

HEALTHY FOODS for HEALTHY kids

THE FIRST STATE SCHOOL GARDEN EXPERTS

THE LATEST NEWS AND UPDATES FROM HEALTHY FOODS FOR HEALTHY KIDS



(L): County Executive Meyer, Sen. Evans Gay, Rep. Dorsey-Walker (not pictured) plant with Kindergartners at Lancashire Elementary
(R): DE Secretary of Education, Dr. Mark Holodick & IRSD Superintendent Dr. Jay Owens (not pictured) plant at E Millsboro Elementary

IN THIS ISSUE

**HOLODICK, MEYER & OTHERS
PLANT WITH STUDENTS**

**NEW WEBSITE, NEW LOGO,
STILL VEGGIE-CATING**

**NEMOURS RE-COMMITS,
FUNDS WILMINGTON MANOR**

**STORY TIME: MCVEY STUDENTS
& MR. SQUIRREL**

**DJ KALE YEAH ROCKS
SUCCESSFUL DOMORE24**

**HFHK OUT & ABOUT
& UPCOMING EVENTS**

**SAVE THE DATE: NOV 4, 2023
HFHK'S 15TH ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION**

Legislative Planting Day draws Holodick, Meyer & others to plant with students

On Tuesday, March 14, legislators from around the state were invited to new partner schools, Lancashire Elementary (NCC) and East Millsboro Elementary (Sussex) to participate in the first planting day in their new school gardens.

Despite the windy and chilly day, County Executive Matt Meyer, Senator Kyle Evans Gay, and Representative Sherry Dorsey-Walker joined kindergartners as HFHK Program Manager Jen Cipolla instructed them how to plant lettuce, spinach, and rainbow chard at Lancashire. First graders ventured out later in the day to plant carrots, radishes, and dill. After his first experience planting in an HFHK garden, Meyer exclaimed, "This program needs to be in every school in Delaware!"

Later that afternoon, Delaware Secretary of Education, Dr. Mark Holodick and Indian River School District Superintendent Dr. Jay Owens visited a kindergarten class at East Millsboro Elementary School. Together, as instructed by Program Coordinator Rachel Terracina, Drs. Holodick and Owens helped plant carrots and radishes as students learned about the school garden for the first time. East Millsboro Elementary is the fifth school partnership within the Indian River School District, following Phillip Showell, John Clayton, and Lord Baltimore Elementary Schools and their Early Learning Center.

When asked about their partnership with Healthy Foods for

(cont. on pg. 5)

New logo, new website, still "Veggie-cating"

HFHK partners with The Launch Lounge to revamp logo and website

In early 2021 Healthy Foods for Healthy Kids conducted a branding survey to community members, followers and stakeholders, and through 583 responses we learned two key takeaways: 46.5% of respondents were *unfamiliar* or *not familiar at all* with HFHK, but 59.3% replied they would support a nonprofit with our mission. What these numbers indicate is that people want to support our mission, if we communicate our work more visibly.



HFHK prepares for unveiling with promo



Follow this QR code to visit our new website!

Through research and interviews, HFHK hired The Launch Lounge in April 2022.

Nancy Mercante, HFHK Secretary and Branding Committee Chair led the project. "This huge undertaking would not have been successful without the undeniable talent from Kate at The Launch Lounge and the steadfast commitment from Nancy," praises Lydia Sarson, HFHK Executive Director. "I am so grateful to them for leading us through this."

"What is most exciting about these changes," remarked Mercante, "is that the new website now provides better systems integrations for smoother communication to our supporters and alleviates some capacity issues."

As the year progresses and moves forward, we encourage our followers to continue to visit the HFHK website for program updates, news, events, and more.

Nemours re-commits to Adopt-a-Garden program

Adopts Carrie Downie, Eisenberg; funds Wilmington Manor

At the end of 2021, Healthy Foods for Healthy Kids quietly rolled out our Adopt-a-Garden program, with Nemours Children's Hospital as one of the first participants. For 2022, Nemours adopted Carrie Downie Elementary School, where Nemours hosts a student-based wellness center. Combating the Social Determinants of Health throughout Delaware, and particularly within the Rt. 9 corridor between Wilmington and New Castle, is a key focus of Nemours' community outreach and partnerships. Nemours has committed to adopting Carrie Downie and also Eisenberg Elementary. This agreement will also fund a new garden and program implementation at Wilmington Manor in Fall 2023. All three schools are located within the Colonial School District.

