

FINAL PROJECT REPORT

EARTHKEEPING YOUTH ENTREPRENEURIAL TRAINING PROGRAM

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Abstract

Earthkeeping Ministry is developing and implementing a two-level pilot entrepreneurship training program for immigrant, low-income, at-risk youth in Ward 4 of Washington D.C. The project is being carried out through the agency of Lutheran Social Services of National Capital Area (LSS). The program is teaching the skills necessary for young adults to become self-employed with the option to establish businesses based in the principles of ecologically sustainability. The target population is youth aged 15-18, who attend the schools which presently have on-site greening projects administered by Earthkeeping. Level I of the program will teach the curriculum of the National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship¹ (NFTE). Level II will add leadership training, horticulture, permaculture,² landscape and organic garden design and will include hands-on experience working in Earthworks permaculture/landscape design business. All participants will begin Individual Development Accounts (IDAs).³ The major outcome of this training program is that students will gain the financial knowledge necessary to establish a wide spectrum of business enterprises and/or acquire marketable skills that make them employable.

Executive Summary

Earthkeeping Ministry created and is implementing an Entrepreneurial Training program, based on its school Greening Program, for inner city youth in Ward 4 and adjacent areas of Washington, D.C. This program consists of the following:

- Level I is a three month program, independent of Level II, that teaches financial skills using the NFTE curriculum, that give the foundation necessary for starting and running a business.
- Level II is a two year program that, in addition to NFTE, provides hands-on and classroom learning in horticulture and permaculture, landscape and organic garden design, leadership Skills; practical experience in running a business through the implementation of Landscape

¹ "NFTE's mission is to teach entrepreneurship to low-income young people, ages 11 through 18, so they can become economically productive members of society by improving their academic, business, technology and life skills." Homepage of National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship. Retrieved 11/10/03 at <http://www.nfte.com/>.

²Permaculture (Permanent Agriculture) is the conscious design and maintenance of cultivated ecosystems which have the diversity, stability & resilience of natural ecosystems. It is the harmonious integration of landscape, people & appropriate technologies, providing food, shelter, energy & other needs in a sustainable way. Permaculture is a philosophy and an approach to land use which works with natural rhythms & patterns, weaving together the elements of microclimate, annual & perennial plants, animals, water & soil management, & human needs into intricately connected & productive communities." Retrieved 9/28/03 at <http://www.permaculture.net>

³ "Individual Development Accounts (IDAs) are matched savings accounts that help low-income families move towards self-sufficiency and long-term prosperity. Account holders take money management and asset training classes while saving to buy a first home, start a small business or pay for postsecondary education or job training..." Homepage of Capital Area Asset Building Corp. Retrieved 11/10/03 at <http://caab.org/IDAdescription/index.asp>.

and organic garden design contracts in EarthWorks Landscape Design Business (see Appendix B for a description of services); and experience in creating and selling Horticultural based, value-added products.

This program will give students in Level I the knowledge needed to launch their own businesses and in Level II to establish businesses based in principles of ecological sustainability. The target population is immigrant, low-income, at-risk youth aged 15-18 who, because of income level, lack of social and economic skill or economic opportunity, are vulnerable to drugs, gangs, crime and other unproductive activities. Earthkeeping expects to teach between 20-50 youth with the Level I NFTE program and between 10 and 20 in the Level II training.

Ward 4 and surrounding areas have a high poverty level and a very quickly growing immigrant population. Immigrants are often unable to assimilate into the mainstream and find themselves with no, or very low income. Although Ward 4 is a mixed income area with 12% of the population below poverty level, it interfaces with Ward 1 which has a 20% poverty level. The result of poverty is that youth engage in activities which are detrimental to their future opportunities and which result in unemployment and, too often, imprisonment. This comes at a high price for individuals and society.

The goal of Earthkeeping is to help alleviate the negative effects of poverty by providing activities that are relevant and engaging to Youth and that provide them with the tools for self-employment, other employment and personal and economic empowerment. Earthkeeping intends to provide a caring and transformative experience and to graduate students who can help create an economically and socially thriving community by providing opportunities that will enrich their futures. The program proposes to accomplish these goals via the following objectives:

- Establish a comprehensive and dynamic training curriculum that provides an atmosphere of respect and appreciation of youth.
- Divide the curriculum into two levels to serve the needs of different populations: a three month entrepreneurial training; a two year entrepreneurial training based in ecologically sustainable disciplines.
- Continue to develop the EarthWorks Landscape Design Business to contribute capital to the training program so that it attains a high level of financial self-sufficiency
- Create a second business for off-season income.
- Provide interns with hands-on experience in running a business.
- Acquire funding for salaries and expenses for the next 2-3 years

- Institute IDAs for students so they will have access to matching funds that will help them build economic assets.

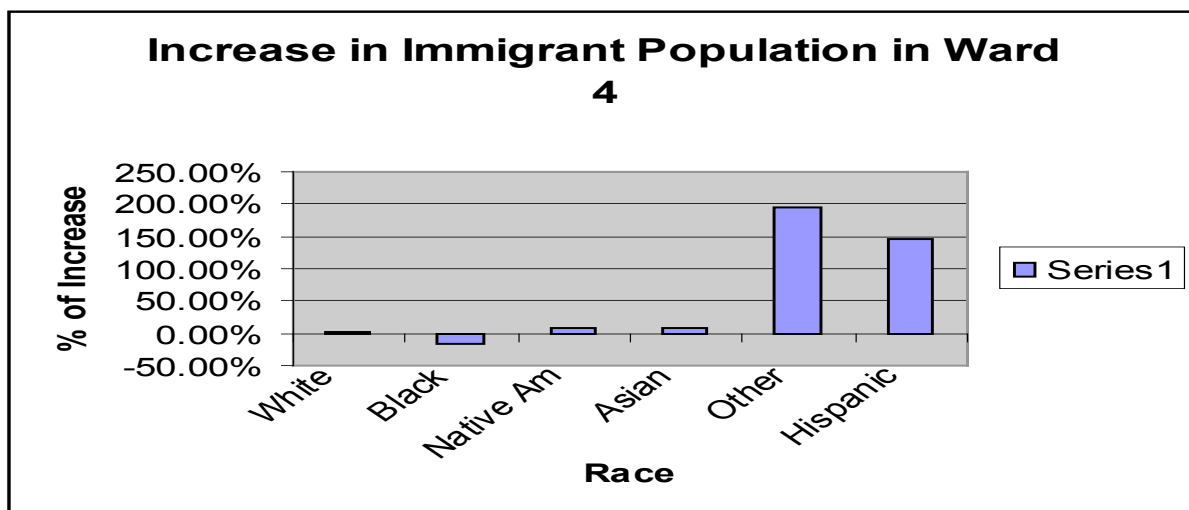
The pilot program began in May, 2003. We have been greatly hampered by lack of funding. However, despite financial and other obstacles, the project team developed 60% of the curriculum. Three interns successfully completed about 1/3 of the pilot program. As of this writing, they have completed several jobs, two for monetary compensation. EarthWorks has enough landscape design jobs lined up to keep ten interns employed for the summer. The present interns are exceedingly satisfied and enthusiastic about what they are learning. Even though Earthkeeping has not yet engaged an IDA provider, the interns made a commitment in August to save \$1 for every hour of time spent in the program and have carried through on their commitment. Since August, they each saved at least \$100. The project is presently developing a monitoring and evaluation system so that it can accurately measure successes and weaknesses in all aspects of the program.

After eight months of limited functioning the conclusion is that this is a viable program that will accomplish the stated goals. Earthkeeping recommends developing the activities of the profit-making arm of the program, pursuing sponsorships for students and further funding for the program so that it can be firmly established and continue with superior staff and high quality resources.

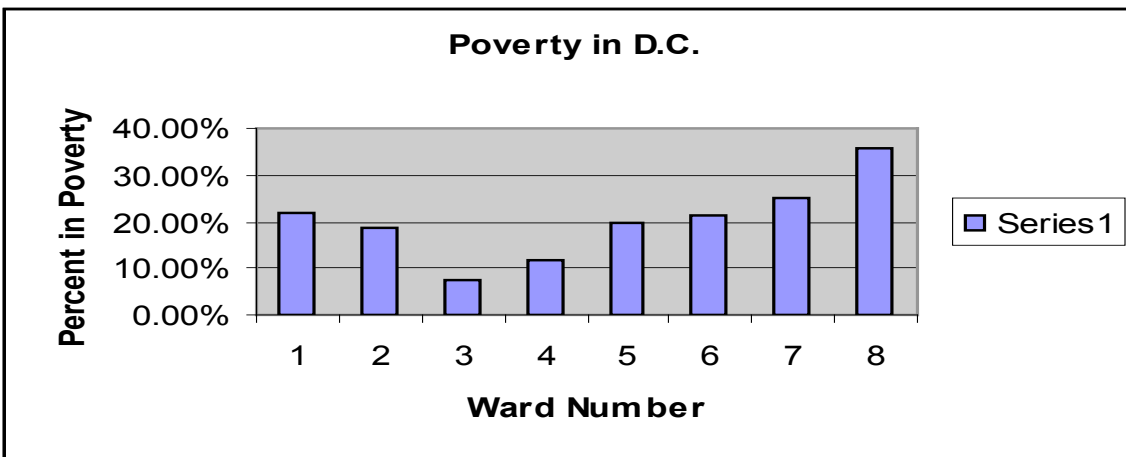
I. Community Needs Assessment

1. Community Profile

In recent years, there has been an influx of immigrants into Ward 4 in Washington, D.C. According to the District of Columbia Office of Planning, the Hispanic-Latino population in Ward 4 increased by 146.1% between 1990 and 2000. Other immigrant populations have increased by 193.5%.



