



FULL FUTURES

A School
Nutrition
Partnership





Introduction

In our third program year, we continue to be inspired by how partners collaborate to achieve the common goal of fostering a school nutrition environment that ensures all students are well-nourished and ready to thrive at school and in life. At each of our three core program sites, our program partners work together to support the four pillars of Full Futures: culture, infrastructure, nutrition education, and food access. Though the tactics and activities look different for each site depending on that communities' needs and our partner resources, one thing remains the same—a dedication to supporting the overall school nutrition environment so that all children can thrive.

In Camden, NJ, our flagship program launched during the 2021-2022 school year. We continue to partner with the Camden City School District's School Nutrition Team and community groups to build on the strong foundation we have established. This year, we expanded the community's access to fresh and local food, supported youth leadership, and offered training opportunities for students and staff related to food and nutrition.

In Charlotte, NC, in our second year of programming we've continued our collaboration with community partners and the district's Career and Technical Education Department. Partners provided a variety of hands-on learning opportunities for students across grades K-12, and expanded families' access to local food and nutrition education.

We are proud to share that in 2023-2024, these efforts reached over 12,000 students, caregivers, and school staff across the Camden and Charlotte communities. Meanwhile, our third Full Futures program launched with a planning year in another Campbell's hometown—Hanover, PA—with the South Western School District and numerous community partners.

To support this work with partners across multiple geographies, Alliance for a Healthier Generation

staff provide critical coordination and support for these sites, while Campbell's leverages resources to sustain this important work. We continue to evaluate our efforts, documenting lessons learned and best practices, and have started developing a program roadmap that we hope will enable others to carry out similar work in other communities. Last year, we were pleased to help inform the work of Novo Nordisk, who launched the Coalition for Healthy Food in Newark, NJ Schools. We hope our work can continue to provide helpful lessons and resources to others investing in school nutrition.

We look forward to continuing this work and hope you enjoy learning about our past year's highlights.

Kate Barrett
President



Kathy Higgins
Chief Executive Officer





About Full Futures

Launched in 2021 alongside public, private and nonprofit partners, the goal of the Full Futures program is to advance the school nutrition environment. The five-year initiative centers on four pillars: culture, infrastructure, nutrition education, and food access. Our program partners include school districts and community partners working together, with the intention of developing a program roadmap to share best practices and lessons learned.

In the 2023-24 school year, working with our partners, we broadened our four-pillar framework. This allowed partners to better tailor their activities to meet the needs of their school community, resulting in more meaningful impact.

Common agenda:

Together, we can foster a school nutrition environment that ensures all students are well nourished and ready to thrive at school and in life.

Our strategy: four pillars



Culture: Influence and support school districts to promote a culture of health that is codified through policies, programs, and partnerships.



Infrastructure: Ensure school districts have the necessary infrastructure to educate students and staff and to serve nutritious meals.



Nutrition education: Offer a variety of educational opportunities that enhance students' and families' knowledge of nutrition and related concepts.



Food access: Expand students' and families' year-round access to nourishing food at school and throughout the community.

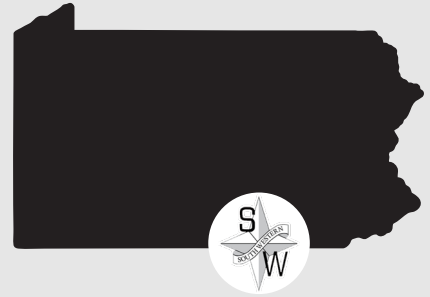
Locations



Camden, NJ



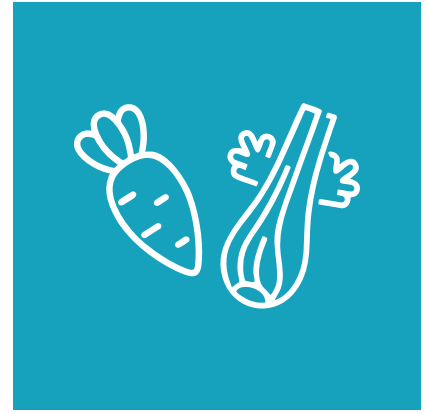
Charlotte, NC



Hanover, PA



Full Futures Camden



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It's important for us to teach our children healthy eating and how to build a healthy community.

