Job Description

Southeastern Massachusetts Food Security Network Coordinator

The Southeastern Massachusetts Food Security Network seeks a coordinator to assist in maintaining and improving the coordination and communications of a network of organizations working to improve food security in Southeastern Massachusetts (Westport to Wareham, MA).

The Network was formed in 2011 to address food security issues in our region, including emergency food access and distribution, nutrition education, and local sustainable agriculture. The Network provides a space for participants to collaborate, share, and match goals and expertise to promote food security in our region. We help build on each other's strengths to effectively support a diverse and healthy local food system.

Purpose of the Position:

The Food Security Network Coordinator is responsible for maintaining and strengthening communication and information-sharing between network members. The coordinator will facilitate networking among SMFSN organizations including emergency food providers, agriculture organizations, farm businesses, and others. Short-term goals of this position are to enhance the communications capacity of the organizations involved in the Network. The long-term goal of this effort is to ensure equitable regional access to healthy foods and increase the self-reliance of our region with regards to such foods.

Scope of Work:

1) Maintain and Expand Network Communications and Web-based Communication:

- Become familiar with existing SMFSN network members, organizations, constituents, and stakeholders.

- Conduct ongoing website maintenance and expand content.

- Work with Food Security Network members to provide training on and troubleshooting for members' use of the website.

- Survey emergency food providers and others in the Network to request input on ongoing communication needs, desired system changes/expansion, and potential integration with groups' existing software systems.

- Assess options for potential ongoing IT support.

- Assess ways that the website can integrate other food security information such as storage and refrigeration capabilities of local food providers, available local classes on healthy cooking and shopping skills, community garden space, and other elements as identified by Network members.

- Work with Food Security Network to purchase and budget for ongoing site hosting and maintenance.

2) Support Collective Advocacy by Food Security Network

- Research corporate foundation grant /sponsorship timelines to find opportunities to request more donations and support for emergency food providers.

- Research best times to meet with corporations regarding surplus food policies, bulk purchasing policies, etc.

- Work with Food Security Network members to organize and prepare for meetings with corporations/foundations.

3) Support Food System Network Working Group Activities

- Act as a catalyst for collective action by facilitating meetings and providing support for three sub-committees within the Network. (Advocacy and Education, Pantry, Food Systems Assessment)

- Identify goals for individual groups and outline a process to collectively achieve these goals.

4) Food System Assessment for Southeastern Massachusetts

- Continue work on a document summarizing the SMFSN members' shared goals for the Southeastern Massachusetts food system, broken into activities for members of the SMFSN over the short, medium, and long-term. The assessment will also include a background data section to provide a basis for understanding the region's food system. The Southeastern Massachusetts FSA will be tailored for our region, but it would be connected with and take advantage of any relevant elements of the statewide Massachusetts food system planning process.

5) Support Ongoing Development of Additional Food Security Strategies

As time permits, work with Food Security Network Members to:

- Continue work on increasing the number of raised beds/community gardens/community farm programs in Southeastern Massachusetts.
- Improve communication with and feedback to farmers and other food security constituents: "work upstream" to improve the kinds of foods that come into food pantries.
- Assess and help to begin implementing other initiatives aimed at increasing the self-reliance of our region with regards to food and nutrition, as determined in consultation with the Network.

Desired Skills and Qualifications:

- Demonstrated experience managing, maintaining, and updating website content, ideally working with users with a range of technological skills and capabilities.
- Ability to facilitate communication and collaboration among a network of organizations.
- Listening skills and the ability to evaluate the needs and capacities of Network members organizations and their staff and volunteers.
- Ability to hit the ground running, take initiative, and work independently to maximize the effectiveness of this position.
- Experience in and familiarity with food system/food security issues preferred.
- Familiarity with SE Mass/Greater New Bedford area preferred.

Administrative/ Location Details:

This is a part-time (10 hours/week), 12-month position; this employee will be hired by YMCA Southcoast and will be required to complete all pre-employment policies per YMCA Southcoast hiring procedures.

The coordinator will have office space at the Dartmouth YMCA and necessary resources to complete work. The coordinator will be expected to travel to Network member locations and spend time meeting and working with members at their locations.

To Apply:

Send cover letter, resume, and 3 recent references by email to: dheim@ymcasouthcoast.org.

Application Deadline:

July 25, 2014