation work that meets community needs in a cost-effective manner; (2) Assist efforts to protect, conserve, rehabilitate, and improve the natural, historical, and cultural resources of Oregon, and; (3) Increase the educational, training, and employment opportunities for youth as a means to improve work skills, instill the work ethic, and increase employability (OYCC, 1997). Thus, like other YCC programs, OYCC programs are meant to offer a mutual benefit: communities tackle important conservation efforts, and youth acquire valuable skills.

Purpose of This Study

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the participant outcomes of youth who participated in summer 1996 OYCC programs. Of interest are the impact of program participation on youth's work skills, attitudes, and behaviors. Investigation of participants' risk status in relation to program outcomes is included. The relationships of outcomes to program characteristics such as residential status and program length are also considered. Evaluation and program recommendations are made and suggestions for future youth corps evaluations are offered.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Since the inception of the first youth corps program in 1971, several evaluations and reports have been published that focus on youth corps programs. These can be divided into two broad categories: (1) studies that examine the economic values of YCC work; and, (2) studies that examine participants' characteristics and outcomes of YCC involvement.

Economic Value Studies

Two primary studies have examined the amount and value of YCC work. Public/Private Ventures (P/PV, 1985) focused on the dollar value assessment of the work performed by the California Conservation Corps (CCC) over the period 1983 to 1985. The P/PV assessment utilized seven methods for determining work value, and reported the results of five studies. Despite variations and limitations in each of the five studies discussed, P/PV concluded that, taken together, the studies demonstrated that the CCC produced work of significant economic value regardless of the means used to measure output.

A second study, conducted by Branch, Leiderman, and Smith (1987), comprehensively examined nine YCC programs from across the U.S. over the period 1984 to 1987. In addition to several non-economic measures, this study included cost-benefit analyses, work volume appraisals, and economic benefit

appraisals. Utilizing data gathered through a variety of quantitative and qualitative methodologies, these researchers concluded that the YCC programs examined produced a significant amount of quality work. In addition, this study found YCC programs to be successful in (1) meeting productivity and cost-benefit goals; (2) increasing the potential for human service work to meet community needs; and, (3) producing favorable income effects for poor youth. Finally, with respect to poor youth, Branch et al.(1987) reported:

Poor youth, who represent roughly half the CCC enrollees, experience significant post program earnings benefits that show no evidence of decaying by the end of the first post program year. JTPA [Job Training partnership Act] youth earned \$678 more in the first 12 months after leaving the CCC than they would have otherwise (p. 10)

Thus, these studies supported the economic success of YCC programs. Specifically, enrolled youth engaged in valuable conservation efforts in a cost-effective manner, and achieved increased employability.

Outcome Studies

The second group of studies have focused primarily on youth characteristics and non-economic outcomes of YCC participation. One survey of youth entering the CCC between 1983 and 1984 sought to determine if disadvantaged youth actually enroll in untargeted programs (Lah, Leideman, & Wolf, 1985). That is, did disadvantaged youth enroll in programs (such as the CCC) which were not specifically reserved for disadvantaged youth? To determine disadvantaged or at-risk status, measures of educational attainment, employment experience, and economic status were gathered. Comparing CCC participants to the general population of

youth in California, the study concluded that, despite being an untargeted program, the CCC served significant numbers of economically and educationally challenged youth. In fact, Lah et al. reported that seventy percent of incoming CCC participants were JTPA-eligible or they lacked an educational degree of any kind.

A second study, published by Public/Private Ventures (1987), reported on the short-term impacts CCC participation had on enrollees. Following a sample of over 900 former participants for one year after enrollment, the study focused on the effects of participation on attitudes and behaviors such as tolerance and concern for the environment. A comparison group of over 1000 youth were also followed for one year. By comparing participants' post-program labor market experiences to those of the comparison group, Public/Private Ventures formulated an impact analysis to describe the economic and non-economic effects of having been with the CCC. P/PV reported that, "It [CCC participation] significantly improves the post-program income of its economically disadvantaged participants and improves certain attitudes and behaviors that are part of the constellation of values central to effective citizenship" (p. 8).

Johnson, Driver, Ross, and Shikiar (1982) sought to identify the benefits of youth corps participation by focusing on attitudinal, behavioral, and knowledge outcomes following YCC participation. The researchers compared selected attitudes and behaviors of youth corps enrollees for the year 1979 to unsuccessful applicants and to applicants who were accepted but did not attend. The three groups were a) accepted and enrolled (experiment group); b) not accepted (comparison group 1);

and, c) accepted but did not participate (comparison group 2). Questionnaires were mailed to the experiment and comparison groups at six months following the end of the 1979 enrollment period. The total sample was comprised of 621 enrollees (experiment group), 295 unsuccessful applicants (comparison group 1), and 200 nonattendees (comparison group 2). Results indicated that youth corps participants reported higher statistically significant mean scores on 9 of 36 benefit scales (factors), including work efficiency, ability to find jobs, tool skills and safety, acceptance of other races, and interest in environmental problems.

Ross and Driver (1986), in a 26 month follow-up of youth corps enrollees from the 1979 enrollment period, assessed possible long-term benefits of youth corps participation. Questionnaires were mailed to a group of former enrollees (N=1349) and a group of unsuccessful (not accepted for participation) applicants (N=510). These questionnaires contained the same 36 perceived benefit scales used earlier by Johnson et al. (1982). Results indicated that 26 months after their YCC experience, former youth corps participants significantly benefited in the areas of tool skills and safety, ability to work with others, interest in environmental problems, and understanding of conservation. While differences in the benefits after 26 months were generally small, the researchers concluded that, "The program benefits the enrollees more than minimally given that the program lasts only 4-8 weeks, and that the benefits were measured 26 months after participation. . . ." (p. 22). Thus, at both 6 and 26 months following participation in youth corps programs, former YCC

enrollees possessed important work skills and behaviors that increased employability.

These outcome studies demonstrate that youth corps programs serve a number of at-risk youth, and that the outcomes that result from participation include improvements in income, attitudes, behaviors, and work skills. Such outcomes reflect the OYCC goal (cited earlier) of providing an at-risk youth work program to increase educational, training, and employment opportunities for improving work skills, instilling the work ethic, and increasing employability among participating youth.

Outcomes Related to Oregon Youth and Program Characteristics

No evaluation has examined how outcomes might vary by participants' risk status. Further, no earlier evaluation has examined program characteristics such as length or residence in relationship to outcomes. In this evaluation of the OYCC, the variables of risk, program residence, and program length receive significant attention.

Risk. The Oregon legislature mandates that 75% of OYCC participants be at-risk. Thus risk is a key to program planners and administrators. It raises the question of whether differential outcomes are found among participants with differing risk levels. Given that youth corps programs represent favorable models for bettering the life chances of youth, in particular disadvantaged and at-risk youth (Jastrzab, Blomquist, Masker & Orr, 1997), an investigation of the role risk may play in affecting outcomes is important.

Residence. Residence vs. non-residence are program configurations that are related to the intensity of program participation or “program dose”. Participants in residential programs will obviously experience greater levels of interaction with peers and crew leaders. This in turn may affect participant outcomes and the staying power of program effects (Jastrzab et al., 1997).

Length. Program length is important because, like residential status, it is also related to the intensity of the service experience. Program length also affects the opportunities youth have to interact with peers outside of their existing social circles. Because participants work together in teams, close relationships commonly develop. Such relationships may foster the development of self-confidence; the attendant peer pressure to be a “team member” may also positively affect work skills such as commitment, punctuality, and the ability to follow through on tasks (Jastrzab, et al., 1997).

Taken together, risk, residence, and program length are potentially salient variables that may affect participant outcomes. Among Oregon participants and programs there was considerable variation in risk, residence and program length across OYCC crews. For example, 48% of participants had 2 or more risk factors; 43% of participants were in residential programs; and, program lengths ranged from 5 to 10 weeks. These variations made it possible to examine how outcomes varied by risk, residential status, and length.

Summary

It is apparent that youth corps participation can benefit youth economically and educationally. Earlier evaluations indicated that program benefits appear to “stay with” former enrollees for a significant amount of time following youth corps participation. This evaluation built upon this previous research by examining the impact that summer 1996 OYCC participation had upon participants’ work skills, behaviors, and attitudes during the program period. This study also examined how outcomes varied by participant risk status, program residence status, and length of program. In addition, this study examined relationships between participants’ and crew leaders’ perceptions. Finally, this study examined the utility of assessing outcomes through both traditional pre-post methodology and the retrospective pretest (post-then pre) methodology.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

Overview

This evaluation was funded by the Oregon Commission on Children and Families (OCCF) in order to assess the outcomes of the statewide OYCC program. The evaluation assessed key outcomes for OYCC summer 1996 participants throughout Oregon's 36 counties. These outcomes were examined by selected program and participant characteristics. The participants, evaluation instruments, evaluation design, and research questions and analyses are discussed in the sections that follow.

Procedures

Crew leaders, prior to the start of the summer programs, attended one of four OYCC trainings. These trainings included a 30-40 minute orientation to the statewide evaluation; this orientation was provided by OSU evaluation staff member, Marc Miller. Over 80% of the 80 OYCC crew leaders attended the trainings. Each crew leader was given the forms (Appendix A) and surveys (Appendix B) to complete the pretest phase of the evaluation. One form explained the purpose of the evaluation and provided instructions for administering the participant pretest; a second form provided step-by-step instructions for completing the crew leader pretest assessment of participants. Non-attendees were contacted and oriented by

phone; orientation materials and surveys were mailed directly to these crew leaders following their orientation.

During orientation, crew leaders were instructed to administer the participant pretests during the first day of work with their crew. Because it was important that crew leaders be familiar with crew members before completing their initial assessment of the crew members' skills and work behavior, crew leaders were instructed to complete their initial assessment (pretest) during the second full week of work with their crew.

