

61 Schools and Organizations Receive 2018 Union County Kids Dig In! Garden Grants

Union County, NJ - As part of Freeholder Chairman Sergio Granados's 2018 Union County Plant a Seed grants initiative, the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders is pleased to announce that grants have been awarded to 61 garden projects in 16 municipalities through the Union County Kids Dig In! school garden grant program.

Schools with students in grades pre-K through 12 were eligible to apply for a Union County Kids Dig In grant. The grants are funded through the Union County Open Space, Recreation and Historic Preservation Trust Fund.

"I started this initiative last year as Open Space Chairman to encourage students, school staff and parents grow healthy produce for students in their own schools and also to donate 30 percent of their harvest to local soup kitchens, food pantries, or community residents in need," said Freeholder Chairman Sergio Granados. "This experience will have a lasting impact on our youth and encourage giving back to others throughout their lives. I have always been of the mindset that we must find ways to help others in need, and Kids Dig In is a perfect example of paying it forward while also learning about agriculture and stewardship of the land."

"It's also very gratifying to see how schools across the country are using gardens as a form of therapy for children with autism," added Chairman Granados. "Gardening provides a broad learning experience with many physical, emotional and developmental benefits."

"School gardens bring everyone together in a collaborative effort: students, teachers, school staff, parents and neighborhood residents," said Freeholder Alexander Mirabella, who is Chairman of the Trust Fund. "The Kids Dig In grant program helps to support the value that Union County residents place on preserving open space and fostering a healthy environment."

The County presented the Union County Kids Dig In! grant program to each

school district through its Open Space Trust Fund, offering a total of \$70,000 in grant assistance through revenues from golf fees administered through the fund.

The grant program covers produce gardens including vegetables, fruits, nuts, berries, herbs and spices, pollinator-attracting plants and plants for pest management. It does not cover ornamental plants or non-producing gardens.

Gardens must agree to set aside 30% of their harvest for community donation and enroll in Come Grow With Us!, a free countywide information and resource sharing network for community gardens.

Those applying for grants were given four options, 1.) to apply for tools and equipment; 2.) to apply for establishing a garden with four raised beds with soil, irrigation, soil amendments, seedlings and provisions for educational programs; 3.) to apply directly for ten (10) Earthboxes with soil, tools, soil amendments, seedlings and provisions for educational programs; and 4.) To apply for funding covering other garden types including rooftop, hydroponic and any others.

The following is a list of schools that applied and will receive assistance through the Kids Dig In! program:

Berkeley Heights—The Mountain Park Elementary School for the Sow Happy Garden—Raised Beds (\$1,250.00)

Clark—1.)Mother Seton Regional High School—Raised beds and equipment (\$1,250.00)

2.)Valley Road Elementary School for the Grade 2 Garden-Tools & Material (\$500.00)

Cranford—the Lincoln School for the Lincoln Garden-Tools and Material (\$500.00)

Elizabeth (27 gardens in all)

1.) Madison Monroe School # 16-New Raised Bed Garden & Equipment (\$1,250.00)

2.) John Marshall School # 20-Dr. Thelma Hurd Memorial Garden—2 or more hydroponic gardens or raised beds (\$1,250.00)

3.) Egenolf Early Childhood Center—Earthbox Garden (\$750.00)

4.) William F. Halloran School #22 —The Husky Patch garden-Raised Bed

gardens (\$1,250.00)

5.) Jewish Educational Center—Early Childhood Garden—Earthbox Garden (\$750.00)

6.) Winfield Scott School # 2 School—School 2 Garden- Earthbox Garden (\$750.00)

7.) Mabel G. Holmes School 5 Annex—Huskies Blooming Wonderland Garden—Tools & Material New Raised Beds (\$1,250.00)

8.) Toussaint L'Ouverture Elementary # 6—Lion's Pride Garden -New Raised Beds (\$1,250.00)

9.) Terence C. Reilly School # 7—Live, Laugh, Learn & Grow garden—Tools & Materials (\$500.00)

10.) Jerome Dunn Academy School # 9—JDA Field of Greens garden— Tools & Materials (\$500.00)

11.) Elmora School # 12—BEST BUDS garden—New Raised Beds/Equipment (\$1,250.00)

12.) Christopher Columbus School # 15—Garden Bed- (\$1,250.00)

13.) Elizabeth Woodrow Wilson School #19—Earthbox Garden and tools (\$750.00)

14.) Victor Mravlag School # 21—STEMS for Success Garden—Fence (\$150.00)

15.) Dr. Orlando Edreira Academy School # 26- New Raised Beds (\$1,250.00)

16.) Dr. Antonia Pantoja School # 27—Pantoja Gardens—New Raised Beds, Earthbox, Tools (\$1,250.00)

17.) Juan Pablo Duarte Jose Julian Marti School # 28- School 28 Garden—Tools/Materials New Raised Beds (\$1,250.00)

18.) Frances C. Smith School # 50—New Raised Bed Gardens (\$1,250.00)

