

greenguerillas

2015 Accomplishments

Green Guerillas engaged in an array of activities to support community gardeners and strengthen community gardens. Our staff, interns, and volunteers:

Distributed plants, soil, and materials to community gardeners

Spring Giveaways: Green Guerillas organized giveaways in May in Harlem, Bedford Stuyvesant, and the Bronx. 75 community garden groups received tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, okra, kale, cabbage, broccoli, collards, calaloo, swiss chard, and a selection of herbs. Light refreshments helped gardeners enjoy the day as they socialized and planned for the upcoming season.

Soil Giveaways: We distributed 7 tons of fresh, healthy soil to 8 community garden groups in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Bushwick, and Harlem to help make garden beds even more bountiful.

Cool Food Giveaway: In August we distributed cool season vegetable seedlings to 9 Bedford-Stuyvesant community garden groups to help them grow food into the cooler months.

Fall Giveaways: We held a giveaway in Harlem where 18 community garden groups chose from a selection of perennial shrubs and bushes, flower bulbs, garlic bulbs, and cover crop seeds. Gardeners also came together to celebrate the growing season and share stories.

Provided organizing, fundraising, and organizational assistance to garden leaders

Bronx and Manhattan Land Trusts: Our executive director led efforts to provide organizational assistance to these two grassroots land trusts and their 32 member gardens. We helped them engage in effective property management, manage water systems, organize fundraisers, manage their finances, and communicate better with their member gardens.

Central Brooklyn Gardeners Coalition: Green Guerillas helped Bedford-Stuyvesant community garden leaders support each other, organize garden workdays and events, and bring resources into their neighborhood.

Fundraising assistance: Our executive director helped 9 community garden groups raise and manage grants and donations from the Citizens Committee, the NY City Council, and individual donors. Groups included: Phoenix Community Garden, Liz Christy Garden, Bruce Reynolds Memorial Garden, La Perla Garden, Serenity Garden, Hope Steven Garden, Convent Garden, and Harris Garden.

Helped the Youth Farm at the HS for Public Service thrive

We helped the Youth Farm team raise and manage funds, do outreach, and strengthen their program. This dynamic group of farmers and youth managed a 1 acre farm that provided fresh healthy food to 100 Crown Heights/East Flatbush families through a CSA and a weekly farmers market. They engaged more than 500 youth in classes and farm activities to help them gain skills, learn where their food comes from and learn to eat and cook healthier. Hundreds of community residents and youth from other schools engaged in farm workdays, visits, and workshops.

Organized the Harvest for Neighborhoods Campaign

We provided vegetable seedlings, advice, information and assistance to 75 community garden groups in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Harlem, and the Bronx to help them grow more food and engage more people in the harvest. We provided the materials and labor to help Tranquility Farm in Bedford-Stuyvesant install a large compost system and expand their chicken coup. We provided

materials and labor to help Mo Pals Garden in Harlem and Madison Street Block Association Garden in Bed-Stuy completely re-build all of their vegetable beds. We provided La Finca del Sur with a large amount of vegetable seedlings and herbs to help them boost the harvest at their South Bronx urban farm.

Launched the Grow Vertical NYC Campaign

We organized and Grow Vertical NYC working group and partnered with Brooklyn Grange to install 4 pilot vertical growing systems at the Clifton Place Memorial Park and Garden in partnership with the community gardeners there. We provided plants, soil, and assistance to help them manage the systems and organized a community celebration. We also distributed how-to information to 50 central Brooklyn community garden groups to help spark interest in vertical growing as a tool to creatively grow more vegetables and herbs.

Engaged 10 youth at the core of our work

Youth Tillers: We hired 8 teenagers for paid urban agriculture internships that took place on the Youth Farm in Crown Heights. The tillers cultivated fruits and vegetables, worked at a weekly farmers market, gave cooking demonstrations and garden tours, and did community outreach. They participated in workshops and field trips to round out their experience.

Young adult interns: Green Guerillas engaged 2 young adult interns at the Youth Farm to provide mentoring and supervision for the Youth Tillers and manage a weekly farmers market.

Advocated for garden preservation

HPD list: A number of important community gardens are on a list of possible development sites for an HPD affordable housing RFQ. We wrote letters to the mayor and City commissioners asking them to remove the gardens from the list and encouraged our members and supporters to do the same.

La Perla Community Garden: The gardeners at this beautiful Manhattan Valley garden face the loss of one third of their garden because a private owner plans to sell one of the lots. We helped the La Perla gardeners obtain pro-bono legal assistance, organize and fundraising event, and strategize on options for keeping their garden intact.

Organized community arts activities for youth

We helped engage youth in various community arts project to help them unleash their talents and creativity. Teenagers at the Youth Farm engaged in culinary arts activities and painted colorful signs. At Phoenix Community Garden, children and teenagers engaged in a vibrant Children's Harvest Festival that included varied community arts activities.

Engaged garden stewards

Our annual meeting and our benefit party served as energetic, educational, and celebratory opportunities to inspire our members, supporters, and board of directors to support the work of community gardeners. GGs also helped gardeners in the East Village and Harlem hold walking tours of community gardens.

Measured the effectiveness of our work

GGs staff used formal and informal methods to monitor the effectiveness of our work and ensure that our programs met the needs of community gardeners. We utilized meetings, phone interviews, and one-on-one discussions with garden leaders. Our board of directors closely monitors the organization's fiscal and programmatic efficacy.