

A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a small, square black plastic seedling tray. The tray contains dark brown soil and a young plant with three large, rounded, light green leaves. The person's hands are dark-skinned; the right hand has a gold ring with a red stone on the ring finger. The background is filled with many other similar seedlings in trays, creating a sense of a large-scale planting or nursery. The overall tone is hopeful and nurturing.

growing hope

annual report  
2008 - 2009



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Dear Friends,

Every time I sit to write an introductory letter or an update to our stakeholders, my first inclination is to start with, “My, how we’ve grown!” And, while that holds true, I’d rather communicate not about how Growing Hope, in the last several years has continued to become bigger, but instead talk about how we’ve refined, how we’ve matured, how we’ve learned lessons and become better at what we do. Since 1999 when I led a volunteer effort to build the Perry Learning Garden – that later evolved through some twists and turns into Growing Hope in 2003 – I have said how that garden was my greatest teacher. And, this decade since, I can say the same about Growing Hope – this organization has been the greatest teacher I have ever had. Several lessons have been invaluable in both my personal development as a leader and, I think, in the development and direction – and ultimately positive impact – of Growing Hope. Just two of these many lessons:

**It’s about people.** We in the nonprofit world often talk about how things can be sustained beyond the original (fill in the blank) funding, grant cycle, strategic plan, etc. On applications we try to conjure a reason and a way things will “sustain themselves,” knowing full well that what it means to sustain something is complex and multi-layered, and not easy. Through Growing Hope’s capacity-building approach, however, where we work to provide training, resources and inspiration for people to provide for themselves, we work to do things will last beyond the involvement of our organization. And, ultimately the lesson I now know very well is that it’s people who do, what I like to call, “the good work” of making our communities better. It’s not stuff – it’s not the physical materials that sustain things – it’s people. Relationships make things happen, and when we can invest in staff, volunteers, community leaders, and youth – the other resources can follow. I’ve learned that as we continue to do the good work, it comes down to how much we can leverage the support to invest in people – whether growing neighborhood gardens by investing in neighborhood leaders, teaching healthy eating through investing in peer educators, or creating jobs and economic opportunities by investing in youth employees. As Growing Hope becomes more than my own face, but the faces – and voices – of so many people you’ll see throughout the report, the healthy change we are working towards radiates and sustains through the work of so many.

**It’s about win-wins.** We’ve long talked about partnerships being a core value for Growing Hope, but I think to understand the true benefits and the true work of authentic collaboration has taken many years of practice. We’ve also learned difficult lessons about partnerships that don’t work, often because of unclear or unsaid expectations, or the reality of changing resources and conditions among the collaborators. What this has distilled to, for me, is the simple concept of the win-win. When I teach community organizing and organizational development to community and school gardeners, we do a Mapping Reciprocal Partnerships exercise where their garden goes in the middle, and any stakeholders, participants, donors, and other partners go around the outside. The task is to verbalize the win-win, and the activity opens many eyes to the fact that for a relationship to be successful there must be give and get both ways. When that garden asks a neighborhood business for a donation, they may get materials needed, but they may not ask (we so often assume) what the business might get out of it. Good PR, a chance to be involved in the neighborhood they care about, an opportunity for their employees to do team building through volunteerism? Yes, yes, yes. We often in the nonprofit world stop short of asking and articulating these motivations and expectations. As Growing Hope, we’ve improved a lot in this area, and it’s led to our taking approaches to our work where everyone involved gains.

I hope you enjoy hearing the voices and reading about where Growing Hope has blossomed in the last year. I also hope you’re not overwhelmed – the lists of names and activities and contributors are long. For us, being a community-based organization is about engaging a wide group of people – mostly as volunteers – to do the work. We’re giving people an opportunity to engage in issues and people they care about, and whether you’ve been involved or supported us in the past, I invite you to join us in the future. After all, as Gandhi reminds us,

**“We must be the change we wish to see in the world.”**

In gratitude,

Amanda Maria Edmonds  
Executive Director  
Growing Hope





*"Growing Hope has helped me to broaden my vision of what's possible for me as a person, for my community garden, and for my city as a whole."*

– Lisa Bashert,  
Rec Park Community Garden Steward, former  
Board Member & active Ypsilanti community member



# Our work:

## Planting seeds of hope

**Food matters.** What we eat not only impacts our physical health, it shapes our identity — what we believe about ourselves, our value and potential. Traditionally, food programs have taken a “powdered milk” approach; those in need are given access to foods that may offer little in the way of nutrition and even less in terms of building self-reliance and self-worth. Although there is unmistakable value in supplying basic necessities, we believe empowering individuals to provide healthy foods for themselves and their families can offer even more. It can inspire confidence, develop new skills and renew a sense of personal security and independence. It can transform the dinner table from a source of anxiety into a place of pride.



change. Youth and adults are learning entrepreneurial skills and making positive investments in their futures.

Since 2003, Growing Hope has proven its investment through programs that impact thousands of youth and adults in Ypsilanti and throughout Washtenaw County. Healthy food is becoming a visible and integral part of our life as a community.

Growing Hope’s groundbreaking programs empower members of our community to grow and eat healthy food and take ownership of their physical, financial and emotional well-being. Young and old are coming together to grow their own fresh produce, revitalize their neighborhoods and teach one another the beauty and hope that comes from nurturing soil, seeds and self. Neighbors and vendors from all walks of life gather at our farmers’ market to share and connect around healthy, local food. Community and school gardens are becoming vehicles for positive social, economic, environmental and neighborhood







*"At Washtenaw County Public Health, we are consistently impressed with Growing Hope's ability to engage the community around growing and eating healthy foods. Our collaboration with Growing Hope will decrease chronic disease risk in this community over the long term."*

– Jenna Bacolor, Downtown Ypsilanti Farmers'  
Market partner, Washtenaw County Public Health



# Our impact:

## A community harvest

### Improved access to healthy food

- An average of 600 local customers a week attended the Downtown Ypsilanti Farmers' Market (DYFM) in 2009. **Market sales increased four-fold between 2006 and 2009.**
- Food stamp and other low-income assistance and incentive programs constitute 20 percent of DYFM sales, totaling \$21,000 in 2009. In addition, 49 percent of customers surveyed said they are eating more fruits and veggies because of shopping at the DYFM.
- Eighty households are now growing food close to home through raised bed gardens. They also report to having greater access to produce and to eating more fruits and vegetables.
- Growing Hope's hoophouse provides healthy, locally grown food to area outlets 10 months of the year, far past when most have access to local, healthy food.

### Increasing self-reliance

- In 2009, **eighty low-income and no-income families received raised bed vegetable gardens** and now grow their own food at home.
- Our youth employment programs connect growing healthy food with green jobs for at-risk young people.
- Teens earn money and develop entrepreneurial skills and vision as they launch garden-based businesses.

### Cultivating community leadership

- **Sixty new local leaders** have completed our Community & School Garden Development Institute.
- Youth interns and neighborhood mentors act as peer educators around healthy food and gardening.
- **400 volunteers contribute 12,000 hours annually.**

### Educating youth and adults

- **More than 500 youth** participate in nutrition and gardening activities annually at area schools through hands-on learning, cooking, and growing.
- Summer programs connect kids and teens with growing and eating healthy food on-site in community gardens.
- Weekly market demonstrations, an annual food system tour, and presentations reach thousands of adults and youth each year.

### A more food secure and sustainable community

- Forty gardens from school, community and congregational partners are active throughout Washtenaw County.
- The Downtown Ypsilanti Farmers' Market directly enhances the area economy with nearly **\$108,000 in sales** to more



than 40 local vendors in 2009 alone, giving these entrepreneurs low-cost opportunities to launch or grow their businesses.

- 15,000 customer visits to the DYFM in 2009 brought people and economic activity to downtown Ypsilanti.
- Increased local food and health promotion through authentic

collaborations with nearly **75 organizations and government agencies**, including schools, nonprofits, neighborhood groups, universities, and local businesses.



## Economic profile of Ypsilanti and the surrounding areas

|                                        | City of Ypsilanti | Washtenaw County | City of Detroit | Wayne County | Michigan    | US          |
|----------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|
| Median household income (in thousands) | <b>\$36</b>       | <b>\$60</b>      | <b>\$29</b>     | <b>\$44</b>  | <b>\$50</b> | <b>\$63</b> |
| % below the poverty level              | <b>24%</b>        | <b>14%</b>       | <b>33%</b>      | <b>20%</b>   | <b>14%</b>  | <b>13%</b>  |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey



# Our community: rooted in Ypsilanti — extending our reach

Growing Hope is firmly rooted in neighborhoods where access to healthy food and economic opportunity has been in short supply. In Washtenaw County, this lack of access is most heavily concentrated in the city of Ypsilanti where Michigan's current economic turmoil has amplified preexisting hardships brought on by decades of job loss and economic decline.

Located between Ann Arbor and Detroit, Ypsilanti is a small, diverse community of approximately 22,000 residents.

