



2023

ANNUAL REPORT

From Seed  
to Harvest

# DEAR FRIENDS,

As we finished another incredible year at Urban Roots, I found myself reflecting on the cyclical nature of our work, both symbolically and practically. What we do with our youth interns is centered on our Progressive Program Model so that over time – much like the work we do with our plant relatives – we’re helping young people empower themselves to grow into their full potential.



Our Board of Directors and staff have learned so much this past year and are focused on continuous improvement – centering the experience of our youth interns and their individual needs to ensure our youth have all they need to grow. This wouldn’t have been possible without the incredible amount of work, time, and emotional labor of our staff and youth interns who push our organization to meet the evolving needs of our community. I am eternally grateful for and inspired by their leadership and how they’ve helped Urban Roots grow. Their work has allowed us to improve programming not only for youth interns but in other spaces as well, such as our two community gardens, our Culturally Specific Crop Programming partnerships, the Urban Tree Canopy Project and reforestation, community meals, and so much more.

In this year’s Annual Report, you will follow a journey of growth from Seed to Harvest. The successes we’ve had in 2023 are measured by the stories shared in this report and show the commitment all of our stakeholders have in furthering our mission to cultivate and empower youth through nature, healthy food, and community. As we head into 2024, I hope that you’ll continue to support Urban Roots and help us move forward, responding to community needs and creating a better East Side of Saint Paul.

Thank you so much for being a part of our journey and supporting Urban Roots.

Gratefully,

*Hayley Ball*

Executive Director

## *Board of Directors*

Leif Masrud, *President*  
Daniel Yang, *Vice President*  
Amy Thomas, *Secretary*  
Dan King, *Treasurer*  
Tim Dykstal  
Stephanie Harr  
Angie Becker Kudelka  
Zak Buell  
Srinivas Siddabathuni  
Melissa Prenevost  
Jamie Gehan

*It all starts with a seed...*



**Seed Crew**

*1st season*

- At least 10hrs/wk
- Learn the basics of the program

Youth interns first entering our program are part of our seed crew. If an intern decides to come back the next summer to do another internship with us, they are then promoted to the Grow Crew.



## Progressive Program Model

A unique aspect of our youth internships is that we encourage interns to come back year after year, following a progressive program structure. Just like our Market Garden interns sow seeds every spring to enjoy bountiful harvests in the fall, interns also grow and flourish during their time at Urban Roots.

*Seed to Harvest and beyond...*



**Grow Crew**

*2nd season*

- More hours
- Opportunities for special projects, serve as mentors

Once a part of the Grow Crew, interns are eligible for a promotion to become a Harvest Crew intern.



**Harvest Crew**

*3rd season*

- Career field experiences
- Leadership opportunities



**Crew Lead**

*3rd season+*

- YJ2 Positions (16+)
- Have demonstrated leadership & strong Urban Roots Principles

Select interns who go above and beyond get promoted to be Crew Leads. Crew Leads work alongside full time staff to lead work shifts.

# SECTION I: SEED



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## *Foundations of our work*

First year interns at Urban Roots are our Seed Crew. The seed not only represents a new beginning but also the foundation that is laid to grow into something wonderful. Seed Crew interns spend time focusing on first-time job skills like effective communication to set them up for success in any future field. Our mission, support, and staff are the seeds that grow into Urban Roots.

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MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

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## MISSION

Urban Roots is a Saint Paul organization whose mission is to cultivate and empower youth through nature, healthy food, and community.

## VISION

Urban Roots' vision is a world where all communities have unlimited access to nature and healthy food.



## VALUES

### *Experiential Learning*

We are happiest in the field or in the kitchen. Our minds and our hands are always engaged.

### *Stewardship*

We own our responsibility to be caretakers of the resources that we are entrusted with.

### *Transparency*

We cultivate a healthy work environment where staff and youth can be true to themselves and honest with each other.

### *Collaboration and Inclusion*

We achieve more when we work together.

### *Continuous Improvement*

We learn from our mistakes. When opportunities for growth arise, we embrace them.

