

Application Code: _____
(for committee use only)

**Tennessee Master Gardener Search for Excellence
2011 Application**

APPLICATION DEADLINE IS NOVEMBER 30, 2011

NAME OF MG GROUP: Davidson County Master Gardeners (DCMG)

COUNTY: Davidson

MASTER GARDENER CONTACT:

NAME Doris Weakley

EMAIL dorisgweakley@bellsouth.net

MASTER GARDENER COORDINATOR/EXTENSION STAFF:

NAME David Cook

TITLE Extension Agent

EMAIL dcook5@utk.edu

PHONE 615-862-5995

CATEGORY---MUST SELECT AND SUBMIT IN ONLY ONE CATEGORY

- Youth
- Demonstration Garden
- Workshop or Presentation
- Community Service
- Innovative Project
- Research
- Special Needs Audience

COMMENCEMENT DATE OF PROJECT: Summer 2003

NAMES OF MASTER GARDENERS DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THIS PROJECT.

| | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| Doris Weakley | Darry Huntsman |
| Barbara Allen | Mike Lannom |
| Machelle Allison | Becky Matthews |
| Bob Ary | Georgeann McCoy |
| Catherine Atwell | Sue McGinnis |
| Kent Bessee | Jim Miles |
| Lois Bessee | Linda Pennington |
| Mary Boyd | Pam Rice |
| Judy Burger | Chelsea Romersa |
| Muff Cline | Arden Schlesinger |
| David Cook | Chrissy Smith |
| Margaret Devine | Susan Stern |
| Mary Dickerson | Waneta Strickert |
| Michael Fenswick | Pam Swoner |
| Tami Forbes | Sylvia Wahl |
| Tracy Fulton | Pattie Waller |
| Nancy Goodrich | Bessie Ward |
| Chris Harris | Lou Ann Williams |
| Charlene Hiller | Ruth Wingett |
| Jessie Holloway | Deborah Yoder |

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

NAME OF PROJECT: Junior Gardeners Day Camp (JGDC)

LOCATION: JGDC is held yearly at the Ellington Agricultural Center, District II Regional Office conference room in Nashville, TN. This location is ideal for JGDC because it has a conference room, demonstration garden, greenhouse, play area, and kitchen. The presence of the demonstration garden on the grounds provides opportunities for the campers in two ways:

1. The demonstration garden provides models for and readily available props for

presentations about research-based practices in organic gardening and environmental stewardship such as composting, mulching, rain barrels and more.

2. The demonstration garden provides a location and materials for children to plant their raised bed vegetable and herb gardens and to design a lasagna garden. In this way, campers contribute to the demonstration garden, which in turn, provides similar learning opportunities for future visitors to the gardens.

TARGET AUDIENCE:

1. Twenty-five youth, ages 9-14, are the primary target audience. The maximum number of youth the conference room can accommodate is 25. Youth are accepted in JGDC without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, veteran status, political beliefs, sexual orientation, national origin, marital/family status of parents, and socioeconomic status. The low fee of \$50 enables inclusion of youth from all economic levels.
2. Master Gardener Interns from the current year's class are a secondary target audience. Master Gardener Interns from the current class are recruited to work at JGDC.

DESIRED OUTCOMES: JGDC promotes environmental stewardship. JGDC Master Gardener volunteers provide current UT research-based education to their target audience by teaching organic home gardening. Children who engage in organic gardening have first-hand opportunities to observe the importance of conservation and intelligent allocation of resources. Creating and maintaining a garden offers many opportunities for achieving insight into the long-term human impact on the natural environment.

