Kessler Foundation Funds the Camden Children’s Garden
Youth Employment & Training Program

Camden, NJ… The Camden Children’s Garden’s Youth Employment & Training Program is the recipient of a generous $25,000 grant from the Kessler Foundation.

Elaine Katz, Senior Vice President of Grants and Communications for the Kessler Foundation, stated, “We believe your project, along with others funded this year, will make a unique and valuable contribution to our community in the effort to provide high quality employment opportunities for people with disabilities. We appreciate your commitment to improve the lives of people with disabilities and we are glad to be able to support your program this year.’”

The year-round Youth Education & Training Program (YET), now in its 24th year educates underserved, at-risk youth in environmental science, urban agriculture and nutrition basics, providing them with year-round paid employment, including hard and soft skills job training, e.g., customer service, cashiering, personal responsibility, and self-discipline, preparing them for entry level employment and post-secondary education. For many participants, the wages they earn are the only reliable source of income for their families. Since 1994, with a nearly 100% high school graduation rate of enrolled students, 336 Camden students have graduated from this program, transitioning to employment and post-secondary education.
Valerie Frick, Director of Education for the CCG says, “By pairing our students with supervisors and instructors, we ensure that the bonds they form here will help them both vocationally and psychologically. The entire program is designed to teach the kids but also to make them gain a sense of stability and safety.” Frick states, “If it seems odd to label healthy young people as disabled, then you don’t know the harm that an often toxic urban environment can do to the city’s children. With this generous grant, the Kessler Foundation has enabled the Camden Children’s Garden to continue doing its truly essential work in the Camden community.”

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The Camden Children’s Garden is operated by the Camden City Garden Club, which was established as a non-profit 501(c)3 in 1985. It has multiple community based initiatives. Primary among these is its mission to inspire and educate people of all ages by providing opportunities to improve their quality of life, health and community through horticulture.

Please visit us online at www.camdenchildrensgarden.org