State of Missouri
2012 Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity
Executive Summary

Team Name: State Parks Youth Corps Program

Nominator: Sarah Parker Pauley, Director, Missouri Department of Natural Resources and Chris Pieper, Director, Missouri Department of Economic Development

Nominating Department: Department of Natural Resources, Missouri State Parks; Department of Economic Development, Division of Workforce Development

Category: Efficiency/Process Improvement

Executive Summary:
The State Parks Youth Corps is a cooperative effort between the Missouri Department of Economic Development's Division of Workforce Development and Missouri State Parks, a division of the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Using a variety of federal funding sources, the program has provided summer jobs for Missouri youth within state parks and historic sites since 2010. These jobs give youth the opportunity to gain valuable work experience and introduce them to possible future careers in state parks and natural resources.

The first two years were funded by Workforce Investment Act Discretionary Funds. The 2012 program is being supported by Community Development Block Grant funds and Neighborhood Assistance Program tax credits. In the past two years, more than 65 percent of funds allocated went toward the participant payroll.

Since SPYC was a new program in 2010, many details and processes needed to be worked out by both agencies to ensure it was a productive and effective program. This required cooperation from all levels of both agencies, from those in administration to people at the local level in the Workforce Investment Boards and individual state parks and historic sites. The result has been a very positive experience for all involved, especially the participating youths, the state parks and their visitors.

After 2010, staff from both agencies worked together to make several improvements to the program to help alleviate some of the initial challenges. The total hours a youth could work was increased from 240 to 400 so that productivity could be increased and less time was spent on training. A statewide consistency in the hiring process and associated paperwork was also implemented. Funds in 2012 were also set aside to hire former SPYC to help supervise the new crew, thus helping with the shortage of full-time staff to do so.

Because of the success of the 2010, the program was renewed in 2011 and 2012 and the positive response to the program continues. As a result of SPYC, Missouri's state parks and historic sites have been enhanced and improved. In a time of budget cuts, SPYC program has provided resources to complete projects that may have never been possible otherwise. In turn, the youth have been provided work experience and the opportunity to learn new skills while being introduced to possible careers in natural resources and state parks. Ninety-three percent were unemployed when they were hired. Local economies also benefit from the youths being employed and the enhanced state parks continuing to draw visitors to the area.

Positions and responsibilities varied from routine maintenance and trail construction to interpretation and social media skills. In the first year alone, more than 25 structures were reroofed, 650 miles of trail were signed and blazed and 145 videos were developed for the Missouri State Parks website. Many more projects are planned for the 2012 SPYC Program, which is now in full swing.

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NOMINATION FORM

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Department: Department of Natural Resources and Department of Economic Development

1. **Project or team name.** **State Parks Youth Corps**

2. **List the name of all team members, job titles, state agency department, and/or community organization.** [please list alphabetically by last name]
3. Albertson, Traci, Workforce Development Specialist IV, Division of Workforce Development, Department of Economic Development
Bryan, Bill, Director, Missouri State Parks, Department of Natural Resources
Carter, Pati, Executive Director, Workforce Development Board of Western Missouri Schmidt, Connie, Natural
Fuqua, Mark, Director, NEMO Workforce Investment Board, Inc.
Gibson, Julie, Director, Division of Workforce Development, Department of Economic Development
Gorden, Gene, Workforce Development Director, Office of Workforce Development
Holmes, Michael, Executive Director, St. Louis Agency on Training and Employment (SLATE)
Holt, Don, Executive Director, St. Charles County Department of Workforce Development
Hostetler, Lisa, Director, North Central Missouri College
Jones, Jasen, Executive Director, Workforce Investment Board of Southwest Missouri
Kelly, David, Facility and Visitor Services Program Director, Missouri State Parks, Department of Natural Resources
McQueen, Clyde, President & CEO, Full Employment Council
O'Dell, June, Director, Workforce Investment Board of Southeast Missouri
Paige, Dan, Deputy Director, Missouri State Parks, Department of Natural Resources
Resource Manager, Missouri State Parks, Department of Natural Resources
Peine, John, Interim, Department of Workforce Development, City of Springfield
Robbins, Melissa, Acting Director, South Central Workforce Investment Board
Sieg, Jennifer, Volunteer Coordinator, Missouri State Parks, Department of Natural Resources
Vaughn, Jan, Executive Director, Central Workforce Investment Board
Wilson, Shirley, One Stop Coordinator, Office of Job Training Jefferson-Franklin Counties, Inc
Woltkamp, Melissa, Adult and Youth Program Manager, Division of Workforce Development, Department of Economic Development

4. **Describe the project** (*200 words or less*)
The State Parks Youth Corps (SPYC) is a cooperative partnership between Missouri State Parks in the Missouri Department of Natural Resources and the Missouri Department of Economic Development's Division of Workforce Development and its Workforce Investment Boards. It benefits both the youth employed in this summer work program and Missouri state parks.

