

## Reclaiming Southfield: Sowing the Seeds of Belonging, Mastery, Independence and Generosity Report

Office:	Manitowoc County UW-Extension
Resource Management Dollars Received:	\$1300
When Received:	2004
Budget Expenditures:	Attached

### Narrative:

**Situation:** Southfield Townhouses is a low-income housing area in the city of Manitowoc where approximately 150-200 at risk youth reside. The Southfield Townhouses Neighborhood Network Learning Center was developed to provide youth and their families an opportunity to access the Internet. The Learning Center has expanded programming well beyond Internet access. The center serves as many as 900 residents monthly, and it provides after school tutoring, summer programs, YMCA programs, and a new 4-H club, Southfield Supersports. In 2004 the Learning Center was looking for partners to provide summer programs and activities for youth residing at the townhouses.

**Response:** 4-H Youth Development Educator, Kevin Palmer, met with the Learning Center Director and proposed a youth gardening program for the upcoming summer. Southfield Townhouses has a number of abandoned playground sites, and a plan was developed to backfill one of the sites with topsoil and create a youth garden. A proposal was submitted to the UW-Extension Northeast District, and funds were allocated for the project through a UW-Extension Northeast District Resource Management Grant. With the help of the Manitowoc County UW-Extension Dairy Agent, Scott Gunderson, one of the abandoned playground sites was backfilled with 140 yards of topsoil.

**Results:** Twenty-eight racially diverse youth participated in the gardening program throughout the summer learning skills associated with the Circle of Courage: Belonging to a group with a common interest - gardening; Mastery of gardening skills and life skills such as planning and organizing, communication, decision-making, and teamwork; having responsibility for the garden and working Independently to maintain the garden; and sharing the fruit of their labor with others as a Generous human being. With the help of the Manitowoc County UW-Extension Family Living Educator, Faye Malek, a corn roast and harvest celebration utilizing vegetables from the garden was planned and conducted in September, 2004. Almost 100 youth and adults from Southfield Townhouses attended the event. After the event, the new Learning Center Director sent an e-mail and noted: "Just wanted to thank you for all that you did to make the 'corn roast' at the Learning Center happen. What a fun and exciting thing to do. From the looks of things and the faces of those who attended, it really was a success. I can't wait to see and become a part of what you cook up next!"

**Evidence:** Although there was initially some skepticism about whether a garden would "survive" at Southfield Townhouses, there was only one incidence of vandalism directed at the garden the entire summer. The Learning Center and the management

of Southfield Townhouses were very supportive of the youth garden and are looking forward to a garden next year. The garden provided youth at the townhouses with a unique learning opportunity for the entire summer. The success of the program is best summed up by one of the youth, who created a garden sign with the following Haiku:

my plant is growing  
the garden is growing  
it is beautiful  
-Vang

## Reclaiming Southfield Resource Management Dollars

Deposited: \$ 1300.00

### Expenses:

5/28/04 - Junior Master Gardener's Curriculum	(\$124.37)
7/2/04 - American Home & Garden Bobcat Rental	(\$196.50)
7/9/04 - Braun Building Center - Row Markers	(\$6.96)
7/9/04 - Miscellaneous Gardening Supplies	(\$122.92)
9/10/04 - Braun Building Center - Garden Haiku Signs	(\$19.80)
9/17/04 - Copps - Corn Roast Supplies	(\$15.48)
9/17/04 - Karl's Excavating - 140 yds. of Topsoil	(\$1,050)

**Expenditures: \$1536.03**

### Other Income:

10/22/04 - Clarks Mills Good Sports 4-H Club Donation	\$210.00
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