

# FoodCorps New Mexico 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

# Bernalillo Public Schools

## Bernalillo

### **Community Description**

Bernalillo Public Schools (BPS) serves a diverse New Mexico community that is rich with history and culture. Several early Pueblo and Spanish colonial sites, some dating back almost a thousand years, are nearby. The Rio Grande River winds through the heart of the school district and the Sandia Mountains rise to the east. Our district consists of a population of 3,156 students who learn in a safe, secure and stimulating environment. Bernalillo Public Schools serves the communities of Algodones, Bernalillo, Placitas, Pena Blanca, Sile and the Native American Pueblos including Cochiti, Santo Domingo, San Felipe, Santa Ana, Sandia, Zia and Jemez. The District has approximately 1,375 Native American children (320 BHS, 193 Algodones Elementary, 219 Cochiti Elementary/Middle School, 139 Bernalillo Middle School, 95 Bernalillo Elementary School, 315 Santo Domingo Elementary/Middle School, 87 Carroll Elementary, 7 Placitas Elementary School) Pre K-12th grade according to our last count for the 2015-2016 school year.

### **Organization Description**

Bernalillo Public Schools is made up of (10) schools. One high school, three middle schools and six elementary schools. The total enrollment for the district is 3157. The elementary, which includes Preschool is 1724, middle school is 642 and high school is 791. We have Bilingual programs with Spanish and Keres classes and special education programs. With the surrounding Indigenous communities, it is important that we bring the culture into our schools. One way of doing that would be to provide programs such as Food Corps into the district and our schools.

### **Service Activities Description**

The service members will serve students at Algodones Elementary (Pre-K - 4th). We would want the service members to provide lessons on healthy eating, start a garden, work with the communities that surround the school. Possibly cook meals with the students. The district works closely with the surrounding communities and we have Impact Aid meetings monthly and would like for the service members to give updates on how they are working within the schools and ask how the communities can help in the schools. that would be to bring in the community to work with the children and bring in their traditions and culture so all students can learn, not just our Native American students.

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

The district as stated above is surrounded by (7) Indigenous communities, we would like the service members to have knowledge of the communities. A background in farming, gardening

vs traditional gardening would also help. They would have the opportunity to learn from the community and their members.

**Helpful Languages:** Spanish or Keres

**Service Members Need Car?** Helpful

# La Plazita Institute

## Albuquerque

### Community Description

LPI service members serve Albuquerque's most vulnerable youths and their families. Most of our participants are of Hispanic/Latino, Chicano, and Native/Indigenous heritage, are previously incarcerated and/or gang involved, and come from families with multi-generational legacies of poverty, gang involvement, trauma, physical and substance abuse, and addiction.

### Organization Description

Mission, History & Goals

Mission

La Plazita Institute, Inc. is a non-profit grassroots organization in Albuquerque, NM. La Plazita engages New Mexico's youth, elders and communities in a comprehensive, holistic and cultural approach. Designed around the philosophy of La Cultura Cura or culture heals, La Plazita programs engages New Mexico's youth, elders and communities to draw from their own roots and histories to express core traditional values of respect, honor, love, and family.

History

Since 2004, LPI has provided cultural healing services to Albuquerque's most vulnerable youth, adult populations and their families. Most of our participants are of Hispanic/Latino, Chicano, and Native American heritage, are previously incarcerated and/or gang involved, and come from families with multi-generational legacies of poverty, gang involvement, and substance abuse addiction.

There is an enormous need for this work as our population tends to fall through the cracks of conventional social service institutes. We provide whole family, culturally appropriate support to facilitate healing and development of core identity and self-esteem. LPI is a cultural "hub" for urban Native American families who attend weekly Inipi ceremonies, language, arts, and crafts programs.

La Plazita has made huge strides in establishing a significant footprint in the South Valley and throughout the state of New Mexico in reducing violence, addiction, incarceration and recidivism amongst the most overrepresented youth and adults in detention and those considered high-risk populations within the community.

The seeds, successes and sustainability achieved in strengthening the social, physical and cultural capital of the South Valley, can be attributed to the expertise and diligence of La Plazita staff, community leadership, volunteers and students, as well as funding support provided by many public and private donors and community partners committed to LPI's mission and vision. In addition, collective impact, coalition building, systemic and social change are central to the efforts La Plazita Institute is engaged in.

