

The Schoolyard Gardener

Winter 2007

Volume 6, Issue 1

CS featured in noted "Catalogue of Philanthropy"

CitySprouts was a featured non-profit in the 2006 Catalogue of Philanthropy, published in November. The exposure to philanthropists across the state has already resulted in increased financial support for CitySprouts.

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CitySprouts expansion plans take shape

In an exciting new chapter for CitySprouts, the organization has announced plans to expand to all remaining Cambridge schools that desire an outdoor classroom over the next three years.

In the Fall of 2006 CitySprouts invited Cambridge public schools not currently served by the CS garden program to indicate their level of interest in CitySprouts. The response was enthusiastic. Five schools—Baldwin, Fletcher-Maynard, Graham and Parks, Kennedy-Longfellow, and Tobin—submitted requests to add the CitySprouts program to their schools.

Two—Fletcher-Maynard and Graham and Parks—proposed a launch date of September 2007.

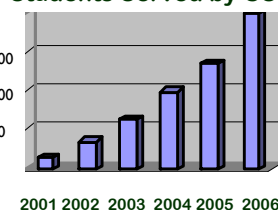
The board of CitySprouts was pleased and gratified by the school response. "It has

always been our mission to serve as many Cambridge students and teachers as we can," said board member Susan Fisher. "We are excited about our growth plans and appreciate the schools' show of support." CS staff and board have be-

gun preparations for fundraising and garden design and creation for the two schools to be added in September of this year. CS has also requested a modest increase in the Cambridge Public Schools budget for the 2007/ 2008 school year.

"This is such a big moment in CitySprouts' history," commented CS founder and executive director Jane Smillie. "The staff and I are energized by the possibilities for significant growth, and eager to launch our plans for next year and beyond."

Students Served by CS



M.L. King-Amigos garden secures \$20,000 grant

Science-in-the-Garden Pilot in Development

In September of 2006 the King-Amigos CitySprouts garden was awarded a \$20,000 Lowes Outdoor Project grant from Lowes, Inc.

Parents Teresa Walker and Jesse Wenning, along with teachers in both schools, wrote the grant proposal that won the funds.

The grant funds are being used to pilot a new and

exciting "Science in the Garden" program in the M. L. King-Amigos school garden. The pilot will feature several sun, wind, and water installations that will serve as models for other CS schools.

CS embarks on art in the garden program

CitySprouts is working with Mitch Ryerson, artist and King Open parent, and Kelley Mowers, King Open art teacher, on an art-in-the-garden project in which seventh graders at the King Open middle school work with Mitch to conceive and create a permanent garden bench for their schoolyard garden.

This project is modeled on projects Mr. Ryerson led with groups of Boston

youth in 2002, 2003 and 2005.

The bench will be constructed of wood and

copper; students choose

Chinese characters and create images and words that they 'hammer' onto copper panels.



Student-designed copper panels grace the King Open's garden bench.

CitySprouts will host a reception in early May at the King Open when the completed bench is installed.

Hold the date! The annual CS volunteer thank-you party is March 25 at the Cambridge Skating Club, 4-7 pm.

CS to feature in Science in the City Festival

CitySprouts will participate in the MIT/Cambridge *Science in the City* Festival, April 21-29. CS's events—workshops on everyday science—will take place in each of the schools:

4/23, Haggerty School garden, 3:30: An exploration of the food web in the compost bin, and how garden (and food) waste is trans-

formed into soil nutrients.

4/24, Peabody School garden, 3:00: A self-guided tour of how photosynthesis works in the garden, with emphasis on how solar energy provides us with human energy.

4/25, Morse School garden 2:30, and 4/26, Amigos/King School, 3:00:

A hands-on workshop for children and adults on testing soil for pollutants and for nutrients.

4/26, King Open School garden 3:00: A cooking and tasting workshop featuring the herbs growing in the school garden (one of the earliest edible plants to appear in the spring).

Smillie receives “Garden Crusader” mention

In Fall 2006 Jane Smillie, CS's founder and executive director, received an Honorable Mention from the national Garden Crusader program. Jane was recognized for her work in bringing schoolyard gardening to thousands of Cambridge public school children.

Jane and a small group of parents and teachers

founded CitySprouts in 2000. Since then Jane has been the guiding force behind the organization's growth and success.

Gardener's Supply, an employee-owned national direct-to-consumer gardening company since 1983, started the Garden Crusader Award in 2001 to recognize individuals who are using



CS founder and executive director Jane Smillie

their love of gardening to make a difference in their community.

