

Farm Project Report 2024



Partners

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Introduction

The Middelpoos Farm, located in Malmesbury, South Africa, is a comprehensive community development initiative led by Inspire Children and Youth (ICY). This project addresses historical injustices related to land ownership and agriculture in South Africa while focusing on community empowerment, education, and sustainable development with focus on women and children.

As part of the project's development and research, a visit to Kansas City was organized in March 2024 to explore similar initiatives and gather insights. This visit focused on programs and institutions that work with women and children, aligning with the Middelpoos Farm Project's core objectives.

The Middelpoos Farm is transforming a traditional farm setting into a multifunctional community center, integrating agriculture, education, skills training, and business development. The project team's visit to Kansas City served as a research and learning opportunity, exploring various institutions and programs that support women and children in underprivileged areas. This visit provided for future collaborations and initiatives in Cape Town, South Africa.

Project Goals

The farm project aimed to build a business sustainable ecosystem with a focus on addressing historical inequalities while promoting education, empowerment, and economic development among women and children of color. The project aimed to achieve the following goals:

1. **Achieve a 10-year vision for Middelpoos Farm by 2034:** Transform the farm into a thriving, multifunctional center that serves the community and promotes sustainable development.
2. **Cross-cultural learning/exchange:** Marvin Carolina Jr. to visit the farm, Inspire Children and Youth Team to visit the United States to explore similar initiatives and gather insights. Project Team to present the farm 10-year vision (business development plan).

About Project Team

[Inspire Children and Youth \(ICY\)](#) works on Middelpoos in Riebeeeksrivier, Malmesbury. The organization nurtures dreams, inspires rural people to achieve, and creates safe spaces for children and young people to thrive. ICY provides food, shelter, toilets and a range of activities/projects to help restore human dignity on rural farms; but we couldn't do this without your help. ICY implements the following programmes:

- **Women's Programme**

The Women's programme offers a range of sub-programmes personal development, health awareness, entrepreneurship, and skills training (Basic farming, Agro-processing, Sewing, Design & Creation, Jewellery).

- **Children's Programme**

Similar to the Women's programme, the children's programmes provide children with educational Support (homework support, computer access, supply of basic resources), Kids Judo, Youth Leadership, School Holiday Programmes, Life Skills Programme, Feeding Programme and Auntie Judith's Food Garden Project.

Lisle Svenson, Lecturer & Coordinator of the Small Business Clinic, University of the Western Cape, is a lecturer in Management, specializing in Strategic, Project Management and Entrepreneurship, with over 12 years of teaching and 12 years of consulting experience at PwC, IBM, and Ngubane & Co. Before joining UWC, she was Operations Director at Developmentnomics. As a member of several professional organizations, she has cross-industry experience and leads initiatives supporting SMME and social enterprise. Her research focuses on entrepreneurship, economic development, and the empowerment of marginalized communities.

Marvin Carolina Jr., Assistant Teaching Professor, University of Missouri Kansas City (UMKC), has experience working with MBA fulltime working students at the University of

Missouri Kansas City where he coached them as they navigate their corporate life, family life and being an MBA student. He has experience as an advisor at the Bloch Consulting Lab, which was created in 2022 by the Bloch Business School at UMKC using students as business consultants helping small disadvantaged businesses. Professor Carolina Jr. also coaches and consults with small businesses across the United States, and now in South Africa as well.

Project Business Development Plan

Our 10-year vision aimed to transform Middelpoos Farm into a thriving business ecosystem by 2034, integrating all aspects of our development plan to create a sustainable, community-oriented hub that addresses historical inequalities while promoting education, empowerment, and economic development in South Africa.

