One of the largest out-of-school-time youth organizations in the United States seeks to expand its program in metropolitan areas in Illinois. University of Illinois Extension 4-H Youth Development Program is a national and international youth development program administered throughout the state by the University of Illinois Urbana Champaign as part of the services available in every county. These positions will focus on meeting the needs of youth in Illinois’ most populated communities by developing targeted innovative program models.

Candidates must be able to thrive in a self-directed environment and work with local organizations in communities and neighborhoods to create environments that support positive youth development. Initial work resembles community organizing as the Educator spends time getting to know the community systems, influencers, resources, challenges and opportunities. The Educator will deliver high-quality youth development experiences, by assessing opportunities to provide informal and formal education to adults and older youth who in turn work with youth. Youth organizations already in existence can access the resources of the University of Illinois via the Extension Educator. Where youth need additional opportunities to thrive, the Educator matches adult volunteers with groups of youth and together they engage in learning activities that stimulate hands-on learning by doing.

Each of the following units has a full-time Extension Educator, Youth Development (Metro Communities) opening:

- Unit 3, Lake and McHenry County
- Additional positions may become available in other locations

This is a security-sensitive position. Comprehensive background checks, including but not limited to a criminal conviction information check, a CANTS check, and a review of the Registered Sex Offender list, will be conducted.

Specific Responsibilities Include:

- Provide program leadership, interpret and integrate information, deliver programs in the field of designated expertise, maintain the competencies to develop and deliver educational programming, and assist clients with the appropriate resource bases.
- Assess the needs of select metropolitan neighborhoods in a systematic and analytical manner. This may include networking and collaborating with community organizations and other relevant groups. Common local collaborators to include faith-based organizations, after-school providers, and community action groups. Market and represent Extension’s interests to external partners and stakeholders in areas related to youth development.
- Interact effectively and equitably with diverse individuals, building long-term relationships with diverse communities. Examine current 4-H policies and procedures to ensure inclusiveness. Develop educational opportunities for youth that are culturally relevant.
- Within the area of Youth Development, develop innovative curricula and programs to address local needs as well as to mesh with the broader state and national interdisciplinary initiatives. Utilize the knowledge of growth and development, positive youth development, ecological model, community organizing, and resiliency theory to create environments that help youth to reach their full potential.
- Plan, implement, and evaluate high impact programs that achieve positive youth development outcomes. Evaluation plans should be initiated in a planned and statistically relevant fashion, focused not only on short-term impacts but also on long-term changes in youth environments.
Build and maintain volunteer management systems for the delivery of youth development programs. System to include recruitment, selection, orientation, training, supervising, recognizing, and evaluating. Current programing is dependent on adults and older youth with an interest in science, gardening, or health. Work to engage volunteers with groups of youth in sustained and longer-term learning experiences.

Engage youth in community development and the broader community in youth development. Form youth-adult partnerships, and foster environments that support youth organizing for community change.

Compete for internal and external resources to enhance the development of innovative educational programs with potential for high impact. Attention to detail is critical to sustained grant funding.

Continually seek professional development opportunities to enhance competencies in youth development; youth program development; volunteerism, equity, access, and opportunity; partnerships; and organizational systems. Be an active member within a professional society(s) to keep abreast of changes within relevant discipline(s). Establish professional relationships and participate in campus-based partnerships that tie academic programs and research to complement Extension programming by partnering with Extension Specialists and/or faculty members on research projects as appropriate within youth development.

Partner externally with local youth organizations, corporations focused on civic engagement, businesses committed to youth development; and internally with Extension Educators from other disciplines to match needs with input and ultimately achieve mutual outcomes.

Provide local clientele access to the academic and research programs at and through the University of Illinois.

When possible, link metro youth to higher education access points.

Develop effective and contemporary approaches to communicate with clientele. This may include constantly evolving electronic technologies (e.g. twitter, facebook, blogs, e-learning, Skype, etc.)

Represent the needs of underserved metro youth clientele in planning and management of the overall Unit 4-H Youth Development Program. When sensible, foster and develop linkages between metro youth development programs and other youth development programs occurring in the Unit.

Assist with and support the total University of Illinois Extension program. As needed, accept statewide responsibilities as requested by the Program Leader. Develop professional collaborations with the County Director and Extension Council members. Cooperate with the County Director to achieve budget goals and relevant grant initiatives. As requested, supervise civil service personnel. Comply with all reporting deadlines and requirements. Market and represent Extension’s interests to external partners and stakeholders in areas related to youth development.

Serve as an effective team member and volunteer for leadership roles as appropriate.

Comply with all University of Illinois Extension Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity policies and guidelines.

Perform other duties that contribute to University of Illinois Extension programming, as assigned.

Administrative Relationship: Extension Educators are administratively responsible to the County Director.

Program Relationship: Extension Educators are programmatically responsible to the Program Leader(s) for the delivery of programs that mesh with identified national and state priorities.

Required Qualifications

- A Master’s degree related to subject matter from an accredited institution of higher education in youth development, sociology, social work, psychology, human services, community education, urban studies, community development, communications, public administration, or related field.
- Experience in metropolitan setting with multi-cultural audiences.
- Ability to work variable hours including some weeknights, weekends, occasional overnight travel required. Personal transportation required.
• Must be able to use technology to communicate, present, and teach.
• Successful candidate will be self-directed. Demonstrated success as a program developer; able to network effectively, think critically, build evaluation into all aspects of the work, envision and articulate strategy, and achieve results.
• Evidence of strong interpersonal skills, oral and written communication skills, and effectiveness in a team environment.

Preferred Qualifications
• Experience working with youth in out-of-school-time group-oriented environments is strongly preferred.
• Ability to converse in Spanish.
• Teaching experience in non-informal and formal settings.
• Experience in community organizing and volunteer development.
• Experience working with adult mentors and influencers of youth.
• Experience with teens as teachers of subject matter.
• Interest in science, gardening, or health.

Additional Information
The position is a full-time, benefits-eligible academic professional position appointed on a 12-month service basis. The expected start date is as soon as possible after the closing date. Salary is commensurate with experience and qualifications.

Application Procedure: To apply, go to http://go.illinois.edu/A1300064 and click Apply Now. Log in to your account and upload a cover letter and resume addressing your qualifications as they align with the job description. In addition, step one of the online application will require the names and contact information of three professional references. Transcripts may be requested at a later date.

To receive full consideration, all requested application materials must be submitted via the online system by the close date of March 11, 2013. For further information please contact Denise Legvold at dlegvold@illinois.edu.

Illinois is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer and welcomes individuals with diverse backgrounds, experiences, and ideas who embrace and value diversity and inclusivity. (www.inclusiveillinois.illinois.edu).