



COLLEGE  
HEALTH CORPS  

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MN CAMPUS  
COMPACT

## Host Site Request for Proposal Renewal Application

2017-2018

***Letter of Interest (LOI) due via email by Friday, 12/2/16, 5:00 p.m.  
Full Application due Thursday, 1/26/17, 5:00 p.m.***

Please note that this application, and the program itself, is subject to change based on Corporation for National and Community Service funding, policies, and procedures.



# Table of Contents

## Overview

Minnesota Campus Compact .....	3
The College Health Corps .....	3
Activities and Roles of VISTAs .....	4

## Application Process

Requirements of Host Sites.....	6
College Health Corps Program Goals .....	8
Host Site Eligibility and Selection Criteria.....	8
Letter of Interest Instructions .....	9
Application Instructions .....	9

## Full Host Site Application

Part I: Narratives .....	10
Part II: Project Goals .....	14
Part III: VAD .....	15

## Timeline

### Letter of Interest in Applying

**December 2, 2016 (5:00 p.m.)**

Informational Webinar for Applicants (*optional*)

December 15, 2016 (10 – 11 a.m.)

### Full Host Site Application due

**January 26, 2017 (5:00 p.m.)**

Preliminary notice of selection decisions provided to applicants

February 13, 2017

Supervisor Webinar on VISTA Member Selection (*required*)

February 15, 2017 (10:00 -11 a.m.)

Sites' VISTA position descriptions due

March 1, 2017 (5:00 p.m.)

Host sites recruit, interview and select VISTA members

March 6 – May 26, 2017

All VISTAs selected and approved by MNCC & the CNCS State Office \*

May 26, 2017

Mandatory Pre-Service Orientation for new VISTAs\*

July 25 – 28, 2017

### VISTAs begin their year of service \*

**July 31, 2017\***

*\*Specific dates tentative and subject to change by CNCS*

# Overview

## Minnesota Campus Compact

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Minnesota Campus Compact (MNCC) is a statewide coalition of colleges and universities committed to educating students and building partnerships to develop creative solutions to society's most pressing issues. MNCC is the only coalition in Minnesota that brings together two-year and four-year, public and private higher education institutions around shared goals of developing informed and active citizens and contributing to healthy, just, and democratic communities. In order to advance those goals, we offer professional development opportunities, individualized technical assistance, publications, grants, awards, and other types of resources that build member institutions' and community organizations' capacity for mutually beneficial partnerships. MNCC is affiliated with the national Campus Compact network, which includes more than 1,100 campuses in all 50 states.

## The College Health Corps

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Low-income college students and residents in our communities face an array of barriers to affordable, quality, accessible health care, mental health supports, dental services, wellness programs, health insurance, emergency food, nutritional services, and health education programs. When individuals are unhealthy, their success in school, work, and life are jeopardized. Increasingly, colleges and universities are enrolling determined, ambitious students who have multiple jobs, family responsibilities, and challenging financial situations. With that come health issues for themselves and their families, including too little to eat.

The College Health Corps (CHC) exists to advance health equity for low-income Minnesotans through partnerships between higher education and communities. It was started in 2009-10 with 5 VISTAs and expanded to 11 VISTAs plus a VISTA Leader in 2012-13. It has been instrumental in deepening and expanding campus and community partner efforts to increase access to health care and increase health literacy throughout the state. **VISTAs may be based at community organizations or at MNCC member campuses; in either case, they must support partnerships that engage at least one member campus.** (A list of our member campuses is available at [http://mncampuscompact.org/who-we-are/member-campuses/.](http://mncampuscompact.org/who-we-are/member-campuses/))

During the 2015-2016 program year, VISTA host sites achieved the following through VISTA-supported projects:

- **18,367** low-income individuals received primary and preventive health care services
- **10,047** low-income individuals participated in health education initiatives/events
- **6,735** low-income individuals received healthcare access and enrollment information through VISTA outreach and engagement initiatives
- **4,342** low-income individuals received emergency food
- **317** low-income individuals received education to alleviate long-term hunger
- **973** volunteers were engaged
- **6,234** volunteer hours were served
- **\$371,604** in cash resources were generated
- **\$199,744** in non-cash resources were received

## Activities and Roles of VISTAs

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VISTA stands for Volunteers in Service to America. VISTA was initially founded in 1964 to fight poverty in America. When AmeriCorps was founded in 1993, VISTA was brought under the AmeriCorps program umbrella. VISTA is distinguished from other AmeriCorps programs by its unique focus on supporting capacity-building projects that bring people out of poverty.

