

CONSERVATION EDUCATION GROUP



The idea of having fresh vegetables in the inner city community had always been on the mind of Memorial Baptist Church's Pastor/CEO of the Memorial Community Development Corporation's Adrian M. Brooks, Sr. It seemed relatively easy enough to turn unused plots of land into viable food stations. He thought, surely someone would be interested in helping make this a viable and sustainable project for the community. That vision came to life with the help of the City of Evansville's City Council, Mayor Weinzapfel, and the

Department of Metropolitan Development.



After receipt of a modest amount of funds for the garden for youth employment and community gardening, Rev. Brooks turned the program over to youth director Rev. Lisa Beckner and field supervisor Rev. Adren Joyner. Team Leader Everett Warfield assisted and led other youth in vegetation and plot maintenance, along with delivery of vegetables to soup kitchens, homeless shelters, and the elderly.



The program over a two year period has seen its fair share of hard work, trials and tribulations, and finicky weather. However, over the last two years the garden has produced a variety of fruits and vegetables from tomatoes, to corn, to cabbage and collard greens. This variety has helped to not only open a market in which youth learn entrepreneurial skills, but in which the community has seen over 3500 lbs of food given away and sold, with over 75% going to local food pantry's, homeless and transitional shelters, and churches of all denominations. We are grateful for our newest addition of a small greenhouse funded by the Evansville Urban Enterprise Association, which will help to make the garden a true year round program in 2011. Thanks to the numerous volunteers and donors who continue to help make the garden a success.