

# “Here We Grow Together” – Updates on Nutrition Lessons and Inspiration Acres



I wish to serve for AmeriCorps in the Farm to School program as an educational specialist for 3 main reasons and countless other important reasons. AmeriCorps and the program match my personal mission in life. My mission from God is: Feed My People and Teach Them How to Feed Themselves.

1. I want to help ensure people have nutritious, delicious, wholesome, and safe food to eat and that they are fully aware how the food was produced and where it comes from.
2. I want to teach people about the value of agriculture and how to produce food themselves from all 5 food groups.
3. I want to share with others the value of a healthy lifestyle that stems from different types of agriculture and from eating a wide variety of foods in combination with physical activity, personal wellness, and happiness in life.



**AmeriCorps**

## **Highlights of Service Activities -- February 8 – March 31**

I secured some local cheese curds produced by milk from local farmers and made by Springside Cheese in Lena, Wisconsin and served them to school students as a squeaky cheese breakfast item listed on the school menu. I wrote an educational document and newsletter for the school district and a portion went home to parents describing the process. The cheese curds were served to over 580 students at 5 different schools within the district. I wrote a document of the venture to the Dairy Farmers of America and was awarded a milk cooler transportation cart for the school district.

I completed a 3 day community event In March by setting up a booth show at the Green Bay Home and Lifestyles Garden Show at the Resch Center with 7,000 visitors from the local community. I had many conversations with folks covering nutrition and the “My Plate” USDA diagrams and passed out over 250 pamphlets describing the recommendations. I handed out over 200 AmeriCorps pamphlets describing the basics of service. I handed out over 150 Frisbees from the Howard/Suamico School District to promote physical activity and family relationship building and family health activities.

I spent a day with the Bay Port High School Agricultural teacher, Whitney Barnes and Ryan Weed attending their agricultural class sessions. I was involved in explaining where milk comes from via cow udder dissections acquired from a local slaughter facility. I also was involved in explaining where eggs come from and how they are produced by the chicken.

I collected the food scraps leftovers from the school cafeteria to start a compost pile for the school garden system for 2 days at Bay View School and explained to the students the value of being eco-friendly.

### **Highlights of Service Activities -- April 1 – June 30**

I taught many nutrition lessons to many classes at different schools within the school district in April and May. The details are listed on the monthly reports on the AmeriCorps website. I wrote many after event reports with pictures and those are all listed on the website as well. I gave a presentation about AmeriCorps including nutrition to the Howard/Suamico Optimist Club in a formal, professional setting in Green Bay. I worked on the new Local Foods Database and became the area manager for northeast Wisconsin. I signed up some farmers and school nutrition directors onto the website system. I facilitated some different taste tests to include local honey, local cheese curds, watermelon, whole grains, raspberries, blackberries, fresh local milk, beef sticks, green beans, and strawberries. I brought in a local beef cattle farmer to give a presentation to the high school agricultural students. I built and am currently maintaining both the school hoop house and the school garden. In June, I spent many hours with the summer school students at Inspiration Acres in both the indoor and the outdoor classrooms teaching and working about gardening. I worked on local procurement of strawberries and blueberries for the school district. The farmers are having challenges finding and retaining pickers and field workers so much of the crop is not being harvested.

### **Highlights of Service Activities -- July 1 – August 14**

...I took over and managed the Inspiration Acres and the Summer School program. The summer school program has two different semester offerings each three weeks in length. The first semester starts June 14th and ends July 2nd, 2021. The second semester starts July 6, and ends July 23, 2021. The maximum amount of students in each course is capped at twenty five. The course that encompasses gardening is titled "Here We Grow Together". This course is a collaboration of Howard Suamico School District and AmeriCorps. The course has three different sections each in duration of 90 minutes or 1 hour and a half. Section 1 has 3rd and 4th grade level students. Section 2 has 1st and 2nd grade level students. Section 3 has 5th to 7th grade level students. The official teacher for the first semester was Kelly Pierner assisted by Donna Yost and Julia Lindley and AmeriCorps members Nahani Lukes and David Lee Schneider. The official teacher for the second semester was Molly Sabel assisted by Julia Lindley along with AmeriCorps members Nahani Lukes and David Lee Schneider. The classes are held at Bay Port High School in classroom C114 and outside at Inspiration Acres which is an open 10 acre field located directly in front of the high school...The high school has an agricultural department which has a greenhouse, a hoop house, a school garden, an orchard, and a chicken coop with 14 chickens.

All of these facilities are also currently being utilized with the assistance of AmeriCorps member David Lee Schneider. The hoop house is planted with green beans, red and green lettuce, sweet corn, tomatoes, peppers, peas, cucumbers, and kale. The school garden is planted with sweet corn and red potatoes. The field at Inspiration Acres is currently planted with white potatoes, green beans, purple beans, radishes, white sweet corn, and beets. The food will be harvested and utilized in the cafeteria system of the school district. AmeriCorps Farm To School Program, local foods, where they come from, how they grow, the nutritional value, education for youth. Root For Local, Root For Youth, Root For The Future!

Grand total of 135 students at 7,830 minutes of learning! The first semester enrollment was section 1 (18 students), section 2 (24 students), section 3 (25 students) at 90 minutes each learning session for a total of 15 learning days came to 4,050 minutes students learned about agriculture. The second semester enrollment was section 1 (20 students), section 2 (24 students), section 3 (24 students) 90 minutes each learning session for a total of 14 learning days came to 3,780 minutes students learned about agriculture. Grand total of 135 students at 7,830 minutes of learning about agriculture, where food comes from, how food grows, plant nutrition, human nutrition, animal nutrition, gardening, and farming practices...