Many of these immigrants and other residents are living below the poverty line. Planning Office statistics indicate that in 1999, 12% of the population in Ward 4 was below poverty level. According to Cockburn (2003), nearly one-third of all children in D.C. live below the poverty line and 34.6% of children in Ward 4 are presently in low-income families. The service agencies in Ward 4 also work with the population of Ward 1 which is directly adjacent. Here, the percent of the population below the poverty level is 22%.



Poverty creates the breeding ground for crime, violence, drugs and gangs. The Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics (2003) indicates that in 2000

- violent crime among youth aged 12-17 nationwide was 17.2%;
- that youth victims of serious crime in the same age bracket was 16.3%;
- youth aged 16-19 in D.C. who were neither working nor in school was 14.4%.

According to the D.C. Kids Count Collaborative (2001),

- There were 2,495 juvenile cases referred to D.C. Superior Court for all causes in the year 2000.
- There were 44 violent deaths to teens ages 15-19 in 1999.
- There were five suicides, two accidents and 39 murders.
- In education, “the D.C. Public Schools saw their SAT scores drop below any level seen in the past decade.”
- Forty-six percent of high school students did not graduate in 1999.
- Enrollment in D.C. public Schools fell from 80,000 in 1990 to below 70,000 in 2000.

- Births to teen mothers were 14.8% in 1999.

2. Community Needs Assessment

The D.C. Kids Count Collaborative (2001) indicates that Ward 4 ranks relatively high on indicators of child well being. However, the rating is deceptive as life for teens in the District is in a dismal state overall. The above quoted statistics indicate that a large population of youth in the area is engaged in activities that are detrimental to themselves and to their entire community physically, psychologically and economically. Dabson ((1998) states that:

“America’s youth face a daunting array of social and economic challenges. Gang membership, drug abuse, alcoholism, suicide, and HIV infection are on the rise among our teenage population. Each year, 800,000 students drop out of school, many of whom will face unemployment and poverty. Our efforts at educational reform have not reversed the tide of the unemployed and unemployable flowing from the public schools system. We are failing to provide millions of young people with the necessary social and economic skills to support and nurture families or at least become self-sufficient law-abiding citizens. As a result we are seeing growing lawlessness in our communities, particularly among youth, and more and more public dollars devoted to incarceration (p. 1).”

The prosecution of crime and incarceration are expensive and psychologically destructive to society. The District of Columbia pays \$53.50 per day to Corrections Corporation of America to house one inmate (Hallinan, 2001, p. 180) which translates to \$19,527.50 per year. Other sources place an even higher price on incarceration ranging from \$25,000 to \$40,000 per year. (Dees, 2001). That outlay of money is more than double the HHS official poverty line which is \$8,980 for a family unit of one according to the Federal Register (2003). This money would be far more productive if it were dedicated to training youth in skills that are meaningful to them and can unlock possibilities for their futures.

There is a desperate need for education that is appropriate to the needs of this population of young adults. They need positive guidance and direction in addition to marketable skills that will lead them away from crime, drugs, gangs and unproductive activities into pursuits that engage their intelligence and lead to jobs, healthy families and a future with greater opportunity.

Graphical Content:

1990-2000 Population Change by Single Race and Hispanic Origin by Ward

Ward ¹	Total Population	White	Black/ African American	American Indian/ Alaskan Native	Asian or Pacific Islander	Some Other Race	Hispanic/ Latino ²
City	-34,841	-3,566	-56,292	247	4,323	7,001	12,243
	-5.7%	-2.0%	-14.1%	16.8%	38.6%	46.8%	37.4%
1	1,429	4,350	-9,847	113	1,127	2,378	5,028
	2.0%	23.0%	-22.7%	42.6%	74.7%	30.4%	38.4%
2	1,768	2,042	-4,157	67	1,688	227	919
	2.6%	4.7%	-23.2%	40.1%	45.7%	9.6%	15.1%
3	509	-3,086	250	29	1,068	356	-42
	0.7%	-4.8%	6.2%	26.1%	33.4%	30.8%	-0.8%
4	-3,523	267	-9,641	14	56	3,520	5,484
	-4.5%	2.1%	-15.5%	6.7%	8.1%	193.5%	146.1%
5	-10,923	-2,758	-9,779	50	110	303	393
	-13.1%	-28.9%	-13.5%	27.8%	21.4%	52.6%	26.9%
6	-3,133	-1,410	-3,946	-22	508	306	484
	-4.4%	-6.2%	-8.5%	-9.8%	58.1%	58.5%	30.8%
7	-9,151	-898	-8,959	-6	23	-29	41
	-11.5%	-47.9%	-11.6%	-3.7%	18.3%	-11.2%	6.6%
8	-11,817	-2,073	-10,213	2	-257	-60	-64
	-14.3%	-35.6%	-13.5%	1.3%	-42.7%	-14.5%	-5.9%

Available: http://www.planning.dc.gov/documents/single_change.shtm. Retrieved online, 2/11/03.

1999 Percent of Population Below Poverty Level by Ward

Ward	Persons for Whom Poverty is Measured	Percent Below Poverty Level
City	541,657	20.2%
1	68,531	22.0%
2	60,238	18.7%
3	68,528	7.4%
4	73,377	12.0%
5	67,587	20.0%
6	64,522	21.1%
7	69,869	24.9%
8	69,003	36.0%

Available: http://www.planning.dc.gov/documents/poverty_status/ps_ward.shtm. Retrieved online, 2/11/03.

II. The Challenge

1. Problem Statement

Circumstances of poverty and lack of social and economic skills and opportunities have led youth in Ward 4 of Washington, D.C. and adjacent wards to drugs, crime and other futile activities with resulting negative consequences to their education and future opportunities. Of the total population of youth in D.C. between the ages of 5-24 years, or 155,093 youth, 2,495 of them, or 1.6% (separate crime statistics not available for teen population which would cause the percentage to rise) have been involved in juvenile court cases. If something isn't done to provide guidance, engaging activities, marketable skills and employment opportunities for unskilled youth, they will continue in a downward spiral of poverty, crime, drugs and gang activities. This will not enhance their job possibilities as adults and is economically costly and destructive to families and community.

2.. Target community

The target community is immigrant, lower-income, at-risk youth of Ward 4 between the ages of 15 and 18 who are involved in the on-site school Greening Projects of the Earthkeeping Ministry (see Appendix D for description) or in other local youth groups and who are at a disadvantage in participating in this economic system.

3. Stakeholders

According to Dabson (already cited) the problem of youth gangs, crime, drugs, and lack of education is nationwide. Therefore the stakes are high for families, communities, schools, businesses, civic society and all taxpayers. The cost of prison or unemployment is far greater than the cost of this program and the benefits of this training program will last a lifetime and have a positive multiplier affect on the entire community. People who have been incarcerated once are often incarcerated again because they are unable to get employment or function in society. Therefore, the negative costs of incarceration at an individual and social level continue to accumulate and multiply. The negative effects and costs of unemployment are similar. However, the stakes are not just economic. This problem has to do with transforming the caliber of the future citizens of our country and their ability to contribute to society.

4. Project Goals

The goal of this project is to teach inner city youth self-employment and landscape design skills. To achieve that end, Earthkeeping created a two-level entrepreneurial training program. The goal of the first level, which is three months, is to teach the financial skills necessary to start and run a business. The goal of the second level, which is two years, is to teach the vocational skills necessary to run an ecologically sustainable business in addition to entrepreneurial skills. The program staff envisions a community where the multi-faceted treasures of youth intelligence, ingenuity, enthusiasm and vigor are channeled to the benefit of the community rather than into the wasteland of negativity that has been created nationwide in the last 20 years. The long term goal of this program and others like it is to help establish safe, dynamic, economically and socially viable, self-reliant communities through the talents of it younger generations.

The Earthkeeping program will develop, organize and carry out a comprehensive training program, organized into two levels, that educates youth in finance and business expertise, permaculture, horticulture, organic gardening and leadership skills.

