

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Meet Our New Staff!
- Check Out our New Logo!
- Check Out our Revised Website!
- Learn the many ways you can get involved!

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Jennifer Strayhorn, Executive Director

Michael H. spent this past summer learning about gardening -composting, planting fruit and veggies, weeding and watering in a garden near his home. His favorite part was the harvesting. He never knew food could grow in 45 days. He thought you got it in an instant from the grocery store. Michael's work schedule was 3 mornings a week. He loved the garden so much that he walked *everyday* to work early. He proudly shared the knowledge he gained with anyone who stopped to listen. You could see the garden growing on him.

Michael's enthusiasm re-ignited my purpose and passion for all St. Louis residents to live in healthy communities with viable green spaces and access to neighborhood-grown produce. We accomplished a lot in 2008. Over 2400 people participated in cooking demonstrations, 120 volunteered in 4 urban gardens and 300 purchased produce at our farmer's market.



There are bigger and better plans in 2009! We now have 5 Ameri-corps staff members, new volunteers, more education opportunities, increased urban gardens, and farmer's market collaborations. Be sure to go to our website where you can see all the "dirt" for yourself www.hopebuild.org.

You can help us expand by getting involved outside if you like playing in the dirt; inside if you like good healthy food with no pesticides. If none of that suits your fancy, you can volunteer in our office, at the farmer's market, or maybe you have a skill that you'd like to share. You can make a donation that will support all of our cultivation efforts. We look forward to growing here, there and everywhere!

Kate, Program Director

Hello friends of HopeBUILD! My name is Kate Sapp and I am the new Program Director of HopeBUILD. I'm originally from small-town, Illinois and I'm every excited to live life in STL. As Program Director, I get to do a little bit of everything to help HopeBUILD succeed in its mission to the St. Louis community.

The rest of the new staff members are going to introduce themselves to you throughout this newsletter. We want you to know that we are excited to be a part of HopeBUILD and we are eager to meet you! Let us know how you would like to be involved and we will provide you with many opportunities!



Please Note: We will be sending the newsletter via email from now on. If you're receiving this newsletter in hard copy it is because we do not have your email address.

If you'd like to keep receiving the newsletter please send us your email address at info@hopebuild.org



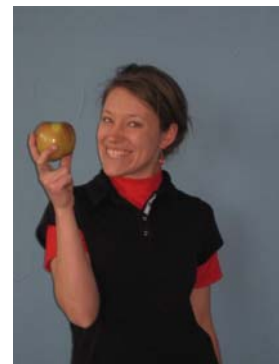
Sarah, Volunteer Coordinator

Hi, HopeBUILDers! My name is Sarah Koenig and I am the Volunteer Coordinator with HopeBUILD. I am a recent transplant from Chicago, Illinois but am having a great time living in St. Louis and learning all about the city, including learning to like the Cardinals.

As Volunteer Coordinator, it is my job to find groups or individuals wanting to be part of our community gardens and schedule dates and times for them to dig in—so to speak! In the months of March and April, we have three large groups joining HopeBUILD in our gardens, including: a youth group from the Wyman Center, several college students from Murray State University, and a youth group from the West End neighborhood. I am excited to work with all of our volunteers—those that have worked with HopeBUILD in the past and those that plan on doing so in the future. If you are looking for an opportunity to volunteer, we have many outlets to do so, such as helping in the gardens, assisting with our nutrition classes, lending a hand with some minor office work, or even creating booths, posters and t-shirts if you have a passion for design. You can contact me at sarah.hopebuild@gmail.com or at 314-757-6063. I look forward to a productive and energizing year!

From Jill, Nutrition Education Coordinator

A little H.E.L.P. (Healthy Eating, Living Powerfully) can change your life! As the Nutrition Education Coordinator at HopeBUILD, I am eager to help that statement become realized for all types of community groups throughout St. Louis this year! Backyard gardens and fresh produce have always been a part of my life as a small-town Iowa girl, and I am thankful to share the good taste (and nutritional benefits) of a homegrown tomato with many taste buds across the city. Having taught upper elementary science over the last year, I am incorporating more interactive activities to our nutrition classes and invite YOU to be a part of the fun! Check the HopeBUILD website and future newsletters for more information about our nutrition class offerings!



