Meet the Be Well Fox Valley AmeriCorps Members!

Meet our enrolled AmeriCorps members, who are serving at our partner host site organizations throughout the Fox Valley.

**Yearlong service members: Serving from September 1st, 2020-August 31st, 2021**

Greg Sikowski

**Host Site: Be Well Fox Valley – Menasha, WI**

1. **Why did you choose to serve with the BWFV AmeriCorps Program?** I chose to serve with Be Well Fox Valley because the health of our community is paramount. When we’re healthy, we can be the best versions of ourselves. And when we’re at our best- anything is possible.

2. **Where are you from?** Appleton, WI

3. **Where’d you graduate from college?** University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire

4. **Traveled anywhere/Any unique experiences you’ve encountered?** I’ve done disaster relief in Texas, North Carolina, Florida, and the Bahamas. I’m happy to serve the community. I also, went to China for 25 days with a research team in college, and absolutely loved it.

5. **Hobbies?** Running, playing board games, eating cookie dough

6. **Pets?** My dog- Copper (think Fox and the Hound)

7. **Favorite food?** The Blueberry muffins my mom makes

8. **Favorite vegetable?** Potatoes

9. **Favorite fruit?** Honeydew

10. **Favorite movie?** Shawshank Redemption

11. **Favorite book?** Harry Potter Series
Andrea Peterson

Host Site: Community Clothes Closet – Menasha, WI

1. **Why did you choose to serve with the BWFV AmeriCorps Program?** I unexpectedly lost my dad in August of 2018. His abrupt death made me realize just how fragile and short our time on this Earth can be. We spend more time at our careers than we do with our families and I decided that I wanted my time spent working to be impactful and enrich the lives of others in our surrounding communities.

2. **Where are you from?** Born and raised in Winneconne, Wisconsin!

3. **Where’d you graduate from college?** I have my B.S. in Business Management from Edgewood College in Madison and am currently studying Psychology at Marian University in Fond du Lac.

4. **Hobbies:** traveling, horseback riding, exploring state trails, and adding to my extensive Starbucks mug collection.

5. **Pets:** Bartlett – a hound mix who sure follows his nose and loves the sound of his own voice! Chester – the orange tabby. Taz and Bernie – my two horses.

6. **Favorite sports teams:** All Wisconsin teams.

7. **Favorite food:** All the carbs.

8. **Favorite vegetable:** The many beautiful variations of the potato. See answer for ‘favorite food’.

9. **Favorite fruit:** Apples, but only when served on a stick and covered in caramel and nuts.

10. **Favorite movie:** It’s a tossup between 10 Things I Hate About You, Pretty Woman, or Sweet Home Alabama.

11. **Other fun facts:** I am a certified scuba diver, am “deathly afraid of needles and all things creepy crawly, and at one point in my life I was in-shape enough to run a couple of half-marathons”
Lisa Penterman

Host Site: Feeding America Eastern Wisconsin – Appleton, WI

1. Why did you choose to serve with the BWFV AmeriCorps Program?
   “I’m serving my term at Feeding America Eastern Wisconsin, which has allowed me to help others as they may not have the assistance they need. My fulfillment is another person’s self-sufficiency. I am very thankful for my team at AmeriCorps and for this amazing opportunity to help others in need.”

2. Where are you from? Born and raised in Kaukauna Wisconsin

3. Where'd you graduate from college? UW Oshkosh

4. Relevant past work/volunteer/internship experience you'd like to share? I have a wide variety of health and human services experience, including:
   -- Volunteer Coordinator and Victim Advocate at Sexual Assault Crisis Center, Appleton WI
   -- Crisis response Victim Advocate at Harbor House Domestic Abuse Shelter, Appleton, WI
   --Board of Directors at Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault based in Madison, Wisconsin

5. Hobbies: Reading Biographies

6. Traveled anywhere/Any unique experiences you’ve encountered: Traveled to Ireland twice, Amsterdam and Holland

7. Favorite sports teams: Wisconsin Badgers

8. Favorite form of physical activity: Nature walks

9. Favorite food: Really anything Italian

10. Favorite vegetable: Carrots

11. Favorite book: Jackie Kennedy Onassis biography
Jonathon Green

Host Site: United Way Fox Cities – Menasha, WI

1. Why did you choose to serve with the BWFV AmeriCorps Program? I am interested in supporting non-profit work, and I saw this as a great opportunity to start a career.

