



## HIRING SUMMER ASSOCIATES

HELP CONNECT SNAP CONSUMERS WITH FARMERS MARKETS

SUMMER 2017

## LOCAL FOOD PROJECTS

SOUTHERN TIER WEST REGIONAL PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT BOARD



details @ [www.FreshLocalWNY.org](http://www.FreshLocalWNY.org) or call Susan Avery 716-945-5301 x 2206

OPPORTUNITIES IN ALLEGANY, CATTARAUGUS & CHAUTAUGUA COUNTIES

## **Associateship Opportunity**

Summers 2017

USDA FARMERS MARKET SNAP SUPPORT GRANT - SNAP Customer Relations and Education Associate (CREA)

### ***Serving the greater Chautauqua, Cattaraugus, Allegany County region***

#### **About Southern Tier West**

In 1969, the County Legislatures of Allegany, Cattaraugus, and Chautauqua Counties of New York State adopted a resolution creating Southern Tier West as a regional planning board (specialized unit of local government) under the authority of Article 12B of the New York State General Municipal Law.

Our mission is to help coordinate and enhance planning and development activities in Allegany, Cattaraugus, and Chautauqua Counties, so as to promote social, physical, and economic development in these counties. Southern Tier West seeks to improve the quality of life for the region's people and assure that the "people of the Southern Tier West region have access to adequate occupational, educational, and recreational opportunities; environment; health care services; housing; public safety; and transportation."

Southern Tier West Regional Planning & Development Board is the recipient of a competitive USDA Farmers Market Support Grant for FY 2016 and FY 2017 which includes the implementation of Associateships at regional SNAP farmers' markets. Associates can be members of the public interested in supporting their local farmers' markets and/or college level students pursuing academic interest in local food systems.

#### **Title**

SNAP Customer Relations and Education Associate (CREA)

#### **Number of Associateships Available**

Up to 10 associateships available. Associates serve during summer 2017.

#### **Location of Associateships**

An associate will be assigned to one farmers market located as close to the associate's location of residence as possible. There are 13 SNAP farmers' markets throughout Chautauqua, Cattaraugus, and Allegany Counties. Weekly market days and hours vary by market and each associate's schedule will also vary accordingly. A list of regional farmers' markets is found at this link: <http://www.freshlocalwny.org/html/farmers.html>.

#### **Supervision**

A SNAP Customer Relations and Education Associate will be directly supervised by staff or an agent of Southern Tier West and take direction from and closely work with the managers of the assigned farmers market(s). Successful Associates will be expected to perform a high-degree of self-initiated and sustained work.

#### **Responsibilities:**

A SNAP Customer Relations and Education Associate may be responsible for any of the following activities:

- travel to/from farmers' market(s) on a weekly basis
- travel occasionally to Southern Tier West's office in Salamanca, NY for group meetings of all Associates
- be a weekly familiar face at the market so that the SNAP client can build trust in using their income benefits at the farmers' market,
- identify and engage existing and potential new farmers market SNAP clients,

- conduct in effective and respectful customer engagement and can assist a SNAP client with all aspects of shopping with SNAP at the weekly farmers' market,
- can talk about ways to extend the food's shelf life or how to prepare it in a recipe to extend its value or the best way to freeze large quantities of a high-value item,
- assist and/or conduct food demonstrations with collaborative partners,
- organize educational or nutritional programming or assistance on a regular basis,
- understand some of the challenges SNAP households face in accessing affordable healthy food and to develop strategies for the markets and CREAs to assist the SNAP shopper in extending the greatest value from the benefits at the farmers' markets.
- can differentiate the various fresh vegetables and produce, accompany the SNAP shopper through the market to make introductions to the vendors, and to highlight that week's purchase power values such as when the market is overrun with zucchini or tomatoes
- conduct observational journaling at farmers' markets, taking special notes on SNAP consumer traffic patterns, demographics, consumer interaction with vendors, and other interactions as determined by market managers and associate cohort. Associate should be able to construct written, well-formed statements and reports based on observational notes
- implement market activities that attract and educate SNAP consumers about the farmers' market
- in partnership with other Associates, research available entertainers, performers, artists, musicians, educators, and other activity-oriented personnel/organizations that would be appropriate to appear at a farmers' market as a SNAP consumer attraction
- find strategies to reach SNAP consumers using social media venues
- participate in volunteer training conducted by Cornell Cooperative Extension
- be willing to participate in an exit interview or provide a final report outlining the Associateship experience, knowledge and skills gained/imparted, and offer any suggestions or thoughts related to any aspect of this opportunity

If the successful associate does not have the full abilities or knowledge to execute some of the responsibilities outlined above, training and resources will be provided to assist the associate in gaining the knowledge and skills to fulfill the objectives and tasks.

### **Duration**

The duration and total completed associate hours can be flexible to accommodate the student's need to accrue academic credit. Duration of the Associateship will be a minimum of 14 weeks with no fewer than 4 hours per week attributed to the responsibilities plus training. The associate can pre-arrange a work schedule to fulfill the Associateship anytime between June 1, 2017 and October 31, 2017.

### **Qualifications**

- The successful SNAP Customer Relations and Education Associate should:
- Have excellent written and oral communication skills
- Can initiate project work and sustain activities through completion
- Can work individually as well as part of a team
- Can multi-task, set priorities, and ability to meet deadlines
- Have reliable transportation
- Have access to a computer and associated connection and video communications application such as Skype.
- Have strong associated research, social media, and database management skills

- Be proficient with Microsoft Office suite of applications, Google docs and Google Drive functions, and social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and email marketing program
- Can conduct self in appropriate manner while interacting with the public
- Have a friendly, engaging, and personable demeanor

### **Compensation**

A \$750-\$1000 stipend is provided for completion of one full seasonal Associateship, depending on market and schedule.

### **Optional Credits**

It is up to the associate and their respective school to determine the appropriate number of academic credits to be earned for fulfilling an Associateship as a SNAP Customer Relations and Education Associate. The responsibilities, duration, and other aspects of any individual Associateship can be flexible to meet minimum or maximum requirements by the academic institution and should be arranged in advance with Susan Avery of Southern Tier West.

### **To apply**

Interested associate candidates should email a cover letter and resume to Susan Avery, Local Food Projects Specialist at [savery@southerntierwest.org](mailto:savery@southerntierwest.org). Please use the cover letter to address how this Associateship opportunity reflects your personal, academic, and/or avocational interests, the experience and knowledge that you'd like to learn from this Associateship, and the benefit to the program that your belief you will contribute through your Associateship. Letters of interest should be **submitted no later than April 30, 2017** for the summer 2017 program.

Susan Avery

Local Food Projects Specialist / Grant Project Coordinator

Southern Tier West Regional Planning & Development Bd.

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