



VISTA Assignment Description

VAD

VISTA Member Name	
VISTA Title	Foodscares Garden Programs & Education Manager
Member Term of Service	2022-2023

Site Name	Maine Foodscares, Inc.
EIN Number	83-4414589
Service Location (address including 4 digit zip extension)	Maine Foodscares 22 Montgomery Road Windham, ME 04062
Supervisor Name/Title	Ali Mediate
Supervisor Phone/Email	(207) 671-6306, ali@mainefoodscares.org

Project Name	Goodwill VISTA Partnership
Sponsoring Organization	Goodwill Industries of Northern New England
Project Number	17VSAME002
Project Period	2022-2023
Focus Area	Healthy Futures
Secondary Focus Area	Environmental Stewardship
Number of Years with Goodwill VISTA Partnership	1
If more than 3 site must define a NEW project for the VISTA(s).	n/a
If the service the VISTA member will perform meets the following priority areas, please highlight which and briefly explain how:	Opioid Addiction Prevention and/or Recovery Employment/Workforce Development Housing: particularly for veterans STEM programming for underrepresented students

VISTA Assignment Objectives & Member Activities

Host Site Organization Overview	Maine Foodscares focuses on reducing food insecurity in southern Maine by providing low-income families and individuals with free gardens, gardening and food preparation instruction, and a community experience based on increasing direct access to healthy, nutritious produce. Maine Foodscares also participates in the network of southern Maine organizations and programs that support food production as a means to reduce food insecurity; Maine Foodscares has several partnerships that enable us to leverage additional resources to combat hunger and poverty. Because organic vegetable gardening embodies the principles of sustainable agriculture, reduces the transportation component of food costs,
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	and improves the micro-ecology in the area where the garden is located, the Free Garden Project also generates positive outcomes for the environment.
Project Goal	<p>The goal of this VISTA project is to continue the capacity building efforts of Maine Foodscapes to act as a non-profit agency by developing the tools, procedures, and grant submissions necessary to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> meet the needs of the Foodscapes Garden Project's community of low-income gardeners throughout Southern Maine expand Maine Foodscapes programming increase financial sustainability of the organization through fundraising efforts and grant submissions
Sustainability	<i>Provide a summary of how the member(s) service will be sustainable once their term ends. Is this project designed to augment a full year member's term? Will the project be expanded upon in the rest of the year or the following summer?</i>
Objective 1	<p>Work towards ending the cycle of poverty through increasing Maine Foodscapes' capacity to address food insecurity experienced by residents of Southern Maine</p> <p><i>The Maine Foodscapes Garden Project serves low-income, food-insecure families in southern Maine; depending on how the data are counted, 16% of Maine's households, 16% of its seniors, and 20% of its children do not have enough to eat. Maine has the highest rate of hunger ("very low" on the food insecurity scale) in New England; our hunger rate is third in the nation, and sixth for overall food insecurity. Cumberland and York Counties comprise the majority of Maine Foodscapes' service area. Of the households in Cumberland County, just over 12% experience food insecurity, and 50% are eligible for federal food assistance programs; in York County, just over 11% of households are food insecure, and 52% are eligible for federal food assistance. Both counties have a poverty rate of about 10%.</i></p> <p><i>Recruitment of gardeners is conducted through notices sent to over 50 partners who work with our target population (food banks, social service agencies, community gardens, etc.). Along with information about gardening skills, the application form gathers demographic characteristics and perceptions of household food security and self-efficacy. For our three years of operation to date, 45% of Foodscapes households are headed by single parents; 50% receive EBT/WIC benefits, are eligible for free or reduced-price school lunches, and use a food bank or pantry more than twice a month. Over 75% reported that their funds did not cover enough food to last the month, and nearly 80% reported that their budget often or sometimes did not stretch to provide healthful, well-balanced meals.</i></p> <p><i>Although there are few studies to date on the impact of personal vegetable gardening on food insecurity, interest is growing, and preliminary data have been collected. A 2018 study in San Jose, CA, found that home gardens active for six months saved \$552 on the household food budget. The three-raised-bed gardens provided by Maine Foodscapes can, if succession planning and season extension techniques are used, provide about \$1,200 of produce for a garden year. The poverty line for a family of four in Maine is \$25,100; if a household did produce \$1,200 worth of food, it would increase household income by 4.7%.</i></p> <p>VISTA Member Involvement: The VISTA member assigned to Development Manager will aid Maine Foodscapes in developing key processes necessary for the long-term sustainability of the organization as a nonprofit. The VISTA Member will play a key role in the sustainability of the new organization-wide CRM system (Neon One CRM), grant research and writing, work to increase Maine Foodscapes' operating budget through fundraising</p>

