



Issue # 2 | December 2009 / January 2010

Grow Food, Grow Hope wins \$20,000 grant

Inside this issue:

Tom's of Maine \$20,000 grant	1
Winter Farmers' Market	1
GFGH welcomes new VISTAs	2
AP Story goes to print	2
Rachael Ray comes to town	2
Kids learn with 'Read and Seed'	3
Garden Families Needed	3

Throughout the months of October and November, we campaigned for our project to win a \$20,000 Community Involvement grant from Tom's of Maine, the natural health-product company. After an extensive vetting process, during which more than 2,100 projects from around the country applied, we were selected as one of five organizations to receive the \$20,000, which will expand our project in specific areas and help fund day-to-day operations in general.



"Winning these funds will

assist us in enhancing our anti-poverty focus," said Tara Lydy, Director of the Center for Service & Civic Engagement at Wilmington College, which sponsors Grow Food, Grow Hope. "Our mission relies heavily on educating others, increasing families' confidence in the ability to put food on their tables, and, ultimately, empowering them to develop a sustainable solution—thus achieving lasting solutions to poverty."

We owe our success in winning this grant to our community of supporters and collaborators who con-

sistently voted for us online and helped spread the word to other networks. We competed with established organizations from large, metropolitan areas, but our committed base of supporters gave us the votes we needed to secure the \$20,000 for Clinton County. We are excited and ready to put the generous grant money to use.

To those who voted or spread the word about our cause: Thank you! You are directly responsible for this success, and we are grateful for your help.

We look forward to working with Tom's of Maine, our newest partner and collaborator.

Winter Farmers' Market open, successful in first season

The first-ever Clinton County Winter Farmers' Market opened its doors on Saturday, November 7, at Swindler & Sons Florists in Wilmington, and it runs every other Saturday from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. throughout the Winter.

Our Buy Local Food &

Farmers' Market Coordinator Dessie Buchanan has been coordinating the market and said that both the farmers and the customers are pleased with its success so far.

"We've had a really good turn-out every week, and the vendors are happy with the

success of the pre-ordering system, which is new," Buchanan said. "It makes it easier for everyone."

For a full product list, order form and details on how to order, visit clinton-countyfarmersmarket.com or growfoodgrowshope.com



The Clinton County Winter Farmers' Market is open every other Saturday, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

GFGH welcomes VISTAs Aileen Ash & Jessica Braun

We welcomed the final two AmeriCorps* VISTA members to our team on Monday, November 23, with the addition of Aileen Ash and Jessica Braun. Aileen will be serving as the Growers' Co-Op Coordinator for our project, and Jessica will be our Food Distribution Coordinator.

Both Aileen and Jessica bring past experience in volunteerism and food issues to their new roles, and we are

excited to welcome them.

Ash is originally from Philadelphia, PA and is a 2008 graduate of the University of Rhode Island, where she studied Wildlife Conservation Biology and Interna-



Aileen Ash

tional Development. She will be working with the Clinton County Fresh Network and the local Food Co-Op

Braun is originally from Wapakoneta, OH and is a graduate of the Ohio State



Jessica Braun

University where she studied French. She will be working with Sugartree Ministries specifically, as well as coordinating food distribution to other local food pantries.

With the addition of Ash and Braun, our team of 9 VISTA members is complete, and their roles will be integral in the coming 2010 growing season.

Please join us in welcoming them to Wilmington.

AP: 'Hard-hit community learns to grow food'

The Associated Press published a story about our community and our project on November 11 that made its way to more than 2 million news outlets around the world.

Dan Sewell, the AP reporter who wrote the story, visited Wilmington in September and interviewed several of the families who maintain plots in our community garden, as well as

several people involved with Grow Food, Grow Hope.

The story was featured on ABC News, in the New York Times, the Washington Post, the Los Angeles Times, the Denver Post, and thousands of others around the country. We received several phone calls from other news agencies interested in



writing about our project after reading the AP article.

The Epoch Times, an international newspaper and website chain with bureaus around the world, contacted us shortly after reading about us online, and expressed interest in covering our story. They ran a story online and in print on Nov. 18, and we

received more web traffic on our website that weekend than any other in past months.

Those two stories, coupled with the news of our Tom's of Maine grant victory, made for an exciting few weeks at the end of November, and helped push our story into the national discussion almost overnight.

Rachael Ray comes to town, GFGH lends a hand



For much of November, Wilmington was abuzz with excitement about Rachael Ray. The Food Network star and talk show host made a

surprise visit to Wilmington in early November to renovate Your Father's Kitchen and host a Thanksgiving dinner for 2,000 Clinton County residents.

Rachael brought along her production crew and filmed the entire week, which aired as a one-hour special on CBS called "Thanksgiving on Main Street."

