



# AmeriCorps VISTA

## VISTA Assignment Description (VAD)

Please note the goals, objectives and activities, and other sections throughout this document are fairly standard, but can be adjusted to fit the needs of your site. If awarded, your specialist will go over this document with you and any changes you'd like to make to ensure all activities and requirements are allowable, and all necessary sections are complete. Please indicate in your host site application if you anticipate needing to make significant changes.

<b>Affiliate/Host Site Name:</b> Habitat for Humanity of Greater Los Angeles	<b>Host Site Manager (HSM) Name:</b> Caitlin Rose
<b>Program:</b> AmeriCorps VISTA <b>Member Role:</b> Project Development	<b>Will members engage in any of these programs?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Disaster Recovery <input type="checkbox"/> Neighborhood Revitalization <input type="checkbox"/> Veterans/Military Families <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None
<b>Service Week (days/times):</b> Monday – Friday, 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM with occasional evenings/Saturdays/Sundays	<b>Direct Supervisor Name:</b> Darrell Simien
<b>Will this member be actively building on the construction site at least one day per week?</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	

**Goals** (position's goals in relation to the project as a whole, as well as the impact the project will have in the community)

**NOTE: The Project Development member role is a sort of catch-all for roles that do not fit into other standard member role categories. The goals and objectives and activities listed below are very broad in nature, but we've found that they are typical of most Project Development roles and can be adjusted to apply to your specific project.**

*Our affiliate has expanded our service area which includes a population of over 9 million residents. The additional support provided by the AmeriCorps member will allow us to expand our programs(i.e. homeowners association management, business development and home repair) in the new territory. This member will be critical in creating the programmatic policies that the Affiliate will utilize in helping educate and empower those residents to take an active role in their community and learn vital communication and leadership skills. The AmeriCorps member will become an integral part of our Real Estate Department. This department manages our real estate, land acquisition, project development, mortgage portfolio, homeownership association management, property disposition, and Community Housing Development Organization activities for the affiliate. We currently have a housing production pipeline of over 300 units and we have just doubled the service area of our affiliate to a population of over 8.5 million. The support of the AmeriCorps member to the department is key to successfully provide our services to our entire service area.*

**Example of affiliate-specific goal with a focus on affiliate operations and Disaster (please ensure your position's goals are specific to your host site):**

It is critical that our affiliate goes back to basics to enable us to move forward rapidly. To do this we need to ensure we follow relevant actions recommended in the "Affiliate Building Blocks," and ensure that there is a strong infrastructure and supporting management system in place. This will be followed by the implementation of recommendations in HFHI's "Field Guide: Building on Strengths for Greater Affiliate Impact (Capacity Building)," which will allow the affiliate to become much more effective and increase the number of homes we are able to build and repair. In addition, through the support of the VISTA member we will be able to not only execute the affiliate's hurricane recovery program effectively and efficiently, but we will also be able to measure the success of the program and leverage this to promote the affiliate, supporting fundraising efforts.

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**Outputs:** Measurable targets must be included and should be targeted **PER MEMBER**. Please use the shared outputs below, inserting “0” if not applicable.

- 200 individuals will collaborate with VISTA member on projects related to this position. (Stakeholders, volunteers, community members, staff, etc.)
- 4 systems and/or tools will be created, utilized or enhanced by VISTA member that will increase capacity at the affiliate (example Assessment tools, asset mapping, research analysis, business development strategies)
- 3 of additional projects that do not fall into one of the categories above created or enhanced by VISTA member that will increase capacity at the affiliate .

## **Objective One** (First Quarter)

**EXPLORATION:** Explore the programs, policies and procedures, leadership and resources that are currently in place at the site and identify best practices from other programs. Identify what additional needs the project requires. Document research, communicate findings to the project sponsor and gain further direction to move forward with developing an enhanced program.

