

# AmeriCorps Member of the Year

**David Lee Schneider**

***Department of Public Instruction AmeriCorps  
Farm to School Program***



With great enthusiasm and a passion for both agriculture and serving his community, David Lee Schneider has had a tremendous impact through his two terms as an AmeriCorps member with the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction AmeriCorps Farm to School Program.

Jumping into his first term of service in the middle of the school year during the COVID-19 pandemic, David taught nutrition education to over five hundred Howard Suamico School District students through in-person and virtual learning. This year, David has taught hundreds more students, taken students on a farm field trip, and revamped their upcoming summer school curriculum to make it more sustainable.



The district previously acquired a 10-acre plot to turn into a school farm. The garden grew slowly with a relatively small produce yield. David quickly got to work by cleaning up several acres of overgrown fields full of rocks, rubble, tall grasses and branches and worked with six classes of summer school students to plant their school garden. David and his students grew 31 different varieties of crops, and he was able to harvest over 2,700 pounds of produce this fall for use by the school nutrition program. He is now working to clean-up and reorganize Inspiration Acres, striving to create a garden more conducive to student learning.

The reach of David's service goes beyond the students he serves. David uses his own experience as a farmer to promote the Wisconsin Local Foods Database, which launched in 2021 to connect local farmers and school food service directors. He has spread the word to farmers throughout the state by writing articles in the Wisconsin State Farmer and other newspapers, television appearances, virtual presentations, and presenting this summer at a statewide school nutrition conference.

Howard-Suamico Director of School Nutrition Laura Rowell explains that "David has shown off his blood, sweat and tears in the land and classrooms across Howard Suamico School District. He never disappoints and always carries a smile. I am beyond proud of him and thankful for his hard work and commitment to not only farm to school efforts through AmeriCorps programming, but as a beacon of hope for the future of agriculture in Wisconsin!"

