

Yale University

President's Public Service Fellowship

Proposal for Fellowship Placement Summer 2023

Organization information

<i>Name of organization</i>	Common Ground Farm/New Haven Ecology Project
<i>Full street address</i>	358 Springside Ave, New Haven CT 06515
<i>Website or link to social media page</i>	www.commongroundct.org

PPSF Fellow's direct supervisor

The supervisor must be available to supervise Fellow on a daily basis.

<i>Name</i>	Deborah Greig/Diane Litwin
<i>Title</i>	Farm Director/Farm Manager
<i>Cell phone number</i>	917 822 7254
<i>E-mail address</i>	farm@nhep.com

Placement dates (8-11 weeks between Tuesday, May 30, 2023 through Friday, August 11, 2023)

May 30th-August 11th

Are placement dates flexible? Are there any dates on which your Fellow must work?

Yes, Dates are flexible and can start earlier or end later than this time period. We prefer that the fellow start by May 30st at the latest so as to participate in orientation with the rest of our Summer staff (even though their responsibilities are slightly different). Placements must at minimum through August 4th, ideally through August 10th when our Summer Programming ends.

Proposed work schedule (*work week should equal and not exceed 37.5 hours per week*)

Mon-Fri Average Day 8:30-4:30 *if choosing to focus on our Mobile Market, some days might start and end later.

The proposed work schedule is as follows:

May 30st-June 9th: up to 30hrs/week Orientation week on Farm, Compost, youth and/OR Mobile Market.

June 12-30th: 30 hrs/week with our farm, compost system; 6-7.5 hr/week planning learning opportunities for our High School Green Jobs Corps (GJC) High Program OR supporting outreach for our mobile farm stand

Jul 6-Aug 7: 12.5 hrs/week on the farm/compost; 25 hrs/week co-leading Farm Crew and supporting education for the general GJC Youth Crew OR supporting our mobile farm stand.

Aug 8-11th: 37.5 hrs/week on farm or supporting the mobile farm stand.

Organization description (*mission statement, population served. 1,000 characters or less*)

Organization description (mission statement, population served. 150 words or less.):

Common Ground is a center for environmental learning and leadership, inviting people across ages and identities to connect to their urban environment, build community, grow into their full potential, and contribute to a just and sustainable world. We work toward this mission through active, authentic learning rooted in justice and our environment: a farm, in a forest, in a city. Three connected efforts are at the core of Common Ground's work:

The nation's longest-running charter high school focused on the environment – growing a new, more inclusive generation of successful students and powerful environmental leaders.

An environmental education center – each year connects more than 15,000 people of all ages with the natural world while helping them develop habits of sustainable living.

An urban demonstration farm, modeling practices of sustainable agriculture and contributing to a healthy food

Write a 1-2 sentence summary of the work that the Fellow would be conducting (500 characters or less).

The Fellow would provide hands-on support growing vegetables, maintaining our compost system and caring for animals on the Common Ground 1 acre urban farm alongside our farm team and Summer young adult interns (including technical farming workshops, food justice conversations and field trips).

Depending on interest they can choose to focus on co-leading a crew of High School aged Green Jobs Corps students working on our urban farm OR support our mobile farm stand, which travels around New Haven

Write a more complete description of the specific project you propose and list the duties/outcomes expected of the Fellow.

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Depending on interest they can choose to focus on co-leading a crew of High School aged Green Jobs Corps students working on our urban farm OR support our mobile farm stand, which travels around New Haven providing access to different neighborhoods with fresh vegetables.

Write a more complete description of the specific project you propose and list the duties/outcomes expected of the Fellow.

In addition to the work with the GJC Farm Crew, the Fellow will also take on hands-on work on Common Ground's urban farm. Our $\frac{3}{4}$ acre sustainable, diversified market garden grows over 10,000 pounds of food and raises livestock in a unique urban setting. We sell our fresh produce and eggs through our Farm Share program, through a mobile farm stand and to our school cafeteria. The Fellow will work under the guidance of our Farm Director and Farm Manager and alongside GJC students and other young adult interns, in the following areas:

- Planting, cultivating, and harvesting over 25 types of vegetables
- Processing for our Compost System
- Supporting a mobile farm stand and farm share program
- Participating in or running weekly educational trips and workshops on farming and food justice related topics
- As part of their responsibilities, fellows can choose to focus on supporting our Green Jobs Core Program for High School Students OR the Common Ground Mobile Market.

Common Ground's Green Jobs Corps (GJC) connects more than 50 Common Ground High School students with paid environmental work, career and leadership development opportunities, and individualized support during the Summer and the school year. This Summer, GJC members will take on a variety of work placements – including restoring habitat on and off of Common Ground's campus, growing produce on Common Ground's urban farm, monitoring water quality in New Haven rivers, and more.

