A NATION THAT WORKS— WHAT’S IT GOING TO TAKE?

I just returned from a national conference that connects the work we do at Homeless Garden Project to the broader movement in our country that uses transitional jobs as a strategy to end chronic unemployment, poverty and homelessness. Over 300 people attended, including Workforce Investment Board leaders, county officials, National League of City members, a wide variety of nonprofit agencies, funders and other stakeholders. I am inspired by the national conversation and action around the transitional jobs strategy.

Inspiration abounds here at our farm, workshop, store and office. We rejoice in all the successes of our trainees— the graduations, landing a job, getting into housing, and all the steps leading up to them. This year, with your partnership, we increased the amount of food distributed to low income people through Feed Two Birds— children and veterans were new recipients, bringing the total number of agencies receiving shares of our organic produce to 10 and the food distributed to 5000 pounds in 2016! And, we held our Food and Wellness Fair, which encouraged healthy uses of fresh fruits and vegetables through cooking demonstrations by local chefs, as well as workshops on yoga, container gardening and more.

The Ecological Farming Conference honored us this year with their prestigious Advocates of Social Justice Award, and the Steering Committee of the Community Assessment Project honored us with a Community Hero award for our work achieving an Economic Community Goal. In early December, we look forward to being honored, along with our founder, Dr. Paul Lee, by Smart Solutions to Homelessness at their Community Recognition Reception.

Our staff and volunteer leaders are preparing to move our programs to our new Pogonip Farm in 2019 with plans for: new programs that will allow us to double the number of people we serve; a site design, and a campaign to raise the funds needed to build our site.

We’ve relocated our Downtown Stores to two new sites-more information inside-and we hope to see you at both of our sites this holiday season. Be sure to check out our unique, local and organic handmade gifts on our online store. We can ship holiday gifts to your out-of-town friends and family. If you’d like to keep in touch with Homeless Garden Project, please sign up for our email newsletter on our website. At goo.gl/i15uqv, you can watch a video from experts and practitioners across the country answering the question: a nation that works— what’s it going to take? What do you think it will take?

We are enormously grateful for your partnership in this important work.

— Darrie Ganzhorn, Executive Director

YEAH! I’M GOING TO WORK!

I found the Garden through Laurie [a trainee who has graduated]. It’s saving my life. Every day, I get so excited to say, “Yeah. I’m going to work!” Homeless Garden Project made me feel confident to make a change, because I was out of work for two years—a little longer—and I lost my ID, so without my ID, I felt that no one would hire me. At all.

But the minute I step onto the farm, it’s magical. And there’s a peace at the farm. I feel so much better. And we get counseling once a week. I mean: who does that? And we exercise and we eat good. None of these things I was doing [before]. It’s stuff I think we should do as homeless people, like get back down to earth.

And... the food: You might think it’s small, because it’s just lunch 4 days a week, but my body is starting to really feel the change. Especially when I’m growing it. The work is so much more meaningful. Most of the [jobs I’ve had], I wasn’t really involved in what I was doing... I came from the banking world and was the head teller. This has so much more. I’m feeding people. It feels like I’m really doing a service.

— continued on inside left page
I know now that I want to work for New Leaf or Trader Joe’s. I can still supply my money skills, but then... I’m like: “what we sell is good!” Or Whole Foods or Shoppers Corner. I would be very happy working there as a cashier. Where I know about the products, and I’m [feeling] positive about the products and I can do my job and make really cool friends.

Because of the garden, I know now that there is community here, and they do care about us. Because we do matter. We’re all human. And especially if we’re trying. And all the people that I work with here now— we are all trying to better ourselves.

I try to share that a lot with my street friends. I just wish everyone had the chance to come here. At least try it!

I know they see me and I want them to see me go to work.

And it is very cool when I walk through the park and they’re like: “George-ie! You going to work? Yeah, alright, go, girl! You do it!”

I want them to see me because if I hold it together, maybe one girl will look and say: “Man, she can do a little part-time job. Maybe I can too.”

I always tell people: “The Homeless Garden doesn’t just grow plants and flowers! They’re growing souls.” We’re planting inside.

We’re growing inside. And on top of that: then you can eat! And put flowers in your hair.

As I grow, Homeless Garden Project is still my roots. I know now that I am a tree, but the Garden has rooted me so firmly with confidence; they have introduced me to people and resources that are always going to be out there. I now feel that there’s always going to be people out there willing to help us.”

