



AmeriCorps Member Position Description



Member Position / Title: Wetland Park Program Coordinator

Member Immediate Supervisor Name: Tricia LeBlanc

Days / Hours of Service: M-F, 8-4 (Some weekends)

Member Immediate Supervisor Title: Director, Wetland Park & Nature Trail

Partner Organization Name: Sankofa Community Development Corporation

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

Website: www.sankofanola.org

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 9th Ward following the devastation of Hurricane Katrina. To support food equity in the Lower 9th 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

development of a volunteer corps for the park, including supervision of volunteers during 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 Program 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. Lastly, the Coordinator will assist with park maintenance.

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. 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:

- Development and supervision of volunteer program for park.
- Coordination and implementation of nature based educational programs and activities
- Assist Park Program Director in creating and developing new ideas for nature based activities.
- Assist with park maintenance

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 written and oral communication skills
- Excellent organization 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 50lbs.

Required Academic and Experience Qualifications:

- High School Diploma
- Background or experience in environmental education or informal education preferred