

GILBERT AGRICULTURAL & RURAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER



the
GARD
center

**Annual report
Sept. 2016- August 2017**

**Strengthen
the
weak
hands
and
make
firm
the
feeble
knees
Isaiah
35:3**

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**GARD CENTER
ANNUAL
REPORT**

**SEPTEMBER 2016 –
AUGUST 2017**

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Objectives, Vision and Mission

Objectives

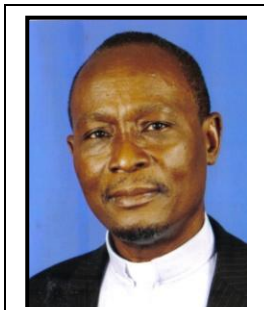
To develop skills of men and women between the ages of 16 - 30 years, to be able to establish and operate viable farms or other agricultural and rural based enterprises, at a universally acceptable standard of living.

To encourage the formation and development of groups and other types of organizations amongst graduates of the GARD Center's training programs and to establish links with other existing local and regional organizations.

A sustainable institution through which young men and women are empowered to improve their living standards

To provide training programs that facilitate the development through life skills, agriculture, entrepreneurship, technical vocational skills and business development services

Message from the Chairman of GARD Center's Board of Directors



The Gilbert Agricultural and Rural Development Center (GARD Center) is celebrating its twenty-eighth year (28th) as an NGO in Antigua.

What is now GARD Center started as the Young Farmers' Project on 12 March 1990. It was intended to serve as an incubator for the training of young farmers in the OECS sub-region. This was regarded as a means of strengthening the economic base of vulnerable youth and rural women and to provide a cadre of skilled workers to promote agricultural productivity.

This Annual Report is GARD Center's accounting of its stewardship for 2016-2017. There is no doubt that its Board and its Friends, its Partners and its Clients and the Government of Antigua and Barbuda can say, "Well done GARD Center." Despite challenging financial circumstances, its most dedicated staff has once again provided services and has been faithful in keeping the vision of GARD Center alive, and through difficult times have continued to believe. Thanks to members of Staff for your wholehearted involvement in the many Course Offerings of GARD Center which are outlined in the report.

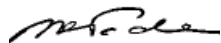
On behalf of the Board of Directors, I give thanks to all those GARD Center's local partners and the Government of Antigua and Barbuda. The report indicates the participation of thirty-four private and governmental institutions in the job-placement program. The Government has continued to give a subvention to fund to utilize the services of the institution. The Mill Reef Club has continued to be involved and many of our farmers and our hotels with the hard work of the GARD Center staff have made "**Farm to Table**" an item on Antigua's social calendar.

I also give thanks to our international partners: United Methodist Women (UMW) - Women's Division/General Board of Global Ministries, Nationals in Mission Appointments - the Methodist Church in Britain, the European Commission and the Groupe Collegia-Cegep de la Gasdesie et des Iles.

I am mindful of the difficult economic times, but I believe the case for contributing to GARD Center is made: GARD Center is worthy of your continued support.

Most members of the Board of Directors have served from the inception of the Board, 14 years ago. I offer most sincere thanks to each member. The Secretary, Rev'd Patmore Henry and myself will depart Antigua later this year. Our successors in the Conference Office of the Methodist Church will replace us on the Board.

We have received notice that the Executive Director, Mrs. Roberta Williams will be retiring during the 2017-2018 year. She has been the driving force behind GARD Center for the past twenty-eight years. We offer our most appreciation for the tremendous work that she has done.



Chairman, Board of Directors

Executive Director's Message



".....the potential of young people to be agents of social and economic progress continues to be undermined by the wide range of challenges they confront. These obstacles include but are not limited to the lack of decent work opportunities, ineffective and undemocratic political participation structures, protracted conflicts, natural disasters and poor health."(Global Youth Development Index and Report 2016)

As we pass through another year of activities, helping our youth face the many challenges of broken homes, domestic violence, homelessness, drugs and mental illness to name a few, we are once again blessed with partners who share our mission.

