

AGENDA
Special City Council Meeting
ZOOM Video Conference
August 14, 2020, 8:00 a.m.

1. **CALL TO ORDER/DETERMINATION OF QUORUM/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
Council President
All individuals are asked to either silence or turn off all cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices that may disrupt the meeting. *Information Found On:*

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA** *City Council*
Approve the agenda as posted in accordance with the Open Meeting Law and herein place all agenda items on the table for discussion.

3. **NEW BUSINESS**
 - a. Host Site Agreement, Lead for Minnesota – approve *City Administrator* Pages 1-9
 - b. Agreement for Lead for America Fellowship Services – approve *City Administrator* Pages 10-26

4. **ADJOURNMENT** *Council President*

If you need any type of reasonable accommodations to participate in this meeting, contact City Hall at (320) 616-5500 at least 72 hours prior to the meeting. Meetings are live streamed at [LITTLE FALLS CITY COUNCIL MEETING.](#)



Established in 1849
"Where Minnesota History Begins"

AGENDA ITEM
LITTLE FALLS CITY COUNCIL

Special (Work Session) Agenda: _____

Consent Agenda: _____

Regular Agenda: X

Meeting Date: August 14, 2020

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TITLE OF THE ITEM FOR CONSIDERATION: Lead for America Fellowship – Phoebe Ward, AmeriCorps Site Host Agreement

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BACKGROUND: Lead for America and their partner agency Lead for Minnesota, have identified and agreed to place a Fellow with the City of Little Falls for a period of at least two years. Details about the fellowship are as follows:

- It is a minimum two-year program with opening to worked beyond that if funding can be secured.
- Lead for America pays the fellow a monthly stipend, health care stipend and housing stipend, which are all based on guidelines like AmeriCorps.
- Host sites must raise part of the funds to cover those costs less any grants or scholarships they secure for our fellow.
- Currently, the total cost to the City for hosting the fellow is about \$32,081 per year,
 - We have a commitment from Sourcewell for \$10,000 per year.
 - There is an application pending Initiative Foundation for \$5,000. (This may not be available in year 2)
 - AmeriCorps will also grant a stipend for the fellow around \$15,000 per year.
 - The Balance for year one is \$17,081 which, if approved, will be paid from the City EDA budget.
- The fellow will be working on supporting our local community by identifying resources and making connections to help businesses and organizations receive support from the City and our Economic Development partners.
- Future projects may include implementing goals that have arisen out of community engagement meetings like Local Foods, Local Places, OurTown 56345, etc.

Phoebe is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin with a Master’s in Environmental Conversation with a focus on Conservation Planning and Communication. She worked with the Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTs) as a Minnesota GreenCorps Member, which gave her experience in engaging with a variety of stakeholders including businesses and local governments on various programs provided by the CERTs.

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ACTION REQUEST: Authorize the Fellowship Site Host agreement, AmeriCorps Site Host Agreement, and applications for future grants to support financing the Fellowship through 2021.

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FISCAL IMPLICATIONS: Funds will be paid from the EDA operating budget.

BUDGETED: YES _____

NO X

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DEPARTMENT/COMMITTEE: Administration/EDA

STAFF PERSON REQUESTING: City Administrator, Jon Radermacher

DATE: August 13, 2020

AGREEMENT FOR LEAD FOR AMERICA FELLOWSHIP SERVICES

This Agreement is made and entered into as of the date of countersignature by and between City of Little Falls, MN, hereinafter referred to as "Host", and National Lead for America, Inc., hereinafter referred to as "LFA."

RECITAL

WHEREAS, LFA is a nonprofit organization that connects recent graduates, local governments, and nonprofits to improve capacity building and leadership development.

WHEREAS, LFA recruits, trains, and places recent college graduates into two-year volunteer fellowships in high-impact civic leadership roles.

WHEREAS, LFA has developed a fellowship program to introduce recent college graduates to the work of civic leadership, provide them with comprehensive public service leadership and skills training, and connect Fellows to a national network of locally-rooted, systems-oriented young leaders committed to serving their communities; and

WHEREAS, Host is a municipality willing and able to participate in the fellowship program of Lead For Minnesota, a state affiliate of Lead For America, by accepting for placement a recent college graduate interested in an immersive leadership development experience.

NOW THEREFORE, the parties agree as follows:

1. TERM

LFA will place one individual (the "Fellow") enrolled in the Lead for Minnesota Fellowship program (the "Program"), with the Host for twenty four months, from August 1, 2020 to July 31, 2022 (the "Term").

2. HOST RESPONSIBILITIES

During the Term, the Host shall provide the Fellow with an immersive developmental experience designed to promote a possible career in local government. The Fellow will be assigned to assist upper level managers and/or elected officials with projects, as well as training, guidance and resources necessary to successfully complete the project. As part of the fellowship, the Host shall also permit the Fellow to spend up to eight work hours a month to engage in a self-directed project for the benefit of the local community.

3. LFA RESPONSIBILITIES

LFA agrees to place one Fellow (Phoebe Ward) with the Host and to provide ongoing support, mentorship, and training to the Fellow, consistent with LFA's Lead For Minnesota Agreement (signed by the Fellow and LFA).

4. FEES AND COSTS

A. Because the previously selected Fellow declined, Phoebe Ward has been chosen as the Fellow. Due to her experience and education, LFA and the Host have each decided to provide an additional \$5,000, bringing the annual Host contribution to \$32,081.00. To partially offset Program costs and placement of the Fellow as outlined in Attachment B, the Host will pay \$64,162.00 to LFA in support of the Fellowship program. \$32,081.00 shall be paid within 30 days of the signing of this agreement, and the remaining \$32,081.00 to be paid by April 1st, 2021. The Host shall not be responsible for any other costs or expenses incurred by LFA.

B. During the Term, LFA shall provide a monthly scholarship to the Fellow in order to assist in covering the living expenses of such Fellow. The Fellow shall not receive any additional funding or compensation in connection with this fellowship. The Fellow will receive scholarships from LFA equal to the livable wage in their host community, which includes the equivalent of (in payment or in-kind support): the annual AmeriCorps VISTA stipend for their county; the cost of housing for their community as calculated based on the MIT Living Wage Calculator; reimbursements for health insurance premium costs if paid out of pocket; and additional financial aid if needed to support basic living costs.