1. Desired Outcome for impact immediately following camp: JGDC Campers will report increased learning in 13 areas of focus (from JGDC Presentations) on a questionnaire completed the last hour of JGDC. Additionally, campers and their parents will report their general impression of JGDC:
 - An overall excellent camp experience.
 - A willingness to recommend this camp to their friends.
2. Desired Outcome for impact at 4 months following camp: 4 months after JGDC ends, parents of JGDC Campers will answer questions related to the camper's behavior after camp by means of a post-JGDC questionnaire. The answers to these questions will demonstrate that JGDC impacted the lives of the campers to the extent that they now perform specific behaviors they learned at JGDC. Additionally, the last question on the 4-month questionnaire will assess whether the JGDC Camper has spontaneously taught content they learned at JGDC to others. Spontaneous teaching is taken as evidence of the camper's internalizing and owning the content they learned at JGDC.
3. Desired Outcome for Master Gardener Interns: Recruit at least 5 Master Gardener Interns to assist with the camp in the current year and retain at least 50% to volunteer in the following year. Attracting Master Gardener Interns from the current class recruits volunteers for future JGDCs.

PARTNERSHIPS:

1. Community Experts: All time is donated.
 - Margie Hunter, native plant specialist, author of book, *Tennessee Native Plants*
 - Debbie Joins, Tennessee State Soil Lab
 - Ann Dale, Director, Ellington Agricultural Museum
 - Julie Berbiglia and Jefferey Ezell, Education Specialists, Davidson County Metro Beautification and Environment Commission
 - Tyne Meade Garden Club, Floral Designers, Marlene Key, Pat Bowling, Janet Brownlee, Doris Weakley, Betsy Abernathy, Sandra Frank, Donna Welke, Len Walker
 - Perenity Flower Ministry
 - Ruel Jones, Tree Arborist
 - Darry Huntsman, Mushroom Specialist
 - Tom Stebbins, Plant Pest and Disease Specialist
 - Polly Rooker, Tennessee Wildlife Specialist
2. Advertising: All advertising is donated. In the questionnaire completed the last hour of JGDC, 25% of parents reported they were made aware of the program through formal advertising (newspaper and neighborhood listserv). Seventy-five percent of parents reported they heard about JGDC by word of mouth.
 - The local newspaper, *The Tennessean*, lists the JGDC in the "Gardener's Calendar" the month before and the month of the camp and publishes an article prior to the camp.
 - Local television shows feature the JGDC. For example, NPT's show, "Volunteer Gardener," featured the JGDC in the early years. Another local television weather reporter did his weather report in the demonstration garden of the JGDC location during camp week as a way of advertising the camp. A local talk show promoted the camp.
 - Several neighborhood associations posted the JGDC information on their listserv.
3. Davidson County Extension Office: David Cook, County Extension Agent, delivers two presentations and presents the certificates to the children. The secretary at the Extension Office oversees the applications process, communicates any issues with JGDC Coordinator, creates a camper roster and makes name tags and certificates.
4. Local Businesses:
 - Home Depot, donates buckets for tool caddies, vegetable plants
 - Purity Dairies, supplies milk, ice cream treats

PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT

PLANNING:

Contributions of the JGDC Coordinator:

1. The coordinator updates the Junior Gardeners Day Camp Handbook every two years to reflect current scientific research and ensures it is reprinted. Each camper receives a copy of the handbook.
2. The coordinator designs and orders tee-shirts for campers and staff.
3. The coordinator selects teachers based on past and present performance, teaching, preparing and capturing the interest of an audience in other contexts.
4. The coordinator schedules the conference room 9 months in advance of the camp.
5. The coordinator recruits two co-chairs yearly based on evaluation by the coordinator and camp staff.

Contributions of the JGDC Co-Chairs:

1. The co-chairs attend the current year's final Master Gardener class to promote JGDC and to recruit Master Gardener Interns to volunteer.
2. The co-chairs recruit other Master Gardeners to staff the camp four months before camp. With this advanced notice, some Master Gardeners plan their vacation time at work so they can volunteer at camp. (The average daily staff to camper ratio is 1:1).
3. The co-chairs meet with the JGDC Coordinator two months before camp to plan JGDC.
4. The co-chairs create the daily schedule of presentations.
5. The co-chairs select the Hands-On Project (HOPs) and purchase the supplies for HOPs.
6. The co-chairs decide on the menu for healthful, tasty snacks
7. The co-chairs manage publicity two months before camp. For example, they initiate newspaper and listserv advertising. Word of mouth is, of course, ongoing.
8. The co-chairs go with the JGDC Coordinator, the weekend before camp starts, to the Regional Office conference room to set up camp.
9. The co-chairs run the day-to-day camp activities.

