

FoodCorps Arkansas Service Site Descriptions

Below you will find detailed descriptions of all of the service sites located in Arkansas. Each description includes details about the community where the service site is based, the overall work and mission of the organization, and what an incoming Service Member can expect to do on a day-to-day basis.

We hope this document will help you to best determine where you are most interested in serving! Please note that this list is subject to change, and new sites may come on board.

Cedarville School District:

About Cedarville: Cedarville is a rural town located in the Arkansas River Valley with a population of about 1,300 people. It is a quick drive to both Fort Smith and Van Buren, so members get to enjoy the quiet rural life and the perks of living near a city. The Cedarville community is tight-knit; parents and community members are strong supporters of the school garden program!



(1 Service Member) **Cedarville Elementary:** Cedarville Elementary's staff is dedicated to their garden program. Teachers are committed to observing lessons, co-teaching, and learning more about outdoor education. In partnership with Cedarville School District, Mercy Healthcare opened the Cedarville Wellness Clinic on the school campus which offers medical, mental health, dental and vision care to students as well as the community.

Cedarville believes students deserve equal access to resources, the most important and basic being food. Staff work hard to make sure food insecurity does not hold their students back as they enter their learning zones through: after school programs, free breakfast, grab n go breakfast, food share tables, free summer meals programs, snack packs, holiday meals on wheels, and fruits and vegetables in the classroom. FoodCorps Service Members help to enhance the programs that they've implemented, so that students and families have even greater access to nutrition and fresh foods. This connection is extra valuable in the cafeteria, where the member helps inform and pilot healthier breakfast options and promote the new salad bar program. The Service Member also helps to enhance daily after school and summer programs by providing fresh food and garden programming.

Cedarville envisions their member connecting to the three areas of service by:

- Hands-On Learning- The member spends time with each classroom throughout their term to provide hands-on curriculum-aligned lessons that help to connect children to healthy habits and to what they are learning in the traditional classrooms.
- Healthy School Meals- The member helps to pilot and promote new recipes or recipe improvements within our breakfast and lunch program. They help to revamp and promote our salad bar. They create a positive cafeteria environment by encouraging our students to make healthy choices. They offer healthy alternatives to classroom snacks during holiday parties.

- School-Wide Culture of Health- The member participates in the after-school program once a week leading a Sprout Scouts club. They work with the summer program participants (around 85 students from our school) to offer fun, healthy, engaging activities throughout the summer.

Learn more about Cedarville’s garden program at “Cedarville Pirate Patch” on Facebook.



Van Buren School District:

About Van Buren- Located in the beautiful River Valley of Northwest Arkansas, Van Buren has a population of 24,000 and neighbors Fort Smith, the 2nd largest city in Arkansas. The Main Street Historic Downtown offers many tourist attractions including antique stores and the Old Frisco Train Depot. The Van Buren area also offers a variety of environments from the rural countryside to the more urban city life. The Van Buren community is very giving and supportive of the schools. Each school knows several businesses, farmers, and individuals it can depend on for volunteers of their time, talents and resources.

School Descriptions:



(1 Service Member) **Tate Elementary and Oliver Springs Elementary: Tate**

Elementary’s mission is to provide students with purposeful information concerning nutrition.

Tate is an elementary school ranging from Pre K to 5th grade and currently has 464 students. It

is located in a rural/farming community. Tate was named Arkansas's 2017 Best Community Collaboration School Garden, and this shows in the fun family cooking nights, parent events, farmers market stands, etc that they host throughout the year! Find them on facebook at Tate Tiger Learning Garden.

Oliver Springs Elementary. Oliver Springs was built in 2020; and the staff of Parkview Elementary relocated for the 2020-2021 school year. They're in the process of rebuilding their world class garden program. Their outdoor classroom is home to many pollinators, fruit trees, and the biggest most wonderful nature club around.



(1 Service Member) **King and Central Elementary:** King Elementary serves 522 Pre-K to 5th grade students. It was renovated in 2011 and is one of very few LEED schools in Arkansas. King was recognized as Arkansas's Best Nutrition Education Based School Garden and is well known for student's preparing tasty garden treats in their classrooms. It's even home to several happy school chickens. You can find them on facebook at King School Garden.

Central Elementary: Central Elementary serves 527 K-5th grade students. They were awarded Arkansas's School Garden Start Up of the Year award and have a beautiful budding outdoor classroom. You can find them on facebook at Central Elementary Garden to see examples of their fun family farmers markets, movie nights, and garden clubs.



