

Clay Thornton
Request for Funding For Community Gardens of Southwest Missouri

Dear Community Foundations of the Ozarks,

Community Gardens of Southwest Missouri, a nonprofit organization currently developing community garden spaces in the heart of the Ozarks, seeks \$5,000 to implement a community garden at Shady Acres, an elderly assisted living center.

The Ozarks is a turbulent region when it comes to ensuring resources reach those who need them. We appreciate your investment into this region, widening the outreach of numerous nonprofits. Since 1973, you have persisted as an important beacon in the area. As this issue is thoroughly embedded in the Ozarks community, we believe your investment will go far in ensuring and furthering your goal of making the Ozarks a better place to live by giving the residents of Shady Acres access to a stable program of physical activity, nutrition, socialization, and presence in nature.

The Problem: Lack of Programing.

Shady Acres is an assisted living center that hosts 50 residents that require nursing services. Among the residents, Shady Acres also holds a special care unit focusing on patients with Alzheimer's disease and dementia. Currently, there is a gap between the needs of the residents of Shady Acres and the social and active programs the facility can provide, as Shady Acres does not offer many programs or activities for the benefit of patients in the memory ward, or for the rest of the facility at large. These programs are paramount to the health of these residents, and it is important that a program of some sort is implemented to establish a better echelon of eldercare within this regional community.

The solution: Communal Raised Gardens.

There is a plethora of research that shows the benefits of gardening in eldercare facilities, for both the general senior population and those with Alzheimer's and dementia. The physical activity linked with gardening improves the stability of senior individuals, and combined with the social aspect, it has been shown to increase the overall function of dementia patients after a 12-week program, as researched by the Journal of Therapeutic Horticulture. Furthermore, In research composed in an Arkansas community, published by the Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior, the addition of a garden, along with education materials, could result in an increase of vegetable consumption within the entire population of the facility. Without the implementation of a garden, seniors, especially those within the memory ward of Shady Acres, will be without a program that fosters greater physical activity and sociability. These aspects are crucial to increase the quality of life of this community, who might otherwise be left to decline mentally and physically.

Credentials: Why CGSM?

The Community Gardens of Southwest Missouri is a reputable nonprofit organization which is known for its work bettering the region, making it a better place to live through the development of common space gardens. They are more than qualified to tackle this issue, as it directly aligns with their mission. Furthermore, as they are well-known, they were directly approached by Shady Acres to implement this program, and as such are trusted by the facility to carry out the work more than any other nonprofit organization in the area.

Budget Request: \$5,000.

This proposal addresses a community need which could pave the way for changes in other eldercare facilities. The Community Gardens will use funding to implement raised garden beds, which will be more accessible to elderly populations than garden plots placed directly in the ground as the residents will not have to reach as far down to work. To build these garden beds, \$5,000 is being requested in order to purchase and maintain the supplies needed. First, they require construction materials to build the raised beds themselves (\$30 x 125 square feet = \$3,750 for construction materials.) To fill the beds, they need the funding for soil (\$1,000.) Lastly, enough money to purchase seeds for the first year of growth, including both vegetables to supplement nutrition, and flower seeds for flower cutting in the facility (\$250).

Closing

We hope, with your assistance, that Community Gardens of Southwest Missouri will be able to implement this gardening program to help Shady Acres. Doing so will further your mission as a funder, by bettering the living conditions of those in this region, and the CGSM's mission, to do so with the implementation of community gardens. Simply put, this assistance will be priceless when it comes to bettering the lives of these citizens, especially those within the memory ward, who are often left and forgotten.

Thank you for your consideration, the Community Gardens hopes to work with you on this project to make our little corner of the globe a better place for everyone.

You can reach me for additional information or to ask any questions via telephone at [REDACTED], or via email at [REDACTED].

Sincerely,
Clay Thornton
The Community Gardens of Southwest Missouri