

FutureHeights

Job Description AmeriCorps VISTA

Overview: FutureHeights, Inc. (FH) seeks a creative, focused, and personable AmeriCorps*VISTA member to join our team. The FutureHeights VISTA will help launch the FutureHeights Pilot Model Block Program in the center of Cleveland Heights. The primary goals of the program are to reinvest in the neighborhood and improve conditions for existing residents by conducting detailed neighborhood research; identifying potential community groups and anchor institution partners; and seeking opportunities to build on neighborhood assets, incorporating place-making initiatives, incentivizing housing and storefront improvements, and implementing housing rehab and infill development.

The VISTA will expand on the Model Block strategy and conduct a community organizing plan to empower area residents by increasing their social capital and access to resources, expanding their networks to nearby opportunities, and reducing their home- and neighborhood-improvement burden. In conjunction with FutureHeights' Planning & Development, and Civic Engagement teams, the VISTA will recommend projects, create outreach materials, and work with residents to develop a neighborhood plan. The desired end result is a stronger neighborhood and an increase in property values through empowering residents, connecting and concentrating resources, and facilitating physical improvements that result from a neighborhood plan.

About the AmeriCorps*VISTA program: VISTA members are passionate and committed to their mission to bring individuals and communities out of poverty. Members make a year-long, full-time commitment to serve on a specific project at a nonprofit organization or public agency. They focus their efforts to build the organizational, administrative, and financial capacity of organizations that fight illiteracy, improve health services, foster economic development, and otherwise assist low-income communities. The program is administered by the Ohio CDC Association (OCDCA), a statewide membership organization of Community Development Corporations (CDCs).

Job responsibilities. The candidate must have the skills and experience to perform the following duties.

Research the target neighborhood

- Develop outreach strategies to build relationships with residents, existing community groups, neighborhood associations, businesses, and other key stakeholders in the neighborhood.
- Build a comprehensive asset map of housing and neighborhood development resources and programming available to Cleveland Heights residents, and identify any barriers to access that might exist.

Identify opportunities

- Identify comparable neighborhoods and research their available community-based programs.
- Identify best practices, strategies, and outcomes of initiatives.
- Recommend specific actions for the neighborhood, including opportunities for physical improvements, housing rehab and infill construction, business development, storefront renovation, place-making opportunities and community-building initiatives.
- Outline resources needed to implement proposed programs.

Administrative

- Attend staff meetings and trainings.
- Create and maintain a database of progress, both qualitative and quantitative.
- Create and maintain a database of community contacts.

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- Create maps and visual aids to supplement research findings.
- Create initiative implementation plan.
- Compile data on potential funding sources.

Qualifications

Experience

- Bachelor or Master's degree in urban planning and development, economics, nonprofit management, fund development or related field or equivalent work experience.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills.
- Ability to work under deadlines and prioritize tasks.
- Excellent organizational and planning skills and attention to detail.
- Strong analytical skills with the ability to work with data, draw conclusions and make recommendations.
- Ability to work independently and to be flexible in changing priorities as needed.
- Demonstrate a strong ability to work well with people of all racial, ethnic, religious and income backgrounds.
- Have the ability to exercise independent judgement and take initiative.
- Experience with and/or knowledge of community development, urban planning, housing, and civic engagement strongly preferred.
- Prior leadership, volunteer and/or internship experience with a nonprofit organization.

Other: This is a full-time position requiring at least 37.5 hours of work. Must have reliable transportation. Must be comfortable working in various settings with diverse groups of people.

Compensation and Benefits: See pages three and four of this job description.

Application Deadline: Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis until **April 1, 2019**. To apply, go to <http://www.americorps.gov/>, click on "Join AmeriCorps!" choose Ohio on the drop down list, and search for this position.

Questions: Send an e-mail to sbasu@futureheights.org, or call 216-320-1423.

FutureHeights is a nonprofit with a mission to inspire and facilitate communication, collaboration, engagement and empowerment across our communities to ensure a vibrant and sustainable future for Cleveland Heights and University Heights, Ohio. FutureHeights programs are tied together by the common theme of mobilizing community activism and participation as tools to contribute to stronger Heights neighborhoods and the community as a whole. FutureHeights engages in planning, placemaking and community development initiatives to strengthen Heights neighborhoods. It mentors and trains neighborhood leaders through an annual workshop series; funds small-scale neighborhood projects through a mini-grant program; provides timely public forums and workshops on important current issues; leads planning and place-making efforts; publishes the Heights Observer, a free, monthly citizen-driven community news source; functions as a fiscal agent for small or ad hoc community groups; promotes the local economy through Shop Local marketing and the annual Best of the Heights Awards; and hosts other events that showcase the Heights as a vibrant place to live, work and play.