VISTA projects are intended to build capacity that is sustained after the project is complete. Organizations effectively utilizing a VISTA may operate a VISTA project for three years, with an option for a fourth year. VISTA members serve one-year terms, with an option to renew. If selected, your project would likely host 3 VISTAs over 3 years.

VISTA members are typically college educated, though they are not required to be, and serve full-time for one year. The Corporation for National and Community Services (CNCS) provides members with a monthly living allowance at the poverty level in their community (\$990 per month for all members in Minnesota) plus an end-of-service award of either \$1,500 cash or an Education Award of \$5,815, which can be used to repay loans or pay tuition or other educational expenses. VISTAs will begin their year of service in late July, 2017 and serve a full 12 months.

### **CHC VISTA's Core Principles include:**

- **Anti-Poverty Focus:** VISTA projects support efforts to help individuals and communities out of poverty, not simply make poverty more tolerable. Projects should support long-term solutions rather than short-term services.
- **Health Equity Focus:** CHC VISTA projects focus on advancing equitable health outcomes for people of all socio-economic, racial and cultural backgrounds in Minnesota. We define health broadly to encompass preventative care, primary care, health education and wellness programming, mental health and behavioral health, food security, and other aspects of health. (As long as a significant portion of their service addresses health issues, CHC VISTAs may also address other barriers to low-income college student success, e.g., housing insecurity, financial literacy, or emergency financial needs.)
- **Capacity Building:** VISTAs strengthen and support organizations' efforts to address barriers to good health for low-income populations by engaging in capacity-building activities. Capacity building is defined as activities that expand the scale, reach, efficiency, or effectiveness of programs and organizations (e.g., developing and piloting a new volunteer program and writing a training guide but not managing a volunteer program.) Activities may also leverage resources for programs and/or organizations.
- **Sustainability:** VISTAs serve as a short-term resource to help sponsor organizations develop sustainable initiatives that will outlive the VISTA. VISTAs cannot perform direct service, nor fill ongoing staffing needs.

- **Campus-Community Partnership:** CHC VISTAs engage campus-community partnerships as a strategy for advancing their health-focused projects. These partnerships are reciprocal in nature and are recognized as valuable by both the community-based organization and campus. They may engage students, staff, and faculty with community organizations through service-learning, internships, collaborative research projects, trainings, etc. and/or engage institutional resources such as space, equipment, etc. Community organizations may provide services or resources to low-income college students and their families, train campus professionals in culturally appropriate programming, etc.
- **Asset-Based:** VISTA values the inherent strengths and resources of the community and expects communities to be involved in the planning, development, and implementation of VISTA projects.

**Host sites have used CHC VISTAs in a variety of ways, including:**

- Forming partnerships to open a campus-based Resource and Support Center for low-income students and their families;
- Developing new relationships between immigrant-led organizations and a free health clinic;
- Creating health education programs for Somali women through partnerships with dietician and physical education programs at colleges;
- Partnering to open a nursing center in a reduced-income housing complex;
- Researching models and developing partners for mental health services in a rural and highly concentrated immigrant community;
- Recruiting college service-learning classes to work with at-risk youth to design and build a community garden, providing their school and families with fresh produce;
- Developing partnerships to open a free dental clinic for underserved individuals;
- Launching a social media campaign to raise awareness of breast cancer in Native women; and
- Writing grant proposals to support such activities.

AmeriCorps VISTAs are meant to build the capacity of organizations. As such, hosting a VISTA is not meant to be a permanent staffing solution. Typically, organizations may apply to host a CHC VISTA for three years. Although most sites are limited to hosting a VISTA for a three-year cycle, host sites may apply for an extension to host a VISTA for an additional year if they can demonstrate that this will contribute to the sustainability of the project and if the site can provide some, if not all, of the VISTA member's living allowance. Sites that have already hosted a VISTA for three years through the CHC may also apply to host a VISTA to work on a new and clearly distinct capacity-building VISTA project if they can provide some, if not all, of the VISTA member's living allowance. It is hoped that, through the VISTAs' service, host sites either develop new systems, services, or partnerships that make a VISTA's presence unnecessary or develop adequate financial resources and demonstrate the need for permanent employees to support continued work.

