

## Community Food Funders Briefing

You are invited to a special briefing for funders:

### How Youth are Transforming the Food Justice Movement

Monday, July 23, 2012  
Noon to 2:00 p.m.

James Beard Foundation,  
167 West 12th St, New York, NY 10011

Co-Sponsored by Community Food Funders, James Beard Foundation,  
Levitt Foundation, Merck Family Fund, New York Community Trust,  
North Star Fund, and Philanthropy New York.

Lunch will be provided.

Please RSVP no later than Monday, July 16 to [abby@northstarfund.org](mailto:abby@northstarfund.org).

Contact Abby Youngblood at North Star Fund with questions: [212-620-9110](tel:212-620-9110)

#### *Who should attend?*

Funders of children and youth, education, environment, health, grassroots organizing, neighborhoods, urban agriculture, and food justice

#### *Program*

Enjoy a taste of fresh vegetables and herbs from young people's gardens! Meet and dine with some of the remarkable leaders in the youth food justice movement who are transforming their NYC neighborhoods. Join us to learn how the untapped energy of youth has been harnessed to develop creative solutions to key economic and social problems. We will feature three youth-powered non-profits that train and empower youth to take on leadership roles in their communities.

Youth leaders will explain why they became engaged in this movement, how they assumed leadership roles, created community awareness of healthy foods, and brought about change within their communities.

#### *Explore*

- Creative strategies to address inequalities and improve health in underserved communities
- Leadership development through youth food justice initiatives
- New paths to economic growth and employment for youth and adults
- Imaginative use of urban land for community improvement through the creation of urban farms on vacant lots

#### *Presenters*

- Sarita Daftary and a youth leader from [East New York Farms!](#) in Brooklyn.
- Paula Hewitt Amram and a youth leader from [Open Road](#) in neighborhoods in Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island.
- Stacey Murphy and a youth leader from [The Youth Farm](#) at the High School for Public Service in East Flatbush, Brooklyn. The Youth Farm is a partnership between [BK Farmyards](#), [Green Guerillas](#), and the [High School for Public Service](#).

#### *Moderators*

- Barbara R. Greenberg, Levitt Foundation
- Ruth Goldman, Merck Family Fund

**Community Food Funders (CFF)** is a philanthropic organizing project formed in 2011 to provide information, resources and networking opportunities for funders in the New York, New Jersey and southern Connecticut region to invest in the transition to an equitable, ecologically sound and sustainable regional food system.

[CommunityFoodFunders.org](http://CommunityFoodFunders.org)

### ***The Obesity Epidemic: Youth add tons of locally-grown fresh food to low-income communities***

Nationwide, one in three children is obese. One in five New York City children in grades K-8 is obese. However, children of color and those living in low-income neighborhoods have far higher obesity rates. Low-income neighborhoods often have a multitude of small bodegas and fast-food restaurants, but few places where people can buy appealing, fresh, locally-grown fruits and vegetables at affordable prices. Obesity leads to higher risk of diabetes, heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, arthritis, and cancer. In addition, overweight children often experience social stigmatization and poor self-esteem.

To bring fresh affordable produce to low-income communities, three issues must be considered:

1. ***Distribution and access.*** How can we deliver fresh produce to the low-income communities that need it most? Supermarkets may be few and far between, people lack cars, and public transportation is limited in

some neighborhoods. Upstate farmers often have difficulty profitably connecting their produce with stores and farmers markets in low-income communities.

2. *Affordability.* How can we make fresh produce affordable for low-income consumers? Fresh fruits and vegetables cost more, and MacDonald's and snack foods offer easier, more filling alternatives for families on budgets stretched thin.
3. *Consumer education.* How do we educate consumers of all ages who have never before seen or eaten fresh produce and have no idea how to prepare it? People rarely buy foods they do not recognize or know how to cook.

Children and youth in many low-income neighborhoods lack positive out-of-school time activities. Research shows that rather than create programs "for" children, the most effective interventions are those that actively engage young people in learning, research, planning, and implementation.

Across New York City (and the nation), hands-on, youth-powered urban agriculture programs have transformed young people and their neighborhoods. Youth learn about their environment and the availability of fresh locally-grown food in their own communities. They plant, grow, and harvest fruits and vegetables. Youth urban farms and farmers markets become fun gathering places that attract neighborhood people of all ages. Through practice selling their produce, leading cooking demonstrations and garden tours, young people boost their confidence and self-esteem. Youth teach their peers and families about healthy eating, and many young people report that they lose weight. Youth farmers markets add literally tons of fresh, affordable, locally-grown vegetables and fruits to low-income neighborhoods.