As a part of the program implementation, Missouri State Parks staff developed a list of potential projects and duties that needed to be performed in 85 state parks and historic sites and the number of positions they needed for their facilities. Youths were recruited through various channels, including media outlets, schools and job fairs. Potential candidates were directed to their local Workforce Investment Board and affiliated career center, where they were screened for income eligibility. Positions varied from routine maintenance work to interpretation and developing videos for each park and site.

The program was first initiated in 2010 and proved to be so successful that it was renewed in 2011 and 2012. Some details, such as funding sources and amounts, have changed but its positive goal and the results have remained the same. Missouri youths are employed, which helps the local economies, plus Missouri state parks are enhanced and improved.

Nomination category.
(*Check only one)*

☐ INNOVATION ☐ CUSTOMER SERVICE

☒ EFFICIENCY / PROCESS IMPROVEMENT ☐ TECHNOLOGY IN GOVERNMENT

5. Describe why you selected this nomination category.

The Efficiency/Process Improvement category was chosen because of the effective way that Missouri State Parks and the Division of Workforce Development work together to develop a program that help our youth, our local economies and Missouri state parks. Both agencies were already fulfilling their missions but by partnering together, they deliver a new product or service and improve the overall quality of what they can offer to the public.

II. BACKGROUND

1. When did the team begin its work?

SPYC was first implemented in the spring of 2010 with from Missouri State Parks and the Division of Workforce Development working together to make it a successful program. The results were so positive in 2010 that it was extended in 2011 and 2012. With each year, staff continue to make improvements to the way the program is implemented.

2. When did the team implement this project?

SPYC was first implemented in 2010 with the first youth working in May.

3. How long has the project been implemented?

☐ 0 - 3 Months ☐ 4 – 6 Months ☐ 7 - 9 Months

☐ 10 – 12 Months ☒ 12 or more ☐ Completed

III. RESULTS/ACCOMPLISHMENT

1. What did the team accomplish? (*150 words or less*)

This team developed and implemented a program that gives youth valuable experience and skills to enhance their future careers. The program employed 1,007 youth in 2010 who worked 187,500 hours. In 2011, the program employed 628 youths who worked 177,523 hours. The number of hours that could be worked in 2011 increased so fewer youths were able to work almost as many hours. The goal in 2012 is to hire 500. The number of youths who are able to participate is a reflection of the amount of funds available for the program. The program introduces the youths to possible careers in natural resources and state parks. Their employment in turn helps the local economies. Missouri State Parks benefits from the program immensely as many projects are finished that may not have been feasible otherwise. Projects include repairing and improving structures, providing additional programming and interpretation and a variety of other duties. All of these projects help provide a higher quality of customer service to state park visitors that would not be possible without this program.

2. Which of the following describes the benefits of the accomplishment? (Check all that apply and provide an explanation)

☒ cost reduction ☒ time savings ☒ increased effectiveness

☐ improved process ☐ other: describe

Cost reduction – By using funds and labor provided through SPYC, the state park system was able to greatly reduce the money it would have spent on other seasonal labor. In addition to the labor through SPYC, in 2010, the state park system received $75,000 worth of supplies and equipment through the Neighborhood Assistance Program and additional funds for equipment through the Conservation Federation of Missouri. The donations reflected both organizations strong support for the program. This funds helped reduce the amount of money the state park system needed for improvements.

Time savings – Having help from SPYC members frees up time for the state park employees to accomplish other duties.

Increased effectiveness: Having additional help from SPYC members helps the state park system accomplish more tasks in a more cost-effective manner.

