**Columbia Center for Urban Agriculture**

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1. **Vision, Mission, and Goals of the Organization and the Population It Serves**

I am currently a volunteer at Columbia Center for Urban Agriculture. My supervisor, Justin Gregory, oversees volunteers and service learners at the organization. When asking him the questions to the research prompt, he stated that some of the answers he had were from the website. This is because the organization has worked really hard on their mission and vision, and the members feel that it explains what they are trying to accomplish very well. Justin explained, “CCUA works to enhance our community’s health by connecting people to agriculture and the land through hands-on learning opportunities from seed to plate”. CCUA has a Garden Pro’s program that helps people start their own mini gardens, that way they can learn about gardening and growing their own food, which is the organizations philosophy. CCUA “serves everyone in the Boone county area from children to adults to local hunger relief agencies and families living with low income” (Gregory). Because CCUA is a non-profit, the garden and business run on the donations of local companies and individuals. What makes the company so successful is the friendly workers, and positive energy being put into making gardens for those in need. The organization helps families who cannot buy fresh produce, due to the high cost, be able to access those foods for their families. CCUA has a main garden, that they started the organization with, along with a few other local gardens. The organization has classes on the farm about gardening for children.

1. **The Project/ Job/ Tasks and my Role**

During my first few weeks at CCUA, I helped with organizing the Harvest Hootenanny, which is one of the annual fundraisers for the company. During the morning of the Hootenanny, I helped set up tables and chairs for the guests to eat at, along with various information booths about the programs of CCUA. My job at the Hootenanny was to check in volunteers at the front gate and tell them their positions for the day. Some of the fellow volunteers helped me with giving shirts out and wristbands to everyone. Over the past few weeks, since the Hootenanny was over, I have been entering information into the company’s system about the people who volunteer and donate to CCUA. CCUA sends out specialized letters and information to people who donate over fifty dollars to help the cause. The intern for CCUA and I spent a few weeks entering the info into the system and updating records of current subscribers. Besides helping with the post-hootenanny stuff, I have helped other managers in CCUA with office tasks they need completed such as scanning documents and organizing files. I usually volunteer four hours every week in order to meet the thirty-five-hour requirement for transcript designation by the end of the semester.

1. **What I hope to Gain from This experience**

Because I started my service learning early, I will be completing my thirty-five hours before thanksgiving break. I have never worked in a non-profit organization before, so volunteering at CCUA has helped me learned more about how they run their operations. Fundraising is the key source of funds for CCUA, so the company needs to successfully sell themselves to get investors. CCUA has people that are passionate about gardening and healthy eating, and that’s what helps them gain support. When I first started, I was nervous about the requirements of being the NPO management assistant, but as time passed I realized it was about being relatable and friendly, and the work would come easily. Working with a NPO has helped expend my area of expertise when coming to work related experience.