



BEACH FLATS COMMUNITY GARDEN

Organization/Agency: Beach Flats Community Garden

Agency Sponsor:

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Address: 1156 High Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95064

Needed for quarters: Fall, Winter, Spring — Keep on file for one year

The Beach Flats Community Garden, which has flourished for over 25 years, is located in the historically Latino community of Beach Flats located at the base of the Santa Cruz Boardwalk. It is a space that contributes to food security and continuation of agroecological traditions from gardeners who have immigrated from Mexico and El Salvador. Additionally, the garden provides green space in the most densely populated neighborhood of Santa Cruz.

The garden also provides a unique and important opportunity for youth education. In the Winter of 2017 interns, volunteers, community members, and gardeners at the garden worked to revive a connection between the Community Center's Afterschool Program and the garden. Financial budget cuts by the city eliminated this previously year-long program. Nueva Vista Community Resources run by Community Bridges at the Beach Flats Community Center runs a youth education program after school program which serves elementary to middle school students.

In Spring 2017, we started a program Tuesdays 3:30-5:00pm with the after-school program to engaged kids in the community with the garden. For the first 30 mins there is a time for homework support, relationship building, etc, followed by garden programming. The ultimate goal is to create a solid year-long curriculum for children's programming in the garden that is unique to the community and garden rather than adopting and imposing an outside curriculum.

In this internship students will have the option of engaging in several tracks of work by:

1. Community building and organizing with the gardeners, neighborhood, town, and campus communities in connection with the garden. This track also involves helping other gardeners/volunteers with community outreach, organizing events such as movie nights and harvest festivals, assisting with community meetings, etc
2. Working with local researchers to continue to document and share the history and stories of: the garden, the gardeners, and the neighborhood. This work supports a long-term project developing a social history archive and related useful projects. Students can help with video editing, transcription, website development, etc.
3. Working with our youth education program to develop unique curriculum that engages and value the community's history, culture, crops, traditions, cultivation methods, language, and knowledges.

In addition, all students will have the opportunity to:

- Grow food with the gardeners and learn from their traditions
- Work with the *Save the Beach Flats Community Garden Coalition* to gain first-hand experience in community advocacy
- And/or investigate the history of the garden and community to give background on the current issues.

The objectives of working with UCSC interns are to include the eyes and voices of students in the work of the garden, which has in years past been an essential element to garden well-being. If students are interested we encourage interns to volunteer for more than one quarter in order to develop relationships and learn in depth about this garden, community, and project.

Prerequisites:

No particular coursework or background knowledge is necessary. A willingness to respect and learn from community gardeners and local leaders is required. In addition, Spanish skills will be very useful although not mandatory. Working with children requires availability to be emotionally and mentally as well as physically present.