



2010 – 2011 MTCC VISTA: NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

The Montana Campus Compact (MTCC), a statewide network of college and university campuses and an affiliate of the national Campus Compact movement, is committed to renewing the civic purposes of higher education by engaging more students, faculty, and staff in meaningful community service. For 10 years, MTCC has hosted an AmeriCorps*VISTA program, an anti-poverty-focused service program unique to Montana. VISTA (Volunteers In Service to America) members are non-students, generally with a minimum of a four-year degree, who provide a full-time year of service. VISTAs organize their communities to build long-term sustainable solutions to poverty.

An MTCC VISTA is a living grant, in that it manifests itself in a person, who commits to a year of service, and payroll, benefits and training are provided for that person. The above benefits, as well as relocation expense, are provided by the Montana Campus Compact Network Office which serves as an intermediary between the prime funder, the Corporation for National and Community Service and local sites.

This packet contains information to assist staff at Montana Campus Compact member institutions and their community partners in applying to host a local AmeriCorps*VISTA project. MTCC Member campuses and collaborations between community-based organizations (schools, nonprofits, government agencies) and member campuses may apply. To find out if your campus is a member of The Montana Campus Compact, contact your campus's CEO or go to www.mtcompact.org and click on the "Members" tab.

- ◆ **Proposals must be received by 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 4th, 2010.** Mail proposals (no faxes, please) to:

The Montana Campus Compact
Attention: MTCC VISTA Program
302 University Hall
Missoula, MT 59812-3960

Proposals must include the following:

- Fully completed Cover Page (worksheet)
- Proposal Narrative (up to five pages)
- VISTA Assignment Description (VAD) –i.e. VISTA project work plan
- Letter of Support from Campus Partner
- Signed Host Site Participation Agreement

Questions? Contact MTCC's Program Manager at (406) 243-5451. Technical assistance in preparing this proposal is available through March 11, 2010.

AWARD NOTIFICATION & PROGRAM START-UP TIMELINE

February 2010	Technical assistance in completing this proposal is available to all campuses and partner organizations
February 16, 2010	Technical Assistance webinar/conference call for applicant organizations
March 4, 2010	Proposals due to The Montana Campus Compact by 5:00 p.m.
March 24, 2010	Notification to sites of approved projects
March 31, 2010 (10:00AM)	Recruitment conference call, all awarded sites call
April – June 2010	Sites and MTCC Network Office recruit VISTA members
June 4, 2010	Member recruitment completed (names of members forwarded to Corporation for National and Community Service for approval)
July 13-15, 2010	Mandatory first training for VISTA applicants (Pre Service Orientation) and Swearing-in Ceremony (Helena)
July 16, 2010	1 st day of service for MTCC VISTA members
August 2010 TBA	MTCC VISTA members and Supervisors attend Symposium on Service Training
September 24-26, 2010	Building Engaged Citizens Conference – All VISTAs attend

I. CONTINUATION REQUESTS

For those sites that already have a VISTA and would like to recruit for another in the July 2010 – 2011 recruitment cycle please submit the following documentation to the MTCC Network Office by the proposal deadline.

- Contact Cody Lillstrom (lillstrom@mtcompact.org, 406/243.5451) with your intent to continue with VISTA;
- Indicate any prospective changes in program supervision or staffing;
- Submit a revised VAD for the July 2010 -2011 program year along with a narrative explanation of any changes to the VAD;
- Submit an updated and signed Host Site Participation Agreement.

II. OVERVIEW INFORMATION

The Montana Campus Compact

The Montana Campus Compact (MTCC) is a statewide, higher education consortium that promotes civic engagement, service from college campuses and campus-community partnerships. The 19 campuses of the Montana Campus Compact initiate, implement, and manage projects that engage their resources in community needs. The MTCC VISTA program is available to member institutions and communities to address the needs of low-income people. MTCC campuses may apply to host a VISTA project which helps the campus build infrastructure, such as volunteer and service-learning programs, to respond to any of the specific poverty needs listed below.

The MTCC VISTA Program

The MTCC VISTA Program provides resources to communities working to address poverty problems in the form of AmeriCorps*VISTA members, modest volunteer stipends, benefits, and extensive training. The program offers communities an opportunity to respond to a community poverty need in one of the following areas: 1) Hunger: the availability of emergency food resources; 2) Housing: the availability of low-income housing units; 3) Mentoring: academic performance; 4) Disaster and Emergency Preparedness: availability of disaster services.

