Urban Agriculture and Food Justice Amid Uncertainty: Fostering Sustainability and Volunteerism Through Storytelling and Therapy

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Abstract

The Great Recession and its aftermath, recent immigration patterns, migrants and refugees across the globe have put the importance of food justice and hunger at the forefront of the many social justice causes. The need for urban agriculture is even greater today than it has been in the past because of the sheer numbers of people living in poverty, experiencing hunger, food insecurity, needing food assistance or subsidies. Organizations and individuals must make a permanent commitment to urban agriculture. To do this, urban agriculture must be sustainable. This paper attempts to address some sustainability issues and solutions using statistics, predictive modeling, storytelling and therapy. Sustainability in an urban agricultural context includes equipment, supplies, a work force or labor, capital and funding. Sustainability also refers to human resources issues associated with staff and volunteers. The sustainability of a volunteer pool includes organizational cognizance of the experience of volunteering. For a farmer, organization whose mission is food justice or individuals and organizations in urban agriculture, one of the biggest costs is labor or human resources, which includes volunteers. Motivating volunteers and keeping them engaged is one of the biggest challenges along with fiscal issues for urban farms and gardens. Storytelling helps to create unique volunteer experiences and this can be achieved through social and community horticulture and urban agricultural activities. Urban farmers themselves also engage in a form of storytelling to keep one another encouraged and to develop friendships. SHARE Food Program, Inc. and its Nice Roots Farm is an excellent case study because it has a well-established network and pool of volunteers, partners as well as resources, including past and present farmers and agricultural and horticultural volunteers, and techniques for promoting sustainability.

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Keywords: urban agriculture, volunteerism, horticultural therapy, volunteer, sustainability, education, service-learning, experiential education, corporate social responsibility

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Introduction

Poverty, hunger and food insecurity have been with humankind for centuries. However, in 2008, a global economic crisis ensued. This global crisis affected the United States of America in the form of the Great Recession[1] and a predicted increase in poverty rates.[2] Internationally, the Arab Spring, various ethnic conflicts[3], economic crises in the Eurozone, wars and other global geopolitical events have created an unprecedented refugee crisis across Europe and the world. The displacement of so many people will likely create even more of a need for urban agriculture internationally[4] because many of the displaced individuals will want to grow food unique to their specific cultures. Urban agriculture here in the United States has the added benefit of creating a pace for indigenous ethnicities and newer immigrants to grow culturally appropriate food for and in their respective communities. There is a global need to address sustainability as it relates to urban agriculture, which is practiced across the globe. This research

[1] The Great Recession is a term that refers to the global financial crisis where in the U.S., "a combination of Wall Street behavior, low interest rates, safe-harbor rules for investing in high-risk debt, and implicit government guarantees to Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae sent investments gushing into real estate. A bubble market ensued, and Americans suffered….Municipalities' pockets swelled from real estate taxes. Spending, and borrowing, spun out of control…Homeowners began defaulting; foreclosures skyrocketed; housing prices plummeted. And then, as interest rates on adjustable-rate mortgages began resetting, homeowners who were counting on housing prices to continue appreciating so that they could refinance and take advantage of low teaser rates, were not able to do so. People were priced out of their homes…The U.S. economy sputtered..." (Jagannathan, Kapoor and Schaumburg, 2013). Additionally, the official poverty rate increased from 12.5% in 2007 to 15% in 2011 and there was an increase in "'working poverty,'" according to research compiled by The Russell Sage Foundation and The Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality (Danzinger, Chavez, & Cumberworth, 2012, pp. 1-3).

[2] According to The Russell Sage Foundation and The Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality, poverty "will remain a major social problem of our time unless either (a) economic growth is far stronger and more widely distributed than one would currently expect, or (b) public policies that have been shown to reduce poverty are expanded" (Danzinger, Chavez, & Cumberworth, 2012, p. 5).

[3] The deposing of Saddam Hussein, former President of Iraq, the assassination of Muammar Gaddafi, former leader of Libya, and Hosni Mubarak, former President of Egypt and the current controversy surrounding Bashar al-Assad, the President of Syria.

[4] Urban agriculture through community gardens and other such vehicles is practiced around the world in places such as Accra, Ghana, Canada, India and the United Kingdom.

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paper and case study address psychological, sociological and economic theories[5] as they relate to volunteerism and sustainability in urban agriculture. In an urban agricultural context, sustainability refers to stakeholders and their needs or requirements, equipment, supplies, work force or labor, capital and funding, which will be discussed also in this research paper.

In urban agriculture settings, sustainability has different meanings, which range from organizational to personal, for each of the food system stakeholders. With respect to urban agriculture, stakeholders are the farmers and related staff, land grant universities, extension offices and staff, educational institutions, volunteers, organizational leadership, Boards of Directors, partners, the public, private and non-profit sectors and sources of income (e.g., foundations, corporations, earned income, social events, individuals, endowments, capital). Each of these stakeholders has a role to play, which will be discussed, when it comes to volunteerism, funding and sustainability.

The goal of the researcher in this case study is to understand the benefits of horticultural therapy and storytelling and their relationship to volunteerism and sustainability in an urban agriculture setting. An additional goal, but no less important, is to understand specifically how the Director of Urban Agriculture and the Executive Director at SHARE Food Program, Inc. are creating a flexible and distinctive model for UA program sustainability, by looking in depth at SHARE Food Program, Inc.'s urban agriculture program and SHARE Nice Roots farm.[6] This novel model is indeed a paradigm shift and worthy of further study and analysis.

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[5] Psychological theories emphasize "personality traits, self-concepts and motivation" (Wilson, 2012, p. 177-8). Sociological theories focus on "individual sociodemographic characteristics such as race, gender, social class" and "social networks and community characteristics" (Wilson, 2012, p. 178). Economic theorists discuss volunteerism as a "form of unpaid labor, consuming resources and motivated by the promise of rewards" (Wilson, 2012, p. 178).

[6] Stake distinguished between intrinsic where the researcher wants to "understand the specifics of a case and not generalize" and instrumental case studies where the researcher's goal is to "support or build understanding of general phenomena by looking in depth at one typical example"

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The author believes that gardening is inclusive rather than exclusive much like the spirit of community gardens, food justice and nonprofit oriented urban farms, including the SHARE Nice Roots Farm at SHARE Food Program, Inc. (SHARE). The author asserts that social cohesion and social exclusion are alleviated through urban agriculture via volunteers experiencing and participating in therapeutic gardening, a derivative of horticultural therapy, and storytelling, which then translates into a sustainable labor pool disguised as volunteers. SHARE provides a space for a collective community garden and urban farm. Community gardens are part of the urban agriculture landscape.

According to Drescher and Lal, urban agriculture has production sites that include abandoned homes and factories, community gardens, road strips and home gardens as well as other novel sites (Lal, p. 59, 2014; Drescher, 2013). SHARE has a physical location inside of a former factory and the facility resides on five acres. SHARE has approximately 2,000 volunteers per month and distributes 21.5 million pounds of shelf-stable and fresh produce through the food bank. In 2014, ten-thousand pounds of the food distributed was produce from the Nice Roots Farm and in 2015, 20,000 pounds were distributed. SHARE Food Program, Inc. requires that one perform community service as part of the individual's participation in SHARE Food Program, Inc. services.

As John Wilson (2012) noted, "…the experience of volunteering—remains somewhat neglected, particularly the influence of the social context of volunteer work on the volunteer's satisfaction and commitment" and it is this void to which the author also intends to contribute either anecdotal commentary and conclusions or novel ideas and research.

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Motivating volunteers and keeping them engaged is one of the biggest challenges along with fiscal issues for urban farms and gardens. SHARE Food Program, Inc. and its Nice Roots Farm is an excellent case study because it already has a well-established network and pool of volunteers and funding through the Herculean efforts of its Executive Director, Steveanna Wynn. Mrs. Wynn has been with SHARE since its inception in 1987 and has been the leader of the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania organization since 1989.

SHARE Food Program, Inc.'s mission includes advocacy and educational information, which is integral to the volunteer experience. With the face of education changing, including a push for experiential education and the view of education as a commodity, what better place than through civic engagement or service-learning to inject some of the core principles that made liberal arts education desirable in the past. SHARE has an enviable intern program that can boast of college students from all over the United States and a diverse group of local high school students.

This has implications at all levels of education and professional development because education, training and development as well as travel budgets are being cut by institutions and organizations. Corporate social responsibility mandates and organizational programs encourage civic engagement and volunteerism. These volunteerism opportunities provide a chance for professional development on the part of the volunteers. Professional development and educational experiences can be created through a win-win or symbiotic relationship between education, the public, private and nonprofit sectors when stakeholders devise creative ways of administering programs.

Storytelling helps to create unique volunteer experiences and this can be achieved through horticulture and urban agricultural activities. A discussion of horticultural therapy is

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comprised of public health, spiritual therapy, medicinal herbs, aromatherapy, religion, and the metaphysical attributes of nature. However, some volunteers may not identify as either religious or spiritual; therefore, a unique volunteer experience must be crafted for those individuals. For example, horticulture is an artistic experience as much in art is largely based upon nature. Moreover, horticulture and agriculture bring people together. Volunteers can experience the therapeutic properties of gardening and horticulture regardless of religious beliefs through thoughtful storytelling, tasks and activities as well as educational programs.

Depending upon volunteers for urban agricultural needs is arguably akin to what rural farmers experience with regard to the unpredictable nature of the weather and depending on migrant farm workers. With adequate assistance or preferably an abundance of volunteers, the more productive and efficient the farm or organization can be and the converse is true as well.

Many nonprofit urban farms need access to resources, equipment, personnel, expertise, and funding to be sustainable. Although predictive models have been used for forecasting hourly water demand, crop yield models, and plant nutrition and plant uptake digestion for large farms or agricultural enterprises, there is very little literature on using similar methods for small urban farms, especially as it relates sustainability.

The sustainability of UA is also dependent on its psychosocial benefits. Urban agriculture is the source of many social benefits as noted by Cole, Lee-Smith & Nasinyama, Dubbeling, Holland, Mendes, Wakefield, Yeudall, Taron, Reynolds & Skinner, Wekerle and Welsh & MacRae, which include stimulating public spaces, improved health and nutrition, social inclusion, an “enhanced sense of place,” community safety, physical activity and food security (Mendes, Balmer, Kaethler & Rhoads, 2008, p. 436).

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SHARE is unique in the Philadelphia urban agriculture context because we are more educational than production oriented. Our goal is to explore and show visitors and volunteers the possibilities of urban agriculture, what is applicable for home and community gardeners, and what different fruits and vegetables look like when they are not in a supermarket, convenience store or other retail establishment. The author choose SHARE Food Program, Inc. located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania as a case study because of Philadelphia's rich history and tradition in the urban agriculture and green city movements. Hassall referred to Philadelphia the doyenne of urban community gardens because of the extremely large number[7] of "food-producing community and squatter gardens," including Weaver's Way Co-op, Greensgrow Farms and the Philadelphia Orchard Project among others, as discussed by Vitiello and Nairn (Travaline & Hunold, 2010, p. 582). The Philadelphia Urban Gardening Program stated that Philadelphia is well known as a city with strong community gardening movements as evidenced by the presence of over 700 gardens (Saldivar-Tanaka and Krasny, 2003, p.400). Eigenbrod and Gruda state that the importance of urban agriculture is likely to increase in the future because of "a constant migration from rural to urban areas" occurring in developing countries (Eigenbrod and Gruda, 2015, p. 491). SHARE, given its location and mission is uniquely positioned to address this present and future international crisis and need for UA.

Research Questions

In the sections that follow, the author address three primary research questions. First, does every nonprofit organization need an uber-champion? If so, how should these individuals be selected, mentored or is it a serendipitous occurrence by which these individuals are matched with an organization? Second, how can we develop those broad-minded leaders, activists and

[7] Some sources state that there are over 700 community gardens in Philadelphia.

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others committed to community service or the nonprofit sector into persons such that causes that are important to them receive even more resources and attention? Third, what is the best way to develop these leaders and activists such that they reach their full potential as it relates to their impact on food and social justice causes as well as the nonprofit sector? Fourth, what methods or approaches are fruitful or best when trying to attract additional corporate sponsors? Fifth, how do you enhance the educational or professional development experience? Sixth, how can we challenge provincial college students, children, people, and business and organizational leaders to become cosmopolitan individuals? Seventh, should service learning and volunteerism be integrated into pedagogical models for business schools and undergraduate business programs? If so, would this increase the number of partnerships and funders? Eighth, how does the weather or season influence volunteerism and volunteer efforts in an urban agricultural setting? Finally, are similar methods, i.e., predictive models similar to those used for forecasting, appropriate for small urban farms?

Theoretical Framework: Storytelling and Volunteerism

The Meaning of Volunteerism

Volunteerism has different meanings depending on the region and context. The International Labour Office (ILO) does not use the terms "'volunteering' or 'volunteer work" because of the various meaning they have depending upon the context (2011, p. 18).

In the United States of America, volunteers and volunteerism are viewed as human resources or human capital. Therefore, they have economic value. According to Forbes and Zampelli, when economists analyze volunteerism, they utilize three models: "the public or collective goods model, the private goods mode, and the investment model" (Forbes & Zampelli,

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2014, p. 229). In identifying characteristics of volunteers, these models provide insight to the possible motivations of volunteers as well as a foundation upon which to create a unique volunteer experience. At SHARE, we are better able to loosely categorize volunteers based upon the organization they represent or their interests. Using this information, we can appropriately allocate and deploy our volunteers or human resources in the most efficient way. By allocating them and deploying them efficiently, we increase their productivity levels exponentially.