5. ASSUMPTION

Assumption or takeover of any of LFA's duties, responsibilities, or obligations, or performance of same by any entity other than LFA, whether through assignment, subcontract, delegation, merger, buyout, or any other mechanism, with or without consideration for any reason whatsoever, shall occur only with the Host's express prior written approval.

6. REPLACEMENT OF FELLOW AND TERMINATION

This Agreement may be terminated by either party with 30 days' written notice. If the Host chooses to terminate this agreement before a Fellow begins their full-time service with the Host, LFA shall refund the Host any amount already paid, with the exception of \$5,000 that will be used to cover recruitment, selection, and Host partnership expenses associated with the fellowship prior to placement.

If the Fellow begins their full-time service with the Host but is unable to complete the Term with the Host, on request of the Host LFA will use commercially reasonable efforts to provide the Host with a replacement Fellow to complete the Term.

Otherwise, the Host may terminate this Agreement. The final cost to the Host will be the cost of training, recruitment, selection, program support, and host partnership expenses (\$17,000/year/Fellow) plus the prorated cost of the Fellow scholarships. If the Host terminates the fellowship agreement in the first 365 days of the Fellow serving their placement with the Host, this amounts to: \$17,000/Fellow + ((Total Cost Year 1 - \$17,000/Fellow) * (Number of Days Fellow Completed in Placement / 365)). If Total Cost Year 1 is less than \$17,000/Fellow, then the final cost will instead equal Total Cost Year 1.

If the Host terminates the fellowship agreement in the second 365 days of the Fellow serving their placement with the Host, this amounts to: \$34,000/Fellow + ((Net Total Cost - \$34,000/Fellow) * (Number of Days Fellow Completed in Placement / 730)). If Net Total Cost is less than \$34,000/Fellow, then the final cost will instead equal Net Total Cost.

If the Host terminates and has paid more than the final cost as calculated above, then LFA will reimburse the Host. If the Host terminates and has paid less than the final cost as calculated above, then LFA will invoice the Host for the remaining cost, with an invoice due date within 90 days of termination.

In the case of termination, LFA will pay any reimbursement in the form of two installments, one within 90 days of termination, and the second within 180 days of termination.

If a Fellow takes an indefinite leave, the same process for reconciling final costs in the case of termination shall be undertaken, and LFA shall either reimburse the Host or send an invoice to the Host as detailed above.

7. NO EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP

At all times relevant to this Agreement, the parties, and any affiliates thereof, shall remain contractors independent of one another, and neither party (including representatives and sponsors of that party) shall be deemed an employee, joint venturer, or partner of the other. Neither party has the authority to bind the other, and no employee, agent, sponsor, or other representative of either party shall at any time be deemed to be under the joint control or authority of the other party, or under the joint control of both parties. Neither party shall have the right to control the other party; however, LFA and the Host mutually agree as to the objectives and the scope of the fellowship placement, as set forth in this Agreement. LFA and the Fellow shall not be entitled to, and shall not seek any benefits made available to the Host's employees, including, but not limited to: group health insurance (including dental, vision, and any other enhancements from time to time), disability insurance, group term life insurance, workers' compensation, or participation in any retirement plan for the Host's employees. In the event the Fellow is reclassified by any state or federal agency or court as an employee of LFA and/or the Host, LFA shall be responsible for all associated wages, taxes, workers' compensation coverage, and penalties. This provision shall survive the expiration or other termination of this Agreement.

9. INDEMNIFICATION

LFA shall indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the Host and its officials, officers, employees, and agents (hereinafter collectively "Public Entities") from and against any and all liability, demands, damages, claims, causes of action, fees, and expenses (including reasonable attorneys' fees, expert witness fees, and legal costs) including, but not limited to, claims for bodily injury, property damage, and death (hereinafter collectively referred to as "liabilities") arising from or connected with LFA's acts, errors, and/or omissions under this Agreement, to include the acts, errors, and/or omissions of the Fellow. LFA shall not be required to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the Public Entities from any liabilities that are caused by the sole negligence or willful misconduct of the Host or its officials, officers, employees, or agents.

The Host shall indemnify, defend, and hold harmless LFA and its officials, officers, employees, and agents, to include the Fellow, from and against any and all liability, demands, damages, claims, causes of action, fees, and expenses (including reasonable attorneys' fees, expert witness fees, and legal costs) including, but not limited to, claims for bodily injury, property damage, and death (hereinafter collectively referred to as "liabilities") arising from or connected with the Host's acts, errors, and/or omissions under this Agreement. The Host shall not be required to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless LFA or its officials, officers, employees, or agents from any liabilities that are caused by the sole negligence or willful misconduct of LFA or its officials, officers, employees, or agents.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have caused this Agreement to be executed by their respective duly authorized officers as of the Effective Date.

Lead for Minnesota

City of Little Falls, MN

By: _____

By: _____

Name: Benya Kraus

Name: Brad Hircock

Title: Lead For Minnesota Executive
Director

Title: Council President

Date:

Date: August 14, 2020

Lead for America

By: _____

Name: Reed Shafer-Ray

Title: Chief Operating Officer, Lead For
America

Date:

ATTACHMENT A FELLOWSHIP SCOPE

Hosts are invited to use the following Fellowship Scope template. While the “Fellowship Description” section can be fully customized based on host preference, we ask that no language from the “Fellow Support” section is deleted (although more can be added) and no language is removed or added to the “Financial Considerations” section, with the exception of a substitution of proper nouns where text is in all caps. Because the Fellow is not classified as an employee, please refrain from using the words “employee,” “work,” or “supervisor” in the Fellowship Scope.

Fellowship:	City of Little Falls, MN
Fellow Reports To:	Jon Radermacher, City Administrator
Location of Fellowship:	Little Falls, MN
Fellowship time base:	Full-Time

“How Might We” Question: “How might we guide local businesses, arts organizations and nonprofits through navigating the recovery of COVID-19? How might the collaborative spirit, the leveraging of the existing Our Town grant, and the creative ingenuity of such a recovery serve as a foundation for advancing and rebuilding a thriving local economy post COVID-19?”

Project Scope Summary:

In the first year, the Fellow will serve as a direct liaison between local businesses and the City of Little Falls, supporting community members in navigating COVID-19 relief efforts (i.e. Small business loans, grants, supply chain re-capturing, etc.). The relationships built through these relief efforts will extend into the second year’s focus around identifying existing financial, human, social and cultural resources, community collaborations, and funding/capital support and advance priority projects identified through the OurTown and Local Foods, Local Places community engagement and listening processes.

