

## **Session 7: Workshop Developing and building organizational capacity for youth involvement**

Moderator - Megan McDermott

Presenters-

Anita Singh - Keep growing Detroit

Angela Abiodun - Detroit Food Academy

Damanique Stinson – Student

Sanaya David-Jones – Student

Doriawn Rodgers – Student

Sarah Scarborough – Student

Introductions: Each student said their name and which school they go to.

Anita – This is a collaboration hybrid of keep growing Detroit and Detroit food academy.

They tried to play video but the speaker is playing audio from another session. “AV tech on their way”

Angela- I am from Detroit Food Academy afterschool food programing, 10 cohorts currently. Culinary arts.

Anita – I am from Keep growing Detroit, our goal is to get majority of fruits and vegetables grown by Detroiters. The students worked on the farm for 6 weeks this summer will be invited back as youth leaders to new student apprentices.

Angela- Introduction of opening circle questions

Damanique- Read questions:

- Why do you want youth involvement?
- What are your perspectives on youth and their perspectives?
- What are your experiences with youth involvement in the past?
- What are some successes and what were some challenges?
- What brings you to this workshop today?

Angela – We feel like we could go on for hours. There are 40/50 people in this room we cannot address everything. Lets start a foundation today and build a community you can go and take with you after today. Can we get 2 people from the groups answer questions 1 and 4.

Emily – youth are the future, building habits can help and improve their life. Empower them and feel involved. Felt like a diverse group. Many people in our group as well. Getting them involved in gardening.

Angela – Can we get 3 people from the groups answer question 3?

Answer: Strengthen the youth and their personal health and nutrition. Strong desire to be connected to community. Want to be part of things that are just and inclusive. Youth are passionate about the environment and our job is to create structure for them to take off. "As a youth" you're doing good. Building of trust and ownership.

Answer: Summer school, don't want to be there. Don't want to be at the farm. Don't know where their food comes from. By the time 8 weeks they take ownership of the food. They want to plant and they want to grow. We need introduction to food and growing. Sometimes they have no idea.

Damanique – Another answer for question 3?

Answer from a worker at Food Corps: y challenges are trying to prove that what I do is valid to the teachers. Challenges are that Students can get a little wild so smaller groups help. Once they trust you there seems to be involvement. Elementary youth are so into it. The adults are the ones that are pushing back. I think it is important to incorporate food into all classes.

Anita- Asking students, how and why is it important to convince adults of your capacity to be involved and do this work.

Doriawn- I didn't want to try. Once I did it was a good experience. Now I'm eating healthier because I like it.

Damanique – With parent involvement and teacher involvement and working together to get in the child's brain maybe we could have a great outcome, I think it is important for little kids and teenagers.

Sarah – adults don't ask. Sit them down and ask what is your passion what do you want to do. Sarah learned in Paris they get asked what they want to do and they don't go to school for a year and then they go understudy a professional and they do it. I like to ask what can I do to teach them. Adults think they know the way and the right answer. I never come in with "I know". I ask what can you teach me. I learn from all of my students.

Angela – We are going to watch the video now and then give you some techniques.

"A bite sized video about Detroit Food Academy"  
Healthy connected powerful youth leaders.

"Keep growing Detroit Video"  
20 square miles of vacant land in the city.

Angela – PowerPoint page: Strategies for youth engagement

Damanique – Opening and closing circles everyday. We got to know each other better there. It was a good way to get youth ready for the day and reflect at the end of the day.

Doriawn - Closing circles was my favorite part of the day and least favorite part of the day. Show how much we learned from those days.

Angela – See paper for guidelines. Open the space up to the youth to see what they want the program to be. Break bread every week, Spend the whole day talking to set norms and guidelines.

All students had to sign expectations. One mic so everyone had an equal voice. Be on time, dress appropriately.

Sanaya David-Jones – Try it on helped me a lot. I love plums they are my favorite food. I thought I hated it. And don't exclude people so we become a family. We also made staff expectations. We asked them to be attentive and there for us. Let us ask questions.

Angela – first semester is about working towards meal share. Second semesters are a pop up business. Closing circles help reflect did you accomplish your goal today? Every afternoon we cook. You have to be particular with 20 students so everyone had a role. Chef and, sue chef, table clean up, timekeeper, social media, budget, shopping list, serves as a foundation for mutual accountability.

Sanaya David-Jones – I wanted to go to school for cooking and we had community chefs come twice a week and we would always make something different. We had to use what was in our farm. We had 3 cook offs we were competing against each other. It was so fun.

Damanique - The cook offs were a time to show off our talents. We had a chart to show who won. We were all really competitive. See picture to see the ingredients I used for the salsa. I got first place. It helped with youth engagement and made it fun.

Anita – the competitive element helped the group actually work together. You could really taste the difference in the food from the beginning and from the end with all of the flavors.

Sanaya David-Jones – Our skills got better and we learned a lot from that program.

Sarah – Our advanced program is for students who have been in the program for over a year. The pop up is to ask a restaurant to host an event. They did a pop up at “Revolver” and made tacos and salsa. Ask chiefs for support. Learn cooking and the business side of things. At the end of the year they went to

Chicago and went to a ton of restaurants and were hosted by the owner of whole foods.

Angela – Powerpoint slide: Youth engagement strategies

Sarah - Youth Crop Circles kept things alive, worked on accountability, everything in the world takes time and dedication. Seeds start small and grow just like us.

Angela – Refer to white sheets: Restorative practices  
What culture do you want? Culture building strategies. Proactive and retroactive statements. Be proactive. We hosted students for 6 week paid internship. Help them understand what a job is like. They learned that an interview is just as much, do you want to work here as them seeing if they want you. Leaving a job doesn't always mean you were not successful. Incorporate restorative practices. Look at websites in the bottom because it is a great tool against adultism.

Sarah- Leadership development. I try not to have anything set because the students write my program. I never come in with this is what we are going to do. They always surprise me.

Doriawn – I learned a lot of people skills. I learned from a lot of different people. I used to be shy and never raise my hand in class and now I talk a lot. I asked for feedback and to rate my performance so I can improve.

Anita – This presentation is Leadership development. You are here to learn from youth. We want to incorporate their voices so you can hear it from them. We need to involve them in every step of the way. End of season awards were a good strategy to engage them.

Angela – We have a few minutes left for questions.

Question for youth: How has this changed your path?

Damanique- I'm eating a lot more vegetables. I am a senior looking at community gardens. In my house we ordered the recycling bins to put on the curb.

Doriawn – I didn't eat any vegetables. I love spinach and carrots and I feel stronger and like Popeye.

Sanaya David-Jones – My dream school is U of M and we visited there and they have a garden resources program and that's what I want to major in when I go there for college.

Angela – We are out of time. We will be here if you have more questions. The handouts will be available online. Thank you.