

SERVING THE COMMUNITY SINCE 1994

2018 ANNUAL REPORT



PLANTING SEEDS. EMPOWERING YOUTH.

WWW.COMMUNITYGROWS.ORG



Our Mission

To cultivate healthy youth through growing gardens
in low-income, diverse communities.



A Message from the Director

*"It's Salad Day!" shouted a 3rd grader, jumping up and down on the edge of a bed of arugula. "Thank you to the volunteers who came out to help us... thank you to all of us who made the salad... and **thank you to whoever invented salad in the first place!**" she said.*

2018 was a great year. For CommunityGrows and for salad. In 2018, we strengthened the connection between our environmental and nutrition education classes through **a special Salad Day for each classroom at Rosa Parks Elementary School**. The students started their class by planting ingredients which they harvested, prepared and ate together, culminating in a celebration on their last day in the garden. In turn, we officially **combined our garden and cooking programs into the Seed to Mouth Garden and Nutrition Education Program** to cement our commitment to teaching a streic curriculum that combines gardening, environmentalism, health and wellness, and justice.

In addition, in 2018 we **doubled our engagement in community events**, officially **joined the Western Addition Health and Wellness Coalition**, and we **ended the year with a financial surplus** which will allow us to strategically, and sustainably, grow in 2019.

I'm very excited for what this next year will bring. We're working to expand our in-school education classes through exciting new partnerships and to raise our BEETS stipend rates to minimum wage!

And we couldn't do any of this vital work without you, the community, the parents, neighbors, supporters... and most of all the amazing, funny, smart, resilient, creative kids that inspire and teach us every day. And a special thank you to whoever invented salad.

In gratitude and community,



Kelly ErnstFriedman
Executive Director
CommunityGrows

Photo by Catherine Gregory

OUR VISION

That all youth have the opportunity to reach adulthood as healthy, eco-literate leaders of their communities.



84 Recipes Learned

429 Garden & Cooking Classes

1,042 Youth Served

Planting Seeds.

Empowering Youth.



Photo by Catherine Gregory

OUR IMPACT

Our Mission: To cultivate healthy youth through growing gardens in low-income, diverse neighborhoods.



**Safe Outdoor
Experiences**



**Healthy and Nutritious
Foods**



**Teen Job
Skills Training**

In the last year, we improved our financial sustainability, began strengthening the connection between our garden and nutrition programs, and increased our after-school partnerships, helping over 1,300 children experience the joy of planting, watching something grow, harvesting and eating their own food, and practicing job and life skills. Through our free programs, kids and youth reconnected with the earth; learned about the environment and nature while building STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math) skills; and cultivated and ate the nutritious food necessary to lead the healthy, active lives they deserve. For our BEETS (Band of Environmentally Educated and Employable Teens), they took this one step further by increasing the amount of green space in the Buchanan Mall by planting gardens along the five block stretch in the Western Addition, and teaching the community how to grow and prepare healthy meals.

Click on the icons above to learn more about our approach!





89%

**Reported
Significant Increase
in Knowledge**

The majority of teachers said their students showed significant increase in environmental knowledge

73%

**Eat More
Vegetables**

Elementary-aged kids who took our classes said they increased their interest in and consumption of nutritious food.

88%

**Learned How to
Make Healthier
Choices for
Themselves**

Our teens learned the importance of making nutritious food choices for their bodies and communities and why self care, such as fresh air and meditation, helps you reach your goals.

Looking Forward

In 2019, we want to strategically expand capacity to provide in-school garden and nutrition programming. Last year we had four schools reach out about bringing programming to their students. For each additional \$20,000 we raise, we will be able to place a half-time garden educator at one additional school, reaching 250-500 additional youth per year.



