



Grant Follow-Up Report for Organizations

Organization Information

Date: Dec. 20, 2013

Fiscal Agent: Chelsea Senior Center

Intervention Contact: Trinh Pifer

Title: Executive Director

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Program Information:

Intervention Name: Intergenerational Garden

Number of individuals participating in this intervention: Lots! 50+ summer camp kids and counselors, 60+ preschoolers and teachers, 1000+ elementary school kids, teachers, and parents from N. Creek and S. Meadows, clients and staff from the Eisenhower Center, and countless volunteers!

Check List

- The Grant Funds were utilized as designated
- Funds were disbursed to vendors of equipment or services and/or to nonprofit organizations providing direct services; no cash awards were made to clients.
- This report is being submitted within the time requested in the grant award letter.

Attachments

- A complete expense report that demonstrates how the grant award was used. If this is an Interim Report, please indicate expenses to date.
- If the full amount of the grant was not necessary to provide the approved services or programs, a check from the agency is enclosed for any unused funds above \$100.
- Amount Returned - [Click here to enter text](#). Reason - [Click here to enter text](#).
- A photo(s) of the program (if appropriate). Photos will not be returned.
- Completed Photo Release Form

Narrative Responses

1. Referring to the goals described in your intervention (or any revisions submitted subsequent to the grant award), please indicate the following:
 - a. What were your major accomplishments?

Our goals for Year 2 of the Intergenerational Garden were to 1) have an impact on the eating habits of pre-school and school age children, 2) increase physical activity of gardeners, both seniors and children, 3) increase children's involvement in food production which promotes appreciation and appetite for healthy vegetables, 4) achieve season

extension to educate the public on harvesting veggies “year round” in Michigan and 5) promote healthy social connections for children and older adults.

Our major accomplishments include building the hoophouse in mid-November 2013 and starting our partnerships with the school district to provide programs and resources in the schools.

Hoophouse: With support from the school district, we constructed a 24x36 foot hoophouse structure inside our garden. We contracted with the Eisenhower Center for materials and labor. The Eisenhower Center in Ann Arbor provides resources and support for clients with closed head injuries. Their group leader is Jeremy Hodges, a Chelsea resident with a horticulture degree and experience in building hoophouses on the St. Joseph Mercy Hospital campus. Jeremy organized a crew of Eisenhower Center clients to assemble the hoophouse over several days. We will contract with them to also provide raised beds for planting inside the hoophouse. Additional monies will be allocated to purchasing an appropriate planting mix for these raised beds. We hope to plant our early cool weather crops in March-April. The school district will be installing electricity to power a fan that will circulate air in the structure.

School-age programs: In March, we helped the preschool classes start seeds using a grow light system that was purchased with funds from the Chelsea Area Garden Club. Each of the four classes planted seeds for a 3-Sisters Garden (corn, beans, and squash). In May, we invited a local person, Tahnahga Yako, to lead a Native American blessing for the preschool gardens. Students, teachers, and seniors were able to join in a ceremony to bless the garden so that the children and the plants could grow and prosper.

In June, we met with Julie Deppner, Executive Director of Instruction, and Sue Gregg, Director of Food Service, to lay some groundwork for bringing healthy eating programs into the schools. We decided to start by focusing on the two elementary schools, N. Creek and S. Meadows. After meeting with the principals of each school, we identified several possible partnerships that would allow us to promote healthy eating among kids K-5. On October 18, we supported the Bulldog Jog by providing apples as a healthy snack for nearly 1,000 kids. Additionally, we supported the Harvest Festival at S. Meadows on October 30 by doing a fun program to “Try the Mystery Dip”. About 500 kids from grades 3-5 sampled different dips made from pumpkin, peas, tomatoes, tomatillos, and spinach. The parents and teachers wanted recipes and the kids’ reactions ranged from refusing to try things to wanting seconds!

We will continue to identify programs that can be easily implemented at the schools without creating extra workload for teachers or disrupting the required core curriculum. Some future ideas include starting a garden on-site at S. Meadows that would be maintained by parents/students with guidance from our Intergen garden committee, and purchasing some garden books for the school libraries.

b. What measures were used to determine effectiveness

We had another year of successful growth! During the months from May-Nov, we recorded over 325 pounds of food harvested and roughly 450 volunteer hours (approximately half were kids). These numbers are underestimated because we know many volunteers and

community members came “after hours” to work in the garden and harvest vegetables for their own use. We are happy to share the bounty, but it can be challenging to remind them to record their harvest and work hours.

c. Was this intervention effective? (Please provide supporting data)

Yes, seniors enjoyed working in the garden if they were physically able to do so and were happy to take home fresh vegetables to enjoy. The kids had fun and learned a lot about where their food comes from and many were willing to try new foods. The senior lunch program benefitted from having potatoes, greens, tomatoes, onions, broccoli, beans, etc. incorporated into the menu. This year alone we impacted over 2,000 people of all ages and physical abilities.

d. What were the unexpected results or key learnings?

