



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HFHK AND LEWIS DUAL LANGUAGE SCHOOL STUDENTS CELEBRATE THEIR SPRING HARVEST AT THEIR SCHOOL GARDEN AT RODNEY RESERVOIR COMMUNITY GARDEN

Partnership is example of how the community, a school and a non-profit can join together enabling kids to get outdoors and form healthy habits

WILMINGTON, Delaware (May 4, 2023) – Healthy Foods for Healthy Kids (HFHK) is excited to deepen its school garden partnership with Lewis Dual Language School with a celebration of the students' first spring harvest at the Rodney Reservoir Community Garden.

"Local residents and gardeners were thrilled to welcome the teachers and students of Lewis Dual Language Elementary and our community partners Healthy Foods for Healthy Kids into the Rodney Community Garden last fall to grow food, learn about science and have fun," said Jamila Davey, Green for the Greater Good.

"Today as we celebrate this season's labors and spring harvest, may we be inspired to keep making connections in the community and working together to imagine and manifest ways that public greenspaces like the Rodney Reservoir Community Garden can serve our community's health and wellness and above all our children and youth."

A First for HFHK

In early 2021, Lewis first expressed interest in Healthy Foods for Healthy Kids' "Education Cultivation" program. HFHK staff realized that there was not a good location on the school grounds for a garden. After months of searching, West Side Grows Together and Green for the Greater Good offered garden space at the Rodney Reservoir Community Garden. Everyone agreed it was a fantastic solution.

This was the first time HFHK used community garden space for a school garden. Green for the Greater Good installed a brand new, dedicated water line for our beds and a schedule was coordinated for the students to work in the garden. Their first growing season was a success and both students and staff were excited to have their own school garden.

"Students who participate in the HFHK school garden over several growing seasons have been shown to advance their understanding of gardening, science and their willingness to try new vegetables," noted HFHK Executive Director, Lydia Sarson. "We are pleased that Senator Lockman and Representative Dorsey-Walker came out to support this wonderful opportunity for these students to grow and eat their own vegetables, which ultimately results in smarter and healthier students."

Rodney Reservoir Community Garden becomes an outdoor classroom

"It's so exciting to see children learning about how to grow food and enjoy nature," said Christian Willauer, Rodney Community Garden Co-President and Co-Founder. "We are lucky to have the Rodney Reservoir serve as an outdoor classroom for so many students from Lewis Elementary School. We need to work together to expand access to the outdoors among Wilmington students. Lewis School has planted a seed. Let's all help it grow."

Dr. Ortega-Moran, Principal of Lewis Dual Language Elementary, added, "It is a pleasure to facilitate our school's mission and vision through community partnerships. This opportunity to nurture our students' learning and growth through school gardening is paramount. We are thrilled to help develop healthy habits in our youth and look forward to the positive manifestations."

"As a founding gardener, the Rodney Reservoir Community Garden holds a special place in my heart, and I am thrilled to see students from the Lewis Dual Language School getting an opportunity to discover the joys of gardening right in their own community," said Sen. Elizabeth "Tizzy" Lockman, D-Wilmington. "I can't think of a better way to learn hands-on lessons about the importance of healthy food, the calming beauty of nature and the rewards that come from hard work and community. My hope is the students are just as proud of the fruits and vegetables they have grown, as I am that this unique program exists right here in Wilmington's Cool Spring neighborhood."

The HFHK “Education Cultivation” program helps youth learn how to grow vegetables and eat the ones they’ve helped grow. HFHK’s science lessons support the curriculum specific to their grade. It is the only school garden program of its kind in Delaware and the only to involve all students in all grades in the school. The hands-on lessons are grade-specific and allow children the opportunity to not only grow and learn science, but to harvest and try the vegetables they have grown.

HFHK provides this program at no-cost to the schools and is funded solely on the generosity of individual and corporate donations, and grants. To get HFHK’s “Education Cultivation” program in your school, send an request email to info@healthyfoodsforhealthykids.org.

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About Healthy Foods for Healthy Kids (HFHK) – *The First State Garden Experts*

HFHK is a non-profit organization committed to improving children’s health by offering garden-based science education to K-12 schools throughout Delaware. As “*The First State school garden experts*,” their mission is to inspire healthier lives by providing youth with joyful school gardening experiences and opportunities to learn science and eat the garden-fresh vegetables they’ve grown. Serving more than 48 schools and more than 21,000 students, HFHK’s science-based programs run throughout the academic year and allow every student to participate in hands-on science-learning activities. Students discover that vegetables can be delicious when they eat the “veggies of their labors.” For more information, visit www.healthyfoodsforhealthykids.org.

About William C. Lewis Dual Language Elementary School

William C. Lewis Dual Language Elementary School is a public magnet school located in Wilmington, DE. It has 409 students in grades K-5 with a student-teacher ratio of 11 to 1. Its mission is to empower students to be active participants in their own learning and achievement through engaging English and Spanish instruction in a school community that is respectful, resilient, and safe.

About Green for the Greater Good

Green for the Greater Good is a coalition of residents and stakeholders working to keep the Rodney Reservoir site public, safe and green so all residents can enjoy its use. Follow Green for the Greater Good on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) @GreenfortheGreaterGood or visit the [website](#).

About West Side Grows Together

West Side Grows Together is a coalition of residents, businesses, churches, and local leadership in the West Side of Wilmington, Delaware, working together to transform & strengthen their community. Follow West Side Grows Together on the [Web](#), [Facebook](#) & [Instagram](#) for more information and program updates.