Expanding their commitment beyond Carrie Downie in 2023 is part of their *Well Beyond Medicine* strategic plan. "Nemours partnership with HFHK continues to strengthen and grow just like healthy foods enable

(cont. on pg. 4)

NEMOURS PARTNERSHIP WITH HFHK CONTINUES TO STRENGTHEN AND GROW, JUST LIKE HEALTHY FOODS ENABLE STUDENTS TO GROW HEALTHIER AND STRONGER.

- YVETTE SANTIAGO,
DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT



Nemours volunteers open the garden at Carrie Downie, March 2021



Nemours volunteers talk to Serviam Scholars about nutritional benefits associated with vegetable colors, July 2022

Story time: McVey students and Mr. Squirrel

ESL students learn more than gardening skills, expand program lessons

The garden at McVey Elementary School is used a little differently than HFHK's typical "Education Cultivation" program thanks to the ingenuity of Mrs. Kite, the school's ESL (English as a Second Language) teacher. Using the garden as a way to drive communication and language skills, Mrs. Kite's students are problem-solving and learning new responsibilities - especially the 4th and 5th graders.

These students are now leaders in their garden forming teams such as Junior Garden Coordinators, Harvest Masters and Irrigation Engineers. These student leaders are taking pride and ownership in their garden. They recently reached out to HFHK for help with a small squirrel problem.



Student leadership teams:
(L) to (R):
Junior Garden Coordinators - Haylie and Julian; Harvest Masters - Bara'a, Ibrahim and Ivan

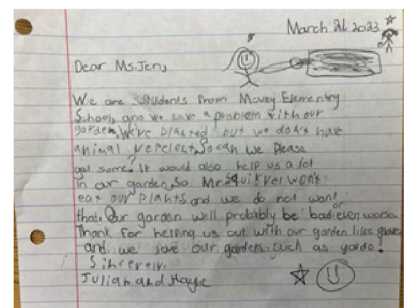
(L) to (R): Materials Managers - Alexa, Ashley, Amy, Adam, Monserrat and Ismael; Irrigation Engineers - Brandon, Kerem, Nicole, Zane, Zander and Zachary



"Dear Ms. Jen,

We are students from McVey Elementary School, and we have a problem with our garden. We've planted but we don't have animal repellent. So can we please get some? It would also help us a lot in our garden so Mr. Squirrel won't eat our plants, and we do not want that. Our garden will probably be bad or even worse. Thank you for helping us out with our garden like gloves and we just love our garden such as you do!

Sincerely,
Julian and Haylie"



HFHK sprung into action at the call for help, and provided them with pest repellent pellets to help keep the squirrels out of their garden!

When their irrigation system began leaking underground, Student Irrigation Engineers investigated and tried problem solving on their own, eventually reaching out to HFHK for assistance. We are proud of these students and their dedication to their school garden!

DJ Kale Yeah! rocked successful DoMore24

Over \$2,400 raised to support garden tool replacement needs for schools

This year's annual DoMore24 event, hosted by Spur Impact and the United Way, was once again a success thanks to our many donors - and HFHK's new in-house mascot DJ Kale Yeah!

Rachel Terracina, HFHK Program Coordinator, donned a newly acquired kale costume and rocked out at several locations across the state including Sprouts, Frawley Stadium, and Serviam Girls Academy in Wilmington and at Lewes Elementary in Lewes.

Facebook Live videos were taken throughout the day and can still be viewed on our Facebook page. Congratulations to Caitlin Custer and Win Bookhart, this year's raffle winners!

Over \$2,400 was raised this year and these funds will be used to replenish established gardens with necessary supplies. *Thank you to everyone who donated!*



(L): DJ Kale Yeah! and Serviam Scholars talk about their Summer 2022 program. (R): Rachel rocking it at Sprouts.



Nemours, cont.

(cont. from pg. 2)

students to grow stronger and healthier. Through our collective work, this support expands opportunities to increase education in the gardening growth and harvesting process. Our partnership with HFHK enables us to support community partners, schools, and kids in addressing food insecurities and nourishing growing bodies with nutritious produce that are consumed by the same students is the start of this process," stated Yvette Santiago, Director, Community Engagement at Nemours.

