



TERRACORPS

Formerly MassLIFT-AmeriCorps

2017 Youth Education Coordinator Position Opening **with Growing Places**

TerraCorps, formerly MassLIFT-AmeriCorps, is an innovative national service program helping communities conserve and secure land for the health and well-being of people and nature. Using the AmeriCorps national service model, TerraCorps prepares and mobilizes emerging leaders to help strengthen community-based nonprofits working to meet these goals.

This year's TerraCorps program will support thirty-six full-time AmeriCorps members, serving in one of four positions: Land Stewardship Coordinator (LSC), Regional Conservation Coordinator (RCC), Community Engagement Coordinator (CEC), and Youth Education Coordinator (YEC). Members will serve in full-time, eleven-month positions (August 28th, 2017- July 27, 2018) in which they complete at least 1,700 hours of service with one of our partner organizations. Members receive a living allowance, education award, and additional AmeriCorps benefits (see full list at end of announcement).

Growing Places will host a Youth Education Coordinator for the 2017-18 service year. Information about all TerraCorps positions is available at terracorps.org.

Growing Places

325 Lindell Ave
Leominster, MA 01453
growingplaces.org

Growing Places believes in the power of gardening to change lives. We help low-income communities in North Central Massachusetts realize the many health, economic, and social benefits of growing and consuming healthy fruits and vegetables by building food gardens and teaching the skills to grow, harvest and use fresh produce. We believe all people have the right to enjoy sustainable, thriving and resilient communities.

Working with individuals, families, non-profit organizations, farmers, businesses, schools, and public agencies, we aim to:

- Make fresh, healthy fruits and vegetables more accessible, affordable, and widely consumed
- Increase physical, outdoor activity

- Improve mental and emotional well-being
- Foster neighborhood pride and enjoyment
- Grow social connections through gardening and healthy eating
- Provide meaningful volunteer and leadership opportunities
- Promote environmental sustainability and climate resilience
- Contribute to region-wide strategies for creating a socially-just food system

We promote healthy people, healthy communities and a healthy earth by:

- Building food gardens and teaching gardeners the skills to maintain them
- Offering educational programs that demonstrate healthy food preparation
- Increasing environmental awareness and enjoyment of outdoor spaces by distributing free shade trees
- Teaching sustainable growing practices that support community resilience
- Improving access to healthy food through community gardens, participation in federal nutrition programs, and support of farmers' markets
- Providing leadership and expertise in a regional network of providers and stakeholders working to advance food access strategies
- Building long-term community connections through volunteer and leadership opportunities, community events and forums, and our support of safe and accessible community gathering spaces within a network of regional community gardens

Youth Education Coordinators (YEC) build the long-term capacity of their host site by engaging youth in service learning, experiential education, and inquiry-based science and nature learning projects. They collaborate with schools, libraries, and youth groups on projects that connect young people to the natural world, improve science literacy, and encourage healthy lifestyles.

YECs may help their host site to engage with educators and volunteers to guide youth in environmental inquiry and discovery, school and community garden projects, urban tree stewardship projects, urban pocket park projects, and "green jobs" training and internship programs. By serving with youth in an outdoor learning environment, they reinforce the connection between people, nature, and community and foster an inclusive land stewardship ethic in future generations.

TerraCorps members engage with their supervisors to develop and carry out three or more capacity building projects over the course of the service year. Some of these projects will involve recruiting, training, and/or managing community volunteers. Growing Places has proposed the following potential projects for their Youth Education Coordinator:

Growing Places seeks the placement of one MassLIFT YEC member to build upon our 15 years of experience providing gardening, environmental stewardship, and healthy eating education to adults and families by serving area youth. The goal of our youth education programming is to build the skills, confidence, and knowledge of youth, ages 6 to 12, to grow, harvest, and prepare healthy fruits and vegetables, to be good stewards of the environment, and to encourage healthy lifestyles. Our youth programs will be offered through local public schools

and in the community in partnership with community based youth-serving organizations located in Clinton, Leominster, Fitchburg, and Gardner, MA.

Our goal is for the YEC to expand the following program:

Teaching Garden *for Kids* – 10-week, school-based garden and environmental stewardship education for kids in grades 2-5. The goal of the Teaching Garden *for Kids* program is to offer elementary age youth the opportunity to experience the benefits of gardening, healthy eating, and to understand the connection between food, health, and the environment.

In addition to the Teaching Garden for Kids, the YEC could potentially expand:

Garden on the GO!: The mobile education program takes gardening out of the gardens and into the community, giving local youth and their families the opportunity to learn about the benefits of growing fresh produce right in their own neighborhoods. Responsibilities could include planning, planting, and maintenance of the Garden on the GO! and implementing the mobile garden workshops with community partners.

Garden Story Time: This program will allow families to explore the garden, taste new vegetables, and relax in an outdoor setting and spend time reading various children's books with themes around gardens, land stewardship, environmental sustainability, and food.

Tree ID walks: We offer monthly tree ID walks for adults and families in Leominster. We would like to expand the tree ID walks to focus on youth organizations and youth sustainability education.