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VISTA
Volunteers In Service To America

What is the Ohio CDC Association?

The Ohio CDC Association (OCDCA) is a statewide membership organization of Community Development Corporations (CDCs) that engages in capacity-building, advocacy and public policy development to foster socially and economically healthy communities. OCDCA developed its legacy of capacity building throughout the last 21 years, in partnership with the AmeriCorps VISTA program in order to create a community development environment that comprehensively improves the life opportunities for Ohio residents

What is AmeriCorps VISTA?

AmeriCorps*VISTA members are passionate and committed to their mission to bring individuals and communities out of poverty. Members make a year-long, full-time commitment to serve on a specific project at a nonprofit organization or public agency. They focus their efforts to build the organizational, administrative, and financial capacity of organizations that fight illiteracy, improve health services, foster economic development, and otherwise assist low-income communities.

BENEFITS

MONTHLY LIVING ALLOWANCE

- VISTAs will receive the cost of living in their area. This works out to be \$1026 dollars before taxes. The amount varies depending of if the service site is in a rural location versus urban.
- Ohio CDC Association VISTAs are paid twice a month. The schedule is on the 15th day and the last day of the month.

END OF SERVICE STIPEND – if not choosing education award

- Accrues at the rate of \$125 per month for 12 month

EDUCATION AWARD – if not choosing end of service stipend

- This award is in the amount equivalent to the Federal Pell Grant, which is about \$5,815
 - There are two types of education benefits to members who choose the AmeriCorps Education Award:
 - An education award in the form of a voucher (it is not cash) that can be used to pay for higher education (degree or nondegree) or to repay eligible student loans
 - A postponement of payments on federal student loans during the time served in AmeriCorps VISTA (called a forbearance)

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RELOCATION ALLOWANCE

- Members serving a 12-month term and moving from their home of record to their project site are eligible to receive a relocation allowance. The amount, which may not exceed \$550

HEALTH CARE SUPPORT

- AmeriCorps VISTA Members are required to maintain their own health insurance, in compliant with the ACA. For these members, their only health care option through AmeriCorps VISTA is the Healthcare Allowance.
- The AmeriCorps VISTA Healthcare Allowance helps cover eligible out-of-pocket expenses. These include: an annual deductible, coinsurance, copayments for qualified medical expenses, and similar charges for qualified medical payments. The allowance may not be used to for any other purpose, including paying for other healthcare coverage premiums or expenses from non-essential healthcare services. The allowance can cover up to the maximum limit specified by the Health Insurance Marketplace. For VISTA Members who began their service in 2015, the maximum that a Member could receive was \$6,600.
 - **The AmeriCorps VISTA Health Benefits Program is not an insurance policy.**
- In rare occasions, AmeriCorps VISTA Members may be exempted from the ACA's health insurance requirements. Individuals who may qualify for exemptions are those who have very low income, members of federally recognized tribes, and certain hardship other situations. Additional information regarding exemptions from the ACA's requirement is available here:
<https://www.healthcare.gov/health-coverage-exemptions/exemptions-from-the-fee/>
 - In these cases, Members may enroll in the AmeriCorps VISTA Health Benefit Plan. The plan covers expenses for most emergency, medical and surgical costs, hospitalization and prescription drug needs a Member may have during their service term. It is not considered ACA-compliant coverage.
- Additional information regarding the healthcare options through AmeriCorps VISTA, and how Members can sign up for them, is available on the VISTA Campus:
http://www.vistacampus.gov/sites/default/files/VISTA_Healthcare_FAQ_8_7_2015.pdf

CHILD CARE SUPPORT

- AmeriCorps VISTA offers child care benefits to members who qualify. The maximum amount of child care assistance a member can receive is \$400 per child per month.
- Child Care Assistance is paid directly to the child care provider.
- Child Care Assistance paper can take a few months to process and for the benefits to start. Assistance will be retroactively paid to child care provider for the time it took to process paperwork once everything is processed.