"We are delighted that Nemours sees value in helping us reach more students and families with our program," commented Anita Broccolino, HFHK Director, Community Engagement and Partnerships. "Not only does it support program continuity, but expansion to the 300+ students at Wilmington Manor, too. We firmly believe that this program should be in every school in Delaware and Nemours sees the value our *Education Cultivation* program brings to Delaware's students and families."

"We are also grateful to Nemours for their commitment to HFHK's inaugural Garden Coordinator Workshop and Appreciation Dinner this November 4th. As HFHK enters its 15th year of garden education, we wanted to do something special and engaging and to really rally our community around our Garden Coordinators (who are volunteer teachers!). Nemours is the first commitment we secured in what we hope will

become a yearly professional development experience for the teachers, while providing opportunities for our funders, donors, and friends to hear first-hand the wonders these educators witness due to our garden program," continued Broccolino.

"This is a great example of partnerships in education, health, and community coming together to support our goal of creating the healthiest generation of children!" said Santiago.

HFHK Out-and-About! See us around town? Say hi!



HFHK attended the BizNow State of the Construction Market event in Wilmington

HFHK staff and board members kicked off DoMore24 at Sprouts in Wilmington. This year's event raised over \$2,400 for school garden supplies.

Thank you to all who donated!



Gov. Carney signs proclamation declaring March 24 Women & Girls in STEM Day in Delaware. This effort was led by Million Women Mentors.

2nd Quarter Events: Where to find us next!

April

April 1 - In Bloom Conference, University of Delaware
Program Manager, Jen Cipolla, presents "Down and Dirty in the Garden: Pre-school Style"

April 11 - Highmark Delaware Check Presentation at Blue Rocks Home Opener (vs. Hickory Crawdads)

April 14 - Seed Giveaway and Plant Swap, Wilmington Art Loop, The Delaware Contemporary

April 21 - Earth Day Event, Sussex Academy

April 22 - Earth Day Celebration, Philip C. Showell Elementary School

May

May 4 - Family Health Night, Brader Elementary School

May 4 - Lewis Dual Language School Garden Ribbon Cutting, Rodney Reservoir, Wilmington

May 6 - Delaware Inland Bays Plant Fest, James Farm Ecological Preserve

May 13 - Delaware Association for Environmental Educators Annual Conference, Brandywine Springs Elementary School
Program Manager, Jen Cipolla, and Program Coordinator, Rachel Terracina, present "Embracing Outdoor Education in a Post-Covid World - Come get your hands dirty!"

May TBD - Legislative Harvest Day, Maple Lane (NCC) and Lewes (Sussex) Elementary Schools

June

June 13 - Garden Re-build, Red Lion Christian Academy (NCC)

June 20 - Garden Re-build, West Park Place Elementary School (NCC)

June 27 - Garden Re-build, North Star Elementary School (NCC)



Jen at the In Bloom Conference, April 1

Legislative Day, cont.

(cont. from pg. 1)

Healthy Kids, Dr. Owens commented "The Indian River School District is proud to partner with the Healthy Food For Healthy Kids program. The partnership provides our students with an opportunity to step out of their traditional classroom to learn how to plant, grow and harvest vegetables. Not only are our students learning about the nutritional benefits of gardening, they are given the opportunity to eat the vegetables they have helped to produce."

This was Dr. Holodick's first visit to an HFHK garden.

"Promoting our program to our local legislature and representatives is crucial to HFHK longevity and future success," remarked Lydia Sarson,

HFHK Executive Director. "HFHK relies heavily on state and federal funding for program expansion and continuity. It is important the state's key decision makers know who we are and about our *Education Cultivation* program. But what's even more critical is that they see it first-hand. Witnessing the students' excitement over planting seeds is something we, as an organization, can never properly capture in a grant report."

Anita Broccolino, HFHK Director, Community Engagement and Partnerships, continued "We were so happy to hear of the interest of many who were unable to join due to scheduling conflicts. In light of this we are planning to invite everyone back to both Maple Lane (NCC) and Lewes (Sussex) Elementary Schools for a harvest in May. Invites coming soon!"



Rep. Sherry Dorsey-Walker plants in Lancashire Elementary's new garden



Kindergarteners prepare for their first planting lesson at E Millsboro

Save the Date: NOVEMBER 4, 2023

Healthy Foods for Healthy Kids'
15th 'Crystal' Anniversary Celebration



SAVE THE DATE
November 4, 2023
Newark, DE