

Community Economic Development
Southern New Hampshire University

Jovenes Junto con Ancianos para un Mejor Mañana

JJAMM Food Network

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Abstract

Jóvenes Juntos con Ancianos para un Mejor Mañana Community Gardens Food Network (JJAMM Food Network) was designed to address three different needs in the community of Lawrence, MA: health, education and employment. The JJAMM Food Network is composed of 4 areas: Elder and Teen Program, Community Gardening, Micro Enterprising, and Community Network.

The JJAMM Food Network began with a structural component teaching nutrition, fitness, gardening, and money management. Elders and Teens were able to put into practice what they have learned, as they planted and tended a garden and harvested the crops. The crops harvested were prepared to be sold at a food stand and sold to local restaurant owners.

Groundwork Lawrence (GWL) donated the use of gardening beds on Brook Street and an alleyway between Mechanic and Union St. The program began in summer 2006 and will have an opportunity to continue for the years to come. Funding was challenging but the U.S. Department of Agriculture granted funding towards GWL's vision of the Food Network for 2007.

The JJAMM Food Network brought together teenagers and elders who participated in the structured program while building a much needed relationship between each other. There are stereotypes that are built in into each social group, which made it very difficult for these two social groups to interact.

There were many benefits to participating in the JJAMM Food Network. It prepared each team to not only grow crops but also to think about forming a business or further develop their skills educationally. The JJAMM Food Network not only allowed a social network, but provided a network with local restaurant owners who purchased some of the crops that were grown in the community gardens.

Executive Summary

Groundwork Lawrence piloted a program that prepares elders and teens to physically work a summer in a community garden. Each elder was assigned a community garden bed and a teenage partner. Each elder participated in a functional training program in order to help enable, sustain and endure more time gardening. They also learned social skills and how to relate to teenagers. The exercises were tailored to their age. These teenagers also participated in an exercise program, focusing on how to stay fit through exercise and diet. They also learned skills of building relationships with elders. The newly formed teams were then able to collaborate with each other and help each other to maintain the garden bed they developed. They then actively sold their grown products at their own farm stand at the Lawrence Senior Center.

Over the summer, 10 participants: five teenagers and five elders will join and plant community gardens. Both young and old will learn about nutrition, fitness, gardening, and money management and to a local restaurant.

The elders who worked on this program were able to loan a portion of the “gardening bed” at no cost to them. The gardening beds was located on an alleyway off of Mechanic and Union Street. The participants lived in the vicinity

Each of the participants learned how to grow their own vegetables and flowers. Each participant also learned several ways to utilize or cook that vegetable and learned to sell the item and maintain records. Each participant learned various ways to keep their vegetables fresh and healthy. The goal would be for these gardeners to continue investing in the garden while lowering their food consumption cost and raising their income level.

Groundwork Lawrence (GWL) collaborated with the Greater Lawrence Family Health Center (GLFHC), Lawrence Senior Center, and local residents to make the program successful. GWL determined that in order for a participant to qualify for the program, that participant must be borderline healthy, and mobile. They then received a training beginning in July 2006 of fitness, nutrition and gardening. During this time, gardening commenced, while workshops on staying fit under the sun, rain and weeding continued. Then in August 2006, workshops on financial literacy, including budgeting and marketing skills, were provided. Also, a small local vegetable stand was started. Evaluation of this program showed that, while some problems were encountered, the project was generally successful.

The community vision of this program is to compose a Food Network. This Food Network is comprised of four areas:

Elder/Teen Program

- Encourages inter-generational relationships
- Promotes positive social behaviors, such as staying in school
- Increases knowledge of health and nutrition, and aids in diet-related illness prevention

Community Gardening

- Encourages cultivation of fresh food
- Increase consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables
- Beautifies the urban environment

Micro Enterprising

- Increases opportunities for micro enterprise development
- Encourages cultivation and sale of fresh produce
- Increases personal and family income

Community Networks

- Creates partnerships between community gardeners and local restaurants
- Connects sympathetic organizations in the community to build a coalition of advocates for fresh food choices, increased health, and better nutrition

I. Community Needs Assessment

1. Community Profile. Demographics

Lawrence is a historic textile mill town that was built in the 1840's as the nation's first planned industrial city. Known as the "Immigrant City," Lawrence has always been a multi-ethnic and multicultural gateway city with a high proportion of foreign-born residents (Lawrence Public Schools, 2003). In 1997, Lawrence was the 23rd poorest city in the nation, with a 15 percent unemployment rate (EPA, 1997).

In the 2000 Census approximately half (41.8%) of Lawrence residents have no high school diploma or equivalency. Lawrence also has an extremely high percent of individuals living in poverty with 24.3 percent and 21.7 percent of Lawrence families live in poverty. The median income of Lawrence households (\$27,983) and is significantly lower than for the region (\$61,177) and the state of Massachusetts median household income (\$50,052) (Lawrence Public Schools, 2003).

Though the poverty level of the city is above average, renting and purchasing a home is a challenge for those who live there. To afford the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Lawrence, a family needs an annual income of \$34,999. Over half, (54.6 percent) of families earn less than \$34,999 and forty percent of Lawrence families earn less than \$24,999 causing families to be homeless or live in a studio apartment affordable with an income of \$21,600, at Fair Market value (Lawrence Public Schools, 2003).

2. Community Needs Assessment.

Economic Statistics:

- In 1997, Lawrence was the 23rd poorest city in the nation, with a 15 percent unemployment rate.
- 51% of residents live under 200% of the federal poverty level.
- Unemployment rates in Lawrence are at 14%, or three times the State average.
- The median income of Lawrence households (\$27,983) is significantly less than the region (\$61,177) and the Massachusetts median household income (\$50,052).

Social and Educational Statistics:

- Nearly half (41.8%) of Lawrence residents over age 18 have no high school diploma or equivalency (2000 Census).
- Since the year 2000, only 57% of overall students graduated from Lawrence High School*.
- The dropout rate among Lawrence Public School Students (grades 9-12) is 11.2%, compared with 3.7% statewide (DOE website).
- Lawrence High School lost its accreditation three times in the past ten years*.

Health Statistics**:

- The mortality rate for coronary heart disease is 167.77 per 100,000 residents, significantly higher than the state rate of 145.77.
- The rate for hypertension (high blood pressure) for Lawrence is 8.73 per 100,000 residents, compared to 5.49 statewide.

- The age-adjusted rate for diabetes is 36.25 per 100,000, 76% higher than the state rate of 20.56.

*A Few Generally-Accepted Truths about Food Choices as they relate to these demographics and health statistics***:*

- Low-income people generally have few choices (aside from cost) when it comes to choosing foods to purchase and consume.
- Generally speaking, the cheapest food in America holds the least nutritional value and the highest fat content.
- Low-income people generally suffer from diet-related disease at rates greater than people at higher income levels.

More general community needs assessment:

- Since 1990, Lawrence has seen significant changes in its population. While its overall population has increased only 2.6 percent, its Hispanic/Latino population has increased 47.1 percent, and its non-Hispanic/Latino population has decreased 29.2 percent.
- Sixty percent of Lawrence residents are Hispanic or Latino, with Puerto Ricans representing the largest Hispanic/Latino ethnicity (36.7%). (Census classifies Hispanic or Latino as Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, and Other.) Only 2.8 percent of Lawrence's population is Asian, with Vietnamese being the largest reported Asian group (37.8%). (Census classifies Asian as Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, and Other.)
- Thirty-one percent of Lawrence residents over the age of five have limited English language proficiency; the majority of that population (88%) consists of native Spanish speakers.

Graphical Content.

Below is the information on youth ages 14-17 demonstrating that they are at risk of not being able to complete high school. Without a high school diploma jobs will be difficult to find. Without skills for a trade, poverty will continue due to the low paying jobs that do not help with the cost of living (Lawrence Public Schools, 2005).

Grade 10 – 2004 MCAS English Language Arts

Participation		% Students at Each Performance Level				
#	%	Advanced	Proficient	Need Improvement	Warning	
STUDENT STATUS						
Regular	368	94	2%	26%	52%	20%
Disabled	30	70	0%	3%	21%	76%
Limited English Proficient	75	100	0%	3%	20%	77%
ALL STUDENTS						
2003	514	98	2%	26%	35%	37%
2004	473	92	1%	21%	45%	33%
STATE						

2003	69,607	99	20%	40%	28%	12%
2004	68,943	96	19%	44%	27%	10%

Grade 10 – 2004 MCAS Mathematics

Participation		% Students at Each Performance Level				
#		%	A	P	NI	W/F
STUDENT STATUS						
Regular	373	95	7%	17%	40%	36%
Disabled	39	91	0%	5%	10%	86%
Limited English Proficient	75	100	3%	7%	25%	65%
ALL STUDENTS						
2003	521	98	4%	14%	29%	53%
2004	487	95	5%	15%	35%	45%
STATE						
2003	70,263	100	24%	27%	28%	21%
2004	69,342	96	29%	28%	28%	15%

II. The Problem

The elder and youth populations of low-income households are not able to economically advance due to a lack of skills and job opportunities. Lawrence is known for the many health problems, which include but are not limited to Type II diabetes and obesity, that are faced by its residents.

