

MCC Monthly VISTA Feature - September 2011

Vanessa Lewis Lawrence Technological University



Vanessa Lewis serves in the Office of Leadership Programs at Lawrence Technological University in Southfield, Michigan where she will be addressing issues surrounding financial literacy. Vanessa is from Waco, Texas and is a graduate of the University of North Texas with a degree in Journalism. She is very passionate about serving her community. "I believe that everyone has a story to tell," she notes, "and I have dedicated my life to making sure that those stories are heard."

Since she has arrived at LTU, Vanessa has been busy coordinating events for Summer Connections, a camp for incoming freshmen to help them build relationships and learn the campus before school starts. It was Vanessa's duty to create reflection activities, making it fun and interactive for students including a game called "Cross the Line," which encouraged students to see their financial differences and similarities in a supportive setting. Another project that Vanessa was involved with had her developing and executing a financial literacy workshop designed to help students save money on their college textbooks. Upon completing this workshop, students then helped prepare backpacks for Operation Kid Equip, a nonprofit organization that gives school supplies to children. This activity proved to be helpful for building relationships with students which will be essential in the coming months of her service.

A note from her supervisor, Holly Helterhoff:

Vanessa started just as our Summer Connections program was getting underway. She fearlessly jumped right in and got to work to serve our incoming students. Our previous VISTA TaQuilla Martin did an outstanding job lining up speakers, and Vanessa took that groundwork and built these presentations into cohesive, service-minded learning events for our students. We are so lucky to have Vanessa, and the AmeriCorps VISTA program, here at Lawrence Tech.