

PREVENTION RESOURCE CENTER MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

EDUCATION
HEALTHY FUTURES
VETERANS

2014 QUICK FACTS:

\$41,494 raised
\$74,245 in kind raised
691 volunteers recruited
16,755 new clients served



The Prevention Resource Center VISTA Project assists Montana communities in creating and sustaining conditions that reduce risk, as well as promote the safety, personal responsibility, and well-being of our youth. The Prevention Resource Center is a project intermediary with VISTAs serving statewide under the following CNCS focus areas:

- Healthy Futures
 - Access to healthcare
 - Nutrition
- Education
 - K-12 Success
- Veterans
 - Mental health services
 - Military families

Over the last year PRC VISTA members have served with local school districts, county & state government, and non-profits like Hopa Mountain, No Kid Hungry, ChildWise Institute, Gallatin City-County Health Dept., Human Resource Development Council, The Center for Children & Families, Montana Food Bank Network, and Summer Food Service Programs statewide.

"I feel so incredibly lucky and grateful that Ben has offered to complete a third and final year as NCBI's VISTA. His impact on our organization is immeasurable. Retaining Ben as our VISTA will provide added stability through our time of growth and transition, and ensure that the system improvements Ben has designed will be institutionalized in the year ahead."

*~Heidi Wallace, Director
NCBI Missoula*



THE CENTER FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES

VISTA: JOSHUA SKINNER

HEALTHY FUTURES
VETERANS

QUICK FACTS:

\$175,678.27 in-kind raised

512 Volunteers Recruited

3134 Volunteer Hours

Overall Goal of the project: Increase access to health services and programs to prevent child abuse while building the capacity of the Center for Children & Families by developing and implementing a public relations program through volunteering to assist families struggling with addiction, including Veterans and their families.

What capacity was built for the organization and is it sustainable?

The capacity built for this organization is in infrastructure for the volunteer program. We now have policy and procedure for each individual event that we are involved in throughout the year. Anyone with access to the shared files can manage volunteer needs for each individual event with detailed descriptions and timelines for getting things done to prepare. I have also trained staff on the volunteer intake process. They are able to at the front desk take in volunteers and get them appropriate paperwork and background checks.

Internship program has seen a major overhaul. The relationships that I have created with the local colleges and points of contact will continue to send us quality and competent interns who are able to help our staff serve more clients. There is an entire intern orientation and toolkit that was made by me that is passed out to new interns in each semester. With the video and toolkit very little staff is needed in training and orienting new interns at the Center. I have helped solidify better recruiting practices to get a larger quantity of competent and quality interns. We have also worked hard to create even more structure for orientation, gathering feedback for interns, and increase channels of recruitment to yet another school. Specifically we are able to take on more graduate level students that need clinical hours for licensure.

We have stepped up our community service partners to provide safe and supervised workplace for people needing to get in community service hours. We are now working with three different community organization to get even more people involved at the Center.

I have created and refined the infrastructure for our reporting duties at the Center for our federal grant match report. There are now better practices in place for recording and reporting specifics of the report for each given section and who is responsible. Finally coordinated volunteer efforts have completed a larger new office space so we can increase and improve our capacity to serve more clients.

How the capacity built and other efforts have or will:

The capacity built will allow us to better support or efforts in the community. With appropriate infrastructure and staff trained how to recruit volunteers for particular events, the events in themselves will be able to reach more people. The volunteers and interns that can be successfully recruited for other areas and programs will also be able to take some work load off of paid staff and allow them to focus solely on their particular job responsibilities. With the new space finished by volunteers the organization will have the physical work space to serve more clients in our community. They will be able to both increase the amount of clients that we serve but also are able to deliver a service that is higher in quality.



THE CENTER FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES

VISTA: NICOLE STEPHENS

HEALTHY FUTURES
VETERANS

QUICK FACTS:

35 Clients served

598 Items distributed



Goal of the project: The overall goal of the project is to create a better flowing system for the donations received and given to The Center for Children and Families.

What capacity was built for the organization and is it sustainable? Capacity was built through locating and creating resources and making them readily available. I believe that this is sustainable-so long as the resources stay updated. Since this is the first time that anything has really been set up for the area, there will be resources that are just too much and/or repetitive and unhelpful. However, as long as people are noticing this, then my work will be sustainable.

How the capacity built and other efforts have or will:

1. **Increase the number of clients served, who are the clients, and how many were served?** By creating a system to better monitor the items we go through the most, the items we don't use, and the items that we just don't have space for, we are better able to help our clients and get them on their own two feet.
2. **Improve or increase the number of services provided and a brief description on these services.** By creating a list of items we can accept, can't accept, and most needed items, we create more space and less stress for employees and are better able to help our clients. There are also resource sheets that were created which can help direct people that have items we don't accept, as well as give our clients a good idea of where they can find whatever they may need at a low cost to them.
3. **Support the organization's efforts in the community.** Since the organization already puts numerous efforts out into the community, the donation area will be help us better serve our clients and get them to a point where they are comfortable on their own and hopefully want to help others the same way. Some of the resources used for the donation area include lists of items we don't carry, but places that do. For example if someone needs an air conditioner, we don't have space to store it, but we know that Goodwill or St. Vincent de Paul's will carry something like that. We included the hours, locations, and contact info. This will also help our clients get items that they need at an affordable price while supporting the community with the money they spend.
4. **How will the VISTAs work move individuals and communities out of poverty?** This work won't move people out of poverty immediately, because getting out of poverty isn't as easy as getting a higher paying job. The resources that I have created will help individuals get out of poverty by helping them make better.



