

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN - LA CROSSE
COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND HEALTH

TRAVEL & SUPPLIES GRANTS
For Student Researchers

Date: 2/15/2024 **Total funds requested** \$237.5

Term for which funds are requested: 20 Fall Type of Grant:
20 24 Spring **Type A: Supplies** _____
20 Summer **Type B: Travel** x

Project Title Community Gardens Mapping Project

Conference Title (Travel Grants): MUGS

Destination/Dates of travel: UW_River Falls
April 26-27th, 2024

Principle Student Author:

Print/type name: Emma Everett Student ID: REDACTED
Local address: REDACTED Local phone: REDACTED
Signature: _____ E-mail: REDACTED

Other Student Authors:

Print/type name: Courtney Osmek Student ID: REDACTED
Local address: REDACTED Local phone: REDACTED
Signature: _____ E-mail: REDACTED

Print/type name: _____ Student ID: _____
Local address: _____ Local phone: _____
Signature: _____ E-mail: _____

Faculty mentor 1:

Name: Gargi Chaudhuri Department: Geography and Environmental Science
Signature: _____ E-mail address: gchaudhuri@uwlax.edu

Faculty mentor 2:

Name: _____ Department: _____
Signature: _____ E-mail address: _____

(For office use only)

		1	2	3
Eligibility check for students:	Enrolled?	_____	_____	_____
	SAH major	_____	_____	_____
	GPA > 2.5	_____	_____	_____
	Previous reports on file	_____	_____	_____

Committee action: Approval: _____ Denial: _____ Date: _____ Amount: _____

Dean's action: Approval: _____ Denial: _____ Date: _____

UW-L CSH
TRAVEL AND SUPPLIES GRANTS FOR STUDENTS

TRAVEL GRANT APPLICATION

Budget Form

Name: Emma Everett and Courtney Osmek

Project Title Community Gardens Mapping Project

Conference Title: Midwest Undergraduate Geography Symposium 2024

Destination/Dates of travel: UW River Falls April 26-27, 2024

Travel to the Conference:

Car: \$0.36/mi x 0 mi Shared among 2 Students = \$0

Airfare: \$

Other: (explain) _____ \$

Conference Fees:

Registration \$ 38

Other: (explain) _____ \$

Lodging: Students are eligible for funding for their portion of the room. To calculate the eligible portion, divide the total cost for the number of nights by the number of students sharing the room.

Room \$ 129 + tax /night x 1 nights = 129 + tax
Shared among 2 Students = \$ 129+

Other: (explain) _____ \$

Other Costs (explain below) \$70.50

Total Cost: \$237.50

Please explain any unusual costs or circumstances. If the total cost is greater than \$1000, indicate where the balance of the funding will come from (your host department, advisor, yourself, etc.).

Meals and refreshment/break fees were added. Meals are 75% of \$35 for each student



**Community Food Resources Mapping Project in
Partnership with La Crosse County Health
Department**

Courtney Osmek and Emma Everett

Faculty Supervisor: Gargi Chaudhuri
Department of Geography and Environmental Studies
UW- La Crosse

February 19, 2024

Abstract-

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, food insecurity rates have been on the rise in the United States and food accessibility has become an issue of concern, especially for underserved communities. In La Crosse county alone, figures suggest 3,000 children are food insecure. Food insecurity can be addressed in several ways including offering free or reduced cost meals and foods. La Crosse County has several public and private organizations that strive to meet these needs for vulnerable populations like children, the unhoused, and people who are HIV positive. However, lack of physical or structural—lack of ID or proof of address—access to or knowledge of these resources results in beneficial programs becoming underutilized. In partnership with La Crosse County Health Department, the goal of this project is compiling information about organizations that provide these services and turning the existing swath of qualitative data into a spatial representation of the data that employs a user-friendly, easily accessible interface to communicate both spatial and nonspatial data of food resources within the county to the vulnerable and wider population. This interface will be the first of its kind for the county that transforms existing written data, websites, and individual resources into a spatially integrated all-in-one platform available to anyone with internet access.