### *Social Justice and Equity*

We strive for fairness in our communities and the world at large.

### *Fun*

We enjoy what we do and celebrate each other doing it.

### *Diversity*

We honor different perspectives as our strength.

# Financial Summary

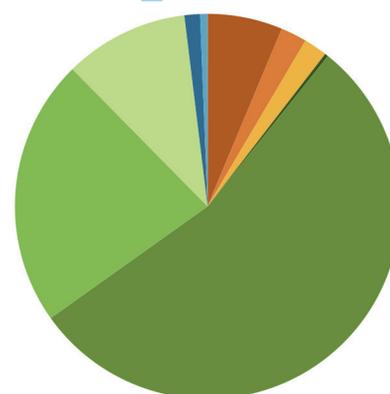


## CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET

<i>Assets</i>	<i>2023</i>	<i>2022</i>
Cash	\$216,331	\$238,362
Investments	\$11,202	\$11,156
Prepays	\$12,441	\$8,264
Contributions Receivable	\$415,632	\$141,086
Property and Equipment	\$178,021	\$95,488
Right of Use Asset	\$75,572	\$155,101
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$909,199</b>	<b>\$649,457</b>

## SUPPORT AND REVENUE

- Individual Gifts
- Corporate Gifts
- VocalPoint
- Non-Profit Gifts
- Grant Income
- Contracts
- Non-financial Contributions (In-Kind)
- Other Income
- Special Events
- Investment



## Liabilities and Net Assets

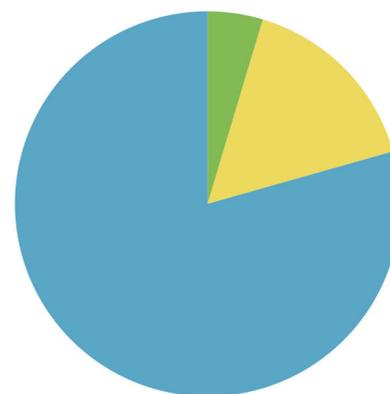
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
Accounts Payable	\$13,938	\$18,712
Notes Payable	\$21,015	\$1,030
Accrued Expenses	\$59,395	\$40,432
Right of Use Liability	\$75,572	\$84,000
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>\$169,920</b>	<b>\$144,174</b>
Long Term Liabilities	\$47,797	\$77,742
Net Assets	\$691,482	\$427,541
<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</b>	<b>\$909,199</b>	<b>\$649,457</b>

## CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

<i>Support and Revenue</i>	<i>2023</i>	<i>2022</i>
<i>Gifts</i>		
Individual Gifts	\$115,097	\$73,042
Corporate Gifts	\$40,012	\$45,811
VocalPoint	\$36,041	\$0
Non-Profit Gifts	\$5,114	\$4,558
<b>Total Gifts</b>	<b>\$196,266</b>	<b>\$123,411</b>
Grant Income	\$994,466	\$527,689
Contracts	\$411,013	\$144,196
Non-Financial Contributions (In-Kind)	\$190,887	\$136,286
<b>Contributions and Gifts Total</b>	<b>\$1,792,632</b>	<b>\$931,582</b>
Other Income	\$23,912	\$30,375
Special Events	\$11,124	\$48,908
Investment Income	\$244	\$537

## EXPENSES

- Fundraising
- Management and General
- Program



## Expenses

Program	\$1,241,653	\$932,250
Management and general	\$249,880	\$219,660
Fundraising	\$72,438	\$57,865
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$1,563,971</b>	<b>\$1,209,775</b>





# THANK YOU!

We extend heartfelt gratitude to our dedicated volunteers, generous donors, steadfast foundation and corporate supporters, invaluable community partners, vibrant network of community members, supportive youth families, and the individuals who choose to make a positive impact by purchasing from us. Your collective commitment and support fuel our mission, empowering youth and fostering a thriving community.

