Please complete the project summary and return the completed form to April Snyder, Associate Administrator for the Institute on the Environment at aprilnsnyder@umn.edu. Paper copies will not be accepted. Please also attach any photos, publications, brochures, event agendas or other materials that were a result of the mini grant summary.

**Date of Report Submission:** 3-15-13

**Project Title:** Embedding Experiential Education in Food and Gardening: The Sustainable Agriculture Project @ UMD, the Duluth Public School System, and the Duluth Community Garden Program

**Project Context & Purpose**

*Please include the original project purpose statement and revise for any changes that occurred in the project after the start date with a short explanation of the changes.*

The project created a model school garden in partnership between the Sustainable Agriculture Project at the University of Minnesota Duluth, the Duluth Public School System, the Duluth Community Garden Program, and the Carlton-Cook-Lake-St. Louis County Community Health Board. This school garden has been and will continue to be used for training teachers in the experiential knowledge for planting and maintaining a garden and for creating and using curriculum around it. By installing a model student garden, we have created a laboratory for learning about food, gardening, and role that everyone plays in the stewardship of the natural world. Thanks in part to the support by the Institute on the Environment, this laboratory will allow us to train new and existing teachers for years to come.

**Work Completed**

*Please provide a summary of the work that was completed for the mini grant project.*

The Sustainable Agriculture Project at the University of Minnesota, Duluth (SAP@UMD) formed in 2009 to institute education, research, and community engagement around local food and agriculture systems. SAP@UMD is guided by an interdisciplinary faculty collaborative that manage a fifteen acre field site at UMD’s Research and Field Studies Center (formerly the Northeast Agricultural Experimental Station). These fifteen acres include a five acre heritage apple orchard and the ten acre organic transition ‘SAP Farm’. The SAP Farm hosts a series of collaborative projects. Most of the space on the farm is used to grow vegetables for use in the UMD Dining Services, with some also marketed to area grocers, restaurants, and at farmers markets. A school garden on site works with the Duluth Community Garden Program and the Duluth Public School system to host teacher training sessions for both practicing and aspiring teachers (with support from IonE). An ethnobotany garden features native and medicinal dye plants. A western honeybee apiary works with the Northeast Beekeepers Association to host six hives. A native pollinator site works in collaboration with the Xerxes Society on research related to fostering vegetation to increase beneficial insects. In addition, the farm hosts a 50 tree heritage apple orchard won with community support, a large scale compost system for creating soil amendments for vegetable production, and a series of bird and bat houses to increase biodiversity that is beneficial to farming.

With support from the IonE mini-grant, we were able to install an integrated, raised bed school garden and allied rain garden for working with practicing and aspiring teachers. The first workshop for teachers from the Duluth
Public School System was held on 10/23/12, and two additional workshops are scheduled for the Spring and Fall, 2013.

Partnerships & Collaborations

Please provide a summary of the project personnel, partnerships and collaborations that worked directly on the project or were started as a direct result of the mini grant project.

SAP worked with representatives of the Duluth Public School (DPS) and the Duluth Community Garden Program (DCGP) in order to create a community embedded plan for experiential education around food, gardening and the environment for elementary school age students. Representatives include School Board member Tom Kasper, Head DPS Agriculture teacher Jennifer Madole, several teachers from each of the schools, DCGP President Sarah Nelson, and other support staff from both programs. As the project got going, we also collaborated with the Carlton-Cook-Lake-St. Louis County Community Health Board, who contributed additional funds to the project as they came to understand its value to their work. Through a collaboration with MN Department of Health Community Transformation Grant funding, five school gardens will be installed within the Duluth Public School System in 2013, and teachers affiliated with these projects will be working with us to develop curriculum, training and related activities and protocol. We continue to explore partnerships with faculty in the Education Department at UMD as well.

Project Outcomes

Please provide a summary of the outcomes of the mini grant project including future plans for the project.

Outcomes of our project include a strengthening of the collaborative relationships between community based organizations, the public health institutions, the public school system, and the University of Minnesota more generally. Successfully installing the school garden in the summer of 2012 allowed us to hold our first workshop in October, 2012, and we are looking forward to continuing these workshops in the Spring and Fall of 2013. We plan to continue to explore creative ways of using this learning laboratory within a community engagement context as well as within the University system itself. We are grateful for the seed monies granted by the Institute on the Environment, without which this inspirational and transformational project would not have been possible.