This program is geared to reaching out to youth from ages 14-18 who are at risk of dropping out of school in the city of Lawrence, MA and elders at risk of mortality prior to their time due to depression and loneliness.

1. Problem statement:

Problem 1: Much of Lawrence's population lacks economic security.

- Features of this problem:
 - Lack of jobs (Lawrence's unemployment rate is 14%).
 - No financial resources to remove self and family from poverty.
 - Increased stereotypes associated with poverty and joblessness.
 - Stress associated with economic insecurity can lead to increased health problems.

Problem 2: Lawrence faces many challenges and associated social problems.

- Features of this problem:
 - High dropout rate by the age of 16
 - Youth at risk of gang involvement, teen pregnancy and substance abuse
 - Increased mental health issues, including suicide
 - Increased risk of committing crimes
 - Lack of skills in education and trade

Problem 3: Much of Lawrence's population lacks food security.

- Features associated with this problem:
 - High rates of health-related illness, including Type II diabetes, high blood pressure, coronary heart disease, and obesity
 - Low-income families are often forced to purchase inexpensive food, which is often the least healthy food option
 - Lawrence is home to only one chain grocery store, and few options for fresh produce purchases exist in neighborhoods.
 - Transportation to fresh food sources may be a challenge for many families

Many youth and elders in the city are faced with many stereotypes as a result of their socioeconomic position. Elders are “too weak or fragile” and youth are too troublesome. These two populations have been underserved and need skills to build more financial independence. The community needs to provide opportunities for individuals and institutions to make more wholesome food choices

Target community:

There are two population groups that are being targeted: the youth who are below the poverty rate and have less of an opportunity to succeed and elders who are independent but at risk of being alone, without resources and skills to remain independent. Participants of the program were youth from the Lawrence Public High School in the City of Lawrence and Elders who are residents or nearby residents of Brook Street and Mechanic Street where the garden beds are located.

2. Stakeholders:

There are many major players who compose the JJAMM Food Network. They are:

- Groundwork Lawrence (GWL)

GWL is the lead agency that will seek funding to provide employment, trainings and skill leadership building to at-risk youth and elders. GWL hired a program manager to help run this program and other projects of GWL. They seek funding for programs that will attract youth and prepare them with career skills. They target and identify Latino Youth at risk to participate in program. They recruit from already established youth groups including from already established Youth Corps and Green Teams.

- Community Teens and Elders

They participated in trainings and educational programs that will help them develop skills and experience in an environmental micro-enterprising career

- Lawrence Senior Center (LSC)

LSC Recruited elders for the JJAMM Food Network from their established elders group. Their elders who participate developed skills and experience in an environmental micro-enterprising career.

- Greater Lawrence Family Health Center

They provided training on Health, Nutrition and Fitness. The training helped participants be more aware of their well-being. GLFHC identifies and targeted Latino Youth at risk to participate in program.

- SNHU CED Graduate Intern

She integrated programs of gardening and micro-enterprising. The intern also implemented a new program to integrate generational differences and building economical well being.

- Food Project, Dorchester acted as an advisor and mentor.

Through consultation, JJAMM Food Network modeled areas that were successful with the Food Project.

- Nuestra Raíces, Holyoke, MA

Advisor and Mentor. Through consultation, JJAMM Food Network modeled areas that were successful with Nuestra Raíces.

- Boston Natural Areas Network/ Urban Masters Gardner

Provided a trainer who met with the gardeners to educate in proper usage of the gardening beds.

- The Program Manager helped organize the gardening program and will conduct a social survey that will identify what the consumer needs and wants. The Program Manager was hired in May 2006.

3. **Project goal(s) in CED terms:**

To reduce poverty and promote economic growth among Elders and Youth of low-income households in Lawrence, MA by:

- a. Engaging residents in unique community gardening programming (i.e. pairing teens and elders) that encourages cultivation and consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables.
- b. Offering programming to educate residents about health, nutrition, fitness, and economic sovereignty, especially as each facet relates to food.
- c. Increasing opportunities for micro enterprise development through programming that encourages cultivation and sale of fresh produce, and/or production of fresh-food-based value-added products..
- d. Creating partnerships between community gardeners and local restaurants and/or institutions that encourage growth and consumption of fresh, local produce.

4. **Project objectives:**

To reduce poverty and promote economic growth by:

- a. Engaging residents in unique community gardening programming (i.e. pairing teens and elders) that encourages cultivation and consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables.
 - A team consisting of an elder and teen(s) would be assigned to a garden bed.
 - A team would be instructed how to take care of their garden bed
 - A team would be instructed who to contact if garden bed is unsafe.

- The elder would “borrow” the garden bed and will be responsible for the management of the garden bed.
- b. Offering programming to educate residents about health, nutrition, fitness, and economic sovereignty, especially as each facet relates to food.
 - A team would know the expectations of participation in the program.
 - A team would be trained on how to weed, care for their crop.
 - A team would be trained how to “market” their produce.
 - Each individual would be taught to compare their prior budget and add earnings or savings to their “new” income.
- c. Increasing opportunities for micro enterprise development through programming that encourages cultivation and sale of fresh produce, and/or production of fresh-food-based value-added products..
 - Each individual would be taught gardening skills.
 - Each individual will be provided information of where to seek employment in this field
 - Each individual will be provided information of furthering their education in agriculture.
- d. Creating partnerships between community gardeners and local restaurants and/or institutions that encourage growth and consumption of fresh, local produce.

III. Design

1. Review of the Literature:

Introduction

Community Gardens (CG) have been in existence for decades. CG's have proven to help mankind in a variety of different needs. According to research by different authors, people need plants for more than just food and pleasure. Psychologist Stephen Kaplan reports in one of his studies that, "Nature is not just 'nice'... it is a vital ingredient in healthy human functioning." (Malakoff 1999)

At a time that the poor are unable to sustain themselves even with governmental help, CG have proven to help with economic sustainability within families who garden. Another author states that community gardeners save money on food bills; they build community spaces; they eat more nutritiously than their non-gardening counterparts; and they help to create neighborhoods with character, with a sense of place. (Herbach 1998)

Catherine Sneed began a CG with prison inmates and she reported, "...growing fruits and vegetables offer the gardeners a sense of empowerment..." (Scott 1996)

In 1993, the Congress essentially eliminated funding for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Urban Gardening Program, which helped over 150,000 low-income gardeners in 23 of the nation's cities. (Malakoff 1999) The Congress at that time did not see an essential and vital need to maintain funding for CG. What they did not see is that CG can economically benefit government, as well. In research where 23 city programs were analyzed, it was noted that for every dollar of government investment, six dollars in vegetables were produced. (Hynes 1996)

Background theory

Some of the theories of CG have reported that people have positive psychological responses to plants and green spaces. A theory reported by researchers from Texas Ulrich and Parsons reported that people are overwhelmed by the noise, movement, and visual complexity of the modern world, and that quieter gardens reduce stress. A survey completed by the University of Michigan reported that over 80% of the members of the Horticultural Society ranked "peacefulness and tranquility" as one of the top benefits of gardening. And a gardener in Dorchester, MA reported that his gardening plot was considered "a little island in the madness." (Malakoff 1999)

Also, gardening instructor Catherine Sneed reports that, "the garden inspires people to learn. They want to be able to read the bean packets, to know why the beans are growing. You should see me teach a roomful of women in jail for prostitution the concept of asexual plant reproduction." (Scott 1996)

CG's have been beneficial for teens. Kids who are participating in the garden program have better school attendance and have gotten their parents more involved in their schooling than have non-gardening kids. A teacher involved stated that lessons can be derived from gardening. Lessons in science, math, health, social studies and language arts can be taught to students. Other teachers also reports that students have a feeling of accomplishment and learn responsibility. (Finch 1995)

Prior art and design

There are three other locations that have implemented projects similar to our JJAMM Food Network. They are Nuestra Raíces Organization in Holyoke, MA, Brookside Church in Manchester, NH and Food Project en Dorchester, MA.

Jaime Iglesia has worked at Nuestra Raíces for over 8 years on their Community Gardens. He is the Director of the Agricultural Department of Nuestra Raíces, Holyoke. He shared that when the elders and teenagers share with each other there is more unity. Mr. Iglesia was very passionate about this and stated that opening the field for children teaches them awareness and love towards this area.

The following provides an insight in the program's operations. Families alternate days to come to the garden to care for their crops. He shared that when crops are ready for harvesting; they consume it, sell it or give it away. 30% of their profit is given to Nuestra Raíces while the remainder is retained by the participants. The 30% earnings help pay the stipends and the office management of the program. He also reported that the youth participate only on the days that the crops need to be harvested and carried to the market. The youth also sell the harvest for them but do not receive any income from this program. However, the youth are compensated by funding and activities from another program that they participated in. Nuestras Raíces also manages a licensed kitchen where residents can produce products from locally grown foods to sell to the community.

The program has produced the following results: 2 coordinators receive a stipend and are changed every year; 32 families working on it and has a small lot for the children or grandchildren to raise their own garden. On average families are producing over \$1000 dollars of organic produce per year.

