growing together
2017 IMPACT REPORT
OUR MISSION

The mission of Grow Dat Youth Farm is to nurture a diverse group of young leaders through the meaningful work of growing food. At Grow Dat, people from different backgrounds come together to create a more just and sustainable food system. On our farm we work collaboratively to grow food, educate and inspire youth and adults, and build power to create personal, social and environmental change.

YOUR IMPACT

Since we began six years ago, Grow Dat has graduated more than 250 young people from our leadership program, grown over 90,000 pounds of food, and cultivated 2 acres of farm land in New Orleans City Park. Grow Dat youth have worked with 15 Shared Harvest partner organizations to donate over 27,000 pounds of the food we grow.
GROW DAT’S EXECUTIVE TRANSITION

Dear Friends,

2017 has been a momentous year for Grow Dat. Thanks to your support, more than 60 young people participated in our leadership programs and the farm produced more than 25,000 pounds of food for the community. We launched a new field trip program and held five sold-out farm dinners. We even raised the money to buy our first tractor, thanks to our Hootenanny Live Auction!

Alongside these accomplishments, 2017 was a time of transition. Johanna Gilligan, Grow Dat’s Founding Director, stepped down from her role to accept a Loeb Fellowship at Harvard University. Johanna led Grow Dat from its inception in 2010, growing the organization from a couple staff members working with a dozen youth on borrowed land at Hollygrove Market and Farm to the largest farm operation in New Orleans and a nationally recognized youth leadership program. It goes without saying that Johanna is missed, and we have all wished her the absolute best during this next phase of her life.

From the beginning of our succession planning, we knew we wanted to design an executive search and selection process that aligned with our values of multiculturalism and inclusion. We created a search committee composed of board members, staff, and youth alumni to draft a position profile, interview candidates, and ultimately recommend a candidate to the Board of Directors to make a final hiring decision.

As Grow Dat’s Assistant Director prior to Johanna’s departure, I’ve assumed the role of Interim Director until a new Executive Director is hired by the Board. While we are still in the midst of this executive transition, it is clear that Grow Dat is an organization full of leaders, all of whom have taken on additional responsibility during this period of transition. We see this transition as an opportunity to invest in the next phase of growth and impact, simultaneously investing in internal leadership capacity while selecting a new Director who will bring a new set of skills and lived experience to the organization that we love so much.

We look forward to announcing a new Executive Director in 2018. Thank you so much for joining us on this journey.

With gratitude,

Michael Kantor
Interim Director
“I would have to say, before when I was a crew member I wasn't that talkative, I just kept to myself, closed my shell, no one comes in. But now that I am an ACL (assistant crew leader) my shell is open, cracked open, I am talking to everyone, everyone is talking to me. I will carry that with me through life.”

– Toi
Assistant Crew Leader 2017

“One thing that I will take away from Grow Dat is the openness of everyone who works here, it's just so happy, and always willing to help out when needed and I really do appreciate that about Grow Dat because they made me want to step out of my comfort zone. It's just made a great impact on me in how I see people and how I see the world.”

– Kayla
Assistant Crew Leader 2017
How would you describe Grow Dat?

This is a job, but there is more to it than just working in the field, you want us to know something, you wanted us to open our eyes to what we don’t know. This really hit me during the worker rights workshop. During that lesson we learned about all the farmers, grown men, working long hours and on bigger scales and making a dollar an hour.

I think Grow Dat has a role of transforming youth, not changing but encouraging. Grow Dat really shows youth how to show up and be themselves and have respect and be one. Even though people are different, we are all the same. This was a great place that made me feel comfortable, broke me out of my shell, gave me this new life of work that I really enjoyed. There were new experiences that I really wanted to gain, new life skills that I didn’t have but I wanted, (skills) I didn’t know how to get without being here.

What are some things you have learned?

The inner me, I really think, is a farmer. I have always like trees, weird looking plants, [and] pretty exotic bugs. Teaching lessons (as an Assistant Crew Leader) really stuck with me. Teaching shows the importance, it’s not just a tree, it’s a house for bugs or birds. Or how some insects can be beneficial to a farm, they don’t just fly around stinging people.

I even used it as a capstone for my senior project. I remember teaching this lesson on parasitic wasps and when I first said that word everyone, including my teacher, was like “Oh My God!” After I was finished everyone had 100 questions because I was telling them how we need parasitic wasps and they are actually good for the farm because they get rid of all the insects we don’t need. Maybe they do sting people, but they are good for something.

What are your plans after Grow Dat?

After Grow Dat, I really want to start something in between recycling and agriculture work. I know Grow Dat has prepared me for agriculture work but it has also helped me to learn how to do research or ways to have conversations with people or find help in ways that benefit you.

