

Dallas Youth Garden News 2022 Annual Summary

It was a relief this year not to be impacted by Covid19. Unfortunately, we had the worst spring weather since our first year in 2013. Interns started May 2nd and spent the first week developing a plan for their 25'x50' garden. On May 11th, they helped clean up after the annual Polk County Master Gardener's plant sale. It was great to assist the master gardeners at this event after its absence the past two years.



This year DYG employed two senior interns, Chloe and Sophia. Both were garden interns for multiple years. It was nice to have their help and understanding of intern requirements from their past work at the garden.

BAD! Due to a very cold and wet spring we did not start planting until late May. Then in mid-June we had a big rain storm which turned the garden into a giant puddle with many areas covered by over an inch of water. Young plants, especially tomatoes, and newly planted seeds need water but too much is very bad. Interns took the disaster in stride and, where needed, re-planted starts and seeds. This set the garden back by about a month. After planting and replanting, interns mulched their gardens with recycled paper and straw. Post mulching our interns installed tomato cages. We replaced more of our older tomato cages with funds donated from Maps Community Foundation. We also put-up fences for pole beans. Given the success of last years experiment, we planted more pole-beans this year.



May weather was



In early July, our interns harvested their first crop of radishes and lettuce. Additional harvests in July continued to be light as the summer squash were slow to recover from the very wet June. In July we completed a team exercise where interns researched what sustainable gardening is and came up with following definition as it applies to the Dallas Youth Garden: "Sustainable gardening means gardening in a smart and ecofriendly way without harming the environment." We also took a field trip in Dancing Oaks Nursery. We had a great tour from Fred, one of the owners. Interns learned about the nursery business, job opportunities, perennial plants, and low impact water requirements of some plants.

Interns spent August weeding, watering and harvesting. It was a relief in August to perform standard garden tasks. Unfortunately, the weeds, which are well adapted to Oregon weather were not adversely affected by the cold spring. Interns had to be especially diligent in their weeding efforts. We had a great open house in mid-August. Intern family members and friends were treated to great garden tours and had lots of treats provided by the garden supervisors. In September, we closed the formal garden season and in early October put the garden to bed. Our harvest and donation of produce this year was significantly lower than previous years at just over 1500 pounds. But the work ethic and efforts put forth by our interns made it a great year!



In addition to gardening, interns learned several soft job skills. They had to track their attendance and their allotted days off, start time and end time each work day, and had to document their weekly activity on their web page blog. www.dallasouthgarden.com.

Each intern was also required to complete at least three projects this year. They worked at the Polk County Family and Community Outreach food center where they helped with restocking shelves and learned how our produce donations get used by our partners. Interns also learned about the finances related to having a job. They were required to fill out a W9 form and research what this form was used for. Several also elected to open bank accounts. Some elected to use produce they grew to make something to eat. They shared their recipes on the web site and often brought their treats in to share with the group. Several



interns also chose to research a garden problem including understanding primary garden nutrients, learning why tomatoes plants can be "droopy" and what cucumber bugs are. They shared their experiences with each other during our weekly Saturday breaktime. When asked at seasons end about what they had learned, they said the following:

- Time management & how to work with a boss (job skills)
- How to take care of plants and a garden. For example, how to read your plants and how you have to problem solve.
- Cabbages can split
- Learning about agriculture. I had fun learning how to weed, pick, plant, etc.
- What 'DILL' was
- How different vegg grow
- Not everything has to be perfect. Some plants and veggies are silly shapes and sizes, and that's okay, because they're for an important cause.
- Friendship can be important, but shouldn't be an absolute priority in a workplace.
- Not every plant looks the same
- Some gardens do better for reasons out of the intern's control (water flooding, cucumber bugs)
- I learned how to best manage my time to get the most done I could when I was at work.
- I also learned how to work with other people in a work environment. This includes the supervisors and co-workers.
- How to take care of a garden
- Weeds are annoying

Again, we had great support from our garden supervisors who donated one to two hours a week to work in the garden and assist our interns. A big thanks to our supervisors: Amanda, Abby, Annie and our master gardeners Teresa, Sheila, and Amelia. Everyone especially appreciated Amelia's Saturday treats. We also had great support this season from a variety of individuals and organizations including: Polk County Family and Community Outreach for sponsoring our program. Dallas Community Foundation, Polk County, and Polk County Master Gardeners with funding for interns. Old Mill Feed & Garden, Maps Community Foundation, Wilco and Sally Davies for providing funds and/or discounts for much needed equipment and supplies. The City of Dallas and Trinity Lutheran Church for providing water and land for the garden. Polk County Extension and 4H and Dallas High School with assistance in hiring. Anderson Mobile Service for providing straw for mulching and equipment transportation. A very big thanks to Anna and Bernie Salgado for the donation of a practically new riding lawn mower! Finally, a big thanks to Linda Fox and the Master Gardeners for such beautiful plant starts and the many other individuals who contributed time and materials that made our season a success.

ANNUAL GARDEN TOTALS

Year	Interns Hired	Produce Donated
2013	6	800
2014	8	6000
2015	8	4700
2016	9	5700
2017	9	3500
2018	10	3200
2019	11	3100
2020	12	5200
2021	10	4200
2022	10	1500
Total	93	37900

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