Harvest Festival 2006 a record breaker

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The October 2006 annual Harvest Festival was again blessed with beautiful autumn weather and a record-turnout crowd. Several hundred visitors enjoyed ballads and fun from *Connect 3*, New Orleans-style jazz from *Second Line Social Aid and Pleasure Society Brass Band*, and the period songs of the *Revels Circle of Song*.

Local eateries served sumptuous lunch offerings, while kids decorated pump-

kins with a variety of natural accessories, made veggie-print flags, marched in the famous Harvest Festival parade, created greeting cards, and pressed cider.

The Festival raised a record-breaking \$13,000+ for CitySprouts programs.

CitySprouts is grateful to our many volunteers, enthusiastic attendees, participating restaurants and markets, local businesses that advertised in the program, and

our sponsors Whole Foods Markets and Novartis.

Mark your calendars for the 7th Annual Harvest Festival this fall, October 13, 2007 at the M.L. King/Amigos Schools.



Mr. Pumpkin and his family.

Tasty Choices cafeteria program expands

The CPS Food Service Department's Tasty Choices program is introducing some new foods and taste testing even more. New items include:

Special Breakfast Fruit on Fridays: fresh blueberries and another new fruit like tangerines, grapes, or maybe kiwis, will be available. Plus, as usual, fresh apples, oranges, bananas, and/or pears are on the menu.

New Lunch Choices: The veggie wrap was recently revised. It's a delicious puree with Tuscan white beans, parsley, garlic and lemon in a whole wheat wrap with fresh chopped vegetables.

Baked sweet potato "fries" were introduced as a new menu item on January 18 at selected schools. Kids say, "This is like from a restaurant!"

Taste Tests currently in progress: Lentil soup from scratch, and a "crudite" bowl with fresh sweet red pepper slices, cucumber chunks, and grape tomatoes.

This program is a partnership of the CPS Food Services, Cambridge Public Health, Chef Vin Connelly, the Institute For Community Health, and CitySprouts.

Garden info for spring

Haggerty School

Coordinator: Laurie Gaines

lgaines@citysprouts.org

Drop in: Tuesdays,

3:30pm – 5pm

King Open School

Coordinator: Louise Forrest

lforrest@citysprouts.org

Drop in: Thursdays,

3pm – 4:30pm

Morse School

Coordinator: Gretchen

Friesinger, Gfriesinger

@citysprouts.org

Drop in: Wednesdays,

2:30pm – 4pm

Peabody School

Coordinator: Amy Baron

abaron@citysprouts.org

Drop in: Tuesdays,

3pm – 4:30pm

Amigos School

Coordinator: Jessica Drench

jdrench@citysprouts.org

Drop in: Thursdays,

3:00pm – 5pm

M.L. King School

Coordinator: Jessica Drench

jdrench@citysprouts.org

Drop in: Thursdays,

3:00pm – 5pm

Growing Healthy News

CitySprouts and other members of the Growing Healthy Initiative will be attending The Third National Farm To Cafeteria and Food Policy Conference in Baltimore in March. Growing Healthy is funded by a USDA Farm-to-School grant to promote local and seasonal food in school and to families.

Whole Foods Markets continues its staunch support

Whole Foods Markets continued its long-standing support for CitySprouts with a coupon fund-raising program in January. During the entire month of January, \$2 and \$5 CitySprouts “coupons” were available for sale at the registers in all three WFM Cambridge stores. The program was a great success for CS. Thank you to Molly Paxson, Serena Hsu, Lynay Smith, and all of our friends at Whole Foods Markets.

Special thanks to the many individual supporters who responded generously to our Fall Appeal, and to our Catalogue of Philanthropy feature. At the half-year point, individual donations had already come close to beating last year’s 12-month total!

CitySprouts is grateful for your support.

CitySprouts relies on the generosity of donors and volunteers. To donate or get involved, go to www.citysprouts.org/augetinvolved.htm.



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CitySprouts today

CitySprouts has come a long way. In the seven years that CitySprouts has operated its program in the Cambridge Public Schools, it has proved itself a program with strong parent and teacher support.

The CitySprouts program

- extends and enriches learning in district elementary schools;
- strengthens the connection between Cambridge schools and families;
- addresses the community call for health education and the fight

against obesity.

All without compromising the school day or the focus on academics.

How does CitySprouts support achievement in Cambridge Public Schools? CS staffers:

- develop extensions to the curriculum that allow teachers to make use of their school garden as an outdoor classroom;
- coordinate the use and maintenance of school gardens;



Garden art from the Morse School kindergarten

- create leadership opportunities for middle schoolers through garden activities.

In Fall 2006 alone, 57 teachers and 1,100 students in Cambridge used their school garden for learning purposes.