

# Healthy Foods FOR Healthy Kids



## The First State school garden experts

*The latest news and updates from Healthy Foods for Healthy Kids*



(L) to (R): Students at Lord Baltimore learn how to dig furrows using trowels. Lewis Dual Language students are all smiles after harvesting radishes.

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## FOUR NEW SCHOOLS ACROSS THE STATE FINISH THEIR FIRST GROWING SEASON

Lewis Dual Language Elementary School in New Castle County, Lord Baltimore Elementary, Milton Elementary, and the Indian River School District's Early Learning Center (ELC) in Sussex County, all finished their first growing season in the Fall 2022.

### A First for HFHK

In early 2021, Lewis first expressed interest in Healthy Foods for Healthy Kids' "Education Cultivation" program. Upon our initial site visit, HFHK staff realized that there was not a good location on the school grounds for a garden. After months of searching, West Side Grows and Green for the Greater Good offered us 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, and we were up for the challenge! Green for the Greater Good installed a brand new, dedicated water line for our beds and we set up a schedule 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. Thank you to the Million Dollar Round Table for funding this garden.

Parents, teachers, and students all joined in on the fun of building Milton Elementary's brand new garden. In early October, we got right to work growing their first crops.

*(cont. on pg. 5)*

## Sprouts, Longwood fund two new gardens for 2023

### HFHK builds gardens at East Millsboro and Lancashire, preps for Spring

Local Sprouts employees, faculty, parents, and students of Lancashire Elementary built the new garden late last year to planting in the Spring 2023. Sprouts Healthy Community Foundation funded this garden, and this is the second Day of Service where Sprouts volunteered with HFHK. The first partnership funded and built Carrcroft's garden.



Sprouts and students celebrate the new garden at Lancashire. Photo credit: HFHK



Families joined in the build at East Millsboro. Photo credit: HFHK

On a much chillier November day, community members and HFHK

staff joined together to build a new garden at East Millsboro Elementary School. This celebratory event grew into their Fall Fest where families could visit and join in on the garden build. At the same time, students could play games, enjoy treats like popcorn and hot chocolate, and have fun with tractor-drawn wagon rides. This build marked our 7th and final new garden build for the 2022 year.

## Staff Spotlight: Rachel Terracina

### Rachel joins HFHK full-time, aims to expand program through after-school

In May 2022, Healthy Foods for Healthy Kids hired Rachel Terracina as a part-time program coordinator for Kent & Sussex Counties. This new position supports the growing number of partner schools located in those counties. In October she became a full-time employee. HFHK sat down with Rachel to see how her first full growing season went, hear what her goals are for this position, and to get the scoop on what it is to be HFHK's in-house "Nature Nerd".

**HFHK:** Rachel! Welcome! You are now full-time and absolutely an integral member of HFHK. What initially drew you to our organization?

**Rachel:** When I found the listing for the part-time program coordinator position, it had literally everything I could ask for; working outdoors, gardening, and empowering students. What I couldn't possibly know is how compassionate, caring, and goofy the rest of the staff and board are. My initial draw was the amazing mission. The thing that keeps me going on tough days is the amazing team!

(cont. on pg. 4)

*IF A CHILD IS TO KEEP ALIVE HIS INBORN SENSE OF WONDER. . . HE NEEDS THE COMPANIONSHIP OF AT LEAST ONE ADULT WHO CAN SHARE IT, REDISCOVERING WITH HIM THE JOY, EXCITEMENT, AND MYSTERY OF THE WORLD WE LIVE IN*

– RACHEL CARSON, BIOLOGIST AND AUTHOR



Rachel and her pet corn snake, Wishbone, planning their next spring garden together. Photo credit: Rachel



Lydia, Rachel and Jen are happy to welcome Lord Baltimore to HFHK.

## Letter from the Executive Director

Dear HFHK Friends & Supporters,

Happy New Year to you all! And what a year it was! As we look back on 2022, reflecting where Healthy Foods for Healthy Kids was in January to where we are now, I am filled with **admiration, appreciation, and absolute gratitude**. We have accomplished so much together and I am just so thankful to everyone.



## YOU MADE A DIFFERENCE.

### Absolute gratitude

All of you reading this have contributed in one way or another to the success of Healthy Foods for Healthy Kids and for that I am absolutely grateful. Whether you are a long-time donor, volunteered at a garden build or someone who liked and shared a post, your contributions and public advocacy of our organization have helped us grow in leaps and bounds.

This year you:

- volunteered ~430 hours to help build and rebuild gardens at 11 partner schools
- helped introduce 4,000 new students to our "Education Cultivation" program - totaling 17,000 students!
- made our "Growing the Future: The Promise of the School Garden Movement" event a sold-out success with 120 attendees

### Admiration & Appreciation

Working for a small organization, whether that is as an employee or a Board member, requires commitment, effort, and selflessness. As we started this year, Natalie McKenney began her first term as Chair of the Board and Dr. Thianda Manzara, our Founder, was still volunteering as we on-boarded new team members, Anita Broccolino and Rachel Terracina. In June we said fond farewells to Dr. Manzara and our 2021-2022 Public Ally, Joe Jankowski. We also welcomed new board member, Gary Linarducci. From working with power tools to politicians, I admire and appreciate each team member's dedication to "veggie-cate the First State"!

