

Final
~~PROGRESS REPORT~~

FOREST SERVICE GRANT NO. 00-DG-11244225-171

Period covered by this report: August 1, 2000 through August 30, 2002

NOTE: Please review the following information and revise/complete as necessary.

Issued to: Community Resources, Inc.

Address: 4900 Wetheredsville Road, 1 D., Baltimore, MD 21207

Congressional District Number: 7

Project Name: Using Community-Based Urban Forestry to Create New Jobs for Lower-Income Urban Residents: A Greater National Demonstration Project in Washington, DC

Contact Person/Principal Investigator:

Name: Mike McConnell
Mailing Address: Same as above
Phone Number: (410) 448-4900
Fax Number: (410) 448-0874
E-mail Address: mike@communityresources.org

Your Organization's Internet home page address: www.communityresources.org

Date of Award: August 1, 2000

Grant Modifications: N/A

Date of Expiration: August 30, 2002

Funding: Federal Share: \$85,000 plus **Grantee Share:** \$115,500 = **Total Project:** \$200,500

FS Grant Manager: Phil Rodbell

Address: USDA Forest Service - NA, 11 Campus Blvd, Suite 200, Newtown Square, PA 19073

Phone Number: (610) 577-4133

Fax Number: (610) 557-4136

Provide an abstract on your project and its results. This abstract will be posted on the NUCFAC Internet site.(approximately 200 words or less).

The health of our communities is dependent on the health of the urban forest for cleaner air and water, beauty, public health, psychological well-being, and economic opportunities. Our vision is to improve the total environment of two targeted urban neighborhoods, Shaw and Anacostia, by addressing the primary concerns observed and raised by community residents, leaders and institutions. During introductory meetings, four major concerns voiced were environmental

quality, economic opportunity, and also the broader community issues of crime, grime, education, and lack of pride. These issues were chosen as the goals we were to work toward changing. Therefore, we sought to improve the neighborhood environments of these communities through community-based urban forestry or greening. Our project tried to help 4-8 local green businesses in the communities to grow - providing more local, green jobs, capturing both green and economic growth. We also provided individuals with the knowledge and skills needed to acquire and advance in the green jobs industry. While simultaneously promoting community-based greening by training leaders and active residents in ecologically sound approaches to urban community greening. We linked the knowledge of urban greening to other community concerns. This we hoped would build a culture of local natural resources and community stewardship in communities where such a culture is often lacking.

Project objectives:

1. Improve the neighborhood environments of the Shaw and Anacostia communities through community-based urban forestry (greening) on public, private, and community spaces;
2. Enhance economic opportunities for residents through green-job training and placement, and through locally-owned green business development; and
3. Strengthen the culture of stewardship and the community's capacity in these neighborhoods through shared learning, participatory project development, and community-based greening.

Objectives met successfully:

Obj. 1) Improve the neighborhood environments through community-based urban forestry...
Complete/Ongoing: In spring and fall of 2000, coordinated by ANC Commissioner Deborah Thomas and supported by Community Resources, several stewarded tree plantings were organized for the Shaw community. This was the first step in getting the community involved in improving and beautifying their neighborhood. Deborah Thomas and Dawn Gifford, of Community Resources' D.C. office, went door to door asking neighbors to come out and support the tree plantings. Those residents who wanted a tree planted in the fall had to then attend both the tree box construction in the spring and the tree planting and tree care workshop in the fall, as well as sign an agreement which states that they will care for the tree properly. The planting was a huge success. Many residents from all parts of the community came out to help. Other projects to continue improving the neighborhood's environment are being discussed with the local leaders and residents.

In spring 2001, trees were planted at Ferebee Hope School in Anacostia. And with the help of Deborah Thomas, two more communities in Shaw were greened and beautified with new trees and tree boxes. The Westminster Neighborhood Association alone had 87 stewards for 88 new or existing street trees. Plans were made for tree care workshops to take place in the fall when the tree planting was scheduled to begin. By fall of 2001 an additional 17 new trees were planted in the Shaw community. In an effort to teach children the importance of caring for a tree, the children planted 7 trees in front of the Shaw YMCA. The remaining 10 went to the Westminster Neighborhood Association to replace dead or missing trees in new or existing tree boxes. Community Resources began site development of the Matthew Henson Park with the new members of the Earth Conservation Corps (ECC) in spring of 2002. The Matthew Henson Park located along

the Anacostia River is a demonstration site for rain gardens, a greenroof and for urban ecosystem restoration. Here Corps members were taught to assess and maintain the site, identify trees, remove invasives, and replant with native species. (For pictures of the site please go to www.communityresources.org/dcwhatsnew.html).