5. Project Objectives

Earthkeeping anticipates that the following objectives will lead to attainment of the stated goals:

- a) Engage the interest, enthusiasm and creativity of youth.
 - i. In March of each year, we will run focus groups and/or workshops at the local schools to introduce youth to the training program and enroll between 20-50 students, possibly more as the program develops.
- b) Create proficiency in financial, organizational, horticultural, organic gardening and leadership skills that will lead to opening businesses, meaningful employment or further education.
 - i. At the end of each Level one session, we will graduate between 20-50 youth from the NFTE program.
 - ii. At the end of each Level two session, we will graduate between 10 and 20 interns who understand the principles of ecological sustainability.
- c) Generate enough opportunities through hands-on training in Earthkeeping for-profit businesses to teach the skills necessary to run a business
 - i. By June 2006, we will have established two successful for-profit businesses to sustain the training program.
 - ii. The interns will work in this business(s) as one of the major training components of the program.
 - iii. As of this writing, EarthWorks has enough contracts lined up to employ 10 youth until October, 2004.
 - iv. By May 2006, an additional business will be created so that the program can employ a minimum of 30 youth year-round.
- d) Produce income from its own model business ventures.
 - i. Business(s) will produce enough profit to contribute toward a 60% self-sufficiency rate for the training program by 2009 and be close to full self-sufficiency by 2014.
- e) Carry out on-site contracts to customer satisfaction and program evaluation criteria.
 - i. Evaluation forms are given to customers at the completion of each job and staff will make programmatic changes accordingly.
- f) Pay participants a minimum of \$7.50 per hour
 - i. The Landscape design pricing is based on youth receiving \$7.50/hour.

- g) Graduate 20-50 Level I students by December 2004 and 10-20 Level II students by June 2006.
- h) Obtain funding for program expansion, staff and start-up costs by June, 2004.
- i) Create and implement a sponsorship program to help defray educational expenses of students and of the Training Program.
- j) Get teacher certification for one or two staff members from the National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship by March, 2004.
- k) Write business plan for landscape and organic garden design business by May, 2004.
- l) Set up monitoring and evaluation systems by September, 2004.
- m) Complete development of curriculum by October, 2004
- n) Create a marketing strategy for our profit business(s) by April, 2004.
- o) Hire another staff person by June, 2004.
- p) Establish IDAs with IDA provider by July, 2004.
- q) Research and develop a second business for the training program by June, 2005

Over the past four years, Earthkeeping has developed an excellent track record in educating youth who were involved in Greening programs. Earthkeeping programs and projects have met with high approval by several funders, including the USDA and have been nominated for the Sea World/Bush Gardens/Fuji Film Environment Excellence Award, 2004. The present training program is dynamic, comprehensive and beneficial to youth and community on many levels. All of these factors indicate an extremely high likelihood of achieving our objectives and, therefore, project goals.

6. Feasibility of achieving goals

The realization of a successful training program is contingent on the following:

- Earthkeeping continues to be supported by Lutheran Social Services or a new Host Organization
- The program will obtain grants for administrative salaries and start-up costs
- IDA accounts will be set up with an established agency
- Earthkeeping for-profit businesses achieve financial success

7. Goal verification

- Twenty to fifty students enrolled in Level I of the program by September 2004; 10-20 enrolled in Level II by May 2004
- The training program proves to be effective as measured by regularly scheduled tests, presentations, and student competency in on-site projects
- Interns take on and successfully complete contracts in landscape/permaculture and organic garden design
- Customers are satisfied with the design and implementation of their contracts
- Youth establish IDA accounts to build assets for business start-up and/or further education
- Students graduate and create businesses or find employment and pursue higher education
- Earthkeeping develops an ecologically sustainable, financially viable form of earned income to help support the program and to serve as a component of the training program

III. Design

1. Review of Literature:

a) Youth Run Enterprises

Beatriz Zuluagua, Program Director of Earthkeeping Ministry, who for the last four years has been working directly with the schools and neighborhood youth in and around Ward 4, many of them Latino, has stated (personal communication, 2002) that many of them cannot or don't want to go on to college. Therefore, they need other avenues of education in order to learn skills to support themselves. The option of Youth Run Enterprises (YREs) introduces young adults to necessary social and economic skills by running a business.

Research by Dabson and Kaufmann (1998) on Latino youth shows that "The strict provisions on legal immigrants, namely cutting off their benefits, will leave large portions of many poor Latino communities without an adequate safety net... they look to entrepreneurship as a means to support their families." (p. 21). They also state that, "There is a strong entrepreneurial ethic among families from Central and South America." (p. 22).

Running business ventures based in ecologically sustainability and in horticulture brings in multiple layers of individual and group skills and provides meaningful activities through dynamic challenge. Dabson (1998) states that, "Work-based and project-based learning are two clear proven models of

effectiveness” (p. 36) that attain S.C.A.N. Competencies (Secretary’s Commission for Achieving the Necessary Skills) which are “necessary for success in the workplace.” (p. 37).

Feenstra, et al., (1999) in research on food based youth enterprises learned that:

“Participants acquired a broad range of skills through their involvement in these projects. In addition to horticultural, landscaping and marketing skills, many project participants learned about food processing, distribution, and business and marketing. The skills could be applied to help participant acquire jobs in horticulture, landscaping, the floral industry, and the food industry. They also learned about environmental and stewardship concepts.” (p.28)

In the entrepreneurial component of the training program, students will be directly involved in running a landscape design business. They will learn to work together and coordinate the necessary activities to get the job done. Students will learn to:

- develop business plans, bookkeeping systems, keep records
- evaluate and cost out jobs
- use the tools of the trade
- stay on a time schedule
- write up invoices
- develop relationships with customers of varying ethnic and economic backgrounds
- operate appropriate computer programs
- use permaculture and horticultural skills

Research by James Stone, et al., (2000), shows that YREs fill an educational void by contributing to student confidence, self-esteem and social abilities. In the process of running their businesses, they learned practical skills and gained a sense of personal power.

“These YREs are successful because most of the decision-making is in the hands of the students. These students are allowed to succeed or fail, facing the same opportunities and threats present in real start-up enterprises. This creates an emphasis on real-world learning, supported by high levels of trust, respect, appreciation, and responsibility.” (p. 4).

In his community work over the years, Ray Bridgewater of the Petworth Assembly has ascertained the need and demand for food and gardening related activities in the Ward 4 area. Because these activities arise out of community needs and opportunities, YREs not only provide meaningful activities, but can also enhance local economy, community cohesiveness and the ability of the community to become self-reliant by keeping talent and money in the local economy.

According to an international report on micro enterprise by Reynolds, et al., (2002), there are indications that micro enterprise may give a significant boost to national economic growth levels (p. 6). Dr. Michael E. Porter of Harvard University Business School also affirms the need for sustainable local micro-businesses:

“I have spent 2½ years in a major research effort concerning the economic viability of the inner city. The problems in the inner city are not there because of lack of effort. They are there because we are using the wrong model...we need to create the conditions to develop profitable businesses there...NFTE has the right model.”

By learning the NFTE curriculum, interns will have the skills to start their own businesses and can serve the needs of their families and communities. Steve Mariotti (2000), founder of the National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship states:

“Knowledge of the principles of business modified the behavior of these kids... It became apparent to me that many of these young people had a natural aptitude for entrepreneurship. Their challenging lives encouraged independence of spirit, toughness, unselfconsciousness, and a natural ability in salesmanship. They were comfortable with risk and ambiguity. These same qualities—along with difficulty in doing well in a traditional, structured environment—characterized many great American entrepreneurs such as Henry Ford and Conrad Hilton. I found that the negative characteristics of my students, when channeled into entrepreneurial activities, became positives. The benefits they reaped went far beyond the areas of education and business and academic subjects.” (p. 12)

In addition to the benefits of learning about and creating micro enterprises, students who complete the NFTE curriculum and pass the online test can gain college credits for their classes.

b) IDAs

Earthkeeping Ministry will launch IDA accounts for interns so that they can learn to allocate their money, cultivate a sense of responsibility, develop assets and financial literacy, and become banked. Each intern will begin an account in order to save funds to capitalize their chosen business venture or invest it toward future education.

“IDAs, resembling Individual Retirement Accounts, are savings accounts at financial institutions established by individuals, with a specific, restricted purpose for the funds, such as purchasing a home, continuing education or starting a business. With training and economic

counseling provided by nonprofit organizations, as well as matching funds provided by public or private sources, low income persons can now begin to transition themselves from poverty to prosperity.” (Office of Thrift Supervision, 1998, p. 1).

IDAs can provide the means of furthering education, building assets and opening the door to economic participation and financial leverage for low-income youth.

From a policy perspective, assets based programs cross political lines and combine “the liberal objective of poverty reduction with the conservative dream of individual wealth building to achieve the shared goal of economic opportunity.” (Brown, 2001). The asset based philosophy opens the door to bipartisan political action that could transform the economy to one that is accessible and effective for all individuals.

c) Horticulture, Permaculture, Urban agriculture

For the past four years, Earthkeeping Ministry has worked with students at several schools to teach them horticultural skills and organic gardening. The training program will teach a system of organic urban agriculture, called permaculture, and will run a permaculture based landscape design business. Literature on urban agriculture in communities worldwide indicates that working in the context of nature is both individually and socially therapeutic in addition to its environmental and economic benefits. Working with nature adds meaning, beauty and connection to the lives of those involved. There is a wealth of information indicating that urban agriculture projects reduce poverty, create jobs, enhance community life, provide food safety and change contemporary agricultural practices that are harmful to humans and to the environment.

Additionally, urban agriculture provides a non-technological option for employment, yet an integral and necessary contribution to society. According to Lisbeth Schorr (1997),

“Young families, unskilled workers, and minorities bore the biggest brunt of the economic and technological revolution...unskilled black males who once needed only to demonstrate their skill and stamina now encountered a labor market that didn’t need their ability to do strenuous work.” (p xxiii).