CG seeks a PPSF to co-lead our GJC Farm Crew, as they take on important agricultural and food security work, and to support general leadership and soft-skill development activities for youth in the GJC program. The Fellow will help supervise and work alongside members of the GJC Farm Crew, in partnership with Farm staff. The Fellow will also take responsibility for developing and facilitating learning opportunities for the entire GJC Youth Crew (in placements beyond the farm), in partnership with other Common Ground staff, 1 day a week during the Summer. The topics will be selected based on the interest and skill set of the Fellow, and will be discussed with the Farm Manager, Food Justice Education Coordinator, and Green Jobs Corps Manager prior to the start of Youth Crew. The Fellow can also have the opportunity to join other crews working on our site and in our kitchen. This work will give the Fellow an opportunity to build capacity and understanding related to youth leadership, youth development, youth employment, and education.

If working with the Mobile Market, the Fellow would support the Mobile Market Manager in outreach, sales and other related activities. The Mobile Market, in operation since its pilot season in 2012, is a farm stand on wheels that brings fresh produce from Connecticut farms directly to New Haven neighborhoods that don't have access to farmers markets or fresh produce through grocery stores. Common Ground supplies the Mobile Market with fresh, local tomatoes, corn, peaches and other veggies grown on their farm and other farms around the state. The Mobile Market accepts and encourages SNAP, WIC and Senior Farmer's Market Nutrition Program Checks to support folks with limited incomes in purchasing fresh produce. It goes to Senior residences, libraries, community centers and other spaces around New Haven.

List specific skills/experience required for the project

Experience in working with youth, preferably high school aged OR experience in customer service settings.

Commitment to social justice, inclusiveness, and work in racially diverse contexts.

Good communication/interpersonal skills with people of all ages, especially youth.

Good organizational skills and ability to multi-task.

Willingness to get dirty and work in the heat.

Ability to be work hard and be physically active for most of an 8 hour day.

Demonstrated commitment, reliability, punctuality, and responsible behavior.

An interest in learning about sustainable agriculture and local food.

Maturity, and the willingness to be a positive role-model and leader for young people (ages 14 – 18), while maintaining appropriate supervisory boundaries
Strong writing, research, and program planning skills.

Flexibility with the ever changing needs of farm programs.

Additional requirements (e.g. a car or weekend working hours). If a car is required, include information regarding parking arrangements and mileage reimbursement.

-A car is not necessary, although helpful, as our site is accessible by the city bus or bicycle. Parking is available if needed.

-If working on the Mobile Market, comfort speaking Spanish is helpful but not required.

Briefly describe any work that Yale PPSF Fellows have done with your organization in the past and present. If you have not worked with Yale Fellows, describe any work that Yale students have done with your organization.

Common Ground has been fortunate to host a Yale Fellow on several occasions, and our site and our students have greatly benefited from their contributions.

In summer 2007, a Fellow worked in the Ecology Camp as a counselor for the 6-8 year old campers. She also put in many hours in the garden and at our Farmer's Market stand.

In summer 2008, we significantly expanded our summer camp program and our Yale Fellow was instrumental in the launch of many new camp sessions. Summer 2008 also benefited from the farm and farmer's market help of an additional Yale Fellow, who labored in the garden, worked with our teenage Youth Crew, attended farmer's market, and helped us design attractive new publicity materials for our farmer's market stand.

Summer 2009 saw the start of a very popular Saturday Open Farm Day and a successful on-site farmer's market stand, both of which relied on the capable, hardworking help of our Yale Fellow.

In 2010, our Fellow ran a small work crew in the garden and helped to make the on-site farm stand more successful than in 2009.

In summer 2011, our Fellow was a Green Jobs Corps Youth Crew Assistant Supervisor, managing a team of teenage workers on Common Ground's campus. She developed original environmental and food justice curricula, and ran various workshops for the entire Youth Crew throughout the summer.

In the summer of 2012, our Fellow was also a Youth Crew Assistant Supervisor. She proved to be a valuable member of the team; helping to supervise the Farm Crew, running a workshop on goal setting, facilitating various team building activities and leading impromptu discussions on various issues such as the food system and human rights. She was instrumental in helping the program run effectively.

Our 2017 Fellow proved to be an integral part of running our farm, and gathered stories/information from alum that has helped us assess the effectiveness of our Green Jobs Corps program.

In 2018, our Fellow was instrumental in helping to run our farm (in the midst of a particularly short-staffed season), supported outreach and general operations support for our mobile farmer's market, and planned a 4-part "Food Stories" curriculum which addressed topics related to food security, food justice and food sovereignty, and culminated in an all-crew cooking event that allowed students to share dishes important to themselves and their families.

In 2021, our Fellow supported Common Ground social media and communications virtually through our Development Department. We additionally had 1 Yale student as part of our Summer Intern Program who stayed on to support the farm and our compost system through November.

Yale fellows have also worked on several occasions in our summer ecology camps, tutors for Common Ground High School, as research interns, and as mentors for students in classes doing field work, managing social media and research on the farm and in the forest