	campaigns/events/grants program development; recruitment & training of community members/groups to fundraise on behalf of Maine Foodscapes, and will create external communications as related to the above responsibilities. The VISTA member will also support data collection & impact reporting.
Timeframe	Continuous
Member Activities – Objective 1	The Maine Foodscapes VISTA member will be supporting Maine Foodscapes, rather than providing direct service to program participants. Through the member’s capacity-building work on fundraising, donor cultivation, development, and grant writing, Maine Foodscapes will be able to support additional households.
Objective 2	<i>Increase sustainability of Maine Foodscapes Garden Project by providing full time capacity building support.</i>
Member Activities – Objective 2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Manage the Foodscapes Garden Programs year-round supporting 150+ low-income families and 10+ organizations across Southern Maine who have vegetable gardens installed by Maine Foodscapes. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Support pre, mid, and post survey collection, gather program feedback through events and surveys, and lead data reporting for the Garden Programs; incorporate program results into the Foodscapes Annual report. B. Coordinate FGP Leadership team meetings beginning in January or at start of programming at the beginning of the year. Recruit and retain lead volunteers to support the FGP Program in 2023. C. Manage application distribution and selection of new gardeners and household recipients of free raised beds and resources for home vegetable gardening. D. Manage organizational community garden installation partnerships in collaboration with Director and Volunteer Program Coordinator E. Lead, coordinate, recruit, and manage the Gardener Mentors Program. Recruit local volunteers and pair them with Gardeners in the FGP program and with community garden partner sites. F. Supervise and support the hire and training of a lead builder paid intern who will lead direct service of garden building, working closely with the Volunteer Coordinator to support volunteer placement at every new garden build. G. Support new low-income gardener households with correspondence and a sense of community. This includes email, Facebook, texting, phone calls, and Instagram correspondence. H. Schedule, manage reservations, and conduct 3-4 New gardener Orientations and 1 end of year celebration for low-income gardeners in the FGP program. I. Manage mid-season Gardener check in schedule (connect volunteers with gardeners for mid-growing season visits – bring succession seedlings and extra seeds as needed).
Member Activities – Objective 3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Manage all FGP Gardener digital and phone communications. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Send a Monthly Gardener e-newsletter through the Foodscapes CRM platform (similar to MailChimp). B. Create social posts for all platforms (Instagram, twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn) C. oversee the Facebook social learning group for low-income gardeners in the FGP program – ensure gardeners are sharing and getting all questions answered. D. Call gardeners as needed to check in, invite to events, request feedback, etc. E. Manage any USPS mailings necessary for program execution. F. Act as the liaison between FGP Gardeners and the Foodscapes Board of Directors.

