

Community Relationships With the CWU Campus Community Garden

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INTRODUCTION

The CWU Campus Community Garden is an organic garden open to any and all in the Ellensburg community members who have an interest in gardening and not afraid to get their hands a little dirty. The community garden is situated in between the free parking and the R.O.T.C. building, next to the Wahle apartment complex.

As a group, we became involved with the Campus Community Garden through a Health Education course, Community Organization and Coalition Development (HED 450). The purpose of this course is to provide public health students the knowledge, practices, and skills necessary to be successful while working with community organizations. As an academic service learning project (ASL) We started out developing a concept to attract more Central Washington University students to be a part of the garden through participating in a design competition for the garden's mural.

Our role in this project was to collaborate in the launching of the mural design competition, engaging local businesses to contribute resources to the mural project, and participate in the Garden's opening day in May.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

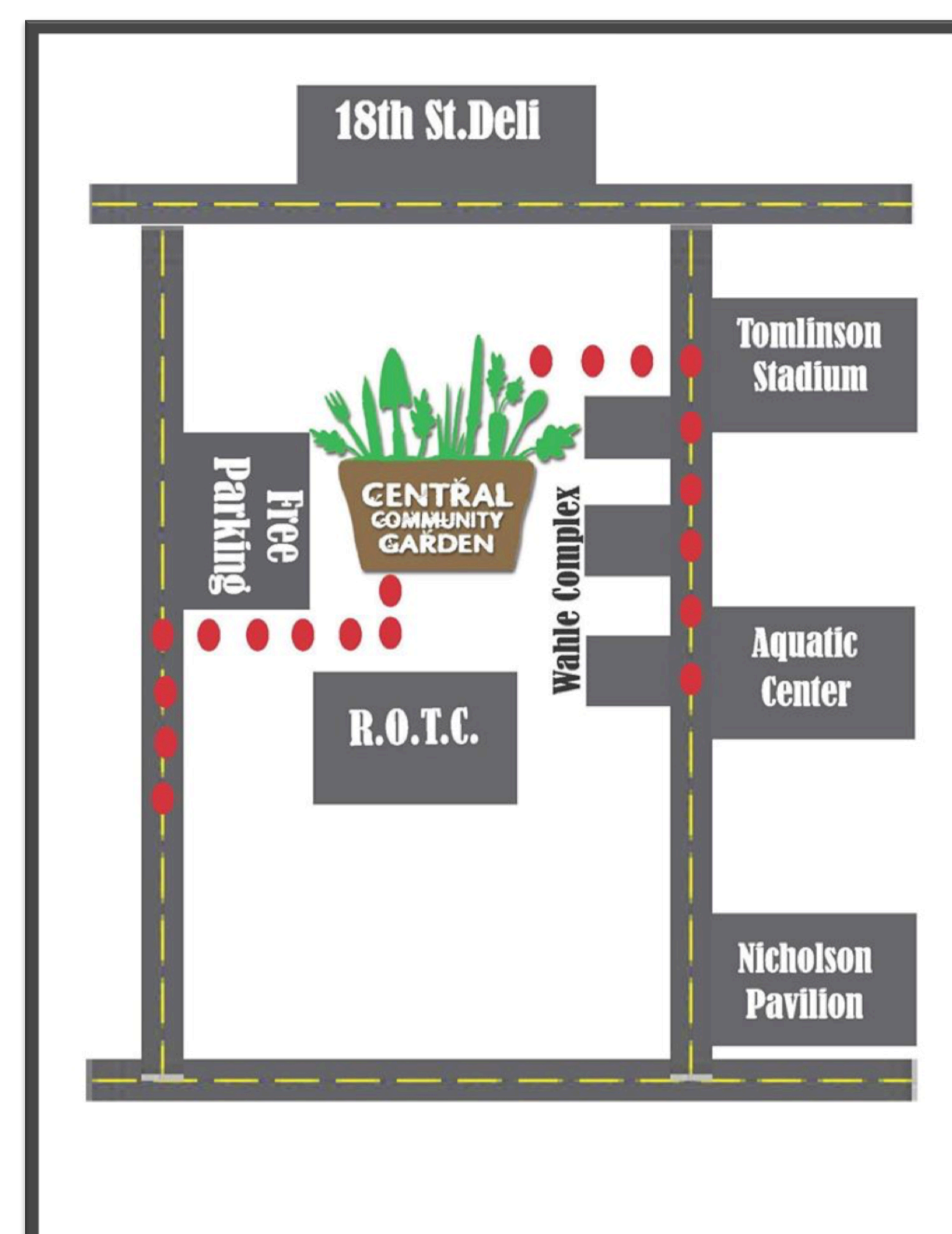
- To create a successful, welcoming and sustainable campus community garden
- Educate and empower community members to produce/consume healthy foods
- Develop practical and sustainable campus partnerships

The donations from the business owners and the submissions of the art designs by the students will help to create a mural of every season to help raise awareness for the Campus Community Garden.

METHODS

We worked along side Dr. Rebecca Pearson (Garden Founder) and her interns to design a plan of action to increase community awareness of the garden. As a team we wrote a plan for the Mural Project that included both a publicity campaign to gather art designs for the mural from CWU students and a donation campaign to gather resources and materials from local Ellensburg organizations.

In Spring 2015, we launched both campaigns with the intent to implement the mural during the Campus Community Garden's Opening Day on May 1st, when students and community members could participate in a "paint by numbers" activity to complete a portion of the selected mural design.



RESULTS & CONCLUSIONS

We received enough materials to complete the Campus Community Garden Mural through our gracious community donators in April 2015. Two submissions were entered in the design competition however, we are still waiting on the final design selection, as chosen by Campus Community Garden Leaders. This revised our intended timeline, where we had originally intended to have the mural completed on May 1st. The Campus Community Garden leaders suggest that a Fall 2015 mural project may be more feasible to complete. We still participated in the Opening Day activities by working in the Garden and partnering with the Public Health & Pre-Nursing Club to host a BBQ event. A summary of the key results of the project includes:

- We completed our goal by bringing awareness to CWU's Campus Community Garden.
- Made new ongoing networks in the community
- Raised funding and gathered donations from Ellensburg and other area donors
- Partnered with CWU's Public Health and Pre-Nursing club on May 1st for opening day of garden/BBQ.

STUDENT REFLECTIONS

"By creating awareness of the community garden, will allow more people to have access to fresh foods. This garden provides the area for people to come together, share their skills, or learn from others by becoming a more sustainable community."
- Angie, public health student

"It was a great bonding experience between students and community members."
- Alex, public health student

"It was a really good learning experience to be able to connect with community members and donors to make this project possible."
- Catherine, public health student

"I enjoyed promoting community health through the Campus Community Garden in a way that took my learning beyond the classroom."
- Blanca, public health student

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