GROWING Together

Gratitude Report
2013-2014
In 2016 it will be 20 years since Common Ground made its home on Springside Avenue. In anticipation of this anniversary we are deeply engaged in envisioning our next 20 years. The values and vision that have guided our first 20 years have been implicit. Over the coming year we have committed to making them explicit so that we can better measure our progress in realizing them.

In light of these explicit values and vision we will ask ourselves: How will we remain relevant to the community we are a part of? How will we deepen and broaden our work? How will we measure and evaluate impact and progress toward realizing our vision? How will we ensure we are living our values? Finally, how will we model what it means to be a resilient, sustainable, inclusive, fair, equitable, just, and responsive community?

Our intention is for this annual gratitude report to be the first of many that will sum up our year, and over time tell the story of how well we fulfill our promise to you, our friends and supporters, to realize our vision and live our values. We are forever grateful for the support you and others have provided us on this journey, and are looking forward to a bright future with all of you.
Strong Partnerships = Strong Community

Common Ground’s partnerships amplify our ability to change lives. Here are a few examples from last year:

Two years ago – inspired by Common Ground High School seniors and fueled by Common Ground-grown produce – CitySeed and Common Ground joined to launch New Haven’s first mobile farm market. This year, the mobile market brought 13,000 pounds of produce to 20 different senior centers, low-income neighborhoods, and public housing developments.

Common Ground and All Our Kin installed educational gardens at 13 home day care providers and followed up to help providers use their gardens as teaching laboratories. Among other results: a 76% increase in children’s requests for vegetables as a snack.

In addition to working on Common Ground’s site, the young people of Common Ground’s Green Jobs Corps worked across New Haven with the Urban Resources Initiative, Solar Youth, New Haven Farms, New Haven Public Schools, Audubon Connecticut, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and other community organizations making New Haven greener. The students worked 138 paid jobs, earning $67,000 for their mostly low-income families.
Starting in 2012, we asked you to help us raise $2.1 million. We did it together!

- Welcome more than 12,000 people/year to Common Ground
- Build educational wetland
- Implement low-impact stormwater management
- Complete geothermal well installation
- Sign 20 year lease with City of New Haven
- Get City & State approval for final plans & send project to bid

Coming Soon: A New Building!

**Capital Campaign Supporters** (December 2011 - October 2014)
The accuracy of this listing is very important to us. Please let us know if you can’t find your name or if you are listed incorrectly so that we can correct our records. Thank you all!

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Linda David Noel & Barbara Zvonar

With Thanks

2013-2014
What did we grow together in the last year?

In 2013-14, donor support resulted in measurable growth and real community impact. You can see a few of the signs of growth below.

Children’s and Community Programs

In the last year, members of Common Ground’s Green Jobs Corps planted 100 street trees, greenspaces, helped to grow and distribute more than 12,000 pounds of local produce, and

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In the last year, members of Common Ground’s Green Jobs Corps planted 100 street trees, led educational programs for more than 1,600 children, stewarded 23 neighborhood greenspaces, helped to grow and distribute more than 12,000 pounds of local produce, and built and tended more than a dozen school and community gardens.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2014</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Five years ago, 88 kids joined in Common Ground’s Kids Unplugged after-school programs; 18% were children of color. Last year—thanks to free buses, off-site programs, and financial aid—595 kids joined in our after-school programs, and 38% were children of color.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- 6,511 kids joined in our children’s programs—summer camps, school field trips, after-school and vacation programs—up from 3,174 just five years ago.

- Before joining in Kids Unplugged, 29% of participants were adventurous eaters. After Kids Unplugged, an additional 55% of families report that their children are likely to try healthy foods at home.

- Before Kids Unplugged, 55% of participants chose to play outside on their own time. After Kids Unplugged, an additional 39% of families report their kids choose healthy outdoor exercise.

