

## **The Food Project Youth Development Specialist - Root Crew Greater Boston Region**

### **Who We Are**

Since our founding in 1991, The Food Project has grown into an internationally recognized non-profit organization that works at the intersection of youth, food, and community. For 28 years, youth and adults from diverse backgrounds have come together to produce healthy food for residents of the city and suburbs and build local, sustainable food systems. Each year, 120 youth work in crews with our staff to farm on 70 acres in eastern Massachusetts in the suburban towns of Beverly, Lincoln, and Wenham and to partner with our neighbors in Lynn and Boston's Dudley neighborhood to create the food system they imagine. We believe that food is a unique vehicle for creating personal and social change. Nothing else ties us so intimately to each other and to the planet we share, affecting our health, the climate, and culture. Moving into the future, our goal is to transform the food system into a more just, community-engaged model, that supports food security for all.

### **About The Role**

The Greater Boston Youth Development Specialist plays an integral role in the implementation and ongoing development of The Food Project's youth engagement model. They provide primary leadership for the Root Crew, The Food Project's most experienced cohort of youth in their work on The Food Project's farms in Lincoln and Dorchester and in resident-envisioned food systems change initiatives in Boston's Dudley neighborhood. They contribute significantly to the organizational scope of work from daily agendas and workshops; to seasonal work plans that engage youth, staff, and community members; to larger thinking and partnering in the development of practices, processes, models and evaluation that continually improve our work. This position reports to the Director of the Greater Boston Region.

Major responsibilities include:

#### **Youth Engagement**

- Support Root Crew members' leadership in building a just food system in the Dudley neighborhood in accordance with residents' vision, including:
  - o Growing food on the farms in Lincoln and Dorchester, including performing skilled farm work tasks independently and leading groups of adult volunteers on the farms.
  - o Supporting the efforts of Dudley neighborhood business owners to offer more fresh, locally sourced foods by coordinating the Eat Well cooking workshop series, featuring participating local businesses, and leading grassroots marketing efforts to build customer awareness of new options at neighborhood businesses.
  - o Organizing around, planning for, and building raised bed gardens and permanently secured community growing spaces, in partnership with interested neighborhood residents.

- Foster a culture of trust, respect, accountability, and growth among Root Crew members, as well as relationships between Root Crew youth and partners in the Dudley neighborhood.
- Individually mentor Root Crew members toward goal setting and attainment, and regular feedback through Straight Talk and other organizational practices.

## Community Engagement

- Work with Regional Director to build relationships with residents and institutional partners to support and facilitate the work of the Dudley Grows initiative.
- Represent The Food Project at various community and institutional gatherings and committees.
- Research and help build up The Food Project's model of resident engagement in Boston to support strategic plan and the Dudley Grows initiative.
- Help create website and social media accounts for Dudley Grows - a hub for food systems resources and information for Dorchester, Roxbury and Mattapan.

## Youth Crew Models Design & Development

- Partner with the Director of Learning & Design to design and adapt curriculum as necessary to meet overall crew learning objectives and Root Crew core competencies, in accordance with The Food Project's organizational strategy.
- Partner with the Director of Learning & Design to design and implement evaluation of all stages of The Food Project's youth crews.
- Work with The Food Project's staff and partner organizations to facilitate strong alignment of Root Crew activities with organizational and neighborhood priorities.
- Participate in a community of practice among youth development staff across the Greater Boston and North Shore regions, contributing to the maintenance and further development of a strong, coordinated multi-year youth development model in accordance with organizational strategy.
- Facilitate meaningful engagement of youth in organizational leadership and decision-making.

## Location & Schedule

From September through May, the person in this position works a Tuesday through Saturday schedule and is based in the Dorchester office of the Greater Boston region, with occasional travel to The Food Project's other locations for meetings, Root Crew sessions and other work. They work with other Food Project staff to co-facilitate two overnight youth retreats, on a weekends in October and March. The position also requires periodic evening hours for participation in community meetings and events.

From June through August, the person in this position largely works a Monday through Friday schedule and is based on our farm in Lincoln three days per week and in Dorchester two days per week. The Food Project supports staff transit to and from Lincoln. The summer schedule

includes an evening meeting on Tuesdays in July and August and two extended evenings for special youth events.

The Food Project is committed to sustainability and supports staff in taking time off to balance evening and weekend hours.

## Qualifications

- At least two years of experience working directly with youth in a teaching, organizing, and/or facilitative capacity.
- Experience facilitating discussions or training about systems of oppression, power, racial justice and equity, as well as working with diverse groups of people.
- Experience in curriculum development, including ability to make complex information accessible to adolescent learners and understanding of how to adapt content to learning exceptionalities.
- Demonstrated skills in youth development, including creating safe space and responding effectively to the non-crew or work-related issues youth bring up in the course of their work.
- Capacity to uphold high standards set by the community, and to motivate a group of young people while fostering their potential.
- Experience and strong interest in creating, building, and supporting youth/adult partnerships to plan and execute each season of Root Crew's work.
- Excellent organizational skills, dependability, flexibility, and capacity to manage time effectively both independently and on group projects.
- Some familiarity with food systems and food access issues.
- 21+ years of age, with valid driver's license and willingness to drive large vehicles in the city.
- Farming or gardening experience (preferred).
- Familiarity with the Dudley neighborhood (preferred).

## Compensation

This is a full-time, benefit eligible position. Compensation is commensurate with experience, and package includes paid vacation, employer-sponsored health insurance, and produce from the farms, among other benefits.

## Recruitment Process

Please send resume and cover letter via email to: [greaterbostonjobs@thefoodproject.org](mailto:greaterbostonjobs@thefoodproject.org). In the subject line, write your name and the position for which you are applying, e.g.: "Jordan Smith – Youth Development Specialist."

We will review all submissions, identify viable candidates and contact only those individuals selected to continue in the search process. The position will be filled when desired candidate is found.

The Food Project is an Equal Opportunity Employer that is committed to creating a multicultural organization. We actively seek a diverse pool of candidates for this position.