Arlethia Brown

Senior Director, Camden City School District
School Nutrition

About Full Futures Camden

The 2023-2024 school year was the third year working with the Camden City School District (CCSD) and Full Futures partners in Camden City, NJ, to support menu change and nutrition education directly in schools. Highlights from the year include:

- Monthly farmers' markets at Camden schools
- Culinary staff professional development and training
- New School Nutrition Student Ambassador program
- Recipe development for school meals
- Camden Youth Advisory Council field trips to local farms
- Cooking Matters classes for kids & families

Over 7,000 students and 1,700 adults reached through Full Futures Camden activities

Pillar 1: Culture

Family & Community Engagement

The program raised awareness of nutrition resources and engaged families and community residents.

- **What's Cooking in Camden:** The CCSD's School Nutrition Team continued to release their monthly "What's Cooking in Camden?" newsletter, highlighting events, special menu items, and resources. As an incentive to visit school-based farmers markets, participants who brought a copy of the newsletter received a coupon for an extra item.
- **Resource Tables:** At monthly Farmers Markets and other district events, program partners from various organizations shared information with attendees about local services and resources.
- **Language Access:** This year, efforts to distribute educational and promotional materials in both English and Spanish were sustained. Bilingual staff led professional development trainings, cooking classes, and tastings, ensuring students and staff could fully participate.

Camden Partners 2023-24



Backbone and Evaluation Partner



Camden School Nutrition | February, 2024

WHAT'S COOKING IN CAMDEN?

FOOD SAFETY TRAINING

Chef Ricardo from Wellness in the Schools led a Food Safety Training for our FFVP Student Ambassadors and Camden Youth Advisory Council members on Friday, February 16th. The students learned the importance of a cleanly work space, proper hand washing techniques, and knife skills culminating in the creation of delicious power water. Thank you Chef Ricardo for your positive energy and support in leading the food safety training!



VALENTINE'S DAY CELEBRATION

FoodCorps members showed their students love with Valentine's Day themed lessons this month! Ms. Emmi led Valentine's Day card making with potato stamps and Ms. Kenya led self care smoothie lessons.



SCHOOL FOOD HERO



Chef Ricardo Diaz, RDN, is a Nutritionist and Program Manager for Wellness in the Schools (WITS). This month he taught a Food Safety Training for our FFVP Student Ambassadors and CVAC students and co-taught a ServSafe training for the Whitson's team. Chef Ricardo shares his culinary expertise with kindness and enthusiasm, we are lucky to have the opportunity to work with him! Thank you Chef Ricardo for your continued support.

FARMERS MARKET COUPON!

Bring a copy of this newsletter to the Community Farmers Market on 3/22 at ECDC for an additional item!



When you eat breakfast and lunch, you have energy to learn at school.

Camden Youth Advisory Council member



Camden Youth Advisory Council

The Food Bank of South Jersey (FBSJ) coordinated more than 40 meetings, activities, and trips for 10 middle and high school students from across the district who participate in the Camden Youth Advisory Council (CYAC). CYAC is a youth-led group that provides a platform for students to learn about, advocate for, and implement initiatives to create a healthier community. Most CYAC students are interested in a career in food.

CYAC activities this year:

- CYAC students met with the New Jersey Office of the Food Security Advocate to learn about the state's food insecurity programs and how they develop new policy initiatives to combat hunger and facilitate greater access to food relief programs.
- Students visited Specca Farms, Free Haven Farms, and Mood's Farm Market to learn more about how food is grown.
- The "All Around the World Food Tour" allowed students to try cuisines from different countries.
- Students participated in training sessions on food preparation to ensure proper and safe food handling practices.
- Campbell's Chef Gerald Drummond hosted a soup prototyping activity, where students developed two custom soup recipes.

