



Garden Development Coordinator, Chris Hiryak, assists students during Harrisburg Middle School's Dig Day.



News from the Delta Garden Study

*Addressing Childhood Obesity in the Central and Delta Regions of Arkansas
Headquartered in Little Rock, Arkansas*

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This fall began an exciting second year for the garden at Mabelvale Magnet Middle School.

The garden is transforming from its establishment as a pilot project site for the Delta Garden Study into its second year of sustainability as an outdoor classroom and learning laboratory for many disciplines at Mabelvale Magnet Middle School.

This year Kristy Brownell, the Americorps service member serving at Mabelvale Magnet School, is collaborating with science, math and art teachers to enhance the integration of the gardens and greenhouse into the curriculum.

The primary focus at Mabelvale Magnet Middle School in its second year is to bring together the school and community to sustain the garden so that it will best serve the needs of students,



Dig Day a Success!!!

During the month of October, Delta Garden Study schools held their Dig Days which marked the official expansion of their gardens. Ryan Norman, the Garden Program Specialist (GPS) at Harrisburg Middle School felt that Dig Day was a real success. "The day went very smoothly, and the students seemed to have a lot of fun with it. Everyone did great work and it shows. We now have 30 new raised beds, 25' each. We'll be planting them in arugula, strawberries, and lots of greens this winter." Kevin Keen, the GPS at Highland Middle school, had a total of 180 students help out during Dig

Day. "The students absolutely loved the garden and many enjoyed the recipes Jackie (FoodCorps Service Member) and volunteers prepared. So many of the students said they would be much happier staying outside to dig all day rather than going back to class! It is amazing not only throughout the regular garden curriculum classes, but also throughout Dig Day that students get so excited about work!" Cale Nicholson, the GPS at Marshall High School, and Liana Harden, the GPS at Monticello Middle School, had similar experiences. According to Liana, "The teachers and students really enjoyed it! Our students were very productive on Dig Day and over the course of the whole week. They mulched new pathways, planted garlic, prepared beds for winter crops, harvested, seeded flats, and built up their compost piles!" Thank you to all of the volunteers who helped out with Dig Day. Without you the event would not have been such a success!!



Monticello Middle School Students are Thankful this Holiday Season

Students at Monticello Middle School are very thankful for their new garden and recently wrote letters to their Superintendent, Mr. Harper, to express their gratitude for allowing their school to participate in the Delta Garden Study.

One sixth grade student wrote, "I really enjoy having a school garden. I have lots to look forward to every week because of the garden. I love science, it's my favorite subject, and having a school garden makes science a hundred times better." Many students were excited about all that they had already learned this year. "My favorite thing about the garden is the chickens. I have learned many things about the chicken that I have never known. Some things I have learned about are that the chicken doesn't have teeth, but it has a gizzard that grinds up the food so they can digest it better." Some students are already taking what they have learned home. "This garden has inspired me to make my own garden. I will have tons of night shades and legumes in my garden." Thank you to Liana, Garden

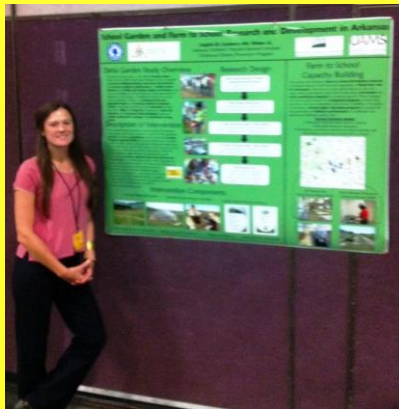
teachers, staff and the local community.

For weekly updates and pictures on the activities and progress of Mabelvale's garden, please visit [Mabelvale's page](#) on our website.

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Program Specialist at Monticello Middle School, for sharing these letters!



Delta Garden Study Researchers Present at National Conference

Emily English, MPH, MPS, and Andrew Carberry, MS, MPH, recently presented the goals and objectives of the Delta Garden Study and the Arkansas Grow Healthy Study during a poster session at the 15th Annual Community Food Security Coalition Conference in Oakland, California. The conference was held November 5-8, 2011, and was presented by the Community

Food Security Coalition which is a national coalition of more than 500 organizations dedicated to building food systems that are healthy, sustainable, just and democratic by building community voice and capacity for change. The theme of this year's conference was "Food Justice, Honoring Our Roots, Growing the Movement." Emily and Andrew attended multiple sessions on farm to school programs across the country including the Farm to School and School Garden Research Consortium Work Session.



Delta Garden Study is Now Recruiting Schools for the 2012-2013 School Year

The Delta Garden Study has begun recruitment for its second year of the full-scale study. Criteria for eligibility as a garden school includes the following: must have at least 200 6th-8th graders located on the same or adjacent

campuses, have at least 4 teachers willing to participate in garden-based science lessons at least twice a week, up to 1 acre of land available for a garden, greenhouse, rainwater harvest units, and chickens, and be willing to develop an after-school garden club that involves both student and community volunteers. Garden schools must also be willing to participate in all necessary measurements and data collection and will be compensated with all tools and supplies necessary to run the garden, a full-time Garden Program Specialist for 12 months, DGS lessons and accompanying materials, and teacher training. Comparison schools must be willing to participate in the measurements and will be compensated with a \$2000 stipend. All schools must be located in the Central or Delta region of the state. For more information, please visit the Delta Garden Study website at www.artengarden.com/recruitment.



School Garden Grant

Opportunities Looking for a little extra "green" to help your garden grow? Several programs are currently accepting applications for school garden grants, including the Whole Kids Foundation, Arkansas Farm Bureau, Annie's, and the National Gardening Association. The Whole Kids Foundation is currently

accepting applications for school garden grants. the Whole Kids Foundation's mission is to improve children's nutrition and wellness with the goal of ending the childhood obesity epidemic. Learn more about the application process and apply for a school garden grant at www.wholekidsfoundation.org/gardengrants.php. The Farm Bureau of Arkansas's Outdoor Classroom Garden Mini-Grant Program is designed to show that agriculture is an integral part of our everyday environment. It is the intention of the program to provide educational opportunities to classroom and youth organizations that will increase agricultural literacy in Arkansas. The application form and guidelines can be found at www.arfb.com/programs_activities/ag_classroom/mini_grant/. Annie's is offering a limited number of small grants to community gardens, school gardens and other educational programs that connect children directly to real food. These funds can be used to buy gardening tools, seeds or other necessary supplies. Those interested in applying should visit www.annies.com/grants. The National Gardening Association's grant and award programs are funded by generous corporations and foundations that share NGA's vision of a greener future and belief in the powerful impact gardening programs can have on the mental, physical, and psychological health of individuals. To apply to their numerous grants visit www.kidsgardening.org/grants-and-awards.



DGS Chosen for International Symposium

Dr. Judy Weber, Lead Investigator of the Delta Garden Study (DGS), will present the results of the DGS pilot study as part of a symposium titled "School Gardening for Sustainable Living" at the International Society for Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity (ISBNPA) annual meeting in Austin, Texas, May 23-26, 2012. This session will allow attendees to explore how school-based gardening programs can positively affect health and related behaviors and assess how such programs can

be sustainable over time and replicated to more settings.

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Thank you for your interest in the Delta Garden Study.



