



Hillview
URBAN AGRICULTURE CENTER
A Growing Experience

2017

Annual Report

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Pam Dixon

PHOTO: 2018 © Lee Harvill

HILLVIEW URBAN AGRICULTURE CENTER is the La Crosse community's source for education and resources to grow and eat healthy food.

I am delighted to introduce you to this local nonprofit organization which, for the past seven years, has been an urban agriculture center with a mission to provide people in the La Crosse area with skills and resources to grow and eat healthy food, while building and advocating for a local food system that meets the needs of all community members.

We understand that one out of five children in our community lacks access to healthy food, that the three leading causes of death in La Crosse County are all food related, and that our environment is polluted by factory farm production and food waste. By building a strong community-based food system we benefit the physical health, social well-being, and vibrant economy of our community. Sounds like a big challenge, but we have a practical and holistic approach:

- Building healthy soil with food waste in our **Vermicomposting Center**
- Educating and inspiring people of all ages and abilities to **grow food** in our hoop house, greenhouse, and through education and special events
- Preparing and preserving healthy food together through our **Market Baskets** classes
- **Collaborating** to support a food system that serves all our community needs

Through your generous donations of time and/or dollars, you help us make a difference in our community. When we see a child holding a vermicomposting worm and thanking it for eating food waste, a senior mentor smiling while eating peas with a teen, participants in a Market Baskets class declaring they do indeed like kale, or a community partner that works with us to build a stronger local food system, we thank you for supporting us to achieve our mission. We can't do it without you!

Please join us and support our work for a healthier you and a more resilient community.

I was brought up frequently hearing a quote from Abraham Kuyper that said something to the effect that "there is not a square inch in all of creation that is not God's." Because it is God's and not ours, we are stewards of creation. Tithing is important to us as well, so when it comes time to give back, Hillview is high on our list.

Dr. John Houskamp
GUNDERSEN HEALTH
SYSTEM, BOARD MEMBER



PHOTO: 2016 © Maija Karkanen



Children love learning about Hillview's vermicompost or "worm poop" when we add it to our school gardens. We really appreciate Hillview's work in creating this local treasure because of the nutrients it brings to our growing food.

Jamie O'Neill
GROW LA CROSSE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PHOTO: 2018 © Andrea Schaefer
COVER PHOTO: 2017 © Andrea Schaefer



VERMICOMPOSTING CENTER In 2010 Hillview partnered with UW-La Crosse's Green Team to raise funds and purchase a large-scale vermicomposting unit that can process 400 pounds of food waste each week. Mayo Clinic Health System joined our partnership and together we are creating a nutrient-rich, local, sustainable fertilizer that is perfect for growing food.

**HARVESTED,
DONATED,
AND SOLD
OVER
350
POUNDS**
of VermiGold in the
community*

356
VISITORS
toured the
Vermicomposting
Center

**DIVERTED
and
PROCESSED
20,401
POUNDS**
of food waste



PHOTO: 2016 © Andrea Schaefer

*Enough to fertilize nearly 2,000 linear feet of garden rows OR nearly 4,000 individual food growing plants.

The internship through Hillview Urban Agriculture Center has given me a chance to experience plant growth techniques in thoughtful planning and hands-on application. I am able to apply methodology and experience results through basic scientific methods. I was allowed to make mistakes, allowed to take responsibility for them, and allowed to fix them. If I were to define my time at Hillview in one word it would be invaluable.

Michael Parkes
SUSTAINABLE
AGRICULTURE INTERN
FROM WESTERN
TECHNICAL COLLEGE



PHOTO: 2017 © Andrea Schaefer

THE SEED LIBRARY is a partnership with the La Crosse Public Library's main branch. Seeds are available for local gardeners at no cost with the agreement that they try to return fresh seeds at the end of the growing season. Over time, the seeds in the collection will be locally adapted to our region. **The Seed Library opens in March.** Funding for the Seed Library came from Vicki and Rich Miller.

