



# UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN—LA CROSSE STUDENT ASSOCIATION

235 CARTWRIGHT CENTER 1725 STATE STREET LA CROSSE, WI 54601 (608) 785-8717

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## **SA1516-027: Resolution Approving Fall 2015 Green Fund Request, Vermicomposting Program.**

DATE: November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2015

AUTHOR(S): Jeremy Ames

SPONSOR(S): SUFAC

WHEREAS; The Joint Committee on Environmental Sustainability believed this request fulfilled the requirements of the Green Fund.

WHEREAS; SUFAC is responsible for submitting recommendations to Student Senate

WHEREAS; after discussion, SUFAC approved the request at partial funding.

WHEREAS; the Student Senate is required to approve all Green Fund Requests and;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED; that the Student Senate approve the Vermicomposting Program at \$2,150.

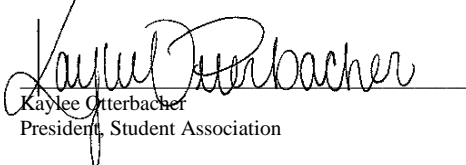
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Molly Davies  
President, Student Senate  
Vice-President, Student Association

12-02-2015

Date



Kaylee Otterbacher  
President, Student Association

12-02-2015

Date

# - Green Fund -

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University of Wisconsin-La Crosse  
Application for Environmental Sustainability Reserve

FALL 2015

*Application must be received by November 8, 2015*

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Please send completed applications to [greenfund@uwlax.edu](mailto:greenfund@uwlax.edu). You will be sent a confirmation e-mail verifying that the proposal was received.

For more information about the Green Fund or the application process please refer to the following; [Green Fund Bylaws](#), Green Fund [webpage](#) or email us at [greenfund@uwlax.edu](mailto:greenfund@uwlax.edu).



**Include the following with this application:**

- At least 3 price comparisons of the item(s) or project.- **no comparable project**
  - Budget Sheet- **attached**
  - Other supporting documentation- **attached**
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### **Contact Information**

Name: Larry Ringgenberg Ph.D. \* Please note that we have other student and faculty listed at the end.

Phone: 608-785-7888

Email: lringgenberg@uwlax.edu

Unit/Organization/Department: Director, University Centers

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**Please give a brief overview of the proposed items or project(s) you are requesting funding. What would be the approximate cost?**

We are requesting funding to support the Vermicomposting Program in partnership with nonprofit Hillview Urban Agriculture Center and local hospital Mayo Clinic Health System-Franciscan Healthcare. The project takes food waste from UW-L cafeteria and utilizes vermicomposting worms to turn it into a fertilizer product called VermiGold that is then donated to school gardens, community gardens, used in UW-L garden research, and sold to support Hillview's education programs. The program utilizes faculty, staff and students and engages in the community in multiple full circle program areas. We are requesting 2 years of funding at \$13,514 each year.

**What is the general timeline for the project? (When do you see this being on campus?)**

Hillview and UW-L have been in partnership on this project since 2011 with Green Fund supporting the initial purchase of a 32' by 5' Vermicomposting unit. There are multiple students, faculty and staff involved in the project. The vermicomposting unit was originally purchased with Green Fund funding and is now housed in a new permanent temperature controlled location owned by Mayo and adjacent to Hillview's Hoop House operation in the Washburn Community Garden.

**Please give a detailed explanation on the environmental impact of proposed project? Will this project reduce UW-Ls Carbon Foot print, water usage or electricity consumption? If indirectly please explain how.**

To date 38,350 pounds of food waste has been diverted from UW-L cafeteria kitchens and 10,000 pounds of worm castings have been harvested. This year alone Hillview donated 1,575 pounds to Washburn gardeners, Kane Street Community Garden, multiple schools in the area, Boys and Girls Club, and the Mayo Clinic square foot garden. Hillview conducted 8 educational tours and "hands-on" learning experiences in 2015. More tours and educational opportunities are planned for 2016

This project reduces the carbon footprint for UW-L by rerouting food waste that would be hauled to the landfill and putting it to higher use. It also reduces the need for all recipients of the vermicompost by providing a local resource for fertilizer that is produced locally from food waste rather than input of chemical components that have to be mined and travel far distances.

**How will this project increase student understanding of environmental issues or actions?**

Each student who eats in the cafeteria understands that the food waste is diverted from the kitchen and composted. A new educational display is being created for Whitney Center and a demonstration for students is planned for Dec. 8<sup>th</sup>. Student interns from the Biology Program or other programs intern and are supervised by Hillview Urban Agriculture Center to pick up the food waste and feed the worms. Students can tour the composting facility, participate in the program, and help educate others about the importance of diverting food waste from the landfill. Food waste in a landfill takes up space and causes off gassing that must be monitored to prevent air pollution. Turning this product into a fertilizer resource is a far superior environmental choice.

