Greetings GRuB friends,

We are nearing the end of 2004. I am finally ready to reflect upon this intense year of accomplishment, of struggle, and of change. It is difficult to separate the threads of my personal life from those of my life with GRuB. The tremendous success of this summer’s Rooted In Community Conference is now forever tied with the bout of cancer my partner faced in July. It seemed as though this year never settled down. Everything was big. While the youth, staff, and board of GRuB set forth our inspiring goals for the next few years, I became clear on some of my plans for 2005, like giving birth to a new human in April. Just as I was saying hello to a new life, GRuB said goodbye to our long-time benefactor and ‘grandma’, Bonnie Turner. Bonnie passed away on September 4th after a long life of family, gardening, and giving. Bonnie had donated the use of her land to our youth program since 1996 and to many other community ventures before us. Her generosity has made the work of GRuB possible. Like I said, everything seemed big this year.

As you know, Garden-Raised Bounty (GRuB) is a grassroots non-profit organization dedicated to nourishing our community by empowering people to grow good food. We grow inspired, self-confident and community-minded youth through educational and employment opportunities. We help low-income families and seniors to help themselves by building raised-bed gardens at their homes. Our work is guided by our core values: caring youth and adult partnerships, strong communities, sustainable land stewardship, education, and good food for all people.

I hope you will look carefully through this end-of-year report and see just how BIG this year was for us and our community of youth and gardeners. While I’ll let the pictures and statistics tell that story, I want to use this letter to tell one youth’s story. The real power of our work here can sometimes get lost in all the numbers; pounds of food donated, graduation rates, money raised. The magic is in the individual stories, the individual journeys. Here’s one.

‘Paul’ entered GRuB’s Cultivating Youth Employment program in July of 2003 at the end of his sophomore year in high school. According to Jim Knowles, a former teacher of his, Paul was quiet, uninvolved, and disinterested at school. At home, his strong and loving mother struggled to support her three kids while living off of disability benefits. In his first weeks with GRuB, Paul was hardworking and reserved though he would occasionally wow us all with his sharp wit and traffic-stopping smile.

During the next school year Paul became one of our strongest public speakers. He and one other crewmember led a workshop at a national conference (which many praised as one of the best workshops in the conference). He spoke GRuB’s mission to various civic organizations. In his second summer with us, Paul was hired as a Peer Crew Leader. He and four crewmates were now in leadership roles, mentoring the new grubbies and teaching them the way of the garden. Advancing to his senior year of high school, Paul became one of the primary organizers of the 2004 Rooted In Community Conference here in Olympia. And at the end of his time with GRuB, he had earned his high school diploma and was accepted to the Evergreen State College. When we asked Jim Knowles to comment on Paul’s growing maturity, he responded with:

“I have known a number of these kids, previously, as a teacher and witnessed some of the obstacles they have in their lives. Watching the growth and development they have gained through GRuB has been more than phenomenal. The transformation of these individuals from feelings of helplessness to taking action and empowering their lives is nothing short of miraculous.”

I hope that our work with empowering low-income youth & families and its purposeful evolution continues to earn your trust and partnership. Enjoy the pictures and know that you helped make it all happen.

Kim Gaffi, Co-Director
At the youth garden, we not only grow food, we eat it too! ‘Guest Chefs’ (community volunteers) cooked 24 tasty & nutritious lunches with and for our hungry crew. Youth learned how to turn garden veggies into easy-to-make burritos, pizza, stir fry, and more.

“I also want to thank you and recognize you all for helping me raise my son. If we didn’t have Garden-Raised Bounty, I cannot imagine how I would have weathered the rest of his upbringing. Your original vision to bring this program to the youth of our community has saved us, I feel as though I owe you everything.” - Parent, 2004 Graduate

Youth once again led a very successful flower bouquet business serving 26 businesses and earning $3,335. At our annual fundraiser, Seafood at the Schmidt, youth earned $1,071 at the market stand selling garlic braids, stepping stones, cookbooks, GRuB t-shirts, lip balm, and hand salve.

In 2004, we increased food production at our youth garden from 5,500 lbs to 8,000 lbs! Approximately 3,000 lbs. of that was donated to the Thurston Food Bank. The other 5,000 lbs. fed youth and their families and our new paying CSA customers. This weekly farm subscription raised $3,350.