HILLVIEW'S PLANT SALE provides 4,000 organic, mostly heirloom-variety, food-growing plants to the La Crosse area. We utilize student interns from Western Technical College, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, and Viterbo University to prepare for this event and teach them skills in planning, growing, and event organization. During the sale, classes for beginning gardeners are taught by staff. **This event is held in May.** Funding for this and all of our Growing Programs in 2017 came from Blooming Prairie Foundation, La Crosse Community Foundation, and private donors.



Each year we host the **BOUNTIFUL GARDENS TOUR**, where local gardeners who grow their own food can show off their gardens and share their knowledge and inspiration. **This event happens every July.** In 2017 this event was made possible by People's Food Co-op, Full Circle Supply, Coulee Family Dental, and Cassidy Taggart ReMax.



DONATED OVER
\$3,300
WORTH OF PRODUCE
in the form of
300
POUNDS

of fresh local organic produce to:

Salvation Army, the group homes on the property of the Washburn Neighborhood Garden, Come for Dinner program, and Place of Grace.



Hillview Urban Agriculture Center 2017 ANNUAL REPORT

PHOTO: 2017 © Matija Kackanen

GENERATION GARDENERS highlights a natural fit between senior citizens provided by RSVP who have time for and skills working with at-risk youth who are looking for a safe place in our community to learn and grow. **This is an ongoing program. In 2017 our work on this was funded by Robert & Eleanor Franke Charitable Foundation.**

Our **GARLIC AND TOMATO FEST** includes a tomato tasting, seed garlic giveaway, recipe demonstrations, seed saving presentation, and the Ugly/ Beautiful Tomato Contest. **This partnership event with the La Crosse Public Library Seed Library happens in September.**

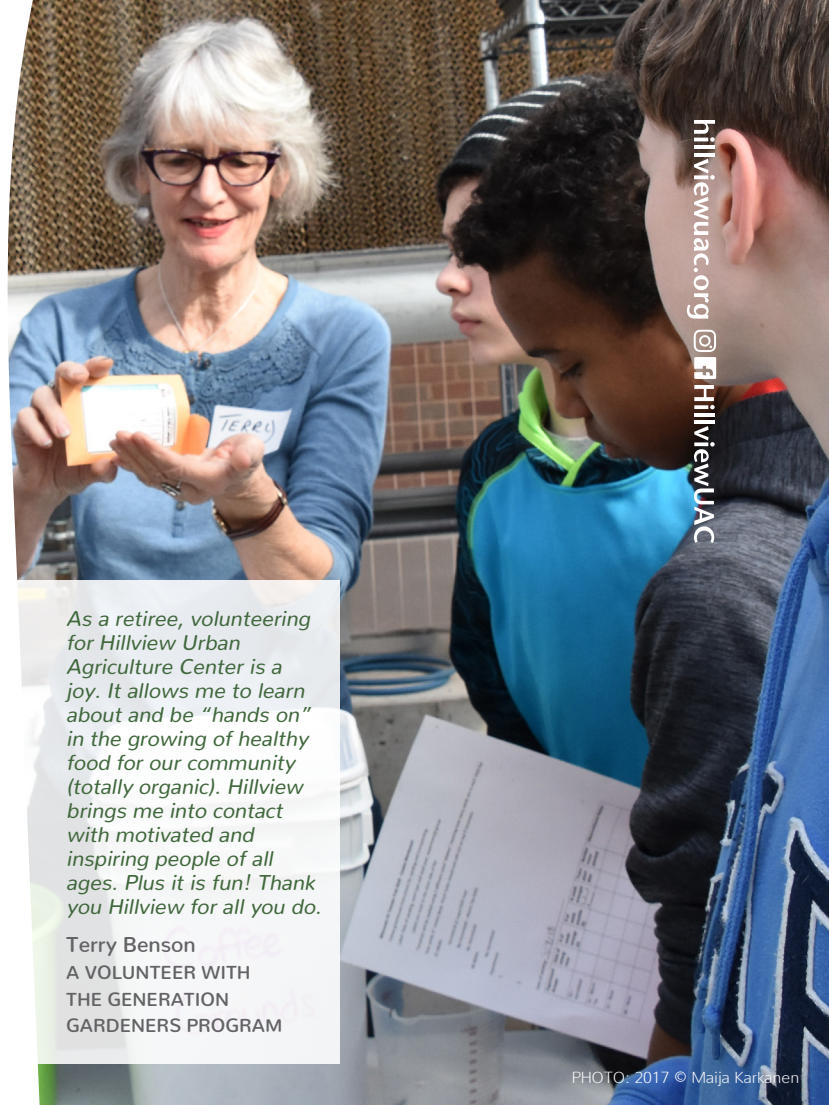
In the dark of winter, we invite volunteers to our warm greenhouse to participate in **SALAD SATURDAYS**. We take a break from the work of planting and harvesting greens a to enjoy fresh-made salad grown in our gutter garden. **This program goes from October through April.**