- Students applied their learnings by encouraging peers to eat school meals, developing a public service announcement about nutrition, and providing constructive feedback on recipes.





New Student Ambassador Program

CCSD's School Nutrition Team employed 6 students as part of their new School Nutrition Student Ambassador (SNSA) program. SNSAs are responsible for:

- Preparing snacks for the district's Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP)
- Supporting Community Farmers Markets and produce distribution events
- Assisting with maintenance of garden beds across the district and harvesting produce
- Supporting menu development and advocacy of the school meals program



Pillar 2: Infrastructure

Professional Development Opportunities for Staff

Wellness in the Schools (WITS) Chefs led a variety of professional development opportunities for 150 food service and student workers across the district. Each week, three WITS Chefs rotated through 16 schools where they taught culinary skills, provided support to school cooks, and helped prepare new items for students and staff to try. Additionally, three small group "CookCamp" trainings for 30 kitchen leads and cooks focused on cleaning and storage standards, recipe preparation, and wellness activities.



CookCamp trainings for staff helps foster a well rounded healthy environment.

Marion Williams, Wellness in the Schools

In collaboration with Free Haven Farms, School Nutrition Student Ambassadors installed and repaired 6 garden beds at various schools across the district, ensuring they remain operational year-round. The garden harvests can be used in the cafeteria or shared with families for home use, and the gardens themselves serve as important learning environment for lessons with students.

WITS conducted food safety training for students, teaching them the importance of maintaining a clean workspace, proper handwashing, and knife skills. Students also took part in interactive cooking lessons led by FBSJ and WITS and received farm stand training to prepare them for assisting at community farmers markets.



“

My favorite part about being a Student Ambassador is the Farmers Markets. I like making small talk with the customers and I like how happy they get.

School Nutrition Student Ambassador

“

We are excited to inspire a lot of students as they discover the fun of cooking and learning new techniques in the kitchen.

Ricardo Diaz, *Wellness in the Schools*





It helped me make more healthy eating decisions.

