



Horticulture & Business Development Assistant - AmeriCorps (1 opening)

Conservation Legacy Program: Arizona Conservation Corps

**Site Location: Arizona State University Walton Sustainability Solutions Services:
777 E. University, 3rd Floor Suite 364, Tempe, AZ 85287**

Term of Service:

- **Start Date: 8/18/2025**
- **End Date: 8/14/2026**
- **AmeriCorps Slot Classification: 1700 Hours**

Purpose:

This is an AmeriCorps position with Arizona Conservation Corps (AZCC), which is an AmeriCorps program of Conservation Legacy. The member selected for this position will be serving at Arizona State University Walton Sustainability Solutions Services as an AmeriCorps member with Arizona Conservation Corps, and completing service projects for Arizona State University Walton Sustainability Solutions Services.

AZCC aims to continue the legacy of the Civilian Conservation Corps of the 1930's, and is focused on connecting youth, young adults, and recent era military veterans with communities and conservation service projects on public lands. AZCC operates programs across Arizona that engage individuals and strengthen communities through service and conservation. AZCC has program offices in Flagstaff and Tucson.

Arizona State University Walton Sustainability Solutions Services:

RMWSSS is the practice arm of ASU's Julie Ann Wrigley Global Futures Laboratory and is a strategic implementation partner for businesses, governments, and non-government organizations. RMWSSS works with partners to understand what is possible and develop actionable strategies, transformative programs and scalable systems that solve some of the most audacious and complex sustainability challenges.

Since 2012, the Rob and Melani Walton Sustainability Solutions Initiatives have engaged more than 320 organizations that affected more than 500,000 people across five continents, completing 86 projects, trained 7,271 students and professionals, provided continuing education for 816 teachers and science educators and engaged 114,182 event attendees around innovation and sustainability thus far.

The Sustainability Solutions Service is an evolution of one of the original initiative programs and will be housed within ASU Knowledge Enterprise Development. This sustainability consultancy, a progression of the traditional cooperative extension service model, co-creates solutions-based projects with faculty, students and external partners such as the city of Phoenix, international aid organizations and established and emerging businesses.

Such an ambitious, entrepreneurial enterprise requires a dynamic team. The Rob and Melani Walton Sustainability Solutions Service has assembled a distinguished group of committed academic leaders, business professionals and international specialists to advance this effort. In concert with our clients, students, fellows and partners, the Sustainability Solutions Service focuses the immense knowledge assets of ASU on the social, environmental and economic challenges of sustainability. These teams actualize the charter and the design principles of ASU as a New American University, in particular entrepreneurship, social embeddedness, use-inspired research and global engagement.

Arizona State University is a new model for American higher education, an unprecedented combination of academic excellence, entrepreneurial energy and broad access. This New American University is a single, unified institution comprising four differentiated campuses positively impacting the economic, social, cultural and environmental health of the communities it serves. Its research is inspired by real world application blurring the boundaries that traditionally separate academic disciplines. ASU serves more than 100,000 students in metropolitan Phoenix, Arizona, the nation's fifth largest city. ASU champions intellectual and cultural diversity, and welcomes students from all fifty states and more than one hundred nations across the globe.

Description of Duties:

Arizona State University's Rob and Melani Walton Sustainability Solutions Service was awarded a \$5 million grant by the USDA Forest Service to grow the tree and shade canopy in metro Phoenix, while also growing a thriving urban forestry industry through community-industry partnerships, and this project aims to improve depleted and dangerous urban heat island environments through building and scaling infrastructure to grow nature-based solutions to mitigating extreme heat, conserving water, and increasing a biodiverse and resilient urban forest in metro Phoenix. Urban Nature is a Justice-40 initiative to be implemented in collaboration with 5 community-based organizations, 4 municipalities, 3 industry partners, and 3 national organizations and 4 ASU departments.

Urban Nature aims to grow the tree and shade canopy in metro Phoenix, while also growing a thriving urban forestry industry through community-industry partnerships. As a key part of this, Urban Nature will be starting a community embedded micro nursery focused on buying, selling, and growing desert-adapted and native plants. This nursery will help to grow our native plant stockpile in the Valley, increase shade and mitigate extreme heat, support paid learning and workforce development, and create entrepreneurship programs to support thriving ownership pathways for those interested in launching and scaling nursery and tree/plant brokering businesses. Plant brokering is a critical part of making the micro nursery successful and sustaining these initiatives long-term.

This internship position will assist in 1) identifying profitable plant procurement opportunities with other nurseries, 2) assessing market demand for potential plant acquisitions, and 3) managing plant sales. This role is ideal for individuals interested in horticulture, landscape design, nursery business, entrepreneurship, and the business aspects of plant cultivation. Plant brokering will play a key role in

ensuring the micro nursery's success by generating revenue that will go towards workforce development and heat mitigation efforts, expanding the availability of native and desert-adapted plants, and generative entrepreneurship knowledge and opportunities.

Beyond its operational benefits, plant brokering serves as an essential learning tool for aspiring entrepreneurs in the nursery industry. Interns will gain hands-on experience in:

- Identifying and growing native plants and trees.
- Understanding their relative benefits in particular locations and sites.
- Understanding how different sectors (nurseries, landscape designers / architects, landscape contractors and developers) interact around plant selections, allocations and procurement.
- Navigating supply chains.
- Negotiating wholesale costs, stock pricing for retail and contractor, and margins.
- Managing inventory.
- And executing purchasing and sales strategies.