Urban agriculture provides an attractive niche with endless entrepreneurial opportunities to those who are not interested in a technological career path. Halweil (2002) has documented the community and economic effects of urban agriculture globally. Food growing activities not only offer productive work, but also small, local gardens and farms often employ organic farming and diversity of crops due to limitations in land availability. Crop diversity and organic growing methods are keys to healthy produce, economical

production and eliminating the inefficiencies of contemporary agriculture. Halweil's (2002) research shows that,

“There is a strong economic argument to be made for preserving this local crop diversity, since it helps to reduce dependence on expensive agrochemicals and other inputs. Studies have shown that diverse organic and ecological farms, which rely less on purchased inputs and more on taking advantage of the ecological processes in the field, cost less to maintain and make more efficient use of land, nutrients, energy, and other inputs, than do chemical-intensive monocultures.” (p. 29).

Economical and efficient food production is crucial, especially in urban farm projects where land is scarce. Because these farms are small, local and available to more people, they also cut food distribution costs. Shuman (2000) states that, “...complex distribution networks often carry new costs... If farmers were linked more directly with nearby consumers, these inefficiencies could be wrung out (p. 21-22).”

d) Best Practices

The following youth groups have undertaken projects in urban agriculture that are similar to some aspects of the Earthkeeping entrepreneurial program and have attained some modicum of success in the urban agriculture field.

The Food Project is a youth based farming enterprise. According to Lazarus (2000), The Food Project began in 1991 in Lincoln, Massachusetts. It is a 21 acre farm run by youth. As of this year, it is close to being self-sustaining by selling at local farmer's markets and through Community Supported Agricultural subscription services. Youth grow food organically and employ a strategy of crop diversity. The young adults at the Food Project have also launched a micro enterprise. According to The Food Project's Happenings (2002, Fall/Winter) newsletter, “...SVP Boston will now begin working with us on a business and marketing plan to expand sales of our salsa and food delivery service.” (p. 1).

The founder of The Food Project, Ward Cheney,

“...noticed that even in a community as green as Lincoln, young people and adults were not connected to the land or often to each other... He observed that it wasn't just youth from the suburbs like Lincoln who felt isolated because local opportunities for meaningful work were limited. Youth from the city expressed similar frustrations... And so, drawing on his experience as a farmer, organizer, educator, and activist, Ward founded The Food Project in 1991... he also envisioned The Food Project

as a national model with the potential to transform urban and suburban young people and the communities in which they lived.”

Food from the Hood (FFH), a Los Angeles based youth enterprise was founded in 1992 by students who wanted a positive way to respond to the Los Angeles riots. They began with a garden behind the high school and went on to create a line of salad dressings which, according to Auther (1998), brings in approximately \$250,000 per year. According to Feenstra, FFH has formed an Entrepreneurial Training Institute and franchised its logo and product name (p. 73). The students commit money each year to a scholarship fund which has provided a college education to more than 70 workers.

“The project’s garden and business center holds the attention of many students who do not thrive in a traditional classroom setting. Those who might have joined a gang for a sense a belonging now find themselves hanging out at the project’s headquarters, enjoying the camaraderie while running their own business.” (Auther, 1998).

Of the projects discussed, the San Francisco League of Urban Gardeners (SLUG) is the project which most closely resembles the Earthkeeping program.

“SLUG has developed a plan for local economic and community development which strives for long-term sustainability and self-sufficiency by creating locally-owned enterprises that involve and employ the people in the communities where they are located.” (Feenstra, 1999).

These programs demonstrate the possibilities for creating self-employment opportunities for youth and for community building. They also indicate how horticulture and urban agriculture can create a wide variety of jobs, niche products, and positive economic, community, social and environmental effects. Judging from the success of these programs, it is certainly feasible to have an urban horticulture-based project, run by youth that is economically successful and that engages them in productive activities that add value to the individual and to the community. These programs provide inspiration, information and guidance for the Earthkeeping entrepreneurship training project. Permaculture and urban agriculture implementation is rapidly increasing worldwide. Food and horticultural products provide a wealth of resources to generate youth employment opportunities, and enhance community and environmental health.

There are numerous groups out there with similar ideas who are running projects that give youth positive opportunities and practical skills. Many of these projects are economically successful. There are others which aren’t successful for reasons including lack of commitment on the part of schools, local competition, market distribution (Stone, et al, 2000), and lack of time for marketing, lack of funds for staffing and lack of resources to counsel youth.

2. Program

The literature strongly indicates that self-employment is an entryway into the economic system and creates opportunities that are otherwise unavailable to immigrants, low-income and at-risk youth. The Earthkeeping project is a two-level entrepreneurial training program that will introduce youth to the concept and benefits of self-employment and to business opportunities in the fields of horticulture, permaculture and related fields. The program will provide students with positive guidance, economically productive activities, lead to self-employment, other employment, marketable skills, higher education and to positive community participation. In conclusion, Youth Run Enterprises show the tremendous personal and community value that result from creating and running small business enterprises.

a) Mission Statement

The mission of our entrepreneurial training program is to economically and socially empower motivated, low income, at-risk, inner city high school students. Earthkeeping intends to provide a transformative education and the tools necessary for youth to become productive members of society who contribute to a dynamic and thriving community. The Earthkeeping entrepreneurial training program is dedicated to fostering opportunities and skill training for youth self-employment in the areas of environment, ecology, Permaculture, horticulture, and related industries so that they can further themselves personally, economically, civically and socially in order to break the cycle of poverty and despair.

To accomplish this mission Earthkeeping will:

- Educate students with the ultimate goal of creating self-sufficient leaders who can own their own successful businesses using sustainable, ecologically based skills and products.
- Become a center of training excellence, known for teaching young people how to serve the emerging commercial and residential markets for sustainable natural products and Permaculture services. The applications and uses of the outputs of permaculture services are virtually endless, and one of our core goals is to stimulate and cultivate creativity in the development of the ideas that can best serve the ultimate goal of economically independent youth, and self reliant, sustainable communities.

The Earthkeeping group is confident that the entrepreneurial training program will prove to be an extraordinarily successful model project in Washington, D.C. and surrounding areas. Long term, the team of trainers and directors is committed to personally mentoring a new group of local students every

two years, and sharing their developing expertise to multiply the global benefit of ecologically sustainable business applications.

3. Participants

The participants will be 20-50 inner city high school students, and possibly more as the program grows, who demonstrate responsibility, enthusiasm and leadership potential. They will come from the Greening projects (see Appendix D for sample project) that Earthkeeping Ministry facilitates at the local schools and other youth programs such as Latin American Youth Center. The team will select them through an application and interview process which will give an idea of their interest, availability and potential.

4. Community role

The primary community participation takes place through the D.C. Public Schools, including Roosevelt, Sharpe, and Community Academy. Earthkeeping will continue to involve teachers at these schools through:

- Training the trainers
- on-site greening projects
- environmental and ecological in-class presentations and activities
- student participation in the outdoor gardens and projects
- garden clubs and after school programming

Obviously the participation of the schools is vital to both the goals and objectives. Without their continued involvement in these activities, it would be complicated to introduce youth to horticultural and environmental training and engaging their participation might become difficult.

Lutheran Social Services negotiates grant money and salaries for Earthkeeping. This relationship is essential to the operations of Earthkeeping and, if discontinued, could delay or terminate some or the entire training program.

Other partner organizations include:

- a) Georgia Avenue Collaborative is endeavoring to create youth employment programs. Earthkeeping will continue to be involved with these programs in various capacities. The Collaborative is active in developing neighborhood assets and has been a resource for Earthkeeping through networking Earthkeeping to other partners and by offering their own skills

and experience to Earthkeeping staff in a variety of areas. They have also collaborated on joint events. The knowledge and experience of the Collaborative will continue to be valuable to the evolution of the Program.

- b) Garden Resources of Washington (GROW) shares resources with Earthkeeping, including grant opportunities, and participates in occasional joint events. Judy Tiger, CEO, is giving Earthkeeping the benefit of her many years of experience in community gardening in D.C. by providing consulting services on various aspects of the formation of the Program.
- c) Latin American Youth Center is a very successful multi-service youth and family development center. Among their youth training opportunities is a partnership with Ben and Jerry's to train youth on-site, at the Ben and Jerry's Scoop Shops, in business skills and operations. The Earthkeeping team anticipates teaching the NFTE program at LAYC and plans to develop a stronger relationship with them as a source of interns and as a consultant on the formation of the Program. The Earthkeeping project group will consult with LAYC to understand how they structured and operate their youth programs and businesses.
- d) Assembly of Petworth Director, Ray Bridgewater, is active in all aspects of Ward 4 and the surrounding community as a community net worker and interfaces with Earthkeeping on many issues. Ray initiated funding for the Greening project and has continued to serve as a resource for the Youth Enterprise project. The Assembly opened the doors to USDA grants that funded the original school Greening projects which are now at four schools. Ray is working with Earthkeeping to find funding for the training program.
- e) There are several other groups, including Brain Food, Community Harvest and CEED, which work with food and food security. Earthkeeping joins with them on local and national food security issues.
- f) Neighbors in the community will be invited to participate in various ways -- as volunteers, mentors, sources of creative business ideas and other as yet undetermined roles.