Key Activities (Year 1):

1. Serve as the point person for local business & nonprofit concerns by listening to and inventorying their needs as they seek to recover from the impacts of COVID-19.
2. Help the City craft relief programs specifically tailored to aforementioned needs, learning from other models nationally and statewide of best practices.
3. Identify challenges to local and regional supply chains for small businesses & nonprofits, and craft opportunities to grow a local economic system in the short term, with an eye to connect emerging supply chains for local business growth in the long-term (specifically around safety equipment supply chains to ensure workplace safety upon re-opening).
4. Research existing models throughout the nation of creatively financed and designed public asset-based infrastructure.
5. Identify creative financing strategies to support economic development (i.e., Opportunity Zones, public/private partnerships, grants, etc.).

Key Activities (Year 2):

1. Work closely with community lead partners of the Local Foods, Local Places and OurTown initiatives, specifically to understand the scope, practice and outcomes of the OurTown 56345 Plan and the Community Action Plan for Little Falls, Minnesota developed through the Local Foods, Local Places process.
2. Organize and attend regular meetings across stakeholder groups to share best practices and resources, and to develop relationships/networks to advance goals.
3. Assist in the coordination and implementation of collaborative projects that emerge.
4. Connect with the existing network of community groups and share the goals with one another, while identifying opportunities for partnerships and synergies to align their goals.

Key Goals:

1. Local businesses are supported and clear in how to navigate federal, state, and local relief efforts from the immediate and long-term effects of COVID-19.
2. The City develops an immediate and long-term recovery and rebuilding strategy to curb the harmful impacts of COVID-19 on the local economy, with a focus on developing new partnerships to guide a renewed vision and direction for Little Falls in the long-term.
3. The need for a new sense of community cohesiveness, finding common ground and bridging differences to close the gaps that stand in the way of change and receiving immediate support.
4. New and revitalized economic development at the intersections of local foods, cultural identity, social cohesion, community collaboration, and placemaking.
5. Ensure that all community members are being meaningfully engaged and provided economic opportunity, particularly those who may be economically, racially, or socially marginalized, and to whom city and dominant services are harder to reach.

Fellow Contribution:

1. Serve as the key point of contact for supporting local businesses in economic recovery efforts from COVID-19, and ensure that City initiatives accurately reflect local need.
2. Move the priority activities from plans to implementation in the recent community collaboration project, Local Foods Local Places, OurTown56345, etc. with an emphasis on tying implementation plans to COVID-19 rebuilding efforts.
3. The Fellow will connect with a wide variety of community groups to hear about the goals and interests, and bring connections and collaborations when opportunities arise
4. Become familiar with the organizations that can provide resources like: technical support, finances, space, and volunteers that maybe able assist the project
5. Work with the City engage with the community in broader ways connecting with the people who we struggle to reach.

Key Deliverables:

Strategies are in place through both the Our Town and Local Foods, Local Places awards.

Expected deliverables for year one include:

1. Development of a needs assessment for local businesses and nonprofits, supplemented with an asset map of opportunities for additional deliverables.
2. Development of a community engagement plan that is proportionally aligned with the scope of the project and needs of its impacted communities.

3. If applicable, the establishment of a technical support task force to assist local businesses in COVID-19 recovery efforts.
4. A peer review and set of recommendations of ways to fill immediate supply chain gaps for a safe re-opening of local business/nonprofit activity, as well as recommendations to sustain and grow these supply chains for long-term economic growth.

By year two:

1. Implementation of the goals and actions identified in the Local Foods, Local Places Community Action Plan.
2. Advancing community strategic plans currently underway through the Community Visioning, Our Town 56345 project.
3. Local Comprehensive Economic Development Study

Fellow Support:

The supervisor and their staff will facilitate introductions and meetings with key staff within the office as well as elected officials as appropriate. The Fellow will meet regularly with the supervisor. The supervisor will provide the Fellow office space and a desk, computer, telephone, voicemail, and email.

Financial Considerations:

The Fellow is not an employee of either the Host or Lead for America, and is subject to the terms and conditions specified in this contract. The Host will provide no stipend to the Fellow in addition to the scholarship provided by Lead for America. The Fellow and Host will discuss time off protocol, but the Host will not be responsible for compensating the Fellow for any time off. The Host will give the Fellow no more than one day off for Lead for America trainings in the fall, spring, and winter quarters, and no more than three days off for Lead for America summer training. The Host will reimburse the Fellow for expenses the Fellow incurs to execute duties required by the Host, such as travel expenses, consistent with the policies of the Host. The Host will have no financial obligation for expenses related to duties required by Lead for America, such as travel by the Fellow to Lead for America trainings or events.

**ATTACHMENT B
FEE SCHEDULE**

Item	Annual Cost
<p>LFA Scholarship, Direct Training, Education, and Support (Includes Fellow scholarship calibrated to community’s living wage, graduate-level MPA/MPP training, leadership and equity training, and local government certificate programs through organizations like ICMA. In addition, includes full-time staff member dedicated to supporting the Fellow, three retreats for all Fellows during the course of two years, recruitment & selection subsidy, general operations contribution, online community, graduate scholarship opportunities for Fellows, and more)</p>	\$32,081.00

Total Cost Year 1	\$32,081.00
Total Cost Year 2	\$32,081.00
Net Total	\$64,162.00



2020-2021
Host Site Agreement
by and between
Sponsor: Lead for Minnesota (LFMN), a state affiliate of National Lead
for America, Inc. (LFA)
and
City of Little Falls

Purpose

The purpose of this Agreement is to establish the basic parameters of the Community Partner's service site's participation in Lead for Minnesota's 2020-2021 AmeriCorps program year.

Reasonable accommodations provided upon request. This document is available in alternative formats.

Instructions

- A.** We recommend that you read this thoroughly and give a copy to your Site Supervisor. We must have an electronically signed copy of the certification page on file before a Fellow can begin their service with your site.
- B.** You must complete the electronic version in its entirety to certify that you have read the Agreement.
- C.** The award made to your site through this Site Agreement is pending federal and state funding decisions, which are typically received between May-June of each year. The number of Fellows awarded may decrease or increase depending on the outcomes of these funding decisions.