**Roughly 25 percent of Ypsilanti residents are food insecure and live well below the poverty line.** In the adjacent neighborhood just south of the Growing Hope Center, the median income is less than \$18,000. With 60 percent of the city's renters spending more than 30 percent of their income on housing, many must choose between paying for utilities, rent, and medicine or for food for their families. Similar conditions exist for hundreds more living just outside the city's edge in the neighboring townships. This equates to thousands of people, residing in a relatively

small geographic area, who need increased access to both economic opportunity and affordable, nutritious foods. Poverty often has a direct negative impact on personal health, as evident by the fact that **more than half of those residing within the bounds of the Ypsilanti School District are overweight, while only 12 percent report eating the amount of fruits and vegetables** recommended for healthy living. Adult and childhood obesity is directly linked to lack of access to fresh food. Like many facing hardships, residents of these communities are resilient, hopeful and eager to seize opportunities to better their lives.

While the need, and our focus, is concentrated in Ypsilanti, people are struggling throughout the region. The economic downturn has created pockets of poverty and households in crisis throughout Washtenaw County. Our strong foundation in Ypsilanti has allowed us to branch out and become a regional resource as we help promote and replicate proven models for meeting the family and community challenges of our time.

## In our own words: Nisha Kapadia

"When I got interested in Environmental Justice issues, I took a couple classes and I started to realize that food issues, food security, food systems issues, definitely environmental justice issues, community gardens and farmers' markets and food policy, they are all environmental justice issues. So what I was originally interested in was Environmental Justice but then it got to be more focused, and these are basic ideas behind Growing Hope. **Creating and sustaining access to healthy, nutritious, affordable, culturally appropriate food is what Growing Hope does.**

"All of Growing Hope's programs exist in a community where access to food is so limited, so what they're doing is trying to address the issue at the community-level. I know also that Amanda is involved in policy work in terms of urban planning so she's changing things at the top and also changing things from the bottom up. Ypsilanti is especially suffering economic woes and that relates to the quality of food and the kind of food that is available there. Encouraging people to build gardens in their yards, be involved in community gardens, go to farmers markets, and supporting local farmers too, all these things are so important.

Nisha Kapadia was Growing Hope's first intern in 2001, when she was an undergraduate in the School of Natural Resources & Environment at the University of Michigan. Later she became Growing Hope's first board member and now serves on the advisory board. She worked for many years at the Sacramento Hunger Commission, and is preparing to enter an international graduate program on food security in London. She lives and works in Korea.





## In our own words: Linda Mealing

“Last summer, Growing Hope started to come in for two hours a week and worked with the children, establishing a program and letting them know what nutritional eating was all about and how much fun you can have, in the garden, growing your own food. It’s been a delight. I’ve enjoyed the partnership and that’s what it is. Growing Hope has partnered with the community. If you have the ideas, it’s very good to be a part of it. It’s easy to come up and say, ‘I have this idea’ or, ‘this is wrong and needs to be changed,’ but **you need to be a part of the solution, and I think Growing Hope sees that too.**”

“I was happy to see people here want a community garden. That’s what I would like to see. The kids realize that, ‘yeah, you can grow your own things.’ It’s important for them to say, ‘I did it. I did it.’ **It’s not just that they go in the grocery store and get it, but they actually played a part in helping it grow and making those decisions about what are we going to have.**”

“With the kids in the program, going home, talking about it, and bringing home things that they’ve done in the garden program, I think they are encouraging their parents to come out and be involved in the community garden. I know some of them have raised beds at their home. I guess that would be the next level, not only being a part of the community garden here, but establishing something at home that the whole family can do. That’s how I was raised. We had a garden. The more involved you get with your community, the better and stronger community you make. We want to make this a community where people are involved.”

Linda Mealing is a valued partner of Growing Hope. She has lived in West Willow subdivision since 1971 and has been on the Board of the New West Willow Neighborhood Association (NWWNA) since the 1990s. This is the second year Growing Hope has worked in collaboration with her and the West Willow Garden Summer Camp to run a nutrition-based garden summer program for kids.







## In our own words: Merilynne Rush

“In the fall of 2008, I was working on establishing a community garden in my congregation at St. Andrews Episcopal Church in Ann Arbor and somebody suggested that I contact Growing Hope because they knew that they were a resource for community gardening. That’s how I found out about the CSGDI course – which we signed up for, five of us from our congregation – in January 2009. It was at that same time that I became aware, because of my work in my outreach committee and my concern about feeding the hungry, of the study that Food Gatherers had done assessing the needs of people in our community who access community food banks. That study showed that **cost is the main reason people who access those food banks and meal programs don’t eat enough fruits and vegetables. So we decided to start a community garden to donate the food to people who needed it.**

“People know about Food Gatherers as a place where they can donate food, people know about Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice as a resource for doing social action, and people know about Growing Hope as a source of information on how to garden, how to organize family and community gardens and how to benefit from gardens. The CSGDI course is especially important because it enables people and empowers them to become gardeners. There are also things like the lending library and the tool library and being able to go to the seedling swaps to get seeds and participate in community building events at Growing Hope that energize people to become part of the urban gardening movement.



In 2009, after graduating from CSGDI, Merilynne Rush was hired as the coordinator for Faith and Food, a pilot partnership between Growing Hope, Food Gatherers, and Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice, where she worked with congregations growing for donation. She now works with ‘soul gardening’, as an after death home care consultant. She educates about, and attends families who wish to have a home funeral, and is advocating for a new local green cemetery. Her website is [www.afterdeathhomecare.com](http://www.afterdeathhomecare.com).



A photograph of a community garden plot. In the foreground, two green plants with small yellow flowers are in focus. In the background, several people are working in the garden, with one person in the center wearing khaki shorts and holding a wooden handle. The ground is dark brown soil.

*“Having a community plot at the Growing Hope Center helped us grow lots and lots of fresh food to eat and share, more importantly, it made our clients feel that we were part of something bigger.”*

— Michael Bennet, Case Manager, Home of New Vision



# Growing Hope Programs

*Growing Hope began in 2003 as an effort to help young and old start growing gardens community, school, and home spaces. Since then, our own learning, along with our communities' interests and needs, have evolved into four distinct program areas that encompass the ways we make an impact: Growing Gardens, Youth & Schools, Downtown Ypsilanti Farmers' Market & Social Enterprise, and Community Outreach & Volunteerism. Through these programs, we aim to engage people in learning, service, and involvement in making healthier lives and communities.*

## Growing Gardens

Growing Gardens is our entry-point for all things gardening at Growing Hope. An annual sliding-scale membership for a household or a group gives anyone access to training and resources from Growing Hope, as described below, while allowing us to track and understand the impact of our engagement with our community.

**Garden Leadership Training:** Our five-week Community & School Garden Development Institute (CSGDI) trains teams ready to begin their garden project by providing training in organizing, project planning, leadership development, volunteerism, and site design. Beginning in 2006 with six participants from two community groups, our 2009 Community & School Garden Development Institute (CSGDI) session trained more than 21 people from seven local organizations including churches, preschools, mental health treatment services, and housing and homelessness community groups. Teams then build and manage their own gardens – most as volunteers – multiplying the positive and healthy impact in their own communities.

**Seed Starting Squad:** Volunteers grow seedlings at home for themselves, neighbors and Growing Hope. This program, new in 2009, engaged 45 households in growing seedlings through an inexpensive yet effective light setup for borrow or purchase that we designed and built with volunteers. In its first year, Seed Starting Squad members with all levels of experience grew over 4000 seedlings for Growing Hope, as we helped reduce a barrier to establishing gardens in the spring.

**Tool and Resource Lending Library:** Growing Gardens members can check out tools, small equipment and curricular materials from our Lending Library. We also donate seeds, plants and garden materials to low- and no-income members.

**Raised Bed Gardens:** Low-and no-income families receive free raised bed gardens in exchange for tracking their harvests, nutritional changes and the impact on family food budgets. Over our initial two-week recruitment period in 2009, 75 households completed applications. Forty gardens were installed in the spring and another forty in the fall. Though our focus was Ypsilanti, we received applications from as far away as Detroit and Whitmore Lake. Participants received additional dollars for healthy food through tracking market dollars that could be spent at our Downtown Ypsi Farmers' Market. Participating households, 70% of which included children and most on food stamps, grew more than a thousand pounds of food among the first forty households. The highest producing household grew 115 pounds of produce in just 48 square feet (three four by four foot raised beds), worth \$188.

**Faith and Food:** A 2009 pilot partnership among Food Gatherers, Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice, and Growing Hope, Faith and Food aimed to maximize congregational growing for donation. The project was part of Food Gatherers' Big Community Harvest. Working with 15 congregations through Washtenaw County, participants grew over 3500 pounds of fresh, healthy food to donate to Food Gatherers. A summer tour of Faith and Food gardens showed others how they, too, can use land for food instead of grass.

**Four Square Society:** We like to ask, "What Can You Grow In A Square?" In an effort to quantify the impact of small-plot growing, we engage gardeners in weighing their harvests through our Four Square Society. As we do so, we can have better data around the economic and nutritional potential of small-scale growing – essential information to validate urban agriculture.

## In our own words: Towne Centre Place residents and gardeners



Sharron Kniffen  
(left, pictured with Tom Stefina)

“When I was just a tot, my family was sort of poor. They weren’t real wealthy. At one point, my adopted dad lost his job, and **just before he lost his job, he planted a half-acre garden.** But soon after, he had to take work uptown, which meant he had to leave. So upon planting the garden, he gave my adopted mother and I instructions on how to take care of it, and he left. What he didn’t realize, was that he took the hose. He put it in the back of his car, and left with the hose. He was gone for six weeks on an out of town job. When he came back, there was no garden.

