

HORTICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND ENVIRONMENT
STUDENT EDUCATION PROJECTS

School Snack Recipe Development and Sun Powered Dehydration

After assessing the school lunch system of the Virgin Islands, service learners sought out a lunch program that utilized locally sourced and nutritious food options. In the spring of 2017, students implemented a snack program that operated on produce obtained from the EARTH garden. A sun powered dehydrator was used to ensure the preservation of harvested goods.

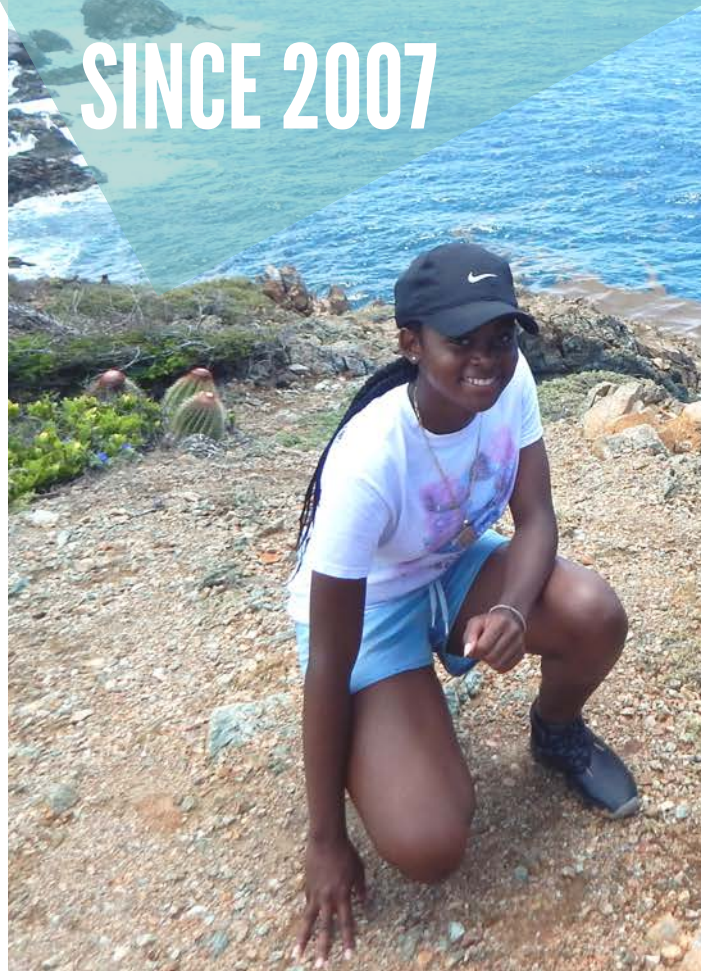
Irrigation Systems

Rainfall is the primary source of water supply in the Virgin Islands. Due to the infrequency of rain events, service learners devised two, ecologically efficient irrigation systems. The systems were designed to be economical, safe to operate, and reproduceable for small scale gardeners.

Hydroponics

After taking into account the arable and acidic soils of the Virgin Islands, a student learner devised a cost effective hydroponics system that would assuage the lack of soil fertility.

CULTIVATING SUSTAINABILITY SINCE 2007



CONTACT US

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IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

EARTH 

SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH SERVICE LEARNING

Service learning is a multifaceted approach for students to actively engage in an academic curriculum while participating in a community focused service project. Students who are involved with service learning assist in community engagement projects that benefit both the local area as well as the participants own knowledge-base.

The EARTH program exemplifies this active learning method by immersing students in a program that utilizes hands on methods for addressing sustainability in nutrition, agronomy, history, culture, and the environment.

EARTH Students assist with the following volunteer efforts:

- **St. John, Feed The Hungry-** EARTH Students assist with harvesting produce grown in the EARTH Garden. Food is then transported and prepped at the local, *Feed The Hungry* kitchen.
- **Giff Hill School Nutrition Program-** EARTH students practice "Farm to Table" methods as they consolidate food grown at Giff Hill into nutritious and delectable dishes for school children.
- **Island Green Composting Initiative-** Students collect food waste and scraps from local food establishments. The collected material is then utilized for *Turn Style* composting.
- **Island Green Outreach and Extension-** EARTH Students assist with the promotion of hands on, information sessions presented to the community. Session encompass anything from informational composting meetings to discussing the impact of plastic waste on the island.

LEARN ABOUT EARTH

Through the EARTH Program, Iowa State Students travel to the U.S. Virgin Islands and the Island of St. John for their summer, spring, or fall semester. While in St. John, students will live, work, and provide community service for the local community.

University students (also known as "service-learners") assist with EARTH gardens to grow native produce in a sustainable manner.

The "service learners" also have the opportunity to assist teachers with EARTH, environmental science, and culinary arts classes to create learning opportunities for children.

Over the past year, the EARTH program hosted twelve service learners who were actively involved with youth, horticulture, agriculture, and food projects at Giff Hill School (GHS) of St. John and service projects in the greater community. We are extreme grateful for everyone who has supported the EARTH program for the past 12 years and are excited to see it grow.

For 8-12 weeks, students will incorporate their various backgrounds to communicate the prevalence of balanced nutrition, environmental science, culinary science, and horticulture practices to the local community. Conversely, students will develop a well-rounded understanding of the social and economic facets of sustainability.

The accomplishments of service learners will be depicted through the completion of a poster presentation.

COURSE INFORMATION

Travel Dates:

- 12-15 weeks Fall semester and Spring semester; 8 weeks in the Summer
- 1 credit per week (variable depending on Fall/Spring Semester; 3-4 credits in Summer)

Course(s):

- Pre-departure Seminar
- Service Learning (Hort 494B): 10-12 Credits
- Independent Study (Hort 490F): 3 Credits (US Diversity)
- Online Coursework: Potential for Distance Education Credits on Island
- Post - Internship Seminar

HOW TO APPLY

- Complete Online Study Abroad Application
- Obtain 1 letter of recommendation from Iowa State University faculty (this portion is completed in the online application)
- Essay questions (part of the online application)
- GPA above 2.0
- Agree to a driving check
- Interview with program directors, coordinators, and assistants

APPLICATION DEADLINES

- Spring: October 20th, 2017
- Summer: January 12th, 2018
- Fall: February 15th, 2018