Questions?

Contact Anna Pollock, LFMN Program Director, at 507-521-0675 or anna.pollock@lead4america.org.

AmeriCorps Overview

Lead for Minnesota is an AmeriCorps Program. AmeriCorps is a national service program that engages people in a year-long commitment to service in meeting needs in their local communities, often called the "domestic Peace Corps." Since the program's founding in 1994, nearly one million AmeriCorps Fellows have contributed to more than 1.4 billion hours of service across America. For more information, visit www.americorps.gov.

Definitions

- A.** Community Partner: The entity that is hosting the Fellow during the program year.
- B.** Site Supervisor: The staff member of the Community Partner that is responsible for directly managing the Fellow.
- C.** Sponsor: Lead For Minnesota, the state affiliate program of Lead For America.
- D.** Fellow: The individual who will carry out the project scope for the Community Partner.

AmeriCorps Fellow Award

The Community Partner is awarded the following AmeriCorps members for the 2020-2021 program year: **1 Full-Time Fellow (1,700 Hours)**

Service Site Contact

The Fellow will serve as a full time LFMN Fellow for the following selected Community Partner:

Community Partner Name: City of Little Falls, MN

Address: 100 7th Ave NE, Little Falls, MN 56345

Site Supervisor Name and Phone Number: Jon Radermacher, (320) 616-5500

Sponsor Contact

The LFMN Program Director is Anna Pollock, with address 508 S State St, Waseca, MN 56093, St Paul, MN 55155. Anna can be reached at 507-521-0675.

I. Terms of the Contract

- A.** This Agreement shall become effective on the start date of the Fellow and shall terminate on July 31, 2021, unless terminated early by either partner. Any early termination of the Host Site Agreement between the Sponsor and the Community Partner will result in the termination of all provisions within this Host Site Agreement, with the exception of financial obligations outlined in Section III. Full-time LFMN Fellows will begin service as early as August 10, 2020 in order to complete the required 1,700 hours of service by July 31, 2021.
- B.** The Sponsor may transfer a LFMN AmeriCorps Fellow from one Community Partner to another if the Sponsor determines that the Community Partner has a consistent pattern of not being able to meet the obligations of this Agreement, and after attempts at redress it appears unlikely that necessary compliance from the Community Partner can or will be met.

II. LFMN Role and Responsibilities

The Sponsor will:

- A.** Pay living allowances on a monthly schedule, as well as provide a health insurance reimbursement plan and worker's compensation for the Fellow.
- B.** Work to assist the Community Partner in recruiting incoming LFMN Fellows and conduct a first interview with all applicants to ensure that they meet AmeriCorps eligibility and are strong matches with the mission of LFMN and partner organizations.
- C.** Provide an orientation for Fellows and Community Partner Staff. Site Supervisors will receive information and training on:
 - 1. Time and activity reporting, and other documentation on AmeriCorps and Program personnel policies and grievance procedures;
 - 2. AmeriCorps, the National Service Movement, and the Program operation, goals, and objectives; and
 - 3. Supervision of Fellows.
- D.** Serve as provider of training and technical assistance for Fellows throughout the program year. Such assistance includes:
 - 1. Development and implementation of training sessions, Fellow meetings, community service projects, and statewide Fellow events;
 - 2. Site visits by the LFMN Program Staff at least once a year;
 - 3. Provision of service gear for Fellows; and
 - 4. Provision of other support and assistance as needed to Community Partners and Fellows.
- E.** Develop and instruct the Community Partner and LFMN AmeriCorps Fellows on systems for the effective evaluation of their Fellow(s)' performance, including time and activity reports, monthly, semi-annual, and annual reports, Fellow evaluations, and training session evaluations.
- F.** Maintain and update Fellow service records, including timesheets, enrollment and eligibility documentation, Fellow Agreements, status changes, and exit forms, as required by the Corporation for National and Community Service.
- G.** Provide accounting and fiscal management services.
- H.** Discipline or release a Fellow from service early either for cause or for compelling personal circumstance.
- I.** Complete an assessment of the Community Partner at mid-year and end-year for compliance with the Agreement.
- J.** Replace Fellows. In most cases, the site may not replace a Fellow who exits the program early. However, sites are allowed to replace a Fellow who terminates service before completing 30 percent of the term, provided there is a LFMN-approved individual training plan for the new Fellow. Sites may not replace a Fellow in the following instances: 1) the exited Fellow is eligible for a prorated education award or has completed more than 30 percent of the term, 2) other LFMN sites have not filled allotted Fellow slots, or 3) the Fellow has been removed from the site by LFMN. In these cases, sites may bring on Lead for Minnesota Fellows as replacements for their Fellows but the Fellow will not be part of an AmeriCorps Program.

- K. Resolve conflicts. LFMN staff will work together with the Community Partner to resolve issues, as warranted. The LFMN Staff, not the Community Partner, has the authority to terminate an LFMN Fellow's term of service. LFMN maintains a formal grievance procedure.

III. Community Partner Roles and Responsibilities

- A. The Community Partner must assign their Fellow a Site Supervisor who oversees the Fellow's service and performance. LFMN expects that the Site Supervisor has previous experience in supervision, manages day to day operations in the program area where the Fellow serves, and prioritizes the necessary time to supervise the member.
- B. Community Partners must comply with the following reporting requirements:
 1. Approving Fellow Timesheets. Site Supervisor will keep track of and be able to verify Fellow hours for the timesheet categories of direct service, training, and fundraising. LFMN staff takes responsibility for verifying Corps day hours and LFMN project hours. A Supervisor has until the Wednesday after a timesheet period is due to approve a timesheet once he/she has received it electronically from the Fellow. LFMN is not able to pay the Fellow their living allowance until hours have been approved by the Supervisor;
 2. Reviewing quarterly reporting on the achievement of Fellows based on LFMN's performance metrics;
 3. Completing a mandatory mid-term and year-end performance evaluation of LFMN AmeriCorps Fellows. The mid-term performance evaluation must be completed by January 1st, 2021, and the year-end performance evaluation must be completed by July 31th, 2021.
- C. The Community Partner may not compensate the Fellow in the form of salary or other direct monetary compensation beyond the living allowance that the Fellow is receiving from LFMN, unless the compensation is for transportation reimbursement between service sites. Non-direct monetary compensation in the form of decreased costs such as paying for bus passes and gift cards are acceptable.
- D. For Fellow travel to complete work associated with their project scope, the Community Partner provides transportation or may choose to reimburse the Fellow for transportation costs based on their site's reimbursement policy.
- E. The Site Supervisor agrees to the following Fellow support:
 1. Have some organizational authority in the specific program where the LFMN AmeriCorps Fellow serves.
 2. Advocate for the LFMN AmeriCorps Fellow within the organization. The Site Supervisor is the translator to the rest of the organization about AmeriCorps, what tasks are appropriate for an AmeriCorps Fellow to complete and what tasks are not appropriate. The Site Supervisor is the first line of defense if the Fellow is looking for support. LFMN Staff will become involved if a Supervisor and Fellow cannot resolve an important issue.
 3. Be the only person at the site who gives the Fellow service tasks. No one else at the site can give the Fellow a standing responsibility. If there is a situation where

