



Dearest Grubbers and friends,

I can't help thinking of last night's luscious dinner. It was made with just about every stunning vegetable I grew this fall. Vegetables our family lovingly gathered against a backdrop of trees dressed in shimmering crimson and gold. And you know, autumn days also bring to mind all the varied richness of a late GRuB harvest; bright cherry tomatoes bursting with ripeness, the last crisp sweet shoots of broccoli amid triumphant green leaves. A basket of plump and painted winter squash, earthy rough-skinned potatoes, and elegant, pungent leeks.

In light of this season, **I hope that you are enjoying the diverse richness of your own efforts this year.** I certainly am. Let me introduce myself. My name is Kerensa, and as the new Community Engagement Coordinator for GRuB, I cultivate volunteer, community and financial support for GRuB. With much excitement and anticipation, I come to this wonderful and assorted community of staff, youth, volunteers, alumni, and longtime friends.

As a Kitchen Garden Project gardener, I know firsthand how GRuB has enriched the life of my family. I myself sought a backyard garden through GRuB and the huge wealth of food that goes along with it. In GRuB's Kitchen Garden Project, gardeners get the gift of a free garden and experience **the joy and connection that comes with nurturing little shoots of their own intention.** Lower income families and seniors are empowered to take control over their own health and sustenance by growing their own food. In our family, our children claimed their own little garden section of soil, chose seeds and planted them, and tended & harvested the fruits of their labor. The children had a direct opportunity to observe how their individual actions affected the natural world around them.

"Happiness is abundant when kids are in the garden."

– 2010 KGP Madison Elementary Gardeners

"What a beautiful, content feeling planting and caring for and watching this garden is."

– 2010 KGP Gardener

At GRuB, **we believe we can eradicate hunger and empower young people with awareness, skills, and self-discovery.** These youth will be potential new leaders who, like my children in their garden, will seed a creative new solution to a societal need, consciously hold the vision for its growth, and act consistently to nurture its taking root within their community. However, youth often come to GRuB with a different experience.

"I moved from Florida to Texas to Washington and I always had to adjust to new settings. That's the kind of life I lived as a military brat. In every high school I went to, students didn't want to be your friend because you were different. Soon enough I fell through the cracks...I was alone in my own world. As I started my first job at GRuB I knew I wasn't going to make any friends. Everything was so different and out of my comfort zone that I wasn't going to talk to anyone. That all became an instant memory..."

Adolescence can be a time rich with creativity, self-discovery, and exploration of new frontiers of thought and action. However, many of the youth who come through GRuB's doors statistically have lower access to food and financial resources, supportive relationships and opportunities for growth. GRuB's Cultivating Youth employment program starts by encouraging and developing strong, healthy relationships. Caring adult mentors help them to feel a sense of belonging to something **greater** than themselves, a team that is enriched by what they **each** contribute.

Through a recent training on anti-oppression, GRuB was introduced to a way of looking at diversity like a salad bowl rather than the traditional melting pot. It's a way of honoring the gifts that everyone brings to our community without expecting or requiring them to assimilate. Through the process of workshops and self-reflection, the Cultivating Youth program brings youth a **positive awareness of diversity and celebrates the individual differences in each person.** Unfortunately youth in our community are often confronted with the opposite. Tori shares with us her experience of stepping into someone else's shoes in one of GRuB's workshops.

*"...We had a workshop where GRuB staff placed note cards on everyone's backs that said a particular kind of identity – for example, an African American, a gay man, or a teen mom. The objective was to go around and treat the people as society would treat them based on stereotypes that we're familiar with. I was [labeled] a Native American and some people said some really harsh things to me. After the workshop, I had a new perspective on life. Hearing how society treated one another, **I wished there was a way for us to start over.** GRuB taught this workshop because we are a country of diversity. **GRuB is here to end hunger, but it will take more than growing food to end it.** We need a strong community that will accept and will cherish our similarities and unique differences. With cooperation from everyone, ending hunger will not be a fairy tale."*
- Tori, 2010 Crewmember

Tori is right. GRuB's mission is to end hunger, but it takes more.

We believe we can start the world over sometimes, especially if we start within our own diverse community. Whether it's our youth crew leading volunteers on the farm, elementary school children tasting their first kale, or gardeners attending our workshops, GRuB strives to be a community, **a place for people to belong.** Throughout our years of work,

we have built gardens and inspired youth to find their own voice. We have produced tens of thousands of pounds of farm fresh produce and donated much of it to lower income families. All in an effort to build the community we want to belong to.

