

■ COMMON GROUND CANOPY TOURS

4th Congressional District

Unique Canopy Tour provides recreational and educational experience to support youth program

In Lorain County, zipping through a tree canopy is not only fun and exciting; it also generates much-needed financial resources for Common Ground – The Cindy Nord Center for Renewal Foundation.

The nonprofit provides innovative education programs for low-to-moderate income youth and adults as well as development programs for Lorain County schools and workplaces. It also operates Common Ground Canopy Tours – an enterprise that enhances its financial sustainability so the group can continue to fulfill its mission. This world class canopy tour creates a self-sustaining revenue source that will give Common Ground the ability to address capital needs by being less reliant on grant and donor dollars.

Finance Fund provided a \$620,000 loan to Common Ground to purchase real estate and equipment, pay for construction costs and provide initial working capital so that the unique Canopy Tour project could come to life.

This is northern Ohio's first world-class canopy tour. It will create 2 full-time jobs and 16 full-time seasonal jobs in addition to the 5 full-time and 20 part-time/seasonal employees they currently employ. Based on market and feasibility studies, Common Ground Canopy Tours is expected to draw participants from a large geographical area, increasing tourism and business for area restaurants, hotels, gas stations and stores.

Common Ground helps youth, adults and organizations learn new skills, develop personal assets, expand their own potential, integrate their lives, and develop a sense of relationship with the world. The focus is on building more integrated, happier and healthier people in all dimensions of life and work. This in turn contributes to engaged youth, high functioning families, thriving organizations and vibrant communities.

Approximately 5,000 people have benefitted from Common Ground's programs during the past three years with an average of 74 percent falling within the low-moderate income targeted population.



FINANCE FUND INVESTMENT IMPACT:

- \$620,000 loan for real estate purchase, construction, equipment and working capital
- Create 2 permanent full-time jobs and 16 seasonal full-time jobs
- Help create a self-sustaining revenue source to support personal and professional development programs for low- and moderate-income families



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