At the end of the orientation, crew leaders were encouraged to ask questions, and were reminded to contact the OSU evaluator by phone if any concerns arose. Throughout the summer, follow-up contacts were made by telephone to crew leaders and program supervisors. These calls were intended to increase compliance with data collection and to gather data on program length, crew size, attrition, and preferred mailing addresses for receipt of post test surveys.

Evaluation Instruments

Four surveys were developed for this evaluation. These surveys included participant pretests and post tests and crew leader pretests and post tests.

Identification (ID) numbers were included on each survey; these ID numbers included the participants' initials and birth date. ID numbers were used to match pre-post and participant-crew leader assessments for each participant. The participant post test paralleled the pretest survey with the addition 11 items to assess self-perceived changes in skills over the summer. These items comprised the

retrospective pretest (see discussion below). Demographic items were omitted on the post tests.

The participant pretest gathered demographic data and included 56 questions assessing work skills, work behavior, social skills, and other outcomes (Appendix B). These questions were adapted from an instrument used by Johnson et al. (1982) in their long-term outcome study of YCC participants (cited earlier). The crew leader pretest assessment of OYCC participants, and the corresponding post tests (participant and crew leader) were also adapted from the instrument used by Johnson et al (1982). The original instrument contained 36 benefit scales (factors) and 110 total items. The alpha values for each factor were calculated in 1979 and again in 1981. The alpha values for the 36 factors ranged from 0.51 to 0.84, with the majority over 0.70.

For the surveys used in the 1996 OYCC evaluation, survey development was conducted in consultation with the OYCC evaluation advisory group (Appendix C). The researchers and advisory group members selected items from this original instrument that most clearly addressed OYCC goals. This process resulted in 16 factors (56 items) being adapted from the Johnson et al. (1982) instrument for the participant pretest. The development of the participant post test and the crew leader pretest and post test was based upon these same 56 items.

For crew leader versions of the surveys, items from the participant pretest which required subjective self-awareness (e.g., I can be counted on) were omitted. The result was a 40-item crew leader pretest.

Factor analysis of the crew leader and participant pretests was used to create scales. The crew leader pretest was found to contain three scales that measured work related attributes: Work Competence (17 items including finishing projects, being organized, being dependable, following through); Positive Work Behavior (12 items including being helpful to others, being responsible for own actions, working in all weather conditions, behaving appropriately in public); and Comfort With Diversity (3 items including accepting other races, working with persons different from self, and speaking comfortably with adults). Each scale exceeded minimum standards for an internally consistent scale. Specifically, the alphas were: Work Competence 0.95; Positive Work Behavior 0.92; and Comfort With Diversity 0.69.

Factor analysis revealed that the participant pretest contained two scales measuring work-related attributes: Work Self-Perception (10 items including doing well will help me succeed, I don't mind working hard to achieve a goal, I am a good worker); and, Work Commitment (8 items including finishing on time, I usually finish what I start, I don't waste time). A third scale, Total Work Identity (18 items), was created by combining these two scales. Cronbach's alpha levels for each scale exceeded minimum standards for an internally consistent scale. Specifically, the alphas were: Work Self-Perception 0.84; Work Commitment 0.83; and Total Work Identity 0.90. Individual items on each of the above scales are listed in Appendix D. The items used to construct the various scales possess obvious face validity. The relatively strong alpha coefficients obtained through factor analysis

further support these scales as valid measures of work-related behaviors, attitudes, and skills.

In addition to the items included on each pretest and post test survey, the participant and crew leader post tests contained the 11-item *retrospective pretest* that asked respondents to rate skills and behaviors both prior to and after OYCC participation (Appendix B). Retrospective pretests differ from traditional pretest-post test scales in that respondents have the opportunity to reflect and report on changes that may have occurred over the course of program participation. For example, participants and crew leaders retrospectively assessed the ability to “work hard” both before youth corps and after youth corps (response range: 1 = poor; 4 = excellent). Both Rockwell & Kohn (1989) and Howard & Dailey (1979) reported the retrospective approach to be a valid and reliable way to measure program impacts as it helps remove response-shift bias among respondents. Response shift bias with traditional pre-post testing occurs because participants do not have the same frame of reference for the post test as they had had with the pretest.

Post tests completed by crew leaders also included an 11-item risk factor scale (Appendix B). By the end of the programs, crew leaders were assumed to have enough knowledge about their crew members to objectively assess whether individuals faced any one of eleven different risk factors. Crew leaders were specifically asked to identify experiences in the crew members’ lives that put them at risk for dropping out of school, drug abuse or other life problems; specifically, crew leaders indicated whether or not they were aware of participant risk factors such as

family problems, low self-esteem, alcohol or drug problems, and gang affiliation. This description of risk experiences is consistent with the research that identifies risk factors as those characteristics, experiences, or processes that substantially increase the likelihood of poor outcomes (Dryfoos, 1990). Crew leaders were also given the choice to answer “Don’t Know” for any particular risk factor. If participants dropped out of their program early, or were dismissed, crew leaders were instructed to complete only the risk factor section and the identification portion of the post test.

In order to present findings related to risk factors in a way most understandable to policy makers, a decision was made to create categories that reflected the number of risk factors present. Four categories were created which reflected whether there were zero, one, two, or three or more risks present.

Single items assessed the impact of OYCC on work skills and future educational goals (participants’ post test items 68 and 69; crew leaders’ post test items 52 and 53). On a scale of 1 (not at all) to 5 (a huge amount), participants and crew leaders were asked to indicate the extent to which they believed the OYCC experience influenced their overall work skills and interest in future education and training. Finally, an informed consent document was distributed to and completed by all participants (Appendix E). The consent form clearly indicated that participation in the evaluation was voluntary, that responses would be kept confidential, and that individual names would not be used. Because this evaluation involved human subjects, evaluation materials were routed to the OSU Human Subjects Committee. Permission to proceed was subsequently granted by the Committee.

Evaluation Design Including Research Questions

This evaluation used a pretest-post test design. Participants and crew leaders were surveyed at the outset of program participation and again at the completion of the program. To answer the research questions, data were analyzed using the SAS statistics program. This series of analyses is described below, by research question.

Question 1: Did OYCC participation make a difference in participant factor scores (work skills, behaviors, and attitudes) by time (pretest and post test), risk status, program residence status, and length of program in weeks?

Analysis #1: Factor analysis of participant and crew leader pretests to identify scales and alpha levels.

Analysis #2: Paired t-tests of scale scores comparing time one to time two in order to test for significant differences by time.

Analysis #3: General linear models procedure to examine differences in participant factor scores by risk status, length of program, and residence status.

Question 2: What are the relationships among and between the traditional pretest-post test factor scores and the retrospective pretest change scores among and between the crew leaders and participants?

Analysis #4: Correlation analyses of the scale and retrospective scores for crew leaders and participants at time 1 and time 2.

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS

Description of Sample

The 1996 OYCC summer programs served over 600 youth (OYCC, 1997). With 600 participants as a reference, response rates for the pretests were as follows: 454 (76%) participant pretests were returned, and 420 (70%) crew leader pretests were returned. Post test response rates were lower. This decrease was due in part to attrition (7% of participants did not complete the summer program). Non-compliance among some programs in completing the post test surveys also decreased the response rates. Participants completed 379 (63%) post tests, and crew leaders completed 389 (65%) post tests. All completed surveys were coded and tracked by county and program. Data were entered into a computer for analysis with the SAS statistical package.

Demographic data were gathered only at the pretest. These data revealed that sixty-four percent of participants were male and 36% were female (Table 1). Twenty-four percent of participants were racial or ethnic minorities. The mean age of participants was 16.98 years. Only 14% reported grade point averages of 1.99 or less. Over 80% were still in high school; 88% lived with their parents or guardians.

Table 1
Characteristics of Summer 1996 Oregon Youth Conservation Corps Participants

<u>Characteristic</u>	<u>TOTAL</u> n = 453
Gender	
Male	64%
Female	36%
Race/Ethnicity	
Caucasian	76%
Afro-American	10%
Hispanic	09%
Native American	05%
Age	
Mean Age	16.98 years
15 or 16 years	45%
17 or 18 years	43%
Over 18 years	12%
Grade Point Average	
Less than 1.99	14%
2.00 to 2.99	43%
3.00 to 3.49	24%
Above 3.50	18%
Education	
9th or 10th Grade	46%
11th or 12th Grade	38%
High School Graduate	08%
Some Community College or College	08%
Living Situation	
With Parents or Guardian	88%
Independent	05%
Foster Parents	03%
No Regular Place	02%

Program participation characteristics were also examined (Table 2). Overall, 15% of participants were enrolled in a previous OYCC program, over one-third

participated in programs of 8 or more weeks duration, and 93% of the youth completed the 1996 program. Forty-three percent of programs were residential wherein participants spent their days and nights with the program; 57% of programs were non-residential.

Table 2
Characteristics of Summer 1996 Program Participation

<u>Characteristic</u>	<u>TOTAL</u> n = 454
Participation in Previous OYCC Program	15%
Program Length	
5 weeks	44%
6 or 7 Weeks	17%
8 or 9 Weeks	31%
10 Weeks	8%
Completion of Program	93%
Residence Status	
Residential	43%
Non-Residential	57%

Risk Characteristics

The legislation creating the OYCC specifies that 75% of participants will be at-risk or disadvantaged. During summer 1996 OYCC youth had an average of 1.5 risks identified by crew leaders (Table 3). Overall, 65% of participants were identified by crew leaders as having one or more risks in their lives. Nearly half (48%) of the participants were at very high risk with two or more risks in their lives. Youth who experience two or more risk factors are significantly more likely to

drop out of school, commit juvenile crimes, and experience other poor outcomes (Dryfoos, 1990).