Cooking Matters For Teens Student Participant

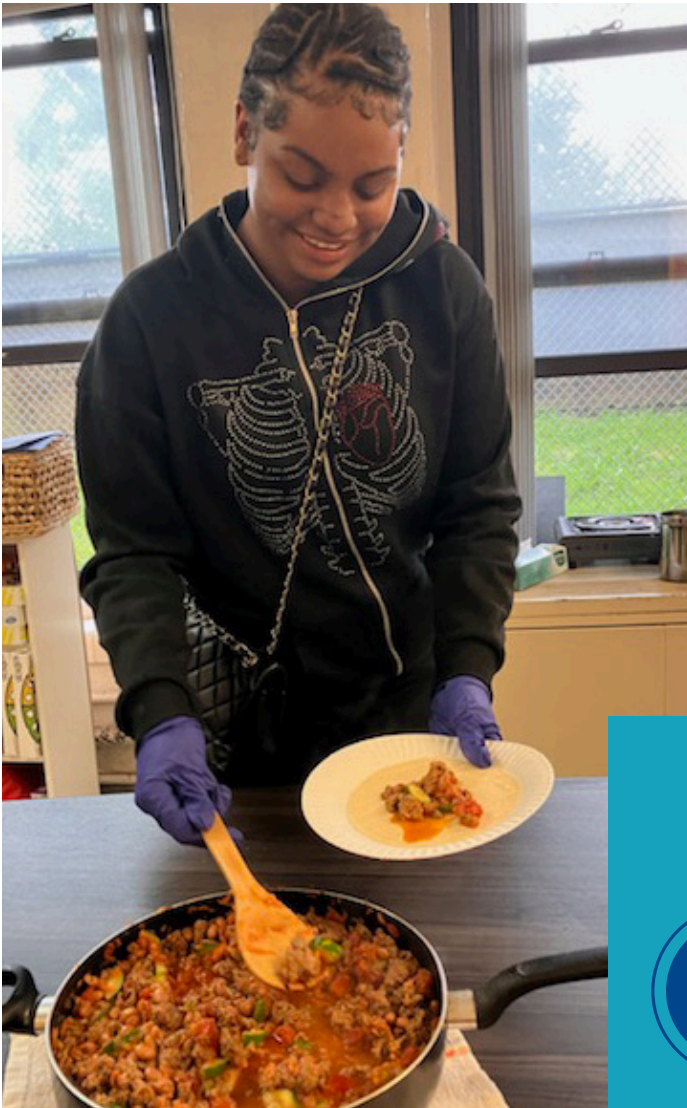
Pillar 3: Nutrition Education

Nutrition education for students and families

The Food Bank of South Jersey (FBSJ) led more than 60 Full Futures-associated nutrition education sessions this year in schools and throughout the community. Over 300 people were reached through these classes and activities.

- Cooking Matters is a series of interactive cooking lessons tailored for children, teens or families. Participants learn about dietary guidelines, prepare food in class and are given ingredients to replicate recipes at home.
- Two Bite Club introduces young children to new food items and encourages them to try taking “two bites.” The program is conducted in collaboration with the district’s Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) and FoodCorps service members. This year, students tried Asian pears, grapefruit, papaya, pea shoots, and sweet potatoes.





Participant takeaways

92%

agreed that they have a better understanding of how to eat healthfully.

87%

are interested in choosing healthy foods and drinks.

79%

agree that in this program, "I feel like my voice matters."

76%

tried a new food.



Pillar 4: Food Access

Local procurement program

CCSD's School Nutrition Team partnered with The Common Market and its farm partners again to receive weekly deliveries of locally sourced produce from New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland.

In addition to their school food operating budget, additional funding was provided through the Full Futures program to support farm-to-school efforts. This initiative not only increases students' access to fresh, wholesome foods, but also boosts economic opportunities for farmers. Incentive funds were also used to procure items for community farmers markets hosted by the CCSD's School Nutrition Team.



dollars reinvested into local economies.



unique food items procured.



percent of incentive dollars spent in New Jersey.



local farms supported.



pounds of local food delivered.



percent of farms supported were from New Jersey.

Community farmers markets

Farmers markets hosted at schools across the district were a new addition in the 2024-25 school year. From October to August, CCSD's School Nutrition Team organized 11 farmers markets, providing community members the opportunity to select complimentary, local products procured by The Common Market. Attendees connected with local farmers, explored resources offered by community partners, and sampled fresh and culturally relevant food through cooking demonstrations.

Outcomes:

- 758 shoppers visited the markets
- Approximately 3,000 household members benefitted
- 37,000 pounds of food were distributed

An additional 2,100 produce boxes were distributed in the community, supporting more than 600 families; 900 boxes were donated by the Community FoodBank of New Jersey. Other free and reduced-price food access opportunities were available to families at school-based pantries and at Saturday brunch events.



I was so surprised to see so many different types of food there. When I was done it was like I just went grocery shopping.

Camden resident





Supporting local farmers

CCSD's School Nutrition Team was able to provide long-term purchasing commitments to 3 farms owned by Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) farmers: Innoculated Farms, K&J Farms, and Provenance Farm. These commitments help build the farms' capacity and supply chain, expanding and maintaining their operations through promised and consistent market outlets.



New items procured

25 items were procured locally from Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. This produce was served to students in the cafeteria, used in trainings for cafeteria staff, and available to the community at farmers markets:

- Apple Butter
- Apple Cider
- Bok Choy
- Broccoli
- Brussel Sprouts
- Butterhead Lettuce
- Cabbage
- Callaloo
- Carrots
- Cauliflower
- Celery
- Cheeses
- Cherries
- Chicken
- Fennel
- Garlic
- Honey
- Kiwi Berries
- Parsnips
- Potatoes
- Romaine Lettuce
- Romanesco
- Turnips
- Yams

Menu enhancement

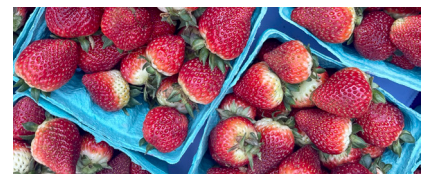
“TryDay Friday” is an opportunity for district students and staff to try new recipes. During meal service, students and staff received a new item to try in the lunch line. Full Futures partners asked them to provide feedback via a simple voting system. Participant feedback determines which items are added to the menu in the future. This year, there were more than 40 TryDay Friday tastings across the district. The two most popular dishes were fruit & yogurt parfaits with homemade granola, and Shepherd’s Pie; both featured local ingredients.