This year was no exception as we recognize the European Commission who have come on board for two years to not only strengthen our at-risk youth development program but we have been given the opportunity to expand our programs to work with incarcerated youth. Our move to take on the challenge of the prison culture in this country which unfortunately still extends punishment and not rehabilitation will need much patience and God's direction. Introducing a re-entry program for young inmates will require the cooperation of government and non-government agencies and communities that we will help to sensitize their roles in embracing approaches that will attempt to reduce the risk factors influencing delinquent behavior.

I wish to sincerely thank all of our partners, volunteers and friends of the GARD Center for another year where we were able to touch the lives of another group of young men and women and their families. May God continue to bless us and the work we strive to carry out. It is my pleasure as the Executive Director to once again submit an annual report to the GARD Center Board of Directors.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Roberta Williams".

Roberta Williams
Executive Director

2016 - 2017 Board & Advisory Committee Members

Board Members

Bishop Otto Wade,
Chairperson

Dame Eusalyn Lewis,
Vice Chairperson

Rev. Patmore Henry,
Secretary

Mr. Kirthley Maginley,
Member

Mrs. Maudlyn Richards,
Member

Mr. Neil Gomes,
Member

Ms. Denise Hodge, Member

Mr. John Mussington,
Member
Barbuda

Ms. Jacqueline Yearwood,
Member

Permanent Secretary,
Ministry of Agriculture

Mrs. Roberta Williams,
Executive Director,
Member

Advisory Committee

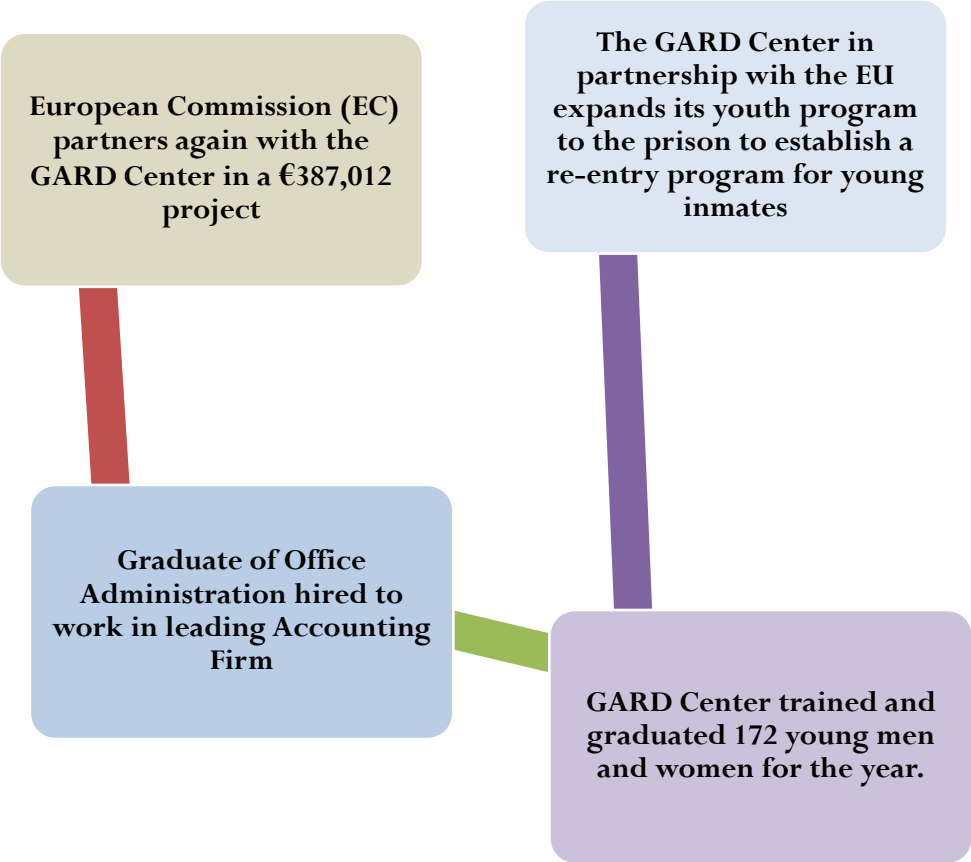
Dr. Brian Cooper, Agricultural Consultant

Mrs. Kathleen Forde, Agricultural Consultant

Ms. Jennifer Maynard, Agro-tourism Consultant to the
Ministry of Tourism



HIGHLIGHTS OF ACHIEVEMENTS FOR THE YEAR



Staffing & Staff Development

There are always mixed feelings when one of GARD Center's staff moves on to other opportunities. Ms. Kareem Francis one of the Project Managers left this year. She will be sadly missed. Her passion and love for the work she did at the GARD Center has left an indelible mark.