Table 3
Mean Number of Risk Factors and Percentage of OYCC Participants Experiencing Risk Factors

<u>Characteristic</u>	<u>TOTAL</u> n = 385
Risk Factors	
Mean Number of Risk Factors	1.50
No Risk Factors	34%
One Risk	18%
Two Risks	15%
Three Risks	11%
Four or More Risks	22%

Risk factors among participants fell into the following three categories: personal, peer, and neighborhood risk factors (Table 4). The most commonly identified risk factors were personal; about 60% of OYCC participants experienced at least one personal risk, including family problems, low self-esteem, and school failure. The most common personal risk factors were family problems and low self-esteem. Peer risks were identified among over one-quarter of the OYCC participants; the most common peer risk was a history of juvenile offenses (19% of participants). Neighborhood risks (living in a deprived and/or high crime area) were experienced by 14% of the participants.

Table 4
Percentage of Participants Experiencing Personal, Peer, or
Neighborhood Risk Factors

<u>Risk Factors</u>	<u>TOTAL</u> n = 388
Personal Risk Factors:	
No Personal Risk Factors	42%
One Personal Risk Factor	19%
Two Personal Risk Factors	17%
Three or More Personal Risk Factors	22%
Family Problems	40%
Low Self-Esteem	32%
School Failure	26%
Social Isolation	22%
Learning Disabilities	13%
Peer Risk Factors:	
No Peer Risk Factors	72%
One Peer Risk Factor	15%
Two Peer Risk Factors	11%
Three Peer Risk Factors	02%
Juvenile Offenses	19%
Alcohol/Drug Use	19%
Gang Affiliation	05%
Neighborhood Risk Factors:	
No Neighborhood Risk Factors	84%
One or More Neighborhood Risk Factors	16%
Deprived Area	13%
High Crime Area	05%
Homelessness	05%

Participant Outcomes by Time (pretest-post test)

Research Question 1: Did OYCC participation make a difference in participant factor scores (work skills, behaviors, and attitudes) by time (pretest and post test)?

Crew leaders' pre-post assessments of participants' abilities were compared using paired t-tests (Table 5). Participants were compared on three scales: Work Competence (17 items including finishing projects, being organized, being dependable, following through); Positive Work Behavior (12 items including being helpful to others, being responsible for own actions, working in all weather conditions, behaving appropriately in public); and, Comfort with Diversity (3 items including accepting other races, working with persons different from self, and speaking comfortably with adults). Significant improvements were reported by the crew leaders from pretest to post test in all three areas of assessment.

Similarly, the crew leader retrospective change score revealed significant increases in participant work skills (Table 5). Included in Table 5 are the "Before OYCC," and "After OYCC" mean scores on the retrospective pretest. The change score represents a variable entitled Changes in Work Behavior. This variable was created by subtracting the retrospective pre-score on 16 items from the post-score on those same items.

Table 5

Means (Standard Deviations), Alpha Levels, and Paired T-Values for Crew Leaders' Pre-Post Assessments of Crew Members' Abilities (n = 360), and Crew Leader Retrospective Pretest Scores (n = 365)

<u>Work Scales</u>	Means (sd) Pre	Means (sd) Post	Paired t-value
Work Competence (alpha = 0.95)	2.57 (.82)	3.87 (.82)	6.62***
Positive Work Behavior (alpha = 0.92)	2.61 (.56)	3.90 (.55)	4.94***
Comfort with Diversity (alpha = 0.69)	2.74 (.67)	4.01 (.67)	5.74***
Crew Leader Retrospective Pretest Scale = 1 (poor) to 4 (excellent)	Before OYCC: 2.45 (0.61)	After OYCC: 3.20 (0.54)	Change Score: 0.75 (0.44) Paired t-value: 32.47***

Work Scales = 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) ***p ≤ 0.001

Participants' pre-post assessments of their abilities were also compared using paired t-tests (Table 6). Participants were compared on three scales: Total Work Identity (18 items including doing my share, can be counted on, work well with others); Work Self-Perception (10 items including doing well will help me succeed, I don't mind working hard to achieve a goal, I am a good worker); and, Work Commitment (8 items including finishing on time, I usually finish what I start, I don't waste time).

As shown in Table 6, participants did not significantly change over the summer as assessed with the traditional pre-post methodology. This is attributable to very high pretest scores. Specifically, on average, participants rated their initial work skills near the top of the 1-5 range (4.30 and above). Thus, there was little "room" for improvement over the course of the summer. Youth, in evaluating their pretest

work skills, were extremely confident in all their abilities before the OYCC experience.

The retrospective pre-post approach did result in significant change.

Specifically, participants demonstrated an improvement on the retrospective pretest that reflects an improvement from “fair” to “good” in work behavior (Table 6).

Table 6
Means (Standard Deviations), Alpha Levels, and Paired T-Values for Participants' Pre-Post Assessments of Work Abilities (n = 366)

<u>Work Scales</u>	Means (sd) Pre	Means (sd) Post	Paired t-value
Total Work Identity (alpha = 0.90)	4.34 (.47)	4.31 (.50)	ns
Work Self-Perception (alpha = 0.84)	4.30 (.52)	4.31 (.56)	ns
Work Commitment (alpha = 0.83)	4.39 (.49)	4.29 (.53)	ns
Participant Retrospective Pretest Scale = 1 (poor) to 4 (excellent)	Before OYCC: 2.94 (0.52)	After OYCC: 3.49 (0.40)	Change Score: 0.55 (0.42) Paired t-value: 26.48***

Work Scales = 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) ***p ≤ 0.001

Participant Outcomes: The Impact of Program Variability and Risk

Research Question 1 (continued): Did OYCC participation make a difference in participant factor scores (work skills, behaviors, and attitudes) by risk status, program residence status, and length of program in weeks?

General linear models procedures were used to examine variations in participant factor scores by risk status, length of program, and residence status. For the participant analysis, data from the retrospective pretest assessments were utilized

because only the retrospective pretest post test methodology resulted in significant changes over time. A variable entitled Changes in Work Behavior was created by subtracting the retrospective pre-score on 16 items from the post-score on those same items. As discussed earlier, a retrospective pretest provides a valid means of measuring program impact as it helps remove response-shift bias among respondents. Participant mean change scores on the retrospective pretests represent overall changes in work behavior as a result of OYCC participation (Table 7). General linear models analyses revealed that the overall model was not significant ($F = 2.68$). Furthermore, none of the variables of interest were significant in this

Table 7

General Linear Models Procedure Means, Standard Deviations, and F-Values for Participants' Retrospective Assessments of Changes in Work Behaviors by Risk, Residential Status and Program Length

	Change Score Mean (sd)		F-value
Total GLM Model.....	.....		..... 2.61 (193, 6)
Risk.....	.....		..... 0.87 (193, 3)
0 Risks	0.54	(0.35)	
1 Risk	0.62	(0.44)	
2 Risks	0.52	(0.48)	
3+ Risks	0.62	(0.47)	
Residential Status.....	.....		..... 0.00 (193, 1)
Yes	0.66	(0.42)	
No	0.45	(0.40)	
Program Length.....	.....		..... 0.13 (193, 2)
5 Weeks ^a	0.66	(0.42)	
6-7 Weeks	0.42	(0.40)	
8-9 Weeks	0.46	(0.40)	
10 Weeks	0.51	(0.41)	

^a All residential programs were 5 week programs

Crew leader assessments by the selected variables are considered in Table 8.

The overall model for retrospective change scores was significant ($F = 8.11$, $p \leq 0.001$). Residence status ($F = 5.00$, $p \leq 0.001$) and risk status ($F = 4.60$, $p \leq 0.01$) were the significant variables. Crew leader change scores were higher for participants in residential programs ($M=0.86$, $sd=0.43$) compared to participants in non-residential programs ($M=0.57$, $sd=0.42$). Crew leader change scores were also higher for participants with 3 or more risk factors ($M=0.87$, $sd=0.44$). Type III sum of squares results are reported. Type III sum of squares reports the effect of each variable after all other factors have been accounted for (Cody & Smith, 1991).

Table 8
General Linear Models Procedure Means, Standard Deviations, and F-Values for Crew Leaders' Retrospective Assessments of Changes in Work Behaviors by Risk, Residential Status, and Program Length

	Change Score		F-value
	Mean	(sd)	
Total GLM Model.....	.....	.....	8.11*** (358, 7)
Risk Status.....	.....	.....	4.60** (358, 3)
0 Risks	0.69	(0.44)	
1 Risk	0.73	(0.45)	
2 Risks	0.66	(0.46)	
3+ Risks	0.87	(0.43)	
Residential Status.....	.....	.....	5.00* (358, 1)
Residential	0.86	(0.43)	
Non-residential	0.57	(0.42)	
Program Length.....	.....	.....	0.67 (358, 3)
5 Weeks ^a	0.86	(0.42)	
6-7 Weeks	0.52	(0.36)	
8-9 Weeks	0.66	(0.46)	
10 Weeks	0.51	(0.41)	

^a All residential programs were 5 week programs

* $p \leq 0.05$ ** $p \leq 0.01$ *** $p \leq 0.001$

In addition to analyzing the crew leaders' retrospective assessment, GLM procedures were performed for the traditional pre-post changes score on 3 crew leader work scales (Work Competence, Positive Work Behavior, and Comfort With Diversity; Table 9).

