



**CULTIVATE**  
CHARLOTTESVILLE

City Schoolyard Garden  
Urban Agriculture Collective  
Food Justice Network

NEWSLETTER | VOLUME THREE | ISSUE TEN | NOVEMBER 2022 | REFLECTING ON WHAT MAKES US GRATEFUL

Being from a Native American family, conflicting feelings surrounding this time of year can be overwhelming. In my culture wealth is not measured by how much we can accumulate, but how much we can give away to others. Being surrounded by this amazing team who embodies these values is something that I am indeed thankful for, and am gratified by the work we do TOGETHER selflessly for others. I hope that you can find a moment of stillness in your each day to reflect on what you are grateful for, and that it carries you through your week.

– Amyrose Foll, Urban Agriculture Collective Program Director

## CITY SCHOOLYARD GARDEN

### Digging Right In

During my first month as a youth engagement and garden coordinator, I experienced immersive moments with the students. For Farm to School Week, The CSG team escorted chickens from Charlottesville High School on field trips to see the elementary students. Scratching and snacking in the grass at Burnley-Moran Elementary, the hens grazed while surrounded by curious student spectators. The students approached the chickens with an excited but gentle curiosity, smoothing their feathers with care. As a class, we noted the beauty of their colorful patterns and we considered how chickens create rich soil in the garden.

The students and I plunged deeper into the soil with earthworm lessons. Gazing into the many layers of the “earthworm hotel,” also known as a vermicompost chamber, students marveled at the soil superheroes. With magnifying glasses and trowels, we searched the garden together, discovering an abundance of earthworms. The students screamed with surprise when they learned that earthworm poop, called castings, is the key to healthy soil and therefore everything we eat. Earthworms and chickens, the unsung caretakers of a thriving food system, impressed the students through close-up interactions. What better place than the garden to allow the students to explore these essential creatures?



Emma and her family digging right in at the school gardens



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## URBAN AGRICULTURE COLLECTIVE

### Reflecting on the Growing Season

The Saturday before Thanksgiving, the Cultivate Charlottesville team joined with other area nonprofits for the Unity in the Community Turkey Giveaway and Meet & Ride. While Urban Agriculture Collective (UAC) distributed the remainder of over **1,200 pounds of sweet potatoes** that the team produced during the growing season, The Tonsler League, Uhuru Foundation, Charlottesville Community Bikes, and Dreamin Diamonds handed out bikes, winter coats, and—of course—turkeys!

This was much more than just a one-day event, as UAC spent the summer nurturing these plants for the neighbors with careful intention. And the Cultivate team came together to hand dig all these beautiful tubers over the course of a day; they were subsequently clean, cured, and packed. Many hands, and many hours went into making this possible. We did it as a team. There is a proverb that alone we go fast, but together we go far. Cultivate Charlottesville’s team is a living example of living this praxis for the greater good, and for that I could not be more thankful, or proud.

With Thanksgiving and Native American Heritage Day behind us, we can take the time in the fall, and winter to truly reflect on what the garden gives us, teaches us, and what it means to the vital food justice work we do in the city of Charlottesville. We must not forget to walk in gratitude every day of our lives, but small reminders like coming together around a table with family, and friends is a beautiful, gentle reminder to put thankfulness into practice in our daily lives if we forget.



Top and bottom: Cultivate staff, Prolyfyck Run Creww, Uhuru Foundation, and other community members hand out turkeys and sweet potatoes at Tonsler Parl





**If you are interested in working with Urban Agriculture Collective as a volunteer, or would like to provide in-kind material support please contact [amyrose@cultivatecharlottesville.org](mailto:amyrose@cultivatecharlottesville.org) or [volunteer@cultivatecharlottesville.org](mailto:volunteer@cultivatecharlottesville.org).**

## FOOD JUSTICE NETWORK

### We Believe

The fall season brings not only the changing color of leaves, but it is also a time where the growing season here at Cultivate slows down, making for more cross-program opportunities. This month, our team and the youth food justice interns had the pleasure of hosting the wonderful ladies of “I Believe In Me Girls ” at our CATEC garden. “I Believe In Me” (IBIM) is an organization in Baltimore, Maryland that supports the physical, mental, social, emotional, and financial success of young Black and brown girls. With young ladies from 8 to 18 years-old thoughtfully led by Founder and CEO Cortney Robertson aka “Farmer Cortney”, IBIM focuses on mentorship, engaging community, growing/sharing food, and working to dismantle systemic issues much like what we do here at Cultivate.

Farmer Cortney shared that her passion behind starting the organization came from her grandfather who had a small urban garden when she was young. “I would work with my cousins and friends in the garden,” says Cortney. She spoke about her grandfather’s garden feeding her family and teaching her about establishing independence at a young age which she hopes to instill in her girls.

We began this beautiful Sunday afternoon with a grounding exercise sharing about which fruits and vegetables we most relate to while passing around a ball of yarn. At the end of the exercise, a large web was formed connecting everyone together. Interns Rosy and Markasia showed amazing leadership with a presentation to the group about the Summer Intern Program and what being a youth food justice intern means to them.

**CONTINUE READING**





Young ladies from I Believe in Me Girls interact with Cultivate staff and youth food justice interns at the CATEC farm plot

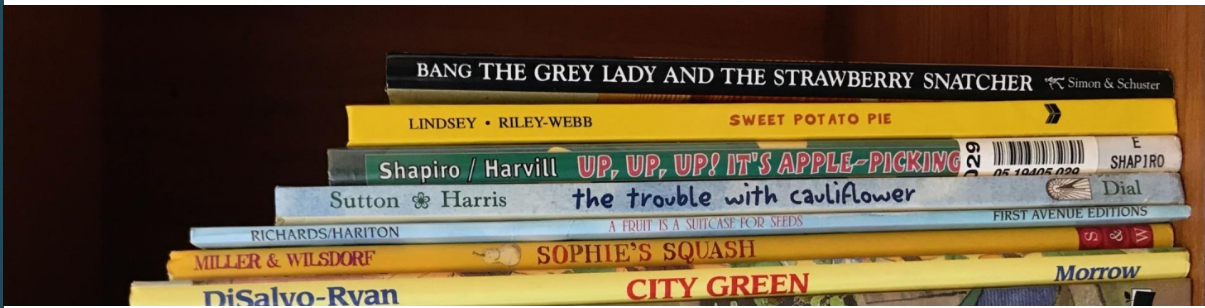
For more information or to join Food Justice Network full team meetings, email [quentia@cultivatecharlottesville.org](mailto:quentia@cultivatecharlottesville.org)

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## TAKE ACTION

Together we can move Charlottesville from a foodie city to a food-E(quity) place for ALL residents!

## CULTIVATE SOCIAL JUSTICE BOOK CLUB



These are some of the things we are reading:

[Eating While Black: Food Shaming and Race in America](#), Psyche A. Williams-Forson, The University of North Carolina Press

[Help Black Farmers, Who Know Hyperlocal Doesn't Mean Fancy](#), Tressie McMillan Cottom, The New York Times

[Redefining Black Farming](#), Iris Crawford, Nonprofit Quarterly



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AND TO ALL OF THE DONORS WHO SUPPORT US DURING THE YEAR!

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At Cultivate Charlottesville we believe that working together to grow gardens, share food and power, and advocate for just systems cultivates a healthy community for all.



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