

**College Hills Compost Center
Student Development and Engagement Grant Application**

**Bryan Barnhill, Student Composting Coordinator at McCoy Center
Birmingham-Southern College**

Introduction

In partnership with the McCoy Center for Community Service, Inc. and the College Hills Neighborhood Association, I am requesting \$1,000 from the Student Development and Engagement Alliance of the Associated Colleges of the South Environmental Initiative to serve as a student intern for a composting program at the site of the College Hills Eco-scape.

The BSC Compost Internship Project will provide me the opportunity to work with the McCoy Center for Community Service, gain an understanding of the local community, and provide dependable leadership for the composting project. By encouraging the College Hills neighborhood and the BSC Community to recycle organic waste products instead of throwing them away, this project will indirectly address the issue of environmental justice because studies indicate that there is a disproportional incidence of hazardous waste facilities and landfills in minority urban neighborhoods.

The McCoy Center for Community Service, Inc. is a neighborhood non-profit located in a highly underserved, predominantly African-American community across the street from Birmingham-Southern College. In the five-digit zip code in which the McCoy Center is situated, over thirty percent of the population lives below the poverty line, and the local elementary and middle schools rank among the lowest tenth percentile in the state of Alabama.

The mission of the McCoy Center is to nurture public and private non-profit service agencies with the objective of improving the quality of life for the College Hills community. These agencies include the McCoy Adult Day Care, a program that provides quality care for the area's aging population and North Star Youth Ministries, which serves over 200 area children through its annual six-week summer camp program. Also, the Mental Health Association of the Crisis Center offers a day program for the mentally ill, which includes job training, job placement, GED training, and a variety of socialization opportunities. The McCoy Center will expand its services to include environmental outreach programs.

Project Description

In October of 2006, the College Hills Neighborhood Association voted on the allocation of \$30,000 from their budget towards the creation of a neighborhood eco-scape. A concept pioneered by the Southern Environmental Center at Birmingham-Southern College (www.myecoscapes.edu), the Eco-scape Program serves as a successful model on how to combat urban decay and reinstall pride of place among residents living in

underserved neighborhoods. To accomplish this objective, I will work with a series of pocket parks on the various courtyards and open spaces around the McCoy Center for Community Service, Inc. The funds committed by the neighborhood will cover the purchase of soil, plant materials, brick, stone, and other materials necessary for extensive landscaping and the creation of raised beds and brick walkways. Director Roald Hazelhoff and his team at the Southern Environmental Center will also be working closely with the McCoy Center staff to develop education programs for the Eco-scape. I have worked closely with Roald in the Eco-scape located on the campus at BSC as well as other eco-scapes scattered throughout Birmingham.

To supplement this commitment by the neighborhood and the Southern Environmental Center, the McCoy Center for Community Services, Inc. is supplying \$5,000 for the creation of educational signage and take-home brochures, which will be made available to local residents who visit and work in the Eco-scape.

Likewise, I will work five hours/week for 6 months at \$8.00/hour from mid-July through December to establish the composting project at the site of the proposed Eco-scape and train a local resident to be responsible for the compost in the future. The environmental objective is to create a sustainable cycle in which organic waste from the Eco-scape is composted to create new soil to be used for future gardening projects. The educational objective of the composting project will be to teach local residents how to harness the economic value of their natural resources while improving their local quality of life. The target audience will be the College Hills Neighborhood, a community with roughly 1,200 households; local elementary and middle school children, numbering over 1000; and the regular customers who currently take advantage of the McCoy Center's many community service programs and agencies.

I am a senior biology major, with an environmental studies minor, at BSC and have been the assistant at the Southern Environmental Center for four years. Roald Hazelhoff, director of the Southern Environmental Center, will be the BSC advisor for the grant. The McCoy Center for Community Services is located across the street from the college and they do not have sufficient funds to pay for an intern to launch the composting project.

My long-term goals for the composting program are two-fold: to engage the neighborhood in the creation and maintenance of the composting station and to encourage individuals to start their own composts and garden-related enterprises at home.

PROJECT TIMETABLE:

July-07	Finalize McCoy Eco-scape; I will begin to coordinate the composting project.
July-07	Install Compost Station. Design and create education signage and brochures to accompany the Eco-scape garden and compost station. Assist with plans for composting activities for North Star's summer camp at McCoy Center.
July-07	Organize garden activities for the children and teach the fundamentals of composting at Camp North Star

Aug-07	Plan community gardening activities and continue compost project.
Sept through December-07	Continue the composting project, working with local volunteers and train them how to manage the compost project in the future. Promote volunteer opportunities for BSC students at the McCoy Community Center.

Evaluation and Dissemination

Jeanne Jackson, Director of Leadership and Environmental Studies at Birmingham-Southern College, and the Community Outreach Director of the McCoy Center, Elizabeth Scribner, will serve as evaluators for the compost project. Criteria for these evaluations will be (1) the ability to construct and establish a successful compost station, (2) the number of BSC student volunteers participating in the compost program, and (3) the training of community member(s) to manage the composting project in the future.

In terms of publicity, the ACS intern I will encourage newspaper publicity for the project and take photos of the project for the college website. Finally I will write the final report on the Compost Project, and supply photographs and for this final report.

Institutional Approval

Approval by BSC Provost or Dean _____
Signature _____ Name _____

Approval by ACS
Environmental Faculty Fellow _____
Signature _____ Name _____

Disclosure Statement

BSC Compost Project Budget

Item	Project Revenue	Cash	In-kind	Total
1	ASC Funding	\$1,000		\$1,000
2	College Hills Neighborhood Association	\$30,000		\$30,000
3	McCoy Center for Community Service, Inc.	\$5,000		\$5,000
4	Alabama Cooperative Extension System		\$1,600	\$1,600
5	TOTAL	\$36,000	\$1,600	\$37,600
Item	Project Expenses	Cash	In-kind	Total
1	Stipend for Student compost intern	\$1,000		\$1,000
2	Three Compartment Compost Bins	\$500		\$500
3	Three Pitchforks for turning compost	\$115		\$115
4	Concrete anchors for compost bins	\$100		\$100
5	Compost spreader for garden	\$130		\$130

6	Wheel Barrow	\$155		\$155
7	Trees, shrubs, topsoil, etc. for Eco-scape	\$30,000		\$30,000
8	Educational signage and materials	\$5,000		\$5,000
9	ACES volunteer garden educator		\$1,600	\$1,600
10	TOTAL	\$37,000	\$1,600	\$38,600