



**Position Title:** Ecological Assistant

**Position Service Site:** Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration (St. Joseph Ridge in La Crosse, WI)

**Service Time:** September 9, 2024 – August 22, 2025 (1,700 Hour AmeriCorps Term, 50 weeks, 35 hours per week)

**Benefits:** Living stipend total for whole term = \$23,000 (\$460 per week). Education Award of approximately \$7,300 upon successful completion of service. To find out more about the Award: <https://americorps.gov/members-volunteers/segal-ameri-corps-education-award/find-out-more>.

Health insurance optional (1,700-hour positions only, available for individuals who are not already covered).

**Requirements:** Covid-19 vaccine required.

**OVERVIEW:** Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration's goal is to provide young environmental leaders with the opportunity to gain relevant professional experience that serve the environment and the community by supporting healthy urban and rural ecosystems. FSPA has 200 acres of land with a greenhouse, garden, and orchard on St. Joseph Ridge, just outside La Crosse, that serves as an education model in the community for conservation and regenerative land practices.

Learn more at [fspa.org/land](https://fspa.org/land)

**SERVICE DESCRIPTION:** FSPA's Ecological Assistant will aid in living out the commitment to care for Earth by helping restore native ecosystems on the grounds of FSPA, maintaining the greenhouse and gardens, engaging the community, and supporting programs that are part of the FSPA ministries.

#### **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

##### *Community Improvement*

- Willingness to learn the impacts of climate change on the Driftless region and help educate others how to mitigate those impacts and build a resilient community.
- Support the development and implementation of the FSPA Laudato Si Action Plan (Climate Action Plan) with a regenerative land management focus.
- Increase environmental awareness, support land justice and promote sustainability through community outreach events.
- Design and implement at least one program for environmental education, sharing what you've learned with members of the local community; may present to the FSPA community towards the end of service.
- Identify and develop virtual resources related to climate action, natural resource management and land access in the Driftless region.
- In the case of natural disasters AmeriCorps member may be recruited to assist the community.

##### *Programming*

- Assist FSPA land projects working in the woodlands, prairies, garden, greenhouse and orchard.
- Assist with habitat management and restoration of native prairie, forest, oak savanna and natural waterways, including prairie and tree plantings, water diversion strategies, and burning of brush piles.
- Assist with identification and eradication of invasive species, timber stand improvement, prairie and tree plantings, and water diversion strategies.
- Assist with garden preparation, planting, weeding, harvesting, field clean up, mulching, mowing, row covers and seasonal maintenance.

- Assist with designing, improving, and updating kiosks, signs, and brochures as related to the FSPA land on St. Joseph Ridge.

#### *Program Marketing*

- Help create or curate simple “how-to” videos, including but not limited to natural landscape restoration, leave no trace principles and pollinator habitat support etc.
- Assist in the development of FSPA eco education programs including lesson planning, activity development and teaching and developing educational materials.
- Track progress and develop reports on specific sustainability and environmental measures.

#### *Volunteer Recruitment*

- Develop partnerships with local and regional partner organizations to learn and implement best practices for regenerative land management and climate resiliency for the FSPA land.
- Create an outreach plan to connect with local and regional environmental and eco-justice organizations to promote FSPA land projects.
- Assist in recruitment, training, and management of FSPA land volunteers of all ages for stewardship and service projects including trail work, woodland and prairie restoration projects, garden, orchard, and greenhouse.
- Assist in volunteer and activity tracking, for continual program improvement.

#### **QUALIFICATIONS:**

- A team player and good communicator with flexible attitude and eagerness to learn.
- Physically active and able to lift at least 30 lbs. (occasionally 50 lbs.) with stooping and bending
- Able to work in all weather conditions relevant to Wisconsin.
- An intrepid sense of curiosity and enthusiasm about the natural world and interactions within.
- Willing to interact inter-generationally and inter-culturally in a respectful manner.
- Ability to take direction and accept constructive criticism.
- Ability to prioritize and handle multiple tasks.
- Attention to detail and organizational skills.
- Strong sense of responsibility and follow-through.
- Education and/or experience in land conservation, ecological restoration, sustainability, community outreach and climate resilience a plus.
- Technology proficient in platforms such as Google Workspace and Microsoft Office.
- Withstand the physical demands of work which involves lifting, carrying, bending and hiking on uneven terrain.
- Ability to perform the essential duties of the position with or without reasonable accommodation.
- Ability and willingness to safely use herbicides, pressure sprayers, chainsaws, and other power equipment.
- Ability to multitask and shift schedule and priorities to meet changing conditions.
- Upon hire, a criminal background check will be conducted. Service with WisCorps will be considered probationary until all results are returned and have been reviewed.

*WisCorps provides equal employment opportunities without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, marital status, amnesty, or status as a covered veteran per applicable federal, state, and local laws. We are committed to assuring equal employment opportunity and equal access to services, programs, and activities for persons with disabilities. If you have a disability, and need to access information in an alternative format, or need it translated into another language, please contact us at 608-782-2494, by email at [staff@wiscorps.org](mailto:staff@wiscorps.org) or Wisconsin Relay 711.*