Our vision for Middelpoos Farm Center encompasses six key areas:

- Farming (Agriculture)
- Farmers Market (Community)
- Business Center (Professional)
- Tourism (Travel & Adventure)
- Educational Center (Knowledge /Learning Hub)
- Kids Judo Academy (Fitness & Sport)

[Click to watch our 10-year vision.](#)

Kansas City Visit Outcome

The Kansas City visit yielded important insights:

- Visited Operation Breakthrough, a child development center for underprivileged children in KC, gaining insights into effective child support programs.
- Explored the KIPP K-12 School system, a charter school in underprivileged areas, for potential educational models.
- Visited the Kansas City women crisis center and UMKC women center, learning about support systems for women in crisis and educational settings.
- Conducted a presentation for the Dean of Bloch Business school and Faculty, staff, and students, sharing information about the Middelpoos Farm Project and discussing potential business ecosystem creation. [Read the full presentation here.](#)

[*Click to view the full presentation.*](#)

Project Challenges

The Middelpoos Farm project faced some setbacks. During the trip, we received unfortunate news that there were break-ins at the farm, cutting the trip short. The Middelpoos Farm team is currently working on finding alternative locations for families, indicating ongoing security and housing challenges. The team is exploring other locations for expansion, recognizing that some families might not want to stay on the farm land.

Future Direction

As a result of the several break-ins at the Middelpos Farm, we had to close out this project. However, it laid the foundation for Marvin Carolina Jr. to visit the University of the Western Cape (UWC) Small Business Clinic resulting in work with youth businesses, conducting business coaching workshop, and one-on-one meetings, adding to ongoing collaborations and knowledge sharing. Read more about Marvin's time in South Africa [here](#).



Marvin Carolina Jr. with youth small business owners in Cape Town, South Africa at the UWC Small Business Clinic.

Conclusion

With the Farm project closed out, Marvin Carolina Jr. with collaborators colleague Dr Jocelyn Evans along with UWC's Prof Lisle Svenson, Abaham Oliver, and Ms Babongile Bidla will be implementing the Business Coaching Program in 2025. The Program Team was awarded a partial funding as part of the UMSAEP award. The grant award will be used to implement a collaborative initiative aimed at addressing the critical challenges faced by small businesses in South Africa. The program is designed to be scalable and replicable, ensuring long-term sustainability and broader impact. By empowering young entrepreneurs in Cape Town, the Business Coaching Program aims to create a resilient entrepreneurial ecosystem that contributes to economic development and job creation. This grant marks a significant milestone for the project and its objectives. The funding will be utilized to implement a collaborative initiative specifically designed to address the critical challenges faced by youth-owned small businesses in South Africa.

The screenshot shows the website of the University of the Western Cape. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the university logo and links for 'DONATE NOW', 'CONTACT', 'APPLY NOW', and 'NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS'. Below this is a secondary menu with 'ABOUT', 'ADMISSION & FINANCIAL AID', 'STUDY', 'CAMPUS LIFE', and 'NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS'. The main content area features a news article dated '15 August 2024' with the headline 'Professor Marvin Carolina Jr Strengthens Entrepreneurial Skills at UWC's Small Business Clinic'. A photograph shows a group of people standing together. Below the headline is a breadcrumb trail: 'News & Announcements / News / Professor Marvin Carolina Jr Strengthens Entrepreneurial Skills at UWC's Small Business Clinic'. The article text begins with: 'A professor from the United States was so passionate about collaborating with the University of the Western Cape (UWC) that he personally funded his trip to South Africa, where he ended up working closely with the Small Business Clinic. When the clinic - run by the Faculty of Economic Management Sciences (EMS) - was opened last month, Professor Marvin Carolina Jr from the University of Missouri Kansas City was overjoyed. His journey with the faculty started in early 2023 when he learned about the grant and exchange programmes at UWC. He was too late to apply, but he was so inspired that he picked up the bill to work with the University. This' On the right side of the article, there is a 'Posted on' section with the date '15 August 2024', an 'Author' section listing 'Carmel Roberts - Institutional Advancement', and a 'Keywords' section listing 'Caren Alexander', 'Lesego Clement/Malepe', 'Lisle Svenson', 'Professor Marvin Carolina Jr', and 'Small Business Clinic'. A 'BACN' button is visible in the top left of the article content area.