

**College Hills Compost Center
Campus-Community Partnership Grant Application**

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Introduction

In partnership with the McCoy Center for Community Service, Inc. and the College Hills Neighborhood Association, students at Birmingham-Southern College are requesting a sum of \$2,000 from the Associated Colleges of the South Environmental Initiative to establish a composting program at the site of the College Hills Eco-scape.

The BSC Compost Project satisfies a number of CCP Alliance directives, including (1) the development of community partnership with non-profits representing underprivileged neighborhood organizations and (2) the creation of off-campus service learning opportunities with community partners. Also, 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 hopes to 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, the Southern Environmental Center will work with community members and volunteers this coming spring to construct

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.

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, students at Birmingham-Southern College are requesting a sum of \$2,000 to establish a composting project at the site of the proposed Eco-scape. The environmental objective will be 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.

Our 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. We intend this project to increase the social capital of this area by equipping the young with important skills that will not only open doors for job opportunities but also improve the quality of life in the neighborhood in which they live.

PROJECT TIMETABLE:

| | |
|--------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Apr-07 | Install Eco-scape, recruit BSC Student coordinator. |
| May-07 | Install Compost Station. Design and create education signage and brochures to accompany the Eco-scape garden and compost station. Student coordinator plans composting activities for North Star's six-week summer camp. |
| Jun-07 | Camp North Star; BSC student compost coordinator organizes garden activities for the children and teaches the fundamentals of composting. |
| Jul-07 | Community Gardening Activities and continuation of compost project. |
| Aug-07 | Community Gardening Activities and continuation of compost project. |
| Sep-07 | Continuation of BSC student participation in the Eco-scape program and compost project. |

Evaluation and Dissemination

Jeanne Jackson, at Birmingham-Southern College, and the Executive Director of the McCoy Center 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 ability to recruit and hire a qualified BSC student compost coordinator, (3) the number of BSC student volunteers participating in the compost program, and (4) the number of community members who benefit from this project.

In terms of publicity, the ACS intern at Birmingham-Southern College will supply the final report on the Compost Project, and the designated Compost Station coordinator will supply photographs and notes 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 | \$2,000 | | \$2,000 |
| 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 | \$37,000 | \$1,600 | \$38,600 |
| | | | | |
| Item | Project Expenses | Cash | In-kind | Total |
| 1 | Stipend for Student compost coordinator | \$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 |

Process Evaluation