



Welcome to

The Importance of the VAD in VISTA Projects



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Today's Speaker



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National &
Community Service



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Education Northwest

Session Goals

By the end of the webinar, you will be able to:

- Learn what the VAD is and how it is used
- Understand the importance of the VAD
- Identify why difficulties with the VAD arise
- Address key issues that come up with the VAD

VISTA Campus

ABOUT VISTA

LIFE AS A VISTA

THE WORK

CONNECT & LEARN

LEADERS

SUPERVISORS

BECOMING A SUPERVISOR

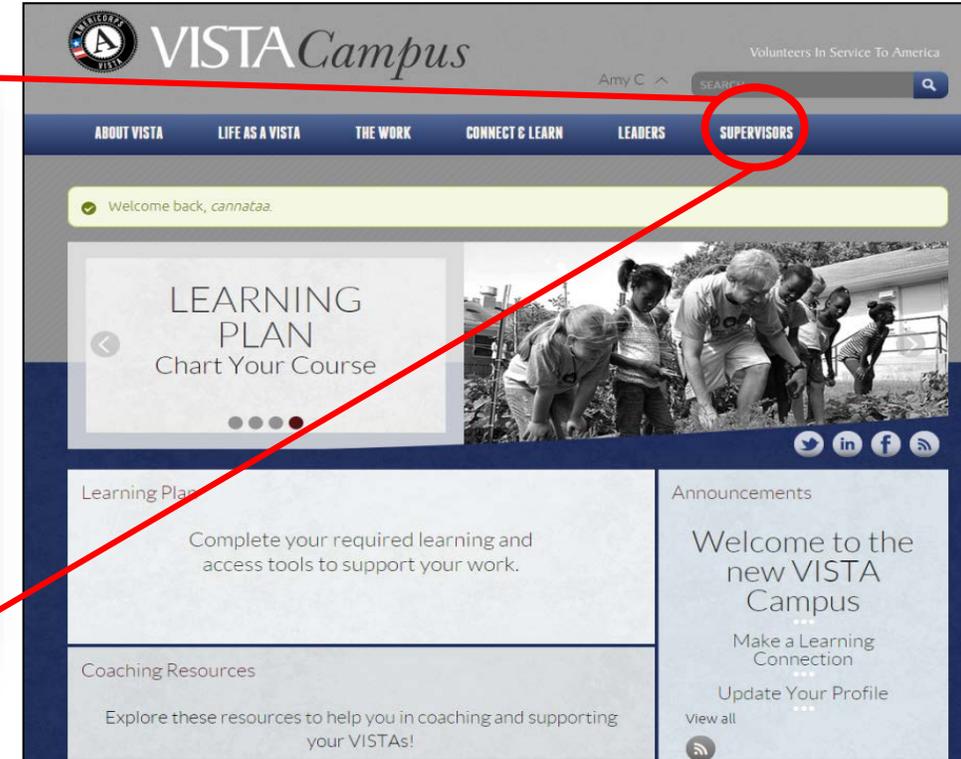
VISTA Supervisors Manual
The Big Picture
Getting Started
Member Policies
Contacts

SUPERVISING YOUR VISTAS

The VISTA Assignment
Recruiting
Orienting Your VISTA
Coaching and Supporting
Ongoing Training
Transitioning
Member Handbook

OTHER

Reporting and Evaluation
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What is the VAD?

- Details activities a VISTA member will perform
- Foundation on which the entire member experience is built
- Customized for each VISTA member and each project year
- Both a position description and work plan

What does a VAD do?

- Translates proposal milestones into a realistic set of activities
- Guides the member and supervisor throughout the year
- Evolves to fit the member and project needs

The VAD Matters Because...

- It is essential to recruitment and selection
- It supports service preparation at PSO
- It is used as a management tool
- It supports project accountability

Key Elements of a VAD

1. Title
2. Details
3. Project Goal
4. Objectives
5. Member Activities



Project Goal

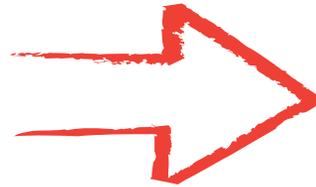
TIP: Copy and paste the Goal of the Project directly from the Goal Statement in your Project Plan (part of the Project Application).

