

Clean Future Consulting

<u>Team Member Name</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Major</u>
Emma Chesbrough	2023	Sustainability Management
Alyssa De la Cerda	2026	International Business
Joseph Sigmund	2025	International Business
Jacolby Lacy	2025	International Business
Christopher Payne	2024	International Business

Advisor(s): Astrid Schmidt-King, *J.D., LL.M., M.A.*; Joseph Carrier, *Chief Risk Officer, and Chief Audit Executive (Retired)*, Franklin Templeton; Mustafa Wahid, *Startup Executive in Residence at Loyola University Maryland & Entrepreneurship instructor, Researcher, and Coach*

Topic Title: Food for Thought: Good Lunch Today for a Better Tomorrow

Audience: The Home Depot Sustainability Council

Sustainable Development Goal

SDG #4 Quality Education: To ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all.

Executive Summary

The Home Depot, founded in 1978, originally began as a retail hardware and coffee shop. Employees were encouraged to aid and teach customers directly, establishing from the start the company's tie to the community, "our core values shape our commitment to making the communities we serve stronger." Over the last 40 years, the company has gained 35,000 associate volunteers through Team Depot, showing their commitment has not changed. As of the 2022 ESG report, DEI areas of focus include "advancing education for all", creating community outreach programs to improve the equity and accessibility of education.

The company has already made strides towards sustainable business practices, such as the Retool Your School program that awards grants to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU's) for campus renovations, repairs, and enhancements. Their partnership with Kaboom echoes the same commitment to teaching sustainable practices but tailored to younger minds. This current infrastructure demonstrates their ability to leverage existing community outreach programs and lay foundation to create new initiatives in the future.

Our company is proposing the construction and maintenance of interactive, regenerative gardens, primarily for urban K-5 schools in local communities of operation that lack access to healthy food. This is a program that could turn the cafeteria into a classroom, while benefiting the environment. Volunteers will educate students on not only the process, but also the importance of regenerative gardening and providing fresh, plant-based meals for school lunches.

In 2022, Congress passed the No Child Left Inside Act to provide "effective environmental education programs and integrate environmental literacy and outdoor learning into other core subjects." Simultaneously, there have been increasing demands to improve the nutrition and quality of school lunches. By connecting the garden to curriculum, our team believes this is an opportunity for The Home Depot to leverage their power for change.