

Conference Planning Team Conference Planning Team

**Youth Voices: Designing Garden Based Programs for
Children & Youth – Oct. 3, 2009**



The conference planning team has a combined total of 66 summers working, growing and leading to become experts in urban garden-based programs for children and youth.

Programs:

- **Children's Garden:** Children ages 5- 9 learn responsibility and respect for nature through the garden.
- **City Fresh Veggies:** Plant vegetables and use marketing skills to sell to local restaurants.
- **City Fresh Flowers:** Design, market, and sell floral arrangements that were grown by the group.
- **City Fresh New Products:** Invent and sell products that are inspired by the garden.
- **City Fresh Photo:** Learn photography skills to capture the essence of the garden.
- **Communications:** Document the events of the summer programs using various forms of media.
- **Landscaping:** A crew works to design and install various landscape projects for different customers.
- **Arboretum Interns:** Group members are placed in different positions at the Arboretum to explore different job skills.
- **Children's Garden Teachers and Teachers Assistants:** Plan and teach a science based curriculum in an urban garden setting.



LaVance Dixon Jr, Age 19

I've been with this youth program for 14 years, starting at age five. Watching my older sister get to work inspired me to get my first job at age twelve. At that time I learned how to keep a real job and be responsible. I always returned to the garden because I loved working with the people and kids around me. I also wanted to share my experience with the up and coming gardeners.



Xavier Porter, Age 21

In my lifetime I have experienced a total of eleven years in the children's garden and CityFresh programs. Three of those years consisted of me being a youth gardener, where I discovered my liking of gardening. The remaining years I was a youth worker in various programs. The biggest impact I underwent was that my perspective towards gardening, nutrition, and plants changed drastically. I learned that it's not just about candy everyday, or pulling up anything that's green, but about taking responsibility for your health and maintaining a consistent work ethic to achieve your goals in life.



Deedra Porter, Age 19

I have been involved with the garden program since the age of five. I have nine years of experience working in the program. What encouraged me to return to the garden each year, is working with the wonderful and amazing people. The experience that I have gained from the garden has helped me to become a smarter, more responsible, and respectful adult. I believe this program can help a lot of youth in urban areas find a more positive alternative in their lives and for their future, because it has changed mine.



Ebony Turner, Age 20

In my nine summers of working with the urban garden I have learned many things about what it takes to work in a garden setting as well as the essential skills needed to be successful in the work world. The responsibility that the programs have taught me help me to tackle the obstacles I face in everyday life. Each summer, I return with the feeling that my participation is important for the team.



Arika Paukner, Age 25

I have 14 years of summer garden program experience beginning at age eight. After graduating from the children's garden, I was able to participate in many of the youth work programs the garden had to offer. I formed connections to the garden; nature and community which made me want to return year after year. Working with youth in the garden positively impacts the future, and is always a rewarding experience.



Karen Beamon, Age 23

Over the past nine summers that I have been involved with the CityFresh program I've matured in academics, perseverance, and self determination. At the age of 14 I was first introduced to the program, and have been an active member since. I come back because the program allows me to do what I love. Working with youth that come from similar backgrounds as me, I get to give them the opportunity to flourish just as I have.

