COMMUNITY GARDEN 2020

PROPOSAL

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An application for a 2020 grant through Stockton University to continue to beatify the campus and promote student engagement.
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Statement of need: The campus needs more sustainable infrastructure that promotes community involvement.

Project Rationale: Improvement in campus engagement and beautification as well as providing numerous learning opportunities.

Stockton 2020 Proposal (Sustainability)

Project: Stockton Community Garden

Team Leader: Joe Rubenstein
CONCEPT GARDEN 2020 Proposal

FALL 2017

ABSTRACT
This proposal demonstrates the purpose and need for a 2020 grant for the Stockton Community Garden. The garden has had success with its original 2020 grant and hopes to continue this momentum. The grant will enable the development of the Grove as well as allowing for the improvement of the Main Garden space. Community engagement is one of the center goals of the Community Garden project and because of this we are looking to conduct smaller on campus projects that target student engagement and beatification as well as projects near the new Atlantic City campus. Overall, through use of a new 2020 grant the project has potential to do extremely beneficial work for Stockton University while maintaining its sustainable practices.

Mission statement

“Our mission is to build a Community Garden that beatifies, produces, and develops community engagement”
## Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Walkway ground material</td>
<td>$250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hand tools for maintenance</td>
<td>$250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shed improvements (chalkboard and siding)</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plants and shrubs</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seedlings plus growing materials</td>
<td>$1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture for grove (chairs, benches, tables)</td>
<td>$1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native earthworms to improve soil compaction</td>
<td>$1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional on-campus beautification projects</td>
<td>$1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor classroom materials</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenhouse materials</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art installations</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Garden Assistants (600hrs@$10 per hr.)</td>
<td>$6000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$20,000</strong></td>
</tr>
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## Notes and In-Kind Assistance for the Stockton Community Garden Project

1. Project Leader, Professor Rubenstein, will be working with 7-15 students for the year and will also be remunerated by the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences
2. Cynthia Gove, Project Director, Facilities and Construction has provided valuable consultation and will be working with the project for the year. Below are in-kind services to be provided by Facilities and Construction
   a. Mow grounds
   b. Maintain grounds and fence where necessary
   c. Assist in construction
3. Caitlyn Clark, Stockton Farm Manager and Sustainability Coordinator, will continue to provide her expertise, guidance and assistance in all garden matters. She has helped select and interview summer garden interns to insure the year-round success of the produce.
Narrative:

This proposal is seeking funding to continue to establish The Stockton Community Garden. This project has previously received funding to build from the 2020 program. Originally, an on-campus garden was built on a drainage basin that was determined to be an unfit location. Efforts were then made by the new and current Community Garden Team to establish a new and better public garden space on a lot that was considered an “eyesore” near the freshman dorms. The lot was previously used by the University for various temporary things such as storage. Due to the previous uses the lot had been severely compacted and became a dirt pit that flooded often.

This project is being developed as part of a network of affiliations and agreements that we have amassed to support our overall goal. Our original proposal focused on obtaining funding for the initial physical needs to establish the garden. This proposal focuses on obtaining funding for the next stage of physical needs for establishing the garden as well as performing community outreach. A Community Garden on campus directly correlates with the Sustainability goal S8 (Increase Sustainable Infrastructure), but it is also connected to several Learning and Engagement goals.

The project gained momentum upon the creation of the SUST 3800 class entitled “Stockton Community Garden”. In the class students established a structured plan to create a sustainable garden from build to food production. The class enable the formation of a core team of students from diverse educational backgrounds. Other products of the class included the formation of a club, a new bed design for the garden that was ultimately implemented and a collection of in-depth research to ensure minimal mistakes were made.
Surrounded by the New Jersey Pinelands, a Stockton Community Garden is an opportunity that has been realized that has the ability to showcase an example of the transition from a native wooded ecosystem to an open space for community engagement. The project intends to be a space for collaboration between departments and schools of study. One way we are looking to accomplish such a task is working extensively with the art department. Students have been recruited to design a “brand” for the garden including a logo, website, sign, flyers etc. and a raised bed had been reserved to grow plants that will produce natural dyes for the art department to use. We will also be working with Neal Galloway, a Stockton Art Professor, to build a center sculpture for the Garden’s center hexagon display planter box.