other site staff also need to direct the AmeriCorps Fellow, this must be approved by LFMN staff beforehand.

4. Inform LFMN Staff if a Fellow has violated the terms of their contract in some way (unprofessionalism, repeated tardiness, not turning in work on time, etc.). LFMN Staff can then determine what corrective action is necessary. A Site Supervisor does not have the ability to unilaterally suspend a LFMN Fellow from their site unless they determine that personal safety is involved.
 5. Provide necessary training opportunities for LFMN AmeriCorps Fellows to be able to perform their specific site tasks.
- F. The Community Partner assures that the LFMN AmeriCorps Fellow is not involved in any prohibited activities while they are serving hours or representing AmeriCorps or the site. Fellows may not engage in the following activities:
- a. Attempting to influence legislation.
 - b. Organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes.
 - c. Assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing.
 - d. Impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements.
 - e. Engaging in partisan political activities or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office.
 - f. Participating in or endorsing events or activities that are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation, or elected officials.
 - g. Engaging in religious instruction, conducting worship services, providing instruction as part of a program that includes mandatory religious instruction or worship, constructing or operating facilities devoted to religious instruction or worship, maintaining facilities primarily or inherently devoted to religious instruction or worship, or engaging in any form of religious proselytization.
 - h. Providing a direct benefit to: a business organized for profit, a labor union, a partisan political organization, a non-profit organization that fails to comply with the restrictions contained in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 related to engaging in political activities or substantial amount of lobbying except that nothing in these provisions shall be construed to prevent participants from engaging in advocacy activities undertaken at their own initiative, or an organization engaged in the religious activities described above in (G).
 - i. Conducting a voter registration drive.
 - j. Providing abortion services or referrals for receipt of such services.
 - k. Engaging in census activities or being a census taker during service hours.
 - l. Providing services for election or polling locations.
 - m. Such other activities as the Corporation may prohibit.

AmeriCorps Fellows may not engage in the above activities directly or indirectly by recruiting, training, or managing others for the primary purposes of engaging in one of the activities listed above. Individuals may exercise their rights as private citizens and may participate in the activities listed above on their initiative, on non-AmeriCorps time,

and using non-CNCS funds. Individuals should not wear the AmeriCorps logo while doing so.

- G. The Community Partner codifies a **service plan** (otherwise known as a project scope) for the use of LFMN AmeriCorps Fellows before the start date of the Fellow. Throughout the course of the Fellow's service year, the Site Supervisor must correct the Fellow's service plan as soon as possible if a Fellow does not have enough to do or is behind on hours, or if there is substantial change in a Fellow's service plan. Any changes to the Fellow's service plan must be approved by LFMN Staff before implementation.
- H. The Community Partner provides adequate space to permit LFMN AmeriCorps Fellows to perform their assigned duties, and provides a value of this space as an in-kind contribution to LFMN at the end of the year. Providing adequate space includes:
 1. Phone with personal answering machine;
 2. Access to a computer at all times that has
 - a. Internet and access to site email
 - b. Computer applications needed for the Fellow's work
 - c. Place to save work files electronically on site;
 3. Access to printer and copier with paper;
 4. Materials and supplies related to the performance of assignments;
 5. Place to keep personal belongings (preferably secured);
 6. Adequate time in schedule when they are uninterrupted by clients to better concentrate on capacity building projects and direct service preparation (minimum of two hours a day should be standard); and
 7. Site should be accessible to people with disabilities, such as allowing use of a wheelchair.
- I. If the Fellow falls behind in their target hours (due to vacation or illness) to complete their 1,700 hour service commitment, the site and LFMN Staff will implement a corrective plan with the Fellow that will increase site requirements for weekly hours served. It is in the Fellow Contract that the Fellow must seek approval from the Site Supervisor for any time they need to leave a site during regularly scheduled hours for LFMN collaborative projects, vacation, or other. Any Fellow vacation length of over a week must also be approved by LFMN staff in addition to the Site Supervisor.
- J. The Community Partner provides the first resource to the Fellow(s) assigned to it for resolution of disputes or grievances related to service with the organization. If the performance doesn't improve, the Supervisor should provide the Fellow and the LFMN Program Director with a written statement specifying necessary areas of improvement. A written statement describing the areas of improvement needed and setting a probationary period should be signed by all parties. The site should also determine if staff can help the Fellow to improve performance through additional training, instruction, or support. At the end of the probationary period, a meeting with the Fellow should be set to evaluate performance. If there is no evidence of improvement, a decision will be made whether to extend the probationary period or to terminate the Fellow's placement at that site.

The Community Partner must notify LFMN Staff immediately regarding unscheduled changes of status and conditions of LFMN AmeriCorps Fellows, such as arrests, hospitalization, and absence without leave. The Community Partner understands that they can tell a Fellow not to report back to the site until a conflict has been resolved, but the Community Partner cannot unilaterally dismiss the LFMN AmeriCorps Fellow without agreement from the Sponsor.