In the public goods model, volunteerism is analyzed as a selfless endeavor and the focus is on the collective volunteer effort not the volunteer's individual contribution (Forbes & Zampelli, 2014). In contrast, the private goods model treats volunteerism as "a private consumption good where it is the individual's own volunteering that imparts utility" (Forbes & Zampelli, 2014). Finally, under the investment model, the primary motivator is individual desire of the volunteer to gain marketable skills and experience to increase one's own employability or "employment prospects" (Forbes & Zampelli, 2014). We encounter volunteers at SHARE that fall into these latter categories, namely interns, some master gardeners and others. For example, recent college graduates and upper class students intern (volunteer) at SHARE to gain practical experience. Master gardeners and others in the horticulture or agriculture field volunteer at SHARE to enhance their employment prospects at nurseries and other related organizations. In contrast, volunteers affiliated with faith-based groups or service-oriented organizations, including fraternities and sororities, are volunteering for helping out to improve the lot or condition of mankind and their fellow man.

When discussing the meaning of volunteering, "informal volunteering," which is civic engagement outside of the framework of a formal service organization (Carson, 1999).

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Benenson and Stagg assert that the term "*volunteering* [emphasis] as traditionally applied in scholarly research" does not necessary reflect the "full dimensions of voluntary participation in diverse communities (Benenson & Stagg, 2015, p. 3). At SHARE, many of the African-American male volunteers engage in informal volunteering because they are picking up the SHARE packages or boxes for the churches, mothers, sisters, aunts, wives, children and friends. Many of the domestic faith-based organizations and corporate organizations among others include their families in volunteer efforts. Oftentimes, this fact is overlooked. Employees, for example, bring their spouses and children to SHARE to help out during a organizational outing or event.

Storytelling: Humans' Connection to the Earth

SHARE Nice Roots Farm is an informal community garden, i.e., it is a garden available to the community not only to work, maintain and from which to harvest, but also there for leisure and enjoyment by the SHARE community. Many volunteers come to SHARE to find a place of emotional and economic support as well as a sense of purpose and affinity. This kinship is to the earth, nature, spiritual belief systems that rely upon the ecosystem and other intangible metaphysical concepts. In an editorial written by Turner, Henryks and Pearson, the authors noted:

> "In times of fear and crisis…people turn to food gardening…and it may be about creating and supporting people's efforts to establish a sense of connection and about grounding people in place and creating and supporting efforts to find a sense of purpose and belonging , not just to a community, but to land and to nature as a personal and…rather

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intimate response to bigger picture issues over which we as individuals might feel we have little control" (Turner, Henryks & Pearson, 2011, p. 490).

According to Relf, "throughout the history and tradition of…civilization[8] the garden has served as a pivotal location for change…" and "if…the garden does play a vital role in the grand scheme of things, then horticulturists, as keepers of the garden, need to try to understand the meaning of the garden to people" (Relf, 1992, p. 160;). As urban agriculturists, it may be the duty of farmers, horticulturists and other stakeholders, to tell this part of the story of humankind's connection to the earth. Volunteers may be interested in this aspect of the history of horticulture and it would assist in helping volunteers to understand the importance of their work as it relates to sustainability in urban agriculture. At SHARE, the Director of Urban Agriculture makes these connections, imparts the wisdom and stories and history with volunteers.

According to Steveanna Wynn, Executive Director of SHARE Food Program, Inc., there may be a greater story to tell regarding the rationale behind why people have gardened throughout history (personal communication, October 21, 2015). People have gardened for food, healing and medicinal purposes as well as the aesthetic nature of flora throughout time and throughout the world. Through the manual physical labor associated with gardening and agriculture, people were connected to the earth Ms. Wynn asserted (personal communication, October 21, 2015). Over the generations, we have lost that connection to the earth as indicated by research and our individual family histories. For example, the author is three generations removed from an agricultural or agrarian existence. The author connects with the land through

[8] To this point, some of the most famous gardens in history and civilization include those in Mesopotamia (Detweiler, M.B., 2012, p.2), the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, the Garden of Eden, the Garden of Gethsemane, and monastic gardens, for example.

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family tradition – culinary, cultural and otherwise. That is, many principles and behaviors were encouraged, taught and passed on via family values.

Have humans lost their connection with the earth, soil, the ecosystem and other systems associated with food? The answer for many, is likely yes because that subset of individuals is less likely to want to engage in the "hard manual and physical labor" required for food production, according to Ms. Wynn ((personal communication, October 21, 2015). The relationship that generations of humans formerly had over time with the earth is in jeopardy and this is one of the many stories that must also be told as part of the urban agriculture experience. In urban areas where space or earth is at a premium, the skill sets required for growing food and gardening may be lost, according to Steveanna Wynn (personal communication, October 21, 2015). Given poverty, immigration patterns, domestic and local migration patterns, and the need to preserve ethnic culture through food and plants and storytelling, urban agriculturalists play a pivotal role preserving this rich history, culture and culinary trove. These factors can also play a role in recruiting and maintaining a pool of volunteers. In the author's case, not all of her contemporaries have learned the horticultural and agricultural lessons and traditions through family that she has had imparted to her. At issue is whether there has to be interest and desire on the part of younger generations to engage and learn about urban agriculture. The author says absolutely. However, it is a partnership and the partnership must be fostered between the generations, farmers, educational institutions and UA programs. Mutual respect is key. There must be a willingness to learn and take direction from an older person or elder. More importantly, there must be cognizance and respect for the idea that hands-on experience is valuable and that theoretical learning, although extremely important, is not the sole source of

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horticultural or agricultural knowledge. Finally, the older person, farmer and educator must have patience and a desire to serve and volunteer.

Domestic migration patterns historically have trended toward urban, suburban and ex-urban areas. It follows that by living in an urban area, one has less of a need for formerly important agricultural skill set(s). The skill sets required for urban existence differ from those required in a rural area. Much of the world's population lives in an urban area, which means that the area was without large areas or swathes of vegetation, soil or optimal conditions for growing plants (Relf, 2003, p. 990). According to Relf, "plants in our cities have a humanizing effect" and many are starting to realize the importance of that "humanizing effect" (Relf, 2003). More importantly, those interested parties and stakeholders are voicing their concerns over urban areas that are void of plants and "what we may be losing as human beings" (Relf, 2003, p. 990). Urban agriculture presents an opportunity for storytelling and increasing the interaction between people and plants in an urban environment. As Relf noted, opportunities exist for "expanding the uses and contacts that people have with plants and nature" (Relf, 2003, p. 990). For example, studies have shown that neighborhood crime was reduced in Philadelphia with community greening (Macpherson, 1993).

The environment at SHARE, as compared to the external environment outside of the gates, is much safer, healthier and greener than much of the surrounding area, which in some cases is abandoned. In 2003, Bellows, Brown and Smit concluded that UA builds "safe, healthy and green environments in neighborhoods….and abandoned areas" (Bellows, Brown & Smit, 2003, p.1). SHARE has been in this North Philadelphia neighborhood for thirty years and has served many purposes and is arguably adept at changing with the times and needs of the community.

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Socializing and Socialization via Urban Agriculture

With the proliferation of technology, e.g., mobile devices, tablets, smart phones, and social media, modernly, people often feel alone and seek out venues and means in which to socialize. SHARE's mission and motto include building and nourishing community. Inherent in this mission and organizational goals are socializing and socialization via urban agriculture. Chiara Tornaghi raised the issue of tackling specific localized urban problems and presented the question of "how are social cohesion and social exclusion promoted and alleviated through" urban agriculture (UA) (Tornaghi, p. 562, 2014). SHARE, for some, is a valuable asset to the surrounding community.[9] Urban community gardens provide a safe community space for socializing and recreation (Ghose & Pettygrove, p. 1101, 2014). At SHARE and in other community gardens, the residents and the Director of Urban Agriculture use benches in a dedicated area of the garden for rest, relaxation and socialization and while working in the garden, the residents interact with passersby by answering questions related to the garden (Ghose & Pettygrove, p. 1101, 2014). Volunteers and SHARE staff often use the garden for lunch, picnics, meetings, breaks and other gathering because of the strategic placement of benches and other seating.

The Director of Urban Agriculture at SHARE often uses the garden as a "shared space for…residents" and visitors "to bridge cultural differences and build connections between each other around the shared activities of growing and eating food" (Ghose & Pettygrove, p. 1103, 2014). The author further extends these observations to the SHARE Food Program, Inc. through the presence of economic integration, the bridging of cultural differences and the ability to build

[9] In Milwaukee, black residents living in the "'inner city'…consider the gardens as valuable assets that contribute to the safety, stability, and aesthetic quality of the neighborhood (Ghose & Pettygrove, p. 1100, 2014).

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connections between a highly diverse group of people. SHARE attracts volunteers from a diverse demographic set, including many who identify as Asian, Hispanic, Caribbean, African and other immigrant groups as well as many corporate volunteers, including principles and officers.

Recruiting Volunteers

Creating, maintaining and managing a volunteer pool is one of the many challenges regarding UA. The volunteer pool at SHARE is culled from faith-based groups, corporate organizations, schools and others. One aspect of sustainability in urban agriculture is to get those from more deprived backgrounds, those who would not normally volunteer or people reporting long-term chronic health conditions to volunteer. Cornwell and Warburton assert that if employers were to create, enforce and encourage "flexible policies that encourage workers' ties to the local community" then this would likely lead to a "significant investment in the surrounding community" (Cornwell and Warburton, 2013, p. 167). It is also likely that this net or significant investment effect would spread to surrounding communities.

Oftentimes, researchers, leaders and individuals look for a return on investment. In the case of urban agriculture and food justice, the return on the human capital investment would be the sustainability of this element of the food system. At SHARE and in conjunction with its business partners, SHARE's corporate partners return year after year to participate in community service projects at SHARE. These businesses encourage flexible work arrangements or days devoted to service via United Way Day of Service or other structured programs to make communities stronger.

In any organization the employees and members have different personality types. It is possible to cull, artfully and thoughtfully, prospective volunteers from the broad spectrum of

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personality types, specifically introverts and extroverts. According to John Wilson, extraverts, agreeable people and those with a "'resilient' personality"[10] are more likely to volunteer (2012, p. 179). However, organizations and researchers must consider those individuals deemed less likely to volunteer, e.g., introverts. SHARE's UA programs and activities have volunteer opportunities for all personality types. The tasks and activities include solitary and group work.

Creating a volunteer pool specifically designed to encourage people to volunteer who would not normally volunteer would help to sustain any urban agriculture program. At SHARE Food Program, Inc., it is a requirement to volunteer or engage in community service in order to receive shelf-stable products from the emergency food resource center. That is, SHARE indirectly encourages some people with "social phobias or chronic but not clinically serious social anxiety" to volunteer because SHARE acting as a "friend or acquaintance" persuades these individuals to engage in volunteer and community service projects (Wilson, 2012, p. 179) in order to receive a benefit.

Volunteers are not only a source of labor, but also classified as human resources, which is a term that Wilson used to describe the "individual 'assets' that enable people to volunteer or condition their interest in doing volunteer work" (2012, p. 183). The gender, race, class, education, work and income of an individual determine their tendency to volunteer or not and the frequency of volunteerism (Wilson, 2012, p. 183-8). Nonprofits must understand their human resources and assign meaningful and high impact tasks, when possible, to these individuals. By encouraging volunteers to return, they become "regulars" or frequent volunteers. Regular volunteers could be counted as employees (Davis, p. 29, 2011). By creating pools of recurring

[10] Those with a "'resilient' personality" are those individuals who are "high in emotional regulation, socially skilled, and tending toward positive emotionality" (Wilson, 2012, p. 179).

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volunteers, the individuals in these pools have the ability to take on leadership roles, develop specialized skills, they require less direction and supervision and they are available for paid opportunities should they arise. For those who are transitioning or are unemployed, volunteering helps them to stay motivated during an extended job search and it lifts the spirits of the volunteer (Messmer, 2002, p.15). Student interns and other adult volunteers find solace in this regard in UA and other programs at SHARE.

At SHARE, volunteers are recruited through faith based groups, food cupboards, school groups, colleges and universities, Penn State Extension, corporate groups, court appointed criminals, and other community partners. By recruiting from multiple sources, the volunteer pool is extremely diverse with respect to age, ethnicity, background, race, and experience. Moreover, this type of recruitment approach helps to build and reinforce relationships between SHARE and its partners. The Community SEAL Project of the University of California Extension's unique model for recruiting and training teen and adult volunteers in urban areas recruits volunteers through community partners and this recruitment approach improved communication and helped fortify ties between University of California Extension and community collaborators (Smith, Dasher & Klingborg, 2005, p. 7). The author, a Penn State Master Gardener, volunteered at SHARE under the direction of the inaugural farmer and first Director of Urban Agriculture at SHARE, Bill Shick.

One of the trends that the Pennsylvania State University Extension has recognized and supported is the rise of the urban farmer and issues related to marketing, farmers' markets, farm stands, food safety, buying local produce and food products among other things. Modernly, consumer trust in the commercial food market has been eroded over time and small producers are in the throes of a comeback with UA being the conduit. A reason to promote volunteerism is

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to recruit people who have concerns about food safety, adverse environmental impact of agricultural practices, and the lack of social equity as it relates to food access because this group of people have concerns about the large producers controlling the commercial food market. At SHARE, we use sustainable and chemical free growing practices, which are appealing to consumers who desire more locally grown foods. It is well settled that the commercial agriculture industry has been affected by "criticism over cultivation practices and food quality concerns driving consumers to seek more locally grown foods" (Bradshaw, 2013, p. 267).

