



MAINE TRANSITION NETWORK
INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE ON TRANSITION

P.O. Box 2219
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04338
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WWW.MAINETRANSITION.ORG

21 September 2009

Secondary Educational Institutions in Maine:

Maine Transition Network is pleased to be able to offer an opportunity for LEA's to have a spring semester AmeriCorps Member to work hands on with students that have IEP's from age 14 on. The RFP is open to all schools in the State of Maine. The AmeriCorps member will be able to begin on January 1, 2010 and complete after 900 hours of service to your school.

The purpose of this grant is to expand a project called "Youth Mentors Inc." which is a peer mentoring, job club model for youth which assists students in planning for the future. This project, *Youth Leaders Inc.*, will help ensure that schools are 100% compliant on the transition components of each student's IEP. More importantly, the ultimate goal is that students' post school outcome goals will be student driven, realistic and attainable and will lead to students having better connection to post school education and employment opportunities.

Attached is an announcement and application for the RFP process, which will include a bidder's conference on Tuesday, September 29, 2009. This will take place through the University of Maine's ITV system and is available at most sites throughout Maine. We hope that you seriously consider applying for the funds and enhance the opportunity for youth with IEP's as they transition into their adult lives.

If, after reviewing the material, you have any questions, please submit your questions in writing to Maine Transition Network, P.O. Box 147, Jay, ME 04239 or by email to mLUCE@mainetransition.org. Deadline for submitting questions is 12:00 noon on Friday October 16, 2009. All questions and responses will be posted at www.mainetransition.org and those posted will be made available in writing at the RFP information session on September 29, 2009 and questions asked there will be posted as well.

Sincerely,

Mary Redmond-Luce
Regional Coordinator
AmeriCorps Grant Manager



Youth Leaders Inc Application

Grant Announcement and Application Instructions

AmeriCorps Opportunity for Youth with Disabilities Beginning at Age 14 "Youth Mentors Inc" now called "**Youth Leaders Inc.**"

Maine Transition Network has received a one year grant for from the Maine Commission for Corporate and Community Service with the prospect of continued program funding for a period of up to three additional years contingent on satisfactory performance and availability of funds. Maine Transition Network will act as an intermediary in order to provide AmeriCorps Membership opportunities to LEA's across the state of Maine. A total of 20 half year full time members will be able to participate in local schools and direct a *Youth Leaders Inc.* model for students to learn about self advocacy and service learning in their community. Each LEA who is interested in receiving 900 hours of service for this AmeriCorps member must contribute in kind space, computer, telephone, general office supplies, and a cash match of \$7,000.00. LEA's will take the lead to recruit the AmeriCorps member of their choice; assistance from Maine Transition Network will be provided including the advertising, payroll, health insurance benefits, and training. In addition LEA's will be asked to identify an **Adult Anchor** who will receive a stipend from Maine Transition Network of up to \$2,000.00 per year to ensure that the AmeriCorps Member is connected to the students and staff so that the program can progress at the expected rate.

The Maine Transition Network and its grant partners will provide grant management and other technical assistance including appropriate initial and ongoing training for AmeriCorps Members and Adult Anchors as well as continuing training, and site support. Each site will also be supported by Maine Transition Regional Coordinators and their Regional Board, The Department of Labor-VR system, and CareerCenter One Stop Programs, the State of Maine Department of Education Special Services, and partners within the Commission for Employment of People with Disabilities and the CHOICES CEO Program.

We believe that this project will be most effective if we support LEA's in such a way as to maintain their identity, independence and sense of vision throughout the contract and program cycle. *Youth Leaders Inc.* can work within the framework of the existing school culture either as part of classes or a class of it's own or as an after school program or elective.

Eligibility Guidelines:

For purposes of this announcement an Eligible LEA is one which:

1. Is recognized as an LEA by the State of Maine
2. Is located within the State of Maine

3. Will have a minimum of 15 students participate (Small schools may want to seek partners to fully participate. In this case, an additional mileage match must be secured by the LEA's for the additional travel).
4. Encourages each student to attend and fully participate in the IEP process
5. Has someone that can act as the Adult Anchor to ensure the program's success.
6. Is willing to recruit and support an AmeriCorps Member
7. Is willing for the AmeriCorps member to bring students out into the local community or provide community members a chance to enter the school for the Job Club portion of *Youth Leaders Inc.*
8. Has the available cash and in-kind match required
9. Has a signed MOU by the local Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation determining the role of VR within the local LEA. (The Maine Transition Network may be able to assist with this portion upon request.)
10. Guarantees that at least 75% of the students who participate in the AmeriCorps Program
 - a. Have an IEP
 - b. Are not in a self-contained or Life skill classroom for more than 60% of the time in school
 - c. Are at least 14 years old
 - d. Will be strongly encouraged to attend their IEP meeting

Specific Guidelines

No individual shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, subjected to discrimination under, or denied employment in the administration of or in connection with, any such program or activity because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability or political affiliation or belief.