Granola Parfaits:	Shepherd’s Pie:
Loved It: (48%)	Loved It: (45%)
Liked It: (41%)	Liked It: (41%)
Tried It: (11%)	Tried It: (14%)

Local oat cereal was also added to the menu this year. Since the start of Full Futures Camden, Wellness in the Schools has helped create or update more than 50 recipes featured at TryDay Friday, professional development sessions, and community events; several of these recipes have become permanent menu items. Recipe cards are provided at tastings and events for families to take home.



Full Futures Charlotte



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An effective Career & Technical Education program aims to prepare its students for the world of work and to become contributing citizens of our community. Through the Full Futures partnership, CMS CTE has found an alliance to make this possible. Infusion of the hydroponics and aquaponics in our Agriculture and Culinary programs is allowing students to learn about sustainable farming, growing healthy produce in small spaces with innovative technology, and giving them the opportunities to practice nutritious recipes in Culinary classrooms.

Deepal Patel, Culinary Arts, Agriculture,
Hospitality and Tourism Curriculum Coordinator

About Full Futures Charlotte

The 2023-2024 school year was the second year working with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) to support education around culinary and agriculture careers. Highlights from the year include:

- Aquaponics and hydroponics system installations and curriculum
- Family Nutrition Nights
- Farm-to-school internships hosted by Full Futures partners
- Nutrition education at mobile farmers markets
- Student field trips and cooking lessons



Over 1,550 students and 1,400 adults reached through Full Futures Charlotte activities



Charlotte Partners 2023-24



Backbone and Evaluation Partner





As a family we love attending this activity, very good and delicious fruits and vegetables at the market. Thank you so much.

Family Nutrition Night participant



Pillar 1: Culture

Family Nutrition Nights

The Bulb, in partnership with Full Futures partners, hosted two Family Nutrition Nights at Merry Oaks International Academy and Eastway Middle School. Multiple interactive and educational stations were set up for families to participate in, as well as nutrition education presentations about healthy snack options and the health benefits and flavor profiles of well-known fruits and vegetables. Interpreters for Spanish-speaking participants were available to ensure that all families could take part in the activities.

Pop-up farmers markets featured 8 locally grown and culturally appropriate produce items, offered to guests free of charge, along with recipe cards in English and Spanish. The Merry Oaks event served 85 households, while the Eastway event served 61 households. Produce samples were provided, and at the Eastway event the CTE (Career and Technical Education) Culinary team prepared a meal for participants.

After attending Family Nutrition Night,

85%

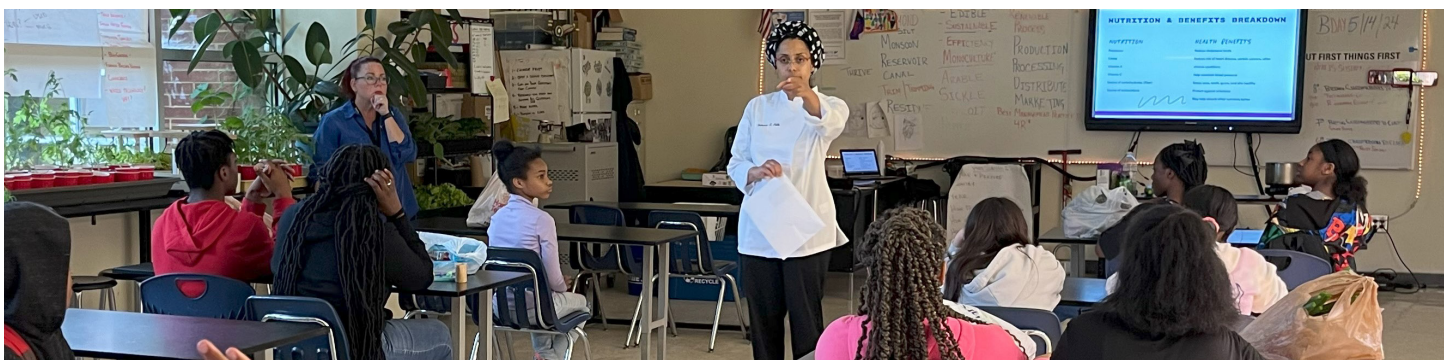
have a better understanding of how to eat healthfully.

