

# FoodCorps Maine Service Site Descriptions

Below you will find detailed descriptions of all of the service sites located in this state. Each description includes details about the community where the service site is based, the overall work and mission of the organization, and what an incoming service member can expect to do on a day-to-day basis at this site. We hope this document will help you to best determine where you are most interested in serving!

Please note that this is a list of FoodCorps service sites in the 2019/20 school year, and may change for the 2020-2021 service term. Some of the sites listed here may no longer host service members next year, and new sites may come on board

## RSU 19

### Etna Dixmont School

#### Community Description

The Etna Dixmont School is in the geographic center of Maine. Newport, the largest town in the district, sits at the crossroads of Maine, a place where three major highways converge, meaning there is easy driving access to Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument, and Baxter State Park, in the north, Acadia National Park, and Belfast in the east, the Appalachian Trail, Rangely Lakes region, and ski resorts in the west, and all of southern Maine's more urban centers. Outdoor recreation, including hunting, fishing, boating, camping, skiing, and snowmobiling, are extremely important parts of the culture, and driving forces for the economy, which is still in the process of shifting from a primarily forest products economy after the collapse of the paper industry throughout northern Maine. Our people are fiercely independent, self-sufficient, and have a strong sense of community.

#### Organization Description

RSU 19 serves the towns of Corinna, Dixmont, Etna, Hartland, Newport, Palmyra, Plymouth, and St. Albans, Maine. In the fall of 2019, the district completed a state funded \$60 million school construction project, which created a new middle high school, and consolidated the elementary schools. Etna Dixmont School now serves the communities of Etna, Dixmont, and Plymouth, and the school itself is bisected by the town line between Etna and Dixmont. Etna Dixmont School (EDS) has been working for years to develop its garden programming and, in the last year, several things have fallen into place which will likely catapult the programming. First, RSU 19 partnered with FoodCorps, and EDS took leadership in becoming the first FoodCorps service site in the district. Secondly, EDS was selected to send a team to the Northeast Farm to School Institute at Shelburne Farms, in Shelburne, Vermont. While there, the EDS team, which

included the principal, teachers, dining services staff, and a school board member, developed a robust farm to school action plan. Along with efforts to increase participation in the school meal program through the inclusion of locally produced food, the plan sets out to tie the entire third and fourth grade writing curricula to the garden, and outdoor, experiential learning. Also on the EDS Farm to School team is one of the premier small-scale organic farmers in Maine, who is a resident in the community, and without whom, the garden programming would not be where it is today.

### **Service Activities Description**

The service member would serve primarily at Etna Dixmont School, but will also begin to lay the foundation for a transition within the district from EDS to Somerset Elementary School. EDS has a very large garden ( $\frac{1}{4}$  acre), two hoop houses (a 12x20 foot and a 12x48 foot), and a four bin compost area, that have been championed by a local farmer, teachers and the principal, but have lacked a dedicated individual who can help plant, maintain and develop a sustainable garden plan that includes community volunteers and provide hands-on-learning experiences for students. The goal would be for the service member to work with teachers to develop a comprehensive garden plan that will include community volunteers. The service member would also work with the kitchen to support connections between local food providers and the school kitchen and district director of nutrition, who is also supportive of this endeavor.

### **Skills, Interest, Knowledge Preferences**

Ideal service members will have experience, and skills working with young children. Gardening skills are important since that is a large focus of our experiential programming. An ability to organize one's time and prioritize objectives are important. A positive attitude and belief that a better future comes through hard work and focus and the ability to translate those values to students, would be great.

### **Service Members Need Car?**

Yes

## **Cultivating Community**

### **Portland**

#### **Community Description**

Portland, ME is a thriving, little brick city with a culture of local food. We are a hub in Maine for cultural and community activities, and our economy is driven by food, and tourism, among

other things. We have the biggest refugee and immigrant community in Maine--students at the high school here speak more than 70 languages. The islands of Casco Bay are a short ferry ride away, along with many opportunities to enjoy the natural beauty of Maine through hiking, biking, skiing, boating, camping, and more!

### **Organization Description**

Cultivating Community's mission is to strengthen communities by growing food, preparing youth leaders and new farmers, and promoting social and environmental justice. We use our community food work as an engine for high-impact youth and community development programs that reconnect people to the natural and social systems that sustain us all. Our service member will complement our purpose of exposing all students to healthy eating habits and valuing the growing of one's own food. This is part of local sovereignty, which is a major theme for us.

### **Service Activities Description**

Cultivating Community will have two service members this year! Service members will serve with three local schools to help integrate the strategic plans to truly integrate FoodCorps programming beyond FoodCorps. Service members will collaborate with individual classrooms as well as smaller in-school and afterschool groups through organized lessons in the garden and in the kitchen, group projects, outside speakers, etc. They will also collaborate with parents and other volunteers during community work days and events. Skills, Interest, Knowledge Preferences Comfort working with groups of students, multilingual adults and students, parents and volunteers. On a district level, SM's will work closely with Food Services around taste tests, promotion, and best practices. They will also join monthly action group meetings through Food Fuels Learning. Experience in or willingness to learn effective relationship building for community organizing and volunteer management. Strong organizational skills will be necessary. Helpful Languages: Arabic, French, Somali Service

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**Helpful Languages:** Arabic, French, Somali

**Service Members Need Car?** Helpful

# Indian Township

## Indian Township

### Community Description

Indian Township School is a school on an Indian reservation. The community as a whole is roughly 500-600 people, 1/4 of those are children. Students who attend this school are either on the tribal census or their parent or parent's partner are on the census. The school has 129 students in total.