2. Where are you from? Franklin, Michigan

3. Where’d you graduate from college? Michigan State University


5. Traveled anywhere/Any unique experiences you’ve encountered: I did a month long road-trip across the US and hiked all over the country in different national parks

6. Pets: 1 dog

7. Favorite sports teams: All Detroit sports & Michigan State

8. Favorite form of physical activity: Running

9. Favorite food: Pasta

10. Favorite vegetable: Broccoli

11. Favorite fruit: Peach

2021 Service Term Members: Serving from January 4th, 2021-August 31st, 2021

Tammie DeVooght Blaney

Host Site: Aurora Medical Center-Oshkosh, WI

1. Why did you choose to serve with the BWFV AmeriCorps Program? I was searching for an opportunity to get more involved. I chose to serve with the Be Well Fox Cities AmeriCorps program because the program is searching for solutions to problems in our community like food insecurity. I believe service in our communities benefits us all.
2. **Where are you from?** Valders, WI

3. **Where’d you graduate from college?** Bachelor’s degree from UW-Oshkosh and her Master’s Degree from Lakeland University

4. **Relevant past work/volunteer/internship experience you’d like to share?** I have long volunteered for youth sports organizations, including with the NHM Hockey, Fox Valley Blades, Valley Figure Skating Club, Fond du lac Blades Synchronized Skating; schools, St. Mary’s, St. Gabriel’s, Seton Middle School and Appleton East. Most of my volunteering has been related to what my children are involved in. In 2013, I began service as a Fox Valley Technical College trustee, which has been one of the most rewarding things I’ve done.

5. **Hobbies:** Reading, traveling, writing.

6. **Traveled anywhere/Any unique experiences you’ve encountered:** Throughout my professional life, I have always traveled a lot for work. On average, I am traveling somewhere in the US on a plane once or twice a month. I try to do at least one special thing for myself when I am on a work trip. It could be going to a special restaurant, museum, or play. My favorite place to visit is the National Portrait Gallery in Washington, DC, in particular their President’s gallery which has portraits and small exhibits about our former Presidents. A second favorite is live theater and in particular catching Broadway shows in NYC on the cheap by purchasing rush and same-day tickets.

7. **Pets:** I have a Covid puppy named Millie.

8. **Favorite sports teams:** Any team my children are on.

9. **Favorite form of physical activity:** Kayaking.

10. **Favorite book:** A Year of Magical Thinking by Joan Didion. Runner up - any book by Isabel Allende. Runner, runner up - We Were the Mulvaneys by Joyce Carol Oates.

11. **Other fun facts you’d be willing to share with the public:** I think one unique thing about me is that my dad was a house mover and I grew up traveling around Wisconsin and Michigan with him to job sites. My siblings and I all learned to work when we were young and saw many interesting buildings being moved. Today I write about structural moving for STRUCTURALMOVER magazine and other publications. I have traveled the country and Canada to see buildings being moved over the past 5 years and continue to revel seeing what can be moved.
Josh Nelson

Host Site: Fox Valley Advance Care Planning Partnership at Mosaic Family Health – Appleton, WI

1. Why did you choose to serve with the BWFV AmeriCorps Program? AmeriCorps provided me the perfect opportunity for personal growth and the ability to positively impact local communities in Wisconsin, which is something I’ve always valued as I begin my career path. I look forward to continuing to work together with amazing individuals/organizations in large thanks to the opportunity provided by AmeriCorps!

2. Where are you from? Milwaukee

3. Where’d you graduate from college? Beloit College

4. Hobbies: Travel, Sports (watching and playing), and binge watching shows like The Office!

5. Pets: Two cats! Simba and Scout

6. Favorite food: Pizza! (pepperoni)

7. Favorite vegetable: Cucumbers

8. Favorite fruit: Apples

9. Favorite movie: Avengers End Game!

10. Favorite book: Leadership In Turbulent Times by Doris Kearns Goodwin

11. Other fun facts you’d be willing to share with the public: I can name the capital of every state in the US!

Karen Warren:

Host Site: Mosaic Family Health – Appleton, WI
1. Why did you choose to serve with the BWFV AmeriCorps Program? I have a heart for serving others. I especially love encouraging others to get started . . . or helping them get started . . . again. AmeriCorps closely aligns with my values of serving and impacting communities and organizations.

2. Where are you from? Born in Florida – raised in Georgia.

3. Where’d you graduate from college? UW-Oshkosh

4. Relevant past work/volunteer/internship experience you’d like to share? I was the Wellness Coordinator for Fond du Lac County and love teaching active older adults classes – Strong Bodies and Silver and Fit. (but I’m taking a break until we can be outside)

5. Hobbies: Running, Reading, Hiking

6. Traveled anywhere/Any unique experiences you’ve encountered: I love the culture of Italy but our favorite destination is Kauai.