**Do you plan to collaborate with other entities? This includes, planning, executing the project through student or community organizations and university departments/offices.**

We have been in collaboration with Hillview Urban Agriculture Center along with many student groups, individual student interns, faculty, and staff members since the vermicomposting unit was provided by the Green Fund in December 2010. We are delighted to add Mayo Clinic Health System-Franciscan Healthcare as a partner who has dedicated a permanent home for the Vermicomposting unit with heating, cooling, and convenient location as an in kind donation. We currently have students, staff, and faculty involved from UW-L Chartwells Dining service, Biology, Grant writing, Environmental Studies, and Sustainability Programs all working on this project or other projects with Hillview Urban Agriculture Center.

**Large and complex projects require UWL staff member(s) to be involved, please list designated personnel who are involved in the proposed project or have been contacted to verify project viability.**

Name(s):

Larry Ringgenberg Ph.D.

Andrea Shaefer- Student Intern from UW-L working with Hillview Urban Agriculture Center

Alysa Remsburg, Ph.D.-Associate Lecturer, Environmental Studies Program

Email(s):

lringgenberg@uwlax.edu

schaefer.andr@uwlax.edu

aremsburg@uwlax.edu

**Are you receiving additional funding from other university or non-university entities?**

YES: ☒ NO: ☐

**If yes, please state the other sources of funding that you are receiving and the amount received.**

In the past this project received funding from Community Development Block Grants but that funding is no longer available and we are seeking two years of funding for the program staff, UW-L student stipends and employment, transportation costs, and materials costs. All location costs are provided by Mayo, which recently paid set up cost of nearly \$30,000 and ongoing utility and maintenance costs of between \$2,000 and \$3,000 per year. Hillview Urban Agriculture Center will provide some of the oversight and H.R. needs of Program staff at the cost of approximately \$1,000/ year.

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**Is there any other relevant information that you would like to add?**

This program is a great opportunity to support a broad community coalition that is addressing food waste in our area. It can act as a model for other communities and creates a full circle environmental loop where we take food waste out of the landfill, turn it into fertilizer, and use it to grow more food. We have been working together for a number of years and the biggest challenges were location; we now have a permanent location provided as an in-kind donation. We work together to provide a service for the Dining Hall, interning for students, and educational



**Memorandum of Understanding  
between:**

**The University of Wisconsin – La Crosse (UW-L)  
Mayo Clinic Health System - Franciscan Healthcare (MCHS-FH)  
Hillview Urban Agriculture Center (Hillview)  
9/15/2015**

Statement of Purpose: To utilize a Vermicomposting unit to recycle UW-L's and MCHS-FH's pre-consumer food waste, for Hillview to benefit from VermiGold contributions and sales, and for all partners to promote sustainable waste practices and educate the community on the benefits of creating a local fertilizer.

UW-L agrees to:

- Collaborate with Hillview and MCHS-FH to educate the community on the benefits of vermicomposting with the community
- Recognize Hillview and MCHS-FH as equal partners with UW-L in any vermicomposting-related promotion, education and programs
- Accept that Hillview has the right to sell and profit from any worm castings or other resulting output produced by the vermicomposter during the term of this agreement
- Receive VermiGold for research and the University garden at no cost
- Through open negotiation, to transfer ownership of the four vermicomposter units to MCHS-FH for monetary consideration in the amount of \$10.00 and non-monetary consideration consisting of MCHS-FH's agreement to provide a suitable home for the units for four years or more and UW-L's continued involvement in the cooperative program and access to the vermicomposter
- Appoint a University Project Adviser
- Provide a transport vehicle for food waste as needed
- Provide pre-consumer food waste for vermicomposting in the school months; may provide food waste in other months as Hillview is able to accept. On a yearly basis, UW-La Crosse will determine by August 1 of each year, the ability to provide compostable material
- Provide vermicomposting volunteers and internship opportunities for UW-L students and staff, specifically in the area of fundraising/grant writing, and hands-on operations
- Provide a faculty or staff expert to advise on the vermicomposting project when available
- Provide assistance in applying for grants to support the vermicomposting project
- Partners should meet on a quarterly basis to address issues and the MOU should be renewed on an annual basis

Mayo Clinic Health System - Franciscan Healthcare (MCHS-FH) agrees to:

- Recognize Hillview and UW-L as equal partners with MCHS-FH in any vermicomposting-related promotion, education, and programs
- Accept that Hillview shall have the right to sell and profit from any worm castings or other resulting output produced by the vermicomposter during the term of this agreement
- Receive VermiGold for square foot gardens and other Mayo gardens at no cost
- Provide the garage located at 921 Ferry Street in La Crosse and owned by MCHS-FH as a home for the four vermicomposting units
- Provide occupancy to Hillview on or before September 15, 2015, after:
  - Constructing a new "paint room" so that garage may be vacated
  - Removing MCHS property and cabinetry along exterior walls
  - Relocating water meter from house to garage and plumbing garage to create interior and exterior water access
- Maintain the garage structure and mechanicals
- Provide insurance covering the garage structure
- Pay taxes associated with the building
- Pay utility bills associated with the garage (water, electricity, gas)
- Accept transfer of ownership of the four vermicomposting units from UW-L to MCHS-FH, contingent on MCHS-FH providing a suitable home for the units for four years or more
- Maintain the vermicomposting units so long as the cost to do so is feasible, given the age and value of the units
- Provide snow removal at the garage during the winter months
- Provide pre-consumer food waste for vermicomposting in the summer months; may provide in other months as Hillview is able to accept
- Provide nutrition and medical expertise to assist with related programs
- Share vermicomposting volunteer opportunities with MCHS employees
- Provide exterior trash receptacle and empty contents weekly
- Provide signage for the vermicomposting site
- Mayo Financial and in-kind contributions:
  - \$26,000 to construct new paint room
  - \$1200 (2 workers x 30 hrs x \$20) to move equipment and materials currently stored in garage and remove wall cabinets
  - \$400 to install four GFI electrical outlets in garage
  - \$1500 for plumbing to provide interior/exterior water access at garage
  - \$700 per year (estimate) for gas, electric, water
  - building maintenance
  - snow removal
  - trash removal
- Partners should meet on a quarterly basis to address issues and the MOU should be renewed on an annual basis

