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Contact: Lori Kingston, Marketing Director

Workforce training program with focus on horticulture is seeking applicants

32-week program at Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens includes classroom, hands-on, and community based instruction to prepare 18-24 year olds for green industry jobs..

(June 18, 2013, Columbus Ohio) Green Corps, a training program for high school graduates residing in Franklin County, is accepting applications for its third 32-week class that begins on July 29, 2013.

The program, a Franklin County Economic Development and Planning Initiative takes place at Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens and includes instruction and hands-on training in horticulture-related fields such as landscaping, plant propagation and food cultivation. Personal development is also addressed through class topics such as time management, job readiness, financial literacy and conflict resolution.

Eastside Columbus resident C.J. Brice, who completed the program in 2012, was offered a position in the Conservatory's horticulture department upon his graduation. He was recently promoted to a grounds technician, responsible for maintaining outdoor gardens, flowerbeds and park grounds..

"Green Corps was much more than I thought it would be," Brice says. "We learned about horticulture, but also gained important life skills, such as how to create a resume, dress professionally, and to not only be on time...but be early." He cites the program as helping him to pinpoint landscape design as the area of horticulture he found to be of most interest.

The goal of the program is to provide each participant with a solid understanding in a range of topics. Participants work side by side with the Conservatory's staff and horticulturists, learning skills in plant propagation, botany basics, organic garden practices, and design.

Concentrated classroom training, guest speakers and field trips to local businesses provide comprehensive preparation, giving participants the best opportunity to confidently enter the job market at the conclusion of the 32-week program.

July 1 is the deadline to apply for inclusion for the class beginning on Monday, July 29. Anticipated class size is 10 students. Applications received after July 1 may be considered if space in the class is still available.

Green Corps candidates must have an interest in horticulture or landscaping, be 18 – 24 years of age, be residents of Franklin County, and TANF- or WIA eligible. Central Ohio Workforce Investment Corporation (COWIC) recruits and screens potential participants; COWIC also provides an hourly wage to Green Corps participant while they are in the program.

Applicants should contact COWIC Career Consultant Lawrence Jackson at 614.559.5075 or by email: Ljackson@COWIC.org.