Politics From Below

I have witnessed countless moments of connection and care in community since I began working at the Homeless Garden Project: a trainee teaching a volunteer about the healing properties of the stinging nettle plant; seventy-five employees digging out crab grass from the squash beds as they bond during their staff retreat; a group of volunteers, trainees and staff sitting around the lunch table together, savoring the delicious warmth of a squash soup prepared in the farm kitchen.

In a time when top-down, big government is on our minds, my work with the Project has turned my attention toward a very different kind of politics; one which aims to bring about the Project’s vision of a thriving and inclusive community, workforce and local food system.

This kind of politics is grounded in the real relationships that form our community. It can be found in holding each other accountable and in caring for one another. This politics from below is about listening, learning, advocating, and showing up.

In this light, the Homeless Garden Project does not exist outside of the individuals, families and organizations who show up in the most concrete ways to dig into the dirt at the farm, to sell products in the stores, and to contribute time, money, and energy into making the Project a reality.

As we transition off the farm and into the workshop, I reflect on the moments that make up the journey of the products sold in our holiday store. The wreath, candles, and other products reflect a year-long journey of transformations for both plants and people. Each product at the store points toward a rich constellation of connection, healing and growth.

My work with the Homeless Garden Project teaches me that politics is not abstract or distant, but rather, it is an active practice of care and community building.

Our holiday store is both a celebration and a continuation of this commitment to our vision. At a time when this work feels more urgent and necessary than ever before, I am deeply inspired and grateful for the resilient community that we build together at the Homeless Garden Project.

—Georgie Linderholm, an HGP Trainee Read the full article on our HGP Blog!

—Keren Reichler, HGP Volunteer Coordinator
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TRIBUTE GIFTS
A tribute gift to the Project is a great way to show your support of our work while honoring the generous and beloved people in your life. We'll acknowledge your gift promptly by mailing directly to the individual, family or organization that you are remembering or honoring.

The following Tribute Gifts were made between October 2015 and November 14th, 2016:

In Honor of:
• Ginny Aragon- Ann Freitas & Harriett Robles
• Terry Brumbaugh- Christina Pasetta
• Zoi Deutsch- Nathaniel Deutsch
• Patrick & Martha Dexter-John Miller, Edwin Dexter, Matthew Miller, Janet Kaseda & Mark Miller
• Mary Edmund- Jane Arabian & Wouitje Swets
• Darrie Ganzhorn- Matthew Skaarup & Wouitje Swets
• Allison Garcia- Rick Zimman, Doreen Schack & Yvonne Falk
• Kathleen Groves- Debbie Harless
• Stuart Kaplan- Barbara Meislin
• Ian Keeler- Joan & Patrick Henry
• Kathy Kramer- Ginny Aragon
• Rose Kutz- Marcia Kaplan
• Jim & Becky Lang- Ken & Lisa Rose
• Coco Lazenby- Erin Adler
• Joanne Main- Caryn Simon
• Richard & Marenco Palmer- Darrell Palmer
• Ann Russell- John Russell
• Erik Schapiro- Abbey Asher
• Ivor H. Specterman- Meris Walton
• Jean Stuart- Joanne Matuzas
• Peggie Sugars- Becky Lang
• Kelly Sullivan- Sally Shepherd
• Roger Swain- Linda Rosewood
• Elizabeth Tattersall- John Russell
• Patrick Teerhauhs- Maria Gitin
• Dick Verrow- John Russell
• Eliana T. Willis- Rachel Levin & Sandra Borack
• Ron & Jacqui Woodward- Cory Woodward
• Mark Zalona- Rebecca Zalona
• Alice Payan & Mindy Lee- Renee Payan Wong
• Beryl (her Tuesday Night Yoga Girls)- Jane Arabian
• David Winters & Beth Steinmetz- Barbara Cushing
• Dr. Cauldon & April, RN- Christopher Jones
• Jon Kersey & Alice Beinet- Diane Schulman
• Mr. & Mrs. Bruce Bane, Tracey Baumann, & Peggy O’Neal-Maydeen Stout
• Pegatha Hughes & Paul Seever- Geoffrey Hughes
• Norman- Sally Kane
• Waleed- Wendy King
• Beebe Family- Eric Strader
• Edison, Vickers & Parrish Families- Martha Vickers
• Kabi Runns, Steve Wirih, & The Waters Family- Bob & Betty Imlay
• Donald & Emily Clark & Patrick Family Fund- Al Patrick
• Mike Arenson’s Swim for Food Campaign- Edgar Thrift, Len Beyea, Sheila Siegel, Babette Brekka