**Thank you for sowing the seeds of success!**

# Staff



## Top Row (left to right):

Anthony Meng, *Phillips Scholar-Food Storytelling Project*; Skyleer Hawkins, *Market Garden Farm Manager*; Adora Thao, *Market Garden Crew Lead*; Zarea Mobley, *Office Manager*; David Woods, *Conservation Program Director*

## Third Row:

Haley Spann, *Climate Impact Corps Community Stewardship Facilitator*; Megan Myers, *Climate Impact Corps Community Stewardship Facilitator*; Moua Yang, *Conservation Crew Lead*; Thia Xiong, *Conservation Program Manager*; Chris Weikert, *Conservation Crew Lead*; Basil, *Office Dog*; Hayley Ball, *Executive Director*; Sara Johnson, *Development and Events Manager*

## Second Row:

Astrid Berger, *Cook Fresh Program Coordinator*; Paloma Cardoza, *Market Garden Youth Coordinator*; Jaclyne Jandro, *Market Garden Education Manager*; Alex Kucich, *Conservation Program Coordinator*; Elżbieta Martínez-Kukowski, *Cook Fresh Program Manager*

## Bottom (Front) Row:

Alfredo Alvarado, *Mobile Market Coordinator*; Imogene Silver, *Communication Assistant*

Not Pictured: Whitney Barkley, *Climate Impact Corps Community Stewardship Facilitator*; Marcos Giossi, *Market Garden Farm Coordinator*; Sam Mockert, *MN GreenCorps Member*

# SECTION II: GROW



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## *How we grow*

Once a seed is established, it's time to grow grow grow! Growth can be measured in many ways from the size of the roots to the size of the leaves, but one thing remains certain - growth will not happen without the proper inputs. In this section, we highlight how our programs and activities are the “nutrients” for growth.

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# Our Programs



Youth interns at Urban Roots are enrolled in one of three program options: Conservation, Market Garden, and Cook Fresh.

## *Market Garden Program*

Youth in the Market Garden program participate in small-scale crop production at our urban gardens while engaging with our hands-on curriculum. Interns practice valuable job and life skills through growing food - becoming stewards of their environment and communities. The produce that's grown 1) goes to the Cook Fresh program to be made into shared meals for interns across all three programs, 2) is taken to farmers markets including our Mobile Market, and 3) is distributed to East Saint Paul community hunger relief efforts.

*total enrollment: 27*

## *Cook Fresh Program*

In the “farm-to-table” paradigm, Cook Fresh is the table to Market Garden’s farm. Working with seasonal crops from local farms, including and especially our own, interns learn valuable skills in food preparation, safety, and planning. The curriculum focuses on nutrition, career exploration, and the cultural importance of food. Interns cook alongside community chefs and help to document the food stories of the world around them.

*total enrollment: 18*

## *Conservation Program*

Conservation youth interns support and improve green spaces around the East Side and participate in the restoration of local parks through removal of displaced plant species, native seed collection, and installation of native plants. Interns learn hands-on skills through the installation and maintenance of rain and pollinator gardens in public and private spaces. Youth also engage in citizen science projects, such as insect surveys, water sampling, and forest inventories.

*total enrollment: 36*

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*total youth employed: 81*

# Conservation Program



**2023 was another amazing year for the Conservation Program. We had 36 interns, with 15 of them being returners, a new record!**

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## *BUSY AS BEES AT THE RIVOLI SITE*

The Rivoli Bluff Farm and Restoration Site received a lot of our attention this year. We continued restoring areas unfit for farming throughout the site, using cardboard and black plastic to smother displaced plants like crown vetch and bindweed to create a weed-free area that we planted with hundreds of native wildflowers, grasses, trees, and shrubs in the fall.

Last year we received an observation hive - a special type of honey bee hive that allows people to peer through a window into the hive without having to put on a suit. The observation hive got a lot of use this summer with all of our interns learning about honey bees, along with hundreds of children who visited Rivoli or saw our bees elsewhere, since the observation hive is also mobile! As a crowning achievement, for the first time in a few years, our bees produced enough excess honey for us to be able to harvest some! We left 100lbs for each hive to eat throughout the winter and collected 70lbs. We think that's pretty sweet!