FAMILY SUPPORT NETWORK

VISTA: KARI GROAT

EDUCATION
HEALTHY FUTURES

2014 QUICK FACTS:

\$8,000 raised
\$1,000 in kind raised
15 volunteers recruited
3 new clients served



My goal at the Family Support Network was to strategically plan and implement a youth group for young people who have lived experience in social systems that were created to serve them, such as juvenile justice, mental health, education, and child welfare. By creating an outlet for youth to exhibit their strengths, expand on their leadership skills, and nurture their inner voice we are providing youth a social experience alternate to drinking and doing drugs. The youth group is just one small part of the community's collaborative work to keep children off the streets, and to lower Montana's drop out and suicide rates. Through consistent community outreach and activities we have gained advocacy partnerships and have been able to develop a wide understanding of the purpose and need of the youth group.

One of my goals was to create a curriculum for future group leaders to facilitate. With an easy to read binder the future facilitators will be able to comprehend the structure of the meetings and lead them with the original intention. In my last few months of service I worked to recruit an active leader for the group and found a facilitator that not only has experience in social systems but is motivated to create change in the youthful community. Our youth group has teamed up with NAMI Connections, a structured youth group that addresses mental health topics, for the purpose of providing the same youth with a combination of support systems.

By networking with other agencies we will be able to reach a wider audience in our outreach. Our group will be able to expand by serving youth who are involved in many different social services. By networking with different agencies we have been able to connect people to needed services such as HIV/AIDS testing, employment & housing services, support groups for both adults and youth, runaway youth and homeless shelters, parenting education classes, food services, and SNAP benefits. Due to my participation in the local Mental Health Advisory Council I have been able to connect agency representatives to this networking opportunity, expanding the board's active participation, which has ultimately built the council's potential to make a difference in the community. The work I have done this year has not been done single-handedly. I have had the opportunity to work alongside inspiring and mentoring people. I feel gratitude knowing that I have been able to play a small part in the macro process of bringing people out of impoverished conditions.



FLATHEAD CASA FOR KIDS

VISTA: JULIA BELLQUIST

HEALTHY FUTURES

QUICK FACTS:

\$53,236.74 raised
3 new programs established
39 new children served
18 new advocates trained



Overall Goal of the project:

- The goal of the project is to help build ways to fund the operations of Flathead CASA for Kids. The VISTA will develop a program that maximizes the use of volunteers in volunteer management/support roles by customizing existing National CASA and CASA for Kids models. Our VISTA project will allow CASA to be self-sustaining and able to fund its yearly budgetary needs.

What capacity was built for the organization and is it sustainable?

- The VISTA developed and implemented a CRM Fundraising Software Database, DonorPerfect. This database now tracks 1,368 donors. It is a vital tool used to track events, monetary donations, in-kind donations, and personal donor information. This database also contains a moves management component which is key when forming relationships with donors. DonorPerfect has mail merging capabilities, endless reporting options, and is user friendly once trained. It is sustainable. The VISTA has also created a user manual and has trained staff on the intricacies of the database.
- The VISTA has also created a pilot CASA Coaching Program. This program will allow CASA for Kids of Flathead County to train more CASA Advocates thereby increasing our capacity to serve more children.

How the capacity built and other efforts have or will:

1. Increase the number of clients served and the number of services provided, who are the clients, and how many were served?
 - Through the VISTA's database efforts CASAs outreach to donors was dramatically improved, as was office efficiency, and donations were increased.
 - The VISTA's Pilot Coaching Program enabled CASA to train more advocates therefore serving more children in the Flathead Valley. The pilot program consisted of 6 senior advocates coaching 2-4 new advocates each. There were 18 new advocates served through this pilot. These new advocates have now served 39 new children so far through this program.
2. Support the organization's efforts in the community
 - The DonorPerfect database makes outreach efforts easier enabling CASA for Kids to reach members in the community spreading awareness of the organization's efforts.
 - The Thank-a-Thon increased awareness and relationships with donors. This will be an annual event which will continue to strengthen ties in the community.
3. How will the VISTAs work move individuals and communities out of poverty?
 - Through the pilot Coaching Program CASA for Kids was able to train more CASAs thereby serving more children. This program gives these children a constant, stable individual advocating for their best interests and mentoring them, doing their best to give them an opportunity to live in a safe permanent home.



GALLATIN CITY-COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT VISTA: CHRISTINE ARMSTRONG

HEALTHY FUTURES
VETERANS

QUICK FACTS:

\$680 in-kind raised

1300 resource guides distributed



Implementation of the Healthy Gallatin Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) means sustainable solutions to improve health in Gallatin County through multi-faceted efforts including increasing access to care, especially for those below 200% Federal Poverty Level, expanding public transportation services to rural areas in Gallatin County, strengthening relationships between human services organizations and increasing referrals where appropriate, and collaborating with prevention specialists, stakeholders, and other community members to address alcohol, tobacco, and drug issues in Gallatin County.

