

## Annual Report 2024

### Another remarkable year of growth

#### Sister-Corps Overview and Activities

A 501(c)(3) Nonprofit Organization Founded in 2017

#### Mission Statement

Sister-Corps is an all-women volunteer organization dedicated to mobilizing volunteers to provide recovery efforts in areas affected by natural disasters, environmental challenges, or other community needs.

Sister-Corps is an *action-based organization*! We respond and activate. Our presence is being seen across the United States. The number of natural disasters appears to be growing, and we are growing in the number of projects to which we can respond. In 2024, we responded in a total of twenty-two times, almost 2 a month on average! In the month of October, we had five projects or activities. These are all part of the following annual report from the President. (see appendix A)

Our primary focus is **long-term recovery work**, which includes light carpentry tasks to help families return to their homes and daily lives. Typical projects involve:

- **Drywall installation and finishing** (including insulation)
- **Laminate flooring installation** (and sometimes subflooring)
- **Painting**
- **Mobility ramp construction**
- **Cabinet and door installation**

We do not perform tasks such as electrical work, plumbing, roofing, concrete work, or projects in areas with unmitigated mold.

The year 2024 was our seventh year as a disaster relief organization and was a year that held more “firsts” for us than any to date. Partnerships or collaboration with other agencies make our work stronger; this year we worked with 8 Days of Hope, KXLY (tv) and the Extreme Team, ROAD, Southern California VOAD and Hope Crisis Response Network, National Parks Service, Sisters on the Fly, United Way of Southwest Virginia, and Salvation Army. Sister-Corps delivered disaster work across the nation in nine states from Virginia to California and Washington to Florida and points in between.

In 2024, Sister-Corps deployed to Mississippi in March and to Oklahoma in April in response to tornadoes.

Amory, Mississippi with approximately fifty volunteers, was our first project in which most of our labor and expense was directed at a single residence and the result of the focus was the ability to create a complete home “flip” in six days. Another “first” was to work under another agency, Eight Days of Hope, who graciously urged us to use their warehouse as a source of much of our materials and supplies for the homes we worked on! Our tool trailer went on the FIRST project!

Shawnee, Oklahoma project had close to forty-five volunteers and was a “first” time to work under another agency, Recovering Oklahomans After Disaster (ROAD), who served as the planner and the supervisor.

Prior to August 2024, Sister-Corps had not been able to deploy a group to respond to a long-term recovery effort in a location of wildfire damage. However, the invitation was out for us after meeting the Long Term Recovery Group director at the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters conference in May. Spokane has been one of the more active grassroots led regional/area projects in our history. There was a hardy group of seventeen or so and all but five were first – timers! Our other first was that we were housed in a church recreation hall (or camped in the parking lot) and we had NO LODGING costs.

## Disaster Recovery and Relief Work

While Sister-Corps is not a first responder organization, we occasionally assist in disaster relief shortly after an event.

Our year of “firsts” continued as Sister-Corps responded in a rapid manner to deploy a group of twenty-two to do light rebuilding in Damascus Va just three weeks after hurricane Helene caused massive flooding far across the inland. Lodging was again at no cost by boondocking on the land owned by one of the organizing volunteers.

Also following Hurricane Helene’s devastation in Western North Carolina, Sister-Corps volunteers prepared and delivered 150 “muck buckets” containing essential cleaning supplies, tools, and personal hygiene items to an approved distribution agency managing relief efforts. The organizer of this new project approach, at my request, wrote up a procedure for such endeavors in the future. And just three weeks later (or less) a similar project was pulled off for Punta Gorda, FL following Hurricane Milton. And a handful of local volunteers make a delivery of 60 Muck Buckets. This approach too rapid response will likely be one that SC uses with more frequency.

The drive for getting supplies to an area of devastation in the first week is not new to us, but the drive done for Damascus, VA --- separately conducted—was evidenced in a tool bag drive for homeowners there were having trouble doing even simple home repairs because they had lost their household tools in the flood.

In November, around fifty volunteers responded to our disaster project in San Diego—a first in an urban area, our first natural disaster project in California and our first very structured one or two week (volunteer’s choice) and our first to have all volunteers were housed in no-cost dorm style housing. And our first project is in which we teamed with a VOAD state group.

## Volunteer Safety and Training

Volunteer safety is our top priority. To ensure this, we have established strict safety policies, including:

- Mandatory use of **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** appropriate to the project (e.g., hard hats, gloves, goggles, and hard-toe shoes).
- A **Medical Director** who oversees safety protocols and procedures.
- On-site medical advisors, triage teams, and first-aid support, with well-equipped medical kits and AEDs.

To enhance volunteer skills, we offer **carpentry classes** that focus on safe tool use and basic construction techniques. This year there were six classes in carpentry taught; this training brought fifty-six more volunteers to a more skilled and safer situation with power tools.

For tasks requiring power tools, volunteers must complete safety training and receive verification of their skills. Certified volunteers are identified by decals on their hard hats. Additionally, chainsaw operators must complete a certification course, the cost of which is reimbursed by Sister-Corps. Notably, we have had no injuries involving power tools to date.

## Volunteer Recognition

Sister-Corps is completely reliant on volunteers and is committed to valuing the donation of time, skills, and talents of those volunteers. In keeping with that commitment, we are verified by the National Points of Light program, known as the President’s Volunteer Service Award, to acknowledge the contributions made in hours of volunteerism. In 2024, there were forty-six awardees, an increase of 119% from 2023. Twenty-one

volunteers received bronze level recognition for 100- 199 hours of volunteering, nineteen received the Silver Award for 200- 499 hours, and six were awarded the Gold Level for over five hundred hours of volunteerism.

The national program, existing since the 1980s, values the contributions of volunteerism with a formula for monetary value and Sister Corps' volunteers contributed a value of \$600, 274 labor in 2024 and in the years since beginning in 2017, we have contributed over \$1 million in value through our volunteering! Recipients acknowledged with a national pin and certificate. Way to go volunteers!

### **Environmental Work and Community Service**

For the third year, Sister-Corps has had a volunteer partnership with Sequoia National Park working under the direction and supervision of the Ranger. This is an incredibly special project. And for the fifth year, there was a large Beach clean-up project on the coast of Texas.

Sister-Corps held the national blood drive in both February and in July-August. We had the single best turnout with over 150 blood and blood product donations across the U.S. This was in partnership with sisters on the Fly. And an exceptionally good outcome, several doors have let this become a regular activity for them.

### **Financial Health**

This year, 2024, our donations were strong and our total revenue allowed us to conduct the projects of long-term recovery. Our operating expenses represent the necessary costs involved in administering a growing nonprofit such as insurance, website, tools, and equipment, and more. Sister-Corps is committed to training volunteers and having a strong leadership team with the knowledge to do the work and to be connected to other non-profits in the disaster field. Therefore, funds were committed to that training this year. Our percentage of expenses directed at programming – meaning the expenditures on meeting our mission of assisting in long-term recovery—is in line with the standards for a small non-profit. Our-financial reports are posted on the Sister-Corps website and are open for public review.

In Summary, 2024 was a strong year for Sister-Corps and with the continued generosity of our donors, 2025 is projected to be one of continuing to help communities in their recovery.

Respectfully submitted,  
Leeann Moore,  
President

January 2025

## Appendix A

