



OCIA R&E Micro Grant Report

January 2022



“We can grow together” was the project focus at our Urban Community Farm for 2021 and 2022, with a goal to bring together a diverse social, economic and demographic population through environmental practices that reduce hunger while increasing environmental awareness.

The program has had a positive impact on the community, with 10 of the 20 areas producing more than 80 pounds of organic produce a week. This food is going to families at title one schools, 2 feeding centers, of which one focuses on

veterans, and a food distribution hub in a low income community. Another impact is that it now supports a new environmental club within the community garden.

We brought together seniors, college students and local boys and girls club to build out the areas that serve as a teaching and growing area. With your support, one grow area uses containers and drip irrigation rings for water conservation and 5 gallon buckets for bedding. Participants learned how to make compost which was used for the bedding. The intent of the buckets was to demonstrate that large grow spaces are not needed to yield big results. This was important as many of the residents within 25 mile square radius are in low income housing with limited outdoor space. Fertilizer was provided from our worm bins which we were able also use as a learning component. However, the most ask question was, can we use the worms for fishing!

Although, the project is only 75 percent complete, the impact is already apparent with schools starting clubs and residents of this food desert community not only having access to fresh produce, but the knowledge and ability to grow their own food at home. We also introduced college students to organic farming in a community they would not have visited, and they became ambassadors against negative media coverage of this community.

Once again, we thank the OCIA for helping make this possible as together we have not only raised awareness, but also demonstrated the power of organic growth that has delivered over 500 pounds of fresh produce in the last 6 weeks.

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