

## University Assisted Community Schools

### Garden Program Coordinator

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#### Summary of Community

Inskip is an eclectic community with vast cultural and ethnic diversity. A majority of the population in the area faces economic hardships as evident by the 100% Title I students at the school and Title I survey results that reveal 87% of residents are economically disadvantaged. Inskip Elementary School exceeds the state average of 35.1% of economically disadvantaged students in Tennessee and far exceeds the Knox County average of 29.9% of economically disadvantaged student percentage. Of the 550 students at Inskip Elementary, 39.7% are Black, 43.3% are white, 16% are Latino and the remaining population identify in varying categories including Native American, Asian and Other. The ages in this school range from 5 years to 11 years.

#### Service Position Summary

An AmeriCorps member is requested to orient management of the Inskip Elementary School garden through volunteer recruitment, develop garden-based curricular activities and lessons, and create strategies to improve the garden's function as an access point to healthy foods. Through a combination of education, programming, and creating community garden shares for families, the goal of relieving food insecurity for families in the Inskip Community will be supported by this AmeriCorps member.

Central to the ideals of community schools is the belief that student's academic needs can be best met with full attention to their social and emotional needs. Perhaps the most compelling part of our garden at Inskip is the extent to which it serves, as a multipurpose space for tending to those needs. Students engage in experiential learning and also find the garden to be a safe space during moments of frustration. They may elect to have recess in the garden and the numbers who choose this option serve as evidence that the garden is a vital component of meeting social and emotional requirements. We look to the assistance of an AmeriCorps Member in continuing and building the capacity to serve our students and community at Inskip Elementary.

Some of the primary responsibilities of the AmeriCorps member would include:

- Cultivate and manage the 2,500 square foot garden at Inskip Elementary School to provide fruit and vegetable produce for students and community members.
- The AmeriCorps member will be involved in education to alleviate food insecurity through co-planning and implementing lessons with teachers for students during the regular school day as well as after school programming.
- Coordinate with school teachers and staff to provide educational opportunities and lessons in the garden for students which incorporate grade level math, reading and science standards.

- Engage all of the school's Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade student population directly in the garden through a variety of mediums.
- Volunteerism & Capacity Building. UACS thrives with a strong base of University affiliated volunteers. As a community school, our mission is to broaden the base of volunteers both for the benefit of our students and the community at large. A key role of the AmeriCorps Member will be the supervision of current volunteers, the recruitment of future volunteers, and the creation of a volunteer manual for the garden.
- Fill lead and support roles in the Inskip Elementary UACS after school program. These roles will include that of academic tutoring, enrichment programming (art, music, cooking, garden, science, technology, etc.) and performing arts programming.
- Perform other duties related to the UACS program such as supervising snack, evening meals or bus monitoring.
- Teach, Implement, lead and coordinate all efforts for a weekly student nutrition program during the Inskip UACS after school tutoring initiative.

#### Required Knowledge, Skills, Abilities

Skills required include strong written and oral communication skills. Additionally, this person should have good organization and time management skills with the ability to juggle a range of duties. This volunteer should have interest and experience in gardening. Further, experience working with elementary aged children is necessary. Flexibility and a willingness to grow personally and professionally are essential. While being a gardening expert is not necessary, this person should possess a strong interest in gardening, the ability to perform physical tasks associated with managing a garden, the ability to manage volunteers, and the ability to work outside. The ability to maintain programming in place and put their personal touch on future programming is also required.

Academic Qualifications: A bachelor's degree is required.