In late 2002 we began focusing more on reaching our goal in Anacostia. The members of the Earth Conservation Corps continued to plant the Matthew Henson Park with new native trees and shrubs. Rain gardens were also installed around the site, by the Corps in order to control the storm water run-off problem.

During the summer, we worked with the Shaw Ecovillage Project, a youth urban planning internship program, to inventory the last remaining empty tree pits in Shaw and help recruit neighbors interested in adopting and planting new trees. In summer of 2002 Community Resources sent out support postcards for the tree stewards, to remind them to water and to mulch their trees. The reminder included how much water to give, how often to give it and how to properly spread the mulch around the tree. It also included our contact information, in case they no longer had it and needed assistance, as well as information on how to obtain a tree irrigation device to make watering their trees easier. These postcards are sent out each spring to all tree stewards, new and old.

Over the past year Washington, DC has received monies from the Casey Tree Foundation for the restoration of the urban canopy. Due to this endowment the city decided to make planting and caring for street trees a top priority. This means that the more the city plants the fewer open tree pits there will be for community tree plantings. In the fall of 2002 we met with the newly hired chief forester to form a partnership with the DC Department of Transportation (DDOT) Urban Forestry Division. These discussions led to the signing of a MOU between DDOT Urban Forestry and Community Resources in September of 2002. This agreement recognizes the importance of CR's community tree stewardship programs in Shaw and Anacostia and allocates resources for materials that will continue the programs in 2003. Through this partnership we continue our tree steward program along with receiving more help and cooperation from the city.

With support from the City, we continued our stewardship plantings with great success throughout fall of 2002, planting significantly in the Logan Circle Community Association area of Shaw. Recent publicity of our program on Public Interest, a program of WAMU public radio in D.C. has garnered more interest and has helped us to reach more neighborhoods for the community tree plantings. Neighborhood word of mouth and interested passerby on community planting days quickly spread the news about our tree program and we found ourselves rolling through planting adjacent blocks on successive weekends.

The International Society of Arboriculture recently awarded their prestigious Gold Leaf Award for "Outstanding Landscape Beautification Activities" to Community Resources' Street Tree Stewardship Program. CR was nominated for this award by DC's Urban Forestry Administration for our continued commitment to working with DC residents to

clean and green our communities, and restore the urban tree canopy.

Our calendar for planting this spring is already filling as of January 1, 2003. This February, with the sponsorship of the City Urban Forestry Division, we intend to aggressively advertise our program through the use of professionally printed door hangers in English and Spanish. This winter we will also be offering pruning workshops to our tree stewards, which will include a neighborhood tree identification and diagnosis walk, as well as the nuts and bolts of simple pruning.

Obj. 2) Enhance economic opportunities through green-job training and placement...

Completed/Ongoing: To date we have assisted Young Endeavors, an Anacostia-based, minority owned landscaping business, in preparing bids and supporting documentation for a city, highway landscape maintenance program. We have also worked with DT LLC to develop landscaping services to be offered with their deconstruction business. We continue to offer training and consulting services while opening the DC Greenworks umbrella organization to all interested small green businesses as a linkage to potential contracts, to business services and to fellow members. We have successfully linked with the University of the District of Columbia Cooperative Extension Department (UDC), the Department of Parks and Recreation, and the Department of Employment Services to create and implement an 8-week hands-on landscape training and Master Gardener's certification program. From January of 2001 to March of 2001 Community Resources provided the curriculum, coordination and staffing for the project, while UDC integrated life skills and career development. Upon completion of the program, 26 trainees received their National Master Gardener Certification from UDC and were hired by the District of Columbia Department of Park and Recreation to restore and maintain 100 of DC's small pocket parks and green spaces.