In Memory of:
• Josh Alper- Joshua Alper-Marines Foundation
• Alice Bautista- Nanlouise Wolfe
• Rodney Bayne- Carolina Bayne
• Dori Bodebeinser- Ronald Maysenhalder
• Betty Sue Budge- Dale Budge
• Brook Butterfield- Brian Beahn
• Abe Cohen- Gena Conndly
• Fred Deenele- Vema Bacon
• Bill Fiehring- Mike Arenson & Susan Dahlgren
• Karen Feistman- Prima Salon
• Virginia Finocchio- Margaret & Donald Fitzgerald
• George & Yuri Fukuda- Mario Singleterry & Lori Fukuda
• Margaret Yates Gerwin- Daryl Gerwin
• John T. Lamerdelia- Justine Bykowski
• Coco Lazenby- Michael & Carmela McDonald
• Ian Peters- Chris Peters
• Harold Hill Smith- Hilda B. Hodges & Don Hodges
• Charlotte Specterman- Ginger McNally
• Muriel S.- William Salmansohn
• Elizabeth Tattersall, Dick Verrow & Ann Russell- John Russell
• Susan Lentz, Ken Gray, Steve & Ann Domin- Joan & David Hentes
• “Butterfly” Tikki Randle- Annette March
• The Krosters- Catherine Steele

SECOND FRIDAY
Celebrate the Season in Local Style. Enjoy festive sweets and treats on Second Friday December 9th from 6-8:30 pm at the Homeless Garden Project Downtown Store, located at 1001 Center Street, Suite 2 in the Santa Cruz Art Center. The talented local author Lois Lawson will be reading excerpts, selling and signing copies of her book “Growing Up in Santa Cruz.” This event is free.

ARTISAN’S HOLIDAY MARKET
Shop the Homeless Garden Project Downtown Store in the Santa Cruz Art Center on Saturday December 17th from 11-4 pm for an extensive selection of handcrafted bath and body products, food, beeswax candles, dried wreaths and more.

LOVE MONDAY SERIES
Stop by the Discretion Brewery at 2703 41st Ave, Suite A from 11:30-9pm on December 26th. 20% of beer sales will be donated to HGP. Invite your friends and family to celebrate the season while supporting.

These items are created by Project trainees using materials grown at the Project’s certified organic farm. There will also be over twenty additional artisans selling their goods in the Food Lounge and Atrium of the Art Center, located at 1001 Center Street in downtown Santa Cruz.

—continued next column
The Homeless Garden Project
P.O. Box 617 • Santa Cruz, California • 95061

See our Web Site: www.homelessgardenproject.org
or call us at: (831) 426-3609

Be an active supporter:
☑ $1,000. Friend of the Garden ☐ $500. Cultivator of the Garden
☑ $250. Sower of the Garden ☐ $100. Supporter of the Garden
☑ Other ____________________________
☑ I’d like to make a monthly donation $ ______________________
☑ Please contact us about planned giving, gifts of stock, and corporate matching gifts.
☑ Yes! I’d like to receive email updates from HGP.

Email Address _________________________
Card No. __________________ Exp. Date _____
CVV# on back of card __________________
Name __________________________________
Address __________________________________
Daytime Telephone _______________________

DONATE ONLINE: www.homelessgardenproject.org

Shop Our Downtown Pacific Avenue & Center Street Stores!
Unique, Local, Organic and Handmade Gifts

• Hand-crafted Dried Flower Wreaths • Hand Dipped Beeswax Candles
• Baking Mixes • Herb Salts • Jewelry • Jams, Jellies and Pickles
• Healing Salves, Balms and more...

1120 Pacific Avenue
Open Every Day 10-8 pm through 12/24

1001 Center Street, Unit 2
Santa Cruz Art Center
Open Fridays 11-7 pm • Saturdays 11-5 pm
Open the week before Christmas, 11-7 everyday
Follow us on FaceBook to find out about our latest events and extended event hours.