# Renewal Application Process

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## Requirements of Host Sites

MNCC provides support to VISTAs through quarterly trainings, monthly newsletters, ongoing communication via email, site visits, and coaching. Host sites provide the day-to-day supervision of members and provide additional training and evaluation support. Each host site must appoint one responsible VISTA supervisor. Supervisors have a very strong influence on the success of the VISTA's year.

Supervisor Time Commitment:

- The supervisor in most cases must be a full-time employee with time to supervise and mentor the VISTA, including providing weekly one-to-one supervision.
- The VISTA supervisor's responsibilities will require 10-15 hours/ month, with some times of year being more time-intensive than others. The busiest times of year will be February, March, May, and August. These correspond to the VISTA recruitment, selection, and onboarding timeline.
- Supervisors are expected to participate in one full-day in-person training in August in the Twin Cities with their new VISTA, two webinars in the winter and spring, and two site visits with MNCC staff.
- Additional optional or required meetings may be scheduled if CNCS or MNCC deem them necessary.

In addition to supervision and training of the VISTA, the following are important requirements of host sites and their designated supervisors:

### **VISTA Recruitment and Selection**

MNCC supports the VISTA recruitment, interview, and selection process by providing relevant materials and templates, and by posting each host site's position on the AmeriCorps website. Host sites are responsible for the other aspects of recruitment, including writing the position description, publicizing the position, reviewing applications, and interviewing and selecting candidates. This process allows sites to identify VISTAs based on the skills, traits, and experiences they consider most important for their specific position, organization, and community. Based on the tentative schedule provided by CNCS, sites will need to select a final VISTA candidate and notify MNCC staff no later than May 26, 2017; the final approval of the candidate's acceptance as a VISTA will then be made by MNCC and CNCS staff. *Any site that does not have a VISTA selected and paperwork completed by the final deadline established by CNCS will lose its VISTA slot for the 2017-18 program year and will prevent that slot from being given to another site.*

### **Financial Contribution**

Host sites are required to help offset the cost of the CHC program by paying Minnesota Campus Compact an annual VISTA financial contribution. For 2017-2018, the financial contribution is \$4,500. The \$500 increase from 2015-16 reflects MNCC's increased contributions to CNCS for living allowances. This amount may change from year to year based on the cost of operating the program. These funds are used toward VISTA project expenses.

### ***New Project Cycles and Living Allowance Cost Sharing***

Although most sites are limited to hosting a VISTA for a three-year cycle, host sites may apply for an extension to host a VISTA for an additional year. The host site must make a strong case for why a fourth year would contribute to the sustainability of VISTA project at the site. In addition to the standard financial contribution, sites with extensions are expected to cover the cost of most, if not all, of the VISTA member's living allowance for the additional year. (Approximately \$11,880.)

Sites that have already hosted a VISTA for three years through the CHC may apply to host a VISTA to work on a new and clearly distinct capacity-building VISTA project. In such cases, the site should complete the new host site application, rather than the renewal. These sites are also expected to pay the financial contribution and cover the cost of most, if not all, of the VISTA member's living allowance in the second program cycle. (Approximately \$11,880.)

### ***Payment Timing***

Both campus and community partners may contribute toward the financial contribution (and cost share, if applicable) payment. A \$2,250 non-refundable deposit is due upon selection as a host site in February. The remaining \$2,250 of the financial contribution, and any cost share, is due when the VISTA begins service in July. The financial contribution is non-refundable if the site is unable to select a VISTA by the CNCS deadline or if the host site or VISTA choose to terminate the VISTA's service at any point before or during the program year.

### ***In-kind Requirements***

In addition to supervision and training, host sites are required to provide their VISTA with:

- ✓ a personal workstation/desk and office supplies
- ✓ access to a computer with current software and an individual internet account
- ✓ technical support for computer
- ✓ a telephone with personal voicemail
- ✓ at least one professional development opportunity
- ✓ reimbursement for local travel necessary for the position
- ✓ parking permit or bus pass if necessary
- ✓ optional, but encouraged: Sites may choose to provide a housing subsidy. Funds must be paid directly to a landlord, not to the VISTA. Grocery store and gas cards are also allowed.

