Kristina, a senior in high school and Discovery Corps member, credits the program with helping her gain more confidence in presenting, becoming more knowledgeable about scientific careers, and developing a greater interest in a number of sciences. One of Kristina’s most memorable experiences was participating in a Girls Who Code club dedicated to Discovery Corps members.

“I always looked forward to the club meetings because I had no previous experience of coding and I was fascinated by the possibilities of advancements and solutions coding could offer. It was a challenge to learn this skill from scratch, but as a dedicated person I made sure to always put in the effort and ask for help when I got stuck. I ended up creating my very first app about college information for youth. This was such an amazing experience and it truly gave me insight into the advantages of including computer science in my academic interests and for my career.”

Kristina decided to study environmental science in order to help the future of the planet and humanity with a minor in computer science in college next year. With the support of the Discovery Corps program Kristina has grown into the passionate person she is today “passionate about the environment, my peers and friends, and my future.”

Michael W graduated from the Discovery Corps Class of 2010 and is already making an impact on the world.

“While in Discovery Corps, the tide pool was one of my favorite exhibits to work. I loved explaining the regenerative abilities of the starfish and other echinoderms to visitors. It was always intriguing to me how such small creatures had abilities beyond what we humans could naturally do. Being involved early in this kind of scientific environment really inspired me to pursue a career in biology.”

Michael went on to earn a bachelor’s degree in bioengineering from University of Washington, and recently earned a master’s degree of stem cell biology and regenerative medicine from the University of Southern California. He now works in a research hospital in Los Angeles manufacturing patient-derived, cell-based therapies to treat blood and brain cancers.
EMPOWERING AND EMPLOYING THE NEXT GENERATIONS OF SCIENCE ENTHUSIASTs

Discovery Corps is the Pacific Science Center’s intensive youth development program that builds science literacy and leadership skills of high school students, and exposes them to the professional world of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM).

The Corps consists of students who show an interest in the sciences, are highly motivated, and traditionally underrepresented in STEM career fields. They undergo extensive training throughout their high school years and learn valuable job skills in customer service, education, and communication with people of all ages.

Discover Corps provides work-based learning opportunities that build confidence, empower youth with employable skills, teach teens about self-advocacy, and emphasize the importance of service to the community.

HOW IT ALL WORKS:

1. **Identification**: Work with schools and counselors to identify and enroll motivated youth who may lack opportunities.

2. **Training**: Corps members spend up to four years learning the principals of science and become increasingly more literate in science. They will complete 100 hours of service learning and training.

3. **Assessment**: Corps members are assessed on skills and performance. If expectations have been met, he/she may be promoted into a paid position at the Science Center.

4. **Employment**: Corps member’s responsibilities will increase with available training to assist with the continued development of skills. Paid youth can continue to work towards further promotions within the structure of the program.

5. **Graduation**: Members graduate from the program ready for post-secondary education or to contribute to our economy and community.

BY THE NUMBERS

The current cohort consists of 72 students,

- 82% are students of color
- 63% are women
- 53% speak a language other than English at home
- 49% participate in free or reduced lunch programs

70% say that Discovery Corps contributed to their success with current projects.

“Previously to DC I did not see myself as someone who was “good at science”, nor did I have an understanding of science careers (or see myself pursuing one). With DC, particularly with the DC field trips, I learned that science was so much more than the chemistry classes I was having a hard time with. I studied Biology in college because of the confidence DC gave me.”

—DC Alumni

“I think that Discovery Corps really was the biggest growth opportunity I had in the last 4 years. It gave me wonderful mentors in my community who support my academic goals and make me feel comfortable in a professional environment. Having that opportunity was so essential to becoming the person I am today.”

—Ellie, Discovery Corps Member, 2019 Discovery Corp Graduate

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