

FoodCorps Iowa 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 servicemember 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 2018-19 and is likely to change for the 2019-2020 service term. Some of the sites listed here may no longer host service members next year, and new sites may come on board

Davenport Community School District

Davenport

Community Description

Davenport, part of the Quad Cities, is a metropolitan community filled with hidden treasures. With interesting people, restaurants whose goal is using local foods, cultural and sporting events, and a strong performing arts scene, there is plenty to do and enjoy. For the foodie, Davenport supports two farmers markets, one of which is open year round, with several others in the Quad Cities. Area wineries and microbreweries abound as well as distilleries, all of which use local produce to make their products. In addition to community gardens scattered throughout the city, the Quad City Food Forest in Davenport was established in November 2014. This is one more exciting potential area for a FoodCorps service member to become involved. There are 10 other FoodCorps sites in Iowa within a 2-3 hour drive from Davenport. Anyone with an interest in local foods, gardening, and promoting the nutritional health of children will find this to be a rewarding experience.

Organization Description

Davenport Community Schools has the resources of a large district with the small class sizes and hands-on approach of a hometown school. With 29 schools serving Blue Grass, Buffalo, Davenport and Walcott, Davenport Community Schools are resource-rich, blending student and family support programs with a wide array of curricular offerings to create a quality learning environment for all students. High expectations and low class sizes, customized curriculum and a caring learning environment, over \$135 million in recent facilities improvement and high tech classrooms and library-media centers, Davenport Community Schools is a District of Distinction.

Service Activities Description

The service member will serve in two elementary schools, Hayes and Garfield. The service member will use the Pick a better snack curriculum developed by the Iowa Department of Public Health to increase fruit and vegetable consumption with Kindergarten, first, and third grade students. They will also support school gardens at both schools, collaborating with teachers to connect curriculum to the garden. At Hayes Elementary, the service member will continue to support the projects brought forth by the student led Green Team. Such projects may include working in the green house, school gardens, composting and recycling projects. Hayes also has an outdoor learning center that can be used for garden lessons and activities. At both schools the service member will have opportunities to conduct taste tests in the cafeteria and to support school wellness policies.

Skills, Interest, Knowledge Preferences

It is preferred that a service member has:

- Good communication skills with a variety of ages
- Experience working with at-risk students
- Gardening experience
- Cooking skills
- Basic nutrition knowledge

Service Members Need Car? Required

Des Moines Public Schools

Des Moines

Community Description

Des Moines is located in the heart of Iowa with just over 200,000 residents and a growing number of racially and ethnically diverse communities from all over the world. The array of events and activities, from live performances to farmers markets, offers connections to urban and agricultural life with safe and easy-to-navigate streets and parking. As the capital city, Des

Moines also offers opportunities to connect with state policy and programs. Due to the size of the area in which out service member will be serving, a vehicle is required.

Organization Description

The Des Moines Public School (DMPS) district is comprised of 10 pre-K/Head Start, 39 Elementary, 11 Middle, and 5 High Schools and has a total enrollment of approximately 32,400 students. DMPS was the recipient of a USDA Farm to School Planning Grant to work on district-wide support for local food procurement, school gardens, and integrated education. We utilize Pick A Better Snack nutrition education and social marketing in K-3rd grade classrooms, after school programs, and summer programs. DMPS Food & Nutrition Management is actively involved in the Food FOCUS Midwest Regional Learning Lab, working on healthy school food procurement with other large school districts..

Service Activities Description

Each service member will serve in 2 elementary schools that have 60% or more students who qualify for free/reduced lunch. The service member will use the Pick a better snack curriculum developed by the Iowa Department of Public Health to increase fruit and vegetable consumption with Kindergarten through third grade students. Each FoodCorps member will build upon and support school wellness teams, gardens, and afterschool and summer garden/nutrition programs for students and the community. FoodCorps members will be able to help with the district Wellness policy team and Farm to School efforts.

Skills, Interest, Knowledge Preferences

FoodCorps members will work directly with elementary school staff and students. Experience and skills teaching or collaborating with students is essential. Knowledge and experience gardening and cooking is preferred. Knowledge and experience working with culturally and socioeconomically diverse populations is necessary.

