

AmeriCorps Program Start Up Institute

October 10-12, 2007

Justine Murray has over 25 years experience in international and domestic program development, management and training. Extensive experience and proven success in coordinating large, complex projects; training multicultural staffs to perform as a team; and facilitating change efforts. She has been with the Aguirre Division of JBS International for the last ten years and oversees several projects for the Corporation for National and Community Service. Among these are Project TASC (Technical Assistance to State Commissions) and Project TADS (Technical Assistance for Disaster Services). She appreciates the opportunity to work with service programs, assisting in their organizational development and building the capacity to get meaningful things done on a daily bases.

Kapila Wewegama serves as an independent management and training consultant/facilitator and as a Senior Research Associate for the eGrants technical assistance project at JBS International. He is currently providing training consultancy to the Corporation for National Service, Peace Corps and other non-profit organizations. His services to the Corporation for National Service include technical assistance and training to State Commissions on Volunteerism and Community Service and their sub-grantees, CNCS State staff, VISTA volunteers, supervisors and eGrants applicants of the National Service Partner programs. He consults as a Peace Corps Staging Director and trains Peace Corps volunteers prior to departure for their assigned country. Kapila also teaches a graduate course on cultural competence in community development at the North Park University in Chicago. He has over fifteen years of training and management experience. Kapila served as the Associate Peace Corps Director (Director of Program & Training) with Peace Corps in Sri Lanka for eight years. He has designed and provided numerous cross-cultural and diverse trainings to organizations and individual participants over the last eighteen years. In addition to his training designing and facilitating expertise, he also designs and conducts Training of Trainers.

Gwendolyn Price is Program Manager of the Early Childhood Home Visitation Program. AmeriCorps ECHV is hosted by Porter Leath in Memphis. Gwen has been the Program Manager for four years. For over 150 years, Porter-Leath has been the primary resource for Memphis' at-risk children and families. By focusing on the essential building blocks of healthy development, they not only give children and families access to the tools they need, but also to a sense of hope. Porter-Leath is helping build stronger children, stronger families and a stronger Memphis.

Stephanie Schooley is Director of the UCAN Serve AmeriCorps program hosted by Colorado Campus Compact. UCAN Serve is an education award only, part-time AmeriCorps program engaging over 4,000 students per year in national service through 50 participating universities and colleges in Arizona, Colorado, Montana, New Mexico, and Utah. Member serve through academic programs, extracurricular activities, Centers for Service Learning and Civic Engagement, and federal community work study programs. Stephanie has been the Director of UCAN Serve for five years, managed a Colorado State Commission AmeriCorps program for two years, and was an AmeriCorps*VISTA member in Colorado.

Jim Snell is Executive Director of Volunteer Tennessee. Jim served in the very first class of AmeriCorps at a program hosted by Vanderbilt University Medical Center (VUMC). After successfully completing the AmeriCorps program, Jim later went on to co-direct this program. Volunteer Tennessee, the state service commission that oversees AmeriCorps and Learn and Serve America programs in Tennessee, recruited Jim from VUMC to serve as the AmeriCorps Training Officer. During his 8 years at Volunteer Tennessee, Jim also served as AmeriCorps Program Manager and then Deputy Director, where he oversaw the funding and implementation of AmeriCorps programs across the state.

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Community and Site Partnerships

Andy King is the Director of Training and Consulting for the Points of Light and Hands On Network, a national nonprofit that seeks to inspire and mobilize people to become engaged, take action and solve community problems. In his role there, he develops new training curricula and manages national seminars on a range of topics related to effective volunteer engagement. He has presented at national and international conferences such as the National Conference on Volunteering and Service and the International Conference on Volunteer Administration. He has trained nonprofit professionals from around the world through programs of the U.S. State Department, Meridian International Center, and the International Research and Exchanges Board. He has developed and delivered customized training programs for national and international organizations including the U.S. Fund for UNICEF, The Salvation Army National Headquarters, Medical Reserve Corps and Volunteers of America. He has taught at Georgetown University's Center for Public and Nonprofit Leadership in Washington, DC, and Case Western Reserve University's Mandel Center for Nonprofit Organizations in Cleveland, Ohio.

Lori Jean Mantooth is the Learning Design Manager at Points of Light & Hands On Network, a CNCS training and technical assistance provider that offers services centered on leveraging community volunteers in meaningful service. In addition to her current work with national service, Lori Jean has coordinated a statewide Learn and Serve program for Tennessee 4-H Youth Development; developed curriculum on topics such as volunteer management, project management, and youth civic engagement; and presented at numerous regional and national conferences. A Tennessee native, she holds a degree in English from Mississippi University for Women and a Master of Science in Agricultural and Extension Education from the University of Tennessee.

Mark P. Lazzara is the Executive Director of the West Seneca Youth Bureau and West Seneca AmeriCorps. Lazzara holds a B.S. in social work and a Master's degree; he became the full-time executive director of the West Seneca Youth Bureau in 1990. The West Seneca Youth Bureau facilitates over 400 full and part-time AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps VISTA members. It is the largest program of its kind in Western New York. Since 1993, the youth bureau has been the proud sponsor of five AmeriCorps programs: Sharing the Words, America Reads, a tutoring program; the Governor's Violence Prevention Corps; the Service Action Corps; VISTA; and the West Seneca Urban Corps.

