

AmeriCorps Farm-to-School Specialist Position Descriptions – Crawford and Vernon Counties

August 7, 2008

Contact: Laura Brown, 608-326-0223 Crawford County
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Overview:

School districts in Crawford and Vernon counties are seeking candidates to fill two 50% time AmeriCorps positions with the area Farm to School program. AmeriCorps members will work with school districts to expand farm-to-school programming in Crawford and Vernon Counties.

The AmeriCorps members will have two main areas of focus: 1) working with school food service personnel and local farms to increase the amount of local foods served at the schools and 2) food and nutrition education. Early in the year the volunteers will work the Crawford County UW Extension Community Development Educator and school volunteers to organize farm to school work teams at each school. These teams will define specific activities and goals for their farm to school programs which may include classroom snack programs, local foods school fundraisers, and school gardens, lunchroom food tastings, classroom lessons, and farm field trips.

WHL AmeriCorps will have opportunities to work with elementary and middle school students, teachers, farmers, food service personnel, parents, and a wide range of community partners including the UW Extension office and the University of Wisconsin Extension Nutrition Education Program.

One AmeriCorps volunteer will be based in Prairie du Chien and the other in Viroqua. Both positions will have offices within local schools. Volunteers will report directly to the UW Extension Community Development Educator and will receive guidance from a supervisory team comprised of representatives from each school. Work hours will vary based on school start times primarily Monday through Friday but may include occasional evening and weekend hours.

AmeriCorps members will be part of a larger team of 20 AmeriCorps members who will be implementing farm-to-school programs at eight other sites around Wisconsin. Statewide and local training will be provided for the volunteers.

Specific Duties:

- Organize and attend farm to school work team meetings for interested schools which may include (Prairie du Chien based position) Prairie du Chien, Seneca, Wauzeka, Boscobel, (Viroqua based position) Desoto, North Crawford, Viroqua, and LaFarge
- Work with teams to develop farm to school plans, goals, and evaluation strategies
- Assist work teams in developing fresh local foods educational materials through lunchroom activities, flyers, and communications to families
- Work with schools organize daily snack program and develop materials for homegrown fundraisers
- Develop and maintain a database of farmers willing to sell to schools
- Coordinate school district needs to minimize transportation and processing barriers
- Communicate with farms about school needs
- Collaborate with teachers to present fresh food lessons to elementary students in area schools
- Provide feedback on lesson plans and develop lesson materials

- Recruit volunteers to assist with tastings, classroom lessons, and field trips
- Contribute to newsletter, website, and other communications for schools and families

Required qualifications:

- Strong interpersonal and problem-solving skills in a team setting
- Strong verbal and written communication skills
- Passion for inspiring healthful eating among youth and for promoting local agriculture
- Working knowledge of word processing, spreadsheet software, email programs and ability to efficiently perform internet research
- Ability to work independently and proactively
- Ability to provide one's own transportation for work purposes (this will sometimes include travel to other school districts)

Desired qualifications:

- Experience in education, nutrition, environmental science, or agriculture
- Experience working with youth in an educational setting
- Volunteer or paid experience with socially, economically and/or ethnically diverse populations
- Experience working with food service in schools, restaurants, or other institutions
- Experience working with farmers
- Skillful in establishing and maintaining professional work relationships
- Experience recruiting and managing volunteers
- Familiarity with graphic design software

Appointment Type:

This is a 50% one-year appointment. The position will begin approximately September 1, 2008 and end approximately August 31, 2009. There are 2 positions available. Hours are flexible.

Compensation:

AmeriCorps members will receive a modest living allowance (approximately \$475/month), student loan deferment, and a \$2,360 education award at the end of service. Work travel expenses will be covered.

Application Procedure and Deadline:

Please submit a resume, two professional references, and a letter of interest including a statement explaining why you think farm-to-school is important for Wisconsin schools by August 25, 2008 to:

Crawford County:

Laura Brown

Crawford County UW Extension

225 N Beaumont Rd

Prairie du Chien, WI 53821

608-326-0223

*Emailed applications are preferred. Send to laura.brown@ces.uwex.edu.

Vernon County:

Jessica Luhning

Valley Stewardship Network

124 ½ S. Main Street

Viroqua, WI 54665

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To Read More About Farm to School or Americorps Initiatives in Wisconsin:
Visit Wisconsin Homegrown Lunch <http://www.reapfoodgroup.org/farmtoschool>
AmeriCorps visit www.americorps.org