

THE VISTA VOICE

Welcome to Our First Issue of the Term!

A Note from the Editor

I wanted to take a moment and welcome you to the ShareCorps family! I am honored to get the privilege of working with and getting to know each of you. I also want to take this opportunity to reiterate that my job is to be here and support you through your year however you need. That could be mediating conflicts, researching and providing resources, being a listening ear, providing a reference, etc. When in doubt give me a call or shoot me an email and ask if what you need is something I can help with. I am so excited to see and help your impact in your programs and communities! You are the change makers and I can't wait to be of service to you.

~Caitlin



VISTA Advisory Council

Providing guidance, edits, and guest articles for the VISTA Voice and general programming

Portia Small — GRAD Cincinnati

Zoe Jones — Greater Cleveland Foodbank

Rachel Scherzer — Otterbein University

Kaimyn Paszko — Toledo Northwestern Foodbank

Nada Popovic — Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank

Have ideas you want to contribute? Email cballinger@ohiofoodbanks.org to share and get involved.

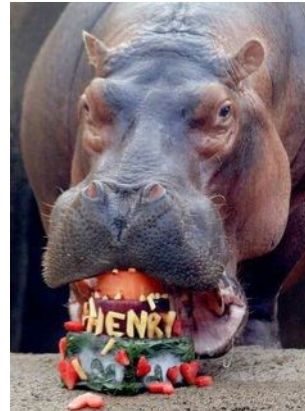
Fun Facts

- Over 400 VISTA members have served ShareCorps in the last decade!
- Ohio is the leading producer of greenhouse and nursery plants in the nation.
- Despite its stocky shape and short legs, a hippo can easily outrun most humans. Hippos have been clocked at 30 km/h over short distances.
- Roughly 20% of ShareCorps' VISTA members are hired by their host sites.

VISTA Birthdays!

July, August & September celebrations!

Amy Raymond — July 7
 Whitney Reardon — July 24
 Angela Aaron — August 1
 Crystal Crisp — August 4
 Becky Taylor — August 10
 Sheldon Lawrence — August 18
 Ann Viancourt — August 22
 Zarek Bell — September 24



May you all
 enjoy your
 birthday cake
 as much as
 Henry!

Self-Care Warfare By Caitlin Ballinger

As VISTAs, we all know, or are learning, how poverty affects a person to the core; being unfocused from hunger, a lack of confidence because one can't afford the luxury of personal hygiene, disconnectedness from exhaustion, a loss of faith that things can get better because we do not see tangible change often enough, etc. What we might not have realized yet is that although we have chosen to live this year in poverty, both personally and surrounded by its effects in our communities, we are subject to its pervasive symptoms as well. We must actively take care of ourselves to combat the effects of our environments. We all know our work is important and you may be thinking to yourself, "Caitlin, I don't have time for bubble baths and ice cream and 'treat yourself.' I have work to do!" and I would agree with you! We DO have important work to do, and we can not afford to be unfocused because we are tired, sore, hungry, worried, distracted, etc. The epitome of caring is caring enough about others to make sure you are in top notch shape to give. You cannot pour from an empty vessel, am I right? So, what are we going to do about it?

I have some ideas:

- Leave work at work! If you had a meaningful experience today, absolutely share it with your loved ones, pet, journal, mirror... but don't let it consume your every moment. Make a to do list of what didn't get done today and prioritize it for tomorrow instead of taking work home. 1) there's no telecommuting in VISTA, but 2) you need time away from it to rest and come back fresh, logical, and creative to get it done.
- SLEEP! Take time to actually rest. The body and the mind take on a lot of damage working on the stressful things we work on all day. Low level stress on a consistent basis is as damaging (if not more) than sudden spikes of stress. Sleep allows our bodies and minds to heal and come back ready to fight another day!

