



THE PSP JOTTER



The Public & School Partnership's Monthly Newsletter
October 2016

VISTA SITE HIGHLIGHTS

Success & Celebrations at VISTA Sites

Bridger Elementary

In September, Bridger Elementary held its annual Watch D.O.G.S. Pizza Night, which was coordinated by PSP VISTA Member, Jason Parker. The event is a time for students, dads, and father figures to get together to learn about the Watch D.O.G.S. program and win some cool prizes but also to recruit school volunteers for the program. The event saw around 320 people, and over 35 dads or father figures signed up to volunteer throughout the school year. The final week of September had 17 volunteer sign ups alone! The turnout was not expected to be quite so large, and Jason and his team even had to order more pizza to feed all of the attendees. Overall, the event was inspiring and a great success for the school, its students, and their families.

The Family Place

The Family Place, one of PSP's newest VISTA sites, recently received approval for a five-year SAMSHA grant to support services for military veterans, refugees, and their families. Through this grant, staff members will have the opportunity to attend trauma-sensitive training, and the organization will be classified as a satellite location for the National Traumatic Stress Network (NTSN). The grant also supports the use of ARC trauma treatments, and The Family Place will partner with a team from USU who will research the effectiveness of those treatments. The SAMSHA grant will certainly open doors for The Family Place to expand their services and will help the organization in its mission to strengthen families!

Logan Family Center

The Logan Family Center concluded their Anniversary Event series in September with their Tables of Content event, held at the USU Alumni House. During the event, celebrated authors from Cache Valley and Utah answered questions from their fans, promoted their material, and enjoyed a

delicious meal provided by USU Catering. The event was largely coordinated by PSP VISTA Member, Laura Higgins, who recruited and engaged volunteers, obtained donations, and partnered with various organizations and individuals. Dr. Richard P. West entertained the crowd as the event MC, musicians Robert Linton and Curtis Wardle provided the musical entertainment, and local photographer Jesse Walker, of Jesse Walker Photography, photographed moments from the event.



USU & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Working together to make lasting impacts

Tech Comm, CRIC, and AmeriCorps VISTA

Dr. Rebecca Walton of USU is always looking for new opportunities to engage her Technical Communications students in meaningful service learning opportunities that focus on social justice and volunteerism. This semester, Dr. Walton has teamed up with the Cache Refugee and Immigrant Connection (CRIC) to offer students a hands-on learning experience that will impact the lives of refugee and immigrant families in Cache Valley.

Dr. Walton's Tech Comm students will work with community members to create study guides for the written portion of the DMV driving test in several languages spoken by refugee and immigrant families. The study guides will help people who speak English as a second language to study and master the material covered on the driver's test so that they may obtain a driver's license. PSP VISTA Member,

Jenni Allred, has played an important role in facilitating the partnership by acting as a liaison between the university, the VISTA program, and CRIC.

PSP's 9/11 Day of Service & Remembrance Project

Each year around September 11th, thousands of organizations hold service projects to pay tribute to survivors, victims, and people who rose up to serve following the 9/11 attacks. This year, PSP joined the effort by partnering with two great organizations – the Cache Refugee and Immigrant Connection at their refugee garden and the Cache Valley Gardener's Market for their Farm to Table Banquet. Nelda Ault-Dyslin, Director of CRIC and the USU Service Center, and Todd Milovich, Director of the USU Education Outreach Program and AmeriCorps Supervisor, were instrumental in coordinating PSP's efforts to engage VISTA Members and their families and friends.



VISTA MEMBER RECOGNITION **Thanking Our VISTA Members for Their Service**

- *The Above & Beyond Award* for the VISTA who puts in extra effort for PSP, their site, or a struggling student.
- *The Good Role Model Award* for the VISTA who exemplifies what it means to be a National Service volunteer.
- *The Outstanding Outcomes Award* for the VISTA who makes big impacts on their site and their community.
- *The Determination Award* for the VISTA who rises to face challenges and overcomes them unyielding tenacity.



Courtney Stumph,
South Cache Middle
The Above & Beyond Award

Courtney began her VISTA service in August, and she is already doing everything she can to support students and staff at South Cache as well as her fellow VISTA Members. Courtney coordinates a school-wide service-learning club and two brand-new incentive programs to motivate students to develop good study habits and complete assignments. In addition to those projects, she is helping to coordinate volunteer presenters for the Utah Scholars program and working to plan a school career fair.