Through the VISTA's efforts in supporting the existing CHIP committees and coalitions, and securing buy-in from human service organizations for a system navigator group, designing, and convening monthly meetings with the system navigator group to strengthen referral relationships by providing in-depth knowledge of programs and services available, Gallatin County now has sustainable and reliable support from community partners, human service organizations, and stakeholders in improving the health and wellness of its residents. In addition to CHIP implementation, the VISTA revamped the Health Department's use of social media and worked with an outside copywriter to establish a sustainable social media/website utilization plan for the Health Department's use during and after the VISTA's term of service.

The efforts by the VISTA and others in implementing the CHIP has resulted in multiple and diverse efforts to reach out to vulnerable populations such as Spanish speakers and others whose first language is not English, people below 200% Federal Poverty Level, people living in rural areas without reliable transportation, the homeless or near homeless, families of all types, and students in Gallatin County. Through monthly meetings with system navigators from multiple human service organizations, referral relationships have been strengthened, thus increasing the number of services and resources being provided in Gallatin County. Working with several substance abuse prevention specialists, stakeholders, and community partners, great headway has been made in addressing issues relating to binge and chronic drinking, and alcohol, drug, and tobacco use and abuse by adults and minors such as working with community coalitions, collecting data to drive and focus efforts, and securing buy-in from the university, the city/county commission, local media, and other outlets of community interest.

The VISTA's work in the implementation of the Healthy Gallatin CHIP has directly helped move residents and the community out of poverty by strengthening relationships between human service organizations and in-turn increasing referrals for resources to address or prevent poverty. Efforts made by CHIP committees and coalitions worked to reverse social determinants such as transportation, access to medical and mental health care, and worked to create a supportive system for kids living in poverty or without a support system or resources to make healthy and steadfast choices to avoid use and abuse of alcohol, drugs and tobacco.



MONTANA CHILDREN'S TRUST FUND

VISTA: NICOLE JOHNSON

HEALTHY FUTURES
VETERANS

QUICK FACTS:

\$573 cash raised
\$10,363 in-kind raised
40 volunteers recruited
2 new clients served



- The overall goal of the project is to increase the awareness and opportunities for families and communities to protect children who have been or are at substantial risk of abuse or abandonment. To help increase awareness and recognize protective capacities of families and incorporate them in assessments, decision making and actions with the goal of improving safety, permanency, and well being for children.
- The Montana Children's Trust Fund (CTF) and the VISTA have started to host awareness events and build partnerships with businesses in the community. These events aim to build top of mind awareness of the Trust Fund and their mission to strengthen families and prevent child abuse and neglect. The very first CTF event was a Halloween Fun Fest. The goal for this was to provide a space for children and families in the community to celebrate the holiday in a free, fun, safe, and warm way. CTF partnered with the local YMCA for this event.
- Through the Montana Children's Trust Fund there are community-based, nonprofit organizations providing primary and secondary prevention programs that reduce the risks of childhood maltreatment and strengthen families. These include after school programs, parenting classes, mentor programs, respite child care services, and resource referrals. The Children's Trust Fund currently grants to 15 different organizations across the state and more funding could increase that number. Partnerships, donations, and events, can increase funding opportunities. With help from the VISTA, training opportunities, such as Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), have also been offered, which will help the grantees to better be able to provide services to the children of Montana. In the local community and across the state, the issue of child abuse and neglect as well as shaken baby syndrome/abusive head trauma needs to be changed and ultimately prevented. Youth that have been abused or neglected are at an increased risk of delinquency, poor school performance, symptoms of mental illness or pregnancy. While there is no one cause for maltreatment, these are risk factors. Some factors that contribute to child abuse and neglect include a history of maltreatment of a parent or caregiver, substance abuse, age of the parent or caregiver, family structure, domestic violence, stress, as well as poverty or unemployment. With the prevention of child maltreatment, children can grow to be healthy and productive members of society, as well as decrease the risk of their children being abused or neglected.



MONTANA CHILDREN'S TRUST FUND

VISTA: MELISSA LAVINDER

HEALTHY FUTURES
VETERANS

QUICK FACTS:

\$1,758.14 raised
\$3,726.09 in kind raised
78 volunteers recruited
210 volunteer hours



Overall goal of the project: To increase the awareness and opportunities for families and communities to protect children who have been or are at substantial risk of abuse, neglect or abandonment, strive to assure that all children have a family who will protect them from harm, help increase awareness and recognize the protective capacities of families and incorporate them in assessments, decision making and actions with the goal of improving safety, permanency, and well being for children, and encourage our communities to strengthen their prevention efforts and to share responsibility for the safety of its children and families.

