Sister Gardens Farm Manager and Educator

About UrbiCulture Community Farms: UrbiCulture Community Farms (UCF) is a multi-plot farm committed to providing food to people of all income levels by sustainably growing affordable, local food in the Denver-metro area. Our organization engages communities by educating youth and neighbors on growing food and promoting healthy, active lifestyles, beautifying our neighborhoods with edible landscapes, and lessening the distance from farm to plate.

Sister Gardens mission is to provide the Chaffee Park community better access to fresh, affordable, produce that is grown right where it is purchased, while sharing knowledge about nutrition through affordable classes, engaging citizens in urban farming, creating an outdoor classroom that the community has access to and building a stronger sense of connection within the community through a mutual love of food.

The Cultivate Health Project, a collaborative effort to help support the health and wellness of residents living in the neighborhoods around Aria and Regis University, was recently funded through a grant from The Colorado Health Foundation in 2014. As part of that project, UrbiCulture, has put in a 1 acre production and educational farm in the Chaffee Park neighborhood on the Aria Development at 52nd and Federal. Garden produce will be sold at a pay-what-you-can farmstand, commercial accounts, and distributed to local nonprofits. Also included in the project are permaculture community gardens, which will be managed by Regis University. Regis University’s Center for Food Systems and Community Health and UrbiCulture will offer educational programs to Regis students and area residents.

Position Summary:

UrbiCulture is seeking a reliable, hands-on, experienced urban farmer/manager to run the Sister Gardens with a commitment to food access and community. All of our farm practices follow organic recommendations and emphasize overall sustainability although we are not certified organic. We do encourage the use of bio-intensive farming practices. The Sister Gardens Farm Manager will be responsible for managing 1.25 acres at Aria for food production and education, training and oversight of volunteers and interns working on the farm, outreach to the outlying neighborhoods, communicating outputs and outcomes to supervisor and coordinating the distribution of farm produce to a variety of beneficiaries.

In addition to being an urban farm site, the gardens are an educational center for the community and the students of Regis University, making this job opportunity unique. The Sister Gardens Manager will play an important role coordinating educational projects involving the farm that will require strong skills in leading, supervising, and communicating with groups of youth and adults. The manager will be working with teachers at Regis to build curriculum to build a minor and eventually a major in urban agriculture. The Manager will also stay in strong communication with the Regis Cultivate Health Manager.

The Garden Manager reports directly to UrbiCulture’s Executive Director and Program Director.

This is a great opportunity for a passionate person to come in at the beginning stages and participate in the development of a phenomenal venture that is beneficial to the neighborhood residents, schools, restaurant owners, social service community organizations, and all who desires access to fresh, healthy and affordable produce.

Manager Education, Experience and Other Requirements:
Experience managing an organic production garden/farm, from annual planning and seed ordering to all aspects of caring for the farm through the growing season.

Experience managing the distribution and sale of produce.

Experience with educating and supervising workers on the farm (volunteers, interns, staff, students, etc).

Excellent administrative, communication and organizational skills.

Outgoing and personable.

Proficiency in Microsoft Word and Excel.

Ability to work a flexible work schedule as needed.

Must be dependable, organized, flexible, and have a sense of humor.

Must be a self-starter with a strong work ethic and work with little supervision – many times the Urban Farm Manager may be the only person at the site.

Have excellent communication skills.

Additional skill areas (not required as minimum qualifications, but desired in a strong applicant):

- Mechanical aptitude for maintaining and operating standard farm equipment (rototiller, weed wackers, etc)
- Carpentry and “fix-it” skills: handy enough with tools and basic carpentry practices to build and fix various items around the farm.
- Bilingual – English/Spanish is a plus.

Manager Job Tasks include but are not limited to the following:

**Urban Garden Planning**

Work with UCF’s Program Director to help create and carry out an annual farm plan that meets the needs of our partners and beneficiaries.

The plan shall include at minimum:

- Annual Farm Budget
- Crop Production Plan
- Farm produce sales, marketing and distribution plan
- Farm maintenance plan
- Hoop house operation plan (in 2017)
- Farm Related Programs plan for community classes and events
- Farm staffing plan that seeks to incorporate volunteer and intern labor/education
- Food Safety plan.

**Garden Management**

- Ensure that all daily farm-related tasks are completed including daily planting, weeding, harvesting, irrigating, soil amendment, and general maintenance.
- Coordinate and oversee the distribution of farm produce to end-users, including providing produce to Warren Village, our onsite ‘pay what you can’ farmstand, commercial accounts, and others.
- Manage the compost operation.
- Maintain garden infrastructure (irrigation, fences, tool repair...), and daily care for the farm landscape as needed.
- Put in cover crops in the fall.
Volunteer, Student, Intern, Job Corp Oversight: Train and direct students, volunteers, and seasonal interns in doing the seasonal work of the farm.

Lead individuals and groups of many ages in contributing to the work of the farm.

Give tours of the farm.

Ensure farm activities adhere to safety regulations and standards.

Check email on a daily basis, and be available by phone during all working hours.

Educational Programming

Work with Regis University and UCF staff to create a curriculum for the Urban Agriculture Program.

Work with Regis University and UCF staff to develop and implement a farm and agriculture related training and education program for adults and youth.

Help coordinate educational opportunities into the farm schedule.

Work with and assist local service groups (such as the Boys and Girls Club) with service projects at Sister Gardens.

Work closely with UCF’s Executive Director, Program Director and Board of Directors on planning, coordinating, budgeting, and operating the Urban Farm.

Prepare monthly reports on the status of The Sister Gardens.

Represent UCF’s agricultural programs at relevant conferences and events.

Supervise all farm related interns and volunteers.

Physical Requirements: This is a very hands-on job that includes:

- Lifting 50 pounds
- Bending, kneeling, twisting and stooping throughout the work day
- Using small hand tools, sprayers, and power equipment
- Caring for delicate plants without damaging them

Other Requirements: A valid driver’s license and your own transportation are required. A background check will be completed prior to start of job and applicant must meet our background check standards for working with youth and handling money. Must be comfortable working with people of differing economic status, race, ethnicity, and language familiarity; as well as, working with youth ages 13-24. Exhibit patience training and supervising youth employees in proper farming techniques.

Hours: 25 hours per week December through February and then 40-plus hours a week from March through November working over 5 days during the week, including Saturdays. Manager can determine hours with some flexibility, but Wednesdays and Saturdays are required for the farmstands. Short periods of time for work on holidays will be required and can be worked out between Manager, assistant and youth trainees. Staff must be able to respond to emergency on off days if necessary. You must be able to work independently.

Salary and Benefits: Salary of $28,000-$33,000 per year with paid sick, holiday and vacation hours. Potential for paid health insurance.

To Apply: Please email a one-page cover letter and no more than 2-page resume to candice@urbiculturecommunityfarms.org by January 25, 2015. In the cover letter, please describe why you are interested in this position and your unique qualifications to fill it. Interviews to be held the 27th and 28th of January.

UCF provides equal employment opportunities (EEO) to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, marital status or civil union status, past or present military service, or any other
protected classification. This policy applies to all employment decisions, including recruiting, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, compensation and training.