We also had a few construction projects. Interns built a small bridge and staircase to create a walking path loop around the site, and volunteers helped us build a new gravel bed nursery, triple the size of our existing one. With this, we can grow many more trees next year to help our efforts reforesting the East Side.

## *BATTLE CREEK POLLINATOR GARDEN*

In the spring we took on a project in partnership with Metro Blooms and Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District to put in a 10,000 square foot pollinator garden at Battle Creek near the Battle Creek Picnic Shelter. Interns and volunteers help to cut, roll, and haul out more rolls of sod than we could count, preparing the area to be planted by school children in the spring and fall.



## *IMPROVING TREE CANOPY ON THE EAST SIDE*

The fall was tree-mendous! Our two new Climate Impact Corps members helped to distribute 58 bare root trees to East Side residents to improve tree canopy coverage. Our interns did the majority of our plantings for the year, planting native wildflowers, grasses, trees, and shrubs at Rivoli, the Pocket Park on Jessamine, and Harvest Park in Maplewood.

New for us, we joined The Nature Conservancy to receive training and then set out collecting tree seeds to increase production of tree seedlings, helping The Nature Conservancy's goal of reforesting one million acres in Minnesota by 2045. We collected oak seeds (acorns) since it was a mast year (oak trees go in cycles of boom years - 'mast years' - where they produce a lot of acorns, followed by a few years of much smaller crops). In just two days, we collected 20 gallons of acorns!





## *NATURE JOURNALS*

The summer was our second year using our nature journals - an education curriculum developed in-house that encourages youth to explore their relationship with the natural world and find connections between nature, themselves, and their community.

Some highlights from our interns' journal experiences included:

- Learning how to identify common birds in the area
- Learning how to identify plants based on their flower structure
- Exploring the connections between the migration monarch butterflies partake in each year and the interns' own stories of migration in their and their family's lives

## *FOR THE BIRDS...AND SCIENCE*

We had two special program offerings for youth interns this summer. **Bird by Bird** is a program through the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources that worked to increase interns' appreciation and understanding of birds, building up their birding confidence and skills with the goal of them leading bird walks with community members in Spring 2024.

**Science Deep Dive** grew from our relationship with the Snell-Rood and Santelli labs at the University of Minnesota, exploring ecological impacts of urban contaminants at our Rivoli Bluff Farm and Restoration Site. Nine youth participated in Science Deep Dive, working each week with research scientists to develop their own questions and then experiment at Rivoli. Interns explored the impact on plant health and growth of different soils and compost found at Rivoli.

# Cook Fresh Program



As we reflect on Cook Fresh's journey in 2023, we celebrate growth, collaboration, and a commitment to creating positive culinary experiences. **Here's to a future filled with delicious adventures and impactful community connections!**

## *CELEBRATING CHEF-LED LUNCHES*

We continued the beloved tradition of Chef-Led Lunch, welcoming six accomplished chefs to collaborate with our youth interns. Throughout the summer, chefs shared their expertise while making lunch for 100+ interns, staff, and others each week. Our interns sharpened their knives and culinary skills while also honing their public speaking abilities as they introduced each dish to a hungry audience.



## *YOUTH-LED LUNCH PROGRAM EXPANSION*

Building on the success of Chef-Led Lunch, Grow and Harvest Crew interns planned and executed their own lunches in the Youth-Led Lunch initiative. This hands-on experience enhanced interns' culinary knowledge and provided opportunities for leadership and increased responsibility.



## *PARTNERING WITH OUR EAST SIDE NEIGHBORS*

In collaboration with Farnsworth Aerospace and Saint Paul Public Schools' Flipside program, we extended our reach to provide after-school programming for middle schoolers. We aimed to nurture the students' culinary talents and interests, fostering a passion for cooking and creativity. We also deepened our partnership with M Health Fairview's VeggieRx program, regularly packing hundreds of food boxes for distribution to ensure that fresh, healthy produce reached more of our community.