Growing food in a hoophouse is very different from traditional gardening. We will continue to draw on advice and knowledge from experts like Jeremy Hodges, MSU horticultural staff, and garden club members.

2. *Describe any setbacks encountered during the period of this grant*

a. How did these setbacks impact the intervention?

Recording volunteer hours and the amount of harvest was challenging. We obtained several scales and established charts to record the data, but it was an ongoing problem to have individuals record the information. Also, we continue to deal with critters (deer and bunnies) that like to forage in our garden.

b. How were these setbacks addressed?

We established a group email of volunteers to better communicate information and reminders. We built a weatherproof outdoor sign in the garden to communicate instructions. We added chicken coop fencing around the perimeter of the garden to deter bunnies, but we continued to have deer problems. We tried hanging shiny, reflective CDs and next year we will explore some other organic, affordable options for deterring wildlife.

3. *Indicate if program goals were altered in any way and why.*

N/A

4. *Should this intervention be continued?*

Yes, this garden is the epitome of community collaboration. We have proven in the first two years that we can build community support and recruit/organize volunteers to maintain the garden. For sustainability, we are discussing partnerships with the Farmers Market, Chelsea Community Kitchen, and the school district to assess the feasibility of hiring a Farm to School Coordinator.

5. *If yes what steps are being made to ensure the sustainability of the intervention beyond this grant period?*

The initial infrastructure costs such as fencing, irrigation, shed, and the hoophouse have been completed with funding and support from the Chelsea Area Wellness Foundation, Chelsea School District, Chelsea Lions, and Chelsea Area Garden Club. Moving forward, we will need to obtain funds for annual supplies such as seeds and plants. Our committee will continue to seek donations from community partners when appropriate. We are also prepared to host a

breakfast fundraiser for larger ongoing expenses, such as replacement plastic for the hoophouse.

6. *If your program involved collaboration with other organizations, please comment on the value the collaboration.*

With a grant from the Chelsea Area Garden Club, we constructed a message board to communicate with volunteers, installed chicken wire base around the gaps in the fencing to deter rabbits, and purchased seed starting supplies (e.g. grow lights, shelving units, trays, seeds) for the Senior Center and the preschool classes.

The Garden Mill in downtown Chelsea held a day of shopping on April 20 to benefit the Intergenerational Garden. A portion of proceeds from that day were donated to the garden, which was used to purchase seeds and supplies.

Once again, MSU Horticultural Demonstration Gardens donated plants for the garden including vegetables, herbs, and perennials. These donations kept down our cost for purchasing seedlings, which are much more expensive than seeds.

We worked with a local 4H group, the Silver Spurs, to paint the shed that was built and donated last year by the Lions Club. Over a dozen 4H kids and parents came to paint the shed in July. This was a wonderful volunteer opportunity for the kids and much needed to help weatherize our shed.

Chelsea Rec 5H summer camp kids and counselors came over every Monday from June through August to help weed and harvest their healthy snacks for the week. Volunteers from the Senior Center worked with the kids to share their knowledge and love of gardening.

We partnered with the Chelsea Community Kitchen to hold monthly cooking classes for seniors during the harvest season. Using produce from the garden, these classes were held during the regular senior lunch program so that participants could learn recipes and taste samples. Class topics included "Cooking in Season", "Chilled Garden Soups", and "Simple Salad Dressings".

In October 2013, the local Meals on Wheels program was transitioned to the Senior Center. With this transition, we were able to incorporate produce from the garden into the meals that were delivered to homebound seniors (e.g. adding kale to salads). Through our Senior Nutrition Program, both congregate and home delivered meals, we serve nearly 2,000 meals per month to seniors in our community (Chelsea and Manchester). These meals are often times the main meal a senior eats for the day and the only opportunity for connection with others.

7. *How did this intervention impact the organization responsible for implementation?*

This intervention supports our mission to address the physical, social, and emotional concerns of senior citizens and their families. It provides many opportunities for different generations to make healthy connections. Lastly, it provides opportunities for different segments of our community from ages 3-93 to eat well and eat locally.

8. *If fiscal agent is different than those responsible for implementation, use this space for feedback from the fiscal agent, if any*

N/A

Approval of Exec. Director or Equivalent [Click here to enter text.](#)
name