



RETURNING GENERATION BLACK FARMERS MENTORSHIP PROGRAM HANDBOOK



SANKARA FARM





ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The Returning Generation Black farmer mentorship and fellowship program connects established Black farmers in Missouri and Kansas with new and beginning Black farmers recovering and uplifting the deep agrarian roots of Black foodways. The project promotes agroecological practices that enhance environmental stewardship and solidarity with the soil, and horizontal cooperation in a social process that benefits historically underserved yet culturally rich communities.

The project's primary focus is historically underserved Black agricultural producers and the communities they are a part of. Our approach to outreach within African American communities utilizes asset-based and culturally relevant knowledge translation methods to generate and utilize untapped skills and resources of Black farmers. Community-based education involves the creation of community participation, engagement and collaboration that treats historically-underserved farmers as protagonists of their own destiny.

The project will initiate a Black Emancipatory Agriculture Asset Mapping project aimed at identifying an inventory of existing production, processing, distribution, and marketing infrastructure that supports Black farmers in the Kansas City Metro area.

The project will increase the number of producers and growers, marketability of local Black food production and market access for food sovereignty.





FARMER FELLOWSHIP

The Returning Generation Black Farmer Mentorship Program provides a space for experienced Black farmers in the Kansas City area to mentor Black farmers in agroecological production methods and enliven the legacy of knowledge sharing between generations of Black people

A Black Farmer focus will guide ongoing studies in Agroecology, Land Stewardship, with collective study, farm field days, and workshops centered in Black agrarianism as a framework of culturally relevant and sustainable agroecological practices to enhance local Black Food Sovereignty.

MEET OUR FARMERS

Ryan Tenney of Sankara Farm

Izula Maximillen of Sankara Farm and Lincoln

University Cooperative Extension

Webster Davis of Triple D Produce

Mike Pearl of Pearl Family Farm

Mike Rollen of Ophelia's Blue Vine

Daniel Robinson of Brush Creek Box

Star-Royce Neely of Global One Farming



Izula Maximillen

Land Steward of Sankara Farm

Izula Jade Maximillen (She/They/WE/YeYe) Born by the river in Kansas City, Missouri, in the heart of occupied Missouri-Otoe territory, Izula's journey of nurturing food sovereignty within Black, African, and Indigenous Diasporic communities has spanned over 2 decades. As a student of Traditional Indigenous Midwifery, Izula's passion intertwines with being a co-land steward alongside kindred spirits, at Sankara

Farm, on a 27-acre urban family farm, pulsating with AgroArt, agroecology, and agroforestry. Here, they honor the diverse legacies of songs, stories, and cultures woven into the very essence of agriculture and Black Agrarianism..

Izula extends their impact as a Small Farm Outreach Worker, for the Innovative Small Farmers Outreach Program collaborating with Lincoln University's Cooperative Extension in Jackson County, Missouri. As a chapter organizer for Hip Hop is Green and Herbalist without Borders in Kansas City, they are deeply engaged with mutual aid organizations, cultivating perennial partnerships with pollinators, plants, and people to unite in a symphony of health, harmony, and kinship.



In their current chapter, Izula is immersed in the exploration of community care practices, eco-ethnobotanical foodways and the sacred principles of biodynamics, nurturing the Earth and all its interconnected life. Their journey began with reclaiming and tracing their ancestral lineages, as the granddaughter of Sharecroppers, their grandmother picked cotton til she was 19 years old and it is her legacy of nurturing the land and providing tender care and sustenance to generations from her backyard, inspiring me today to empower families to grow fresh foods, medicine and relationships with nature to promote food sovereignty in their community.



Webster Davis

**Senior Policy Advisor and
owner of Triple D Produce**

Webster Davis is the owner of Triple D Produce, located two miles west of Auxvasse, Missouri. He has worked with various FFA groups to secure vegetable starts and encourage youth to pursue food production as an occupation. He worked with Lincoln University as a mentor for the Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences (MANRRS).

2023 Board Member Missouri Vegetable Growers Association
2022 Missouri Agricultural Extension Professional Award
2016 – Missouri NAACP Agriculture Committee Chairman



Webster is a proud Ambassador for the Missouri AgrAbility program which is dedicated to helping farmers and ranchers return to their passions and livelihoods after an accident.

Webster is a veteran having turned 18 years old in U.S. Marine Corps boot camp and serving almost 23 years in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve and Missouri Army National Guard; he is now a member of the Farmer Veteran Coalition. He conceived and is Chairman of the State of Missouri NAACP Agriculture Committee, whose goal is to increase awareness of agriculture issues and opportunities.

Webster is the treasurer of the Union Local where he works at the Callaway Nuclear Plant and is proudly serving as the Secretary for the State of Missouri NAACP Conferences. In this role he is fulfilling the important work of ensuring that books and papers are ready for the next generation.



Mike Pearl

Owner of Pearl Family Farm

In 1813, Milton Paxton was born a slave in Kentucky. Milt was a farm laborer for the Paxton family. Around 1839, Milt was brought to Platte County, MO to work on their plantation. It was Milt's dream to someday own his farm.

