To: AASHE STARS Program Committee  
From: Cynelsa Broderick, AmeriCorps Member, University Sustainability Office  
Subject: Letter of Affirmation – Education and Outreach Coordinator AmeriCorps Position  
Date: October 30, 2015

The participation of the NC State University Sustainability Office (USO) in the 2015 AmeriCorps Project GEOS Program through the Conservation Trust for North Carolina allowed the office to be one of 15 host sites in North Carolina to participate in a national service program seeking to reconnect people with the outdoors and develop future leaders in conservation. This involvement enhanced the work of our office by adding an AmeriCorps Member to serve on staff for education and outreach, specifically to articulate the interconnectedness of sustainability and diversity on campus. Not only did the service position allow beneficial experiences to be gained directly by the AmeriCorps Member through professional development and improved skills, but the NC State community also greatly benefitted.

The objectives of this position include providing on-campus environmental education training and resources to diverse audiences, infusing cultural competence into sustainability programs, and building relationships between departments, student and community groups. Essential responsibilities included planning and development of programs and events, outreach through workshops and presentations, and setting the direction and catalyzing the movement of diversity efforts and sustainability initiatives joining forces.

Creating programs with such combined goals allowed students to enter safe spaces for conversations around diversity issues as well as explore connections to environmental, economic, and social sustainability. These programs also permitted new partnerships to develop across campus, as well as an increase in innovative programming.

For the first time, a program sponsored by NC State’s USO was offered as a part of the 6th Annual Diversity Education Week (DEW) in October 2015, a joint initiative of the NC State Office for Institutional Equity and Diversity (OIED) and Union Activities Board. This program also connected to Hispanic Heritage Month and was only one of a series of several similar opportunities, such as “Tell Me More” with TRiO Talent Search, an early intervention program, “Delta Going G.R.E.E.N. (Global Restoration of Environmental Empathy Now)” during the Mu Omicron Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority’s Delta Week and a presentation in collaboration with the Eta Omicron Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. Participants learn about sustainability, and engage in a variety of cultural, educational, and reflective activities to enhance their experience. We plan to continue and expand these offerings at NC State, so that everyone may understand how lessons of environmental, social, and economic sustainability apply in communities.

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