What can a three year old with a little watering can do? Well, I got spanked for not watering the garden, which was not rational, but it happened anyway. So, I never had a garden after that. Nobody let me have a garden because I didn’t water that garden. I was supposed to water half an acre with a pint can? So here I am. I’m now either 62 or 63 years old, depending on which birth certificate is accurate, and for the first time in 60 years, I have an opportunity to have a garden. These women convinced me to have a garden. Now, I have bok choy coming out of my ears.”



Shirley Ramsey (second from left)

“Sigrid was the one who got us involved, she had this showplace garden up there, just a beautiful thing and I just went crazy when I saw that. I thought, ‘I can’t believe it, we can have gardens here?’ I was heartbroken when I moved from my house and couldn’t garden anymore so when there was this possibility that opened up I was just thrilled.

Because of health problems, **I live on mostly vegetables, but because it’s too expensive, for years I didn’t have any fresh vegetables.** It was all frozen stuff, whatever I could store in my freezer on sale, because food stamps wouldn’t cover the price of fresh vegetables. Fresh vegetables, these days, are about the price of meat. So I was desperate to find a way to ease my food budget and this was just perfect. Growing Hope has just been really terrific, I’m just thrilled with the whole idea of going out and getting people to plant gardens and helping them and mentoring them.

**It doesn’t make sense not to be able to grow your own food.** It’s just a basic human need. I’m grateful that we have the opportunity to have gardens here and I’m really grateful for all the help that Growing Hope has given us.”



Rene Finney (second from right)

“I’m originally from Detroit, I’ve been up here five years. I have 13 grandkids and two great grandchildren. We’ve always had a garden, but my grandparents did the gardening, I was usually the picker. So **this is the first garden I’ve tried on my own.**”



Sigrid Melvin (right)

“When my neighbors saw that I had such nice tomatoes and tasted how great they were, I didn’t have to convince them to get a garden, they wanted it. **I picked my vegetables and when I had too much for myself, I would leave the extras on the table in the community room.** So my neighbors got to help themselves and once they tasted it, they didn’t want to go back to the store. Even my little granddaughter would say. ‘grandma, this is greeeeaaat!’

We have a beautiful backyard and for four years I couldn’t get my neighbors to come out. They would just sit in the lobby. Now at least they come out and get a little more sun, some vitamin D. The gardens provide us with more benefits than the vegetables alone.”

Sigrid Melvin led the drive to install raised bed gardens for fixed-income seniors – her neighbors – at Towne Centre. She was the first recipient of three raised beds from our Garden Install Program in May 2009 and there are now about forty, including six wheelchair accessible beds. Shirley Ramsey has also been active in leading the effort to bring gardens to Towne Centre. Sigrid, Shirley, Sharron Kniffen, Tom Stefina and Rene Finney are just a few of the residents who are now tending gardens from beds installed in partnership with Growing Hope.



## Youth & Schools

**Youth Internships & Mentors:** Graduates of our youth development programs gain leadership skills while serving as gardening and nutrition peer educators. In 2009, five teens – all graduates of other youth programs at Growing Hope – acted as Youth Interns and created and taught garden-based nutrition lessons, business basics, and cooking to other programs with young people. Other teens worked as neighborhood mentors in our garden summer camp.

**Youth Job Training:** In 2009, Growing Hope's Summer Youth Employment Program gave low-income teens and young adults training opportunities in gardening, farming, cooking, and farmers' market. Through a Michigan Works funded grant, 15 youth worked 25 to 35 hours a week from June through September. They installed raised beds for families, learned gardening & farming, built fences, worked with customers at the farmers' market, volunteered at local farms, and learned business planning.

### After School Clubs & Classroom Education:

Through classroom activities, curricula and after-school Seed2Plate clubs, students learn the connection between gardening and healthy lifestyles. During the 2008-2009 school year, Growing Hope worked with science, health, and special education classes in East and West Middle Schools in Ypsilanti.

### West Willow Garden Summer Camp:

In collaboration with the West Willow Community Garden, this nutrition-based garden summer camp for kids of all ages began in 2009. It reached a total of 27 participants. In addition, the camp created jobs for eight neighborhood youth and adults.

**Youth Volunteering:** More than 100 youth, each season, combine learning with service opportunities at our sites.

Through a long-time partnership with the Plymouth YMCA, a Youth Volunteer Corps provides a weekly volunteer group during the summer. Other young people volunteer at Growing Hope to fulfill community service requirements or get early job experience.



### In our own words: Kelsey Watson

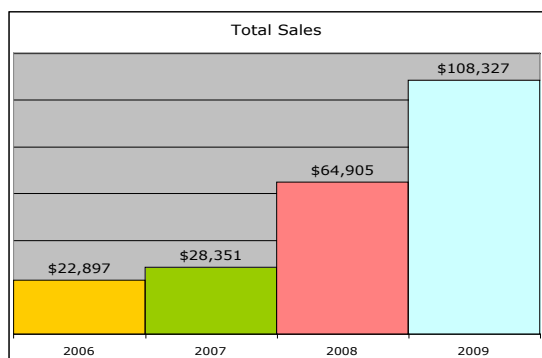
"I started out in the Roots & Shoots program and then I came back to Growing Hope to work as a youth intern. I planned activities for the Summer Youth Employment Program and took my involvement to another level. I worked with a group where we ended up planning a tea business. We'd take natural herbs from the garden and make teas with it. It ended up being real cool and turned out to be a good experience. I absolutely loved working there – it suited me really well. I love the people and the atmosphere and what I did, it was great. And so I carried a lot on through what I do now. During spring break I weeded out my whole garden from the summer and I planted bunch of different things. So, **working with gardens stayed with me. I also really learned a lot about how to work with people. It was my first real work experience and that was a good thing to have when I was 15.**

"The process helped the kids learn a lot about what comes out of our gardens and what you can do with it, as well as the different business aspects of it. It helped them learn about what you can do with what you have.

Kelsey Watson is currently 16 years old and a junior at Lincoln High School. She was a youth intern with Growing Hope and a mentor at the West Willow Garden Camp during the summer of 2009.

## Downtown Ypsilanti Farmers' Market (DYFM)

In 2006 Growing Hope expanded our impact from gardens to broader healthy food access when we became the lead organization to found the Downtown Ypsilanti Farmers' Market, establishing key partnerships with Washtenaw County Public Health, the Ypsilanti Food Co-op, and MSU-Extension. The market increases access to fresh and healthy food while supporting our local economy and revitalizing downtown Ypsilanti. Tracking and evaluation data affirms that this is the case. **Market sales grew 370% between 2006-2009.** During



the market's first year, vendors brought in more than \$20,000 in sales. Over the years, the market grew steadily with close to \$30,000 in sales in 2007, over \$60,000 in 2008 and over \$108,000 in 2009. The market accepts cash, and uses a multicolored token system to take food stamps, credit cards, and other incentive or coupon programs.

The DYFM leverages dollars from government programs and market partnerships that help people access food, making healthy options accessible and affordable. These programs allowed low-income families and seniors to buy Michigan-grown produce at Michigan farmers'

markets, making a win-win for our vendors, local economy, and for customers. **Participation in all of these low-income assistance programs increased in 2009 composing nearly 20% of overall market sales, and growing 132% compared to 2008.**

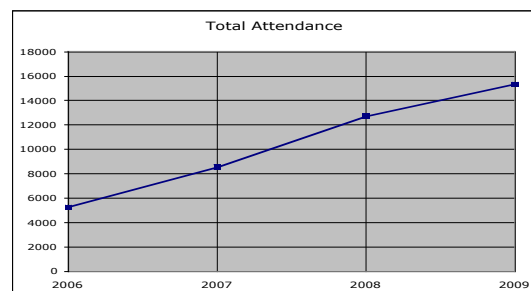


**Food Stamps at the DYFM:** When the DYFM opened in 2006, it was the third market in the state to accept EBT/Bridge Card/Food Stamps through a wireless machine managed by the Ypsi Food Co-op. In 2009, over 30 markets accepted them, and now Growing Hope shares our knowledge and successes with other markets through the Michigan Farmers' Market Association (MIFMA). GH employed creative marketing and outreach strategies to make shoppers aware that they can use their food stamps at the market, and **EBT dollars used at the market doubled in 2009 compared to 2008.** In 2009, \$6113 was spent by customers using food stamps and another \$2423 on food stamp matching dollars. The average EBT transaction amount was \$12.57 per customer.

### Project FRESH:

Project FRESH is an extension of Michigan's

Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program, and provides coupons for WIC-qualifying families to purchase locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables at any participating farmers' market in the



state of Michigan. Senior Project FRESH provides the same coupons to income-qualifying senior citizens and people with disabilities. Both programs include on-site orientations and nutrition education for participants, which were led by WIC and MSU-Extension. In 2009, \$5,476 was redeemed at the DYFM for fruits and vegetables through this program.

### Prescription for Health (PFH):

DYFM partner, Washtenaw County Public Health, offered its third year of a healthy food initiative called Prescription for Health. PFH distributed market tokens to the patients of five community-based health clinics that serve low-income residents and people with disabilities: The Corner Health Center, Hope Clinic, Neighborhood Health Clinic, UM Ypsilanti Health Center, and Packard Health Clinic. Also in 2009,



Food Gatherers and other food pantries served as additional distribution points for Prescription for Health tokens. **In 2009, \$6,496 in PFH tokens was redeemed during the market season**, compared to \$1,470 in 2008.