CNCS provides VISTAs with approx. \$990/month (pre-tax) as a living allowance. This living allowance plus the VISTA's educational award, health benefit, FICA, background checks, and expenses related to the VISTA's pre-service orientation and College Health Corps cohort trainings are paid directly by CNCS and MNCC. Sites able to provide additional support, such as a \$100/month housing subsidy, may have an advantage in recruiting candidates and make VISTA service more feasible for people from a wider variety of backgrounds and financial circumstances.

### ***Program Evaluation***

MNCC is committed to achieving measurable results through clear and consistent data collection, aggregation, and reporting. Host sites will report bi-monthly on progress towards the College Health Corps program goals (listed below), as appropriate to their specific local priorities and activities. Sites are also asked to send a link to an online survey created by MNCC to any students serving with the VISTA's projects, including volunteers, interns, service learners, field education

students, etc., to capture student impact. In addition to completing written evaluation forms designed to capture community impact through both quantitative information and compelling stories, host sites will participate in two site visits during the program year. MNCC in turn reports on program outputs and outcomes to the CNCS state office.

## College Health Corps Program Goals

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The purpose of this VISTA program is to improve health and well-being by increasing low-income communities' access to

- 1) **primary and preventative healthcare services;**
- 2) information on **health insurance, health care access and/or health benefits;**
- 3) **health education** programs;
- 4) support, services, education and/or referrals to **alleviate long-term hunger; and/or**
- 5) **emergency food**

through **capacity building** activities.

Sites focused on supporting low-income college student success may address other issues, e.g., housing insecurity, financial literacy, or emergency financial needs, as long as a significant portion of the VISTAs' service addresses one or more of the health goals above.

## Host Site Eligibility and Selection Criteria

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Applications to host a VISTA will be reviewed by the MNCC staff, the CHC Advisory Council, and the Minnesota office of CNCS according to the following criteria:

- **Alignment with one or more CHC program goal:** Project is focused on healthcare, health care access, health education, or hunger alleviation.
- **Capacity building:** Project is focused on increasing the applying organization's capacity to provide those health and/or hunger services, not direct service or administration of ongoing programs.
- **Low-income populations:** Project is focused on serving low-income populations.
- **Campus-community partnership:** Campus-community partnership activities are an integral part of the project.
- **VISTA assignment:** The VISTA Assignment Description (VAD) is actionable and achievable.
- **Measuring outcomes:** Project includes a plan to collect data on outputs and outcomes.
- **Support:** The applying organization has capacity to provide regular, high-quality supervision, professional development opportunities, adequate work space, and other supports to the VISTA member.

Additional considerations:

- Geographic distribution of projects throughout Minnesota
- Ability to provide required financial contribution
- Demonstrated success in hosting a VISTA in past years, if applicable
- Higher education institutions, nonprofits, and public agencies may host CHC VISTAs. However, only those higher education institutions that belong to Minnesota Campus Compact (MNCC) are eligible to host a VISTA. For community-based applicants, the designated campus partner must be an MNCC member. If an interested, accredited higher education institution is not included on the current [list of Minnesota Campus Compact members](#), it may join MNCC when it or the partner applies for a CHC VISTA. With questions about membership, please contact Sinda Nichols at 612-436-2080 or [sinda@mncampuscompact.org](mailto:sinda@mncampuscompact.org).



## Letter of Interest Instructions

A brief letter of interest (LOI) is required of interested renewing host sites. The LOI should briefly (on one page) describe the site's interest in hosting a VISTA in 2017-2018, the project(s) that the site envisions the VISTA taking on, and how campus-community partnership will contribute to the proposed work. If you are a college site, provide the name and contact information for at least one of the involved community partners; if you are a community site, provide the name and contact information for the higher education partner.

We will respond with an invitation to submit a renewal application and/or questions to clarify the proposed project's alignment with the CHC VISTA program.