5. Host organization

Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area (LSS) is the host organization for Earthkeeping Ministry and provides resources for grants to fund the salaries of the directors and interns. LSS was founded in 1917. According to Cockburn (2003)

"It's mission is to provide services that offer hope and provide for the well being of children, individuals, families, and communities, in need... LSS provides direct service to more than 3,000 individuals each year through the following services and programs:" (p. 2).

Adoption and Foster Care

Emergency Assistance

Transitional Housing Program

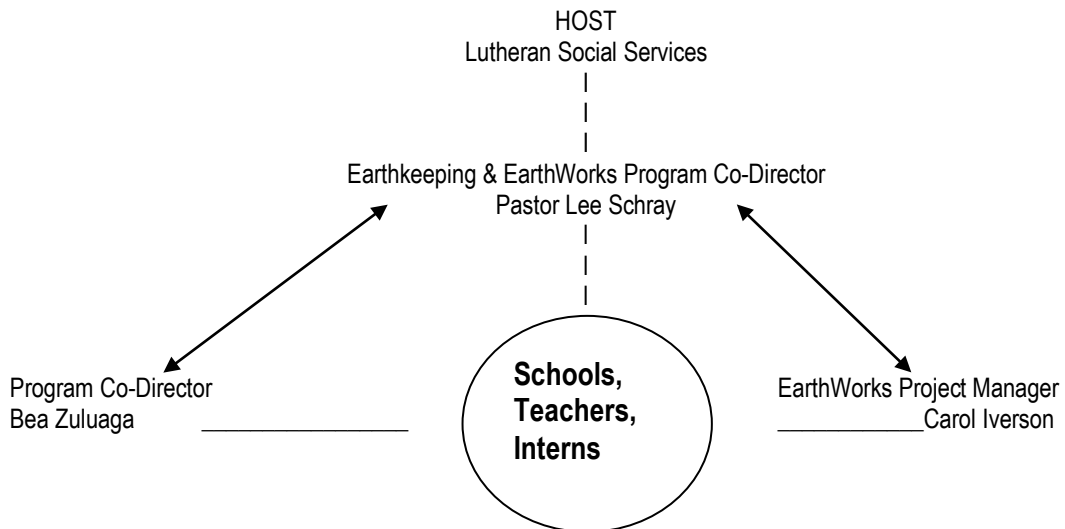
Refugee and Immigrant Services

Mental Health Services

Youth Initiative Program

Earthkeeping Ministry comprises 90% of the Youth Initiative program. This Ministry is concerned with stewardship of the Earth, sustainable ecological policies and environmental education and justice. Through the avenues of the environmental and horticultural sciences, it works with at-risk and low income youth to develop skills that will enhance their lives and future opportunities.

6. Organizational Chart for Earthkeeping Ministry



7. Method

To accomplish the goal of economic and social empowerment of youth, Earthkeeping created a two-level entrepreneurial training program. The first level will teach the curriculum of the National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship. The second level, in addition to NFTE training, will teach horticulture, permaculture, landscape and organic garden design and leadership training.

In order to sustain the program and to give students hands-on training, the project group created a for-profit landscape and organic garden design and maintenance business (see Appendix B for description of services). In the future, the Earthkeeping team will also create a second for-profit business based in ecologically sustainable resources to add further income to the training program and to keep interns employed year-long.

To acquire further funding for running the training and for intern expenses, a sponsorship program is being developed. Various levels of giving will sustain various needs. Earthkeeping will find an IDA provider so students can begin matched savings accounts.

A Monitoring and Evaluation System is being developed to gather information on the accomplishments, strengths and weaknesses of the program, the for-profit businesses, staff and students.

8. Inputs, Products and outputs

a) Inputs

- Enthusiasm, talent, and appreciation of youth
- Training time for students of 30 hours/week in summer and 10-15 hours/week in winter
- Computer equipment and programs
- Books and supplies
- Additional landscape equipment
- Total staff time of approximately 90 hours/week

b) Products and outputs

- An entrepreneurial training program that facilitates excellence in learning and attains a certain degree of financial self-sufficiency through its own business ventures
- Graduates who have attained the financial skills necessary to start a business or gain employment
- Students who understand the principles of Permaculture, the elements of Design and who know plant materials.
- Profitable design contracts that bring in enough income to pay five Youth a minimum of \$7.50/hour.
- On-going Landscape and Permaculture design and maintenance and organic garden design and maintenance contracts that keep Youth employed for eight months of the year.
- A second business to generate income for the training program and provide hands-on experience all year.

- Savings in IDA program.
- Successful business start-ups or employment of students

c) Resources

- Student IDA accounts to develop financial assets and leverage and capitalization for business start ups.
- For-profit permaculture and landscape design business that brings in enough income to pay 10-20 students a minimum of \$7.50/hour.
- A second for-profit business: possibly a plant nursery to provide low-cost materials to EarthWorks; value-added products to sell at Farmer's markets, local businesses and through a web-site.
- High quality, dedicated and creative staff
- NFTE Organization
- Supportive Host organization and local partner organizations
- Lutheran Church Communities

IV. Implementation

1. Implementation Plan

The program will be implemented in the following steps.

a) Workshops will be presented to introduce youth to the concept and benefits of self-employment. They will be given to the classes at Roosevelt High, Sharpe Health Academy and LAYC. After the workshops, applications will be taken by Beatriz Zuluagua and Lee Schray, candidates interviewed and hired for internship positions.

b) Level I students will take the NFTE training and establish IDAs in order to accumulate capital for self-employment. Students who complete the NFTE program are eligible for college credits.

c) Level II students will take NFTE, establish IDAs and participate in classroom and on-site training. Lee Schray, Director, will teach the horticulture, organic gardening, landscape and Permaculture design in addition to maintaining relationships with the schools. Beatriz Zuluagua will teach NFTE and Carol Iverson will teach leadership training. Staff and interns will carry out contract work. At the end of the training, Interns will have achieved the expertise necessary to create and incorporate into autonomous enterprises, if they so choose. Following is the tentative curriculum outline.

Curriculum Outline and Outcome Measures				
First Year				
Program Area	Summer Hours	Winter Hours	Outcome	Facilitator
Financial Literacy		1 hrs/wk.	Participants learn: 1. Monthly Budget 2. Importance of saving 3. Meaning of payroll deductions 4. Types of investments 5. Record keeping	<i>Bea</i>
NFTE Curriculum	6 hrs/wk	4 hrs/wk.	Participants create: 1. Income Statement 2. Product Research Plan 3. Cost/Benefit Analysis 4. Marketing plan 5. Bookkeeping plan 6. Cash Flow Stmt. 7. Business plan	<i>Bea, Carol</i>
Horticulture and Permaculture: Classroom and on-site.	20 hrs/wk	2.5 Hrs/wk	Knowledge of: 1. Fauna and flora of east 2. Seasons 3. Sun, wind, water 4. Natives and exotics 5. Annuals, perennials, biennials 6. organic gardening Permaculture: 1. Principles and Ethics 2. Intro to ecological design 3. Soil prep	<i>Lee</i>
Leadership	4 hrs/wk	2.5 hrs/wk	Knowledge of: 1. Dynamics of Leadership 2. Role models 3. Habits of highly effective people 4. Conflict Resolution & negotiation	<i>Bea, Carol, BA, Lee</i>
IDA Enrollment			1. Account holders save regularly \$1 for each hour of work for education and micro-business 2. Increase self-esteem and possibilities for better future	<i>Interns, LAYC, SBICOA</i>
IDA Savings			= \$210 IDA contributions = \$150 IDA contributions = \$360 in First Year (doesn't incl. matched funds)	
Total Program Hours	210 Hrs/7 months	150 Hours/5 months	Total of 360 hours for 12 months	

Curriculum Outline and Outcome Measures				
Second Year				
Program Area	Summer Hours	Winter Hours	Outcome	Facilitator
Horticulture, landscape design & Permaculture: Classroom & onsite	6/hrs/wk.	4 Hrs./wk	Knowledge of Landscape design: 1. Art elements 2. Concept: overall design 3. Site evaluation 4. graphics Horticulture: 1. Soil/composting 2. Seeds & seed starting 3. basic botany 4. habitat 5. Plant care Permaculture: 1. Guilds 2. Stacking 3. systems	Lee
Leadership	4 hrs/wk	2.5 hrs/wk	Knowledge of: 1. Role Models 2. Personal application 3. Community Building	Bea, Carol
NFTE		1 hrs/wk	Knowledge of: 1. Competitive advantage 2. Negotiation 3. Consumer analysis 4. Business structures 5. Personal Selling 6. Small Business & Government 7. Socially Responsible Biz	Bea, Carol
IDA Enrollment & Savings	210 Hrs/7 months	150 Hrs/5 months	1. Account holders save \$1/each hr. worked 2. Increase self-esteem and financial future = \$360 in 2nd year (not including matched funds). Total of \$520 for the two years for each intern	Bea, LAYC, SBICOA
Total program Hours	210 Hrs/7 months	150 Hrs/5 months	360 hrs/12 months	

