

FY 2011 - Dreaming Out Loud, Inc.

\$88,068 to Dreaming Out Loud, Inc., Washington, DC, to begin a new EBT project to offer fresh, local produce and prepared foods directly to low-income residents through healthy food retail outlets in "food deserts." Additionally, they will host a wide range of family education and nutritional programs and youth activities.

[Final Report](#)

Farmers Market Promotion Program

Final Performance Report

For the Period of October 1, 2011 – September 30, 2013

Date: 10/16/14

Recipient Name: Dreaming Out Loud, Inc.

Project Title: Aya Community Markets: New EBT, food desert, community supported agriculture

Grant Number: 12-25-G-1317

Project Location: Washington, DC

Year of Grant Award: 2011

Amount Awarded: \$ 88,068

Contact: Christopher Bradshaw/202-800-2612/chris@dreamingoutloud.org

Program Summary:

Provide a brief summary regarding the goals and objectives, activities performed, beneficiaries, collaborators, and your most impressive (result) measurement.

The objective Dreaming Out Loud, Inc. established for its Farmer's Market Promotion Program was to develop and operate farmer's markets in underserved communities. Our first market was established in Ward 7. In the parking lot of Pennsylvania Avenue Baptist Church in Ward 7 in Southeast DC where nearly 72.9 percent of residents are overweight/obese, and 13.8 percent of residents have diabetes. We opened our first season market operations (6 markets), on a monthly basis which resulted in 700 market attendees; 2,200 lbs. in produce sold and more than \$ sales for vendors. At the conclusion of the grant period, we increased the number of attendees to more than 10,000 attendees, more than 100,000 pounds of produce distributed, and \$13,000 in healthy food purchasing through incentive programs Unity Health Care Ward 7, a community affected by food deserts.

Goals and Objectives:

The goals of this project were: 1. To enhance and expand farmers markets to directly serve low-income residents located in “food deserts” in underserved communities in the District of Columbia 2. To establish a community-supported agriculture program both of which employ robust EBT programs that would facilitate access to fresh produce for low-income residents.

Aya will work to impact Ward 7 and other targeted communities by synergistically achieving the following social goals:

- Increase access to fresh produce by linking local/regional farmers and community gardens to a vibrant marketplace;
- Provide sustainable employment, capacity building and develop transferable skills in community members (youth, low-income and returning formerly incarcerated citizens);
- Provide an opportunity for various local vendors to connect with customers in Ward 7 and other food desert areas;
- Engage youth in programming and participation in health education and outreach;
- Leverage community institutions and individual community-member assets;
- Leverage volunteers and community-service opportunities to the broader community.

Dreaming Out Loud, Inc. established for its Farmer’s Market Promotion Program was to develop and operate farmer’s markets in underserved communities. Our first market was established in Ward 7. In the parking lot of Pennsylvania Avenue Baptist Church in Ward 7 in Southeast DC where nearly 72.9 percent of residents are overweight/obese, and 13.8 percent of residents have diabetes. We opened our first season market operations (6 markets), on a monthly basis which resulted in 700 market attendees; 2,200 lbs. in produce sold and more than \$ sales for vendors.

We opened with one farmer. The first year we operated monthly as we built the necessary networks to scale, established community relationships, and learned more about the regulations governing markets. In our second season at Pennsylvania Avenue Baptist Church we operated weekly.

As detailed in our proposal Aya Community Markets (*Aya*) is a community-centered economic and holistic health initiative that combines education, farmers’ markets and community-supported agriculture to provide access to healthy food and improved nutrition in “food deserts” and underserved communities in Washington, DC. *Aya Community Markets* offers fresh, local produce and prepared foods, flowers and items directly to low-income residents through healthy food retail outlets in “food deserts” in alignment with the 2011 FMPP priorities. In addition Aya have hosted a wide range of family education and nutritional programs, chef demonstrations, live entertainment and youth activities.

Aya established and developed healthy food outlets in food deserts through two primary methods:

- Farmers markets – vibrant marketplaces focused on holistic health and wellness
- Community-supported agriculture distribution points including churches, community centers, non-profit organizations, schools, senior living facilities and businesses

Our *Aya*’s physical farmers’ markets are vibrant gathering places and destination points where consumers come to not only shop for produce, but are able to access various vendors for goods and services for mental, spiritual and financial health. Our holistic approach has also attracted customers in search of other health experiences such as yoga, exercise classes, or credit counseling which help to improve the community. Since the markets had fixed days and hours, we piloted and deployed a community-supported agriculture (CSA) program to reach additional customers who were not be able to attend the market days due to work, various weekend/travel interests, or other causes.