The building of the Community Garden has all been done by Stockton students with help from Plant Management. All future construction will continue to be completed by students. Since the lot is so compacted we have had hits and misses in the building process. With the compaction of the soil came issues of constant flooding that demanded attention. We have taken the initiative to track all of our successes and failures in the process of establishing the garden. This is being done to help others who plan to convert “difficult” plots to areas that benefit their communities. The garden has already provided learning opportunities for students such as the implementation of site test such as solar site assessments, water test and soil test. Students have also gained useful skills in writing, presenting, and programs such as CAD.
There are three major goals for this project that remain constant: (1) Cultivation of organic produce, (2) Beautification of the space, and (3) Creation of a site for community events. To ensure every part of the garden is organic and sustainable we have used countless sustainable and chemical free products in the build. Some example of these include: recycled materials, non-treated cedar wood for the raised beds, and EarthTurf. EarthTurf is our sustainable ground cover that is a mixture of native grass and clover that eliminates the need for pesticides and herbicides as well as producing clover that can be harvested and consumed.

With the new budget, we hope to continue to work towards our overall goals. One of the original plans for the space was to have it open to all, this includes making the area functional for the disabled. We have built our center box higher up then the rest so it can accommodate people with special needs. We are also working on incorporating walkways to ensure the space is wheelchair accessible. We are also seeking to improve the plot by aerating the soil to correct the compaction. Ways in which we plan to do this is allowing roots to establish in the ground (with help of a new top layer of nutrient rich soil) and a proposed plan to incorporate native earthworm.
Our main goal moving forward is to perfect the main garden and establish what we are calling the “Grove”. The garden plot is sizable and split into three sections; The Main Garden, The Grove, and The Orchard. The Grove is a space where we want to promote gathering. Our first task will be constructing an outdoor classroom that we hope will be used by all the departments. The classroom will feature seating centralized to an outdoor chalkboard. The Grove will also have benches and tables to be used for studying, events and leisurely.

The Garden has 3 areas:

1. The main garden
   ○ Raised boxes/ event area
2. The orchard
   ○ Fruit trees
3. The grove
   ○ seating/ outdoor classroom/ event area/
     To be determined
Activities

Below are some examples of the campus-wide impacts:

- Promoting sustainable horticulture opportunities that are accessible for all the students on campus.
- Beautifying what was an unused public space that will become open to all.
- Providing interdisciplinary learning opportunities for projects, demonstrations, installations, and collaborations.
- Increasing opportunities for engagement between internal and external communities, for example, providing a site for admissions and other tours that is an example of a thriving and functional human-influenced ecosystem

Assessment Plan
The following action steps for the development of the Stockton Community Garden Project are required.

- Design plan of the grove space based on the site analysis. Determine best areas for outdoor classroom, beautification, and community events.
- Engage campus-wide communities to develop opportunities for learning and engagement. Conversations have begun with Sociology/Anthropology, Arts, Sustainability, Environmental Science, Hospitality and Tourism, SUST Trust student club, SAVE student club, Service Learning, and Stockton Center for Community Engagement.
- Improve newly built garden space: siding for shed, art installations, signs, and general finishes
- Improve soil compaction and document failures and successes
- Build on site greenhouse for year-round plant growth
- Assure site is handicap accessible
- Maintain plants and assure production of produce that increases the school’s biodiversity
- Conduct community outreach both on campus and in Atlantic City to help smooth community transition into new campus site
Outcomes

- Transformation of a damaged dirt lot into a bio-diverse Community Garden while still retaining the original function of the space.
  - Submission of a scholarly paper on the process of transformation.
- Documentation of the transformation through blogs, photographs, and other media.
- Measure the quantity and diversity of produce.
  - Record the variety of destinations of the produce.
- Quantify positive impacts on biodiversity including plants, native bird and insect populations.
- Hosting community events for internal and external communities.
- Assess Stockton student, faculty, and staff usage of the community space.
Progression Tracking Images