In our greenhouse,
**WE GREW
5,000
FOOD PLANTS**
that were sold or
donated to nonprofits
in our community:

WAFER, Aptive (formerly Riverfront), GROW La Crosse, Viterbo's garden for Boys and Girls Club, Mayo's Onalaska Community garden, Clearwater Farm, and the YMCA Food Forest

Our Program
Coordinator
**DIRECTED OVER
1,400
PARTICIPANT
HOURS**
in the greenhouse and
hoop house for people
of all ages and abilities



As a retiree, volunteering for Hillview Urban Agriculture Center is a joy. It allows me to learn about and be "hands on" in the growing of healthy food for our community (totally organic). Hillview brings me into contact with motivated and inspiring people of all ages. Plus it is fun! Thank you Hillview for all you do.

Terry Benson
A VOLUNTEER WITH
THE GENERATION
GARDENERS PROGRAM

PHOTO: 2017 © Maija Karkanen



PHOTO: 2017 © Andrea Schaefer



For years we have had an excellent relationship with Hillview. Their desire to reach vulnerable populations with healthy and affordable food options was significant.

Mike Desmond
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF BOYS &
GIRLS CLUBS OF GREATER LA CROSSE



PHOTO: 2018 © Lee Harwell



FUTURE IRON CHEFS is an opportunity for teens from organizations or schools to be matched with diverse local chefs to be trained on presentation, flavor creation, and healthy food preparation. They then compete for prizes at public events. **The competition happens at the Earth Fair in April.**



Each month we host free, hands-on **MARKET BASKETS** classes or demonstrations, primarily in La Crosse's food deserts, to bring kitchen tools and healthy and economical recipes to the people who need it most. **This is ongoing. Both our Market Baskets and Future Iron Chef programs were made possible by support from Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration, Mayo Clinic Health System, People's Food Co-op, and Kwik Trip.**

Operational support, capacity building, future planning, and unrestricted funds are critical to our work. In 2017 we received very generous support from Mayo Clinic Health System—Franciscan Foundation, La Crosse Community Foundation, Otto Bremer Foundation, and John and Elizabeth Houskamp.



THROUGH OUR **MARKET BASKETS** PROGRAM WE GAVE AWAY

27

Good and Cheap
cookbooks

21

salad spinners

21

immersion blenders

18

cutting boards with
knives, and

11

crockpots

along with **14 NEW** recipes
to go with the tools!

246

people reached

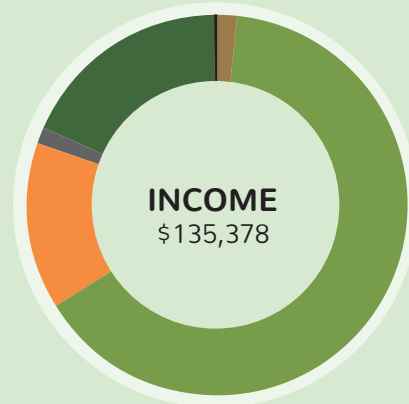
8 OF 12

classes held in
food desert

FINANCIALS

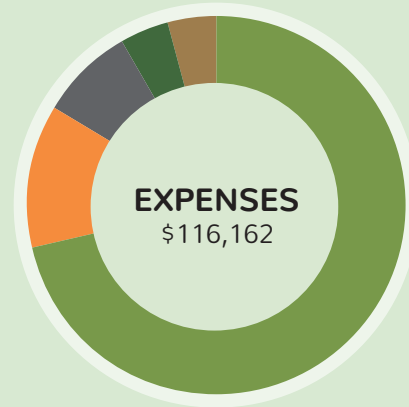
INCOME:

