GROWING EQUITY FROM THE GROUND UP

A Leadership Development Partnership for a Sustainable and Equitable Oakland Food System
Transforming the Food System

Growing Equity from the Ground Up will establish an urban gardening and farming training program to prepare community leaders to advance equity. The project aims to become the premiere national site for developing expert gardeners and farmers who are cross-trained in the knowledge and skills needed to make sustainable, healthy food production the foundation for strategic and comprehensive interventions that address the interconnected economic, employment, educational, environmental, health, and nutritional challenges facing urban communities.
Revitalizing Communities

Apprentices will learn to transform urban communities literally from the ground up through restoring the fertility of the land, growing and distributing organic food in an ecologically and economically sustainable way, and living a healthy lifestyle.

Growing Equity from the Ground Up will not only create the nation’s most comprehensive urban garden and farm network and urban ecological horticulture program, but it will leverage the resources of its graduates and affiliated organizations to untangle the policy knots that bind responses to the many problems undermining the well-being of urban communities.
Growing Equity from the Ground Up emanated from and is deeply rooted in the Oakland community. Its impetus and strategic leadership comes from Reverend Daniel Buford of the Prophetic Justice Ministry of Allen Temple Baptist Church, one of the largest and most respected churches in the city with a wide variety of programs serving the segments of the community most in need.

Many Oakland organizations have for a number of years been pursuing work related to the goals of this project, and this project is intended to amplify, extend, and coordinate those efforts to increase their impact at the local level as well as nationally. Growing Equity from the Ground Up will directly incorporate the strengths of the organizations into its training programs, and the program Apprentices will directly contribute to the support and development of those same organizations during the program.
Growing Equity from the Ground Up is grounded in a network of established food justice organizations in Oakland, CA, and builds on nearly fifty years of experience of the internationally recognized Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems (CASFS) Apprenticeship in Ecological Horticulture program at UC Santa Cruz, as well as the innovative approaches of the University of California Center for Collaborative Research for an Equitable California (CCREC).

**Oakland, CA Community Partners:**
- Acta Non Verba Youth Urban Farm Project
- Alameda County Office of Education Project EAT
- Allen Temple Baptist Church
- Bay Localize
- City Slicker Farms
- Communities for a Better Environment
- Community Food & Justice Coalition
- Emerald Cities Collaborative - Oakland Council
- Food First (Institute for Food & Development Policy)
- HOPE Collaborative (Health for Oakland’s People & Environment)
- Merritt College Urban Agroecology Program
- Oakland Food Policy Council
- People’s Grocery
- Phat Beets Produce
- Planting Justice
- PolicyLink
- Public Health Institute
- PUEBLO (People United for a Better Life in Oakland)
- Roots of Change
- Youth Uprising

**University of California Partners:**
- Center for Collaborative Research for an Equitable California (CCREC)
- Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems (CASFS)
- UC Cooperative Extension, Alameda County
Leadership

Allen Temple Baptist Church Prophetic Justice Ministry (Oakland, CA)
Reverend Daniel Buford of the Prophetic Justice Ministry at Allen Temple Baptist Church provides the strategic and community organizing leadership of the project. The Prophetic Justice Ministry at Allen Temple Baptist Church carries on the distinctive justice tradition that comes with the legacy of being an African-American Church in the 21st Century. We work on critical social justice issues that impact our quality of life individually and collectively. Our work expresses itself through: Research/Policy Analysis; Community Education & Organizing; and Information, Referral, and Advocacy.

Community Food & Justice Coalition (Oakland, CA)
The Community Food and Justice Coalition (CFJC) provides the administrative leadership for the project. CFJC promotes the basic human right of access to healthy food. We see food as a tool for building a just and equitable society. We take a holistic and systemic approach to creating a food system that is equitable, environmentally and economically sustainable, and community-driven. Therefore, we work to be a connector and provide support across issues that impact our communities and our food system, including food and farm policy, healthy food access, climate change, economic development, and health equity.

Acta Non Verba Youth Farm Project (Oakland, CA)
Acta Non Verba Youth Farm Project (ANV) is leading the farm outreach, urban agriculture, and land aspects of the project. ANV elevates life in the inner city by challenging oppressive dynamics and environments through urban farming. Using the model of “garden-as-classroom,” the farm located in Oakland’s Tassafaronga Park is planned and harvested by low income students (aged 5 - 17). The students also sell the produce, and 100% of proceeds are placed into individual college savings accounts for the participants. Acta Non Verba is a community-based and community-backed program.

Public Health Institute (Oakland, CA)
Public Health Institute (PHI) is both a partner organization and the fiscal sponsor for the project. PHI generates and promotes research, leadership and partnerships to build capacity for strong public health policy, programs, systems and practices.

Center for Collaborative Research for an Equitable California (Santa Cruz, CA)
The Center for Collaborative Research for an Equitable California (CCREC) serves as incubator of the project through seed funding and initial administrative support. CCREC also provides research leadership. CCREC is a University of California multicampus research center that engages university researchers, community-based organizations, and policymakers in projects to promote equity in California’s communities. CCREC is committed to incubating and supporting ethically informed collaborative research, preparing a new generation of engaged scholars and community leaders, and creating institutional capacity to build this emergent field.
Impact

Growing Equity from the Ground Up seeks to prepare leaders who will be capable of transforming urban landscapes, improving nutrition, health, and educational outcomes, and upending economic and social structures that currently reinforce inequities for low-income, racially, culturally, and linguistically diverse urban populations.

Graduates of the Growing Equity from the Ground Up program will possess the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to develop programs that can achieve the following outcomes:

- Reclaim unused land and restore it to productive purposes
- Establish economically and environmentally sustainable food systems
- Mitigate environmental hazards
- Reduce urban blight
- Eliminate food deserts
- Foster economic and employment development
- Expand healthy lifestyles and reduce obesity, diabetes, and heart disease
- Strengthen civic engagement
- Develop school gardens and farm-to-school programs
- Improve diets and multiply healthy activities for youth
- Expand educational and employment opportunities for youth
- Reduce neighborhood violence
- Enhance healthy neighborhood pride
Help Us Build an Equitable and Sustainable Future

Consider supporting Growing Equity from the Ground Up. Your funding contribution will help:

• plant a garden
• restore the land
• transform urban deserts into urban oases
• cultivate new leaders by sponsoring an apprentice
• support community training workshops
• grow the project’s communications capacity
• sustain community-university action research
Contact Us

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