Examples of JGDC Presentation Content (environmental stewardship is considered when selecting presentation topics; content is research-based when such is available)

1. Agricultural Museum
2. Basic Botany
3. Bees and Butterflies
4. Birds
5. Composting and Vermiculture
6. Computer Research for Gardening Information
7. Container Gardening
8. Edible and Inedible Mushrooms
9. Floral Design and Arrangement
10. Garden Art
11. Garden Latin
12. Garden Safety
13. Herbs
14. Horticulture as a Career
15. Insects (Beneficial and Pests)
16. Landscape Design
17. Leadership and Volunteering
18. Native Plants
19. Nutrition
20. Plant Pests and Diseases
21. Propagation
22. Rain Barrels
23. Soil
24. Trees
25. Vegetable Gardening in Raised Beds and Lasagna Gardening
26. Wildlife in the Garden

Examples of Hands on Projects (HOPs)

1. Building a Birdhouse
2. Bookmarks from Pressed Flowers
3. Compost Tea Bags
4. Floral Arrangement
5. Garden Art: Tin Man (recycling)
6. Herb Identification, Collection and Pressing
7. Landscaping Design with Scale Model Doll House and Plants
8. Leaf Impression Bowl
9. Making a Garden Hat
10. Making Organic Sprays
11. Making Pesto
12. Making Prize Ribbons
13. Mushroom Identification
14. Planting a Fairy Container Garden
15. Planting Vegetables in a Raised Bed in the Demonstration Garden and Preparing a Lasagna Garden
16. Propagation of Plants and Potting
17. Observation of Insects under Magnifying Glass
18. Taking Soil Samples, pH Tester
19. Tree Leaf Identification, Collection and Pressing
20. Tool Caddy
21. Tour of the Soil Lab
22. Tufa Pots

IMPLEMENTATION:

Below is a schedule for a typical day at JGDC.

| | |
|-------------|---|
| 8:30-9:00. | Campers and staff arrive and sign in |
| 9:00-10:15 | Presentation Topic (example: Composting Presentation) HOP: (example: Make compost tea bag.) |
| 10:15-10:30 | Break (healthful snack) |
| 10:30-11:45 | Presentation Topic (example: Vegetable Gardening in Raised Beds and Lasagna Gardening Presentation) HOP: (example: Plant raised vegetable beds in demonstration garden. Prepare lasagna garden in demonstration garden.) |
| 11:45-12:15 | Lunch (campers bring their own lunch) |
| 12:15-1:30 | Presentation Topic (example: Floral Design and Arrangement Presentation) HOP: (example: Make floral arrangement to take home. Feedback is given by floral designers and ribbons awarded to each camper) |
| 1:30-1:45 | Break (healthful snack) |
| 1:45-2:30 | Presentation Topic (example: Landscape Design Presentation) HOP: (example: Landscape with scale model dollhouse and plants. Feedback given from professional landscaper.) |
| 2:30-3:00 | All campers help clean up Door Prizes given |

Monday: 9:00 Introductions

Friday: 2:30-3:00 Parents and grandparents are invited to the Ice Cream Party.

Questionnaires are completed by campers and parents. Photos are taken of each

camper receiving their certificate from David Cook, Extension Agent. These are then emailed to that child's parents.

HOW THE PROJECT HAS BEEN FUNDED

JGDC receives no funds from the local Master Gardener Organization or the Davidson County Extension Office.