Capacity Built: Melissa created a community outreach plan and media templates to help grantees recruit more participants and leaders. The document was created as a universal plan that can be tailored to a program's individual needs. It also helped to increase awareness of the Montana Children's Trust Fund. Various resource guides were compiled so that people who visit the website can easily find resources such as homeless shelters, food banks, and parenting groups and classes. Distribution lists were also created for the Montana Children's Trust Fund to send out letters, flyers, and other materials more easily. Melissa worked with various organizations and community groups to share ideas and information as well as to collaborate on various plans such as the Emergency Services for Children - Child Ready Plan. Melissa also increased funding and volunteer resources for the Montana Children's Trust Fund, particularly during Pinwheels for Prevention in April and Halloween Fun Fest in October.

Increase the number of clients served and the number of services provided: This year, Melissa and the Montana Children's Trust Fund provided multiple trainings on sustainability for the grantees. These trainings and the Community Outreach Plan better equip the grantees to grow their funds and engage more people. This will give them the capacity to offer more services and serve more people. Using social media, Melissa increased the attendance of Halloween Fun Fest, one of the Montana Children's Trust Fund's largest awareness events, by 100%.

Support the organization's efforts in the community: The Community Outreach Plan is available for all grantees and will help them meet their organization's goals. Outreach for the Montana Children's Trust Fund has and will continue to make the community more aware of the organization as well as the importance of child abuse and neglect prevention and what they can do to help. This will also help the Montana Children's Trust Fund seek funding from untapped resources.

Move individuals and communities out of poverty: Child abuse and neglect disproportionately affects individuals and families living in poverty, who often do not have protective factors in place. Protective factors include enhancing parental resiliency, developing social connections, offering concrete support in times of need, building knowledge of parenting and child development, and fostering social and emotional competence of children. By addressing and providing these protective factors, parents will have the support and resources they need to help them finish school and secure steady jobs thus preventing an intergenerational transmission of poverty.



MONTANA FOOD BANK NETWORK

VISTA: ERIN CARLSTROM

HEALTHY FUTURES
VETERANS

QUICK FACTS:

- 96 School Breakfast Report Cards distributed
- 238 Summer Report Cards distributed
- 6 alternative breakfast models started
- 3 Summer Food Service Programs started



Overall Goal of the project:

- Increase access to child nutrition program, specifically school breakfast and the Summer Food Service Program.

What capacity was built for the organization and is it sustainable?

- 16 conversations started with schools about using an alternative breakfast model reach more kids at risk of hunger.
- 10 communities engaged in conversations about starting a Summer Food Service Program for the kids in their community.
- 6 alternative breakfast models and 3 Summer Food Service Programs started during the VISTA term. All of these programs are sustainable and together reach over 300 children across Montana.

How the capacity built and other efforts have or will . . .

- Increase the number of clients served: The resources created and personal contacts made with Food Service Directors, school administration, church members, non-profit organizations and local government will cultivate awareness, and create new alternative breakfast models and Summer Food Service Programs so that more low-income children are served.
- Improve or increase the number of services provided: The resources created, data collected and presentations given will help schools and communities make informed decisions about the Summer Food Service Program and how to start an alternative breakfast model.
- Support the organization's efforts in the community: The Montana Food Bank Network works to end hunger in Montana however possible. This includes, food pantries, mobile food trucks, support and advocacy for public programs like SNAP or WIC as well as the school breakfast program and the Summer Food Service Program. By helping start sustainable breakfast and summer programs across the state, the VISTA helped with the host organization's efforts.
- Move individuals and communities out of poverty: The families of children receiving meals through the school breakfast program and the summer food service program will be able to use their resources otherwise used for food to help in other areas of their life. Also, studies show that children who receive adequate nourishment are able to learn better during the school day, resulting in a higher quality of education, that could potentially lead them out of poverty.



MT NO KID HUNGRY

VISTA: JESSI SHEAVA

HEALTHY FUTURES
VETERANS

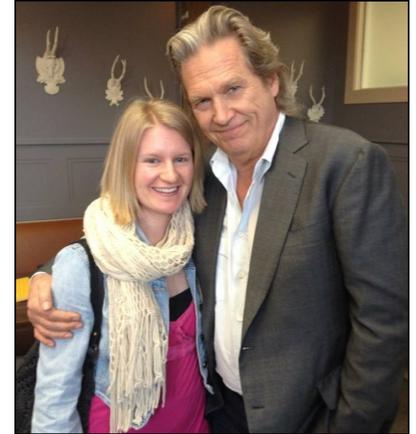
QUICK FACTS:

\$10,000 raised

14 volunteers recruited

5,000 in-kind donations collected

59,000 new clients served



Montana No Kid Hungry works to connect kids to food where they live, learn, and play. The goals are to increase participation, outreach, benefits, and education within our priority programs: The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Afterschool Meal Program. In Montana, 20.9% of children live in families that struggle to put food on the table on a consistent basis. In working with our priority programs to increase participation, more kids throughout Montana can eat healthy meals year round.

