

# Emory Urban Health Initiative Food Insecurity Programs/Projects

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## Establishment of Community Gardens:

### **Super Giant Food Store**

- This garden was in a large, visible location on Hollowell Pkwy, in the parking lot of the grocery store.
- We had 26 16' x 4' raised garden beds which were 2' high to facilitate elderly or disabled residents.
- Primary goal was production of produce, which was given to community members for free
- Secondary goal was gardening and nutrition education, through workshops, and daily "garden hours" with trained volunteers. Workshops included "Gardening 101," "Growing Herbs," "Preserving the Harvest," and other topics chosen from community input. Hosted special groups like summer day camps for youth.
- Held community events such as "movie nights," where we showed movies on the side of the building and invited families and had informational booths, free cooked foods, cooking demonstrations, etc.
- This garden and it's programs thrived from 2013 until the store closed and the property was sold in 2016.

### **Magnolia Park Apartments: 2016-2018**

- HUD apartment complex in NW Atlanta food desert area.
- The apartment complex had a community event center where we held focus group sessions with the residents to determine how we could best work with them to meet their needs.

### **NW Youth Power Child Enrichment Center (Daycare):**

- This garden was a collaborative effort with Northwest Youth Power and the Grady Health System Asa G. Yancey Neighborhood Health Center, which was located across the street. In addition to providing food for the kids at the Center and their families, this garden served patients from the Health Center. It also served an encampment of homeless people who lived outdoors in lean-to shelters in the woods nearby.
- Conducted programs geared toward youth (Young Agricultural Entrepreneur Program), and special events for children at the daycare center, such as Harvest Festivals.
- We operated this garden and programs from 2016-2018, when the property was sold.

### **Collier Heights Garden**

- Built and maintained a raised bed community garden in a parking lot adjacent to a private laundry business in the Collier Heights neighborhood—a historic neighborhood

built by African-American planners for the up-and-coming African-American middle class. Participants included nearby residents of Collier Heights, The Laundry Centers customers, and people who would come over from the adjacent MARTA bus stop.

- Primary goal was to teach people to garden and teach about healthy eating. We held weekly workshops to teach community participants how to grow their own container gardens at their homes.
- All food from the garden was given to the community members who visited and/or worked in the garden.

#### Programs/Projects that UHI has conducted that address food insecurity:

- **Young Ag-Entrepreneur Program**, offered at multiple sites. Along with gardening/agricultural skills, the youth in this program were taught business and leadership skills. The goal of the program was to teach these youth, many who had dropped out of high school, (a) job skills that could be used in an entrepreneurial business or other employment, (b) agricultural skills to hopefully bring more opportunities for food access into the community, and (c) leadership skills (taught primarily by leaders within the community) to help develop these young people into future community leaders.
- **Senior Wellness Program** at Johnnie B. Moore Towers: monthly wellness topics, chosen by the residents of this low-income senior resident facility, are given by Emory medical students.
- **Sprouting Readers**, at PAWKids After-School Daycare Center: combines literacy skills with gardening skills and STEM education related to gardening. We have built a school garden at PAWKids to allow the children in the program to have hands-on gardening experiences to enhance the learning they receive from gardening-related books that are read to them. The children are also given books at each session to build their own “library” at home. This program was started in response to the high number of youth in our other programs who had inadequate reading skills—we combined literacy with food access in this initiative.
- **Health Equity and the Social Determinants of Health** course, taught at the Laney Graduate School, Emory University. This inter-professional graduate level course was developed by UHI and has been taught each year for the past 3 years to students from across Emory (Med, Law, Nursing, Grad/Undergrad, etc.), other universities, staff from community organizations, and community members. Includes didactic and hands-on activities to help students understand the effects of various social determinants of health on health equity.
- **Fruit and Vegetable Rx Program**: UHI staff have conducted portions of this program to patients who have been referred by their providers to receive nutrition education.
- **Summer Youth Day Camp**: UHI staff have developed curricula for a summer day-camp program for youth, held at the Urban Food Forest at Browns Mill to learn about “Beginning Farming.”

Programs/Projects that UHI is developing / in the process of initiating:

**Aquaponics Training:** This program is being developed by UHI in collaborating with Truly Living Well and Clark Atlanta University to optimize local food production through aquaponic technology and teach valuable business/job skills to residents in this west-side Atlanta community.

**Therapeutic Gardening:** We have seen the valuable effects of gardening in this community in addressing trauma (from violence or domestic situations), PTSD, depression/loneliness, etc., and are currently working with the THRIVE program at Callenwold Arts Center and others to develop a basic therapeutic gardening program that can be modified for specific targeted populations.

**Women & Girls Gardening Program:** to get more women and girls involved in growing food for their families and learning about how they can create income from gardening and creating value-added products from the harvest.

**Teen Parenting Program:** in collaboration with the Urban Food Forest at Brown's Mill, UHI's contribution to this program will be to teach teen parents about the importance of proper nutrition in early childhood development.

Some of our Community Partners:

Emory University School of Medicine

Rollins School of Public Health

Super Giant Food Store

The Laundry Centers

Northwest Youth Power

Magnolia Park Apartment Complex

PAWKids After School Daycare

Cruz's Fishermen, Inc.

Foodwell Alliance

Truly Living Well

Grow Where You Are

Atlanta Food Bank

City of Atlanta Mayor's Office, Dept. of Urban Agriculture

City of Atlanta, Parks & Recreation

City of Atlanta Police Department, PAL Program

Urban Food Forest at Brown's Mill

Emory School of Medicine

Rollins School of Public Health, Emory University

HERCULES Exposome Research Center

Brenau University  
Georgia Institute of Technology  
Clark Atlanta University  
United Nations Regional Center for Expertise

[Our previous funders:](#)

United States Department of Agriculture, NIFA, Community Foods Projects  
Emerald Corridor Foundation  
HERCULES Exposome Research Center  
United Nations Regional Center for Expertise / Turner Foundation