

Overview – 2021:

The combined activities of the Pier View's Golden Journeys (H.E.A.L.) Healthy Eating Active Living and the Green Duke Community Garden (Community Garden) programs culminated into a 2021 year of working together and providing spaces that not only allowed access to fresh vegetables helping to alleviate food insecurity but also safe spaces, as a source of mental, physical, and emotional well-being for community members.

During 2021, Community Garden yielded fresh produce of leafy greens-collards, kale, and cabbage to community residents. Within the H.E.A.L. program, activities continued, some in tandem with Community Garden activities, i.e., the Green Walk. Nine virtual-interactive and in person workshop-gatherings were held with members engaging in fitness, nutrition, self-care-mindfulness, and cultural diversity activities.

From the Community Garden the work of cultivating, seeding, harvesting, and packaging leafy green vegetables for distribution to community residents helped to overcome the realities of food insecurity.

Through workshops, virtual platforms, and in-person gatherings at our local County Park, nine (9) activities (in tandem with food-nutrition) were developed and delivered with a focus on helping to alleviate the stemming tide of frustration, anxiety, fears, and discomfort brought on by the pandemic and its circumstances.



1. What have been your greatest successes and challenges in 2021?

Greatest challenges:

- Motivating community members to move from isolation to inclusion.
- Creating safe spaces
- Meeting rising costs.
- Finding new recruits.
- Developing safe, effective, and informative venue platforms.

Greatest successes:

- Working together and developing strategies, i.e., THE GREEN WALK – Culture and Collards.
- Community Garden Management: – Under adverse conditions, cultivated, seeded, harvested leafy green vegetables, delivered, and provided access to area, in need, residents, helping to overcome food insecurity.
- Pier View H.E.A.L. – delivered nine effective gathering venues focusing on engaging, resetting, and building resilience and hope in times of hardship, culminating in September 2021 ‘Gift of Giving’ 45, Self—Care bags to forty-five residents of Scott-Mitchell Housing.
- Planning, Implementing, Collaborating, and Networking with community organizations, and local governments producing more effective delivery systems in times of great need.

2. What advice do you have for other people doing similar work?

- a. Become involved with an organization already engaged in foods, wellness, healthy eating active living related programs. Understand the issues and educate yourself on new and working trends.
- b. Bring your skills, life experiences, job, and career skills to an organization or development a new one. This work is non-profit oriented, seek and search new funding sources. Be adaptable to changing environments and social narratives.
- c. Depending on your career status (working or retired), make sure you can allot time needed to get the job done.
- d. Organize a core community group to serve as branches to the greater community, especially in rural, underserved, densely populated areas.
- e. Know and be able to express the skills you have to offer to others,
- f. The priceless gift of this work is bringing you – your hearts, humor, empathy, and enthusiasm to the work. Know and care about people. Stay aware of your community’s needs. Think outside the box!



3. What motivates you to serve your community?

- Giving back, to serve and help others is a number one priority in the Warren County Community Garden and Healthy Eating – Active Living collaborative.
- The motivation to serve is essential towards helping to build a stronger community; along with having interest and professional technical experiences in agriculture; wellness

counseling – physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being - nutrition, and community cultures.

- Gaining access to new ways and methods, gaining more experience, acquiring new skills, while learning, teaching, and learning, staying active, establishing new contacts, and finding ways to engage communities.
- Engaging in viable teaching moments with positive effects for our greater communities in Warren County.



4. What are you looking forward to in 2022?

During 2021 and the hard and sobering lessons of 2020; there is a critical need to maintain the human chain of goodness and serving community. Within this context, we look forward to the



continued growth of the Green Duke Community Garden and Pier View' H.E.A.L. activities continuing to grow, exponentially, build capacity, and sustainability thereby enabling greater opportunities for people to live healthy and active lifestyles. Growing the 'Green Walk'!

GREEN WALK, NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER 2021- 2022 – REFRESH – REBALANCE – REVIVE – EAT WELL!

H.E.A.L. participants and Green Duke community garden leafy greens – combined fitness, nutrition and cultural education activity - November and December 2021-2022 green walks- health benefits and cultural diets of peoples of color in Carolina's piedmont & coastal regions.

THE COLLARD GREEN

The vitamins, minerals, and dietary fiber found in COLLARD GREENS provide significant health benefits. Dietary fiber is important for helping to maintain your digestive health. The soluble fiber in collard greens can help absorb cholesterol before it makes its way into your bloodstream, lowering your cholesterol levels. The insoluble fiber in COLLARD GREENS feeds the good bacteria in your gut, which can help you digest foods more efficiently.

EXCELLENT SOURCE OF VITAMINS: A, C, K, CALCIUM, POTASSIUM, FOLATE, ANTIOXIDANTS

RECIPE. NOTE:

To cook COLLARD GREENS the healthy way, do not boil them, JUST SAUTE THEM IN A PAN. This way no nutrients are lost during the cooking. And, of course, don't add the bacon. In this

healthy collard green recipe, the collard greens are cooked in a frying pan with olive oil and garlic/
WEB MD

AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY NOTE – PEOPLE AND CULTURE

The Gullah Geechee people are the descendants of West and Central Africans who were enslaved and bought to the lower Atlantic states of North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida, and Georgia to work on the coastal rice, Sea Island cotton and indigo plantations.

Because their enslavement was on isolated coastal plantations, sea, and barrier islands, they were able to maintain many of their indigenous African traditions. These traditions are reflected in their foodways, arts, and craft, and spiritual traditions. They also created a new language, Gullah, a creole language spoken nowhere else in the world. Source: PSCI - www.nps.



WALKING FOR CABBAGE &
COLLARDS A GREEN DUKE
COMMUNITY GARDEN HARVEST –
NOVEMBER DECEMBER 2021-22