Activities:

The principal activities associated with the grant that were accomplished were:

1. Partnered with Christ United Methodist Church as a outreach ministry of the church; this season deepening our relationship through church volunteers to assist in administering DC's Produce Plus Program.
2. Established community partnership with Green Leaf Gardens Public Housing Community and Southwest House, a senior housing facility whose former resident council president frequents the market and advocates on behalf of Aya in the SW community.
3. Established urban micro-farming project in Ward 6; from which we provided programming for sixty children ages 6 through 10 during summer 2013, engaging them in personal development, nutrition education, and S.T.E.M. (science, technology, engineering, and math) learning through gardening.
4. Added the Greenleaf Garden's Resident Council President to the DOL's Board of Directors.
5. Engaged ten (10) SW community youth from low-income families in market relations, marketing, and social entrepreneurship.
6. Supported by Area Neighborhood Commissioner (ANC) 6D01 for our work within the community.
7. Hosted nutrition classes at the market and garden sites.
8. Hosted food demonstrations at market and garden sites.
9. Initiated pilot CSA program for SW market customers.
10. Hosted DC State Fair "Tastiest Tomato" contest competition for Ward 6.
11. Partnered with the Southwest Arts Festival to host holistic arts day at the farmers market.
12. Participated in Martha's Table "Meals for Minds" free-food giveaway for families at Amidon-Bowen Elementary School, providing nutrition games and education for children.

We expanded our reach, capacity, and our customer base by moving to SW; and with that move increased the exposure of DOL and its evolution into a developing network of farmers markets and mobile farm stands that help to provide access to fresh, local produce; spurring economic development and building health equity.

We have begun to utilize a refrigerated truck to expand our reach and ability to access communities and isolated locations via mobile farm-stands; consisting of produce wholesale sourced from our market farmers and complimentary agricultural products for healthy meal creation. This benefits the farmers, as well as our partner communities by providing access to fresh, healthy food. We are exploring another model in which we supply direct, community-run farm-stands via our refrigerated truck via a cooperative economic model with produce purchased from our farming partners.

Farmers markets:

1. Aya Community Markets @ Unity Health Care Clinic (Ward 7; 3924 Minnesota Avenue NE, Washington, DC 20019);
2. Aya Community Markets @ SW Waterfront (Ward 6; 900 4th Street SW, Washington, DC 20019).

Mobile Farm-stands:

1. Unity Health Care Clinic Southwest DC (850 Delaware Avenue SW);
2. Unity Health Care Clinic Walker Jones Health (40 Patterson Street NE);
3. Unity Health Care Clinic Minnesota Avenue (3924 Minnesota Avenue NE);
4. Lincoln Heights Public Housing Community (400 50th Street NE);

5. Greenleaf Senior Building (1200 Delaware Avenue SW).

Accomplishments:

1. Number of new jobs created with FMPP funds:

Aya Community Markets has created several paid positions:

- a. Market Manager
- b. Assistant Market Manager
- c. Project Manager
- d. Youth Program Coordinator (funded by Live to Give Trust).

Volunteer Positions and Trainees

- a. Ten (10) SW Community Youth Marketing Assistants will be employed this summer under Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program, learning to grow health food at our urban micro-farm and take it for sale at the market.
 - b. Sixty(60) youth were trained in our 2013 summer nutrition program.
 - c. Volunteer nutrition educator.
2. Number of existing jobs supported using FMPP funds
 - a. Christopher Bradshaw, Project Manager.
 3. Dollar amount and percentage change in sales of healthy foods
 - a. 2011 Season (PA Baptist Church): 6 market days; \$2,933 in sales; 2,200 lbs.
 - b. 2012 Season (Christ UM Church): 16 market days; \$6,806 in produce sales; 9,066 lbs.
 - c. 2013 Season: (Christ UM Church): 30 market days; \$9,307 in produce sales; 12, 409 lbs.
 - d. CSA Pilot: \$585 in community supported agriculture shares.
 4. Dollar amount of sales for each vendor of SNAP, WIC, and/or other Federal nutrition assistance program (if applicable under award)
 - a. 2011 Season (PA Baptist Church): \$325 combined WIC/TANF; \$120 in matched incentives via Aya Bonus Bucks.
 - b. 2012 Season (Christ UM Church): \$266 WIC, \$146.30 EBT, \$35 Senior Farmers Market Vouchers; \$400 in matched incentives via Aya Bonus Bucks.
 - c. 2013 Season: (Christ UM Church): in matched incentives via Aya Bonus Bucks
 5. Dollars spent on healthy food promotional activities