Another program was opened in Manchester, NH. Pastor Bill Donohue of Brookside Church opened his church land to build a



Community Garden last year with families from a Somalian Refugee Camp. He reported that their church sits on 10 acres of property. The church has a lot of green space that had only been used for soccer before May 2005. Ann Sanderson from the International Institute in Manchester, NH called to see if he was willing to donate time and a location to help build a better nutritional system for these Somalis at a refugee camp. It was reported to him that these Somalis were nutritionally deficient. Several people who were excited about the project donated tools and essentials to garden. The Somalis then planted, tended and harvest 2000 square feet of this community garden, which was big enough to feed 12 families.

Families would tend to their crops 1 time a week, specifically on Fridays. This year they have decided to add more land to garden to feed 25 families. They will also add a row of raspberry bushes and fruit trees. In their lot they grew beans, tomatoes, Swiss chard, cucumbers, squash, zucchini, and common New England vegetables. The total cost of this garden was \$2500.00. This was financed through contributions. Fertilizers and seeds were donated. Many people became excited and responded positively. See picture on the right of lot used for gardening.

The New Hampshire Cooperative Extension volunteered to provide much of the agriculture training and expertise. They also provided the Masters Gardener to come once a week. He reported that the Master Gardener was very crucial. The Master Gardener took care of providing the tools.

The Food Project, Dorchester, MA has many vacant lots being reused for gardening. They have managed to own the lots for gardening and use youths as primary gardeners; they have also organized themselves in a way that their sales of produce grown in community gardens take place at a local farmers market. They also have greenhouses on vacant lots that grow through winter seasons.

Outside of Massachusetts, a CG that caught my attention was “The Garden Project” in San Francisco, CA. In 1992, The Garden Project was founded with a mission unlike any organization in the country: to provide job training and support to former offenders through counseling and assistance in continuing education, while also impacting the communities from which they come to former inmates.

Garden Project Apprentices work in an intensive program to learn horticulture skills and grow organic vegetables that feed seniors and families in San Francisco. Apprentices grow a variety of vegetables – such as kale, Swiss chard, and broccoli – which are distributed by community centers. In addition, some centers offer nutrition and cooking classes with Garden Project vegetables, teaching children and families how to eat better. Garden Project Apprentices also work to support neighborhood greening projects by cultivating plants for schools, establishing and maintaining gardens at police stations and housing developments, and supporting community clean-up efforts. (The Garden Project 10)

Discussion

Community gardening can be very rewarding. It can help heal and enhance the economic stability of low-income individuals and families. It has been clear via research that CG have played at least three distinct roles in community development. (Malakoff 1999) They:

- provide a more livable environment by controlling physical factors such as temperature, noise, and pollution;
- help create a community image that is perceived as positive by both residents and outsiders; and
- create opportunities for people to work together to improve communities in many ways

CG has helped many people through economic obstacles, betterment of life, and educationally. It is understood that unless these individuals or families have acres of land, they would not earn enough profit to partially meet the daily cost of living. However, if CG is used a tool for the community to work together as a team, then what is grown can together be sold at local restaurants. Sneed, through The Garden Project's micro enterprising, has managed to help these released inmates to connect with the local community, and build trust and sustainability. (Scott 1996)

Community gardening certainly has its social and physical challenges. As with Sneed, when she began building her community garden it took her 3 years to simply clean an acre of land so that she could begin her program. In another example, Sneed tried to conduct outreach to inmates. One of the difficulties was trying to transition these inmates into the mainstream society and become accepted. In general this is always a difficult aspect. It seems as though community gardening has never been respected or valued.

Another problem that may arise from CG can be sustainability. At times it's the lack of staffing, members or simply the funds to be able to hold a CG together. As read in previous paragraphs, Food project and Nuestra Raíces have also valued the work of "team building" and have educated either their elders or teens on the value of a Food Network Business.

What are some of the major problems or questions that still need to be answered? In all of the low income areas, there will always be a lack of transportation and lack of funding sources. Sneed shared that Gardening is not for everyone; therefore, there could be a large turnover rate of gardeners. Questions are: How do you identify gardeners that have the potential of consistency? Transportation is a problem. How can it be resolved so that CG can be self-sustainable and not dependent on grants?

2. **Program:**

The program will be using 2 donated stone beds about 40 feet long and 2.5 feet tall. Elders and Teens will be matched and will work together to plant and harvest these community gardens. Residents will be assigned to several sections of the beds and will be responsible for their upkeep.

JJAMM Food Network is a program sponsored by Groundwork Lawrence in collaboration with Lawrence Senior Center, and Greater Lawrence Family Health Center. The program is developed to build the economic status of residents of the city of Lawrence. Local elders and teens work together utilizing the gardening skills known and learned in order to grow vegetables in a garden bed assigned to them. The participants will learn and experience how to sell their produce in a stand and/or learn to save by bringing home-grown produce to their household.

3. **Participants:**

Ten participants, five teens and five elders, participated in the program. Participants had to be in average to good health, and live in the city of Lawrence in low-income households. Teenage participants had to demonstrate being at risk of dropping out or at risk of not completing high school.

4. **Community role:**

Stakeholder	Describe Participation	Level of Participation	Impact of participation	Plan
Groundwork Lawrence	Search for funding to provide employment, trainings and skill leadership building to at-risk youth. Will hire program manager to help run this program and other projects of GWL.	High	Funding will attract youth and prepare them with career skills	Identify and target Latino Youth at risk to participate in program. Will recruit from already established youth groups: Youth corps and Green Team.
Community Participation Teens and Elders	Participate in trainings and educational programs	High	Participants will develop skills and experience in an environmental micro-enterprising career	Recruit Elders and teens
Lawrence Senior Center	Elders are recruited from their established elders group.	Medium	Participants will develop skills and experience in an environmental micro-enterprising career	Recruit Elders
Greater Lawrence Family Health Center	Provide training on Health, Nutrition and Fitness	Medium/High	Participants will be more aware of their well being	Identify and target Latino Youth at risk to participate in program.
CED Graduate Intern	Integrate programs of gardening and micro-enterprising	High/Medium	Implement new program to integrate generational differences and building economical well being	Plan, Organize program and figure out how program can continue.
Food Project, Dorchester	Advisor / mentor	Low	We will know what was successful in the project development and what was	Meet with Coordinator for consult.

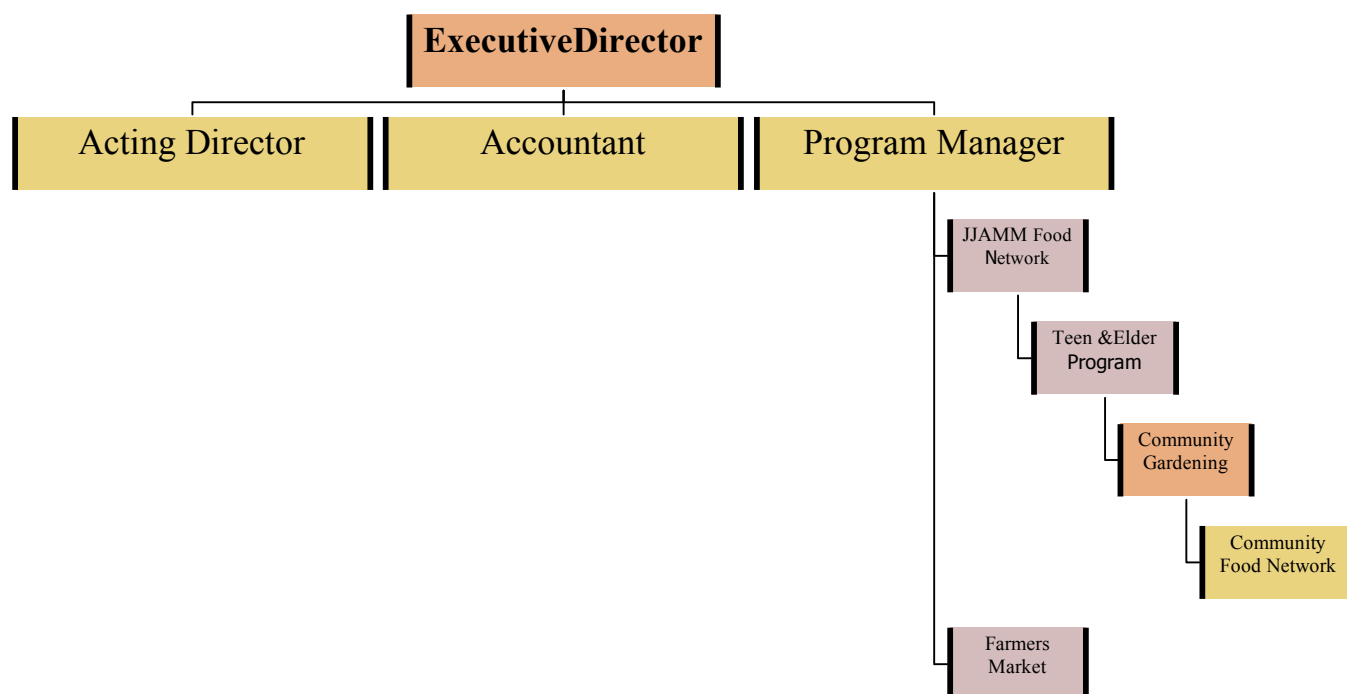
			not.	
Nuestra Raíces, Holyoke, MA	Advisor / mentor	Low	We will know what was successful in the project development and what was not.	Meet with Coordinator for consult.
Boston Natural Areas Network/ Urban Masters Gardner	Advisor/Trainer	Low/Medium	Participants will be trained in gardening.	Meet with Coordinator for consult. And wait for a trainer is assigned to our program.
Program Manager	Will organize the gardening program and will conduct a social survey.	High	We will identify what the consumer needs and wants	In process of being hired. Will be hired in May 2006. In the meantime, Intern is completing tasks.
Technical Advisor	Will provide technical advice of the development of the program	Low	Will maintain an outlook of program development via constructive criticism	We meet monthly with program leaders.
Financial Educator Gloria Gonzalez	Provide the educational component on the financial literacy.	medium	Coordinate 10 hours of Financial literacy for program	Meet with Coordinator to help with financial curriculum

