

1993 Project Abstract

FOR THE PERIOD ENDING JUNE 30, 1995

This project was supported by MN Future Resources Fund

TITLE: Project City Camp: Experiential Urban Environmental Education
PROGRAM MANAGER: Steven Gustafson
ORGANIZATION: Pillsbury Neighborhood Services, Inc.
LEGAL CITATION: M.L. 93, Ch. 172, Sec. 14, Subd. 7(k)
APPROPRIATION AMT: \$130,000

STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

To implement relevant environmental education for urban people of color

To promote positive environmental choices as consumers

To explore multi-cultural perspectives on environmental issues

To generate neighborhood environmental quality maps and a three dimensional model of Minneapolis for environmental education outreach

OVERALL RESULTS

270 participants were involved in City Camp during this two-year project. Information was gathered through our explorations of the many systems (both natural and built) that work to support and sustain Minneapolis. Transportation, water, food, energy, communications, waste and economics were some of the systems we explored. Natural analogies were utilized whenever possible. Focus groups also provided information about the perceptions and realities of living in an urban environment.

The information gathered from these experiences was used to develop a three-dimensional model of Minneapolis along with a curriculum which will enable people to explore their city in a guided fashion without the expense of travel or the commitment of time it would take to explore the working systems of a city in person. Linking urban issues to environmental issues helps illustrate the interconnected nature of modern urban life to ecosystems and natural resources.

PROJECT RESULTS USE AND DISSEMINATION

The model and curriculum were piloted at Dowling Environmental Magnet School in Minneapolis. It received very high marks from both teachers and students. The urban environmental education model and curriculum will be made available for use in classrooms or by neighborhood groups. A promotional brochure and video tape are being developed. We plan to market this educational program directly to all public, private and parochial middle schools in the Minneapolis area.

July 1, 1995

LCMR Final Workprogram Update Report

I. Project Title: PROJECT CITY CAMP: EXPERIENTIAL URBAN ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Program Manager: Steven M. Gustafson
Agency Affiliation: Pillsbury Neighborhood Services, Inc.
Address: 1701 Oak Park Ave. No. Minneapolis, MN 55411
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A. Legal Citation: M.L. 93 Chpt. 172, Sect. 14, Subd. 7(k)

Total Biennial Budget: \$130,000
The anticipated Biennial budget is \$127,336. This change is due to the delay in hiring the Project Coordinator and to some revision of the original Work Plan.

Balance: \$0

This appropriation is from the future resources fund to the Commissioner of Education for a contract with Pillsbury Neighborhood Services, Inc. to implement Project City Camp, to help inner city poor and minority youth and adults understand the urban environment and it's impact on human development.

B. LMIC Compatible Data Language: N/A

C. Status of Match Requirement:
Match Required: \$ None
Funds Raised to Date: \$ N/A

II. Narrative: Project City Camp is a focused experience designed to help inner city poor and minority youth and adults understand the urban environment and its impact on human development by exploring the interrelationships and interdependencies of human and natural systems.

III. Statement of Objectives:

- Project City Camp will
A. Implement Intensive Urban Environmental Education
B. Promote Effective Environmental Choices
C. Develop Multi-Cultural Perspectives on the Environment
D. Generate Neighborhood Maps and a Model of Urban Environment

IV. Objectives:

A. Title of Objective: Intensive Urban Environmental Education

A1. Narrative: 84 racially and economically diverse urban teens and adults, including some with disabilities, will be engaged in interactive urban environmental education experiences, using a "city camp" model. Over the two years, eight program sessions will be conducted (three sessions are 5 or 7 days long and involve 8 participants and 2 adult leaders. Five sessions will be ten weeks in length involving 12 participants and 2 adult leaders each).

IV. A1. Cont.

These experiences prompt interaction among culturally diverse groups as they study, experience and participate in activities that address the relationship between urban economics and the environment (eg: waste management, lifestyles and living conditions and minority perspectives on environmental issues).

A2. Procedures: Planning and preparation for 44 or more hours of continuous immersion in the urban environment. Exploring human and natural systems in greater depth during five 10-week sessions. Redefining "environment". Exploring environmental issues through dialog and guided experience. Investigating human and natural systems to better understand the meaning of being interdependent. Using concrete examples to illustrate abstract concepts. Exposure to professionals working in environment related careers. Using video as a learning tool.

1993
July 1 - Dec 31
Project start up: develop curriculum, hire staff, recruit participants, identify resident resource experts, coordinate with cooperating organizations.

1994
Jan 1 - Feb 28
Program period I (3 five day sessions...). PNS evaluation.

March 1 - May 31
Preparation and implementation of session 4 (ten week experience). Mapping. PNS quarterly evaluation.

June 1 - Aug 31
Semi-annual Status Report. Preparation and implementation of session 5 (ten week experience). Mapping. PNS quarterly evaluation.

Sep 1 - Nov 30
Preparation and implementation of session 6 (ten week experience). Mapping. PNS quarterly evaluation.

