



Position Title: Ecological Assistant

Position Service Site: Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration (St. Joseph Ridge in La Crosse, WI)

Service Time: September 5, 2023 – August 16, 2024 (1,700 Hour AmeriCorps Term, 50 weeks, 35 hours per week)

Benefits: Living stipend total for whole term = \$23,000 (\$460 per week), Education Award = \$6,895.00 upon successful completion of service. Health insurance optional (1 year/1,700 hour positions only, who are not already covered)

Requirements: Covid-19 vaccine required.

OVERVIEW: Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration's goal is to provide young environmental leaders with the opportunity to gain relevant professional experience that serve the environment and the community by supporting healthy urban and rural ecosystems. FSPA has 200 acres of land with a greenhouse, garden, and orchard on St. Joseph Ridge, just outside La Crosse, that serves as an education model in the community for conservation and regenerative land practices.

Learn more at fspa.org/land

SERVICE DESCRIPTION: FSPA's Ecological Assistant will aid in living out the commitment to care for Earth by helping restore native ecosystems on the grounds of FSPA, maintaining the greenhouse and gardens, engaging the community, and supporting programs that are part of the FSPA ministries.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

Community Improvement

- Willingness to learn the impacts of climate change on the Driftless region and help educate others how to mitigate those impacts and build a resilient community.
- Collect and track the congregation's greenhouse gas emissions as it relates to the FSPA land on St. Joseph Ridge.
- Support the development and implementation of the FSPA Laudato Si Action Plan (Climate Action Plan) with a regenerative land management focus.
- Increase environmental awareness, support land justice and promote sustainability through community outreach events.
- Design and implement at least one program for environmental education, sharing what you've learned with members of the local community; may present to the FSPA community towards the end of service.
- Identify and develop virtual resources related to climate action, natural resource management and land access in the Driftless region.
- In the case of natural disasters AmeriCorps member may be recruited to assist the community.

Programming

- Assist FSPA land projects working in the garden, greenhouse, orchard, woodlands and prairies.
- Assist with garden preparation, planting, weeding, harvesting, field clean up, mulching, mowing, row covers and seasonal maintenance.
- Assist with habitat management and restoration of native prairie, forest, oak savanna and natural waterways.
- Assist with identification and eradication of invasive species, timber stand improvement, prairie and tree plantings, and water diversion strategies.

- Assist with designing, improving, and updating kiosks, signs, and brochures as related to the FSPA land on St. Joseph Ridge

Program Marketing

- Help create or curate simple “how-to” videos, including but not limited to natural landscape restoration, leave no trace principles and pollinator habitat support etc.
- Assist in the development of FSPA eco education programs including lesson planning, activity development and teaching and developing educational materials.
- Track progress and develop reports on specific sustainability and environmental measures.

Volunteer Recruitment

- Develop partnerships with local and regional partner organizations to learn and implement best practices for regenerative land management and climate resiliency for the FSPA land.
- Create an outreach plan to connect with local and regional environmental and eco-justice organizations to promote FSPA land projects.
- Assist in recruitment, training, and management of FSPA land volunteers for stewardship and service projects including trail work, garden, orchard, greenhouse, woodland and prairie restorative projects. Volunteers are all ages.
- Assist in volunteer and activity tracking, for continual program improvement.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- A team player and good communicator with flexible attitude and eagerness to learn
- Physically active and able to lift at least 30 lbs. (occasionally 50 lbs.) with stooping and bending
- Able to work in all weather conditions conducive of Wisconsin
- An intrepid sense of curiosity and enthusiasm about the natural world and interactions within
- Willing to interact inter-generationally and inter-culturally
- Ability to take direction and accept constructive criticism
- Ability to prioritize and handle multiple tasks
- Attention to detail and organizational skills
- Strong sense of responsibility and follow-through
- Education and/or experience in land conservation, ecological restoration, sustainability, community outreach and climate resilience a plus
- Technology proficient in platforms such as Google Workspace and Microsoft Office
- Withstand the physical demands of work which involves some lifting, carrying, bending and hiking across uneven terrain
- Ability to perform the essential duties of the position with or without reasonable accommodation
- Ability and willingness to use chemical products both natural and conventional for land management
- Ability to multitask and shift schedule and priorities to meet changing conditions
- Upon hire, a criminal background check will be conducted. Service with WisCorps will be considered probationary until all results are returned and have been reviewed

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