81%

are more likely to try new foods.

77%

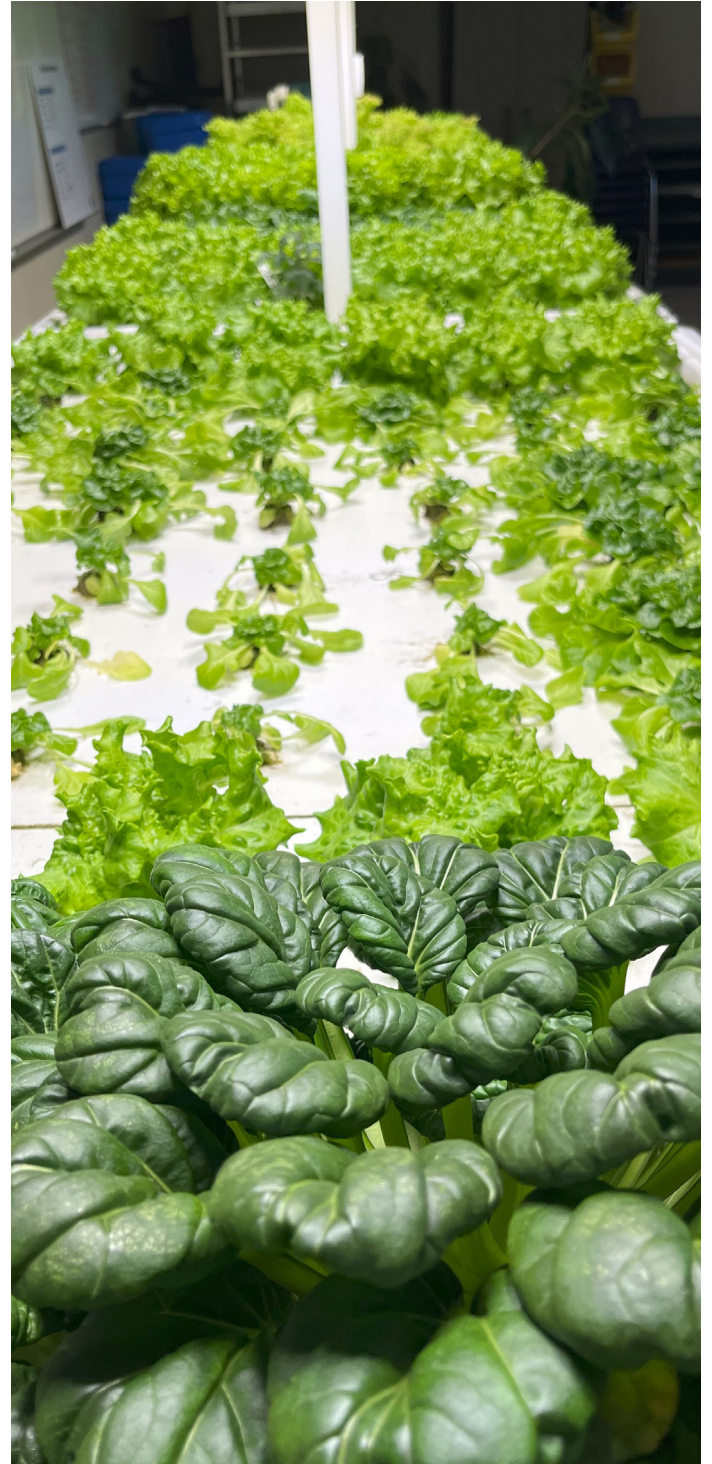
indicated their family learned something new.





some of the leafy greens they harvested, while a portion is donated to The Bulb and Refugee Support Services, who offer the produce to the community at no cost.

