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Member Immediate Supervisor Title: **Executive Director**

Partner Organization Name: GREEN LIGHT NEW ORLEANS

Address: **8203 Jeannette St.** ***City:*** **New Orleans, LA** ***Zip Code: 70118***

Website: **www.greenlightneworleans.org**

Organization/Agency Mission and/or Goals:

Green Light New Orleans is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization based in New Orleans, Louisiana. Green Light invests energy in people by assisting residents in person, one household at a time. Green Light coordinates volunteers to help install free energy efficient light bulbs, backyard vegetable gardens, and rain barrels to demonstrate that a mass movement of individual actions creates a significant impact on our environment and community. Green Light connects New Orleans residents to relevant, local opportunities and encourages individual actions so that everyone can benefit from a vibrant, resilient and sustainable community.

Program Mission and/or Goals: Our innovation lies in connecting individual health to community health. By maintaining their garden boxes, individual residents will experience positive personal health outcomes. By participating in supportive peer gardener networks, residents will strengthen community relationships (a social determinant of health) and contribute to productive, informed conversations about food access and food systems. Providing direct support in this transformation is key to program success.

Community Need:

The project responds to community needs for healthy behaviors, including increased consumption of fresh produce, healthy meal preparation, increased physical activity, and stress reduction by providing backyard gardens to households. A survey, conducted by AmeriCorps team members in 2012 in three neighborhoods, identified healthy food access as one of the main needs. Many of the households we serve are in areas considered “food deserts” that lack access to fresh, healthy food. Green Light currently has 450 households on the waiting list, demonstrating significant need across local community for the program.

Environment:

- According to Cornell University, food in the United States is transported an average of 1,500 miles from farm to table. The average American is responsible for the consumption of 50,000 gallons of gasoline per year by eating food that is not locally sourced, which creates 16,000 lbs of CO_2 per person, per year.

Health:

- The latest annual "F as in Fat" report from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Trust for America's Health reports that 33.1 percent of all Louisiana residents are obese. Diet related diseases such as heart disease, diabetes and stroke are some of America's top killers.

- According to a 2013 New Orleans Community Health Improvement Report, only 19%of Orleans Parish residents consume five servings of fruits or vegetables each day. Research indicates that a lack of fresh food contributes to poor diet and subsequent diet-related disease. Good nutrition is vital to normal childhood growth and development. According to the Second Harvest Food Bank, Louisiana has a 20%child hunger rate.

Economic:

- Climate change, a social justice issue, disproportionately affects the elderly, indigenous groups, and low-income populations. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 27.2% of New Orleans residents live at or below the poverty level as opposed to the national poverty level of 14.5% (2013). According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), low-income groups often lack the resources to purchase or gain access to technologies, services, and behaviors that help them adapt to climate change.