Helpful Languages: Spanish

Service Members Need Car? Required

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach - Black Hawk County Waterloo

Community Description

Black Hawk County includes Waterloo, Cedar Falls, Evansdale, and Hudson. Our service members primarily work with Waterloo schools and organizations. With a 2013 population of 68,366, Waterloo is the fifth largest city in the state. The free and reduced meal rate for the district (as of October 31, 2014) is 71.3%. Recreation facilities include two Olympic-sized swimming pools, one baseball stadium, one softball complex, 23 softball diamonds, eight baseball diamonds, 27 tennis courts, and an Olympic-sized ice arena, as well as a 115 acre soccer complex, a skatepark, a dog park, and five 18-hole golf courses, three of which are owned and operated by the city. With over 110 miles of hard-surfaced, multi-use trails, an abundance of soft trails, and emerging water trails in the county, Cedar Valley Trails was named Iowa's Outstanding Tourism Attraction this past year! The city has completed its Riverfront Renaissance Plan (in the downtown core), which includes the river walk loop trail and amphitheater plaza, renovated its Cedar River dam to add depth to the river for boating, and built a youth pavilion, a new boat house, a public market, and Iowa Veteran's museum. A \$50 million project was announced for the Tech Works Campus including a new hotel, new Deere Museum, and industrial and office spaces to be finished.

Organization Description

Iowa State University (ISU) Extension's core purpose is to engage community members through research-based educational programs. ISU Extension also focuses on developing diverse and meaningful partnerships, which not only expand the reach of FoodCorps programming but connect our organization to community members interested in Extension's other services including adult nutrition and 4-H. FoodCorps connects schools with research-based curriculum such as Growing in the Garden, Pick A Better Snack, and Junior Master Gardeners.

In addition, Black Hawk County specifically seeks to expand access to fresh, whole foods through its urban agriculture program. In April, 2014, the Extension Council adopted these urban agriculture goals:

1. Provide leadership in community garden programs, environmental education and the local foods value chain.
2. Strengthen Master Gardeners' educational role in the community.

3. Enhance youth programming in the county by strengthening, sustaining and expanding in-school and out-of-school garden/agricultural programs and support the development and implementation of Farm- to-School programs in Black Hawk County.
4. Build and enhance networks of local growers, Master Gardeners, farmers markets and small/beginning farmers and others to campus-based educational programming.
5. Create and build partnerships with local food advocates such as Northern Iowa Food and Farm Partnership, Northeast Iowa Food Bank and others that increase local food access in food deserts and promote health eating.

FoodCorps supports these efforts directly through development of school gardens and garden committees as well as by sparking interest among families to turn to gardening and procurement of local foods.

Black Hawk County Extension operates the Dick Young Greenhouse at George Washington Carver Academy, Iowa's only STEM middle school. The greenhouse is connected to the school and is staffed by extension personnel (horticulture assistant). FoodCorps members will utilize this space as a resource for their outreach.

Service Activities Description

Lowell Elementary

1. Collaborate with potential leaders to determine a method for sustaining the garden in a way that duties are shared and there exist possibilities for integrating the garden into school-year classes and events.
2. Work with Student Council to create a project promoting healthy food within the school.
3. Creating guest lessons about plants and nutrition to present and integrate into the 2nd and 4th grade science classes.

Lincoln Elementary

1. Continuing the garden club I created in collaboration with the school counselor and creating meaningful lessons. Thus far, we have been holding garden club indoors but there are abandoned, raised flower beds at the school that we would like to start using this spring.
2. A 5th grade teacher is very interested in gardening and composting so we would like to start a composting program, whether that start with just his class or encompass the whole school.

Dr. Walter Cunningham Elementary

- 1) Act as a resource for the Garden and Beautification Club, in partnership with the Jesse Cosby Center garden.
- 2) Teach a garden/cooking club during Cunningham's extended day.

- 3) Service Members will provide Pick A Better Snack lessons for grades K-3 that are led by the Iowa Department of Public Health and/or FoodCorps once a month.
- 4) Future goals for Cunningham could be creating leadership opportunities around healthy eating and/or gardening, and decorating the halls with fruit & vegetable and gardening themed bulletin boards.

Irving Elementary

- 1) Continue to work with the Healthy School Team, a group of staff and students who are champions for FoodCorps and Blue Zones in the school. This group will create and help carry out the action plan for Irving.
- 2) Continue to meet with the 3rd grade garden club during their recess time once a week.
- 3) Provide education to parents/guardians about healthy snacks that can be brought to school. This could be done at PTO meetings, conferences, and other family events at the school.
- 4) Service Members will provide Pick A Better Snack lessons for grades K-3 that are led by the Iowa Department of Public Health and/or FoodCorps once a month.
- 5) Connect curriculum to nutrition and gardening using Kids Dig In and Little Chefs, programs developed by another FoodCorps Iowa service member.