(1 Service Member) **Oliver Springs Elementary.** Oliver Springs was built in 2020; and the staff of Parkview Elementary relocated for the 2020-2021 school year. They're in the process of rebuilding their world class garden program. Their outdoor classroom is home to many pollinators, fruit trees, and the biggest most wonderful nature club around.

Van Buren Service Description- Service activity goals are to teach students how to grow healthy foods in the garden. Service Members also teach students about nutritious choices and preparing healthy foods. Van Buren Service Members help enthusiastically communicate the benefits of healthy lifestyles to students, parents and community members. Service Members are an integral part of the Coordinated School Wellness Committee.

Skills, Interest, Knowledge Preferences: An enthusiastic interest in growing gardens, teaching students about nutrition, and communicating healthy food choices to the Van Buren schools and community.


Transportation: Required



Conway School District:

About Conway: Conway is a growing community of approximately 65,000 people and is located just 30 miles north of Little Rock, the state's capital. Toad Suck Park is located on the Arkansas River and borders the western side of the area, which gives reason for the annual Toad Suck Daze festival. Conway is home to three colleges, which include the University of Central Arkansas, Hendrix College, and Central Baptist College. Conway has a small town feel, but has many shops, places to eat, and a great downtown area with a Farmers' Market during the warm weather months.

School & Service Description:

 (1 Service Member) **Carolyn Lewis Elementary** serves 400-500 K-4 students each year. They are dedicated to student learning and are always looking for ways to engage students outside the classroom! The Carolyn Lewis garden is a large outdoor classroom that contains many whiteboards, ample seating and even a music wall. Carolyn Lewis also has a garden education classroom located in the building. Service Members engage students with garden lessons, taste tests, and after school clubs. They work alongside food service staff to encourage students to consume more fruits and vegetables, especially with the Harvest of the Month

Program and Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program. Members have the opportunity to attend district wellness committee meetings and district garden champion meetings. This year will be Carolyn Lewis's last year with FoodCorps, and their member will be focused on collaborating with FoodCorps Arkansas staff and school staff to implement a sustainability transition plan.


Skills, Interest, Knowledge Preferences: The member should have a basic knowledge of gardens and enjoy working with children in a high energy environment. Carolyn Lewis also values team-oriented individuals with strong communication skills.

Transportation: Required



Springdale School District :

About Springdale: The City of Springdale is central to the Northwest Arkansas Corridor allowing access to beautiful national forests, multiple state parks and the beautiful Buffalo National River. There is also easy access to miles of paved bicycle and walking trails, the University's entertainment district, minor league baseball, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, outstanding local dining, libraries and much, much more. Springdale is home to a wonderfully diverse population, bolstering a large Hispanic community and the largest Marshallese population outside of the Pacific Islands.

 (1 Service Member) **Jones Elementary and Elmdale Elementary:** Elmdale is home to over 600 K-5th grade students. At Elmdale there is a wellness Center available to all families and the surrounding community. Elmdale has an amazing school building with dedicated staff members, and outstanding students and families, working towards one vision to provide, “a safe learning community where all can be academically and physically successful.”

Jones Elementary is our newest FoodCorps partner in Springdale and home to over 500 preK-5th grade students. They have a beautiful outdoor learning space that their teachers created almost ten years ago. They also have a robust club program, that gives students a chance to get their hands dirty in the garden outside of their more formal garden classroom time!

Skills, Interest, Knowledge Preferences: An interest in children and their actual well being as a human is most important. Knowledge in gardening is also important, along with a knowledge of nutrition and balance. Proficiency in **Spanish** would be highly valuable.



(1 Service Member) **JO Kelly Middle School and Knapp Elementary:** **JO Kelly** is a middle school which serves 700 6th and 7th grade students. They bolster a community garden project in conjunction with their EAST initiative of container gardening; their goal is to provide students with a life-long skill to help sustain themselves and their families. JO Kelly has a thriving after school program that Service Members assist with one to two days per week. They also lead students to help provide community service in the areas of food insecurity (teaching residents how to build container gardens at apartment complexes), how to prepare tasty treats from the community garden, nutrition, gardening techniques, etc.

Knapp is Arkansas's largest elementary school, serving almost 1,000 PreK-5th grade students. They are very excited to engage their diverse and active student body, along with their families and community, in garden education, healthy lifestyles, and to connect their classroom learning to these concepts. Their program is still very new! The Service Members collaborate with the EAST program and other classrooms to engage students in food, nutrition and gardening education.

