

FRASER DESIGN, PLLC

August 1, 2014

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my support for the Innovation Food Forest project at George Mason University. Over the past two and a half years I have worked with the Office of Sustainability in various capacities. As a local architect and through my volunteer work with the City of Fairfax Environmental Sustainability Committee and the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service, I am always on the lookout for innovative and unique environmental projects and programs across the region.

When I first heard about it, I was very intrigued by the idea of a food forest. As far as I know, the Innovation Food Forest (IFF), located at George Mason University's Fairfax campus, is the first of its kind in our region. It has its roots in the Permaculture Design Certification Course that the Office of Sustainability held in 2012. After completing the course, one of the class graduates, Elizabeth Torrens, drafted a plan for the IFF and submitted a proposal for a grant through Mason's Patriot Green Fund program. She was awarded the grant shortly thereafter and began implementing her plans later that year. Over the past two years she and numerous other volunteers have developed, planted and maintained the IFF.

This project is very unique for several reasons; it is the first of its kind in the region, it offers students, faculty, staff, and community members the opportunity to interact with nature, it is in a central location on campus and very visible to all who pass through/by it, and all of the food that it produces are for the campus community to enjoy for free. The garden has apple, pear, plum, and persimmon trees and pomegranate, blueberry, hazelnut, and elderberry shrubs among others.

To my knowledge, this project has not been submitted for any other STARS credits nor is it being used for any current STARS credits.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Thank you,

Judy Fraser

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