GROWING PLACES

PLANT A SEED, GROW A COMMUNITY

Diana Ceron and her daughter, learning together in the Maybarton Teaching Garden.

BELOW: Israel, 7, and Josiah, 8, help make a kale-avocado salad at the Fitchburg Farmers Market.
CREDIT: SENTINEL & ENTERPRISE

GRATITUDE REPORT 2016

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

"Watching our gardens grow is so exciting and educational! Have a great time every time we meet." CLEGHORN TEACHING GARDENER

71% HAVE SHARED PRODUCE WITH NEIGHBORS.

75% FEEL MORE RELAXED AS A RESULT OF THEIR GARDEN.

71% HAVE NOTICED THEIR GROCERY COSTS DECREASE.

"Gracias a este programa he podido conocer más personas dispuestas a cooperar entre diferentes razas. Gracias adelante."

TRANSLATION: "Thanks to this program, I have been able to meet more people willing to cooperate between different races. Thank you and let's move forward."

BERTA, PIERCE MEADOW TEACHING GARDENER

50% FEEL PRIDE IN THEIR COMMUNITY WITH 46% HAVING MET NEW PEOPLE IN THEIR NEIGHBORHOOD.

32% HAVE TAUGHT OTHER PEOPLE TO GARDEN.

"I enjoyed the cooking class. The food we cooked was healthy and very delicious."

CHERISH, TEACHING GARDENER

"I'm always amazed by how much I learn about gardening every year in the teaching garden."

HEATHER, TEACHING GARDEN GURU VOLUNTEER

This year we offered more than **251 volunteer opportunities**. Over **100 individuals** answered the call and gave **583 hours** of their time! They shared their talents to build and install **43 raised beds**, **a community garden** and **3 community garden compost bins**. In addition, they helped restore and maintain **3 community gardens**. They also provided hands-on education to **125 gardeners, led 14 educational workshops**, helped maintain our website, and raised money to support our mission.

OVERALL EXPERIENCE RATING FROM VOLUNTEERS:

94% GREAT!

"I have enjoyed every activity that I have taken on over the years. I was very happy contributing all that I did over those years."

CONNIE, TEACHING GARDEN GURU VOLUNTEER – WITH GP FOR 15 YEARS!

Numerical data derived from direct gardener feedback via end-of-season surveys.

HEALTHY FAMILIES

"We are grateful for the classes. It was really great to do this with my 10-year-old son. Thank you!"
MARIA, PIERCE MEADOW TEACHING GARDENER

"If my mom cooked like this every day I would be so happy!"
YOUTH PARTICIPANT IN *ROOTS OF OUR FOOD* PROGRAM

"The communal family atmosphere was very enjoyable."
MAYBARTON TEACHING GARDENER

"I learned a lot since I don't cook. I only eat frozen meals and peanut butter sandwiches."
GARDEN-TO-TABLE COOKING CLASS WORKSHOP ATTENDEE

93% HAVE TRIED NEW VEGETABLES OR PREPARED FAMILIAR VEGETABLES IN A NEW WAY.

86% ARE EATING VEGETABLES 3–6 TIMES A WEEK, AS COMPARED TO ONLY 39% PRIOR TO HAVING A GARDEN.

82% BETTER UNDERSTAND THE CONNECTION BETWEEN FOOD AND HEALTH.

79% SAY THEIR FAMILIES, INCLUDING CHILDREN, ARE EATING MORE VEGETABLES.

64% SAW CONSUMPTION OF PRE-PACKAGED FOODS DECREASE.

15 YEARS & GROWING

TOGETHER WE HAVE TAKEN ROOT

WE ARE BRANCHING OUT!

Our story began one spring afternoon, 15 years ago, with a simple plan to bring gardening and vegetables to people in need. Since then Growing Places has grown into a network of gardeners, volunteers, donors, and partners in North Central Massachusetts addressing hunger, nutrition, food security, and community health and wellness.

From simply building gardens to growing communities of gardeners, YOU and Growing Places have been creating change for 15 years!

GROW WITH US!

FOOD EDUCATION

- Teaching Gardens
- Learn & Grow Workshops
- Roots of Our Food – Adult & Youth
- Garden on the GO!
- Garden-to-Table Classes
- Food Gardeners' Gathering

ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOOD

- Community Garden Management
- Backyard, Community & Institutional Gardens
- Sundial Community Orchard
- SNAP & Double Coupons at Fitchburg Farmers Market

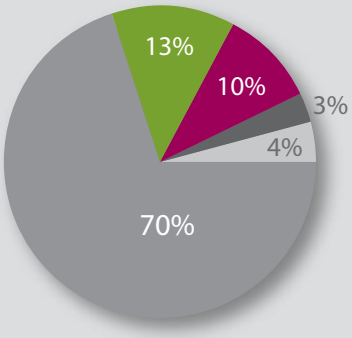
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

- Building Networks among Gardeners
- Rewarding Volunteer Opportunities
- Greening the Gateway Cities

THANK YOU!

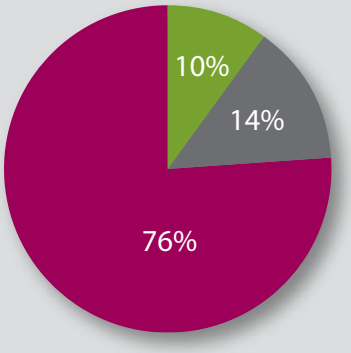
WHERE OUR MONEY COMES FROM

Foundations: **70%**
Individuals: **13%**
Government: **10%**
Corporations: **3%**
Earned Income: **4%**



HOW WE SPEND YOUR MONEY

Programs: **76%**
Administration / Management: **14%**
Fundraising: **10%**



THANKS TO YOU WE ARE THRIVING AND GROWING!

This past year over 100 individuals donated $28,000 to Growing Places representing 13% of our revenues. Our corporate sponsors made financial contributions of $8,000, a 27% increase over the previous year! This year, for the first time, Growing Places received two government grants, each with three year contracts: Greening the Gateway Cities through the State EOEEA and as a subcontractor with World Farmers for a USDA Beginner Farmer and Rancher Development Grant. Private foundation grants represented 70% of revenues and many of these are awarded from local community and health-related foundations with money that is donated to them by members of the local community. **The support to Growing Places from individuals and businesses from the North Central MA region runs deep!**

Our end-of-year financials had not been completed by our accountants at the time of this printing. You will find our most recent 990s and financial statements, along with a complete listing of the individuals, businesses, and foundations who have lent their time, talent and treasures to make this work possible, on our website: www.growingplaces.org

THANKS TO OUR KEY SPONSORS

roots Natural Foods
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RBT Rollstone Bank & Trust
Workers Credit Union
Enterprise Bank
re-imagine North of Main
Eos Foundation
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Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs
Reliant Medical Group Foundation
Greater Worcester Community Foundation
Nypro
CHNA 9 North Central Massachusetts
Hometown Bank
Clif Bar Family Foundation
GFA Federal Credit Union
CMOS Central Mass Oral Surgery

GROWING PLACES

At Growing Places (GP), we believe in the power of gardening to changes lives and use gardening as a platform for social change. We help low-income communities in North Central Massachusetts realize the many health, economic, and social benefits of growing and consuming healthy fruits and vegetables by building food gardens and teaching the skills to grow, harvest and use fresh produce.

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