Alex

CREW SPOTLIGHT

We’re thrilled to be using our new 39hp Kubota tractor! A tractor will help us to work with greater efficiency while still upholding our commitment to using sustainable practices. We are planning to use this new capacity to bring additional land under cultivation this year. Huge thanks to everyone who contributed to our live auction at last year’s Hootenanny! It was your support that made this addition possible.
FIELD TRIPS
inspiring love of land

This year over 1,200 students from across the region visited Grow Dat to learn about food systems and ecology through the Grow Dat field trip program. Originally outlined in our strategic plan, field trips widen our impact on the community, provide new teaching opportunities for fellows and alumni, and are a successful earned income strategy—earning $11,260 in the fiscal year 2017. We offer multiple field trip options for schools and teachers including Birds and Bugs on the Bayou, Seed to Plate, Farming with Care, History of the Land, and Living Soil. Each of these tracks emphasize a different part of our work, from love of nature, to food systems education, to sustainable agriculture.

This year, we hope to host close to 2,000 students on the farm, providing youth across the region with a new extra-curricular experience and awakening a love for the outdoors. Field trips also enable fellows and alumni to deepen their facilitation skills and to gain experience by teaching different grade levels.

In the photo above you can see former fellows Asia Vinae and Ellenie Cruz leading a field trip for 5th graders at the International School.

COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

Community workshops are a way for us to engage our New Orleans community and to support local educators. For the second year in a row, we have welcomed former Grow Dat Fellow and natural herbalist, Ellenie Cruz to join Grow Dat for a multi-part herbal medicine series. We also team up with Reyn Studios to teach a yoga series on the farm each spring.
Tyler and Rebecca Coatney first learned about the Grow Dat Farm Share through a flyer on their car. Five years later they are longstanding Farm Share members and generous contributors to our work. Tyler is a native New Orleanian and expert vegetable chopper who works at his family’s local trucking business and Rebecca is a former school teacher and fulltime mom to their two young children. We recently took a walk around the farm to hear more about what inspired their commitment to Grow Dat.

Grow Dat: How did you first become connected with Grow Dat?

Rebecca: I had been thinking about trying to start cooking more and preparing more healthy meals. It seemed like a really natural fit for us to give it a try and it ended up becoming a great part of our routine. Especially with the kids at this age to be able to see the other side of the food cycle. We come to the farm on Saturdays, we pick up our box and then we sit down with it. Usually, Tyler does all the prep and chops everything. I sit down and I menu plans for the week. I find myself less willing to throw food away after seeing the faces of people that have grown it and knowing where it’s coming from.

Grow Dat: What is your favorite dish to make with Grow Dat veggies?

Rebecca: Kale with craisins, nuts, and this maple vinaigrette that has Dijon mustard in it. It’s delicious.

Grow Dat: What inspires you about the work at Grow Dat?

Tyler: We were exposed to the leadership side during one of the farm dinner tours. As we learned more, at least in my mind, it’s almost more impressive than the food side.

Rebecca: It’s holistic, it is not just organic farming and making produce available to people in the city, but also doing good work. I think that that was really appealing to us that there was so much benefit on so many levels.

Grow Dat: Where would you like to see Grow Dat go?

Tyler: From conversations with staff we are excited about the expansion of the leadership program and encouraging young people to impact their communities. Not just on food security and nutrition but getting youth leaders to find their own passions and interests by providing them with a skill set to develop that wherever they end up going. I don’t think you ever have enough peer to peer support or opportunities to learn in a real environment. We have a strong belief in the program and the people that have been put around it. There’s lots of good to be done.
Crew Leader

Gustavs

Gustavs is a student at Lusher Academy and joined Grow Dat as a Crew Member in Spring 2017. This year, Gustavs is an Assistant Crew Leader and will help to lead a cohort of youth through the leadership program. He feels strongly about learning across difference and his favorite farm task is weeding.

Assistant Crew Leader

Food Justice Project

10-15 alumni
8 week paid internship
deepening facilitation skills through community outreach, research, and collaborative planning

Food Justice Leader

L’czyrian

L’czyrian began as a Crew Member in the summer of 2017. She quickly jumped into workshops and farming and stunned everyone with her beautiful voice during the camping trip talent show. This fall, she was a part of the first ever Food Justice Project where she spent her time deepening her facilitation skills and working with community partners such as the Backyard Gardeners Network to learn more about agriculture and youth development work happening in the New Orleans community.