#### Organizational Goals:

- Improve the health and well-being of Latino/Chicano, Native American youth and adult inmates through traditional cultural services, and facilitate healing, core identity and self-efficacy.
- Reduce incarceration, recidivism risk and adjudication of Latino/Chicano and Native American youth and adult inmates through innovative, drug-free income generating activities that promote entrepreneurship, art and educational development of high risk area youth and inmates by increasing the exposure of these individuals and families to LPI activities.
- Increase the organizational capacity of La Plazita to sustain its healing services while retaining its community-based and indigenous healing philosophy.
- Reduce race-based and ethnic disparities of Latino/Chicano and Native American inmates through engagement in critical prevention work and systemic policy efforts collaboratively with local, state and national stakeholders. Such strategies include reducing the school to prison pipeline through development and implementation of culturally appropriate strategies and best practices to reform the juvenile justice system and address key barriers for Chicano/Hispanic and Native youth and families.

#### **Service Activities Description**

Native American Community Academy - Members will apply the Food Corps Curriculum to teach K-12 students how to make healthier food choices and will also impact and create a school wide culture of health by provided important support in teaching healthy food workshops, classes and school garden activities.

South Valley Preparatory - Members will apply the Food Corps Curriculum to teach K-12 students how to make healthier food choices and will also impact and create a school wide culture of health by provided important support in teaching healthy food workshops, classes and school garden activities.

Bernalillo County Youth Detention Center School - Members will apply the Food Corps Curriculum to teach K-12 students how to make healthier food choices and will also impact and

create a school wide culture of health by provided important support in teaching healthy food workshops, classes and school garden activities.

**Skills, Interest, Knowledge Preferences**

Our members need to have strong skills in Youth engagement, youth empowerment, systems navigation, traditional food knowledge and leadership

**Helpful Languages:** Dine Bizaad, Spanish

**Service Members Need Car?** Not necessary

# La Semilla Food Center

## Anthony

### **Community Description**

Our two FoodCorps service members will serve in Anthony, NM and Las Cruces, NM. Anthony is a rural area situated in the Chihuahuan Desert between two major metropolitan areas (El Paso, Texas and Las Cruces, NM). Our service members will live within 10-30 minutes of a variety of restaurants, museums, libraries, shopping centers, grocery stores, outdoor markets, and more. Hiking, camping, and outdoor activities are also abundant in the surrounding mountain ranges.

### **Organization Description**

La Semilla Food Center's mission is to build a healthy, self-reliant, fair, and sustainable food system in the Paso del Norte region of southern New Mexico and El Paso, Texas. We work with children, youth, and families to build awareness around food issues, provide informed analysis, and create alternatives for healthier environments and communities. Two FoodCorps service members will be joining our team of seventeen dedicated food system advocates who share a love of good food - food that is grown fairly, sustainably, that is affordable, and accessible.

### **Service Activities Description**

Service Members will be placed at Zia Middle School, Santa Teresa Elementary, Berino Elementary, and Lynn Middle School. Service members work closely with a few teachers at each school while also contributing to I development and technical assistance to schools to support productive school gardens, and integration of cooking activities using garden produce, and collaborating with schools to develop environments that make the healthy choice the easy choice.

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

Basic gardening and cooking skills, basic construction skills, comfort public speaking and teaching, excellent written and verbal communication skills all strengthen an applicant seeking to serve with FoodCorps at La Semilla Food Center.

**Helpful Languages:** Spanish

**Service Members Need Car?** Required

# The Volunteer Center of Grant County

## Silver City

### **Community Description**

Silver City is a small town located in rugged and beautiful Grant County, New Mexico. Grant County is a limited resource community in an area characterized by its rural nature, diverse population, and the history of ranching, farming, and mining industries in the region. There is an abundance of access to National Forests and designated wilderness area, as well as a downtown scene that includes art galleries, live music, local food and spirits, coffee shops, a natural food co-op, and a variety of other small businesses.

### **Organization Description**

The Volunteer Center uses a holistic strategy to end hunger in Grant County that includes emergency and supplemental food distribution, education, economic development, and food growing -- particularly through home, school, and community gardens. Education about social justice issues is always a component of our programming as this knowledge is critical to our understanding of why our work is necessary. At The Volunteer Center, our FoodCorps service member focuses on school gardens at our local elementary schools including 6th Street Elementary and Jose Barrios Elementary.