Table 9

General Linear Models Procedure Means, Standard Deviations, and F-Values for Crew Leaders' Traditional Pre-Post Change Scores by Risk, Residential Status, and Program Length

	<u>Change Score Mean (sd)</u>		<u>F value</u>
Work Competence	0.22		2.16*, (226, 6)
Risk Status.....	.....		0.57, (226, 3)
0 Risks	0.23	(0.54)	
1 Risk	0.24	(0.44)	
2 Risks	0.07	(0.49)	
3 Risks	0.25	(0.60)	
Residential Status.....	.....		4.80*, (226, 1)
Residential	0.28	(0.54)	
Non-Residential	0.13	(0.51)	
Length of Program.....	.....		3.23*, (226, 2)
5 Weeks	0.28	(0.54)	
6-7 Weeks	0.02	(0.50)	
8-9 Weeks	0.16	(0.48)	
10 Weeks	0.59	(0.73)	
Positive Work Behavior	0.13.....		2.15* (226, 3)
Risk Status.....	.....		0.60 (226, 3)
0 Risks	0.14	(0.43)	
1 Risk	0.11	(0.46)	
2 Risks	0.19	(0.48)	
3 Risks	0.13	(0.38)	
Residential Status.....	.....		10.60** (226, 1)
Residential	0.22	(0.42)	
Non-Residential	0.03	(0.42)	
Length of Program.....	.....		0.23 (226, 2)
5 Weeks	0.22	(0.42)	
6-7 Weeks	0.00	(0.41)	
8-9 Weeks	0.06	(0.43)	
10 Weeks	0.05	(0.37)	
Comfort With Diversity	0.28.....		0.88 (225, 6)
Risk Status.....	.....		0.55 (225, 3)
0 Risks	0.24	(0.55)	
1 Risk	0.25	(0.60)	
2 Risks	0.25	(0.74)	
3 Risks	0.35	(0.64)	
Residential Status.....	.....		3.26 (225, 1)
Residential	0.34	(0.65)	
Non-Residential	0.19	(0.54)	
Length of Program.....	.....		0.17 (225, 2)
5 Weeks ^a	0.34	(0.65)	
6-7 Weeks	0.21	(0.60)	
8-9 Weeks	0.19	(0.51)	
10 Weeks	0.05	(0.49)	

^a All residential programs were 5 week programs * $p \leq 0.05$ ** $p \leq 0.01$

In the GLM analysis of the traditional pre-post change scores, the models for the crew leader scales Work Competence ($F = 2.16, p \leq 0.05$) and Positive Work Behavior ($F = 2.15, p \leq 0.05$) were significant. For Work Competence, the significant variables were residential status and length of program. For Positive Work Behavior, the significant variable was residential status (Table 9). In the GLM model for Comfort With Diversity, no significant differences were found by risk status, residential status, or program length.

Participant Outcomes: Correlation Analyses

Research Question 2: What are the relationships between the traditional pretest-post test factor change scores and the retrospective pretest change scores among and between crew leaders and participants?

Correlation analyses were performed to examine relationships among and between participant and crew leader variables. All analyses were performed with the “nomiss” option activated in SAS correlation procedure. Thus, only cases without missing data are included in the analyses. The result was a dataset of 212 cases when only participant data were analyzed; 230 cases when only crew leader data were analyzed; and 205 cases when participant and crew leader data were analyzed together.

The participants' retrospective change score was not significantly correlated with the pre-post change scores from the 3 traditional pretest-post test work scales (Table 10).

Table 10
Correlation of Participant Change Scores Based on Retrospective Pretest and Traditional Pretest-Post test (n=212)

	Participants' Retrospective ^a Change Score	Pretest M ^b	Post test M ^c	Identity ^d	Perception ^e
Pretest M ^b	-0.74**				
Post test M ^c	ns	0.51**			
Pre-Post Change Scores on:					
Identity ^d	ns	ns	ns		
Perception ^e	ns	ns	ns	0.88**	
Commitment ^f	ns	ns	0.18*	0.85**	0.49**

* $p \leq 0.05$ ** $p \leq 0.01$

^a = Mean change based on retrospective pretest items

^b = Mean based on retrospective pretest items before OYCC

^c = Mean based on retrospective pretest items after OYCC

^d = Mean change based on pre-post Work Identity items

^e = Mean change based on pre-post Work Self-Perception items

^f = Mean change based on pre-post Work Commitment items

Table 11 illustrates the correlation found between crew leaders retrospective change score and the mean change scores from the crew leader scales assessing Work Competence, Positive Work Behavior, and Comfort with Diversity. In addition, a variable titled Total Change was created by summing the average of the three scales. Of these, slight positive correlations between the retrospective change score and the change scores Positive Work Behavior and Total Change were found.

Table 11
Correlation of Crew Leader Change Scores Based on Retrospective Pretest and Traditional Pretest-Post Test (n=230)

	Retrospective Change Scores ^a	Pretest M ^b	Post test M ^c	Traditional Pre-Post Changes on:		
				<u>Competence^d</u>	<u>Positive^e</u>	<u>Diversity^f</u>
Pretest M ^b	-0.44***					
Post test M ^c	0.24**	0.77***				
Traditional Pre-Post Change on:						
Competence ^d	ns	ns	0.22**			
Positive ^e	0.13*	ns	0.23**	0.67***		
Diversity ^f	ns	0.18*	0.28***	0.38***	0.49**	
Total Change ^g	0.14*	0.18*	0.30***	0.82***	0.84***	0.80***

*p ≤ 0.05 ** p ≤ 0.001 *** p ≤ 0.0001

^a = Mean change based on crew leader retrospective pretest items

^b = Mean based on retrospective pretest items before OYCC

^c = Mean based on retrospective pretest items after OYCC

^d = Mean change based on pre-post Work Competence items

^e = Mean change based on pre-post Positive Work Behavior items

^f = Mean change based on pre-post Comfort With Diversity items

^g = Mean change of summed scales Work Competence, Positive Work Behavior, Comfort with Diversity

Finally, a correlation procedure that examined the relationships of the retrospective and traditional change scores for crew leaders and participants was performed (Table 12).

Table 12

Correlation of Change Scores on Traditional Scales and Retrospective Scales for Crew Leaders and Participants (n=205)

	Crew Leader Retrospective Pretest Change Score	Participant Retro Pretest Change Score
Overall Mean Crew Leader Retrospective Pretest	0.99***	
Participant Retrospective Pretest Change Score	0.33***	
Overall Mean Participant Retrospective Pretest	0.34***	0.91***
Crew Leader Traditional Scale Change Scores:		
Work Competence	ns	0.15*
Positive Work Behavior	0.15*	0.23***
Comfort With Diversity	ns	0.16*

* $p \leq 0.05$ *** $p \leq 0.001$

Table 12 indicates a moderate correlation between the Participant Retrospective Change score and the Crew Leader Retrospective Change score, suggesting that as participants' retrospective assessments of their work abilities increased, the crew leaders' assessments increased. In addition, correlations were found between the Participant Retrospective Change score and the Crew Leader Traditional Change

scores, lending support to the notion that the retrospective pretest gave the participants an opportunity to be more objective in assessing their abilities.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Summary and Conclusions

This program evaluation provided information about: a) the demographic characteristics of 1996 OYCC participants; b) how program participation appeared to impact work-related outcomes; c) how program variables such as program length and residential status appeared to influence participant outcomes; and d) implications for future youth corps program evaluation.

The large sample of participants provided for an accurate assessment of OYCC program outcomes. The decline in post test response rates as a result of attrition and, especially, non-compliance in administering surveys was unfortunate given the efforts to maintain contact with crew leaders and program supervisors throughout the evaluation. Despite the approximately 10% reduction in post test response rates a final sample of over 380 provided an ample basis for evaluation.

The fact that the evaluation did not utilize a control group in order to compare outcomes represents a limitation of this study. Because of this, it is difficult to assess whether participant outcomes were due solely to program participation. Rather than the program itself, factors such as being away from home, having a chance to earn money, or simply having something to do during summer may have influenced participant outcomes. However, because both crew leaders and participants specifically indicated that changes in work behaviors were attributable to program

participation (e.g., retrospective pretest data and survey items 68 and 69 on participant post test, and survey items 52 and 53 on crew leader post test), it is believed that the OYCC experience did indeed influence participant outcomes. For example, over 90% of participants and crew leaders reported that OYCC program participation increased work skills anywhere from “some” to, “a huge amount.” Specifically, 66.5% of participants and 58.2% of crew leaders indicated gains in work skills of either “a lot” or “a huge amount.”

When asked to indicate whether program participation increased interest in further education or job training, over 90% of participants and crew leaders again indicated that increased interest in further education or job training was a result of participation. Specifically, 56.3% of participants and 50.0% percent of crew leaders reported increases in interest in further education or job training of either “a lot” or “a huge amount.”

Though not as sizable as the crew leader assessments, the participants demonstrated significant improvement over the summer when their retrospective pretest data were considered. The inclusion of the retrospective pretest proved important in this study as it appeared to capture the participants’ true assessment of their work-related abilities. As discussed in Chapter 3, utilizing the retrospective pretest eliminates response-shift bias. Response-shift bias can seriously distort measures of behavior change (Preziosi and Legg, 1983). For example, prior to beginning work in an OYCC crew, a participant’s self rating on a scale of one (strongly disagree) to five (strongly agree) is four on the item “I can work hard ”; at

the end of the program, the same subject rates himself a five. But that “five” rating reflects the participant’s new understanding that “I can work hard ” means something a lot different than previously thought; the participant realizes now that the pretest score of four was an overestimation--that a lower score would have been more realistic--but it is now too late to change the pretest assessment. This is especially apparent when one considers that the overall mean score on 2 of the 3 participant pre-post work behavior scales actually decreased (Table 6). The remaining participant scale (Work Self-Perception) increased from pretest to post test by just one tenth of one percent. It is apparent, given the results, that the retrospective pretest gave participants a valuable opportunity to reconsider just where their work skills and behaviors were prior to program participation, and, by comparison, where they were once the program had concluded. Without this retrospective scale, the program would have seemed to have little impact in terms of participants’ self reported data.

The assessment of risk status among participants proved noteworthy. While the Oregon legislature mandates that 75% or more of OYCC participants be considered at-risk, this study found the percentage to be 65%. However, it must be restated that the risk status data were gathered and reported by crew leaders; no participants were asked to self-report on risk. One possibility that may explain the lower risk percentage is that many of the participants were indeed at-risk without the crew leaders being aware. Another explanation may lie in the fact that not all risk factors

were included on the surveys. In particular, income level, a major risk factor, was not assessed.