- Addresses Poverty
- Defines how the VISTA activities will build capacity

PROJECT GOAL: To help ensure that children of incarcerated parents receive the educational, social, and emotional support they need to help them break the cycle of poverty, the MentorCorps VISTA project will build the capacity of WCS by developing a sustainable volunteer recruitment and management systems for its mentoring program.

Objectives & Member Activities

Objectives identify what the VISTA will achieve



Member activities specify what VISTAs will be doing to achieve objectives

SAMPLE OBJECTIVE:

By 8/19/2018, set up outreach systems and build partnerships with community organizations—and then develop targeted marketing materials—to spread the word about the mentor program.

SAMPLE ACTIVITIES:

- a. Identify the skills, abilities, and experiences sought in volunteer mentors by 1/30/2018.
- b. Write volunteer task descriptions that include qualifications, activities, benefits, the time commitment, and other expectations by February 28, 2018

Difficulties With VADs



Difficulty #1: VAD language is unclear or unrealistic

“I once reviewed a VAD that asked the member to recruit 150 new youth mentors within their project year yet, they didn’t have a mentoring program in place or understand the difficulties of recruiting mentors for a yearlong commitment.”

- VISTA Supervisor Training Facilitator



Reasons for Unclear/Unrealistic Language



- The description of member activities is broad or general
- Lack of due dates for each activity create confusion around prioritizing
- Tasks are unrealistic for a one-year VISTA project

Sample VAD Review

What makes this VAD strong?
Do you see examples of clear and realistic language?

VAD Sample

TITLE	Mentor Recruitment and Management Systems Designer
SPONSORING ORGANIZATION	Waketa Community Services (WCS)
PROJECT NAME	MentorCorps
PROJECT NUMBER	12ABCD345
PROJECT PERIOD	08/20/20XX - 08/19/20YY
SITE NAME	<i>if applicable</i>
FOCUS AREA(S)	Education (Primary)
NOTE	If your VAD is not accepted, the State Office will note the reason(s) why here.

VISTA Assignment Objectives & Member Activities

PROJECT GOAL *To help ensure that children of incarcerated parents receive the educational, social, and emotional support they need to break the cycle of poverty, the MentorCorps VISTA project will build the capacity of WCS by developing a sustainable volunteer recruitment and management system for its mentoring program.*

Tips: Overcoming Difficulty #1



- Ensure that the member activity is clear and has a specific focus
- Break down complex activities into sub-tasks
- Provide the specific timelines for each activity so the member can meaningfully prioritize activities
- Do a reality check to ensure that activities could be reasonably accomplished by one individual during one year

Difficulty #2: Coordination Among Sites

“How should the intermediary help sub-site supervisors write a meaningful VAD with tangible outcomes and clear directives that make sense to perspective VISTAs, site stakeholders, and the supervisor?”

