

From: [Faculty Description of Research Project](#)
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Subject: New submission from Faculty Description of Research Project
Date: Wednesday, February 07, 2018 1:08:53 PM

Project title:

Food Security in the Homeless: high impact health intervention through sustainable gardening nutrition project

Faculty mentor name, email, department and phone number

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Research Project Description

Do you want: direct patient interaction, poster presentation, and publish opportunity, all achievable within the year? Do you want to be involved in a project where your work will make an actual difference in the immediate lives on our most vulnerable population suffering health disparities? Then this is the project for you!

The evidence supporting nutrition intervention for prevention, management, and cure of chronic diseases and improvement of mental health is now undeniable; however, implementation has not become first-line management in healthcare. Increasing fresh fruit and vegetables in the diet has been shown to improve depression, decrease anxiety, decrease blood pressure, stabilize diabetes, improve body mass index, and resolve atherosclerosis.

Developing and expanding a food garden at Grace Marketplace in Alachua County aims to solve multiple problems in our most at-risk population: the homeless. Growing a sustainable organic garden is easy, affordable, and provides the best food nutrition source available. One 4 ft by 4 ft garden bed, planted properly, can provide all of the nutrition needs for one person for one meal per day! Our project will 1) decrease hunger in the homeless population, 2) provide high yield nutrition that is sustainable and 3) provide an agricultural curriculum with a graduate certification to help provide employment in the clients.

Join our team as we initiate our first Agriculture Certificate program this Spring, and study its effectiveness and benefits. This Spring, our garden will grow 21 4 ft x 8 foot beds of fresh food. 10 homeless clients will receive a weekly stipend to complete an agriculture certificate program that will help them obtain employment in local farms after its completion. We will evaluate the program, and design a study to evaluate the impact on employability, and also mental health. Bring your own research ideas to this project, or join in on ours! Applicants should be ready to meet and get involved in the garden project this Spring, but formal research activities will be easily completed during the summer program.

We can accommodate 3 students, so apply early!