



Commonwealth Corps Service Internship Position Description

Regional Environmental Council Inc.
UGROW (Urban Garden Resources of Worcester)
Commonwealth Corps
Community & School Garden Engagement Specialist



The mission of the Commonwealth Corps service internship program is to engage Massachusetts residents of all ages, backgrounds, and identities in direct service to strengthen communities, address critical needs, and increase volunteerism. Through hands-on experience, Commonwealth Corps members gain professional skills and valuable knowledge while positively impacting diverse communities in our state.

The Massachusetts Service Alliance (MSA) is a private, nonprofit agency that oversees the program and supports host site partners and members to find success throughout the program year. The REC will host two Commonwealth Corps members that will serve 10 months in a full-time capacity. They will join a diverse corps of members across Massachusetts who share a common desire to discover their passion and build their network in service to their communities and the Commonwealth.

The Regional Environmental Council, Inc. (REC) is a grassroots, nonprofit, environmental and food justice organization with a 45-year history working for environmental sustainability and social justice in Central Massachusetts. REC is seeking one full-time Commonwealth Corp member to support our network of volunteer community garden coordinators, who lead and manage 60+ community gardens in the City of Worcester. They will also support the REC's 25+ school gardens by planning and implementing programming relevant to urban gardening and healthy eating for schools and early childhood education centers throughout Worcester. UGROW (Urban Gardening Resources of Worcester) is made up of the REC's Community Gardens and School Gardens programs. Through their service, the UGROW Engagement Specialist will coordinate and promote community garden workshops in areas of interest to the volunteer leaders in the network, recruit and train new volunteers to support community garden needs, and engage existing and new volunteers to work on projects to increase gardens climate resiliency.

What You'll Do:

Essential Responsibilities:

- Complete a minimum of 1,500 hours of service, serving through June 22, 2024.
- Attend a minimum of 6 Commonwealth Corps trainings and service events held by MSA post orientation.
- Participate in a minimum of 1 hour of MSA-related activities each week. This may include filling out timesheets, completing a bi-monthly reflection or check-in, or other MSA-related tasks or activities.
- Recruit volunteers to support the community and school gardens network through direct outreach, partner development, and relationship building.
- Provide direct support at the school and community gardens.
- Serve with existing network of expert organizations to plan and promote educational garden workshops to be hosted at community garden sites and at the REC's YouthGROW Farm.
- Serve with the Community Garden Coordinator and existing community garden volunteer leaders to develop a plan for improvements at two locations focused on increasing climate resiliency/demonstrating carbon sequestration techniques as well as recruiting volunteers to support in the implementation of these improvement efforts.
- Provide direct support to gardens serving early childhood age, including general maintenance, watering,

and harvesting as well as developing plans in partnership with the site for sustainable long term maintenance.

- Develop and deliver developmentally appropriate hands on workshops related to gardening and healthy eating.
- Serve with School Gardens Coordinator to schedule and implement “mini market” program where REC brings Mobile Market and produce for an on-site market experience for children, including a literacy component and vegetables for families to take home.
- Develop support tools and training for early childhood providers to incorporate gardening as a teaching tool.
- Support produce delivery and sale in low-income communities via the REC Mobile Market program in order to build relevant skills/experience for mini-market program implementation.

Marginal Responsibilities:

- Collaborate with other Commonwealth Corps members to support greenhouse operations to grow \$5,000+ seedlings for the community and school gardens network.
- Collaborate with other Corps members to plan spring community events, including a city-wide Earth Day Clean Up, engaging over 1,000 volunteers and our Annual Spring Garden Festival and Plant Sale.
- Support non-volunteer-based youth development programming including monthly retreats.
- Be a part of the greater Commonwealth Corps community, including participating in cross-site learning groups, writing a short profile for the CC newsletter, connecting with other members on our online platforms, and attending optional social/service events.

Who You Are:

You must be:

- A Massachusetts resident ([see guidelines here](#)) with legal authorization to work in the U.S.
- 18 years of age at minimum (member age range is 18 – 70+ years old)
- Excited to give back to your community and interested in developing your skills and gaining new professional experiences
- Able to balance service internship commitments with personal commitments in a sustainable way
- Self-motivated, detail oriented, highly organized and reliable
- Ability to manage multiple tasks with competing deadlines
- Ability to travel independently to sites via personal or public transportation
- Strong people and communication skills, both written and verbal
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It would also be great if you:

- Have familiarity/experience with the Worcester community, particularly the Bell Hill and Main South neighborhoods
- Have previous experience collaboratively working or volunteering with people of diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds
- Speak a language other than English -- multilingual candidates encouraged to apply
- Have experience growing food
- Have experience working with children ages 2-5
- Are comfortable with online collaboration tools, e.g., shared calendars, email, shared folders/files (Dropbox, Google Suite)

What You'll Get:

- **Stipend** of \$1,200 semi-monthly while in service, up to \$25,200 ,minus taxes and withholdings;
- **Health insurance** (individual coverage only);
- **Member assistance program**, including unlimited, confidential, 24/7, phone counseling services and up to three free, in-person counseling sessions, plus a lot more;
- **Completion award** of up to \$4000 upon successful completion of service, minus taxes and withholdings;
- **Reimbursement for outside training** or professional development opportunities relevant to member's service and/or goals (Up to \$100; Dependent on approval from MSA)
- REC will provide up to \$250/member to support approved professional development or trainings and a \$80/month produce stipend for local produce via the REC Mobile Farmers Markets
- **Extensive training from MSA with a diversity, equity and inclusion focus and other professional development** opportunities;
- **Limited reimbursement for travel** to Corps-wide MSA-sponsored activities;
- **Internet reimbursement** up to \$50/month while required to complete some service from home if required by site;
- Limited travel reimbursement from their host site for certain service-related travel away from their usual service location, according to that agency's policies;
- **Mental Health/Personal Day** once per month counting towards 8hrs
- The opportunity for at least 10 days of planned absences (may include holidays, does not count towards hours requirement);

Please note that receipt of these stipends/benefits may impact an individual's eligibility for certain public benefits.

Term of Service:

- **Position Start Date:** August 21, 2023
- **Position End Date:** June 22, 2024
- Service commitment 40 hours per week during the following days/times:
- Service commitment will average 38-40 hours per week with a minimum of five full service days (9-5) and approximately two evenings per month and up to two weekends per month during the months of September, October, April and May, with advance notice. Service schedule/days will be agreed upon at the start of the service term and any changes or additions, including night or weekend hours, will be made with advanced notice.

How to Apply:

- To apply, submit a cover letter and resume to Grace Sliwoski at grace@recworchester.org. Early applications are encouraged as applications will be accepted on a rolling basis, with preference given to candidates who apply by May 20th. Questions about this position can be directed to Grace Sliwoski at grace@recworchester.org.

Accepted members will be required to undergo a criminal history check.

The Regional Environmental Council will recruit and select persons in all positions to ensure a diverse and inclusive climate without regard to race, ethnicity, religion, sex, gender, 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. The Regional Environmental Council welcomes applications from individuals with disabilities and will make

reasonable accommodations for interviews and for service upon request.