The next Master gardener Certification training class was scheduled to begin in February of 2002 and run until March of 2002. This training was for the enhancement of the existing staff of the DC Department of Parks and Recreation. Unfortunately, due to circumstance beyond our control the second Master Gardener Certification training class for the DC Department of Parks and Recreation had to be rescheduled. We hope to offer the training again this spring of 2003.

In 2002, we launched DC Greenworks, a green service delivery vehicle to help funnel subcontracts for green work to local providers. DC Greenworks' focus is on services performed in the green industry in the area known as low impact development (LID). LID focuses on the integration of sustainable practices in landscape and building design including green roof technology, rain gardens, constructed wetlands, storm water management and pervious surfaces. In order to build the capacity of community contractors in this field, we will bid on LID contracts and offer subcontracts and training to small businesses and individuals that will qualify them to perform this work without us in the future. As a result of our LID work with ECC at the Matthew Henson Park and our

promotion of green roofs at environmental and community forums, we have received dozens of calls for green roof information and services, and have made five bids for green roof installations in Washington, DC. One of the five bids has already been accepted. We are currently in the process of building relationships (for future projects) with those interested in LID technology.

Obj. 3) Strengthen the culture of stewardship and the community's capacity...

Completed/Ongoing: Our Tree Stewardship Program, which includes tree care training as well as irrigation assistance and maintenance help, continues to grow in both popularity and success. With the City's permission, we have expanded our program to include planting canopy trees in front and side yards, where appropriate to do so. This has enabled us to gain greater interest from neighbors in Anacostia who have wide front yards but very few tree pits. We plan to plant 50 trees in 2003 in Anacostia.

We have also received tree requests from several people in neighborhoods outside of our focus communities. To that end, we are working with the City with the hopes of expanding our program into Trinidad, and increasingly depressed neighborhood in Northeast DC. In the meantime, we have made tree care and pruning workshops available on request to any DC community group of 5 or more, and we have also begun providing tree irrigator bags at wholesale cost to any DC resident.

In Anacostia this summer we completed work on the Matthew Henson Park, which was designed to be an educational, environmental, sustainable demonstration site, and public green space. The park is now open to schools and other youth groups who wish to visit or tour the site.

This winter, we have recently developed curriculum for a new LID job training and green workforce development program for the Anacostia area, in partnership with the Covenant House, Bridges to Friendship, Sustainable Community Initiatives, the University of Maryland Landscape Architecture Department and the EPA Chesapeake Bay Program, among others. Funding for this project is pending.

Beginning in the spring of 2003, Community Resources plans to award mini-grants to applicants from Shaw and Anacostia. The mini-grants are geared toward those groups and/or programs looking for ways to improve and increase community relationships, educate youth and adults, increase citizen action and community service, beautify, restore and improve community green spaces and waterways, and have a lasting impact on the community and ecosystem involved. We feel that this will be one of many ways to help strengthen and build the culture of stewardship within these two communities.

Objectives not met:

Although we had to modify some of our objectives we feel that we have completed most of our objectives.

List the major research or policy findings of your project?

While working on this project we encountered some difficulties with one of our objectives: trying to enhance the opportunities of some locally-owned green businesses. We have learned that small organizations have many issues that we were not prepared for. In one case our support came too late. Under time pressure we diligently tried to help with submitting offers for bids without fully understanding the structure of our competitors. As a result items were missed and the bids went to larger, more experienced companies. In another case we found that as we worked with these clients to incorporate an expansion into green business their plans began to change. In all, we found that small businesses quickly change strategies in order to remain viable. While CR remained committed to the objectives, the clients have a limited loyalty to urban community forestry businesses unless the rewards were virtually immediate.

If not apparent in the above, or if your project did not involve research, how did the project increase the knowledge we have about urban forestry? How did (will) the public benefit?

The forest is everywhere, and we must not overlook the urban forest. The health of our communities is dependent upon the health of the urban forest for cleaner air and water, beauty, public health, psychological well-being, and economic opportunities. It is necessary to note that although urban communities are not often considered as forest ecosystems, they are nonetheless some of America's most critical. For us ecosystem restoration starts with the simple act of planting a tree, but grows to bring the improvement of our ecosystems through ecologically and socially sound forest management. By bringing people together to care for their community we begin to strengthen a culture of community and environmental stewardship that will eventually extend from street to forest to watershed to region. By beginning in our urban neighborhoods with the basic issues of beauty, pride, jobs, apathy, and youth opportunities, we will eventually impact the broader issues of ecosystem, economic, and community health.