Courtney also participates in many PSP-hosted events, having volunteered on a Saturday as part of the 9/11 service project and walking with the PSP team during the USU Homecoming Parade. Courtney is always smiling and full of energy, and she is always looking for opportunities to do something a little extra for those around her!



Melissa Yardley,
Cedar Ridge Middle
The Good Role Model Award

VISTA Members, PSP staff, students, and many others look up to Melissa for her welcoming personality, her positive attitude, and her ability to empathize and connect with those around her. Melissa is a great listener and takes the time to recognize the strengths in others so that they can feel confident in their abilities. Melissa also has a unique ability to reflect on her own weaknesses and to seek out opportunities to grow so that those weaknesses can become strengths that she can be proud of.

Melissa has recently stepped into the role as a mentor with PSP, and she has taken on the role with unmatched enthusiasm and energy. In one situation, Melissa even visited a fellow PSP VISTA Member who had recently undergone surgery so that the VISTA Member could have someone to talk to and help

around the house! Melissa is one of our most engaged participants during training events and service projects, and she is willing to ask questions and clarify information for others when needed. Melissa is in her second year as a VISTA Member with PSP at Cedar Ridge Middle, and we are very lucky to have her on our PSP team for another year!



**Wes Andrew,
Cache High**

*The Outstanding Outcomes
Award*

Wes started his service at the end of August, and he has worked very hard to develop and improve many of the student services offered at Cache High. Wes coordinates the Panther Pride attendance incentive program, the weekly USU SNAC Pantry donation, the breakfast program, and the school's new pantry. Although he just recently started his service, Wes recognized that many of those programs needed additional support, and he was extremely proactive in getting out in the community to solicit support from local organizations and businesses. Wes has obtained over \$2750 in donations from 20 different businesses and organizations to support these student services.

Wes also recently began a partnership with Dr. Scott Hunsaker's Honor's Class at USU, through which he will coordinate highly motivated student volunteers to support the school and its students. Wes has already shown a genuine investment in making an impact on the lives of students at Cache High!



**Stacie Denetsovie,
The Family Place**

The Determination Award

Stacie exemplifies the determination it takes to be a VISTA Member. During the service project at the CRIC refugee garden, Stacie, even after six hours of outside work, maintained a positive attitude to get the work done and to get it done the right way. She was very willing to do some of the less desirable tasks, and she did them with energy and enthusiasm.

This determined attitude also carries over into her work as a VISTA. Stacie is a new VISTA Member at a brand-new VISTA site, and she is very determined to make sure the first year of the partnership is an incredible success. She is always looking for ways to better serve her site by attending professional development workshops, asking for feedback, and asking questions when she needs more clarification. We are excited to see where Stacie's strong will and determination will take her during her service year as a VISTA Member!

HERE IS WHAT WE HAVE COMING UP...

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **October 13-14: Site Visits**
- **October 14: PSP Monthly Training, Power Schools (optional)**
- **October 17-19: Utah Scholars Presentations at Sky View HS and South Cache Middle**
- **October 24: PSP Halloween Social**



**CONTINUE ON TO SEE
IMPORTANT UPDATES
FROM RSVP!**



RSVP Newsletter



Retired and Senior Volunteer Program. Sponsored by the Public & School Partnership at Utah State University. RSVP provides volunteering opportunities to seniors 55 and older in Cache County and Rich County.

October 2016

Current and planned organizations where Cache and Rich RSVP volunteers help:

In Hyrum:

Mountain Crest High School

In Logan:

Adams Elementary
Bear River Head Start
Bridgerland Literacy
Cache Food Pantry
Cache High School
Cache Refugee & Immigrant Connection
Cache Senior Center
Logan Family Center
Meals on Wheels
Stokes Nature Center
Wilson Elementary

In Smithfield:

Birch Creek Elementary
Park Elementary
Summit Elementary

In Rich County:

Bear River Head Start

Thanks, Valued Friends

The Public & School Partnership's RSVP (Retired and Senior Volunteer Project) at Utah State University has made great strides in the last six months. Thanks to help from our volunteers, stations and partners, we have seen the project come together with a firm foundation and a strong momentum. We are excited about RSVP's future.