Consumer education can be the catalyst for many other movements, concerns, priorities and goals under the UA rubric. Oftentimes, volunteers and other stakeholders engage based upon the education benefits of UA, including plant maintenance, planting vegetables, seed starting, environmental benefits of chemical-free growing, hands-on activities and the opportunity acquire new skills or practice. According to Moskell, Allred, and Ferenz, urban forestry practitioners and volunteers view the opportunity to "learn new skills or to exercise skills" they do not use often as both a volunteer recruitment strategy and a motivator for volunteers themselves (Moskell, Allred & Ferenz, 2010, p.17).

SHARE's location, a low-income neighborhood, coupled with its SHARE package recipient requirement to engage in two hours of community service onsite at SHARE or at a location of the recipient's choice makes recruiting volunteers easier because as residents of a low-income, the recipients may be more dependent on public transportation[11]. If they live in the area around SHARE, they do not need to use public transportation to travel to a volunteer site, they can save money because the volunteer site is within walking distance.

[11] The research findings of Clifton, Handy and Morland illustrated the possibility that "residents of low-income areas may be more dependent" on public transportation, which makes travel to markets outside of their neighborhood more arduous (Hung, 2004, p. 61).

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The Experience of Being a Volunteer

You must show these individual volunteers that they, too, are stakeholders and critical to the long-term viability, success, existence and persistence of the organization. Like many people, volunteers need to feel that their actions are appreciated.

The Volunteer Rationale: Motivators and Health Benefits

The author is constantly fascinated with both the question of why people volunteer, particularly at SHARE, and their individual answers. According to research conducted by City University London, there are five reasons why people begin to volunteer or engage with the community (Low, Butt, Ellis, & Davis Smith, 2007, p.33). The most common reasons are "to improve things or help people…because the cause was important to the volunteer…to get involved in order to meet people or make new friends…word of mouth" and having previously used the services of the organization (Low, Butt, Ellis, & Davis Smith, 2007, p.33). Low et al. also found that the other reasons for volunteering included a desire to "use existing skills," "learn new skills," "part of my religious belief," "connected with my interests/hobbies," and for help with career advancement (Low, Butt, Ellis, & Davis Smith, 2007, p.34). SHARE's community service requirement as a stipulation for receiving a SHARE package has the net effect of creating a pool of volunteers for SHARE. The author has heard all of these reasons or a variation thereof from all of her informal interviews with volunteers.

Another reason that many people volunteer at SHARE is the flexibility. Working people may or may not have the option of volunteering during the week. However, they may have more flexibility on weekends for civic minded or community engagement activities. SHARE is open two Saturdays per month and many school groups, unaffiliated college students, adults and

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young adults come to volunteer on a regular basis. By coming regularly, the regular and returning volunteer benefits include: informal monthly training and mentoring on not only UA projects and social justice, but also life skills. According to Smith, Dasher and Klingborg, periodic training strengthens volunteer leader capacity over time and volunteers improved their career and life skills (Smith, Dasher & Klingborg, 2005, p.7).

Not all of the skilled regular volunteers are SHARE participants, i.e., some come regularly out of commitment to social justice or they like the people and sense of community at SHARE. Another motivating factor for volunteers and recruitment method employed at SHARE is the lure of teaching people how to produce their own food. Are healthy food choices and healthy lifestyle messages related to volunteering and/or volunteerism messaging? Yes, they are related and must be addressed. By participating in horticultural activities, participants can "see, touch, smell and even eat the products" and it follows that "an appropriate level of sweat and hard work is physically healthy" (Chen, M.L., p. 637-8, 2014).

Perceived cultural affiliation is extremely important as it relates to storytelling. Food preferences are rooted in tradition and many do not want to give up their culture and choose mainstream American culture (largely defined as White). Moreover, it is critical to the receptivity toward the "food promoted and the food source" (Hu, Acosta, McDaniel & Gittelsohn, 2013, p. 70). When people understand the public health connection between food choices and lifestyle, volunteering in an UA setting is pleasurable, educational and imperative because the individual is empowered and contributes to his or her own lifetime health and well-being.

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Background: Horticultural Therapy

A discussion of horticultural therapy must first acknowledge the relationship between humans and plants. human issues in horticulture (HIH) examines the relationship between human beings and plants (Relf, 1992a; Relf & Lohr, 2003). It is well established that horticultural activities are associated with promotion of health, correction of negative behavior, the reinforcement of confidence, the improvement of social skills and other things (Klemmer, C.D., Waliczek, M.T. & Zajicek, M.J., 2005; Lohr & Pearson-Mims, 2005). It is on this foundation in which horticultural therapy is built.

One type of therapy to which the author refers is horticultural therapy. Although SHARE offers other types of therapy, the author largely focuses her discussion on horticultural therapy. Horticultural therapy is the practice of getting people to participate in plant or gardening activities to uplift and enrich their bodies, minds and spirits (Worden et al., 2004, p.1). Research has proven the benefits of horticultural therapy, which include physical, social, psychological and cognitive benefits (Worden et al., 2004, p.1). Therapy in the context of horticulture has social benefits that span generations.

Horticulture also has some intergenerational social benefits when preschool children are able to work with elderly adults or retirees. Nature-based interventions, nature-based activities and horticulture offer many benefits, including "psychological distance from everyday demands…and reduction of severity of depression" (Gonzalez et al., 2010, p. 2010). This is particularly helpful to those suffering from depression, dementia and loneliness.

Although horticultural therapy has no regulatory body, the American Horticultural Therapy Association offers some guidance and programs in this regard. SHARE Food Program,

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Inc. participates in a "social horticulture" program, which is referred to as community horticulture and it is a "leisure or recreational activity" and SHARE uses "restorative gardens" (AHTA, p. 1-2, 2012). These types of gardens can be public or private and they are not always associated with a healthcare setting (AHTA, 2012).

At SHARE, the garden is used to create "an environment conducive to mental repose, stress-reduction, emotional recovery, and the enhancement of mental and physical energy" (AHTA, p. 1-2, 2012). SHARE is creating and participating in a horticultural therapy program via social or community horticulture. Sustaining the garden for these purposes has a long-term positive effect on the community, where community includes volunteers, staff, residents of the surrounding neighborhood, stakeholders, partners and customers or SHARE package recipients.

Community Horticulture and Therapeutic Gardening

What do visitors and volunteers first see as they drive into the parking lot SHARE? How can we improve that aesthetic visual? At SHARE, we look for uniformity, symmetry, orderliness, and tidiness first, color and placement second, with aroma and scents being last. At SHARE, we make use of "the power of garden elements such as a bench for sitting, a path for walking and access to the elements of earth and sky" (Davis, p. 37, 2011). Davis also discusses the importance of understanding the original garden design intent, poor choices for plant replacement and lack of planning for the long-term maintenance of the garden (Davis, p. 41, 2011). These, too, are sustainability issues in an urban agricultural setting as well as issues that speak to the therapeutic elements of UA.

Ideally, SHARE should have a cadre of trained professionals and create a formal horticultural therapy program. However, this is unrealistic in a nonprofit food justice context.

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Therapeutic gardening describes several types of "purposeful gardening activities with varying formal therapeutic components" with horticultural therapy being a "specialized discipline of counseling where trained professionals use gardening as a tool for the enhancement of therapy" (Sandel, 2004, p. 124). SHARE has created a cost-effective informal version of therapeutic gardening.

Paula Diane Relf concluded that "programs related to Farming for Health are beneficial" to "individuals in treatment or rehabilitation" and the programs of this type that use plants fall into the categories of horticultural therapy (e.g., horticulture therapy, garden therapy) and healing landscapes (e.g., therapeutic landscapes, meditation gardens) (Relf, 2006, p. 318). According to Relf, these programs focus on physical, intellectual, social, psychological and spiritual and/or philosophical goals (Relf, 2006, p. 322). For those suffering from hunger, food insecurity, poverty or other maladies, the above goals are integral to the healing and rehabilitation of each individual.

Many individuals volunteer not only at SHARE, but also at other organizations, including food cupboards because they are concerned about their health, but have little or no income, limited access to retail outfits with high quality, fresh, healthy and affordable food. These individuals living in urban areas who have little or no access to supermarkets, farmers' markets or farm stands live in a food dessert. Moreover, SHARE is located in a neighborhood that has been classified as a food dessert over time. Larsen and Gilliland defined a "*food dessert* [emphasis added]" as "poor and ethnically-diverse urban neighborhoods that lack access to affordable, healthy food options" and if "access to grocery stores and healthy food sources" were available, then people would "eat healthier," which "leads to an improvement in health"

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(Besthorn, 2012, p. 192). Unfortunately, many people, including the elderly and those on fixed incomes live in these food desserts.

However, by volunteering in a UA or other setting, people may receive a trifold benefit from volunteering, especially at SHARE, access to affordable food, a sense of purpose and identity. Expressing or strengthening a sense of personal identity can be a motivating factor in the decision to volunteer (Matsuba, Hart, & Atkins, 2007; Wilson, 2012, p. 180). Additionally, volunteering may give older people a way to restore their sense of usefulness (Okun, 2010) and it helps to reduce the risk of dementia. According to a study conducted by Simons, et al. known as the Dubbo study of the elderly, men and women who engage in daily gardening activities have a 36% "reduced risk of dementia" (Simons, et al., p. 69, 2006). According to Mark B. Detweiler, et al., horticulture is a therapeutic modality whose benefits include "reduction of pain, improvement in attention, lessening of stress…lowering of…medications and… reduction of falls," which help improve the quality of life for assisted living and dementia patients (Detweiler, et al., 2012, p. 9). These benefits would be helpful to anyone who is elderly and it is likely that many of the elderly volunteers at SHARE experience these public health benefits.

There are additional public health gains that volunteers profit from by engaging with the community in an altruistic manner. Volunteers experience "increased longevity; improved ability to carry out activities of daily living; better health coping mechanisms; adoption of healthy lifestyles; and improved quality of life, social support, interaction and self-esteem" (Jenkinson, et al., p.2, 2013). There were other benefits for the volunteers participating in this study, including reduced depression, stress, hospitalizations, pain and "psychological distress" (Jenkinson, p.2, 2013). Clearly, most people would want to experience those health benefits and other UA related benefits.

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By growing food, i.e., helping with the harvest, maintaining and planting vegetables and fruit, people are more likely to eat it. Many volunteers leave Nice Roots Farm excited to try new fruits and vegetables. Bellows, Brown and Smit found that the practical health benefits of urban agriculture include a correlation between the experience of growing food and eating it, where people grow their own food, the more likely they are to consume it (Bellows, Brown & Smit, 2003, p. 1). Volunteers working at Nice Roots Farm receive an added health benefit: low to high impact exercise and body movement. Additionally, the researchers concluded that UA involves participants in healthy and active work (Bellows, Brown & Smit, 2003, p. 1). The public health gains associated with UA are vast and far reaching and beneficial to any volunteer.

Public health benefits are not limited to conventional volunteer profiles. Some members of the volunteer pool at SHARE are court appointed criminals and substance abusers. Given the nature of the work at SHARE in the UA programs in conjunction with the willing and pliable natures of the volunteers it follows that informal horticultural therapy reduces hostility and other negative behaviors. Rice and Lremy found that the psychosocial functioning of inmates in the San Francisco Sheriff's Department horticultural therapy program had lasting effects, including decreased levels of hostility and risk-taking[12] (Rice and Lremy, 2008, p. 186). Those same observations are likely to apply in the case of some of SHARE's nontraditional volunteers.

Generally, volunteering has a positive effect on an individual's well-being; however, there are exceptions. Volunteering too much can lead to burnout or have some negative effects on the volunteer. However, the volunteer has to balance this with the need to volunteer enough to reap the health desired benefits. For example, one must volunteer approximately ten hours per

[12] The results of the Rice and Lremy study varied depending on race. The horticultural therapy effects were "not sustained at follow up" for White subjects. In contrast, African-American subjects "exhibited decreased levels of hostility" at follow-up (Rice and Lremy, 2008, p. 186).

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month to experience mental health benefits (Jenkinson, p. 7, 2013). According to Jenkinson, the social aspects of volunteering may affect survival rates because people with stronger social relationships have a reduced risk of death (Jenkinson, p.8, 2013; Holt-Landstad et al., 2010). Volunteers, and perhaps, volunteer sites, bear some individual responsibility for being accountable with respect to volunteer burnout and monitoring overly enthusiastic volunteers.

The Impact of Urban Agriculture in Education: The Convergence of Public Health and Service-Learning

How can UA bridge the gap between public health and service-learning? UA is a rich source of educational initiatives and partnerships. Community gardens are multigenerational spaces, which contribute to public health initiatives, including "promoting healthy eating" as well as educational initiatives by encouraging the "transfer of knowledge" (Ghose & Pettygrove, p. 1102, 2014). For example, internships are abundant as well as vital to the volunteer pool at SHARE. Interns at SHARE build self-esteem, a sense of responsibility and an understanding of contemporary social issues. One of the 2015 SHARE interns, Jaclyn Van Dyk spoke of the humbling nature and experience of working with volunteers, SHARE package recipients and SHARE staff. Yvonne Hung discussed these concepts found that interns "emphasized the value of helping their community" via the responsibilities and jobs the interns assumed as part of the internship (Hung, 2004, p. 70). Internships and co-op experiences are integral to the college experience, students' personal growth and to prepare students for their entrance into the job market.

In 1994, Ernest L. Boyer wrote about the "New American College" where the "capacity to connect thought to action, theory to practice" would occur along with "cross-disciplinary

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institutes" organized "around pressing social issues" (Boyer, 1994, A48). Boyer (1994) also championed an institutional model in which "faculty members would build partnerships with practitioners who would…come to campus as lecturers." Here, at SHARE Food Program, Inc., Steveanna Wynn collaborates regularly with research university faculty. This contributes to the sustainability of urban agriculture by creating a pipeline for interns and volunteers.