The MTCC VISTA Program offers sites the opportunity to build sustainable infrastructure to address poverty problems. Local project sites address poverty problems with a variety of strategies. MTCC requires the use of the 6-step community building process, which engages community members in needs assessment, strategic planning, implementation, and evaluation phases of the project. The MTCC VISTA Program improves the capacity of Montana communities to respond to pressing poverty problems.

The Montana Campus Corps Program

Campus Corps is MTCC's college student AmeriCorps program through which college students serve with community nonprofits, schools and clinics. Most Campus Corps members serve as part of their academic discipline, through the program's service-learning initiative. Campus Corps members do direct-hands on service, whereas VISTAs' service is of a "capacity-building" nature, helping to start and sustain initiatives and programs. Communities interested in utilizing MTCC VISTA resources to establish or grow a Campus Corps service-learning initiative within their community are encouraged to apply to do so.

Who Should Complete This Application?

This packet is for campuses, organizations and partnerships that want to host an MTCC VISTA member for one year, beginning July 16, 2010. Campuses wishing to place VISTA members in partnership positions with community based organizations (nonprofits, government agencies and faith-based organizations) should discuss what campus resources the VISTAs will work to mobilize to meet community needs and create work plans around these goals. Partnership sites between campuses and community organizations need to schedule a face-to-face meeting a minimum of once every three months, to assess progress and check in.

III. VISTA PROJECT LEGISLATED PROGRAMMING AREAS

The MTCC VISTA Program is based on addressing the following legislated programming areas. Campuses and organizations that wish to host VISTA members must address one of the programming areas listed below. Each programming area is broken into 7 objectives that match with steps of the community building process, and each requires thorough participation of community members:

Mission: To develop a community building process that will enable citizens to address critical community issues.

MTCC VISTA Anti-Poverty Programming Areas

The MTCC VISTA Program addresses the following legislated programming areas:

- ✓ Meeting the health, education, welfare, or related needs of Indians living on reservations or Federal trust lands
- ✓ Assist in the care and rehabilitation of mentally ill, developmentally disabled, and other individuals with disabilities, especially individuals with severe disabilities
- ✓ Addressing the problems of the homeless, unemployed individuals, and low-income youths
- ✓ Addressing significant health care problems, including mental illness, chronic and life threatening illnesses, and health care for homeless individuals (especially homeless children) through prevention, treatment, and community-based care activities
- ✓ Strengthening, supplementing, and expanding efforts to address the problem of illiteracy throughout Montana
- ✓ Assisting with the reentry and reintegration of formerly incarcerated youth and adults into society, including providing training and counseling in education, employment, and life skills
- ✓ Initiating and supporting before-school and afterschool programs, serving children in low-income communities, that may engage participants in mentoring, tutoring, life skills and study skills programs, service-learning, physical, nutrition, and health education programs, and other activities addressing the needs of children

- ✓ Assisting veterans and their family members through establishing or augmenting programs that assist such persons with access to legal assistance, health care (including mental health care), employment counseling or training, education counseling or training, affordable housing and other supportive services
- ✓ Addressing the health and wellness of individuals in low-income communities and individuals in underserved communities, including programs to increase access to preventive services, insurance, and health services
- ✓ Increase the availability of disaster and emergency preparedness plans and resources in Montana
- ✓ Meeting unmet energy-efficiency and environmental needs in Montana
- ✓ Help children and youth achieve success and prevent them from dropping out
- ✓ Increasing access to healthcare, disease prevention, health promotion initiatives and health literacy
- ✓ Meeting unmet needs of veterans, members of the Armed Forces on active duty and families of deployed military personnel; engaging veterans in service

MTCC VISTA Community Building Objectives

- **Objective A:** Conduct a community needs assessment.
- **Objective B:** Raise community awareness of the poverty problem, via the results of the assessment.
- **Objective C:** Create a community board or group to address the problem.
- **Objective D:** Develop a strategic plan with the community group.
- **Objective E:** Implement the strategic plan (grant writing, volunteer program creation, etc.)
- **Objective F:** Evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation process.
- **Objective G:** Create documents and processes that will enable the project to last beyond the VISTA term of service.

How Do VISTA Members Address the Above Programming Areas?

All VISTA projects use the following process to build community infrastructure to address poverty problems. Work plans or “Vista Assignment Descriptions” (VADs) designed for VISTA Members must reflect the process outlined below.

