

Sauk County 4-H Youth Development AmeriCorps*VISTA Year Round Position Description

Brief Description of Program

Sauk County AmeriCorps*VISTA will work on reaching and serving underserved and underrepresented Sauk County audiences through integration of various 4-H Afterschool, outdoor education, and financial education programming efforts.

AmeriCorps*VISTA will work to build community capacity through connecting with existing community organizations and recruiting and training adult and youth volunteers to carry out the programming efforts. This is a paid volunteer position. You may not have another paying job while you are serving the year as an AmeriCorps*VISTA member. More information on AmeriCorps can be found at: <http://www.nationalservice.org/>

Benefits of Participation

VISTA members commit to serve full-time for a year at a nonprofit organization or local government agency, working to fight illiteracy, improve health services, create businesses, strengthen community groups, and much more. With passion, commitment, and hard work, you'll create or expand programs designed to bring individuals and communities out of poverty.

There are as many reasons to serve as there are people who serve. Volunteering is not just an altruistic act. It's an opportunity to advance in all areas of your life. Here are a few of the things you can gain when you give your time and yourself:

- Connect with your community.
- Conserve funds for charities, nonprofits and faith-based and other community organizations by contributing your time.
- Share your skills and gain new ones.
- Develop self-esteem and self-confidence.
- Meet new people from all walks of life.
- Enhance your resume and make important networking contacts.
- Promote a worthwhile activity.
- Feel needed and valued.
- Experience something new.
- Serve your country.

Each VISTA will receive \$833 per month for their work, plus an additional educational award to apply to higher education (upcoming tuition or outstanding student loans), and valuable resume building experience. Year Round VISTA receives a **\$4,725 educational award** (or \$1,200 cash) plus options for health benefits, child care benefits and paid sick leave/vacation

Program Description

Mission

AmeriCorps*VISTA in Sauk County will, along with community partners and adult volunteers, engage youth in creative, research-based youth development programs designed to develop skills that support improved academic performance, problem prevention, and life transitions to college and to the workforce.

Audience Served

The primary audience for the programs is school aged youth and adult volunteers working to serve the youth through AmeriCorps*VISTA programming. Sauk County has a total population of approximately 4,000 in poverty and in 2006, 4,569 residents participated in the FoodShare program. Specific areas of the county have a higher percent of underserved youth, underrepresented youth, and families in poverty. These areas of the county would specifically be targeted and include Lake Delton (47% of students at Lake Delton Elementary School qualify for free or reduced lunches), the Bluffview Community (which, although hard to quantify, is a community in need which has an non-proportionally high population of Latino families and families living in poverty), HoChunk Head Start youth, Baraboo Elementary School students currently enrolled in afterschool programs (46% of Baraboo South Elementary School youth qualify for free or reduced lunches), and Reedsburg Elementary School students (47% of Reedsburg West Side Elementary School youth qualify for free or reduced lunches).

Program High Lights

During the school year, AmeriCorps*VISTA will bring 4-H Afterschool programming into the existing Baraboo School District afterschool program by creating a service program that prepares middle and high school students to mentor and lead 4-H Afterschool curriculum activities with elementary aged youth. AmeriCorps*VISTA will also partner with community organizations to implement various 4-H afterschool and summer youth development programming with other low income populations (for example, Lake Delton Elementary, Reedsburg Elementary, Bluffview, HoChunk Head Start). Financial education outreach programs are also a key component of the VISTA program in Sauk County. Outreach to youth with risk factors for continuing poverty will encourage youth and their parents to engage in these programs. Programming efforts will focus on life skill development, healthy lifestyle activities, outdoor education, environmental stewardship, and problem prevention.

AmeriCorps*VISTA Activities and Responsibilities

- Serve as a member of the Sauk County UW-Extension Youth Development programs team
- Work cooperatively with Baraboo School District after school staff to plan 4-H after school teaching topics
- Work cooperatively with the Baraboo School District to sustain & grow the four 4-H After School programs within their current “Kid Stop” program.
- Work cooperatively with the Baraboo School District to implement a 4-H Afterschool club within the Baraboo Middle School.
- Work to implement a 4-H program within Spring Green Elementary School during delayed start mornings. Work to implement additional 4-H community clubs and 4-H AfterSchool clubs/activities within other areas of the county where positive youth development opportunities are needed. Support & expand the beginning stages of 4-H Youth Development work with the Ho-Chunk and Bluffview communities.
- Work cooperatively with Youth Environmental Projects (YEPS) of Sauk County to organize service-learning, youth environmental stewardship projects in areas of high poverty within Sauk County and develop a community service program that would allow juvenile defenders to satisfy penalties through environmental stewardship projects
- Work cooperatively with Sue Nagelkerk, Sauk County Family Living Educator, to provide & expand financial literacy training and support opportunities to Sauk County families in need.

Successful applicants will possess the following skills:

- Strong self-motivation
- Ability to multi-task on a variety of projects
- Creativity
- Ability to complete tasks with minimal supervision
- Highly self-directed
- Works well with collaborations
- Team player
- Effective communication skills
- Follows through on all tasks

Dates of Service and Work Hours:

The VISTA member is expected to work approximately 35-40 hours per week, with some night and weekend programs. Typical office hours are 8:30 – 4:30 pm, but can be adjusted to meet your schedule. Flex time is available for night and weekend work hours.

Pre-service Orientation (PSO) will be August 18 -21, 2009 in Indianapolis, IN. All expenses related to this training, including travel to and from your hometown will be covered. The official start date for the position is August 24, 2009.

To Apply:

Send a cover letter, resume, and contact information for two references to Jessica Jens, Sauk County 4-H Youth Development Agent (contact information below).

Preferred application deadline is June 15, 2009.

Direct Supervisor

Jessica Jens, Sauk County 4-H Youth Development Agent

University of Wisconsin-Extension

jessica.jens@ces.uwex.edu

(608) 355-3255

Please have inquiries about this position directed to Jessica Jens.

