

The Heart Line: Taking the Pulse

Covering Volunteerism and Service Throughout the Commonwealth

August 2009 Edition

Welcome

Welcome to the August edition of the Heart Line newsletter, a publication by the Kentucky Commission on Community Volunteerism and Service (KCCVS). Although summer is almost over, there are national service opportunities just beginning, including the community forums starting this week and the 2009-10 AmeriCorps programs beginning in September.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have questions about any of our community service programs, such as AmeriCorps, the Governor's Volunteer Awards, the Volunteer Insurance Program, or the Volunteer Recognition Program.

The KCCVS has transitioned to an electronic newsletter. To have information delivered directly to your inbox, please sign up for our e-mail distribution list by sending your contact information to kccvs@ky.gov.

Program Spotlight: UNITE Service Corps

The UNITE Service Corps (USC) just completed its first year of providing services in Eastern Kentucky. Seven counties -- Leslie, Knott, Morgan, Magoffin, Johnson, Pike and Floyd -- were partners in this service project. The 10 USC members began providing mathematics tutoring to at-risk students on Sept. 1, 2008. In addition, all 3rd- and 4th-grade students in the assigned school were taught the "Too Good for Drugs" curriculum.



Jayson Helton, USC member at Salyersville Elementary School in Morgan County, indicated, "Students like Presley (pictured), who have a real desire to better themselves, really make me happy that I have had the opportunity to be involved with AmeriCorps and with these kids lives."

Preliminary results indicate students experienced a 38 percent growth in achievement as measured by pre/post tests in specific content tutored.

Each member taught "Too Good for Drugs" curriculum to all 3rd- and 4th- grade students. Pre/post tests were given and the student's knowledge of the harmful effects of drugs on body systems increased by 40 percent. Under the supervision of the USC member, older students mentored younger students with anti-drug messages. Over 1,100 students received this mentoring during the program year.



Each member continued or initiated a "UNITE Club" in their assigned school. These clubs provided anti-drug activities in the school by completing projects like decorating bulletin boards, garbage cans and parade floats and keeping the anti-drug message in front of all the students in the school. In addition to all these activities, each club did a service project. These service projects impacted the school community in various ways. Phelps Elementary School UNITE Club did a "Sock it to Drugs" campaign

in which more than 200 pairs of socks were collected and delivered to a local nursing home.

Another objective of the USC was to recruit volunteers to assist with implementing activities in the school. More than 225 volunteers were recruited this program year, providing many hours of volunteer services. This year has been a tremendous success, and all the members look forward to an even more exciting and rewarding program year.

Program Director Spotlight: Gary L. Perkins

By Shannon Ramsey, KCCVS Media and Publications Specialist



Gary L. Perkins of Williamsburg is the program director of the UNITE Service Corps (USC), a program sponsored by Operation UNITE. The 10-member program began in September 2008, providing math tutoring and drug education to students. Through additional funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, USC is able to have 15 members serving 10 counties in Eastern Kentucky for the 2009-10 program year, which begins in September.

"USC has touched the lives of over 1,000 students in eastern Kentucky," Perkins said. "Although USC is a small corps, we have had a big impact."

Perkins graduated from Cumberland College with a Bachelor of Science degree in biology and chemistry, earned his Masters degree in Education Administration from Union College and administrative certification extensions from Eastern Kentucky University. After spending 13 years as a science teacher in Knox and Whitley counties, Perkins served as a high school assistant principal and middle school principal in the Whitley County School District.

In 1993, Perkins was selected as one of the original 50 Distinguished Educators, a program of the Kentucky Department of Education that is now called the Highly Skilled Educators Program. With this selection, he worked at the Region Six Service Center of the Kentucky Department of Education, where he was named director in 1994. Following the closure of the regional service centers in 2003, he was selected as an Achievement Gap Coordinator with the Kentucky Department of Education until 2005.

In addition to being the USC program director, Perkins is a consultant with The Leadership Center, which provides services to schools in Eastern Kentucky. He also has served as an adjunct professor with Union College and Eastern Kentucky University in the Educational Leadership Programs.

