



## Hunger Free Community-AmeriCorps VISTA Bethesda, Maryland

### Overview:

The Alliance to End Hunger is seeking one full-time AmeriCorps VISTA member to work with the Montgomery County Food Council in Montgomery County, Maryland to implement anti-hunger strategies. VISTA members support community leaders in identifying food-resource barriers and developing comprehensive end hunger plans.

[The Montgomery County Food Council \(MCFC\)](#) is an independent nonprofit that serves as the central connection point for businesses, government agencies, nonprofits, and residents who share a commitment to cultivating a robust, sustainable, and equitable local food system.

MCFC leads community initiatives through its four working groups: Food Economy (connecting farmers, food producers, manufacturers and retailers); Food Education (improving the nutritional knowledge of residents through educational opportunities); Environmental Impact (protecting and improving the local environmental resources of Montgomery County related to agriculture and food); and [Food Recovery and Access](#) or “FRAWG” (supporting the increased recovery of, equitable access to and advocacy for more healthful food for County residents).

MCFC, through FRAWG and its other working groups and along with its community partners, forms a broad-based, multi-sector coalition committed to creating a “Hunger Free Community” in Montgomery County. [Hunger Free Community](#) initiatives are formed around the belief that to end hunger at the community level, a broad range of community stakeholders must unite behind a common vision and strategy.

In the Spring of 2017, County Executive Leggett released the [Five Year Food Security Strategic Plan](#) - a roadmap of research, findings and recommendations to be implemented by County agencies, food assistance providers, nonprofits and multiservice organizations to reduce the number of food insecure people in the County - 63,380 according to the most recent figures. The FSP’s overarching goal is to build a Montgomery County in which all people have access to safe, sufficient, and nutritious food, with dignity. Recent initiatives include establishing a SNAP Outreach Program, convening a Food Security Community Advisory Board, launching an online searchable database of over 75 local food assistance providers, and facilitating a monthly working group that serves as a community of practice for over 120 County providers. Last year, MCFC along with CountyStat and the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services launched FoodStat, a data analysis tool to help county stakeholders analyze food availability,

transportation needs, and delivery gaps to create strategies that will pool resources and connect those in need to the food assistance available through the county.

In the coming year, goals include expanding access to culturally appropriate foods, implementing nutrition standards for food assistance, increasing availability of food education opportunities for all residents, and partnering with healthcare providers and other community organizations to screen residents for food insecurity and refer them to available resources.

**Position Description:**

The Hunger Free Community-AmeriCorps VISTA will be responsible for:

- Ensuring the sustainability of the Hunger Free Community's work by recruiting, training and managing volunteers for the Community Advisory Board and Senior Hunger and SNAP Outreach Program that can be maintained with minimal oversight by program staff, as well as completing tracking and evaluation spreadsheets.
- Ensuring the long-term viability of the Hunger Free Community by continuing to manage and coordinate the Food Council's Food Security Community Advisory Board.
- Facilitate networking, information sharing, and overall organization for the Food Council's Food Recovery and Access Working Group.
- Connecting with partner organizations, community leaders, food insecure residents, stakeholders or other established entities in the community to continue services offered in part by the VISTA project and conduct outreach to raise the visibility of hunger in our community.
- Helping to develop and implement a sustainable fundraising plan to increase funds and in-kind support for the continued work of the Food Security Plan.
- Preparing and distributing materials; including but not limited to: press releases, video clips, and public documentation that demonstrates the value and reach of the Hunger Free Community.
- Evaluating the Hunger Free Community's capacity to take on the task of community change, and identifying areas that need strengthening or further development.
- Establishing tools and processes by which the goals of the Hunger Free Community can be monitored and evaluated to ensure progress towards the Food Security Plan is being made.

**Time Commitment:**

This is a one year, full-time position. The anticipated start date is September 2019.

This is a stipend volunteer position with AmeriCorps-Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA).

Learn more at <https://www.vistacampus.gov/>.

**Position Benefits\*:**

- The living stipend for the full year is \$20,584, paid bi-weekly
- Segal Education Award (\$6,095 or End-of-Service stipend (\$1,800)
- Health benefits\*
- Potential to forbear or defer student loans while in service
- Relocation assistance (if applicable)
- Childcare assistance (if applicable)
- Optional life insurance
- One year non-competitive status for federal government positions

- A network of over 180,000 AmeriCorps VISTA members and alums

\*For more information on benefits provided through AmeriCorps VISTA, visit:

<https://www.vistacampus.gov/in-service/benefits-service>

### **Qualifications:**

- Associate's Degree or equivalent experience.
- Strong, self-motivated interest in working on domestic nutrition, hunger and food security issues, and ability to proactively pursue projects.
- Excellent planning, organizational and time management skills, and ability to effectively and regularly communicate progress to supervisor.
- Willingness to travel around the County on a regular basis to attend meetings, events or conferences. Access to a car preferred.
- Ability to occasionally flex time to attend evening or weekend events.
- Demonstrated experience in community engagement preferred.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills, and comfort in reaching out to people by phone or in person.
- Experience with and enthusiasm for public speaking and giving presentations.
- Good working knowledge of Microsoft Office programs.
- AmeriCorps VISTA Requirements:
  - Be 18 years or older (no upper age limit)
  - Pass a national service criminal history check
  - Hold one of the following citizenship statuses: US citizen, US National, Lawful Permanent Resident Aliens and persons residing in a state that have the following legal residency classifications: refugee, asylum or asylee, temporary protected status, or deferred action for childhood arrivals (DACA) status.

### **How to Apply:**

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis, starting on or around June 7th, with a **priority deadline of June 23rd**.

To apply, please completely fill out the online application through MyAmeriCorps:

<https://my.americorps.gov/mp/listing/viewListing.do?id=75029&fromSearch=true>

If you have any additional questions about the Food Council, Position Description or Qualifications, please contact Amanda Neshier at [anesher@mocofoodcouncil.org](mailto:anesher@mocofoodcouncil.org).

If you have any additional questions about VISTA benefits, contact Layla Arnold at [larnold@alliancetoendhunger.org](mailto:larnold@alliancetoendhunger.org)

### **About AmeriCorps VISTA:**

AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) members bring their passion and perseverance where the need is greatest: to organizations that help eradicate poverty. The most pressing challenges we face as a nation require the most courageous and creative people to address them. An AmeriCorps VISTA member serves as a catalyst for change, living and working alongside community members to advance local solutions.

[About Alliance to End Hunger:](#)

The Alliance to End Hunger engages diverse institutions to build the public and political will to end hunger at home and abroad. The Alliance to End Hunger's Hunger Free Communities initiative supports broad-based, multi-sector coalitions in the U.S. that are committed to ending hunger in their communities.