The most commonly identified risks were personal; family problems (40%), low self-esteem (32%), school failure (26%), and social isolation (22%). These factors can contribute to negative outcomes among youth (Dryfoos, 1990).

Program variables were of interest from the very beginning of the evaluation. Both the researchers and the stakeholders were curious about how residential status and program length may affect program outcomes. Notably, when crew leader data were analyzed, the variables of residence and risk status were significant, but not when participant data were analyzed. Specifically, participants in residential programs, and participants with 3 or more risk factors, demonstrated the highest gains when the retrospective change in work behavior data were analyzed. However, further analysis of the data revealed that crew leaders of participants in residential programs reported lower scores on the "Before OYCC" portion of the retrospective pretest ($M = 2.40$ residential; $M = 2.53$ non-residential). In addition, participants with three or more risk factors also were assessed by the crew leaders as having lower "Before OYCC" scores than their counterparts with fewer risks ($M = 2.11$ for 3+ risks; 2.43 for 2 risks; and 2.65 for one and zero risks, respectively). Thus, participants in residential programs and those with three or more reported risk factors had more room to improve because their "Before OYCC" assessments were lower than other participants'.

These same analyses were conducted using the participants' pretest data. Results here indicated that the participants in residential programs ($M = 2.86$ residential; $M = 3.07$ non-residential), and those with higher reported risks ($M = 2.82$ for 3+ risks; $M = 2.92$, 2.95 , and 3.02 for those with 2, 1, and zero reported risks, respectively), also had more room to improve than their counterparts.

An important confound exists in the models that examined the effects of residential status and length of program (Tables 7 and 8). In considering the probable effects of these variables, it was assumed that residence and length of program would both prove to be significant variables affecting program outcomes. However, when analyzed with the general linear models procedure, the length of program variable proved insignificant for both crew leaders and participants. The confound lies in the fact that all residential programs were also. However, the results also indicate that the program length that results in the greatest improvement is 5 weeks.

To further examine the relationships among selected outcome variables, correlation procedures were conducted. First, the relationship between the participants' retrospective change score and their traditional pretest-post test changes scores was examined (Table 10). No significant correlations were found, reflecting the discrepancies between the participants self-assessed abilities on traditional scales and their retrospective assessments following program participation. Secondly, the crew leaders' mean retrospective pretest score was correlated with their traditional (pre-post) scores (Table 11). The assumption was that if the crew leaders' mean

retrospective pretest change score was positively correlated with their traditional (pretest-post test) change scores that this would indicate that these measures were a valid measure of program impact. The results of this analysis show that the crew leader mean retrospective pretest change score is positively (although weakly) correlated with both Positive Work Behavior and Total Change. Finally, correlation analyses were performed to investigate the relationships between the participants' retrospective mean change score and the crew leaders' traditional (pretest-post test) change scores to determine whether the participants' retrospective change score in work skills was a valid measure of program impact (Table 12). The assumption was that if the participants' subjective assessments were correlated with the crew leaders' more objective assessments, this would indicate that the participant retrospective pretest was indeed a valid measure of program effects. This analysis included the crew leaders' pretest-post test change scores on Work Commitment, Positive Work Behavior, and Comfort with Diversity. The results of this analysis demonstrate a significant positive correlation between the participants' retrospective pretest mean change score and the crew leaders' more objective pretest-post test changes scores. This finding, in my opinion, establishes the validity of the retrospective pretest as an accurate means of measuring participant work behaviors. Whereas the traditional pretest-post test format masked real changes among the participants due to their propensity to overestimate their work abilities at the pretest, the retrospective format removed the effects of this response-shift bias by giving the participants a single frame of reference by which to assess changes in their work skills and behaviors. As

reported by Preziosi & Legg (1983), providing this single frame of reference with the retrospective pretest allows for more accurate assessments of “before” and “after” changes. That the participant retrospective change score correlated with the crew leader traditional change scores (noting that the crew leaders were more objective in their traditional assessments of work skills and behaviors) lends further validity to the retrospective pretest as a valuable tool to measure program effects.

Evaluation and Program Recommendations

Evaluation recommendations. The implications of the current study focus on the apparent benefits that youth corps programs, independent of program characteristics, have on participants. In other words, overall improvements in work skills were apparent among participants regardless of program length, residential status, and risk status. Higher risk groups in particular appeared to benefit from the OYCC experience.

When program variables were considered, it appeared that when crew leader data were considered, residential programs may have played a more significant role in affecting outcomes. Future studies may wish to examine how residential status and length of program interact to influence participant outcomes. Additionally, the question of how risk status is related to participant outcomes merits further investigation. That is, what program configuration best serves at-risk youth? It may be that diverse crews promote interactions that help members overcome stereotypes and biases that were reinforced in the participants’ previous lifestyle (Jastrzab, Blomquist, Masker & Orr, 1997). An evaluation designed to investigate this

question may seek to deliberately organize crews to achieve varying “mixtures” of educational, socio-economic, and ethnic backgrounds. Within such a framework, the question of how program residence and program length affect at-risk youth could be addressed.

The objective impressions of crew leaders in combination with participants’ pretest-post test and retrospective self report data provide a valuable means of examining program impact in the absence of a control group. It is recommended that future studies consider the inclusion of the retrospective pretest format. A retrospective pretest format may prove more feasible and more cost and time effective for programs that wish to perform in-house evaluations. To further simplify matters, program administrators may wish to collect only crew leader assessments at the end of program participation.

Finally, in order to gain a clearer understanding of program effects, it is recommended that future evaluations of youth corps programs endeavor to utilize control samples. Such designs would perhaps shed more light on the impact of variables such as residential status, length of program, and risk status.

Program recommendations. Two primary implications of this evaluation concern residence and risk status. With regard to residence, it is recommended that programs turn their attention toward residential programs as they appear to affect outcomes in a significant way. In doing so, programs should continue to target at-risk youth and strive to attain mandated at-risk inclusion rates. To verify that programs serve at-risk

youth in the proportions set forth by legislative or governing bodies, a system of documenting participants' risk status would be beneficial.

Program length appears to be a weaker influence in affecting outcomes in this evaluation. However, it must be noted that residence and program length together strongly affect the intensity of the service experience. As stated by Jastrzab et al. (1997), "The intensity of the service experience makes it more likely to have a permanent effect on participants" (p. 24). Thus, program planners may wish to consider how the three variables of residence, risk, and program length interact to affect participant outcomes.

In the long term, it is recommended that programs, through ongoing evaluation, seek to determine which combination of residence, at-risk status, crew diversity, and program length will yield the greatest program benefits among participants.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Branch, A., Leiderman, S., & Smith, T. (1987). *Youth conservation and service corps: Findings from a national assessment*. Philadelphia: Public/Private Ventures.
- Brown, D. (1997). *Meeting the needs of out-of-school youth*. Washington, DC: National Governors' Association.
- Cody, R., & Smith, J. (1991). *Applied statistics and the SAS programming language*. 3rd ed. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Dryfoos, J. (1990). *Adolescents at risk: Prevalence and prevention*. New York: Academic Press.
- Howard, G. & Dailey, P. (1979). Response shift bias: A source of contamination of self-report measures. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 64:144-150.
- Jastrzab, J., Blomquist, J., Masker, J. & Orr. (1997). *Youth corps: Promising strategies for young people and their communities*. Washington, DC: National Governors' Association.
- Johnson, T., & Troppe, M. (1992). Improving literacy and employability among disadvantaged youth: The job corps model. *Youth & Society* 23(3):335-355.
- Johnson, L., Ross, D., Driver, B., & Shikiar, R. (1982). *Final report of the first survey of panel study no. 1 for a project entitled: A five-year program of research to evaluate the long-term benefits of the youth conservation corps*. Fort Collins, CO: Colorado State University & Rocky Mountain Forest and Range Experiment Station.
- Lah, D., Leiderman, S., & Wolf, W. (1985). *The california conservation corps: An analysis of participant characteristics*. Philadelphia: Public/Private Ventures.
- National Association of Service & Conservation Corps [NASCC]. (1996). *Youth corps profiles*. Washington, DC: NASCC.
- Northwest Youth Corps (1997). A job with northwest youth corps. *Northwest Youth Corps WWW Home Page*. [On-line]. Available: <http://www.nwyouthcorps.org/jobs1.html>

BIBLIOGRAPHY (CONTINUED)

- Oregon Youth Conservation Corps (1997). About OYCC. *Oregon Youth Conservation Corps WWW Home Page*. [On-line]. Available: <http://www.ccf.state.or.us/oycc/about.htm>
- Preziosi, R. & Legg, L. (1983). Add 'then' testing to prove training's effectiveness. *Training May*:19-21.
- Public/Private Venture (1985), *The california conservation corps: Assessing the dollar value of its work*. Philadelphia: Public/Private Ventures.
- Public/Private Ventures (1987). *The california conservation corps: An analysis of short-term impacts on participants*. Philadelphia: Public/Private Ventures.
- Rockwell, S.K. & Kohn, H. (1989). Post-then-pre evaluation: Measuring behavior change more accurately. *Journal of Extension* 27:19-21.
- Ross, D. & Driver, B. (1986). Importance of appraising responses of subgroups in program evaluations: The youth conservation corps. *Journal of Environmental Education*, 17:16-22.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

**FORMS DETAILING THE EVALUATION AND
INSTRUCTIONS FOR ADMINISTERING SURVEYS**

Evaluation of Community Service Corps, 1996-1997

Greetings. Enclosed are the materials needed to complete the first phase of the evaluation. You will find the ivory colored corpsmember pretests, the tan crew leader surveys, consent forms, envelopes, and three loose sheets of paper in this manila envelope.

