



THE GROW DAT YOUTH FARM

QUARTERLY UPDATE: FIRST QUARTER 2013

OUR 2013 PROGRAM

Our third programming year kicked off in January, with 27 new Crew Members hired into our intensive five month program on the farm. During the school year youth work one day a week after school and all day on Saturdays. For the month of June, youth work four days a week up until their Grow Dat graduation on June 22. After graduating from this core program, youth can apply for tiered leadership positions to be an Intern or an Assistant Crew Leader (ACL).

MEET OUR 2013 CREWS

Three crews make up our current core program. Each crew is comprised of a staff Crew Leader, an Assistant Crew Leader, and seven or eight Crew Members. After graduating from Grow Dat, youth can apply to become an Assistant Crew Leader (ACL). ACLs work closely with a staff Crew Leader to model leadership, expand their own leadership capabilities, and ensure an excellent experience for the youth in their crew.

LET'S MAKE ALL ORGANIC

Crew Leader: Johanna Gilligan
ACL: Shawn Dexter

THE GREEN AVENGERS

Crew Leader: Jeanne Firth
ACL: Yasmin Davis

THE LIGHTNING BEANS

Crew Leader: Jabari Brown
ACL: Brittany Gaines



2013 PRODUCTION GOALS

- Grow 9,000 pounds of food
- Earn \$15,000 from produce sales
- Sell 60% of our produce at farmer's markets and to restaurants
- Donate 40% (3,600 lbs) as our Shared Harvest to partner organizations, youth and their families and hunger relief agencies



HIRING AND RECRUITMENT

Last fall we recruited, interviewed and hired our current crew. To become a Crew Member students must complete a three page written application, request a letter of recommendation from someone who knows them well, and attend a group Interview Day. This year we welcomed a dozen Masters & PHD students from Tulane's School of Public Health to assist in Interview Day. This 'Learn Dat' team conducted interviews with students and collected baseline data so we can better understand our applicant pool. This team, lead by Dr. Laura

Murphy, is helping us continue to refine our evaluation tools and measure our impact.

We had 63 young people apply for a job with us - a record number! Of this initial pool we offered positions to 27 young people. We have robust requirements in order to hire a crew that is diverse as possible.

OUR TEAM

We have continued to expand our staff and leadership team, bringing these esteemed colleagues on board over the past few months:



Sarah Howard
Farm Assistant (pictured at left, hard at work in the fields)

Kateria Williams
Cooking Instructor

Sunsiray Williams
Cooking Instructor

Joshua Schoop
Evaluation Coordinator, PHD
Candidate in International
Development, Tulane

Ariel Roland
Youth and Alumni Coordinator, Master of Social Work Candidate,
Tulane

Rachel Van Parys
Wellness Coordinator, Master of Public Health Candidate, Tulane

Jason Bethea
Documentary Filmmaker, Hampshire College

MEET OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

We extend a warm welcome to the first Grow Dat Board of Directors. Many members of the Board have been key to the launch of our organization since day one. We look forward to their inspired leadership.

- Dan Etheridge, Board Chair
- Jenga Mwendo, Vice Chair
- Leo Dunn, Treasurer
- Stephanie Barksdale, Secretary
- Lauren Bierbaum, Committee Chair
- Paul Soniat, Member
- Tim Dubuclet, Grow Dat Graduate, Member

OUR PARTNER SCHOOLS

Youth in our program attend one of five partner schools. Partner schools help with recruitment and make a contribution to support the salaries of their students that complete the program. We are fortunate to work with teachers and staff at these schools from across New Orleans:

- De La Salle High School
- Warren Easton High School
- The Net High School
- New Orleans Charter Science and Mathematics High School
- Clark High School



EATING WELL AT GROW DAT: SNACKS AND COOKING CLASSES

At Grow Dat, our mission is to nurture a diverse group of young leaders through the meaningful work of growing food—a straightforward mission and goal, but one that is complicated by the challenges facing the young adults we hire to work on our farm. This year we have refined our evaluation tools, allowing us to capture more baseline nutrition and diet data from youth in the program. When we administered the survey this February, even we were surprised by what we found out.

When the young adults who work with us arrive from work, so often they arrive hungry. Often the first time youth try many different kinds of fruits and vegetables is at work. This exposure to food that is good for them, that they can eat as much of as they wish, provides an essential foundation and support that allows them to thrive in the often very physically demanding work of farming. It also reinforces that they are in an environment where they are cared for, which encourages them to take risks and grow as individuals.

