

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE: FEDERAL WORK-STUDY PLACEMENT IN THE COMMUNITY

Source: Gina Vincent, MCC Americorps*VISTA, Davenport University 2004-2005

Issue(s) Being Addressed:

It is important to place work study students in the community in areas where they can excel based on their major, interests and strengths. This will yield a positive learning experience for the student, impact in the community and further develop partnerships with the college/university.

Successful work study placement, in the community occurs through the following steps:

1. Obtain a list of students who qualify for work study through the campus Financial Aid Office in preparation for the fall semester.
2. Review student applications (major, previous work experience and number of hours per week eligible).
3. Contact individual students to schedule interviews.
4. Interview students to determine their interests and strengths, their availability, and their access to transportation.
5. Contact 2-3 community agencies per student to inquire about their current volunteer needs during the hours of work study student availability.
6. Match each student with a community agency based on his/her interests, experiences or strengths; this will create positive outcomes for the agency and the student.
7. Share information with the agency regarding the potential work study student's experiences and interests.
8. Contact each student and encourage him/her to contact the community agency to schedule an interview in person.
9. Request that students follow up with a staff member after each interview.
10. Contact each agency to follow up regarding the interview.
11. If an agency director or volunteer coordinator decides to hire a work study student, schedule a meeting with that student so he/she may fill out a W4 and bring in a drivers license or State identification card and a social security card or birth certificate. Make copies of all documentation and organize in files.
12. Forward this documentation to the Financial Aid Director or other designated campus employee along with the agency contact information (contact person, phone number, fax number, email address and mailing address).
13. The agency will contact the student and inform the student that he/she is hired and when they can start working (usually within a few days).
14. Follow up two weeks after each student has started and schedule a site visit with the volunteer coordinator and/or agency director.
15. Mid-semester schedule a time to meet with each student and their community service supervisor to celebrate their accomplishments thus far.
16. At the end of the work study assignment ask each student to complete an evaluation on their experiences with the program and with their community agency.