National Service AmeriCorps*VISTA Positions
At Growing Hope in Ypsilanti, Michigan
Be a part of healthy, sustainable solutions! Help take the lead in Growing Food Security in Washtenaw County

POSITION OVERVIEW:
Growing Hope is currently recruiting applicants for two VISTA positions for 12-month terms of service, to begin on August 12, 2013 and to run through August 15, 2014. See below for details, but please note application deadline is June 9. However, prospective members who are willing to commit to a two-year term of service will be given some preference. Growing Hope is a community-based nonprofit organization whose mission is to help people improve their lives and communities through gardening and healthy local food access. Growing Hope and partners may also be recruiting VISTA positions in Aug-Sept 2013 to begin their one-year terms of service in November 2013.

All VISTA members help to strengthen food security, enhance local environments, improve health & nutrition, and provide educational opportunities to community members throughout Washtenaw County—particularly in ways that strengthen access for low-income families—through different roles at Growing Hope and our partners. These VISTA members will work to increase organizational capacity by developing program models, partnerships & collaborations, training, and securing financial and human resources. The goals of this VISTA project include:

- Maximizing year-round food availability for low-income households
- Cultivating healthy eaters among low-income youth & adults to increase well-being and reduce risk of chronic disease
- Training youth & adults as urban farmers, and expand opportunities to serve in this area
- Developing economically-viable models of urban agriculture
- Building enduring capacity of these efforts to maximize impact of organizations & projects in urban ag and food security through collaboration and volunteerism; Documenting success & impact using common metrics

Each VISTA member will focus in one of the areas below, although some responsibilities/projects may be shared and adjusted based on the strengths and interests of each member.

Please specify which position or positions you wish to be considered for. Please cite both what skills you would bring to the entire Growing Hope team, and specific qualifications for each position you wish to be considered for. While we outline specific position descriptions below, we may not fill all positions and/or may combine positions.

Qualified candidates for any of our positions will exhibit the following:

- Passion for Growing Hope and our partners’ missions and work. Dedication to working as a member of and in partnership with diverse communities
- Willingness to commit to one full year of full time service to the organization and community, with some preference to those willing to commit to two years of service
- Proven ability to work well and communicate effectively both in groups and independently
Comfort in use of computers and technology on a daily basis
Desire to encourage local community members to share ideas, talents and resources; previous knowledge of local resources is a plus!
Excellent verbal and written communication skills
Strong organizational and management skills, including excellent follow-through.
Willingness to know more about and respond to needs of communities and schools, and become grounded/involved (if not already) in the communities in which we work
Flexibility to work non-traditional hours, including evenings and weekends as scheduled
Experience in coordinating and leading teams and working with volunteers
Willingness to see projects through—from developing to implementing to evaluating
Ability to juggle multiple projects simultaneously
Experience or desire to gain knowledge of and assist in disseminating information about organic gardening or farming, nutrition/health, sustainability, and community food systems
Willingness to adapt to changing organizational conditions and extremely limited resources
Creativity, flexibility, resourcefulness and positive thinking
VISTA members placed at Growing Hope who live in or will relocate to Ypsilanti are preferred

TO APPLY:

There are two steps to the application, and until both are completed, we will not review your application.

1) Go to http://my.americorps.gov to enter the Americorps online application website. Create your online Americorps application. Once completed, you still need to submit your application to Growing Hope. Do a search for Michigan and Growing Hope and you’ll find us among the results—from there you should be able to submit the application to us. Note: until your references have completed their sections describing you on the Americorps website, your application is not complete.

2) Submit a resume and 2-page letter describing your interests and qualifications by June 9th at the latest—but applications will be reviewed and selections made on a rolling basis, so it is helpful to get yours completed right away. You may not be considered if you apply later and applicants are already selected. Electronic applications encouraged; please email (as attachments) to apply@growinghope.net. After receiving materials and completing online application above, applicants will need to be available for interviews in person or by phone (in-person preferred).

Please read on for the position description, and specify in your letter how your qualifications match those described below position.

POSITION DESCRIPTIONS:

Database/Information Systems VISTA will be responsible for maintaining, administering and supporting existing Growing Hope databases. This role will include, but not be limited to, developing system standards for information flow into and through the organization. This VISTA will work within Growing Hope’s existing database structure to identify appropriate information flows and design database user manuals for current and future staff. Incoming information includes volunteer, donor and program participant contact information, giving history, gardening
experience and other related data. The Database/Information Systems VISTA will assist Growing Hope in managing information by identifying the best ways to organize, store and present data according to identified end-user needs.

**Job Training** VISTA will be responsible for researching best practices for job training and economic development in local food systems work. This role will include, but not be limited to, researching peer organizations and their job training programs as well as providing suggestions and recommendations for Growing Hope’s growth in this area. This VISTA will work with Growing Hope’s existing youth and adult programs to identify appropriate occasions to build or expand existing job training opportunities. Furthermore, this VISTA will assist in building and compiling job training curricula for various identified target audiences, as well as facilitating some pilot trainings.

**BENEFITS**
- Monthly Stipend of $983.00 (before taxes), or $11,796/year
- Health Benefits, optional Life Insurance
- Child care assistance
- Educational ($5,500) or cash award ($1,500) at end of term
- Training before and during service term; Opportunities to build resume

**EXPECTATION OF SERVICE**
AmeriCorps*VISTA members serve full-time, for one year with varying work schedules. VISTA members are not allowed to be in school full time or have other employment during their term of service. VISTA members may be eligible for Food Stamps, childcare subsidies, or other forms of public assistance.

**QUESTIONS?**
More information about Growing Hope is available at [www.growinghope.net](http://www.growinghope.net). More information about VISTA and other Corporation for National and Community Service programs, see [http://www.cns.gov/](http://www.cns.gov/). Additional questions about Growing Hope or these positions, please call us at 734-786-8401 or email apply@growinghope.net.