By creating and fostering partnerships between practitioners and researchers, the principles of vision, innovation, and futuristic thinking unite such that theories in the vanguard of the interdisciplinary university collaborations are really put into practice and into the hands of the nonprofits that desperately need them. In effect, cutting edge research and development is not limited to the private sector and social justice theories are applied in real life or organizational scenarios. Edward Zlotkowski wrote about service-learning in which he discusses the "priority of *educational* vision" and "*educational* innovation" (Zlotkowski, p. 5, 1995). Urban agriculture provides an environment for such innovation. Moreover, innovative pedagogical models can be tested or used to teach non-traditional learners. The farm at SHARE is a constantly changing urban laboratory with multiple environmental variables that provide the bases of many discussions, including resourcefulness, critical thinking and problem solving, business and management concepts, public health trends and many other rich topics.

According to Relf, gardens in public schools may motivate student learning in different academic subjects because "it is a hands-on experience" (Relf, 2003, p. 988). At SHARE, for many volunteers, their families, college students, and school groups, the lessons that the author imparts are a combination of horticulture, folklore, business, sociology, anthropology, history, math and science. The students disguised as volunteers absorb the material through hands-on activities, such as building raised beds, learning about the culinary importance of okra for

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Indians, Blacks and African-Americans, the culinary importance of cilantro for Asians and Hispanics, and the importance of soil and air for plants, just to name a few.

The hands-on experience is not enough, students in traditional and nontraditional academic programs should be awarded academic credit for internships and volunteer projects when possible. With respect to service-learning, awarding participants with formal academic credit may be a motivating factor in the decision to participate in a volunteer project. Rewards affect volunteer retention as well. At SHARE, regular volunteers are particularly valuable because they require very little instruction, no onboarding or introductions. These individuals know where tools are kept, for example, and they know what needs to done and need little or no direction. One of the many SHARE college interns, Jaclyn Van Dyck, an undergraduate student from Hope College earned academic credit for her sixteen-week internship. At the University of California Extension, volunteers earned formal academic credit through their respective college or high school (Smith, Dasher & Klingborg, 2005, p.7).

Regardless of academic credit, education and citizenship are Integral to the UA program at SHARE. Volunteers and visitors learn about what is possible for them to plant in their community gardens, yards, steps, balconies and porches as well as what fruits and vegetables look like in a preharvest state. More importantly, people learn about hunger, food justice and social justice and how to ameliorate its devastating effects on both a large and small scale. This triad – advocacy, activism, and policy – is at the heart of the garden-based learning program at SHARE. UA volunteers: learn about the environment, community, the role of the farmer; engage in community building through multigenerational and multicultural connections; develop relationships between consumers and growers; and engage in hands-on activities, which allow them to "get their hands dirty." Travaline and Hunold addressed the notion that urban

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agriculture can "educate city residents" because people learn "where, how, and by whom" their food "is grown" (Travaline and Hunold, 2010, p. 584-588). In 2013, Chen, Lou and Shih defined garden-based learning in which the garden is used as a teaching tool and it is based on experiential education (Chen, Lou and Shih, 2013, p. 2048). As a result, both traditional and nontraditional students, volunteers and visitors benefit from experiential educational techniques as applied in a UA context or setting.

Context: Sustainability Concepts - Special Considerations for Urban Gardens: Location, Accessibility and Maintenance

Sustainability has multiple dimensions, including design, staff and organizational sensitivity to the special needs of urban agricultural settings, which must be maintained over time. The special considerations for urban gardens are not that much different from those of a rooftop garden in many respects. The concerns include location of the garden in relation to other parts of the SHARE warehouse; "views; access; safety; efficient wayfinding; specialized planting designs;" and "unique maintenance considerations" (Davis, p. 16, 2011). When creating healing environments, Davis states that designers "must become sensitive to…simple issues such as garden access" (Davis, p. 33, 2011). New plantings are sent through a rigorous vetting process, which includes placement and garden access.

An important, but often neglected dimension of sustainability is maintenance of the urban garden. Poor maintenance of certain plants over the years "rendered" plants "incapable of providing visual or functional benefits" (Davis, p. 16, 2011). Although Davis was referring to garden being maintained by healthcare professionals, we can extend this issue to volunteers,

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maintaining an urban farm and the sustainability of the urban garden or farm. By systematizing garden maintenance, UA programs are one step closer to achieving sustainability goals.

Context: Sustainability Concepts – What Is Sustainable Urban Agriculture Vis-à-vis Food Justice?

Sustainability has a different meaning depending upon the stakeholder in the food system. Socially sustainable communities are essential to the long-term success of UA. A socially sustainable community could be self-contained, e.g., SHARE or a planned community. Urban agriculture and food justice are at issue in this research paper. One must understand the volatility of multiple environmental factors in UA and food justice so as to see the relationship between the stakeholders and their various interpretations of the concept of sustainability. The sustainability of UA, its importance to food justice and explaining how SHARE works is the approach of the case study. The literature, as argued by Irvine, Johnson & Peters, Mougeot, Rosol, Smit, Ratta & Nasr, consistently links urban agriculture (UA) with environmentally and socially sustainable communities, including flourishing green spaces, reclaimed brownfield sites, improved air quality and many other benefits (Mendes, Balmer, Kaethler & Rhoads, 2008, p. 435). Environmentally maintainable communities, green spaces, reclaimed brownfields, improved air quality among other things are the context in which storytelling and therapy foster volunteerism and sustainability.

The food system includes UA from a profit and nonprofit perspective. Here, we discuss UA as it relates to food justice. By definition, food justice is nonprofit and requires funders and multiple sources of funding and labor, i.e., volunteers. Raising capital to pay for expenditures, equipment, personnel, materials and other resources is a never ending endeavor in UA because of

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the costs associated with agriculture. Moreover, the mission in a food justice context is to provide affordable, healthy food. It follows that affordable for low-income or indigent individuals means that the costs associated with the food, its production and movement through the food system must be subsidized. At issue is who pays or what organization or which arm of government funds the food production and distribution costs not covered by the nonprofit and its clients. This is one of the critical issues associated with sustainable UA.

Context: Sustainability Concepts - Civic agriculture versus urban agriculture

Civic agriculture is related to sustainability and this case study because farmers, a stakeholder in and a component of the sustainability universe, must often balance their lifestyle needs with how they feel as evidenced by the follow comments from farmers, Bill Shick and Nina Berryman. They both queried whether the organization's leadership and board are committed to the long-term support of a farmer and whether the farmer's personal well-being and ability to be gainfully employed, e.g., burnout, happiness and making enough money in terms of salary and benefits, are priorities or even considerations for stakeholders. Laura DeLind described this phenomena best when she stated "farmers…are pursuing individually felt and often contradictory lifestyle needs (DeLind, 2002, p. 218). This is summed up best through the following quotes: "'I want to farm'…and 'I want to know my food is safe'" and conversely "'I want my farming to be profitable'…and 'I want my food to be convenient and cheap'" (DeLind, 2002, p. 218). Individual farmers must be protected and supported by the larger society and those in the food system because they are the work horses and backbone of any UA program.

With regard to the sustainability of the staff, namely the farmers, DeLind cleverly observed that "a good producer" and "a good product" are "not at all the same thing as a good

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citizen" (DeLind, 2002, p. 218). In the food justice and urban agriculture environment, the farmer must be an inherently good citizen because he or she is trying to provide a high quality product and service for those who are experiencing hunger and/or poverty. An implicit caveat to the farmer's wish that his or her enterprise be profitable is that the farmer wishes to earn a living or be gainfully employed, even though their clientele consists of those who require subsidies, subsidized, low or no cost food and food products. At SHARE, the farmers are both good farmers and good citizens – an implicit job requirement.

Civic agriculture, which is not necessarily the same as sustainable agriculture, attempts to balance common interests with private interests. Moreover, it "recognizes…commitments that transcend the economic" and embraces a "more mutualistic and holistic way of being and belonging" (DeLind, 2002, p. 219). The citizenship requirement for SHARE farmers is tested because of the sheer number of people experiencing hunger and the volume of food processed at SHARE.

Given the great needs of low-income families for affordable healthy food, the farm stand at SHARE is an option other than a supermarket for fresh produce. The Sustainable Food Center and Feenstra noted that civic agriculture is an "alternative food supplier" for low-income families (Saldivar-Tanaka and Kransy, 2004, p. 400). Lyson and Raymer postulated that civic agriculture encourages individuals to learn about food production and to understand the food system (Saldivar-Tanaka and Kransy, 2004, p. 400). Farm stand customers, volunteers and SHARE participants have the opportunity to question and interact with SHARE staff and the farmer regarding where their food comes from and where they fit in the food system.

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When people understand their role in the food system and how food is produced, they often want to participate. Encouraging participation in the food system is essential to whether the UA venture is sustainable. Although SHARE is a nonprofit, the concept of sustainability is parallel to the meaning of staying in business in the for profit or private sector. That is, nonprofit oriented UA projects, programs and farms are concerned about their individual continued existence. UA at SHARE means that our agricultural systems are diverse, e.g., vertical growing systems, high tunnels, greenhouse, raised bed, orchard as well as the constant exploration of trends and other novel growing systems by the Director of Urban Agriculture and the Executive Director. In order to maintain the viability of the farm and to be sustainable, nonprofit UA farms must "mitigate risk and promote systemic resiliency in a world…of low farm profits" (Paul, 2013, p. 20). Participation must include labor, consumption and infusions of capital.

Even if participation rates were maintained at optimal levels, environmental issues are abundant in an UA context. Wortman and Lovell identified the following environmental challenges that threaten the growth of urban agriculture: urban soil contamination and remediation, "altered microclimate and atmospheric pollutants in urban ecosystems,"[13] "optimization and safety of urban water resources" (Wortman and Lovell, 2013, pp. 1284-1287). By extension these threats affect the sustainability of UA and the SHARE Nice Roots Farm agriculture programs. The farmer is constantly battling these threats via remediation, education, mitigation and avoidance.

In UA, sustainably grown produce does not necessarily mean certified organic as proscribed by state and federal governments and other certifying bodies. At SHARE, it simply means chemical free, using the least environmentally harmful practices and using organic

[13] These terms relate to the way pollutants affect plant growth (Wortman and Lovell, 2013, p. 1287).

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principles whenever possible. The SHARE Nice Roots Farm agricultural products are not certified organic, they are "organically raised" to the fullest extent deemed reasonable and possible. As part of the educational component of the UA programs at SHARE, sustainable agriculture concepts, techniques and principles are discussed with volunteers. It is well settled in agricultural, nonprofit and food justice communities that, oftentimes, crop "production costs surpass the harvested value," (van Leeuwen, Nijkamp & Vaz, 2010, p. 22), but this information is used as an advantage at SHARE when recruiting volunteers. For example, the Director of Urban Agriculture discusses the culinary benefits of fresh fruits, herbs and vegetables from one's own garden, the farmers' market or from a farm stand as tasting better, lasting longer and generally being of a higher quality than vegetables from a supermarket or other retail establishment. Van Leeuwen et al. clearly state that "fresh food and vegetables from one's own garden are…more appreciated than products" purchased in other venues (2010, p. 22). Encouraging people to support and to buy local and fresh food from the farm stand contributes to the longevity of the farm.

SHARE, one of Philadelphia's major hunger relief organizations, has specific programs that distribute produce to those in need. Moreover, it partners with the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS), the Pennsylvania State University Extension and other organizations. By partnering with these organizations, the longevity and long-term success of the farm increases and the sustainability is greatly improved.

Sustainability at SHARE also means that we provide an open and welcoming environment where everyone is treated with dignity. That is, the garden at SHARE is not member-only, and it does not exclude any person or group based on financial, racial, age or access limitations and their "perceived socioeconomic status" (Meenar and Hoover, 2012, pp.

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151-152). Some community gardens[14] have membership dues, a strict vetting process, i.e., one in which the basis of admission is who you know, your zip code, where you live and your occupation.

By using democratic principles and having an inclusive spirit, the garden or farm at SHARE is truly open and accessible to all. Sustainability in UA means that perceptions of the UA movement and its participants must be debunked or modified[15]. At SHARE, UA programs are collaborative and more representative of the diverse populations that the programs serve.

Although SHARE has a fence, the gates are open during business hours. The fencing requirement is due to the fact that it is a warehouse that primarily distributes shelf-stable products and the fence is a theft deterrent. SHARE practices intentional social inclusion as opposed to unintentional social exclusion, e.g., community gardens that are "members-only entities in which membership is largely driven by socioeconomic factors. The gates or metaphorical "doors" are open to the community garden are open to all, especially those in need or experiencing hunger. UA in a food justice context must include those members of the food system who are in need.

Many people, urban and suburban, have little or no understanding of food systems, particularly food production and farming. The SHARE UA program fills the knowledge gap for both urbanites and suburbanites with regard to how plants grow or where food comes from because our garden is a teaching and demonstration garden. According to Meenar and Hoover's research, many nonprofit UA projects affect their surrounding communities and achieve their

[14] Community gardens in upper middle-class communities are more likely to have these restrictions in place.
[15] According to research, the UA movement is perceived by many as being exclusive, i.e., it is a movement that is run by young White people and that, for example, many African-Americans do not like to garden due to perceived references to slavery (Meenar and Hoover, 2012, p. 152).

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mission through education and "creation of knowledge of local produce for a generation unfamiliar with the production of food" (Meenar and Hoover, 2012, p. 156). The Nice Roots Farm at SHARE is not production focused; it is an educational demonstration farm.