We spent more than \$3,200 on promoting healthy food via infographics, recipe cards, posters and fliers. We produced posters and fliers that encouraged healthy choices, highlighted our "Aya Bonus Bucks" matching incentive program, and recipe cards that were paired with the farmers' fresh produce to increase sales. In addition, we had in-kind graphic design of more than \$1,000 donated for these efforts.

6. Number of new clients and vendors over the season or from previous years
 - a. 2011 Season (PA Baptist Church): 700 attendees, 6 vendors.
 - b. 2012 Season (Christ UM Church): 2,239 attendees, 4 vendors.
 - c. 2013 Season: (Christ UM Church): 4,542 attendees, 8 vendors.
7. Change in diversity of products offered at the market, including addition of processed or prepared foods and nonfood products provided by farmers/producers

- a. 2011 Season (PA Baptist Church): 6 vendors consisting of one farmer, teas/spices, and smoothies; nonfood vendors included clothing and hats; massage therapy, and a health coach.
 - b. 2012 Season (Christ UM Church): 4 vendors consisting of one farmer, teas/spices, eggs/poultry, and vegan baked goods.
 - c. 2013 Season: (Christ UM Church): 8 vendors consisting of two farmers (Crazy Farm, Larry's Produce), free range eggs from J & L Green Farm; two baked good vendors, I Heart You Bakery and youth entrepreneurs YOLO Pies; teas/spices from Tea 4 You and Paps Juices, prepared raw vegan foods from Treat Yourself.
8. Change in dollar amount of SNAP, WIC, and/or other Federal nutrition assistance programs from previous years (if applicable under award)
- a. 2011 Season (PA Baptist Church): \$325 combined WIC/TANF; \$120 in matched incentives via Aya Bonus Bucks.
 - b. 2012 Season (Christ UM Church): \$266 WIC, \$146.30 EBT, \$35 Senior Farmers Market Vouchers; \$400 in matched incentives via Aya Bonus Bucks.
 - c. 2013 Season: (Christ UM Church): in matched incentives via Aya Bonus Bucks
9. Please also include details addressing what added value your project provides to the target underserved community (e.g. greater variety; fresh, local produce, etc.).

We have greatly added value to our partner communities through access to fresh, local produce; building a sense of community; and increased health awareness. This will only increase as we scale our reach and impact. In addition, our project increased the variety of vendors, health resources, and ways to prepare newly available fresh, local produce items the community was exposed to. Our impact in exposure and opening community members' minds to new healthy produce options may be our greatest value-add, but the toughest to quantify. It is this important work that is going to allow for greater impact in consumption of local produce, improving community health and increasing small and medium-sized farmer income.

Key in the expansion of our mobile sites and anchoring our Minnesota Avenue farmers market is the development of a key partnership with Unity Health Care. Unity's mission is to promote healthier communities through compassion and comprehensive health and human services, regardless of ability to pay. Founded in 1985 as the Health Care for the Homeless Project providing primary health care services to homeless individuals and families that resided in local emergency shelters or on the streets of the District of Columbia.

In addition, our produce access initiatives via the markets and farm-stands at Unity Health Care will support the expansion and implement of Fruit and Vegetable Prescription Program. Developed by Wholesome Wave, the Fruit and Vegetable Prescription Program (FVRx) is designed to provide assistance to children who are at risk of developing diet-related diseases.

The program is intended to provide direct economic benefits to small and midsize farmers and bring additional resources into the local economies of underserved communities. FVRx is distributed by community healthcare providers and can only be redeemed at participating farmers markets for fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables. Health care providers and farmers market partners work together to identify and enroll overweight and obese children as participants in FVRx.

This season, we are set to launch the AyaAccelerator, a program designed to launch and speed the development of promising micro-entrepreneurs and cooperative businesses from underserved communities through access to human, social, and financial capital.