- K.** The Community Partner allows LFMN AmeriCorps Fellows to participate in:
 - a. Local emergency disaster relief efforts if needed.
 - b. Days of Service, i.e. Martin Luther King Day of Service, National AmeriCorps Week, Make a Difference Day, should activities be organized in the communities where the Fellows are in service.
 - c. Special trainings and independent community projects. As part of the program, the Community Partner shall permit the Fellow to spend up to eight work hours a month to engage in a self-directed project for the benefit of the local community. This project must be approved by the LFMN Program Director, and must not involve any CNCS prohibited activities. To ensure the Fellow receives specialized public administration and leadership development training to amplify his or her impact within his or her placement, the Community Partner will allow up the Fellow up to 10 away from their service site to attend LFMN trainings and retreats during the course of the program.
- L.** The Community Partner will reference and promote the LFMN AmeriCorps program in any internal or external communications that reference projects that include Fellow service activities.
- M.** The Community Partner will post an AmeriCorps sign provided by LFMN Staff to identify the site as an AmeriCorps site. The sign should be placed in a public space at the site.
- N.** The Community Partner may provide letters of support to help LFMN raise funds to support the AmeriCorps Program if requested.
- O.** LFMN values the diversity of our staff, members, site partners, and students we serve. We value both the visible and invisible diversity present within our program. LFMN believes that we all must strive to create and nurture an environment that demands, engages, celebrates, and cultivates diversity. By agreeing to be a site with LFMN, the Community Partner is committing to join our program in this continuous process to cultivate an environment that is inclusive and respectful to those from all backgrounds and experiences. Any decisions or actions made by LFMN or its partners that are inconsistent with an environment of inclusivity will be seen as a breach of this Site Agreement, and any further relationship between LFMN and the site named in this Agreement could be terminated.
 - 1. **Inclusive Environment.** Provide the Fellow with a safe and welcoming service environment. Treat Fellows as part of the staff team, including inviting them to participate in all staff activities and workshops, and in staff communication. Fellows should be given a tour of the Community Partner site and be personally introduced at a staff meeting or in a similar setting. Educate all staff about the purpose of the Fellow position and provide relevant updates to staff regarding

LFMN in the building. The site is responsible for recovering site property that may be issued to the Fellow for use during the service term.

2. Accessible Service Location. The service site must be accessible to people with disabilities.
 3. Reasonable accommodations. The service site will work with LFMN program staff if a Fellow requests reasonable accommodations in order to complete the essential functions of the position description.
- P.** The Community Partner may participate in special site visits to highlight and demonstrate the effectiveness of the LFMN Program. These site visits may include representatives from the media, legislature, corporations, and other parties involved in funding.
- Q.** The Community Partner maintains reporting documents involving LFMN AmeriCorps Fellows and the project as the Corporation may require. The LFMN Community Partner agrees to retain such records as the Corporation may require for a period of three years after completion or termination of the project, or longer if required for administrative proceedings and/or litigation purposes, and to provide access to such records to the Corporation for the purpose of litigation, audit, or examination. This includes:

IV. Criminal Background Checks

LFMN staff performs criminal background checks on all Fellows before they begin their service. The check will include a fingerprinted FBI background check if the Fellow is interacting with vulnerable populations, a Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) statewide check, and a check of the National Sex Offender Registry. LFMN will provide a copy of the background results only if the Community Partner requests the documents and the Fellow consents that the information can be shared with the site. If for some reason the background check is not completed by his or her start date, the applicant may participate in the pre-service orientation but cannot serve community participants alone at their site until the record is received. LFMN in most cases will not place applicants who have been convicted of a violent crime.

V. Ownership of Products Created by Fellows

As LFMN Fellows are not employees of the Community Partner agency, all products created by the Fellow such as curriculum or other materials may be shared with LFMN staff, within the LFMN network, and posted for public use on the website of LFMN or LFA.

VI. Safety of Fellows

Both Parties to this Host Site Agreement shall make every reasonable effort to ensure that the health and safety of the LFMN AmeriCorps Fellows are protected during the performance of their assigned duties. Neither the Sponsor nor the LFMN Community Partner shall assign or require LFMN AmeriCorps Fellows to perform duties that would jeopardize their safety or cause them to sustain injuries.

VII. Fellow Fundraising Policy (per 45 CFR §§ 2520.40-.45)

The Fellow may raise resources directly in support of the program's service activities. Examples of fundraising activities AmeriCorps members include, but are not limited to, the following;

- A. Seeking donations of books from companies and individuals for a program in which volunteers teach children to read;
- B. Writing a grant proposal to a foundation to secure resources to support the training of volunteers;
- C. Securing supplies and equipment from the community to enable volunteers to help build houses for low-income individuals;
- D. Securing financial resources from the community to assist in launching or expanding a program that provides social services to the members of the community and is delivered, in whole or in part, through the members of a community-based organization; and
- E. Seeking donations from alumni of the program for specific service projects being performed by current Fellows.

The Fellow may not:

- A. Raise funds for living allowances or for an organization's general (as opposed to project) operating expenses or endowment; or
- B. Write a grant application to the Corporation or to any other federal agency.

An AmeriCorps Fellow may spend no more than ten percent of their originally agreed-upon term of service, as reflected in the Fellow enrollment in the National Service Trust, performing fundraising activities.

VIII. Non-Duplication and Nondisplacement Policy

Non-duplication (per 45 CFR §§ 2540.100(e))

Corporation assistance may not be used to duplicate an activity that is already available in the locality of a program. And, unless the requirements of a nondisplacement are met, Corporation assistance will not be provided to a private non-profit entity to conduct activities that are the same or substantially equivalent to activities provided by a state or local government agency in which such entity resides.

Nondisplacement (per 45 CFR §§ 2540.100(f))

- A. An employer may not displace an employee or position, including partial displacement such as reduction in hours, wages, or employment benefits, as a result of the use by such employer of a participant in a program receiving Corporation assistance.
- B. An organization may not displace a volunteer by using a participant in a program receiving Corporation assistance.
- C. A service opportunity will not be created under this chapter that will infringe in any manner on the proportional opportunity of an employed individual.
- D. A participant in a program receiving Corporation assistance may not perform any services or duties or engage in activities that would otherwise be performed by an employee as part of the assigned duties of such employee.
- E. A participant in any program receiving assistance under this chapter may not perform any services or duties, or engage in activities that:

1. Will supplant the hiring of employed workers; or
 2. Are services, duties, or activities with respect to which an individual has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures.
- F. A participant in any program receiving assistance under this chapter may not perform services or duties that have been performed by or were assigned to any:
1. Presently employed worker;
 2. Employee who recently resigned or was discharged;
 3. Employee who is subject to a reduction in force or who has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures;
 4. Employee who is on leave (terminal, temporary, vacation, emergency, or sick); or
 5. Employee who is on strike or who is being locked out.

