

AmeriCorps*VISTA in Nebraska



AmeriCorps*VISTA is a national program whose mission is to strengthen and supplement efforts to eliminate poverty by providing meaningful and constructive volunteer service in agencies, institutions and situations where the application of human talent and dedication may assist in the solution of poverty and poverty related problems. VISTA members work to generate the commitment of private sector resources, to encourage volunteer service at the local level and to strengthen local agencies and organizations.

For details on AmeriCorps*VISTA projects in Nebraska and information on how to apply to support AmeriCorps*VISTAs, please contact:

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AmeriCorps*VISTA Programs in Nebraska

The following is a listing of Nebraska AmeriCorps* VISTA Programs and sites effective April 2012.

City of Omaha

1819 Farnam St.
Omaha, NE 68183

Program Supervisor: Craig Howell, Chief Service Officer
E-mail: craig.howell@ci.omaha.ne.us
Phone: (402) 444-5921
Priority Area: Embracing Innovation
Focus: Economic opportunity (Neighborhood restoration), Afterschool programming, Disaster recovery, and Non-profit capacity building.

Description: In January 2010, the City of Omaha was one of ten cities to be awarded the Cities of Service Leadership Grant funded by the Rockefeller Foundation. The two-year grant covers the salary of a Chief Service Officer, a senior city official whose job is to develop and implement a Comprehensive Community Service Plan to increase volunteerism and target volunteers to address the city's greatest needs.

Lincoln Public Schools

5901 O St.
Lincoln, NE 68510

Program Supervisor: Josh Cramer, Federal Programs Supervisor
E-mail: jcramer@lps.org
Phone: (402) 436-1994
Priority Area: Building Enduring Capacity
Focus: High School graduation and grade-level performance

Description: VISTA members will help improve graduation rates through a comprehensive birth to postsecondary success model. They will work to strengthen the following programs: ExCITE (Early Childhood Infant Toddler Educare), Title I, Community Learning Centers, Youth Development Team, and the Graduation Initiative. The VISTA members' work with these programs will help support and increase the impact of the \$4.5 million dollar grant LPS received from the U.S. Department of Education to increase high school graduation rates.

Metropolitan Community College

Fort Bldg. 005, Rm. 215
Omaha, NE 68103

Program Supervisor: Ms. Penny Boykins
E-mail: pboykins@mccneb.edu
Phone: (402) 457-2608
Priority Area: Building Enduring Capacity
Focus Area: Education, High School Graduation, Economic Opportunity, & Veterans

Sub-site: University of Nebraska Medical Center College of Public Health
Supervisor: Ruth Stashefsky Margalit
E-mail: rmargalit@unmc.edu
Phone: (402) 559-7458
Fax: (402) 559-3773

Description: Metropolitan Community College (MCC) is developing targeted outreach and support systems for low-income military personnel and veterans who wish to increase their educational attainment as a pathway for employment and a livable income. In addition, the MCC VISTA project will focus on high school retention, graduation, and transition to college for low-income students at Omaha Northwest and Omaha South high schools and youth offenders who are residing in detention facilities or rehabilitation centers and/or served through probation or parole. Developing a financial literacy program and short-term career training opportunities that lead to jobs with strong wages and ongoing opportunities for advancement will effect all three target populations. MCC is partnering with the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) to incorporate how public health issues influence these specific populations and their ability to escape poverty.

Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture – Combat Boots to Cowboy Boots

404 E. 7th St.
Curtis, NE 69025

Program Supervisor: Mr. Scott Mickelsen, Associate Dean
Phone: (402) 367-5253
E-mail: smickelsen4@unlnotes.unl.edu
Priority Area: Service as a Solution
Focus Area: Economic Opportunity, Education, and Veterans

Description: NCTA's Combat Boots 2 Cowboy Boots is designed to assist eligible military personnel, their families and armed forces veterans to become Farmers, Ranchers, and Business Entrepreneurs in their next careers. Combat Boots 2 Cowboy Boots utilizes existing programs funded by the federal Department of Agriculture, Small Business Administration, Veterans Administration, Department of Defense, and various state and local agencies to create successful business succession plans that match participants with existing farm/ranch/business owners. It is the intent of this program to return NCTA graduates to rural communities with a large enough asset that they will be a viable partner, rather than a "hired hand."

AmeriCorps*VISTA & National Service Priorities

National Service Priorities

The Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act enacted in 2009 calls for engaging citizens in a lifetime of service and is directed at finding community solutions to some of our nation's most pressing and persistent challenges. The Corporation's goal is to build on this momentum and foster higher levels of innovation, collaboration, and impact in America's service and voluntary sector. In Nebraska, VISTA Programs reflect the Corporation's strategic priorities and focus areas

Strategic Priorities

1. Service as a Solution – Targeting resources to tackle national priorities from increasing high school graduation rates to fostering economic opportunity, the Corporation will identify where service has an important role to play and target resources to tackle those issues.
2. Expanding Opportunities to Serve – connecting with citizens from diverse communities, backgrounds, and perspectives, providing easily accessible service opportunities to fit their needs, and engaging them in a lifetime of service.
3. Building Enduring Capacity – enabling individuals, organizations and communities to become more effective at addressing pressing challenges and better able to use service as a lasting solution.
4. Embracing Innovation – investing in models that work, finding new ways of doing business, and serving as a source of ideas for local communities. All across America, groups are finding solutions to local problems, and the Corporation’s challenge is to scale these opportunities to achieve our national priorities.

Focus Areas

1. **Education:** How can the country increase the number of students who are achieving in the classroom and beyond?
2. **Veterans and their families:** How can the country help veterans and military families secure the support they need to achieve financial security and improved quality of life?
3. **Healthy Futures:** How can the country improve the physical and mental well-being of its citizens?
4. **Economic Opportunity:** How can the country improve the financial stability of economically vulnerable Americans and their families?
5. **Clean Energy:** How can the country reduce energy consumption and become an active steward of the environment?
6. **Disaster Services:** How can the country help economically vulnerable communities prepare for and respond to natural disasters effectively?