This year the HFHK Team:

- built 11 school gardens for 8 new school partners and 3 existing partners
- trained an additional 212 teachers in our "Education Cultivation" curriculum
- piloted 3 new programs: a summer speaker series, an early learning program, and an after-school program

As we begin 2023 and dream of all the future has to hold, I am reminded that the work we are collectively doing to grow the school garden movement here in Delaware is only possible because as gardeners, we seek truth, are determined and most importantly, have hope; because we see it every year in our gardens, that even the

*"Smallest seeds of gratitude will produce a Harvest of Hope".*

**Thank you for all you do to support Healthy Foods for Healthy Kids.**

**We have done a lot already, but we're just getting started and we certainly can't do it without YOU.**

On behalf of Jen, Anita, Rachel, and our Board of Directors, we wish you and yours a very happy and healthy New Year.

With gratitude,

Lydia M. Sarson.  
Executive Director



(L to R): Dr. Ajayi, FMC, speaks to students at Serviam. Board & Staff volunteer at UD's Ag Day. Small spinach seeds produce big smiles at John M. Clayton Elementary

## Rachel, con't.

(cont. from pg. 2)

**HFHK: The Kent & Sussex Counties Coordinator position is new to HFHK. How do you see yourself developing the position, while supporting HFHK's goal to "veggie-cate the First State"?**

**Rachel:** While a major part of our mission is to inspire youths, it is clear that we can't do that without the hard work and dedication we receive from our partner schools and our Garden Coordinators working behind the scenes. I hope, and plan, to turn my position into one that creates a sense of community in Southern Delaware schools and supports all of the teachers supporting our students!

**HFHK: You are affectionately known as our in-house "Nature Nerd". What is your favorite fact to tell students in the garden?**

**Rachel:** I may have to start adding "Nature Nerd" into my email signature!

**Favorite garden fact:** The parts of the broccoli plant we eat are the flower buds!

**Favorite nature fact:** The word 'Mistletoe' is Old-English for 'poop on a stick'!

**P.S.** Watch out everyone, I am excited to say I am undergoing Delaware's Master Naturalist Training this spring, so there will definitely be more where that came from!

**HFHK: Wishbone the Corn Snake has also become a member of the HFHK team. Do snakes have wishbones and what is his favorite vegetable?**

**Rachel:** Snakes, and other reptiles actually don't have wishbones! Birds have them to aid them in flight but one would be totally wasted on my lazy little fella!

You know, I've only ever seen WB eat mice. . . but I bet his favorite would be whichever veggie attracts the most rodents to his plate!

## HFHK Out-and-About!

See us around town? Say hi!



HFHK attended the World Trade Center of Delaware's Gala, where Rep. Lisa Blount Rochester and Lydia Sarson discussed HFHK's program.

(R): Staff retreat with, from L, former team member, Lindsay Lancaster, and current staff Lydia Sarson, Rachel Terracina, Jen Cipolla, and Anita Broccolino at Longwood Gardens



(L): HFHK presented to the Delaware Farm Bureau at their Annual Meeting in December

## COMING SOON...A NEW ONLINE HOME



We are unveiling our new look and website starting mid-February. Please check it out.

As we continue to grow, the site will offer you more ways to get involved with our mission.

## Fall 2022 Recap

(cont. from pg. 1)

While we faced a few issues with unwanted visitors snacking at the garden and cold weather slowing down the growth, our 4th and 5th graders made the most of the garden by working together to practice harvesting, clearing the garden, and covering it for the winter.

### Expansion continues in south Delaware

We continue our efforts in the southern half of the state as we grew our partnership with the Indian River School District. After building Lord Baltimore's garden in late September, we wasted no time getting seeds in the ground. Students took to their tasks with enthusiasm, being sure to bring their best attitudes even on the coldest of days! With the garden next to their playground, students could watch the veggies they planted grow.



(Top & Middle: Jen & Rachel get HFHK's littlest learners ready for planting at IRSD's ELC)



(R): 4th graders harvested radishes during Milton's first harvest



### First foray into early learning program

On a hot day in August, a small crew of HFHK staff and ELC's principal and chief custodian built new garden beds. Soil and planting lessons began in October as excited students worked in their new school garden. In late November, our young gardeners enjoyed their diverse salads filled with a delicious mix of arugula, kale, lettuce, and tatsoi.

This also marks HFHK's first foray into an early learning program. HFHK staff have worked closely with staff at ELC to rewrite our "Education Cultivation" curriculum for the youngest learners. The new songs and activities were a big hit with the students and we discovered 3 year-olds really like to dig!

Milton, Lord Baltimore, and ELC's gardens were all funded by the Longwood Foundation.

## SAVE THE DATE: DOMORE24 IS MARCH 2-3, 2023

Help us reach **our goal of \$3,000** to support our 2023 "Education Cultivation" program.

We are fundraising to purchase supplies schools need for their Spring 2023 growing season, including:

**a wheelbarrow for Forwood Elementary**  
**a storage cabinet for Keene Elementary**  
**shed shelving for South Dover Elementary**  
**200 trowels for planting kits**  
**& many other items!**

On March 2-3, find us at [domore24delaware.org](https://domore24delaware.org)  
 Want to donate now? [Click here!](#)

Make sure to follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#) for all updates!

**DO MORE**  
**DELAWARE** **24**<sup>TM</sup>

**Delaware's Giving Day.**  
**3/2 - 3/3**  
**6 PM - 6 PM**

[DoMore24Delaware.org](https://domore24delaware.org)