IX. AmeriCorps Civil Rights Policy

The Corporation for National and Community Service has zero tolerance for the harassment of any individual or group of individuals for any reason. CNCS is committed to treating all persons with dignity and respect. CNCS prohibits all forms of discrimination based upon race, color, national origin, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, disability, gender identity or expression, political affiliation, marital or parental status, or military service. All programs administered by or receiving federal financial assistance from CNCS must be free from all forms of harassment. Whether in CNCS offices or campuses, in other service-related settings such as training sessions or service sites, or at service-related social events, such harassment is unacceptable. Any such harassment, if found, will result in immediate corrective action, up to and including removal or termination of any CNCS employee or volunteer. Recipients of federal financial assistance, be they individuals, organizations, programs and/or projects, are also subject to this zero tolerance policy. Where a violation is found, and subject to regulatory procedures, appropriate corrective action will be taken, up to and including termination of federal financial assistance from all federal sources.

Slurs and other verbal or physical conduct relating to an individual's gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or any other basis constitute harassment when they have the purpose or effect of interfering with service performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive service environment. Harassment includes, but is not limited to: explicit or implicit demands for sexual favors; pressure for dates; deliberate touching, leaning over, or cornering; offensive teasing, jokes, remarks, or questions; letters, phone calls, or distribution or display of offensive materials; offensive looks or gestures; gender, racial, ethnic, or religious baiting; physical assaults or other threatening behavior; or demeaning, debasing or abusive comments or actions that intimidate.

CNCS does not tolerate harassment by anyone, including persons of the same or different races, sexes, religions, or ethnic origins; or from a CNCS employee or Supervisor; a project, or site employee or Supervisor; a non-employee (e.g., client); a co-worker or service Fellow.

CNCS expects Supervisors and Managers of CNCS programs and projects, when made aware of alleged harassment by employees, service participants, or other individuals, to immediately take swift and appropriate action. CNCS will not tolerate retaliation against a person who raises harassment concerns in good faith. Any CNCS employee who violates this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination, and any grantee that permits harassment in violation of this policy will be subject to a finding of non-compliance and administrative procedures that may result in termination of federal financial assistance from CNCS and all other federal agencies.

Any person who believes that he or she has been discriminated against in violation of civil rights laws, regulations, or this policy, or in retaliation for opposition to discrimination or participation in discrimination complaint proceedings (e.g., as a complainant or witness) in any CNCS program or project, may raise his or her concerns with our Office of Civil Rights and Inclusiveness (OCRI). Discrimination claims not brought to the attention of OCRI within 45 days of their occurrence may not be accepted in a formal complaint of discrimination. No one can be required to use a program, project or sponsor dispute resolution procedure before contacting OCRI. If another procedure is used, it does not affect the 45-day time limit. OCRI may be reached at (800) 833-3722 (TTY and reasonable accommodation line), (202) 565-3465 fax), eo@cns.gov, or:

Office of Civil Rights and Inclusiveness
 Corporation for National and Community Service
 250 E Street, SW
 Washington, DC 20024

Complaint Procedures

Fellows have the right to report a concern or complaint about discrimination or discriminatory harassment to their Site Supervisor, LFMN's Program Coordinator, LFMN's Executive Director, or to the LFA COO. In fulfilling the obligation to maintain a positive and productive work environment, Site Supervisors, The LFMN staff, and the LFA Human Resources Department are expected to address or report any suspected discrimination or discriminatory harassment.

The following is the contact information for LFA Human Resources:

Lead For America
 400 South Rd
 Chapel Hill, NC 27514
 919-960-1041
 reed.shaferray@lead4america.org (email)

X. Modifications

This Host Site Agreement may be amended at any time by an Agreement in writing executed by authorized representatives of the Sponsor and the Community Partner.

XI. Authorization

LFMN (Sponsor) and Community Partner hereby acknowledge by their signatures that they have read, understood, and agreed to the terms of this document.

For the Community Partner Organization:

Authorized Signature: _____ Date: August 14, 2020

Printed Name: Brad Hircock Title: Council President

For the LFMN AmeriCorps Program:

Authorized Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: Benya Kraus Title: Executive Director, LFMN

Phoebe Ward

Relevant Experience

Excellent written and verbal communication skills

- ◆ Developed the stories and factsheets for the [Public Solar Projects in Minnesota Communities](#) map and presented the tool at the League of Minnesota Cities
- ◆ Drafted the 2020-2025 strategic plan for the Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota chapter of The Nature Conservancy

Ability to work independently with limited supervision

- ◆ Developed a comprehensive conservation plan for the management of water quality at Lake Montesian in Monticello, Wisconsin
- ◆ Conducted independent, in-depth interviews with key players in major solar energy projects across the state of Minnesota

Strong interpersonal skills

- ◆ Conducted outreach to county and city-level administrators on the Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program, resulting in renewed promotion of the program in eight counties
- ◆ Partnered with food shelves across the state and a representative from Applied Energy Group to facilitate the distribution of water conservation kits to underserved populations

Education

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

Madison, WI

- ◆ M.S. Environmental Conservation 2019, GPA: 3.75
- ◆ Focus: Conservation Planning and Communications

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN

- ◆ B.A. Global Studies 2016, GPA: 3.88, Wallin Scholar
- ◆ Focus: Environment and Sustainable Development

Work Experience

CLEAN ENERGY RESOURCE TEAMS

Saint Paul, MN

Minnesota GreenCorps Member

September 2019 - present

- ◆ Conducted targeted outreach to 45 city officials on GreenStep best practice actions
- ◆ Successfully developed a map of public solar projects in Minnesota through research and one-on-one interviews with stakeholders
- ◆ Analyzed GreenStep Cities survey data and presented an analysis of trends to the steering committee on April 3, 2020
- ◆ Crafted five case studies on successful solar implementation for a Minnesota Department of Commerce report and for outreach and education purposes

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY (TNC)

Minneapolis, MN

Strategic Planning Intern

January 2019 - August 2019

- ◆ Consulted with internal and external partners to draft the 2020-2025 strategic plan narrative for the Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota chapter of TNC
- ◆ Developed a set of evaluative criteria for program evaluation in collaboration with Conservancy colleagues and external partners