### **Member Activities** (include specific outputs as appropriate)

1. Research best practices, systems, resources and examples of similar projects at other organizations (including other affiliates and HFHI).
2. Research opportunities to create resources and enhance community partnerships for HFH. Conduct research in specifically assigned project areas and develop distribution plan for information.
3. Research methods to increase participation with project, including presentations, materials and systems for recruitment of partners.
4. Research systems to accurately track and record project related data, focused on ensuring sustainability. Research evaluation tools that will assist in projecting and assessing project impact.
5. Research past affiliate attempts to form project and identify key stakeholders.
  - Research land development opportunities.
  - Identify community improvement projects opportunities. and execute projects(ex.
  - Regularly attend community development meetings, information sessions and relevant affordable housing forums that advance our knowledge of affordable housing campaign. Examples include local governance, public comments, and resident meetings.

## **Objective Two** (Second Quarter)

**DEVELOPMENT:** Based on the information gathered, the VISTA will develop systems or programs that will address the needs of the host site and are sustainable. This may include improved data gathering methods or storage, more efficient policies and procedures, improved community interaction and increased leveraging of resources, community engagement and support, etc.

### **Member Activities** (include specific outputs as appropriate)

1. Develop new systems and programs that will increase the number of families served at the site.
2. Develop community partnerships that will support programs, develop leadership and leverage resources.
3. Develop methods to increase participation with project, including presentations, materials and systems for recruitment of partners, volunteers and leadership.
4. Develop systems to accurately track and record project related data, focused on ensuring sustainability. Develop

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evaluation tools that will assist in projecting and assessing project impact.

5. Formulate results and present to key stakeholders to establish direction of project.
6. Develop all processes, materials, and procedures for project.
- 7. Build relationships with other non-profit and community based organizations in an effort to find mutually beneficial capitol improvement projects.

### **Objective Three** (Third Quarter)

**IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW** – Implement the new and/or improved system or program. This may include setting up systems, documenting the new policies and procedures, training others (including leadership) to use it, putting in place a schedule, securing resources or implementing an event plan. Assist the site in testing and evaluating the various parts of the program developed and make revisions to the program as needed in order to ensure success.

#### **Member Activities** (include specific outputs as appropriate)

1. Implement the new systems and programs developed that will increase the number of families served at the site. Pilot project using developed tools, processes, etc.
2. Implement opportunities to secure or create resources and enhance community partnerships that will support programs, develop leadership and leverage resources.
3. Implement methods to increase participation with project, including recruitment of partners and leadership and training them on presentations, materials and systems.
4. Implement systems to accurately track and record project related data, focused on ensuring sustainability. Implement the use of evaluation tools to assist in projecting and assessing project impact.
5. Collect feedback on pilot; make necessary modifications.
  
6. Assist Habitat homeowners in understanding the Covenants, conditions, restrictions and Reservation of easements and other governing documents
7. Ensure Habitat homeowners association members are educated and versed in their fiduciary obligations
8. Execute a pilot training program for new homeowner association

\* Note that while VISTAs cannot regularly build on the construction site, the VISTA member may have the opportunity to engage in active building no more than one time per month to help inform project development activities.

### **Objective Four** (Fourth Quarter)

**SUSTAINABILITY** - Ensure that the systems and/or programs developed are sustainable and will continue at the host site after the completion of the VISTA term by developing manuals and training staff/volunteers on the new program.

#### **Member Activities** (include specific outputs as appropriate)

1. Build relationships and partner with residents, local agencies, elected officials, and community stakeholders. These partnerships will help to identify areas where host site housing and community development solutions can intersect with the community's identified aspirations.
2. Create and manage the Habitat LA Home Owner Association Management Policy and Procedure Manual for Staff
3. Create and manage the Habitat LA Home Owner Association Member Policy and Procedure Manual for Homeowners
4. Create and manage a Habitat LA Homeowner's Association Member training class for new Association Homeowners (1 hr class)
5. Help to develop or enhance current systems and policies.
6. Work in collaboration with local, regional and statewide offices to combat the affordable housing deficit in the Los Angeles region.

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**Required Meetings, Trainings and Events** Minimum expectations are outlined below, with the understanding that further trainings may be required as determined by HFHI, CNCS or the Host Site.

