Intern Position: Food Systems Research Assistance
“Neighborhood Garden Coalition”

Organizational Description: The Neighborhood Garden Coalition participating with the Franciscan Volunteer Corp are sponsoring a summer internship located in Ferndale, MI.

The “Neighborhood Garden Coalition” Mission is one of stewardship of the environment and to empower communities using urban agriculture to feed themselves, using organic methods, and promote health, nutrition and well being. We are working to establish sustainable community gardens by forming partnerships between local residents, youth, seniors, educational institutions, social service agencies, governmental entities, and other key stakeholders.

“Song and Spirit Institute for Peace” part of the Franciscan Volunteer Corp promotes greater understanding among people of diverse religious, cultural and ethnic backgrounds through music, art, and gardens providing cultural programs, dialogue and study. It is run in part by BROTHER AL MASCIA, OFM, who is a Franciscan Friar of the St. John, the Baptist Province.

Position Summary: There are two areas that are part of these positions. The primary responsibility will be working in the development of a web-based system where farmers, consumers and distributors can share information that would allow the movement of food from farm to consumer. The other is working with two community gardens that are managed by the NGC. Sharing of duties and responsibilities will be encouraged.

Farm to Consumer: The interns will work with farmers, and consumers to help develop the criteria and identify the barriers that will guide in the development of the proposed system. The basic concept is “Facebookish” with special tools that are will allow transactions. The emphasis is on local food systems comprised of (a) forming clusters that can leverage resources (b) establishing central distribution points and (c) connecting larger farms directly with the consumer wherever practicable. The intern will need to be able to educate and work with producers and consumers to the advantages of participating in local food systems.

Community Garden: The interns will help manage two community gardens to improve growing techniques, crop yields and sales. One is an accessible garden inclusive of all people including those with physical and mental handicaps, which is part of Song and Spirit Institute for Peace. The other garden is in an underserved community where it is important to connect with the residents to promote nutrition and role of locally grown organic food.

The positions are located in Ferndale, MI and will be working primarily in Oakland, Wayne, and Macomb Counties. The interns may be requested to work on other duties as required. Position reports to the Jim Greenwood of the Neighborhood Garden Coalition and is guided by a three-member task force.

Qualifications: Are flexible. The ideal candidates will have:
• Have at least two years education in horticulture, agriculture, or other natural science.
• 20 years of age or older.
• Experience in organic farming
• Should be able to demonstrate ability to work with diverse groups of people, have excellent communication and organizational skills, computer savvy, and a passion for being part of and the development of local food systems.
• The ability to work independently, and as part of a team.
• Must have reliable transportation and phone.

The Neighborhood Garden Coalition
701 Woodward Heights, Ferndale, MI 48220
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Terms: This is a part-time seasonal position working from Mid-May through September. Hours of work will be 35 hours a week for approximately 16 weeks. It is a non-paid position. Room with kitchen privileges is included. A $1500 stipend will be paid at the end of the internship term and completion of the work as described. Expenses directly associated with the project will be reimbursed such as gas, materials and supplies.

Please contact:
   Jim Greenwood (jim@thengc.org) 248-390-4790
   or Carl Scott (carl@thengc.org) 248-376-0858