1. Cultivating veterans

Our returning soldiers need jobs, and our country needs more farmers. For these two crises, Michael O'Gorman, who for decades ran organic farms in California's Salinas Valley, came up with a single solution: Teach veterans to farm. His Farmer Veteran Coalition matches vets with farmer mentors all over the United States; distributes information on government aid; and gives money and advice to participants like former Navy radar specialist Kelly Carlisle, whose quarter-acre urban farm and CSA in East Oakland supports her nonprofit, Acta Non Verba. She works with kids ages 5 to 13, who plant, harvest, and sell the vegetables; 100 percent of the proceeds goes into their savings accounts. "I enlisted in the Navy to find a purpose," Carlisle says. "Three weeks into boot camp was 9/11, and I found my mission." Something similar happened when she left the Navy, came home, and saw hopelessness in East Oakland's youth. "I decided to be part of the solution. This is what I'd fought for." farmveterans.org; envfarm.org.