**Our Vendors:** In 2009, the market hosted 46 vendors throughout the market season. Our vendors come from all over southeast Michigan and represent a range of racial and socio-economic backgrounds. Vendor diversity sets the Downtown Ypsilanti Farmers' Market apart from many of our peers in the region and makes the market especially welcoming to customers from diverse backgrounds. Produce vendors include small backyard hobby farmers, full-time farming families, urban farmers, and youth entrepreneurs. Additional vendors include cheese, egg, and baked good vendors along with local artists

of handmade crafts. There are also vendors who buy Michigan-grown produce at wholesale and then re-sell to the public at the market.

Vendor surveys were completed in 2009 and showed vendor satisfaction was very high. 91% rated the management of the market as excellent or good, 95% said they were satisfied with market layout and stall space and 54% said their market sales resulted in a large or moderate increase in their total income. Also, returning full season vendors showed a 40% growth rate in sales from 2008 to 2009. Vendors typically traveled approximately 15 miles to sell at the Downtown Ypsilanti Farmers' Market, although many come from less than a mile away, and even some from across the street!

## In our own words: Magnolia Minor

"When I first came to Ypsilanti I lived in an apartment across the street from the market and when I walked through the market, I saw that people were out selling. So I asked one of the girls, 'May I do a baked good table' and she said 'Sure!' and that's how I got started at the market.

I've been baking for longer than I know, for years and years and years I've been baking. I used to cook dinners and boxed lunches. Then I made quilts and sold them. **Then for about three years, I did nothing, until I came here. Now, business is really good, I love it.**

People start to depend on you being at the market every week, and if you're not here, they say, 'where were you?.' When people are concerned about you, it makes you come, and I think I have a lot of satisfied customers. A lot of people talk about the things that I bake and it really makes you feel good to know that people enjoy what you do. I enjoy cooking, I love to cook. I've been cooking for so long, since I was about six or seven years old, when I couldn't even reach the top of the stove.

**One of the things Growing Hope teaches people is healthy eating. Even though I'm over 60, I'm still learning things I didn't know about.** I'm still learning about the different vegetables and the different herbs and spices and I ask a lot of questions. I'm always saying, 'What's this? What's this? What's this?' Being from Mississippi, people think I should know what a lot of these things are, but I didn't. So I learned a lot from Growing Hope."

Magnolia "Maggie" Minor has been a vendor of baked goods at the DYFM since 2006. She's originally from Mississippi and currently a resident of Towne Centre, a fixed-income highrise directly across the street from the market. She comes to Ypsilanti via Detroit by way of Memphis, Tennessee. She is pictured here with her grandson, Nelson.



## Social Enterprise

As Growing Hope has evolved and our community has experienced worsening economic times, we've recognized the growing importance that food and gardens can play in economic revitalization for individuals and our community overall. At the same time, we aim to become more self-reliant as an organization. In the last three years, we've undertaken planning and pilot efforts in social enterprise – developing earned-revenue and business opportunities that further our mission. At the same time, we are modeling and training others in entrepreneurship and green jobs, through youth employment and intern programs, training via volunteerism, and eventually more formal adult training programs.

Revenue to support our mission is earned by growing and selling veggies and herbs in local marketplaces, building and selling raised bed kits and our spring plant sale. In 2008, Growing Hope worked with a master's project group from the University of Michigan to explore future ways of sustaining the Growing Hope Center through social enterprise programs.

**Growing Hope Center:** As you'll see in pages to come, our 1.4 acre demonstration urban farm will showcase how urban lots can maximize production for self and for sale. Our 3,000 square foot, unheated hoophouse exemplifies the potential of a 10 month growing season. Demonstration plots also show how garden-based enterprises can begin with just a few square feet. The Center will be the headquarters for all of our programs, but allow us to grow green jobs and training in a way currently not possible. A small, certified commercial kitchen will be available for community use in piloting food-based businesses, and our lending library will be open and include business planning and entrepreneurial resources. Just in 2009, volunteers contributed 1300 hours of service to the development of food at Growing Hope Center, culminating in approximately 1200 pounds of produce made available to the community primarily through the Downtown Ypsilanti Farmers' Market

**Ypsi Urban Farmers:** A breakfast gathering, community survey, and listserv provide networking opportunities for people of all backgrounds interested in urban agriculture and producing food in the city; they also provides a vehicle for community input to gauge community interest and help guide GH's priorities.

## Community Outreach

**Volunteer Programs:** Volunteers support every angle of Growing Hope's work, from one-time infusions of large groups to ongoing professional volunteerism on our site planning team. We depend on a diverse group of volunteers, coming with a wide range of skills and life experiences to lead and assist in all of our programs and operations. Volunteerism is also a training opportunity, and many volunteers go on to start similar efforts or use their skills as they apply for jobs. As our programs grow, so does our volunteer base. In 2008, more than 200 volunteers donated more than 2000 hours of their time and in 2009, more than 300 volunteers worked in excess of 3700 hours. In addition, Growing Hope has received volunteer staffing who receive a small stipend from the Americorps\*VISTA program. In 2008, VISTAS worked more than 7600 hours and volunteer hours grew to more than 11,000 in 2009.

**Networks and Coalitions:** We both participate and take leadership roles in a broad range of local and statewide groups that are working to share information and advance mutual causes in gardening, nutrition, public health and related areas. In 2009, Growing Hope joined the leadership team for the Ypsilanti Health Coalition. In November of 2009, Growing Hope hosted the Michigan Community & School Garden Network's annual meeting, bringing over 100 folks from Michigan (and Toledo, Ohio) to learn, share, and tour.

**Impacting Policy:** The City of Ypsilanti made a major move forward in supporting urban agriculture in 2009 with the passage of ordinances allowing the keeping of chickens and bees. Growing Hope gained community input, reported results and best practices before council, and helped neighbors organize and advocate.

**General Outreach and Education:** We spread the word through presentations at local fairs and events across the state, by working with college student projects and by maintaining a strong overall presence in the community.

**Tour de Fresh:** Our annual garden and food system tour features the work done by community groups and individuals to make the Ypsilanti-area greener, healthier and more sustainable.



## In our own words: Tyrone Bridges

"I was introduced to gardening as a young child. My mom lived in a community where they all bought plots in Willow Run. We had a big field to plant in and she bought a small plot. I was about six or seven. I wasn't very interested at the time, but **I was still amazed at how people could grow on their own, as opposed to just seeing vegetables at the grocery store.** I didn't get interested-until I was about 39. I enjoy growing, I really do. If I can do this every year, all day, every day, I will. **I love going out in my garden. It gives me a piece of mind. It's almost meditation for me.**



I heard about Growing Hope last year in passing, and then I went down on Michigan Avenue and I saw the hoophouse and I was just very excited that this was something that was happening in this community, because a lot of people in this community really need fresh produce, chemical free. **It's a very healthy way to eat and saves you a lot of money.** I know it saved me so much money last year I couldn't keep track. I had more tomatoes that I could use last year, and I ate tons of greens last year. I had sweet bell peppers too and I also picked a lot of my rosemary and basil and used it for cooking.

I think the mission of Growing Hope is such an important mission. It is a group that will continue to be greatly appreciated over the years for the things they've been doing in the community. I think that's one of the most awesome things Growing Hope has to offer. I like doing the garden installs for people, going around and talking about the gardens and encouraging more people to grow. I think that's what we need to do more of in our community. A lot of people are financially stressed and a lot of people could benefit. Many people don't realize how much a garden at their home could save them as opposed to buying produce at the store, and there's nothing like picking fresh vegetables and then using them in the kitchen right away. There's nothing like it. I'm energized when it's time to cook."

Tyrone Bridges was born and raised in Ypsilanti. He has eight children. He is currently a single parent of his 11 year old, Tyree who is in the sixth grade. He received raised beds in 2009 and has been an active volunteer with Growing Hope.



*"Growing Hope is actively contributing to positive community growth at an important time when it's crucial for individuals to reassess their own environmental footprint and self-sustaining habits."*

– Peter Fremuth, volunteer





*"In a few short years, Growing Hope has transformed the landscape of food-access activism in the Ypsilanti area. Many groups imagine a change. Growing Hope makes things happen."*

– Jeff McCabe, community member committed to sustainable food systems and increasing the number of hoophouses in Washtenaw County



# The Growing Hope Center: Rooting for the Future

In December 2007, Growing Hope took a major step forward in demonstrating our commitment to growing positive and healthy futures in Southeast Michigan when we purchased the 1.4 acre property on Michigan Avenue for the Growing Hope Center. Since then, we've been raising support, securing partnerships, and mobilizing thousands of volunteer hours to

and productivity of our gardens. Several thousand people have visited the Center since it was purchased. Volunteers from Google, the University of Michigan, Eastern Michigan University, Community Support & Treatment Services, and many more local institutions have played a role in developing the property, one project at a time. But, we need more support to complete all renovations necessary for a Certificate of Occupancy.