Skills, Interest, Knowledge Preferences: These schools are looking for a Service Member who is self-starting, takes initiative, and is able to take on programming in addition to new goals they may have. They are looking for a member who can inspire and motivate faculty/staff to participate. Proficiency in **Spanish or Marshallese** would be valuable, though not required. The main thing is the desire to serve alongside teachers and staff to provide great learning experiences for young adolescent students.



(1 Service Member) **Bayyari Elementary Bayyari Elementary** is located in a remote area of Springdale. It is surrounded by a subdivision of small homes and duplexes. The city's Growing Healthy Communities Committee has identified the area as a "food desert", meaning there is no place within the attendance zone where a person can purchase healthy food. Bayyari has seen their students' excitement for learning come alive because of this partnership. Bayyari is nearing the end of their partnership and are taking the next steps to institutionalize the program. They are determined to create an overarching culture of health in order to provide the best possible foundation for their students.



(1 Service Member) **Parson Hills Elementary: Parson Hills** is a PreK-5th Grade School. At both Bayyari and Parson Hills Elementary, the Service Member manages and maintains the school gardens throughout the year by coordinating parent volunteers/ distributing produce during the summer and involving teachers and students with garden tasks during the school year. At both schools, the Service Member run a garden club after school. The Service Member also teaches standards-based gardening and cooking lessons to help increase the use of the garden as a classroom. Lastly, the Service Member collaborates with the cafeteria staff to promote and develop the Harvest of the Month program and continue building relationships between local farmers and the district so that the program can be sustained in the years to come.

Skills, Interest, Knowledge Preferences: Ability to speak Spanish and experience with gardening are highly preferred. Pedagogy and curriculum knowledge, classroom management, communication skills are also appreciated but not necessarily a must. A good work ethic and commitment to serve students to the best of your ability is a requirement.



(1 Service Member) **George Elementary and Harp Elementary:** **George Elementary's** mission is to provide a quality education through shared responsibility in a safe, supportive environment that will help all students to meet the challenges of a global society. Programming includes, but is not limited to, family/staff garden work days, environmental science lessons co-taught with the classroom teacher, Sprout Scouts for 2-5th, a Recess Garden Intern program, family cooking nights, and collaboration with other after-school clubs. George has a great community of neighbors and families that they would like to engage in the school's garden and nutrition projects. They want to cultivate an overarching climate of health for our students and families.

Harp Elementary School is a neighborhood school that is central and focal to the surrounding community. There are 600 students who attend Harp, the majority of whom are English Language Learners. Harp's mission is to ensure that grade-level standards and expectations are achieved by all children in a child-centered learning environment. The Service Member spends their time coordinating the planting, maintaining, harvesting, and distribution of the produce from their garden and greenhouse. The Service Member is also responsible for developing lessons and implementing them within the classrooms, aiding teachers in their own implementation of lessons or garden planting, and leading student groups in order to maintain the garden and increase school-wide health. Harp is working to institutionalize the garden program, as they transition out of their partnership with FoodCorps.

Skills, Interest, Knowledge Preferences: The Service Member should have definite gardening/nutritional knowledge as well as a desire to share and teach others so that they may grow in learning what is healthy food, how to grow/cook/eat it, etc. Service Members are expected to be able to co-teach and collaborate with classroom teachers to provide the environmental science curriculum for grades K-5, and to collaborate with site supervisor and instructional facilitators to provide curriculum for grades K-5. Helpful Languages: Spanish, Marshallese.

Note: Springdale Service Members are expected to coordinate with fellow Springdale Service Members to provide district-wide activities (such as Harvest of the Month) and teacher workshops. They work closely with the Coordinated School Health Coordinators, Child Nutrition Director, and Coordinated School Health Committee to support the Springdale School District in their vision of a district-wide Culture of Health. Additionally, many of our Springdale Schools host Family Literacy Programs where parents can come 4 days a week to learn English; members work closely with these groups. **Spanish and Marshallese** are both highly valued language skills at any Springdale site. Experience working with English Language Learners is also highly valued. Transportation is required for Springdale Service.

The Delta Cultural Center



(1 Service Member) **About The Delta Cultural Center:** The Delta Cultural Center is a museum and educational complex that tells the story of a land and its people, capturing what makes the Arkansas Delta region unique. It is the mission of the Delta Cultural Center to preserve, interpret and present the cultural heritage of this legendary 27-county area.

It is the mission of the Delta Cultural Center to research, document, collect, interpret, and present the heritage of the people of the Arkansas Delta. This mission is carried out through activities in the four areas: interpretive exhibits, public presentations, educational programming, documentation and resource acquisition.

The FoodCorps service member focuses on educational programming at the center's community garden, as well as on site programming at surrounding schools.