STUDENT INTERN: The Vermicompost Program.

CONTEXT: The Vermicompost Program is a partnership between Hillview, UW-La Crosse (UW-L), and Mayo Clinic HealthSystem—Franciscan Healthcare (MCHS-FH). The Vermicomposting Center (VC) has an industrial sized vermicomposting unit that houses thousands of worms. The worms are fed pre-consumer food scraps and coffee grounds from multiple kitchens. In the last six years, over 63,000 pounds of food scraps were diverted from the waste stream to become about 15,000 pounds of worm castings—“VermiGold”—for local gardens.

RESPONSIBILITIES: Primary “Worm Caretaker”

- Visit the VC two times per week to feed worms; spaced out in times of the intern’s choice (between Monday and Friday is typical)
- Drive electric vehicle, located at UW-L
- Plan enough time to work approximately six hours/week for the full semester is required.
- Extra opportunities to participate in public presentations and tours are additional time.
- Communicate and report to Natalie Kostman, Hillview Program Manager.

Sequence of worm care:

1. Pick up full food buckets from freezer in kitchens, replace with empties.
2. Transport to the VC. Weigh buckets, check the temperature of worm bins, check moisture levels; record findings in log book on computer (Excel).
3. Chop up food scraps and feed worms (high physical activity).
4. Water and sprinkle sawdust/coffee as needed.
5. Rinse out buckets.
6. General housekeeping: One hour of cleaning the facility is required every week. Ensure a clean, organized appearance: MCHS-FH and UW-L staff can inspect at will.

BENEFITS-Resume building opportunities: Intern is responsible for wormcare with the goal of efficient, maximum casting production. Helping with tours and presentations are excellent public communication experience. $500 stipend.

If you are interested please send your resume to Natalie Kostman at greenhouse@hillviewuac.org.