-Intermediary



Reasons Coordination is Difficult



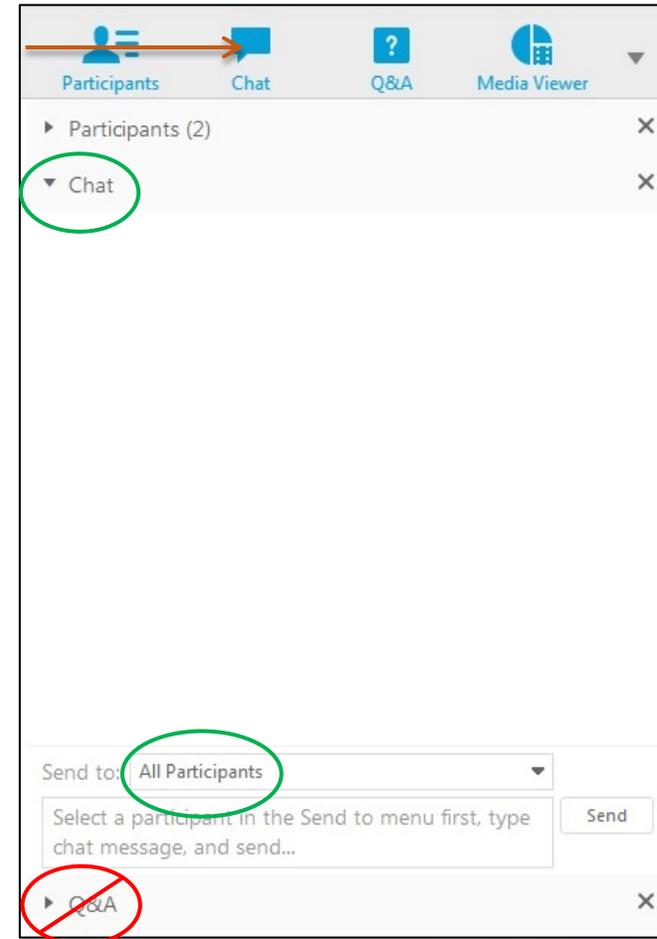
- Different pressures for Intermediary Projects
- Unclear roles in VAD development
- Untrained site supervisors

Chat Question

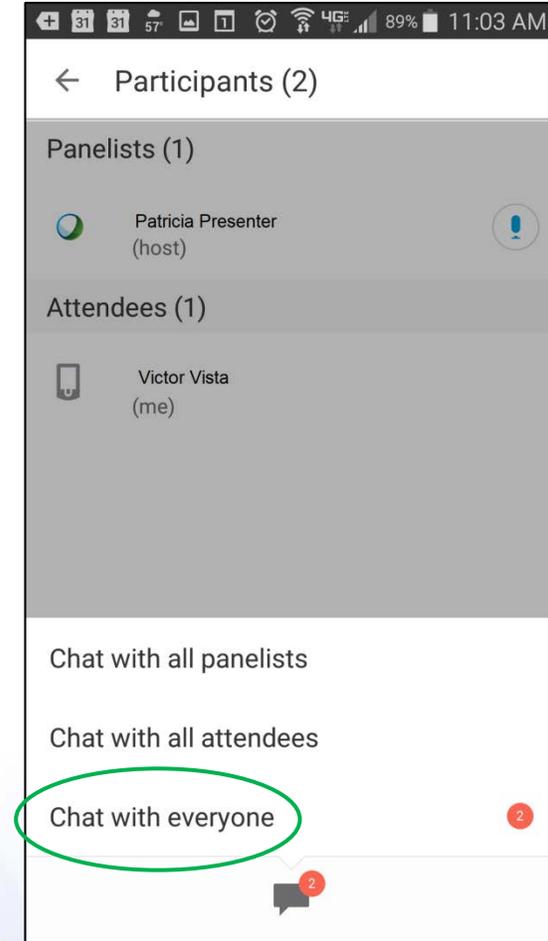
- What have you found to be successful when collaborating to develop or refine VADs?

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Tips: Overcoming Difficulty #2



1. Intermediaries should offer a training to orient sub-site supervisors to the VAD and project roles
2. Intermediaries and site supervisors can collaborate to write and/or customize VADs for each sites needs
3. Use templates and examples to maintain quality

Difficulty #3: Incorrect or Placeholder VAD

“At PSO, there are often VISTAs with incomplete or incorrect VADs or VADs that have not been uploaded at all. Having the correct VAD at PSO is essential to completing the PSO curriculum in a manner that is most effective.”

–VISTA Training Unit Staffer



Tips: Overcoming Difficulty #3



- Project Directors work closely with sites to ensure a process and procedure is in place
- Person responsible for VISTA recruitment sets a date by which they will have the correct VAD in place
- Intermediary holds person with “recruiter access” in eGrants accountable for updating placeholder VADs

Difficulty #4: The supervisor inherits a VAD

“My biggest challenges with VADs has been taking on the supervisory role from another and having to revise an existing VAD.”