Member Activities – Objective 4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Coordinate and manage year-round educational and FGP Gardener events. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Plan, promote, and ensure successful Community Workshop education schedule (gardening, cooking, and wellness workshops – 1-2x per month). A. Use Eventbrite and the Foodscapes CRM to engage clients and community members in the Foodscapes Workshop Series. B. Promote the Community Workshops Series through the Foodscapes CRM, social media outlets, and other forms of communications. C. Work with educators to ensure they have a workshop agenda, resource handouts available, a small budget for materials, and all other needs for successful workshop event management. D. Recruit volunteers and paid educators from the program and the community to lead skill sharing events in collaboration with local organizations. E. Support Fundraising events at Foodscapes. F. Recruit Gardeners to engage with Foodscapes events and workshops as leaders, volunteers, and/or participants.
Member Activities – Objective 5	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Coordinate Foodscapes community education programming. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Secure contracts with community garden sites serving at risk clients and plan installation and/ or educational programming for community gardeners at various audiences. B. Recruit and oversee Summer VISTA Gardener Educator(s) at Boys & Girls Clubs and other community garden partner sites who want garden education programming for their clients. C. Schedule all garden programming at partner sites and ensure there is a Foodscapes Educator present for all scheduled programs. D. Recruit, support and train educators to lead on site garden education programming. E. Develop program evaluation materials and identify areas for improvement.

Training	Training	Expected Timeframe
	Goodwill VISTA Partnership Trainings <i>(outlined in Member Training Calendar)</i>	Ongoing

	3 overnight trainings in September, February and May. Dates TBD. Most are 2 nights, 3 days.	
	Monthly trainings including: webinars, member conferences or day-long conferences. Dates and locations TBD. Travel may be required.	
	Foodscares Trainings	TBD
	Mentoring by members of Foodscares Board of Directors and Leadership Team on all aspects of program development and implementation	Ongoing
Service Compon	National Days of Service	Expected Timeframe
	9/11 Day of Service and Remembrance	Week of 9/11
	Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service	Week of 1/21
	AmeriCorps Week	2 nd Week of March

AmeriCorps VISTA Benefits

- Stipend of \$954 per month throughout the 12 month term (\$1,174 in Cumberland and York Counties)
- Choice of \$6,195 education award or \$1,800 cash stipend upon completion of service
 - Education award can be to pay off qualified loans, or for educational expenses at Title IV schools
- Forbearance of federally qualified student loans during service term (interest paid by AmeriCorps)
 - Stafford
 - Perkins
 - Some private loans (you must call lender to ask)
- Health Benefits (go to link below for more details)
- Workers Compensation Coverage
- Child Care Reimbursement (if income eligible)
- 10 days of sick leave and 10 days of vacation leave
- Relocation Allowance for service for those who relocate 50 miles or more (from their home of record)
 - One time relocation allotment of \$750 and reimbursement for travel costs (baggage shipment, mileage reimbursement if driving a personal vehicle)
- Non-competitive eligibility for Federal Jobs for 1 year after your term of service
- Networking/professional development
- Mileage reimbursement to AmeriCorps sponsored training events
- Mileage reimbursement for project/site related travel consistent with staff reimbursement at the site
- Usually eligible for Food Stamps (SNAP) – should apply for benefit before starting VISTA term

For more information about VISTA: <http://www.vistacampus.gov/>

AmeriCorps Prohibited Activities

The following activities are prohibited in AmeriCorps Programs:

- (a) While charging time to the AmeriCorps program, accumulating service or training hours, or otherwise performing activities supported by the AmeriCorps program or CNCS, staff and members may not engage in the following activities:
1. Attempting to influence legislation;
 2. Organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes;
 3. Assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing;
 4. Impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements;
 5. Engaging in partisan political activities, or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office;
 6. Participating in, or endorsing, events or activities that are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation, or elected officials;