Additionally, in Level II, students will create individual or group owned enterprises. They will:

- Conduct research and decide on business venture
- Carry out a community business survey

- Perform a Feasibility study
- Create Business plan
- Incorporate

The program offers many levels of skill training but will begin with entry level competency. The staff will support and help direct students to further resources and education, depending on their level of interest and commitment. Therefore, the participants have the opportunity to graduate to a higher level of economic opportunity, skill and knowledge in each of the designated areas as they branch out into their chosen business ventures, employment areas or further education.

d) Earthkeeping is presently soliciting and implementing paid landscape/permaculture design and maintenance contracts and contracts to create and maintain organic gardens in order to employ interns and acquire income to support the training program.

e) As soon as it is feasible, the Earthkeeping team will begin research on a second business to create off-season income. A number of possibilities are being considered including food-based, value-added products and a plant nursery. The marketing strategy is to advertise through:

- customer referrals
- fliers
- church bulletins
- local newspapers
- community gatherings
- weekend workshops
- farmers' market
- web-site

f) As part of their business training students will:

- Create policies and financial structures necessary to run these businesses
- Research, generate and produce ecological products and crafts
- Cultivate customer relationships
- Fashion marketing materials

g) Earthkeeping will consider offering maintenance services as the landscape/permaculture and organic garden design business stabilizes. Following are some of the possibilities:

- Interns will mow, prune, mulch, weed, water, etc., on a regular basis
- They will cultivate the gardens on a regular basis

- Gather fresh produce on a regular basis for clients
- Regularly gather and sell excess produce from sites.

The staff monitors all activities necessary to achieve goals and objectives that steer the program to stellar performance (see Monitoring and Evaluation, p. 32).

Project Implementation will be reported through a monthly narrative which will accompany and explain progress and changes on the Implementation timeline and Gantt Implementation Table.

2. Project Implementation Inputs & outputs Table

<u>OBJECTIVES:</u>	<u>Inputs</u>	<u>Outputs</u>	<u>Indicators of Completion</u>
Obtain Funding: \$300,000	Biweekly meetings w/Judy Tiger	Resources for Funding proposals	Written proposals
	Monthly meetings w/BA	Coordinate funding efforts. Develop grant proposals	Receipt of grants in amount of \$75,000 start-up
	Meetings with SBICOA	Long term (3 yrs) funding	Government grants for \$350,000; corporate matching funds for IDAs
Sponsorships	Research & Contact possible sponsors	Agreement to sponsor	Monthly Pledge money
NFTE Teacher Certification	Attend training	Ability to teach NFTE curriculum	Certification
Complete curriculum plan	Research & meetings on curriculum design	Completed curriculum	Completed handbook for curriculum implementation
Establish IDA accounts	Research on providers	Contract with providers	Interns increase savings
Market services	Ideas and resources on creating brochures, websites & other marketing materials	Brochures, website, business cards, etc.	Customers; sponsors; student enrollment in program
Solicit Design Contracts	Marketing strategy	Signed contracts	Customers; Implementation of design contracts: profit
Develop Program Monitoring & Evaluation system, surveys and other forms	Regular Meetings with Lee, Bea	Monitoring & evaluation system	Format to give needed info on successes & weaknesses of program & for-profit biz(s)
Research & develop 2 nd biz: possible value-added products	Research on feasibility, market demand, cost	Ecologically sustainable products & services	Income for program
Recruit new round of interns	Focus groups	Eligible Candidates	Interns hired

3. *Staffing Pattern* (See Appendix A for detailed job descriptions)

Executive Director: Lee Schray will be responsible for maintaining school and partner relationships, teaching horticulture, landscape and Permaculture design; and for design of on-site contracts.

Program Director and Supervisor: Beatriz Zuluagua will provide program oversight, and continue to implement school programs with Lee, supervise on-site job implementation, and teach NFTE course and some components of leadership program.

Project Enterprise Director: Carol Iverson will provide program oversight, financial and organizational direction and structure to the Program. She will assist in teaching Finance and Leadership.

4. *Budget:*

Tentative one year budget, January – December, 2004:

Salaries

Executive Director: 20 hrs/wk X 48wks @\$25/hr.	\$24,000	
Program Director: 40 hrs/wk X 48 wks @ \$25/hr.	48,000	
Enterprise Director: 20 hrs/wk X 48 wks @ \$25/hr	24,000	
Ten Interns: 10 hrs/wk X 32 wks @ \$7.50/hr (winter)	24,000	
Ten Interns: 30 hrs/wkX12 @\$7.50/hr. (summer)	<u>27,000</u>	
	<u>Total salaries:</u>	<u>\$147,000</u>
<u>Overhead @ 15% of above:</u>	<u>\$ 22,050</u>	
<u>Benefits @ 33% of salaries:</u>	<u>\$ 48,510</u>	
	<u>Total salaries, benefits, overhead for six months</u>	<u>\$217,560</u>

Additional costs related to start-up

Additional equipment	2,000	
Greenhouse renovation & equipment:	40,000	
Intern Transport Van: Dodge Truck Ram Van 2500	24,000	
Van insurance w/commercial liability	3,000	
Three computers	4,500	
Allowance for guest teachers (one/mo. @\$40/ 2hr.)	960	
Transportation: 200mi/wk X 96wks X \$0.36/mi.:	6,912	
	Total: <u>\$ 81,372</u>	
	<u>Total start-up costs for one year:</u>	<u>\$298,932</u>

5. Project Implementation Report:
Status of Project as April 15, 2004

a) Funding:

The Earthkeeping team meets weekly to strategize ways to obtain funding for this project. The Small Business Corporation of America, who is an IDA provider and fiscal agent for non-profits, is working to acquire long-term (up to 3 yrs) funding for start-up and operating costs. The Earthkeeping staff met with Mark Cooper, Director of LSS, on February 6th to request that he meet with the Browns regarding their proposed contract for Earthkeeping. They are in negotiations. He supports our plans and is willing to do whatever he can to acquire funding for the program. The meeting with Mark, his meeting with the Browns, and his continued support through the evolution of the training program are major milestones.

BA Cockburn has submitted a number of grants, but doesn't expect to hear anything on them until March or April. Some members of the Board are urging the Director to cut this program, but BA has convinced them to wait. In the meantime, the staff is developing a sponsorship program, along with a sponsorship brochure and PowerPoint presentation, to gain additional funds to support the program and interns. Various giving levels have been set and the staff goal is to obtain by September, 2004, a minimum average of \$1,000 per intern to defray our expenses for them. Earthkeeping will soon contact organizations that have an interest in supporting Youth, organic gardening, healthy food issues, environmental issues and ecologically sustainable businesses. Additionally, the project team is researching other avenues of revenue.

b) For-profit Design Business:

The project group is developing a business plan, a customer contract and pricing structure for the Landscape Design Business. Expectations are to finish by May, 2004. The first draft of a Client contract will be finalized by June, 2004. Earthkeeping has many requests for Landscape Design work and enough work lined up for the summer. Outside work will resume in April. A marketing timeline and strategy are being developed.

c) Curriculum:

During the months of February to July, the staff will continue to meet to develop the curriculum format and outcome measures according to established goals and to articulate the details of the syllabus, the day-to-day substance of the curriculum.

d) IDA provider:

Presently there are two options regarding IDAs. Negotiations are in process for the Browns to become our IDA providers. If Earthkeeping partners in teaching NFTE at LAYC, the interns will have the opportunity to apply for LAYC IDAs.

e) Monitoring and Evaluation:

Key areas that require monitoring and evaluation have been defined (see p. 33). The staff developed an outline of the Management information system. Over the course of the next six months, the framework and details of this system will be worked out. Research will begin on software programs to find those that are suitable for project purposes.

6. Project Implementation Gantt Chart (See Appendix B for sample MS Project Gantt Chart)

	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	Resource	Outcome	Timeline
OBJECTIVE												
Obtain Funding:												
Continue writing grants	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		BA	Grant Funds	Continuing
Develop Sponsorship strategy	X	X	X	X	X					B, C, L	Guidelines	Feb. 30
Create Sponsorship brochure	X									B, C	Brochure	Done
Create Powerpoint presentation	X									B, C	PP Present.	Done
Research and contact possible sponsors	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		B, C, L	Funds	Mar-Sep
Meet w/Mark Cooper re Board outreach	X										Activate Board	Done
Continue to improve for-profit design biz												
	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	Resource	Outcome	
Create Business Plan	X	X	X	X						B, C	Financial strategy	April 30
Create Client contract forms	X			X						B, C, L	Contract	Feb. 30
Create company policies	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	B, C, L, Int	Legal structure	Dec. 30
Continue to solicit contracts for profit biz	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	B, C, L	Clients	Continuing
Implement contracts			XX	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX	B, L	Compl. Jobs	Continuing
Research 2 nd biz								X	X	B, C, Int	Ideas	Oct. 30
Research markets									X	B, C, Int	Info for decision	Nov.30
Choose product(s) & services										B, C, Int, L	Decision	2006
Determine resource needs										B, C, L	Appropriate action	2006
Create marketing strategy										B, C, Int	Strategy	2006
Establish website									X	Outsource	Website	Jan. 30