The life of an urban tree is hard. Street trees face bumping, banging, litter, pests, drought, pollution, abuse, and neglect every day. When the city plants trees, there is often no one to maintain them after planting to ensure their survival. As a result, many trees die in the first few years after planting and then become an eyesore the city must pay to have removed.

Urban trees, like urban communities, have a far greater chance at health and success if they are folks looking after them, making sure they get the water, weeding and pruning they need. What makes the Community Resources Tree Stewardship program unique is the before planting a tree, that tree must have a neighbor willing to care for it, and that neighbor must be part of a group of at least four other neighbors who are also willing to steward trees near their homes. Community Resources believes that street trees and public space are a common resource that belong to all of us, and by coming together as a group of concerned neighbors to take ownership of and responsibility for the health of the trees on our block, we begin the process of taking responsibility for the health of ourselves, each other and our communities.

Our project has benefited the general public as well as local communities by helping local, green businesses in our communities grow, therefore providing more, local, green jobs while creating

greener neighborhoods. We have also provided dozen of young individuals with the knowledge and skills to acquire and advance in regional green industry jobs. The leaders and the residents of our target communities have received hands-on training in ecologically sound approaches to urban community greening. Through urban greening, residents have been linked to other community concerns, which we feel helps to build a culture of local natural resource and community stewardship. In all, we hope that our project has encourage shared learning between leaders in our two communities (hopefully spreading to other communities) through joint meetings, tours, participatory monitoring, reflection and adaptation, and participation in national learning forums.

What recommendations might you make for community foresters or others who might benefit from your project?

Community Resources has a unique approach to greening and tree planting. We, with the full support of the City, will plant trees ONLY where they are wanted. Neighborhood groups interested in planting or caring for trees near their homes sign informal contracts stating that in exchange for a framed tree box, tree, and memorial plaque of their choosing, they are willing to participate in a workshop to learn to care for the tree, keep the box free of weeds and litter, and participate in Community Tree Planting Days with their neighbors. Neighborhood groups or associations must have a minimum of four individually committed households or businesses to participate in the program.

This approach has many benefits: Street trees take a lot of abuse in the city. They are often banged by cars, abused by unknowing children, and killed by destructive passersby. When a resident takes responsibility for planting and caring for the tree in front of her house, and therefore develops a sense of place and ownership in her community, this is much less likely to happen. The street trees planted anonymously by city contractors often fare much worse than the trees lovingly planted and tended by neighbors. In three years of planting with communities, we have lost only two trees, due to car-door girdling.

Offering planting resources and environmental education to urban residents gives an important understanding and respect for trees, and also helps ensure the success not only of trees in their neighborhoods, but of all trees in the city.

Finally, there is nothing like a common goal to bring people together, and bad weather, hard work, or any other hardship can often cement relationships. Community Tree Planting Days are a great way to unite a diverse group of people living together who don't often have a reason to meet and interact. In short, tree plantings encourage camaraderie among residents; camaraderie leads to trust; trust builds communities; communities have visions; and visions can change worlds.

Attach copies of reports, publications, or videos. If your work has been published (journals, popular press, etc.), provide where they have been published or reported and how copies can be obtained.

See attachments. Updated progress on this report can be also be viewed on our website www.communityresources.org

How were your results disseminated to the public?

The progress of this project has been made available through various distribution and dissemination methods to insure that our results are receivable by all. These include:

- The development and maintaining of a web page, (www.dcgreenworks.com), to list the progress and outcome of the project.
- Producing a project summary report; available by contacting Community Resources.
- Sending summaries of our results to other communities who may be interested in trying this in their community.
- Posting up-dated summaries of our results and links to our web site from appropriate web sites and Internet discussion lists.
- Continuing to present our results at appropriate conferences and meetings around the country as invited.
- Documenting the results in a working paper and on our web site.
- Publicizing our program on Public Interest, a program of WAMU public radio in D.C.