Once the Center is fully renovated and operational, tens of thousands of youth and adults will visit, volunteer, train and learn in a year-round, hands-on, educational environment. When fully operational, the Growing Hope Center will be an inspirational model of viable urban gardening and entrepreneurial development, by providing:

- A regional showcase for urban agriculture and community gardening where results are measured and quantified.
- Fresh produce grown and harvested by volunteers, for themselves, their community, local restaurants and farmers' markets.
- Opportunities for youth to gain employment, build life skills and develop positive perspectives on the

transform the site. A 1930s house on the property will hold the organization's offices and teaching space and, through green rehabilitation, will showcase energy efficiency, creative reuse and sustainable building practices. When complete, the Center will be a tangible symbol of hope amidst our shifting economy as Ypsilanti and our region move towards economic and community revitalization.

The Growing Hope Center is already becoming a place where people can learn, grow and be inspired by the beauty, health

value and purpose of their education.

- Engaging classes where food is harvested, prepared and presented using an indoor commercial kitchen and outdoor adobe oven.
- A productive and nurturing place where friends and neighbors from across a large spectrum of age, economic ability and ethnic backgrounds work together in the spirit of building a sustainable local economy.



*Illustration courtesy of Amanda Szot, AICP, LEED AP*

# Impacts of the GHC for our community and region

The Growing Hope Center will operate year round, both making our programs and services more accessible and serving as an anchor of revitalization by providing indoor and outdoor gathering and learning spaces. Once complete, the Center will set a visible and undeniable example of progress and success in an urban setting by:

- Dramatically increasing our ability to demonstrate and provide hands-on training for gardening, urban farming, healthy eating, and garden-based entrepreneurship.
- Making food production more accessible and affordable to community members by creating a center for storing, lending, selling and donating tools, books, equipment and building materials.
- Providing space where volunteer labor can be utilized to grow thousands of seedlings and build hundreds of raised bed kits and rain barrels that can be utilized both for donations and a sustainable revenue stream.

- Nurturing local businesses through garden-based enterprises including growing herbs for wholesale to local restaurants, producing vegetables for sale online and at the farmers' market, and training local under-employed workers for jobs in urban agriculture and local food industries.
- Increasing the locally grown supply of fresh foods available for sale and donation by further integrating our hoophouse and its 10-month growing capacity into our operations.
- Enhancing our internal capacity and organizational sustainability by providing new revenue streams and providing space for fee-based programs.
- Solidifying Growing Hope as a hub for urban agriculture and training for Washtenaw County and Southeast Michigan.
- Building upon our existing media and community relationships to showcase the successful rebirth of Ypsilanti and our region.

## Featured Partner:

### Washtenaw Community College Residential Construction Program

Growing Hope first met Cristy Lindemann, Director of the Washtenaw Community College Residential Construction Program, in 2005 when we worked together to build school greenhouses that had been designed by Dr. Lorelle Meadow's freshman engineering classes at the University of Michigan. Cristy's students gained construction experience as they built the frames for three school greenhouses that were donated to Ypsilanti-area schools Growing Hope was working in. Fast forward to 2008, and WCC came on board with Growing Hope in an even bigger way as the lead construction partner at the Growing Hope Center. Each semester her students work on different components of the green remodel of the 1931 house that will be the Growing Hope headquarters, gaining hands on experience with remodeling. What a win-win for Growing Hope and green jobs!



Learn more about WCC's program at [www4.wccnet.edu/departments/residentialconstruction](http://www4.wccnet.edu/departments/residentialconstruction).



# Growing Hope in the media

"Ypsilanti brew pub hosting three more farmers markets" November 16, 2009. *Examiner* by Donald Schwartz

"Growing Hope tours Ypsi" September 16, 2009. *Ypsilanti Citizen* by Dan DuChene

"Metro Detroit Goes Slow And Tastes The Difference" August 6, 2009. *Metromode* by Nicole Rupersburg

"Urban agriculture in action in Ypsilanti" May 13, 2009. *Issues of the Environment Radio Show WEMU 98.1*. hosted by David Fair

"Nonprofit grows revenue and mission through social enterprises" April 29, 2009. *Ann Arbor Business Review* by Sarah A. Rigg

"Growing Hope's Four Square Society offers to install free gardens" April 26, 2009. *The Ann Arbor News* by Laurel Firant

"Local Food for Thought" February 25, 2009. *The Ann Arbor Chronicle* by Mary Morgan

"Green thumb itching? Ypsilanti gardening group Growing Hope has seed of an idea" February 10, 2009. *The Ann Arbor News* by Lynn Monson

"Growing Hope nonprofit pushing to change chicken ban in Ypsilanti" February 9, 2009. *The Ann Arbor News* by Cindy Heflin

*"Like an established plant, Growing Hope has roots that run deep, flourishing in native soil and destined to become a lasting part of the local landscape."*  
– Edible WOW. Summer 2009

*"Urban farms, urban gardens—all of them have the same purpose. By providing families who might not otherwise have access to fresh, nutritious produce, they are promoting wellness—both physical and mental, as the cost to families is free and helps lessen the burden of financial need. By promoting the community sharing aspect of a community garden, in which all people participate in whatever way they can and take only what they need, they help strengthen the sense of community."*  
– Metromode. August 6, 2009

*"Growing Hope, the Ypsilanti nonprofit dedicated to bringing organic food and gardening to a larger audience, is finding that making money and pursuing its mission are not incompatible."*  
– Ann Arbor Business Review. April 29, 2009

*"Growing Hope has initiated many programs geared towards teaching children and adults the benefits of growing and eating fresh healthy food."*  
– Eat Local Food. September 24, 2008

"Mastermind: Amanda Edmonds" October 22, 2008. *Concentrate* by Amy Whitesall

"Growing Hope in Ypsilanti, Michigan" September 24, 2008. *Eat Local Food* by Joan Tobin Rozelle

"Markets reach out to those in need" August 3, 2008. *The Ann Arbor News* by Jordan Miller

"Community gardens cultivate more than produce" July 10, 2008. *The Ann Arbor News* by Dave A. Holzman

"Gardens grow a community" July 10, 2008. *The Ann Arbor News* by Seth Gordon

"Hope Grows In Ypsilanti" Summer 2008. *Edible WOW* by Alex Harrison.

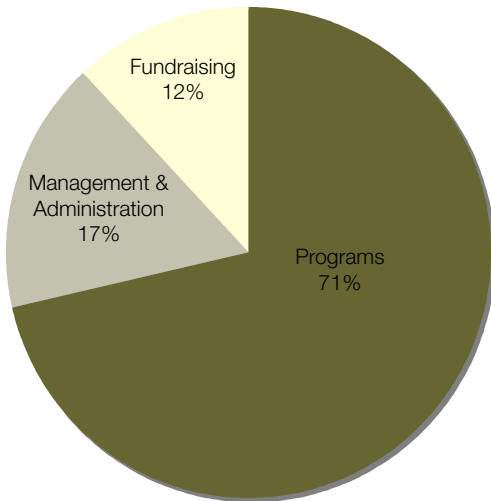
"For Ypsi nonprofit, gardens are an agent of change" April 22, 2008. *Green Michigan Magazine* from *The Ann Arbor News* by Jerry Sova

"Growing Hope for the Future" May 2008, Issue #39. *The Crazy Wisdom Community Journal* by Rachel Pastiva

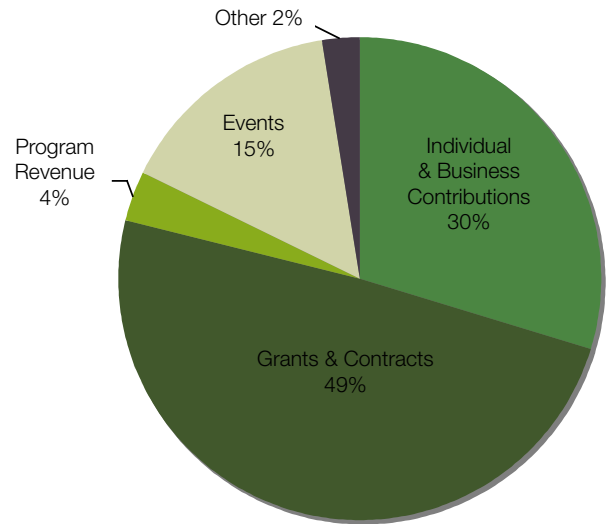
"A Place to Grow: Growing Hope finds a home near downtown" May 11, 2008. *The Ann Arbor News* by Jordan Miller

