



VISTA VIEWS

VISTA's Working With THE *GUARDIAN AD LITEM Program*

Editor: Fran Hamilton, VISTA Leader



"How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world."

Anne Franke

1st Quarter, 2006, Recruiting Results

Total # Prospects Contacted	983
Total # Volunteers Sworn In	174

Note from Mr. Winston in the Corporation for National Service Office in Raleigh:

"I have decided after twenty-five years of federal service to retire effective July 1, 2006. This decision did not come easy but I feel that the time is right for me to retire. I will always remember the support and cooperation and what wonderful, kind and dedicated people each of you are. Hopefully, in the future our paths will cross again."

We wish Mr. Winston much happiness as he starts his new life...a life of retirement!



VISTA SPOTLIGHT

Charlotte Resident Jatis Juan Edmond Highlighted in New Book About AmeriCorps*VISTA

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Volunteers in Service to America program today released a new book, *VISTA ... In Service to America*, highlighting Jatis Juan Edmond's, a resident of Charlotte, NC, involvement in 40 years of fighting poverty in America. The book, which celebrates VISTA's enduring history of service to low-income areas through the personal photographs, reflections, and experiences of 21 VISTA members and alumni, was released at a reception that gathered together some of the key people who developed VISTA in the mid-1960s as part of the War on Poverty, including Sargent and Eunice Shriver, former Senator Harris Wofford, and Frank Mankiewicz.

After retiring from her job in special education and moving to Charlotte, N.C., Jatis J. Edmond became an AmeriCorps*VISTA member with the Amachi Program at Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Charlotte. Edmond's was responsible for identifying the children of incarcerated parents so that they could be matched with a mentor. She successfully recruited children for the program and worked with the parents, grandparents and great-grandparents of the children to establish trust and grow the program.

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The original idea behind VISTA – that of creating a domestic service program to provide urgently needed services in urban and rural areas of poverty in America - came from President John F. Kennedy in 1963. Less than X years later, President Kennedy's dream was realized when President and Lady Bird Johnson welcomed the first group of 20 VISTA volunteers to the White House, telling them, "Your pay will be low; the conditions of your labor often will be difficult, but you will have the satisfaction of leading a great national effort and you will have the ultimate reward which comes to those who serve their fellow man."

Throughout the decades, VISTA has changed to respond to local problems and the changing face of poverty in America. In its first decade, the program helped develop a range of projects around the United States, including block watch clubs, credit unions, and agricultural cooperatives. As experience with poverty issues grew, VISTA also recruited lawyers, doctors, and architects to work in underserved areas. In the 1980s, the program placed a strong focus on literacy and substance abuse prevention and treatment. In the 1990s, VISTA members created programs to help individuals transition from welfare to work and to provide constructive out-of-school activities for disadvantaged youth.

Today, VISTA, with an annual budget of \$95 million, is part of the AmeriCorps program. The more than 6,000 members of AmeriCorps*VISTA each year work with more than 1,100 nonprofit and community groups nationwide to develop new programs, recruit community volunteers, raise funds, manage projects, and otherwise build the capacity of nonprofit organizations to become sustainable. Since 1965, more than 177,000 individuals have served their communities and country through VISTA.

AmeriCorps*VISTA is part of AmeriCorps, a network of national and community service programs that each year supports the engagement of 75,000 Americans in intensive service to meet critical needs in education, the environment, public safety, homeland security, and other areas. AmeriCorps is administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service, which also administers Senior Corps and Learn and Serve America. Together with USA Freedom Corps, the Corporation is working to foster a culture of citizenship, service, and responsibility in America. For more information, visit www.nationalservice.gov.



FRAN'S CORNER

The three VISTA Regional Meetings in April and May were a huge success with lots of information gathered and distributed. Thank you for your attendance and contributions.

We discussed the fact that each VISTA should have a "How To" Manual" at their workplace. If you do not No instructions on what was done by previous VISTA

Solution:

Create a VISTA "HOW TO" Manual

It was suggested that Fran create a template as to what important items should be left for the next VISTA member. Fran will investigate with Raleigh.

Statement from Corporation for National Service:

Income Disregard Policy:

For Members who were receiving public assistance (food stamps, subsidized housing, etc.) prior to becoming an AmeriCorps*VISTA member, their subsistence allowance is considered a living allowance and cannot be counted as income.

If they have a problem with the Department of Social Services, we have an Income Disregard Policy memo that we can fax to them. However, if they apply for any public assistance benefits after becoming an AmeriCorps*VISTA member, their living allowance will count as income.



Note from Brad Fowler:

*Many Americorps*VISTA Members have been able to use their creative ideas to recruit volunteers. Whether or not your district has a VISTA Member, I*

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hope that some of their ideas will be useful in your district.

No Direct Service:

*Our contract with Americorps*VISTA prohibits our Members from direct service (i.e. serving children by carrying cases). If you were a volunteer guardian before becoming a Member, you need to develop a plan with your District Administrator for you to transition off your cases during the next month.*

*If you retain any cases, your service on these cases must be completely voluntary and in addition to the at least 35 hours per week you serve as an Americorps*VISTA Member. Any time spent working cases must be taken as leave because direct service is not permitted under our contract with the Corporation for National Service*

.Excerpt from UPDATE National CASA Newsletter



LOOKING AHEAD.....

We have 4 students “approved” for the 7/25-28 PSO. They are...

Gary Stagmate, Mac Moody, Caitlin Cullitan and Christina Brooks

Upcoming PSO's:

- August 21-24
- November 14-17

Quote of the Month

“You cannot bring about prosperity by discouraging thrift. You cannot strengthen the weak by weakening the strong. You cannot help the wage earner by pulling down the wage payer. You cannot further the brotherhood of man by encouraging class hatred. You cannot keep out of trouble by spending more than you earn. You cannot build character and courage by taking away man's initiative and independence. You cannot help men permanently by doing what they could and should do for themselves.”

-- Abraham Lincoln