List the active partners (key individuals or organizations) involved in the project. Our partners and advisors on this project to date have included:

- Brenda Richardson - President of the Earth Conservation Corps Board of Directors
- DCCCH
- DC Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR)
- DC Department of Transportation, Urban Forestry Division
- Deborah Thomas - ANC Vice Chair for the Shaw community
- Dream Team
- DT, LLC
- Earth Conservation Corps
- GCA Casey Trees
- Marilyn Hoskins - Former Senior Community Forestry Officer for the united Nation's FAO and a consultant for the World Bank and World Wildlife Fund on social forestry.
- Rhoda Burwell - Director of the Anacostia - Congress Heights Partnership
- The Low Impact Development Center
- The Shaw Ecovillage Project
- The Temple Group
- Thumbs Up
- Todd Mosley - Director of Youth Environmental Services (YES); at DPR
- Young Endeavors

Photo or Illustration: If possible, please provide a photo or illustration for our use that summarizes or represents the project. Indicate how this illustration should be credited. See attached photos. Other photos and captions can be found on our website (www.communityresources.org) or in the working paper.

If a no-cost time extension was granted for this project, why was it needed?

N/A

How would you evaluate the grant process? What changes, if any, would you recommend?

We found the grant process to be clear and convenient. We appreciated the help and support offered throughout the progress of this project.

Comments considered of importance but not covered above:

N/A

This report was prepared by:

Name:	Nichelle Bolden	Mike McConnell
Title:	Program Associate	Director
Phone Number:	410-448-4900	same
Date:	January 17, 2003	

What makes the Community Resources Tree Stewardship program unique is that before planting a tree, that tree must have a neighbor willing to care for it, and that neighbor must be part of a group of at least four other neighbors who are also willing to steward trees near their homes.



Neighbors set out to beautify the streetscape and to bring the neighbors of this very diverse block together. In working together to plant trees, neighbors broke down the economic, language, age, and gender barriers between them, introduced the new neighbors to the old neighbors, and created a sense of belonging and togetherness for everyone.



Mark Buscaino-Chief and State Forester of DC, Mike McConnell and Dawn Gifford of Community Resources.

DC Greenworks / Community Resources wins ISA Gold Leaf Award!

The International Society of Arboriculture recently awarded their prestigious Gold Leaf Award for "Outstanding Landscape Beautification Activities" to Community Resources' Street Tree Stewardship Program. CR/DCG was nominated for this award by DC's Urban Forestry Administration for our continued commitment to working with DC residents to clean and green our communities, and restore the urban tree canopy.

00-DG-11244 225-171

DC Department of Parks and Recreation

Youth Environmental Services

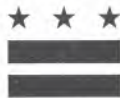
Master Gardeners



Graduation Ceremony

Thursday, May 24, 2001

4:00 pm - 5:00 pm



Government of the District of Columbia
Anthony A. Williams, Mayor

The Youth Environmental Services Program

The Youth Environmental Services (Y.E.S.) program was designed by the Department of Parks and *Recreation* to attract *young* adults, men and *women, who* are entering the formal *workforce* for the first time, and who *are* committed to establishing and maintaining crime-free, independent lifestyles.

The Y.E.S. graduates *received* training to *become* master gardeners at the University of the District of Columbia, Cooperative Extension Services. On a full-time basis, they will landscape and maintain 350 Rocket parks throughout the District of Columbia that *are* less than *one acre* in size. The goal for this year is *100* parks.

Welcome	Neil Albert, Acting Director DC Department of Parks and Recreation
Remarks	Dawn Gifford Community Resources
Remarks	Deloris Langford Bridgett Assistant Dean University of the District of Columbia Cooperative Extension Services
Presentation of Master Gardener Certificates	Neil Albert and Deloris Langford Bridgett
Closing remarks	Todd Mosley, YES Director
Reception	

DC Department of Parks and Recreation

Youth Environmental Services Program

Graduates



Julius Ashford	Donald Jones
Joseph Bailey	Robert Lorick
Anthony Blount	Angel Marshall
Keia Burns	Day Day McCauley
Clifton Chaney	Rashaad Mckey
Gerald Crisp	Todd Mosley
Derrick Cross	Mike Parker
Evelien Crossland	Larry Perkins
Darnell Garmany	Anthony Plummer
Shelton Graham	Kevin Smith
Dennis Jones	Eric Walker
	Aaron Wilson



Prepared by the
Office of Communications