

Bronzeville Community Garden Summer Learning Experience

Bronzeville Community Garden hosted a six week Cultivator Development Program for local youth from June 27-August 5, 2011. For three days per week and four hours per day students were introduced to basic cultivation techniques. Lead gardener Guadalupe Garcia, with support from various members of the garden's leadership team, taught a course in skill development in a hands-on, project based setting. Two-thirds of the instruction time was spent in the garden with the remainder being spent in a classroom setting. Journal writing was a large component of the summer's program with students keeping an activity journal and making entries pertaining to the subject matter for each instruction day. Topics explored throughout the program were:



- Cultivation Techniques for Organic Gardens; Watering, Seeding, Maintenance, Crop Rotation
- Garden Safety
- Flora and Fauna Identification
- Life Cycles of Plants
- Beneficial Garden Life
- Pest Management
- Composting
- Water Conservation (early morning watering, mulching, etc)
- Employment Opportunities in Urban Agriculture
- Health & Nutrition
- Food Safety & Preparation
- Food Systems
- Food Ways & Traditions
- Permaculture & Monoculture
- Native Plants & Species
- Climate Change (Combating & Adapting)

Curriculum (Cultivation & Garden Management)

Week 1: Introduction to Garden Basics; bed and box preparation, tools and equipment

Lab: Identify different tools and their purpose

Week 2: Soil Preparation and Care; seasons, weather, compost and climate. What effect does weather in different seasons have on soil quality.

Lab: Examine and compare different soil samples by planting in compost and soil found in the garden. Soil testing and improvement.

- Week 3:** Water; water cycles, rain water versus potable water, and water conservation. Advantages of early morning or late evening watering, using mulch and planting native plants
Lab: Water usage exercise.
- Week 4:** Seeds and Planting; propagation, germination, transplanting
Lab: Seed viability exercise
- Week 5:** Botany; plant families, plant and flower parts, reproduction, weeds and invasive plants.
Lab: Identify plant and flower parts
- Week 6:** Bugs; beneficial garden life and integrated pest management
Lab: Identify some common garden residents as non/beneficial

Curriculum (Community & Professional Development)

- Week 1:** Preparing Resumes, Cover Letters & Portfolios
- Week 2:** Preparing Resumes, Cover Letters & Portfolios
- Week 3:** The Southside Food Economy & Creating a Food-Based Enterprise
- Week 4:** Organization and Management of Bronzeville Green Projects
- Week 5:** Employment Opportunities in Urban Agriculture
- Week 6:** Food Preparation and Service

Special Projects (Cultivation & Garden Management and Community & Professional Development):

Field trips: The Mycelia Project @ Hyde Park Art Center
 Al Raby HS Native Species Garden
 Garfield Park Conservatory, Hall Branch Library

Reducing our carbon footprint:

Eating in (and from) the garden versus traveling for Lunch
 Walking
 Carpooling and using rapid transit for field trips

Movies: A Man Named Pearl
 Dirt: The Movie
 Food Inc.