



# We Can End the Food Desert at Autumn Woods!

Voices from youth from the  
Autumn Woods housing  
complex

Summer 2012



"Help Me Stay Alive"  
Photo by Samatha, 15 yrs. Autumn Woods resident

**Seed-to-Feed:**  
A food justice and organic  
gardening program for  
Bladensburg teens to  
transform a vacant lot into  
a food forest and garden

**Please join us in celebration!**

**Teen photo exhibit in the  
Autumn Woods garden  
Thursday, August 2  
2:00-3:00PM**

Program funded by the  
Prince George's Community Foundation  
Partners - ECO City Farms, Magic Johnson  
Community Empowerment Center at Autumn  
Woods Apt, Port Towns Youth Council, USDA EFNEP  
& Critical Exposure

Directions from 57th Ave. in Bladensburg:  
Make a right on Emerson and go strait until you see  
an open gate on your left  
Contact: Sonia Keiner ~ 443.253.6570

# We Can End the Food Desert at Autumn Woods!

We are working with Eco City Farms, the Magic Johnson Community Empowerment Center at Autumn Woods, and Critical Exposure to make a difference in people's eating habits and to provide healthier food options in the Port Towns, Bladensburg, and Autumn Woods community. Through our pictures, we are bringing awareness to the improvements we have made to our new farm.

We are also advocating to you and other Prince George's County officials for more support so that we can expand our garden and grow more nutritious food for our community.

## Community Empowerment by DeAndre

I took a 'worm's-eye' picture of Carigna. This picture can help explain that we are powerful, powerful enough to change the community standards.



## Inside and Outside by Cristian

There is a difference in the inside  
Than the outside.  
There is a difference in the garden  
Than what is inside an apartment.  
The garden carries more nutritional food  
Than our fridges in our apartments.  
There is a better life outside  
Than inside a house.



## Waste Being Wasted by Thai

This picture shows how the town of Bladensburg needs to put some recycling bins and compost waste bins in the community instead of waste being thrown on the side of the street and ending up in the sewers, which lead to the rivers.



## A Bee's Garden By Dempse

This photo shows how bees and other pollinators are important to an ecosystem, or in this case a garden. Without pollinators there is no produce. No garden, no bees. No bees, no food.



## More Hands, Greater Result by Carigna

As a team, we are working together at the Autumn Woods Community Garden. The hot weather didn't prevent us from weeding the grass surrounding the new plants. From my experience, it is not an easy job to take care of a garden without support from our local community leaders and community volunteers. We want to expand the garden. In order to do this we need volunteers, and we also need support from the people who are in power of this entire community, Autumn Woods.





## Power to the People by Ulises

We can make a change about what we eat and how we make our food. We care about our future.



## Tomatoes by Uises



This picture shows what hard work goes into growing vegetables. For example, this week I had to weed the garden. Also, when you grow these plants you see when it's a flower to a newborn tomato to a full-grown tomato. And when you pick them, they smell and feel fresher than when you go to a Wal-Mart or at Shoppers.

Some people take planting fruits and vegetables for granted. Some people also don't realize that when you buy a tomato from Shoppers or Safeway, it gets transferred from another state in a truck where it gets rotten. If you pick a tomato in your own backyard, it's more organic.

## Building a New Environment by Abdul

This can help advocate for more community gardens because, first of all, we live in a food desert. Also, even if we get to a store, most of the food is not healthy, so we [should] just make more community gardens and be healthy.



## Hard Work Pays Off By Celeste

This photo is very important to me because it's a beautiful flower and it shows that with hard work, dedication and determination, the result is something beautiful; a garden where communities can come together.



## The Food Desert by Abdul

A 'food desert' means there are no grocery stores in distance of seeing or walking. This photo can help advocate [to end] the food desert because it's a long road, and it's a struggle to get fresh, healthy food.



## Lack of Water by Yamilet

Right now we need a better way to get water to our garden to improve it in many ways. Water is an important element for growing food. This shows how we have a lack of water and only a certain amount to work with. We could use more.



## Help Me Stay Alive by Samantha



In this photo a plant is being watered. Without water or sunlight the plant will die. But if it's too much sunlight, the plant will dry out. The plant will need as much water as possible. We need more water support for the garden in Autumn Woods.

## Great Things Start Small by Crystal

This photo shows how many people live in this area, and the garden is small. It doesn't and couldn't feed the needs of the people unless we get help. We need it to be bigger and better so people can have more fruits and veggies, because this area is a food desert.





## Cooking Veggies by Crystal

Picking and cooking our own food helps us stop buying unhealthy foods. We need more farmers markets so we can get fresh organic foods.



## Organic Berries by Randolph

This picture shows fresh fruit grown on Eco City Farms [with] no pesticides. This is important because it doesn't hurt the environment and the people who eat the food. Berries are in the top "dirty dozen" of fruits and veggies sprayed with pesticides. In Autumn Woods, it's not easy to reach fresh fruits.



## Our Vision by Carigna



Hard work and passion leads to progress. This picture is the exact vision we want for this new farm. As they say, it takes a village to raise a child; it takes a community to raise up a farm.

We would appreciate if Prince George's County and the town of Bladensburg could give us a hand in making our vision a reality. My colleagues and I have a passion for healthy eating and active living. All we need is support from the community, parents, and city and county officials.