- 1. Community assessment**
 - ⇒ Clearly define the specific poverty problem which the VISTA project was created to address – working with local experts,
 - ⇒ Develop and maintain an “map” of campus and community assets/resources in the form of people, places, things and expertise
- 2. Develop public relations/public education program**
- 3. Develop groups, boards, or support existing group to address community issues**
 - ⇒ Develop community leadership
 - ⇒ Develop collaborative relationships
 - ⇒ Recruit groups and boards
 - ⇒ Support and strengthen group or board
- 4. Develop sustainable strategic plan through inclusive collaborative efforts**
 - ⇒ Vision
 - ⇒ Missions
 - ⇒ Objectives
 - ⇒ Short-term strategies
 - ⇒ Long-term strategies
- 5. Implement plans and strategies and generate necessary resources (people, places, and things) to address critical community issues**
 - ⇒ Plan, develop, and carry out a strategic plan to **a)** create a volunteer program **b)** carry out fund-raising campaign **c)** other strategies
- 6. Evaluate success and measure results**
- 7. Sustainability**
 - ⇒ Create documents and processes that will enable the project to last beyond the VISTA term of service.

Sample Projects for VISTA Members

Though each VISTA Member may work on different tasks, all of the tasks will fulfill one of the programming areas described above. Some examples of successful VISTA projects include:

- ⇒ Assess community needs related to a specific poverty issue (hunger, housing or school performance);
- ⇒ Work within an academic department to establish a program that regularly places Campus Corps service-learners with a community agency or school, to address a poverty problem;
- ⇒ Develop community advisory boards to address poverty problem;
- ⇒ Raise community awareness of poverty problem;
- ⇒ Help community engage in strategic planning process;
- ⇒ Research and write specific grant proposals to help community implement their strategic plans;
- ⇒ Develop and expand service-related scholarships, including president's scholarships for high schools, college scholarships, and AmeriCorps Education Awards;
- ⇒ Help campuses start antipoverty-focused service-learning courses;
- ⇒ Strengthen the partnerships between community organizations and college campuses;
- ⇒ Expand services to nearby rural areas currently under served by community service Work Study, campus volunteerism and community-based organizations;
- ⇒ Expand campus involvement in local antipoverty initiatives;
- ⇒ Help the community establish a community food pantry, after-school program or affordable housing project.

IV. PROJECT SPECIFICS

- **Quality Proposals**

The Montana Campus Compact offers AmeriCorps*VISTA members to campus-community partnerships that demonstrate a desire to engage the broader community in an attempt to address social problems and move people permanently out of poverty. Quality proposals will show a genuine partnership between the off-campus community and the potential for impact on work plan goals and objectives. Technical assistance (Cody Lillstrom, MTCC VISTA Program Manager 243.5451) will be available throughout February 2010.

- **Supervision**

Each VISTA member must be assigned a site supervisor at his/her host site. Site supervisors should complete a proposal packet. The primary responsibility of the site supervisor is to oversee the VISTA member's work on the proposed project, ensuring that the project progresses toward the stated objectives. Meetings between VISTA members and site supervisors will occur on a weekly basis. The site supervisor will be expected to attend the Community Building Institute with the VISTA, as well as the site supervisor training in June 2010. Throughout the year, Site Supervisors will be invited to attend several other trainings and events.

- **Type of positions available**

All VISTA member positions are based on full time service, with evenings and weekends as needed, (generally 40-45 hours per week) for one calendar year. **VISTA members may not be students*** or hold additional employment of any type. (*unless under the UM Academic Learning Integrated with Volunteer Experience "ALIVE" Program, which is complementary to VISTA service or by taking a single course that helps with the project)

- **Benefits to organizations and campuses that participate**

Organizations and campuses that participate as host sites will enjoy the opportunity to:

- ⇒ Build community capacity to address poverty problems
- ⇒ Engage community members in strategic planning process
- ⇒ Leverage resources to assist community problem solving

- ⇒ Expand financial resources to assist with grass-root anti-poverty work
- ⇒ Expand campus-sponsored national service (Campus Corps) programming and improve programming quality
- ⇒ Create service-learning and research opportunities for students and faculty
- ⇒ Participate in a growing national movement to renew the public purposes of higher education

- **Benefits to VISTA Members**

All VISTA members are enrolled in the AmeriCorps National Service initiative. As members, they receive the following benefits:

- ⇒ An annual living allowance of \$10,296, payroll administered by MTCC
- ⇒ Cash award of \$1500 upon successful completion of service
- ⇒ (or) An education award of \$5,350* upon successful completion of service
- ⇒ Health care benefits provided by AmeriCorps*VISTA
- ⇒ Loan deferment/forbearance while enrolled in the program
- ⇒ Child care (if need criteria are met)
- ⇒ \$550 Relocation funds (if relocating from over 50 miles)
- ⇒ Mileage reimbursement (if relocating to serve)
- ⇒ Graduate credit (if enrolled in ALIVE program through The University of Montana)
- ⇒ Professional training opportunities and citizenship development