AmeriCorps Members cannot be used to dislocate, carry an identical job description as a paid employee or take the place of paid staff.

These grants may not be used for the instruction in religion or sacred literature, worship, prayer, proselytizing or other inherently religious practices. The services provided under these grants must be secular and non-ideological. Grant or sub-grant recipients, therefore, may not and will not be defined by reference to religion. Neutral, secular criteria that neither favor nor disfavor religion must be employed in their selection.

Under the DOL regulations a recipient may not employ or train a participant in sectarian activities, or permit participants to construct, operate, or maintain any part of a facility that is primarily used or devoted to sectarian instruction or workshop.

Selection Process

A panel of up to five representatives from the COT/MTN system will review the applications. The selection for recommendations will be based on a point system, which is designated in the application.

Maine Transition Network expects to make up to 20 awards. Local grantees (LEA's) must complete the application for one full-time half year (900) hour AmeriCorps Member; however the member may be connected to more than one LEA. All awards are made at the discretion of Maine Transition Network and its grant partners: DOE, and the State of Maine Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation, including but not necessarily the Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

Local Grantee Requirements

- Recipients of this award (local grantees) are required to enter into a memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Maine Transition Network (see sample provided)
- Local Grantees are required to participate in initial and ongoing periodic meetings with MTN, grant partners and other local grantees for the purposes including but not limited to: training, support and networking.
- Local grantees are required to submit monthly and or quarterly status reports.

Selection Criteria and Instructions

When selecting proposals for award, Maine Transition Network will evaluate the completeness of each application and the quality of each applicant's response to the selection criteria detailed below. Each complete proposal will be given a score out of 100 possible points. Applicants must respond to each of the 13 questions in the application to qualify:

Maine Transition Network Youth Mentors Inc., Grant Application
Cover Sheet

Name of Organization:

Superintendent: _____ Phone: _____

Grant Contact Person: _____ Phone: _____

Mailing Address: _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Street Address (if different from above)

County in which organization is headquartered

List all the towns that the school serves:

Checklist: Include 5 stapled sets and 1 paper-clipped set in the following order with project name appearing in the upper right corner of each page of the application:

- Grant Application Cover Sheet
- Grant Application

APPENDICES

- I. Letters of Support
- II. Memorandums of Understanding

Printed Name of Authorized Representative

Title

Phone

Signature of Authorized Representative

Date Signed

Notification of Award(s) will occur by Monday, October 26, 2009

GRANT APPLICATION

If you need additional space to answer questions with more detail please type on other paper and indicate with the number which question you are answering. You may also download an electronic version at <http://www.mainetransition.org/AmeriCorps.html> and complete it. Each question will be graded except for #1 with a possible 120 points (10 points per question). The top schools based on the grading of this application will be chosen

1. Name of School where the Member will volunteer/work:

2. Does your school have a minimum of 15 youth with IEP's ages 14-21 that you will allow to participate in the AmeriCorps program through MTN?

3. Does your school already offer a job club or other elective to help students with identifying their post school goals?

4. Is your school comfortable and uses age appropriate assessments to guide the transition process?

5. Is your school willing to allow an AmeriCorps member to use age appropriate assessments to help students identify their employment, education and when applicable independent living objectives?

- 5a. if you answered yes, how would this take place in your school?

6. Does your school already have an after school or during school program that helps youth with leadership skill building and self esteem development?

6a. if no, are you willing to allow the AmeriCorps member to develop such an after/before school program?

7. In your estimation what are the % of students in your school ages 14-21 that lead or even actively participated in their IEP?

8. Your goal for an AmeriCorps member working with your students would be to increase the percentage by how much?

9. Do you have a permanent space, with computer, telephone and internet that the AmeriCorps member could use while in service?

10. Do you have the \$7,000.00 cash match needed to participate?

If you answered no to #10, and would like some help with obtaining the cash match please indicate how much cash match you do have.

11. Do you currently have a good working relationship with the transition counselor that serves your school from VR?

12. Do you have strong relationships with outside agencies to help with the development of the transition process on individual IEP's?

13. Is there anything else that you would like to tell us about your school that would make having an AmeriCorps member a help to your students?

Application Deadline:

Completed applications must be received at Maine Transition Network by **Friday, October 16, 2009**. Please note this is not a postmark deadline.

Applicants may hand deliver applications no later than **2:00 pm on Friday**, hand delivery of applications *prior to October 16th* by appointment only.

Late applications will not be considered. Applications sent by facsimile or e-mail will not be considered. Mail completed applications to:

**Maine Transition Network
Attention: Mary Redmond-Luce, Grant Coordinator
P.O. Box 2219
Augusta, ME 04338**
