



CAMPUS NEWS

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BIMONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Happy New Year!

GROWING FORWARD ANNOUNCES CAMPAIGN CO-CHAIRS



CO-CHAIR
DR. FREDDIE WILLS



HONORARY CHAIRS
JOHN & JOAN VATTEROTT



CO-CHAIR
MR. JOHN NICKEL

We have been organizing and preparing for Growing Forward, a campaign to fund the construction of the new Education Center on the GHV Campus. This technology-rich science learning facility will advance innovative, hands-on curriculum among Urban Education Alliance schools, stakeholders, and the larger community. This centerpiece of the Campus will feature both indoor and outdoor growing spaces, fish cultivation with aquaponic tanks, and videography capabilities to telecast experiments and lessons. Such an ambitious vision requires bold and credible leadership.

We are most excited to announce that Dr. Freddie Wills and Mr. John Nickel will be serving as our Campaign Co-Chairs! In addition, we are most grateful to John and Joan Vatterott who are serving as our Honorary Chairs.

We look forward to keeping you informed of our progress, as we continue our campaign preparations and as we launch Growing Forward, the campaign for The Green House Venture in 2022.



CAMPAIGN CO-CHAIRS CONTINUED

Co-Chair Dr. Freddie Wills

Dr. Freddie E. Wills, Jr., Ph.D. is Vice President for STEM Initiatives and Research Partnerships at Harris Stowe State University. His career is dedicated to significantly increase the number of underrepresented minority students statewide who complete undergraduate and advanced degrees in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields. Regarding the mission of The GHV, Wills says: "Realizing and empowering the potential of youth in continuous efforts to improve the communities they live in and to impact global challenges of sustainability through exploring solutions in their own neighborhoods is core to the mission of the Green House Venture Project. The work that our youth produce today will shape thriving communities for the St. Louis region and beyond."

Honorary Chairs John & Joan Vatterott

John and Joan have dedicated tremendous time and resources to education and we are proud that they are helping to lead this campaign. Their spirit of philanthropy inspires all who will participate in this effort. "There are lots of ways of giving, and you do it in a way that's more notable. If you give or do any kind of volunteerism, you know, you always get more than you give."

Co-Chair Mr. John Nickel

John Nickel is a co-owner of Switch, a brand engagement and events agency. A lifelong St. Louisan, John is passionate about the work of non-profits in the community. He has been involved with The Green House Venture since the beginning and is excited about the vision of the new center. He says: "The Green House Venture is destined to become an important community asset. Educating students and parents on healthy and sustainable food and habits, and creating a renewable food source in parts of the Saint Louis community where it is most needed."

Spotlight Daniel Reynolds from HRR

The Green House Venture has engaged the firm Holmes, Radford & Reynolds, Inc. to guide Growing Forward, the campaign that will realize the vision of a new education center.

Dan Reynolds, HRR's President, has been with the firm for over 20 years, directing highly successful capital campaigns throughout St. Louis. HRR's past clients include several elementary schools, STEM initiatives, as well as food/nutrition organizations like Operation Food Search, one of GHV's partners.

Dan is very excited about this project, as he believes that it appeals to a variety of relevant and compelling purposes. "There is urgency to provide immediate educational solutions, particularly those that address science education, in St. Louis. This effort also sees the long game as it is working with young children to respond to the future talent needs of our burgeoning bio-science sector. Most impressive is the cooperative spirit of the project – so many organizations strive for collaboration in St. Louis, but the GHV has achieved real, credible, and sustained traction with so many diverse partners already. The Embankment Garden is one of the more creative projects that I've seen in a while. It has converted previously considered unusable space into something productive, while engaging multiple experts to do it. It is a great and truly unique vision!"



Daniel C. Reynolds
President Holmes, Radford & Reynolds, Inc.

The Educational Mission of the Green House Venture

 [Full Link to Document Here](#)

The prime objective of the Green House Venture is to enhance STEM education for students in urban elementary schools, with a special emphasis on those who are underserved. Though focused on St. Louis, the Venture has from the beginning been designed as a replicable model for similar educational projects elsewhere on a regional, national, and even international scale.

Our aim is not to replace education carried out by classroom science teachers but to supplement it. All our activities are hands-on, designed to attract young students to do science and, more importantly, to experience what it is to be scientists.

From our founding in 2015 to the present, our educational strategy has centered on five main programs, listed below. We have piloted the first two successfully on a neighborhood scale. The last three programs are planned for future development when our Education Center has been constructed.

Summer Adventure Camp.

A three-week program in collaboration with Tower Grove Park (for educational experiences in nature) and with Saint Louis University (for lessons in growing and cooking healthy food).

After-school programs. Our successful pilot, called the Ambassadors Program, brings together small teams of students in grades 4-6 from four partner schools in the Urban Education Alliance. The teams meet once a week to carry out experiments, take field trips, and prepare end-of-term presentations for their families, teachers, and friends.

Classroom initiatives. The aim is to offer teachers opportunities to conduct eight-week growing experiments in computer-controlled growing chambers invented and supplied by the Venture. For overworked teachers on tight budgets, such support is necessary for students to have hands-on experiences as experimentalists.

Encounters with our Education Center. This innovative facility will offer a wide range of experiences, beginning with class sessions in science and urban agriculture for our partner-schools in the Urban Education Alliance. The center also will be available to classes from other schools throughout the St. Louis region, visiting us as they go on field trips to the Botanical Garden, the Zoo, Tower Grove Park, and other nearby destinations.

Content streamed on the Internet. Lessons and experiments successfully piloted in after-school Ambassadors Program will be made available on the World Wide Web for any teacher who wishes to draw on them. As we branch out into further areas of science and new educational projects, we plan to invite school and university professionals to contribute ideas and advice. We also hope to fund graphic designers to make our videos a creative force in science education.



Science in Action with our Green House Venture Ambassadors

Through these foundation programs and others yet to come, our work will continue to provide students with opportunities throughout their middle-school years and beyond. In these ways, we intend to contribute to workforce development that leads to more students pursuing careers vital to local institutions and corporations that make St. Louis the leading center for research in bio-science and agriculture in the nation.

CURRICULUM CORNER

The Learning Curve

by Donald Stump, GHV VP/Curriculum Director

This is the first in a series on the curriculum currently being prepared for publication to describe our three-year after-school Ambassadors Program.

We begin with a term devoted to something that students can dig their hands into--soil.

Have you ever wondered why the Dust Bowl of the 1930s blew away vast quantities of the most fertile top-soil, leaving less productive sub-soil behind?

Early in their first year, we asked students in the Ambassadors Program to explore that question.

Using different mixtures of the four primary ingredients of soil (clay, sand, silt, and humus), they dried samples and placed them on large sheets of white paper. Then, using a leaf blower, they blasted each sample and studied the dispersion patterns.



The results led them to the observation that soil dominated by the ingredients that are heaviest and least conducive to plant growth (clay and sand) was harder to disperse than that dominated by the lightest and most fertile ingredients (silt and humus). Though hardly conclusive, the experiment offered a plausible reason for the loss of the Dust-Bowl soil that was richest in nutrients. Perhaps that was the kind of dirt that eroded first and soared highest and farthest, blackening the sky in places as far away as New York City!

**GROWING
FORWARD**

The Campaign for

**THE GREEN HOUSE
VENTURE**

IMPROVING SCIENCE
EDUCATION AND
CHILDHOOD NUTRITION

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<http://www.greenhousetl.org>