We are grateful for those who have joined with us in our goal of engaging persons 55 and older in volunteer service to meet critical community needs.

Now, with 54 volunteers, we are well on our way to our goal of having 150 volunteers within 36 months. We foresee having over 75 in the next three months.

Of the 54 volunteers, 62% are men and 38% women. Our youngest volunteer is just turning 55 and our oldest is 88. The average age is 71.5 years.

Our volunteers are what Michael Lindenmayer calls "energizers." *"They are the original energy drink. You feel amped when collaborating with these folks. When the different volunteers get together it is magical. Friendships form, fun is present and it feels like family."* You think more about what you can give than what you can get.

We are thankful for all of you!

And let us not forget the schools and non-profit organizations who have partnered with us as we work to find additional volunteers to help them with their mission. These organizations have staff that work at modest salaries and put their heart and soul into making lives better through schooling and other support programs.

Volunteers and Stations Meet for 2016 Annual RSVP Dinner

Nearly ninety RSVP volunteers and their guests, school principals, and non-profit directors, met at the Bluebird Restaurant on Tuesday night, October 4 to enjoy a meal, meet with friends, and listen to music from Diane Hardy prior to the dinner, and singing from Genesis Wardle accompanied by Jenni Allred as the evening's entertainment.

This is an important annual event. It gives us an opportunity to acknowledge the work of RSVP volunteers and partner stations during the year. It is also an opportunity for stations and volunteers to meet, create new bonds of friendship, and to match volunteers with stations who need help.



Genesis Wardle sings while Jenni Allred plays piano at the 2016 Annual RSVP Dinner last week.

Ways to Get Involved

RSVP and Rich County

The Public & School Partnership RSVP's grant spans not only Cache County, but Rich County as well. While we have focused the last six months on Cache, we want to now expand our services and find volunteers and stations in Rich who would benefit from having additional volunteers.

If you have any connections in Rich county and can suggest volunteers and stations who could use from RSVP's services, we would like to hear from you.

Bear River Head Start Joins RSVP

Bear River Head Start (BRHS) recently joined RSVP, and we look forward having volunteers work within the program locations in both Cache and Rich Counties.

BRHS has three programs they administer: Preschool Head Start, Early Head Start, and Child Care Partnerships. Preschool Head Start helps parents in their role of keeping kids healthy and safe, and meeting educational goals. Early Head Start helps strengthen families with children from birth to age 3 by promoting positive parent/child interaction. Their newest program, Child Care Partnerships, offers Head Start services to children attending childcare full-time.

BRHS needs a wide range of volunteers. They are looking for seniors who can provide preschool classroom assistance, infant/toddler classroom assistance, assist with childcare visits, translate program materials, assist with meals and snacks, help with reading assistance, support family education afternoons, and provide support in resource libraries.

More Opportunities to Serve

Logan Family Center

This Family Center (LFC) is located between the Island Market and Wilson Elementary on Logan's Island. LFC is looking for volunteers who will help teach preschool classes, maintain lending library materials, and help staff develop teaching materials year round.

They need seniors who can be with young children and parents to act as role models and offering positive response to families' accomplishments and lend a sympathetic ear when appropriate.

And they need seniors who can help in learning groups to give more personal attention to students and parents from a variety of backgrounds.

LFC will work with volunteers to find an assignment that works with

each volunteer's schedule.

Cache High

This high school on 1400 North in Logan needs volunteers to help in classrooms, mentoring and tutoring students. They also need volunteers with background/skill in art.

They also need help with their food pantry.

Students at this school want to learn! Their 104 students have an average daily attendance of 91%!

Stokes Nature Center

The Stokes Nature Center needs volunteers to carry out their mission of providing nature education to people of all ages.

Stokes has a strong need for volunteers with a range of experience. Needs include retired educators with natural science

backgrounds who can talk to groups about understanding and appreciating nature, helping with outreach events, and handicrafts.

They need "critter caretakers." These volunteers can come in any time the center is open and care for native critters. Critters include a snake, a salamander and hummingbirds.

They also need volunteers who can serve as docents at the center welcoming visitors.

You can find out more about volunteering opportunities at their web site: www.logannature.org/volunteer/

**Public & School
Partnership's
RSVP**

**Utah State University
6505 Old Main Hill
Logan, Utah 84332-6505
435-797-5720**