These skills are invaluable for those looking to build their own plant-based businesses or work in green industry sectors such as nursery management, landscaping, and ecological restoration. These are also skills we aim to develop into teachable content for community-based entrepreneurship courses; the internship would offer opportunities for informing some of this content. Additionally, this internship will provide opportunities to engage with industry professionals and community partners, to develop business acumen, and to contribute to the growing movement of sustainable and locally driven horticultural enterprises in metro Phoenix.

Our team, comprised of leaders in business design, nursery management, strategic communication, interdisciplinary collaborations, community-based conservation, urban planning, landscape design, and program evaluation, will engage in collaborative mentoring with the intern related to the particular tasks the intern is completing / learning to complete. This role will also have widespread opportunities for networking within the nursery, landscape architect, landscaping, and community-based entrepreneurship industries.

Essential Responsibilities and Functions:

- Assist with plant procurement and market analysis.
- Research and identify plant suppliers, wholesalers, and nurseries.
- Drive to nurseries to buy identified plants for brokering
- Assess market demand for specific native and desert-adapted plants.
- Develop and maintain a database of plant availability, pricing, and supplier contacts.
- Track and make buying decisions based on biweekly plant lists for sale from nurseries
- Assist with sales and marketing of plant stock.
- Assist with plant care and maintenance.
- Engage with potential buyers, including landscape architects, restoration projects, and local gardeners.
- Develop plant sale strategies, including a biannual plant sale
- Track sales, manage customer relations, and ensure timely fulfillment of orders.
- Assist with logistics and inventory management.
- Coordinate and manage plant deliveries and pickups with buyers and sellers.

- Maintain inventory records and track plant stock levels.
- Appropriately represent Arizona Conservation Corps, Arizona State University, and AmeriCorps to the public and partners at all times.

Minimum Qualifications:

- United States citizen, United States national, or a lawful permanent resident alien.
- Has received a high school diploma or equivalency certificate; or has not dropped out of elementary or secondary school to enroll as an AmeriCorps participant, and agrees to obtain a high school diploma or its equivalent prior to using the education award.
- Agrees to provide information to establish eligibility and to complete a National Service Criminal History Check.
- Introductory understanding of horticulture, plant sales, or entrepreneurship.
- Strong organizational and research skills.
- Basic proficiency in Microsoft Excel, Google Sheets, or other data entry tools.
- Effective communication skills, both written and verbal.
- Comfort with networking and outreach to industry professionals.
- Ability to work independently and in a team setting.
- Willingness to learn about plant sourcing, inventory management, and sales strategies.
- Must have reliable transportation and be able to travel independently to work sites as needed.
- Must be 18 or over.

Preferred Qualifications:

- Background in business, horticulture, or a related field.
- Experience with market research or data analysis.
- Familiarity with native and desert-adapted plants in the Phoenix area.
- Prior experience in sales, marketing, or customer relations.
- Knowledge of supply chain logistics or plant nursery operations.

Physical Requirements:

Conservation Legacy is committed to the full inclusion of all qualified individuals and will ensure that persons with disabilities are provided reasonable accommodations to perform essential functions. Some positions may require periodic overnight travel, non-traditional hours, ability to move across varied terrain, use program-specific tools and a range of technology on an infrequent or frequent basis. Exerting up to 50 pounds of force occasionally to lift, carry, push, pull, or otherwise move objects. Ability to safely drive an organizational vehicle may also be required for some positions. If you need assistance and/or a reasonable accommodation due to a disability during application or recruiting process, please send a request to the hiring manager.

Time Requirements:

- Typically, this position is expected to serve Monday – Friday, 40 hours per week, but exact service schedules may vary. A half hour lunch break will not be counted towards AmeriCorps service
- Member may be required to participate in national, state, or local service projects or events as part of their service term.

Orientation and Training:

- Member will receive an Arizona Conservation Corps Individual Placement Program *New Member Orientation* at start of service that includes training on AmeriCorps prohibited and unallowable activities.

Benefits:

- Segal AmeriCorps Education Award of \$7,395.00 with successful completion of position.
- Living Allowance of \$480 per week.
- Additional Benefit of \$170 per week.
- Healthcare Coverage provided by The Corps Network and Cigna
- Childcare Coverage.
- Qualifies for Student Loan forbearance and Interest Payment reimbursement through AmeriCorps.

Evaluation and Reporting:

As an AmeriCorps member, performance will be evaluated on whether the member has completed the required number of hours, the member has satisfactorily completed assignments, and if the member has met other performance criteria that were clearly communicated at the beginning of the term of service. Reporting requirements include, but are not limited to, bi-weekly timesheets and accomplishment tracking.

Supervisor Name and Contact Information:

This position reports to Jen Clifton (Assistant Director, Community Economic Development) with Arizona State University.

To Apply:

Please submit a resume and cover letter along with the online application at <https://azcorps.org/ip-positions>.

If you have questions, contact AZCC's Individual Placement Coordinator Preston Sands at psands@conservationlegacy.org.

For more information on the Arizona State University Walton Sustainability Solutions Services, please visit their website at <https://sustainability-innovation.asu.edu/sustainabilitysolutions/>.

Conservation Legacy is an equal opportunity employer. We are committed to hiring a breadth of diverse professionals and encourage members of diverse groups to apply. This program is available to all, without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, disability, gender identity or expression, political affiliation, marital or parental status, genetic information, and military service. Where a significant portion of the population eligible to be served needs services or information in a language other than English, the recipient shall take reasonable steps to provide written material of the type ordinarily available to the public in appropriate languages.

We also consider qualified applicants regardless of criminal histories, consistent with AmeriCorps requirements. If you need assistance and/or a reasonable accommodation due to a disability during application or recruiting process, please send a request to the hiring manager.