In Kind	\$2,400
Foundations	\$87,348
Individuals	\$19,097
Events	\$2,014
Program Revenue	\$24,423
Interest/Misc	\$96



EXPENSES:

Program	\$83,251
Fundraising	\$14,458
Leadership & Management	\$9,403
Community outreach	\$4,701
Budget and Finance	\$4,701



OUR BOARD & STAFF

Pam Dixon
Board President

Ann Kotnour
Secretary

Steve Thicke
Treasurer

Erica Black
Joshua Gamer
John Houskamp
Mac Kiel
Joe Kotnour
Mackenzie Mindel
Nicole Van Ert

ADVISORS
Barbara Friell
Vicki Miller

LEGAL COUNSEL
Amanda Halderson Jackson
Attorney, O'Flaherty, Heim,
Egan & Birnbaum Ltd.

STAFF
Pam Hartwell
Executive Director

Kirsten Arm
Market Baskets Coordinator

Andrea Schaefer
Vermicompost & Greenhouse
Program Coordinator

Roxanne Aubrey Marina
Admin/Marketing

Special thanks to our
Foundations & Donors in 2017:

Franciscan Foundation–
Mayo Clinic Health System

Otto Bremer Foundation

La Crosse Community Foundation

Robert & Eleanor Franke
Charitable Foundation

Dairyland Power Cooperative

Dr. Elizabeth Smith-Houskamp &
Dr. John Houskamp

Tom Klemond

Ann & Joe Kotnour

Joe Kotnour, DDS &
Christine Jones, DDS

Joe Kruse

Vicki & Richard Miller

Steve P. Thicke

It's just great people to work with and it's always a fun time—there's not much that we don't enjoy doing!

Cathy & Ron have each been averaging four hours per week at the greenhouse since the summer of 2016. Ron is also Hillview's "handyman".



Barb and I support Hillview because we believe in the importance of locally grown food and the benefits for an individual to experience gardening and using food grown in a garden. Our society needs to reclaim a connection to the earth, and there is no better way to do that than to garden. Mayo Clinic Health System—Franciscan Health-care recognizes the health benefits of locally grown food and gardening especially for children. Healthy eating is the foundation to overall well-being. Hillview is leading the way in our community in this work.

Joe Kruse
REGIONAL CHAIR,
ADMINISTRATION MAYO
CLINIC HEALTH SYSTEMS

WHY GIVE TO HILLVIEW

As a culture we eat terribly, as individuals we are sick, and as a community we are disconnected—and we are losing skills needed to grow food. Hillview's programs create local fertilizer while reducing food waste going to the landfill, teach people of all ages and abilities to grow food together, provide resources for preparing healthy, economical meals in the communities that need them most, and build coalitions to solve broader food systems problems and incubate vibrant local projects!

WHAT IS MY MONEY GOING TO DO?

- Feed people at Place of Grace from our hoop house
- Donate microgreens to Salvation Army so they have fresh, organic, nutrient-rich food
- Provide plants from our greenhouse to places like the YWCA Ruth House and WAFER

When you sign up to give monthly, you allow us to dedicate less time to fund-raising and more to programs. And we'll bother you much less with reminders.

- **SOIL SAMURAI**
\$5 A MONTH provides vermicompost for school gardens.
- **SEED STARTER**
\$10 A MONTH buys seeds for us to grow and allows us to donate plants to nonprofits and food bank recipients.
- **CITY CHEF**
\$25 A MONTH pays for chefs to train teens and for coordination of our Future Iron Chef program or provides for a class to be taught in the food desert.
- **FRIEND OF THE FOOD SYSTEM**
\$50 A MONTH pays for all of our fresh produce donations to Come For Dinner at Our Saviors, WAFER, and Salvation Army.

Give at a level that is meaningful to you.



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