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## **Community Strategies Policy Specialist – VISTA Member**

### ***Interested in cutting-edge community development and neighborhood revitalization?***

*Passionate about supporting groundbreaking community development and affordable housing? Do you hope to be a vital member of a mission-based organization making valuable contributions to communities? If so, we have a year-long opportunity for you!*

We have partnered with AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) to offer a one year opportunity for you to bring your passion and perseverance where you can have an impact. You will living and working alongside community members to advance local solutions.

### **What you'll do**

As a Community Strategies Policy Specialist VISTA, you will assist in our effort to build the capacity of local municipal, nonprofit and resident leaders, along with key resource providers and stakeholders located in our most distressed communities statewide. Your work will potentially result in an improved policy and regulatory environment that will help reduce poverty and increase intergenerational wealth. Working with our Community Strategies team, you will:

- Work to enhance our overall policy building effort by expanding the extent and quality of our work to build the capacity of local systems and stakeholders to drive comprehensive neighborhood revitalization strategies.
- Identify the creative strategies for reactivating and managing vacant and underutilized lots in urban neighborhoods.
- Assist with the development of neighborhood revitalization plans and project applications.
- Conduct data-driven research that sets the context of our work in a community by delivering the background information needed to determine appropriate strategies and interventions and implement positive community solutions.
- Further develop our template for conducting neighborhood market condition assessments.
- Build our capacity to better collect and manipulate data.
- Help analyze data to pull out and organize information on significant findings and trends.
- Refine and add to public policy and best practices research that we share with our target communities.
- Help develop and manage trainings for activities, such as marketing and branding the neighborhood, and determining high impact revitalization strategies.
- Identify new resource development opportunities to support implementation and new funding resources to help implement good practices.

While you will work with our Community Strategies team, you will also play a critical role in enhancing our overall infrastructure to effectively manage & sustain our policy- and systems-building efforts by expanding our ability to conduct data-driven research. The byproducts & impact of your work as a member of this invaluable VISTA team will live well beyond your time here with NJCC. Your work will enable NJCC to significantly expand its role as one of New Jersey's foremost thought leaders in community development.

### **The skills you'll need**

We're looking for people who are motivated and driven to develop their career. To be successful in this role, you'll:

- Have a passion for community service and a strong customer service attitude.
- Have completed some college level coursework in Urban Policy or Planning, Geography, Sociology, Economic Development, or related courses.
- Understand basic government functions and structure, including the legislative process and budgeting.
- Demonstrated facility with data analysis and the ability to write concise reports.
- Have experience researching community and economic development policies and best practices.
- Understand community development and neighborhood dynamics.
- Have good interpersonal communications skills; Spanish is a plus.

### **What else you'll need to know**

At our core, New Jersey Community Capital (NJCC) is a financial organization with a mission to create thriving communities. We do this through strategic investments and knowledge. Fulfilling the needs and improving the quality of life of thousands of individuals and families would not be possible without our talented and diverse staff, and motivating environment. At NJCC, we are always looking for great people to join our team. Our fellowship program accepts applicants on a rolling basis and targets current undergraduate or graduate students.

We are all about taking a comprehensive approach to transforming New Jersey's underserved communities. NJCC specializes in providing flexible, hands-on financing to nonprofits and other mission-driven entities, empowering them to grow and thrive. We provide an array of services to our borrowers, including financial training and portfolio management.

Each year, NJCC and its affiliates provide millions of dollars in capital and substantial technical assistance to support the revitalization of communities across the state. These efforts provide quality housing, early care, education, and employment to thousands of low-income people. NJCC has also emerged as a national leader in developing creative strategies to reverse the distress created by the foreclosure crisis, implementing large-scale programs to acquire and redevelop vacant homes, modify nonperforming mortgages, and infusing flexible capital into collaborative community-level efforts to stabilize blighted neighborhoods.

NJCC embraces diversity and equal opportunity in a serious way. We are dedicated to forming a team that represents a variety of backgrounds, perspectives, and skills. The more inclusive we are, the better our work will be. Check us out at [www.newjerseycommunitycapital.org](http://www.newjerseycommunitycapital.org)

### **Compensation**

AmeriCorps VISTA provides a living allowance to cover the cost of food, housing, and other basic necessities during your service. Amounts are low because you are expected to live at approximately the same economic level as the people you are serving. The annual living allowance stipend for this position, based in New Brunswick, is \$18,177, paid bi-weekly. (Federal income tax deductions are withheld from the living allowance. No state, county, or city tax deductions are withheld. However, you are responsible for paying those taxes, as appropriate.) AmeriCorps provides options for health care benefits, child care benefits, and a relocation allowance. Additionally, each member is eligible for either an Education Award of \$5,920 or an \$1,800 cash stipend at the end of the full year of service.

### **To Apply**

If this exciting opportunity appeals to you, please apply at the AmeriCorps VISTA site: <https://my.americorps.gov/mp/listing/viewListing.do?id=80286&fromSearch=true>