



## Back to School: City Year San Antonio

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San Antonio has the highest high school dropout rate in Texas.

In the San Antonio Independent School District, 48% of students drop out before graduating. [City Year San Antonio](#) has an innovative, cost efficient, peer-to-peer solution for keeping kids in school and on track to graduate.

City Year recruits and trains 17-24 year olds for 10 months of full-time service. These AmeriCorps members come from all over the country with the passion, maturity and leadership skills needed to take a supportive role in the classroom and a leadership role during before-school and after-school activities.

Corps Members (CMs) are trained to address the three early warning indicators of the drop out crisis: **attendance**, **behavior** and **course performance**. “CMs are the first to arrive on campus in the morning to organize activities, rallies, or tutoring clubs to get kids’ minds and bodies ready for a day of learning,” said Paul Garro, Executive Director of City Year San Antonio. “After the school bell rings, CMs work with the attendance office to call every absent student, let him or her know they are missed, and try to find a solution for why they aren’t there.”

CMs work on student course performance throughout the day by supporting teachers in the classrooms. They also merge course performance assistance with behavior coaching in after school programs that they run in every school where they serve. As near-peers, CMs have a unique opportunity to build relationships with students who need additional support and encouragement to finish school.

“One student appeared to be involved with gang activity but was trying really hard to stay out of it,” wrote one teacher who had a Corps Member as part of their education team. “The student used his story to write about it and after being mentored by the City Year volunteer, worked very hard to alienate himself from the gang life.”

Last year, City Year served in seven schools including two SAISD Schools – Mark Twain Middle School and MLK Academy. This year, SAISD is expanding the City Year program to five of its campuses. In all, 80 Corps Members will serve in ten schools citywide during the 2011-12 school year. City Year needs to grow to 300 Corps Members to make a significant impact on the dropout crisis – by decreasing it by 50% in San Antonio. It is on track to reach that 300 CMs benchmark in the next 5 years.

If you or someone you know would like to join the CYSA Corps as a mentor, tutor and role model, please contact **CYSA Recruitment Director Kayla Galvan** at 210-247-4423 or email her at [kgalvan@cityyear.org](mailto:kgalvan@cityyear.org). City Year also needs volunteers to assist with civic service projects and to join their board of directors.