

## **2021-11-16 Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**

1. General Introductions
  - a. In Attendance: Erin Rosolina, Alanna McKissack, Jenna Bailey, Haley Michael-Lee, Jason Scott, Christine Doka, Lauren Bird, Leah Fontaine, Ashlee Mays, Cele Weakfall
2. Recruitment of Committee Members
  - a. Lorien Pace and Lizzie Gardner are both VISTA Supervisors who have applied to be members of the Advisory Committee. Their interest letters will be included in the email with the Meeting Minutes along with a form to vote on their addition.
3. Discussion on When to Meet for Future Meetings
  - a. Everyone feels that the current meeting time of the third Tuesday at 3 pm every three months is best.
  - b. Calendar invites will be sent out for all meetings in 2022 within a week of this meeting.
4. Update on Recruitment Efforts
  - a. We are close to 100% recruitment rates for the full-time program despite recruiting for more positions than average after August.
  - b. We are close to and hope to hit 50% recruitment for our part-time program. This is the first year for this program, and it has made us realize the need for more local recruitment for our organization going forward.
  - c. It has been challenging to recruit members due to the general job market and people's unwillingness to move, so the team feels accomplished by what has been achieved so far.
5. Update of programs
  - a. Environmental
    - i. Jason recently submitted the first draft of the environmental corps grant. It asked for 52 member spots. Over 52 positions were asked for during the RFP process, so 45 positions have been prioritized until we know for sure how many are granted to the corps.
    - ii. Higher living allowance for members asked: \$17,250 (\$735 biweekly)
    - iii. We have gotten feedback from the state, and they want to know more about the local need related to environmental education and public lands improvements.
    - iv. We believe that after our next revision, that should be the final draft.

- v. There will likely be more funding than usual due to the American Rescue Plan, so we feel confident that our program will be fully funded.
- vi. Fall site visits are wrapping up, and members are generally doing well.

b. VISTA

- i. There are still a few spots that we are recruiting for with a start date of January.
- ii. The Bottom and CTV became partners recently and will have members starting in January.
- iii. Christine got approval for a continuation grant, and they awarded us 32 spots. We were previously at 30, including two VISTA Leaders.
- iv. They also increased admin and support money from \$20,000 to \$40,000
- v. Christine is hashing out performance measures with site supervisors currently for next year's grant.
- vi. Cele and Ashlee have been Rockstars with recruitment, reporting, and midyear retreat planning. The office is very thankful for their presence and continued effort for the program.

c. Community Action Fellows

- i. Recruitment has been rough as we haven't prioritized local recruitment in the past, and the program has very low visibility as it is new.
- ii. We are dropping Leaders for Readers- Early Education performance measure as it is no longer a program hosted by Knox Education Foundation. We looked into partnering with Friends of Literacy, but it wasn't plausible for our members to participate due to this program's part-time/300 hours nature. We are looking to change this in our grant, which may affect the number of awarded positions
- iii. We currently have several members interviewing at sites and are hopeful for the 50% recruitment rate mentioned previously.
- iv. Two members will be wrapping up their term in December. One will be returning for a second term in the spring.
- v. We have had site visits with them as well. They also seem to be doing well at their site and in this program.

6. Update on Initiatives

a. Mentorship

- i. Relatively good feedback from both sides.
- ii. Haley mentioned that it's been hard to get more than a couple of members to the meetings.

- iii. Jenna is pushing mentors to reach out for support if something comes up and to keep emailing their mentees even if they haven't shown up several meetings in a row.
  - b. Service Learning Initiators
    - i. 3-4 members on it this year
    - ii. They held "Carving Out Your Service," a pumpkin carving day with a prompt of service-related questions to get them chatting about their year. It was a massive success, with 20 members participating and enjoying the opportunity to connect with fellow members and the office.
    - iii. All Service Learning Initiator planned events are optional and count for hours.
    - iv. They are planning a reading of "To Hell With Good Intentions." This will get members thinking about what it means to enter and support a community that isn't their own. It will be followed up with information about the communities members are serving and how to implement what members are talking and learning about.
  - c. AmeriCorps Alums: Knoxville
    - i. We have held two relatively successful events, a pint night and a drive-in movie night. Feedback has been positive, so we hope to continue hosting in-person events.
    - ii. On 11/20, we are hosting a Market Square Farmers' Market Meetup. Alum will receive a reusable bag with the new AmeriCorps logo to use around the market.
    - iii. Jenna suggestion: High Wire Brewing recently hosted a Puzzle Challenge where teams of 4 competed to see who could complete a 500 piece puzzle the fastest. We could host something similar for alum.
  - d. Community Impact Fund
    - i. There is currently still \$3,000 left in the fund.
    - ii. We received our first proposal!
- 7. Review and Vote on Community Impact Fund Proposal
  - a. Darcy Ayers serves with SEEED and asked for \$375 to pay for a YouScience small school site license. This would provide an aptitude assessment and career discovery tool. Through this, students can identify skills, values, and interests to kickstart the career development process.
  - b. Erin and Alanna provided positive feedback on the program. Alanna took this test in High school and said that it was helpful for her.
  - c. A link to anonymous voting was posted and will be open to the committee until Friday the 19<sup>th</sup>.

## 8. Open Discussion

- a. The Build Back Better Legislation
  - i. There is a lot of back and forth going on with it, but it has a proposal to have a climate corps in it which would increase AmeriCorps by an additional 200,000 spots (previously 80,000 positions.)
  - ii. It would also increase all AmeriCorps stipends to approximately \$15/hr and the education award to approximately \$9,000. This could increase accessibility to AmeriCorps broadly.
  - iii. It is rumored that it will be voted on in the house this week.
  
- b. KCDC Housing Discussions
  - i. Jason and CAC Executive Director, Barbara Kelly, have a meeting with KCDC to discuss options to build housing specifically for AmeriCorps members.
  - ii. A survey went out to members, and the results showed members want these housing opportunities and would consider serving a second year if provided with them. The survey also provided the office with valuable information on the perception of affordable rent, preferred location of units, and the most beneficial amenities for members.
  
- c. Sarita Baxter's Passing
  - i. Second-year member Sarita Baxter passed away last week. She served with Lakeway Casa and was a valuable part of their team who always prioritized the children they served.
  - ii. The CAC AmeriCorps staff attended her celebration of life, where they got to meet her family, including several of her great-grandchildren. It was great to share stories with them and learn more about her love of service. Sarita will be dearly missed, but we are thankful for the time she spent in our program.