This program will include workshops and pro bono business assistance for our current farmers and producers; as well as potential entrepreneurs from within our partner communities. The District finally passed the Cottage Kitchen Act of 2013 that will allow small producers of non-hazardous foods to make products in their own homes up to a limit of \$25,000 in revenue. This could be a significant opportunity for low-income

entrepreneurs from the District with potentially great products to produce local foods for farmers markets.

The ability of these micro-entrepreneurs to produce and sell would help to strengthen the community feel and product diversity of our farmers markets; boost farmer income as these businesses purchase locally grown products from farmers participating in the markets; and help to provide pathways out of poverty for community members. We have also developed capital access partnerships with Kiva's Zero Interest Program and Clovest, both crowd-funding sites, to support AyaAccelerator participants.

Both programs will allow for us to help raise zero interest loans for our farmers and market vendors to grow their businesses. Sunsplash Farm – founded by a Pete Charlerie, a Trinidadian immigrant and graduate of the University of Maryland College Park's Agriculture Program – will become our first participant. Funds raised will assist him in jumpstarting his expansion growing to expand from 3 to 5 acres.

Our ideas and impact have lead to our selection as finalists for Ashoka Changemakers' [Nutrients for All](#) Competition. In the coming weeks we will be writing for Ashoka Changemakers' blog highlighting our work through the Farmers Market Promotion Program and our vision going forward. Finally, were also successful in advocating for– along with the D.C. Farmers Market Collaborative – for a \$200,000 allocation in local funds for a farmers market incentive program called DC Produce Plus. The D.C. City Council passed the legislation and the program is set to launch in June 2014.

Beneficiaries:

Entrenched generational poverty and inadequate education in some of Washington, DC's most distressed communities has negatively impacted economic development, health and wellbeing. According to the District of Columbia's Department of Employment Services (DOES) - Office of Labor Market Research and Information (OLMRI), statistics show 11.6% unemployment in Ward 7 and 17.7% unemployment in Ward 8; and there few documented successful bridges to employment skills or sustainable employment that might decrease economic uncertainty. Similar rates are to be found in a pocket of poverty in Ward 6. In addition to economic disparities, residents face the highest incidence per capita, of health disparities including: diabetes, obesity and high blood pressure.

The targeted communities we engaged are predominantly African-American. None of our three targeted-Wards total more than 2.5 percent Hispanic population, the second most affected ethnic group in regards to unemployment, food insecurity and negative food-related health impacts. Listed by target Ward, African-Americans compose the following percentages of overall residents and represent the majority of the residents who are overweight/obese and afflicted by diabetes:

- In **Ward 6** African-Americans equal 42 percent of the population, 49.2 percent of residents are overweight/obese, and 6.3 percent of residents have diabetes.
- In **Ward 7** African-Americans equal 96 percent of the population, 72.9 percent of residents are overweight/obese, and 13.8 percent of residents have diabetes.
- In **Ward 8** African-Americans equal 94 percent of the population, 71.5 percent of residents are overweight/obese, and 18.3 percent of residents have diabetes.

Our targeted communities lack equal access to fresh produce, while Crazy Farm, our anchor farm-partner, as a new farm, lacked market access in Washington, DC. Crazy Farm is located in West Moreland County, Virginia – a county designated for assistance through the USDA's StrikeForce County for Rural Growth and Opportunity Initiative. We worked to support these disadvantaged farmers, who as first generation Mexican-

Americans, benefited from strong urban-rural connections they would not have otherwise had. This approach of finding ways to benefit each of our constituents: communities and farmers, proved affective and works to address the unique set of challenges faced by both communities.

Lessons Learned:

Our initial markets began at Pennsylvania Avenue Baptist Church (PABC) in Ward 7. While initial participation was good, we were presented with several pointed challenges: (1) the tendency of the church to think of the market as an event that could be arbitrarily canceled, (2) high volume car-traffic, but little foot traffic, and (3) lack of on-site storage space.

Following one arbitrary cancelation, participation was drastically cut, damaging customer relationships with the people that had supported us despite challenges. As such, weekly market participation declined overall. One of the most challenging aspects of building successful farmers markets in underserved communities is bringing about a change culture that can only be addressed through consistent education, marketing, and engagement. At PABC, we could not reach the level of consistency to become culturally entrenched and become deeply situated in the community.

