



Student Placement Opportunity

Position: Food and Meal Programs Students
(2 students annually)

Program: Food and Meal Programs

Reports to: Community Engaged Food Programs Coordinator

About The 519

The 519 is a City of Toronto agency committed to the health, happiness and full participation of LGBTQ individuals and communities. Through our innovative model of Service, Space and Leadership, The 519 strives to make a real difference in people's lives, while working to promote broader inclusion, understanding and respect.

Programs related to this placement

The main program students will support is the Food and Meal Programs.

The Sunday Drop-In offers a safe and welcoming space for LGBTQ people of all ages who may be experiencing poverty or are under-housed. Each week we offer a range of services, including group counselling, harm reduction and housing support. LGBTQ-specific resources and referrals are made available to drop-in participants. The Sunday Drop-In meets on Sundays from 10:30am to 1:00pm at The 519.

Students will also support Meal Trans, a drop-in program serving nutritious meals to lower-income, street-active, homeless and sex-working trans women, trans men, genderqueer, and questioning people. Meal Trans is a trans-only program which offers a laid back space where you can be yourself. It's a perfect opportunity for trans community members to share their experiences, get referrals, collect resources, and to hang out with friends. Meal Trans meets on Monday nights from 6:00pm-9:00pm (except statutory holidays).

Purpose of this placement

The two *Sunday Drop-In Students* support the staff team to plan and deliver community meals and weekly programming, work from anti-oppression principles, and personally/professionally build knowledge and skill to affirm the dignity and self-determination of our participants who have complex identities, communities and experiences.

Responsibilities

- Work with a team to create a welcoming space for LGBTQ people.
- Promote conversation and engagement within the program to share knowledge and develop lasting connections between participants.
- Facilitate activities to help understand participant needs.
- Support weekly menu planning and food preparation.
- Understand and abide by basic food safety and kitchen safety guidelines.
- Provide support in searching and navigating community resources to help program participants access necessary services.
- Report to staff on program plans and participant levels/attendance.
- Set up and tear down programming spaces and equipment.

- Put theory into practice and reflect on what works well, potential improvements, and personal learning
- Assist with projects outside of program time if desired

Skills and Experience

- Experience in program/event planning and implementation
- Experience with group facilitation
- Experience working in a kitchen, cooking at home or an interest in cooking for large groups.
- Knowledge of current issues and trends for LGBTQ community members.
- Ability to work as part of a team in a supportive manner with enthusiasm and energy
- Ability to approach and support community members in a welcoming and friendly manner
- Knowledge of commonly used services and life skills (e.g. shelter referrals, accessing social and health services, free/low cost entertainment and recreation)
- Possess strong communication skills and a non-judgmental attitude
- Possess a desire to help affirm and celebrate LGBTQ people across the economic spectrum.
- Able to arrive on time; must give agency sufficient notice if they will be absent
- Able to become familiar with The 519's policies and procedures and follow them

Assets

- An understanding of some of the unique needs of LGBTQ people and how they may be compounded by living in poverty, experiencing homelessness or are under-housed, having limited food security, or experiencing social isolation.
- Lived experience as an LGBTQ person and within Toronto's LGBTQ communities
- Experience as a participant or volunteer in social groups or organizations for LGBTQ people, people living in poverty or people who are under-housed.
- Knowledge of programs and services for LGBTQ people, people living in poverty, people who are under-housed, and/or people who do sex work.

From empowerment and connectedness perspectives we especially encourage the placement of students who are able to identify as peers of participants.

Time Commitment

September to April for a minimum of 15 hours per week

Required Student Attendance in Program: Sundays, 8:00 AM to 2PM

Interviews, Training and Orientation

Successful applicants must be available for interviews and training and will be contacted for an interview with the Coordinator, Community Engaged Food Programs.

Training will include a general orientation to the history, values, policies and space of The 519, and specific program needs and practices.

Application Instructions

Submit an application, cover letter and resume to StudentOpportunities@the519.org.