5. **Host organization:**

Groundwork Lawrence was modeled after Groundwork England. Five years ago a branch was opened in Lawrence as an environmental program that combines and identifies the needs of the community with environmental protection. They have been able to establish funding for clean river programs and developing parks along the river way in order to develop a better sense of community. GWL has been recognized for its involvement with the local community and using the local residents to increase awareness via hands on experience.

The CED Intern's roles and responsibility were to help write grants to fund the program, recruit and develop curriculum that will be used for the program.

6. **Organizational Chart:**



7. **Method:**

8.

GWL collaborated with Greater Lawrence Family Health Center, Lawrence Senior Center and local residents along with the support of Boston Natural Areas Network and several other already established gardening agencies. JJAMM will be using or duplicating some of the resources the Nuestra Raíces has, since they have an agricultural project already established.

Also, Boston Natural Areas Network (the local/regional community gardening resource) has donated seeds. Local stores and gardening shops also donated tools and beginner plants to help the commencement of the program. The donated seeds will be planted in the garden beds that are owned by Groundwork Lawrence.

The following is a brief a description of the areas in which the garden beds will be located in:

Mechanic St. Alleyway – In Spring 2006, this long-neglected alleyway, which runs through a city block dotted with several vacant lots and densely-built three-family homes, was transformed into a community garden alongside the construction of nine new affordable homes (construction of the homes was led by GWL organizational partner Lawrence Community Works). While some of the homes' construction displaced a five year old squatter community garden (which is very loosely organized and maintained), the design of the alleyway gardens was shaped by these squatter community gardeners with the ultimate vision and promise of a permanent community garden home on this site.

The redevelopment of this entire block utilizes low-impact development (LID) techniques by creatively designing the landscape to effectively manage storm water on-site.

GWL continues to write proposals to fund this program. GWL has submitted proposals to the USDA Community Food Projects Grant Application. They will also submit to the Stevens Foundation, Noyes Foundation and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

9. **Products & outputs.**

Product 1:

Engage residents in unique community gardening programming (i.e. pairing teens and elders) that encourages cultivation and consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables.

Output

- GWL supplied a garden plot in local community gardens (Mechanic St. Alleyway and Brook St.) at no cost to participants.
- Filter fabric place on ground to protect vegetables from contamination
- Soils, seeds and tools donated by community investors
- Beds created by volunteers on Earth day. Stone Beds are raised 24 inches for easier facilitation for elders.
- Elder and teens recruited by GWL and Lawrence Senior Center

Product 2:

Offer programming to educate residents about health, nutrition, fitness, and economic sovereignty, especially as each facet relates to food.

Output

- Workshops on gardening provided by Master Urban Gardeners program, GWL on Financial Management, Elder Services and GLFHC on Health.

Product 3:

Increase opportunities for micro enterprise development through programming that encourages cultivation and sale of fresh produce, and/or production of fresh-food-based value-added products.

Output

- Sale of community garden-grown produce will take place at the Lawrence Farmers Market, managed by GWL.

Product 4:

Create partnerships between community gardeners and local restaurants and/or institutions that encourage growth and consumption of fresh, local produce.

Output

- Meet and have community institutions commit to purchase locally grown produce from local residents.

IV. Implementation

1. Implementation Plan:

- Engaging residents in unique community gardening programming (i.e. pairing teens and elders) that encourages cultivation and consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Offering programming to educate residents about health, nutrition, fitness, and economic sovereignty, especially as each facet relates to food.
- Increasing opportunities for micro enterprise development through programming that encourages cultivation and sale of fresh produce, and/or production of fresh-food-based value-added products.
- Creating partnerships between community gardeners and local restaurants and/or institutions that encourage growth and consumption of fresh, local produce.

2. Inputs:

- Engaging residents in unique community gardening programming (i.e. pairing teens and elders) that encourages cultivation and consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables.
 - Work on Proposal
 - Work on Program/ Curriculum development
 - Recruit Elders, Youth, and volunteers
 - components discussed of gardening techniques and movements
- Offering programming to educate residents about health, nutrition, fitness, and economic sovereignty, especially as each facet relates to food.
 - Program Begins
 - Weeding and Watering Techniques
 - Gardening movements
 - A team consisting of an elder and teen(s) would be assigned to a garden bed.
 - A team would be instructed how to take care of their garden bed
 - A team would be instructed who to contact if garden bed is unsafe.
 - The elder would “loan” the garden bed and will be responsible for the management of the garden bed.
 - A team would know the expectations of participation in the program
 - Garden management
 - A team would be trained on how to weed, care for their crop.
 - Strength Building training

- Increasing opportunities for micro enterprise development through programming that encourages cultivation and sale of fresh produce, and/or production of fresh-food-based value-added products.
 - Prep for local vegetable stand
 - A team would be trained how to “market” their produce.
 - Basic Nutrition
 - Local vegetable stand
 - Inventory
- Creating partnerships between community gardeners and local restaurants and/or institutions that encourage growth and consumption of fresh, local produce.
 - Local vegetal stand
 - Each individual would be taught to compare their prior budget and add earnings or savings to their “new” income.
 - Recruit Senior Center or Nursing home to purchase vegetables that remain after the vegetable stand is over.
 - Debriefing/Evaluation
 - Meet and have community institutions commit to purchase locally grown produce from local residents.

3. **Staffing Pattern:**

Program Executive Director:

- Maggie Superchurch, Executive Director of Groundwork Lawrence

Program Manager:

- Gloria Machado, Social Worker and SNHU CED Intern

Program Assistants:

- Rose Gonzalez hired in May 2006 as Steward Program Manager of Groundwork Lawrence

Health Advisor:

- Trinidad Telez, MD, Policy and Research Analyst of Greater Lawrence Family Health Center

Technical Advisor and Consultants:

- Patricia Hynes, PHD, Professor of Boston University Department of Public Health and Advisory Board Member of Groundwork USA.
- Valerie Burns of the Boston Natural Urban Area Networks has provided much insight in building a community garden and welcomed the invitation to be a consultant. She will also connect our program with the master’s garden trainer who will volunteer for our program.

- Pat Hines a Professor of Public Health at Boston University will also provided feedback as a Technical Advisor for this program.
- The Food Project Dorchester, MA and
- Nuestras Raíces (Holyoke, MA) have also served as role models to the JJAMM Food Network.

Program volunteers Trainer and Consultants:

- Dr. Trinidad from the Greater Lawrence Family Health Center has assigned volunteers to help organize the health component of the JJAMM Food Network Program,
- Gloria Gonzalez 24 year experienced Head Start teacher and 14 year treasure record keeper in the faith based Spanish Eastern District of the Assembly of God in New England volunteered to provide the educational component on the financial literacy.
- Joanne Whitehead of Boston Natural Area Resource will provide their expertise and knowledge towards forming the curriculum and program.

4. Budget:

The following is the budget written by Groundwork Lawrence.

