Green Opportunities
2017 Program Update

**OUR MISSION** Green Opportunities’ mission is to train, support, and connect people from marginalized communities to sustainable employment pathways.

**TRAINING & EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES**

- 92 people received training related to culinary arts, construction, life skills, or entrepreneurship
- 64 industry-aligned certifications awarded
- 59 people secured jobs or apprenticeships, or enrolled in post-secondary education
- 20 people graduated from the 15-week Kitchen Ready and Southside Construction programs

**ORGANIZATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS**

- **Welcomed Joseph “J” Hackett as our new Executive Director.** Mr. Hackett brings to GO 17 years of experience in supportive services and community-based programming.
- **Completed a Strategic Plan** that will guide Green Opportunities’ work for the next four years, from 2018 to 2021.
- **Launched a YouthBuild Pre-Apprenticeship training program, thanks to a three-year grant** from the U.S. Department of Labor, expanding education, leadership, and training opportunities for Buncombe County’s out-of-school youth.
- **Grew our Southside Kitchen social enterprise,** providing healthy meals for the United Way Homework Diner program at three middle schools and the YMCA of WNC Summer Meals program.
- **Expanded employment partnerships** with key area employers, including Brasfield & Gorrie, Biltmore Farms, and the City of Asheville.
- **Purchased and outfitted our Southside Soul food truck,** thanks to a grant from The Cannon Foundation. The food truck made appearances at the Goombay and Blue Ridge Pride Festivals, serving Soul Food prepared by Kitchen Ready graduates.

**Graduate Profile: Lisa Simpson, Kitchen Ready Cycle 15**

“GO Kitchen Ready has helped me to be myself, and to be my best person around other people. It is nice to work as a team, making meals together and serving customers at lunch time.”

After graduating in August, GO’s staffing agency, UpStaff Personnel, helped Lisa secure a part-time job as a room attendant at a local hotel. She was recently named “Employee of the Month” at her job.
COMMUNITY IMPACT

- Hosted 11 Kitchen Ready Pop-Up Dinners and welcomed thousands of community members to our donation-based lunches 3 times a week in Southside Kitchen.
- Helped organize three community resource fairs for residents of public housing.
- Co-hosted 4th Annual Southside Community Thanksgiving Dinner, cooking and serving a free holiday meal to 500+ Asheville residents.
- Built Free Little Libraries to expand literacy and access to books locally, in partnership with The POP Project.

Graduate Profile: Jerry “JL” Peary, GO Training Team

“Working with GO has opened up so many opportunities for me.”

Jerry spent 5 years working steadily in the building and music industries after completing the GO Training Team program in 2012. Last fall, Jerry returned to GO after hearing about a job opportunity with the City of Asheville’s Public Works department, one of GO's employment partners. He completed several months of temp work before being hired as a full-time sanitation worker.

ORGANIZATIONAL RECOGNITION

- Chosen for Mountain BizWorks' ScaleUp WNC Cohort 5, an intensive business growth planning and mentorship program. ScaleUp empowered GO to grow its UpStaff Personnel staffing social enterprise, connecting local job seekers to temp-to-perm employment opportunities while generating a sustainable revenue stream for GO's training programs.
- Awarded two-year grant from The Kresge Foundation for the Southside Arts and Agriculture Project. The “FreshLo: Fresh, Local & Equitable” grant will expand food and cultural programming in Southside Community Garden and engage GO Members in renovating Edington Center auditorium.
- Welcomed food sovereignty activist Vandana Shiva for lunch in Southside Kitchen and a tour of the Southside Community Garden.
- Featured by local media, including Mountain Xpress, Citizen-Times, WLOS, and Asheville FM 103.3.

Visit greenopportunities.org to learn more or support our work.

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