This is a very rural area, located about 30 minutes away from Calais. Overlooking the shores of Big Lake, Indian Township School is located in an ideal place for incorporating the outdoors into the curriculum, all year long. The beauty and the peaceful surroundings are beneficial to both students and staff alike.

### Organization Description

Indian Township School is one of the two Passamaquoddy schools in the nation and serves students from Prek-8th grade.

### Service Activities Description

Indian Township is the only school in the district and therefore will be the single school served. There are hopes to partner with another tribal school in the future.

We're looking for someone who has knowledge of gardening and pruning to encourage our students to become more self sufficient in their food supply and help them acquire lifelong skills for healthy eating. We want someone who will be supportive to the students, be a positive role model, particularly around nutrition, because they don't have very many places for this-- with the vision of a broader community impact where the taste for good, healthy food carries into the home and spurs more home gardens. The service member will partner with teachers, staff, students, the community garden and broader community, including the local food pantry.

### Skills, Interest, Knowledge Preferences

Gardening/horticulture, cooking and nutrition skills, respect for Passamaquoddy culture, and the ability to put oneself out there are all very important. There are a lot of recreational outdoor opportunities in the area, so enjoyment from the natural world is preferable as well. Teaching skills are a plus, but not required; a passion to see students succeed will be sufficient. A positive outlook on life is key. Incorporating Passamaquoddy language into FoodCorps service would be ideal, so someone who speaks the language would be great.

**Service Members Need Car?** Required

## RSU#71

# Captain S. Albert Stevens School

### Community Description

The five towns vary in population from roughly 1000 to Belfast, which is the largest town by far at 7,000. Belfast is the hub of the county and has a decidedly more cosmopolitan feel than the surrounding towns, which are rural and less populated.

### Organization Description

RSU 71 serves the towns of Belmont, Searsmont, Morrill, Swanville, and Belfast, Maine. The main site being considered for FoodCorps services is Captain Albert Stevens School in Belfast, the largest of five elementary schools in the district. CASS serves 300 students and has a burgeoning garden program that is in need of a champion.

### Service Activities Description

The service member would work at Captain Albert Stevens Elementary School. The school has a small, but well-loved, garden, but has lacked a dedicated connection to the school's actual learning; the space has been used for "breaks" and extra-curricular activities. The goal would be for the service member to work specifically with the three third grade teachers (who all support this idea and would be excellent to work with; all three are creative and dedicated to outdoor learning) to develop a curricular connection to the school garden. The service member would also work with the kitchen to support connections between local food providers and the school kitchen and district director of nutrition, who is also supportive of this endeavor.

### Skills, Interest, Knowledge Preferences

Well, of course an interest in working with children - wouldn't hurt to have skills in that area as well. Gardening skills would be a bonus. I think an ability to organize one's time and prioritize objectives would be important. A positive attitude and belief that a better future comes through hard work and focus, and that those attitudes and beliefs are contagious, would be great.

**Service Members Need Car?** Not necessary

## RSU 89

# Katahdin Schools

## Community Description

The Katahdin Region is nestled in the heart of Maine's North Woods. Patten, the largest town in the area, is a gateway community to the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument, and Baxter State Park. Outdoor recreation, including hunting, fishing, boating, camping, skiing, and snowmobiling, are extremely important parts of the culture, and driving forces for the economy, which is still in the process of shifting from a primarily forest products economy after the collapse of the paper industry throughout northern Maine. Our people are fiercely independent, self-sufficient, and have a strong sense of community.

## Organization Description

RSU 89 serves the towns of Mount Chase, Patten, Sherman, and Stacyville, Maine. Katahdin Elementary School, and the Middle/High School across the street, are in Stacyville. Patten is the largest town in the district, and is a gateway community to the newly established Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument. RSU 89 serves approximately 350 students, and is a newly formed district, created from what was previously a much larger district, RSU 50. In the new configuration, RSU 89 is focused on place based, and experiential learning, making the district an ideal partner for FoodCorps, and an excellent place for a service member to put down roots and help the district expand its blossoming garden, and the associated hands-on learning, as well as continue to impact the cafeterias, run by a very supportive and forward thinking staff.

## Service Activities Description

The service member would serve primarily at Katahdin Elementary School, but there is a high level of collaboration with the middle/high school (across the street). The schools have small, but growing, gardens, and hoop houses, that have been championed by teachers and supported by the administration, but have lacked a dedicated individual who can make connections to the school's actual learning. The goal would be for the service member to work to develop curricular connections to the school gardens, and the natural wonders surrounding the schools, in connection with the district's focus on experiential and place based learning. The service member would also work with the kitchen to support connections between local food providers and the school kitchen and district director of nutrition, who is also supportive of this endeavor.

