Position Description: American Connection Corps (ACC) Member

Host Site: Partner: Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Position Title and Information:</th>
<th>Lead for America Digital Equity Fellow</th>
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<td>1700 Hours</td>
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<td>Full Time, 40 hours per week</td>
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<tr>
<th>Service Location:</th>
<th>Berkshire County, based at Berkshire Regional Planning Commission</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Fenn Street, Suite 201</td>
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<td>Pittsfield, MA 01201</td>
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<tr>
<th>Reports To:</th>
<th>Immediate Site Supervisor: Wylie Goodman</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Phone Number: 413-442-1521 ext. 16</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:wgoodman@berkshireplanning.org">wgoodman@berkshireplanning.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supervisor Address (if different from where AmeriCorps Member will be serving):</td>
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Host Organization Mission:
Define the mission and goals of the Host Site where the member will be serving, including information regarding relevant community needs your organization will address with this project.

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission is the official region-wide planning agency in Berkshire County, Massachusetts, providing comprehensive planning services to municipalities including land use, transportation, community and economic development, housing, public health, and environmental planning. BRPC promotes regional collaboration among communities and works to increase coordination between all levels of government. Berkshire Regional Planning Commission’s mission is to provide leadership and assistance to the County’s municipalities, organizations, and citizens in achieving County-wide inter-relationships, prosperity, opportunities, quality of life, strength, and vibrancy.

The Municipal Digital Equity Planning and Partnerships Fellow will assist BRPC’s Economic and Community Development Program staff lead comprehensive digital equity and planning work in one city (Pittsfield, MA - pop. 43K) and 12 rural towns (pop. from 500-7K) as part of a broader statewide effort funded through the MassTech Collaborative and Massachusetts Broadband Institute. In Phase I, the ACC Fellow will assist with quantitative and qualitative data collection to better understand communities’ digital equity, access, and literacy/skill needs, gaps, and assets. That data will inform municipal digital equity plans and direct strategic community initiatives to bridge the digital divide, especially but not exclusively for Covered Populations, as defined by the Federal Government in its Digital Equity Act. In Phase II, the ACC Fellow will support work related to the Affordable Connectivity Program including education, outreach, and enrollment; digital literacy/skills training; expanding device distribution; and public space modernization to ensure those who need and want to use the internet to conduct essential activities (e.g., telehealth, social connections, career reskilling; digital sales) can do so.
POSITION SUMMARY

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC), Berkshire County, Massachusetts’ regional planning agency (RPA), seeks a creative, conscientious, and community-minded individual to join a focused team creating digital equity plans and implementing digital equity partnership community-based activities that aim to bridge the digital divide in a largely rural region of the Northeast boasting some of the nation’s leading cultural institutions (e.g., MassMOCA, Jacob’s Pillow, Tanglewood Music Festival) and expansive outdoor recreational opportunities (e.g., Mt. Greylock, Bash Bish Falls, Notchview). The selected ACC Fellow will play a key role in engaging municipal leaders, small business owners, and economically marginalized residents to ensure they have digital equity, access, and literacy/skills at a critical moment when all are essential to quality of life and economic mobility. To achieve these goals, the ACC Fellow will assist with in-person and virtual (social media) public engagement; conduct survey research and analyze findings; facilitate large group meetings, focus groups, and interviews; and help draft accessible and inclusive digital equity plans intended for diverse audiences. Once complete, the ACC Fellow will support the region’s community-based organizations to remain focused on digital equity advocacy, securing funding to implement strategic recommendations, and implementing activities such as ACP adoption, device distribution, and public Wi-Fi modernization that tangibly demonstrate impact.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

ACC Program Activities (REQUIRED FOR ALL):

- Conduct an initial listening tour in the first 1-2 months to assess community needs by hosting individual or group conversations with community members that represent the diverse range of demographics present in your community.
- Complete bi-weekly timesheets and monthly impact reports.
- Meet monthly 1:1 with your designated ACC Program Officer.
- Complete key training modules and certifications, including AmeriCorps 101 eCourses (through On3Learn), ACP enrollment training (Education Superhighway), and digital literacy training (through NorthStar).
- Attend regularly required ACC meetings and trainings, including bi-weekly Pods, quarterly training retreats, and Life After LFA webinar series.
- Lead event planning for two National Days of Service in your local area for both the MLK Day of Service (January) and AmeriCorps Week (March) with service projects related to digital inclusion.
- Recruit and coordinate local community volunteers to ensure buy-in and long-term sustainability of your projects.
- Serve productively and effectively across service environments and adhere to LFA, host site, and AmeriCorps policies and procedures.
- Meet AmeriCorps service hour benchmarks and complete full term of service (1700 hour minimum with service ending on July 31, 2024).

Selected Activities from Different Categories.

1. **Bridging the Digital Divide: PLANNING + PARTNERSHIPS**
   a. Engage municipal and nonprofit leaders in making digital equity, access, and literacy/skills priorities for the residents and clients they serve.
   b. Devise innovative in-person and virtual outreach and engagement strategies to ensure Covered Populations are aware of the digital equity planning and partnerships projects and feel motivated to participate in activities that directly affect their quality of life.
   c. Gather data from existing and new sources that together capture on-the-ground realities for Covered Populations around their digital equity, access, and literacy/skill needs.
d. Identify community assets that can bridge the digital divide and begin the process to evaluate their efficacy and impact with the goal of educating stakeholders about best practices.

e. Help create one or more public-facing websites where information about digital equity, access, and literacy/skills can be conveyed to the public in an accessible manner.

f. Work with community-based organizations to support outreach and canvassing efforts to inform and enroll residents into the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP), which provides monthly internet bill subsidies to qualifying households.