In a move to develop a national Small Business Development Center, the Ministry of Trade invited the GARD Center to be one of the satellite Centers. In preparation for this, two of the staff was trained in the specialized data base system that will be used to record information on all the clients and their progress, as well as, provide vital statistics on the economic impact from these businesses. The Executive Director had the opportunity to travel to Jamaica for the first MSME Conference, with the theme "Collaboration for Caribbean Business Sustainability," organized by the Small Business Association of Jamaica. Mrs. June Jackson, the Center's Job Placement Officer travelled to St. Lucia for the close off of the Caribbean Youth Skills Development Program. Plans for accrediting the Yacht Maintenance course were discussed.

Table 1

Staff Member	Activity	Location/Dates
Angela Ephraim (Administrator/Communication)	Training in NeoSerra data system	June 28-29, 2017, Antigua
Roberta Williams (Executive Director)	Caribbean MSME Conference	July 18-24, 2017 Jamaica
June Jackson (Job Placement Officer)	Training in NeoSerra data system	June 28-29, 2017, Antigua
June Jackson	Close of Car. 19 project	Feb 12-14, 2017, St. Lucia

Courses

Table 2

Course	No. of Graduating	Starting Date
Courses		
Life Skills -ABSTEP	38	Jan-July 2017
Life skills -ICT Cadet Program	32	Sept 2016-April 2017
Car 19		
Yacht maintenance	26	Sept-Nov '16
EU/GARDC courses		
Office Administration	37	March 20, '17
ICT	21	April 4, '17
Agriculture	8	May 2, '17
Evening courses		
Business Management	10	Oct-Dec '16

Internships / Job Placement Highlights

The Job Placement unit is busy setting up internships for each of the trainees for a 4-6 week period. A number of employers committed to take the Center's interns. In reviewing the performance appraisals, 85% of the trainees received above 80% scores on job training.

Employers who support the GARD Center Job Placement Program

AUA	Medical Benefits
Kennedy's Club	Unicomer - Employed
Caribbean Airport Services	Ministry of Tourism - Employed
Community First Cooperative Credit Union	Board of Education Book Scheme - Employed
ACT	Caribbean Water Treatment - Employed
Carlisle Bay Resort	NCO - Employed
Lockhart Mendes & Co	PKF - Employed
Ministry of Agriculture - Employed	Billy's Food Mart - Employed
ICT Cadet Program – Employed	Employers Federation
Mount St. John's	Social Security
Antigua Boats and Carpentry	Anything Wood
Budget Marine	Digicel Antigua
Precision Yacht Painting	Woodstock Boat Builders
On Deck Sailing	Furniture Gallery
A & F Sails	Pegasus Technologies
Unicomer (Courts) Antigua Ltd	West Indies Oil
Techniques Yacht Painter Decorator	Linton Mark
Glenworth Francis	



Success Story



T'Keyah Baltimore

Working at Pannell Kerr Foster (PKF) and experiencing their energy and drive continues to inspire me to work towards empowering myself. This has given me a lot of satisfaction and determination to succeed and to help me grow, not only as an individual but as an employee of this wonderful establishment. Working at PKF is a great pleasure and a privilege. Although I have been only with the Company for a short period of time I have found that from the day I started my role as Receptionist, I realized that I'm surrounded by a diverse team of all intelligent and friendly people.

I truly feel honored to be associated with PKF and its team, and because of the work culture, today I am able to make a balance between both my professional and my personal life. Moreover, it is very motivating to be a part of such a dynamic and international team and this further gives me the enthusiasm and opportunity to grow professionally. It has been a great pleasure being a part of their team.

T'Keyah

ICT Cadet Program (formerly the GATE program)

The GARD Center was once again contracted to the ICT Cadet Programme for conduct its Life Skills training. Thirty-six (36) trainees benefited from six months training. In addition to the Life Skills the trainees trained in New Media which includes photography, journalism and graphics, CISCO and Microsoft.