Ryan, Garden Manager

Originally from St. Charles County, but living in many random places for the past seven years (Ohio, Pennsylvania, Wyoming, California, New Hampshire), receiving a masters degree in landscape architecture from the University of Minnesota, and fresh from the mountains and Pacific Coast of Ecuador, I have returned to my home state to become the new garden manager with HopeBUILD!



As the garden manager, I will be getting my hands dirty in the gardens that have partnered with HopeBUILD, assisting with logistics and resources that will make the gardens run more smoothly, networking with the garden leaders to share gardening wisdom and resources, and assisting in harvest and distribution of the produce to the community. In addition, I will be working with members of the community who are interested in establishing new gardens throughout the city of St. Louis. If you or your community has a desire to create a garden in your neighborhood that will help to supply fresh produce throughout the community or if you wish to learn more about urban agriculture, please call me at 314-757-6040 or send me an email at ryan@hopebuild.org.

Branden, Fund Developer



My name is Branden Harlen, I am the Fund developer/Grant Writer for HopeBUILD. My duties include but are not limited to finding funds and grants through donors and organizations as well as fundraising events. I maintain a committee that helps me achieve my goals. I also construct various grants for HopeBUILD. In the near future I will be a member of the Non Profit Consortium roundtable. I also meet and network with various contacts to see if collaboration is possible.

If anyone has questions about a possible donation, or would like to partner with us financially please email me. The HopeBUILD staff is always grateful for to receive in-kind or financial donations! We welcome positive energy!

Murray State University Volunteers



We want to give a shout out to our friends at Murray State University who came all the way from Kentucky to volunteer part of their spring break to cleaning up one of our garden projects! Check out their hard work!

Local Poet SpotLIGHT

Our fellow community gardener and friend, Dylan Atchley, shared a poem with us the other day and we could not pass up the opportunity to share it with all of you. Dylan works with the Catholic Charities community gardening endeavor.

We hope you enjoy his work as much as we do.
Oh...and Happy Spring!

**Magnolias of the rainbow hearken
early
To the moist winds of change,
Showering their splendor like tears of
God
Over sprouting green.**

**Mingling, feathered messengers
Outside inviting, open windows
Dance beneath rays of warmth.
O, glorious Spring, you've arrived.**



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Here We Grow!

OUR MISSION

HopeBUILD is a non-profit organization thriving in the St. Louis community. Our vision is to provide **fresh produce through urban gardens and farmers' markets** to promote healthy lifestyles and enrich cultural traditions in neighborhoods suffering from indifference and neglect.

OUR VISION FOR ST. LOUIS

- We seek to partner with communities by **resourcing and empowering them to grow community gardens.**
- In providing healthy food sources within communities who may not otherwise have access to nutritious food, **we join the fight against diseases related to poor nutrition** (i.e. obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and other chronic diseases).
- We believe that the existence of a **produce-based garden** within a community **must be coupled with education** in order to truly promote healthy lifestyles.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Watch Our Gardens Grow...

In this portion of our newsletter we want to highlight our gardens and their progress over the growing season.

Watch with us!



Union Communion Garden

A Collaboration of Union Communion Ministries and Clark Elementary School
Located at the trisection of Suburban Track, Clarendon, and Cates

Garden Community Leader: Dianna Brown



Neighborhood Garden of Hope

The Learning Tree Intergenerational Center Garden
Located at 4430 Labadie Ave.

Garden Community Leader: Dwight Taylor



Barrett-Brother Hip Hop Garden

Barrett-Brothers Park
Located at cross section of St. Louis Ave. and Goodfellow Blvd.

Garden Community Leader: Kyria Virshelle



Union Memorial Garden

The Community Garden of Union Memorial United Methodist Church
Located at 1141 Belt Ave.

Garden Community Leader: Joe Heavens