

Ardmore Institute of Health

Report Abstract for Awarded Grant

Organization Name*

Midland Memorial Foundation
Midland Memorial Hospital

Project Title

MMH Community Garden

Project Start Date

May 2016

Project End Date

August 31, 2017

Number of People Impacted

As reported in August 2016, the MMH Community Garden had 33 participants. In addition, a grand opening event was held on August 13, 2016, and had over 150 Midland community members in attendance.

Actual Number of People Impacted*

The community garden has 34 regular raised bed plots, 2 keyhole gardens, and 3 wheelchair accessible plots, for a total of 39 plots. In 2016, the MMH Community Garden had a total of 38 different community gardeners. So far in 2017, the garden has 36 different gardeners and 11 people are on the waiting list for a Fall 2017 plot.

Project Overview*

The importance of adding a water harvesting tank to the MMH Community Garden is to capture the necessary resources for gardeners to use in irrigating their plots. Midland is located in a desert-like climate, therefore, the community is extremely cautious in the amount of water utilized due to supply and demand. MMH is confident that the water harvesting tank will continue to ensure that the

community garden yields the importance of water conservation while still enabling participants to have their fruits and vegetables prosper.

Results*

With the delay in the water harvesting tank installation, MMH Community Garden participants are currently using well water that has been routed to each plot. To water their garden, gardeners attach a hose to their plot's faucet. For the time being, this has resulted in successful crop production.

Use of Funds*

The total budgeted cost for the purchase and installation of the water harvesting tank is \$49,972. Of the total amount, \$25,000 will be utilized from the donation received October 21, 2016 from the Ardmore Institute of Health. The remaining balance of \$24,972 will be funded by Midland Memorial Hospital.

Key Challenges*

Located in a cyclical economy, Midland's prosperity is greatly determined on the oil and gas industry. Due to the recent down turn in the oil and gas industry, all industries in the Midland community have felt the effects. As a result, the original business that agreed to install the water harvesting tank is no longer able to honor the original gift-in-kind. With the understanding that circumstances can change, Midland Memorial Hospital has prepared to absorb the costs of installing the water harvesting tank as it is essential to sustaining this vital project. The installation and purchase of the water harvesting tank is projected to cost \$49,972. MMH is extremely thankful that \$25,000 of the total cost will be funded through the generous grant received in on October 21, 2016 from the Ardmore Institute of Health. Midland Memorial Hospital has contracted with the company WaterSpec for the installation of the tank, and expects the project to be completed by August 31, 2017.

Key Learnings*

Managing the community garden members has been more difficult than originally anticipated, and has provided learning opportunities that will enhance the community garden for future seasons. MMH has learned that the majority of gardeners are very passionate and do a great job keeping up with their plots, but other gardeners are not as attentive. Through this experience, MMH created a

non-compliant policy that gardeners are informed of when they apply for a plot. If their plot is out of compliance due to overgrown weeds, rotting produce, etc., gardeners have 14 days to remedy the situation or the plot will be assigned to another gardener. As mentioned earlier, there are always people on other waiting list and MMH wants to ensure that participants are active and benefiting from this experience.

Additionally, gardeners have had an incredibly difficult time growing produce this summer due to the extremely hot temperatures. This has pushed gardeners' knowledge on how to adjust to the extreme elements of West Texas.

Recommendations for Future Projects*

The MMH Community Garden was meant to be a template so that other organizations around Midland can adopt it and build their own garden. The Midland YMCA just recently agreed to add a community garden to their property and they are expecting to have it completed by Fall 2018.

Project Lead

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Project Lead Title

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