



## *The Massachusetts Land Initiative for Tomorrow*

### **2015 Community Engagement Land Coordinator Position Opening** **with Hilltown Land Trust & Kestrel Land Trust**

The Massachusetts Land Initiative for Tomorrow (MassLIFT) AmeriCorps program was initiated and is managed by Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust as a collaborative effort of regional conservation organizations seeking to increase the pace of land protection across the Commonwealth. This year, 22 AmeriCorps members will serve in the MassLIFT program, helping their hosting organizations meet critical community needs for land protection, stewardship of protected lands, outreach to the broader community, and service learning opportunities to engage young people in conservation. To learn more about MassLIFT AmeriCorps visit [masslift.org](http://masslift.org).

**AmeriCorps** engages more than 75,000 men and women in intensive service each year through more than 15,000 nonprofits, schools, public agencies, and community and faith-based groups across the country. AmeriCorps members help communities tackle pressing problems and also leverage their service by mobilizing volunteers to help address community needs for environmental stewardship, health, education, economic opportunity, disaster services, and support to veterans and military families. To learn more about AmeriCorps visit [americorps.gov](http://americorps.gov).

MassLIFT-AmeriCorps is a grant program contingent upon renewal of federal funding from the Corporation of National and Community Service (CNCS). CNCS grants to AmeriCorps programs in Massachusetts are administered by the Massachusetts Service Alliance.

**The Massachusetts Service Alliance (MSA, [mass-service.org](http://mass-service.org))** is a private, nonprofit organization that serves as the state commission on community service and volunteerism. MSA's mission is to catalyze the innovation and growth of service and volunteerism by creating partnerships that maximize resources, expertise, capacity, and impact. MassLIFT is one of 22 AmeriCorps programs for which MSA currently administers funding and supports program implementation.

#### **AmeriCorps Member Eligibility Requirements**

This year's MassLIFT program will run from September 8, 2015 through August 5, 2016. All MassLIFT-AmeriCorps members are expected to serve full-time, commit to serve for the entire eleven month term, and complete 1,700 hours of service. The 1,700 hours includes time spent in trainings and service with the full MassLIFT team. Weekly service averages 35 hours and commonly includes some night and/or weekend activities.

Applicants must also meet the following AmeriCorps requirements:

- a US citizen, US national, or Lawful Permanent Resident Alien of the U.S.

- at least 18-years-of-age
- a minimum of a high school diploma or GED
- no more than three previous terms as an AmeriCorps member
- pass a criminal history background check
- if serving primarily with vulnerable populations such as youth and the elderly, also pass an FBI check. (This requirement applies to MassLIFT Service Learning Coordinators.)

AmeriCorps programs provide equal employment opportunities. MassLIFT will recruit and select persons in all positions to ensure a diverse and inclusive climate without regard to race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, veteran status, color, political affiliation, creed, national origin, marital status, or any other status as protected by federal, state, and local laws. We encourage applications from individuals with disabilities and will provide reasonable accommodations for interviews and service upon request.

### **Member Compensation and Benefits:**

- MassLIFT-AmeriCorps members will receive a living allowance of \$12,530 over the 11 month term of service, or \$501.20 per 25 biweekly pay period.
- MassLIFT assists members in obtaining health insurance coverage through [healthcare.gov](http://healthcare.gov). Reimbursement of costs may be available.
- Childcare assistance may be provided in cases of financial need.
- Upon successful completion of the term of service, AmeriCorps members will receive a \$5,730 education award, which can be used for future education or to pay off existing school loans. See [edaward.org](http://edaward.org) for more info and restrictions.
- Individuals in approved AmeriCorps positions are eligible for forbearance of most federally-guaranteed student loans.
- MassLIFT-AmeriCorps members gain skills in land conservation, attend a statewide conference, and participate in team trainings and other professional development opportunities.
- AmeriCorps members experience the personal rewards of national service and community engagement.

Note: MassLIFT-AmeriCorps members are responsible for their own housing and must have access to reliable transportation.

### **Positions**

The 2015 MassLIFT-AmeriCorps program will support twenty-two full-time AmeriCorps members, serving in one of four positions: seven Land Stewardship Coordinators (LSC), five Regional Conservation Coordinators (RCC), six Community Engagement Coordinators (CEC), and four Service Learning Coordinators (SLC). The positions differ in their emphasis on land protection, stewardship, community outreach, and youth or adult education. All positions involve recruiting, teaching, and training community volunteers, conservation staff, and others to participate in and implement AmeriCorps members' projects.

For the 2015-2016 service year, Hilltown Land Trust and Kestrel Land Trust will each be hosting a Land Stewardship Coordinator and sharing a Community Engagement Coordinator. Information about the CEC position is detailed below. Information about Mass*LIFT* positions hosted by other organizations is available on the Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust's "Join MassLIFT" website: [masslift.org](http://masslift.org).