1994-1995
Dec 1 - Feb 28
Semi-annual Status Report. Preparation and implementation of session 7 (ten week experience). Mapping. PNS quarterly evaluation.

March 1 - May 31
Preparation and implementation of session 8 (ten week experience). Mapping. PNS quarterly evaluation.

IV. A2. Cont.

June 1 - June 30 Final Status Report. Model completed. Project redesign and future course decided. PNS evaluation.

A3. Budget:

- a. Amount Budgeted: \$57,300
- b. Balance: \$0

A4. Timeline:

	7/1/93	1/94	7/94	1/95	6/95
Program Period I (sessions 1-3) ***					
Session 4		*			
Session 5			*		
Session 6				*	
Session 7					*
Session 8					*

A5. Status: Twenty-eight youth were involved with City Camp during the second half of 1994; seventeen of whom were new to the program. During this period we completed sessions five and six which emphasized social action and environmental careers. Perhaps the greatest success of the summer was the fact that as a direct result of exposing kids to environmental issues and career opportunities, several have strongly stated that they intend to consider environment related careers. One young man has registered and begun attending classes at one of the State University schools where he has declared an environmental studies major. While attending school this fall he has also begun involvement with the Americorps program. He has chosen urban environmental issues as his area of focus and is working on neighborhood lead poisoning prevention education and household hazardous waste education issues. The impact that City Camp has had to this point on youth has been far more than we originally anticipated and likely the effects will continue to be felt in the future if this one young person's experience is any indication!

Understanding the relationships between natural and built systems that work to sustain a city has been this project's primary focus. Illustrating the city as a complex living organism was a constant challenge. 270 people participated in City Camp urban exploration, focus groups and classroom presentations during 1993-1995.

Traveling the city to explore the variety of systems at work was as fascinating to staff as it was to the participants. Information learned on these outings was used to develop wall maps (with the help of the Minneapolis Planning Department's map office) and a three dimensional model of the city including significant geological and subterranean features. All participants indicated that they learned a great deal about the interconnected nature of the systems supporting our urban lifestyle. None said they would think of their neighborhoods or themselves as detached or autonomous from the larger community and ecosystem.

IV. A6. Benefits: Improved awareness and appreciation the relationship of urban living and its impact on, and interdependence with, the environment. Urban youth and adults will become proactive participants in environmental issues, and be exposed to career opportunities in environmental disciplines.

B. Title of Objective: Effective Environmental Choices

B1. Narrative: Explore environmentally friendly alternatives within the urban setting that result in personal choices that promote the reduce, re-use and recycle model (for example, purchasing decisions on packaging, disposable products vs reusable/ recyclable ones). Impart knowledge of the impact of personal decisions on the environment and quality of life. Connect people with community resources that help achieve goals.

B2. Procedures: Locally investigating human impact on environmental quality. Examining lifestyle choices & alternatives and their respective environmental & human impacts. Exploring individual and community solutions to identified problems. Using video as a learning tool.

B3. Budget:

- a. Amount Budgeted: \$54,650
- b. Balance: \$0

B4. Timeline: Same as above (A4.).

B5. Status: Using Teen America's "Environmental GPA" activities we have been able to measure the level of success City Camp has had on participant attitudes and actions. In addition to using a pre and post session quiz, we made observations in behavioral changes that reflected a greater interest in environmental justice issues and in participating in recycling and conservation efforts. Participants indicated that they were more likely to speak up in peer groups than non-participants about the importance of a healthy environment or to remind others about placing their recyclables in the proper place. Also, more than half of the participants at the start of each session who indicated they were not recycling at home said they had gotten their families to start recycling by the end of the session.

IV. B6. Benefits: Enhances knowledge and decision making by urban poor and minority youth regarding their environment while promoting proactive participation.

C. Title of Objective: Multi-cultural Perspectives on the Environment

C1. Narrative: Establishment of environmental position statements from different cultural perspectives; how do various ethnic groups perceive the environment and the issues surrounding it?

C2. Procedures: Investigate perceptions of environment and related issues by at least four different ethnic groups. Exploring urban environmental issues along cultural lines to solidify common denominators and reveal distinctions. Collect and compile "position statements" from leaders in each ethnic community and neighborhood. Written report on cultural perspectives on environment from inner-city residents. (See detail under A2).

C3. Budget:

- a. Amount Budgeted: \$5,200
- b. Balance: \$0

C4. Timeline:

7/93 1/94 7/94 1/95 6/95
Multi-cultural position statements * *
Comprehensive cultural perspectives report *

- C5. Status:** Concerns voiced by focus group participants were strikingly similar regardless of cultural background or neighborhood. The most frequent response to the question "what do you see as the two or three most important problems in your neighborhood?" was that people seem only to be looking out for themselves; that there is a serious lack of feeling connected to others and to the community.

