

**Community Gardening Service Learning Grant**  
**Janine Anderson**  
**Community Based Newlove 2**

**I. Project Description**

Students with severe disabilities in a community based transition program learned how to grow and maintain their own vegetable, herb, and flower garden at a local community garden. Students have had the opportunity to participate in purchasing plants for the garden, as well as planting, watering, weeding, and harvesting vegetables in scheduled visits to the garden twice per week. These activities have broadened students' experiences in the community, as well as further develop vocational skills/interests that will assist students in their adult lives.

**II. Outline**

Students will have had the opportunity to participate in purchasing plants for the garden, as well as planting, watering, weeding, and harvesting vegetables in scheduled visits to the garden twice per week. The plot at the community gardens is located in a raised bed, making the activities accessible to students in wheelchairs or with mobility difficulties. Students have also had the opportunity to observe the growth at other community members' plots, which will help serve as a model and inspiration for the students' garden. Students will be able to use harvested food/herbs as ingredients in lunches prepared in the classroom, and/or flowers that can be put into bouquets at the classroom.

**III. Lessons**

Using a picture sequence of gardening activities made using the Boardmaker program, students were instructed in how to select plants from a local nursery, purchase their plants using grant money, assisted in transporting the plants to the community garden, and planting their purchases. Continuing to use picture sequences using Boardmaker icons and photographs, students cared for their garden several times per week during scheduled outings to the community garden site. Students watered, weeded, and harvested vegetables, herbs, and flowers. Students were able to use the vegetables in meals prepared at the classroom, and also took flowers and leftover vegetables home to show families and caregivers. Also utilized was Learning for Life: Plants Learner Box curriculum developed and published by Infinitic/UCP. Please see "Materials Used" Section below for more information.

**IV. Notes/Tips for Teachers**

This project was designed for students with severe to profound cognitive disabilities in a post-secondary transition program (grade 13).

Standards and subjects covered:

California Career Technical Education: *9.0 Leadership and Teamwork:*

*9.1 Understand the characteristics and benefits of teamwork, leadership, and citizenship in the school, community, and workplace settings.*

*9.5 Understand how to interact with others in ways that demonstrate respect for individual and cultural differences and for the attitudes and feelings of others.*

*9.6 Understand leadership, cooperation, collaboration, and effective decision-making skills applied in group or team activities, including the student organization.*

Student impact:

By the end of this project, my students have developed a greater understanding of the sequence of purchasing plants, transporting plants to the garden, planting, and that regular maintenance of the garden is required in order for their garden to thrive. Students understand that by regularly watering and weeding, they are able to harvest vegetables, herbs, and flowers that can be taken to the classroom and used in cooking projects. (We were able to grow a salsa garden for our classroom!) Students have become more independent as they participate in and complete each step of the gardening routine. Students have not been exposed to a community garden, which will give them new opportunities to create relationships and share experiences with other community members while working towards shared goals of maintaining gardens. The community garden

project also allows students to develop gardening skills as potential vocational skills as they transition into adult services and supported employment settings.

**Materials Used:**

- ☒ Learning for Life: Plants Learner Box curriculum developed and published by Infinitec/UCP.  
<http://www.learnerbox.com/>
- ☒ Boardmaker v.6 software by Mayer-Johnson
- ☒ <http://www.adaptedlearning.com/> This website is a forum for Boardmaker users to upload and download activities, worksheets, picture sequences, and icons for free. You must have Boardmaker to access the files. Gardening sequences and plant care sequences are available.