### **2015 Community Engagement Coordinator Position Opening with Hilltown Land Trust & Kestrel Land Trust**

**Hilltown Land Trust**  
**332 Bullitt Road**  
**Ashfield, MA 01330**  
**[Hilltown-land-trust.org](http://Hilltown-land-trust.org)**

Hilltown Land Trust (HLT) serves thirteen rural towns in western Massachusetts (Ashfield, Chester, Chesterfield, Conway, Cummington, Goshen, Huntington, Middlefield, Plainfield, Westhampton, Williamsburg, Windsor and Worthington). HLT's mission is to maintain the area's working farms and forest as vital part of Hilltown life, and to protect the area's rich ecological resources, species diversity, native habitats, water quality, and unique scenic landscapes. Since our founding in 1986, HLT has acquired 31 conservation restrictions (CRs) and eight fee properties protecting 3,200 acres. HLT maintains three active hiking trails with plans to develop and additional trail in the coming year. In 2010, HLT and The Trustees of Reservations (The Trustees), one of America's oldest statewide conservation organizations, launched a new partnership that combines the efforts and resources of these two non-profit land conservation organizations in the Hilltowns. HLT and The Trustees continue to function as independent entities, but are now pooling resources in order to increase the pace of land conservation in the Hilltowns.

**Kestrel Land Trust**  
**284 N. Pleasant St.**  
**Amherst, MA**  
**[Kestreltrust.org](http://Kestreltrust.org)**

Kestrel Land Trust is a regional land trust serving the 19-town region surrounding Amherst and Northampton. Our mission is to protect the land that sustains the ecological integrity and quality of life in the Connecticut River Valley. Founded in 1970, Kestrel has conserved more than 19,000 acres in the Valley. Kestrel is responsible for stewarding over 2,000 acres of conservation lands and conservation restrictions. Throughout our history, we have partnered with landowners, governmental agencies, citizen groups, and other organizations to protect farmland, woodlands, wildlands, wildlife habitat, water resources, historic landscapes, rare and endangered species habitat, and scenic vistas in the heart of the Valley.

### **Community Engagement Coordinator**

MassLIFT Community Engagement Coordinators (CECs) help communities enhance and expand public support for land conservation by building the capacity of regional land trusts and partnered organizations to: 1) reach new audiences and establish new conservation partnerships; 2) offer programs that bring people outdoors to learn about and appreciate nature and the land; and 3) secure the resources and volunteers that they need for improving their conservation properties to better serve community recreation or nature education goals. CEC's work with volunteers to coordinate outreach events that

attract diverse interests, and they identify opportunities to partner with non-conservation focused civic groups on community service projects with overlapping relevance for both groups. Examples of community service projects coordinated by CECs include, but are not limited to: 1) building community gardens and recruiting volunteers to sustain them 2) organizing volunteers to revitalize public parks; 3) helping volunteer municipal boards plan recreational uses for community forests; 4) designing and maintaining recreational trails with community members; and 5) initiating urban greening projects in vacant lots with neighborhood groups.

MassLIFT AmeriCorps members work with their supervisors to develop and carryout six or more capacity building projects over the course of the service year. Many of these projects will involve recruiting, training, and managing community volunteers. For the 2015-16 service year, Hilltown Land Trust will share a Community Engagement Coordinator with Kestrel Land Trust, with the CEC serving half of their time with each organization.

**Hilltown Land Trust** has proposed the following projects for the CEC:

- 1) Plan and promote monthly HLT events including hikes, educational talks, a race and other creative activities.
- 2) Engage new audiences and partner groups by establishing a stronger social media presence for HLT including creating website video content, improving the organization's monthly e-news publication and enhancing the organization's facebook and twitter content and following.
- 3) Work with teachers, students and volunteers at a local public school to enhance an outdoor classroom such as a school garden, composting system or trail.

**Kestrel Land Trust** has proposed these projects for the CEC:

- 4) Conduct a community needs assessment in targeted geographic areas for challenges that could be addressed, directly or indirectly, by conservation.
- 5) Enhance and expand Kestrel's current social media program based on best practices, including FaceBook, Twitter, and creating a blog or Instagram profile.
- 6) Develop and implement programs to reach underserved constituencies based on the community needs assessment to provide memorable, positive experiences in nature and on the land.

Development of these and other projects will occur during the first two months of service and consider the member's interests and skills.

Essential Qualifications:

- A strong interest in working with community groups, landowners, and town boards on land conservation projects
- Comfort presenting in front of groups
- Strong writing, communication, and networking skills
- Strong social media skills including Facebook, Twitter, website development
- Able to work both independently and as a member of a team
- Familiarity with Microsoft Office programs

Desired Qualifications:

- Experience recruiting, training, and managing volunteers
- Experience in local government, or civic organizations
- Marketing experience or experience developing public information materials
- Familiarity with land conservation in Massachusetts

For questions about Hilltown Land Trust's service position, contact Sally Loomis at [sloomis@ttor.org](mailto:sloomis@ttor.org).  
For questions about Kestrel Land Trust's position, contact Kari Blood at [kari@kestreltrust.org](mailto:kari@kestreltrust.org).

**How to Apply**

Hosting organizations, service positions, and application procedures are described in the *Join MassLIFT* section of the MassLIFT-AmeriCorps website: [masslift.org](http://masslift.org).

The member application includes a completed application form, the names of three references, a resume, and a 1- 2 page cover letter. Download the application form from the *Join MassLIFT* website. Scan the completed form, resume, and cover letter into one PDF file and email this file to [admin@masslift.org](mailto:admin@masslift.org).

Member applications will be available for viewing by all of our host sites. Do not send applications directly to a host site.

We strongly encourage applications to be submitted before interviews begin in late May. Position offers and acceptances will begin in early June. The program aims to fill all positions by late July, but host sites may continue interviews as needed until all positions are filled.

For questions about MassLIFT-AmeriCorps, contact Sean Pollock, Program Director, Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust, Athol, MA. w: 978-248-2043 x16; c: 413-522-3996 or email [admin@masslift.org](mailto:admin@masslift.org).