And it takes more.

What if many more youth had the opportunity to change their own lives while contributing to a community food system where we all could meet our needs? *What if*, like GRuB's youth program, high school was based on strong relationships, relevant community issues, significant personal responsibility, and rigorous physical and mental work? The possibility of moving the *'what if'* into reality drives us to move forward.

GRuB is doing more.

GRuB is co-creating a pilot project with Matt Grant, principal of Olympia High School, where disengaged students will come to GRuB for part of their school day. These students will experience the transformational outcomes of the GRuB employment program at the GRuB Farm while earning high school credit. If this initial pilot project is successful, OHS and other interested area high schools will begin engaging their students within this innovative model at their own sites. Students, principals, educators, and superintendents are all showing great interest in the venture. They know their schools have hundreds of students who are incredible young people looking to find their voice and direction. We know at GRuB that what these students need is to be a part of **meaningful change** in their community. Mallorie, a GRuB crew member says it so clearly:

"If I had not gotten this job, I would have remained a person in the community who only watches great things happen instead of making them happen."-Mallorie, 2010 Crewmember

We believe GRuB is poised to make a huge impact in our community. For us to do that, we must **STRETCH** as an organization, grow outside the boundaries of our bountiful farm, touch and involve other groups and organizations who are excited about working to create social change.

I know that the **STRETCH** is what enriches us as people and builds new skills and growth. The youth in our employment program model it every time they make friends with someone they never thought would speak to them. The KGP gardeners do that when they decide to steward the sovereign venture of a backyard garden. As a new member of GRuB's community, I'm stretching to spread GRuB's message and opportunities to you. **It takes more than what we're used to. It often takes more than what we think we have.**

"GRuB is a place to tunnel through your dirt and break through the topsoil to become the plant you've always wanted to be." -Lucinda, 2010 Crewmember

As part of the GRuB family we recognize how much your continued support is like the sustaining rains that fill our fields every winter, preparing them for the shoots of spring. We thank you for your belief in us and for contributing to the richness of our farm and the work we do. **This year we ask you to contribute a gift to GRuB that is just a little bit more than you're used to. STRETCH and grow with us and make these dreams real.** Think about what you donated last year and give a little more, just beyond what feels comfortable; and think of how you'll grow like Jordanna did when she discovered her own inner strength:

"I have only recently discovered an ability I have... to push myself, even if it scares me to death, to help and defend the things that are most important to me. I can lay myself on the line to better my surroundings and use my own unique style and nature in how I do it. As a non-profit GRuB depends on donations and support from people... to stay alive. And I am determined to honor that and help get that support. I can and will push myself to the fullest I can to acquire my higher education and learn all that I can that will help me toward healing this world we all share." - Jordanna, 2010 Peer Crew Leader

STRETCH and help us. Make *your* gift a **monthly** pledge that helps new KGP gardeners discover their connection to food by starting a very first garden.

STRETCH and feel how *your recurring* donation paves the way for an isolated teen to make a friend and feel a part of herself and her future for the first time.

STRETCH by growing **your gift** and watch how we can all make our visions of "starting the world over" an everyday happening.

Here's wishing you all the rich and bountiful gifts of the harvest season.

In service and love for GRuB's vision,



- Kerensa Mabwa, Community Engagement Coordinator

*Spread bread and butter, not war/If I gotta go door to door
Gotta make sure we get great GRuB to the poor
And the wealthy too/Make them all healthy dude
We're not in it for money, we're doing what we gotta do
Carrot, potato, corn beef stew
This food is going in my tum, tum, tum/Makes me say yum, yum, yum
GRuB's amazing tell your friends, your wife, your son
- Kory, 2010 Crewmember*

WHAT GIFTS TO GRuB DO:

\$36 (\$3/mo) = Enough KGP Seeds to feed a local family!

\$60 (\$5/mo) = 6 yards of rich soil for three KGP Gardens!

\$120 (\$12/mo) = One KGP garden bed for a family or community garden!

\$300 (\$25/mo) = A year of veggies for a GRuB crewmember!

\$600 (\$50/mo) = 3 produce shares for the Food Bank!

\$1200 (\$100/mo) = One year of weekly farm-fresh lunches for our entire youth crew.

SECURELY GIVE ONLINE:

www.goodgrub.org

Nourishing Community · Empowering People · Growing Good Food

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