Financial Snapshot

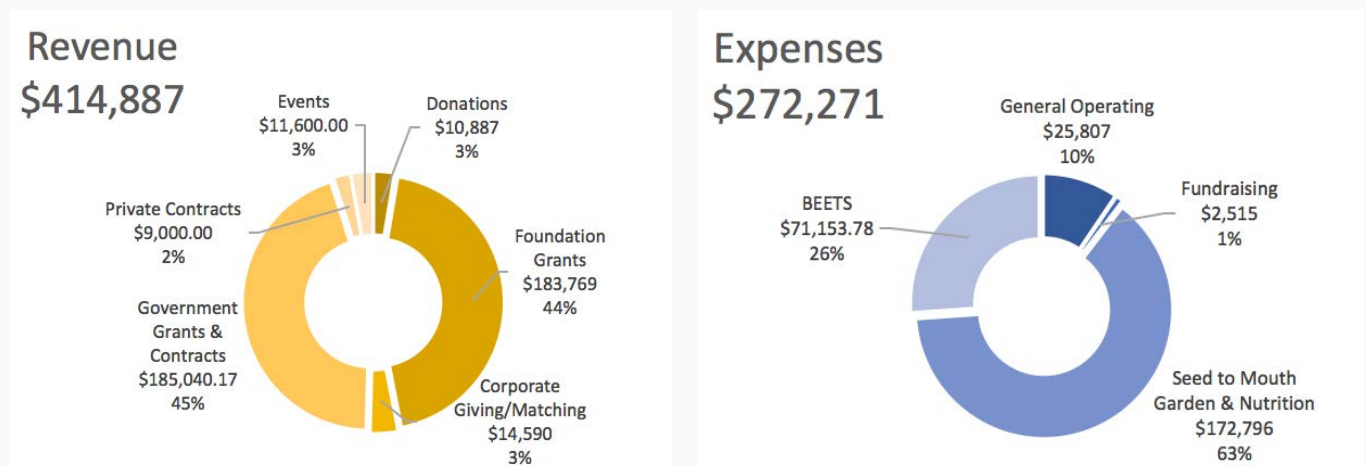
Building A Reserve

In order to ensure that youth in our programs continue to receive high quality, garden-based environmental and nutrition education in years where we face funding challenges, we created a short- and long-term strategy that combined reducing expenses and increasing fundraising in order to create a more sustainable budget. We reached out to key funders and partners and were able to build a 3-month reserve without sacrificing program quality or number of youth we serve.

2018 Key Financial Points

- We are a small but mighty organization! With our budget of ~\$270k we provided programming to 2 schools, 15 non-profits and community-based organizations, ultimately serving over 1,300 youth.
- In 2018 our focus was on delivering high-quality programs and rebuilding the organization's reserves after a challenging 2017 and in preparation for a strong future. We were fortunate to end 2018 with a significant surplus that allowed us to meet both of those goals.
- Thanks to a multi-year grant from the Department of Children, Youth and Their Families, our government revenue stream increased five-fold. In 2019 we will continue to work to diversify other areas of revenue including individual donations, corporate giving and expanding our foundation grants.

Revenue and Expenses



"I enjoyed watching the kids explore the outdoor garden classroom with wonder and excitement. Whether it was learning to germinate seeds in a Ziploc bag, picking and eating cherry tomatoes, or digging for worms in the dirt, there was never a dull moment. My favorite memory of the class was the day that the kids participated in a scavenger hunt around the garden to find items that could be described using a certain word, such as "smooth" or "fuzzy". The kids loved searching for these new items, and the hunt helped them really become familiar with the garden."

- Haley, K-5 garden class volunteer.



THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS!!



We'd like to give a special thank you to Cissy Geballe and the Eucalyptus Foundation, Mrs. Phyllis K. Friedman, and the Rosa Parks PTA for their continuing support and partnership.

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- Cobb Elementary School ExCEL Program
- Faces SF
- Good Samaritan Family Resource Center / Vision Academy
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- Green Streets
- Hayes Valley Art Works
- Hayward Rec Connect
- Japanese Community Youth Council
- John Muir Elementary School
- Magic Zone
- Mo' MAGIC
- Prince Hall Learning Center
- Rosa Parks Elementary School
- San Francisco Recreation & Parks Department
- Up On Top
- Village Project
- Western Addition Beacon Center
- Willie Mays Boys & Girls Club at Hunters Point
- Youth Art Exchange

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762 Fulton St., San Francisco, CA 94703 | (415) 795-3855 | communitygrows.org