**Letter of interest is due in electronic form by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, December 2, 2016.**

Email letter to Sinda Nichols at: [sinda@mncampuscompact.org](mailto:sinda@mncampuscompact.org)

## Application Instructions

**Applications must arrive in electronic form by 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 26, 2017.** *Only applications that follow the instructions below will be reviewed. Application and attachments must be fully completed.*

- **SUBMIT ONE ELECTRONIC COPY. (INCLUDE SIGNATURES WHERE INDICATED.)**
- Be sure your application responds to all the required questions below, in the order requested.
- An electronic copy of your application must arrive **by 5:00 PM Thursday, January 26, 2017.**
- Email your application to **[sinda@mncampuscompact.org](mailto:sinda@mncampuscompact.org)**

### Your Application Must Include the Following:

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- Part I: Application Narratives
- Part II: Project Goals Form
- Part III: VISTA Assignment Description (VAD)

Please ask questions during the preparation of your application:  
Sinda Nichols [sinda@mncampuscompact.org](mailto:sinda@mncampuscompact.org), 612-436-2080.

**2017-2018 Renewal Application to  
Host a College Health Corps (CHC) AmeriCorps VISTA**

**Part I: Application Narratives** (Often, narratives are 6 - 8 pages in length, total. Yours may differ.)

<b>Campus/Organization:</b>	
<b>Lead contact person</b>	
Name & Title: _____	
Address: _____	Phone: _____
_____	Fax: _____
_____	Email: _____
Signature: _____ Date: _____	
<b>Projected VISTA supervisor (if different than the lead contact person)</b>	
Name & Title: _____	
Address: _____	Phone: _____
_____	Fax: _____
_____	Email: _____
Signature: _____ Date: _____	

**1. Executive Summary**

Please list the primary reasons you request a VISTA, key VISTA focal projects for the year, etc.

**2. Past Accomplishments**

What are the previous years' VISTA project accomplishments? What did your organization accomplish with a VISTA member that it wouldn't have otherwise? If there were challenges related to past VISTAs, how will you actively address or prevent future problems?

**3. College Health Corps Program Goals**

How does your proposed project address one or more of the program's goals through capacity building? (See list on page 8.)

**4. Campus-Community Partnerships**

A) Tell us how your VISTA project has successfully leveraged campus-community partnerships since the inception of the project. B) Please list at least one primary contact (name, phone, email) at your partner campus/organization. C) Describe the ways in which your VISTA project will continue to build and engage in meaningful, long-term campus-community partnerships to support the College Health Corps goals.

**5. Supervision and Support of the CHC VISTA**

Describe how and by whom the VISTA will be supervised. How will the supervisor and host site contribute to a successful year for the VISTA? What professional and/or educational opportunities will be offered? Are you able to provide any additional support, such as a housing subsidy (see other allowable types of support on page 7)?

**6. Sustainability**

What strategies or systems were used to ensure the past VISTA's work was sustained beyond their year? What additional strategies for sustainability will be implemented this coming year? Please note which year in the three-year VISTA cycle you are applying for. *If you are applying for a fourth year extension or a renewal of a second project cycle, please state whether and how much of the VISTA's living allowance your site is prepared provide, in addition to the required financial contribution. The VISTA annual living allowance is approximately \$11,880*

## Part II: Project Goals

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The 2017-2018 College Health Corps goals reflect the Corporation for National and Community Service's performance measures for the national VISTA program. [Definitions are available here](#). We're happy to discuss the specifics of your program. Contact Sinda at [sinda@mncampuscompact.org](mailto:sinda@mncampuscompact.org) or 612-436-2080. The VISTA may help the supervisor in reporting on the site's progress toward indicated goals. When in doubt, make conservative projections that you are confident of attaining.

### Organizational Capacity Building

Select **one or more outputs** and **one or more outcomes**. Provide an expected number.