- Eat well! Yes, food is fuel and as such you must put top notch fuel into your precision machine (and you are all luxury vehicles requiring the toppest of notch fuel). Make time to eat and try to eat well. Whether you make a conscious effort to get your daily servings of vegetables (or at least 1 more than usual) or you just get an extra glass of water in, it makes a difference you'll feel.
- Play hooky. I mean it. Take time for yourself. You have personal and sick days for your mental and physical health as well as your schedule. Don't play so much that you aren't working, but take time to do the things you love. Plan to skip a Tuesday and hit the museum or hike or simply go to the grocery in peace. Do something you love everyday and take some days to do only the things that bring you unadulterated joy.
- Meditate. Whatever that means for you, do it. If that is taking a walk around the building to bring awareness back to your body, breath, and soul or it means taking a moment at your desk to name your feelings without judgement and do a body scan to check in. Maybe it's as simple as taking 5 deep breathes just to get the oxygen moving again. Self-awareness is an important part of self-care and actually makes us better employees and friends so take the time to cultivate that awareness and be present.

When we feel good we do good. If you're still feeling a little guilty about the idea of self-care, think about it this way; in her 1988 book, *A Burst of Light*, Audre Lorde wrote that "caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation and that is an act of political warfare." So, hatch act or not, go commit some political warfare! You are part of a team fighting an entire system of poverty. You deserve what makes you well, productive, rested, and happy. Fight the system, eat your veggies, and have some fun too, kiddos!

Apps for Your Life!

Habitica: Habitica is a step above your basic “to-do” list app, allowing you to accrue points to spend on rewards as you check things off your list. You can also create and organize daily tasks and habits using this app. It features a tags function that allows you to hide or show tasks, so you can keep your work and home to-dos separate, if desired.

Zombies, Run! A running/jogging app that puts you in the role of scavenger for a base of survivors hiding from zombies. There is also a “free run” mode which uses GPS to find materials to use to upgrade your builder base.

Acorn: A beginner’s guide to investing. Acorn allows you to invest cents into micro-shares of stocks, so there’s no minimum investment. Just sync it with your debit card, and for every purchase, Acorn will round up to the nearest dollar and invest the difference for you.

Gas Buddy: Feeling anxious when it’s time to buy gas? This app will find the best prices and deals your area.



Happy Cow: A vegetarian/vegan restaurant finder, this helpful app will use your location to find vegan and vegetarian eats, as well as suggesting restaurants that offer non-meat selections. It allows you to read and add reviews, and provides links to the restaurants’ websites.

Hoopla: Borrow digital books, audio recordings, comics and graphic novels, music and DVDs with this app, all through your public library account.

Take a Break: A guided 2 minute to 15 minute meditation app (also available at iTunes store).

Have an app you enjoy and would like to share?

Send it to:
cballinger@ohiofoodbanks.org
 to add to future issues!

Recipe Corner

Who doesn’t like a good taco? We all have our favorite fillings (meat, mushrooms, peppers, tofu, what have you), but can you ever have enough variations of toppings to keep tacos new, fresh, and delicious? Try some of these bad boy taco toppings out:

Avocado Cream

- 1 ripe avocado
- 1/3 cup full fat, plain greek yogurt
- 1/4 cup minced cilantro
- 1 tablespoon lime juice

Mash avocado and then stir all ingredients together and either bottle or drizzle on EVERYTHING!

Garlic Cilantro Lime Slaw

- | | |
|--|-------------------------|
| 1/4 cup oil | 1/4 cup water |
| 1/2 cup chopped green onions | 1/2 cup cilantro leaves |
| 2-3 cloves garlic minced | 1/2 cup sour cream |
| 1/2 teaspoon salt | juice of 2 limes |
| 3-4 cups shredded cabbage (red, green, or mix) | |

Mix everything but the cabbage in a food processor, blender, or whisk together. Toss sauce with cabbage for a delicious slaw.

Peach Basil Salsa:

- 4 ripe firm peaches, finely chopped
 - Juice of 2 limes
 - 1/4 yellow or white onion, finely chopped
 - 2 teaspoons finely chopped basil
 - 1/8-1/4 teaspoon salt
 - 1 teaspoon chopped jalapeño (optional)
- Toss ingredients in a bowl, mix, and get scooping!