JJAMM Food Network Program Budget Year 1 Pilot Program

• Program Manager	\$10,593.60*	(in-kind donation)
• Workshop Facilitators	\$4,500.00*	(in-kind donation)
• Materials (seeds, tools)	\$850.00	(in-kind donation)
Total:	\$15,943.60**	

Full Program Budget Year 2 Contingent on grant funding

• Program Manager	\$10,593.60
• Workshop Facilitators	\$4,500.00
• Materials (seeds, tools)	\$500.00
• Teen Stipends	\$12,600.00
• Farmer's Market Sale Material	\$3,500.00
• Promotional Materials	\$250.00
• Liability Insurance	\$350.00
Total:	\$33,293.60

*\$22.07/hour is the Commonwealth of Massachusetts standard value of volunteer service per hour. (www.independentsector.org, 2004)

**Total Program Cost is for a one-year, 12-month program.

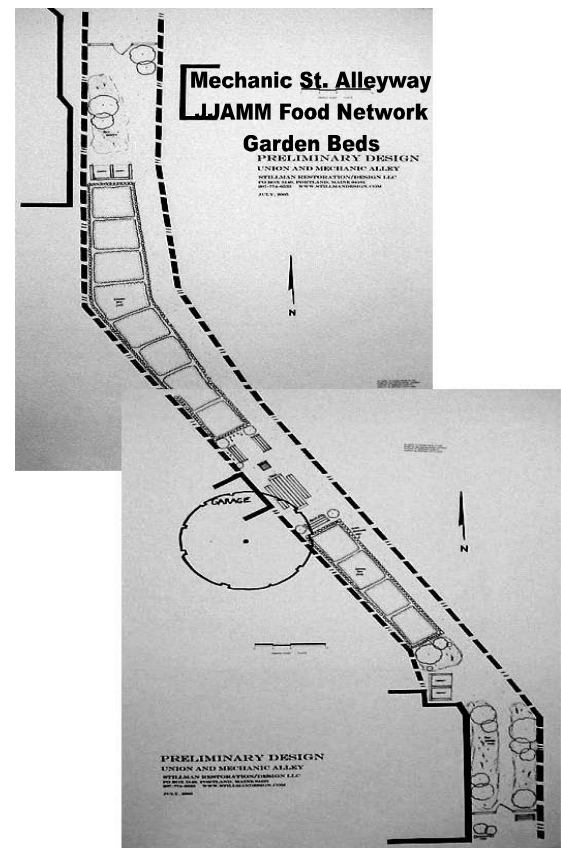
SNHU CED Intern will be volunteering time, but is equivalent to a cash value of \$10,593.60 of in-kind support. SNHU CED Intern is the acting Program Manager for Year 1 Pilot Program. Another Program Manager assistant will be hired by GWL to assist with SNHU Program Manager.

The Program Manager will be doing a variety of tasks for the Community Gardens but is expected to also work for other projects that GWL presently running.

5. Project Implementation Report:

The SNHU intern approached the GWL director with plans for a CED project. The GWL director introduced the idea of community gardening and the SNHU intern introduced the idea of working with teens. Together the decision was made to complete a teen and elder community garden project. Interviews began with Holyoke's community garden experts. They were ecstatic to begin the development of the project. Due to lack of funding, they suggested for the first year be spent for research and planning and implement. It was suggested that even if a smaller number of people were to participate, a pilot project should be pulled through. We all understood that this would require in kind donations from both parties. They were willing to take the risk.

GWL hired a Stewardship Manager to assist SNHU intern with project and other projects GWL had. The SNHU intern dedicated at least 10-15 hours a week towards the implementation of the pilot program



In April 2006, a group of volunteers came together to celebrate Earth Day and build not only the garden beds loaned to the JJAMM Food Network participants but also to beautify the city of Lawrence. Recruitment of Elders and teenagers also began.

A couple of opportunities were given to conduct a couple of focus groups in order to analyze the feasibility and popularity of a food network in the city. What was discovered in the focus groups was that many would love to work in a garden but near their home. Many participants have issues surrounding transportation, health, and time.

They also mentioned gardening is therapeutic and beneficial.

Many local business and organizations were approached and responsive to a food network. They offered to provide either donations or support in some way. Local businesses donated tomatoes plants, lettuces, basil plants, hoes, snacks, rakes, food vouchers as start up materials for the program.

GWL and the SNHU intern introduced the idea to several social service agencies, including Greater Lawrence Family Health Center (GLFHC), Lawrence Senior Center, Family Service Inc., Elder Services and Americorp with the idea of recruiting participants from their already established groups as well as to have the JJAMM Food Network concept introduced.

At the same time, GLFHC medical doctor Trinidad Telez was recruited to help form part of the health and nutrition component of the curriculum.

Dr. Telez also sought out professional volunteers who could teach this component with the JJAMM Food Network Participants.



Boston Urban Networks was also approached and Joanne Whitehead volunteered to



provide her expertise and knowledge towards the gardening component of the curriculum.

Barbara Brodt-Saret from the Elder Services also was willing to volunteer two hours towards the curriculum. She ran a program for elders. SNHU Intern opted to not utilize her since GLFHC had a health curriculum that was more extensive.

Also, the owner of Brox Farms provided invaluable information how to harvest garden plots. He shared how other community gardeners networked with the community and how one of the community gardens in Lowell contracted restaurants or farms with a commitment of \$200.00 for the summer pre-paid. Vegetables would then be brought to them via a box on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. It is clear that those who contract are under the expectation that they may or may not get \$200.00 worth of vegetables. They are told that the worse or the best can occur. Businesses understand this and are simply supporting the program.

GWL originally had suggested that its accountant give a couple of financial literacy classes. Unfortunately, our restricted funding would not permit financing these classes. On that note, the SNHU intern began to seek volunteers to work on the financial literacy component. After several people were approached to help provide input towards the financial literacy curriculum, Gloria Gonzalez, a Head Start teacher of 24 years, a 14 year treasurer of the faith-based programs of the Assembly of God New England District and Director of the Dept. of Sunday School within the Spanish Assembly of God Church agreed to volunteer to teach the financial literacy to the elders of the program. She utilized the curriculum suggested by GWL: NEFE High School Financial Planning Program ®



GWL hired Rose Gonzalez for the Stewardship Manager position. The Stewardship Manager position had several functions in working with GWL including working with the community garden. It turns out that due to the lack of funding, the SNHU intern was informed that she would not be able to focus on the JJAMM project because there were other areas that she needed to focus on.

Originally, GWL offered to utilize 2 gardening sites, Brooks Street and Mechanic St. Alleyway. Brook St. began to have challenges with development as well as legality



issues of land ownership. Therefore, Mechanic St. Alleyway became the main site to the program. Prior to beginning the program in July, the garden beds on Mechanic St. Alleyway had some defects. When the volunteers had come in April, the majority of the volunteers had very little knowledge of how to design a garden bed with stones. A specialist had to come to the site on other occasions to stabilize the stones in the dirt bed so that dirt would not drain from the bed when it rains.

GWL also had agreed that the elders could participate in the Farmers Market and because the program was operating on a shoe string budget the only thing that GWL would be able to cover is the insurance. However,

when the opportunity arose, this was denied. Therefore, SNHU intern decided to speak with the Lawrence Senior Center and ask for permission to host a local vegetable stand.

Finally the program began, with over twenty recruits. We soon realized that we needed to lower the age requirement. With the age for teen participation being lower, these teens did not have the expectation of earning any income, but simply enjoyed being out of the home. They also enjoyed participating in a project that was not common to them.

On the first day of the program, many elders began to inform that several were going away on vacation and would not be able to participate. Many were quiet and shy about introducing themselves. However we were off to a good start. SNHU intern had scheduled an agenda and structured the morning as an orientation to introduce what the participants were going to do for the summer. The participants on the first

day began also the gardening component. GWL and the SNHU Intern had prepared seeds and purchased materials for the gardening component, therefore gardening



commenced.

Teenagers were paired up individually or pairs to an elder. As the participants began work in the garden challenges between elders and teenagers began to occur. Many of the elders have learned to be independent that working with teenagers was not a strong forte. SNHU intern had to go to each elder and give instructions as to how

to keep interacting with teenagers. SNHU intern also observed how the teenagers would shy away and want to clique with other teens. However, SNHU intern was quick to redirect the youth to reach out to the elders.

It was great to see how city teenagers who have never been exposed to any type of gardening reacted to the planting, weeding, gardening and even the bugs. For many of the teens it was difficult to adjust to the gardening component because several did not like the bug world. There was much screaming, much education on bugs and much patience that was needed. Also, the age that was more attracted to this idea of gardening were 8th and 9th graders and 11th graders whose vision was to go to college and wanted a reference of volunteer work.



Elders and Teens would participate in this program where each day had a curriculum. The first couple of weeks the lessons were on nutrition and fitness. Two weeks after would be gardening and the last couple of weeks were on financial literacy.

There were several challenges.

1) Personality conflicts arose between the elders. Many elders had some experience in gardening and thus were excited, about the endeavor. For example, one of the elders began to water and plant his own plants that he purchased in the garden. This for the most part would not have been a problem but because he purchased many plants and didn't have the space to plant them within his own garden spot, he planted them in everyone's garden plot. One of the other elders found out and a heated altercation began causing one of the elders resigned from the program. Though the SNHU intern attempted to intervene



and set rules of respect for both but unfortunately, there was nothing to have that elder return.

2) GWL had informed the SNHU intern that the program could utilize the two garden beds, however it turned out that only one of the garden beds was available. GWL garden manager had assigned part of the other garden bed to other residents who were interested in gardening but not in the program, this also included GWL staff. Therefore,

the space for gardening became an issue. SNHU intern asked for more space and was given 1/3 of the 2nd garden plot where JJAMM was able to plant the tomato plants that were donated by a local garden shop. When SNHU intern asked about the GWL staff vegetables, originally it was informed that the vegetables in that garden were for all the

gardeners but then was informed that the vegetables in that plot were picked for her own consumption. Miscommunication between SNHU intern and GWL staff was evident.