## Skills, Interest, Knowledge Preferences

An interest in working with children is a must. Ideal service members will have experience, and skills working with young children. Gardening skills are important since that is a large focus of our experiential programming. An ability to organize one's time and prioritize objectives are

important. A positive attitude and belief that a better future comes through hard work and focus and the ability to translate those values to students, would be great.

### **Service Members Need Car?**

Yes

## **St Mary's Nutrition Center**

### **Lewiston**

#### **Community Description**

Lewiston (and its across-the-river sister city, Auburn) is an old mill town along the Androscoggin River, and it serves as a small, urban hub and gateway into rural Western Maine. The city has the challenges that come with some of the highest poverty levels in the state (childhood poverty rate of 42%), but also possesses the resilience, grit, and humor emblematic of a place ready for and capable of revitalization. The city is small enough that it is possible for grassroots efforts to instigate change and then witness the change in action. Lewiston has deep Franco-American roots and is home to several annual festivals including a balloon festival and an acclaimed modern dance festival at Bates College each summer. It is equidistant from the ocean and the Western Maine mountains. Lewiston has seen a significant demographic transformation in the last fifteen years, with the arrival of ~5,000 Somali, Somali Bantu and Central African immigrants and refugees. This community has expanded the cultural diversity of the city, which is now home to nearly a dozen Halal stores and ethnic restaurants.

#### **Organization Description**

Sitting in the midst of Lewiston, Maine's most diverse and economically challenged neighborhoods, the St. Mary's Nutrition Center serves families, youth, adults, elders, and refugees who range from age 3 to over 70 and come from many diverse backgrounds. The Nutrition Center promotes community health through organizing, advocacy, and education. The long term goal of the Nutrition Center is to build a viable food system while supporting local leaders, strengthening community ties, and engaging youth as agents of change. The Nutrition Center is home to Lots to Gardens, which is an urban garden program, the St. Mary's Food Pantry, and cooking and nutrition education programs. Programs include cooking-centered nutrition education for all ages, community gardens for families of low-income; garden education programs for children, FoodCorps programming in schools, leadership and job training programs for teens, and the year-round Lewiston Farmers Market.

#### **Service Activities Description**

Service members at St. Mary's Nutrition Center will continue to serve at McMahon and Connors Elementary Schools in Lewiston with the hope of expanding service into another eligible elementary school. McMahon service will focus on partnering with the school garden coach to continue garden improvements and expansion while also working to establish a garden committee to ensure long-term care. Connors service will focus on working with the established farm to school committee to continue key projects such as building the school garden, installing an orchard, and engaging students through the Green Team. All Lewiston school qualify for FoodCorps service, so we hope to transition service to a new elementary school in the next two years.

### **Skills, Interest, Knowledge Preferences**

We are looking for a service member with strong organizational and communication skills who is interested in working with teachers and school administrators to identify and develop school garden sustainability mechanisms. It is also necessary that the service member be comfortable and invested in working in a diverse community and with a variety of school and community partners who are furthering farm to school efforts in our county. Experience working with kids and teens would be preferred. A background in education would also be helpful when working on the new curricula compilation project.

**Helpful Languages:** Somali, French, Portuguese, Arabic **Service Members Need Car?** Helpful

## **RSU 12**

### **Windsor School**

#### **Community Description**

The Windsor School is located just outside of the capital of Maine, Augusta, Maine. Windsor is located in the north central region of Kennebec county and home to the infamous "Malta War"- a rebellion against the Massachusetts state government over land ownership rights in the early 1800s. Windsor hosts the annual Windsor Fair and is home to Hussey's General Store, self-proclaimed to be the largest general store in the state of Maine. Outdoor recreation in Windsor includes hunting, fishing, boating, and snowmobiling.

#### **Organization Description**

Sheepscot Valley RSU 12 believes that it is our mission to build a foundation of lifetime learning by inspiring growth, change, and success. We design learning experiences that honor our beliefs about learning: that we learn in different ways and in different time frames; that success breeds success and influences esteem, attitudes, and motivation; and that mistakes are inherent in learning.

## **Service Activities Description**

The service member would serve primarily at Windsor School, but will also begin to lay the foundation for a transition within the district from WES to another of our four elementary schools. Our goals include developing a large working garden created by the students and staff. We hope the service member will work to develop curricular connections to the school gardens, focusing first on science and math, but with success there expanding into other subject areas. The service member would also work with the kitchen to support connections between local food providers and the school kitchen and district director of nutrition, who is also supportive of this endeavor.

## **Skills, Interest, Knowledge Preferences**

Ideal service members will have experience, and skills working with young children. Gardening skills are important since that is a large focus of our experiential programming. An ability to organize one's time and prioritize objectives are important. A positive attitude and belief that a better future comes through hard work and focus and the ability to translate those values to students, would be great.

## **Service Members Need Car?**

Yes