### **Service Activities Description**

At 6th Street Elementary, our service member will help transition the school garden into a school- sustained program by teaching teachers several STEM based garden lessons, helping students in the garden, and gathering community involvement in the garden. Our goal is to make the garden an accessible tool for teachers to use for hands on learning even when there is no longer a service member at the school. At Jose Barrios Elementary, our service member will continue to collaborate with teachers already engaged in the garden to create garden classes and nutritious taste tests. The service member will get to know the school community including teachers, staff, families, and school neighbors and recruit community members to be on a garden committee and to participate in garden care and maintenance. The service member will also be helping with our teen internship "Rooted: Youth Growing Change" over the summer. This internship focuses on teaching youth food skills including growing, harvesting, cooking, and understanding the larger food system through a lens of social justice.

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

Teaching and gardening skills are incredible tools for our service site! Service members will be regularly engaged with students in the garden, will care for the gardens, and will need to be able to build community around each school's garden! It is important that our service member



be an active and self-directed member of the team who can thrive independently as well as on a team.

**Helpful Languages:** Spanish

**Service Members Need Car?** Helpful

# Albuquerque Public Schools Wellness Dept - APS School Gardens Albuquerque

## **Community Description**

Two thirds of our students are Hispanic and nearly two out of 10 students are English Language Learners. We also serve many students in need: two thirds of our students qualify for the federal school lunch program and more than 70 of our schools have been identified as high poverty Title I schools that qualify for federal funding.

## **Organization Description**

Albuquerque Public Schools is the 34th largest school district in the nation and the largest in New Mexico, serving 85,000 students in 141 schools scattered across nearly 1,200 square miles. Our students live in the city of Albuquerque and the towns of Corrales and Los Ranchos; the counties of Bernalillo and Sandoval; the Pueblos of Isleta and Laguna.

## **Service Activities Description**

Highland High School is the current assignment for an in-depth school site experience for 9-12 grade students. The school has a very small garden located at the entrance of the school with some native plants, herb and flowers. The main goals are to 1) create and collect lessons and instruction supports for in-classroom applications and 2) plan for and implement sustainability practices while increasing the vibrancy of the small garden in hopes of a larger one. The lessons and instruction aspects of the work and successful garden practices will add to the district-wide information and supports that all APS School Gardens Team members will have access to and support for. At the district level, the service member has considerable opportunities to network with other departments and organizations in the area to leverage resources and efforts, particularly the district Food & Nutrition Services Department and local farmers, markets and healthy eating initiatives.

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

Solidly good communications skills--written and oral; personal skills in easily meeting a wide variety of people and building relationships with individuals and organizations; personal organizational skills in scheduling and prioritizing tasks

**Helpful Languages:** Spanish

**Service Members Need Car?** Helpful

# SouthWest Organizing Project

## Albuquerque

### **Community Description**

Albuquerque is the most populous city in the U.S. state of New Mexico. It is the county seat of Bernalillo County, and it is situated in the central part of the state, straddling the Rio Grande. The city population was 555,417 as of the July 1, 2012 population estimate from the United States Census Bureau, and ranks as the 32nd-largest city in the U.S. The Albuquerque MSA has a population of 902,797 according to the United States Census Bureau's most recently available estimate for July 1, 2013. Albuquerque is rich in tradition and culturally diverse. You will have access to a wide range of local food and art. There is also a vibrant outdoor life with easy access to the bosque or mountains for a hike or bike ride. Any other outdoor activity from fishing to skiing and snowboarding are very close by.

### **Organization Description**

The SouthWest Organizing Project was founded in 1980 by young activists of color to empower our communities in the SouthWest to realize racial and gender equality and social and economic justice. We seek to redefine power relationships by bringing together the collective action, talents, and resources of the people within our communities. We work primarily in low-income communities of color to gain community control of our land and resources

Our work takes various forms: direct grassroots organizing campaigns to make social or political change, education and skill building to develop leadership within our communities, and mass-based civic engagement strategies to build and demonstrate the collective power we have through voting.

We've dug in, literally, on how to promote local food systems and connect them to low-income communities. We are working with five area schools to integrate on-site gardens into curriculum. These efforts provide an opportunity for us to educate communities, parents and children about the connection between health and their environments, and to grow the local agriculture movement in a way that promotes a sustainable, eco-friendly food systems approach. A particular policy goal of this campaign is to leverage state resources for increased incorporation of New Mexico grown produce in school lunches. The FoodCorps service member will focus directly on further developing our work within the schools. Creating curriculum and leadership development opportunities for parents, students and teachers while also helping to create internal systems to sustain the school gardens.