Context: Sustainability Concepts - Urban Environmental and Agronomic Issues

When dealing with complex environmental problems, agronomic production, agronomic yield and sustainable urban agriculture, soil and water resources and their associated issues must be addressed. According to Rattan Lal, these issues include:

> "(i) Actual and potentially available soil resources;
>
> (ii) Loss of soil resources to climate-induced degradation;
>
> (iii) Degradation of soil by land use and soil mismanagement;
>
> (iv) Determinants of soil resilience to abiotic and biotic stresses;
>
> (v) Strategies of soil restoration in the context of threshold levels of key soil properties and their dynamics;
>
> (vi) Global and regional hot spots of soil degradation; and
>
> (vii) Sustainable intensification of soils devoted to agroecosystems (Lal, p. 45, 2013)."

Lal further points out some agronomic restrictions that are unique to urban agriculture, including "water availability, soil fertility, soil compaction and soil pollution" (Lal, p. 60, 2014). More recently, unacceptably high lead levels in urban municipal water supplies are a newer environmental problem.[16]

[16] Flint, Michigan and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania have documented lead levels that exceed federal safety standards (Millman & Glenza; Wood, 2016).

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SHARE's educational demonstration garden empowers volunteers, members of the community and other interested parties to improve their individual and collective living and health conditions by contributing to, maintaining and creating the farm and garden at Nice Roots Farm. The three prongs of sustainability as delineated by Kathryn A. Peters – "'environment, economy, and social equity'" are advanced and enhanced by "establishing a well-planned urban agricultural system" that "advances socioeconomic equality, promotes natural resources sustainability, and improves the quality of life" for residents by "promoting self-sufficiency" ((Bradshaw, 2013, p. 259). Volunteers, visitors and others who leave SHARE and begin their own gardens or learn to maintain them become more self-sufficient.

Cultural competence, another aspect of sustainability, is essential to the uniqueness and success of the SHARE community. At SHARE, the farmer is a teacher, educator, social worker, mentor, activist, project manager, marketer, businessperson, innovator and chief strategist because the viability and sustainability of the UA programs is dependent upon the visionary skills of both the Director of Urban Agriculture and the Executive Director. For example, a growing system in which vertical farming practices are employed has unlimited possibilities, including the potential to grow culturally appropriate foods that reflect the ethnic food tastes of the community surrounding SHARE and the communities served by SHARE. According to Besthorn, a vertical farm can be set up to cater to the ethnic tastes of individual neighborhoods (Besthorn, 2012, p. 198). By exploring agricultural practices that can be introduced and maintained into an urban environment, culturally appropriate foods and agricultural skill sets are celebrated.

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Context: Sustainability Concepts – The Challenge of Attracting Volunteers from the Communities Nonprofits Serve

It is a given that food justice oriented UA programs serve low-income or no income clients. When such is the case, how is it possible for an individual with multiple part-time jobs, something short of gainful employment or no employment to volunteer, let alone have time to participate in civic or community engagement activities? It is difficult, if not impossible for many low-income individuals. One possible solution is SHARE's take on the volunteer requirement – an individual does not have to complete the volunteer work assignment onsite at SHARE; it can be done anywhere. According to Ghose and Pettygrove, one of the challenges of volunteerism is the fact that volunteer candidates must give up "material and labor resources" even though these are "resource-poor citizens, who struggle to fulfill basic survival needs" (Ghose and Pettygrove, 2014, p. 1105 – double check page number of citation here). How do we promote the benefits of volunteerism in the face of life struggles and struggles for basic needs on the part of these individuals? Volunteerism and potential candidates must represent a cross-section of society and able-bodied persons regardless of the driver, i.e., mission or church, corporate social responsibility program, employment, or driven the requirement that one perform community service as part of their partaking of an entitlement, subsidy or food program. Consequently, volunteering or working for one's share, e.g., SHARE participant package, is less likely to be perceived as charity bestowed upon one in a condescending or patronizing manner. Possibly, the recipients and the administrators view it as a gesture of autonomy and individual empowerment. The author certainly holds this viewpoint.

However, even if poverty were not a barrier to volunteering, volunteers often cannot commit to regular schedules or advanced training. In 2009, Sheriff noted that urban agriculture

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related organizations are particularly challenged because "volunteer turnover, lack of skill among volunteers or unreliability of volunteers" can affect the organizational projects and efforts (Ghose & Pettygrove, p. 1105, 2014; Sheriff, 2009). Therefore, it is the job of the farmer to have multiple activities available to match the myriad skill levels of volunteers.

Context: Sustainability Concepts - Sustainability versus Economic Expectations in Urban Agriculture

Are community gardens distinct from urban agriculture projects with respect to economic ramifications and expectations? Boards and executive directors view urban agriculture in a food justice context differently than for profit UA enterprises. For example, Ghose and Pettygrove, observed that there is the perception that the City of Milwaukee Department of City Development views urban agriculture as a "commercial enterprise that attracts investment, research and technological innovation" whereas community gardens are a "small-scale, ad hoc form of community development" (Ghose & Pettygrove, p. 1107, 2014). In contrast, community gardens must be monitored rather than "actively pursued and promoted" unless they contribute to the reduction of blight (Ghose & Pettygrove, p. 1107, 2014). Is it possible that this perception or actual viewpoint is shared by other municipalities and that support is allocated disproportionately or accordingly? In contrast, the City of Philadelphia's greening program may be more egalitarian in its resource allocation.

Urban agriculture increases economic prosperity and improves the health and safety of residents (Mogk, p. 77, 2011). According to Mogk, the secondary effects of urban agriculture include creating a "sense of community, pride and belonging" (Mogk, p. 78, 2011). At SHARE, we are returning a green landscape to the community and removing blight as well as encouraging

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existing stakeholders to continue their relationship with the organization and inspiring new partners and volunteers to develop a relationship with us.

Context: Sustainability Concepts - Geographic Challenges

Sustainability vis-à-vis urban agriculture also includes the physical and geographic location of the farm. Oftentimes, volunteers look at the neighborhood in which the urban farm or garden is located and let those extrinsic and uncontrollable environmental factors stand in the way of creating a relationship with the organization. Engaging with the farm or garden, farmer and others, ideally, should not be affected by physical and geographic constraints that are beyond the control of the nonprofit organization. To combat this unfortunate phenomena in urban areas with high concentrations of poverty, crime and blight, a hybrid approach to Steveanna Wynn's suggestions of adoption by a corporation or school work well. For example, highly selective private schools and corporations are likely candidate pools for not only volunteers, but also for funding or donations. These organizations can provide transportation to the site, food and monetary donations as well as lucrative fundraising opportunities. In contrast, volunteers with limited resources can provide physical labor, increased frequency of volunteer visits to the site, direct connections to the community and other things with support systems provided by the sponsorship.

More importantly, these diverse groups can come together through storytelling and first person testimonials, which may morph into a therapeutic event. Therapy for volunteers in the garden comes in many forms: diversity, first-hand accounts of hunger, memories of growing up in the southern part of the United States, the mid-west or some other country. The volunteer pools are diverse and senior vice presidents of Fortune 500 companies work alongside

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grandmothers raising their grandchildren, to name a few. The author has worked with at-risk transgender individuals as well as college students from Swarthmore and Haverford Colleges. The conversations, which were really storytelling sessions, the author has had range from listening to how one person grew up on a farm in Iowa, another who was native to Kolkata, India[17], and learning about food and how to cook different meals. Working with at-risk youth is rewarding because even though many in the larger society have either given up on them or "written them off" as productive members of society, working in a warehouse and the garden brings out the "grit" in them. The author engages in education and development in a nontraditional educational system, i.e., part of the food system. Steveanna Wynn counsels the at-risk youth with respect to life skills, which is essential to their future success in most cases. Geographic challenges should not be a barrier for anyone wishing to be a part of the SHARE organization or volunteer experience because increasing the number of people brought into the fold enriches the experience and organization for everyone.

Methodology and Metrics: Assessing and Measuring Sustainability and Volunteerism

Establishing a standard definition of volunteer work in order to assess and measure the number of volunteers, what is important to them and their experience at the volunteer site, and how to get them to return for future volunteer events. The ILO Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work uses the term "unpaid noncompulsory work" that (they) did, which refers to time they donated "without pay to activities" accomplished "either through organizations or directly for others outside (their) own household" (ILO, 2011, p. 18). Some of the metrics that an organization might track in a UA program would be man hours and the cost of labor per man

[17] Formerly Calcutta, India.

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hour. By tracking these aggregate values, funders and the nonprofit itself would understand the true cost of UA.

Statistical Modeling

Developing an urban agriculture volunteer model requires not only statistical data and analysis, but also the stories associated with the data sets and their associated summary data. The stories allow the researcher to "define the issues and provide a means to make subtle but powerful arguments" (Guhathakurta, 2001, p. 2). Merely creating a scientific study or social science study and data generation on volunteerism is not enough, the researcher must listen to staff and volunteer stories to produce tangible improvements and implementation plans, i.e., models and conclusions. Collectively, the narratives and the scientific study, particularly in a UA sustainability context drive the solution, data model and conclusions. As Guhathakurta concluded, "urban mathematical models…are embedded within a narrative" where the "critical element of understanding 'the story' is not…the examination of associations but an analysis of interconnections" (Guhathakurta, 2001, p. 5). As a result, in this case, the author, researcher and Director of Urban Agriculture must understand the complete story before engaging in any data modeling that would affect policy, advocacy, hiring or strategic decisions.

Presently, the author is tracking whether it is important to learn about urban agriculture and whether it is important to interact with the Director of Urban Agriculture. These are important metrics because the author is then able to tailor activities and introductory information around these results, which then improves the SHARE volunteer experience.

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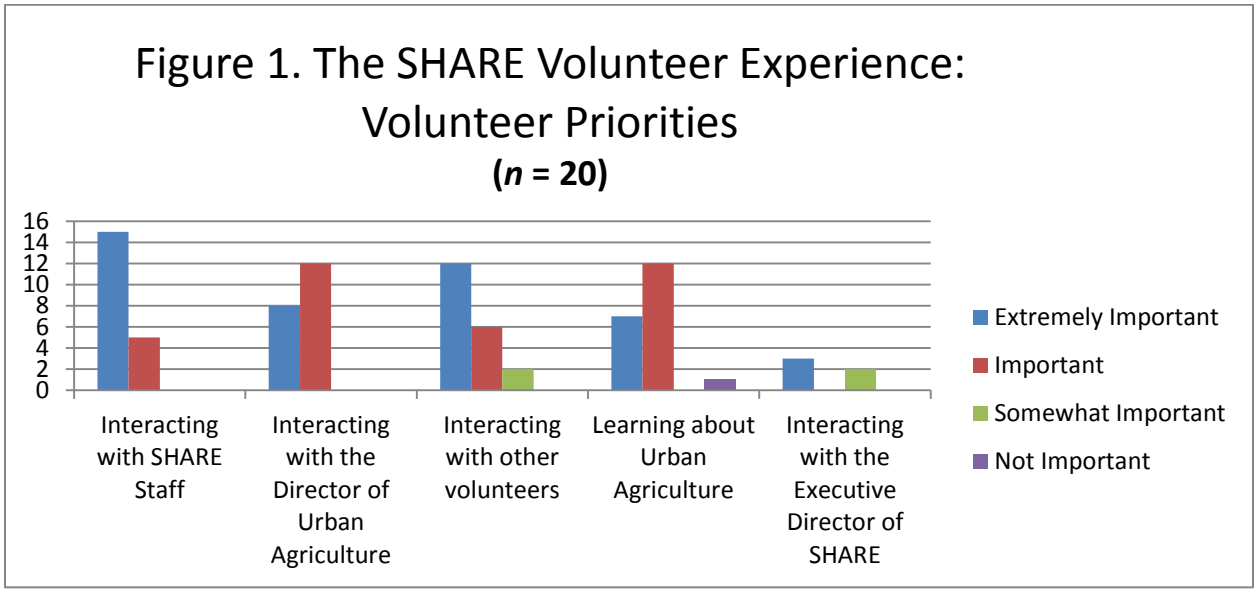

For the vast majority of respondents, interacting with staff, especially the Director of Urban Agriculture or farmer is extremely important as is learning about urban agriculture. The role of the farmer, farm educator and in this case, the Director of Urban Agriculture is not only high profile, but very important because this individual is the face of the urban agriculture program.

Research Constraints

Although SHARE has an abundance of volunteers, it is difficult to get them to fill out a survey or take a moment to give formal feedback to the author. This difficulty may be due to the timing of the administration of the questionnaires. The questionnaires were distributed at the end of a volunteer session, which was inconvenient for many respondents. Additionally, electronic versions of the surveys were equally successful. In the future, the questionnaires will be simplified and administered toward the end of the session, not at the very end.

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One of the ramifications of low survey return rates (small sample size) is the lack of data or limited data[18] prevented the author from conducting significant statistical analysis.

Future Research

A future statistical study would be structured around the following hypotheses.

Hypotheses:

H_1: The most productive volunteers in the garden are those with prior experience in a garden, farm or other horticultural setting.

H_1: The volunteers that enjoy the experience have a desire to be outside or working on horticulture and agriculture related tasks.

H_1: Corporate partners that send employee-volunteer workgroups regularly are those that have a corporate social responsibility program.

H_1: Corporate groups, mission groups, schools and other organizations build relationships (personal and professional) with the Executive Director of SHARE Food Program, Inc., Steveanna Wynn and SHARE staff.

H_1: Volunteers enjoy "getting to know the farmer" because the farmer, Michelle Lawson, Director of Urban Agriculture at SHARE Food Program, Inc., tells her story[19], the history of the SHARE facility and the mission of SHARE.

[18] There were 20 respondents (*n*=20) and the minimum sample size for statistical analysis in 26 or more.
[19] Michelle Lawson's story is how she became interested in agriculture and gardening and her external interests and professional experience.