Trainee with Credit Union staff member after money management session

Antigua Barbuda Skills Training and Empowerment Programme (ABSTEP)

The Center's Life Skills contract with the government's ABSTEP programme involved four (4) organizations. Thirty-four (34) beneficiaries received certificates for completing the Life Skills training course. The GARD Center wishes to sincerely thank the ABSTEP Labour Department Technical Unit and the Project Management Unit for the opportunity to conduct the Life Skills Training for these young people on the Skills Training & Empowerment Program. The Center is pleased to have been able to impact positively on many lives in a safe environment that enables individuals to deal effectively with challenges and to resolve their issues without being judged. This helped to build the participants self-esteem and trust, and to encourage continuous growth and development.



Projects

Caribbean Youth Skills Development Program CAR 19 Yacht Maintenance Course

Collaborative effort amongst the National Training Agency, GARD Center, Groupe Collegia-Cegep de la Gasdesie et des Iles continued.

The final two cohorts in Yacht Maintenance graduated on December 8, 2016 with 56 young men and women. Four received high honors, three of these were women. Twenty three (23) graduated with honors. The next step is to work out the logistics of getting their Caribbean Vocational Qualifications.

In addition, during the Graduation Ceremony, twenty –seven tutors were recognized by the Center for their contributions over the 27 years GARD Center is in operation.



Women graduates in Yacht Maintenance

European Commission/GARD Center

Increasing Opportunities for At-risk, Probationary and Incarcerated Youth in Antigua and Barbuda

The European Commission/GARD Center project is well on its way with a series of activities:

Orientation sessions were held and training commenced with 68 youth enrolled. During the training of Cohorts 1, 2, 3 youth gained knowledge in their selected courses of Office Administration, Agricultural Enterprise and Information Communication Technology, along with cross cutting skills in Math, English, IT and Life Skills. In addition, several professional guest speakers conducted sessions on topics that enhanced their total development. Topics such as Your Value, Your Worth; Diet and Exercise; Domestic and Sexual Abuse; Money Management; Workers Rights and Gender Roles & Equality were covered.

Graduation exercises were held after the completion of Cohorts 1, 2 and 3. Fifty six (56) trainees graduated from Office Administration, Information Communication Technology and Agricultural Enterprise. Four trainees who were identified with difficult issues benefited from counseling with a Psycho-social counselor who graciously volunteered her time.

Training of trainers sessions in Positive Youth Development and Motivational Interviewing were held with staff and partners and facilitated by Consultant, Ms. Rashida George, of the District of Columbia Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services.

Information Technology Trainees



Office Administration Trainees



Camp GROW: An Environmental Awareness Group and GARD Center Initiative

Due to lack of funding for Camp Grow 2017 it regrettably had to be cancelled until next year. Many thanks to the donors who contributed:

- Mill Reef Fund,
- Scotia Bank,
- CIBC/First Caribbean International Bank and
- Wishing Well Foundation.



Mill Reef fund

The GARD Center/Mill Reef Fund Youth Empowerment Project received \$US 10,000 in March 2017 from the Fund. Monies were utilized in Yacht Maintenance (YM) 2 courses training 65 young men and women (14 were women) in varnishing, plumbing, welding and the first group also learnt fiber glassing. The instructors were extremely pleased with the quality of young persons in the courses. In addition, the Business Management Courses graduated 10 new upcoming entrepreneurs in many diverse areas such as event planning, family craft center, spa, cook shop, retail clothing etc.

Life Skills courses play a tremendous role in helping youth at-risk reshape their lives, increasing their self-esteem/self-worth, learning how to handle personal problems, practice good work ethics, tolerance of other people, working as teams, conflict resolutions, handling money, managing their time, gender sensitization etc. Thanks to the Mill Reef Fund, the GARD Center has been able to expand its program expertise and has been contracted by several other organizations to conduct Life Skills with their youth. The GARD Center assists in the government's ICT Cadet Program and the Ministry of Labour Temporary Skills Training program for the unemployed.

Once again, a heartfelt thank you to the Board members of the Mill Reef Fund, for your continuous support and interest in our programs and services for at-risk youth.