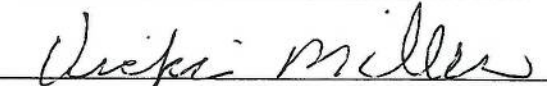
Hillview agrees to:


- Recognize MCHS-FH and UW-L as equal partners with Hillview in any vermicomposting-related promotion, education, and programs
- Have the right to sell and profit from any worm castings or other resulting output produced by the vermicomposter during the term of this agreement
- Work with UW-La Crosse Project Adviser to provide management for all vermicomposting operations and related programs
- Provide VermiGold for research and the University garden at no cost
- Coordinate Hillview staff and all volunteers associated with vermicomposting operations, as well as new and continuing programs
- Provide recognition of MCHS-FH for donation of in-kind gifts and services
- Provide a certificate of liability insurance for not less than \$1 million naming Mayo Clinic Health System-Franciscan Healthcare and the University of Wisconsin – La Crosse as an additional insureds and provide a new certificate to each, annually, prior to expiration. Hillview regular staff and volunteers who need access to basement on site, will sign waivers
- Support a positive relationship between MCHS-FH and Washburn gardeners; share concerns and suggestions
- Accept pre-consumer food waste, as able, from the UW-L and MCHS-FH cafeterias
- Provide guidelines to all partners about appropriate food waste
- Provide opportunities for UW-L and MCHS-FH employees to engage in vermicomposting activities
- Provide UW-L students with opportunities to learn about, study, and gain experience in vermicomposting
- Work with UW-L interns on grant writing and hands-on operations
- Maintain the garage and surrounding area in clean and good condition
- Avoid creating any circumstance that might unduly inconvenience residents living near the garage
- Report any needed repairs in a timely manner
- Allow entry to the garage as needed for maintenance and repairs
- Partners should meet on a quarterly basis to address issues and the MOU should be renewed on an annual basis

FOR THE BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN SYSTEM on  
behalf of the UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-LA  
CROSSE

  
Bob J. Hetzel

Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance

  
Vickie Miller, Board President  
Hillview Urban Agriculture Center

  
Joe Kruse, Chief Administrative Officer  
Mayo Clinic Health System Franciscan Healthcare

### Vermicomposting Program Budget -Approximate needs for one year

<b>Staffing</b>		
Student Stipend	\$250 per semester and summer term	\$750
Hillview Coordinator staff	Student oversight and education 60 hours	\$960
	Operations while students are on break 48 hours	\$768
	Facility Tours- 36 per year- 108 hours	\$1728
	Educational events off site- 36 per year- 108 hours	\$1728
	Special festivals/demonstrations- 40 Hours	\$640
	20 hours/month of operations-meetings with UW-L staff, students, faculty, budgets, trouble shooting, sales, harvesting, packaging... 240 hours	\$3840
Vermi Expert consult	Helps when there is transition, problems, or big jobs	\$600
Graphic Designer	Creates educational materials and presentations	\$600
Material costs	Bin requires new harvesting blade, winches, casters, packaging supplies	\$800
Exec. Director	Provides oversight of Coordinator and HR needs and helps with planning	\$500
Transportation	Mileage is paid to interns for transport of food waste	\$600
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$13,514</b>



## Vermicompost



April, 2015: Middle school students from Nine Dodge's Coulee Montessori class enjoyed harvesting vermicompost at the hoop house to "help save the worms"!



May, 2015: "Thanks again Joe!!! We loved the vermicompost presentation and hope that you will return to assist in our gardening efforts next year!!" Damian C. Stanton, 2nd Grade Teacher, Summit Environmental School

(The vermicompost given to Summit Environmental School was harvested by Coulee Montessori students!)



# Vermicompost



September 23, 2015: The vermicompost units, which had been housed in a warehouse space provided by UW-L for the past 11 months is moved to the new “Vermicomposting Center” at 921 Ferry Street. Chartwells helped with the move and volunteers helping with getting the site set up included UW-L and Viterbo students. The garage is owned by Mayo Clinic Health System and is the result of a unique and one-of-a-kind partnership between UW-La Crosse, Mayo and Hillview.



November 5, 2015: The Crucifixion School Lego League toured the Vermicomposting Center – the first of many such educational tours to teach children about the importance of vermicomposting.