The falling rates of participation prompted our decision to move the market to Christ United Methodist Church (CUMC) in SW Washington DC mid-season in summer 2012. At CUMC we became an outreach mission of the church, have become deeply engaged in, and a valued member of, the community. As a result of this partnership, CUMC will be the first church in Washington, DC to help implement the District of Columbia's Produce Plus Program, a key incentive program for WIC, SNAP, TANF, Medicaid, Medicare, Senior Farmers Market Voucher recipients to use with our farmers.

Financial Summary:

Financially, Dreaming Out Loud, Inc. utilized this grant award to build the necessary infrastructure to build sustainable markets that support small and medium-sized farmers and serve our partner communities. We

expended funds as follows:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Total</u>
12/28/2011	\$12,905.05
12/20/2012	\$19,102.81
4/4/2012	\$18,532.07
2/28/2013	\$4,000.66
2/28/2013	\$3,064.00
9/2013	\$12,043.90
3/31/2014	\$18,372.79

The investments Dreaming Out Loud, Inc. made in farmers market infrastructure is undergirded by the relationships that we developed with the farmers and the communities which we serve. We will continue to grow and develop relationships that all for greater marketing of specialty crops and distribution models that allow greater community control and ultimately buy-in.

Aya Community Markets, as result of these expenditures, has become an established brand and resource for the communities. Key in our ability to expand the reach of our efforts is the purchase of the refrigerated truck. We will be able to connect isolated communities to farm fresh produce, as well as open up other markets for our farmers. Our expenditures were judicious and strategic, allowing for the greatest effectiveness in executing the goals of the Farmers Market Promotion Program.



AYA COMMUNITY MARKET
PENNSYLVANIA BAPTISTS CHURCH
SEPTEMBER 24TH / OCTOBER 15TH / NOVEMBER 19TH

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LOCATION

Pennsylvania Avenue
Baptist Church
3000 Pennsylvania Ave.
SE
Washington, DC

DATES

Every third Sunday
STARTING:
Saturday July 30th

TIMES

from 11 am to 5 pm



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BLUEBERRY SMOOTHIE



INGREDIENTS

- 1 small banana
 - 1 cup (150g) blueberries
 - 1 ½ cups(300ml) milk
-

INSTRUCTIONS

- Put all the ingredients into a blender.
- Add superfine sugar.
- Cover and blend until smooth (to taste)
- Pour into glasses & serve



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LEMONSORBET



INGREDIENTS

2 ½ cups(400g) sugar
1 ½ cups (300ml) water
6 lemons

INSTRUCTIONS

Cut the top off four lemons; scoop out flesh and place the rinds in the freezer.

Put the lemon flesh, sugar and water in a saucepan.

Bring to boil and simmer for five minutes.

Strain the mixture and cool.

Pour into a food processor until smooth.

Scoop the mixture and place into the frozen lemon peels and freeze in an airtight container until ready to serve.





3924

MARKETS

Love

ROASTED VEGETABLES



INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound carrots, peeled
 - 1 pound parsnips, peeled
 - 1 large sweet potato, peeled
 - 1 small butternut squash, peeled and seeded
 - 3 tablespoons good olive oil
 - 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
 - 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
 - 2 tablespoons chopped flat-leaf parsley
-

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees F.

Cut the carrots, parsnips, sweet potato, and butternut squash in 1 to 1 1/4-inch cubes. All the vegetables will shrink while baking, so don't cut them too small.

Place all the cut vegetables in a single layer on 2 baking sheets.

Drizzle with olive oil, salt, and pepper. Toss well.

Bake for 25 to 35 minutes, until all the vegetables are tender, turning once with a metal spatula.

Sprinkle with parsley, season to taste, & serve hot.



ROSEMARY CHICKEN



INGREDIENTS

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
 - 4 sprigs of fresh Rosemary Leaves
 - 1 teaspoon Salt
 - 1/2 teaspoon Black Pepper
 - 1/2 teaspoon Garlic Powder
 - 2 1/2 pounds boneless, skinless chicken breasts
-

INSTRUCTIONS

- Preheat oven to 425°F.
- Mix oil, rosemary, salt, pepper & garlic powder in large bowl.
- Add chicken ; toss to coat well.
- Bake 30 to 35 minutes longer or until chicken is cooked through, turning the thighs occasionally.