1. Bridging the Digital Divide: ADOPTION + INCLUSION

   a. Research the current state of local digital inclusion needs and barriers; provide a detailed report of findings that can help identify areas of programming. Connect with community organizations to understand their digital affordability and adoption needs; provide a detailed list of those needs to help form strategic plans.

   b. Identify and research outreach programs that could provide the underserved with access to effective internet services and devices, as well as digital skilling programs. Identify which community partners might be helpful to engage to deploy those programs.

2. Bridging the Digital Divide: BROADBAND ACCESS + INFRASTRUCTURE

   a. Research potential broadband infrastructure models that best match local needs.

   b. Help create, coordinate, and/or facilitate a local steering committee of diverse stakeholders, such as a Broadband Action Team (BAT), to ensure that progress toward key development goals and partnerships are met.

   c. Build an asset/resource bank for broadband work to understand potential investments in infrastructure including grants, gifts, private investment, etc. This asset mapping would also include the types and numbers of internet-accessible equipment at schools, hot spots, mobile wireless, and other locations for access.

   d. Deploy local speed-mapping efforts to ensure maps are updated with accurate household internet speeds, thereby increasing the availability of funding available for assistance.

   e. Recommend an infrastructure model for the local community to adopt; provide a written report on the recommended model that details why it fits local needs and how to establish the model.

   f. Educate the community on the benefits of investing in broadband infrastructure, including when and how they will be affected by increased access.

   g. Communicate the mission, vision, and strategy of the broadband team to your community through in-person presentations as well as virtual channels such as email newsletters, social media, printed pieces, and publications; provide continuous updates to key stakeholders (bi-weekly, monthly, and/or quarterly); and capture compelling stories to tell your community’s “broadband story” for ongoing communication efforts.

COMPETENCIES

Required knowledge, skills, and abilities include: ACC AmeriCorps Members must be comfortable speaking to groups and giving short presentations on a topic; researching complex topics; making phone calls and writing emails; facilitating meetings and discussions; attending virtual and online events; and possess basic skills with writing, verbal communication, email engagement, Excel/Google Sheets, and notetaking.

Familiarity with or willingness to quickly learn social media and other marketing strategies and best practices to reach Covered Populations with digital equity, access, and literacy/skill information. Optional but desired: Oral and
written fluency in another language other than English, ideally Spanish, French/Creole, or Portuguese. Experience with one or more graphic design software programs such as Canva or Adobe Creative Suite.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS
To serve in AmeriCorps, you must:

- Be a U.S. Citizen or Lawful Permanent Resident
- Possess a high school diploma or GED equivalent
- Pass a National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) that includes: an FBI fingerprint check, a National Sex Offender Registry check, and any state-specific required background checks for both State of Service and State of Residence.
- Not have completed more than three (3) prior AmeriCorps terms of service.
- Not hold other full-time employment; other obligations should not be temporary or part-time in nature and must not interfere with the program schedule and requirements (i.e., 40 hours/week, training dates, etc.).
- Not be enrolled in a full-time Undergraduate or Professional degree program during the fellowship and agree to maintain full healthcare coverage during the entirety of the fellowship recognizing LFA provides reimbursements for certain eligible healthcare premiums.

BENEFITS
Training
- 5-day Virtual Winter Training Institute with your cohort (November TBD).
- 5-day Spring Training Retreat and national partner summit with your cohort in Minneapolis, Minnesota (March/April TBD).
- Scholarship opportunity to attend the National Digital Inclusion Alliance summit or a similar professional conference of your choice (Spring 2023).
- 3+ day in-person graduation ceremony and summit in Washington, DC (late July 2024).

Support
- Monthly 1:1 calls with a dedicated ACC Program Officer to support your professional and personal goals and planning for the future.
- Regular virtual Zoom trainings and pod sessions with your cohort.
- Access to an Employee Assistance Program for legal, financial, tax, and mental health resources.

Alumni
- Segal AmeriCorps Education Award - Upon successful completion of your AmeriCorps service year, you will earn a $6,495 in scholarship funding for every 1,700 hours of service (one program year) that can be applied to current educational expenses or to repay qualified student loans. Learn more here. Note this scholarship is taxable and a person cannot earn more than the aggregate value of two full-time education awards.
- Alumni graduate scholarships to a growing list of top MPA and MPP schools, including the Fels Institute at the University of Pennsylvania and the McCourt School of Public Policy at Georgetown.
- Grants available for up to $2,500 for alumni to launch entrepreneurial initiatives to serve their community.
- Membership in a lifelong alumni network of talented, passionate, and dynamic leaders across the country.

Living Allowance
- A $30,000 taxable stipend.
- The Corps Network Health Care Plan (Cigna) - available to those who are not already enrolled in a spouse’s or family member’s health care plan.
Lead For America is an Equal Opportunity Employer that does not discriminate on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, creed, religion, national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, age, sex, or gender (including pregnancy, childbirth, and pregnancy-related conditions), gender identity or expression (including transgender status), sexual orientation, marital status, military service and veteran status, physical or mental disability, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by applicable federal, state or local laws and ordinances. Lead For America’s management team is dedicated to this policy with respect to recruitment, hiring, placement, promotion, transfer, training, compensation, benefits, team member activities, access to facilities and programs, and general treatment during employment.

Lead For America will endeavor to make a reasonable accommodation of an otherwise qualified applicant, AmeriCorps member, or team member related to an individual’s: physical or mental disability; sincerely held religious beliefs and practices; and/or any other reason required by applicable law, unless doing so would impose an undue hardship upon Lead For America’s business operations. Any applicant or team member who needs an accommodation in order to perform the essential functions of their position should contact their assigned supervisor or ACC Program Officer for more information.