During Jessi's second year serving with MT No Kid Hungry, she developed and implemented the resources and programs that were identified as a need during her first year. After assessing the barriers of the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), she developed an outreach calendar for use by SFSP sponsors. The calendar runs from April to August and is filled with unique outreach strategies to effectively spread the word about the program in all Montana communities. Jessi presented the calendar at the SFSP summit and it will be used by all SFSP sponsors for many years. Jessi also contacted all SFSP sponsors to improve direct communications, share available resources, inform sponsors of the 2014 summit and the No Kid Hungry mini-grants, locate new sites/sponsors in high need areas, and better understand sponsor needs. This built strong relationships with sponsors, collected critical data, and will be something No Kid Hungry and partners do on an annual basis.

Jessi helped build participation in the Afterschool Meals Program by developing an outreach postcard and performing follow-up communication with new Afterschool Meal Program sites. She also gave several presentations to raise awareness of child hunger issues both state-wide and nationally.

Jessi strategically formed partnerships with both local and state-wide organizations to leverage the work of No Kid Hungry, as well as expand services and increase participation in programs. She helped develop the Lewis and Clark County Child Hunger Team. The group works on addressing barriers to child food access in Lewis and Clark County. Priorities of this group include: expanding transportation services to help the food insecure access food and food services, providing more supplemental meals to middle and high school students, and expanding the afterschool meals program. Jessi created a resource guide which serves as a one-stop-shop for all food services within Lewis and Clark County.

Jessi worked to implement the Cooking Matters at the Store Program throughout Montana through partnering with organizations that serve low-income populations, and trained facilitators. Jessi co-facilitated a tour and gave a number of presentations to specific groups across the state to build interest in facilitating the program. This program is now in 10 cities and is very successful, but continues to grow.

Jessi helped to move individuals out of poverty through working collaboratively with direct service workers to identify the barriers to child nutrition programs and develop innovative solutions to the barriers, implement them, and spread the word to raise awareness.



MONTANA PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILDHOOD HUNGER VISTA: TANIA YOUNG

HEALTHY FUTURES
VETERANS

QUICK FACTS:

31 schools contacted
6 new schools offer breakfast
18 county action plans created



The goal of the PRC VISTA Project was to address poverty and hunger related needs by strengthening community and the development of community infrastructure through a community building process. This process enabled the VISTA to build sustainable capacity within the Montana Partnership to End Childhood Hunger (MT-PECH) by increasing the number of individuals served and enhancing the services provided. The process ultimately helped develop and provide resources and support for families by increasing access to and knowledge of nutritional food options to decrease the number of hungry children in Montana as well as prevent childhood obesity.

The VISTA helped to build capacity for the Montana Partnership to End Childhood Hunger in many ways including creating and distributing promotional materials, updating databases and contact information, planning and evaluating a state-wide outreach initiative, and by starting a social media outreach campaign. These are all sustainable efforts that will be of use to the Montana Partnership to End Childhood Hunger and any employees or VISTAs in the future. Much of the VISTA's time was invested in the planning and follow-up of the "Build A Stronger Montana: End Child Hunger" statewide summit. During this time, the VISTA helped MT-PECH invite representatives from all across Montana to attend the summit where they then worked with others from their community to create an action plan to end child hunger for their town or city. The VISTA transcribed these plans and distributed them to the group members and other key community members after the summit with the hope that each community would take action. This was a difficult task for the VISTA to accomplish as there was little motivation from several groups to follow through with their actions. However, contacts were identified in six counties who will now take the lead on ending child hunger within their community.

The VISTA also helped to update MT-PECH's "Ten Step Plan to End Child Hunger in Montana" with the most current data and created resources that will make it easier for MT-PECH to update again in the future. The "Ten Step Plan to End Child Hunger in Montana" is MT-PECH's blue print for action; it guides the work of all members. Of the ten steps, the VISTA personally focused on implementing step number one to help schools in the state of Montana feed more children through the National School Breakfast Program. The VISTA conducted research and distributed the information in handouts, pamphlets, Facebook and Twitter posts, phone calls, a webinar and in face-to-face meetings and presentations. Because of this effort, thirty one more schools in Montana are aware of the benefits of school breakfast and have resources available to help them implement a new breakfast program or improve an existing one. The VISTA also helped develop an award application supported by the Governor's Office of Community Service and First Lady Lisa Bullock to recognize a new school breakfast program and an improved school breakfast program at the 2014 Serve Montana Award ceremony. This application will also be used for future award ceremonies.

The work done by the VISTA over the past year will help free many Montana's from the cyclical nature of poverty. A child free from hunger is one that is prepared to learn, grow and prosper. More specifically, a child who consumes a healthy breakfast in the morning, before school starts, is more likely to do well in school and have fewer behavior problems than a child who does not eat a healthy breakfast. With a nutritious start to the school day, and consistent access to nutritious foods, more children are likely to graduate high school and continue on to become self sufficient adults, free from poverty.



SAVE FOUNDATION VISTA: ALLISON BATCH

HEALTHY FUTURES
VETERANS

QUICK FACTS:

\$5,550 raised

\$960 in kind raised

72 volunteers recruited

7 community groups served



Overall Goal of the project:

Improve access to basic services, health care, and healthy recreation opportunities for senior citizens, veterans, disabled and low-income populations by addressing pedestrian, bicycle and public transit needs in the Helena Area.

What capacity was built for the organization and is it sustainable?