United Methodist Women (UMW) - Women's Division / General Board of Global Ministries

The UMW once again has continued to be the GARD Center's ardent supporter with \$US 8,000 donated during this period which went towards a number of training courses and administrative assistance. UMW funding helps the GARD Center to expand its programs and compliments other donor funding to ensure that the Center maintains its quality programs and services.



Farm-to-Table Benefit Luncheon 2017

Where Cuisine Goes, Agriculture Follows:

An official launch of Farm to Table 2017 was held at the Government House with a small gathering and the press to do a handing over of the check from the Foundation. . James and Maginley Charity and Care Foundation provided funds to purchase all the crockery \$EC 11,689.95 which will assist the Center in cutting costs for the event. A second check was given from the Foundation for \$10,000 which will cover additional costs for marketing and promotion, rental of table and chairs, sound system and other items. Three new hotels have joined farm to table 2017, Hermitage, Curtain Bluff and Carlisle Bay.



Farm to Table guests

Farm to Table Press Release

Roasted sizzling pork, cassava crusted layered Mahi Mahi, corn and coconut soup with croutons, Roots and scallop gratin and watermelon and cream cheese frosting cake with balsamic reduction.... Sounds intriguing to you? Well sorry you missed the 3rd Annual Farm to Table Benefit Luncheon on Saturday, May 20, 2017 where over 200 exuberant guests supported this event under the sunny skies and the stately Casuarina and Neem trees. The Chinese auction brought much excitement and laughs as the guests jumped to win the weekend for two at the Tamarind Hill Villas and the architectural drawings worth over \$4000 from Mr. Curlson James (one the Center's former graduates), of Rensol Construction and Associates Services Ltd.

As a result of this support, the programs and services of the GARD Center for vulnerable youth will get some of the needed funds to continue the technical vocational training opportunities for the many youth that have dropped out of school or who have done poorly academically.

The staff and Board members of the GARD Center wish to sincerely say thank you to all the farmers, chefs, hotel managements and businesses who contributed to this event. So if you missed 2017 Farm to Table, start planning for 2018 it will be even better.

Nationals in Mission Appointments

Assistance from the Methodist Church in Britain plays an important role in providing a salary for the Center's Job Placement Officer. Mrs. June Jackson continues to provide professional guidance to numerous trainees and placing them both in internships and permanent jobs. She also wears the hat to counsel those who want to go into their own businesses, (refer to Job Placement comments above)

