

**Servant Leadership Summer Internship Placement Site
Job Description Information Sheet
Summer 2010**

Organization Name: Gaia Gardens

Address: 900 Dancing Fox Road
Decatur, GA 30032

Mailing Address (if different):

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Web site: http://web.me.com/danielparson/GaiaGardens/Gaia_Home.html

Internship Supervisor: Rachel Kaplan

Supervisor's contact information including e-mail:

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Organization's Mission Statement: To provide local, organic, and sustainably grown vegetables, fruits, herbs and flowers to members of the Gaia Gardens Community Supported Agriculture program, East Atlanta Village Farmers' Market shoppers and area restaurants.

Summary of organization's primary programs and services:

Gaia Gardens is a two acre, certified organic, urban vegetable farm located between the neighborhoods of East Atlanta and Decatur. The farm is primarily responsible for feeding members of the Gaia Gardens Community Supported Agriculture program for thirty weeks of the year (the end of April through the end of November). The farm also sells produce once a week at the East Atlanta Village Farmers' Market from May through November. When possible, Gaia Gardens also sells produce to area restaurants.

Intern's title: Farm Intern

Internship project/job description:

Farm Description:

Gaia Gardens is an intensive 2-acre certified organic diversified farm located in Decatur, GA, just outside of Atlanta. We grow a wide range of vegetables, fruits, flowers, and herbs and many different varieties. We also have honeybees, a blueberry orchard, and fruit trees.

We market our goods through a 60+ member CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) program, and the farm has the potential to sell at area farmers' markets and supply local restaurants.

Gaia Gardens is a part of the East Lake Commons Co-Housing community (ELC), a unique village of sorts that created Gaia Gardens and continues to support the farm in a many crucial ways.

This opportunity will allow you to learn how to grow high quality vegetables on small acreage throughout the seasons and how to make important decisions for a farm. Our weathered Georgia soils are much improved from their clay beginning and they are still in need of remediation; soil management and protection plays a large role in how our farm operates, with compost management, intensive cover cropping, and crop rotation as high priority.

Marketing Our Produce:

Most of our food goes to our CSA program. CSA (community supported agriculture) is a mutually beneficial relationship between the farm and local consumers, where members receive fresh, organic produce weekly throughout the growing season in exchange for ensuring the farmer a living wage and providing production costs up front. The CSA members learn about organic agriculture and get to share in the risks and rewards of our hard work. The ELC community is the farm's first priority and it is essential that we strive to satisfy the community members that are responsible for the farm's existence.

Summer Farm Assistant Position:

The Gaia Gardens Summer Farm Assistant position is highly diversified. Tasks will include, but are not limited to:

*General Farm Work: Building, creating, and working with the flow of systems on the farm; greenhouse and organization in the winter, planting, harvesting, and weeding in the spring and summer.

*CSA: Harvesting, packing, sorting and organizing produce for CSA pick-up

*Markets: Harvest, packing, and other preparation for market sales, as well as the potential of staffing the market stand.

*Restaurant Sales: Harvest, packing, and delivery of restaurant orders.

*Agritourism: Assist in the coordination of farm tours on-farm educational opportunities. There is also a potential for seasonal events on the farm.

*Compost management: Assistance with the procurement of compostables, turning and monitoring compost.

*Web: Updating events, newsletters, and market information on existing website (experience helpful but not necessary).

Qualifications:

We're looking for someone who has a passion for agriculture and working outdoors in all kinds of weather (especially the heat of Georgia summers). While organic farming experience is preferred, it is not necessary as long as good work ethic and interest is exemplified. Love of physical labor and lots of energy is essential. The person that is always looking for a better way to get the job done and a mind for efficiency will have a much more profound learning experience. You must be kind, respectful, and empathetic of others. You must have a "beginner's mind," being open to learning no matter how much you know about a subject. You will be dealing directly with your consumers: CSA members, market customers, and chefs, so you must be friendly and able to market the products through your knowledge of their production. Finally, you should love to laugh and have fun!

In addition to all the traits that we're looking for in a Summer Assistant, we also want someone who is a self-starter with great ideas and initiative. One that takes ownership over all they do and that has great amounts of energy to see projects to completion. You must be able to work in a group, manage others and take instruction from the farm manager. An eye for efficiency is necessary.

Your time will be split between working alone and working with others, so you must know how to manage your own time and how to ask for help when you need it. Over the course of the season you will also be exposed to more information, farm tours, and lessons on farm management.

Work Hours and Description:

We generally start quite early to beat the heat and have more free time in the afternoon.

The work can be physically demanding. However, many hands can make light work and on most difficult tasks we will all be working together. While the farm operations are diverse and incredibly complex, you must be open to conquering monotonous tasks for long amounts of time with the team. The more initiative you take and interest you show, the more responsibility you will be entrusted with.

A Quality, Learning Environment:

We are committed to creating the best learning environment possible. This is a true "hands on" program. We work hard but we also work intelligently. Greenhouse management, transplant production, tillage, cultivation, weed control, composting, and careful efficient harvesting for maximum crop quality are just some of the many things you will learn. Farm rotations and insect and disease control will be discussed and implemented.

Ultimately, however, what you learn is up to you. To make the most of this experience it takes openness, a curious nature, a mind for efficiency and a desire and initiative to learn and grow.

Other requirements for position (security check, drug screen, immunizations): n/a

Will the internship require that the student have a car? No, but unfortunately it is easier and faster to get to the farm by car.

Is placement site accessible by public transit or other transportation options? Yes. The farm is 2.1 miles from the East Lake Marta station on the East/West Marta line. From the East Lake Marta station, take the #22 bus to the corner of Glenwood and 2nd Avenue. Take a left onto Glenwood Avenue and walk a very short distance toward Summit Drive (which is the second residential street on the right side of Glenwood Avenue after passing the BP gas station). Take a right onto Summit Drive and walk to the end of Summit Drive. The farm gate is at the end of Summit Drive.