Check Out Kula Farm’s Temporary Jobs

Interfaith Neighbors’ Kula Urban Farm in Asbury Park has job openings available to individuals who would like to gain experience in agriculture and farming while also helping the community.

Under a grant from the Elizabeth and Baretts O. Benjamin Foundation, the program, known as the Kula Farm Experience, pays $10 an hour for up to 15 workers, each of whom can work a total of 60 hours at the greenhouse and outdoor produce beds.

Roger Boyle, director of Interfaith’s Business Development Center, said besides learning about growing produce, the staff can help workers with resumes and a job hunt.

The program is designed for people 18 to 21 years old but the work is also open to individuals outside that range. To apply, applicants can go to the farm at 115 Atkins Ave. or if closed, to the adjacent Kula Café, 1201 Springwood Ave. which is open for breakfast and lunch from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday.

Tristan McLean, 22, lives close by at Asbury Park Village and works at the farm each Monday. He has a daily job with iStar on the Asbury Park waterfront where he is a crew member helping visitors and residents. But he arranged to take one day off from that job to work in the Kula program because of his interest in farming.

“‘There’s so much to learn about taking care of plants, the type of vegetables grown here, and the conditions for a particular plant to grow,’” McLean said. “And I love that it’s right here where I live.’”

Meanwhile, they will have a roof over their heads. Temporary Jobs

That would bring great joy to my heart.” Tristan has completed his hours. Now, three more workers are at the farm.

The farm, managed by Lisa Bagwell and Matthias van Oosterhout, is in its first growing season and is open to the public to visit and buy produce. In addition, on Saturdays, the community garden at the front entrance is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. for people to pick those vegetables they would like to take home at no cost.

Direct from the Director

Maura, our rental assistance director, asked me to sit in on an interview she was having with a young father who was seeking rental help from us.

As I listened, I wondered how many other fathers (and mothers) were having a similar experience.

First, he explained that he and his wife had three children and one of them, a teenager, was struggling with substance abuse. Because the mother and the two other sons could not deal with this addiction they decided to separate. Ironically, the father is a drug counselor and is determined to see his son win his battle with substance abuse.

What a tragedy! Unfortunately, trying to help his son win his battle caused the father to miss work and lose pay. Falling behind in his rent just added to his woes. Could we help, he asked. Could we say no? Of course not. I think you, our donors, would agree.

Will the son defeat his demons? Will the father stay strong in his efforts? Will the family be a family again? Only time and prayers will tell. In the meantime, they will have a roof over their heads.

Another story in the life of Interfaith Neighbors.

Joe Marmora, Executive Director

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website: www.interfaithneighbors.org
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seen more than 50 new units of housing on the
faith Neighbors’ continued redevelopment that has
development for several years and is part of Inter-
across Atkins Avenue from the new home site and
and now a vacant building slated for demolition
Club, previously a popular Springwood nightspot,
to be built. The project is named for Leo Karp’s Turf
Interfaith was a significant step for the 20 new homes
Council’s approval of a redeveloper agreement with
small businesses and tons of foot traffic.”
“After a very short time, we’ll have affordable housing,
came through with the money to close a substantial
for introducing the city to the foundation which
at the Springwood Avenue Redevelopment Plan.
She thanked previous and current city officials,
and the county Board of Freeholders with leader-
ship on the funding by Freeholder Lillian Burry.
The next steps include environmental investiga-
tions, soil testing, storm water studies, reconfig-
uring the existing 14 lots into 10 lots for purchase
and obtaining additional planning approvals. The
city is selling the vacant land to Interfaith for
$100,000.
A Time to Grow
The Kula Café and Urban Farm staff initiated the new “Green Thumbs” program for middle-school-
age students who gathered in weekly sessions at the Springwood Avenue café and farm.

Meals on Wheels Volunteers Fed for “Selfless Acts”
Meals on Wheels volunteers heard high praise and thanks for their work at the annual luncheon
Interfaith Neighbors hold to show its appreciation
for the contributions of so many.
The count was 244 volunteers signing up for the luncheon June 29 at the Sheraton Eatontown,
a good representation of 400+ volunteers who help deliver the lunches on various days during the week. About 1,200 meals go out each day, said Paul McEvily, associate director at Interfaith Neighbors,
serving us fresh and thanking the volunteers who make the Monmouth County Meals on Wheels operation viable.
Bob Cece from Bradley Beach spoke of what it was like when he started delivering meals in 2001,
and continues to do so to this day. One constant
over those years, he said, is the good feeling he gets from doing something for someone else. And it
continues to be true, he said, that for many seniors, the Meals on Wheels contact is the only person
they may see that day.
People need food to survive and they need human contact, said Sue Moleon, Director of the
Monmouth County Division of Aging, Disabili-
ties & Veterans Services which oversees the federal
funding that comes through the county for the
program. “Without your selfless acts of kindness, they’d be underserved and at risk.”
Marmora said that Joe Marmora, Interfaith’s Executive Director, and Sandi Silber, Nutrition
Director, have developed a close working relation-
ship with her office.
For his part, Monmouth County Freeholder John Curley pledged: “As long as I’m freeholder, I’ll
make certain that Interfaith Neighbors and Meals on Wheels continues.”
Then Curley spoke directly to the volunteers, “Believe in yourself...Believe in what you do,”
he said. “You’re making the world a better place.”
Joe Marmora said if one calculated that vol-
unteers gave over 50,000 hours last year, and if
Interfaith had to pay $10 an hour to individuals to deliver those meals, that would be $500,000 that
volunteers are contributing.
“So you really are a vital part of our program
and I applaud you for that,” Joe said. “…You have
my personal thanks and admiration.”