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H_1: The volunteers that reap the therapeutic benefits of a respite or time away from the "daily grind," problems or challenges of their professional work or personal lives are those who seek activities and tasks that are "mindless," therapeutic[20], relaxing and provide a level of escapism.

H_1: Because of the Great Recession, a novel pool of experienced volunteers has arisen – long-term unemployed, underemployed and intergenerational combinations.

H_1: The changing face of public education in the City of Philadelphia is the source of novel intern and volunteer opportunities through charter school partnerships.

H_1: Parents concern for their children's health and individual health concerns in conjunction with health education programs under public health theoretical framework create a volunteer pool whose volunteer experience is directly related to maintaining, mitigating or alleviating health issues and concerns.

In addition to conducting statistical analysis based on the hypotheses delineated above, the following questions that warrant exploration: How do corporate sponsors that provide the largest amount of capital, employee-volunteers, donations and other sponsorship activities to nonprofits recruit and maintain leaders and activists? Are these corporate partners providing the vast majority of the support for non-profits, including those committed to food justice?

Methodology and Methods: A Case Study of SHARE Food Program, Inc.

This case study seeks to build the author's understanding of the environmental, including those that are economic, demographic, personnel and geographic related, issues associated with

[20] The therapeutic nature the author is referring to are physical exercise, mental health and wellness benefits. Relaxing refers to a holistic approach – mind, body and spirit – to the individual volunteer. Collectively, these health benefits are open to all regardless of income, benefits, access to health care or other options to promote health and wellness and other constraints.

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sustaining an urban agriculture program. The sustainability of a food justice focused urban farm or garden depends heavily on an organization's ability to recruit and retain volunteers, and a farmer that understands the mission and the needs of the organization. In this study of urban agriculture, the author had some advantages, namely her history with the organization and her current role within SHARE. To generate interest in the study and identify potential participants, the researcher first approached two urban farmers, who epitomize the ideal of the twenty-first century urban farmer – Bill Shick, the original farmer at SHARE and now the Director of Agricultural Programs at Chester County Food Bank and Nina Berryman, farm manager at Weavers Way Co-op Farm. I scheduled an interview with both farmers where the result was in-depth, structured, one-on-one interviews. Second, I approached Steveanna Wynn, the Executive Director of SHARE Food Program, Inc., and scheduled a structured one-on-one interview. The interview questions and responses are included in Appendices A-C. Third, I interviewed a 2015 SHARE intern, Jaclyn Van Dyk and a SHARE staff member, Eloise McBride, currently Operations Manager and formerly the Volunteer Services Coordinator. Additionally, the researcher asked volunteers to fill out a handwritten survey, which is attached as Appendix D. Finally, the researcher interviewed the Director of Urban Agriculture at SHARE, who happens to also be the author and researcher herself.

By focusing on the sustainable and cultural aspects of urban agriculture, this study provides an entry point into answering the research questions first introduced at the beginning of this paper and the hypotheses mentioned in the future research section. The interviews lasted from 15 to 120 minutes were transcribed in person and they were not audio or video recorded. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistical principles, namely a histogram. The data

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from the interviews and personal communications were used as a form of background information and to provide context for the researcher's insights and conclusions.

The author began volunteering at SHARE because of the farmer and the agricultural program in place. She met Bill Shick while taking a class at SHARE. His knowledge was impressive as was his teaching ability and amicability. More importantly, he had a deep respect and knowledge of cultural norms as well as culturally appropriate foods and the author has a deep interest in ethnic cuisine. Similar to the author, many volunteers return to SHARE because of the relationships they build with the Director of Urban Agriculture (farmer), the Executive Director and other staff. One of the first observations that the researcher made is that the attitude, knowledge and disposition of the agricultural program staff can attract volunteers.

The researcher also chose SHARE because of the demographics of many of its participants and volunteers. Modernly, urban agriculture is not associated with any particular ethnicity. However, in the 1970's "'urban'" was a "euphemism for 'black'" (Lemann, 1991, p.6). Many participants of the Great Migration had embraced the community garden movement of the 1970s and were avid gardeners. However, many of those migrants have either passed away or they are elderly and the younger generation has not embraced or learned the skill set associated with that cultural tradition. Consequently, the author wanted to understand and study the historical backdrop of urban agriculture and understand the future of urban agriculture.

SHARE Nice Roots Farm and SHARE represent a legacy food system as well as the food system of the future. SHARE represents the bridge between the old and the new, the folding of new immigrant tastes and culinary choices into the broad definition of American cuisine.

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It is important for those influencers to listen to the people most affected by the issues of those working in that field, industry, sector or system. Farmers are key stakeholders in UA, food justice and the food system. Executive Directors are also key stakeholders, who have the power to attract funders and highly qualified and driven people (volunteers and staff) committed to the mission of the organization. The relationships the ED and other key players build speak to the sustainability of the UA program.

Naturally, the mission is alleviating hunger; however, hunger affects disparate populations. Dietary and public health issues as well as poverty affect *all* populations. SHARE recognized this long ago and the staff, under the direction of Steveann Wynn, communicate with a representative spectrum of these populations through traveling farmers markets, a farm stand, distribution to food cupboards, other distribution and education methods as well as the general dissemination of information.

SHARE is also unique and provides a good case study for a food justice oriented nonprofit UA program because it has been in existence longer than many of its counterparts. In 2016, SHARE celebrates its thirtieth anniversary. The author noticed some innovative and creative solutions being applied to common UA problems.

Should nonprofits or community based organizations be the incubators and research hubs for the twenty-first century? Innovation centers are housed at the best business schools, Division I research universities and other such places, but should innovation be limited to the for-profit sector? As the old adage says, “necessity is the mother of invention.” Many social justice nonprofits are incubators of resourcefulness and creativity, which harkens back to the mindset of the proverbial farmer: fashion a viable solution with limited resources.

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The author chose to volunteer at SHARE while Bill Shick, the inaugural farmer was there because of his knowledge, experience, humility and exceptional teaching skills. There are and were many farmers throughout the city in need of volunteer assistance, but the author chose her volunteer site carefully because she recognized Bill's exceptional knowledge of agriculture. Because the author has been able to consult with Bill and Nina on some matters, it provides a support system for the author. More importantly, Bill has been very generous and periodically returns to SHARE to "volunteer."

Eloise McBride, currently the Operations Manager and formerly the volunteer coordinator, has been with SHARE for twenty-three years. She represents one of the SHARE employee models because she began as a volunteer who was later hired as a full-time employee. She observed that the SHARE mission resonates with volunteers and they "love what they did to help participants and staff" because ultimately, it "touches someone's life."

At SHARE, the garden represents the juxtaposition of many cultures. Bill Shick and Nina Berryman epitomize the new urban farmer, well-educated individuals with keen senses of business as well as a commitment to social justice and the environment. Bill Shick, whose undergraduate major was environmental science was the first farmer at SHARE. Nina Berryman, whose undergraduate major was political science, began as a farmer at an urban farm that has both a for profit and a nonprofit mission.

SHARE is located in a predominately African-American neighborhood, but many of the participants and visitors are not African-American. Bill introduced Korean turnips to SHARE staff and participants. Community gardens are a way for people to maintain or keep their cultural traditions. Turnips are a staple in the traditional African-American diet. According to

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Richard Westmacott, gardens for African-Americans are a "traditional way of life that has perpetuated since slavery but continues to change," but it is "rapidly disappearing from today's landscape" (Westmacott, 1992 ,p. ix).

African-Americans that participated in the Great Migration[21] brought the traditions of the rural South and the urban South with them. According to Nicholas Lemann, "migration meant leaving what had always been their economic and social base[22]" and "finding a new one (Lemann, 1992, p. 6)." Historically, community gardens have been a place in which cultural traditions thrive and survive. Those migrants were similar to the newer immigrants who have created thriving community gardens in the city of Philadelphia. For example, PHS City Harvest program supports community gardens tended by Burmese and Nepalese immigrants[23] (immigrants from Burma and Nepal). SHARE, thanks to the innovative pioneering techniques and cultural sensitivity of Bill Shick, is a place for Asian and Latino immigrants as well as African-Americans and others interested in diverse culinary offerings and culturally appropriate foods.

The current Director of Urban Agriculture has continued the tradition and continues to offer traditional Italian herbs and vegetables, cooking greens, Asian herbs and vegetables, traditional African-American cooking greens and other produce offerings as well as some vegetables preferred by Indian, Caribbean and African immigrants.

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[21] From 1910 – 1970, six and one-half million black Americans moved from the South to the North. It was "one of the largest and most rapid mass internal movements of people…not caused by the immediate threat of execution or starvation" (Lemann, 1992, p. 6). For example, in 1940, 77% of black Americans lived in the South, with 49% in the rural South.

[22] Agricultural pursuits, e.g., farming, sharecropping, cotton picking, etc.

[23] See http://www.welcomingrefugees.org/portfolio/community-gardening-south-philadelphia-builds-refugees%E2%80%99-agricultural-roots-and-transforms

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The SHARE Nice Roots Farm contributes to city beautification, specifically beautification of the Hunting Park section of the city.

The Director of Urban Agriculture draws upon her own knowledge and experience, that of her family and cultural lessons/teaching, the experience of SHARE staff and volunteers, that of the Executive Director and that of experienced farmers, Bill Shick and Nina Berryman, for example.

The Executive Director of SHARE is flexible and recognizes that having a flexible disposition is essential for success in the role of Director of Urban Agriculture or farmer at SHARE.

Both Kisha Elder, a pediatric nurse practitioner, and Michele Hobson, Clinical Assistant Professor in the Department of Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine at the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine both support the notion that garden related therapy helps everyone. Plants are chosen with scents and aromas and color in mind.

The new urban farmer must be confident enough in his or her own knowledge base yet humble and open to non-traditional and alternative sources of information. The farmer must be open and respectful to people with little or no education as well as those with it. The farmer must embrace, understand and respect cultural norms that are distinct from your own. The farmer must be willing to teach individuals who simply want to learn about urban agriculture. Most importantly, the farmer must enjoy working with volunteers, visitors and other stakeholders. If an UA program is fortunate enough to recruit and retain such an individual, there is a price. The organization has to figure out and decide upon the cost and assess the benefits. If the organization does not recruit and retain such a person, then the organization may be subject to

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high turnover rates with individuals holding that organizational role. Farmers need professional education and mobility as well as a decent living wage. If these things are not in place, then urban farming may not be sustainable. Are young farmers and others willing to continue the tradition, pass along the knowledge, or leave urban agriculture because of disillusionment? The reality of the work required for an UA program is astronomical. Is there a disconnect between an individual's reality and expectations? Perhaps the environment may be too harsh, i.e., the classroom or rural farm setting that is pastoral and pristine versus an urban agriculture setting, which is wrought with all of the urban ills, including poverty, congestion, noise, population density issues, blight and diversity. The new urban farmer either embraces all these things or rejects them, but the sustainable farmer model requires the individual to embody a commitment to social and food justice. As Bill Shick put it so well once, the modern farmer must be a competent plumber, carpenter, farmer and businessman. The researcher would add the following caveats: The modern UA farmer must be selfless, an individual who is highly educated, well trained and wwilling to work in less than ideal conditions for the greater good, to carry on and perpetuate cultural traditions, to learn new ones and disseminate them to others. Most importantly, it requires commitment and deep well formed support systems.

The support systems must include support for all three prongs of the sustainability model as well as the dimensions, the researcher, executive director and farmers mentioned during their interviews.

Add tables 1-6 in this section.

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SHARE has found a "'food justice frame'"[24] that resonates with the local community; they provide healthy, affordable fresh produce to the community and the educational support for community gardens as well. This framework also includes a celebration of diverse cultures and traditions.

Conclusion

The United States economy is subject to the geopolitical turmoil of the moment. This turmoil affects expenditures and private donations as well as the ability of individuals to volunteer. For nonprofits focusing on food justice, funding must be proportionate to need; however, the need continues to rise as gainful employment and economic stability prove elusive for too many. Storytelling at its best at SHARE comes in many forms. The most fruitful or synergistic collaborations come in the forms of volunteers telling their stories to the farmer, farmers sharing stories, and other individuals in the field or movement collaborating.

Volunteers, staff and customers all come from diverse backgrounds and the author tries to capitalize on this through the volunteer activity and tasks. At SHARE, the author's goal is to make certain that volunteers have fun. For the author, this goal is essential to sustainability of not only the farmer, but also to the viability of the return volunteer pool. Fun has different meanings, but the most important aspects are creating new relationships, building upon the existing ones and creating an environment in which people return to SHARE when they engage with the community. Additionally, the author believes ideally that persons skills and desires

[24] The Director of Urban Agriculture and other SHARE staff are sensitive to and aware of culturally appropriate food. Moreover, the author is aware of the "regional contexts in which certain food has come to be culturally associated with particular social groups" (Kato, 2013, p. 387-388). Immigrant and African-American community gardeners have been the source of much research and scholarship; therefore, Southern cuisine is often associated with African-Americans and cilantro is often associated with Mexicans and Asian cuisine.

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should be matched with appropriately with the tasks. To do this the Executive Director, Director of Urban Agriculture or other appropriate individual must be able to analyze tasks and roles as well as the individual volunteers slated to take on those roles.

Urban farmers require extensive support systems and without them, farmers may feel unsupported, which lends itself to high turnover rates for that role in the organization. As is the case in any situation with hiring managers, the candidate must fit the role and the culture. However, there are exceptions. Some organizations, including companies and educational institutions specifically seek out experiences for their students and employees in which their comfort zones are either challenged or breached. Engaging in horticulture or agriculture related activities creates a situation in which the individual either rises to the occasion and leaves with a sense of accomplishment and empowerment. Or, alternatively, understands his or her limitations and constraints and leaves with a concrete list of areas of character improvement or a sense of what he or she will not do under any circumstances.