HOW THE PROJECT IS FUNDED:

1. Fees:
 - Each camper pays \$50. Fees have never increased since the camp's inception in 2003.
2. Donations:
 - JGDC conducts an annual White Elephant Sale and a Plant Sale at Homeowners Field Day.
 - JGDC has a booth at the State Master Gardener Conference, where they have a plant sale.
 - Master Gardeners, who are unable to participate in the actual camp, often donate various items including plants, pots, pressed flowers, supplies for HOP and door prizes.
 - Perenity Flower Ministry (organization who accepts flower donations from individual gardens, funerals and weddings) donates flowers for the Floral Arrangement class.
 - Community experts donate their time.
 - Master Gardeners donate their time.
 - Two local businesses donate products.

HOW THOSE FUNDS ARE SPENT:

1. Fees cover custom-printed tee-shirts, printing costs of *Junior Gardeners Day Camp Handbook*, snacks and bottled water, and supplies for HOP.
2. Because JGDC has 501c(3) status, supplies, printing, and tee-shirts are purchased tax free.

OUTCOMES OF THE PROJECT

OUTCOMES OF THE JGDC PROJECT:

1. Desired Outcome for impact immediately following camp: JGDC Campers will report increased learning in 13 areas of focus (from JGDC Presentations) on a questionnaire completed the last hour of JGDC. Findings (see table below):

| TOPICS | % CAMPERS REPORTING LEARNING NEW INFORMATION |
|---------------------|--|
| Soil and Composting | 94% |
| Botany and Plants | 94% |
| Propagation | 76% |
| Bees and Insects | 100% |
| Garden Safety | 94% |
| Landscape Design | 100% |
| Birds and Wildlife | 100% |

| | |
|----------------------|------|
| Trees | 94% |
| Container Gardening | 100% |
| Raised Bed Gardening | 82% |
| Herbs | 88% |
| Garden Latin | 82% |
| Native Plants | 88% |

In addition, JGDC Campers and their parents will report their general impression of JGDC.

- Desired Outcome: Overall excellent camp experience. Finding: 100% of campers and 100% of parents reported an excellent camp experience.
- Desired Outcome: Willingness to recommend this camp to their friends. Finding: 93% of campers and 100% of parents said they'd recommend the camp to a friend.

2. Desired Outcome for impact at 4 months following camp: Parents of JGDC Campers will answer questions related to the camper's behavior after camp by means of a post-JGDC questionnaire, 4 months after JGDC ends. The answers to these questions will demonstrate that JGDC impacted the lives of the campers to the extent that they now perform specific behaviors they learned at JGDC. Findings (see table below):

| SINCE JGDC, MY CHILD HAS | % CAMPERS PERFORMING THIS BEHAVIOR |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Planted a plant | 92% |
| Nurtured a plant by watering or feeding | 100% |
| Volunteered to help in parent's or someone else's garden | 100% |
| Participated in composting | 77% |
| Participated in mulching plants | 54% |
| Practiced garden safety | 77% |
| Talked about insects or bees, either beneficial or pest | 100% |
| Took care of their container garden (made for HOP) | 77% |

The last question on the 4-month questionnaire will assess whether the JGDC Camper has spontaneously taught others content they learned at JGDC.

Spontaneous teaching is taken as evidence of the camper's internalizing and owning the content they learned at JGDC. Finding (see table below):

| SINCE JGDC, MY CHILD HAS | % CAMPERS PERFORMING THIS BEHAVIOR |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Advised or taught someone about something they learned at camp | 92% |

3. Desired Outcome for Master Gardener Interns: Recruit at least 5 Master Gardener Interns to assist with the camp in the current year and retain at least 50% to volunteer in the following year. Finding: Of the 17 Master Gardener Interns recruited during the years 2008, 2009 and 2010, 53% were retained for succeeding years.

METHODS USED TO MEASURE THE IMPACT OF JGDC:

1. The impact immediately following camp is assessed by camper and parent questionnaires given during the last hour of camp.
2. The impact at 4 months following camp is determined by a post-JGDC parent questionnaire.
3. The recruitment and retention of Master Gardener Interns is assessed by internal JGDC records.

