



**AmeriCorps**

## Member Position Description



**Corps Member Position Title:** Wetland Park Program Coordinator

**Member Immediate Supervisor Title:** Director, Wetland Park & Nature Trail / Tricia LeBlanc

**Partner Organization Name:** Sankofa Community Development Corporation

**Address:** 5200 Dauphine St. **City:** New Orleans , **LA Zip Code:** 70117

**Phone number:** 504-872-5214 **Website:** [www.sankofanola.org](http://www.sankofanola.org)

**Days/hours of the week:** The position is mostly M-F, 8am-4pm. However, the Program Coordinator would be expected to work 1 Saturday per month to oversee our monthly volunteer days, and there may be other events periodically throughout the year that would require them to work some weekends and evenings.

**Organization/Agency Mission and/or Goals:** Sankofa CDC is a 501(c)3 that leads programs to combat systems which cause health disparities and impact the quality of life of vulnerable populations in the Greater New Orleans Area. The organization was started as an effort to initiate preventive health services and promote a culture of health in New Orleans' Lower 9<sup>th</sup> Ward following the devastation of Hurricane Katrina. To support food equity in the Lower 9<sup>th</sup> Ward, Sankofa operates a fresh produce market and food pantry. In addition, Sankofa has created a green infrastructure drainage project which also serves as an ecological land restoration project. Other work by Sankofa includes healthy cooking and gardening classes as well as cardiovascular health education work.

**Program Mission and/or Goals:** Sankofa staff has been developing a plan to create a sustainable teaching garden that would address some of the food equity and health needs of the community through sustainable gardening and healthy eating educational programs. The goal of creating this teaching garden is to extend Sankofa's mission, and extend our outreach into the community with regards to building healthier communities.

**Community Need:** Many of the health disparities in the Lower Ninth Ward are attributed to socio-economic situations and a lack of available resources that result in environmental justice issues for residents of the area. The New Orleans Data Center states that the Lower 9th Ward population is comprised of African American residents (91%) with a third of households living in poverty (33.4%), higher than the poverty rate of the entire City of New Orleans (26.2%), as well as the United States (15.1%). High School graduation rates of the Lower Ninth population state 18.9% of residents left high school without receiving a diploma, which is higher than the City of New Orleans rate (10.5%) and the United States (8.5%). Lower 9th Ward residents also have a lower average household income (\$30,035), when compared to New Orleans' average household income (\$60,599), and the average

U.S. household income (\$77,866). In addition, the Lower 9th Ward is currently a “food desert”, having no grocery stores in the area that sell fresh produce and other healthy food items.

**Member Position Summary:** The Wetland Park Program Coordinator would be responsible for the implementation (coordination of logistics, resources, etc.) of volunteer service projects and supervision of volunteers during these projects (tree plantings, trails building, etc.), delivering educational programs to schools and other groups, including scheduling and implementation of programs. In addition, the position would also include assisting the Wetland Park Director in the development of curriculum and new programs that could be used in a variety of programs and for a diverse population of learners, monitoring and collecting park water, plant, and wildlife data, and assisting with the coordination of the park’s workforce development training program.

A typical day corresponding with volunteers and scheduling volunteer projects, working with the Wetland Park Program Director on developing new educational program ideas, and scheduling and conducting park programs for students and other groups, coordinating logistics for volunteer service days, collecting and updating data on water quality and storage as well as plant and wildlife data. In addition, the Serve LA member would meet with the Wetland Park Director and other Sankofa Staff for updates, training, and other important communications.

**Member Impact:** Sankofa’s mission of combating health disparities is driving its interest in creating nature based outdoor programs. . In coordinating and implementing these activities, the corps member would help Sankofa address some of the physical and mental health needs of the community through a nature based approach.. Learners of all ages would be engaged in programs that allow them to explore the benefits of outdoor activities and nature programs. Beneficiaries to the program would be program participants including: students visiting during field trip programs, scouts participating in a badge program, families engaging in activities together, and adult learners .

**Essential Functions of Position:**

- Implementation and supervision of volunteer service projects for park.
- Coordination and implementation of nature based educational programs and activities
- Assist Park Director in creating and developing new programs and curriculum for nature based activities.
- Monitor and collect park water data
- Monitor and collect changes in park plant and wildlife species data
- Assist with the coordination of the park’s workforce development training program

**Required Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities**

- Knowledge of wetland ecology, native wildlife and plants
- Knowledge of how to create and deliver environmental education programs to a variety of grade levels from early childhood to adults
- Excellent organizational skills with a strong ability to coordinate logistics for service projects and educational programs
- Ability to organize and supervise a large group of volunteers
- Excellent written and oral communication skills
- Effective classroom management & instructional abilities and methods

- Must be willing/able to work outside in all weather conditions for a majority of the work day.
- Must be enthusiastic about environmental education, and working with children, plants, and animals.
- Must be able to lift 30 lbs.

**Required Academic and Experience Qualifications:**

- High School Diploma
- Background or experience in environmental education or informal education preferred
- Must have personal vehicle to travel in between sites