



2024 Internship Description

Name of site: Unity Gardens Inc.
Address: 3701 Prast Blvd, South Bend IN 46628
Mailing Address: PO Box 10022 South Bend IN,
46680

Site Contact Person/Direct Supervisor: Katie Lane
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MISSION

Unity Gardens is a local nonprofit in South Bend, Indiana with a mission to connect our community to healthy food, nature and one another, literally growing community. We do this by providing 40+ free-pick gardens throughout South Bend and the surrounding Michiana area to develop a sustainable local food system. Unlike traditional community gardens where people grow food for themselves, at Unity Gardens people gather to grow food that is accessible to anyone and everyone, regardless of their involvement or income level. Besides growing fresh food through sustainable agriculture methods, we provide nurturing green spaces, free education, and other community programming like our Westside BBQ event, free haircuts for kids and our Edgy Veggie program. Unity Gardens strives to grow food and community through multiple different avenues, allowing space for interns to engage with a variety of work and interests as well as the opportunity to specialize their passions to help the mission of Unity Gardens.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Interns will be working primarily at the flagship garden location (3701 Prast Blvd. South Bend, IN 46628) with our full time staff and our intern team. We find value working with our interns to discover what they are passionate about, what knowledge and skills they already possess, and where they would like to grow. Interns will have the opportunity to engage with the various operations that Unity Gardens employs to continue growing food and community for all. After experiencing each facet of the organization, interns have the option to specialize their specific interests to help achieve the goals of the mission. The internship at Unity Gardens primarily focuses on the following:

Sustainable Agriculture:

Our main location is 7.2 acres and spans four greenhouses, native spaces, food forests, traditional garden plots and a four-season geodesic dome. To manage all these spaces, we utilize sustainable agriculture methods. We're a no-till garden that uses no pesticides, herbicides, or fertilizers. We incorporate beneficial insects, crop rotation, and companion planting into our growing system. Besides crop management, we also take care of bee hives, a flock of chickens and a goat at our main location.

Interns will primarily help take care of these growing spaces and learn about their management in the process.

Community Outreach:

Many of our programs are focused on engaging our community, through garden guiding, harvest help, free education, volunteerism, and other programming. Many people are removed from the farm and the origin sources of food, so interns serve as garden guides to teach people about harvesting and preparing produce and generally engage garden visitors to develop the relationships that keep them returning.

Throughout the year, we also provide free classes on nutrition, food preservation and preparation, sustainable gardening, attracting beneficial insects, managing pests, and other sustainability topics like mindful foraging and rainwater capture. Last year, we began our "Edgy Veggie" program, which is a bus that serves as a mobile classroom focused on kids' education. We take it to community centers, summer camps, and schools throughout the summer to connect kids with fresh food, nature, and gardening. Interns are encouraged to help plan and carry out programming for the Edgy Veggie mobile classroom in the community. We also have a number of individuals and groups that volunteer at the garden, and part of the internship is leading these volunteer groups while simultaneously teaching these volunteers about our mission, sustainable agriculture, and the joy of green space.

Farmers Market:

The Farmer's market is an ongoing fundraiser that keeps Unity Gardens running. We harvest from our market garden to provide produce and hand make soap, balms, candles and more at our Welcome Center. Interns will engage with the community via representing Unity Gardens at the South Bend Farmers Market, marketing and selling our handmade merchandise, and informing patrons of our program offerings.

Even More:

Because Unity works in a broad scope of areas, interns can also take part in other programs at Unity Gardens if they would like. Interns have the opportunity to teach a free class over the summer (on topics ranging from gardening, sustainability, cooking, nutrition etc) and to take a bigger role in developing the curriculum for our Edgy Veggie program. We repaint signs, benches, and tables in the garden every year, and interns can take a leading role in that as well. Interns can also improve our social media presence, conduct environmental or social science research at our site, fundraise, or connect with our satellite garden locations.

DIRECT CONTACT WITH POPULATION SERVED: Interns will have direct contact with those who come to the gardens, whether they be volunteer groups, harvesters, civic leaders, or program participants. The garden is a shared community space where people from all socioeconomic backgrounds, religions, and cultures can come together. As such, respect for differing backgrounds is of utmost importance at this community space.

SUPERVISION: Interns will work directly with and report to Katie, our Director of Operations and check in with her periodically throughout the internship. Interns will also work alongside other staff members as they find the type of work they most enjoy.

ORIENTATION: Interns will have an orientation to familiarize themselves with the campus, mission, and staff at Unity Gardens within their first week and will have access to an Intern Manual that will serve as a resource throughout the summer. Throughout their internship, interns will gain knowledge of sustainable agriculture, community outreach, nonprofit work, and have the opportunity to take on projects within their areas of interest.

WORKPLACE DESCRIPTION: The setting is outside work in the 7 acre urban garden farm and throughout the community, including South Bend Farmers Market. The flagship garden is designed as a garden-park with fruit trees, berries, bees, chickens, goats, and vegetable and native flower gardens. Solar panels power the electricity, mulch and compost power the plants, and hoop houses allow year-round growing in the Market Garden. Our wonderful staff, interns, and volunteers are the valued powerhouses that keep this radical free-food model growing. We recently also installed a geodesic dome for more tropical growing.

DATE PREFERENCE/PREFERRED WORK SCHEDULE: During the months of April through September hours are consistently needed. Days, evenings, and weekends are all available as scheduling is flexible. We are looking for full time interns (40 hours/week) that are available to work during our operating hours in the summer which ranges from 7 am to 9 pm every day of the week. Additional hourly structures can be designed per individual learning objectives and scheduling needs.

STUDENT QUALIFICATIONS:

The Unity Gardens Intern will be expected to:

- Utilize computers and social media
- Communicate proficiently promptly, & professionally via group me, phone, text, email, writing, or in public speaking venues
- Approach hard work with a positive growth mindset
- Interact with the community, volunteers, garden visitors, and customers in a respectful manner
- Use critical thinking skills to prioritize, make decisions, and actively inquire as needed
- Proactively schedule, commit, and work the hours and time frames agreed upon
- Serve as exemplary examples of safe and respectful social behavior honoring our inclusive framework
- No relevant coursework required, although we will try to work within your major to incorporate your academic interests with the work you do
- Proficiency in Spanish is helpful but not required
- Work responsibilities require comfortability with heavy lifting and physical labor

DRESS CODE: Anything you feel comfortable working outside in, close toed shoes required, tetanus shot recommended. Interns will also receive a Unity Gardens shirt for community outreach events.