# Financials 2006 – 2009

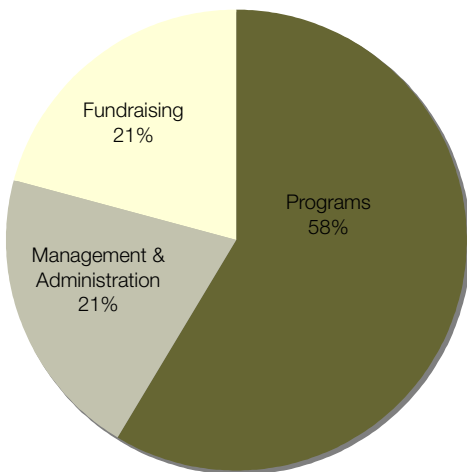
2006 expenses



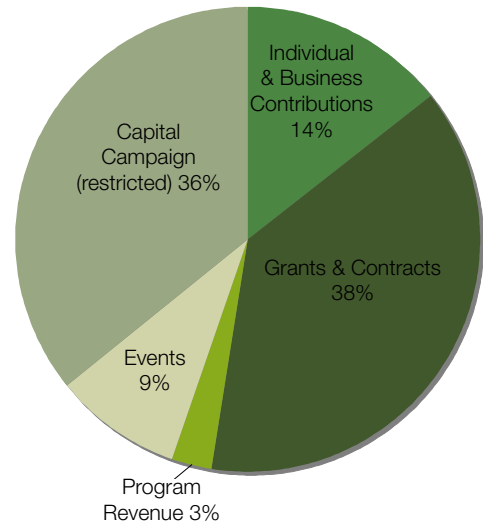
2006 revenue



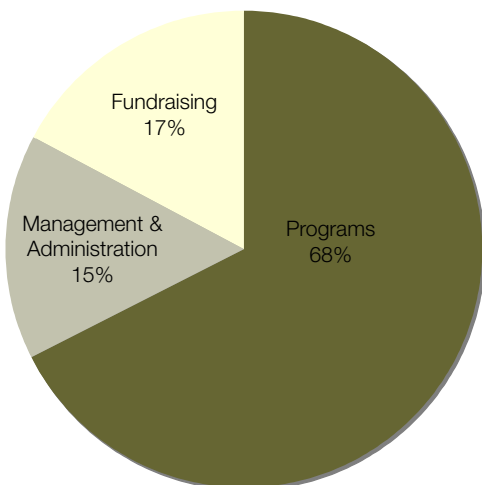
2007 expenses



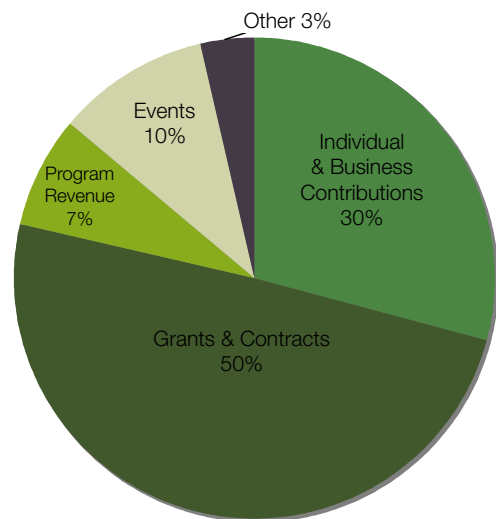
2007 revenue



2008 expenses

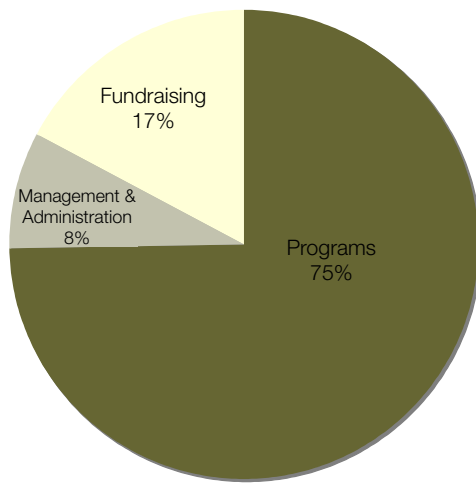


2008 revenue

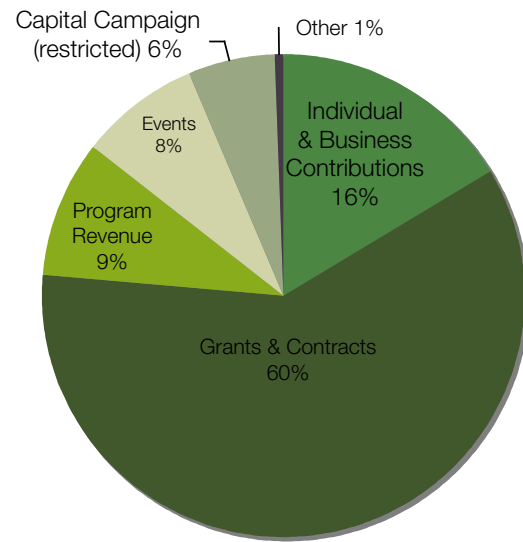




2009 expenses



2009 revenue



| REVENUE                                        | 2006            | 2007             | 2008             | 2009             |
|------------------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>Individual &amp; Business</b>               | \$24,110        | \$30,294         | \$44,388         | \$46,017         |
| Individual Contributions                       | \$24,110        | \$27,017         | \$32,813         | \$37,146         |
| Business Contributions                         | \$0             | \$3,277          | \$11,575         | \$8,871          |
| <b>Grants &amp; Contracts</b>                  | \$39,892        | \$79,219         | \$74,945         | \$170,073        |
| Foundation Grants                              | \$21,700        | \$27,750         | \$14,915         | \$4,500          |
| Government and University Grants and Contracts | \$18,192        | \$48,659         | \$42,080         | \$141,284        |
| Nonprofit Grants and contracts                 | \$0             | \$2,810          | \$17,950         | \$24,289         |
| Program Revenue                                | \$2,850         | \$5,830          | \$11,178         | \$25,505         |
| Fundraising Events                             | \$12,398        | \$18,722         | \$15,758         | \$22,967         |
| Capital Campaign (restricted)                  | \$0             | \$75,000         | \$0              | \$16,250         |
| Other                                          | \$1,995         | \$303            | \$5,292          | \$1,705          |
| <b>Total Revenue</b>                           | <b>\$81,245</b> | <b>\$209,368</b> | <b>\$151,561</b> | <b>\$282,517</b> |

| EXPENSES                      | 2006             | 2007             | 2008             | 2009             |
|-------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Program Expenses              | \$71,667         | \$62,257         | \$105,983        | \$174,552        |
| Management and Administration | \$16,675         | \$21,791         | \$24,090         | \$18,672         |
| Fundraising                   | \$12,112         | \$22,203         | \$27,186         | \$40,105         |
| <b>Total Expenses</b>         | <b>\$100,454</b> | <b>\$106,251</b> | <b>\$157,259</b> | <b>\$233,329</b> |

|                   |           |           |          |          |
|-------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|
| Retained Earnings | -\$19,209 | \$103,117 | -\$5,698 | \$49,188 |
|-------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|

|                       | 2006             | 2007             | 2008             | 2009             |
|-----------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b> | <b>\$100,454</b> | <b>\$106,250</b> | <b>\$157,259</b> | <b>\$233,329</b> |
| <b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>  | <b>\$81,245</b>  | <b>\$209,368</b> | <b>\$151,561</b> | <b>\$282,517</b> |

## In our own words: Roy Finny

“When I was going to West Middle School, Growing Hope came into my science class to do an experiment growing plants in a bottle. They showed us four or five different plants and how they can grow in difficult environments. So I thought that was really cool, because I’m a real science-y type guy, so they got me. I started going to their after-school program and spent the rest of the school year there. Then I went to the summer program and got real close to Amanda and everybody there. In July 2005, I got my first job. I started working at the Farmer’s Market, it was the first year of the market so I’m as old as the market. Now I’m a summer VISTA Associate working as an Urban Farmer’s Assistant. Specifically I’m tending the garden, I’m helping JP water the plants and renovate and clean up the site of the Growing Hope Center and making sure everything is growing right. I’m weeding and composting, laying down bricks for new pathways...all types of stuff.

“I’ve been working with Growing Hope now for 5 years and have been with them for six. So pretty much, **I’ve grown just as much as they have as far as loving the environment.** I used to live at the house that is at the Growing Hope Center now, so we’re pretty much family.

**“My most enjoyable thing so far has been growing things, and knowing that I’m a part of such a beautiful project – like from seed to plate basically – just seeing that process, knowing you’re a part of that process and knowing that you’re helping somebody when you’re watering that plant.**

Originally from Detroit, Roy Finny and his family moved, via Redford, to Ypsilanti six years ago so his family could, in Roy’s words, “get back on their feet.” Roy is now 18 years old and recently graduated from Ypsilanti High School. He has plans to attend college in Arizona in the fall to pursue a career as a music producer and recording artist.



## In our own words: Elizabeth Ayer

“Working at Growing Hope solidified my passion for urban agriculture and provided me a strong base for the work I have done ever since. I have kept the values of Growing Hope, building the capacity of community members, and participatory education, with me, and integrated them in all my endeavors. **While working at Growing Hope I was given the opportunity to grow and be challenged as an educator, with mentorship experience that was invaluable.** In the short time that I worked with Growing Hope, I witnessed great changes created by the organizations and the people we worked with, from the

expansion of community gardens to new neighborhoods, new programs and farmers market. **Being part of such a dedicated organization, and seeing concrete results in the community gave me the hope to continue in the same line of work.”**

Elizabeth Ayer was the New Garden Development Coordinator as a Americorps\*VISTA member for Growing Hope in 2006 and is currently the farm manager for BK Farmyards ([www.bkfarmyards.com](http://www.bkfarmyards.com)) and the High School for Public Service Youth Farm in Brooklyn, New York. She has also run farmers’ markets and garden programs in New York City and completed the University of Santa Cruz Organic Farming Certificate.





