



Winnebago County

Daniel Teuteberg  
dteuteberg@co.winnebago.  
wi.us  
920-232-1974



Linda Sunde  
CNCS, WI State Director  
(414) 297-1118 X11  
lsunde@cns.gov

## **UWEX AmeriCorps\*VISTA Success Story**

**By Genna Thompson, VISTA Member**

One of the major things I have been working on is providing a Youth Council at the middle school in their after school program. Through this program we have been able to provide quality programming over the school year. Some of the most recent major events were bringing in speakers to talk to the students. One speaker in particular was a small animal veterinarian from a local animal shelter. This veterinarian came in with some of her support staff and spoke with about 25 students about the shelter, the services the shelter provides to animals, and animal care. The most important thing she talked about was how she obtained her job as a veterinarian. The purpose of bringing her in to speak was to spark interest for the students in possible careers. It was also a good opportunity for the students to work on some of the life and job skills that we have been working on throughout the school year. The veterinarian talked to the students about getting good grades throughout middle school, high school, and college. She also talked about the importance of going on to college, and after that degree possibly obtaining a second or a third degree. She also talked to the students about the importance of working with people and all of the skills she has gained through her schooling and her jobs. The students were very much interested in what she had to say. They worked on their communication skills by speaking with adults, asking important and respectful questions, and learning how to cooperate in a smaller group. They are used to being around 30+ students for assemblies and speakers. It was a very eye opening experience for the students as they have been asking for more speakers to come in, like the veterinarian did. They have also wanted to take on animal shelters for volunteering opportunities. Some of the students have also talked about becoming veterinarians as a career. As the students are part of the middle school Youth Council, they are able to take into their own hands the kinds of programming and activities they would like to do within the time of the council. It shows that they have learned something from the speakers when they request more speakers to come in and talk about their jobs. Although they have a while before some of them reach the high school and college level it is imperative that these students start learning about their career options and what might be available to them.