OBJECTIVE:												
Develop Curriculum	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	Resource	Outcome	
Define Curriculum Goals											Goals set	Done
Define & Organize time needs	X									B, C, L	Time outline complete appl.	Feb. 30
Apply to NFTE										B	acceptance	Done
Application accepted	X									B	Certificate	Mar. 17
Obtain certification		X								B	Teach.sched	April
Meet w/Lori Kaplan (LAYC): teach NFTE	X											
Create curriculum outline & Outcome Measures	X									B, C, L	Curr. Chart	Feb. 13
Develop syllabus for each subject		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	B, C, L	Syllabus	Mar-Oct.
Complete Training handbook									XX	B, C, L	Handbook	Oct. 30
Create information brochures								X		B, C	Brochures	Nov. 30
Create marketing strategy								X	X	B, C, Ints.	strategy	Nov. 30
Establish organizational policies								X		B, C, L, Int	Policy book	Oct. 30
IDA Provider	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	Resource	Outcome	
Meet w/Mark Cooper re: IDAs/Eagle bank	X									B,C, L	IDA bank	Done
Meet w/Lori Kaplan (LAYC): IDA's	X									B,C, L	Match Funds	April
IDA Accounts set-up		XX								B,C	Provider	Mar. 30
Interns deposit savings		XX	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Interns	Savings	Mar. 30
Monitoring & Evaluation: Training prog.	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	Resource	Outcome	
Establish monitoring and evaluation system for:										B, C, L	MIS	
Interns			X	X							MIS	May. 30
Design Business					X	X					MIS	July. 30
Clients							X	X			MIS	Sept. 30
Value-added products								X	X		MIS	Future
Customrers								X	X		MIS	Future
Training Program								X	X		MIS	Dec. 30

V. Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation of the economic achievement of the training program and design business will take place via monthly financial statements and financial analysis reports. The staff is in the process of creating the formats and tools to carry out evaluations for all other aspects of the program. We expect to complete this process by August of 2004 and begin to implement the system in September. Interns will be evaluated with periodic written tests and presentations. Customers of the design business will receive surveys or questionnaires to measure their satisfaction with the work. The group will have bi-

monthly meetings to discuss the evaluations. The Board of Directors will periodically analyze and evaluate the operations of the entire program.

Monitoring

1. Management Information System

The primary formats used to keep the overall project on schedule, anticipate problems, and measure progress have been the Gantt chart and regular staff meetings. Key areas of success were determined and used to set criteria for evaluating the program. The key indicators of success are:

- Financial self-sufficiency rate of the training program
- Profitability of business operations
- Amount of IDA program savings
- Ability of interns to complete assigned tasks, create and give presentations, pass tests, start businesses
- Staff competence
- Satisfaction of customers with our work.

A number of forms were created to serve in collecting data for the Landscape Design Business. Tests and presentation criteria for interns and client satisfaction surveys will be completed by September, 2004. The program has not been on its feet long enough yet that we can measure anything, but with those key areas in mind the following Management Information Systems will be created:

- Financial reports, which will include profitability, liquidity, operating efficiency and leverage ratios, balance sheets and income statements for the Training program and the Design Business
- Financial measures of each Design job including materials, labor and overhead.
- IDA accounts data reports from IDA program director
- Intern assessments, tests and presentations on all areas of training
- Supervisor evaluation of interns
- Intern evaluation of staff
- Questionnaires/surveys to students on satisfaction with training program
- Questionnaires or surveys to customers on satisfaction with contracts and products.
- Teacher evaluation of curriculum
- Tracking number of graduates and number of business start-ups

Meetings will be held on a regular basis to evaluate data. Reports will be generated on progress in the following areas:

- Training Program development:
 - Quarterly evaluations that track the financial self-sufficiency of the program
 - Monthly evaluations that track student progress and satisfaction
- IDA development – monthly report
- Funding development and tracking – monthly reports
- Internship - information regarding progress at on-site training - weekly

Jobs will be evaluated at their completion using the following:

- questionnaires to clients seeking information on satisfaction with the job and how it was carried out
- questionnaires to interns regarding problems encountered and evaluation of the learning process
- job performance evaluations by Supervisors and Intern Self-evaluations

2. Summary Monitoring Table

Goal	Objective	Monitor	Timeline
Financial Success: 80% self- sufficiency for training program	Profit from design biz and value-added products	Financial Statements	2014
Student graduation 90%	Excellence in all Areas of learning	Tests, presentations, Evaluations	Two years from entrance into Program
Design Biz: Financial profit	20-25% profit margin	Financial statements	Quarterly
Customer satisfaction on Design Contracts	Referrals for other jobs	Number of referrals, client evaluation of work	Completion of each job
Student Start-up Business	60% Student self- Employment	Incorporation Papers	End of 4 th semester
IDA Program	\$1/hr. worked	IDA records	Continuing

MONITORING CHART FOR PROGRAM OPERATIONS

Areas to monitor	What to monitor	Records to keep	Who collects data	Who Uses Data	How to use info	What decisions can be made
Work plan for Training Program	Timing of activities & classes for Training program & administrative activities & meetings	Weekly/monthly curriculum plans; class schedule; test results; admin records; minutes of meetings; policies; licenses	Staff	Staff; Donor agencies	Ensure that planned activities are taking place on schedule	Reschedule activities & deploy resources as needed
Training Program Curriculum	Intern Progress & Biz Start-ups	Tests; presentations; quality of on-site work; leadership skills	Staff	Staff	To ensure that students grasp the materials & attain goals	Adjustments in curriculum; mentor for students
Staff & supervision for training program & design biz.	Knowledge, attitudes & skills of staff; salaries and benefits; job performance	Performance reviews; job descriptions; resumes of staff; Feedback from training program	Managers; Trainers	Managers; trainers; apprentice supervisors	Motivate staff to keep skills honed; resolve job related and inter-staff problems	Training needs; job description adjustments; disciplinary action
Costs & Expenditures for Training Program	Financial ratios. Budgeted & actual amounts, funds on hand; expenditures; IDA savings assessment	Quicken program; Daily Journal: ledger of accounts; receipts; petty cash; bank transactions; donor reports; IDA reports	Bookkeeper; accountant; IDA provider	Project Manager; auditor; Trainers; donor agency	Ensure funds are properly allocated and available for activities & salaries; ensure IDA savings & compliance w/funding regulations	Authorize expenditures; make budget & project revisions; ascertain cost-cutting measures and need for funding; take measures to insure savings
Work plan activities for Design Business	Timing of activities for service contracts & administrative activities; customer satisfaction	Progression of tasks to complete job; customer evaluation; admin records	Landscape designer; job supervisor	Managers; Auditors	Ensure that jobs are being completed in timely manner	Reschedule activities & deploy resources as needed; reassess if customer is dissatisfied
Costs & expenditures for Design Biz.	Financial ratios; Estimated & actual amts; scheduled time vs. actual time	Quicken program; Daily Journal: ledger of accounts; receipts; petty cash; bank transactions; timesheets; customer records; supplier records	Bookkeeper; accountant	Project manager; supervisor	Ensure that jobs are profitable; ensure that funds are properly allocated & available for all categories; determine fee	Authorize expenditures; make budget & fee structure revisions.

Taken from The Centre for Development and Population Activities. (1994) Project design for program managers. (p. 59). CEDPA: D.C.

Evaluation

3. Performance Indicators

Indicators of Financial Success:

- Cash Flow Statements: Identifies positive or negative cash flow so that cash can be efficiently allocated
- Breakeven analysis: Indicates how much money has to be made in order to pay the bills
- Ratio Analysis: analyzes various aspects of the income statement and balance sheet to show weaknesses and strengths
- Income statements: a statement of expenses and net gain or loss
- Balance Sheet: shows the financial state of an organization at a point in time

Training Program Evaluation:

The framework for evaluation of the training program are being created. This project will not be complete by April. Some of the criteria are listed below.

1. Curriculum evaluation will be carried out by outside experts.
 - a. Horticulture - Tom Tyler from Cooperative Extension Service;
 - b. Organic gardening - Judy Tiger of Greater Resources Of Washington;
 - c. Permaculture - Patricia Allison, from Earthaven Ecovillage, who teaches nationally;
 - d. Ability to teach NFTE by taking NFTE certification training
2. Staff evaluation will be based on:
 - a. successful delivery of curriculum demonstrated by interns success in tests and presentations
 - b. successful teaching methods demonstrated by performance of students
 - c. successful time management demonstrated by well organized and timely completion of projects and classes that are carried out in an organized format and timely manner
 - d. student evaluation of staff
 - e. teacher self-evaluation

The staff plans to use several sources to design a system to collect data regarding the success of the training program, design business and customer satisfaction with our work.

Schutt, R.K. (2001) Investigating the Social World. Boston: Pine Forge Press.

