

MANTIS AWARD WINNERS Evaluation Summary – 2009



The National Gardening Association surveyed the 2009 Mantis Award recipients to capture quantitative and qualitative data on the grant's impact. The following is a summary of results.

- Grant package: Mantis Tiller/Cultivator
- Number of applicants: 242
- Number of recipients: 25
- Number of evaluation respondents: 20*

Following is a summary of the highlights from those responses.

Number of participants in Mantis award-winning programs:

Age 2-5 (preschool-K).....	773
Ages 6-8 (grades 1-3).....	1,386
Ages 9-11 (grades 4-6).....	1,604
Ages 12-13 (grades 7-8).....	894
Ages 14-18 (grades 9-12).....	585
Adults (18+)	1,205
Total participants	6,447

Demographic information:

Anglo American	55%
African American	21%
Latino	14.5%
Asian.....	6%
Native American	2.5%
Other	1%
Female.....	55%
Male.....	45%
Eligible for free or reduced lunch program	33%

Type of audience participating in programs:

In-school	60%
After-school.....	55%
Community gardener	55%
Summer program/camp	40%
Youth club	35%
Church/youth group.....	35%
Special needs	35%
Intergenerational	20%
Preschool/Head Start.....	15%
Gifted & Talented.....	15%
Home school.....	5%

Program leaders noted participant improvements in these characteristics:

Community spirit.....	100%
Environmental attitudes	95%
Volunteerism	95%
Nutritional attitudes.....	95%

Continued on page 2

Hours per week a participant was involved in gardening activities:

Average	6 hours/week
Range	1 to 40 hours/week

Months of the year respondents conducted gardening programs:

Average.....	7 months/year
Range.....	4 to 10 months/year

Program continuation:

Programs that will continue next year.....	100%
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Our Garden Project has had a profound impact on our school community. Students stop me in the hall to ask when they can work in the garden. They are proud to show off their efforts. From small seeds started in classrooms to a bounty of harvested vegetables, the positive effect has been addictive. Becoming a garden captain is an honor and a privilege, with many students competing for the right to be on the gardening team.

— Anastasia Hinchsliff,
Oscar Mayer Magnet School, IL



*Three winners requested an extension of the report deadline. Winners failing to submit an evaluation are ineligible for future grants.

Social skills	90%
Self-confidence	80%
Attitude towards school	80%
Leadership skills.....	80%
Scholastic achievement.....	45%
Motor skills	45%

Reported evidence documenting the effectiveness of gardening programs:

Positive feedback from participants.....	100%
Positive community feedback	85%
Positive feedback from family members	80%
Funding and donations	75%
Positive feedback from administrators.....	55%
Decreased disciplinary actions..	40%
Awards and recognition	25%
Improved attendance rates	25%
Positive survey results	20%

Subjects taught through programs:

Community service.....	90%
Health and nutrition	85%
Science	80%
Intra/interpersonal relationships	55%
Physical education.....	45%
Math.....	45%
Art	35%
Cultural studies/issues	30%
Social studies.....	20%
Interdisciplinary	20%
English	15%
History.....	10%

Percentage of time spent on instructional techniques (note: this is the average of all the responses for each technique):

Collaborative project work	33%
Adult-led investigation/hands-on activities.....	23%
Independent learning.....	21%

Student-led investigation/hands-on activities.....	12%
Lecture	10%

Source of curriculum used by gardening programs:

Combined materials from numerous sources	50%
Original material.....	50%
Cooperative Extension (such as 4-H or JMG).....	20%
Nonprofit organization (such as NGA or Life Lab)	15%
State education department.....	10%
For-profit corporation	10%
School district	5%

Compliance with State and National Education Standards:

Respondents who connected their gardening program to State and National Education Standards	25%
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Importance of linking to the standards for respondents:

Mandatory	0%
Very important.....	15%
Important.....	0%
Somewhat important.....	20%
Not important.....	15%
N/A	50%

Type of organizations responding:

Community garden	35%
Nonprofit agency	25%
Public school.....	20%
Private school.....	5%
Charter school	5%
Civic or garden club.....	5%
Other	5%

Location of winners responding:

Suburban	55%
Urban.....	40%
Rural.....	5%



Teens 4 Good (T4G) offers one-on-one mentoring, career exploration, cultural opportunities, and hands-on entrepreneurial experience through a teen-run gardening, nutrition, and health business. We convert blighted vacant lots into productive green spaces. Our teen-created mission is, “To make a difference in the world by inspiring all teens to give back to their communities.”

— Jamie McKnight,
Teens 4 Good, PA

Continued from page 2

Approximate amount of money spent on programs:

Less than \$250.....	10%
\$251 to \$500	0%
\$501 to \$1,000	25%
\$1,001 to \$1,500	5%
\$1,501 to \$2,000	5%
\$2,001 to \$2,500	5%
More than \$2,500.....	50%

Approximate value of in-kind donations to programs:

Less than \$250.....	0%
\$251 to \$500	5%
\$501 to \$1,000	5%
\$1,001 to \$1,500	5%
\$1,501 to \$2,000	10%
\$2,001 to \$2,500	10%
More than \$2,500.....	65%

Percentage of funding programs received from other sources (note: this is the average of all the responses for each source):

Grants	34%
Donations	32%
Other	10%
Fundraising	7%
Parent or volunteer organizations	3%
Instructor's pocket.....	3%
School or school district funds.....	2%

Publicity about the programs:

Newsletter articles	46
Newspaper articles.....	40
Web site features.....	33
TV features.....	12
Radio features	9

Community interaction and additional impacts:

We distribute garden produce to local food pantries. One fed 15,000 people last year and expects to feed more than 25,000 this year. The

project has built community among involved church members. Youth in particular are learning the life skills of teamwork, service, and leadership as well as practical garden skills. We are working with other local churches to start more gardens.

— Karen Simons Gartner,
St. Christopher's Church, IN



“Normally I don't like to get dirty. But this is different,” claimed a female 7th grader building a raised bed. The garden programs at Chico Junior High and Bidwell Junior High involve students who might otherwise slip through the cracks. The Chico garden has improved the whole school's morale. Sunflowers and ripe cherry tomatoes break the monotony of the grass that once grew between classroom wings. At Bidwell, students are amazed by the garden's bounty, which includes raspberries, blueberries, and strawberries.

— Jeremy Miller,
Chico Food Network, CA



Our Green Initiative was lauded by students, parents, and the community. Students were proud of their accomplishments and took great initiative in learning about native plants. Many families now garden at home. We have reestablished meadow and forest areas on the property and now use rain gardens to improve stormwater management.

— Susan Howard, Avon Grove Charter School, PA



One of our gardeners never had land for her own use before and she was ecstatic, making a “dirt angel.”

— Marilyn Klinkner, Winona Community Garden, MN

The school and community see our garden as a great resource. This week we conducted tours for district elementary students. One teacher said, “Wow, this is great! The garden is incredible and the students' hard work is fantastic. They are learning life skills, such as math, how to deal with the public, and helping their community.” The two food pantries we donate produce to regularly send us thank you notes.

— Nancy Scott, Goff Middle School, NY

