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Unknown

first, we want to just thank the go to one credit union, not only for supporting the Ice Growers Alliance with the community grant program, but really

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for supporting the young people that we hope to provide,

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you know, workforce development, training and pathways to opportunities or jobs in the green economy.

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And

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I think more importantly, I was just so thankful because

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this resource is extremely valuable for us to be able to do the mission critical work we're doing

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taking care of our families and the young people who are hungry for change.

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so right now we are actually building a really our first greenhouse at the sugarcane Community Garden where we're working on this project. We've been working on it for quite some time now, and this funding is going to help us build a plant nursery and that's going to allow us to not only teach greenhouse maintenance and operations and provide that type of workforce development for young people, but we're also hoping to be able to grow plants that we can then give away and have plant cells that will continue to provide economic opportunities for young people through the form of internships, stipends and hopefully pretty soon here we want to be able to provide more jobs.

00;02;04;21 - 00;02;18;02

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Hi. My name is Bertino Marley, and I'm the founder and volunteer CEO of the El Paso Heights Growers Alliance. So tell us some more about the organization. What exactly is it all about?

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Yeah, so the Growers Alliance was established in 2013 and we are committed to advancing equity and justice in disadvantaged communities. This all started by planting trees and parks to address a lot of the need for urban greening and green spaces. Since then we now have planted over 500 trees in five parks, three community gardens, and we currently operate and maintain five community garden sites in North Sacramento.

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It's green y you know, it's a waiting list for people. Yeah, it's it's needed for a number of reasons. The first one is that, you know, our food system is unhealthy, it's expensive and it's broken, and there really isn't a place to even get a fresh fruit around that Plaza Heights. And so we realized that we really have to produce more food in our community to address these long health issues, social economic issues that are really tied to a healthy environment.

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SCREEN And what I guess what what do you think this means to, you know, the kids and the families that, you know, are able to utilize this program? Yeah. So we we serve young people in their families by providing education and experience in the natural world. And so we believe that a thriving natural world is so important. And so the there are a number of benefits that our programs and our services provide to young people.

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The first one is just really an opportunity to connect with the nature and the natural world around them, to learn about seasonality, to to recognize plants and learn how to take care of them. And so really the way we see it is we are helping people, you know, thrive by creating clean air, land, air, water to make sure that the future generations have healthy places to play and to work and to live and to just experience not only healthy relationships with themselves, but with their surrounding natural environment.

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And how do people get involved? What is like the type of and, you know, yeah, how does it work a little bit. So I'll, I'll talk about this place. So right now we are at the true Beginnings community orchard in Grove. This grove was created in 2015 and here right now we have about 48 different trees. There's about ten different varieties.

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And so we just had an event here two weeks ago. It was the first annual Del Paso Heights Family Festival, and we're hoping to make that an annual event so that people continue to utilize the space, become better land stewards and to have fun. We we had these we call them dirt cups where we had pudding with candy worms and like little dusted Oreo cookies.

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And so the young people got to not only play with worms, but then we showed them real worms about kind of how to not only just enjoy your fruit, but then your leftover banana peel you can feed to the worms, which will then turn into worm castings that you can put back in the garden. So we

really teach these cycles about carbon, about nitrogen, water and even our organic waste recycling, which is really important in California.

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It's great. And what is the goal, would you say, with the attendees that come to this? What do you think they get out of this organization?

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Yeah, so we have three main objectives and that is to cultivate joy, food and inspiration. And I think if we were to think about the last of it, we had check, check and check.

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People were happy. They enjoyed themselves. We we talked about the different food growing here. I will show you some of the things growing here today. And we inspired other people to take home some plants and to start their own worm bins. And I think that that is just always the best part is to not only have an experience, but then to be able to continue that journey in your own home and in your own life.

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That's great. And let's talk about a little bit of the brand that you guys applied

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and it's great to see if we can go. I know I'm asking you a lot of stuff, but we like to just. Yeah, and I'm and I'll try to think about it too, because I'm like, okay, what else? Okay, let me see. Yeah, you can talk about. Yeah. So I think I know. Okay, so to answer your question about how this will help us, we hope to offer 20 different events and workshops and serve 100 young people with nutrition, agriculture, health opportunities.

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We also hope to be able to provide young people with their serve safe food handler certification. And and so that is a really big thing that if we can certify people to be able to get jobs in the food economy, the food system, those are the things that we're hoping to be able to achieve over the next few years.

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And what was your reaction when you learned that you got the funding? I was elated.

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That's great. Anything else you want to add? Yeah, actually, I would love to give you a little tour of the site if I can, and just kind of show you some of the plant species and the ways in which we teach young people about seasonality, what's in season, how they identify the plants, how to use the plants, preserve them.

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So we really take them on this life cycle journey. So I'd love to show you a few things if I can. Yeah. Yeah. Okay. All right. So I want to start with this lime tree over here. And Jamie, I'm going to I'm going to have you come in and join me in this experience. So have you ever had Thai food?

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I have. Okay. And so there's this is a key for lime. And this this lime is really special. And.