Skills, Interest, Knowledge Preferences

Self-driven, goal oriented, community minded. Willing to work collaboratively with kids, families, teachers, staff and community members for the to reach shared goals of the schools and FoodCorps.

Helpful Languages: Spanish, French, or Other

Service Members Need Car? Required

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach: Linn County Agricultural Extension District Cedar Rapids

Community Description

Cedar Rapids, located in Linn County, is the second largest city in Iowa after Des Moines. The county is surrounded by rural counties and has a strong agricultural influence. It is one of the

largest centers for corn processing in the world, and the grain processing provides 4,000 jobs in the community. Major companies in the area include Rockwell Collins, Aegon, two large hospitals, and Quaker Oats. Cedar Rapids is also home to Coe College, Mount Mercy University, and Kirkwood Community College. Cedar Rapids is located on the Cedar River and parts of the city were severely damaged by the flood of 2008. Approximately 560 city blocks were severely damaged by the flood including thousands of homes and city facilities. The city's demographic makeup is about 88% white, 5% African American, and 3% Hispanic or Latino.

Organization Description

Iowa State University (ISU) Extension and Outreach helps carry ISU's land-grant mission beyond campus to be the university that best serves its state. Our core purpose is to engage citizens through research-based educational programs. We extend the resources of Iowa State University across our state. We accomplish our goals by developing diverse and meaningful partnerships. Through our purpose and partnerships, we increase the ability of Iowans to make informed decisions by applying relevant, needs-driven resources to create significant impact in our state. ISU Extension and Outreach is focused on feeding people, keeping them healthy, helping their communities to prosper and thrive, and turning the world over to the next generation better than we found it.

Service Activities Description

Each service member will serve in 2 elementary schools that have 60% or more students who qualify for free/reduced lunch. The service member will use the Pick a better snack curriculum developed by the Iowa Department of Public Health to increase fruit and vegetable consumption with Kindergarten through second grade students. They will provide after school programs in the same building for K-5th graders. Service members will have the opportunity to support cafeteria taste tests in each of their buildings. They will also support the district farm to school chapter, who has been piloting local procurement projects the past few years. Our service members currently serve at Wright Elementary, Garfield Elementary, Kenwood Leadership Academy, and Grant Wood Elementary. Service members will support schools gardens at each of their schools, collaborating with teachers to connect curriculum to the garden. In the winter, they will collaborate with teachers to teach a literacy-based cooking program for Kindergarten and first grade.

Skills, Interest, Knowledge Preferences

Experience teaching youth is important. Experience in building community networks and partnerships to help with local sourcing. Experience cooking with produce is helpful. Gardening

knowledge is helpful at a beginner level. We do have access to Master Gardeners who enjoy collaborating with youth. Dependability and the ability to make good things happen is super important.

Service Members Need Car? Required

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach: Wapello County Ottumwa

Community Description

Wapello County (pop. 35,391), and especially its central town Ottumwa (pop. 24,840), is often seen as a down-on-its-luck community who has had its glory days and now is struggling to survive. Nothing could be farther from the truth. While yes, the community faces challenges with lower-than-average household incomes (\$38,090, with 16.8% of the residents living below the poverty line), there's a lot of great things happening as well. From a riverfront renaissance project, main street beautification, urban and rural economic development, and beyond, Wapello County is set to change its citizens lives for the better. Its vibrant small-town culture mingles with cultures from around the world, due to an influx of immigrants in recent decades from Central and South America (13.8% of the residents are Hispanic) and Africa. Wapello County may not hold all the amenities of a more urban placement, but it's a place where service members can come to give back, be integrated into a unique and passionate community, and have a profound impact on its people and environment.

Organization Description

Iowa State University Extension builds partnerships and provides research-based learning opportunities to improve quality of life in Iowa. The Wapello County Extension Office has partnered with the Ottumwa Community School District to develop a school garden over the past several years, and the garden now exists at the largest elementary school in the community. Throughout the summer, it is tended by children in the Prime Time Youth Care program, who also learn about healthy eating through the garden.

During the last three school years, the summer gardening and nutrition education activities were extended into the school year by offering healthy cooking lessons using Pick a Better Snack fruits and vegetables at two of the elementary schools in the community.

