

GRADUATION CELEBRATION

On June 28, our fourth graduating class celebrated their successful completion of the 5-month Leadership Program. Friends and family gathered on the farm for a potluck lunch and then a recognition ceremony. Crew Leaders and Assistant Crew Leaders (ACLs) spoke about each Crew Member, highlighting their growth and unique contributions to our diverse team. It's been a challenging time as young people pushed themselves personally and professionally to grow food for New Orleans. Celebration is one of our key values at Grow Dat, and we realize the importance of acknowledging all of the challenges young people have overcome to make it to graduation day. It's taken dozens of teenagers hundreds of hours to harvest, sell and donate thousands of pounds of food (10,000 lbs to be exact). We can only accomplish our ambitious goals through the strength of our community. In the words of a recent graduate, *"Grow Dat is about bringing people together—the energy made us become a family."*



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COMMUNITY LUNCHES

Thank you to everyone who joined us for a Community Lunch this June! Grow Dat's Community Lunch series is a chance for a diverse group of guests to come out to the farm for a beautiful lunch and join in a conversation with our youth employees about our theme of the week. The luncheons take place in our Eco-Campus, which was designed and built by the Tulane City Center and has gotten a lot of attention for the beauty, sustainability and function of the design. The Guest Chefs work with one of our youth crews to prepare a meal for 60-70 guests each week. Each fresh and beautiful meal showcases a wide variety of our sustainably-grown produce.

This year's lunch topics and guest chefs:

- Friday, June 6—Food & Health, Chef Edgar "Dooky" Chase IV
- Friday, June 13—Food & Work, Chef Dominique Adansi-Bona
- Friday, June 20—Food & Agriculture, Chef Chris Montero



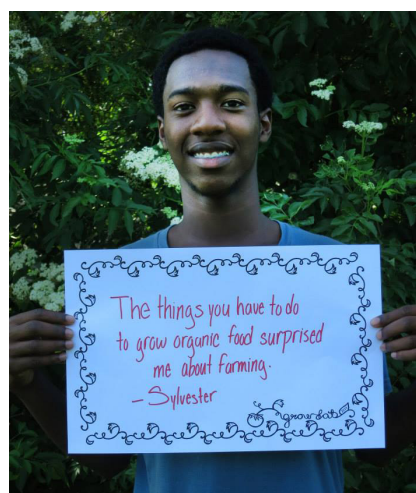
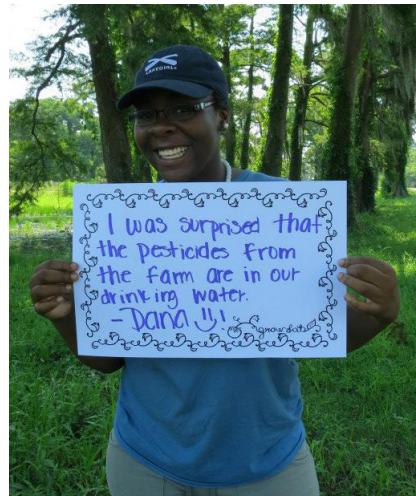
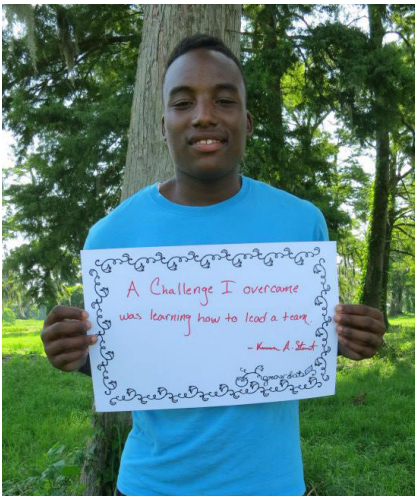
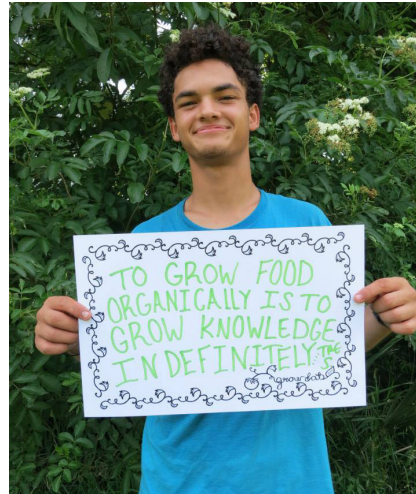
Greenesis youth crew with Chef Dooky



Fruit and mint bowls

HOW WE'VE GROWN

Highlights from the Leadership Program



Increasing food access in New Orleans

We have surpassed our sales goal for the 4th year in a row.

Sales of our produce reached \$35,000 this spring, well beyond our \$30,000 target. Our inaugural Farm Share CSA Members were a financial cornerstone in reaching this ambitious goal—thank you to everyone who joined!

New membership sign up will begin in early 2015. Stay tuned!

We've expanded our growing area and now have 2 acres of land under cultivation.

10,000
lbs of food grown

4,000
lbs of food donated

6,000
lbs of food sold

We expanded our Shared Harvest partnerships this year to include more service activities led by youth. For example, we helped the Congress of Day Laborers start their own garden! 2014 Shared Harvest partners are: Grow Dat youth and families, YEP (Youth Empowerment Project), Crescent City Cafe, Stand with Dignity, Congress of Day Laborers, ReThink, the 7th Ward Community Garden Project, Original Big 7 Social Aid and Pleasure Club and Second Harvest Food Bank.