3) Another problem encountered were neighboring kids who began to take the tomatoes and throw them on the ground. On two different occasions, the locks to the gates were stolen and elders began to feel insecure about whether or not their produce was safe.

4) When it was time to begin the Vegetable stand, the location of when the sale was occurring made a big difference. Though we were outside in a central location, the location was the Lawrence Senior Center. Elders and their families were primarily the people who would stop by the table. At this Senior Center many elders were used to receiving things for free or a very cheap price. We hear from many, “I don’t have money, but I want one. Yet I don’t have money”, “I get paid at the beginning of the month (SSI)”, I like these plants I’ll speak to my (family member) to come see tomorrow.” Sales were low but word of mouth spread about the program and other elders shared interest in participating next year.

5) For the micro enterprising piece, SNHU intern met with a restaurant owner of Mill City Gourmet, who loved the idea of investing in the community,. He informed us that they would certainly purchase tomatoes, specifically regular tomatoes. He informed that baby tomatoes can only be used for salads and limits their use. He also was interested in lettuce, and on occasion 5 lbs of Basil. One of the elders joined SNHU intern and met the restaurant owner. The elder with his broken English shared his excitement of the vegetables he had grown. The restaurant owner shared that he would contact us as soon as he was ready to order.



Soon after the meeting, the SNHU intern discussed product presentation, how to deliver, how to package at a low cost or with recycled materials. It was great to hear the ideas of the elders. One grew up in the “campo” (countryside) of Puerto Rico and has many tricks up his sleeve with recycling.

A week after the meeting, the owner contacted the SNHU intern and asked for all the tomatoes that were ready. One of the elders plucked all the tomatoes that could be ready but there weren’t enough ripe tomatoes, therefore, he stored them in the shed to keep them away from the cold and hoped they would ripen soon.

6) There were other issues that caused frustration. For instance, when packaging the tomatoes there were many there were spotted or cracked. SNHU intern and elders went

through the whole bunch and picked out the “prettier” ones. This was concerning due to fear of not having enough to sell, however the SNHU intern did not want to discourage restaurant owner for continuing with the partnership. Tomatoes cannot be stored for too long. It had to be picked and delivered so that they do not crack with pressure from other tomatoes being on top. It was very difficult to have nice red tomatoes and not spotted. The SNHU intern felt it necessary to inform the restaurant in case if they expect “perfect” quality. Yet they were willing to invest.

7) Another issue was the language barrier. All the elders spoke little to no English. They did know how to defend themselves but needed the SNHU intern to interpret many things.

8) Interest in the program fluctuated. One of the elders showed very little interest in making a profit out of produce grown. Instead she picked for her own consumption. She did

however provide transportation to help with the vending of the tomatoes. Because it was the end of the summer, a couple of the elders had planned their vacation trip to return to their Caribbean country, the Dominican Republic.



9) One other area that was unpredicted was that the garden grew well into the school year. Therefore, the teens ended up returning to school and were unable to help the elders finalize the process. They did come after school to help package, pluck and prepare for the vegetable stand. They also came after school to help clean up. One of the challenges for the teenagers was to prepare a salad with the vegetables grown for their family's dinner.

Finally, the first batch of tomatoes was delivered with excitement. Other tomatoes that were ready for delivery were brought to one of the elder's home, placed in a brown paper bag and placed inside of the oven for ripening. One of the elders was not very readily available; however the SNHU intern encouraged this elder to help at least with the

transportation to help this area of business become developed. It worked! The second box of regular tomatoes was finally delivered. However it was a challenge.

The first box of cherry tomatoes was delivered by one of the elders and the SNHU intern. It was challenging to have them work independently and deliver on their own or take the initiative to make this business their own. Therefore, the SNHU intern chose a tactic to have the elders be more independent. For the 2nd box of tomatoes they had wanted the SNHU intern to go with them to bring a box of tomatoes and the intern suggested for they to drop it off without the intern; however, they would not go. The SNHU intern then agreed but when the time came, the intern purposely guided them via phone and walked them through what they had to do rather than being present. The SNHU intern purposely did not act as an interpreter and the elders with broken English, communicated with the owners and everything went well. The elders began to feel a bit more confident about what they were doing.

For the tomatoes that continued to grow, SNHU intern had suggested that tomatoes be plucked and placed in a brown paper bag. Two of the elders did not want to do this and felt that the tomatoes would be sweeter if they were not removed but left on the stem. They guaranteed that they would take care of it. The SNHU intern left one of the elders in charge of making arrangements to transport them to his house when he felt it was ready. The elders coordinated between themselves to discuss among themselves how they were going to store the tomatoes so that they could ripen. Unfortunately, when he finally was ready to pluck them and bring them to his house, it was too late because the frost had already attacked the tomatoes. He had informed that he had a difficult time finding transportation but spoke up too late about it. Some tomatoes were saved by the majority of the crop were lost. The elders were able to deliver one final box of cherry tomatoes to the restaurant and explained that the rest of the tomatoes were lost by the frost. This was a serious disappointment but a lesson learned.

Towards the end of the summer, The SNHU Intern took teenagers to an amusement park. There were concerns that the teens would not remain in the program if they did not have any incentive. Money was not available and the profit that was made from the vegetables was only for the elders. The amusement park worked as an incentive for the teenagers to complete the program.

There were concerns about the plants that were left over. There were many basil plants and other types and the decision was to make them into compost. A suggestion was given to hang them upside down and let them dry. Then crush them and place them into vials and then sell to local pizza places. It was a great idea, but for the following year. This would be a great after school activity for the kids to participate in. They would also see that every bit of the plant would be utilized.

Towards the end, the SNHU intern had intended to work on the résumés with the teenagers, but the intern had a family emergency and had to leave the country for a period of time. This disrupted the plans and it was not developed. However, would be a good goal for year 2 of the pilot program. The SNHU intern also worked on reference letters and thank you letters for everyone. The intern submitted them to the lead agency for approval since it was on their letterhead; however it was a busy time for GWL and letters were not approved.

Groundwork Lawrence, the lead agency, applied for a grant with the U.S. Department of Agriculture with the intentions of working on research on how to make this project, which is part of a larger vision, more sustainable towards. This grant was approved however only for research of food security rather than implementation of the project. Therefore the need for funding still exists.

6. **Project Implementation Gantt chart.**

<u>Objectives</u>	10/ 05	11/ 05	12/ 05	1/ 06	2/ 0 6	3/ 0 6	4/ 0 6	5/ 06	6/ 0 6	7/ 06	8/ 06	9/ 0 6	10 / 06	11/ 06	12/ 06	1/ 0 7	2/ 0 7	3/ 0 7	4/ 0 7
Work on Proposal and Work on Program development																			
Grant Denied, continue to work on proposals.																			
Continue to write/research grants. Plan how to recruit																			
Recruit and Work on Curriculum																			
Elders and teens become responsible for a garden bed where they can grow safe, edible crops or plants.																			

Program Begins. Earth Day Celebration. Gardening begins. Weeding and Watering Techniques and Gardening movements																		
Elders and teens prepare their produce for consumption and sale.																		
Prep for local food stand: Basic Nutrition																		
Training of Micro-enterprising (Farm Stand sales).																		
Food stand Preparing Healthy Meals																		
Elders and teens bring home produce grown from gardens.																		
Debriefing and Evaluation																		

V. Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring will occur by the following:

- How many residents will be recruited and engaged in JJAMM Food Network encouraging cultivation and consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables.
 - i. Via the number of registrations and applications submitted
 - ii. Via the number of participants signing a sign in sheet
 - iii. Via the number of participants who complete the program
- How knowledgeable do participants become about health, nutrition, fitness, and economic sovereignty.
 - i. Via a pre-post test about health, nutrition, fitness and economic sovereignty
- Opportunity for micro enterprise development through programming that encourages cultivation and sale of fresh produce, and/or production of fresh-food-based value-added products.
 - i. Via the number of vegetables grown and ready for business
- Ability to create partnerships between community gardeners and local restaurants and/or institutions that encourage growth and consumption of fresh, local produce.
 - i. Via the number of interactions and interviews between participants and restaurant owners.
 - ii. Via sales between participant and restaurant owners.

1. **Management Information System:**

JJAMM Food Network Staff gathered monitoring information by applications, sign-in sheets, pre-post tests, verbal health quizzes. There was also a schedule in order to structure the program and keep on task. JJAMM staff would monitor the garden making sure that vegetables were growing and that damages to them had not incurred. Bill receipts were submitted providing proof of the number of interaction sales that were made between elders and restaurant owners.

There were a number of prospective participants who completed an application, however did not come for what ever personal reasons there were. With the attendance sheets participants who completed the course were not always present in class. It was very difficult to maintain people for the program. Therefore there were questions if the program was too long.