CMS teachers also attended 100 Gardens' week-long Aquaponics Summer School and monthly "Fishing for Information" workshops to increase their knowledge and skills.



Pillar 2: Infrastructure

Aquaponics & Hydroponics Systems

100 Gardens worked with school staff on a weekly basis to maintain aquaponics gardens at Merry Oaks International Academy, Eastway Middle School, and Garinger High School. Additionally, the installation of an aquaponics garden at Independence High School was completed and will be ready to use during the 2024-2025 school year.

Hydroponics & aquaponics systems are some of the most sustainable food-growing systems available, allowing growers to produce food anywhere in the world, at any time of the year.

- Hydroponics is a method of growing plants without soil. Instead, plants are grown in a nutrient-rich water-based solution.
- Aquaponics is a method of farming that raises edible freshwater fish and vegetables together in a symbiotic environment.

More than 1,550 students learned about aquaponics or hydroponics this year, including CTE Culinary, Agriculture, and Business Marketing students that utilize these systems as part of their coursework. Students are also able to take home



We use the aquaponics table to demonstrate science objectives from observation skills, food chains, and life cycles in the K-5 curriculum. Students learn about starting seeds, caring for animals, water pH importance, and harvesting and selling produce.

Elisabeth Primm, Teacher, Merry Oaks International Academy

Updating kitchen equipment

The CTE teaching kitchen at West Mecklenburg High School was updated with new stoves, tables, stools, and dishwashers. A hydroponics growing system was added to utilize leafy greens in recipes. By investing in new equipment, teachers will be better equipped to support student learning.





Student takeaways

100%

of Eastway students can explain to someone how aquaponics helps the ocean.

95%

of Merry Oaks students learned something new.

89%

of Eastway students can name one way aquaponics supports the circular economy.

83%

of Merry Oaks students reported feeling positive emotions after the trip.

Pillar 3: Nutrition Education

Field trips

In April and May, 50 third graders from Merry Oaks International Academy, 18 eighth graders from Eastway Middle School, and 23 CTE students from Garinger High School took field trips to the Innovation Barn in Charlotte. The field trips introduced students to the “circular economy,” an economic model where resource usage and waste are minimized. At the Innovation Barn, zero-waste is produced by tenants. Students learned about innovative recycling technologies and toured a variety of farms, including 100 Gardens’ Aquaponics Lab. Merry Oaks and Eastway students also toured the Aquaponics Greenhouse at Garinger High School.



Culinary Experiences

In May, 100 Gardens coordinated culinary experiences for students at Merry Oaks International Academy and Eastway Middle School. Chef Nellie of Growing Thyme Cooking, and Chef Jay Z of the American Culinary Federation Chefs of Charlotte, provided 7 hands-on learning experiences for 71 elementary and 102 middle school students.

Elementary students cut up vegetables for pizza and made smoothies with a variety of fruits and vegetables. Middle school students made guacamole and cooked ground turkey for tacos, utilizing leafy greens grown in their classroom aquaponics system. Students also juiced lemons and strawberries to make lemonade.



Everyone got to help make food which was so fun, and the food was really good.

Eastway Student



Student takeaways

79%

of students tried a new food.

93%

Merry Oaks students reported feeling positive emotions after the chef visits.

74%

of Eastway students agree that after the chef visits, they have a better understanding of how to eat healthfully.

Internships

Fifteen high school students gained professional experience by interning with Full Futures partners during the spring semester and over the summer. Twelve interns were enrolled in Agriculture or Culinary CTE Pathways, while three were Occupational Course of Study (OCS) students from Myers Park High School. All interns who completed 120 hours had the opportunity to receive course credit and a stipend for their time.