7. Favorite sports teams: Georgia Bulldogs

8. Favorite form of physical activity: I actually love choreographed cardio although I am not that great at it : )

9. Favorite food: Pizza

10. Favorite book: The Bible

11. Other fun facts you’d be willing to share with the public: When we moved to Wisconsin 14 years ago, I told my husband that we’d go “and do our time” and leave. Meaning – three years and done! Needless to say, we loved it – and stayed. Our son and daughter-in-love moved here three years ago – and we now have two grandsons. So, I guess we’re lifers.
Lauren “Vaya” Jones

Host Site: ThedaCare – Appleton, WI

1. **Why did you choose to serve with the BWFV AmeriCorps Program?** I took some time off from full time work to figure out where I wanted to go with my career and just as I was ready to jump back into the job market, the pandemic hit. About two months in, we started to accept COVID would be around for the foreseeable future and we decided that if there was a time to go back to school, it would be now. I started taking courses for a Masters of Science in Communication with the intent to complete a Strategic Planning and Social and New Media certificates. My first course was an elective in Health Communication and I was actually upset that was going to be my first course as I had little interest in the topic. After eight weeks learning about health literacy, racial disparities in health care, and Social Determinants of Health, I was impassioned to not only learn more but to change my community. This service position was a perfect fit for what I’ve learned and where I’m looking to go! I’ve now pivoted my focus and will complete my Health Communication certificate in May; the courses I’m taking are instructing on the exact situations, systems, and concepts I deal with every day I serve with ThedaCare. The title of my textbooks are the same as the program I’m piloting! I’m excited for this new direction in life and I couldn’t have done it without BWFV AmeriCorps!

2. **Where are you from?** Green Bay, WI

3. **Where’d you graduate from college?** Undergrad: UW-Stevens Point, Masters: UW-Whitewater

4. **Any relevant past work/volunteer/internship experience you’d like to share?** My eclectic mix of experiences have made me perfect for serving in this role. I’ve done three years of AmeriCorps (NCCC and VISTA), served as a Site Manager, and sat on the Host Site Council for Habitat for Humanity AmeriCorps. I have over 5,000 volunteer hours and have won the Gold and Presidential Service Award including many of those hours volunteering for non-profits in the Fox Cities. In addition to this local, non-profit foundation, I’ve also been a mobile concierge/personal assistant, research assistant, leadership director for a residential Girl Scout camp, large event planner (including weddings!), farmers market manager, and even an actor in local commercials. Each of
these experiences have taught me to be flexible, how to think on my feet, and how to think outside the box for creative solutions to common problems.

5. **Hobbies**: I love traveling but while that’s on hold I love to bake, I’m a great napper, I’m crap at golf, and I have an addiction to home renovation.

6. **Pets**: Technically she’s a pet but to us, she’s our child. Ms. Tilly Jones is a smart and sassy doggo who spends the majority of her time causing trouble and being a philanthropist to the non-profit community.

7. **Favorite sports teams**: Golfer Brooks Koepka (he’s his own team…?), Green Bay Packers, Chicago Fire, and the Women’s and Men’s United States National Soccer teams.

8. **Favorite form of physical activity**: We’re big golfers. I’m terrible at it but love to do it!

9. **Favorite food**: While I love food, I’m more a fan of drinking my calories. I LOVE craft beer, mango smoothies, and my usual coffee order of a venti blonde roast with cream.

10. **Favorite vegetable**: I love me some onions, mushrooms, and olives!

11. **Favorite fruit**: Honeycrisp apples. Not just any apple, Honeycrisp.

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**March-August Service Term Members, serving from March 1\(^{st}\), 2021- Serving from January 4\(^{th}\), 2021-August 31\(^{st}\), 2021**

Emily Eresh

**Host Site**: Ascension Medical Group, Jackson St. Clinic—Oshkosh, WI

1. **Why you chose to serve with BWFV AmeriCorps?** It is a great opportunity to use my knowledge and skills to positively influence my community.

2. **Where are you from**: Waldo, WI
3. **Where’d you graduate from college?** University of Wisconsin - Oshkosh

4. **Any relevant past work/volunteer/internship experience you’d like to share?** Interned with the Oshkosh YMCA and have been volunteering for various roles during my time with the Y.

5. **Hobbies:** Hiking, drawing, and making my dog hang out with me.

6. **Pets:** Maple Jumanji Scout, 2 year old black lab

7. **Favorite sports teams:** Green Bay Packers

8. **Favorite form of physical activity:** Hiking, then running or weight lifting

9. **Favorite food:** Gyoza

10. **Favorite vegetable:** Sweet potato or grape or roma tomato

11. **Favorite movie:** Lord of the Rings trilogy

12. **Other fun facts you’d be willing to share with the public:** I have a fraternal twin sister!