-VISTA Supervisor



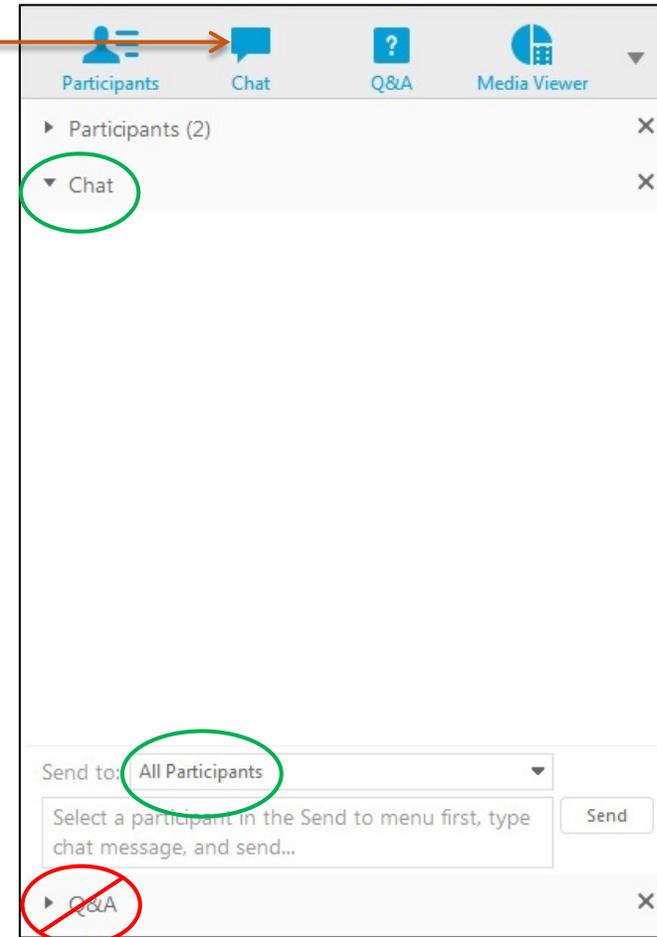
Chat Question

Difficulty #4: The supervisor inherits a VAD

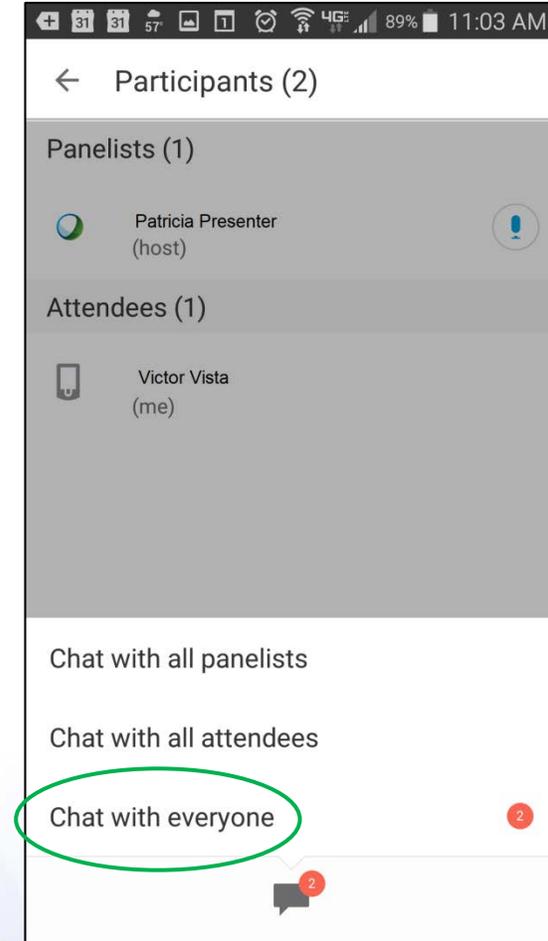
- “Raise Your Hand” if you have experienced inheriting a VAD that was not yours originally?
- If you have, use the chat panel to explain ways you overcame this difficulty.

