

AMERICORPS SERVICE OPPORTUNITY

Position Title: Farm Assistant

Field of Service: Agriculture

Service Site: Rio Grande Farm Park

Address: 6935 State Hwy 17 Alamosa, CO 81101

Site Supervisor's Name: Meg Mercier

Slot Type: Three Quarter Term

Start Date: March 15th

Minimum # of hours to complete term: 1200

End Date: October 31st

Program Overview

Localizing our food system is one of the most impactful and actionable steps we can take to solve so many of our global problems. Across the central Rocky Mountains and southwestern Colorado, AmeriCorps service with Mountain Roots Healthy Futures Program builds social, economic, and environmental health for rural communities. We work with ten organizations throughout the region who are leaders in their fields, activating community-driven initiatives including Farm to School, Regenerative Agriculture & Community Gardens, Hunger Solutions (Community Food Security), and other programs in public health, conservation, and the environment. Join us for anywhere from one season to up to two years of mentored service, where you'll build a bridge from college to career while building and sustaining healthy communities, healthy people, and a healthy environment.

Organization Overview

The Rio Grande Farm Park's mission is to create and sustain a vibrant place where people come to learn, play, and grow. The Farm Park maintains 15 arable acres for disadvantaged farmers to grow food regeneratively, while the whole 40 acres provides youth and community education, robust volunteer programs, and a public park and orchard. The populations served are everyone, with particular focus on families in Alamosa and populations that seek farming opportunities but lack access to land, water, and capital.

Service Description

The Rio Grande Farm Park seeks a curious, hard-working Farm Assistant AmeriCorps volunteer to support activities on a 38 acre community farm in Alamosa, Colorado. The Farm Assistant AmeriCorps Volunteer will assist with land-based work, lead volunteer programs, and have opportunities to hone in on projects and programs based on their interests. This person will learn the ins-and-outs of growing produce in an arid climate, from water management to soil health. This person will also become a leader for volunteer projects, integrating community groups and students into meaningful and creative projects. This person will work closely with the Farm Manager and Director to practice regenerative agriculture and create a vibrant community space.

AmeriCorps Member Primary Responsibilities

- Lead monthly Saturday volunteer workdays, including helping identify projects, planning and promoting events, and recording volunteer data.
- Assist with irrigation, including flood irrigation, drip line maintenance, and ditch maintenance.
- Assist with vegetable production, from seeding to weeding to harvesting.
- Assist RGFP farming program participants as appropriate.
- Assist with animals (in the event we have animals), which may include chickens or goats.
- Assist with the weekly Mercadillo during the growing season including planning, vendor orientation, site management, and data collection.



- Assist with land health activities such as cover cropping, tree care, and noxious weed control.
- Assist with landscaping projects in community areas.
- Assist with growing produce and general maintenance in the greenhouse.
- Work with each RGFP Farmer's Cooperative grower for 1 day/month to learn different growing techniques, provide feedback, and encourage educational exchange between growers.
- Help integrate meaningful and creative volunteer opportunities into needed tasks at the Farm Park, and work with community groups to plan events and accomplish these tasks.
- As needed, create social media and newsletter content
- According to interests and skills, consider the needs of Farm Park and offer creative solutions to problems.
- Participate with the weekly Mercadillo farmers' market during the growing season - helping to set up the RGFP information booth, utilize a Point of Sale system to exchange SNAP and Credit Cards for market vouchers.

Location and Service Conditions:

This position is based at Rio Grande Farm Park and will involve service at San Luis Valley Local Foods Coalition Office at 412 State Ave, Alamosa, CO 81101. Position will involve frequent days of service outdoors.

Qualifications:

- Agricultural experience preferred but not required. Experience working in the manual labor and/or service industry is a plus.
- Ability to safely lift 40-50 pounds and work bent over for extended periods of time in any type of weather.
- Ability to work efficiently with teammates and independently.
- Attention to detail and willingness to focus and learn.
- Positive attitude is key, and the ability to maintain calm with frustrated program participants is necessary.
- Priority given to bilingual English/Spanish speakers. Those who are not bilingual will need to be able to comfortably work alongside monolingual Spanish speakers.

AmeriCorps Required Qualifications:

- At least 17 years old at start of service
- Must be a high school graduate, GED recipient, or working toward attaining a high school diploma or GED during the term of service. Members must obtain either a diploma or GED before using an education award.
- Be a citizen, national, or lawful permanent resident of the United States
- Able to pass a National Service Criminal History Check (state, FBI, and National Sex Offender Public Website checks) per 45 CFR 2540.202

Healthy Futures AmeriCorps Program Benefits

- \$13,552.00. Living Allowance - AmeriCorps Member(s) will receive total stipend paid bi-weekly at \$797.18 over the course of the term.
- \$4,826.50 Education Award / Tuition Assistance - AmeriCorps Member(s) can receive an Education Award upon successful completion of service. This can be used to pay back student loans, or to further your education.
- Eligible AmeriCorps Members can receive childcare assistance.
- All Members receive professional development and training, plus covered travel costs for attendance at state or regional conferences.
- All members may be eligible for Federal program assistance (SNAP, Medicaid, etc.)
- All members may qualify for student loan forbearance (postponing the payment of loans) while in service.
- Alumni benefits may include priority hiring with organizations that are part of Employers of National Service and the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program to eliminate educational debt.



About the Living Allowance

An AmeriCorps Living Allowance is not a wage, salary, or hourly pay. You are enrolling in a SERVICE position, not a job. The Living Allowance is a stipend designed to support the basic necessities of the individual while in service, such as room and board, utilities, and transportation. Carefully consider this when applying.

Place an "X" beside all that apply.

EDUCATION PREFERRED FOR THIS POSITION <i>(select all that apply)</i>	
X	High School Diploma or equivalent
X	Technical / Vocational School or Apprenticeship
X	Some College or AA Degree
X	Bachelor's Degree
	Master's Degree

ESSENTIAL SKILLS			
	Youth Education / Teaching	X	Communications
X	Environment / Conservation	X	Community Organizing
X	Project Coordination	X	Teamwork
X	Agriculture, Farming, & Gardening	X	Outreach & Engagement
X	Animal Husbandry		Working with vulnerable populations
X	Irrigation		Language <i>(specify)</i>
X	Landscaping		Other <i>(specify)</i>

OTHER	
X	Car Recommended (but we will offer bike support if member does not own car)
X	Permits attendance at school during off hours
X	Permits working at another job during off hours
X	Typical schedule, Monday-Friday
X	Flexible hours are required, including some weekends or evenings
	Remote / teleservice is allowed