However, that dream was deferred. Milton, after being freed, changed his name from Paxton to Pearl. Milton had a son named David Pearl that was born a slave in 1852. Dave was eventually freed. In those days, it was common for slaves to make extra money by exceeding their quota of cutting and bundling hemp. David worked and saved enough to buy 87 acres in 1890.



I was raised on the Pearl Farm and as a young man, I was trained to farm and developed an interest and passion in growing. We grew corn, wheat, soybeans, milo, oats, and alfalfa. We also sold eggs, milk and did custom combining. We raised hogs, cattle, horses and leased an additional 1,000 acres in row crop ground. We want our customers to eat healthily and feel good about our sustainable practices.



PEARL FAMILY FARM

EST. 1890



Ryan Tenney

Owner of Sankara Farm

A returning generation (Agri)cultural worker, co-land steward at Sankara Farm and founder of community-based arts organization, AgroArt which specializes in creative socio ecological intervention strategies.

Currently I am founder and Co-land Steward, Programming, Education and Technical Director of Sankara Farm and Director of AgroArt. following in the footsteps of George Washington Carver, shifts perspectives and raises awareness of soil biology. I am designing and building sensor modules that deploy microcontrollers to monitor compost and aim to inoculate our territories with beneficial mycorrhizal fungi and fungally active compost.





Staroyce Nealy

Global One Urban Farming



My name is Staroyce Nealy. Having the opportunity in performing Therapeutic Massages over the last 17 years has led me to Health and Wellness consciousness and a love for the community. I was raised by my grandmother Jesse B. Washington who retired from the main IRS branch here in Kansas City, Missouri.

My background is in home building, union carpentry, bridgework, pipelining, welding, business administration, nonprofit work and massage therapy. Married in 2009 and my husband found out I loved heirloom tomatoes so he said he would put me in a garden and he did just that! He was raised in his mom's garden so he was knowledgeable in that area. We filled our yard with vegetables. We put a garden in the yard of our senior neighbor to enjoy, along with .5 acre of farmland at a nearby church. We were taught to germinate seeds from a guru who still counsels us today. We taught garden clubs in Kansas City, Missouri schools from 2013-2023. We ended up giving away so many vegetables, our accountant advised us to form a charitable organization. We received our federal tax exempt status in 2016 for Global One Urban Farming. In 2018, we purchased over 1.5 acres at 44th Cypress, Kansas City, Missouri 64130 of land to farm.

Global One Urban Farming's mission is to grow organic vegetables and fruit, distribute them free to thousands of individuals within the Inner City Kansas City Urban Our vision is to teach our fellow neighbors, adults and youth proven methods of contributing to the revitalization of our neighborhoods by teaching the greenhouse process of producing plants from seed to final harvest. We also are building self-sustaining, peaceful, and healthy lifestyles by distributing 25,000 pounds of organic produce free each season to 1200 residents in our USDA defined food desert communities. Global One Urban Farming provides garden workshop activities, introductions to the beneficial preparation of nutritious organic vegetables as a means of building community and providing healthy diet alternatives in hopes to raise health levels in our USDA defined food insecurity communities. We host events throughout the year called Kansas City Jazz in the Garden with Live Jazz, Therapeutic massages, food, fun and games. Global One Urban Farming provides access to vegetables that may not be available in the community otherwise. We now have supporters and partnerships from Jefferson City to City Hall. Our volunteer groups and sponsors continue to push us to be able to increase production of vegetables to distribute free to more residents in need. We continue to gain collaborations throughout our community and are being the change we want to see



Mike Rollen

Owner of Ophelia's Blue Vine Farm



Founded in 2014, Ophelia's Blue Vine Farm strives to bring fresh herbs to the Kansas City metro.

Our Grandmother, Miss Ophelia, is the inspiration behind everything we do. As a single Black mother, she raised 6 children and put them through college. Two of which went on to play in the NFL.

It's safe to say she never settled for second best. That's why we don't either. We never let a pack of herbs leave our greenhouse if we don't think Miss Ophelia would call it excellent.

We are proud to call Kansas City's 18th & Vine District home. Our urban greenhouse is nestled among historic spots that helped bring jazz music to the world. We take pride in our neighborhood and want to build up the community that surrounds it.

We continually strive to better the world and our neighborhood by committing to sustainable farming practices and community pride initiatives. We partner with other local businesses to use food waste for biofuel to heat our greenhouse or compost it into healthy fertilizer. Our work is for you, Kansas City. We believe everyone should have access to fresh, great tasting food and know how it grows. Ophelia's Blue Vine Farm strives to live up to our namesake every day. We hope you'll give us the chance to show you the excellence behind our name.

OPHELIA'S
BLUE VINE FARM



Daniel Robinson

Owner of Brush Creek Gardens



Daniel Robinson is the owner of Brush Creek Gardens and is an urban grower of a variety of fresh produce and vegetables.

He spent a couple of years researching and developing infrastructure in the non-profit agricultural sector, and currently a member of a few professional organizations including a stint with MU Extension. Daniel has been primarily focused on advocacy of land justice, equity, access and food sovereignty in our food system and enjoys empowering others in the journey for food sovereignty.