The corpsmember surveys should be administered to each participant as soon as he or she begins work in the program. Along with a pretest, the corpsmember should also complete a consent form. If the parent or guardian is available, they may sign the consent form as well. Once completed, please collect the pretests and consent forms and keep them until you have completed a crew leader assessment for each participant. Please complete an assessment for each participant once you have had 7-10 days of contact with he or she. These assessments, once completed, should be placed, with the corpsmember pretests, in the pre-addressed envelope and mailed to Oregon State University.

Please read each of the loose sheets of paper. The orange sheet describes how to administer the corpsmember pretest. This sheet may be used as a "script" during the time you are administering the pretest. The ivory sheet describes the crew leader assessment. Finally, the purple sheet describes the purpose behind the evaluation.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions, need more materials, or if you have ideas about items to include in the post-test. Participants and crew leaders will complete post-tests when individual participants end their stay in the program. If a corpsmember will be leaving early, please make plans to have he or she complete a post-test before exiting the program.

I wish to thank you for your help in this evaluation. Without your assistance, it could not be done. When the evaluation is completed, you will have the opportunity to see the results you helped generate. I hope your Community Service Corps program is an enjoyable and successful one.

Sincerely,

Marc Miller
Oregon State University
Bates Hall Family Study Center
Corvallis, OR 97331-5151
(541) 737-1901

Evaluation of Youth Corps, 1996-1997

Purpose of the Youth Corps Evaluation

Why evaluate Youth Corps programs?

This statewide evaluation will assess how Youth Corps programs intend to increase employability focusing on work skills, education, and job training. Thus, this evaluation will examine the impacts that OYCC participation have on corpsmembers' employment, education, and social/personal skills on the job.

By evaluating these outcomes, it will be possible to:

- improve and expand the programs and services
- demonstrate program benefits across the state
- justify and preserve the funding to support Youth Corps programs

The information we gather will be analyzed for the entire state and for separate counties. Reports will be made to:

- The Oregon Youth Conservation Corps and Oregon Commission on Children and Families for use in planning and legislative advocacy
- All County Commissions on Children and Families and agencies that sponsor Youth Corps projects

The county projects and, especially, the crew leaders are the keys to the success of this evaluation. Your time and efforts to administer, complete, collect, and transmit the evaluation surveys to Oregon State University staff are critical! You will have the opportunity to see the results of this evaluation once it is completed, and you will know that you contributed significantly to the final product.

Thank you! If you have any questions or comments please contact:

Marc Miller
Oregon State University
Family Study Center
Corvallis, OR 97331-5151
(541) 737-1901

Evaluation of Youth Corps, 1996-1997

Survey Procedures for Corpsmember Pretest

On the first day of work, reserve some time (about 30 minutes) for the corpsmembers to complete the pretest survey. To each corpsmember, distribute:

- one survey
- a pencil or pen
- an envelope

Instruct the corpsmembers to:

- write in their birth date and initials in the upper right corner of the survey
This is critical!

Remind the corpsmembers that:

- their first idea about how to answer each question is usually the best
- there are no right or wrong answers
- answers are confidential
- it is OK to not answer a question, but all of their answers are important
- the information will be used to improve all Youth Corps programs

When they are done, they should:

- seal the survey in the envelope
- give the envelope to you

Please collect these sealed envelopes, enclose them in the large, pre-addressed envelope, and mail them to Oregon State University as soon as possible.

Thank you! We appreciate your efforts to evaluate how Youth Corps programs affect young people! If you have questions or comments please contact:

Marc Miller
Oregon State University
Family Study Center
Corvallis, OR 97331-5151
(541) 737-1901

Evaluation of Youth Corps, 1996-1997

Survey Procedures for Crew Leader Pretest

During the second week of work with your crew, please complete a survey for each crewmember in your crew. This 40-item survey asks you to objectively assess each crewmember from your own perspective.

It is critical to write in crewmembers' birth dates and initials in the upper right corner of the survey! This information will allow us to pair your answers with the crewmembers, and to pair pretest and post test surveys.

Please mail all your completed surveys to us in the pre-addressed envelope as soon as possible. As your program nears completion, you will repeat this process a second time.

Thank you! We appreciate your efforts to help evaluate how Youth Corps programs affect young people! If you have questions or comments, please contact:

Marc Miller
Oregon State University
Family Study Center
Corvallis, OR 97331-5151
(541) 737-1901

Evaluation of Youth Corps, 1996-1997

Greetings. Thank you for your help with the pretest phase of the summer OYCC evaluation. Enclosed are the materials needed to complete the post test phase of the evaluation.

The post test for the crewmembers to fill out during the final 7-10 days of work is blue. It is critical that crewmembers enter their initials and birth dates in the spaces provided. It is as important for the crew leader to enter the crewmember information on the gray crew leader post test (also completed during the final 7-10 days of the program). This is the only way we can match participant and crew leader surveys. Crewleaders also write in their name, program name, and the county where the crew is based.

Please note the changes on the blue crewmember survey (page 4) and the gray crew leader survey (pages 3 and 4). Once completed, please mail the blue and gray surveys back to me as soon as you can.

Again, thank you for your help. Completing the post test surveys will make all the difference in this evaluation as the pretest alone are not sufficient to make a report to OYCC/OCCF.

Marc Miller
Oregon State University
Family Study Center
Corvallis, OR 97331-5151
(541) 737-1901

APPENDIX B
SURVEYS USED IN THE EVALUATION

Your Birth Date: _____

Your Initials: _____

Evaluation of Youth Corps, 1996-1997

Your answers on this survey will help improve Oregon Youth Corps programs.
Your answers are confidential and will be seen only by the OSU evaluation staff.

Please read each question carefully and circle the number that best describes you.
There are no right or wrong answers. When you're done, put the survey in the envelope and give it to your crew leader.

ABOUT YOU

1. How old are you? under 16 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24

2. What is your gender? 1 -- MALE 2 -- FEMALE

3. What is your race/ethnicity?

1 -- WHITE, NON HISPANIC	4 -- NATIVE AMERICAN
2 -- WHITE, HISPANIC	5 -- ASIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER
3 -- AFRICAN-AMERICAN	6 -- OTHER: _____

4. In spring of 1996, what was your highest level of school or education?

1 -- 9TH GRADE	6 -- COMPLETED GED
2 -- 10TH GRADE	7 -- COMPLETED HIGH SCHOOL
3 -- 11TH GRADE	8 -- COMMUNITY COLLEGE
4 -- 12TH GRADE	9 -- 4 YR COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY

5. When you were last in school, what was your overall grade point average?

1 -- LESS THAN 1.5	4 -- 2.50 TO 2.99
2 -- 1.5 TO 1.9	5 -- 3.00 TO 3.49
3 -- 2.0 TO 2.49	6 -- 3.50 OR OVER

6. Where do you live? (If you now live in the Youth Corps facilities, please tell where you lived before this).

1 -- WITH PARENTS OR GUARDIANS
2 -- WITH FOSTER PARENTS
3 -- INDEPENDENT OF PARENTS OR GUARDIANS
4 -- NO REGULAR PLACE; MOVED AROUND
5 -- OTHER, PLEASE DESCRIBE: _____

7. Are you now married? 1 -- Yes 2 -- No
8. Do you have any children? 1 -- Yes 2 -- No
9. Have you been a Youth Corps member before? 1 -- Yes 2 -- No

If yes, what program did you work for? _____

When and where (what county) was the program? _____

EMPLOYMENT AND WORK

Most people feel that they do well at some things and not so well at others. For the questions below, circle the number that describes how you feel about yourself right now.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. When I start a project I usually finish it.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I can work with little supervision.	1	2	3	4	5
3. When I need to make a decision, I take my time to think it through	1	2	3	4	5
4. I get a lot done during the day.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I am able to get things organized.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I usually try to solve my own problems rather than rely on someone else to help me.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I have a hard time making decisions without help.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I need to be reminded more than once to do a task.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I waste a lot of time while working.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I have to be reminded to do the things I am responsible for.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I do not usually finish my work on time.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I look for excuses to avoid tasks I don't like.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I usually quit projects before they are finished.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I am sure I can get a job when I want to.	1	2	3	4	5
15. It has been hard for me to find jobs.	1	2	3	4	5
16. I know the right way to <u>use</u> tools (such as saws, hammers) or other work equipment	1	2	3	4	5
17. I know how to <u>care for</u> tools (such as saws, hammers) or other work equipment.	1	2	3	4	5

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
18. I am aware of work safety practices.	1	2	3	4	5
19. I always think about safety when using tools or other work equipment.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I do my share when working on a group task.	1	2	3	4	5
21. I can be counted on.	1	2	3	4	5
22. I am a good worker.	1	2	3	4	5
23. I find it easy to get along with people I work with	1	2	3	4	5
24. I do not mind working under close supervision.	1	2	3	4	5
25. I work well with others.	1	2	3	4	5
26. It has been hard for me to get myself to study.	1	2	3	4	5
27. It is easy for me to get distracted when I study.	1	2	3	4	5
28. I find education interesting; it is not just something I have to do.	1	2	3	4	5
29. I feel that doing well in education will help me in the future.	1	2	3	4	5
30. I plan to finish high school or my GED.	1	2	3	4	5
31. I have given up on education.	1	2	3	4	5
32. I plan to get more education.	1	2	3	4	5
33. Doing well in school will help me in the future.	1	2	3	4	5

YOU AND OTHERS

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
34. I often read articles about conservation	1	2	3	4	5
35. I try to make other people aware of conservation issues	1	2	3	4	5
36. I enjoy studying nature.	1	2	3	4	5
37. I am often the leader of a group.	1	2	3	4	5
38. I don't like being the leader of a group.	1	2	3	4	5
39. If made the leader of a group, I find it hard to take charge.	1	2	3	4	5
40. I don't mind working hard to achieve a goal.	1	2	3	4	5
41. I set high goals for myself.	1	2	3	4	5
42. If I work hard, I am sure I will succeed in life.	1	2	3	4	5
43. I am comfortable speaking to most adults.	1	2	3	4	5
44. I enjoy meeting new people.	1	2	3	4	5

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
45. I can work with people who are different from me.	1	2	3	4	5
46. I accept people of other races as much as people of my own race.	1	2	3	4	5
47. I feel aimless and lack direction much of the time.	1	2	3	4	5
48. I feel that my life is not very useful.	1	2	3	4	5
49. I have trouble holding a job.	1	2	3	4	5
50. I am pretty confused and disorganized.	1	2	3	4	5
51. I have very little control over my success.	1	2	3	4	5
52. I am excited about my future.	1	2	3	4	5
53. I am pleased with the way I am preparing for the job I want.	1	2	3	4	5
54. I can't make up my mind about the type of work I am cut out for.	1	2	3	4	5
55. I am happy with the person I am.	1	2	3	4	5
56. I am satisfied with myself.	1	2	3	4	5
57. Is there anything you would like to tell us about yourself or what you hope to gain from your Youth Corps experience?					