- **Expectations of MTCC VISTA host sites**

Organizations and Campuses that serve as VISTA host sites are expected to fulfill the following responsibilities:

- ⇒ Designate a Site Supervisor to oversee the VISTA project and its progress toward the stated objectives
- ⇒ Recruit the VISTA member no later than June 4, 2010
- ⇒ Allow the site supervisor to attend the site supervisor training in June 2010, TBA
- ⇒ Allow the site supervisor to attend the Community Building Institute 2-day VISTA and supervisor training, August 2010, TBA
- ⇒ Understand that once selected, the VISTA member cannot be replaced for any reason (e.g., if a VISTA member resigns from service early, the host site may not replace him/her)
- ⇒ Pay cost match assessed by the host site's number of years of participation
- ⇒ Assist the VISTA member with free or low-cost housing, if possible
- ⇒ Provide a vehicle, if available, to allow the VISTA to attend program training
- ⇒ Sign MOU

- **Financial Requirements ***

In the July 2010-2011 MTCC VISTA Program Year, host sites are required to pay a cash cost share. MTCC will bill host sites quarterly starting in the October 2010. Campuses are encouraged to partner with community-based organizations, where the VISTA member is placed in a joint host site position, or with the partnering community organization. In this instance the partner organization can be expected to pay some or all of the cost share. **(See Application Instructions)** VISTA work plans are encouraged to include a fundraising portion that allows each project to sustain itself. MTCC VISTA training includes a major component dedicated to grant writing and fundraising and VISTAs quickly obtain the tools and confidence to raise substantial funds.

Tiered Cost Share

To defray project costs and to encourage host sites to plan for long term sustainability, MTCC VISTA placements will incrementally increase in cost over three years. Year 1 will cost \$2500, Year 2: \$4000, Year 3: the final year a VISTA member may be placed with your project, \$6500. For sites currently hosting AmeriCorps*VISTA members, the 2009/2010 program year will effectively have served as either Year 1 or Year 2, making 2010/2011 Year 2 or 3.

Cost Match/Host Site Membership Schedule:

MTCC bills host site:	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
October 2009	\$625	\$1000	\$1625
January 2010	\$625	\$1000	\$1625
April 2010	\$625	\$1000	\$1625
July 2010	\$625	\$1000	\$1625
Total Yearly Cost	\$2500	\$4000	\$6500

V. DISABILITY DISCLAIMER

MTCC requires participating host organizations to comply with all applicable federal and state non-discrimination laws. This includes requiring campuses and community partners to provide reasonable access and accommodation to members with disabilities, as well as to program beneficiaries with disabilities. Disability inclusion resources are available to all Montana AmeriCorps grantees through the Office of Community Service. Please contact Kathy Bean, Disability Outreach Specialist, at (406) 444-5547 or kbean@mt.gov.

VI. COMPLETING A PROPOSAL

Organizations that want to apply to be an MTCC VISTA host site need to complete the following five items. Proposals must be received by **March 4, 2010**, at The Montana Campus Compact Headquarters.

1. Cover Page

Found in the New Site Application Instructions.

2. Proposal Narrative (Not to exceed 5 pages)

Write a summary that clearly describes the poverty problem (related to hunger, housing or school performance) and proposed work plan in narrative form. Include the scope of the project, background information, where the VISTA will work, and the specific issues that will be addressed. Please be concise. Details about day-to-day activities for the VISTA member should be included in the VISTA Assignment Description (VAD). Site Supervisors and the community service director on campus must agree to meet at a minimum every three months, to review progress and check in.

3. VISTA Member Assignment Description (VAD)

The VAD outlines the work that the VISTA Member will complete during the year. The goals and objectives listed in this packet should be stated in the VAD using the exact wording provided. A worksheet is attached to the New Site Application Instructions to assist you in developing the VAD. A sample VAD has also been included as a guide.

4. Letter of support from primary project partner

Successful VISTA projects are supported by the at-large and campus communities. Please submit a letter from community-based organization or campus that will be involved in the project.

5. Executed Host Site Participation Agreement

The Host Site Agreement form must be signed by the party responsible for hosting the MTCC VISTA project, and paying the host site fee. Host sites will be billed quarterly to support project costs.