Youth Growth

Our Monitoring and Evaluation Team is still crunching data to understand the impact the Leadership Program has on the lives of the youth we serve. Here are some early facts and figures about our graduating 2014 youth program crews:

- **Reduced soda intake by 61%.**

- **Increased the average number of hours they sleep at night by 35% by the end of the program, and reported a 33% increase the time they spend in physical activities per day.**

- **Increased their knowledge of local farmers' markets by 71%.**

- **Increased their knowledge of issues of food justice by 71%.**

- **Deepened their understanding of the difference between conventional and sustainable agriculture by 62%.**



Capstone Camping Trip

A few days before Graduation, we had a wonderful time camping with LOOP (Louisiana Outdoor Opportunities Program) at Chicot State Park outside of Lafayette. To see pictures of canoeing, fishing, cooking, the solo nature hike, and making s'mores around the campfire, check out our Flickr album at [flickr.com/photos/59282847@N04/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/59282847@N04/).

New Short Films Released

Two beautiful short documentaries by filmmaker Jason Bethea were released in conjunction with GiveNOLA Day this May. One film highlights our origins and organization history. <http://vimeo.com/85393110>

The other offers a peek into the heart and soul of our Leadership Program. <http://vimeo.com/86373316>

We hope the films will inspire people about the potential to foster social transformation by growing food with teenagers across difference. Enjoy!

YOUNG AFRICAN LEADERS VISIT GROW DAT

25 leaders from 17 sub-Saharan African countries visited Grow Dat in June as part of their six week exchange on the Tulane University campus this summer. Age 24 to 36, the leaders are part of the inaugural Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders, an exchange program of President Barack Obama's Young African Leaders Initiative. Youth Crew Members led tours of the farm and answered questions about their experience here. Several of the visitors to our farm were inspired by our work and pursuing ongoing consulting opportunities to learn about starting similar projects in their home countries.



Crew Member Kareem Stewart gives a farm tour to members of the Young African Leaders exchange.

SHOUT OUTS AND FUNDING SUCCESSES

Grow Dat Founder Johanna Gilligan (Tulane class of 2003) was honored with the Tulane Newcomb Young Alumna Award

tulane.edu/newcomb-alumnae/awards.cfm

Notice our new look? Since the start of the new year we've been working closely with the talented staff of Right Hat, a marketing and design firm that is proving \$75,000 in pro bono work to Grow Dat to help streamline our look. Stay tuned for more beautifully designed products that feature our new logo.

We are excited to announce generous funding from the ConAgra Foundation which will be applied to our Shared Harvest program (our commitment to share 40% of what we grow). Over the coming year, we will work closely with Shared Harvest partners to create more chances for youth who work at Grow Dat to share their knowledge about growing and eating healthy food.



Farm stand closed for the summer

Our on-site Farm Stand will be closed for summer, and we will not have our weekly stand at the Saturday Crescent City Farmer's Market. 90% of our fields are currently in cover crops but there are sweet potatoes and peanuts in the ground which will be ready for fall harvest. Check our website for the announcement of when we will be back up and running in 2015.

PRESS

On Healthy Food in NOLA Post-Katrina

The Washington Post released a piece by Della Hasselle that highlights Grow Dat as a key component of the changes in the food landscape of New Orleans post-Katrina. The article profiles Grow Dat graduate Tim Dubuclet. “Inner-city kids don’t have anything to do with farming or healthy eating—just football and McDonald’s,” Dubuclet said. “I didn’t know anything about vegetables before I farmed.” Now, he not only knows all the steps of growing plants, but he cooks, too. Dubuclet thinks these programs can help transform communities like his—pointing to the fact that he now gardens and prepares food with his family. “My grandmother is getting older, and working in the garden has helped me to get closer to her,” he said. “Really, farming has made me the person I am today.” Read more [here](#).



Tim Dubuclet cooking

“Really, farming has made me the person I am today.”

An Unexpected Crop: Good Jobs for Youth

Founder and Director Johanna Gilligan released an op-ed in The Lens on the importance and lasting impact of good food jobs. “A strong stock market will do us no good if its foundation is an economy that further degrades the basis of the planet’s true wealth—its biodiversity, its water, air and soil. We have no choice but to see the links between our economic and environmental challenges and to address them as one.” Read more [here](#).

Grow Dat featured at the Leah and Edgar ‘Dooky’ Chase Jr. Family Foundation Gala

- In the Times-Picayune
- On Fox8 news (in the video at 2:38)

Out of Desert Dust, a Miracle on a Shoestring

- The New York Times, by Patricia Leigh Brown, June 15, 2014

Support our work

Donate now! We accept donations through our website at growdatyouthfarm.org.

We appreciate your instant or ongoing contribution.

Soon we will be seeking Fundraisers for our annual Growing the Green alternative holiday gift campaign.

Please reach out to Program Manager Jeanne Firth if you are interested in signing up or would like more information.

jeanne@growdatyouthfarm.org

Produce sales generate 20-30% of our budget. We appreciate your support as CSA members and customers at our Farmstand and farmers market table. Keep an eye out for more produce available in January, 2015!