3. Explain how the accomplishments of the team are beyond regular duties and responsibilities (*150 words or less*).

SPYC is a completely new program for Missouri so many details had to be worked out between the two agencies. This was accomplished by existing staff members as no new positions were created to implement the program. Determining how a new program could be implemented created additional duties for all levels of staff in both agencies, from central office administration to staff at the local level, including the Workforce Investment Boards and staff at each participating state park and historic site. For the state park system, these additional duties included increased paperwork, developing projects, assisting in recruitment of workers, finding sufficient resources for the projects, and training and supervising SPYC workers.

IV. MEASUREMENT/EVALUATION

1. Describe how the success of the project was measured and what outcomes were achieved. (description should not exceed *300-500 words)*

The program's success can be measured in a variety of ways, some tangible and some intangible. The most obvious measurable success is the number of SPYC workers hired. In 2010, 1,007 youth were employed and worked 187,500 hours. In 2011, 628 SPYC workers were employed and worked 177,523 hours. The goal in 2012 is to hire 500 SPYC workers. The number of SPYC workers that can be hired reflects the amount of funds available.

In the last two years, numerous projects were completed in state parks and historic sites. Buildings have been painted and reroofed, trails have been built and maintained, interpretive programs have been presented, artifacts have been cataloged, photos and videos have been taken, trees have been planted and exotic species have been removed, just to name of few of the program accomplishments. Whether it is a recently painted cabin or a new interpretive program, each project enhances the visitor experience, making state parks and historic sites even more appealing vacation destinations to the public.

In addition to improving the state park system, the employment of SPYC workers contributed to the local economy. Ninety-three percent of the youths participating were unemployed when they were hired. In 2012, funds have been set aside to hire former SPYC to help supervise the new workers, reflecting the ongoing positive effects of the program.

The intangible success is harder to measure. One goal is to provide youths with work experience and the opportunity to learn new skills while introducing youths to possible careers in natural resources and state parks. To help measure this component, in 2012, each SPYC participant will fill out a survey when they start and when they leave. This survey focuses on their knowledge and use of the outdoors for recreation and their appreciation for natural and cultural resources. It is hoped that we will see a change in their attitude about both topics after working in one of the state parks or historic sites.

1. Are the benefits derived from this project: (Check only one.)

☒ Recurring ☐ One-time

3. If recurring, how will the benefits be sustained? (Explain in 150 words or less)

Both agencies believe SPYC has been a success and will work to continue the program in the future. If the program is extended, it will continue to provide jobs and work experience to youths while enhancing and improving Missouri state parks.

Even if the program does not continue beyond 2012, the benefits will not end. All SPYC members participating in the program have learned new skills, gained new experience and been introduced to possible careers in natural

resources and state parks. This may affect their future career choices. The projects they worked on will continue to provide an enhanced and improved state park for all visitors for many years to come.

V. RECOGNITION/AWARDS

1. **Has this project ever been nominated for the Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity? If yes, when?**

No

2. **If yes, for which category was it nominated?**

3. **Has this project received any other awards or recognition in the past? If yes, describe.**

Gov. Jay Nixon, who launched SPYC in 2010, was recognized by the National Association of State Park Directors. The Governor received NASPD's 2010 Presidents Award, which was established to recognized organizations and individuals who have made "an extraordinary contribution, innovation and/or best practice at a state, regional or national level, furthering the goal of a system of state parks." NASPD only gives one President's Award each year.

VI. NOMINATOR'S INFORMATION

NOMINATING DEPARTMENT

Name	Signature	Telephone Number	E-Mail Address
Chris Pieper		573-751-4770	Chris.Pieper@ded.mo.gov

VII. DEPARTMENT COORDINATOR INFORMATION

DEPARTMENT

Name	Signature	Telephone Number	E-Mail Address
Laura Hoskins	Laura Hoskins	573-522-6371	Laura.Hoskins@ded.mo.gov

VIII. DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR APPROVAL

DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR'S NAME	DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR'S SIGNATURE*
Chris Pieper	

Nomination must be signed <u>ONLY</u> by the Department Director to be eligible for consideration. Nominations not signed by the Department Director will be returned to the agency coordinator.

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VII. DEPARTMENT COORDINATOR INFORMATION

DEPARTMENT			
Name	**Signature**	**Telephone Number**	**E-Mail Address**
Jennifer Terry	Jennifer Terry	751-6788	Jennifer.Terry@dnr.mo.gov

VIII. DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR APPROVAL

DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR'S NAME	DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR'S SIGNATURE*
Sara Parker Pauley	Sara Parker Pauley

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