

Hood Huggers International

Overview Summer 2016

Rebuilding Afrilachia: The Art of Resilience

Hood Huggers International implements the Pearson Plan, offering sustainable strategies for building support pillars for resilient historically African-American neighborhoods, providing a framework for community capacity building while increasing the effectiveness of existing service programs. These strategies incorporate the arts, social enterprise, and the environment, building a culture of stability that inclusive and economically just.

Who We Serve: The Hood Huggers' Pearson Plan uses a comprehensive, collaborative approach, working with individuals in historically African-American neighborhoods to build internal systems of support and capacity. We also work with organizations and individuals with resources, providing guidance on how to serve in ways that have a greater impact. Our work with these internal (community) and external (service providers) systems creates a new paradigm where communities determine what resources they need and want, and guide how the programs that serve them function.

The Arts:

- Hood Tours is an interactive tour of the history, present, and future of Asheville's historically African-American neighborhoods. Tours incorporate poetry and music and highlight public art, artists, and cultural heritage assets in these neighborhoods.
- Partnerships with established regional festivals (*Goombay* and *LEAF*) are helping provide increased capacity to neighborhood-based events and community celebrations.
- We are collaborating with *Organic Synergy* and *Asheville Music Professionals* on the Inside/Out performing arts workshop to help create a pipeline for careers in the entertainment business for neighborhood-based talents.
- We are working with the *African American Heritage Commission* and *Green Opportunities* on a plan to build and place historical markers throughout the community.
- Our plan includes working with arts organizations on neighborhood-based public art.
- Through these efforts we are creating platforms for creative expression and pride. The arts contribute to community healing.



Social Enterprise:

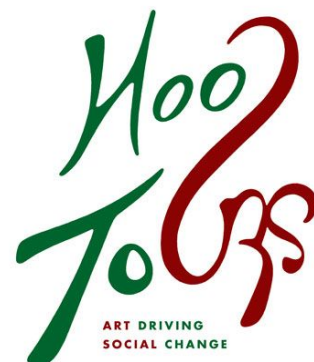
- Hood Tours is a social enterprise that creates opportunities for young people and supports small businesses, helping to spark more grassroots economic development.
- Hood Tours provides a model for other businesses to learn from.
- We maintain and distribute the Hood Huggers Green Book, a directory of African-American led organizations and businesses.
- Another key initiative is the development of a financial literacy program and youth-led credit unions in partnership with *Self-Help Credit Union*, *IRL*, *City of Asheville*, community members and parents. Students will develop basic financial management skills and tap into a pipeline for careers in finance or entrepreneurship.
- We work to connect existing youth programs with each other and with businesses and volunteers in our target neighborhoods, providing a platform for youth skill-building and mentorship.
- The Pearson Plan includes building relationships with service providers to offer these communities better access to training opportunities and other support.

The Environment:

- Hood Tours highlights neighborhood green spaces and community gardens.
- Establish additional green spaces to help strengthen community connections to nature.
- We are partnering with *Everybody's Environment* to support the creation of a pipeline for African-American youth to pursue careers in the environmental field.
- Member of the *Urban Agriculture Alliance*, an alliance supporting urban agriculture initiatives to address root causes of poverty, injustice, and inequity within the local food system while utilizing a collective impact framework.
- Member of the *I-26 ConnectUs Project*.

Want to Engage with Hood Huggers?

1. Join our email list for updates and event announcements.
2. Take a Hood Tour or two (different options available).
3. Encourage others to take Hood Tours.
4. List your black-owned business in the Green Book.
5. Support the businesses and organizations in the Green Book.
6. Rent the Burton Street Community Peace Gardens for an event.
7. Take the Pearson Plan class which starts on September 21.
8. Have other ideas? Let's talk!



hoodhuggers.com