



CONNECT Opportunity Building VISTA  
The Neighborhood Developers, Chelsea, MA

*Help our proud and diverse clients support their families and avoid homelessness! As a VISTA, you will create and evaluate systems to get our residents get back to work quickly in living wage jobs.*

**The Neighborhood Developers, Inc.** (<http://theneighborhooddevelopers.org/>) creates vibrant neighborhoods where people from all walks of life can thrive. Focused on three cities that abut Boston to the north (Chelsea, Revere, and Everett), TND brings its core strengths -- building homes, engaging neighbors, and fostering economic mobility -- to community partnerships that create thriving families and strong neighborhoods.

One of TND's signature initiatives is the CONNECT Financial Opportunity Center which addresses the needs of our largely immigrant constituency by providing a mix of services designed to help clients find a job, manage household expenses, resolve housing issues, improve employment skills, and build aspirations for a better economic future.

### **Program Description**

Our AmeriCorps VISTA alumni describe their year of service as a transformative experience. As the Opportunity Building VISTA, you will play a critical role in helping build and evaluate our new employment services to make sure they are responsive to our clients interests, barriers, skills and dreams. You will learn a great deal about workforce development (a booming social justice field post-pandemic), while helping create critically-needed opportunities for our constituents to land family-sustaining jobs that enable them to stay in their homes.

CONNECT, the direct services and partnership arm of The Neighborhood Developers, a community development corporation, serves residents of the cities of Chelsea, Revere and Everett, MA. These are Gateway Cities that have been home to new immigrants for many years. In Chelsea, 45% of residents are foreign born and 65% identify as Latino. Revere has sizeable Latino, Moroccan and Cambodian populations. These are tight knit communities that have pride of place even though they are low income and face multiple barriers.

But a combination of the pandemic – which resulted in disproportionate job loss in our cities – and gentrification pressures – due to our cities' proximity to Boston - are threatening the very heart and soul of our communities. Rising rents and low wages mean that our residents are at risk of being pushed out of their homes and the nature of our communities will be changed forever. In coalition with grassroots partners and supportive city officials, CONNECT is building a rapid reemployment unit to get people back to work and into “good” jobs so that they can afford the rising rents. At the same time, huge labor market shortages present new opportunities to engage with employers – to press them to look at potential, rather than credentials, and to invest in living wages and training to recruit and retain workers. The Opportunity Building VISTA will play a pivotal role in this critical work.

### **VISTA Member Duties**

In 2022 – 2023, the Opportunity Building VISTA will engage in the following activities that help our largely immigrant constituency land jobs:



1. **Assess the CONNECT Hotline's new COVID response re-employment feature:** this work would include surveying clients served and overseeing focus groups. We need help evaluating what is working and what is not and want your recommendations for improvements to better serve our clients.
2. **Formalize Directories:** We are starting to create a directory of trainings (i.e, ESL and job trainings) in our area that are easily accessible to and affordable for our clients. We also plan to build a directory of employers who are eager to work with us to provide jobs for our community members.
3. **Plan and Deliver Job Search Workshops and/or Fairs:** The VISTA will develop targeted job search workshops and help to organize and execute several job and training fairs.
4. **Create Systems** to transition your work to permanent staff members at the end of VISTA year.

Please note this is a VISTA member position, not a staff position. The VISTA member will be supervised by the CONNECT Director and will work closely with the other workforce development staff. The VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) program provides full-time volunteers to nonprofit, faith-based and other community organizations to create and expand programs that bring low-income individuals and communities out of poverty. In addition to a living allowance, the VISTA program offers an education award or cash stipend, health insurance, and week-long training in a U.S. city. In Suffolk County (where TND is located), service members receive a bi-weekly living allowance of \$1027.88 and can choose an education award of \$6,495 at end of their year of service. For more information about AmeriCorps VISTA, see <https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/ameriCorps/ameriCorpsvista>

### Qualifications

Required:

- A commitment to social justice
- College degree or relevant work history
- At least 18 years of age
- Strong analytic skills
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills
- Responsible, self-motivated, and able to carry out and prioritize multiple ongoing projects
- Thrives in a fast-paced work environment
- Ability to work occasional evenings or weekends, not to exceed 40 hours/week
- Strong work ethic, a good sense of humor

Desired:

- Experience working in a diverse multi-cultural community
- Relevant experience in community development / workforce programs

### To Apply

Please email a resume and cover letter to <https://oppco.hiringthing.com/job/445748/connect-opportunity-building-vista> . Applications will be accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis until the position is filled - through August 12, 2022. TND is an Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Employer.