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**2021 Summer Service Term Members, Serving from June 1st - August 31st, 2021**

Joseph Quinnell

Host Site: The Brigade

*Member bio coming soon!*

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Anya Gutierrez

Host Site: SOAR Fox Cities
1. Why you chose to serve with BWFV AmeriCorps? I chose to serve with Be Well Fox Valley to be a support and engage our community healthy living. I have a passion for connecting their health and well-being to the food they consume.

2. Where are you from? Menasha, WI

3. Where’d you graduate from college? UW-Steven Point

4. Any relevant past work/volunteer/internship experience you’d like to share? I am a returning AmeriCorps member, last summer I served at Riverview Gardens and a community engagement specialist. It was a growing and exciting experience working on the urban farm with volunteers from all walks of life.

5. Hobbies: Biking, running, kayaking, hiking—or just enjoying the outdoors!

6. Pets: I have dog named Lilli, she is an Australian Shepherd & Great Pyrenees mix.

7. Favorite food: Pasta, any dish that involves pasta is my favorite

8. Favorite vegetable: Sugar snap peas

9. Favorite fruit: Strawberries

Andrew Braun

Host Site: ThedaCare
1. Why you chose to serve with BWFV AmeriCorps? I want to experience providing support and services for community members that are not rooted in a fee-for-service structure and AmeriCorps service and strategic community partnerships allow me to do that.

2. Where are you from? Appleton, WI

3. Where’d you graduate from college? UW-Oshkosh

4. Any relevant past work/volunteer/internship experience you’d like to share? My undergraduate degree was in athletic training and I currently work as a licensed athletic trainer in the area. I am also currently attending graduate school in the public administration program. I like to think that a combination of life experiences, undergraduate work, clinic experience, and graduate studies have led me to serving with AmeriCorps. Through these experiences, I have repurposed my ambitions to align more with what I believe to be best practices for healthcare in our community.

5. Hobbies: I enjoy outdoor activities and athletics including running, cycling, hiking, camping, and kayaking. I also enjoy taking our two dogs out to enjoy our great state parks and recreational areas. When I have time, I enjoy reading nonfiction books including self-help.

6. Pets: 2 dogs

7. Favorite sports teams: All Wisconsin teams, college basketball

8. Favorite form of physical activity: Trail running/hiking

9. Favorite food: fish tacos

10. Favorite vegetable: peppers
11. **Favorite fruit:** pineapple

12. **Favorite movie:** Captain America: The First Avenger

13. **Favorite book:** The Happiness Hypothesis

14. **Other fun facts you’d be willing to share with the public:** Cilantro is a plus, pineapple on pizza is amazing, and you really get to know someone after you say “hello”

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**Hersh Pareek**

**Host Site:** ThedaCare

1. **Why you chose to serve with BWFV AmeriCorps?** I am interested in social determinants of health and the public health field, and serving as a Be Well Fox Valley AmeriCorps member aligns perfectly with my interests.

   It is important to work with community members and I am excited about

2. **Where are you from?** Appleton, WI

3. **Where’d you graduate from college?** I have not graduated yet – but I am a rising junior at UW-Madison double majoring in Global Health and Health Promotion & Health Equity

4. **Hobbies:** traveling, reading, music

5. **Traveled anywhere/Any unique experiences you’ve encountered:** I travel a lot, and I frequently travel to India but the most unique experience I have had was going to Jerusalem!

6. **Pets:** ISadly do not have any pets but I wish I had a dog

7. **Favorite form of physical activity:** Running/walking

8. **Favorite food:** Paneer, which is an Indian dish made of fresh cheese cubes and spices

9. **Favorite vegetable:** broccoli

10. **Favorite fruit:** Mangoes

11. **Favorite movie:** Scott Pilgrim vs. the World
12. **Favorite book:** The Da Vinci Code

13. **Other fun facts you’d be willing to share with the public:** I also speak Hindi and Spanish

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**Hannah Struzynski**

**Host Site: ThedaCare**

1. **Why you chose to serve with BWFV AmeriCorps?** To grow as a health professional doing something I love and to offer my support to the community!

2. **Where are you from?** Wautoma, WI

3. **Where’d you graduate from college?** University of WI-La Crosse

4. **Any relevant past work/volunteer/internship experience you’d like to share?** Volunteered in college with a club called Foundation for International Medical Relief of Children (FIMRC) and got to travel to Costa Rica to offer support to Nicaraguan immigrants at a few health clinics!

5. **Hobbies:** Camping, baking, spending time with friends and family

6. **Favorite sports teams:** Brewers and Packers

7. **Favorite form of physical activity:** Walking and biking

8. **Favorite food:** Tacos

9. **Favorite vegetable:** Cucumbers

10. **Favorite fruit:** Honeycrisp apples

11. **Favorite movie:** Ratatouille