Capacity was built with the development of new informational materials, new partnerships, and increased membership. Successful community events, such as the community bike swap, provided model strategies for future events. Additional community partners were identified with the formation of a new coalition: the Physical Activity Stakeholder Group.

How the capacity built and other efforts have or will:

1. Increase the number of clients served, who are the clients, and how many were served?

I added two new community groups served by this VISTA position: the Child Hunger Team and the Physical Activity Stakeholder Group. In total, 7 community groups were served, including the Non-Motorized Travel Advisory Group, the Helena Area Transportation Advisory Council, Safe Routes to School, Bike Walk Helena, and the Healthy Communities Coalition.

2. Improve or increase the number of services provided and a brief description on these services

I worked to improve and expand the annual community bike swap, which provides a source for affordable bicycles in our community. I assisted in planning for an improved public transit system, which would provide bus service to a much broader area of the community than is currently being served.

3. Support the organization's efforts in the community

S.A.V.E. works to foster environmental stewardship in daily activities. Encouraging greener modes of transportation supports this mission.

4. How will the VISTA's work move individuals and communities out of poverty?

By increasing alternative transportation options, individuals without a personal vehicle can still access jobs, healthcare and public services, allowing them more freedom and opportunity in their choices.



YOUTH HOMES OF MONTANA

VISTA: ELISE EWING

HEALTHY FUTURES

QUICK FACTS:

\$2,660 raised

\$400 in kind raised

16 volunteers recruited



Youth Homes of Montana, formerly Rocky Mountain Youth Resources, seeks to serve at risk youth and their families in Western Montana. Specifically in Helena, YH operates 2 group homes and a variety of outpatient services. Youth Homes serves youth ages 12-17 in a variety of ways, from residential and shelter care treatment, to outpatient and wraparound services for families to foster care and adoption services and transitional and independent living programs. Youth come to YH from many different life situations. Some youth are victims of abuse or neglect, are runaways, are struggling with substance abuse, mental health issues, have issues involving youth court and the juvenile justice system as well as other issues involving homelessness or crisis situations.

During the 2013-1014 year the VISTA worked on fund development for Youth Homes. The overall goal of the VISTA's project was to build capacity and a better understanding of the YH vision, purpose and the need for programs serving this demographic in the community. As well as to raise funds to build up and better deliver those goals. Capacity was built through development and fundraising (events), donations (funds and in kind) and donor relations, grant writing efforts, volunteer recruitment and publicity (such as media spots, meeting attendance and other collaboration and campaign efforts). The VISTA supported programs, but more specifically brought the voices of the youth and their stories to better attention in the community through fundraising events and recruitment of volunteers. The VISTA also worked with other collaborators who value and have special passion for the work we do and the population we work with. Targeting and narrowing advocates and events to better support our programs as well as creating more awareness of the need for youth in crisis situations, who may not have been specifically part of the organization. The VISTA built capacity by creating more positive, intentional relationships with advocates, by raising funds to meet some of the basic needs of the youth and by brainstorming and implementing new ways to share the voices of the youth in need in the Helena community.



GRADUATION MATTERS LIVINGSTON

VISTA: JEFF ROME

EDUCATION
VETERANS

QUICK FACTS:

480 students served
20 member coalition
\$10,000 raised



Overall goal: Livingston Grad Matters is based around four general goals—(1) youth are prepared for higher education, (2) youth are prepared for employment, (3) youth have increased prospects of thriving, belonging and engaging, and (4) the highest risk youth receive effective services and supports. We want those that are struggling to not fall through the cracks, and those that are achieving to not let their talents go unnoticed.

Capacity built: The VISTA helped to make college a reality for many students, and the process of applying to college smoother for those who already saw college as a reality. He organized meetings between students and a college counselor, frequently drove students to actual college campuses, and helped with other college related events (FAFSA night, college application week, etc.). For those just working to get through high school, the VISTA became a familiar and friendly face, working as a key member in our HiSET program (for credit deficient seniors) and visiting students in suspension.

Support the organization's efforts in the community: Rooted in Livingston's Park High School, the VISTA has supported Grad Matters events and the large umbrella of events that are college, or student success related. The VISTA would routinely put ads in the local paper for presentations or focus groups, and organized data into more readable formats for the Grad Matters coalition to review.

Move individuals and communities out of poverty: College is poverty. For many, it's the beginning of debt. While a bachelor's degree used to guarantee a job, it's no longer a guarantee because America is overflowing with degrees. Despite this, college gives one better prospects and advances one's social status (and, eventually, their wage). Many students served were the first in their family to go to college (and some going to college were the first even to get a high school diploma!). While some students are going off to work in the oil fields to escape poverty, a growing number of students are taking the more noble path, dipping into debt, but coming out not only escaping financial poverty but also escaping a poverty of education.



HOPA MOUNTAIN VISTA: CHELSEA PEPI

EDUCATION
VETERANS

QUICK FACTS:

68% increase enrollment
5 new communities served
1 new program launched
25 events planned



Overall Goal of the project: To increase academic success for Native American high school juniors and seniors through mentoring and recognition in order to increase graduation rates and students going on to competitive universities.