For example, as a former employee of a Fortune 500 employer, the author finds work in the garden, including cleanup, maintenance, harvesting and planting to be spiritual, meditative. It is completely different from the thought processes as well as the physical activities (or lack thereof) associated with abstract, applied and analytical business, science, technology, engineering or math (STEM), research or scholarship oriented work products. The work product itself differs and this difference is liberating. The difference itself is what volunteers and staff find most rewarding. For example, producing a software system or application that benefits society or business is honorable and noble, but it is no less honorable and noble than the product

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produced using one's bare hands. In our society, many people crave a connection with the earth because of its simplicity and purity.

Based upon the information gleaned from this research and case study, the author believes that storytelling should be the basis of any urban agriculture program and farmer support system. As part of the storytelling and therapeutic aspects of volunteering at SHARE, people are treated with respect regardless of their origins. Respect, for example, in the agricultural and horticulture context, means that no job is too complex or too dirty for anyone. For example, principals, partners, lawyers and other well-connected and well-heeled individuals from corporation environments or other large organizations have hauled wheel barrows full of compost, contributed to maintenance and beautification efforts as well as cleaned up debris and trash from the street and other rough-hewn, commercial and uncultivated locations. Additionally, informal horticultural therapy programs are beneficial to nonprofit staff, volunteers, and visitors because it creates an educational opportunity and an additional public health boon. The beneficiaries of a UA program return to volunteer because of the therapeutic nature of the work involved in UA – individuals can commune with or connect with the earth. For professionals restricted to office environments and burdened and overwhelmed by technology, many find it refreshing and liberating to unplug (from technology) or engage in tasks that are simpler, less dependent on technology or that let one use his or her hands.

Steveanna Wynn and the SHARE staff have carefully cultivated an environment in which distinctions of class, race, gender, age, creed, domestic regional distinctions and national origin are significantly reduced or nonexistent as compared to the larger world. For example, the Executive Director was born and raised in rural Virginia on a production farm until she moved to

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Philadelphia – two disparate regions and cultural norms. She has not only a keen business sense via her education and training as an accounting major in undergraduate college, but also a firsthand knowledge of what it takes to run a farm and a nonprofit organization. An interesting and unique skill set, but necessary for the distinctive nature of SHARE Food Program, Inc.

Michelle Lawson, the author and Director of Urban Agriculture, has formal training and education in horticulture and agriculture concepts and principles, but she also has professional experience as an educator, trainer, facilitator and developer. This combination of skills is unique because she has the ability to apply her analytical skills to multiple challenges and issues facing the agricultural programs at SHARE. The problems and concerns of SHARE are faced by most of the players and stakeholders in hunger, food justice and social justice focused programs. What is rare is the SHARE approach and solutions to these issues.

Clearly, the leadership (board and executive director) of a nonprofit UA program must hand pick the key players. Great leaders are greater when there is an organizational fit. Conversely, those with the potential to lead may not realize their full potential in an organization or situation where there is a poor fit. The author believes that a nonprofit UA program is not a good fit for every new farmer or farmers making lateral career moves. Nonprofit UA programs require a farmer who enjoys teaching, working with different types of people, exhibits humility, will engage in counseling, genuinely cares about humanity and the betterment of society. A UA farmer must be fearless and resourceful because that farmer will face the unexpected and in turn be expected to create miracles – teaching people how to grow their own food and providing a modicum of relief to those experiencing hunger.

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Appendix A

Questions for Practitioners of Urban Agriculture, including Professional Urban and Suburban Farmers and Those Holding Leadership Roles, Including Executive Directors

1. What creates a good volunteer experience on an urban farm for both the farmer and the volunteer?
2. What does sustainability mean to you? What are your biggest challenges in this regard?
3. Are volunteers essential to your operation?
4. Are volunteers helpful to your operation?
5. How can volunteers be harmful or helpful?
6. What aspects of urban agriculture are unpredictable?
7. How does weather or the season affect volunteer turnout?
8. What constitutes a volunteer? Who is a volunteer? U-pickers? CSA members?
9. What is sustainable agriculture? How do we achieve it? How do you achieve it?
10. How do you find or recruit volunteers for urban farms?
11. What is exciting about urban agriculture?
12. What is scary (challenging or a drawback) about urban agriculture?
13. How does horticulture fit into urban agriculture? Are they different in the urban food system or ecosystem?
14. Can a food justice or social justice farm model coexist with a for profit farm model? Are the two distinct and never to be merged? What is the difference(s) between a nonprofit farm with adequate funding versus one without adequate funding?
15. What are your greatest fears when it comes to the future (or sustainability) of urban agriculture?
16. What variables do you take note of with respect to urban agriculture?

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17. What do you define as uncertainties in urban agriculture? How do volunteers fit into these observations?
18. What are your greatest fears with regard to urban agriculture?

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Appendix B

Sustainability from Practitioners Perspectives: Interview with Steveanna Wynn, Executive Director of SHARE Food Program, Inc.

Sustainability means feasibility to Steveanna Wynn, Executive Director, SHARE Food Program, Inc. (personal communication, September 30, 2015). For her, sustainability means financial stability and the ability to make overall needed repairs to the facility, farm and other operations (personal communication, September 30, 2015).

According to Ms. Wynn, sustainability in urban agriculture also means that every year the farm or garden exists (personal communication, September 30, 2015). She also noted that it means that the community is interested and interested in seeing the garden continue year after year (personal communication, September 30, 2015).

One of the most poignant statements Steveanna Wynn (personal communication, September 30, 2015) made is that "not everything is about the dollar…and as city dwellers become less educated, how does urban agriculture fit into social justice and food systems for people who have no money?"

Sustainability may be rooted in the historical performance of similar projects and the question becomes will this project, initiative or effort stay around, or is it dependent on federal funding? If it is dependent on federal funding, will urban agriculture experience the fate of similar greenhouse projects from the late 1970s? Ms. Wynn cites this historical backdrop (personal communication, September 30, 2015) as a concern with respect to sustainability in urban agriculture of the new millennium.

It is a given that personnel changes occur in any organization. Sustainability addresses the issue of labor (e.g., staff and volunteers) vis-à-vis the mission. The author asked, are there

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enough volunteers and staff to carry out the mission at SHARE? Yes, because approximately 2,000 volunteers come to SHARE per month, but it is contingent upon maintaining the volunteer pool levels.

The author has observed that for some, the issue of sustainability as it relates to their specific roles may be painful and personal; therefore, it is difficult to address or the matter is avoided altogether. In many organizations, it may be common to hear leaders and staff express the sentiment that "when I am gone, I am gone." This reaction may be indicative of avoidance of the issue of succession planning, the fear of work or their individual role being absconded with, undone or overturned and, in an extreme sense, the failure or closing of the nonprofit or program once that key individual is no longer there.

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Appendix C

Sustainability from Practitioners Perspectives: Interview with Farmers, Bill Shick and Nina Berryman

The California Institute for Rural Studies produced a research paper in which a sustainable agriculture system was described as one which is "environmentally sound, economically viable and socially equitable" and social equity includes farm labor and opportunities for professional development and advancement (Strochlic & Hamerschlag, 2005, p. iii). Farm labor includes farmworkers and farmers and part of a maintaining a sustainable workforce in urban agriculture includes professional development and advancement for these stakeholders. It may be even more important in an urban agricultural setting to provide opportunities for advancement and professional development because this may encourage farmers to stay with an organization for a longer term. The other aspect of stability that professional development and advancement promote is succession planning. In an urban agriculture environment where a large number of the farmers are Millennials or between the ages of 18-34, we must encourage these individuals.

In interviewing Nina Berryman and Bill Shick, I was able to compare and contrast for-profit production farms and nonprofit food justice related farms in an urban agriculture context.

Nina Berryman, Farm Manager at Weaver's Way Farms in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, states that volunteers and farmers appreciate a "positive, fun and productive experience" when working on the farm (personal communication, September 30, 2015). Nina further states that people want to help and be used to their fullest potential and dislike standing around and being unoccupied or idle (personal communication, September 30, 2015). Volunteers want to leave

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feeling as though they have "gained something" from the experience, Ms. Berryman notes (personal communication, September 30, 2015). That "gain" could be a social benefit such as telling their individual story or they get to know the farmer she also observed (personal communication, September 30, 2015). Nina emphasized that the farmer has to provide clear expectations and provide feedback at all times (personal communication, September 30, 2015). This is crucial for volunteers because they need to know that they are doing a job or task well. Alternatively, the farmer needs to monitor tasks and activities and adjust or reset as needed so that any mistakes made are quickly remediated or mitigated or good work continues to progress or the activities associated with a task advance.

Bill Shick, Director of Agricultural Programs at Chester County Food Bank, states that a good volunteer experience for both the farmer and the volunteer on an urban farm means that the farmer gives the background of the operation (personal communication, September 30, 2015). He describes this as the process of telling volunteers about the background of the organization, the farm and why volunteers and their work are important to the organization (personal communication, September 30, 2015). Bill emphasizes the fact that their work is not trivial and that even though a job may not be glamorous, the work needs to be done (personal communication, September 30, 2015).

Both Bill Shick and Nina Berryman note that individual volunteers can be challenging in that not all come to work (personal communication, September 30, 2015). They may have other agendas or goals, which include socializing. Mr. Shick noted that if the farmer is not a "people person" then for those who are coming to socialize rather than work, it may be difficult to assign tasks to them (personal communication, September 30, 2015). According to Ms. Berryman, these types of volunteers present farmers with a conundrum: How much time will I invest in

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training or assigning tasks and activities to this volunteer whose goal is to socialize? Oftentimes, she takes the positive approach and makes the appropriate corrections (personal communication, September 30, 2015).

In contrast, Mr. Shick has rules under which bringing children under age fourteen is strongly discouraged; however, he does occasionally make exceptions for ten to twelve year olds (personal communication, September 30, 2015). Ms. Berryman noted that two parents with children are helpful with regard to getting work done (personal communication, September 30, 2015). To facilitate this, Mr. Shick will grow cherry tomatoes for children and families with small children to pick (personal communication, September 30, 2015).

Most importantly, Nina Berryman stated that a volunteer's experience in many instances may be just as important as profit, i.e., farm related tasks and activities will be done regardless, but a satisfied volunteer who wants to return is critical (personal communication, September 30, 2015). Therefore, changing the systems to accommodate the volunteers may be in order. Bill Shick noted that some volunteers can be harmful in an urban agriculture environment and in these instances; again, perhaps the systems should accommodate the volunteers rather than the opposite (personal communication, September 30, 2015).

Bill Shick commented that it is unlikely that the productivity, another aspect of sustainability, of the volunteers will ever match that of a farm worker (personal communication, September 30, 2015). He also reflected that if a volunteer's goals center on community engagement rather than productivity on a farm or in a garden, then this mindset or goal orientation is potentially harmful (personal communication, September 30, 2015). In contrast, many volunteers take great pride in being productive and are eager to get to work and are,

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oftentimes, proactive or forward thinking with respect to their actions and activities. Both Ms. Berryman, Mr. Shick and the author noted that harmful volunteers damage things in the field, do not show up for an agreed upon time slot and get less work done than expected. A corollary to the physical harm that volunteers can commit is the psychological aspect of harm that is injected into the group. For example, when an entire group does not show up, the remaining group members may view it as a break from school or the office or they may not like the work. Should such be the case, then the group efforts may become counterproductive and it is the farmer's duty to enhance and create a pleasant and productive volunteer experience.

In terms of sustainability, urban farms depend heavily upon volunteers to maintain or increase productivity and fill labor gaps.

Ms. Berryman noted that labor is the most expensive thing on a production farm. In contrast, many urban agricultural settings are food justice related or nonprofits (personal communication, September 30, 2015). However, labor is still the most expensive cost as Steveanna Wynn, Executive Director of SHARE Food Program, Inc., noted (personal communication, September 30, 2015).

Given the author's own observations and conclusions, the author suggests that a group of "super volunteers" should specialize and by doing so, then oftentimes, they can be as productive as a farmer can or farm worker can.

For Bill Shick, a nonprofit farmer, sustainability includes the questions: (1) Will my work have a long-term impact; (2) Are the long-term goals sustainable? (3) Will the organization always want to have a farm or garden?; (4) When the farmer leaves, will the program cease or be maintained by someone else?; and (5) Is the organization's leadership and board committed to

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long-term support of a farm or farmer? (personal communication, September 30, 2015) According to Nina Berryman, who works on a farm that has the dual goals of production and nonprofit, sustainability has three dimensions: (1) environmental, which includes soil health; (2) financial, which includes staying in business; and (3) personal, which includes farmer well-being, burnout, happiness and making enough money in terms of salary and benefits (personal communication, September 30, 2015). As a follow up to Nina's comment regarding the personal nature of sustainability for farmers, the author questioned whether there was a "shelf-life" for farmers. In contrast, volunteer pools are sustainable.

Sustaining volunteer pools is time consuming and volunteer coordinators are essential parts of any suburban or urban agriculture program notes Mr. Shick (personal communication, September 30, 2015). He commented that highly desirable volunteer profiles include repeat volunteers (those who return often) and fundraisers (personal communication, September 30, 2015).

Uncertainties in an urban agriculture context are the norm. The uncertainties spectrum ranges from not having enough volunteers to having too many volunteers or farmers' markets and farm stand profitability fluctuating with the weather to the leadership and donor expectations of profitability on a farm with a social justice or food justice mission note both Bill Shick and Nina Berryman (personal communication, September 30, 2015). We all noted the following uncertainties in an urban agricultural setting: theft, vandalism, animals, the risk of damage from firearms, homeless people, land tenure and other things. In both an urban and suburban farms, the farmer does not necessarily know what she will find: it could be animals; sources of funding have ceased; or notice that the lease has ended or will be ending. All these variables lend

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themselves to an uncertain environment noted both Ms. Berryman and Mr. Shick (personal communication, September 30, 2015).