Taylor-Powell, E. (1998). Questionnaire design: asking questions with a purpose. Retrieved on November 17, 2003 from: http://cecommerce.mwex.edu/pdfs/G3658_2.PDF

Taylor-Powell, E. and Renner, M. (2000). Collecting evaluation data: end-of-session questionnaires. Retrieved November 17, 2003 from: http://cecommerce.nwex.edu/pdfs/G3658_11.PDF

Training program success indicators:

- number of students enrolled
- number of students enrolled who meet criteria of target population
- number who complete program
- Ability of students to pass written tests in all subject areas. Passing grades.
- Ability of students to articulate knowledge and ideas by giving presentations related to training material. Presentations are engaging and informative.
- In second year, interns complete three presentations including one power point presentation. Presentations will be given at one of each; school, community and one client.
- Ability to lead a team to effectively complete job tasks. Tasks are completed satisfactorily.
 1. Team leader gives clear instructions
 2. Can mediate and resolve conflicts
 3. Creates atmosphere for effective team member interaction and positive morale
 4. Can organize and manage time to complete tasks. Projects stay on schedule.
- Interns positively and effectively interact with customers.
- Number of interns who move up to assistant positions
- The numbers of students who generate start-up ventures, find employment, or continue on to higher education.

Landscape design business success indicators:

- Customers express satisfaction with service through survey or questionnaire.
- Referrals from clients for other jobs
- Positive cash flow and net profit

Community success indicators:

- Positive response from community residents, teachers and businesses. They are interested in investing in the business endeavor either by volunteering and/or mentoring students in various

areas as this enterprise proceeds. Local businesses agree to mentor intern for specified period of time.

- Teachers continue to participate in the on-site school greening program.
- Positive response of partners such as Georgia Avenue Collaborative, GROW and Latin American Youth Center. We continue to collaborate. These groups refer interns to our program.

4. Summary Evaluation Tables

TRAINING PROGRAM EVALUATION SUMMARY

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	INDICATORS	OUTCOMES
Enroll 10-50 students per Cycle	Students come from target population	Income, Ethnicity	Diversity
Graduate 80% per Cycle	Students attain testing standards	Grades, ability to present, on-site performance	Graduation
Students create businesses	Employment	# of Biz start-ups or students employed	Positively engaged and contributing Youth.
Program self-sufficiency	50% in 5-7 years	Profit statements	Financial Self-Sufficiency

LANDSCAPE DESIGN BUSINESS EVALUATION SUMMARY

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	INDICATORS	OUTCOMES
Net Profit	10% profit margin in 5 years	Financial statements	Contribution to Training Program
Customer Satisfaction	Excellence in design creation and implementation	Survey results	Referrals to other customers
Student Skill attainment	Grasp of curriculum & hands-on skills	Tests and presentations	Students who can independently carry out jobs

COMMUNITY EVALUATION SUMMARY

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	INDICATORS	OUTCOMES
Community participation: residents & local businesses	Engage community in Program	Mentors, volunteers	Community enthusiasm for program; community building
School participation	Maintain School Greening Program	Teacher participation; student engagement	Interchange between training program and schools; community building
Partner Collaboration	Partners engaged in various aspects of program	Collaboration on intern referrals; NFTE Foundation participation; exchange of knowledge and benefits	Community building; Multiply Program effects & sustainability

VI. Sustainability

1. Sustainability Elements

The main circumstance that does and will continue to affect the viability of this program is the ability to acquire funding for start-up costs. Under the Bush administration, funding for any non-profit activity has decreased tremendously. If this country elects (assuming that we elect presidents anymore) a Democratic president in 2004, then conceivably the new president will turn the economy around from a war economy to a domestic economy.

2. Sustainability Plan

The aim is to reach 50% self-sufficiency in 5-7 years and 80% self-sufficiency in 7-10 years. The Earthkeeping Entrepreneurship program will be sustained through several income streams:

- a) landscape, permaculture and organic gardening design business
- b) sale of E-books (electronic books) documenting those projects that demonstrate the most ecological, economical applications of permaculture principles and practices
- c) a second business that will employ staff and students through the winter and add to the income stream.
- d) a website to sell our E-books, products and services
- e) sales at farmers' markets and to local businesses.
- f) sponsorship program.
- g) employment of youth in the training program giving the program a return on its investment

The IDA program forms the core of the sustainability plan for youth enterprises. It offers them the financial foundation needed to capitalize their ventures or further their educations. It will also establish financial credibility, collateral to get banking services such as loans to expand business opportunities. Peer lending and support groups will be set up among the students and staff will encourage the students to work in groups to create, finance and run their businesses.

Earthkeeping will partner with the Latin American Youth Center to teach the NFTE curriculum. This will make the training available to a greater number of youth and increase the pool of potential interns and the chances for start-up funding. The training program will gain the many benefits of being a NFTE member after the Earthkeeping Program Director becomes a certified NFTE teacher. NFTE has many corporate sponsors, runs youth business camps, and offers financial awards to youth through various programs. The staff anticipates that this will increase student enthusiasm and self-esteem and will consequently solidify

and stabilize the training program. LAYC has already expressed an interest in having Earthkeeping join their organization, so the group will continue to explore with them the possibility of sharing various aspects of the entrepreneurial training program with their organization for mutual benefit. Earthkeeping will work with an IDA provider to insure that the students have matched savings. Staff will encourage our graduates to join the sponsorship and mentoring program and continue to seek funding. Staff policy will be to hire program graduates before looking for outside resources.

3. Institutional Plan

Mark Cooper, Director of Lutheran Social Services, is exploring the possibility of working with the Browns of the Small Business Investment Corporation of America. The Browns have a long history of getting non-profit programs firmly established through government funding. Mark favors our plan to partner with LAYC & NFTE which will add stability, benefits and credibility to the program. After the training program is established, the Earthkeeping group proposes to institutionalize it via the financial gains of the subsidiary for-profit businesses already mentioned. The Director is also working to create other subsidiary for-profit businesses or revenue sources within LSS so that the organization can stabilize and gain self-sufficiency. In the long term, work will be done at the Municipal level to change land policy and institute organic gardening and ecological sustainability courses in schools and on school and city lands.

VI. Conclusions & Recommendations

Results: The original Earthkeeping project goal was to train a group of 10-15 youth to start a Youth owned and run Horticulture and Landscape design Cooperative. The intention was that as the business became financially stable and prosperous, it could expand into related business ventures and hire more youth. After several months of time, consideration and effort in this direction, It became evident that the project was too small in scope to really attain extensive economic advantage. When the NFTE foundation curriculum for teaching Youth entrepreneurship came to our attention, the project group decided that by creating an entrepreneurial training program with the NFTE curriculum as a core part of the training program, Earthkeeping could accomplish the original purpose of assisting youth to start their own businesses on a much broader scale. The hope was that by offering a program that taught general entrepreneurial skills it would reach and appeal to a greater number of youth. The project group decided to expand our goals to become a training program that would teach students the financial skills of entrepreneurship and additionally offer a vocational training component in horticulture, permaculture and landscape design at the

same time. Therefore, the project changed from teaching a small group of youth to run a horticultural based business to one that would teach self-employment skills in general with the option of also training in ecologically sustainable landscape design. Finally, we decided to divide the program into two levels. This format gives the option of a shorter term learning period learning only financial skills, or the longer, more in depth financial and horticultural training. The advantage of having two choices will attract a greater number of youth and also increase our chances for funding. The project group was in agreement with these changes and enthusiastic about the new concepts.

The Earthkeeping project goal has been achieved in that the training program is up and running at an nascent level. For the last year, in the pilot project, three interns have been learning the basics of horticulture and landscape design both in-class and at paid design sites. They are enthusiastic about the program and engaged in the learning process. The project group intends to hire additional interns as scheduled to begin the spring training session assuming that LSS can fund their stipends.

The program has not yet obtained funding nor engaged an IDA provider but is much closer now that the group has agreed to call in the participation of the Director of LSS to talk to SBICOA. The IDA program is in jeopardy in the U.S. legislature at the moment so chances are that this part of the program may not come to pass. The project group decided to set a deadline that if it hasn't received funding by September, then it will declare the program defunct. The financial crisis LSS suffered last year gravely affected the Earthkeeping program. There was never any guarantee from day to day as to whether there would be funding for Earthkeeping to continue or even if it would have an office in which to continue. That, in addition to the fact that the Earthkeeping Director had to go to half time and the Program Director had to take up a large part of her work, has lowered morale and slowed progress to a crawl. However, the staff is still working toward their objectives.

If the training program receives funding, the project group expects that approximately 20-50 youth will be trained in the NFTE curriculum in the first year and that 15-20 interns will complete the two year program in 2006. The intention of the program is that at least 60% of the NFTE graduates and two year training program graduates will start their own businesses; and that the remainder will have the skills necessary to find employment. The staff hopes that several students in the class will stay on to assist in running the program.

Recommendations:

The project group recommends that when another person is hired, it be a person who has project management and supervisory experience in order to keep the project on course and preferably a third world male in order to have a balanced staff. Since high school students are only available full time in July and August, the group also recommends that the Earthkeeping group extend the age range of target population and hire several high school graduates in order to keep the landscape business running full time from March through November. In addition to the models described in the Literature Review section, resources on organization and leadership from Youth Build have been particularly helpful in designing this program. The next step in advancement of this program will be municipal land policy changes to institute permaculture in school programs and on school and city land. This will not only provide further training opportunities for youth but will serve as a model for ecological sustainability and food security in D.C.