A healthier, more inclusive community

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Academic gains—fueling college success & community leadership

The average Common Ground High School student gained **1.84 grade levels** in reading between September 2013 and September 2014—moving, on average, from the 8th grade level to the 10th grade level.

Between 2007 and last year, the percent of Common Ground students earning **proficient scores on state tests**, across all subject areas, grew from 33.5% to 83.7%—surpassing the state average, and earning Common Ground recognition as a Connecticut School of Distinction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>33.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>83.7%</td>
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</tbody>
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Last year, Common Ground’s **4-year graduation rate** was 90% — and 93% of these graduates gained admissions to college. State-wide, 85% of high school students graduate in four years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State-wide</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Ground</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A bountiful harvest—feeding a stronger community

In the last year, Common Ground’s **urban farm** grew more than 6,600 pounds of vegetables, 443 dozen eggs, and approximately 1,000 pounds of sustainable, local meat. Five years ago, the farm produced a total of 5,064 pounds.

What did this harvest grow? 107 paid youth jobs growing food, building gardens, operating farm markets, and educating children about the sources of their food; 4 youth business ventures; and 10 different Common Ground courses, engaging 186 students in substantive, ongoing, authentic work related to urban agriculture and community food justice.

Common Ground shared its harvest with at least 2,905 low-income community members—through Common Ground’s universal free lunch program, New Haven’s mobile market, on-site farm stands, farmer’s markets, and a farm share program for families of our high school students.

led educational programs for more than 1,600 children, stewarded 23 neighborhood gardens built and tended more than a dozen school and community gardens.
Common Ground Annual Fund Supporters
July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014

* indicates a donation to cover CG student Javier Martinez’ funeral expenses and create a lasting memorial on campus. See page 10.

The accuracy of this listing is very important to us. Please let us know if you can’t find your name or if you are listed incorrectly so that we can correct our records. Thank you all!

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Ruth Goldman
Derryl Gorka*
Giulia and Rob Gouge
In 2014, 93% of Common Ground seniors were accepted to college. Numbers like these made Common Ground one of four Connecticut schools on Newsweek’s “Beating the Odds” list – recognizing the schools doing the most to help low-income students succeed in college.

These graduates had the opportunity to conduct ocean research in the Dominican Republic; create short films regarding neighborhood challenges; intern with The Nature Conservancy at locations across the country…

…and much more. Thank you for your help!!
With your help, we remember a remarkable young man – and grow a more peaceful community.

In December 2013, our community was forever changed by the loss of Javier Martinez, Common Ground Class of 2014, to gun violence. Javier was a remarkable young man, with a big smile and a big heart. He was a powerful environmental leader, who planted dozens of street trees, monitored water quality on the West River, and interned with The Nature Conservancy. Javier’s death left a hole in our hearts and our community.

With incredible care and generosity, people stepped up to support Javier’s family and our school community. More than 70 people – recognized with a star on the previous two pages – made contributions to cover Javier’s funeral expenses and create a lasting memorial to Javier. Dozens of community volunteers joined our students, staff, and Javier’s family to plant the Javier Martinez Wetland at Common Ground – a lasting oasis in our city. Our seniors helped design this memorial, planted trees and gardens in the neighborhood where Javier was killed, and organized community dinners to bring young people together.

In the coming year, we will continue to look for ways to build a more peaceful, resilient community. To learn more about Javier, and our community’s response to his death, visit http://commongroundct.org/remembering-javier-martinez/
Common Ground finished the fiscal year in strong financial shape, and generous capital campaign contributions are driving us toward the start of constructing a new energy-efficient school building that will be a model for urban sustainability and education.
What’s Next?
We can keep growing together.

Common Ground needs your voice and support. This year, Common Ground is setting the course for the next 5 years. The first step: values and vision. You can help us answer the big questions:

► Why do you support Common Ground?
► How should we deepen or broaden our work going forward?

Please send us your answers in the enclosed envelope, or answer online at www.commongroundct.org/growing-together