Development of these and other projects will occur during the first two months of service and consider the member's interests and skills.

Essential Qualifications:

- High school diploma and relevant experience
- Experience teaching youth or leading youth groups in the outdoors
- Experience with hands-on gardening, conservation, or stewardship projects
- Passion for food, nutrition, gardening and its impact on community health, and environmental sustainability
- Strong presentation, communication, and networking skills
- Ability and eagerness to connect and forge relationships with people of all backgrounds and experiences
- Able to serve both independently and as a member of a team
- Familiarity with Microsoft Office programs

Desired Qualifications:

- Spanish language proficiency
- Community based work/outreach, community relations, etc.
- Associates degree or higher and/or certificate, training, or internship in a field related to environmental education, environmental and social justice,

environmental policy, civic advocacy, social justice, or other social science related fields.

- Experience training and managing volunteers
- Experience with experiential education, service learning, and inquiry-based learning methods
- Experience with curriculum development and lesson planning

For questions about Growing Places' service position, please contact Erica Wood, Engagement Manager at: Erica@growingplaces.org or 978/598-3723, x. 803.

AmeriCorps Member Eligibility Requirements

This year's TerraCorps program will run from August 28, 2017 through July 27, 2018. All members are expected to serve full-time, commit to serve for the entire eleven-month term, and complete at least 1,700 hours of service, including time spent in trainings and service with the full TerraCorps team. Weekly service averages 35 hours and commonly includes some night and/or weekend activities.

As a program of AmeriCorps, TerraCorps applicants must also meet the following AmeriCorps requirements:

- A US citizen, US national, or Lawful Permanent Resident Alien of the U.S.
- At least 18 years old
- A minimum of a high school diploma or GED
- No more than three previous terms as an AmeriCorps member
- Pass a criminal history background check, including an FBI check

AmeriCorps programs provide equal opportunities. TerraCorps will recruit and select persons in all positions to ensure a diverse and inclusive climate without regard to race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, veteran status, color, political affiliation, creed, national origin, marital status, or any other status as protected by federal, state, and local laws. We encourage applications from individuals with disabilities and will provide reasonable accommodations for interviews and service upon request.

Member Compensation and Benefits

- TerraCorps members will receive a living allowance of \$12,530 (pre-tax) over the 11-month term of service, which is \$522.08 per 24 biweekly pay periods.
- TerraCorps assists members in obtaining health insurance coverage through healthcare.gov. Reimbursement of costs may be available.
- Childcare assistance may be provided in cases of financial need.
- Upon successful completion of a term of service, AmeriCorps members receive a \$5,815 education award that can be used for future education or to pay off existing school loans. See nationalservice.gov/resources/edaward for info and restrictions.

- TerraCorps members are eligible for forbearance of most federally-guaranteed student loans, as well as payment of interest accrued during service.
- TerraCorps members will receive mentorship, training, and career development opportunities while serving directly with community-based nonprofits.
- TerraCorps members experience the personal rewards of national service and community engagement.

Note: TerraCorps members are responsible for their own housing and must have access to reliable transportation.

How to Apply

2017-2018 Host Site organizations, service positions, and application procedures are described at terracorps.org.

A complete member application includes a 1-page cover letter, a resume, three references, and an application form. Member application and detailed instructions can be found at terracorps.org.

Member applications will be available for viewing by all our host sites. Do not send applications directly to a host site.

We strongly encourage application submissions before interviews begin in mid-April. Position offers and acceptances will begin shortly thereafter. The program aims to fill all positions by early June, but host sites will continue interviews as needed until all positions are filled. For questions about TerraCorps, contact Hanna Mogensen, who manages TerraCorps' recruitment process, at Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust. Email admin@masslift.org or call 978-248-2043.

Additional Information About this Program

TerraCorps We seek to create change by achieving a broader, more authentic engagement of the diverse peoples living in our communities. When we do this, resources will grow, access to land will increase, the pace of land conservation will accelerate, and whole communities will achieve more resilient futures. To learn more about TerraCorps, visit: terracorps.org.

AmeriCorps engages more than 75,000 men and women in intensive service each year through more than 15,000 nonprofits, schools, public agencies, and community and faith-based groups across the country. AmeriCorps members help communities tackle pressing problems and also leverage their service by mobilizing volunteers to help address community needs for environmental stewardship, health, education, economic opportunity, disaster services, and support to veterans and military families. To learn more about AmeriCorps, visit americorps.gov.

TerraCorps is a grant program contingent upon renewal of federal funding from the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). CNCS grants to AmeriCorps programs in Massachusetts are administered by the Massachusetts Service Alliance.

The Massachusetts Service Alliance (MSA, mass-service.org) is a private, nonprofit organization that serves as the state commission on community service and volunteerism. MSA's mission is to catalyze the innovation and growth of service and volunteerism by creating partnerships that

maximize resources, expertise, capacity, and impact. TerraCorps is one of 23 AmeriCorps programs for which MSA currently administers funding and supports program implementation.