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Chesapeake Conservation Corps Inducts 10th Class, Celebrating Program's Decade of Environmental Workforce Training

(*Edgewater, MD*) August 20, 2019 – Today the Chesapeake Bay Trust introduced the newest class of its Chesapeake Conservation Corps, a program created by the Maryland Legislature to invest in the state's young people, provide valuable job skills training, and promote the green economy in Maryland. The program matches young people ages 18-25 with non-profit and government organizations for one-year terms of service, focused on improving local communities and protecting natural resources.

“The Chesapeake Conservation Corps is a great program – combining skills-based, hands-on learning for Maryland young people with an opportunity to improve our environment and clean up the Bay,” said U.S. Senator Chris Van Hollen. “I’m proud to join this year’s ‘Passing of the Golden Shovel’ Ceremony to highlight the work done by the Corps and its participants. I will continue to support crucial efforts, such as these, to restore and promote the health of the Bay.”

Since the program began in 2010 with an inaugural class of 16 members, the Corps has nearly tripled in size due to its popularity among young people pursuing environmental occupations and the organizations that host Corps Members each year. It has become a premier launching pad for green careers and a reliable resource for environmentally focused organizations who are recruiting the next generation of environmental professionals.

“The Chesapeake Conservation Corps is one of my proudest accomplishments,” stated Senate President Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr., lead sponsor of the creating legislation. “It doesn’t just protect our environment – it ensures that young people have experience and career options they may have otherwise never have interacted with, while instilling in another generation the importance of preserving our natural treasures.”

During their year of service, Conservation Corps Members will gain valuable on-the-job experience as they work to advance environmental conservation, K-12 education, energy efficiency programs, sustainable agriculture practices, and a host of other environmentally focused initiatives. Today, 37 Corps participants met their 32 host organizations at Camp Letts in Edgewater, Maryland, to learn more about their job responsibilities for the upcoming year.

Funds for the program are provided by the Chesapeake Bay Trust, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, the U.S. National Park Service, and Baltimore Gas and Electric (BGE), among others.

"Young people are the future of conservation. The partnership between the National Park Service and the Chesapeake Bay Trust continues to successfully engage and prepare the next generation of Chesapeake

stewards, and they in-turn inspire and help us achieve our mutual conservation goals together,” said Wendy O’Sullivan, superintendent of the Chesapeake Bay office of the National Park Service.

“BGE is proud to continue to partner with the Chesapeake Conservation Corps Program. These young people are getting hands-on exposure to a broad array of Bay restoration efforts and learning valuable job skills as they do. Moreover, their mentoring throughout the experience is focused on leadership development, preparing them for impactful future roles.” said John Quinn, Director of Energy Policy at BGE.

Each Corps participant is provided with a stipend and commits to a one-year term of service which begins in August. During that year, Corps participants work directly with their host organizations while also receiving extensive job trainings hosted by the Trust, as well as other service-learning opportunities including grant writing and project management.

"As the Chesapeake Conservation Corps nears the end of its first decade, it is important to note all the wonderful work corps members have done for non-profits and governments throughout Maryland,” said Ben Grumbles, Maryland Secretary for the Environment. “The program empowers talented young professionals to take action and make impactful change for environmental good in their career fields."

Of the 37 selected participants, 8 will work in Anne Arundel County, 4 in Prince George’s County, 3 each in Baltimore City, Frederick, Howard, Montgomery, and Talbot counties, 2 each in Allegany, Calvert, Kent, and Worcester Counties, 1 in Washington County, and 1 in Pennsylvania.

“The Chesapeake Bay Trust is thrilled to celebrate the Corps 10th year of service.” said Jana Davis, executive director for the Trust. “We’ve watched Corps alumni become industry colleagues and chart the course for our future environmental work. There is no better testimonial than that to the quality of workforce development the Chesapeake Conservation Corps program offers.”

Read about the graduating class of 2019 and their placements [here](#).

Read about the incoming, 10th anniversary, class of 2020 and their placements [here](#).

For more information on the program and for detailed descriptions on the program participants and their activities for the year, e-mail cedson@cbtrust.org.