It is interesting to note that Bill Shick commented that social justice and food justice programs cannot sell produce at a profitable price and this puts them at a distinct disadvantage with regard to sustainability (personal communication, September 30, 2015). The business and profit related expectations on urban farmers are unfair given the organizational mission for nonprofits, should the organization expressly place these expectations on the farmer. Mr. Shick questioned whether the perceptions of those in academia conflict with reality, i.e., startup costs for an urban farm are high and profit is elusive when you are addressing income or resource inequality and hunger (personal communication, September 30, 2015). By extension, the author also wonders if the goals of the leadership (e.g., Executive Directors and Boards of Directors) are aligned with the practitioner (farmer), those in academe or altogether different (personal communication, September 30, 2015). It is extremely helpful for organizations to consult with existing non-profit farms, past and present partners, and community garden programs before starting a new program because this collective buy-in promotes sustainability. This can be unfairly burdensome to the farmer because of the competing interests and goals of various stakeholders.

Bill Shick's fear when it comes to the sustainability of urban agriculture is that organizational leadership and individuals may expect non-profit urban farms to break even or even earn a profit from produce sales (personal communication, September 30, 2015). Although

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there are examples of profitable urban farms[25], it is unlikely that they sell to low income communities.

Nina Berryman described a great fear of hers as it relates to the sustainability of urban agriculture (personal communication, September 30, 2015). She stated that urban agriculture is so important that it should not become a trend (personal communication, September 30, 2015). In fact, "it must be a given that urban farms exist," said Ms. Berryman (personal communication, September 30, 2015). For her, "trendy" means little or no money or funding is on the horizon once those programs are no longer chic or desirable (personal communication, September 30, 2015). Urban agriculture should never be associated with the words "trend" or "trendy" because the implication is that it is not important and, therefore, unsustainable.

Ms. Berryman's fears are not unfounded according to Steveanna Wynn (personal communication, September 30, 2015). Historically, many federal programs, including United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) projects are now defunct because of the trendiness phenomena associated with those programs. According to the now defunct Congressional Office of Technology Assessment, many projects were funded using federal funds.[26]

According to Steveanna Wynn, Executive Director of SHARE Food Program, Inc., labor on an urban farm will always be and is currently provided by volunteers. To promote

[25] Profitable urban farms typically follow the conventional profitable models, such as Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs), flowers or selling to middle or upper income consumers.

[26] "Although no legislation directly addresses the subject, however, a number of acts contain provisions, that indirectly or implicitly support the development of food-producing solar greenhouses. These acts include:

- the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964;
- the consolidated Farmers Home Administration Act;
- the Rural Development Act of 1972; and
- the Housing and Community Development Act, as amended in 1978.

These are the primary Acts upon which various Federal agencies have based their programs of funding, information dissemination, and a limited amount of research (much of it aimed at energy conservation) for food-producing solar greenhouses. (The Congressional Office of Technology Assessment, p.83, 1995).

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sustainability of the volunteer pool, she suggests that the creation of a trained volunteer pool with scheduled times would be of great importance (personal communication, September 30, 2015). This is similar to the Master Gardener model that many land grant university extensions employ for horticulture programs. Using this as a model, perhaps master gardener programs could have a niche steward program for those interested in urban agriculture. Ms. Wynn suggested another approach to the creation of a permanent volunteer pool for urban farms: adoption of the urban farm by a school or corporation (personal communication, September 30, 2015).

Conventional wisdom says that urban farms or urban agriculture programs need a farmer. In contrast, Steveanna Wynn asserts that you do not need a farmer, but you do need someone with a growing and harvesting background along with an understanding of the organization and the growing season (personal communication, September 30, 2015). She also observed that oftentimes, farmers might not want to work with volunteers, which is counter to the needs of the available labor pool (personal communication, September 30, 2015). Steveanna has observed that at least "one person in every group is passionate about growing and will take the lead" on garden or farm related tasks (personal communication, September 30, 2015).

SHARE Food Program, Inc. has successfully employed this model. Michelle Lawson, the Director of Urban Agriculture and author, is a Penn State Master Gardener with additional training in agriculture. Like many urban farmers, her formal educational background is not in horticulture, environmental or soil science, or agronomy. She started as a passionate and committed volunteer to food and social justice causes.

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Appendix D

SHARE Volunteer Survey

1. Where do you prefer to work?
    a. Inside the warehouse
    b. Outside in the garden
2. Where did you work today?
    a. In the garden[27]
    b. Outside[28]
3. If you worked outside in the garden, high tunnels or greenhouse, what would improve your experience?
4. What did you like about your experience(s) today and how important was it to your overall volunteer event/feel at SHARE?
    a. Interacting with SHARE staff
    b. Interacting with the Director of Urban Agriculture
    c. Interacting with other volunteers
    d. Interacting with the Executive Director of SHARE
    e. Learning about urban agriculture
    f. Other

Respondents rated the above on the following scale of 1-4:

4 - Extremely important

3 – Important

2 – Somewhat important

1 – Not important

5. If you are a repeat volunteer, why do you come back? Please be specific.
6. What do you like about your experiences each time you return to SHARE?
7. What is important to you when engaging in community service?
8. Why did you choose SHARE as a volunteer work site?
9. What would improve your experience at Nice Roots Farm?
10. What comments do you have to communicate with us about your experience in the garden?

[27] The term "in the garden" refers to harvesting, maintenance and production activities associated with the high tunnels, raised beds, orchard, greenhouse and other production facilities.
[28] The term "outside" refers engaging in horticulture and maintenance related activities on the street, parking lot or on the grounds in facilities storing ornamentals and other non-edibles.

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Table 1. Improving the Volunteer Experience
Selected comments from questionnaire responses:
For those who worked on urban agriculture and horticulture related tasks, respondents made the following comments regarding what would improve their experience:
"More time in the field"
"Bring rubber boots"
"Just more clarity on what to do after finishing each step"
"Getting started on time"
"….harvesting"

Table 2. Reasons for Returning to SHARE for Additional Volunteer Experiences
Selected comments from questionnaire responses:
For those who were repeat volunteers, the reasons for coming back vary, but some of the reasons follow:
"To learn more about green house [sic] and tunnel farming"
"The work is easy"
"I come back for more experience and agricultural knowledge"
"Makes me feel good to help others"
"I enjoy the physical aspect of the volunteer projects/needs"
"We know that we are helping others"

Table 3. What Volunteers Value About Their Return Visits to SHARE
Selected comments from questionnaire responses:
The answers to the question regarding what one likes about his or her experiences each time you return to SHARE follow:
"Planting veggies…Learning how tunnel farming effects the veggies"
"Well organized, fun, meaningful work"
"Seeing all the different volunteers"
"I learn something new and have different experiences each time"
"…feel connected to earth"
"There is always plenty to do"
"Learning"
"Hard working tasks; doing for others"

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Table 4. Community Service Goals, Reasons for Choosing SHARE as a Work Site and Suggestions for Improvement
Selected comments from questionnaire responses:
The responses below are in answer to the following questions: • What is important to you when engaging in community service? • Why did you choose SHARE as a volunteer work site? • What would improve your experience at Nice Roots Farm?
"Explaining to people in the community how service helps the neighborhood"
"The experience on [sic} growing crops…all natural"
"More time in the facility"
"Getting my hands dirty and making a difference"
"Tell us how we should locate things that you will understand later. Give us your detailed quality assurance standards."
"Knowing the impact of the service work"
"Helping those in need…"
"Would have liked to plant, but it is the winter"
"Awesome place with a great mission"

Table 5. Areas of Importance for Volunteers (*n*=20)

EXPERIENCE	Extremely Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
Interacting with SHARE staff	15	5		
Interacting with the Director of Urban Agriculture	9	11		
Interacting with other volunteers	12	5	3	
Interacting with the Executive Director of SHARE[29]	6	2	6	1

[29] Respondents did not interact with the Director and declined to respond to this question en masse.

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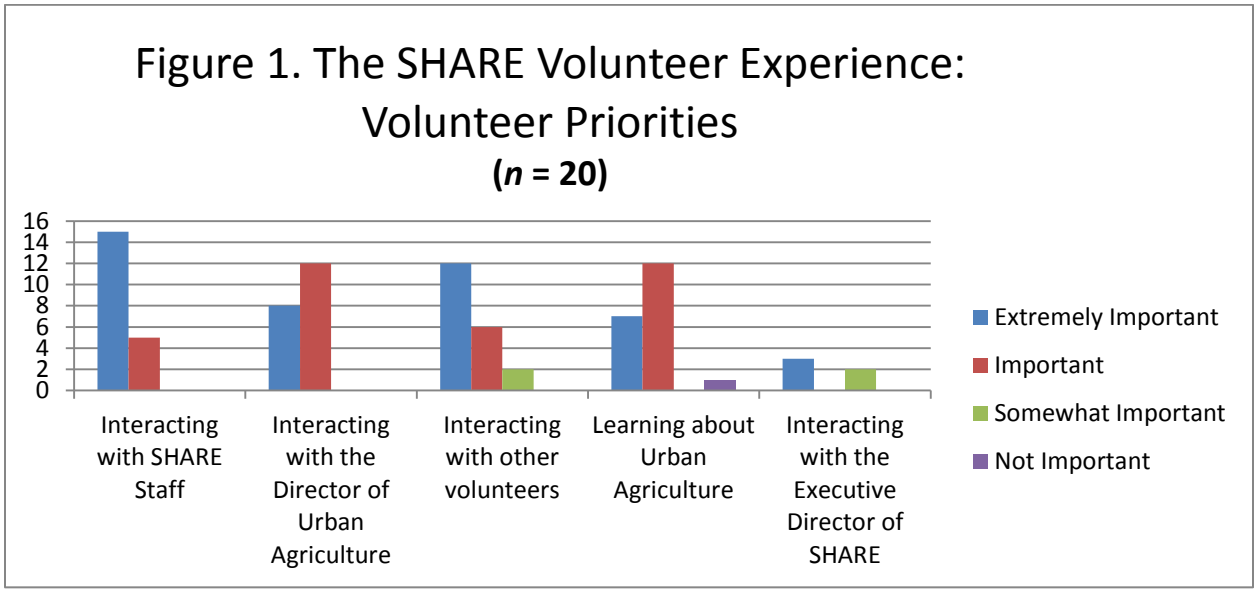
Learning about urban agriculture	7	12



For the vast majority of respondents, interacting with staff is extremely important as is learning about urban agriculture. The role of the farmer, farm educator and in this case, the Director of Urban Agriculture is not only high profile, but very important because this individual is the face of the urban agriculture program.

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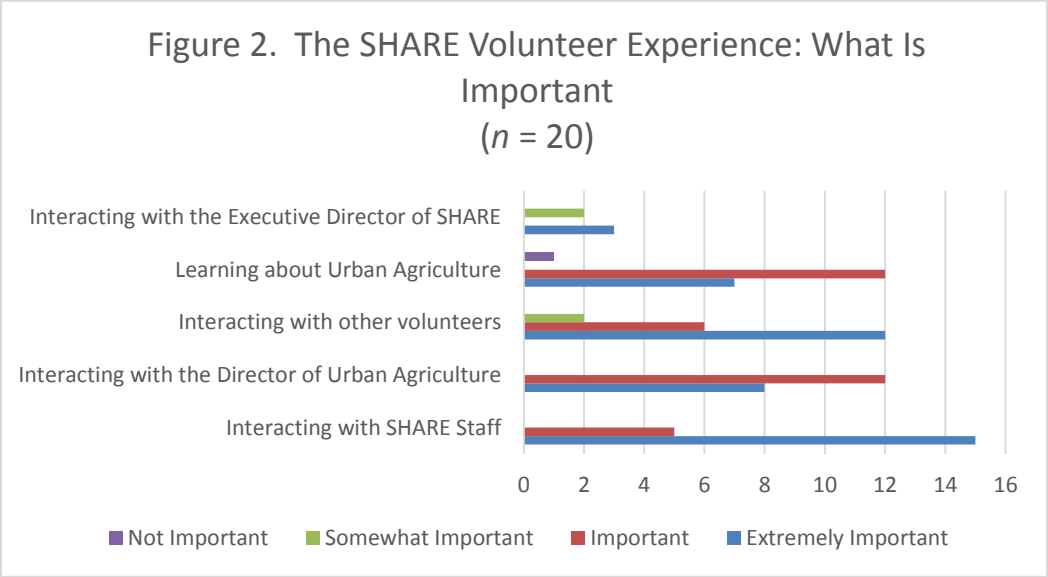

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Table 6. Private Comments and Observations from Volunteer Site Coordinators and/or Participants and the Director of Urban Agriculture
Selected comments from correspondence between the Director of Urban Agriculture and individual volunteer site coordinators or principals:
An information technology manager saw value in urban agricultural activities as team building exercises. He expressed interest in having his entire team come and work with the Director of Urban Agriculture on urban agriculture related tasks at SHARE. This comment was made by an information technology regarding his team of programmers, developers, analysts and statisticians.
"I kept thinking all weekend how much fun I had on Saturday." This comment was made by a social worker after he worked with the Director of Urban Agriculture alongside his clients.
A guidance counselor at a private women's high school stated there are "Never too many great role models."
A faculty member at an elite private school commented that having students who come from privileged backgrounds work on tasks, such as mowing, raking, sweeping and weeding "build character" and give the students a "different perspective" on labor, chores, civic engagement and employment, specifically the opportunity to choose or the lack of an opportunity to choose one's economic circumstances.

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