Perkins and his wife, Nancy, have one daughter, Jimmye S. Perkins, who is a pediatrician in Williamsburg. He is actively involved in his community and church. Perkins also enjoys yard work and building/remodeling. He believes in living each day to the fullest, being kind and helping others in need. Perkins hopes to be known as someone always striving to be a role model for children.

Perkins stated that being from eastern Kentucky and witnessing the struggles people face on a day-to-day basis helped shape him into who he is today. He attributes many struggles to the lack of appropriate training for today's job market.

"My life's ambition is to assist eastern Kentucky citizens to move the economic conditions to a level similar to that of other parts of the state and to remove the stereotype that our citizens are not as capable as others in the nation," Perkins said.

KCCVS is honored to have Perkins' expertise supporting AmeriCorps in Kentucky.

Grant Writing Tips



With budgets shrinking and funding sources drying up it is more important than ever to write quality grant requests. Below are some tips from Susie H. Bullock, the Development Writer at Transylvania University, for writing a quality grant narrative.

Writing the Narrative for a Grant Proposal

1. Do your homework! Read up on the grantor and its mission and priorities. Read the grant instructions as often as needed to gain a "big picture" understanding of what the grantor wants to accomplish through grantees.
2. Read narratives of successful proposals, if possible.
3. What is your story? Draft a one-page executive summary of your program or project. This will help keep you focused and on track.
4. Follow instructions **to the letter!** Many worthy grant applications are declined because organizations requesting assistance did not follow instructions.
5. Cut and paste instructions or questions into a draft document. Questions and instructions should be in a different color font. Answer as many questions as possible in plain, simple English.
6. Seek and draft answers to remaining questions. Don't be concerned about style, transition, etc.
7. Be certain you have answered completely and that your answers are easy to understand.
8. When you are satisfied with your answers, highlight or change font color of corresponding questions. This should eliminate the possibility of leaving questions unanswered.
9. Cut and paste answers into another document and begin knitting everything together. Avoid adjectives! Instead, rely on verbs to paint the picture. Plan to review and revise several times.
10. Ask someone with good writing skills who knows nothing about your program or project to read your narrative and highlight anything that is confusing, repetitive, boring, or appears to be inaccurate.
11. Ask someone who knows grammar, punctuation, spelling, etc. to proofread your draft. Typos and grammatical and punctuation errors suggest a careless attitude and lack of attention to detail.
12. Review again, paying special attention to facts and figures. Highlight all numbers, percentages, etc. throughout. Make sure your math is correct and the data are accurate and consistent.
13. Circulate the draft and ask for input from co-workers, board members, etc.
14. Incorporate suggestions as appropriate, then let the draft marinate a few days.
15. Add finishing touches, then press "Send".

Miscellaneous Recommendations

1. Buy and read Strunk and White's "The Elements of Style."
2. **AVOID USING PASSIVE VOICE.** It's boring and wastes words.
3. Respect the time and intelligence of the grant reviewer by being honest and making every word count.
4. Don't provide information the grantor has not requested.
5. Make your story interesting and compelling by "putting a face on it" when possible.

By Susie H. Bullock, Development Writer, Transylvania University (Sept. 17, 2008)

2009 Kentucky State Service Plan and AmeriCorps Grant Forums

KCCVS is seeking statewide input this summer for the State Service Plan and for 2010-11 AmeriCorps grants.

Participation is needed from nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, local government entities and state agencies.

Public forums are scheduled throughout Kentucky at the following locations:

Lexington: Tuesday, Aug. 18
Somerset: Wednesday, Aug. 19
Louisville: Thursday, Aug. 20
Erlanger: Monday, Aug. 24
Ashland: Wednesday, Aug. 26
Murray: Tuesday, Sept. 1 (CDT)

Sessions are 10 a.m.-2 p.m. EDT unless otherwise noted.

Registration is required. For more information or to register, please contact Melissa Newton by phone at (800) 239-7404 or by e-mail at MelissaC.Newton@ky.gov. **Registration closes two days prior to forum date.**

For more information, visit the KCCVS Web site at www.volunteerKY.ky.gov.



"We can't take any credit for our talents. It is how we use them that counts."

- Madeleine L'engle, American writer (1918-)

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