“Ruth” has developed, through the GRuB program, into a more confident, secure young woman. She is willing to try new things because she has had the mentoring in place to train her and to encourage her. She has succeeded. She is a testimony to the GRuB mentality...each individual has value and worth and can succeed in a nurturing atmosphere... not unlike a seed that has been placed in rich soil, is watered, fed, and given adequate sunlight. Hmmm...interesting!” - Stephanie Brodin, high school counselor
"As a teacher who has been involved with students and staff in the GRuB program the benefits are so much more than just what the program curriculum covers. I feel an important part of the program is the commitment, the understanding, the willingness, the opportunities, the extra effort and support that the staff provides for the students involved. Another important aspect of the program for the students is that it provides a sanctuary, a time when students can enjoy, reflect, and just think."

-Jan Labelle, Teacher

In the midst of growing lots of food, youth in our Cultivating Youth Program made significant investments in their own lives. Of the students who entered our 2-year program in 2002, 44% entered the program on track to graduate from high school. At the end of their two years with us, 89% graduated from high school or earned their GED. 67% are currently enrolled in college and 78% demonstrated improved grades after entering our program.

Of the students who entered our program in 2003, 31% entered on track to graduate. At the end of one year with us, 62% are now on track to graduate or earn their GED. 70% demonstrated improved grades after entering our program.

"I think that gardening is better than video games... At the garden last year, I had friends. It’s easier to make friends when you’re outside and not playing video games. I got to plant the spinach greens, mustard greens, and mint by digging up the soil and putting the plants into the ground. I ate the food we planted after it grew. We played with the chickens after we were done with the work we did. Gardening is way better than playing video games and it rocks my world!"

-Participant

In addition to our employment program, this last spring, GRuB gave 30 middle & high school students a real hands-on education at our Westside garden. Students who are not flourishing in a traditional classroom setting, learned the basic of soil science by making their own soil. They felt the satisfaction of dirty fingernails and teamwork. Our education program was led by an amazing Evergreen intern and two of our employment program youth crewmembers.
Through the Kitchen Garden Project (KGP), GRuB built over 110 free vegetable gardens for low-income families in Thurston & Mason counties. Youth were actively involved in building 40 of those gardens.

"I share my fruits and vegetables at church or with my family who live in Olympia, Shelton and Rainier. The GRuB garden has been a blessing for me.”
- Barbara, 2004 garden recipient

"When the Kitchen Garden Project put in our garden beds I had no idea at the time how quickly the life changing effects would take place. For the last two years that my son has been with you, I've seen the joy of others who were recipients of the raised garden beds. Now I have garden beds. We planted lettuce, arugula and spinach and have already harvested three large bags and shared with neighbors. We mapped out the beds and are very excited about the potential outcome of future vegetables. It was a real confidence builder when I ate the first piece of lettuce, my son laughed as I danced around and said "look at me I can grow vegetables!"
- Sara, ‘Fundraising Garden’ customer

We had more people building gardens this year than ever before. In addition to our incredible Americorps member, Corinne, we benefited from the energy of an outstanding Evergreen intern, Aaron, & countless community volunteers, including our friend Ana Maria from Nicaragua. (below in the baseball cap)
We’ve received surveys back from our 2004 garden recipients and this is what they say.

- 71% reported using the food bank less after receiving a garden.
- 67% reported eating more fresh vegetables each week.
- 85% reported getting more exercise thanks to their garden.
- 85% reported spending more time outside.

"A year ago, when you gave me my garden, I was desperately, frantically, trying to pull myself up by the bootstraps due to a situation that you really don’t want me to go into. I was working to recover from severe anxiety, depression and delayed stress syndrome. The garden was a healer. It still is."

- Jane, 2004 garden recipient

In 2004, we built 33 gardens in Olympia, 10 gardens in Lacey, 5 gardens in Tumwater, 27 gardens in non-incorporated Thurston County, and 34 gardens in Mason County. These gardens fed 500+ individuals!

"...Instead of chips or cookies or spending money on Gerber snacks for my four kids they all just run out and get a bean or two or pea pods to munch."