### **Service Activities Description**

The FoodCorps member will have the opportunity to strengthen the foundation built by other SWOP organizers at Albuquerque Public Schools. This experience will allow you to connect diverse students from Elementary to High School with food justice and sovereignty work happening at their school and in the community. They will support already established gardens by aiding in developing systems and curriculum to ensure the success of the school gardens. You will partner with teachers to connect their in class curriculum to the garden, to better integrate it into the school as a whole. For parent, student and teachers that show higher levels of interests they will have to opportunity to connect them to the broader local food justice movement through the work of Project Feed the Hood. They will also work with our community garden expansion project, the building of our new Agroecology Center. The FoodCorps service member will also be expected to assist with the creation of multimedia outreach to engage our district community in our farm to school efforts. Day to day, this means creating multimedia content that highlight farms that we work with and helping to manage our social media outlets (Facebook, twitter, website, etc.)

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

Ideal service members would be from New Mexico, or have strong ties to New Mexico and its communities. A great service member would have a good understanding of history, colonization, and its impacts on the food system in New Mexico and a willingness to learn. A good service member would have a strong background working with low income, communities of color and other disenfranchised communities, as well as a passion for community change, creative solutions, and food.

**Helpful Languages:** Spanish

**Service Members Need Car?** Helpful

# Community Outreach and Patient Empowerment (COPE)

## Gallup

### Community Description

Gallup is a small city in northwest New Mexico with a diverse population of approximately 23,000. Located on historic Route 66, Gallup is surrounded by stunning red rock formations and offers a variety of opportunities for hiking, mountain biking, rock climbing, hunting and horseback riding. Home to a dynamic arts scene, the downtown also hosts a family-friendly monthly Arts Crawl. Famous New Mexican chile is on the menu at many local restaurants, but you'll also be able to purchase groceries at several supermarkets or the local co-op. While you should be able to find most things you need in Gallup (as well as catch the latest films in one of the town's movie theaters), you might occasionally make the 2-hour drive to Albuquerque to collaborate with other FoodCorps members.

### Organization Description

COPE's vision is to eliminate health disparities and improve the wellbeing of American Indians and Alaska Natives. By investing in existing community resources and aligning our work with the vision of tribal leadership, we hope to help catalyze this transformation within our lifetime. COPE strives to promote healthy, prosperous, and empowered Native communities through three collaborative approaches: robust, community-based outreach; local capacity building and system-level partnerships; and increasing access to healthy foods.

The COPE Program represents a collaboration between the Brigham & Women's Hospital (BWH), Partners In Health (PIH), the Navajo Community Health Representative (CHR) Outreach Program and Navajo Area Indian Health Service (IHS) and 638 Facilities. COPE provides training and resources to teams of community health workers whose goal is to improve the overall health of high-risk patients with poorly controlled chronic diseases and those at risk of developing chronic diseases living within Navajo Nation. COPE also has a heavy focus on Food Security. The Food Access program collaborates with partners to build awareness, promote food sovereignty and support local food efforts to empower healthy and prosperous Navajo communities.

### Service Activities Description

The service member(s) will serve at David Skeet Elementary School in Vanderwagen, NM (16 miles south of Gallup) and at Fort Wingate Elementary School (15 miles east of Gallup). Both schools are comprised of predominantly Native/Indigenous students; Fort Wingate is also a

boarding school. The service member(s) will work with the school administration, teachers and after-school program staff to provide nutrition education . The service member(s) will also collaborate with staff and students to revitalize and maintain a school garden. Navajo traditional knowledge and foods will be incorporated into curriculum materials as appropriate.

**Skills, Interest, Knowledge Preferences**

Understanding or knowledge of Navajo culture and traditions is a definite plus; however, non-native service members can also be mentored by Navajo community members when appropriate. The service member(s) should be flexible and patient, understanding that local, rural schools face many challenges, including staff turnover, which may affect day-to-day FoodCorps program implementation. Service in Native communities is not "one size fits all" and requires a willingness to learn about cultural expectations. A background in nutrition/food security and high desert gardening are a plus but not required.

**Helpful Languages:** Navajo

**Service Members Need Car?** Required