## *CROSS-PROGRAMMING FOR HOLISTIC LEARNING*

To deepen learning and connections, all programs participated in "switch days" in which visiting interns tried out a different program for the day, and hosting interns shared knowledge and skills in their internship area. In Cook Fresh, we began weekly skill-and-knowledge-sharing sessions centered around the "ingredient of the week." Market Garden interns selected a crop they were growing, and Cook Fresh interns delved into its culinary uses. The culmination involved both crews coming together to share knowledge, cook collaboratively, and break bread (literally and figuratively), creating a deeper connection between food cultivation and consumption.



## *PAVING THE WAY FOR THE MOBILE KITCHEN*

We tested the concept of pay-what-you-can meals from our Mobile Kitchen. This was a pilot for our goal to offer weekly lunches throughout the summer of 2024, informed largely by youth input. Our hope is to provide interns with leadership and entrepreneurial opportunities while also ensuring that nutritious, fresh, culturally relevant meals are not just a privilege for some but an option for everyone in our community.

## *HERE'S THE STORY... OF SOME TASTY FOOD*

The Food Stories project thrived in 2023, focusing on community storytelling and youth empowerment alike. Youth experienced the cultural richness and life lessons of our community through recipes and the stories behind them. Community members and interns made dishes such as Fried Green Tomatoes with a Spicy Ranch Sauce and Hearty Taiwanese Dumplings. We're excited to soon bring forth a cookbook that celebrates the culinary heritage of our community - stay tuned!



# Market Garden Program



**Our Market Garden Program implemented many new and exciting activities this year that helped us thrive and reach more youth and community.**

## *NEW FOOD DISTRIBUTION MODEL*

Based on youth feedback, we moved away from our Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) model. Instead, we sold produce at Mill City Farmers Market and our own Mobile Market at Arlington Hills Library. We also sold plant starts at Mill City Farmers Market for the first time. We got food to the local community through our partner nonprofit CLUES, and, importantly, we focused more heavily on getting food to our Cook Fresh program and into the hands (and mouths) of our interns.





## *IT'S ALIVE!*

For the first time, our advanced interns had their own garden plots for experimentation. They were responsible for independently planning, planting, tending, and harvesting a 3'x7' raised bed. Advanced interns also partnered with our Cook Fresh program every Friday to learn new ways to cook a different crop harvested fresh from the garden that week.



## *FULL STEAM AHEAD*

We set aside more time for our STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math) programming, incorporating more themes of culture, history, and food justice during our weekly Green Your Mind educational sessions. We participated in more on-farm soil research than ever in partnership with the University of Minnesota, University of Minnesota Extension, and University of St. Thomas.



## *LEARNING FROM COMMUNITY*

Youth learned about different growing methods from community experts in our Culturally Specific Crop Partnerships. We invited individuals from CLUES, Karen Organization of Minnesota, and Wakan Tipi Awanyankapi to grow a crop of their choosing at our Rivoli Bluff Farm and Restoration Site. Community partners then engaged with our youth around the crop they were growing - sharing stories, techniques, recipes, and memories. These partnerships aim to celebrate the varied expertise in both agriculture and land stewardship on the East Side of Saint Paul and expose garden interns to many different approaches to growing food.



## CAN YOU BE-LEAF OUR OUTREACH?!

- Our Community Garden program grew to **40 families!**
- In partnership with Arlington Hills Library, we hosted **more** Storytime in the Garden events **than ever.**
- Children from 30 Thousand Feet, an East Side nonprofit, visited the garden **weekly** this summer.
- We hosted over **300 elementary school students** from Saint Paul Public Schools for garden field trips!



*"I honestly think my older coworkers are my mentors, and I'm very grateful. I'm glad that we're close in age, so we can relate so much. I can see how much they have changed over time and how dedicated they are to what they do at Urban Roots. I like to help my new coworkers too with things they might not be used to and assist them. I love creating new friendships with them."*



*-ARIANA, CONSERVATION GROW CREW INTERN*



# Growth Snapshots

*This seems like a good spot!*



*chicken*

## YEAR OF THE ~~RABBIT~~

We added some new team members this year! After a rocky start and some trial and error we have a wonderful flock of six chickens who laid their first eggs by the end of the year. Staff members who are part of “Team Chicken” take care of the chickens’ daily needs, and we are excited to integrate the chickens into our youth programming in 2024!