Neighborhood residents were quick to suggest solutions to problems in their neighborhoods. Again, in each focus group, it was submitted that neighbors need to get involved with each other; to work together and support one another. Unfortunately, it is often difficult for people to find the time to devote to make the contacts and maintain the kind of consistent, coordinated effort needed to build a strong sense of community. The desire to have regular neighborhood events open to all neighbors and facilitated by residents together with neighborhood businesses or agencies was commonly suggested.

Focus group participants were recruited anonymously through several neighborhood centers. Group facilitators were trained volunteers with similar cultural backgrounds to the participants. This process was felt to be important in minimizing the influence of cultural bias or "filtering". A total of five different cultural groups participated in the process. Those groups included African American, Native American, Hmong, Latino and European American.

- C6. Benefits:** As each ethnic group develops its environmental position statement, it will gain in appreciation of the complexities of the urban world. Specific cultural environmental position statements would be constructive and useful to policy makers and planners.

IV. D. Title of Objective:

Neighborhood Maps and a Model of Urban Environment

- D1. Narrative:** Collect, assess and analyze data that projects the current state of the urban environment in two Minneapolis neighborhoods (Phillips and Near North). This information, together with information from the city of Minneapolis will be used to build a three dimensional model for use in urban environmental education.
- D2. Procedures:** Collect and record environmental quality information and observations. Produce maps and a model to illustrate current environmental quality in the neighborhoods. Work with professionals to design and create an educational model (See detail under A2).

D3. Budget:

- a. Amount Budgeted: \$10,186
- b. Balance: \$0

D4. Timeline:

7/93 1/94 7/94 1/95 6/95
Comprehensive State of the Neighborhood
Environmental Quality Maps and a learning model *

- D5. Status:** Participants collected information about their neighborhoods and communities to be plotted on wall maps. Significant cultural, economic, social and environmental information, much collected by the participants, was used in the development of a 3-dimensional model intended for urban environmental education programs in school classrooms.

Neighborhood environmental information was collected through October 1994 by City Camp participants and transferred to maps for use in model development. The process of model construction began in November 1994 and is expected to be complete by the end of March 1995. Dowling School in Minneapolis has expressed an interest in piloting the model and it's accompanying curriculum in the spring of 1995.

The educational model was successfully piloted in three sixth grade classrooms at Dowling school in April and May. Interest in the model remains high and plans are in progress to make the environmental program available to other classrooms in the Minneapolis area beginning in the fall of 1995. Our use of pre and post quizzes illustrated that this is a very effective tool for integrating environmental education with the urban experience.

- D6. Benefits:** Creation of maps and a model will be valuable teaching tools for city schools, community organizations, urban planners and policy makers. Greater appreciation and awareness by inner city residents of the state of their neighborhoods from an environmental perspective. The model will allow for in-depth study of the interrelationships between human and natural systems.

V.

Evaluation: Project outcomes will be formally evaluated on a quarterly basis as part of the Pillsbury Neighborhood Services Program Accountability System. This project will be successful if at least 70% of participants indicate they have made positive lifestyle changes as a result of Project City Camp involvement.

VI.

Context:

- A.** Current and previous work has focused on providing summer camp experiences for low income, inner-city youth and retreats & camping trips for a variety of other consumer groups. Though these activities are important, they have the tendency to take the focus away from the urban environment; which reinforces the notion that the "environment" is somewhere outside of the city. Project City Camp will enable us to more clearly illustrate the interdependent links between urban reality and natural systems.

V. **Context cont.**

- B. This project supplements Pillsbury Neighborhood Services' Outdoor Explorer Program with 1992 expenses totalling \$221,559. PNS has conducted outdoor, environmental education and camping experiences since 1921, all of which focus on exploring the natural environment away from the city.
- C. Pillsbury Neighborhood Services has been successful developing and implementing experiential & environmental programs with diverse populations for seven decades in Minneapolis. We collaborate with many programs and organizations to create "tailored" experiences for specific groups in order to ensure their success.

VII. **Qualifications:**

1. Program Manager

- a. Has 15 years of experience developing, implementing and coordinating outdoor & environmental education experiences with and for diverse urban populations. B.S. degree from University of MN in Recreation and Park Administration.
- b. Pillsbury Neighborhood Services Director of Camping; providing outdoor & environmental education through eight neighborhood centers in the city of Minneapolis.

2. Cooperators/Other Investigators

- a. Environmentally conscious educators experienced working with diverse populations who reside or work in the Phillips or Near North neighborhoods.
- b. Project City Camp will work closely with the Urban Environmental Education Coalition, the Minneapolis Urban League, Waite House, Oak Park Neighborhood Center, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, Plymouth Youth Center, New Directions, All Nations' Church, Minneapolis Public Schools, Self-Reliance Natural Resources Center, Phillips Community Center, Izaak Walton League, City of Minneapolis Environmental Section and the Peacemaker Center among others.

VIII. **Reporting Requirements:**

Semiannual status reports will be submitted not later than Jan. 1, 1994, July 1, 1994, Jan. 1, 1995 and a final status report by June 30, 1995.