

VISTA Community Organizer Job Description

Education Focus -- Deadline to apply is September 20The Panel is seeking a community organizer to help rural Arkansas communities improve their schools, create more education opportunities locally, and impact policies on the state level. The Panel organizes community groups across Arkansas, supports them to improve their local communities and links them with one another in coalitions and networks. The Panel supports The Arkansas Citizens First Congress, a statewide, multi-issue and non-partisan coalition of over 40 community organizations who work together to win progressive changes in state policy. This position will report to the lead Education Organizer and has the following objectives:Develop sustainable infrastructure:

- Build participation and collaboration within different statewide coalitions focused on education reform
- Assist statewide education coalition in developing strategic plans and provide support for implementing plans
- Reach out to coalition members to learn more about their concerns and advocate for education issues at the local, regional and statewide levels
- Inform and educate coalition members about relevant education issues
- Assist with meeting preparations, scheduling, coordinating activities and events, travel arrangements and general coordination of the outreach work plan.
- Increase group and leader skills and capacity
- Assist Organizing Team in planning and implementing strategic plans for local education community groups

Building Networks and Coalitions:

- Maintain regular contact with coalition groups and provide appropriate support for group activities
- Strengthen communication, participation, and collaboration among existing coalition groups in the Citizens First Congress and Panel network

Assist in planning and implementation of annual statewide education conference

- Assist with fundraising for projects as required
 - Perform other duties as assigned by the Organizing Director and Executive Director
- Required experience and skills:
- Some experience in community organizing is helpful, team building and group dynamics
 - Openness to learning new strategies
 - Strong written and verbal communication
 - Work well with people in various community, institutional and governmental organizations
 - Cultural competency to work with residents from diverse backgrounds across boundaries of class, race and issue
 - Able to work 40+ hours / week and flexible schedule that includes nights and weekends
 - Ability to work independently and manage multiple priorities
 - Work well in a team-oriented environment and maintain harmonious relationships
 - Some knowledge of the Arkansas political and policy process
 - Education policy experience
 - Strong computer skills
 - Reliable transportation and willingness to travel statewide
 - English and Spanish proficiency a plus

Personal Qualifications:

- Commitment to developing leaders and coalition building
- Strong commitment to social change through community empowerment

Compensation and benefits:Please note that this is an Americorps VISTA position. In return for a year of full-time service, members will receive:

- A \$5,350 Segal AmeriCorps Education Award or \$1,500 post-service cash stipend
 - Modest living allowance
 - Healthcare benefits while in service
 - Childcare assistance while in service
 - Student loan forbearance or deferment while in service
 - One year of noncompetitive status for a federal government job
 - Access to the network of VISTA & VISTA alumni (170,000 strong)
- For more information, please visit <http://www.americorps.gov/about/programs/vista.asp>Send a resume and cover letter to:

Ana Phakhin, Education Organizer, at ana@arpanel.org About the Arkansas Public Policy Panel:Our Values: Social and economic justice is our highest value. This value is advanced through respect for human dignity; embracing diversity and inclusiveness; empowerment; and a political process that is inclusive, fair and transparent.Our Mission:Arkansas Public Policy Panel is a statewide organization organizing citizen groups around the state, educating and supporting them to be more effective and powerful, and linking them with one another in coalitions and networks. The Panel seeks to bring balance to the public policy process in Arkansas.Our Operating Principals: High performance; collaboration and teamwork; recognition and reward; mutual respect; confronting oppression through alternative models; supportive of professional and personal development; personal responsibility and mutual accountability; creating a learning organization; fostering personal and organizational health; and creativity.

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