**Heartland Conservation Alliance**

**Seeking Full-time Outdoor Education Coordinator**

**Position available:** Outdoor Education Coordinator AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America)

Do you have a passion and love of the outdoors? Would you like to share your enthusiasm and skills with urban youth and families? As part of our mission to protect nature in our city for the benefit of all communities, Heartland Conservation Alliance launched a three-year pilot project in partnership with AmeriCorps to connect more people with nature. As part of this project, Heartland Conservation Alliance seeks a full-time Outdoor Education Coordinator, who will serve as an AmeriCorps VISTA.

This is a one-year commitment with a living stipend of $13,399.15 and benefits and training.

The VISTA initiative enables underserved, rural, urban, or minority groups, to engage community residents, promote volunteerism, and empower communities to create sustainable programs that alleviate poverty. VISTAs build capacity of their sponsoring organization to serve impoverished communities by writing grants, strengthening partnerships, and recruiting volunteers.

The Outdoor Education Coordinator will be the primary connection between existing environmental educators, communities, and outdoor recreation opportunities. You will amplify partner efforts already being implemented through support of marketing and outreach activities and coordination. The primary goal of this position is to identify gaps in outdoor education and implement strategies to fill these gaps.

**Application Deadline:** Monday, March 15. All interested applicants should submit a letter of interest, work and education history, and three professional references to Jill Erickson, Executive Director, jill@heartlandconservationalliance.org or call 816-813-0944. All interested applicants must also register through[**the AmeriCorps Portal**](https://my.americorps.gov/mp/listing/viewListing.do?fromSearch=true&id=100053)

**Dates of Service:** VISTA Start Date (VMO): 4/12/2021 – 4/11/2022

**About AmeriCorps:** VISTA was founded as Volunteers in Service to America in 1965 as a national service program to fight poverty in America. In 1993, VISTA was incorporated into the AmeriCorps network of programs. AmeriCorps VISTA is open to U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents age 18 and older. VISTAs will serve full time for one year with Heartland Conservation Alliance.

**Program Benefits:** During their service, VISTAs receive a living allowance, as well as health care, child care, training, relocation expenses, and liability insurance. After a successful year of service, VISTAs receive either a $1,803 stipend or a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award equal to $6,095. The award can be used to pay for educational expenses at qualified institutions of higher education, or to pay back qualified student loans.

**Service Areas:** Children/Youth, Environment, Community and Economic Development, Education,

Community Outreach, Neighborhood Revitalization.

**Skills:** Recruitment, Communications, Fundraising/Grant Writing, General Skills, Education, Community

Organization, Writing/Editing, Environment, Non-Profit Management, Leadership, Public Speaking,

Business/Entrepreneur.

**Overview of project:** The Outdoor Education Coordinator will report directly to the Executive Director to implement a pilot program focused on relationship building with Alliance members, conservation partners and the urban community. Activities will include attending community meetings, hosting focus groups, interviewing community leaders, participate in partner meetings and events, and surveying partners and community members.

The VISTA will recruit community members to experience the outdoors and connect to nature. The VISTA will be planning outdoor events, communicating success stories and recruiting participation from our eight action areas. These activities will successfully impact people’s lives with increased access to nature and outdoor experiences. The VISTA will promote events, hold focus groups, attend training and conferences, participate in community events and meetings, track and analyze results for our pilot project. The VISTA will also conduct site visits of neighborhoods, attend conferences and training, write blog posts and email community. The VISTA will identify future funders for the project, and actively request funding through grant writing.

**Qualifications of the Outdoor Education Coordinator:** the Successful candidate will have graduated from an accredited college or university with a Bachelor's Degree in outdoor education, environmental education, environmental science or a related science, community development, organizational or program management, or a related field; plus have progressively responsible teaching, professional development and management experience. The Coordinator will enjoy the outdoors, be a team player and able to work independently in diverse urban communities. The VISTA must possess skills in public speaking, organizing events, coordinating volunteers and conducting research.

Candidates with significant related experience in lieu of a college degree will also be considered and may be employed at the discretion of the Executive Director. Candidates must be self-motivated and highly independent workers, self-confident and possessing strong written, verbal and interpersonal communication skills, and have excellent organizational skills. We are seeking candidates with strong abilities and skills to work with youth in a hands-on educational setting. The ability to develop relationships and collaborate with partners is critical.

The following are not required, but preferred:

* Background in community engagement and experience working with diverse communities
* Implementation of DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion) strategies of communication and engagement
* Minimum one year leading outdoor recreation activities, experience with youth preferred.
* Fluency in Spanish
* First Aid, CPR and other outdoor readiness training and/or experience

**Training:** There are two required trainings for the VISTA. The trainings will each last five days and will occur out of town. Exact dates and locations to be announced. All travel and lodging expenses are paid for the trainings. During COVID times we may shift to a virtual setting, but they are still mandatory for the members at least once a year.

**Schedule and Stipend:** The member living stipend is $13,399.15 for one year. Members qualify for public assistance such as SNAP and health insurance supplement among other things. More detailed information on VISTA Campus. <https://www.vistacampus.gov/members/benefits-of-service>. The Outdoor Education Coordinator shall complete 40 hours per week on average, with the exception of designated holidays or personal leave. The Outdoor Education Coordinator is generally expected to be available during normal business hours. The Outdoor Education Coordinator is responsible to manage their schedule to ensure completion of required responsibilities in a timely and professional manner.