19.) Donald Stewart Center for Early Childhood Education- Donald Stewart School 51 Garden—Earthbox Garden (\$750.00)

20.) Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. ECC #52—The Reading Garden—New Raised Bed Gardens (\$1,250.00)

21.) Thomas A. Edison Career & Technical Academy—Peter Herbal Herb Garden—Earthbox and Equipment (\$750.00)

22.) Adm. William F. Halsey Jr. Academy—R.I.S.E.garden—New Raised Bed Gardens/Equipment (\$1,250.00)

23.) Thomas Jefferson Arts Academy —TJAA Liberty Hydroponics Garden—Hydroponic Garden (\$1,250.00)

24.) Dr. Albert Einstein Academy School #29—Einstein's Outdoor Classroom—Tools/Equipment (\$500.00)

25.) Abraham Lincoln School # 14 Lincoln's Grove Tools/Equipment (\$500.00)

26.) YMCA-The Gateway Family YMCA—Earthbox (\$750.00)

27.) Joseph Battin School # 4—Battin Garden — Tools/Equipment (\$500.00)

• Hillside—1.) Abram P. Morris Early Childhood Center-Materials, Raised Beds, Earthbox (\$1,250.00)

2.) Hurden Looker School -Tools & Materials (\$500.00)

3.) Hillside High School—Raised beds (\$1,250.00)

Kenilworth—Saint Theresa School—Sts Garden Club Garden—materials and tools (\$500)

Linden—1.) Linden High School/Academy of Excellence-TOP Garden-compost and fence, Raised Bed Gardens (\$1,250)

2.) School # 2 Garden—Tools & Materials (\$500.00)

3.) Elementary School # 1—Lettuce Grow Garden-Raised Bed Gardens (\$1,250)

4.) School # 5-School #5 Family Garden—Raised Bed Gardens (\$1,250.00)

5.) School # 6-School #6 Garden—Raised Bed and Tools (\$1,250.00)

6.) Myles J. McManus Middle School -Raised Bed Gardens (\$1,250)

Mountainside—Beechwood School—Berry Patch Garden—Raised bed gardens (\$500)

New Providence—Morris-Union Jointure Commission-The Developmental Learning Center Garden-Earthbox Garden (\$750)

Plainfield—1.) The Plainfield Academy for the Arts & Advanced Studies-PAAAS it forward produce garden—Raised Beds & Equipment (\$1,250) 2.) Jefferson Elementary—Earthbox Garden (\$750) 3.) Emerson Community School—Emerson Community School Garden—Raised Beds & Equipment (\$1,250)

Rahway—1.) Madison School Madison School—Tools & Equipment (\$500)

2.) Rahway High School—Raised Beds & equipment (\$1,250)

Roselle—Washington Elementary School—Washington Elementary School Garden—tools and equipment. (\$500)

Scotch Plains—1.) Park Middle School Park Community Garden—Raised Bed Gardens (\$1,250) 2.) Brunner Elementary School Brunner—Children’s Garden —Tools & Materials (\$500)

3.) Union County Vocational-Technical Schools—Aero Mobile Garden (\$1,250)

4.) JCC of Central NJ—Brody Family Early Learning Center Garden—Raised Bed Gardens, Earthboxes, Tools (\$1,250)

5.) Evergreen School—Raised Bed (\$1,250)

Union—The Deron School of New Jersey, Inc—

Cathy's Garden—Tool, supplies, irrigation with timer (\$500)

Westfield—1.) Holy Trinity School-Westfield Food Pantry garden—Raised Bed Gardens (\$1,250)

2.) Washington Elementary School-Washington School Garden-Monarch/Pollinator teaching garden (\$750)

3) McKinley Elementary School—Garden of Hearts & Minds—New Raised Bed Garden or fence (\$1,250)

4.) Westlake School—Tools & Materials (\$452)

5.) Jefferson School—Jefferson School Outdoor Classroom-New Raised Bed Garden (\$1,250)

Winfield—Winfield School Garden—raised bed garden and cart (\$1,250)

Plant A Seed includes the Union County Kids Dig in and Union County Means Green grant programs, both administered on behalf of the Freeholder Board by the nonprofit community organization Groundwork Elizabeth. Plant a Seed also includes state-funded recycling grant programs administered by Union County, and other initiatives that foster education, empowerment and community service. More information is online at ucnj.org.

For more information about Groundwork Elizabeth visit online at groundworkelizabeth.org.

Quick links to all Union County environmental programs, activities and services are available through The Green Connection, ucnj.org/green-connection.

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

ELIZABETH—27 Schools from the City of Elizabeth received Kids Dig In! grants from Freeholder Chairman Sergio Granados (far left) and Freeholders Bette Jane Kowalski (far right) and Al Mirabella (second right)

CRANFORD—Cynthia Arch of the Lincoln School (second from left) receives Kids Dig In! grant from (right) Freeholder Chairman Sergio Granados, Freeholder Al Mirabella, and Freeholder Bette Jane Kowalski (end, left).



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