## VOCALPOINT CHORUS

We were honored to be selected as the community partner for VocalPoint Chorus’ final season! VocalPoint is a unique chorus that collaborates with other artists (such as MaMuse and Shruthi Rajasekar) and amplifies the work of nonprofits. The chorus was founded on the belief that music is a powerful medium for social change. Putting together a concert using the power of people, art, and collaboration to tell the stories of organizations doing life-changing work. The concerts were beautiful and moving, and we’re so grateful for the support they provided.



*MaMuse member  
Karisha Longaker*



Visit from Mayor Carter

## *BUDGET AND BROCCOLINI*

We had a great morning hosting the East Side Area Business Association's Coffee Break with Mayor Carter at our Rivoli site. Mayor Carter led a City Budget Community Conversation, and we had great coffee thanks to Tiny Footprint Coffee. The Rivoli Bluff Farm and Restoration Site is a great site for community gatherings and, yes, we did grow broccolini behind the barn!

## *CAMP DU NORD*

In the summer, YMCA Camp du Nord gave us the generous gift of a camping trip in Minnesota's North Woods! Forty-nine interns and staff boarded the bus for the long ride up to Ely and continued down Echo Trail to the camp's picturesque spot on Burntside Lake. There we were welcomed by enthusiastic staff and made our way to the Pine Point field to set up our tents. We spent the next two days hiking, fishing, doing crafts, canoeing, playing all-camp games, singing, having campfires, swimming, and taking saunas. Du Nord treated us with home-cooked meals three times a day and incredible hospitality. Interns experienced some of the most beautiful scenery Minnesota has to offer and continued building their relationship with nature. We made memories together and strengthened our team, helping us all do the hard work in the gardens, parks, and kitchens back at home.



Canoe adventure!



Beautiful day for a hike



# SECTION III: HARVEST



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## *Outcomes and results*

The harvest is the reward for all of the time and energy spent on planting and growth. In this section, learn about our “harvest” in terms of outcomes and results, from our stellar interns to our work with our community.

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# Youth Spotlight



Adora is embarking on a new adventure as a Horticulture Apprentice at Como Park Zoo and Conservatory after several years with us. Although we're saddened by her departure, we find joy in knowing that her journey aligns with the goals of our work - to inspire and empower youth.

Read about her journey.



## *FIRST YEAR - SEED CREW*

My first year (Seed Crew year) at Urban Roots was in the summer of 2021. It was the second job I've had in my life, so I felt pretty prepared to show my fullest potential as a worker. I showed up everyday with my yellow Urban Roots shirt, a bright attitude, and a lot of initiative. I wanted to show that I'm great at whatever I'm doing. The staff were so welcoming and kind, and that positive energy stuck around for the entirety of summer. This impression was the reason why I continued into the fall, the year that came next, and the year after that.

**I loved it so much here that I was convinced I'd stay forever.**

## *SECOND YEAR - CREW LEAD*

At the beginning of my second year I was approached with the opportunity to become Market Garden's Crew Lead because of the skill sets that I had shown from just the previous year. I was proud that what I wanted to put forward was shown clearly. I continued with the mindset of working my best everyday, only this time I would be a leader to all the youth. I enjoyed my second summer as a Crew Lead. I felt like I was pushed out of my comfort zone in a positive way that improved me for what's ahead. Staff also got pushed out of their comfort zones with me. It took both sides working and learning together. Being one of the first Crew Leads at Urban Roots there was a lot of trial and error, both for staff and myself, and we've learned a lot from the addition of these positions.



## THIRD YEAR AND FORWARD

My third and final year was a roller coaster. As Crew Lead, I was a staff member working a full-time position and experiencing the “behind the scenes.”