2. Summary Monitoring Table:

	<u>Inputs</u>	<u>Activities</u>	<u>Outputs</u>	<u>Short term Outcomes</u>	<u>Intermediate Outcomes</u>	<u>Long term Outcomes</u>
S i t u a t i o n	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gardening tools, materials and supplies • community participants (elders and teens) • community collaterals • finances (grants and donations) • expert advice from farmers and farmers markets • garden lots • staff • transportation • meals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit participants (10-15) • Develop curriculum • Program development • Train participants • Recruit trainers • Maintain budget log for each participant • Collect data via focus groups and other surveys • Meet with other similar programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants learn gardening, marketing and financial literacy skills • Participants compensated with crops for selling or for their own consumption • Experts will help not repeat mistakes • Evaluations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants decrease mental health and physical ailments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase of gardening, marketing and financial literacy skills • Participants will build relationships with others in the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participants will increase their income • Financial grantors will invest on the program long term in order to decrease the poverty level of the city

EVALUATION

The evaluation of the project will be measured by the success of the program through a pre and post evaluation. These evaluations will share how well the participants grew their crops, learned techniques to sell their produce and how much profit or deficit they've earned.

A pre-post evaluation will be given to each participant prior and after completion of the JJAMM program. This evaluation tool measured participation, economic gains, social gains, and health improvement:

- How many residents will be recruited and engaged in JJAMM Food Network encouraging cultivation and consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables.
 - i. There were a total number of 14 elder registrations and 18 teenage registrations. However for orientation 1st day only 6 elders and 8 teenagers arrived.
 - ii. On the attendance sheet there were always 4 elders and 5 teenagers. Teenagers are most difficult to keep with consistent attendance.
 - iii. A total of 4 elders and 8 teenagers completed the program. The surprising aspect was the amount of teenagers who completed the program. Originally it was believed that the teens would be more difficult to maintain because of the fact that there was no financial compensation.
 - iv. None of the participants were absent because of health reasons. Instead 2 of the elders was absent because they had to take their spouse to the hospital. Their spouses did not participate in the program. One of the teenagers was absent because he broke his arm, however not during the program.
- How knowledgeable do participants become about health, nutrition, fitness, and economic sovereignty.
 - i. The pre-post evaluation noted that a total of 11 people completed the program. More than 50% of the participant's annual household income was less than \$10,000/year. 70% of the participants were of Puerto Rican decent. 30% were Dominican. Prior to the program over 50% of the participants did not know or purchase anything at the Farmer's Market, however after the program was done, all the participants had some knowledge of the Farmer's Market and began to purchase more green vegetables. Participants also shared that the food from the Framer's Market is healthier.
 - ii. 50% of the participants shared that they would be interested in participating in a community garden and after the program finished 70% expressed their interest in rejoining the community gardens again for next year. All the elders and half of the teens were interested in being a part of JJAMM's 2nd year pilot program.
 - iii. From the elders only completed high school and all of the teens had a goal to graduate high school. 90% of the participants were unemployed. 50% knew someone who was or is in a gang and 100% of the participants stated that the skills learned can from the JJAMM program could be used for seeking better employment.
 - iv. For health and fitness, there was an 85% improvement in knowledge of eating healthy and exercising. Program first started with only 50% knowing some of the basic knowledge. There was also a noted difference in how much healthier foods or vegetables were being consumed. Prior to the star of

JJAMM a total of 9 servings were eaten between all the participants, however after the program was completed the total amount of vegetables consumed by the participants doubled.

- v. 80% of participants were noted to have an increase in Financial Literacy. They learned on budgeting, credit cards, interest rates, keeping record and savings.
- Opportunity for micro enterprise development through programming that encourages cultivation and sale of fresh produce, and/or production of fresh-food-based value-added products.
 - i. Within the 1st week, radishes began to grow onions and lemon balm plants were strong. Soon after the cabbage, broccoli and cilantro began to grow. It did take 3 months to have the tomatoes ready for sale. In September the first vegetable stand was presented.
- Ability to create partnerships between community gardeners and local restaurants and/or institutions that encourage growth and consumption of fresh, local produce.
 - i. Connections were made with the Mill City Gourmet. They purchased 3 rounds of tomatoes. The final 2 batches were destroyed by frost and unable to deliver.

3. **Performance Indicators:**

There are several performance indicators that help identify if this program is being successful.

First is an increase in financial literacy skills. This will be evaluated by how much participants will learn gardening, marketing, and financial literacy skills. This will be identified by a pre-post evaluation as well as the number of trainings the participants complete.

Second a decrease of mental and physical health ailments. This will be evaluated by the number of times a participant is absent due to a mental or physical ailment during the time of the program. An attendance record will demonstrate this. Also the number of participants who complete the program will also identify this indicator.

Third, a noted increase in marketing and financial literacy skills will be evaluated. This will be evaluated by the number of participants completing the training for the financial literacy and the pre and post evaluations.

Lastly, a comparison of success demonstrated by other program will be evaluated. This will be evaluated by comparing the number participants that began and completed the program within the 1st year to other similar programs.

4. Summary Evaluation Table:

<u>Hypotheses</u>	<u>Variables</u>	<u>Indicators</u>	<u>Data-Gathering</u>
If elders/teens marketing and financial literacy skills are increased then they would learn to increase their income	IV: Elders/Teens are marketing IV: Elders/Teens learn financial literacy skills DV: Income increased	IV: # of teens and Elders participating IV: # of elders and teens completing the course/training for financial literacy DV: amount earned from vegetables sold at stand	Keeping a log and providing a pre-post that will test their gained knowledge will help.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If participants decrease mental health and physical ailments then they are able to focus on learning marketing and financial literacy skills. If participants are lent a lot for gardening, they could benefit from learning marketing and financial literacy skills. 	IV: participants decrease mental and physical ailments DV: learn marketing and financial literacy skills IV: participants lent a lot for gardening DV: learn marketing and financial literacy skills	IV: # of times gone to hospital or seen medical attention DV: # of elders and teens completing the course/training for financial literacy IV: # of participants in program DV: # of elders and teens completing the course/training for financial literacy	<p>Secondary sources will be helpful. Searching for data from senior centers and other agencies that have had a similar program in their community may have statistics of how these programs have helped better the health of the community.</p> <p>It would also help to have a physical wellness test pre and post to identify improvements.</p>

<u>Hypotheses</u>	<u>Variables</u>	<u>Indicators</u>	<u>Data-Gathering</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If participants learn gardening, marketing and financial literacy skills then they would decrease in mental health and physical ailments • If participants garden then it could help decrease in mental health and physical ailments • If a comparison of other similar programs are made then participants will build successful gardens • If evaluations are made then participants will have a better chance at building successful gardens 	<p>IV: participants learn gardening, marketing and financial literacy skills DV: they would decrease in mental health and physical ailments</p> <p>IV: participants garden DV: decrease in mental health and physical ailments</p> <p>IV: comparison of other similar programs DV: participants will build successful gardens</p> <p>IV: evaluations are made DV: participants will build successful gardens</p>	<p>IV: # of completed trainings DV: # of times gone to hospital or seen medical attention</p> <p>IV: # of participants in program DV: # of times gone to hospital or seen medical attention</p> <p>IV: # of participants completing program in other towns similar to Lawrence DV: duplication of areas of success and avoidance of errors IV: surveys of pre and posts to participants whether or not completed program. DV: # of crops harvested and sold DV: noted increase in income.</p>	<p>Pre-post evaluations will help identify many of the improvements in health, income and education.</p>

Evaluation Plan					
SURVEY					
What variable(s) are you going to gather data on using a survey?	Identify each of the indicator(s) of the variable. Please type one indicator per line.	Who are the respondents (number, characteristics)?	What is the basis for selecting your respondents?	When are you going to conduct the survey?	Plan of action
IV: participants learn gardening, marketing and financial literacy skills DV: they would decrease in mental health and physical ailments	IV: # of completed trainings DV: # of times gone to hospital or seen medical attention	Elder and Teens who participate in the program.	A central location where functioning elders attend. (Lawrence Senior Center and Family Service, Inc Elders)	Spring – Summer 2006	Contacting activity coordinators and set up a date in which recruitment can be made and surveys can be completed.
IV: participants garden DV: decrease in mental health and physical ailments	IV: # of participants in program DV: # of times gone to hospital or seen medical attention	Overview of health of elders and teens who complete the program.	Health improvement during program participation	Summer 2006	During recruitment questions of health and income will be made and then compared at the end of the program.

OTHER METHODS; please specify: Surveys or other evaluations completed by other programs					
What variable are you going to gather data on using other methods?	Identify each of the indicator(s) of the variable. Please type one indicator per line.	Who are the sources of data?	What is the basis for selecting the sources?	When are you going to gather the data?	Plan of action
IV: comparison of other similar	IV: # of participants	Surveys by other programs (if	Programs that have been successful	During summer season	Meet with organization and

<p>programs</p> <p>DV: participants will build successful gardens</p>	<p>completing program in other towns similar to Lawrence</p> <p>DV: duplication of areas of success and avoidance of errors</p>	<p>available)</p> <p>Food Project, Dorchester, MA</p> <p>Nuestra Raíces Springfield, MA</p> <p>Brookside Church, Manchester, MA</p>	<p>with the growing of crops and ability to improve either the income or well being of the participants.</p>		<p>review literature collected. (if available.)</p>
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SUSTAINABILITY ELEMENTS:

1. Informed Program Development:

Groundwork Lawrence has and continues to consult with professionals and organizations experienced in the field of community food security research, coalition-building, and program development such as:

- Boston Natural Areas Network (support with building, maintaining, and managing community gardening and gardeners)
- The Food Project of Dorchester, MA and Lynn, MA (support with engaging people, especially youth, in community gardening)
- Nuestra Raíces of Holyoke, MA (support in developing micro-enterprise opportunities for the community)
- Greater Lawrence Family Health Center (support in engaging people in health, nutrition, and fitness workshops)

2. Sustainability Plan:

Originally, JJAMM Food Network required participants to give 30% of their profit to support GWL as a supporting and monitoring agency. The program was modeling Nuestra Raices shared profit with their lead agency. However because the profit that was made was very small, in consideration to this, only a 10% was given to GWL. The participants were able to keep 90% of earnings divided by the number of elders who participated in the JJAMM Food Network.

