Green Corps:
Cleveland Botanical Garden’s Premiere Urban Outreach Program

Presenters: Cameron Reid and Sherrell Rodgers

Youth Voices Conference, October 7th-8th 2011
Where to Find Green Corps’ Learning Farms

Cleveland, Ohio!

Youth Voices!
What is Green Corps?
Green Corps Timeline

1996:
- Cleveland Botanical Garden agreed to employ six youth to work at urban farm site (Midtown)

1998:
- Student employees worked only during the summer (June-August)

1999:
- 15 student-employees working at Midtown
- 10 student-employees working to build Esperanza
- All employed in Spring and Fall, working after school 5 hours/week

2000:
- Season extended for all students from April through mid-October
  - 5hrs/week during school
  - 25 hours/week during summer

2009:
- 75 student-employees working at 5 different sites

2010:
- 90 student-employees on 6 learning farms

2011:
- 65 student-employees on 5 learning farms
- Year-round: Winter program
**Midtown Learning Farm**

- Seeded in 1996
- E.66\(^{th}\) and Chester Ave.
- 0.7 Acres
- Dunham Tavern Museum

The largest and oldest learning farm, “Yellow House” is a great showpiece of different sustainable agriculture techniques as well as a workhorse when it comes to food production.
The smallest learning farm, Esperanza is a great example of the quality, quantity, and variety of food that can be grown on a small plot of land.

Esperanza Learning Farm

- Seeded in 2000
- W. 25th and Erin Ave.
- 0.25 Acres
- Trivantage Corporation
- Partnering with REAP
Lonnie Burten Learning Farm

- Seeded in 2006
- E.43rd and Quincy Ave.
- 0.3 Acres
- Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority

Lonnie Burten was created on the site of a demolished school building. The once underused land now employs 8 student-farmers who grow food for their families, for neighbors, and for farmers’ markets.
The Slavic Village Learning Farm was our most experimental project yet, as half of it was built on two feet of woodchips on top of asphalt and the other half was built in the native soil. Slavic had Green Corps’ first on-site farm stand in 2009.

- Seeded in 2008
- E.54th and Fleet Ave.
- 0.3 Acres
- Slavic Village Development Corporation
Fairfax Learning Farm

- Seeded in 2009
- E.79th and Amos Ave.
- 0.5 Acres
- Fairfax Renaissance Development

In the heart of the Fairfax neighborhood this learning farm serves as a community resource for residents to access fresh, local, healthy produce.
As the program’s largest learning farm, the Buckeye-Woodland Site has two high tunnels that will be a part of extending the growing season.

Buckeye Learning Farm

- Seeded in Spring 2010
- E.114th and Woodland Ave.
- 1.3 Acres
- Buckeye Area Development Corporation
Youth

65 student employees in 2011

- 37 first year student employees
- 20 second year student employees
- 7 third year student employees
- 1 fourth year student employee
Youth

Curriculum

- 15 curriculum topics over 3 years
- 10 weeks of summer curriculum
- Based on Academic Content Standards
- Tailored to content on Ohio Graduation Test
- Early college credit course (Landscape Practices) 3rd/4th year

Year 1:
1. Plant and Seed Biology
2. Public Speaking
3. Soil
4. Composting
5. Nutrition

Year 2:
6. Agricultural Techniques
7. Culinary Arts
8. Organic Pest Management
9. How Agriculture Has Shaped History
10. Food Economics

Year 3:
11. Leadership
12. Ecosystems/Cycles
13. Horticulture/Landscape Design
14. Climate
15. Career Development
Youth

Early College Course in Summer 2011

- Cuyahoga Community College partnership

- Landscape Practices Course
  - Focus on pruning woody plants

- Practical work at sites in and around the city

- Green Corps demonstration bed construction and maintenance

- Sessions with horticulture staff at Cleveland Botanical Garden and other experts

- Career options in landscape related fields
**Youth**

**Home Day Care Providers**

- Children’s Hunger Alliance partnership
- Low maintenance containers installed for children at homes of providers
- Green Corps student employees taught children how to seed and plant seedlings
- Education program designed and carried out by student employees for children
  - JUICING!
- End of the season celebration at Ripe, harvest festival at Cleveland Botanical Garden
Home Day Care Providers!
Food

- 2 acres of active growing space
- Over 50 different varieties of vegetables, fruits, flowers, and herbs
- Organic growing methods
- Raised beds!
- Many unique crop varieties
- Seed majority of own vegetables in greenhouses
Just a few crops we grow...

- Carrots
- Turnips
- Radishes
- Garlic
- Onions
- Potatoes
- Kale
- Collards
- Swiss Chard
- Tomatoes
- Peppers
- Squash
- Sunflowers

And many more!!!
Green Corps Salsa
Ripe From Downtown®

- 1050.5 lbs of tomatoes
- 164.75 Lbs. of green peppers
- 48.5 lbs. of jalapeños
- 155.5 Lbs. of onions
- 34.5 Lbs. of cilantro

- Partnered with local farm (Rainbow Farms) for ingredients
- Chop all ingredients at community college kitchen (Tri-C)
- Salsa bottled at company in Salem, Ohio (JES)
- More products next year!
• Community projects in and outside of the city of Cleveland

• Partnerships!
  – neighborhood development organizations, community members, churches, day cares and businesses
- Over 20,000 vacant lots in Cleveland
  - Detract from their surrounding neighborhoods in many ways
  - Green Corps part of a growing movement to revive these areas

- Many Cleveland neighborhoods exist as food deserts
  - Areas with little or no access to healthy foods needed to maintain a healthy lifestyle
  - Green Corps is one food access point among many that are working to change this
Besides the delicious food that Green Corps Learning Farms produce, these green spaces contribute to...

- Biodiversity
- Animal and plant corridors
- Runoff reduction
- Soil remediation
- Air and water quality
- Beautification
- Places for employment, socializing, events and fun!
Green Corps Winter Program

- Pollution prevention
- Energy conservation and efficiency
- Conservation and sustainability
- Urban Ecology, biodiversity, and livability
- Watersheds and water conservation
- Community health
- Environmental issues

_EPA Environmental Education Grant_
Winter Program Objectives:

- Retain staff and student employees
- Youth learn about environmental issues
- Youth earn credit and/or service credit
- Youth service projects
Comments and Questions?

Contact Information:

Jesús F. Sánchez
Green Corps Director
Cleveland Botanical Garden
11030 East Blvd
Cleveland, OH 44106
T: 216-707-2821
C: 216-645-7797
F: 216-721-1694
jsanchez@cbgarden.org