1. Introduction

For years, efforts have been made on national, regional, and local scales to address issues of food scarcity and food insecurity for vulnerable populations such as women, children, the unhoused, etc. A broad range of national partnerships, religious, private, and public organizations across La Crosse County offer community gardens, meal services, and food pantries alike to address such problems and raise awareness for those facing these issues. While these resources can be invaluable to those in need, lack of knowledge of them or fear of reaching out can prevent people from getting the assistance they require to meet basic needs like food and housing.

While there is a swath of information available about these resources online, there can be many hoops to jump through when one is looking for access to baseline necessities; scouring multiple websites that can be outdated with misleading or missing information about who and when someone can utilize these opportunities, not knowing who to contact with questions, or not having documents like proof of address or ID. The goal of this project is to create an easy-to-use and easy-to-access interface that represents available community food resources in La Crosse County and all information someone may need to know. Not only will this be the first resource of its kind for the county, but it will also turn previously available qualitative data into an interactive spatially integrated dataset with up-to-date, easy to edit information about physical accessibility, times of operation, contact information, and specific requirements of each facility.

2. Methods

This is a community partnership project in which we are working to assist the La Crosse County Health Department to compile and transform this data into a spatially integrated, user-friendly platform. We began by compiling the data the Health Department had and are currently conducting research on other resources that may enrich the project. First, we mapped the location of each resource with a focus first on community gardens, then transitioned to include food pantries and meal services. We address-matched (geocoded) them to their real-world locations within ArcGIS Pro and created an attribute table that we could then fill in with qualitative data. We combed through existing websites, social media pages, and third-party resources with a focus on food resources such as FindHelp.org and Feeding America to learn more about each location and the services offered. After organizing all the existing information we could find on the internet, we began reaching out to the organizations to ensure that the data was recent and accurate as well as to check for physical accessibility features that were not listed on the website such as if the buildings are wheelchair accessible or if there are bike racks or parking lots. Going forward we to run network analysis with an existing dataset of Municipal Transit (MTU) bus stops to find out walking distance of each location from the nearest bus stop. Finally, we will add all the geospatial layers into a comprehensive Web map via ArcGIS Online which will be hosted by UWL-Geography and Environmental Science department. After website creation, the link can be posted on the Health Department website and shared with anyone who has internet access.

3. Significance

While there are resources available for each location, many already compiled together by the Health Department, this will be the first resource in the county that is a spatial representation of

this data. Not only will this save time by turning individual existing data into one large database, but it will allow people to have a visual representation of locations closest, most accessible, and specifically available to them depending on their status of membership with an organization.

This resource can increase accessibility to necessities for those who require it.

4. Other Presentations

We will also be presenting our final project to all the La Crosse community food facilities that we are mapping in this project. The La Crosse County Health Department will host these facilities, and we will show them the user-friendly webpage we have created. We will also be presenting our research in the UWL Research and Creativity Symposium. All three of these presentations, including the MUGS conference presentation to which this grant applies to, will help to advance our skills for our future careers. Having the ability to present our results is something we will have to do throughout our careers, and these opportunities will improve our skill level for this.

5. Meeting Information

The Midwest Undergraduate Geography Symposium (MUGS) 2024, will be held at the University of Wisconsin – River Falls on April 26th-27th, 2024. It is a regional undergraduate symposium where we will be presenting our results on a poster. We will get to this symposium by carpooling with two other students, Ryan Fell and Jacob Kampf, who have applied for a car rental in their research grant.

6. Budget and Justification

Item		Cost	Comments
Conference Registration	(2 tickets) * \$19 each	\$38	

Lodging	\$129	\$129	Will be sharing a room
Meals	75% of \$35, (2 meals)	\$52.5	
<u>Refreshment/Break</u>	75% of \$12, (2 refreshments)	\$18.00	
<u>Car Rental</u>	\$0	\$0	We will be riding with two other students who are going to this conference and are requesting grant money for rental car (pick up @4pm 4/26, drop off @6pm 4/27)
Total		\$237.50	