



## **Barron County Cooperative Extension AmeriCorps\*VISTA**

### **Program Overview:**

AmeriCorps\*VISTA's mission is to create and expand programs that ultimately help bring low-income people and communities out of poverty. The Barron County AmeriCorps\*VISTA will serve as a member of the Barron County UW-Extension educator team and will work in a cooperative project that includes Barron, Polk, Sawyer and Washburn Counties. In cooperation with the Extension educators and other community partners, the VISTA will build a network of community garden programs and connect gardeners with organizations that are working toward building a sustainable food system and ensuring food security for limited-income families. The VISTA volunteer will coordinate educational opportunities for youth and adults related to gardening, food preservation, food safety, and nutrition. The VISTA volunteer will also work to support district-wide initiatives, primarily marketing efforts to better connect citizens with Extension's non-formal community-based educational programs and resources.

### **Term of Service:**

- Pre-service orientation: June 16-19, 2009 in Indianapolis
- Service begins June 20, 2009 and ends June 19, 2010

### **Position Responsibilities:**

- Serve as a member of the Barron County UW-Extension educator team
- Facilitate communication among various community garden groups in Barron, Polk, Washburn, and Sawyer counties
- Identify educational needs that are common to the community gardens in the four-county area and work with UW-Extension educators and partners to design programs that will help to meet their educational needs
- Network with and support the work of local organizations working on building a sustainable food system, as well as Master Gardeners, 4-H, and community volunteers that are working on community gardening activities
- Work with the Northwest Regional Food Network members, Six Rivers Cooperative, UW-Barron County staff, and UW-Extension staff to coordinate the production and distribution of the Farm Fresh Atlas
- Develop a sustainable network of community garden volunteers who will be prepared to carry on this work after the VISTA position ends
- Work toward securing additional resources (funding, in-kind contributors, equipment) to insure long-term project sustainability
- Prepare and deliver reports to the county government officials and other community stakeholders as requested by the Barron County UW-Extension department head
- Contribute to Cooperative Extension Western District priority initiatives
- Participate in VISTA orientation and professional development, and additional in-service training as needed

### **Required Qualifications:**

- Minimum age 18
- Excellent organizational skills including the ability to coordinate program details and organize workloads
- Competence working with Microsoft Office programs and the internet
- Ability to work in a context of individual and cultural differences

An EEO/Affirmative Action employer, University of Wisconsin-Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming, including Title IX requirements.

- Ability to schedule evening and some weekend work as a regular part of position duties
- Transportation adequate to fulfill positions responsibilities
- Ability to communicate ideas effectively verbally, in writing, and through educational technology to both youth and adults
- Commitment to a team work environment

**Preferred Qualifications:**

- Some higher education or a college degree
- Volunteer or paid experience working with people from culturally diverse groups
- Knowledge of gardening
- Experience with volunteer management
- Experience in program marketing

**Direct Supervisor:**

Tim Jergenson, Barron County Agricultural/Natural Resources/Horticultural Agent  
 University of Wisconsin-Extension  
 tim.jergenson@ces.uwex.edu  
 715-537-6250

**Office Location:**

This position will work out of the Barron County UW-Extension Office, 330 E LaSalle Ave, Room 2206, Barron WI. Travel throughout the four-county project area and the Cooperative Extension Western District will be required.

**Remuneration:**

- The AmeriCorps\*VISTA is a volunteer position. The volunteer will receive a living stipend of \$833 per month. Direct deposit of stipend into member's bank account is required
- If service is successfully completed, the volunteer will their choice of a \$4,725 Education Award or a \$1,200 post-service stipend
- Health coverage (for VISTA member only; not available for dependents)
- Child care benefits for qualified members
- Ten days of personal leave and ten days of medical leave
- Travel and approved job-related expense reimbursement
- Professional development opportunities

**To Apply:**

Applications are accepted on-line. Go to [www.americorps.gov/vista](http://www.americorps.gov/vista) where you will be asked to create a "My AmeriCorps" account and you will be able to complete an on-line application. Apply to the position titled: "**Barron County UW-Extension**".