Youth Council is a group of advanced interns who provide youth voice in Urban Roots’ work and take on special projects. I took charge of Youth Council, and now I’m the one who introduces what Youth Council is to new people.

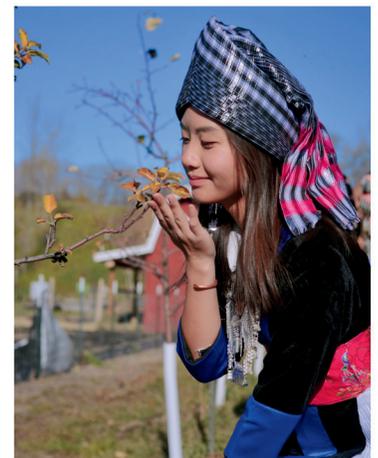
Youth feedback asked staff for more opportunities, so they brought in trips, extracurricular activities, and even provided meals to support youths’ lives outside of work. I would say that the theme of my final year here was advocating for youth voice. Even after I leave, there’ll definitely still be more of that, but I’m glad to be leaving knowing that our staff here at Urban Roots will do the best that they can to have us be heard and improve.

I spent three, almost four, years at Urban Roots. I bring along my relationships with everyone here when I leave, and I hope to leave my legacy. **I couldn’t have asked for a better place to inspire my future, give me opportunities, and provide a safe space to develop.**



Adora Thao

Market Garden Crew Lead



# 2023 Outcomes

**81**  
youth interns

**54**  
Seed Crew Interns

**17**  
Grow Crew Interns

**5**  
Harvest Crew Interns

**5**  
Crew Lead Interns

**Progressive Program Model**

**58** trees planted in collaboration with Frogtown Green given to the community to improve green spaces



**3231** trees, shrubs, and grasses planted



**6**  
Chickens added to the family

**204** acres of parkland monitored by Conservation interns



**5** gardens, totaling **1.5 acres**  
**15000lbs** of produce grown

**211** hours spent at farmers markets



**1000** meals prepared and served by Cook Fresh

**70 lbs** of honey harvested from our bees



*A Year of*  
**URBAN ROOTS**

**20** Professional chefs engaged



**12** Recipes collected from community members

**793** Community volunteers with a combined total of **3,403** service learning hours

**100** Community garden plots



**98** SPECIES of native seeds collected



**3,290** Community members engaged



**2** vans added to the pack



**20 GALLONS** of native tree seeds collected



# Harvest Snapshots

## FARM FAMILY OF THE YEAR

We were grateful to be named Ramsey County's "Family Farm of the Year" by the University of Minnesota Extension. Farm Manager Skyler Hawkins and Executive Director Hayley Ball journeyed to Morgan, MN to accept the honor on behalf of Urban Roots at Farm Fest. In addition to accepting the award, Hayley and Skyler connected with farmers from across the state.



Hayley and Skyler accepting the award

## ESABA COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY AWARD

The East Side Area Business Association (ESABA) is committed to providing meaningful connections to the diverse business community on the East Side of Saint Paul. They awarded us the "Commitment to Community" award, which recognizes a member that is dedicated, active, and involved in the community. Thank you to everyone who voted for us!



Thank you East Side!

## COOKING WITH YIA VANG

Phillips Scholars celebrated completion of their projects at a special dinner prepared by Chef Yia Vang. One of the Scholars was our very own Food Storytelling Project Lead Anthony Meng whose project focused on "bringing affordable and healthy food to people while simultaneously ensuring their autonomy and dignity."

In addition to celebrating Anthony and all of the Phillips Scholars, some of our youth interns had the incredible opportunity to cook with Chef Yia Vang! Vang is a famous local chef who is, according to PBS, "at the forefront of introducing the Twin Cities and the nation" to Hmong food. The meal included Hmong pork sausage, Hill Tribe grilled chicken, and Khao Sen rice noodles served family-style over banana leaves. **Yum!**



Selfie Time!