Phoebe Ward

439 Fairview Avenue N, Apartment 1, Saint Paul, MN 55104
phoebe.ward001@gmail.com | 612-385-3345 | [LinkedIn](#)

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES Madison, WI
Student Researcher September 2018 – January 2019

- ◆ Researched potentially invasive plants, including relative newcomers such as *Thladiantha dubia* and *Actinidia arguta*, for an update to the NR 40 Invasive Species List
- ◆ Assisted in two time-meander surveys of wetlands sites at Poygan Marsh

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF SOIL SCIENCE Saint Paul, MN
Teaching Assistant January 2018 – May 2018

- ◆ Coordinated with fellow teaching assistants to set up and tear down materials necessary for the weekly labs
- ◆ Successfully facilitated the learning experiences of 10-15 undergraduate students per shift, answering questions as they arose and providing guidance where necessary

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY Minneapolis, MN
Researcher February 2015 – January 2016

- ◆ Edited 12 videos of relevant interviews and expert panels for public consumption as part of the Food and Society project

CEDAR CREEK ECOSYSTEM SCIENCE RESERVE East Bethel, MN
Plant Community Ecology Intern May 2014 – August 2014

- ◆ Collaborated with a crew of approximately 7 to maintain 168 biodiversity plots at the Big Biodiversity experiment site

Organizations

VILLAGE OF MONTICELLO WATER UTILITY 2018
Conservation Planner

- ◆ Collaborated with Monticello Water Utility to identify ecological threats to Lake Montesian
- ◆ Drafted a comprehensive conservation plan, including a threat assessment and recommendations for the implementation of a citizen science program

GREAT RIVER GREENING 2016
Volunteer grant writer

- ◆ Researched and identified grant opportunities for Great River Greening
- ◆ Developed a grant proposal template for a project intended to restore oak savanna

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY 2014-2015
Volunteer writer

- ◆ Wrote a grant proposal to the David B. Gold Foundation for the Clean Water Fund
- ◆ Interviewed stakeholders involved in the Forest Legacy Partnership and created an internal report on the project's inception, implementation, and eventual success

Computer Skills

- ◆ Microsoft Office and Google Applications; ArcGIS; Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign

Languages

- ◆ Norwegian, Lithuanian, Russian

A Place in the Sun:

Designing a Replicable Model for Large-Scale Solar Installations

The Rural Renewable Energy Alliance (RREAL) partnered with the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe to pilot the Community Solar for Community Action (CS4CA) model of solar installation, which focuses on assisting low-income households burdened with energy poverty while putting local communities on a path to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.

Background

The Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe is dreaming big. Having worked with the Rural Renewable Energy Alliance (RREAL) to successfully install solar panels at five sites, they have established a Reservation wide Solar Master Plan and are conducting structural integrity assessments at 30 of these buildings. Environmental Deputy Director Brandy Toft estimates that the Band could install as many as 200 kilowatts per year once they solidify their strategic plan.

Taking Action

Leech Lake's longstanding commitment to protecting the planet has taken different forms over the years, and as renewable energy technologies became more accessible, the Band began exploring its options. They have been installing solar heating units in low-income homes within the community since 2008, part of a program intended to help those households save money on heating bills. In 2015, they began work on the 200 kW Low Income Energy Assistance Array system, another project designed to ease the burden of electrical and heating bills, cut down on greenhouse gas emissions, and demonstrate solar's potential benefits to a community that prides itself on sustainability and self-reliance.

Originally, the Band had planned to install the 200 kW in one place and had even selected a site for the purpose. However, due to Minnesota's net metering regulations, this arrangement proved to be unfeasible. Instead, they split the 200 kW across five 40 kW systems within the boundaries of Leech Lake and at the RREAL headquarters in Backus. These five arrays ease the financial burdens of 100 additional Leech Lake families on energy assistance, with a yearly average of \$22,000 worth of electricity produced. Now, as site assessments for solar PV move forward for other buildings in the community, Toft sees a chance to expand this impact to other families in need.

“[Our goal] is becoming more self-reliant, more sustainable, and just being better stewards for the seven generations,” she says.

In addition to the demonstrated benefits in terms of both energy savings and the environment, the installation of the panels also involved workforce development training with several students from Leech Lake Tribal College, one of whom was ultimately hired by RREAL. RREAL program development specialist Erica Bjelland sees the Leech Lake project as an example of how issues of equity, sustainability, fiscal responsibility, and community engagement can all be addressed by a thoughtfully-designed clean energy project.

“We always say, ‘today's youth will make tomorrow's energy choices,’” she says. “So investing in them definitely has an impact.”

Challenges

In addition to the initial issue with net metering regulations, which forced the project leaders to split the 200 kilowatts across five sites, a significant challenge throughout the project was finding the financial backing to implement it in the first place.

“I think funding is always a barrier for low-income projects, especially in Greater Minnesota,” Bjelland acknowledges. “The more dollars we can put toward empowering families with more affordable energy, the more we can address energy poverty.”

Looking Ahead

In addition to the solar arrays, Leech Lake has also worked with SolSmart and the GreenStep cities program to implement sustainable best practices and promote the renewable energy options. They also plan to plant native pollinator habitat and traditional dye gardens under the ground-mounted solar arrays, allowing these sites to serve the community’s cultural, ecological, and financial needs.

“It’s been a success,” Toft says, adding philosophically, “a burger’s not good unless it’s messy. So we had some challenges. We persevered and we got a fantastic project in the end.”

For Bjelland, the work is just beginning. RREAL’s Community Solar for Community Action program, which partners with local Minnesota communities to implement cost-saving solar energy projects, is currently working with the White Earth Nation to install what Bjelland describes as “basically a replica of the Leech Lake model.” When asked what advice she would give the managers of a similar project, she points to importance of having strong community partners.

“It’s about reducing carbon emissions,” she says. “But it’s also about empowering people.”

Works Cited:

Allen, Barbara, Vicki O’Day, and Eric Rehm. “Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe: Community Solar for Community Action.” March 7, 2018. https://0dbcdc78-aef4-46cd-9ed3-46c38d944e92.filesusr.com/ugd/eed9c8_67fe2f63d6d14cb0bd13804196455b41.pdf. Accessed February 4, 2020.

Toft, Brandy. “Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Sustainable Energy Portfolio.” November 2018. Accessed February 4, 2020.