7. Engaging in religious instruction, conducting worship services, providing instruction as part of a program that includes mandatory religious instruction or worship, constructing or operating facilities devoted to religious instruction or worship, maintaining facilities primarily or inherently devoted to religious instruction or worship, or engaging in any form of religious proselytization;
8. Providing a direct benefit to—
 - i. A business organized for profit;
 - ii. A labor union;
 - iii. A partisan political organization;
 - iv. A nonprofit organization that fails to comply with the restrictions contained in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 except that nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent participants from engaging in advocacy activities undertaken at their own initiative; and engaging in advocacy activities undertaken at their own initiative; and
 - v. An organization engaged in the religious activities described in paragraph (g) of this section, unless Corporation assistance is not used to support those religious activities;
9. Conducting a voter registration drive or using Corporation funds to conduct a voter registration drive;
10. Providing abortion services or referrals for receipt of such services; and
11. Such other activities as CNCS may prohibit

Capacity Building Performance Measures

As a general rule, capacity building activities are *indirect services* that enable CNCS-supported organizations to provide more, better and sustained *direct services*. Capacity building activities cannot be solely intended to support the administration or operations of the organization. Capacity building activities must:

1. Be intended to support or enhance the program delivery model.
2. Respond to the organization's goal of increasing, expanding or enhancing services in order to address the most pressing needs identified in the community, and
3. Enable the organization to provide a sustained level of more or better services after the national service participant's term of service has ended.

These Capacity Building Performance Measures should directly relate to the VISTA member Goal/Objectives/Activities outlined in the VAD. Please rank your top three performance measures in order as how they correlate to the VAD objectives and activities you just listed.

Please Note: Although we ask that you to rank the top 3 primary measures associated with the member position, members will be expected to report applicable accomplishments on ALL performance measures via reporting procedures throughout the year. Please indicate your top performance measurement.

Selection 2021-2022	Performance Measure	2020-2021 Target #
	Number of community volunteers recruited by CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants	
	Number of community volunteers managed by CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants	
	Number of organizations implementing three or more effective volunteer management practices as a result of capacity building services provided by CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants	
	Number of organizations that received capacity building services from CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants	
	Number of staff and community volunteers that received training (of one or more types) as a result of capacity building services provided by CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants	10

	Number of organizations that completed a community assessment identifying goals and recommendations with the assistance of CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants	
	Hours of service contributed by community volunteers who were recruited by CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants	
	Hours of service contributed by community volunteers who were managed by CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants	150
	Number of organizations reporting that capacity building activities provided by CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants have helped to make the organization more efficient	
	Number of organizations reporting that capacity building activities provided by CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants have helped to make the organization more effective	
	Number of new systems and business processes (technology, performance management, training, etc) or enhancements to existing systems and business processes put in place as a result of capacity building services provided by CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants	
	Number of organizations that monitored their progress towards the goals identified in their community assessment with the assistance of CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants	
	Number of additional activities completed and/or program outputs produced by the program as a result of capacity building services provided by CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants in:	
	a) Disaster Services	
	b) Economic Opportunity	
	c) Education	
	d) Environmental Stewardship	
	e) Healthy Futures	
	f) Veterans and Military Families	
	Number of organizations that have experienced an increase in requests for their programs and services as a result of capacity building services provided by CNCS-supported organizations or notational service participants	
	Number of additional types of services offered by organizations as a result of capacity building services provided by CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants in:	
	a) Disaster Services	
	b) Economic Opportunity	
	c) Education	
	d) Environmental Stewardship	
	e) Healthy Futures	
	f) Veterans and Military Families	
	Dollar value of cash resources leveraged by CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants	
	Dollar value of in-kind resources leveraged by CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants	\$1,500-2,000
	Number of new beneficiaries that received services as a result of capacity building efforts in	
	a) Disaster Services	
	b) Economic Opportunity	
	c) Education	
	d) Environmental Stewardship	50-100
	e) Healthy Futures	50-100

	f) Veterans and Military Families	
	Number of new beneficiaries from one or more targeted or underserved populations (counts by target population, e.g. racial or ethnic group) that received services as a result of capacity building efforts in:	
	a) Disaster Services	
	b) Economic Opportunity	
	c) Education	
	d) Environmental Stewardship	
	e) Healthy Futures	
	f) Veterans and Military Families	