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OCIA R&E Micro Grant Report 2021

A total of 31 scholarships (valued at \$1,550) were offered for our online seed school and 4 more scholarships (valued at \$488) given to our outdoor, in-person event. Numbers were kept small for the in-person event August 14th-15th, 2021 due to Covid-19 concerns. But because of OCIA's generous donation of \$3,000, the first 75% of the funds covered the initial scholarship total of \$2,038. In anticipation of the remaining 25% from OCIA's full funding of scholarships, we were able to offer all 100 recipients of the May Day Seed Share no-cost access to the online seed school recordings and live Q&A sessions. This was especially significant to us, since Seed Share participants were from disadvantaged households, could not always access the course live, and most were from local, indigenous tribal communities. The online option for Seed Share scholarship recipients totaled \$5,000 worth in education. All in all, rather than the 60 scholarships identified in the grant application, we were able to offer partial or full scholarships to 135 individuals. We are truly grateful to OCIA for their support of this work so that we could offer free seed saving education to so many! We recognized OCIA's contribution by including their information on the scholarship application form, presentation slides, and in the title of the scholarships. Please see the attached images of our in-person event held on August 14th-15th.

To honor applicants' privacy, demographic information was optional to provide. However, a few offered this information willingly, with most scholarship recipients being women and many identifying as nonbinary. One recipient who attended the in-person option identified as a member of the Dine peoples, though there were many more tribal members who did not wish to include this designation. As mentioned earlier, all Seed Share scholarships were for economically disadvantaged households and all seed packages and food boxes left over from the event were donated to the local food banks and/or non-profits. Over half of those participating in-person were between the ages of 55-70 years old and both on-line and in-person included students who intended to use the knowledge they gained from the courses to teach seed saving in their local communities. One participant with the online option wrote to let us know he used what he had learned from the classes to teach seed cleaning at a multi-day event in Omaha, Nebraska.



Among the information covered with both in-person and online options, participants learn technical information on how to save seeds, basic Latin nomenclature, an introduction to growing and saving seed from grains, cultural considerations when saving seeds, seed identification, and hands-on seed cleaning activities if at the in-person event. Seeds collected at the in-person event and prior to it were donated through the May Day Seed Share event to the 100 individuals who signed up. The remaining seeds were donated to Durango, Colorado Manna Soup Kitchen, various tribal communities in SW Colorado, Artistic Apothecary in Mancos, CO, and the St. Vincent de Paul Food Bank in Phoenix, Arizona.

We want to give a big thank you to Organic Crop Improvement Association's Research & Education Micro Grant Program for partnering with us to inspire, educate, and connect a new generation of seed savers. Seed saving has become of increasing importance as the current, pandemic and climate conditions shine a spotlight on the importance of organic, healthy food, sustainable agricultural practices, the fragile conditions of supply chains, and the value of rural life. Should anyone at OCIA wish to have access to the online seed saving class, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Wishing you joy and abundance in 2022,

Jackee Alston & Lee-Ann Hill
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