- Sara, 2004 garden recipient
Creating Skilled & Visionary Leaders

“We are luminescent, we are not transparent
No one does what they do wrong
Together there’s a binding
For new inspiration
Passing on the knowledge
Pass it on
We come from different places
We come for different reasons
We are friends, we ban together
Watch what has been seeded
We keep our roots in the deep stuff
Relevant work, our hands in the dirt
Dig our roots, roots
Dig our roots, roots
Stretching our roots down to the core
Our leaves up to the sun

What a roller-coaster ride! We did it. Over the last year, six Thurston County teens in collaboration with teens in Seattle and Tacoma worked their tails off to organize a high-quality youth-led Rooted In Community Conference focused on issues of food access, urban greening, and environmental justice. When all was said and done, over 130 participants representing 26 organizations from 18 different states attended the 2004 RIC Conference.

“I feel that having the opportunity to host the RIC conference has given me a little more strength in many areas. My organizational skills are awesome. I’ve learned to look at the details. I have the power to make things happen when they need to be done. I am comfortable talking to a hundred people at the same time.”

– Jennie, age 18

WORKSHOPS covered subjects as diverse as irrigation systems, herb crafting, recording public service announcements, and healthy eating habits. Attendees were able to sign up for creative expression workshops where members of the Olympia community showed off their talents which included playback theater, drumming, and hip hop. In the poetry & song-writing workshop, youth & adults came together to write and later perform a song about their Rooted In Community experience. (right)
Youth Reflection - “Rooted in Community was a chance for me to make an impact on hundreds of people across the nation. The impression we left as an organization and as individuals could be seen as people went home that final day.

RIC was a learning experience. Working the phones in the office. Typing and re-typing first, second and final drafts. Spinning around in my chair to ask a question to one of my colleagues and spinning back with the answer, ready to put it to use. ...I was personally accountable for so much, unlike anything I'd been a part of before. I was calling nearly every state in the continental U.S. (and Hawaii) checking and double-checking reservations, travel itinerary, payments, the works. It was refreshing to feel so important and alive...

RIC was a teaching experience. During the conference itself we led discussions and workshops, helped resolve conflicts, and educated people on many culturally relevant issues. People had questions and I had answers. My peers looked up to me. I felt like a role model, and role modeling feels good. Even the adults attending were floored by the performance put forward by myself and my crew members. This was why we had spent the last year working so hard.” - Joshua

"Thank you so much for organizing and orchestrating such a stellar RIC conference. We all had an excellent time and have come back feeling revitalized and full with new ideas, connections, and visions." - Sarah, FoodWorks

Conference attendees were also able to get a feel for food systems work in the Northwest through organized hands-on FIELDTRIPS in the South Sound. A trip to Seattle included the Pike Place Market and Marra Farm, Seattle's last urban farm and home to Seattle Youth Garden Works. Members of the Tacoma trip learned how to make Eritrean food after a down & dirty session learning about compost at Guadalupe Gardens. The youth at GRuB prepared a wonderful fieldtrip at our Sister Holly Garden where attendees learned how to run their own bouquet business, painted a stunning mural, and learned about the Kitchen Garden Project.
On September 4th, GRuB’s grandma & long-time patron saint passed on. Bonnie Turner made the work of GRuB possible by donating the use of her land to us since 1996. We are but the most recent of a long line of community projects that have been graced by her generosity. Her land also served as the home of the Olympia Area Community Gardens and various projects stewarded by students from Evergreen.

After three amazing years, Justin Umholtz, our dynamic garden manager, is moving on to other adventures. Justin transformed our youth garden from a simplistic raised-bed garden to a productive, model mini-farm. Under his design & vision, GRuB’s vegetable production grew from 600 lbs a year to 8,000! Even more notable than his agricultural prowess, is Justin’s remarkable magnetism. He drew people into our project with his spirit, his listening, and his dedication to empowerment. He did all this while serving as an incredible role model for the youth in our programs. He is leaving a tremendous legacy at GRuB and in the Olympia Community.
SAVING SISTER HOLLY

Since Bonnie’s passing, we’ve been working with her wonderful family to preserve our youth garden as a permanent tribute to Bonnie and a lasting site dedicated to youth empowerment & good food education. This special piece of land has been in agriculture for most of this century. In 2005, we will be reaching out to the community for help in purchasing this uniquely beautiful & productive bit of Olympia history.