*"Growing Hope is a unique and innovative organization with a clear goal: to increase access to healthy, local food in Ypsilanti and Washtenaw County. Unique in its commitment to bolstering food security through the support of urban gardens and the low-cost, high-access Downtown Ypsilanti Farmers' Market. Innovative for its use of sustainable strategies to gain these goals, like the construction of a passive solar hoophouse to extend the growing season at the Growing Hope Center, a community adobe oven there, and also its 'green-remodel,' Growing Hope is a significant organization, doing vital work."*

– Stefanie Stauffer, volunteer, PhD student at University of California Santa Barbara

# With your help, hope grows: our 2006 - 2009 donors

*Whether through sustaining financial contributions or an in-kind donation, efforts of hundreds from every corner of the community help Growing Hope grow. Contributions to Growing Hope come in all shapes and sizes. Every donation – whether financial or material – matters, and has built Growing Hope to where we are today. We recognize here our contributors and sincerely thank each one for one-time or ongoing gifts. We build Growing Hope's budget from scratch each year, having confidence that if we carry out work that is valuable to our community, people and organizations will show their appreciation by investing with us. We hope you will consider contributing a future gift, grant, item, or service to allow our impact to sustain and grow.*

|                                                                                                  |                                                  |                                                                              |                                                                    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4 Chefs                                                                                          | Sue and Jim Ashwell in tribute to Amanda Edmonds | Bread and Flowers                                                            | Collected Works                                                    |
| A Green Financial Group                                                                          | Aubree's Saloon                                  | Jerry and Lynne Breakstone                                                   | Colorbok                                                           |
| A Knife's Work                                                                                   | Susan Ayer                                       | Heather Leah Bridgewater                                                     | Carol and Robert Cook                                              |
| Kristen and Geoff Abbas                                                                          | E. Daniel and Lynn Ayres                         | Bridgewater Farm                                                             | Jessica Cook and Cameron Weimar                                    |
| Matt Abel                                                                                        | Babl Tree Inc.                                   | Katherine Briggs Goldberg                                                    | Corner Brewery                                                     |
| Abracadabra Jewelry and Gem Gallery                                                              | William C. Babut Attorneys at Law                | Brines Farm                                                                  | Corner Health Center                                               |
| Julie and Sam Abuelsamid                                                                         | Catherine Badgley and Gerry Smith                | Carol Brodbeck                                                               | Beth Covitt and Robin Saha                                         |
| Action Rental                                                                                    | Daniel Bair                                      | David and Sharon Brooks                                                      | Rich and Becky Cox                                                 |
| Deborah Adair                                                                                    | Bruce Baker and Eugenie Wolfson                  | Jennifer and Hershah Brown                                                   | Chad Crabtree                                                      |
| AFIA                                                                                             | Paul Balcolm and Eli Morrissey                   | Terry and Janice Brown                                                       | Beth Crawford                                                      |
| Julie Agranoff                                                                                   | Jim and Martha Balmer                            | Gary and Shelley Bruder                                                      | Jim Crowfoot and Ruth Carey                                        |
| Gisela Ahlbrandt and Mike Rains                                                                  | Bank of Ann Arbor                                | Bunyan Bryant and Jean Carlberg                                              | Kristen J. Cuhran and Natalie Holbrook                             |
| Chris Akerley                                                                                    | Oscar Banuelos                                   | Sue Budin                                                                    | Cheyenne Curran                                                    |
| Al Dente Pasta                                                                                   | Angela and Marshel Barbash                       | Laura Buhl and Pablo Medina                                                  | Jan Curry                                                          |
| All At Once Foundation                                                                           | Beth Barclay                                     | Ellen Bunting and Ken Schwartz                                               | Curves                                                             |
| Katherine Alaimo                                                                                 | Mary Barley                                      | Ellen Bunting on behalf of Evelyn Bunting                                    | Carrie Czajka                                                      |
| Naida and John Albin                                                                             | Danielle Bartolamucci                            | Lawrence and Sandra Burbank                                                  | Elizabeth Dahl MacGregor and Ken MacGregor                         |
| Karen Albin Edmonds in honor of Amanda Edmonds                                                   | Rena, Jeff, Ari, and Rose Basch                  | Tom Buresh and Danelle Guthrie                                               | Virginia Dakesian                                                  |
| Jeanne Alderson                                                                                  | Lisa and Beth Bashert                            | Jennifer Burris                                                              | Dan Cameron Family Foundation                                      |
| Doug Allen                                                                                       | David Bates                                      | Elizabeth and Brian Burt in tribute to Judy Brook                            | Cheryl Danley                                                      |
| Peter and Sally Allen                                                                            | Judith and Robert Baumann                        | Khalilah Burt                                                                | Dansen LLC                                                         |
| Veronica Allen in tribute to Charlotte Brose                                                     | Kim Bayer                                        | Busch's                                                                      | Irwin and Karen Danto                                              |
| William "Trey" Allen and Amanda Betzler                                                          | Beach Glass Bungalows                            | Kristen Butterfield                                                          | Dar Williams                                                       |
| Ameriprise Financial – Laura Kellman                                                             | Stewart Beal                                     | Brandon Buyaki                                                               | Kristin Darga                                                      |
| Amica Mutual Insurance                                                                           | Beal Inc.                                        | Letitia Byrd                                                                 | David T. Lord Consulting                                           |
| Ananeo Skin Care                                                                                 | Margery Beardsley and Kurt Sonen                 | Café Luwak                                                                   | Delux Rental                                                       |
| Lizabeth and Gerald Anderson in honor of Kathryn Boon and her help with the Angel School project | William Beardsley and Bettina Hoops              | Cake Nouveau                                                                 | Margaret Demmon                                                    |
| Angel Food Catering                                                                              | Beautiful Earth Family Farm                      | Calder Dairy                                                                 | Katy Derezinski                                                    |
| Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation, Joan Binkow and Daniel Chester Fund                         | Todd and Sue Beel                                | Calvert Social Giving Fund                                                   | Frank and Kathleen Deutsch                                         |
| Ann Arbor Branch of Woman's National Farm and Garden Association                                 | Beezy's Café and Chef Bee                        | Mary Campbell                                                                | Ray and Noreen DeYoung                                             |
| Ann Arbor Cyclery                                                                                | Mary Bejan                                       | Debbie Caplan                                                                | David Dickinson and Jeannine Laprad                                |
| Ann Arbor Kiwanis                                                                                | Gary and Barbara Bell                            | Susan Cares                                                                  | Linda Jo Doctor and Elliot Ginbury                                 |
| Anonymous                                                                                        | Vandy Bennett Designs                            | Lisa Carolin and Suzanne Murray in tribute to Hilda Poirer                   | Don Giovanni                                                       |
| Anonymous in tribute to Dean and Clare Liskow                                                    | Christina Berggren                               | Carson's American Bistro                                                     | Patty Donahue and Stan Price                                       |
| Katie Appel                                                                                      | G Biber                                          | Casa Dominicks                                                               | Donna Turner – Massage Therapist                                   |
| Michael Appel and Ruth Kraut                                                                     | Big George's                                     | Claudette Casello                                                            | Downtown Home and Garden                                           |
| Arbor Brewing Company                                                                            | Pauline Bigby                                    | William and Bonnie Castleberry                                               | Bob and Amy Doyle                                                  |
| Arbor Farms                                                                                      | Joan Binkow                                      | Elizabeth Caswell                                                            | Dreamland Theater                                                  |
| Arbor Springs Water                                                                              | Ann and Bill Birkle                              | Peggy Cavanagh                                                               | Chloe Duke and Mike Kozura                                         |
| Vivienne Armentrout                                                                              | Karen Bishop                                     | Judith Cawthorn                                                              | Rob Duncan and Sylvus Tarn                                         |
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## In our own words: Diana and Dick Dyer



Diana Dyer: **We love Growing Hope because of its mission, helping people improve their lives and communities through gardening and healthy food access, thus becoming healthier through gardening. It is the most ideal activity that really brings us back to the earth.** It brings us back to a center of our soul and it gives us an abundance of fresh food with a minimum of our own labors. **There can be nothing fresher or healthier than what you have not only tended, but what you have picked right out of your own garden.** The fact that Growing Hope is helping people learn how to do that, and get back to doing that and realize they can do that is just the most wonderful mission.

We got started with farmers' markets, generically speaking, more than 35 years ago when we lived in Madison, Wisconsin. My husband, he is a born farmer, would get up at 5:00 on Saturday mornings. He would go down to the market and just sit on a curb and watch people set up. We've wanted to be vendors ever since. It took us 40 years to finally get here as vendors - well 38 - from being farmer wanna-bees.

Dick Dyer: The bulk of the people who I see as customers are local residents. Some who stop here are traveling through on the way home from work. Look around, look at all the people who are here, everyone's out talking to each other. I think that type of communication is really important for community building.

I've enjoyed knowing about Growing Hope and doing what I can to help it ever since I learned about the organization. It was coming into existence just when I was deciding, 'I've taken a lot, community has been very good to me, I've been lucky to have a really successful career, I have some resources to share, who would I like to share it with?' So, Growing Hope has been on my mind for a long time and we've supported it in a number of different ways including helping it build its own hoophouse and developing strategies on where they could locate the Growing Hope Center.

