

# 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 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

# Albert S. Hall

## Waterville

### **Community Description**

Waterville is a small city situated on the Kennebec River in Central Maine with an urban feel and a growing, diverse population. Colby and Thomas Colleges are located in Waterville, lending a strong support network of young folks to the school community. Waterville is surrounded by fertile farmland and is home to two important seed companies, Johnny's Selected Seeds, and Fedco Seeds, which are both tremendously generous to school gardens statewide. Downtown Waterville boasts a vibrant main street with a thriving farmers market, and independent cinema. Additionally, outdoor recreational activities abound; Belgrade lakes and Kennebec trails are close by, and the coast and Mt. Katahdin are within easy reach.

### **Organization Description**

Albert S. Hall is a 4th and 5th grade public school in the small city of Waterville, ME, serving about 250 students. Approximately 65% of the school population qualifies for free and reduced price lunch. There are 6 outdoor raised garden beds located on the playground, 1 multi-tiered indoor grow lab which grows produce year-round for use in the cafeteria, and 6 small classroom grow labs that support classroom explorations. Teachers work closely with FoodCorps service members to support the gardens at the school.

### **Service Activities Description**

The Albert S. Hall School - A public elementary school for 4th and 5th graders. Having a FoodCorps service member enables our program to move forward. The service member organizes and runs our taste testings, working with the local farms and school cafeteria. The service member is able to incorporate healthy eating and gardening into our lessons and provide support for teachers who are ready to take it forward on their own but still need support. The service member helps integrate technology into our work and provide the after school club, Sprout Scouts.

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

Our service member needs to be organized, self motivated, kind with children, know how to garden and cook, be able to work well with others, follow directions, and communicate well. Creative thinker a plus!

**Service Members Need Car?** Required

# **Cultivating Community**

## **Portland**

### **Community Description**

Portland, ME is a thriving, little brick city with a committed movement to slow, local, fair, and sustainable food. We are a hub in Maine for cultural and community activities, and our economy is driven by the arts, food, and tourism, among other things. Portland is a beautiful, old city with a revitalized downtown. During the First Friday Art Walks in town, the streets fill up with people. There are a range of music venues, arts venues, and farm to table restaurants. Parks and trails connect the different neighborhoods. 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! In Portland, single apartments are available for \$700+ a month. Many people share apartments and houses in the city. Rooms in a shared house range from \$250-\$600 a month. Our service site is willing to help our service member with relocation logistics.

### **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: Riverton Elementary, East End Elementary, and Hall Elementary. 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. Experience in or willingness to learn effective relationship building for community organizing.

**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

## **Maine School Administrative District 40 Union**

### **Community Description**

The 19 communities of Lincoln County are small, rural villages. Waldoboro, where our service member will spend most of their time, is the largest at 5,000 people. Our service member will be living and serving in one of the most scenically diverse parts of Maine with rolling farmland

to the north and the intricately carved peninsulas, coves, and islands of the coast. Lincoln County is a great place to spend time in the outdoors in both summer and winter, with miles of trails and waterways. Damariscotta is home to the Rising Tide local food cooperative, which also provides space for Focus on Agriculture in Rural Maine Schools (FARMS) to teach cooking classes in their new Community Kitchen. The whole region is dotted with restaurants and small farms dedicated to local food.

### **Organization Description**

Maine School Administrative District #40 includes 8 schools and serves approximately 1,835 students. The mission of the district is to ensure that all students discover and develop their particular interests, skills, and talents. We have a long tradition of incorporating school gardens into our curriculum and hope to expand opportunities for our students to learn about food and nutrition in a hands-on, interactive way. The Heirloom Seed Project was created with goals to teach students how to grow, collect, and save heirloom seeds, pass down history to the next generation, preserve and promote biodiversity of open-pollinated seeds with a unique genetic makeup, and learn how to be self-sufficient by producing their own food for themselves and their community. In 1972, Medomak Valley High School offered the first Horticulture class to students. The Horticulture classes were very popular, and by 1991, the program consisted of one classroom and one 25 X 100 greenhouse. During this same year, the Horticulture program added a new facet to the curriculum, The Heirloom Seed Project. What was once a small garden with a handful of seeds has evolved over the years into a two-acre garden, two greenhouses, and a growing seed bank.

### **Service Activities Description**

At Miller Elementary School, the service member will be serving with all ages helping to install a greenhouse and support greenhouse programming. At Medomak Middle School, the service member will be serving with both the 7th and 8th grades and focus on administering an intensive nutrition unit with the health teacher, running a garden club, and working with relevant local groups.

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

Loves adolescents! Flexible, calm, collaborative. "Out of the box" thinker and doer. High interest in getting kids out of the classroom and into the community. Good networking skills and seeker of available monetary and experiential opportunities.

**Service Members Need Car?** Required

# RSU#71

## Belfast

### **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

# 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**

Our two service members will continue to serve at Longley, Martel, and McMahon Elementary Schools and Lewiston Middle School. One service member will serve in Longley and Martel in an effort to continue building support and momentum around school gardens and healthy school culture in advance of their consolidation into a new elementary school beginning Fall 2019. Our

second service member will serve in McMahon and LMS. McMahon service will focus on building teacher capacity to utilize the garden for educational purposes, working with school nutrition staff to promote healthy school meals, and potentially expand the garden by adding additional beds in another wing. LMS service will focus on partnering with champion teachers to build raised beds in an unused courtyard and identify funding sources and sustainable maintenance techniques.

### **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

# University of Maine Cooperative Extension - Oxford County

## South Paris

### **Community Description**

The FoodCorps service member will work with the Oxford Hills School District, MSAD 17. It is one of the largest districts in the state, boasting eight elementary schools, a middle school, and a high school that offers several technical programs.

Norway, ME borders South Paris and is a hub for the local food movement. The town celebrates local food each summer with the Foothills Food Festival by providing workshops, activities for kids, a farmer's market, and live entertainment.

The Oxford Hills area has many options for outdoor recreation. There are several mountains with hiking/skiing trails, lakes with small beaches, and rivers. The ocean is not far away either. With only about an hour drive, you can spend time on the beach or in Portland.

### **Organization Description**

The mission of University of Maine Cooperative Extension is to help Maine people improve their lives through an educational process that uses research-based knowledge focused on issues and needs. Oxford County Cooperative Extension is located in South Paris.

University of Maine Cooperative Extension - Oxford County is part of a statewide, and nationwide, network of local offices that bring the research based information from the land-grant university system into the local community. We are, in essence, community development through educational outreach. Our role is to provide this unbiased information to help people make informed decisions that best mesh with their resources and beliefs.

In our local office, we run four main programs -

- The 4-H program, which is centered around youth leadership and development
- The Eat Well program which assists clients with health eating, nutrition and home food preservation.
- The Senior Companion program recruits and trains volunteers to assist elder members of our community who are in need of additional support.

- Agriculture and Food Systems program which assists agriculture businesses in strengthening their economic and environmental sustainability. This program also works in supporting and promoting the local food systems.

**Skills, Interest, Knowledge Preferences**

Based on the 2016 Maine SHNAPP (Shared Health Needs Assessment and Planning Process) and U.S. Census demographics for Oxford County, the service member would greatly improve their effectiveness here by bringing with them certain skills. The ability to be aware of how to identify and address hurdles that accompany children struggling with poverty, will be helpful. A clear understanding of human nutrition and creative, effective ways on how to encourage youth to incorporate more fruits and vegetables into their diet and drink less sugary drinks is a priority as well.

**Service Members Need Car?** Required