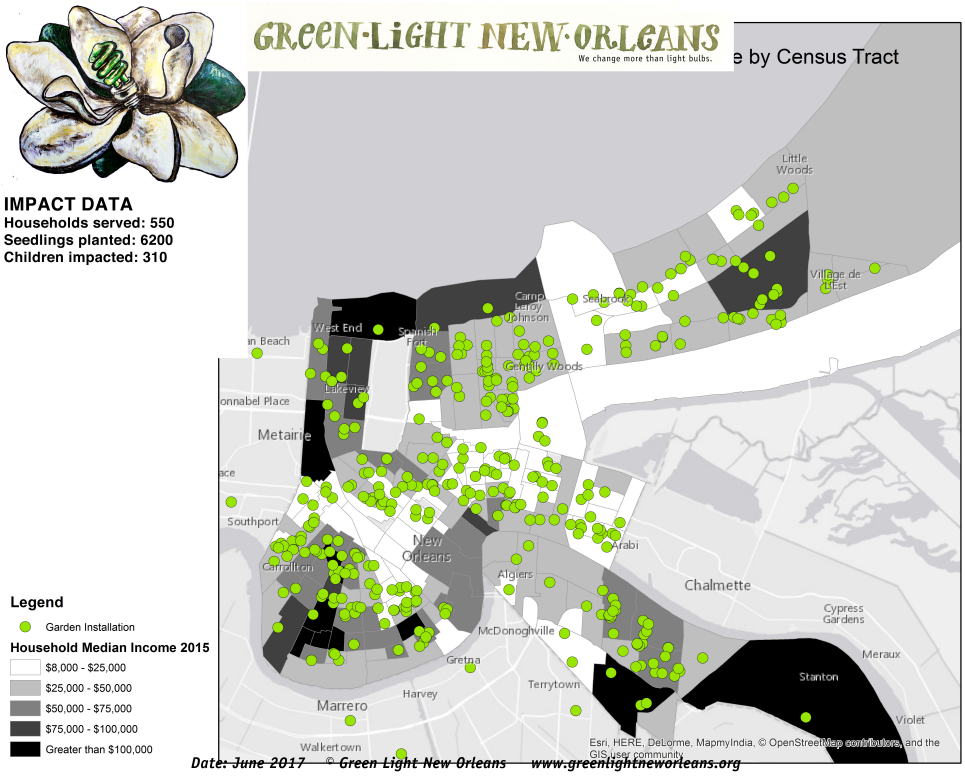
- Food insecurity is tracked by Feeding America, a nationwide network of Food Banks, and is determined by county poverty rates, unemployment and median income. According to Feeding America's "Minding the Meal Gap" survey conducted in 2013, 15.8 percent of all households in America are food insecure. However, in New Orleans the rate is higher and 1 out of every 5 households is deemed food insecure.

Food Access:

- For many residents growing their own food is a new concept that comes with challenges. Our own data collection reveals that continuous support is crucial to the success of providing access to healthy food.

Member Position Summary:

The AmeriCorps Member will be responsible for developing a support network for Green Light gardeners who are struggling to be successful with food production in their garden bed. The previous team member has evaluated 320 surveys. The new corps member will take steps to improve the success rating of our gardeners. The Corps member will also spend a significant amount of time developing best practices for the upkeep of the teaching garden. This will include the development a monthly maintenance guide and general maintenance guidelines. The corps member will also create awareness in the community about the garden program. Awareness and outreach will not be geared toward gaining more applicants but towards creating a general understanding in the community how all of Green Light's programs are connected together. The corps member will develop a manual similar to the light bulb program manual. The corps member will support the other corps members as needed.



Member Impact:

All Corps members work together towards the common goal to create awareness about the personal benefit of living in a resislient community. Energy efficiency, access to healthy food and water management are crucial to New Orleans's survival in a future that will be challenged by climate change. Green Light's holistic approach allows all corps members to have an impact across all programs.

Direct Impact of the garden outreach coordinator:

- Green Light's garden program success rate will be significantly increased.
- Corps member will facilitate the installation of approximately 60 gardens.
- The teaching garden will be transformed into a food garden that is easy to keep up, is appealing and in good order. Guidelines will be available for future garden caretakers.
- Follow up survey 3 will be developed

Essential Functions of Position:

- Care for the Green Light teaching garden.
- Develop a sustainability plan for the teaching garden.
- Further foster a partnership with Grow Dat youth farm and Master gardeners to develop a support network for struggling gardeners.
- Design a garden survey no 3.
- Create a garden program manual.
- Continue to provide gardens to applicants from the wait list.
- Assist the director in the creation of a garden book.

Required Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

- Passion for the environment, and community work.
- Interest in researching cutting-edge practices in urban sustainability and social entrepreneurship.
- Excellent communication skills.
- Organized and detail-oriented.
- Self-motivated, flexible, adaptable, and creative.
- Hardworking, dedicated, and a team player.
- Basic gardening skills.
- Proficient in social media management.

Required Academic and Experience Qualifications:

- Experience with organic gardening or farming, preferably in the Southern United States
- General understanding of volunteerism, social media.
- Proficient in writing and advanced computer skills