Tallgrass Prairie Center
AmeriCorps Program

The Tallgrass Prairie Center (TPC) at the University of Northern Iowa (UNI) in Cedar Falls, Iowa would like to host two eleven-month AmeriCorps members to help us expand our impact and tell our story. We are looking for members who are passionate about environmental conservation and also want to apply and/or expand their skills in mass communications, marketing, and networking. Each position will offer AmeriCorps members professional development opportunities.

The Tallgrass Prairie Center is a nationally recognized center for ecological restoration of the tallgrass prairie ecosystem. Our mission is empowering people to value and restore resilient, diverse tallgrass prairie. We conduct research and provide technical support for roadside vegetation managers, farmers, conservation professionals, and native seed stakeholders. We are also restoring Irvine Prairie, a 77-acre prairie in Benton County, for public enjoyment and natural resource education. All of these programs have very substantial, concrete impacts on the landscape but we need more capacity to tell our story – not only through traditional print media, but also through digital media, such as website (content management system (CMS) is Drupal) and social media, and interpersonal interactions at conferences, events, and visitor tours.

The positions will be funded through the Land & Water Stewards branch of the Green Iowa AmeriCorps program. The benefits of the AmeriCorps program include individualized professional development opportunities, an education stipend upon successful completion, a monthly living stipend, and leadership experience. For more information about AmeriCorps and to apply, please visit: greeniowaamericorps.org/open-positions. To specify the Tallgrass Prairie Center as your preferred location, select Land & Water Stewards for the program position and select Cedar Falls-Tallgrass Prairie Center for the location. If you are selected for a host site interview, please be prepared to submit a writing sample, such as a press release, blog post, newspaper, newsletter, or magazine article, as well as a graphic design sample.

Open Positions – Communications Associate and Program Associate (September 2020 to August 2021)

Required skills and attributes

- Interest in ecosystem restoration
- Strong writing skills
- Strong marketing skills
- Small-team collaboration skills
- Strong interpersonal communication skills
- Attention to detail
- Strong record-keeping and reporting skills
- Organized
- Self-motivated
- Punctual
- Accountable
Preferred skills and attributes

- Passion for helping environmental causes
- Experience with Iowa plant identification or conservation fieldwork
- Comfortable interacting with a variety of people from different backgrounds and age groups
- Comfort working independently in rural and office environments
- Experience with social media platforms (Instagram and Facebook)
- Experience with manipulating video
- Experience with digital photography
- Knowledge of Microsoft, Adobe, and G-Suite apps, including Google Calendars, Google Documents

List of Duties

Program Associate (Iowa Roadside Management Program; supervisor is Kristine Nemec)

- Orientation to TPC
  - Study TPC website and publications to learn about TPC programs, projects, partners, and history
  - Attend staff meetings
  - Assist other TPC programs, projects, and staff at times
- Manage the roadside program part of the TPC website
- Manage social media outlets for the program (Facebook and Instagram)
- Capture media (photo and video) to be used to market the program
- Help to establish a presence at conferences by staffing display tables; some overnight travel to conferences or workshops within Iowa
- Travel to county roadside offices in Iowa as needed to take pictures or gather information from roadside vegetation managers to use in marketing materials
- Between conferences and county visits, up to 12-15 nights total over the length of the position may be spent away from Cedar Falls; up to about 10% of the position may consist of travel
- Gather and summarize information to provide to roadside vegetation managers and the public on the website or in documents
- Deliver educational presentations about the program and benefits of native plants to K-12 students and other audiences
- Assist with organization and distribution of native seed at the annual county seed distribution, which is held at the Tallgrass Prairie Center
- Assist with preparing for the annual roadside conference
- Possibly assist with workshops that may be held to build community support for county roadside programs

Communications Associate (Plant Materials Program and other TPC programs and projects; Supervisor is Laura Walter)

- Orientation to TPC
  - Study TPC website and publications to learn about TPC programs, projects, partners, and history
  - Attend staff meetings
• Assist staff with documenting events, center and program activities, and impacts

• Digital Media
  • Improve and update website
  • Write editorial articles and capture visual media (videos and photos)

• Education and Outreach
  • Assist in development and implementation of educational and community engagement activities at Irvine Prairie
  • Develop and assist with educational activities for the roots project in schools or nature centers
  • Promote TPC at events, visitor tours, and conferences
  • Create an interactive and child-appropriate activity to take to conferences and STEM-related events

• Plant Materials Program tasks
  • Assist with organizing Native Seed Stakeholder meeting
  • Synthesize results of post-meeting evaluation surveys
  • Improve and update Plant Materials webpages
  • Assist with newsletter and/or other stakeholder communications for the Plant Materials program
  • Assist with graphic design of printed and electronic materials for Plant Materials Program (i.e., seed tags, table display)
  • Take and curate photos of plots, plants, seeds, roots, and Plant Materials Program activities in all seasons
  • Write social media posts about Plant Materials Program activities and events

• General TPC and Prairie on Farms Activities
  • Assist the Director in coordinating citizen science (monarch count) and service learning projects (seed collection): planning, recruiting/training volunteers, data quality evaluation, and follow up/reporting
  • Help to establish a presence at conferences by staffing display tables for the TPC and the Prairie on Farms program
  • Assist with Prairie on Farms events
  • Assistance with TPC events

• Additional related duties as they arise or assigned by Supervisor or TPC Director