Leadership Program

60 young people
5 months paid internship
50% of time spent farming and 50% of time spent in team building exercises and workshops

Crew Member

Nola

Nola joined Grow Dat as a Crew Member in 2017. At first quite shy, Nola came out of her shell over the course of the program. After just a few months, Nola had developed meaningful friendships across difference and began communicating more effectively with staff and fellows—she even became a vocal participant in workshops!
**Head Crew Leader**

Sean

Sean joined Grow Dat in the summer of 2014. After just four weeks at Grow Dat, Sean decided to apply to be an Assistant Crew Leader. As an Assistant Crew Leader, Sean honed his teaching skills and made it clear that his hard working and positive nature made him a strong leader. Sean became a Crew Leader in 2016 and expertly led a group of 12 youth through the leadership program. Sean was offered the full time Head Crew Leader position in 2017, he has helped to guide the new Crew Leaders, deepened his farming expertise, and will be leading another crew of youth through the program this spring.

**Crew Leader Fellow**

Finn

Originally from Wisconsin, Finn joined Grow Dat as a Crew Leader in 2017. They participate regularly in farm mornings, lead field trips, and will lead a crew through the program this spring.

**Crew Leader Fellows**

- 4 young adults
- 9-month part time job
- Intensive farming and facilitation education – each fellow is responsible for leading a crew of 12 youth through the leadership program in the spring.

**Farm Fellow**

Alex

Alex joined Grow Dat as a Crew Member in the spring of 2016. After finishing the leadership program, Alex reapplied to be an Assistant Crew Leader. He quickly revealed a talent for facilitating lessons, leading games, and touring visitors. After graduating from Carver Collegiate, Alex decided to return to Grow Dat as a Farm Fellow. (see more about his story on page 4)

**Full Time Head Crew Leader/Farm Fellow**

Ellenie

Alumni Educators return to Grow Dat in a number of different ways including leading field trips and starting personal initiatives. Ellenie joined Grow Dat as a Crew Leader in 2016. Her teaching expertise, natural plant knowledge, and enthusiasm were a welcome addition to the farm. Since joining our Grow Dat family, Ellenie has led over 5 herbal medicine workshops and hosts her annual Herb Gathering at Grow Dat. She returned in 2017 as a field trip leader, tour guide, and recently helped to write a grant that will bring bee hives to the farm this spring – making one of her newest Grow Dat titles Queen Bee.

**Alumni Educator**

Ellenie

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**Farm Fellow**

Alex

Alex joined Grow Dat as a Crew Member in the spring of 2016. After finishing the leadership program, Alex reapplied to be an Assistant Crew Leader. He quickly revealed a talent for facilitating lessons, leading games, and touring visitors. After graduating from Carver Collegiate, Alex decided to return to Grow Dat as a Farm Fellow. (see more about his story on page 4)
## Producers Sales and Income

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<th>Amount</th>
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<td>Earned Income</td>
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<td>Groups and Businesses</td>
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<td>Grants</td>
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<td>In-Kind and Other</td>
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### Total Income

Total Income: $1,028,633

### Expenses

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<td>Development and Marketing</td>
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### Total Expenses

Total Expenses: $1,072,958

### Net Operating Income

Net Operating: -$44,325

### Beginning Reserves

Beginning Reserves: $269,348

### Ending Reserves

Ending Reserves: $225,023

## Assets

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### Total Assets

Total Assets: $255,796

## Liabilities

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Short-term Liabilities</td>
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### Total Liabilities

Total Liabilities: $8,274

## Unrestricted Net Assets

Unrestricted Net Assets: $225,023

## Temporarily Restricted Net Assets

Temporarily Restricted Net Assets: $22,500

### Total Net Assets

Total Net Assets: $247,523

### Total Liabilities and Net Assets

Total Liabilities and Net Assets: $255,796

## INCOME SOURCES

- **Grants**: 46%
- **Individuals**: 25%
- **Earned Income**: 17%
- **Produce Sales**: 7%
- **In-Kind and Other**: 4%
- **Groups and Businesses**: 1%
“Grow Dat helped me to work, laugh, share & communicate with different groups of people.” – Al’Mita, Assistant Crew Leader 2016

thanks to our supporters

$100,000 AND GREATER
W.K. Kellogg Foundation

$50,000 to $99,999
Barksdale Family Fund
Mike and Lynn Coatney Family Foundation
Cricket Island Foundation
Capital One

$25,000 to $49,999
Fox Family Foundation
Zemurray Family Foundation
Institute of Mental Hygiene
Emily’s Bloomin’ Youth Fund

$10,000 to $24,999
Goldring Family Foundation
Greater New Orleans Foundation
Impact 100
Jim and Donna Barksdale
New Orleans Town Gardeners

$5,000 to $9,999
Cathy and Hunter Pierson
Scott and Marjorie Cowen
Boatner Reily Family Fund
Christa and William Payne
Lester Fant

Thanks to our home at City Park.