As the program grows and a larger number of participants begin to flow a 30% share of their profit to GWL will help to keep GWL not only accountable to the program but also as support in times of need.

Many elders were excited about participating in gardening. There were many elders who reminisced their childhood and young life because many worked on farms or in fields. Many realized that participating in JJAMM Food Network gave them an opportunity that they did not have in Lawrence. Lawrence is overcrowded; therefore, it is open space for a garden scarce.

Security became another problem. Locks of the garden would be stolen and vandals at times would jump the fence of the garden to either steal or vandalize. Also other gardeners had a hard time respecting each others gardening plot. Though this needs much improvement, it was decided that having strict rules about who can garden and how was needed. GWL also was very good about keeping an eye to closed gates and locks. Elders also became very conscientious of this. Gardeners also developed good relationships with neighbors surrounding the gardens who would report any concerns noted to the JJAMM Gardeners.

Mill City Gourmet has been recruited to participate again next year. They are very committed to investing in the community of Lawrence. The goal is to have several companies make a multi-year commitment in writing to purchasing food from local gardeners (known widely as “Community Supported Agriculture” or “CSA”). In one of the interviews of the community gardens, they contract local businesses to make a one time payment by faith of \$200.00. As the season begins, they will receive one box either weekly or every 2 weeks with a variety of vegetables. Some weeks may have a full box; some weeks may be less; however local businesses sign the contract knowing

that anything can happen which includes a season of damaged crops. If JJAMM Food Network decides to utilize this method, it may help build the budget to eventually become self-sustainable. Unfortunately, the program is presently not self-sustainable and will need donations of all sorts to continue to function.

3. **Institutional Plan:**

JJAMM Food Networks vision is to form a community food network project that will entail the Teen and Elder Program, Community Gardens, Farmers/local Markets and Micro-enterprising, therefore GWL continues to seek for funds. The elders who participated in the program have been given the option to continue this summer. The program manager has taken the role to maintain communication with participants, advisors and restaurant owners. The restaurant owner of Mill City Gourmet has made a commitment to continue to support the JJAMM Food Network. Mill City Gourmet has also made a good relationship with one of the elders of the program. Program manager will continue to seek more local restaurants will to join the JJAMM Food Network in order to see growth.

Involving multiple organizations and many people in developing and implementing the program increases the chances of it becoming a long-term, successful, sustainable program.

VI. Conclusions & Recommendations

Conclusions:

JJAMM was successful at reaching most of its goals. There was a noticeable improvement in health. Participants exercised more and ate more vegetables. It was clear that the education about vegetables was increasing the consumption of vegetables. As noted in the evaluation, prior to the program 9 portions of vegetables were being consumed by the participants but at the end these portions doubled. There was a growth in knowledge and skills in the gardening and financial literacy component.

Micro enterprising and community networking were also accomplished by the connection made with Mill City Gourmet, a local restaurant, in order to continue building on micro enterprising for year 2. Community networking was established by the local vegetable stand that was held at the parking lot of the Lawrence Senior Center. Originally the vegetable stand was going to take place at the Food Market but as GWL had explained to SNHU intern that insurance had to be placed on the gardeners and the funding was not available. Therefore the gardeners did not participate in this. It was clear by GWL that the program was operating on a Shoe-String Budget.

Gardeners made a total of \$75.00 from the vegetable stand and the sales made to Mill City Gourmet. Local donors donated much of the tools and plants. However, there were tools and some materials that GWL did purchase. SNHU intern and some of the participants also invested some of their personal money for materials needed and gave as donation to the project. Some of the gardeners were interested in participating again in next year's program and wanted to plant their own vegetables that they felt would be more successful at sales within the community. They had mentioned a plant that is grown for Santeria, a religious sect that utilizes plants and herbs as part of their healings or prayers. Many of the elders asked for their own plot. One of the elders that did not participate in the program was given a larger plot and many of the elders complained. This however, did not prevent participants from wanting to participate again next year.

Originally, SNHU intern had suggested that 30% of the profit would be given to the lead agency, but since profit was very short, it was suggest that only 10% should be given. A total of \$7.50 was given to GWL and the remaining was divided among the elders who participated. If the crops had not been destroyed by the frost and if there were other opportunities for a vegetable stand that was more centralized, then a larger profit would have been seen. Also, there were vegetables that remained at the end of the season, these herbs could be dried, crushed and sold to local pizzeria or tea shops. This idea was given by one of the GWL employees but timing was short.

Funding was very difficult to acquire. GWL had applied to several grants and was able to attain one from the Dept. of Agriculture towards research of JJAMM's Community Vision.

Originally, the program stewardship manager was to help JJAMM organization; however, the program manager began to focus more on the Farmer's Market.

On a couple of occasions, the program manager and SNHU Intern would have disagreements. Program manager would email people who had volunteered to work for the community garden and would offer materials to be translated or set dates without discussing this with SNHU intern. SNHU intern had to address this on several occasions because the only person that was could translate was SNHU intern. There was one other person from GWL but she was busy with other programs. SNHU intern and program manager eventually worked out communication problems. Now she will continue working on year 2 of pilot program. It is not clear if the program will have the educational component in year 2.

Several agencies continue to be committed to seeing this community vision grow. GLFHC, Lawrence Senior Center, GWL, and even the restaurant, Mill City Gourmet will commit to purchase vegetables from gardeners again in year 2.

Recommendations:

There are several recommendations for improvement of the JJAMM Community Vision. It is important to start the program as soon as April or May.

When advertising for the community garden, it is important that you advertise what is actual. In the original advertisement, it was announced that participants would be able to cultivate in their own plots. However, when the time came, one plot had to be divided among the whole program participants as the SNHU intern had to ask for more plot which was granted only 1 week after the program had started.

Insurance and liability are important things to factor in. Issues surrounding insurance and liabilities need to be considered prior to beginning a CG. Liability was brought to the SNHU Intern at very short notice. Another area of liability that was brought to attention was the day before the teenagers were going to go to Canobie Lake. The SNHU intern had developed a permission slip that was submitted to GWL for approval. This was not returned and the intern was told the day before that it was not a good idea for GWL to be responsible for the teenagers to attend Canobie Lake. Though SNHU intern understood, it would have been good to have known this not the night before but sooner in order to plan appropriately or suggest another activity as a reward for the teens.

Incentives are needed and important for teenagers, especially if there is no stipend for them to participant. Most teens will participate without any stipend so long as the program is active and interesting. A grant that can provide stipends for the teens would help the program to remain stable with the teen component. Donations were given for food vouchers. If more donations can be sought and given as prizes at the beginning of each day, this will keep the attendance level higher.

SNHU intern had many communication problems with the lead agency, GWL. SNHU intern depended on the approval of GWL for many things, especially things that were being placed on GWL's letterhead. SNHU intern would submit recommendations letters, or thank you letters and these would not be returned. It was clear that GWL was busy, but it would have been good if GWL would have either okayed the material or if they had questions about the program using their letterhead, then informing the SNHU intern sooner so that an alternative could have been developed. It is recommended that if GWL is going to reach out to the community in these areas, then it is important that the provision of an interpreter and translator is made available. Time and information is lost when an interpreter is used. , Find a person who speaks the language of need in order to provide the educational component.

Another recommendation that could be made is that the possibility of training elders who participated in the previous year JJAMM program could be trained to educate new participants in the new year.

It is great to see the Mill City Gourmet is willing to commit for a 2nd year, however as the JJAMM's vision grows, it is important to invite more restaurants to commit to purchasing

vegetables. It is also important to expose teens to bugs and the garden world before and important to start the program earlier...maybe in April/May 2007.

An insight made by the owner of the Brox Farms regarding was that one of the community gardens in Lowell contracted restaurants or farms with a commitment of \$200.00 for the summer pre-paid. Vegetables would then be brought to them via a box on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. It is clear that those who contract are under the expectation that they may or may not get \$200.00 worth of vegetables. They are told that the worse or the best can occur. Businesses understand this and are simply supporting the program. It is recommended that either for the 2nd year or 3rd year of the program, that this model be followed. This would bring a larger sustainable piece financially and may help towards institutionalizing the program. An attempt could be to contract these companies to make a multi year commitment.