Please:

- put the completed survey in the envelope
- seal it
- give it to your crew leader to be sent to Oregon State University

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!

Your Birth Date: _____

Your Initials: _____

Evaluation of Youth Corps, 1996-1997: Survey 2

Your answers on this survey will help improve Oregon Youth Corps programs. Your answers are important and will only be seen by the OSU evaluation staff.

Please read each question carefully and circle the number that best describes you NOW. There are no right or wrong answers. When you're done, put the survey in the envelope and give it to your crew leader.

EMPLOYMENT AND WORK

Most people feel that they do well at some things and not so well at others. For the questions below, circle the number that describes how you feel about yourself right now.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. When I start a project I usually finish it.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I can work with little supervision.	1	2	3	4	5
3. When I need to make a decision, I take my time to think it through	1	2	3	4	5
4. I get a lot done during the day.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I am able to get things organized.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I usually try to solve my own problems rather than rely on someone else to help me.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I have a hard time making decisions without help.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I need to be reminded more than once to do a task	1	2	3	4	5
9. I waste a lot of time while working	1	2	3	4	5
10. I have to be reminded to do the things I am responsible for.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I do not usually finish my work on time.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I look for excuses to avoid tasks I don't like.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I usually quit projects before they are finished.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I am sure I can get a job when I want to.	1	2	3	4	5
15. It has been hard for me to find jobs.	1	2	3	4	5

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
16. I know the right way to <u>use</u> tools (such as saws, hammers) or other work equipment	1	2	3	4	5
17. I know how to <u>care for</u> tools (such as saws, hammers) or other work equipment.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I am aware of work safety practices.	1	2	3	4	5
19. I always think about safety when using tools or other work equipment.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I do my share when working on a group task.	1	2	3	4	5
21. I can be counted on.	1	2	3	4	5
22. I am a good worker.	1	2	3	4	5
23. I find it easy to get along with people I work with	1	2	3	4	5
24. I do not mind working under close supervision.	1	2	3	4	5
25. I work well with others.	1	2	3	4	5
26. It has been hard for me to get myself to study.	1	2	3	4	5
27. It is easy for me to get distracted when I study.	1	2	3	4	5
28. I find education interesting; it is not just something I have to do.	1	2	3	4	5
29. I feel that doing well in education will help me in the future.	1	2	3	4	5
30. I plan to finish high school or my GED.	1	2	3	4	5
31. I have given up on education.	1	2	3	4	5
32. I plan to get more education.	1	2	3	4	5
33. Doing well in school will help me in the future.	1	2	3	4	5

YOU AND OTHERS

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
34. I often read articles about conservation	1	2	3	4	5
35. I try to make other people aware of conservation issues	1	2	3	4	5
36. I enjoy studying nature.	1	2	3	4	5
37. I am often the leader of a group.	1	2	3	4	5
38. I don't like being the leader of a group.	1	2	3	4	5
39. If made the leader of a group, I find it hard to take charge.	1	2	3	4	5
40. I don't mind working hard to achieve a goal.	1	2	3	4	5

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
41. I set high goals for myself.	1	2	3	4	5
42. If I work hard, I am sure I will succeed in life.	1	2	3	4	5
43. I am comfortable speaking to most adults.	1	2	3	4	5
44. I enjoy meeting new people.	1	2	3	4	5
45. I can work with people who are different from me.	1	2	3	4	5
46. I accept people of other races as much as people of my own race.	1	2	3	4	5
47. I feel aimless and lack direction much of the time.	1	2	3	4	5
48. I feel that my life is not very useful.	1	2	3	4	5
49. I have trouble holding a job.	1	2	3	4	5
50. I am pretty confused and disorganized.	1	2	3	4	5
51. I have very little control over my success.	1	2	3	4	5
52. I am excited about my future.	1	2	3	4	5
53. I am pleased with the way I am preparing for the job I want.	1	2	3	4	5
54. I can't make up my mind about the type of work I am cut out for.	1	2	3	4	5
55. I am happy with the person I am.	1	2	3	4	5
56. I am satisfied with myself.	1	2	3	4	5

CHANGES IN YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Listed below are several work skills or abilities. Please rate where you were when you began this Youth Corps program, and where you are now.

My ability to:	<u>BEFORE OYCC</u>				<u>AFTER OYCC</u>			
	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
57. Understand environmental problems.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
58. Work independently.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
59. Work hard.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
60. Find a job.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
61. Handle tools and equipment.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
62. Work safely.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
63. Be dependable.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
64. Work with others.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4

- | | <u>BEFORE OYCC</u> | | | | <u>AFTER OYCC</u> | | | |
|---|--------------------|---------------|------|-----------|-------------------|------|------|-----------|
| | Poor | Fair | Good | Excellent | Poor | Fair | Good | Excellent |
| 65. Set and work toward goals. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 66. Be a leader of a group. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 67. Relate to people with
different backgrounds | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 68. Overall, how much, if at all, did
this program increase your <u>work skills</u> ? | Not at all | Only a little | Some | A lot | A huge amount | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | | |
| 69. Overall, how much, if at all, did
this program increase your interest in
<u>further education or job training</u> ? | Not at all | Only a little | Some | A lot | A huge amount | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | | |
| 70. Is there anything you would like to tell us about yourself or what you have
gained from your Youth Corps experience? | | | | | | | | |

Please: Seal the completed survey in the envelope and give it to your crew leader to be sent to Oregon State University. **THANKS!**

Your Name: _____

Corpsmember's Birth Date: _____

Corpsmember's Initials: _____

Program County: _____

Crew Leader Assessment of Youth Corpsmember, 1996-1997

This evaluation will assess changes in corpsmember work skills and behavior as result of their participation in Youth Corps programs. Please complete a survey for each of the OYCC corpsmembers in your crew.

This survey has two parts. Please read each question carefully and circle the number that best describes the corpsmember you work with. There are no right or wrong answers.

Your answers are important! They will help the Oregon Youth Conservation Corps to improve the services offered to Oregon youth. This survey is confidential and your answers will only be seen by the OSU research staff.

When you have completed the survey, please seal it in the envelope and send it to Oregon State University along with the corpsmember's completed surveys.

When this program is nearing completion, you will complete another set of surveys. These will also be confidential.

If you have questions about the surveys, please contact:

Marc Miller
Oregon State University
Family Study Center
Corvallis, OR 97331-5151
(541) 737-1901

PART I

EMPLOYMENT AND WORK

Think about this corpsmember during the first week he/she was on the job.

Based on your impression, this corpsmember:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Usually sees a project through to the end.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Is able to work with little supervision.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Thinks through decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Gets a lot done during the day.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Is able to get things organized.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Usually tries to solve problems rather than relying on someone to help.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Has a hard time making decisions without help.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Needs to be reminded more than once to do a task.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Wastes a lot of time while working.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Does not usually finish his or her work on time.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Looks for excuses to avoid tasks he or she doesn't like	1	2	3	4	5
12. Usually quits projects before they are finished.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Knows the right way to <u>use</u> tools (such as saws, hammers, shovels) or other equipment.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Knows how to <u>care for</u> tools (such as saws, hammers, shovels) or other equipment).	1	2	3	4	5
15. Demonstrates safety practices on the job.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Can be counted on to do his or her share when working on a group task.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Is the kind of person who can be counted on.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Is a good worker.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Gets along well with the people he or she works with.	1	2	3	4	5
20. Does not mind working under close supervision.	1	2	3	4	5

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
21. Works well with others.	1	2	3	4	5
22. Is easily distracted.	1	2	3	4	5
23. Likes being the leader of a group.	1	2	3	4	5
24. If made the leader of a group, finds it hard to take charge.	1	2	3	4	5
25. Is comfortable speaking to most adults.	1	2	3	4	5
26. Works well with people who are different than he or she.	1	2	3	4	5
27. Seems to accept people of other races.	1	2	3	4	5

PART II

FREQUENCY OF POSITIVE WORK BEHAVIOR

Again, think about this corpsmember during the first week on the job. Based on your impression, how often does this corpsmember demonstrate the following work behaviors?

	Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always
28. Is caring and supportive of others.	1	2	3	4
29. Works at full potential.	1	2	3	4
30. Communicates well with others.	1	2	3	4
31. Is helpful to others.	1	2	3	4
32. Is on time and ready to go upon arrival.	1	2	3	4
33. Takes responsibility for his or her own actions.	1	2	3	4
34. Continues working in all weather conditions.	1	2	3	4
35. Listens and follows directions.	1	2	3	4
36. Responds positively to feedback.	1	2	3	4
37. Takes initiative to keep busy and productive.	1	2	3	4
38. Applies and shares knowledge in new situations.	1	2	3	4
40. Requests assistance when he/she encounters difficulties.	1	2	3	4

PART III

Is there anything that you would like to say about this corpsmember?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!