# In the News



## USDA VIDEO

**February 7, 2023**

*Urban Roots Minnesota Promotes Urban Farming*

During the summer of 2022, we were visited by the USDA with their professional camera crew to learn more about the work we do. They released the video - which is available for viewing on the USDA's YouTube channel - in February 2023.

## PIONEER PRESS

**March 26, 2023**

*Urban Roots brings environmental education to St. Paul elementary school*

*Excerpt: "Whoa-hhhh," came a murmur from a group of 64 Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School students when they learned that the humble oak tree can live for more than 200 years."*

## WCCO NEWS

**July 29, 2023**

*St. Paul Urban Farm Celebrates New Federal Funding*

*Excerpt: "Urban Roots hosted the Rivoli Bluff Bash on the east side of St. Paul, showing off their gardens and urban agriculture space that serves as an open-air classroom."*

## WANDERING NATURALIST PODCAST

**September 6, 2023**

*Episode 179 - Access through the community: Urban Roots*

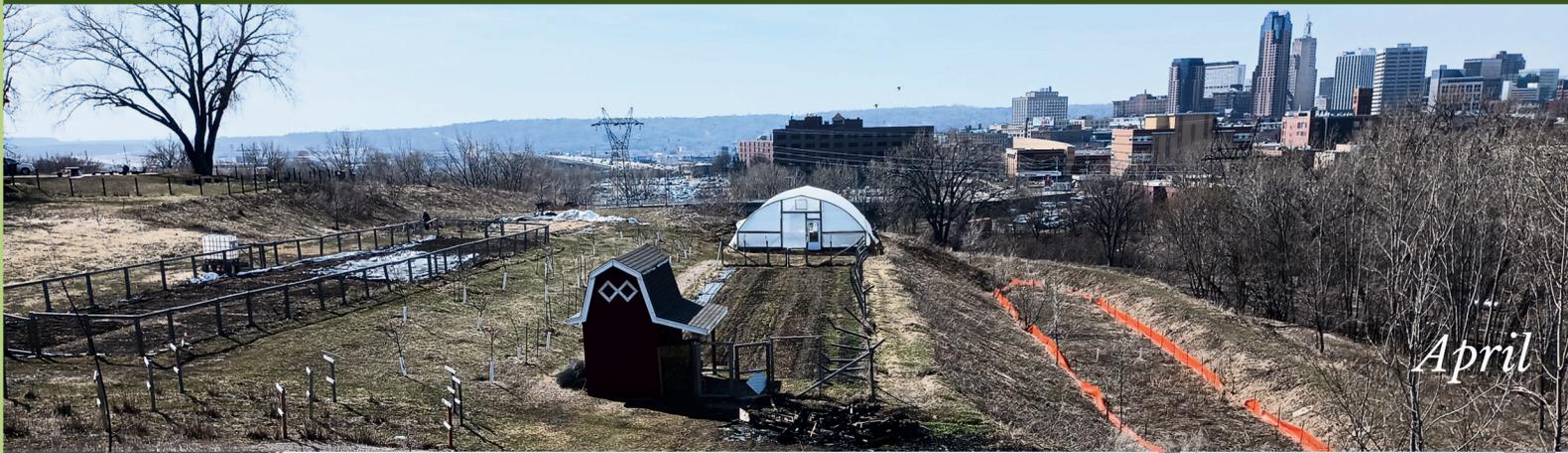
*Excerpt: "David Woods, Conservation Program Director for Urban Roots, joins us to discuss how Urban Roots in St. Paul works to encourage youth to enter careers in the outdoor field."*

## STAR TRIBUNE

**October 10, 2023**

*Teenagers work at St. Paul farm to improve neighborhood access to fresh food*

*Excerpt: "Above the traffic humming along Interstate 35 and buttressing a rail line, a dozen students stuck garden forks into black soil, prepping the earth for the fall crop of garlic. 'I like planting,' said Suabzookatrina 'Nana' Vang, a 17-year-old graduate of an online high school. 'It's sometimes peaceful with the weather.'"*



*April*



*June*



*September*



*December*



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