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VISTA Project Ended After Duplication of Service

DATE ISSUED 12.12.2016

Closed 2016-12-12

CNCS-OIG completed its investigation into Hotline allegations that VISTA members (VISTA) assigned to Programa de Apoyo y Enlace Comunitario (PAEC), Rincon, PR, were directed to perform duties ordinarily performed by a paid employee.

The investigation found that several VISTAs were directed by the executive director to renovate a kitchen, paint offices, and clean the exterior of a building all operated by PAEC. The time used to perform these tasks were counted as service hours. The investigation found that the time counted towards their VISTA service was minimum and did not affect their education awards. Additionally, VISTAs performed direct service as part of their VISTA service when they taught classes.

During the CNCS-OIG site visit it was discovered that two VISTAs and two AmeriCorps members manipulated the time keeping machine with the intent of leaving early and receiving service hours not earned. The members involved admitted to the manipulation of the time keeping machine, but denied submitting fraudulent timesheets or counting hours they had not served.

CNCS management reported that action had been taken against the individuals involved with tampering with the time clock. Additionally, CNCS management issued a Notice of Non-Renewal to PAEC, ending PAEC's VISTA program, which duplicated some of the AmeriCorps program grant.

Case ID: 2016-008

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The Office of Special Counsel



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