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Tips: Overcoming Difficulty #4



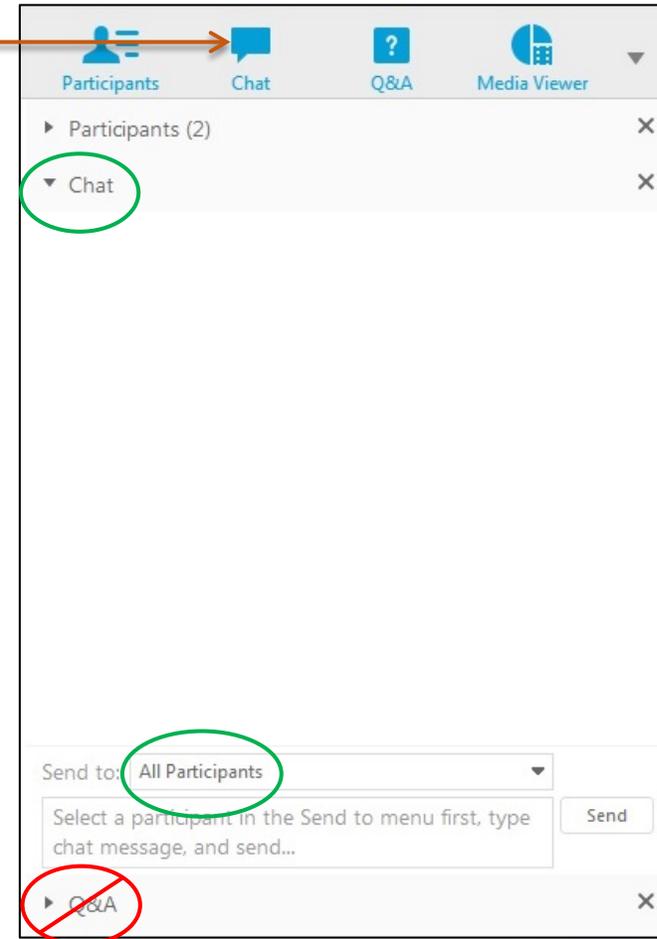
1. Get clarity on the overall goal for your VISTA project to put your inherited VAD in context
2. If needed, revise the VAD in collaboration with the VISTA (and Intermediary if applicable)
3. Follow the chain of communication—changes in VADs can affect performance measures and how data are gathered

Next Steps

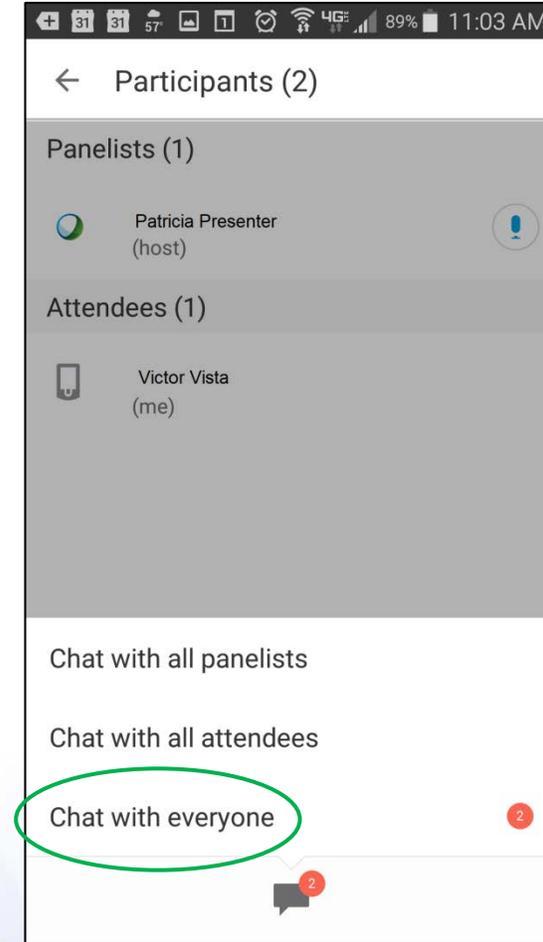
- List one thing you will do based on what you learned in this webinar.