TO MARKET, TO MARKET, WE GO

Grow Dat is proud to launch New Orleans' first weekly Pop Up Market.

Every Saturday morning we hitch up our mobile vending trailer (see photo below) to the farm truck, and head to the nearby Columbia Parc development. Thanks to this initiative between Capital One and the Bayou District Foundation, youth are helping create solutions to food access issues in the neighborhood. Youth also sell our wares every Saturday at the popular Crescent City Farmer's Market in the Central Business District.

POP UP MARKET

Every Saturday
10:00am-1pm
Columbia Parc, St. Bernard
and Jumonville

CRESCENT CITY FARMER'S MARKET

Every Saturday 8 a.m. to
12 noon
corner of Magazine Street
and Girod Street

NUTRITION SURVEY RESULTS

Of 25 youth surveyed:

- 50% reported not having eaten a single meal the day the survey was administered
- 46% reported eating only one full meal that day (the survey was administered at 5 pm)
- 50% reported having eaten any fruit in the last 24 hours
- Only 12% (3 out of 25) reported having eaten any vegetables in the last 24 hours.
- 20% reported drinking at least one soda a day.



THE NATIONAL YOUTH CLIMATE EXCHANGE

Addressing climate change is key to us at Grow Dat because food system emissions account for between 19%-29% of all total greenhouse gases, and agriculture accounts for 80%-86% of emissions within the food system. Josh Kemp, Kamau Johnson and Amber Young are serving this spring as Grow Dat's first Policy Interns with the National Youth Climate Exchange (NYCE). Grow Dat is proud to have been invited to join Build it Up West Virginia and Global Kids NYC and Washington, DC for the NYCE.

On our farm, youth grow food using sustainable and chemical-free methods. Our commitment to carbon reduction and environmental stewardship ensures that agriculture is part of the solution, rather than remaining a leading contributor to the problem.



Grow Dat Policy Intern Kamau Johnson from Warren Easton (far left) brainstorms possible impacts of climate change on different regions

To reduce our carbon footprint, most of the five month long fellowship is conducted via Google Hangout and conference calls. Youth had the opportunity to get to know one another face-to-face through a three day climate action summit in early April in the Blue Ridge Mountains in Pennsylvania. Youth climate activists spent the weekend crafting action plans for environmental justice work in their communities.

Youth in New Orleans know all too well the threat of sea level rise and the fallout of increasingly extreme weather patterns. Their voices are key to understanding the real impacts of a changing climate. Stay tuned to see these young activists in action as they develop their campaigns!

SHOUT OUTS AND FUNDING SUCCESSES

CORPORATE AND FOUNDATION SUPPORT

- Harbor Communications provides our lightning-fast internet and phone service completely free of charge every month.
- The Barman's Fund donated and delivered our commercial-grade American Range (stovetop and oven) for our Demonstration & Teaching Kitchen.
- We received a second year of IMPACT funding from the Greater New Orleans Foundation to continue and expand our Wellness Programming. In addition to providing cooking and nutrition classes for youth in the program, the \$25,000 from GNOF will also allow us to expand to offer cooking and nutrition classes to family members each month.
- The Blue Moon Fund has generously invested in Grow Dat, providing \$160,000 over two years to support staff and program costs while helping Grow Dat leaders build greater linkages with city, state and federal agencies to find opportunities for collaboration and support.



Crew Member Unique Wilson from The Net riding her bike to work and taking home produce in her backpack.

INDIVIDUAL DONORS

- Growing the Green 2012: Our annual winter fundraiser was a resounding success, with individual donors contributing almost \$16,000 - \$6,000 above and beyond our \$10,000 goal!
- Hootenanny: On April 18, we hosted the first Hootenanny Barn Dance Benefit for Grow Dat, featuring square dancing, music by Bruce 'Sunpie' Barnes, and an old fashioned Cake Walk with donations from premier NOLA pastry chefs. 250 people turned out for the event, raising over \$5,000 for our organization.

EARNED INCOME

We are on track to hit our target of funding 20% of our 2013 annual operating budget through earned income.

Our sources of revenue include partner school contributions, field trips, event rental and produce sales to both restaurants and farmer's markets. Please contact us if you are interested in any of these income generation activities.

SUPPORT OUR WORK

- Donate now! We can now accept donations through our website. Please visit growdatyouthfarm.org to make an instant or ongoing contribution.
- Stay tuned for information about our Community Lunches for the first three Saturdays in June. Community Lunches are a great opportunity to get a peek at our summer program while sharing a delicious farm meal cooked by youth.



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