Within one week, please mail this survey to:

**Marc Miller
Oregon State University
Family Study Center
Corvallis, OR 97331-5151
(541) 737-1901**

Your Name: _____

Corpsmember's Birth Date: _____

Corpsmember's Initials: _____

Program County: _____

Crew Leader Assessment of Youth Corpsmember, 1996-1997: Survey 2

Please complete a survey for each of the Youth Corps participants in your crew. This survey has four parts. Please read each question carefully and circle the number that best describes the corpsmember you work with. There are no right or wrong answers. Your responses are confidential, and seen only by the OSU research staff. When completed, send the corpsmember's completed surveys to OSU.

Did this corpsmember complete the entire program? (1) Yes (2) No

If "yes" continue with parts 1, 2, 3, & 4.

If "no" complete part 4 only. On the line below, please tell us what you know about why the corpsmember did not complete the program:

PART I

EMPLOYMENT AND WORK

Think about this corpsmember now that he/she has been on the job.

Based on your impression, this corpsmember:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Usually sees a project through to the end.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Is able to work with little supervision.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Thinks through decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Gets a lot done during the day.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Is able to get things organized.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Usually tries to solve problems rather than relying on someone to help.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Has a hard time making decisions without help.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Needs to be reminded more than once to do a task.	1	2	3	4	5

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
9. Wastes a lot of time while working.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Does not usually finish his or her work on time.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Looks for excuses to avoid tasks he or she doesn't like	1	2	3	4	5
12. Usually quits projects before they are finished.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Knows the right way to <u>use</u> tools (such as saws, hammers, shovels) or other equipment.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Knows how to <u>care for</u> tools (such as saws, hammers, shovels) or other equipment).	1	2	3	4	5
15. Demonstrates safety practices on the job.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Can be counted on to do his or her share when working on a group task.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Is the kind of person who can be counted on.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Is a good worker.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Gets along well with the people he or she works with.	1	2	3	4	5
20. Does not mind working under close supervision.	1	2	3	4	5
21. Works well with others.	1	2	3	4	5
22. Is easily distracted.	1	2	3	4	5
23. Likes being the leader of a group.	1	2	3	4	5
24. If made the leader of a group, finds it hard to take charge.	1	2	3	4	5
25. Is comfortable speaking to most adults.	1	2	3	4	5
26. Works well with people who are different than he or she.	1	2	3	4	5
27. Seems to accept people of other races.	1	2	3	4	5

PART II

FREQUENCY OF POSITIVE WORK BEHAVIOR

Again, think about this corpsmember during the first week on the job. Based on your impression, how often does this corpsmember demonstrate the following work behaviors?

	Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always
28. Is caring and supportive of others.	1	2	3	4
29. Works at full potential.	1	2	3	4
30. Communicates well with others.	1	2	3	4
31. Is helpful to others.	1	2	3	4
32. Is on time and ready to go upon arrival.	1	2	3	4
33. Takes responsibility for his or her own actions.	1	2	3	4
34. Continues working in all weather conditions.	1	2	3	4
35. Listens and follows directions.	1	2	3	4
36. Responds positively to feedback.	1	2	3	4
37. Takes initiative to keep busy and productive.	1	2	3	4
38. Applies and shares knowledge in new situations.	1	2	3	4
40. Requests assistance when he/she encounters difficulties.	1	2	3	4

PART III

CHANGES IN CREWMEMBER'S KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Listed below are several work skills or abilities. Please rate where this crew member was at the beginning of this Youth Corps program, and where he/she is now.

Crewmember's ability to:	<u>BEFORE OYCC</u>				<u>AFTER OYCC</u>			
	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
41. Understand environmental problems.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
42. Work independently.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
43. Work hard.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
44. Find a job.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
45. Handle tools and equipment.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
46. Work safely.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4

	<u>BEFORE OYCC</u>				<u>AFTER OYCC</u>			
	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
47. Be dependable.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
48. Work with others.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
49. Set and work toward goals.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
50. Be a leader of a group.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
51. Relate to people with different backgrounds	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
52. Overall how much, if at all, did this program increase the crewmember's <u>work skills</u> ?	Not at all 1	Only a little 2	Some 3	A lot 4	A huge amount 5			
53. Overall how much, if at all, did this program appear to increase the crewmember's interest in <u>further</u> <u>education</u> or <u>job training</u> ?	Not at all 1	Only a little 2	Some 3	A lot 4	A huge amount 5			

PART IV

CREWMEMBER RISK FACTORS

Some corpsmembers have experiences that put them at risk for dropping out of school, drug abuse, or other life problems. Based on your knowledge of this corpsmember, please indicate if he/she has experienced any of the following risk factors.

	No	Yes	Don't Know
54. Family Problems	0	1	9
55. Low Self-Esteem	0	1	9
56. Social Isolation; Loner	0	1	9
57. School Failure	0	1	9
58. Learning Disability	0	1	9

	No	Yes	Don't Know
59. Gang Affiliation	0	1	9
60. Juvenile Offenses	0	1	9
61. Alcohol/Drug Problems	0	1	9
62. Homelessness	0	1	9
63. Resident of High Crime Area	0	1	9
64. Resident of Deprived Area	0	1	9

65. Other; Specify _____

66. Is there anything else that you would like to say about this corpsmember?

If you have questions about this survey, please contact:

Marc Miller
Oregon State University
Family Study Center
Corvallis, OR 97331-5151
(541) 737-1901

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!

APPENDIX C
MEMBERS OF THE OYCC ADVISORY GROUP

Members of the OYCC Advisory Group

**Becky Eklund, Director
Oregon Youth Conservation Corps
530 Center Street Suite 300
Salem OR 97310**

**Mim Swartz, Administrative Assistant
Oregon Youth Conservation Corps
530 Center Street Suite 300
Salem OR 97310**

**Clara Pratt, Ph.D, Director
Oregon State University Family Policy Program
Bates Hall 204
Corvallis OR 97331**

**Arthur Pope, Executive Director
Northwest Youth Corps
5120 NW Franklin Blvd.
Eugene OR 97403**

**Cheryl Zwillinger, Program Director
Looking Glass Job Center
78-B Centennial Loop
Eugene OR 97401**

**Jackie Franke
Oregon Parks and Recreation Department
1115 Commercial Street NE
Salem OR 97310**

**Marc Miller
Graduate Research Assistant
Human Development & Family Sciences
Bates Hall 103
Corvallis OR 97331**

APPENDIX D

INDIVIDUAL ITEMS USED TO CREATE SURVEY SCALES

Individual Items Used to Create Survey Scales

Work Competence (Crew Leader Scale, $\alpha = 0.96$)

1. Usually sees a project through to the end
2. Is able to work with little supervision
3. Thinks through decisions
4. Gets a lot done during the day
5. Is able to get things organized
6. Usually tries to solve problems rather than relying on someone to help
7. Has a hard time making decisions without help
8. Needs to be reminded more than once to do a task
9. Wastes a lot of time while working
10. Does not usually finish his or her work on time
11. Looks for excuses to avoid tasks he or she doesn't like
12. Usually quits projects before they are done
13. Demonstrates safety practices on the job
14. Can be counted on to do his or her share when working on a group task
15. Is the kind of person who can be counted on
16. Is a good worker
17. Gets along well with the people he or she works with

Positive Work Behavior (Crew Leader Scale, $\alpha = 0.92$)

1. Is caring and supportive of others
2. Works at full potential
3. Communicates well with others
4. Is helpful to others
5. Is on time and ready to go upon arrival
6. Takes responsibility for his or her own actions
7. Continues working in all weather conditions
8. Listens and follows directions
9. Responds positively to feedback
10. Takes initiative to keep busy and productive
11. Applies and shares knowledge in new situations
12. Behaves appropriately in public

Comfort With Diversity (Crew Leader Scale, $\alpha = 0.69$)

1. Is comfortable speaking to most adults
2. Works well with people who are different than he or she
3. Seems to accept people of other races

Work Commitment (Participant Scale, alpha = 0.83)

1. When I start a project I usually finish it
2. I waste a lot of time while working
3. I have to be reminded to do the things I am responsible for
4. I usually quit projects before they are finished
5. I do my share when working on a group task
6. I can be counted on
7. I am a good worker
8. I work well with others

Work Self Perception (Participant Scale, alpha = 0.84)

1. I felt that doing well in education would help me in the future
2. I don't mind working hard to achieve a goal
3. I set high goals for myself
4. If I work hard, I am sure I will succeed in life
5. I can work with people who are different than me
6. I feel that my life is not very useful
7. I have trouble holding a job
8. I am pretty confused and disorganized
9. I have very little control over my success
10. I am excited about my future

Work Identity (Participant Scale -- 18 items, alpha = 0.90)

Work Identity is comprised of the scales 'Work Commitment' and "Work Self Perception."

APPENDIX E
PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Evaluation of Youth Corps, 1996-1997

Oregon State University is conducting an evaluation of Oregon Youth Corps programs. As a program participant, you are a valuable part of this evaluation. The information you provide will help to improve future programs.

In this evaluation, we will ask you about your:

- work attitudes and skills
- plans for the future
- other issues related to your work in Youth Corps

All information you provide will be confidential, your name will not be used in the reports:

- questionnaires you fill out are given a code number
- only the OSU evaluation staff will see the information you provide
- you are free to not answer any or all of the questions; this will not affect your participation in Youth Corps

The information will be used to determine:

- how programs serve youth who participate
- what would improve Youth Corps programs

By signing below, you give permission to the OSU staff to use your answers and program records in this evaluation.

Participant Name (please print): _____

Participant Birth Date: _____

Participant Signature: _____

Parent / Guardian Signature: _____
(for non-emancipated participants)

If you have questions about this evaluation, please contact: Marc Miller
OSU Evaluation Staff
(541) 737-1901