BUILDING MORE GARDENS

As the youth, volunteers, board members, and staff of GRuB came together to look at our future, we all felt that GRuB had a real role to play in fighting hunger & malnutrition in our area. The best way that GRuB currently impacts hunger is through our garden-building efforts within the Kitchen Garden Project. This next year we want to do more than just increase the number of gardens we build, we want to take a more targeted approach, by researching which neighborhoods in Thurston County are most at-risk for hunger. We will then outreach to those communities more intensively and set aside a certain number of gardens just for those neighborhoods. In future years, our goal is to also bring other self-sufficiency and good food opportunities to these areas including building community gardens, coordinating with the city forester to provide fruit trees, and linking area school cafeterias to local farms.

REACHING MORE YOUTH

When asked what GRuB could do to improve its youth program, teachers & counselors have one consistent response, "More youth need GRuB!". In 2005, we are focusing on improving our recruitment efforts at local high schools, strengthening the life changes our youth experience, and overall serving more youth throughout Thurston County. We are contacting teachers and counselors within our local school districts who can provide GRuB with insight into helping our youth gain academic credit for our program, access existing school resources, and find even more mentorship and guidance.
As we expand our work into the community, we are working on inviting the community to join us in our work. Our roots have gone deeper this year and we have more people invested in our work than ever before.

**GRuB 2004 Income**

- 54% Agency contract
- 7% Consulting Services
- 13% Donations
- 3% Government contracts
- 7% Grants
- 7% Product Marketing
- 1% RIC Conference
- 9% Special Events

**GRuB 2004 Program Expenses**

- 49% Cultivating Youth
- 14% Kitchen Garden Project
- 6% Hosting RIC Conference
- 12% NW Youth Garden Network
- 6% Administration
- 12% Fundraising


We wish really good karma on all of these wonderful folks.
OUR DEXTEROUS BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2004

Jeff Bean
Amy Calahan - newbie
Rachel Clark - newbie
Adrienne Drewe
Larry Eickstaedt—departing
Kyle Guzlas - newbie
TJ Johnson - departing
Beth Lovelady - departing

Helena Meyer-Knapp
Teran Nellermoe
Shirly Nevin - departing
Nasue Nishida - newbie
Nita Rinehart - newbie
Heather Ringwood - departing
Alicia Seegers-Martinelli - departing
Brian Sims

OUR NEW YOUTH PROGRAM ADVISORY COUNCIL

Stephanie Brodin
Jan LaBell
Shannon Garrett
Steve McRavin
Cathy Williams
Georgia Cutburth
Mary Wildenhaus
Nasue Nishida

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Shirly Nevin - departing
Nasue Nishida - newbie
Nita Rinehart - newbie
Heather Ringwood - departing
Alicia Seegers-Martinelli - departing
Brian Sims

OUR INDUSTRIOUS STAFF

Blue Peetz, Co-Director
Kim Gaffi, Co-Director
Jackson Sillars
Justin Uhmoltz - departing
Laura Cannon-Robinson
Corinne Hansch - departing
Carrie Stellplig
Jamie Brayshaw - newbie
Sarah Bracken - newbie
Emily Dietz - newbie


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Nasue Nishida

More Cool People

Our Graduated Crew
Noel Parrish
Jennie Murray
Adrian Prevost
Josh Buffington
Tyna Crosby
Elaina Smith

Our 2nd Year Youth Crew
Thomas Ath
Darla Cartwright
Rachel Clark
Cameron Curry
Jo Decker
LaQuetta Harrison
Ciara Stiles

Kim-Ngan Huynh
Mina Kean
Amber Kennedy
Tamara Parrish
Beverly Pope
Linda Sok

Our 1st Year Youth Crew
Tony Brown
Josh Cooley
Jess Demtra
Julie Fry
Randi Henn

Richard Park
Kevin Pickett
Erin Schoch
Katie Smith
Larry Wynder