



Community Engagement & Volunteer Center

Madison Community Scholars (MCS) Overview and FAQ

Thank you for your interest in partnering with the Madison Community Scholars (MCS) administered by the Community Engagement & Volunteer Center (CEVC) at JMU, which matches student employees with schools and community organizations based on compatibility of interests, skills, schedules, and transportation options. Participating students are paid for their time working with partner organizations by JMU through their financial aid package or a scholarship. Partner organizations do not pay a fee but are required to provide ongoing supervision and meet program expectations. The program is designed to increase the capacity of community organizations and schools while providing students with meaningful work and learning experiences.

Student Requirements:

- Be enrolled as a student at JMU at least part-time (6 credits for undergraduates, 5 for graduate students)
- Have a minimum of a 2.0 GPA
- Be awarded Federal Work Study funds in their financial aid package (must be verified every semester) or receive a CEVC MCS scholarship.
- Participate in MCS orientation and regular workshops (coordinated by CEVC staff)
- Complete online time sheets after each shift and submit completed timesheets each pay period (approximately every 2 weeks)
- Commit to a regular schedule of an average 6-8 hours weekly (exceptions can be made on a case-by-case basis)
- Maintain a position during [JMU's academic year](#) (some exceptions made for semester-long positions)

CEVC will:

- Recruit, interview, and match student(s) with Community Partner.
- Conduct a site visit for first-time Community Partners.
- Coordinate completion and collection of new hire paperwork for students.
- Submit student timesheets to JMU Payroll for processing each pay period.
- Provide students and supervisors with a calendar of important dates (i.e., breaks in the academic calendar, timesheet due dates, etc.).
- Facilitate an August orientation for students and Community Partners.
- Facilitate regular workshops and reflection activities for students.
- Request and review evaluative feedback from students and supervisors at the end of each semester.
- Support communication between student and Community Partner should issues and/or concerns arise.

Community Partner will:

- Sign the Community Partner Agreement (please see the CEVC website for a copy of the [Agreement](#))
- Develop and submit a detailed position description, including necessary and desired skills (released via email in May)
- Oversee student success by:
 - providing on-site orientation and training,
 - establishing expectations regarding communication, performance and responsibilities, and
 - providing regular and timely feedback.

- Attend and participate in CEVC’s MCS program orientation in August.
- Be responsive to CEVC communications and requests for evaluative feedback.
- Establish a safe, sanitary, and adequately equipped working space for student(s). (This may be remote if appropriate and approved by CEVC.)
- Monitor the weekly hours worked by the student and approve biweekly timesheets.
- Identify at least one proxy to approve timesheets and provide supervision when primary supervisor is out of the office.
- Inform CEVC of issues and/or concerns about student’s performance or well-being if an initial intervention of verbal feedback did not result in improvement.

Timeline:

When determining what projects and roles would be most beneficial for MCS students to support, please remember that students typically average 6 to 8 hours of work per week during JMU’s academic year (see [JMU calendar here](#)). Additionally, students’ skills and availability vary, so some specific skillsets may be difficult to accommodate.

May 6	CEVC emails request for Community Partner MCS Applications
May 31	Deadline to Submit MCS Application for 24-25 academic year
June 1-14	CEVC may email to set up a site visit for first-time Community Partners
June 14	CEVC posts MCS positions for JMU students to view and apply
June 17 – July 19	CEVC interviews, selects, and hires students. CEVC matches selected students with Community Partners based on student interests, skills, class schedule, and transportation options, and the requirements, duties, and interests listed by the Community Partner in their application.
By August 15	CEVC office will email Community Partners to let them know status of student placements
Wednesday, August 21	First Day of Classes at JMU
Friday, August 23: 1pm-5pm	Mandatory Supervisors Training and Kick-off event with MCS students - please save the date for 8/23/24 from 1-5pm. Students will complete paperwork (students may NOT begin working until they have BOTH completed their onboarding AND it is after the first day of classes).
Last week of August/First Week September	JMU students begin working at Community Partner sites

Frequently Asked Questions:

Does my organization qualify to host MCS students?

Host site Community Partners must be 1) a federal or state agency, or a private nonprofit organization “in which no part of the net earnings of the agency benefits any private shareholder or individual. An organization must be incorporated as nonprofit under federal or state law.” In other words, you must be a registered nonprofit organization, but are not required to have a 501c3 tax-exempt designation. If you are unsure if your organization meets these requirements, please email cevc@jmu.edu. Priority is given to local organizations in the Shenandoah Valley, serving local community members.

How are students chosen for our organization/school?

MCS students apply to work with our office and are connected to a Community Partners based on the compatibility of the student’s skills, interests, availability, and transportation options, as well as with the goals and needs of the Community Partner as described in the Community Partner Application.

Will our organization have a chance to interview potential students?

CEVC completes all interviews and selects students that we assess will best align with your organization depending on the requirements listed in your completed Community Partner Application.

How will our organization meet our MCS employees?

Site supervisors and students will meet in person at the Annual August Supervisors Training and Kick-off Event. They will also be electronically introduced via email by CEVC staff. If the site supervisor does not believe the student is a good match, they should inform the CEVC office. CEVC will try to connect the Community Partner with another student depending on student availability.

Is there a fee for Community Partners to participate?

There is no program fee; however, Community Partners are required to meet program expectations listed above. Community Partners are also expected to cover any fees associated with required checks (i.e., background checks, TB testing, etc.).

How many hours can students work?

MCS students funded by Federal Work Study receive a financial aid award that determines the maximum number of hours they can work during an academic year. Typically, students hired by CEVC work 6-8 hours per week during the academic year. To maintain consistency, MCS students funded by scholarships work 6-8 hours per week during the academic year. Student employees cannot exceed 20 hours of work per week when classes are in session. Students may work up to 40 hours/week during breaks (i.e., Spring Break). Please note: hours per week must factor-in ALL JMU positions (for example, if a student has a CEVC federal work study job and a position at JMU Libraries, those total hours must fit within limit.) The work week runs from 12:01am on Sunday through 11:59pm on Saturday. Please also keep in mind that if students work over fall, winter, and spring breaks, they may run out of funding earlier in the semester.

Is there a difference between students paid through Federal Work Study and students receiving a CEVC scholarship?

All Madison Community Scholars work with Community Partners consistently throughout the academic year. Students paid through a Federal Work Study award must use a timesheet, which is reviewed and approved by their supervisor bi-monthly. Some students were awarded a scholarship at the beginning of each semester, which covers about 6–8 hours/week. Consequently, these students are not required to maintain / submit a timesheet by JMU (although as their Community Partner, you may request that they maintain a log of their time for tracking purposes). Outside of timesheet maintenance, the overall experience – for both the student and the community partner – is the same.

If you have questions or ideas you would like to discuss, please email cevc@jmu.edu or call our office at: 540-568-6366.