

Pandemic Adjustment Equipment Grant Fund Recipient: Venture Manor Farms



In early 2019, MARBIDCO was approached with the opportunity to help the Baltimore Development Corporation on a project in Baltimore City to bring natural dye production to Maryland, including growing indigo. This project is known as the Baltimore Natural Dyes Initiative Pilot Farmer Project.

A variety of public entities and a local college were brought together in support of this project. These include the Maryland Department of Commerce, the Baltimore Development Corporation, the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA), the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, the University of Maryland Extension, the Maryland State Arts Council, and MARBIDCO.

The project is located at the Parks and People Foundation headquarters in Baltimore City, near Druid Hill Park. Plants being grown include two species of indigo and other flowering plants (such as woad) that are used as natural dyes. The restored historic carriage house on the property is being used to process the natural dyes once harvested. MICA is offering a number of courses on the history and use of natural dyes through its Fiber Department and is planning additional economic development research that will potentially benefit the City and the region.

Fabric dyed with indigo and Black-Eyed Susan's grown by the Baltimore Natural Dye Initiative Farmer Project.

MARBIDCO's Financial Programs Specialist Allison Roe had the opportunity to harvest some of the crops grown on the property and participate in a dyeing demonstration at the end of the growing season. The event was also attended by Maryland's First Lady Yumi Hogan and Secretary of Housing and Community Development Kenneth Holt.

Financial Programs Specialist Allison Roe meeting Maryland's First Lady, Yumi Hogan.

Pictured to the right is financial programs specialist Allison Roe meeting Maryland's First Lady, Yumi Hogan while attending a demonstration at the Parks and People Foundation in Baltimore City. Neith Little, an urban ag educator with UME Extension, is looking on.