

Organization Name: Friends of Atlanta Urban Food Forest at Brown's Mill Park Community Collaborative, Inc.

Organization Contact Person: Soisette Lumpkin

Contact Phone: 404-803-3196

Contact Email: slumpkin04@gmail.com

Organization Mission: Atlanta's first Food Forest is a collective effort of many dedicated partner organizations in Atlanta with a passion for providing access to safe greenspace, conservation education, and workforce development to underserved communities throughout Atlanta. Working hand-in-hand with the Browns Mill/Lakewood communities, the partner organizations are building the largest food forest in the country, while simultaneously transforming an abandoned property into an edible landscape. The Atlanta Food Forest is a first-of-its-kind partnership for the Forest Service and serves as a national model for innovative urban and community engagement within USDA. The public private partnership is a community-driven effort focused on leveraging cross sector resources to address community-specific needs. Volunteers also play a valuable role during monthly work-and-learn volunteer days hosted by the partners, corporate volunteer events, and professional work days donated by local non-profits. Through the work of the dedicated volunteers and partners, the vacant lot now has: an orchard, community garden beds, a trail, a picnic area, and more. Securing grant and in-kind donations has also been a team effort. To-date, the Food Forest has resulted in a greater than 10:1 return on the initial Forest Service Community Forest and Open Space Grant investment.

Internship Semester: Summer 2020

Project Title #1: Business Development

Keywords: Communication and Marketing, Outreach, Fundraising

SLS Priority Issue Areas: Community Health, Equitable Development, Green Infrastructure, Water, Citizen Science

Project Background: The Urban Food Forest has served as a model for innovative Urban and community Engagement (and the benefits it can have on the surrounding community) within the Forest Service and USDA as a whole. Partnerships and resource leveraging not only resulted a short-term surge in capacity and food supply, but have created a community ecosystem that will serve Atlanta residents for many years to come. By investing in training and job opportunities/skill development, the Food Forest partners are helping to guarantee that the traditional agricultural practices of the South are not lost and creating the next generation of urban agricultural and natural resource specialists. In addition to traditional skills building, partners are investing in financial management and grant writing training for the Friends of the Food Forest (FFF) (composed of local residents). With these skills, the Friends of the Food Forest will have the opportunity to expand the number of USDA and Forest Service programs and grants to which they have access. Internship support will help the organization develop community engagement, business development and sustainability plan into the future. The intern will work with FFF board members and volunteers to support actions identified through a community impact study and help plan communications and strategy for fundraising and communications.

Project Timeline: This is an ongoing project that will continue after the intern leaves.

Desired skills and qualifications: Writing, Business Marketing/Development, Strategic Planning

Deliverables: Impact study dissemination. Community outreach event reflection.