

**Center for Rural Affairs
AmeriCorps Position – Half Time
2014-2015
Growing Food for Health and the Environment**

Goal: Increase markets for local growers and increase the amounts of fresh and healthy local food for students by encouraging farm to school activities: local food procurement, local food curriculum and events, and promoting school gardens.

Farm to School is a program of the Center for Rural Affairs. The goal of Farm to School is to source food from local and regional farmers for pre-school through senior high schools in Nebraska. Farm to School also provides agriculture, health and nutrition education opportunities. It improves the health of children and communities while supporting local and regional farmers.

Title: Farm to School Organizer
Hours per year: 900 hours
Rate of compensation: \$6,050 + educational stipend (please email kathies@cfra.org for additional information)
Report to: Kathie Starkweather, Director, Farm and Community Program
Start Date: September 2, 2014
End Date: August 31, 2015

Principle Activities and Outcomes

1. Build connections for Farm to School programs in rural Nebraska through face-to-face networking
2. Help organize trainings for farmers and school food service professionals in farm product safety and usage
3. Provide individual Farm to School facilitation between schools and farmers
4. Raise awareness of Farm to School throughout the state
5. Assist with development of a two Farm to School conferences

Co-ordination

This position requires working cooperatively with farmers, school principals and food service directors, rural community members and leaders, the Farm to School team, and with CFRA staff. It requires travel: day-trips by car (company car is available on occasion).

Preferred Skills and Experience

1. Self-starter and passionate about the work
2. People and communication skills
3. Respect for all cultures
4. Community organizing
5. Some knowledge or experience working in rural communities
6. Knowledge of Google applications and files

Additional Information:

1. What is the real-world need the right person will solve?

Most of the work will be with the Omaha and Santee Tribes in Northeast Nebraska. These are food deserts, with little access or money for fresh foods. Obesity and diabetes are epidemic. You will help community members learn to grow their own fresh, healthy food to save money and improve their diets and health. You will schedule educational sessions, handle logistics for project activities, and arrange media for publicity and announcements.

2. How will we quantitatively measure success so we can recognize a top performer?

Time after time, our top performers are those who are embraced by the communities we help: participants ask for these employees, expect them to continue indefinitely, and invite them to community and family activities. We will measure how gardeners apply what they learn, how many families benefit from growing good food, and how many people show they trust us by returning to the activities we sponsor.

3. What are the common attributes of our top performers--hard skills, soft skills, what they do in their free time?

Our top performers can write so well that we are in awe of their insight, humor and grasp of complexity. Our top staff can converse across cultural lines and be welcomed despite any differences. Our best are voracious learners and exceptional listeners -- who amaze us with their experiences, observations and willingness to share.

4. Why would the right person want this job?

The Center for Rural Affairs has a national reputation as one of the top organizations in the country that works to make rural communities more vibrant. You will be hired to work half-time and we'll do our best to hold you to it because we don't want to abuse your time and good will. We believe in independence and job responsibility and your ideas will be heard and often times implemented here. And you will make a difference.