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Member Development and Support

Jerian Abel is a coordinator in the Volunteer Leadership Center within the Center for School, Family and Community at NWREL. She is responsible for coordinating a three-year project involving AmeriCorps program staff in identifying, reviewing, and recommending adaptations to field practices with the goal of developing a set of web-based resources for new or “young” AmeriCorps programs. She was a program evaluation coordinator and then program director for one of the largest AmeriCorps*National direct programs in the Pacific Northwest. Ms. Abel has also worked with schools involved in comprehensive school reform. She participated in the development of inquiry-based curriculum for science and conducted professional development on teaching science through inquiry. Her teaching experience spans high school through graduate studies and includes work with both pre-service and in-service K-12 teachers.

Amy Thompson has worked in the youth, community development, and national service fields for 15 years. Her work includes time at community-based organizations; serving as an AmeriCorps member; working for an AmeriCorps program; serving as Training, Disability Inclusion, and Program Officer for a State Commission; and currently owning her own business, CAC Consulting. Amy has a Masters in both Social Work and Urban Affairs and is dedicated to helping communities and individuals make real community change.

LaTasha Phillips has been the Program Manager for PCC's AmeriCorps for seven years. PCC Community Wellness Center is not-for-profit community health center that is located on the westside of Chicago. Each year PCC recruits and trains twelve AmeriCorps members to provide intensive health education in the community on diabetes, lead poisoning, asthma, prenatal care, and nutrition. LaTasha is responsible for all aspects of the AmeriCorps program which include finance, fundraising, progress reporting, and member management and development.

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Financial and Grants Management

Jonnie Jenkins is a Senior Training & Technical Assistance Staff member for the CNCS Financial Management Training and Technical Assistance Cooperative Agreement; Ms. Jenkins provides both training and technical assistance to Corporation for National & Community Service Grantees including State Commissions, National Direct Parent Organizations as well as sub-grantees receiving CNCS grant funds. She develops training materials on accounting principles and policies, financial reporting and grants compliance. She has presented at National and local levels working with groups of various sizes and types (non-profit organizations, colleges, universities, state and local government agencies). Prior to joining Walker & Company, LLP, she was the Director of Finance and Administration for the Wyoming Community Foundation since 1998. One of her many duties at the Foundation included serving as the Fiscal Agent for Serve Wyoming, Inc, the State Commission for Wyoming. She is also a Certified Public Accountant licensed in the State of Wyoming.

Kris Tecce is the Project Director for the CNCS Financial Management Training and Technical Assistance Cooperative Agreement; Ms. Tecce is responsible for providing direction and implementation of services to National Service Grantees. She manages the project, develops training materials on accounting principles and policies, financial reporting and grants compliance for state commissions as well as commission sub-grantees. She has presented at the National and local levels working with groups of all size. She has worked and provided assistance to very large national non-profit organizations, colleges and universities as well as small community based non-profit organizations. Ms. Tecce was the Chief Financial Officer for the Massachusetts Service Alliance, which is the State Commission for National and Community Service. Ms. Tecce was also an Adjunct Professor at Northeastern University where she taught the course in Non-Profit Financial Management and was responsible for the development of the curriculum and identification of learning objectives for the course.

Steve Niles started off as a VISTA, an AmeriCorps member and then an AmeriCorps leader in 1994-1997. In 1997 he started the Teach Maine AmeriCorps program. Since then he has managed the start up and operation of another two AmeriCorps programs. Steve is currently the AmeriCorps Programs Director for the Training Resource Center in Portland, Maine which operates two AmeriCorps programs. The Community Resource Corps places 40 AmeriCorps members in individual placements at local non-profit or public agencies to assist these organizations with their volunteer programs/systems. Members also help with many aspects of keeping these small organizations going. The Emergency Response Corps places 20 members with volunteer fire departments and ambulance services in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and New York. Members provide critical staffing to respond to emergencies in these small communities while helping to improve their volunteer recruitment and retention systems.

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Principles of Inclusion

Paula Sotnik, currently at the Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI) UCEDD, has over twenty-five years of experience working as a director, curriculum developer, trainer, and diversity and disability specialist. She oversees the National Service Inclusion Project, the national T&TA center on disability inclusion funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service. She also coordinates Community Capacity Building activities designed to support underrepresented communities and individuals to access mainstream services. Ms. Sotnik has served as a lead training consultant and author on culture brokering for the Center for International Rehabilitation Research Information and Exchange at the University at Buffalo, SUNY. Paula has served on several consumer advocacy boards, is a lifelong volunteer, consulted nationally, and conducted presentations and published on topics related to diversity and disability, accommodations, responsive outreach strategies, and developing the capacity of organizations to include individuals with disabilities. Paula has undergraduate degrees in social work and psychology and has taken graduate courses in business and nonprofit management. She is currently a member of the AUCD's Multicultural Council.

Kate Georgen, a graduate of Rutgers University, finished her AmeriCorps service in August of 2007. She worked with the Vanderbilt Student Community Health Coalition in Nashville, now named the Coalition for Healthy Aging, as a Prevent Blindness Tennessee (PBT) Liaison. During her time with this non-profit dedicated to statewide sight loss prevention, Kate acted as Adult Vision Program Coordinator, overseeing the development of the PBT outreach within adult populations. In addition to scheduling community wide vision screenings and educational events, she contributed to the re-creation of a communitywide volunteer program, Eye Adopt, which was the result of collaboration with community members, Vanderbilt University and Lipscomb University. She also initiated a partnership with Vanderbilt history professor Mark Dalhouse to integrate volunteer service with student learning. The service opportunities afforded to Kate through AmeriCorps helped pave the way to her current position as a Public Policy Analyst and Voting Advocate for the Disability Law and Advocacy Center of Tennessee.

Del Rey Zimmerman serves in a dual role as communications and Access AmeriCorps director for Volunteer Tennessee, the state's service commission. He divides his time educating people about volunteerism and service-learning and ensuring that people with disabilities are well-represented as members in statewide AmeriCorps programs.