- On Site Orientation to local host site
- First Aid/CPR
- HabitatLearns “Foundations of Habitat” series
- Lockton Safety Courses
- Build-a-Thon (spring)
- National Days of Service (MLK Day required, 9/11 Day of Remembrance and AmeriCorps Week encouraged)
- HFHI Host Site Monitoring Reviews and periodic check-in calls
- Monthly meeting with HSM (minimum)
- Bi-weekly meeting with direct supervisor (minimum)
- Life After AmeriCorps Training (LAFTA)
- Staff meetings, Board meetings and home dedications, as appropriate
- Annual staff/AmeriCorps team build day
- Individual and/or group professional development trainings may be available based on AmeriCorps interest, HSM/supervisor recommendation and budget
- Host Site Events, including Hollywood Build(June); Builders Ball (October) Participation in these events will be in line with AmeriCorps program regulations/restriction.

### Education/Experience/Knowledge/Skills

Required:

- Valid driver’s license and ability to meet host site’s insurance requirements. Microsoft Office Suite (especially Word/Excel)

Preferred/helpful:

- Knowledge of, and willingness to promote, the mission and activities of Habitat for Humanity and AmeriCorps
- Skilled at data mining and internet based research
- Ability to work with a diverse group of people
- Real Estate transaction knowledge is desired
- Understanding of government infrastructure is a plus
- Strong written and verbal communication skills
- Strong research skills
- Detail oriented and highly organized
- Experience working with volunteers or teaching/group facilitation experience
- Experience working as a member of a team
- A second language is highly desirable, with preferred language being Spanish or Chinese
- Public speaking experience
- Knowledge of community development practices
- Project management experience
- A second language is highly desirable, with preferred language being Spanish or Manderine

**Physical requirements** for this position

- Ability to sit at a desk and computer for extended periods of time
- About 20% of this position requires outreach in the community, including visiting buildings and homes that may have stairs, as well as serving on project sites that might have uneven terrain.

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**Service Site Environment:** Describe type of office space, computer and communication equipment, internet and email access, construction tools, etc. that will be provided for the AmeriCorps member(s). Please note AmeriCorps members are prohibited from serving in a home office:

Members will serve in an open-space office and will share space with other staff and/or AmeriCorps members. Each member will have a desk, computer (with email and internet access), and a phone for service-related tasks. Shared resources include a printer, copy machine, fax machine as well as office supplies.

**Personal vehicle required?**  No  Yes If yes, provide explanation detailing necessary usage of vehicle. If member will be using a company vehicle, also include in the details:

**Examples (please modify to make this specific to your host site):**

Some travel is required for this position. Public transportation options are limited in our community so access to a personal vehicle is required to get to and from service, as well as any required meetings. Approved service-related mileage (beyond commuting to and from service) will be reimbursed per the affiliate's policy.

**Habitat.org posting blurb:** Include a description of your site that can be used when posting on Habitat.org. Include city, state, selling points of your site and the geographical area, additional benefits you offer (ex. housing, transit voucher, etc.), what the member will get out of serving a year with your site (skills, etc.), and your website.

**Examples (please modify to make this specific to your host site):**

Serve, learn, lead and explore in iconic Los Angeles! Habitat for Humanity of Greater Los Angeles has been hosting AmeriCorps members since 1999. Our AmeriCorps members play an integral role in providing leadership on our project sites, engaging volunteers to become champions for our mission, and creating new tools and systems to build capacity. Our members are the ambassadors of Habitat LA, interacting with over 10,000 volunteers, partner families and community stakeholders. During a year of service with Habitat LA, AmeriCorps members gain insight to the inner workings of a non-profit organization and gain hands-on experience in leadership, public speaking and community development. Benefits beyond the AmeriCorps living allowance and education award include a housing stipend of at least \$500-600/month and for construction leads, hand tool and gear reimbursement. In your off hours, hike the many mountain ranges in our backyard; explore Downtown Los Angeles, Hollywood and the many beaches of Southern California Join our Habitat family and form lasting relationships, while creating affordable housing solutions with hard-working families in Greater Los Angeles. [www.habitatla.org](http://www.habitatla.org)

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