Tara Lydy, Director of the Center for Service & Civic Engagement at Wilmington College, which houses the Grow Food, Grow Hope Garden Initiative team, was actively involved in many different planning roles for the event and worked daily with Rachael's production team.

The GFGH VISTAs also helped by coordinating

volunteers, setting up the conference center for the event, and working on the day of the Thanksgiving dinner to help ensure the production ran smoothly.

In all, it was an exciting experience and we're grateful for Rachael, her crew and their support in Clinton County.

Kids have fun with food at monthly 'Read and Seed'



Our monthly youth literacy program centered around food has been extremely successful in our first year, and the number of children enrolled in the program continues to grow.

During past 'Read and Seed' programs, kids have painted with spaghetti, recreated the innards of a pumpkin, learned about worms and the importance

of composting, and built their own miniature compost bins to take home.

Mariah Fulton, Youth Outreach Coordinator for Grow Food, Grow Hope, said that she was happy with the success of 'Read and Seed' so far and is excited about its future programs.

"I've been extremely happy so far with the turnout, both with the kids and volunteers" Fulton said. "We had one grandparent e-mail us and tell us that her grandchild had so much fun at 'Read and

Seed', and that he had never been away from his parents before. That made me feel good."

Fulton said she and other VISTA members are planning on branching off of 'Read and Seed' and creating a 'Junior Master Gardeners' program for older participants.

The next 'Read and Seed', in January, will teach kids about herb gardening, and Fulton is in need of 130 empty (soup) cans to make enough pots for the children to take home. If you are able to donate used cans or would like to volunteer, please contact



A volunteer reads to participants during an October 'Read and Seed'.

Mariah Fulton at (937) 382-6661 ext. 488 or mariah_fulton@wilmington.edu.

Backyard and Community Garden Families Needed

With the 2009 growing season behind us and the 2010 season fast approaching, we are beginning the process of choosing families for our backyard and community garden plots for 2010.

Eric Guindon and Jennifer Kerschner, our Community Outreach Coordinator and Community Garden Coordinator, respectively, have assembled an application for potential families. Area residents can apply for a plot at our community garden, which is expanding from 20 to 40 plots next year, or they can apply to be a host site for our backyard garden project, which seeks

to establish upwards of 35 backyard gardens around the community.

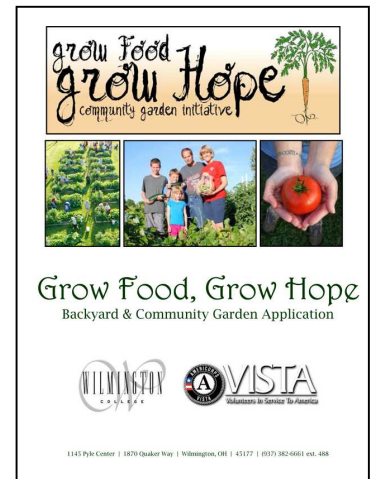
Both the community garden and backyard garden project are free of cost to participants, thanks to grants and donations. All required resources, from education to seeds to tools, will be provided by Grow Food, Grow Hope and Wilmington College.

Participants at the community garden meet once a week as a group to tend to their plots, attend cooking demonstrations with harvested produce, and learn the basics of small-plot gardening.

Participants of the backyard garden project will receive assistance from volunteers, who will make weekly site visits around the community, and will be able to assist the families as needed.

Community members may also sponsor local families by purchasing a garden bed in either project for donation.

If you would like to be involved with our backyard or community garden project, or you would like to nominate or sponsor a family, please contact Guindon or Kerschner at (937) 382-6661 ext. 488 or at growfoodgrowhope@wilmington.edu



A backyard and community garden application. You can download an application from growfoodgrowhope.com or request one by calling (937) 382-6661 ext. 488 or emailing growfoodgrowhope@wilmington.edu

Want more information? www.growfoodgrowhope.com



Grow Food, Grow Hope Garden Initiative

1145 Pyle Center
1870 Quaker Way
Wilmington, OH
45177

Phone: 937-382-6661 ext. 488 | **E-mail:** growfoodgrowhope@wilmington.edu | **Web:** www.growfoodgrowhope.com

The **Grow Food, Grow Hope Garden Initiative** is a community food project dedicated to increasing access to fresh and nutritious food for the neediest members of our community. By increasing food security, we aim to eliminate the effects of poverty.

To that end, we facilitate a community garden for low-income families, we grow bulk vegetables for area food banks, we organize and fund backyard garden installations around our community, we teach children how to garden and we promote local farmers' markets and local businesses.

By growing a little food, we can sow a lot of hope.

Come grow with us.