THE SCORING AND EVALUATION PROCESS: (additional comments)

SIMPLICITY OF THE PROJECT: (ease of replication): Any county, state or community organization is welcome to use the *Junior Gardeners Day Camp Handbook* as a guide for their own projects. In addition, the JGDC Coordinator has created an instruction book on how to start a camp. Occasionally, Master Gardeners from other counties who are interested in starting their own camp, observe JGDC.

PRACTICALITY, USEFULNESS OR RELEVANCE OF PROJECT FOR SITUATION:

JGDC supports the needs of the campers with the *Junior Gardeners Day Camp Handbook*, which is written in age-appropriate language with visual aids. Campers are supported through environmental stewardship-focused JGDC Presentations. The HOPs are provided to reinforce campers' learning by performing a fun project related to the presentation. The campers take their HOPs home each day. Some examples of useful and relevant HOPs follow: Campers are given numerous plants daily with instructions about how and where to plant them. They are urged to plant them soon, thereby reinforcing what they learned at camp by repeating it at home. Soil Test Kits are given to campers with instructions on how to obtain a soil test at home. Compost Tea Bags are made at camp and campers are encouraged to feed their plants at home.

ORIGINALITY OR CREATIVITY: The *Junior Gardeners Day Camp Handbook* was originally compiled and edited by the JGDC Coordinator utilizing UT publications including the *Master Gardener Handbook*. Several sections were written by Davidson County Master Gardeners. The JGDC Coordinator updates the handbook every two years to reflect current UT-based information and new ideas for HOPs. Using the handbook as a guide, presenters bring their own personalities and ideas to elicit the interest of the campers. One of the most creative HOPs is the handmade scale model dollhouse, which campers love to landscape with tiny trees, shrubs, and flowers. Another interesting HOP is the Fairy Container Garden. Campers plant little plants in their containers and decorate it with mirrors for water, pine cones for trees, rocks, bark benches and tiny fairy and animal figurines. Floral Design brings rave reviews from parents and campers as being one of the favorite HOPs. Floral designers from Tyne Meade Garden Club teach the campers the basics of floral design. Campers then design their own floral arrangement with flowers donated by Perenity Ministries and Master Gardeners.

CONSISTENT WITH EXTENSION AND MG MISSIONS: JGDC carries out the mission of Tennessee Master Gardeners (environmental stewardship) as addressed in this application. JGDC carries out the vision of Tennessee Master Gardeners by providing innovative research-based education to Davidson County youth. JGDC embraces the

values of the Tennessee Master Gardeners in that they:

1. Provide home horticulture education to youth.
2. Collaborate with nonprofit local, county, state and multi-state organizations to offer educational leadership for youth.
3. Foster a learning environment for volunteers who promote environmental stewardship, while representing UT.
4. Encourage the recruitment and training of Master Gardener Interns.
5. Offer information and education to Tennessee youth with an innovative and creative approach.

LEVELS OF LEARNING: The impact of JGDC on the campers is assessed by self-report of increased learning in areas of environmental stewardship at the end of JGDC. The impact at 4-months post-JGDC is assessed and reported by eliciting parental report of their children carrying out the specific practices of organic gardening at home that were discussed in the JGDC presentations and HOPs. In addition, internalization of lessons (to the degree that campers teach or advise others in content they learned at JGDC) is assessed and reported by parents. In summary, increased knowledge, although good, isn't enough. Behavior change and internalization of JGDC values are evidence that the camper has been impacted.

NUMBER OF PEOPLE IMPACTED: Approximately 200 JGDC Campers have been directly impacted in the 9 years since the camp started in 2003. The JGDC Coordinator has presented to Master Gardener organizations in 7 TN counties wishing to start their own JGDC. The coordinator has spoken at Winter School in breakout sessions 3 times. The coordinator has presented JGDC at the Southeastern Master Gardener Conference in a break-out session attended by Master Gardeners from other states who wish to implement JGDC as a project in whole or in part. In addition, JGDC has been presented to four local organizations. Not only has the *Junior Gardeners Day Camp Handbook* been shared with other counties & states within the Master Gardener organization, but with other local child-oriented organizations such as Girl Scouts and community gardens.