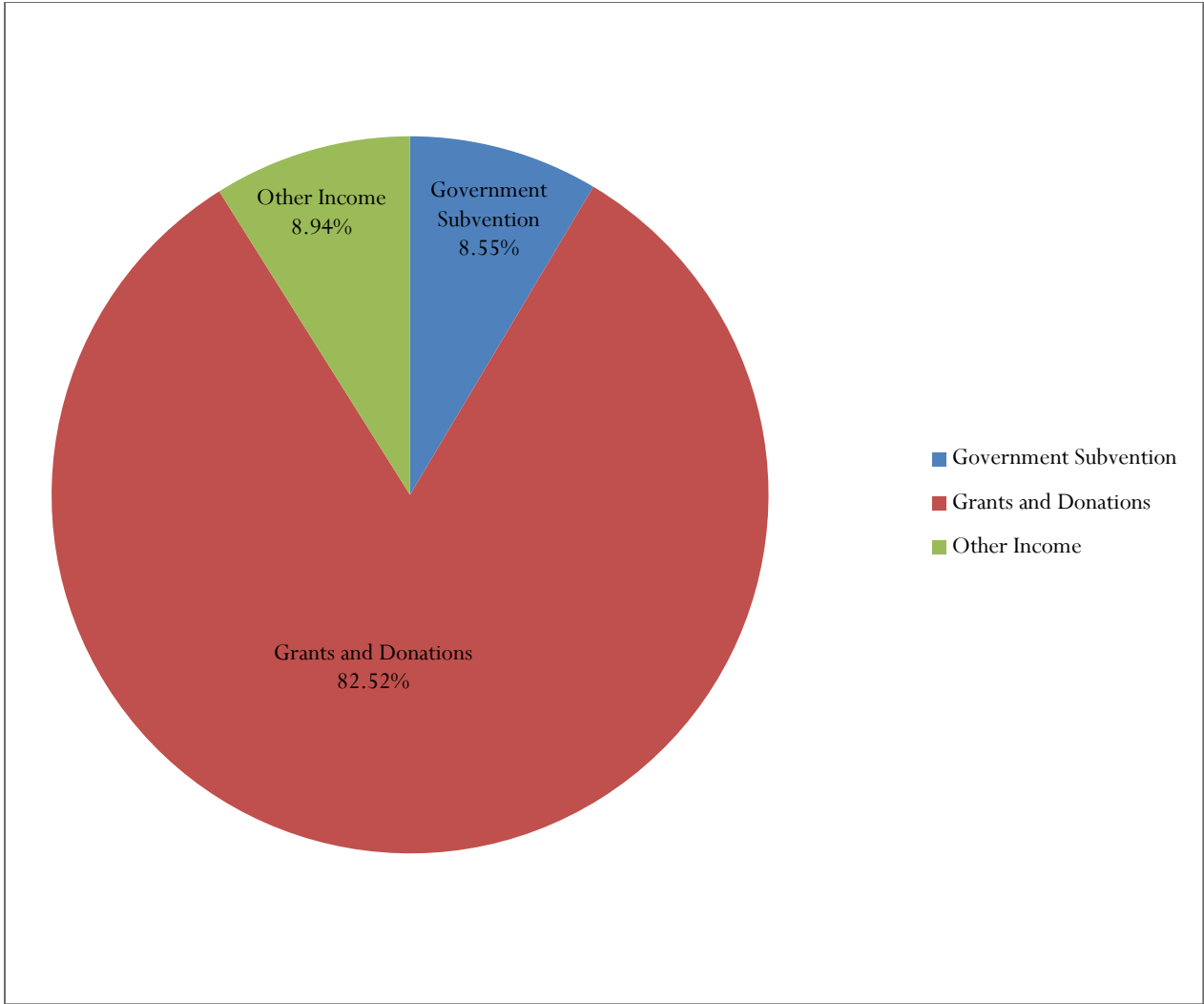


FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Financial Statements

All figures are quoted in Eastern Caribbean currency.
1US\$ = 2.70EC\$

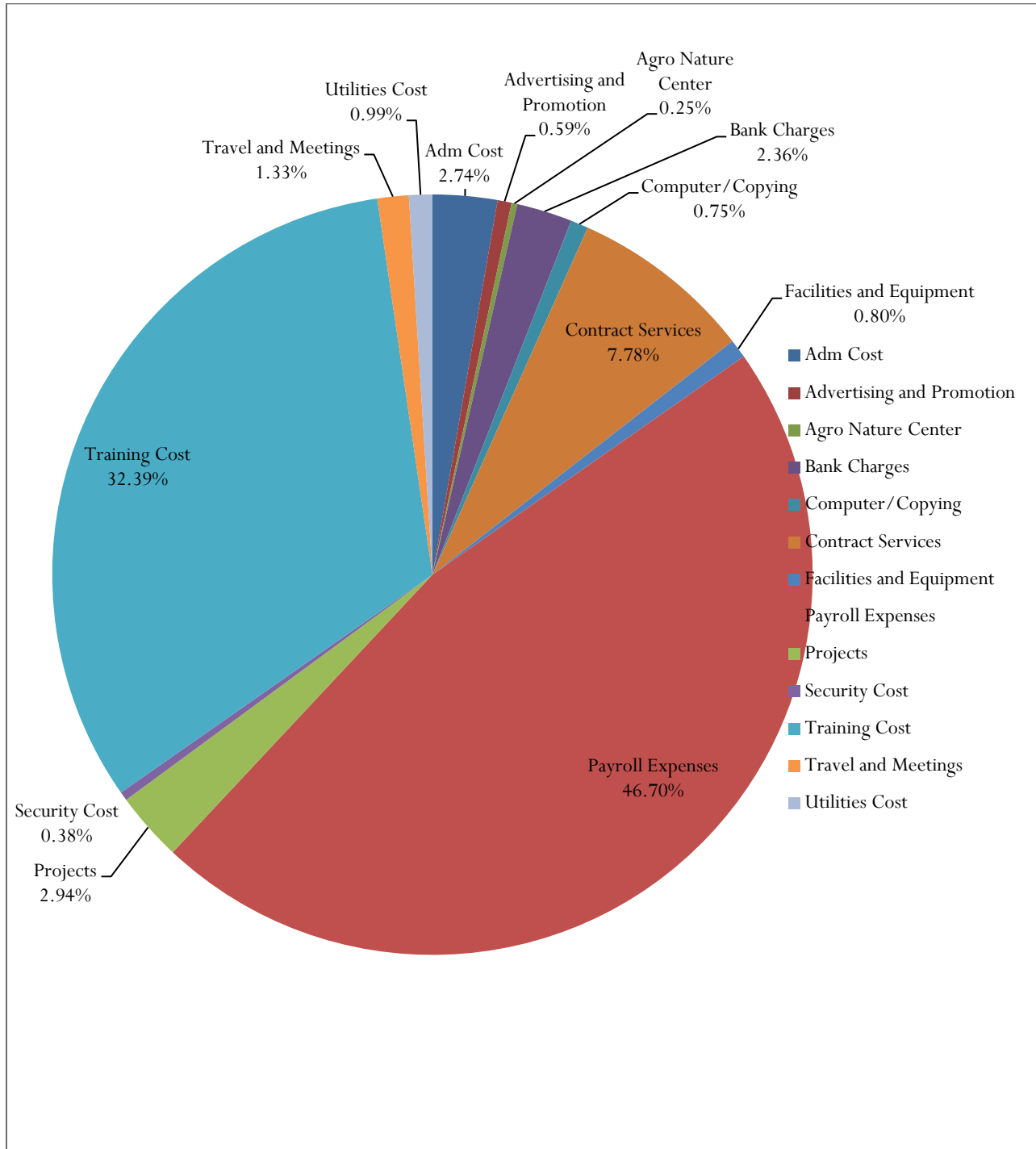
	<u>Sep '16 - Aug 17</u>	
Ordinary Income/Expense		
Income		
Government Subvention	72,600.00	8.55%
Grants and Donations	701,003.28	82.52%
Other Income	<u>75,912.51</u>	8.94%
Total Income	<u>849,515.79</u>	
Gross Profit	849,515.79	
Expense		
Adm Cost	14,395.53	2.74%
Advertising and Promotion	3,115.25	0.59%
Agro Nature Center	1,304.59	0.25%
Bank Charges	12,377.23	2.36%
Computer/Copying	3,930.79	0.75%
Contract Services	40,812.08	7.78%
Facilities and Equipment	4,172.88	0.80%
Payroll Expenses	244,970.60	46.70%
Projects	15,423.69	2.94%
Security Cost	1,976.13	0.38%
Training Cost	169,915.37	32.39%
Travel and Meetings	6,980.87	1.33%
Utilities Cost	<u>5,201.31</u>	0.99%
Total Expense	<u>524,576.32</u>	
Net Ordinary Income	<u>324,939.47</u>	
Net Income	<u><u>324,939.47</u></u>	



Income

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	701,003.28	
Grants and Donations		82.52%
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Expenses 2016-2017



Expense

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Advertising and Promotion	3,115.25	0.59%
Agro Nature Center	1,304.59	0.25%
Bank Charges	12,377.23	2.36%
Computer/Copying	3,930.79	0.75%
Contract Services	40,812.08	7.78%
Facilities and Equipment	4,172.88	0.80%
Payroll Expenses	244,970.60	46.70%
Projects	15,423.69	2.94%
Security Cost	1,976.13	0.38%
Training Cost	169,915.37	32.39%
Travel and Meetings	6,980.87	1.33%
Utilities Cost	5,201.31	0.99%
Total Expense	<u>524,576.32</u>	

Acknowledgement

As the Center prepares to enter its 28th year in November 2017, it is hard to believe that so many years have passed with so many persons who have blessed our existence with human, financial and physical resources that have increased our ability to expand and diversify our programs and services for our Nation's most vulnerable young people.

We extend our heartfelt thank you to all our partner organizations, trainers, volunteers, friends and family members for their untiring support and commitment to this Center and the youth we serve.

Of course what goes on behind the scenes on a daily basis cannot continue without an amazing staff who has committed their lives to helping young people who face some very tragic and challenging circumstances. The GARD Center is a family and with God's Hands on us we have been able to accomplish unbelievable strides with the resources with which we have been blessed.



