



'BUILDING BRIDGES' AMERICORPS*VISTA PROGRAM

Volume 2, Issue 1 August 2007

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Mission of AmeriCorps*VISTA

To start, strengthen, or expand programs, systems or services that help people move out of poverty.

'Building Bridges' Staff:

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'BUILDING BRIDGES' CELEBRATES THE END OF FIRST YEAR

The first year of the 'Building Bridges' AmeriCorps*VISTA program came to an end this summer with most of the members finishing in July and a few fin-

ishing in August. The year provided a lot of learning opportunities for both CSC staff and VISTA members. The members experienced great success throughout the projects. Cumulatively they recruited over 130 volunteers and raised over \$350,000 in cash and non-cash resources. They also developed



Group from L to R: Emily Steadman, Alena Woicicki (and Midge), Cassee Hansen, Kendra Meshnik, and Celeste Scandiffio.

new programs, established efficient systems for their agencies and provided general capacity building support to the community. "It was a great way to end the year. We look forward to building on the success of the first year," stated Tifani Erpelding, Program Coordinator.

We celebrated and said good-bye with a party at South Beach State Park.



Celeste Scandiffio and Cassee Hansen playing games.

The 'Building Bridges' Program continues into its second year with 13 members in Linn, Benton and Lincoln counties.

GETTING THINGS DONE FOR OUR COMMUNITIES!

Here is what the VISTA members have been doing in the community!

of Volunteers Recruited: **131 community volunteers**

of Service Hours Performed by Volunteers Recruited: **1506.05 hours**

Total \$ Amount of Financial Resources Generated: **\$384,553.95 in cash & non-cash resources**

Data from July 14, 2006 to June 30, 2007

Community Services Consortium
545 SW 2nd Street, Suite A
Corvallis, OR 97333



'Building Bridges'
VISTA Members
2007-2008

Linn County

Danee' Cliver

Greater Albany Public Schools

Erica Johnson

Cascade West Council of
Governments-Senior Meals
Program

Kalysta McClaughry

Boys & Girls Club of Lebanon

Benton County

Carmen Westfall

Corvallis Public Schools
Foundation

Chelsea Harlos

Boys & Girls Club of Corvallis

Chelsea Parsons

Home Life, Inc.

Jamie Ernst

Community Services Consortium

Jeff Mascornick

Community Outreach, Inc.

Matt Parkinson

Jackson Street Youth Shelter

Sam Morley

Corvallis Public Schools

Sanjai Tripathi

Cascade West Council of
Governments-Emergency
Management

Lincoln County

Mona Gaither

CSC Head Start-Literacy

Rachel Hellesto

CSC Head Start-Health &
Nutrition

Advisory Council Members
2007-2008

Chuck Crowe

Dan Sundseth

Darrell Hutsell

Dean-Stephen Kauffman

Mike Gibson

'BUILDING BRIDGES' WELCOMES 13 NEW AMERICORPS*VISTA MEMBERS

Summer marks a time of transition for the *'Building Bridges'* Program. This year we welcomed 13 VISTA members to our communities. (See sidebar at left for who they are and where they are serving.)

The program has a variety of projects this year covering, volunteer management, resource development, literacy education, health/nutrition, emergency management and community organizing. "We are very pleased with the projects and people who are joining our program this year." says Tom Cope, Resource Development Officer for CSC.

The new group of members comes from all over the country, including PA, WI, MN, WY and of course OR. They offer a unique set of experiences and skills that will impact Linn, Benton and Lincoln counties for years to come.

IN MY OWN WORDS...

*Submitted by Jeff Mascornick -
Second Year AmeriCorps*VISTA with Community
Outreach Inc.*

All of the reasons that other members give for choosing to serve as a VISTA were important for me in choosing the assignment that I did. I wanted to do something positive and make a contribution to the community in which I chose to serve. I also wanted to gain more experience in the non-profit field.

Also, after graduating with a M.A. – with all the privileges, rights, and DEBT concurrent with that title – I needed to gain more experience to be able get a job I would want, but at the same time I had student loans to worry about. Serving as a VISTA provided me the opportunity to accomplish all of this and more. This last year was very beneficial to me because it provided me with the opportunity to gain experience in a field that I plan to continue on with as a career - so beneficial that I chose to volunteer a second year in the same position.

The position that I chose is more specialized than many other VISTA positions, but that is the reason I chose it in the first place. In the current job market where employers look for employees with highly specialized experience, the experience I gained through this assignment has been invaluable. I look forward to the challenges and opportunities that the next year holds and am proud to be part of the *'Building Bridges'* VISTA team.



**Jeff doing service for MLK Day
in January 2007.**

FROM THE FIELD: Stories from Our Communities

Pre-Service Orientation and Training In Provo, UT

Submitted by : Tifani Erpelding, *'Building Bridges'* Program Coordinator

I had the opportunity to go with some of our new VISTA members to their Pre-Service Orientation and Training in July. While they were learning about poverty and AmeriCorps*VISTA, I was attending the supervisor's training sessions to learn how to recruit and supervise VISTA members. Most importantly, I was gathering information I could share with our site supervisors to help them have highly effective projects.

Since this was my second time attending the training and because I have a year of the program behind me, I was able to be a resource to the other supervisors in attendance who looked like deer in headlights when the facilitator would talk about the unique characteristics of hosting a VISTA program.

Although much of the training was a review, I felt the time I got to spend with my incoming team was invaluable. It was great to get to know these

exceptional and talented people that are joining our communities.

Things I learned at training:

- Follow your gut instinct and check references during recruitment.
- Other supervisors struggle with the same issues as our program.
- Ask for help and learn from others.
- And never accidentally take the wrong person's luggage at the airport.



VISTA members waiting for shuttle.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jackson Street Youth Shelter Donor Appreciation Open House

The Jackson Street Youth Shelter would like to invite donors, friends, and members of the community to the shelter to celebrate the purchase of our house and our capital campaign. Please stop by for some refreshments and conversation.

Wed. September 19, 2007

4:30 to 6:30 PM

Jackson Street Youth Shelter

555 NW Jackson Ave

Corvallis, OR 97330

This event is open to the public, RSVP appreciated but not necessary. For more information contact Matt Parkinson at 541-754-2404 or mparkinson@ysysi.peak.org.

If you would like an announcement in our next newsletter please e-mail Tifani Erpelding at terpelding@csc.gen.or.us.