\$ MONEY \$

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-0kcet4aPpQ>

We all know that VISTAs have to be prepared to budget, but living a year of service at the poverty line doesn’t have to mean depriving yourself and/or going into debt! Below you’ll find articles, websites, and apps to save (and even make) you some of the green \$tuff.

Coupon Resources:

- couponersunited.com
- becomeacouponqueen.com (or king)

Cheap substitutions:

- Swap old wool and pantyhose for your dryer sheets
- Use Class Pass to pay by the class at a range of studios vs buying a couple gym memberships
- Swap baking soda, vinegar, and boiling water for drain cleaner
- Swap vinegar for your window cleaner
- Trade reusable cotton clothes for your paper towels
- Make convenience healthy and affordable by meal prepping instead of eating out or making mac and cheese every night

Money Making HACK\$:

- 8 sites that pay you for your grocery receipts:
 - Ibotta
 - Checkout 51
 - Receipt Hog
 - Receipt Pal
 - MobiSave
 - Berry Cart
 - Yaarlo
 - BevRAGE

Column: My VISTA Life By Portia Small

I was a senior in college when I first learned of AmeriCorps VISTA. I had a conversation with a VISTA member, Juwana Brown, and she told me about all of the good that VISTAs are doing around the country. I was intrigued, so I began searching online for more information and saw openings for different non-profits including food pantries, Habitat for Humanity, even schools and universities. I got excited realizing that I could work in an educational institution because I already had some experience and expertise in that realm.

I began thinking of the impact I could have working with students to help them achieve the point I was at; attending and being on track to graduate college. Excited about helping in that way, I re-

connected with Juwana and began the application process. About a month later, I was an AmeriCorps VISTA member with GRAD Cincinnati, an organization working with Cincinnati schools to help students be college-bound with success. GRAD staff and programming were actually available in my high school and the staff helped me to understand the college application process, FAFSA, and scheduling campus visits to a variety of universities. I benefitted from GRAD, and it is a privilege to now work with them giving back and providing those same resources to current students.

As my term with GRAD was coming to a close I realized how much work remained and opted to serve a second term with them. I wanted to have the opportunity to help even more students through this

organization. I also wanted to continue to grow as an individual and a professional from the experience and mentoring I received there. I learned so much helping to plan their annual college fair, connecting students with colleges and universities, learning about students, and helping them on their journey through high school and beyond that a second year in this work was something I couldn't miss. The journey to college can be a rough one, but I get to help students make it there and succeed through my work with GRAD. So far, I am pleased with my decision to stay on for a second year and I don't see that changing throughout this term.

Straight to Your Inbox

Looking for non-profit blogs to get tips, articles, opinions pieces, and the like? Check out some listed below for good reads! There might even be an Ohio VISTA curated one coming soon...

- **Non-profit AF** — an interesting blog written by Vu, a non-profit head who challenges the status quo (liberal leaning with political content on occasion). Sign up for the article to be sent straight to your inbox every Monday or look up articles on specific topics online.
- **Non-profit Hub** — a more technical blog about opportunities, strategies, etc. relating to everything non-profit. Sign up for specific interest areas to be sent to your inbox.

Jokes Clean Enough For Work

- **What did the pirate say on his 80th birthday?**
- Aye, matey
- **What do you call a camel with no humps?**
- Humphrey
- **What did one plate say to the other?**
- Dinner's on me
- **What do you call an alligator in a vest?**
- An investigator
- **What kind of socks does a pirate wear?**
- Arrrrregyle
- **What does a nosey pepper do?**
- Get jalapeño business

Calling all contributors!

- Do you have a VISTA story to tell?
- Do you have great stats, pics or news from your site to offer?
- An app or resources you would like to share with other members?
- Suggestions for a column or feature?

Email cballinger@ohiofoodbanks.org, and your contribution could be added to our next issue!