

# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT



## A NOTE FROM THE TEAM:

In many ways, these past few years have been some of the most challenging times we've faced together, as both a local community and a global one. It can often feel like an uphill battle to find hope in the midst of division, or peaceful moments during chaos, but with hearts full of gratitude we share the reminder that **you** have helped make an abundance of hope (and more!) possible with your continued support of our work in School Gardens.

This year we've grown by refining and strengthening many of the programs and connections we've already built over the years... we had more neighbors and new friends than ever show up at Northlake over the Summer, and had opportunities to connect at Free Farm Stands with many of those who are benefitting from the food we're growing and sharing. During Middle School Garden Clubs this Spring, we were delighted to host local Farmers, Growers and Producers, through our USDA NIFA grant, where they shared a variety of experiences and knowledge with students. And we've been able to deepen our partnership with the Cowlitz Indian Tribe as we make plans to bring more Native Plants into our garden spaces, and maintain focus on the importance of reciprocity and right relationship with our plant relatives.

These are just a few highlights, but please know there is much more goodness happening as we cultivate health and connection for our whole community, and it's happening with and because of **your** support.

With so much gratitude,

*Emily & Fox Anderson, Julia Brice, Hillary Jensen, Jennifer Johnson, Dexter Kearny, Hannah Long, Robert Loren, Erin McKee, Grace Peyerwold, James Phelps, Ian Thompson, Satou Rabbit and the late Sam Rabbit*





# DID YOU KNOW IN 2022...

our staff engaged **3,900+ K-5 Students** in dynamic garden activities and lessons during **90 Garden Days**

**170 Middle School Students** built community with us and their classmates during **55 days** of Garden Club

**230 volunteers** gave **3,000+ hours** of their time and energy to support our work

we distributed **2,250 free seed packets** across several hundred households

our Staff and Volunteers hosted **135 Summer Open Garden** sessions

our Students, Staff and Volunteers grew **6,000 pounds of fresh produce** that was distributed freely to the community; in addition to **hundreds of pounds** that went directly to students during Garden Programs

we grew more than **36 species of Native Plants**, many of which we have planted or cultivated

our team baked **52 loaves of homemade bread** for garden-related activities and events

we grew **100+ varieties** of plants that directly support our pollinators and other wee garden friends



## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: The Lin Family



*Brian and Michelle Lin, and their children Daniel (14) and Fiona (5) moved to Longview from Vancouver, over the summer. They have a Bubble Tea Shop in the Three Rivers Mall.*

### **Tell us a little about yourselves:**

We are grateful to School Gardens and all staff. Although we moved to the city, it's only been a few months. But in these few months, the school garden has given us many wonderful experiences and added a lot of fun to our family life. Also broadened our horizons, now we know how apple cider is made.

### **How did you first hear about School Gardens?**

We live near Northlake, and when passing by, we found the existence of the school garden. It is very rare for us to have such a garden in a city. Although we don't have much gardening experience, we love gardening at home.

### **What does it mean for your students to have a garden space at their school?**

As parents of students, having a garden at school can cultivate their ability to discover and create beauty. And also let students realize that all good things are hard-won, so that they can develop a good habit of cherishing the earth's resources and not wasting them.

### **What does having access to fresh ingredients mean to you?**

Being able to obtain fresh ingredients means having a safe food source, a better quality of life, and being more grateful for God's gifts and great deeds.





## FOOD FOR ALL!

Thank you for the produce weekly. Never thought I'd need handouts, but local food makes a world of difference in life. One of the only joys in life right now, actually. Thanks for hope.

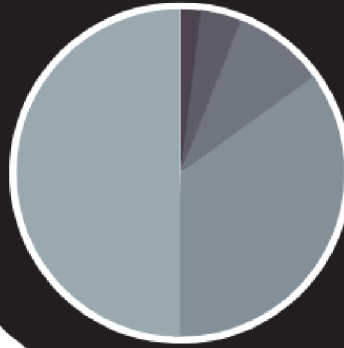
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having a car or bike made it hard, too. I could only go as far as my wheelchair could get me and it's weak... Being homeless is expensive because you have to buy so many pre-made foods. Even our food stamps don't last us the whole month because of it.



## BUDGET SNAPSHOT



2022 REVENUE:  
**\$419,410.56**

-  50% Grants
-  35% Private Donations
-  9% Corporate Donations
-  4% School Districts
-  2% Program Revenue

Oh man I never saw grapes before! I've been homeless since February and couldn't pick anything up because it was always something that needed to be cooked. I was at a shelter so all I had was a dirty microwave. Not

## GARDEN CHAMPION: Mrs. Fortner



This is Amber Fortner's 8th year teaching at Wallace Elementary

**What's your role at the new Wallace Garden and why did you decide to get involved?**

I communicate garden updates to teachers, and they come to me to ask questions. Erica (Buckhalter, another 3rd grade teacher) and I both act as leads. I had experience with my kids doing garden programs at Carrolls and seeing it through their eyes. I always wanted Wallace to have a garden and knew I would have a role once we had one; it happened organically.

**What struggles have you faced taking on this role?**

We had to turn kids away, which was hard to do, but it's difficult to have too many kids in the garden at the same time. So we make sure to pick different kids to give everyone an opportunity.

**What has been the impact on students since the garden was established last year?**

Kids love any opportunity to come out. Whether that's going for a walk in the garden, having a snack in the garden, doing a scavenger hunt in the garden. Kids come running when we have garden recess. I've heard several students quote, "Best day ever!" when they get to visit.

**As a teacher, what does having a School Garden mean to you?**

It's huge. It's huge for the school community, but also for the outside community who can pick up produce (on the free farm stand). They can see the garden when they walk or drive by.





# THANK YOU

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for making our work possible!



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Hubbard Gardens ✦ Vibrant Greens ✦ Cloud Cap Mushrooms ✦



*It is vital to honor those who came before us and acknowledge the long history of what is now SW Washington state. This area has been home to ancestors of the Cowlitz Indian Tribe for thousands of years. The land, with its rich resources, enabled the Cowlitz People to flourish, and they stewarded the land with their traditional culture.*

*Today we must appreciate the persistence of the Cowlitz People and the important role they play in our region as together we steward the land for all our descendants.*

From the Cowlitz Indian Tribe's Cultural Department



## LOWER COLUMBIA SCHOOL GARDENS

empowers our community by connecting kids and families with real food and hands-on learning. Through dynamic garden and cooking programs, we cultivate health, equity, life-long learning and stewardship of the world around us.



## Get in touch...

PO Box 785  
Longview, WA 98632  
360-200-8918

info@LCschoolgardens.org  
LCschoolgardens.org

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DESIGNED BY HILLARY JENSEN