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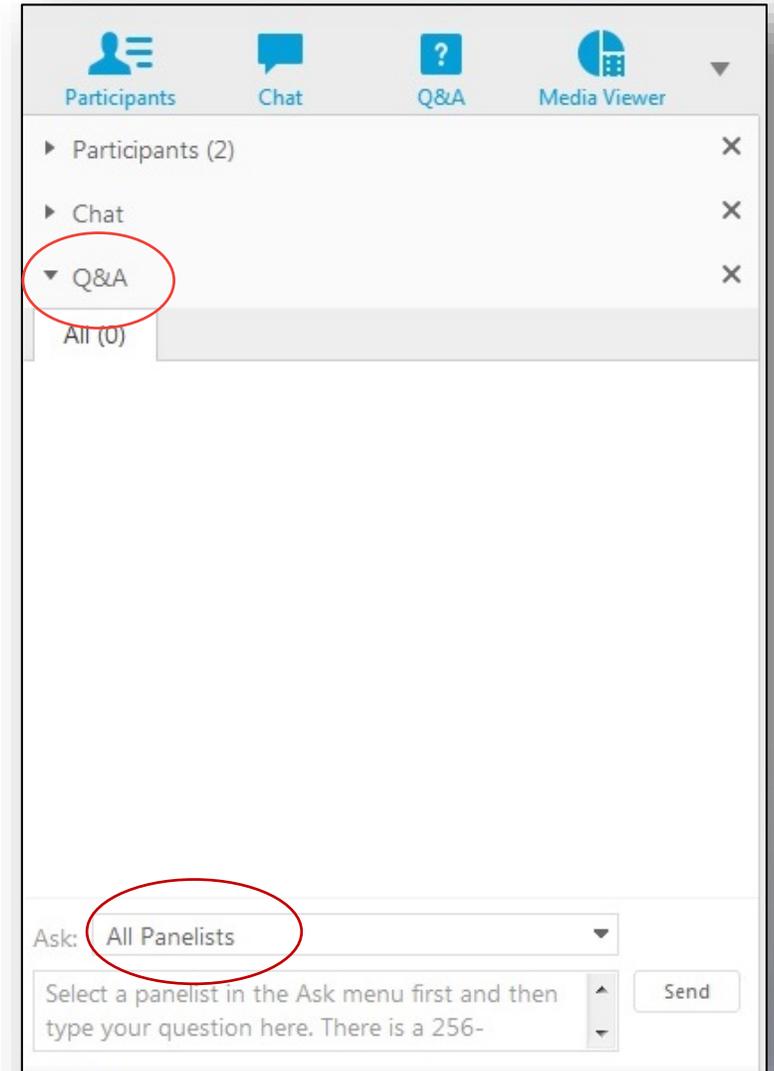


Evaluation

- Please take a few moments to share your feedback through the quick poll on the right side of the screen.
- How can we improve these sessions? What topics should we include in future webinars?
- Thank you very much for your time and participation!

Questions ?

- To ask a question verbally, call in using the number on this slide and press *1
- To ask a question electronically, use the Q&A feature located in the bottom right corner of the screen. Please ask “All Panelists”



Thank You for Your Participation!

If you have further questions or for more information, contact us:

VISTAwebinars@cns.gov

Upcoming Supervisor webinar:

**Supervisor Circle:
Member Training and
Professional Development**

September 20, 2017

2:00pm Eastern

Upcoming VISTA member webinar:

**Plan Your Professional
Development**

July 27, 2017

2:00pm Eastern

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for a schedule of upcoming webinars and recordings of past webinars*