What capacity was built for the organization and is it sustainable? Program expanded in new communities. New materials were developed to aid Indigenous Scholars of Promise (ISP) students in their quest for college admittance. Partnerships were developed with community members and different organizations with services of use to ISPs. Schedules and agenda's were developed to be revised each year. A college library was created so ISP students could access materials about different colleges and universities. A scholarship database was also developed and will be continuously updated. Due to the amount of capacity that was built a new program was able to be launched, Latino Scholars of Promise.

The past year Indigenous Scholars of Promise was able to grow from 2 communities to 7 communities and continues to grow. In the past year the program was able to increase enrollment by 68%. Indigenous Scholars of Promise was able to launch a pilot program called Latino Scholars of Promise (LSP). LSP is currently working in 3 different communities then ISP.

Indigenous Scholars of Promise meets with students once a month in their communities. Staff is able to work with students in person on through phone calls and emails. Staff is able to work individually with ISPs to improve college essays, find scholarships and different opportunities they are eligible for. ISP students acquire enhanced college coaching due to the new materials created.

All materials and connections made support the organizations efforts to increase college access for Native American high school juniors and seniors. Indigenous Scholars of Promise works closely with community members and much of the advancement made in different communities would not have happened without close connections with members of the communities. Community members help with meeting spaces, recruitment, and support.

College access and success helps individuals and communities. Many of the Indigenous Scholars of Promise have plans to go back to their communities and bring with them the knowledge they gained from higher education. Higher education increases ISPs chances of higher paying jobs and careers they are proud of.



MONTANA EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP

VISTA: STEPHANIE BLEYENDAAL

EDUCATION
VETERANS

QUICK FACTS:

\$1,650 raised

137 volunteers recruited

653 hours served by volunteers



The Montana Education Partnership VISTA partnered with the Helena School District, teachers, SACC staff (School Age Child Care Program), and students to create pathways that increase opportunities for kids to become community leaders, earn credit through service, and be recognized for their efforts by the Helena community and its schools.

The VISTA developed an accredited out-of-school time mentoring and service-learning initiative. Alongside Helena School District's high schools and after-school programs, Montana Education Partnership has created a district program that trains, monitors, leads reflections, evaluates, and awards credit to participating high school students.

Montana Education Partnership's VISTA Project engages high school students in a sustainable mentoring program designed to be a reciprocal learning experience for both high school and elementary students. The program is designed to have high school students assist elementary students with homework and facilitate enrichment activities. The high school students earn school credit by mentoring their younger peers, documenting their hours, communicating with the teacher, and reflecting on successes and challenges during their service.



MONTANA GEAR UP

VISTA: MIRANDA SEVERNS

EDUCATION
VETERANS

QUICK FACTS:

42 volunteers recruited

20 partnerships built



The overall goal of the project was to create a pathway for services and assistance to first generation, low-income, primarily American Indian freshman college students. To increase public awareness of Montana GEAR UP and its services.

The VISTA forged partnerships with college campuses statewide (includes 2 year, 4 year, public and private institutions, as well as Montana's 7 tribal colleges). The VISTA created 4 public awareness campaigns including the creation of Infographics, a slide deck in PowerPoint for public relations activities, launched a Facebook page, and created a Summer Camp recruitment video for GEAR UP students. The publications and video are all available online and/or in print and accessible to all staff for future use. The VISTA developed 4 survey campaigns to reach various alumni demographics and to better understand areas in need of support to help students be successful, the surveys are sustainable through a "How To" Guide provided to staff for future survey campaigns as well as the statistical data received increasing the staffs knowledge and capacity to assist GEAR UP students. All of the VISTA's projects, research, and partner contact information are housed in a "Legacy Binder." This binder is organized by project and includes notes of reflection, and processes for recreating each project in the future, ensuring that GEAR UP staff is able to sustain projects, partnerships, and continue to benefit from the VISTA's research.

How the capacity built and other efforts have or will:

- 1. Increase the number of clients served, who are the clients, and how many were served?** The VISTA's work with surveys and a care package project extends the length of service to GEAR UP students into their college career.
- 2. Improve or increase the number of services provided and a brief description on these services:** The partnerships formed will increase the number of students accessing support services necessary for their retention and success in college.
- 3. Support the organization's efforts in the community:** The Infographics have and will continue to increase community and organizational awareness of GEAR UP's work for students in Montana's low income communities. The VISTAs work developing relationships and partnerships at postsecondary institutions will help to create a GEAR UP presence where it has not been in the past.
- 4. How will the VISTAs work move individuals and communities out of poverty?** The work with the college campuses will help to provide students with support needed to stay in college and achieve a post-secondary education, increasing their social and economical mobility. The VISTA's work with Public Awareness and Assessment will increase the communities understanding of students in order to better assist them in achieving success. The VISTA's Summer Camp video will increase the number of students applying to attend GEAR UP summer camps, providing academic enrichment, early intervention and inspiring an interest in a postsecondary education at young age.