Service Activities Description

Our service member will serve at Liberty Elementary School and Pickwick Early Childhood Center. At Liberty, the service member will focus on gardening, cooking, local food sourcing and taste tests, and healthy decision making projects year round, increasing programming in the summer, serving with all grades and the after school Prime Time Youth Care program (PTYC). Pickwick, the service member will teach Pick a Better Snack and look for opportunities to teach additional food lessons.

Skills, Interest, Knowledge Preferences

Gardening knowledge is key for a service member in Wapello County. While they don't need to be a well-seasoned Master Gardener, a service member should have a passion for gardening and basic gardening knowledge. We use our gardens as a way to connect children and families with the earth, teach where food comes from, the value of real food, and as a means to combat food insecurity in a county where 14.2% of the population is food insecure (with 23.8% of the children living in food insecure households). A service member in Wapello County must understand the difficult, multifaceted relationship food and poverty share, as that greatly impacts this community.

Along with a passion for gardening, we hope a service member would continue to make headway in our efforts to source food locally in our schools.

Helpful Languages: Spanish

Service Members Need Car? Required

Oelwein Community School District

Oelwein

Community Description

The Oelwein Community is approximately 6500 in population. The community has a strong connection to the FoodCorp program and the wellness of our community. Oelwein has a history of supporting our FoodCorps member in positive ways by partnering, engagement and wellness activities.

Organization Description

The school enrollment is 1600 students. The FoodCorps individual is supported by an on site supervisor to help with scheduling, supplies, engagement in the district. The school also has an active before and after school programing that is partnering with FoodCorp for support and programing. The summer learning program includes a garden, summer school activities and many oppotunities to partner with the Oelwein Community

Service Activities Description

Little Husky Learning Center: Grade kindergarten

Wings Park Elementary: 1-4th grade

Oelwein Middle School: 5-8th grade

Possible partnering with the high school FFA program.

Skills, Interest, Knowledge Preferences

1. Person willing to invest their time and talents in the Oelwein Community School.
2. Person willing to invest their time and talents in the Oelwein Community.
3. Organizational skill and self motivation.
4. Believe that all children and adults are capable of being lifelong learners.

Service Members Need Car? Required

Postville Community Schools

Postville

Community Description

Postville is a small agricultural community located in Northeast Iowa. Postville has grown as a culturally diverse community in the past three decades due to attraction of work at industries such as AgriStar, Norplex, Rural Electric Cooperative, Farmers Cooperative, and Hall Roberts

located in Postville. The Postville School District spans four Northeast Iowa counties, including Clayton, Allamakee, Fayette, and Winneshiek counties. The Northeast Iowa YMCA is located in Postville and provides a central community space for activity and meeting. The 1-acre community garden creates a community growing space welcome to all community members. In this garden, the 4H Garden Club grows produce to sell to the school lunch program.

Organization Description

Postville Community School District is comprised of one elementary school, middle school, and high school located on one campus. All students eat breakfast and lunch free of cost in the cafeteria located in the elementary school. With 4 full-time and 5 part-time kitchen staff, the school lunch program practices scratch cooking and processes whole, local fruits and vegetables daily. The Food Service Director strongly supports local growers by purchasing from the Northeast Iowa Food Hub, the school gardens, and other local growers. In addition to working primarily at the elementary school, the service member works with the Iowa State Extension of Allamakee County in collaboration with the Northeast Iowa Food and Fitness Initiative. The Food and Fitness Initiative provides a local foods Harvest of the Month curriculum that features locally produced foods of the region, including meat, dairy, breads, honey, vegetables and fruits. The school garden is located in the courtyard of the elementary school and is comprised of 8 raised beds. The school gardens practice sustainable growing practices free of harsh pesticides and herbicides. Elementary students have the opportunity to participate in activities and lessons in the school garden and the high school greenhouse.

Service Activities Description

The service member is responsible for leading hands-on garden and nutrition lessons in the classroom and garden with grades Junior Kindergarten - 5th grade. Additionally, responsibilities include planning and maintaining the two school gardens, organizing taste-tests in the cafeteria, managing the 4H Cooking and Garden Clubs, organizing the district Wellness Team, and assisting with the after school kids program 1-2 days a week.

Skills, Interest, Knowledge Preferences

Experience, knowledge and interest in vegetable production is preferred, as the service member is responsible for supporting two school gardens. Interest in the value of local foods and the importance of regular fruit and vegetable consumption is highly preferred. Additionally, self-driven and motivated mindset is essential in developing an individualized service schedule.

Helpful Languages: Spanish and Somali

Service Members Need Car? Required