

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

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Green House Venture Receives \$1 Million Gift for STEM Education Campus Expansion

The Green House Venture (GHV), a pioneering STEM education program that is cultivating a sustainable future through hands-on bioscience and urban agriculture experiences for St. Louis elementary school students, has received a transformative \$1 million donation from retired businessman Bernard A. (Bud) Purcell that brings the organization a big step closer to completing its two-phase campus development in the city's Shaw neighborhood.

GHV has been revolutionizing elementary education in the City of St. Louis since 2015 by bringing public, parochial, charter and Christian schools together through its inclusive Urban Education Alliance to teach and promote healthy urban agriculture practices.

The \$1 million donation marks a significant milestone achieved in GHV's capital campaign to construct the \$4.7 million state-of-the-art STEM Education Center at the corner of DeTonty and Lawrence streets. A total of \$1.5 million has been raised thus far toward the construction of this unique teaching facility, and an additional \$2 million is needed to break ground and begin building the Education Center.

The Education Center, with approximately 9,000 square feet of learning space, will serve as a hub for students to engage in hands-on experiences aquaponic growing, soilless beds, and other urban agricultural practices. It will also feature advanced technology to enable outreach to schools both locally and nationwide through online videos and live streaming of teaching sessions.

The first phase of GHV's campus is the recently completed \$900,000 Embankment Greenway and Terrace Garden, an experiential outdoor growing environment with a vibrant ecosystem of indigenous plantings and pollinator gardens located on an underutilized highway embankment across the street from the planned Education Center. This creative, first-of-its-kind development in St. Louis is a major model for introducing more ecologically diverse and sustainable growing areas along urban highway corridors across the entire country.

The Green House Venture's mission is to educate, excite, and equip an inclusive population of elementary students to pursue a sustainable world. GHV achieves this through accessible, best-practice programs taught in a working urban agricultural environment, with a focus on three key goals: enhancing bio-science education, promoting proper nutrition and dietetics, and inspiring students to consider careers in STEM and agriculture.

"The GHV's work is particularly vital in addressing critical challenges facing urban communities and disadvantaged youth, including poor nutrition and dietetics and inadequate science education," said Bud Purcell. "By providing a unique and innovative approach to education,

GHV aims to foster a new generation of scientists, agriculturalists, and environmentally conscious citizens.”

“Today’s \$1 million contribution brings our organization's total funds raised to over \$1.5 million towards the \$4.7 million needed to construct the Education Center,” said Tom Purcell, President of GHV and Chair of its Fundraising Committee. “Together, we are poised to make a lasting impact on elementary education and sustainable agriculture practices, not only in St. Louis but across the nation.”

The Green House Venture is an innovative STEM education program dedicated to educating and inspiring elementary students to create a sustainable world. Through hands-on experiences in bioscience and urban agriculture, the GHV equips students with the knowledge and skills needed to address pressing challenges in science, nutrition and dietetics, and agriculture. The organization aims to make a meaningful impact on the future of education and sustainable practices.