NCBI MISSOULA

VISTA: BEN MINCKS

EDUCATION
VETERANS

QUICK FACTS:

\$41,478 raised

\$5,318 in kind raised

77 volunteers recruited

5,500 new clients served



Ben worked with NCBI staff and volunteers building NCBI's capacity through volunteer coordination, marketing, and development. The process will enable NCBI to implement its strategic plan resulting in the increased capacity and ability of NCBI to support community needs: develop opportunities for youth by recruiting, training and supporting volunteers; provide resources to NCBI staff, to increase youth resiliency factors and decrease risk factors so that there is an overall decline in youth risk behaviors, particularly substance abuse/use.

Ben increased the organization's capacity through increasing funding, mobilizing volunteers, and improving the organization's visibility. He made all of these practices sustainable through making and updating timelines for all big events and fundraisers, creating office how to guides on our Wiki page, creating a volunteer coordination manual, and implementing practices such as "social media updates" at all of our staff meetings.

NCBI has served over 5,500 clients this year alone. NCBI's clients include youth, through school trainings and after school programs; community members, through community events like MLK Jr. Day and Diversity Day; and employees working in all sectors including: law enforcement, health care, the private sector, government agencies, social services, etc. through trainings with businesses and organizations.

NCBI Missoula works with thousands of Montanan's every year providing youth, educators, business leaders, and community members with the skills to reduce prejudice and prevent violence. Our services are focused in three main areas: strengthening schools through after school clubs and programs and tailored workshops for students, educators, and administrators; improving organizations through workshops, trainings, and consultation; and building community cohesion through community trainings, events, and offering facilitation around divisive issues (i.e. the community forums around the relocation of the Poverello Center).

Ben held large roles in both of our big community events; including Martin Luther King Day and chairing the MLK Day Youth Art and Essay Contest—reaching over 500 Montana youth in an examination of the legacy and messages of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Low income populations and youth who are targeted by prejudice and mistreatment are more at risk for substance use, early pregnancy, self-harm, and violence. Ben has worked to increase the organization's capacity to assist youth in developing the skills and confidence necessary to respond to prejudice, conflict and violence, and build a safe and welcoming community. Ben also worked to ensure NCBI continues to develop the esteem and skills necessary for youth to achieve a healthy identity, overall wellness, and academic success.



ANACONDA FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER SUMMER FOOD PROGRAM VISTA: CARLY JOHNS

HEALTHY FUTURES
VETERANS

QUICK FACTS:

120 children served per day
5 feeding sites in Anaconda



Overall Goal of the project: The overall goal of this project was assist in the operations of the Anaconda Family Resource Center's Summer Feeding Program which feeds children 18 and under breakfast and lunch during the summer weeks when school is out of session. I did this by handling the majority of the paperwork that was required by the program. I also helped deliver and serve food to the children. I wrote a weekly column in the Anaconda Leader that promoted the program. I also hosted an activity series at Washoe Park that also helped promote the program.

What capacity was built for the organization and is it sustainable? I believe that I have promoted the summer feeding program enough this summer and my previous summers in this position that the community is aware of its existence and will always support the program. I believe that summer feeding program has been sustainable for many years and will continue to be sustainable.

How the capacity built and other efforts have or will:

Increase the number of clients served, who are the clients, and how many were served? An average estimation of about 120 children a day were served. Numbers stayed consistent all summer long.

Improve or increase the number of services provided and a brief description on these services: Some people in the community told me that they could tell that participation had gone up from last summer and they thought it was to due to my services as a VISTA.

Support the organization's efforts in the community: I believe I supported my organizations efforts in the community by promoting the summer feeding program in a very positive light through my columns.

How will the VISTAs work move individuals and communities out of poverty? My work will help move individuals out of poverty because families save money when they send their children to eat at the summer feeding program, so they can use this money to help themselves and their family get out of poverty.



YWCA MISSOULA GUTS! PROGRAM

VISTA: KATIE GANNON

EDUCATION

QUICK FACTS:

37 young woman
4 non-profits served
\$2,000 services donated
720 hours donated



Overall Goal of the project: Encourage young women to explore their own personal values and discover their strengths through wilderness adventures in the summer, as well as after-school groups and community service projects during the academic year.

What capacity was built for the organization and is it sustainable? The youth leadership program was put in place this summer and invites young woman who have participated in the program to gain experience and practice their leadership skills and volunteer leading outdoor trips.

How the capacity built and other efforts have or will:

- **Increase the number of clients served, who are the clients, and how many were served?**
Clients served are young girls attending GUTS outdoor leadership programs or participating in afterschool sessions. 37 young woman were served with 40-400 hours of curriculum, team building, leadership practice, community service and one on one mentoring.
- **Improve or increase the number of services provided and a brief description on these services.**
Providing more volunteers allows for more programs to be conducted and a greater number of community members to be better served. The program will now have a yearly influx of dedicated, passionate, young volunteers who have experienced GUTS! first hand and who will bring fresh perspectives and ideas.
- **Support the organization's efforts in the community.**
Increase awareness about woman's issues and build a new generation of community conscious citizens.
- **How will the VISTAs work move individuals and communities out of poverty?**
GUTS! empowers young woman to break the cycle of poverty and oppression. Giving them the power to stand up for themselves and enact positive change.

