

Urban Agriculture and Food Security Initiative

ORGANIZATION(S) PREPARING/SUBMITTING PROPOSAL: TAGOS Leadership Academy, School District of Janesville and Rock County School Districts

Overview:

As part of the Rock County educational community, Tailoring Academics to Guide Our Students (TAGOS) Leadership Academy seeks to address the economic and nutritional needs of our community by providing a real-life job skills opportunity to our students and displaced workers within the community, establish a sense of community pride by beginning urban gardens within the city, and address nutritional and economic needs within the community by providing prepackaged meals at a low cost to families.

Barriers:

With the closure of General Motors and related businesses in Janesville and Rock County, our community members are facing serious economic challenges. The unemployment rate in Janesville remains one of the highest in the state at 12.8% (March, 2010, USDOL Labor Statistics). Nearly 6,000 workers have been displaced by these closures, impacting all aspects of community life. Families and children are struggling with issues related to availability of food, and adequate and quality nutrition. Acquisition of real-life job skills for both students as future workers and currently displaced workers is urgently needed. Poverty becomes a self-sustaining cycle, as students with inadequate nutrition struggle with lower achievement, lower achievement leads to a lack of job skills and decreased employability, and obesity causes higher medical costs related to health issues. Both Blackhawk Technical College (BTC) and the University of Wisconsin-Rock County (UW-RC) are experiencing high enrollments, and many popular career programs have waiting lists.

Goals & Objectives:

In 2009, TAGOS Leadership Academy received funding from the Sprint Foundation and donations from Hendricks Development Group to begin a greenhouse program on campus. Through this program we have been able to add fresh produce to our students' lunch program while teaching them valuable nutrition and gardening skills. TAGOS seeks to expand this program to include larger outdoor gardens and a fruit tree orchard on the TAGOS campus, and in the future, facilitate the creation of additional community gardens throughout Rock County. There are many areas where a community garden, created by our students and maintained by student and community volunteers, will be a valuable asset to the larger community, providing adequate quality nutrition for families while building a strong sense of community. As a part of a larger health and nutrition component, TAGOS will add a commercial kitchen and bakery to the campus. These additions will serve a number of purposes within the school and community. TAGOS will partner with BTC and existing Stateline Career and Technical Education (SCTEA) programs to begin a formal culinary arts program within the school. This program will be located on the second floor of the current TAGOS building and will become an extension of the existing BTC program. BTC culinary arts students will collaborate with TAGOS students. The commercial kitchen will provide a staging area for production of prepackaged meals which will be made available to TAGOS and community families for purchase, providing key nutrition to families and students at an economical price.

In year one of this program, we envision creating a large outdoor garden and orchard to supplement the existing greenhouse. Produce grown on campus will supplement students' lunch programs and to create

prepackaged meals which will be for sale at low cost to student and community families. An on-site commercial kitchen and bakery would be the stage for this process. Through partnerships with Blackhawk Technical College and current SCTEA culinary arts programs, TAGOS would provide an additional space in Rock County to teach real-life job skills to students and community members alike. By the end of year one, TAGOS will host a culinary arts program for students and community members, provide prepackaged meals at a low cost to families, and host nutritional seminars for the community. We envision offering monthly urban agricultural culinary experiences, where families are provided materials to create a meal, learn how to prepare it, and are able to take their prepared meals home with them.

During year two, TAGOS will expand the existing garden program into the community, partnering with the Rock County community, community service groups, Rotary Gardens and the local Master Gardeners program to begin a number of community gardens within the region, including the Fourth Ward and low income neighborhoods. The TAGOS greenhouse will raise starter plants for all gardens. TAGOS will provide seminars on how to set up a garden, and work with the City of Janesville on a compost site for high quality soil. Student volunteerism will be a key component of the project as students will plant each spring, and harvest produce in the fall. Canning and baking will be included in the culinary arts program, and those products will become part of the food used for prepackages meals. This aligns with the Department of Agriculture Food Security goals. TAGOS will partner with Panoramic for custom packaging for meals, and with local meat packers for organic, quality meats. Year two will see the meals program expand to include catering for community organizations as a way to publicize and sustain the program.

By year three, the community garden/meals program will be self-sustaining.

Measurable goals for this proposal are:

- Provide real-life job skills training for TAGOS students and displaced community members through a culinary arts program.
- Address health and nutrition needs of TAGOS students and Rock County families by providing fresh nutritious meals.
- Provide educational seminars and workshops in job skills, health and nutrition, and finance to TAGOS students, families and the community.
- Address economic concerns of area families by providing prepackaged meals at an affordable price.
- Promote a sense of community pride through establishment of community gardens on the TAGOS campus/Rock County.
- Provide educational outreach to displaced workers by offering evening reading, math, and GED preparation programs.

Innovation:

TAGOS Leadership Academy in Janesville serves students in grades 7 through 12 who come from diverse economic backgrounds. Many of our students and families have been strongly impacted by the economic crisis facing our community. TAGOS offers a range of services to assist families, including onsite counseling. TAGOS focuses on service learning and project based learning activities, putting TAGOS in a unique position to positively impact lives of students and families, as well as the larger Rock County community.

Collaboration:

TAGOS Leadership Academy will partner with the following organizations to implement an urban gardening program, a culinary arts program, and a community meal program within the TAGOS campus and the Rock County community: BTC, Hendricks Development Group, Panoramic, local meat packers, Meals on Wheels, City of Janesville, City of Beloit, Rotary Club, Rotary Gardens, Master Gardeners, Kiwanis, community service organizations, and others as appropriate.

Budget:

In order to begin such an undertaking, TAGOS requests funding in the amount of \$1,923,918 (\$1,214,000 the 1st year, \$630,260 the 2nd year, and \$349,658 the 3rd year). *See actual grant request for detailed budget.*

Community Gardens / Community Meals TAGOS Leadership Academy	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Kitchen Manager	\$ 45,000.00	\$ 45,000.00	\$ 45,000.00
.5 FTE Family and Consumer Education Teacher	\$ 29,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 31,000.00
Build out of 9050 sq ft.	\$500,000.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 10,000.00
Rent (includes all expenses and utilities)	\$ 42,000.00	\$ 43,260.00	\$ 43,658.00
Yearly Operation Budget (seeds, supplies, food)	\$100,000.00	\$110,000.00	\$120,000.00
Maintenance / Custodial	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 32,000.00	\$ 34,000.00
Marketing	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 8,000.00
Logo and Brand Identification	\$ 6000.00	0	0
Kitchen Equipment Purchases	\$200,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 30,000.00
Greenhouses (purchase, installation, electrical, plumbing)	\$ 30,000.00	0	0
Construction Materials for Community Gardens (Yr 1- 6 gardens, year 2- 12 gardens, year 3 – up to 24 gardens)	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 12,000.00
Bakery Buildout	\$ 80,000.00		
Utility Truck	\$ 40,000.00		
Covered Trailer with logo	\$ 10,000.00	0	0
Mini-bus (student/worker transportation to various sites)	\$ 75,000.00		
Transportation maintenance and insurance	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 16,000.00
	\$1,214,000.00	\$360,260.00	\$349,658.00
		3 year total	\$1,923,918.00