**Outputs** – We will report the number of:

- community volunteers** recruited by VISTA or by projects supported by VISTA's capacity building.  
Projected #: \_\_\_\_\_
- hours of service** contributed by above described community volunteers.  
Projected #: \_\_\_\_\_
- staff and/or community volunteers who receive training** supported by VISTA's service.  
Projected #: \_\_\_\_\_

**Outcomes** – We will report the number of:

- new activities** to be completed and/or program outputs produced by the VISTA. (e.g., number of community outreach meetings coordinated, communications tools developed, manuals written, trainings piloted, etc.)  
Projected #: \_\_\_\_\_
- new or enhanced systems** to be put in place as a result of VISTA activities. (e.g., volunteer management system, patient outreach/engagement system, evaluation or data collection system)  
Projected #: \_\_\_\_\_
- additional types of services** offered by organization as a result of VISTA activities. (e.g., new type of patient service or educational program now being offered)  
Projected #: \_\_\_\_\_

### Individuals Served

Select **one or more outputs** relevant to your project. Provide an expected number of people to be served through projects supported by the VISTA's capacity-building efforts.

We will report the number of people who:

- receive information** on health insurance, health care access, or health benefits programs via VISTA-supported projects.  
Projected # people (primarily low-income) served: \_\_\_\_\_
- enroll** in health insurance, health services, and health benefits programs.  
Projected # people (primarily low-income) served: \_\_\_\_\_
- access preventive or primary health care services** through VISTA-supported projects.  
Projected # people (primarily low-income) served: \_\_\_\_\_
- participate in health education programs** through VISTA –supported projects.  
Projected # people (primarily low-income) served: \_\_\_\_\_
- receive support/services/education/referrals** to alleviate long-term hunger via VISTA –supported projects.  
Projected # people (primarily low-income) served: \_\_\_\_\_
- receive emergency food** through VISTA –supported projects.  
Projected # people (primarily low-income) served: \_\_\_\_\_

**Outcomes (optional, but strongly encouraged)** – We will report the number of participants who:

- report increased food security. Projected # people (primarily low-income): \_\_\_\_\_
- report increased health knowledge. Projected # people (primarily low-income): \_\_\_\_\_
- report positive behavior changes. Projected # people (primarily low-income): \_\_\_\_\_
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_ . Projected # people (primarily low-income): \_\_\_\_\_

## Part III: VISTA Assignment Description (VAD) for 2017-18

The purpose of the VAD is to articulate the specific objectives and activities of the proposed VISTA project this year. If selected, this document will be used throughout the year to help MNCC, the site supervisor, and the VISTA identify priorities and monitor progress. A copy of the VAD is provided to the VISTA member when they begin service.

The VAD is composed of 3 parts:

- **Goal of the Project:** This describes your VISTA project's overarching goal.
- **Objectives:** Objectives are based on the goals outlined in the application. Objectives should be measurable. Often, a solid VAD has 3-5 objectives.
- **Activities:** Activities are the specific tasks that the VISTA would need to carry out to achieve the objectives. There will likely be several activities per objective.

Please be as concrete and realistic as possible in writing the VAD. You may increase or decrease the number of objectives and activities in the template, as needed. We are happy to answer any questions about creating the VAD, including providing examples. Contact Sinda Nichols at [sinda@mncampuscompact.org](mailto:sinda@mncampuscompact.org) with questions.

### Examples of Appropriate VISTA Activities

Okay: Indirect Service Activities	Better: Capacity Building Activities	Best: Sustainable Activities
Recruit a site's volunteers	Develop forms, volunteer assignments	Develop volunteer management system and procedural guide
Train direct service providers	Write training curriculum or manual; train trainers	Develop training manual and train-the-trainer curriculum
Coordinate pilot project	Develop procedures, systems, or replication manual to sustain project	Develop funds for staff or recruit volunteers to run program
Write press releases	Develop press kits, media database	Secure media partners
Organize fundraising events	Grant writing, develop database	Secure development staffing
Organize task forces & develop coalitions	Develop leadership structure of task force or coalition	Create infrastructure of long-term community partners
Conduct outreach	Design brochures, posters	Develop volunteers to perform outreach
Conduct evaluation	Design evaluation tools	Train staff to integrate evaluation into existing activities

# VISTA Assignment Description (VAD)

**VISTA Host Site:**  
**Site Supervisor:**

**Project Goal:**

**1. Objective:**

- a. Activity:*
- b. Activity:*
- c. Activity:*

**2. Objective:**

- a. Activity:*
- b. Activity:*
- c. Activity:*

**3. Objective:**

- a. Activity:*
- b. Activity:*
- c. Activity:*

**4. Objective:**

- a. Activity:*
- b. Activity:*
- c. Activity:*