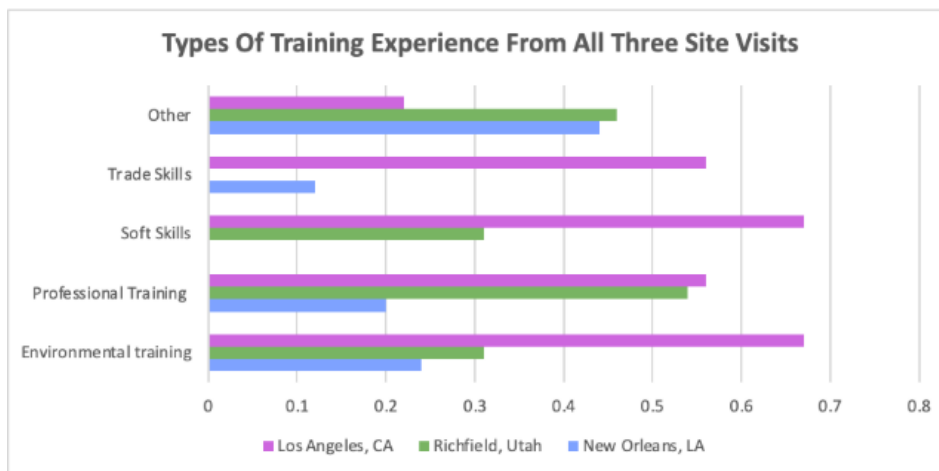
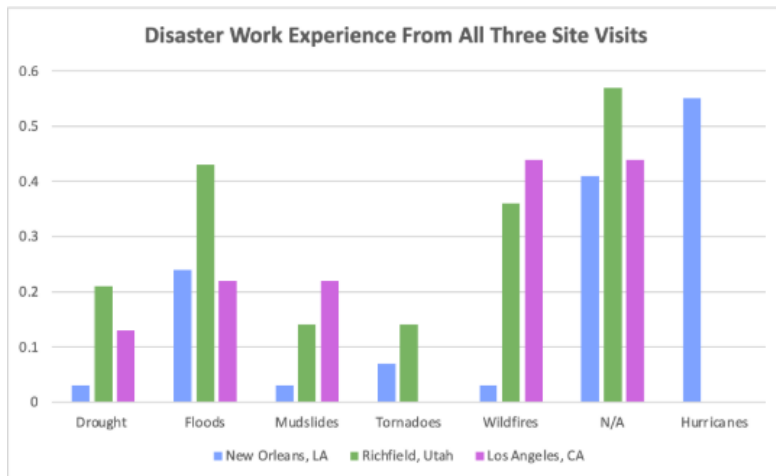


The CECE research team and DataCorps fellows traveled to three site locations across the country this summer to study civic engagement and disaster response among volunteers and service corps workers at organizations funded by AmeriCorps. Our team hosted focus groups, distributed surveys, and visited various work sites. As a fellow, I sought to study the training that volunteers and workers receive and how they apply it to their work within their community.

Our first site was in New Orleans, Louisiana, where our team visited two work sites, one at the St. Joseph the Worker Church and the other at the SBP Disaster Corps headquarters. We also hosted a focus group and distributed a survey to members of the Retired Senior Volunteers Program (RSVP) in Jefferson Parish. In our survey, 92% of RSVP volunteers reported having some type of training. When asked about work related to disaster, 55% of volunteers reported experience in hurricane work, 24% had experience in flood work, and 41% of volunteers had no experience in disaster related work. When talking to the volunteers, our team learned that many members were previously employed in education, social work, and nursing. This experience provided beneficial background for volunteers when working with low-income families and others in their community. To learn more about disaster recovery training in the New Orleans area, the DataCorps team met with SBP Disaster Corps, where volunteers receive training for the mucking and gutting of homes after hurricanes and work with local NGOs to prepare their communities to respond to hurricanes or other disasters.

The second site visit took place in Richfield, Utah, where we studied a second group of RSVP volunteers. The data from the surveys showed that 92% of members received some type of training, including some who received training in emergency management and first aid. 43% of volunteers said they had experience doing work related to flood disasters, and 36% had worked on wildfires. During the focus group, volunteers discussed receiving training in community preparedness. They also told us about their experiences operating backup generators, using ham radio for emergency communications, working as firefighters, and working with FEMA. Our experience in Richfield emphasized that skills and knowledge relevant to disaster constitute an important aspect of volunteerism.

The final site visits took place in Los Angeles and focused on youth corpsmembers in the Los Angeles Conservation Corps (LACC). The survey results showed that 44% of corpsmembers had done disaster work related to wildfires while 22% had experience in mudslides and flood related disasters. 44% of respondents had also worked on environmental water pollution during their time with the corps. Training within the LACC itself is extensive, with onboarding including OSHA and first aid/CPR trainings. LACC also offers enrollment in the LA Education Corps, which helped 20% of corpsmembers earn high school diplomas this year. Corpsmembers also have opportunities to receive certifications in conservation and technological related skills, and licenses to operate heavier machinery.



*Note: x-axis corresponds to the percentage of respondents selecting this response.*

The majority of volunteers and corpsmembers received some sort of training in their organization. Survey results show that disaster related work experience and the type of disaster a person works on depends on the community's surrounding environment. Through their work and training in local communities, volunteers and corps members are able to develop meaningful experience in disaster preparedness, conservation, and civic engagement.