Interns with 100 Gardens were responsible for maintaining aquaponics systems, including harvesting produce and caring for the fish. Interns with The Bulb assisted customers at Mobile Markets across Charlotte. Interns also assisted with nutrition classes, food demonstrations, and community garden events. Over the summer, four interns were also paired up with CTE teachers at J.T. Williams Secondary Montessori and Providence High School to support harvesting and maintenance of gardens, caring for animals, teaching classes to preschoolers, and general upkeep of greenhouses.

Student takeaways

89%

would recommend the Full Futures Internship to other students.

89%

obtained new skills and knowledge that will positively impact their academic or career goals.

89%

learned something they can use in their daily life.

67%

plan to pursue a career or additional education related to their internship.





Volunteering at Bulb markets helped me to see how having a career in nutrition can make a difference in communities where it's greatly needed.

Full Futures Intern

Curriculum Development

Over the past year, 100 Gardens staff have been developing a series of eight lessons for K-5 students with the goal of encouraging youth to think about food, agriculture, and the environment in new ways. The lessons will be piloted in a few elementary schools during the 2024-2025 school year.



Pillar 4: Food Access

Mobile markets

The Bulb operates donation-based mobile farmers markets, providing barrier-free fresh and nutritious produce and resources to neighborhoods throughout Charlotte. Food is sourced from local farmers and rescued items from grocery stores. Full Futures supported three markets this year at Hidden Valley, North End, and Tuckaseegee Elementary.



Starting in February, a registered dietician provided pre-market educational presentations for up to 30 people on topics including food preparation and storage, eating for various health conditions, and reading nutrition labels. Educational lessons included cooking demonstrations and tastings, for example showcasing smoothies and homemade salad dressing. Recipe cards were offered in both English and Spanish.



1,331

shoppers visited the markets.

7,146

household members benefitted.

100K

lbs. of food distributed.

28

nutrition classes provided.

90

percent of attendees took home recipes.

97

percent of attendees loved the healthy snacks.





Expanding Full Futures to Hanover

The third Full Futures program began in Hanover, PA during the 2023–2024 school year as a planning year with the South Western School District (SWSD) and numerous community partners.

During the summer of 2023, Healthier Generation staff conducted a landscape analysis, which included reviewing publicly available data about the county and interviewing community partners to learn more about existing assets and needs.

In November, Healthier Generation hosted an in-person kick-off meeting with 24 participants from 13 organizations. After reviewing results from the landscape analysis, participants brainstormed opportunities for support and collaboration. Over the next few months, partners collectively decided on three key priorities to guide work in SWSD moving forward:

- Increasing family engagement around nutrition and healthy eating
- Increasing access to fresh and local foods in cafeterias and food access programs
- Developing curriculum and common language for nutrition education across schools and community partners



The 2023-2024 planning year wrapped up with two grants to Full Futures partners to get programming started in summer 2024:



South Western School District: Funds will support updating equipment in district cafeterias, specifically industrial blenders and dispensers to make it easier to serve nutritious smoothies and to make other homemade items like hummus and tomato sauce.

York County Food Bank: Funds will support piloting an online food pantry with The York County Food Bank for elementary school families, to enable eligible families to access and select nutritious shelf stable food for pick up at a local school. The Online Pantry Program will provide a dignified, client-choice approach for families who are food insecure, and offers flexibility and the convenience of choosing what items their families eat. The goal is to expand the program to other schools in South Western School District.





Looking ahead

We plan to officially launch Full Futures Hanover to the school community and to move beyond the pilot phase in the 2024-2025 school year. Our community partner working group continues to meet regularly to identify additional needs and partners. Plans for our first full year in Hanover include:

- Conducting a family needs assessment to better understand the resources, gaps and opportunities from the perspective of students and caregivers
- Adding growing systems & accompanying curriculum support for South Western School District
- Expanding the online pantry program in January 2025
- Exploring nutrition education programming for elementary school students



Thank you, Full Futures partners!



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