When we put up the hoophouse, we were at the Center assembling the hoops and helping to hold them while other people were putting them in, but there are these drainage ditches that needed gravel shoveled in, and then shoveled out, and then shoveled in - there was a little bit of comical orchestration going on. So yes, we were there and enjoyed it a lot. **We've donated sweat, we've donated dollars, we've donated creative input.**

Diana Dyer has been a registered dietitian for more than thirty years and her husband, Dick Dyer, is a retired scientist. They are now garlic farmers and grow 40 varieties of organic garlic on their farm in Northeast Ann Arbor. They have also been active supporters of Growing Hope for the last five years. This year, they also become a vendor at the Downtown Ypsilanti Farmers' Market. Diana is also a blogger and keeps several blogs, her favorite of which is [365daysofkale.com](http://365daysofkale.com).



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## In our own words: Miriam Touré

In 2005, I went to Africa to visit my village in Niger. I made a well for them in 2000 from my personal funds and when I went back, I wanted to help them again. I know they have a need for seeds, so I called Amanda and I asked her, 'do you have extra seeds that you can donate?' and she said, 'sure, I do!' She gave me 100 packs of seeds and since then, every season November through February they grow vegetables. I didn't know if they would work, but they really work for them.

The village is Fotoboki, it's a village of 600 people and they live basically from what they grow. They don't grow, they don't eat. So during the rainy season, they do all their growing and when they finish the harvest, they store it, and that's what they eat all year long. If they have a good rainy season, it's good for them. Sometimes it doesn't last the full year, it may last only six months and then they have nothing. But during the dry season, they can grow vegetables, and everybody needs vegetables. You don't need only crops like millet and corn, you need vegetables to add to it, to have a healthy diet. There are one or two people who know how to tend the farm and they show everybody how to do it, now even the women are involved.

They grow tomatoes and peppers around the wells because they need more water. So what we are planning on doing is to dig more wells for them.

African families are big big families, we are a Muslim country. A man can have four wives, so imagine if each wife has even five kids. My dad has twelve kids, and I have an aunt, she lives in France now. Her mom has fifteen kids, one woman, fifteen kids, Can you imagine? But in Africa you are not doing everything by yourself, you always have family to help you. It's not the case here, that's why we are all stressed here. We don't know stress back there. **The only stress you can have is not to have anything to eat, that's it. The main organization helping me there is Growing Hope. They are really growing hope in people's lives and making a big difference.**



Miriam Touré is from Niger, West Africa and also the founding director of the non-profit organization, Africa Village Development. We met her when her son, Malick, was in middle school and in Growing Hope's after school program. Malick is now grown up and attends Washtenaw Community College. Miriam currently lives in Ypsilanti with husband and five children. For more information visit [www.africavillagedevelopment.yolasite.com](http://www.africavillagedevelopment.yolasite.com).

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## In our own words: Sharon Sheldon

“Growing Hope is really a key partner in helping people to be healthier and to understand the importance of healthy food access. A few years after we first established, we got to see that be part of our core mission – how important it is for people to have access to healthy food and fresh fruits and vegetables. We realized there was this whole generation of kids who basically had no clue where their food came from, not just in low-income communities in Ypsilanti but generally, there was this whole generation of lost knowledge. Most of their grandparents gardened and canned and knew all about what it meant to grow some

of your own food. People who lived through World War II had victory gardens, but then their parents’ generation came and that’s when things were pretty flush, and being able to buy everything from the supermarket was a sign of ‘I finally made it in the world, who cares about that garden in the backyard or that farm down the road from us.’ So I think kids are just now re-learning that kind of thing and many community members are re-learning that too. So its pretty interesting to see how it’s come full circle.

“I think Growing Hope has been successful in doing its work because it has a lot of involvement from people all across the community. So yes, our target audiences are the more vulnerable members of the community, but what we are doing is working for everyone’s benefit. **We really just encourage people to learn about what we do and to get involved**, whether that means being a volunteer on a committee, becoming a board member, helping us with our fundraising, or coming to a class that we hold and telling other people what their experience has been. Growing Hope’s mission affects the county in many positive ways, including economic development, and we really need a lot of continued engagement to make continue this – we are always encouraging people to think about ways to get involved.

Sharon P. Sheldon, pictured above at the Tour de Fresh, is a founding board member of Growing Hope and was the board president for six years. She is a native Michigander, originally from the Metro Detroit area, and attended both Eastern Michigan University and University of Michigan. She currently works for the Washtenaw County Public Health Department and lives in Northeast Michigan, where she also runs a vegetarian cooking and food gardening enterprise.

# The Growing Hope Family

*Residents of Ypsilanti, Ann Arbor, and from across Washtenaw County come together, every day, to do the work that has helped Growing Hope become a nationally recognized contributor to increasing access to fresh and local produce for underserved populations. Through the Americorps\*VISTA program, skilled and creative community members dedicate a year of full-time volunteer service — contributing more than 16,000 hours since 2008. Additionally, a talented board of directors, community volunteers, students and youth interns play strong leadership roles in the organization.*

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| M. Jahi Chappell  | Nicole Rom             |
| Caroline Conway** | Kif Scheuer            |
| Jessica Cook      | Carol Shepherd         |
| Kristin Darga     | Elizabeth Stamberger** |
| Lisa Dorvinan     | Shelley Thomopoulos    |
| Kelly Janiga      | Jamie Weinstein        |
| Nisha Kapadia     | Sacoby Wilson          |

\* served more than 6 months

\*\*non-voting board fellows

## Featured Partner: Americorps\*VISTA program

Since 2005, Americorps\*VISTA – a national volunteer service program (sort of like a domestic version of the Peace Corps) has been one of Growing Hope's most important partners. The full-time, one-year volunteers placed with Growing Hope have given thousands of hours of service annually. VISTA members are volunteers who receive a monthly stipend from the federal government along with health coverage and an award at the end of their one year service to go towards student loans or future education. Our VISTA members have ranged in age from 18-63 and come from as near as Ypsilanti and as far as Colorado to serve with Growing Hope.

It is an understatement to say that VISTA members have played major roles in bringing Growing Hope's programs to where they are today. As they've built the organization's internal capacity, they've also impacted thousands through major roles in developing programs including our farmers' market, youth programs, garden leaders training, and urban farm at the Growing Hope Center. VISTA members have gone on after their terms with Growing Hope to continue to make an impact in sustainable agriculture, food security, and urban gardening. Sarah Smith – 2009 VISTA Farmers' Market Manager – is in Wyoming starting a sustainable ranching operation. Daniel Bair – 2009 VISTA Farm Manager, pictured below on left – has begun a farm on the grounds of local St. Joseph's hospital, so healthier food can be fed into the hospital system. Other VISTA members have stayed with Growing Hope as paid staff or board members. We appreciate them all!





### *Growing Hope Staff*

Amanda Maria Edmonds, Executive Director, present  
Elissa Trumbull, Program Manager '09 – present  
Karen Spangler, Program Manager '09 – present  
Liz Dahl MacGregor, Office Manager '09 – present  
Meg Maurer, Program Coordinator '08 – '09  
Terry Phillips Carpenter, Youth Coordinator '08 – '09  
Rachel Chadderdon, Market Manager '08  
Merilynne Rush, Faith & Food Coordinator '09

### *Americorps\*VISTA Members 2008-2010*

Raman Agrawal, Marketing Coordinator '08 – '09  
Daniel Bair, Farm Manager '08 – '09  
Ashley Bishop, Community Organizer '08 – '09  
Adrienne Finelli, Marketing Coordinator '09 – '10  
Kelly King, Marketing & Outreach Coordinator '08 – '09  
Meg Maurer, Youth Coordinator '08 – '09  
Sarah Smith, Farmers' Market Manager '08 – '09  
Jeremy Sobczak, Volunteer Coordinator '09 – '10  
Karen Spangler, Volunteer Coordinator '07 – '09  
Ryan Mary Stedman, Farmer's Market Manager '09 – '10  
JP Swanson, Farm Manager '09 – '10  
Gabe Tilove, Youth & Education Coordinator '09 – '10  
Wendy Watson, Community Organizer '09 – '10

### *Interns, Mentors, Research Assistants*

Stephanie Benson '09  
Willie Cooper '09  
Abby DeBofsky '08  
Joyce Freeman '09  
Robert Harrison '09  
Lauren Lesch '08  
Rachel Long '09  
Ryan Parish '09  
Ariane Rester '09  
Stefanie Stauffer '09  
Deanna White '09

### *Youth Interns, Mentors, & Employees*

Darel Adams '09  
Jordan Bray-Burns '08 – present  
Christian Cannon '08 – present  
Kenya Crawford Davis '09  
Dan Dorman '09  
Aaron Greene '09  
Roy Finny '06 – present  
Nia Hallom '08 – present  
Brian Montagne '09  
Alycia Scott '09  
Jamael Stewart '09  
Trimaine Walker '09  
Kelsey Watson '08 – present  
Paris Wilson '09



*pictured from left to right: 2009 Growing Hope Board, JP Swanson, Jeremy Sobczak*







written by Caleb Brokaw, Amanda Edmonds and Toby Millman  
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Stedman and Elissa Trumbull  
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photograph on page 28 courtesy of Elizabeth Ayer  
edited and designed by Toby Millman



Growing Hope is improving lives and communities  
through gardening and healthy food access.

For more information or to make a donation,  
please visit our website at [www.growinghope.net](http://www.growinghope.net)

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